

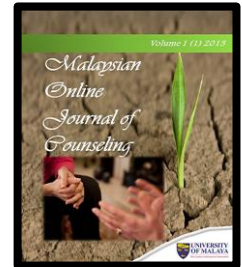
CLIENTS' PERCEPTION OF COUNSELING VARIABLES IN RELATION TO COUNSELING OUTCOMES

Sanisah Bahari¹, Mohamad Fauzi Saad² & Amla Salleh³

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to examine clients' perceptions of the effect of selected counseling variables on counseling outcomes: counselors' attractiveness, skills, and ethical practices. The Counselor Rating Form-Short Version (CRF-S) and the Integrated Clients' Behavioral Changes Scale were used to collect data from 65 clients. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential analyses. Mean score, standard deviation and percentage were calculated to examine the counseling outcomes, while t-test, ANOVA, and correlation were calculated to test the hypothesis. Counselor's attractiveness, skills, and ethical practice were all found to correlate positively with the counseling outcomes. The implications of the study for counseling practices and future research are also discussed.

Keywords: counselor's attractiveness, ethical practice, counseling outcomes.



[1]
Ampang Jaya Secondary
School, Malaysia

[2]
Psychological Management
Division,
Public Service Department
of Malaysia

[3]
Faculty of Education,
The National University
of Malaysia,
Malaysia

Corresponding Author:
The National University of
Malaysia
s_aml@yahoo.com

INTRODUCTION

Client perceptions of their counselors during counseling sessions have been found to influence client behavioral change, or at least the client's positive attitude toward the counseling session (Kendall & Norton-Ford, 1982; Kivlighan, 2008; Kwon, & Jo, 2012; Seo, 2011). The findings of the following research indicate that counselors need to be prepared to present themselves as people who strive hard, constantly change, are willing to take risks, self-evaluating, and problem-solvers, as well as one who experiences all typical human emotions, like grief, is competent yet imperfect, mature, stable, faces all difficulties with perseverance, and continuously learns and progresses (Corey, 2005; Gilliland et al., 1984; Noriah, 2005).

MATERIAL OF STUDY

Studies on counselors' effectiveness as perceived by clients started when Strong (1968; 1988) introduced a model, which he adapted from the communication model, explaining how the client's perception of the counselor influences client behavior in counseling sessions. He proposed three counselor characteristics, namely attractiveness, expertness and trustworthiness, as variables related to counselor effectiveness. Strong further explained attractiveness as displaying compatibility with the client, by reassuring the client that the counselor will be likeable. Expertness is related to evidence of advanced training and reputation, as these are evident to clients. This can also be shown through the counselors presenting themselves in a sensible and self-assured manner. Finally, trustworthiness involves the counselor's standing for truthfulness and kindness, with a demonstration of openness and genuineness, and being perceived as having no interest in personal gain. In his theory Strong also included the characteristics of the clients and the characteristics of the communications as factors influencing the counseling outcomes.

Strong's proposed model has generated several studies on counselor characteristics and their influence on clients' behavioral changes or counseling outcomes, looked at in various settings and from various perspectives. In 1975, LaCrosse and Barak (in Corrigan & Schmidt, 1983) developed a 36-item measurement to assess the three counselor characteristics proposed by Strong, and subsequently used by many researchers in their studies to examine perceived counselor effectiveness (Lin, 2001; Nerison & Claiborn, 1990; Stein, 1981).

The three characteristics of the counselor put forward by Strong have been further examined in terms of what constitutes each characteristic. For example, in Stein's (1981) study, the counselor's verbal communication style was rated higher for expertness if it had no American southern accent, as compared to counselors with such an accent. Nerison and Claiborn (1990) confirmed Stein's finding regarding verbal communication, with the additional information that the counselors' non-verbal cues had greater influence than their verbal behaviors.

A counselor's attractiveness can be determined by his or her emotional intelligence (Noriah, 2005) which comprises two competencies: personal and social competence. These two competencies encompass five domains: self-awareness, self-regulation, self-motivation, empathy and social skills (Noriah, 2005; Rorlinda et al., 2010). Personal competence determines how counselors handle themselves. This ability also enables counselors to self-reflect by looking within themselves (Nidzar & Azniza, 2010). Having empathy enables the counselor to understand the

clients by identifying with their feelings, by listening actively to their expression of feelings, in addition to considering their behavior and emotions (Gilliland et al., 1984). A study by Jang (2009) reported that the empathy of Korean counselors was a moderator of the wellness of their relationships with their clients and of the effectiveness of the counseling as perceived by the client, in terms of having a positive influence on session outcomes. While Nerison et al. (1990) found that physical appearance was perceived by the clients as an element of attractiveness although it correlated positively with the session effectiveness.

A counselor's perceived self efficacy was also found to draw the client closer to the counselor in a counseling session. A counselor with high self efficacy is able to discern how a client feels, thinks, acts and is motivated, as he therefore possesses traits that may influence a client's decisions, and he is also able to cope with the experience of failure (Amelia, 2009; Sheu, Rigali-Oiler, & Lent, 2012). In addition, the counselor's own holistic wellbeing has been found to empower the counselor to give more effective counseling sessions. Counselors who emphasize their own overall health, including the emotional, social, intellectual, career, spiritual and physical dimensions, have the capacity to prevent their own illness by using various approaches and treatments. This can prove to be an effective intervention in restoring clients' own wellbeing when they are suffering from psychosomatic disorders, depression, obesity, stress and passivity (Siang, 2010).

Moving on from the aspect of attractiveness, a counselor's skills or expertness, as described by Strong, are also important dimensions and are reflected in their advanced training. This will include the counselor's mastery of the theories pertinent to the counseling session (Zakaria, 2010). The counselor's knowledge of theory is closely related to his or her level of education and experience in providing counseling services. Counselors of a higher education level have a better grasp of the various theories and are able to apply them more effectively. However, the counselor's chosen approach was found to have different impacts on clients' perceptions of counselor effectiveness. Lin (2001) found that those counselors using Relationship-Centered Counseling were perceived to be more effective than those using Client-Centered and Problem-Solving counseling approaches among Korean female clients. Seo (2011) discovered that the counselor's choice of emphasis between the client's ego-focused emotions and the client's other-focused emotions showed a different impact on client-perceived counselor effectiveness depending on clients' characteristics and their cultural background. Quite apart from the advanced skills and techniques, the use of basic counseling skills not only allows smooth session progress but is also applicable in various counseling situations (Shahbani, 2005).

A counselor's ethical practices are also associated with the effectiveness of the counseling session for a client. Counselors who practice ethical and professional standards are able to predict a client's response, and consequently increase the client's trust and understanding of the counseling process; clients will be more enthusiastic about offering additional information, thereby contributing towards the prevention of and rehabilitation from their problems (Ivey et al., 2010). This practice also creates awareness of personal needs, boundaries of unresolved issues, and potential personal conflicts and defenses. Nerison et al. (1990) discovered that trustworthiness was positively related to counseling session impact, to the quality of the therapeutic session, and to clients' feelings about the session. The issue of confidentiality is an important matter in building an ethical practice, because it is needed to build trust and a productive client-therapist relationship. Hence, it is imperative for the counselor to discuss this issue with a client at the start of the

counseling sessions (Corey, 2005). Understanding, awareness and confidentiality are said to increase clients' confidence towards the counseling process, helping them to see it as an honest process (Mohamad, Syed Najmuddin. & Rosli, 2012).

With regard to the counselor's experience, although Azlinda (2007) found that this variable had no influence on counselor competence in the counseling session, other studies have shown that the counselor's experience was related to counseling outcomes: A study by Kwon and Jo (2012) demonstrated that the counselor's experience level, empathic accuracy, and counseling outcomes were all positively correlated. Counselor experience level was found to affect counseling outcomes through the effects of empathic accuracy. Both routes, from counselor experience level to empathic accuracy, and from empathic accuracy to counseling outcome, were significant. Even among counselor trainees, Kivlighan (2008) found that when trainees' intended structure was similar to that of the experienced counselors, their clients rated their counseling sessions as going more smoothly and exploring more deeply. The mixed findings perhaps require further inquiry.

The literature has indicated strong support for the influence of interpersonal skills on counselor effectiveness in counseling sessions. Nonetheless, in Malaysia, studies on clients' perceptions of their counselors, or of the counseling process, have been very limited, not only in number but also in areas of focus (Ramlan, 2010). Most of the previous studies relied on qualitative methods based solely on counselors' reports or interviews with counselors (Noriah, 2006; Rorlinda, 2010; Siang, 2012; Zakaria, 2010). To the best of our knowledge, Ramlan's study (2010) is the only study on the counseling process conducted in a field setting that focuses on counselor-client online communication. Although his descriptive field study obtained positive results, indicating that e-counseling is effective, the study was on online counseling, which offered a different mode of communication, and in which counselors play a different kind of role. Hence, it did not enhance knowledge regarding counselors' effectiveness in face-to-face counseling. The present study hopes to fill the gap in understanding regarding the effectiveness of face-to-face counseling within the Malaysian context.

This study is conducted based on the interpersonal influence model put forward by Strong (1968). This psychological model recognizes the concept of client transformation through support services. According to Strong, the interpersonal influence model involves two stages; namely the client's perceptions and the role of the counselors in maximizing their influence on client transformation. Each transformation clients undergo in relation to the problem is very closely related to the encouragement they receive from the counselor-client interaction. This encouragement depends on the attractiveness, appearance, skills, expertise, trust, and so on of the counselor. The client's perception of the counselor's attributes is an important aspect of the interpersonal influence theory. The counselor's character expressed during the communication process, style of presentation and interaction process will contribute more as healing factors to the client than the resources present within the clients themselves.

Overall, based on relevant prior research, many aspects that affect client involvement in counseling sessions have been explored, including the emotional intelligence, self-efficacy and holistic wellbeing of the counselor. In addition, the counselors' theoretical application skills, counseling skills and ethical practices have been examined. In most cases studies on counseling practice in Malaysia were mostly examined through counselors' lenses. These aspects all need to be emphasized as they have an impact on the positive changes in client behavior and in achieving

session goals. However, the extent of the relationship between the attractiveness, skills and ethical practices of a counselor and the effect they have on the counseling session from the client's perspective have yet to be identified. Therefore, this study will investigate the effects of the counseling session and identify the relationship between the counselor's attractiveness, skills and ethical practices and the effects of the counseling session on the client. In addition, this study will include the counselor demographic aspect of experience as it may affect the client after the counseling session.

RESEARCH AIM

The purpose of this study is to understand the qualities of counselor attractiveness, skills and ethical practices. This study focuses on observing their effects on the counseling session as experienced by the client, and also on identifying the relationship between the counselor's attractiveness, skills and ethical practices, and their effects on client counseling. In addition, this study also examines the counselor's experience as it may affect the client after the counseling session. We hypothesize that, as indicated in the literature, there is a significant relationship between counselors' attractiveness, their skills, ethical practices and experience, and counseling effectiveness as perceived by the client.

METHODS

Research Design

This study uses a survey design and a quantitative approach to investigate the relationship between counselors' attractiveness, skills and ethical practices and the effects of the counseling session on the client. In addition, the demographic aspects of counselor gender and service experience are surveyed in this study.

Research Population and Sample Selection

The research population consists of clients who sought counseling services in Putrajaya and Kuala Lumpur. Sixty-five clients were chosen as study participants through simple random selection. These clients came from a variety of backgrounds in terms of gender, age, work experience, and race.

Research Instrument

The research instrument used in the study is a questionnaire consisting of three sections, Sections A, B and C. Section A elicits clients' demographic information. Section B measures the counselor's attractiveness, skills and ethical practices, while Section C assesses the effects of the counseling session on the client. Section B factors are measured using the new version (Corrigan & Schmidt, 1983) of Barak and LaCrosse's (1975) Counselor Rating Form-Short Version (CRF-S). Section C, measuring counseling effectiveness, uses six items.

The CRF-S, is a 12-item scale, measuring a counselor's level of attractiveness, expertness, and trustworthiness. Each dimension is assessed by four items. For attractiveness clients are asked to evaluate their counselor's friendliness, likeability, sociability and warmth. The four items measuring expertness require clients to rate the counselor's expertness based on experience, expertise, skills and preparedness. The third dimension, trustworthiness, is rated against items such as honesty, trustworthy, reliability and sincerity. Ratings are assigned using a seven-point Likert type scale (1 = not very, 7 = very), thus producing possible scores from 12 to 84. The CRF-S internal consistency reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha) for the expertness dimension is .90, for the trustworthiness dimension is .84, and for the attractiveness dimension is .92 (in Lin, 2001). The instrument validity as determined through factor analysis found well-defined loadings among the three scales (Corrigan & Schmidt, 1983; Ponterotto & Furlong, 1985).

Counseling outcomes were measured by six items evaluating the influence of the counseling session on the clients' growth in term of their understanding of their own and others' behaviors, as well as their environment. The alpha reliability index for both the CRF-S and the outcomes scale for the present study is in the range of .87 to .91 for each dimension of both scales.

RESULTS

Table 1 shows that 87.7 % or 57 respondents agreed that the counseling session made them think more clearly, 81.6 %, or 53 respondents said that the counseling helped them to behave better and to understand their feelings, while 78.4 %, or 51 respondents agreed that counseling helped them to understand others. Some 75.4% or 49 respondents agreed with the statement that the counseling session helped them understand the situation and environment they were in, and 81.6%, or 53 respondents would recommend counseling sessions to others. The breakdown, based on level of agreement, is shown in the following table (Table I):

Table 1
Effects of Counseling on the Client according to Level of Agreement

Statement	Level of Agreement		
	Low (N / %)	Medium (N / %)	High (N / %)
Help to think better	1 (1.5)	7 (10.7)	57 (87.7)
Help to behave better	1 (1.5)	11 (16.9)	53 (81.6)
Understand own feelings more	1 (1.5)	11 (16.9)	53 (81.6)
Understand others more	1 (1.5)	13 (20.0)	51 (78.4)
Understand situation and environment more	1 (1.5)	15 (23.0)	49 (75.4)
Recommend counseling to others	2 (3.1)	10 (15.3)	53 (81.6)

The mean and standard deviation for each item on the effects of counseling on the client is presented in Table 2. Most of the indicators of the counselors' effectiveness are rated highly (mean > 6).

Table 2
Mean and Standard Deviation for Items on the Effects of Counseling

Statement	Mean	S.D.
Help to think better	6.15	0.93
Help to behave better	6.01	0.97
Understand own feelings more	6.09	1.05
Understand others more	5.90	1.04
Understand situation and environment more	5.95	1.05
Recommend counseling to others	6.10	1.17
Overall Mean	6.03	

Relationship Between Counselors' Attractiveness and Effects of Counseling Sessions

Results from the analysis using the Pearson correlation method show that there is a significant relationship between a counselor's attractiveness and the effects of the counseling session on the client ($r = 0.81, p < .05$). The better the appearance, temperament and personality of the counselor, the higher the client's confidence, resulting in a positive effect on the session outcomes. The results can be seen in Table 3.

Relationship Between Counselors' Skills and Effects of Counseling Sessions

Results from the analysis show that there is a significant relationship between the counselor's skills and the effects of the counseling session on the client ($r = 0.876, p < 0.01$). This means that the higher the skills of a counselor, the higher the positive outcomes for a client from a counseling session. These results are presented in Table 3.

Relationship Between Counselors' Ethical Practices and Effects on Counseling Sessions

There is a significant relationship between these two variables ($r = .792, p < .01$). The better the ethical practices of a counselor, the more encouraging the effects of the counseling session for the client. A summary of the analysis is seen in Table 3.

An analysis of the three variables of counselor attractiveness, skills and ethical practices has shown a significant relationship with the effects of the counseling session on the client. This indicates that if these three variables are emphasized on, it will have a positive effect on the outcomes of the counseling session with the client, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3
Relationship between Counselors' Attractiveness, Skills and Ethical Practices and the Effectiveness of Counseling Sessions

	Attractiveness	Skills	Ethics	Effect on Client
Attractiveness	-	.874**	.904**	.810**
Skills		-	.838**	.876**
Ethics			-	.792**

* $p < .05$

Effects of Counselor's Experience on Clients in Counseling Sessions

One-way ANOVA was performed to determine if the counselor's experience made any difference to the effects of the counseling session. The results show that there are no significant differences in the effect of counseling sessions based on counselor experience ($F(2, 10) = 0.381, p > .05$). This proves that the length of service and counseling experience does not influence the effects of counseling on the client. A summary of this analysis can be seen in Table 4, while the differences in mean and standard deviation values, according to counselor's length of service, are presented in Table 5.

Table 4

One-Way ANOVA on the Effects of Counselors' Experience on the Counseling Sessions

Source of Variance	Df	SS	MS	F
Between Group	2	5.85	2.92	
Within Group	10	76.9	7.69	0.381
Total	12	82.7		

Table 5

Mean and Standard Deviation Values and Counselors' Experience

Length of Service	N	Mean	SD
1 to 3 years	5	37.6	3.28
4 to 10 years	7	38.5	2.37
10 years and above	1	40.0	-

DISCUSSION

The discussion will highlight two main findings. First, the results show all three counselors' effectiveness in terms of their attractiveness, skills, and ethical practices have a positive relationship with the counseling outcomes as perceived by the client, which supports previous studies (Jang, 2009; Kwon & Jo, 2012; Lin, 2001; Nerison & Claiborn, 1990; Seo, 2011; Stein, 1981). Second, the counselor's experience has no relationship with the counseling outcomes, which does not support past research (Kivlighan, 2008; Kwon & Jo, 2012) other than Azlinda (2007).

A significant relationship between the counselor's attractiveness and the effectiveness of the counseling session implies counselors who provide counseling services while demonstrating good personal qualities and appearance, perhaps in terms of emotional intelligence, keep clients interested in continuing counseling. The results of the study support findings from previous researchers such as Noriah (2005), Syarimen et al. (2010), and Nidzar and Azniza (2010), who also found that counselors who master all aspects of emotional intelligence have a positive effect in counseling sessions. Findings from Amelia's (2009) study on self-efficacy and Lee Chee Siang's

(2010) on holistic well-being are also consistent with the findings from this study, whereby both these elements have a positive influence on counseling session effectiveness. Jang (2009) found empathy and personal wellness, consisting of essential self, coping self, and creative self, were related to clients' perceived session smoothness and working alliance.

Results have also indicated the more-skilled counselors in terms of preparedness, skillfulness, and expertness as measured by expertness items of the CRF-S were rated positively by the respondents, and the clients' perception of the counselor's characteristics related significantly to the clients' behavioral change. This finding, which parallels international literature (Kwon & Jo, 2012; Nerison & Claiborn, 1990; Seo, 2011), adds to what is already known about having a positive relationship with expertness. Past studies have discovered a relationship between expertness with session impact and session smoothness, while the present study adds the clients' behavioral change to the list.

Studies by Zakaria, Noriah, and Zuria (2009) perhaps indicate the counselors in the present study have demonstrated they have mastered the theories and have the capacity to apply them well in their counseling sessions. Similarly, Shahbani (2005) and Zuria (2005) also demonstrate that skills in counseling need to be applied in order to guarantee counseling session effectiveness. The mastering of the theories and applying them in the counseling session, as well as other specific skills such as empathy and both verbal and non-verbal communication skills (Nerison & Claiborn, 1990; Stein, 1981), were found to be positively correlated with counseling outcomes.

This study also informs that the higher the ethical practices of the counselor, the more effective the counseling session. Findings of Ivey et al. (2010) as well as Nerison and Claiborn (1990) are consistent with the results of the present study, whereby the client's trust and understanding of the counseling process increases if the counselor is concerned with ethical practices according to professional standards. More focused ethical codes can hinder misappropriation or manipulation that may damage the client's trust for the counselor. Therefore, a responsible counselor will always pay attention to this matter and adhere to the appointed standards to ensure collective well-being.

Although the present findings are not new (Jang, 2009; Lin, 2001; Kwon & Jo, 2012; Nerison & Claiborn, 1990; Seo, 2011; Stein, 1981), studies on Malaysian counselors have so far only focused on the counselors' perception of their work (Rorlinda, 2010; Siang, 2009; Zakaria, 2010; Zakaria, Noriah, & Zuria, 2009). Rorlinda, and Lee Chee Siang reported that their participants (counselors) believed the counselors' knowledge on theories, choice of approaches, and skills demonstrated in counseling sessions impact the counseling outcomes. As data is collected from clients, the present study offers a new dimension to the knowledge body of counseling practices in Malaysia. As indicated in the findings, clients acknowledged their counseling sessions have helped them to grow in their thinking and behaviors and have created a better understanding of themselves and others, as well as their environments. All of them rate the counselors they have seen as attractive, skillful, and ethical, and they attributed these counselor characteristics to their own growth or change. To a limited extent, the finding is comparable to Ramlan's study (2010), although his study examined online counseling. Hence, the comparison would be inappropriate since what contributes to the effectiveness of an online counselor is different from what determines the effectiveness of a face-to-face counselor.

Studies have shown that the counselor's choice of approach, focus, and communication style can result in different levels of perceived counselor effectiveness, in some cases mediated by characteristics of the clients (Choi, Busky, & Johnson, 2010; Lin, 2001; Seo, 2011; Stein, 1981). As we examined neither the counselor theoretical orientation nor the clients' characteristics, the positive counseling outcome in relation to counselor effectiveness in the present study warrants further investigation.

The second major finding to be highlighted is that counselor experiences were found to have no effect on the counseling outcomes. This is based on the findings of the study that showed no significant relationship between counseling experience and the counseling session outcomes. Azlinda's (2007) study, which found gender and counseling experience factors did not influence a counselor's competence, is also in line with this study. Participants in this study, as in Azlinda's study (2007), did not find that counselor experience level impacted the counseling's perceived outcomes, although there was evidence showing that more-experienced counsellors were more-skilled in dealing with important issues by using their in-depth insight, leading to more-positive counselling outcomes (Kivlighan, 2008; Kwon & Jo, 2012). As the participants in this study assessed the counselor's effectiveness based on their reflection of past counselling experiences, in a survey study method, perhaps this could have influenced the participants' perception of the counselors' effectiveness, which was perceived in a more general perspective. Azlinda's study, which has a similar result, also used survey methods, while most of the studies (Jang, 2009; Kwon & Jo, 2012; Lin, 2001; Seo, 2011; Stein, 1981) that examined counselor experience level were conducted using field study methods. Those studies indicated that counselor experience level does have an impact on counseling outcomes. Given these conflicting conclusions, more studies to determine the relationship between counsellor experience level and counselling effectiveness are required.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study show the factors of attractiveness, skills, and ethical practices of the counselor have a positive relationship with the counseling outcomes as perceived by the client, while counselor's experience in counseling is not correlated with the counseling outcomes. The findings imply factors of the counselor's attractiveness, counseling skills, and ethical practices are aspects that need to be considered in the context of counseling benefits to clients. The counselor's ability to balance the external physical aspects with consistently enhancing skills and knowledge of ethical issues in counseling will increase the effectiveness of the counseling services provided.

However, we also note some limitations of the present study. The study employed a quantitative method using a survey questionnaire involving a small sample size; hence, the results obtained are insufficient to provide a comprehensive representation of the aspects under study. Future researchers in the field would thus do well to consider using an appropriate sample size and sample type of both counselors and clients, employing a field study design, and including the variables indicated in the previous discussion in order to gain further insight into this issue. Nevertheless, it is hoped that this study is a starting point from which to identify the indicators determining counseling services effectiveness. Through these indicators, counseling services will

improve when counseling training includes aspects of a counselor's attractiveness in its curriculum adding to the existing focus on skills and ethics.

Still, the study offers two major implications. Theoretically, the present findings imply support for Strong's proposition (1968) that a counselor's characteristics of attractiveness, expertness, and trustworthiness influence counseling outcomes. Second, what Malaysian clients perceived as important in counseling sessions are similar to most of the findings in international literature, implying the counselor's effective characteristics are global characteristics that have implications for cross-cultural counseling.

REFERENCES

- Amelia, M. N. (2009). Survey on counselor trainees' self efficacy among counseling practitioners (Tinjauan Tentang Efikasi Kendiri Kaunseling Kaunselor Pelatih Dalam Pengamal Kaunseling). *Jurnal PERKAMA*, 15, 1-17.
- Amla, S., Rorlinda, Y., & Noriah, I. (2010). Self-efficacy and counseling competency. *The International Journal of Knowledge, Culture & Change Management*, 4.
- Azlinda, A. (2007). *Relationship between guidance teachers' counseling competencies and their demographic factors among guidance teachers in secondary schools in Hulu Langat District*. Unpublished Masters thesis, Univesity of Technology Malaysia, Skudai Johor, Malaysia.
- Choi, K. H., Buskey, W., & Johnson, B. (2010). Evaluation of counseling outcomes at a university counseling center: The impact of clinically significant change on problem resolution and academic functioning. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 57(3), 297-303. doi:10.1037/a0020029
- Corey, G. (2005). *Theory and practice of Counseling & Psychotherapy*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Corrigan, J. D., & Schmidt, L. D. (1983). Development and validation of revisions in the Counselor Rating Form. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 30(1), 64-75. doi:10.1037/0022-0167.30.1.64
- Counseling Act and Regulations 1998. (2011). Petaling Jaya: International Law Book Services.
- Gilliland, B. E., James, R. K., Gayles, T. R., James, T. B. (1984). *Theories and strategies in counseling and psychotherapy*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Ivey, A. E., Ivey, M. B., & Zalaquett, C. P. (2010). *Intentional interviewing & counseling facilitating client development in a multicultural society* (7th ed.). Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

- Jang, Y. J. (2009). *The influence of Korean counselors' personal wellness on client-perceived counseling effectiveness: the moderating effects of empathy*. PhD thesis, University of Iowa. Retrieved from <http://ir.uiowa.edu/etd/38>
- Kaelber, K. A. Y., & Schwartz (2014). Empathy and Emotional Intelligence Among Eastern and Western Counsellor Trainees: A Preliminary Study. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 36, 274-286. doi:10.1007/s1004-013-9206-8
- Kendall, P. C., & Norton-Ford, J. D. (1982). *Clinical Psychology: Scientific and professional dimensions*. New York: Wiley.
- Khairul Nidzar, & Noor Azniza, I. (2010). The Influence of emotional quotient (eq) on counselor trainees' professionalism. *Jurnal Psikologi dan Kaunseling*, 3, 127-142.
- Kivlighan, M. D. (2008). Structural changes in counselor trainee intention use and clients' session evaluation. *Journal of Psychotherapy Research*, 18(5), 560-72. doi:10.1080/10503300802010830.
- Kwon, K. I., & Jo, S. Y. (2012). The relationship among counselor experience level, empathic accuracy, and counseling outcome in the early phase of counselling. *Asia Pacific Education Review*, 13(4), 771-777.
- Lin, Y. (2001). The effects of counseling styles and stages on perceived counselor effectiveness from Taiwanese female university clients. *Asian Journal of Counselling*, 8(1), 35-59. Retrieved from http://hkier.fed.cuhk.edu.hk/journal/wp-content/uploads/2009/10/ajc_v8n1_35-60.pdf
- Mohamad B., Syed Najmuddin, S. H., & Rosli, S. (2012, Jan-June). Relationship Between Understanding, Awareness and Practices of Confidential Ethic among Counselors (Hubungan Antara Kefahaman, Kesedaran Dan Amalan Etika Kerahsiaan Dalam Kalangan Kaunselor. *Journal of Human Capital Development*, 5, 63-73. Retrieved from www.jhcd.Utem.edu.my/index2.php?option=com-docman & task
- Nerison, R. M., & Claiborn, C. D. (1990). Counselor attractiveness, similarity, and session impact: A Field Study. Paper presented at the Annual Convention of the American Psychological Association. Retrieved from <http://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED327797> PublicationType: Reports - Research;Speeches/ MeetingPapers
- Noor Azniza, M. (2009). Survey on counselor self-efficacy among counseling practitioners. *Jurnal PERKAMA*, 15, pp. 1-17.

- Noriah, I. (2005). Emotional quotient: Fundamental competency among counselors. *Proceeding 2nd. Ministry of Education Counseling Seminar: Langkawi, Kedah 30th.May-2nd June 2005*:165-181.65-76.
- Ramlan, H. (2010). *Virtual counseling: Designing and implementation (Kaunseling maya: Rekabentuk dan pelaksanaan)*. Doctoral thesis, Universiti Kebangsaan, Bangi Selangor, Malaysia.
- Rorlinda Y., Syafrimen, Noriah, I., & Amla, M. S. (2010). The quality of professionalism among teacher counselors. Retrieved from <http://Syafrimen.blogspot.com/2010/04/kualiti-profesionalisme-guru-guru.html>
- Seo, Y. S. (2011). Individualism, collectivism, and client expression of different emotions: Their relations to perceived counselor effectiveness. *Asia Pacific Education Review, 12*(2), 251-262.
- Shahbani, O. (2005). Analysis of the application of basic counseling skills among counselors in boarding schools in Kedah Region. *Prosiding Seminar Kaunseling, 2*, 113-123.
- Sheu, H. B., Rigali-Oiler, M., & Lent, R. W. (2012). Multicultural counseling self-efficacy scale-racial diversity form: Factor structure and test of a social cognitive model. *Journal of Psychotherapy Research, 22*(5), 527-42. doi:10.1080/10503307.2012.683344
- Siang, L. C. (2010). Analysis of holistic wellness among registered counselors in Malaysia (Analisis Kesejahteraan Holistik Dalam Kalangan Kaunselor Berdaftar Di Malaysia). *Jurnal PERKAMA, 16*, pp. 41-56.
- Stein, S. J. (1981). *Client's perception of counselor trustworthiness expertness and attractiveness as a function of counselor race and dialect*. (Doctoral thesis University of Florida)
- Strong, S. R. (1968). Counseling: An interpersonal influence process. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 15*, 215-24.
- Strong, S. R. (1988). Counseling: An Interpersonal influence process. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 15*(3), 215-224. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/h0020229>
- Strong, S. R., & Dixon, D. N. (1971). Expertness, attractiveness, and influence in counseling. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 18*(6), 562-570. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/h0031753>
- Strong, S. R., Hills, H. I., Kilmartin, C. T., DeVries, H., Lanier, K, Nelson, B. N., Meyer III, C. W. (1988). The dynamic relations among interpersonal behaviors: A test of complementarity and anticomplementarity. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 54*(5), 798-810. Retrieved from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.54.5.798>

Tracey, T. J., Glidden, C. E., & Kokotovic, A. M. (1988). Factor structure of the Counselor Form-Short. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 35*(3), 330-335. doi:10.1037/0022-0167.35.3.330

Zakaria, M. (2010). Knowledge pattern, understanding and application of counseling theories among counselors in Malaysia. *Jurnal Kemanusiaan, 15*.

Zakaria M., Noriah, I., & Zuria M. (2009). Pola Penggunaan Teori Dalam Kalangan Pengamal Kaunseling Di Malaysia (Theory application pattern among counseling practitioners in Malaysia). *Jurnal PERKAMA, 15*: 86-105.

Zuria, M. (2005). Perlunya kaunselor sekolah menjalankan sesi kaunseling (The need for school counselors to conduct counseling session). *Proceeding 2nd. Ministry of Education Counseling Seminar: Langkawi, Kedah 30th.May - 2nd June 2005*:165-181.