

# Competencies of Classroom Teacher-Counselor towards Students' Self-Esteem Development

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## Abstract

This study assessed the competencies of the classroom teachers as counselor as the basis for the development of Humanities and Social Science students' self-esteem. Through descriptive correlational research design, it investigated the level of competencies of classroom teacher-counselor into behavioral competencies and work-related competencies, and the level of student's self-esteem into identity, appreciation, acceptance, self-confidence, pride, humility and selfishness. It involved 147 Grade 11 and Grade 12 Humanities and Social Sciences students of one private school in the Philippines during the academic year 2021-2022. The findings revealed that there is a significant relationship between the competencies of classroom teacher-counselors and the self-esteem of senior high school students. Therefore, the null hypothesis posited in the study is not sustained. In this light, the study posits that the competence of the teachers as counselors are significant in the development of students' self-esteem. Therefore, students may directly share their concerns with their teacher-counselor dealing with personal issues affecting their general well-being and academic progress. Teachers need to continue to support the learners through counseling and guidance leading to their academic success. Similarly, strengthening the competencies of teachers-counselors reassure the students' mental health.

**Keywords:** *Behavioral competencies, Work related competencies, self-esteem, counselling*

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## 1. Introduction

The teachers are responsible for aiding the smooth execution of the school's harmonious student's cognitive and social behavior, morals, social values, and overall personality (Sharna, 2020). More than that, there are circumstances when they needed to move from teaching to counseling (Teach.com, 2018). Because of the nature of the teaching profession, a teacher provides support, assistance, and counseling, and builds a direct and constant communication relationship with his students (Georgiana, 2015). As educators, they are frequently aware of student issues, particularly mental health issues (MentalHealth.gov, 2019). According to Dattani et.al (2021), counseling allows adolescents to talk about situations they did not share with their parents, such as being abused, doing drugs, or facing other life issues.

According to Counseling Directory (n.d.), a child's self-esteem is affected by various hardships. Psychiatrists, psychologists, and life coaches affirm that teenage mental illness and suicide cases are rising (Cruz, 2018). Similarly, the World Health Organization Global (2015) disclosed that 6.8% of 13 to 17-year-olds tried suicide, while 8,761 students in the Philippines from Grades 7 to 9, Year 4 considered suicide (11.6 percent of 13 to 17-year-olds). This is a social problem which must need attention.

The Philippines enacted the Republic Act 9258 or the Guidance and Counseling Act of 2004, which states that the profession involves the use of an integrated approach to the development of a well-functioning individual, primarily by assisting them in realizing their full potential and planning their present and future following their abilities, interests, and needs. This law also encompasses the teaching guidance and counselling subjects, particularly those covered in the Licensure Examinations for Teachers (LET) and necessary in other human development services. This directs that educators can be part of counseling because they are in the field of moulding students. Because of the lacked of licensed professional guidance counselors, the teachers have to be trained to at least meet the correct ratio of counseling service, which clearly defined how teachers can contribute to the overall development of students through counseling.

Majority of the schools in the Philippines have low counselor-student ratio. For instance, in one private school in the Philippines with 3000 students, there are only two guidance counsellors. Thus, it would be impossible to accommodate all the students for counseling services. During the pandemic, most of the students reported anxiety, burn out and stress. Some

students experienced difficulty adjusting to online class platforms, which also showed low self-esteem. These were not properly given counseling services. Thus, teachers are expected to perform as guidance counselor.

As a teacher, awareness of the problem will help reduce the pain by realizing that a person has a fuller potential in their day-to-day living with a greater understanding of man's behavior and a more transparent and broader understanding of his human capabilities and resources. Recognizing the social changes will bring out the potential (Piltz & Gerber, n.d.), especially students, to boost their self-esteem. In schools, the social science subject gives greater importance to the preventive over treatment approach and for the more significant development of a person. The key points agenda on social science reform in the new correspondence of education through counseling include personal development, human development and social development. Personal development dwells on socialization and reflection on others which will lead to influence the distinction of a person's personality and the opportunity to adjust within society to be a well-balanced individual not just for the organization but notably with himself. Human Development asserts accountability as citizens, part of the community, organization, and government, to respect a person's capability, potential, and rights. Social development upholds the establishment of a good relationship that will improve social skills and positively impact their environment, making their own decision in their broadest sense, empowerment, and valuing life.

Given these arguments and the role of social sciences in counseling program, this study assessed the competencies of the classroom teachers as counselor as the basis for the development of Humanities and Social Science students' self-esteem. It investigates the level of competencies of classroom teacher-counselor into behavioral competencies and work-related competencies, and the level of student's self-esteem into identity, appreciation, acceptance, self-confidence, pride, humility and selfishness.

## **2. Literature review**

### ***2.1. Competencies***

Competencies increase in recognition worldwide to help students expand their learning by providing them with the most critical tools to help them cope with various situations and become lifelong learners (CMEC, 2018). According to CMEC (2018), global competencies are a collection of attitudes, knowledge, values, and abilities that are interrelated, transdisciplinary,

leveraged, and can be utilized in various situations both locally and worldwide. They help students develop the skills they need to manage the demands of learning, life, and job; to be engaged and responsive in their communities; to appreciate different points of view; to act on global concerns" (p. 1). The willingness to achieve and believe in one's potential as a constructive and reflective citizen is part of the ability to engage in cognitive processes to address and understand problems.

The following are the several types of competencies required from the students.

***Behavioral Competencies.*** The well-developed behavioral competencies are believed to provide adolescents with coping skills during their transition age, characterized by many stressors (Lerner et al., 2019). As such, teachers are accountable not only for the educational quality of their students but also for their personal growth as individuals (Harris et al., 2016; Jennings et al., 2019). For instance, the study of Leventhal et al. (2015) indicated efficiency in boosting girls' psychological and social well-being, implying that participants have higher levels of life satisfaction and a more substantial capacity to form peer relationships at the end of the course. These outcomes are achieved by improving behavioral qualities such as self-efficacy, negative circumstance tolerance, empathy, and teamwork.

***Work-Related Competencies.*** This competence means working according to corresponding professional standards (Barnett et al., 2008). In terms of counseling, psychological counseling requires counselors to possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed and practice them ethically to provide adequate services (Barnett & Johnson, 2008). Baharun (2017) adds that school counselor competencies include pedagogical, personal, social, and professional competence. The competency of school counselors is an ability that needs to be developed by counselors in the context of the self-development of counselors to help students. Counselors have values, attitudes, skills, knowledge, and insights in the field of guidance and counseling professions, one of which is research and publications in the field of guidance and counseling (Suryono, 2016).

## ***2.2. Self-Esteem***

Generally, the concept of self-esteem was studied by researchers based on the realm of emotions, socially developed emotions based on feelings and perceptions about individuals, with some self-images and self-concepts, which are grounded in the psychosomatic need aiming for

the authentic and effective functioning, acceptance, and belonging within social group, accomplishments, and competence differ to the other part of the group of individuals (Bruno & Njoku, 2014). Several studies identify the self-esteem dimensions as personal, social, and general self-esteem for teachers. When these three subcomponents are combined, it is equal to overall self-esteem. The signs of low self-esteem include feeling incompetent, worthless, exaggerated perfectionism and unrealistic about our abilities, being overwhelmed with fear and negative thoughts, feeling unloved, fear of change, being unrealistic about goals, the constant need for validation and recognition, and distorted view of self and others (Esmaeil et al., 2014).

As a teacher, the comprehensive product is directly congruent with their self-esteem minus when he/she feels losing confidence while performing their professional responsibilities (Irfan et al., 2013). The possession of high-profile teachers is not only by their virtue of academic achievements but also because they need to enrich their economic and social status too. The cumulative effect of financial and social satisfaction of teachers culminates in their self-esteem, which corresponds to a phenomenon. The state of contentment on the part of the teachers leads to their self-confidence, allowing them to perform with utmost strength and moral vigor. Commitment and dedication with this dedication with concerned faculty members show the following attributes: empowerment, performance, and self-confidence (Irfan et al., 2014).

If an individual does expressive work, he develops a sense of dignity, self, and worth. The activity in which an individual fit into this world is work, by creating new relationships, using talents, learning, and growing to develop his sense of identity and belongingness (Safura et al., 2014). The primary consideration and treatment of the employees is the new managerial standard because, as human beings, they have their desires, needs, and wants, which are excellent signs of satisfaction in a job in any organization, specifically in educational institutions (Patrick & Wemba, 2014).

Maltreatment of a child, in any type of it, can have a significant effect on the healthy development of the self. Researchers reveal that child abuse is connected with low self-compassion, low self-esteem, and external point (with this, the external factors can control one's outcomes) (Bolger & Patterson, 2001; Eskin, 2012; Tanaka et al., 2011). This will lead to adverse effects, including anxiety, depression, emotional dysregulation, and suicidal ideation. The damage in the various self-contracts listed can happen from an early age, and the adverse outcomes can continue until adulthood. This emphasizes the importance of having a healthy

condition for the health conditions for the most appropriate development of the self and requires intervention and prevention in childhood to assist correct the negative outcomes caused by toxic situations such as child maltreatment and/or exposure to violence.

High self-esteem, self-compassion, self-efficacy, and perceived internal point of control have all been established to promote resilience and be protective against the negative consequences of child maltreatment and other life stressors (Afifi & MacMillan, 2011; Bolger & Patterson, 2001; Cicchetti & Rogosch, 1997; Kort-Butler, 2010; Lamoureux et al., 2012; Leary et al., 2007; Vettese et al., 2011). Bolger and Patterson (2001) attest that when individuals perceived themselves as having an internal point of control, this was related with reducing internal problems (i.e., anxiety, depression, etc.). Vettese et al. (2011) confirmed that self-compassion was associated negatively with emotion control difficulties. That is, individuals with more self-compassion could more effectively regulate their emotions. To sum it up, these indicate that encouraging and boosting the self-constructs assists those individuals who suffer maltreatment.

A wide-ranging idea with the internal attitudes of personality is self-esteem, the negative and positive are both standard in psychological well-being (Padham & Aujla, 2014), while self-concept is defined as overall cognitive beliefs a person may have regarding themselves. Self-esteem is derived from self-concept. Despite this, they are considered different from one another (Heatherton & Wyland, 2003). Self-esteem is an individual evaluation of their worth and encompasses beliefs about oneself example. It is also about emotions such as triumph, pride, despair, and shame. There are three (3) types of self-esteem: inflated self-esteem, low self-esteem, and high self-esteem. Additional to these are the four (4) components of self-esteem: self-confidence, identity, belonging, and competence. Self-confidence is the belief that one will be successful in achieving a desired goal (Walsh, 2021), as being both state-like and trait-like and also appears to be multi-dimensional (Weinberg & Gould, 2010). Self-confidence also varies from self-esteem and self-efficacy.

### ***2.3. Theoretical framework***

This research was based on a whole-school strategy, which entails meeting the needs of students, faculty, and the broader community within the curriculum and the entire school and learning environment. It involves a school community's collective and collaborative effort to

improve kids' learning, behavior, and well-being and the conditions that support them. This method can be beneficial, especially in light of students' current needs in dealing with various aspects of their lives, such as family, school, social life, and the psychological element of student life (UNESCO, 2016).

The Holistic Dynamic Theory of Abraham Maslow (1970), also known as humanistic theory, transpersonal theory, the third force in psychology, the fourth force in personality, needs theory, and self-actualization theory, is another theory that supported this study. It is assumed that some need or other drives everyone and that everyone can develop psychological wellness, which is self-actualization. To do so, humans must master Maslow's organized pyramid-like hierarchy of lower needs, including physiological demands. Food and water, adequate rest, clothing and shelter, overall health, and reproduction are all essential for human survival; safety necessitates protection from violence and theft, emotional stability and well-being, health security, and financial security; love and belonging necessitate friendships and family bonds—both with biological family (parents, siblings, children) and chosen family (spouses and partners); and reproduction necessitates reproduction. Esteem is required. Self-esteem (confidence in your potential for personal growth and accomplishments) is made up of two types: self-confidence and independence stem; and self-actualization needs are made up of education, skill development—the refining of talents in areas such as music, athletics, and deportment; and self-actualization needs are made up of education, skill development—the refining of talents in areas such as music, athletics, and deportment; and self-actualization needs are made up of education, skill development (McLeod, 2007).

Another theory that can support this research is Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, published in 1977 and his most significant book. According to this hypothesis, how one reacts to a foreseeable meeting or experience has a more powerful influence than the event itself. Some fundamental assumptions underpin social cognitive theory. First, one of the most distinguishing traits of humans is plasticity, which refers to our ability to adopt new behaviors in various contexts. Bandura agrees with Skinner's premise that humans can learn from direct experiences, but he focuses more on indirect learning or learning through observing others. Bandura also emphasizes the concept of vicarious reinforcement, which states that people might be reinforced by witnessing another person who has been rewarded. A large portion of human learning is based on indirect reinforcement. Second, humans can govern their lives using a triadic

reciprocal causation model that encompasses behavioral, environmental, and personal aspects. If a person lacks this ability, they will respond to sensory experiences and will be unable to foresee events, generate new ideas, or assess current experiences using internal criteria. Chance contacts and serendipitous incidents are two significant environmental influences in the triadic model. Third, it adopts an agentic viewpoint, implying that humans can exert influence over nature to improve the quality of our lives. Humans are both the creators and the consumers of our social system. Self-efficacy is the most significant component of the triadic reciprocal causation paradigm. When a person has high self-efficacy or the belief that they can carry out the attitudes that will result in desired actions in a given situation, their performance is usually boosted. Both proxy agency and collective efficacy, in addition to self-efficacy, can predict performance. People with a proxy agency can rely on others for goods and services, whereas collective efficacy is described as people's shared belief in their ability to effect change. Fourth, both external and internal influences influence people's behavior. Internal variables include the judgment process, self-observation, and self-reaction, whereas external factors include people's physical and social settings. Fifth, when people are in a situation where they are unsure whether their behavior is right or wrong, they often try to control it through a moral agency, which includes redefining the behavior, disregarding or distorting the consequences of their behavior, dehumanizing or blaming the victims of their behavior, and displacing or diffusing responsibility for their actions.

### **3. Methodology**

This study employed descriptive research to determine the competencies of teachers for effectively enhancing students' self-esteem. The student-respondents were drawn through random sampling so that each member of the population has an equal chance of being chosen. The respondents were 147 Grade 11 and Grade 12 Humanities and Social Science Strand, Senior High students of a private institute in the Philippines.

The study used two self-made and validated scale surveys.

*Survey Questionnaire.* Competencies of classroom teacher- counselor scale is sixty (60) items, each of which ratings on a four-point Likert scale that assess the extent of competencies of



classroom teacher- counselor. This scale is used for young adults with the age ranges of 12 to 18 years of age.

*Students' Self-Esteem Scale.* The other instrument used in the study is a self-made survey questionnaire on the students' self-esteem scale. This scale is forty-nine (49) items consisting of each of which ratings on a four-point Likert Scale that assess the extent of the students' self-esteem. This scale is often used for adolescence to adulthood from 12- 27 years.

The survey was conducted on the 8th week of the second quarter through Google form. The study ensured that the research objectives were explained thoroughly to the students before handing the survey questionnaire. The students were also informed that the survey was not compulsory and they have the right to withdraw at any time they feel uncomfortable answering any of the questions. The study treated data gathered with utmost confidentiality.

The study utilized the following statistical techniques: mean and standard deviations, frequency count and percent distribution and Pearson's Correlation Coefficient.

#### 4. Findings and Discussion

**Table 1**

*Competencies of Classroom Counselors*

Indicators	Mean	SD	VI
<b>Behavioral Competencies</b>			
Empathy	3.35	0.58	Agree
Genuineness	3.38	0.55	Agree
Unconditional positive regard	3.45	0.62	Agree
Concreteness	3.53	0.56	Strongly Agree
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.42</b>	<b>0.57</b>	<b>Agree</b>
<b>Work-related Competencies</b>			
Listening	3.35	0.59	Competent
Counselor self-disclosure	2.96	0.66	Competent
Information giving	3.38	0.58	Competent
Addressing obstacles to change	3.22	0.57	Competent
Giving interpretation	3.33	0.6	Competent
Being open to questions	3.32	0.61	Competent
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.26</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>Competent</b>

*Legend: 3.50-4.00 Strongly Agree/ Highly Competent, 2.50-3.49 – Agree/ Competent, 1.50-2.49 Disagree/ Less Competent 1.00-1.50 – Incompetent*

The data in table 1 reveal that the overall mean of behavioral competencies is 3.42. Among all the sub-variables of the behavior-related competencies, “concreteness” has the highest mean of 3.53 and a standard deviation of .56, while “empathy” has the lowest mean of 3.35 and a standard deviation of .58, which signifies that students most likely approved teachers who are proficient in fairness and positively influence them. While empathy is the lowest, it shows that their teachers have a low level of understanding towards others' feelings. This asserts Fyfe et al. (2014) that concreteness helps learners interpret ambiguous terms and be healthy in understanding and provides the ability to think about certain concepts or ideas and enables learners to retrieve their ideas that can be used to give meanings.

The further reveal that the overall mean of work-related competencies is 3.26. Among all the sub-variables of the work-related competencies, “information giving” has the highest mean of 3.38 and a standard deviation of 0.58. In contrast, “counselor self-disclosure” has the lowest mean of 2.96 and a standard deviation of .66. Information giving is the highest indicator of work-related competencies teacher-counselors possess, which helps the students to be practical in terms of knowing and understanding the things happening to them. Information-giving is the counselor's technique to facilitate the students to address their struggles (Higham, 2019). Meanwhile, counselors’ self-disclosure is the lowest because the students are hesitant to provide and validate the information with their teacher, they might be uncomfortable doing it. Teacher-counselors must establish good communication and be trustworthy in dealing with students.

**Table 2**

*Level of Self-Esteem*

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Identity	3.33	0.64	High Level
Appreciation	3.48	0.65	High Level
Acceptance	3.43	0.62	High Level
Self-confidence	3.3	0.58	High Level
Pride	3.34	0.6	High Level
Humility	3.44	0.63	High Level
Selfishness	2.73	0.76	High Level
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.29</b>	<b>0.64</b>	<b>High Level</b>

*Legend: 3.50-4.00 Strongly Agree/ Very High Level, 2.50-3.49 – Agree/ High Level, 1.50-2.49 Disagree/ Low Level 1.00-1.50 – Poor Level*

The data in table 2 reveal that the overall self-esteem is 3.29, which is interpreted as high level. Among all the sub-variables of self-esteem, “appreciation” has the highest mean of 3.48 and a

standard deviation of .65, while "selfishness" has the lowest mean of 2.73 and a standard deviation of .76. Appreciation, a feeling of satisfaction for the greatness of life (Rudd et al., 2012) shows that students acknowledge the efforts of others, such as teachers, institutions, and classmates, that would help them be motivated to achieve their goals. Appreciating oneself is a great tendency to a high level of self-esteem that leads to greater satisfaction in one's life. However, selfishness emerged because students are hesitant to show how they can help others. It means that they can focus on improving themselves.

**Table 3**

*Test of Correlation Between Behavioral Competencies and Self-Esteem*

Self-Esteem	Behavioral Competencies			
	Empathy	Genuineness	Unconditional Positive Regard	Concreteness
Identity	.724**	.776**	.735**	.685**
Appreciation	.788**	.780**	.815**	.787**
Acceptance	.776**	.726**	.753**	.814**
Self-Confidence	.725**	.733**	.710**	.740**
Pride	.738**	.752**	.797**	.798**
Humility	.771**	.756**	.816**	.833**
Selfishness	.231**	.258**	.242**	.200**

\*\* Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (two-tailed)

Behavioral competencies correlate significantly higher with all dimensions of self-esteem. The highest correlation coefficient is between behavioral competencies, the variable of humility (.771\*\*) and concreteness (.833\*\*). Furthermore, the rest are significantly related: identity (.776\*\*), appreciation (.815\*\*), acceptance (.814\*\*), self-confidence (.740\*\*), pride (.798\*\*) and selfishness (.258\*\*). This implies that teachers with deep, genuinely caring, accurate, and compassionate recognize their students' experience and feelings helps students to have high self-esteem. These results are congruent with that of Ottmar and Landy (2017) and Lerner et al. (2019). This asserts that using reliable examples leads to strong learning outcomes for students that lead to motivation. The well-developed behavioral competencies are believed to provide coping skills for adolescents during their transition age, characterized by many stressors.

**Table 4***Test of Correlation Between Work-Related Competencies and Self-Esteem*

Self-Esteem	Work-Related Competencies					
	Listening	Counselor Self- Disclosure	Information Giving	Addressing Obstacles to Change	Giving Interpretation	Being open to questions
Identity	.674**	.571**	.701**	.706**	.679**	.709**
Appreciation	.750**	.529**	.750**	.724**	.777**	.777**
Acceptance	.771**	.586**	.763**	.722**	.795**	.756**
Self-Confidence	.743**	.648**	.750**	.798**	.762**	.752**
Pride	.766**	.608**	.794**	.776**	.754**	.728**
Humility	.783**	.555**	.768**	.748**	.824**	.791**
Selfishness	.250**	.271**	.237**	.380**	.284**	.198**

*Legend: \*\* Correlation is significant at 0.01 level (two-tailed)*

Table 4 explains that teachers who can execute the work-related competencies can achieve positive outcomes are less dependent on the sort of service users and more dependent on the teacher counselor's capacity to be passionate, confident, and believe in the students' ability to change, according to research and it is interpreted as highly significant. This clearly implies that teachers cannot make students change. However, they can assist students in making the necessary changes. Students appear more likely to achieve their goals when they have a solid and trusting relationship with their teachers. As a result, the teacher counselor's engagement with the students can benefit the therapeutic relationship and improve students' self-esteem.

The field of psychological counseling supports this study and requires counselors to possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed and practice them ethically to provide adequate services (Barnett & Johnson, 2008). Furthermore, Baharun (2017) asserts that the competency of school counselors needs to be developed in the context of the self-development to help students.

## 5. Conclusion

This study assessed the competencies of the classroom teachers as counselor as the basis for the development of Humanities and Social Science students' self-esteem. Through descriptive correlational research design, it investigated the level of competencies of classroom teacher-counselor into behavioral competencies and work-related competencies, and the level of

student's self-esteem into identity, appreciation, acceptance, self-confidence, pride, humility and selfishness. It involved 147 Grade 11 and Grade 12 Humanities and Social Sciences students of one private school in the Philippines during the academic year 2021-2022.

This study found significant relationship between the competencies of classroom teachers-counselors and the self-esteem among senior high school students. Therefore, the null hypothesis posited in the study is not sustained. The students perceived that self-esteem is manifested in identity, appreciation, acceptance, self-confidence, pride, humility, and selfishness. Furthermore, there is a highly significant relationship between competencies of classroom teacher-counselor-related factors and students' self-esteem as evidenced by identity, appreciation, acceptance, self-confidence, pride, humility, and selfishness. This study posits that teachers with work related competencies and behavioral competencies help students increase their self-esteem.

With these findings, the study suggests that students may directly share their concerns with their teacher-counselor dealing with personal issues affecting their general well-being and academic progress. They may learn to participate and feel more connected to the adults in their lives. In return, teachers may foster and create a supportive environment that can strengthen students' emotional and social learning capability, focusing on solving problems and making decisions, building relationships, and understanding social situations, and understanding oneself and one's emotions. As an extension, parents are encouraged to support their children and partner with the school to uplift their students' self-esteem. Their cooperation is essential to the holistic development of their child. The administrators continue to support the needs of their teachers and learners when it comes to the self-esteem of students, which leads to academic success. Strengthening the competencies of teachers-counselors reassure the students' mental health. As experts, guidance counselors are encouraged to guide teachers in dealing with student problems. They may provide orientations, help monitor and chronicle progress, and support decision-making tasks in dealing with students.

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