



Emotional Intelligence of Counsellors Improves the Quality of Student Guidance and Counselling

Risma Siregar^{1,*}

¹STT Diakones Balige, Sumatera Utara, Indonesia

*srgrrisma@yahoo.com

Abstract. This study aims to explore the relationship between emotional intelligence and the quality of counselling services provided by counsellors for students. There are several reasons for conducting pastoral counselling in schools. The current state of student character has become deeply concerning, as drug use can begin as early as middle school. Counselling this group is not easy; it requires counsellors with special skills, expertise, and high Emotional Intelligence. Unfortunately, many counsellors lack the necessary competence, leading to recommendations for addicts to enter rehabilitation centers specifically for drug addiction. Many parents experience severe emotional turmoil and despair upon discovering their children's involvement with drugs. Given these challenges, counsellors must be patient, dedicated, and committed to providing consistent care. Emotional Intelligence is defined as the ability to feel, understand, and be sensitive to emotions. Emotional intelligence also refers to a teacher's mental ability to control and comprehend their own feelings and those of others. Therefore, an emotionally intelligent person does not merely experience emotions but also understands others' feelings as if they were their own. Data collection regarding Emotional Intelligence to enhance the Quality of Counselling Services for Students uses a Likert-scale questionnaire. The Likert scale measures attitudes, opinions, and perceptions of an individual or group about a social event or phenomenon. The stages of data analysis include four steps: (a) planning; (b) implementing actions; (c) evaluation; and (d) reflection.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, Quality of counselling services, Descriptive qualitative

1 Introduction

Emotional intelligence is a crucial factor that significantly influences learning success. Current psychological research reveals that emotional intelligence, in addition to IQ, significantly influences learning and achievement. Emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in our ability to acquire practical skills based on five key elements: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Attaining emotional intelligence is not easy, as it does not appear suddenly in an

individual. Therefore, emotional intelligence must be learned and trained at an early age, and the ability to develop it needs to be nurtured and continuously refined.

Emotional intelligence can also influence students' success in navigating both their present and future lives [1]. Intellectual intelligence can work effectively when supported by the proper functioning of emotional intelligence. Poor management of emotional intelligence can lead to uncontrolled emotions, which can have negative consequences such as peer conflicts. Schneider defines social adjustment as the ability to react effectively and healthily to situations, realities, and social relations, ensuring that societal demands are met in an acceptable and satisfying manner. According to Schneider's view, social adjustment refers to behavior that encourages individuals to adapt to others and groups based on inner awareness and environmental demands [2]. Individual social adjustment encompasses adaptation within the family, school, and community. Social adjustment is thus the ability to respond effectively and healthily to situations, realities, and social relationships, allowing societal demands to be met in a way that is both acceptable and fulfilling.

According to Schneider's view, social adjustment refers to behaviors that encourage individuals to adapt to others and groups based on inner awareness and environmental demands. Social adjustment during childhood is particularly focused on school-based social adaptation, given the nature of this stage, where children spend most of their time interacting with their surroundings, especially the school environment. Social adjustment in school can be defined as the ability to adapt and interact with teachers, subjects, peers, other school community members, and various situations within the school environment in an effective and healthy manner. This enables students to achieve satisfaction in meeting their needs, which impacts themselves, others, and their surroundings. The development of social life during primary school age is influenced by an important factor: social adjustment.

This is based on the fact that the elementary school age is the foundation for forming attitudes and behaviors for later stages of life. Students who are able to make social adjustments during their elementary school years are likely to adapt well socially in later stages, compared to those who struggle with social adjustment. The type of social adjustment made during this period will leave a mark on their self-concept, which will reinforce the pattern of social adjustment they will exhibit in the future. Given the importance of social adjustment in everyday life, including in the field of education, it is crucial to study and pay attention to social adjustment. Emotional understanding is often misunderstood, as emotions are generally seen as negative feelings. However, we can harness the power of controlled emotions to enhance our quality of life. This implies that emotions possess intelligence, a concept known as emotional intelligence.

Guidance and counseling are efforts made by an individual (the counselor) to help optimize a person's potential. Guidance is part of the overall educational program that helps develop the opportunities available to the individual and provides specialized services where individuals can develop optimally through their abilities and capacities in a free manner. Educational goals are the focus of counseling services. Effective counseling services will contribute to educational success in schools, as guidance counseling facilitates students by developing their interests and potential. Education is

considered excellent if it has structured and clear management. The management of guidance and counseling consists of organizing and administrating activities. Guidance and counseling have an ideal and structured concept and role. A school guidance and counselling program will not be properly arranged, implemented, or achieved unless it is managed within a high-quality system, including in terms of organizing, directing, and controlling the available resources.

Schools have the responsibility to develop the intellectual aspects of children. The 1945 Constitution sets goals for the national education system in Chapter 11, Article 4: "National education aims to advance the intellectual life of the nation and develop the whole Indonesian human being, namely a person who is devout and righteous towards God Almighty and possesses noble character, knowledge and skills, physical and mental health, a strong and independent personality, and a sense of social and national responsibility." It is the schools' job to make these goals a reality. Guidance and counseling services are provided to individuals to help them reach optimal levels of development and happiness through a process of understanding, accepting, and self-adjusting to their environment.

The goal of providing guidance and counseling services to individuals, particularly in educational programs, is to enable them to plan their study completion activities, career development, and future life. Guidance and counseling also aim to develop the full potential of an individual so that they can adjust to the educational environment, society, or the workplace [3].

Considering the advancing developments in education, the role of counselors and guidance services plays a significant part in promoting students' learning activities related to their personality, talents, interests, motivation, and academic achievements [4]. The role of a counselor in schools is not only to assist students who face issues within the school but also to help those with problems at home or within the community. The presence of a counselor in a school helps address issues experienced by students, including low academic performance. Guidance and counseling services are in line with the goals outlined in the national education system, where education is a conscious effort to develop behavior and potential, such as learning interests, talents, and competencies.

2 Research Methodology

This research uses descriptive qualitative research methods. The goal of descriptive qualitative research is to offer a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. The literature study approach is carried out by collecting, analyzing, and interpreting secondary data from various trusted sources, such as scientific journals, books, research reports, and articles relevant to the topic. This process involves a critical review of theories and previous research findings to identify patterns, trends, and gaps in the literature. This method expects research to provide a comprehensive and in-depth understanding of the discussed topics, based on empirical evidence and existing theories.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Emotional Intelligence

Intelligence is the ability to adapt to new situations using thinking tools. In another definition proposed by Howard Gardner, as cited by Agus Efendi, intelligence is the ability to solve problems or create something valuable for a particular culture. According to David Wechsler, as quoted by Sarlito W. Sarwono in his book **Psychology of Adolescence**, intelligence is defined as the total ability of an individual to think and act purposefully, as well as to manage and control their environment effectively. In another definition provided by Edouard Claparede, a French psychology expert as cited by Sarlito W. Sarwono in his book **Introduction to General Psychology**, intelligence is the mental adjustment to new situations or conditions.

Intelligence is the most important psychological factor in the learning process for students because it determines the quality of their learning. The higher the level of intelligence an individual has, the greater their success in learning. On the other hand, the lower the level of intelligence, the more difficult it becomes for the individual to achieve learning success [5].

Emotion is essentially a drive to act. Various emotions push individuals to respond or behave toward the stimuli present. In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle philosophically discusses virtue, character, and living a good life, with the challenge being mastering our emotional lives with intelligence. Passions, when properly trained, can have wisdom; they guide our thoughts, values, and survival. However, passions can easily become uncontrollable, and this often happens. According to Aristotle, the issue lies not in emotionality per se, but rather in the harmony between emotions and their expression [6] to adopt characteristic styles in handling and managing their emotions: self-awareness, getting lost in the problem, and resignation. Given this, it is crucial for each individual to possess emotional intelligence to enhance life's meaning and prevent its wastage. Based on the explanation, it can be concluded that emotion is a feeling (affect) that drives an individual to respond or behave toward stimuli, whether they originate from within or outside themselves.

The environment greatly influences emotional intelligence, which is not static and can evolve over time. Therefore, the role of the environment, especially parents during childhood, plays a crucial part in the development of emotional intelligence. Good emotional intelligence can help an individual in socializing, making wise decisions, and coping with difficult situations. Some people are naturally endowed with excellent emotional intelligence, while others may need to make an effort to train and improve their emotional intelligence. We can assess an individual's emotional intelligence using these five factors. People with high emotional intelligence exhibit the characteristics listed below.

People with high emotional intelligence are highly aware of their own feelings, including negative emotions such as anger, anxiety, sadness, or fear. This self-awareness allows them to recognize and understand their emotions, enabling them to manage them effectively. As a result, they tend to have higher self-confidence.

Additionally, individuals with high emotional intelligence possess excellent self-regulation, meaning they are rarely impulsive and tend to think before acting. This ability helps them control their emotions, both in themselves and in response to others, and they can effectively suppress negative feelings when necessary.

Furthermore, emotionally intelligent individuals are also skilled at understanding others' emotions. With a high level of empathy, they can adjust to and connect with the feelings of those around them, facilitating effective communication and fostering strong relationships in both their personal and professional lives. Their social skills allow them to build and maintain positive relationships, making them highly adept at socializing. Studies have shown that emotional intelligence can improve with age, as life experiences often help older adults develop stronger emotional awareness [7]. As a result, those with high emotional intelligence tend to lead more fulfilling and happier lives.

Differences in emotions between men and women have been widely studied, with research showing that girls tend to develop language skills earlier than boys, which helps them express their emotions more effectively. Girls are generally more adept than boys at using words to explore and articulate their emotions, often replacing physical reactions, such as fighting, with verbal communication. Hundreds of studies have found that, on average, women tend to be more empathetic than men, at least in terms of their ability to read others' emotions. This includes interpreting unspoken feelings through facial expressions, tone of voice, and other nonverbal cues [8].

Childhood forms many, if not most, of the easily triggered emotional responses in marriage. Close relationships, often modeled by parents, initially teach these responses, which then carry into marriage in a fully developed form. This is the process by which an individual acquires specific emotional habits. Education, both at home and in school, provides valuable benefits for children. At school, children receive education in a structured, systematic, and planned manner. At home, children receive informal education, either through their parents or through other media such as television or books. However, both contribute to equipping and shaping children to grow in a balanced way, not only in understanding and processing various types of knowledge but also in expressing their emotions and feelings [9].

There are teacher's behaviors that are not based on emotional intelligence and are counterproductive to the quality of service in schools. Some of these behaviors include not paying attention to learning achievements in the classroom, failing to counsel lazy students, allowing students who do not complete assignments to do so, frequently getting angry, poorly managing the classroom, and not evaluating the learning process. Teachers who recognize the importance of emotional intelligence and apply it in their daily lives should minimize these indifferent attitudes and behaviors. Teachers can build better relationships with students by recognizing themselves, being optimistic, managing their own emotions, and understanding others' emotions. Additionally, empathy will help create a positive emotional connection [10]. As leaders in the classroom, teachers also need to control their emotions to create a conducive learning environment that supports students' development.

3.2 Counselling

An expert provides guidance to an individual, but comprehending this concept is not as straightforward as it may appear. The formal concept of guidance has been developed since the early 20th century, initiated by Frank Parsons in 1908. Since then, enthusiasts and experts have developed various definitions of guidance, evolving alongside the growth of guidance services as a distinct field. The definitions proposed by various experts complement each other. Experts view guidance as a form of education and development that prioritizes the learning process. This definition highlights guidance as a form of education and self-development, with the desired goals achieved through the learning process.

Following the above definition, it is clear that guidance is when an expert helps one or more people understand themselves, connect what they know about themselves to their environment, and make choices, decisions, and plans that fit their self-concept and the needs of their environment based on the norms that are common in their community.

Taking into account different experts' definitions of guidance, we can say that it is "the process of giving continuous and systematic help to an individual by a trained expert, with the goal of helping the individual understand themselves and their environment, as well as guide and adjust themselves to the environment to best develop their potential for personal well-being and societal welfare."

True counselling is not oriented toward external phenomena but to the root issues behind the phenomena that are the client's main complaints. Only counsellors with psychological training understand this reality. Theological knowledge alone is not enough for counselling services, and counselling is not a sermon.

Based on the above explanation, counselling can be understood as an effort to provide a solution to help others resolve the problems they face and lead them to the right path.

4 Conclusion

The research's findings allow for the drawing of several conclusions. Students who aim to achieve better academic performance and address developmental issues should possess emotional intelligence as an important factor. Emotional skills are not acquired suddenly; they require a process of learning, and the environment plays a significant role in shaping this emotional intelligence. Teaching children the basic skills of emotional intelligence will yield positive outcomes. Emotionally intelligent children will be more understanding, accepting of their emotions, and better equipped to solve their own problems. As a result, during their adolescent years, they are more likely to succeed in school, build positive relationships with peers, and be protected from risks such as substance abuse, delinquency, violence, and unsafe sexual behaviour.

Guidance and counselling services are intended for all counselees. This principle means that counselling is provided to all individuals, whether they have problems or not, regardless of gender, age, or background. In this context, the approach used in counselling is more preventive and developmental than curative. Group techniques are prioritized over individual sessions.

Guidance has several important functions that support an individual's development. The first function is understanding, where guidance helps the counsellor understand themselves and their environment, such as education, work, and existing social norms. With this understanding, the counselee is expected to develop their potential optimally and adjust to the environment in a constructive manner. The preventive function relates to the counsellor's efforts to anticipate and prevent potential problems, providing guidance on how to avoid harmful behaviours such as substance abuse or promiscuity. The developmental function focuses on creating a conducive environment for the counselee's growth, encouraging them to develop their best potential. The remedial function focuses on providing assistance to counselees who are facing problems in personal, social, learning, or career aspects through counselling and remedial teaching. The guidance and counselling function helps the counselee choose extracurricular activities, majors, or careers that match their interests and talents, in collaboration with other educators to support these decisions. The adaptation function involves adjusting educational programs to meet the counselee's needs, interests, and abilities, helping them better adapt to the educational environment. The adjustment function helps the counsellor align themselves with both their internal and external environments in a dynamic and constructive way. The improvement function aims to help the counsellor correct errors in thinking, feeling, and acting. The facilitation function provides ease for the counselee to achieve optimal, balanced, and harmonious development in various aspects of life. Lastly, the maintenance function aims to help the counselee maintain the conducive situation they have created within themselves, preserving their well-being and development. With these various functions, guidance provides comprehensive support to help individuals develop optimally.

Acknowledgments. The author expresses sincere gratitude to STT Diakones Balige for providing academic and institutional support in conducting this research. The author extends special appreciation to colleagues and mentors for their insightful discussions and constructive feedback, which significantly contributed to improving the quality of this study. The author also acknowledges the valuable references and scholarly works that have shaped the foundation of this research.

Disclosure of Interests. The authors have no competing interests to declare that are relevant to the content of this article.

References

1. Agus Efendi.: *Revolusi Kecerdasan Abad 21*. Alfabeta, Bandung (2005)
2. Schneiders, Alexander A.: *Personal Adjustment and Mental Health*. Holt, Reinhart dan Winstons, New York (1964)
3. Dahlan, M. D.: *Model-model Mengajar*. Diponegoro, Bandung (1984)
4. Ahmad Susanto.: *Bimbingan dan konseling disekolah konsep, teori dan aplikasinya*, Cet 1, Prenadanedia grup (2018)
5. Doubtfire, Dianne.: *Teknik Bergaul Yang Efektif*. Bina Rupa Aksara, Jakarta (1993)

6. Gardner, Howard.: Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice. Basic Book, New York (1993)
7. Goleman, Daniel.: Kecerdasan Emosional: Mengapa EI lebih penting dari IQ. Gramedia Pustaka Utama, Jakarta (2006)
8. Mustaqim.: Psikologi Pendidikan. Pustaka Belajar, Yogyakarta (2001)
9. Panitia Istilah Paedagogik DEPDIKBUD. Kamus Paedagogik. PT. Rajawali, Jakarta (1989)
10. Campbell, Linda, et al.: Multiple Intelligences: Metode Terbaru Melesatkan Kecerdasan. Inisiasi Press, Depok (2002)

Open Access This chapter is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits any noncommercial use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this chapter are included in the chapter's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the chapter's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

