

Empathy and Respect: Building Counselor-Counselee Relationships Through Students' Eyes

Alya Adinda Dewi Chotifa, Muwakhidah*, Azzahra Febriana Kurnia Santoso, Maria Sri Vandriyani, Ofilia Wahyu Ridho Pratama, Siti Auliya Putri Allifah

Universitas PGRI Adi Buana Surabaya, Dukuh Menanggal XII St., Surabaya, Jawa Timur, 60234, Indonesia

*Corresponding author, email: muwakhidah@unipasby.ac.id

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Abstract

Empathy and respect are important skills that counselors must have. However, there is not much research that reveals the level of both in a counselor. The aim of this research is to determine the profile of empathy and respect used by counselors in building relationships between counselors and counselees. The method used is quantitative through descriptive design and a survey approach with a subject of 99 students and using an empathy and respect questionnaire according to Carkhuff's theoretical construct. This research uses data analysis techniques, namely descriptive statistics. The research results show the counselor's level of empathy based on the students' perspective with the percentage results in the very high category with a score of 52%. Meanwhile, respect is in the very high category with a score of 48%. Thus, it can be concluded that the level of empathy and respect for counselors is in the very high category.

1. Introduction

Counseling is an interaction between the counselor and the counselee that exists to facilitate changes in the counselee's behavior to resolve the problems experienced by the counselee. The counselee expresses the problems they are experiencing and the counselor practices counseling techniques to help the problems experienced by the counselee (Handari, 2016). The counselor and counselee relationship is the main foundation in an effective counseling process. The success of a counseling service process is greatly influenced by the quality of the relationship between the counselor and the counselee. The good or bad quality of a counseling relationship can never be separated from the counselor's personality. Building a counseling relationship is very important and decisive in carrying out the counseling process.

The importance of the quality of the counselor's relationship with the counselee is demonstrated through the counselor's personal abilities, one of which is empathy and respect. Carkhuff (1969) Empathy can be said that if someone does not have empathy within themselves, then no helping behavior will occur (Carkhuff in Bastomi, 2020). Empathy is an ability that includes the desire to help, experiencing emotions that are similar to other people's emotions, knowing what other people feel and think (Fitrian & Saputro, 2023). Understanding empathy from the therapeutic relationship to involve clients from various backgrounds (Cralk in Zakki et al., 2023). Respect is giving appreciation to the counselee, the counselee is respected as a human being who has self-respect and has potential. Counselees are respected as they are.

Apart from that, through previous studies it was explained about counselor empathy, including (1) research results (Marcu, 2020) in Romania revealed that active-empathetic listening skills had an impact on counseling practices in making career decisions or regarding prosocial behavior. (2) Ivey and Daniels' research results showed that subjects with high scores on empathy were shown to have an increase in FMRI density of insula gray matter which is related to effective empathy. Gray matter density increases in the MCC and DMPFC which is related to cognitive empathy (Fan et al., 2011). (3) research results (Tavabi et al., 2023) in California USA reveal that counselors' empathetic listening skills in counseling communication are a deep reflection in treating problem behavior. (4) research results (Amalia, 2019) in Riau Indonesia reveal that empathy is the ability to understand what other people feel, think, and is the basis for the counselor's personality in developing his personality so that he is able to communicate with clients and understand client problems. (5) the results of research entitled "Profile empathy quality and prosocial intention of counselor candidates" can be concluded that students' tendency to help others is not influenced by the quality of empathy. It is hoped that this research can provide input for study programs to evaluate models so that changes occur not only in terms of cognitive, but also skills and attitudes. Apart from that, it can explore

factors that form prosocial intentions, and factors that influence the quality of empathy for prospective counselors with the wider population (Muwakhidah & Hidayah, 2020).

Empathy is one of the personalities that counselors need to have. This personality allows the counselor to understand the emotions that occur in the client. It is not surprising that empathy is used as the basis of a counselor's personality (Amalia, 2019). That empathy in counseling is basically a requirement for providing effective counseling. Empathy is described as the counselor's ability to feel the client's feelings. Empathy frames the counselor to enter the client's point of view (Yunita, 2021). In addition, by developing respect skills, a counselor not only understands students but can also respect students as individuals who want to be respected as unique figures. Thus, basically, counseling meetings occur in interpersonal communication, namely counselor and counselee. In this communication, the counselee expresses his thoughts and feelings both verbally and non-verbally, while the counselor provides responses verbally and non-verbally as well. The main thing that needs to be developed in the counselor's personal competence is how to cultivate the character of empathy and respect, so that it can support the counseling process.

The positive impact of respect supported by empathy will make the counseling relationship frank, so that it can speed up the counseling process without the client feeling offended. Counselors who have the qualities of empathy and respect can feel the thoughts and feelings of other people, feel mutual respect and have a sense of togetherness with the counselee.

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that empathy and respect play an important role in the counseling process. However, so far there has not been much research that reveals what the counselor's level of empathy and respect is like, because of this we will carry out research. So, through this research, it will be used to see the counselor's level of empathy and respect in the counseling process.

2. Method

The method used is quantitative with a descriptive design and survey approach. Survey research to draw a generalized picture of the situation at the time the research was carried out. The research population is 760 students at MAN Bangkalan for the 2023/2024 academic year. The subjects used were 99 students who were obtained using a sampling technique, namely random sampling. The research instrument uses an empathy and respect questionnaire based on Carkhuff's theoretical construct where empathy consists of 4 indicators and respect consists of 3 indicators. The data analysis technique in this research uses descriptive statistics.

3. Results and Discussion

Data analysis was carried out after respondents filled out the Google form, namely by using a percentage formula. Determining the sample size can be done by statistical calculations using the Slovin Formula. To determine the sample size from a known population of 760 students, use the Slovin formula (Susanto & Realize, 2022). The Solvin formula used is as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+Ne^2} \tag{1}$$

Information:

N = Sample Size

N = Population Size

e = Allowance for inaccuracies due to tolerable sampling errors, then squared

The measurement instrument in this research is accompanied by 3 alternative answer choices. Alternative answers used for favorable items are: Never (TP) with an answer score of 1, Rarely (J) with an answer score of 2, Often (S) with an answer score of 5. On the other hand, for non-favorable items, namely. Never (TP) with an answer score of 5, Rarely (J) with an answer score of 2, Often (S) with an answer score of 1. Determine the maximum score and minimum score by paying attention to the alternative answer scores. The maximum score is 140, obtained if all 28 items are filled with alternative answers with a score of 5. The calculation of the maximum score is $5 \times 28 = 140$. On the other hand, if all items are filled with answers with a score of 1, then the total score is the minimum score, namely $1 \times 28 = 28$.

To determine the quality of the calculation results in the questionnaire, benchmark categories are used with the following percentages (Putri & Wicaksono, 2022):

Table 1. Classification of Score Categories

No	Score	Category
1	86-100%	Very High
2	76-85%	High
3	60-75%	Quite High
4	55-59%	Low

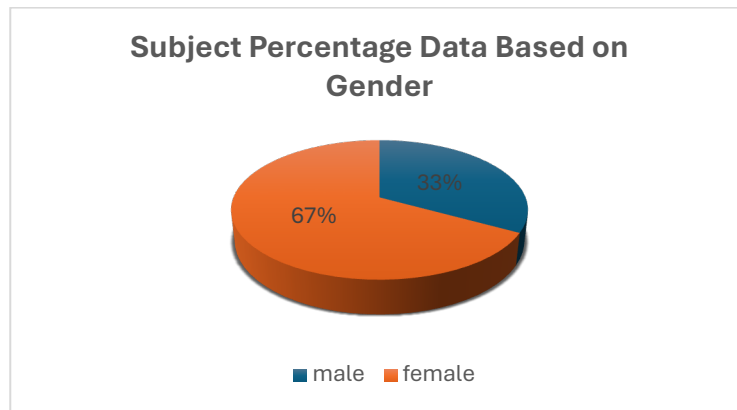


Figure 1. Subject Percentage Data Based on Gender

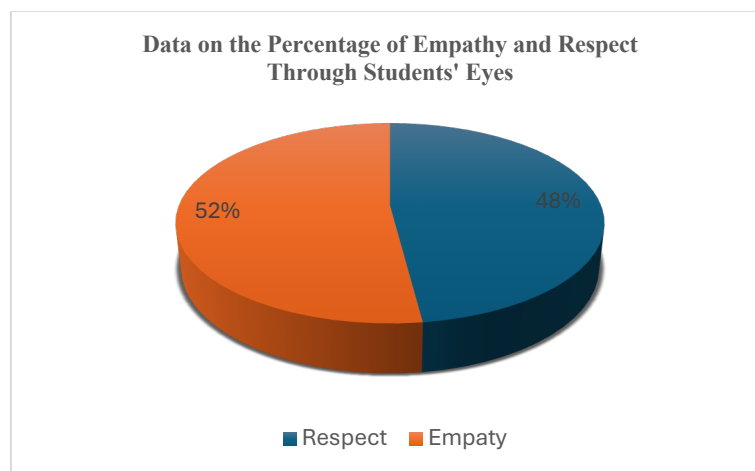


Figure 2. Data on the Percentage of Empathy and Respect through Students' Eyes

Based on the results of the research above in figure 1 of the circle diagram, the number of female subjects is greater than that of men with a female percentage of 67% compared to a male percentage of 33%. So, there are more female subjects than male, because when filling out the questionnaire most women fill out the majority. In addition, male students tend to assess the counselor's empathy, such as the full attention given by the counselor, understanding students' emotions, and being able to feel the feelings experienced by students. Assessing the counselor's respect, such as the counselor helping students to reach their potential, the counselor being friendly, and the counselor accepting students as they are.

Female students tend to assess counselor empathy such as paying attention to students' body language, maintaining eye contact, paying attention to students' behavior, being able to respond to students in the right way, being able to build trust with students, and so on. Assessing counselor respect such as responding to students' words sincerely, respecting students' feelings, respecting decisions taken by students', upholding human values, and so on. It turns out that sex or gender does not influence students in assessing the counselor's empathy and respect.

The results of the analysis of empathy and respect in terms of generation are presented in figure 2, a circle diagram. The level of counselor empathy at MAN Bangkalan for class X students class of 2023 is 52% in the very low category. With this condition, counselors need to increase their empathetic attitude. The variable in this research is empathy. Where Carkhuff believes that empathy is the ability to recognize, understand, feel and communicate understanding to others with verbal expressions and behavior (Juliantika, 2017). This is considered important considering that empathy here is not just about understanding the client's feelings, but truly being immersed in the "counselee's world" and feeling what he feels without any judgment (Satyajati, 2019). To achieve this, counselors need to train themselves to master effective empathy techniques. Empathy training aims to enable the counselor to enter the client's deepest world through expressions that touch the client's feelings. By displaying an attitude, the counselor creates a condition that makes the client feel more heard, appreciated and feels what the client is experiencing at that time.

Meanwhile, the level of respect for counselors at MAN Bangkalan for class X students class of 2023 is 48% in the very low category. This shows the low level of respect counselors have for the quality of counseling services at MAN Bangkalan. This reflects respect and positive appreciation for the counselee's potential as the counselor's center of attention. Students are respected as a person as they want to be respected. The attitude of a counselor is not to judge, not judge, not criticize or ridicule. Respect is expressed by listening to the client and understanding him. Try to appreciate or accept what is said, do not immediately refute it by saying it is wrong or unimportant, and the like (Lase & Halawa, 2024). Trying to respect the ideas or opinions that are conveyed to us, not to be criticized or belittled, but to get a good response and be heard (Silvianetri, 2022). On the one hand, respect increases the counselor's understanding of the client. However, the percentage figures above also show that counselor respect needs to be increased further during the counseling process.

It is something that is very concerning if counselors or guidance and counseling teachers have the characteristics that complained about when providing counseling. It can be said that if this happens in counseling communication, apart from not achieving the expected counseling service results, namely problem solving, it will increase the counselee's problems. The attitudes and characteristics complained of are inappropriate and inappropriate. Therefore, counselors are required to have good skills in the counseling process (Heled & Davidovitch, 2021). Counselors are expected to listen attentively to the message conveyed by their counselee, so that they can easily understand the message, obtain the right understanding, be able to transmit a message and accept whatever the interlocutor or counselee will convey (Hartati et al., 2023).

From the research results, it can be concluded that counselor empathy and respect have a positive impact on the relationship between counselor and counselee. Students' who feel empathy and respect from counselors tend to be more open, honest in expressing their problems, more active in the counseling process, and feel more comfortable and safer in interactions with counselors. Apart from that, gender does not influence students' judgments in assessing the counselor's empathy and respect.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it shows that the level of empathy of counselors is in the very high category percentage with a score of 52%. While respect is in the very high category with a score of 48%. Thus, it can be concluded that the level of empathy and respect of counselors is in the very high category.

Author Contributions

All authors have equal contributions to the paper. All the authors have read and approved the final manuscript.

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