

Evaluating Madrasah Counselor Personality Traits: A Service Quality Based on Students' Perspective

Nur Hidayah^{1,*}, Lutfi Fauzan², Fitri Wahyuni³, Mariani Binti Md Nor⁴, Fifi Khoirul Fitriyah⁵, Husni Hanafi⁶, Mila Yunita⁷, Nanda Alfian Kurniawan⁸, Ikmalun Natiq⁹, and Machmudah¹⁰

^{1,2,3,6,7,8}.Department of Guidance and Counseling, Faculty of Science Education, Universitas Negeri Malang, Indonesia

⁴Department of Early Childhood Education, Faculty of Education, Languages, Psychology, and Music, SEGi University & College, Malaysia

^{9,10}.Department of Early Childhood Education, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Nahdlatul Ulama Surabaya, Indonesia

⁹.Mandalika Hospital Lombok, Indonesia

Corresponding Author: nur.hidayah.fip@um.ac.id

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Abstract

Madrasah provides the specific environment, values, and culture influencing academic life, including the counseling process and working alliance. This research aims to evaluate the Madrasah Counselor's Personality as the Service Quality measurement based on the Student's perspective. This research will provide a specific analysis of personality trait performance based on students' expectations. This quantitative evaluation method uses the Service Quality model with Importance Performance Analysis. This evaluation involved 252 madrasa students in East Java, Indonesia. The instrument was a rating scale of "Students Perspective of Counselor Personality" that contained 24 personality trait descriptors from the Big Five personality theory. The results indicated that 11 personality traits were in Quadrant I, indicating high performance and fulfilling the students' expectations. Other results indicate four personality traits in Quadrant II that did not meet the students' expectations. These four personalities are the main focused traits to be improved and enhanced immediately. These results suggest that training, workshops, and supervision are immediate and long-term programs for counselor personality competence development. Theoretical implication refers to further and broader measurements to construct and validate the Madrasah Counselor Personal Competencies model.

Keywords: Counselor Personality, Madrasah Counselor, Service Quality, Personality Competence.

1. Introduction

School counselors' personalities were an essential key to their helping service to the students. The form of the counselor's personality can influence students' perception, trust, cooperation, and working alliance (Andrade-gonzález et al., 2016; Folmo et al., 2019; Lopez-Perry, 2020). This significant role is essential in

building relationships, maintaining relationships, preventing ruptures, and even maintaining relationships in post-therapeutic follow-up. In some counseling models, especially in the humanistic paradigm, the counselor's personality and how the therapeutic relationship process is necessary and sufficient to provide successful counseling (Brooks & Cochran, 2016; Joseph & Murphy, 2013).

Theoretically, there are various personality traits theories. Each theory has its philosophy and paradigm to see and define human beings. The most popular one is the Big Five personality, which has been used worldwide (Agbaria & Bdier, 2020; Kisten & Kluyts, 2018). This construct has five primary personality traits: openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (emotional stability). Moreover, much recent research has developed and redefined these five personality traits into many specific personality traits (Afdal et al., 2023).

As personality traits have definitions in various constructs and theories, there are also multiple assumptions and judgments about how personality should be (Imhonde et al., 2017). Values, norms, and life background play a role in determining how society and culture view humans, including how customary and reasonable human personality is (Cheung et al., 2016; Stevanovic & Koski, 2018). This diversity occurs not only in ethnic and cultural groups but also in multicultural settings and non-cultural communities or groups.

Religious-based schools, Madrasahs, are also one of the communities with different values and norms in various aspects of life and individual interactions within them. In general, Madrasahs recruit students from diverse cultural backgrounds, making multicultural values one of the characteristics of Madrasahs (Sabki & Hardaker, 2013). However, the foundation and philosophy of Madrasah life based on Islam are critical values in how Madrasah residents (teachers, students, and others) view how a person needs to act and behave (Asadullah, 2016; Fitriyah et al., 2021). This view also simultaneously forms a perspective on the definition of personality expected from students to teachers, including counselors.

The specific characteristics of the Madrasah community become a situation confronting Madrasah counselors, especially students who receive their services. These descriptions explain that Madrasah students, as recipients of counselor services, interact with the personalities of their counselors. At the same time, counselors need to have a personality that follows the hopes and expectations of students (Hidayah et al., 2023) and madrasah values to form a working alliance, therapeutic relationship, and optimal counseling outcomes (Dimaggio et al., 2019; Fauzan et al., 2023; Nienhuis et al., 2018).

Evaluation of the counselor's personality is necessary to ensure that the counselor's personality develops adaptively to the needs of madrasah students. Personality evaluation requires assessment from external parties who interact directly with individuals. In the context of madrasah counselors, students are the recipients of the assistance services provided. In other words, student satisfaction is one indicator of how the counselor's personality works in providing empathy and reassurance, as well as the quality of therapeutic services offered. The rational basis for this study is to measure and radiate the personality of madrasah counselors based on student perspectives. The results are the analysis results of specific counselor personalities that need to be maintained and improved to contribute to therapeutic services that provide greater satisfaction and opportunities for student success.

2. Materials and methods

2.1 Research Design

As the evaluation purpose of Madrasah counselor personnel, this research uses a quantitative research method with an explanatory design. This design provides the quantitative measurement to support the SERVQUAL evaluation of the Madrasah counselor's personality based on the student's perspective. This design

also provides the gap analysis (Alemu, 2023; Chatterjee et al., 2009) of the students' expectations and counselor personality performance based on the students' experience. This gap analysis will indicate the satisfaction level of the students and promote the specific personality criteria for Madarasah counselors.

2.2 Data collection procedures

This research involved 252 Madrasah Aliyah (high school level) students in East Java, Indonesia. The sampling selection used the random sampling method in various districts in East Java. The students, as evaluators, provide their measurements based on their experiences of involvement with their counselor. They should measure their expectations of their counselor personality and give their assessments of their counselor personality performance.

The research instrument was a rating scale on 24 personality traits defined by the big-five personality traits theory. The blueprint of the personality traits of this instrument is detailed in Table 1. The scale was based on nine rating levels, including the students' expectations and the counselor's performance. Specifically, the 9-rated defines as "expected as a must" for the students' expectations and "performed as always" for the counselor performance. On the other hand, the 1-rated is defined as "Not Important" for the students' expectations and "never been shown" for the counselor's performance. The blueprint of the instrument is described in Table 1.

Table 1. The Blueprint of Evaluation Instrument.

Big Five Personalities Dimension	Specific Personality Traits	Code
Openness	Knowledgeable	x8
	Creative and innovative	x11
	Imaginative	x14
	Up-to-date	x22
Conscientiousness	Diligent	x9
	Responsible	x15
	Objective	x18
	Neat and clean	x21
Extraversion	Humorous	x1
	Soft-spoken	x5
	Communicative	x7
	Smiling/friendly	x12
	Responsive	x10
	Authoritative	x20
	Inspirational	x24
Agreeableness	Supportive	x2
	Caring	x3
	Humble and not arrogant	x4

	Sensitive to issues/problems	x13
	Trustworthy	x19
Neuroticism (Emotional Stability)	Resilient	x6
	Calm and not careless	x16
	Able to control emotions	x17
	Patient	x23

2.3 Data analysis

The data analysis method uses descriptive analysis and Importance Performance Analysis. Descriptive analysis measures demographic profiles and statistical statistics to define the results. The Importance Performance Analysis is the primary method for the gap analysis. This IPA provides a detailed measurement for each personality trait and is categorized into four quadrants in a graphical view. These four quadrants are "Keep up the good work", "Concentrate here", "Possible Overkill", and "Low Priority" (Lai & Hitchcock, 2015). The detailed rubric for categorizing the specific results of these quadrants is in Table 2.

Table 2. Evaluation Criteria of Madrasah Counselor Personality.

Quadrant Area	Description	Score range
Quadrant "Keep up the Good Work"	I High Importance, High Performance. Should keep the performance	Importance > Average Performance > Average
Quadrant "Concentrate Here"	II High Importance, Low Peformed. Need to be improved	Importance > Average Performance < Average
Quadrant "Possible Overkill"	III Low Importance, High Performed. Should be effeciently prioritize	Importance < Average Performance > Average
Quadrant "Low Priority"	IV Low Importance, Low Performed. Low prioritize and might be ignored.	Importance < Average Performance < Average

3. Results and discussion

3.1 Descriptive Results

Based on the descriptive analysis, the average of all personality trait expectations was 8.271, while the average of all personality trait performance was 8.126. This average value indicates that the overall student expectation of the Madrasah counselor's personality has not been appropriately met. More detailed results are presented in Table 3.

Based on Table 3, the personality trait with the highest expectation was Responsible (x15), with an average of 8.600 out of 9 expectation scores. The lowest expected of the personalities was Authoritative and Humorous. However, the highest personality trait was Soft-spoken (x5), with an average of 8.483 out of 9 expectation scores. The lowest-performed personality trait was Humorous.

Table 3. Descriptive Results of Madrasah Counselor Personality Evaluation.

Code	Personality traits	Importance/ Expectations	Performance	Quadrant
x1	Humorous	7.717	7.250	IV
x2	Supportive	8.517	8.300	I
x3	Caring	8.383	8.333	I
x4	Humble and not arrogant	8.300	8.317	I
x5	Soft-spoken	8.100	8.483	III
x6	Resilient	8.367	8.333	I
x7	Communicative	8.483	8.300	I
x8	Knowledgeable	8.417	8.200	I
x9	Diligent	8.067	8.067	IV
x10	Responsive	8.367	8.067	II
x11	Creative and innovative	8.317	8.083	II
x12	Smiling/friendly	8.35	8.450	I
x13	Sensitive to issues/problems	8.583	8.150	I
x14	Imaginative	8.017	7.717	IV
x15	Responsible	8.600	8.417	I
x16	Calm and not careless	8.267	8.283	III
x17	Able to control emotions	8.533	8.283	I
x18	Objective	8.133	7.833	IV
x19	Trustworthy	8.567	8.083	II
x20	Authoritative	7.467	7.750	IV
x21	Neat and clean	8.167	8.267	III
x22	Up-to-date	7.900	7.667	IV
x23	Patient	8.500	8.433	I
x24	Inspirational	8.400	7.967	II

3.2 Importance Performance Analysis

The following analysis of the gap between the expectation and performance of each personality trait is shown in the visual description. This visual analysis shows 11 personalities in Quadrant I, four in Quadrant II, 3 in Quadrant III, and 6 in Quadrant IV. The detailed visual analysis results are in Figure 1.

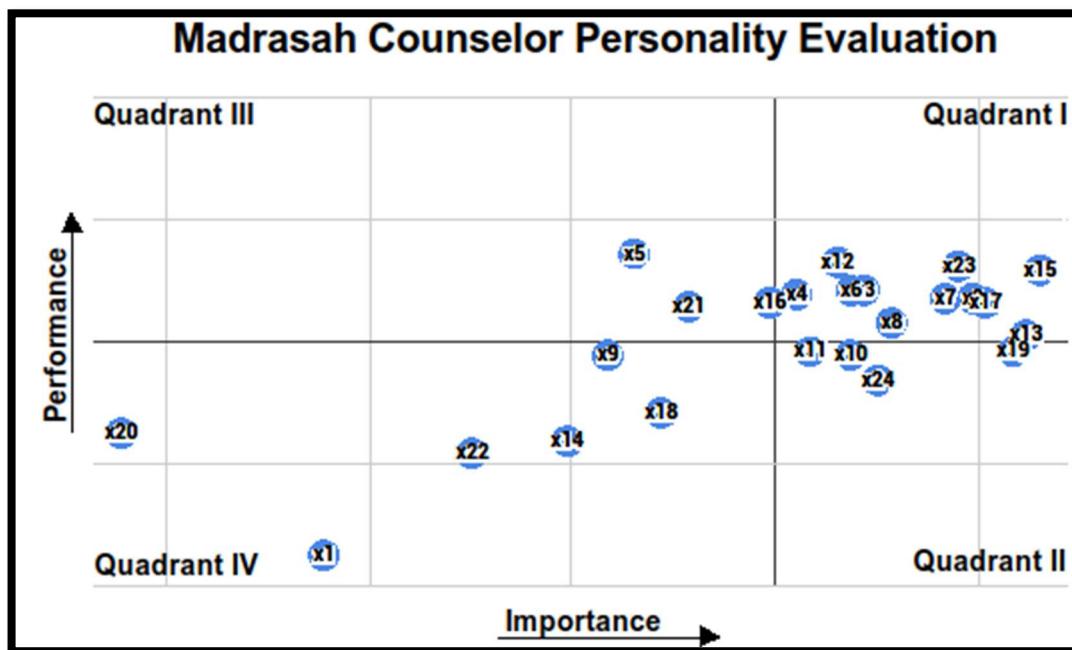


Figure 1. Madrasah Counselor Personality Evaluation Analysis.

Figure 1 shows the results in quadrant 1 ("Keep up the good work") with 11 personality traits. These personalities were Sensitive to issues/problems (x13), Knowledgeable (x8), Able to control emotions (x17), Communicative (x7), Supportive (x2), Humble and not arrogant (x4), Resilient (x6), Caring (x3), Responsible (x15), Patient (x23), Smiling/friendly (x12). These personalities indicate Madrasah counselors have performed well and fulfilled the students' expectations.

Following the results, quadrant II ("Concentrate Here") became the focus as the Madrasah counselor's performance did not meet the high expectations of the students. The personalities to be focused in Quadrant II were Inspirational (x24), Responsive (x10), Creative and innovative (x11), and Trustworthy (x19). The other results in Quadrant III and Quadrant IV became the supported focus as they had low expectations compared to the average overall score.

3.3 Discussion

Based on the results of the Madrasah student assessment, at least 15 personalities are expected of their counselors. Furthermore, 11 personalities have been successfully fulfilled, emerged well, and become personality models that need to be maintained and continuously developed by Madrasah counselors. The other four personality traits have not met student expectations, so they need to be the focus of improvement and efforts to improve and develop the personality of Madrasah counselors.

In general, the average value of personality performance is relatively high, and 11 personalities (73.33%) in Quadrant 1 show quite good achievements based on the initial evaluation. These results indicate that madrasah counselors have successfully met and developed personalities according to the expectations of students receiving services. However, there are still some personality traits that need to be the focus of improvement and follow-up. However, the overall gap analysis provides the opposite result of Madrasah students, who were still dissatisfied with the counselor's personality from a statistical perspective. This result indicates the counselor's performance doesn't meet students' expectations in general.

In a more specific study, personality traits in Quadrant I show personality traits from five dimensions.

Agreeableness was the most common personality trait included in this Quadrant. On the other hand, Quadrant II has Extraversion, Openness, and Agreeableness. As in the Quadrant IV, openness, conscientiousness, and neuroticism existed. In general, agreeableness was the most well demonstrated by the teacher, as were the high expectations from the students.

As a helper personality, agreeableness, empathy, compassion, and cooperation provide understanding, patience, and support. It helps in building trust with students (Andrade-gonzález et al., 2016; Drury et al., 2016; Hidayah, Ramli, Fauzan, Rahman, et al., 2022). High agreeableness counselor personality contributes to creating a safe and accepting relationship and working alliance (Jibeen, 2017) for students, which makes students more likely to engage in the counseling process and have optimistic hopes for the counseling outcome (DiCroce et al., 2016; Hidayah, Ramli, Fauzan, Hanafi, et al., 2022; Malinowski & Lim, 2015). In the end, it is vital for effective counseling and facilitating students' growth and change.

The other results indicate the four dimensions that have not met the students' expectations. These personality traits were Openness in "Creative and innovative", Extraversion "Responsive and Inspirational", and Agreeableness in "Trustworthy". These personality traits need to be improved and enhanced significantly to provide students with better change mechanisms and strategies. Creative, innovative, and responsive will promote better design, elaboration, and responsiveness of counselor strategies (Fauzan et al., 2023; Ramli et al., 2023). The inspirational and trustworthiness of the counselor will provide a strong and positive working alliance to support the counseling process and outcomes (Dimaggio et al., 2019; Locati et al., 2017), and also prevent the premature rupture (Chen et al., 2016; Esterer et al., 2023).

Following the evaluation results, there were some recommendations to improve the necessary area (especially for Quadrant II). Implementing professional development programs, such as workshops on creative problem-solving and cultural sensitivity, and mentorship programs might help Madrasah counselors develop the personality traits (Asri & Tahir, 2014; Bennett-levy & Finlay-jones, 2018; Miller et al., 2011) in Quadrant II. As a reflective practice, self-reflection, peer reviews, and supervision might be the long-term strategic development (Bailin et al., 2018; Hanafi et al., 2022) as further support the development of these traits. This immediate and long-term program might ensure counselors' continuous development and align their practices with Islamic educational principles and school climate (Fadhlina et al., 2019; Johnston & George, 2018; Rusilowati & Wahyudi, 2020; Tuna, 2021; Wahyuni et al., 2019).

Incorporating creativity and innovation, responsiveness, inspiration, and trustworthiness into counseling strategies also aligns with the spiritual dimensions of teaching and helping professions (Fitriyah et al., 2021; Pilpel & Gindi, 2019). Creativity and innovation reflect the Islamic value of Ijtihad, encouraging counselors to seek new knowledge and solutions (Achilov & Shaykhutdinov, 2018). Responsiveness and inspiration embody the principle of Rahmah (compassion) (Dehghanizadeh et al., 2024), showing empathy and motivation towards students (Aarvik, 2021). Trustworthiness is rooted in Amanah (trust) (Iranmanesh et al., 2018), a core value in Islam that ensures counselors act with integrity and accountability. By integrating these spiritual dimensions, counselors can provide holistic support that nurtures students' educational and spiritual growth.

4. Conclusion

This evaluation research provides insight into 11 personality traits the counselor highly demonstrates. This result indicates the better components for counselors building positive relationships and strong working alliances with the students. However, four specific personality traits did not meet the students' expectations.

These four personalities were related to promoting better design, elaboration, and responsiveness to counselor strategies. Following the results, there were practical implications for immediate and long-term programs for counselor development. This recommendation involves training, workshops, peer review, and supervision to provide continuous development of the counselor's personality. The theoretical implications of this research provide insight into the personality traits that relate to the spiritual dimension of helpers, especially counselors. However, this research was not a generalized result, and further and broader measurement might provide the model analysis of counselor personality competence in Madrasah.

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Conflict of interest

There is no conflict of interest in this research data collection and publication.

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