

## Profile Of Socio-Emotional Issues Of Gifted And Talented Students: A Counseling Approach Strategy

Tengku Elmi Azlina Tengku Muda<sup>1</sup>, Nadhirah Muhammad Arib<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Pusat PERMATA@Pintar Negara,Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 Bangi Selangor

<sup>1</sup>Fakulti Sains Sosial Dan Kemanusiaan,Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 Bangi Selangor  
[elmiazlina@ukm.edu.my](mailto:elmiazlina@ukm.edu.my)

Orchid ID No: <https://orchid.org/0000-0003-4727-2268>

<sup>2</sup>Fakulti Sains Sosial Dan Kemanusiaan, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

Email: [nadhirah.ma@utm.my](mailto:nadhirah.ma@utm.my)

Orchid ID No:<https://orchid.org/0009-0001-9439-5845>

Corresponding Author: Tengku Elmi Azlina Tengku Muda

---

### ABSTRACT

*Asynchronous development has caused socio-emotional conflicts among Gifted and Talented Students when their social and emotional abilities do not develop parallel with their intellectual abilities. Therefore, this study aims to identify and explore the socio-emotional issues faced as well as the effects of the problems and the factors that influence them. This study uses a mixed-method research method and a total of 217 students consisting of students from Basic 1 to Level 2 at Pusat Genius@Pintar Negara, UKM. This study used the Student Socio-Emotional Stress (ITSeP) instrument, The Overexcitability Questionnaire-Two (OEQII) and Multidimensional Perfectionism Inventory. The results of the study related to the perfectionism recorded a high score for all components where the component of the self-perfection is the highest component (4.58) and the component for perfectionism towards others is the lowest (4.08). The results of the study related to overexcitability showed that the emotional component recorded the highest value (3.75) and the psychomotor component as the lowest value (3.13). As for the emotional stress analysis, the justice stress component recorded the highest value (4.07) while the family stress component was the lowest value (2.29). Qualitative findings show that the factors that trigger socio-emotional problems are caused by personal personality, genetics and the environment that ultimately affect daily life. Based on the socio-emotional issues that have been identified, a specialized counseling approach has been implemented for gifted and talented students to enable effective counseling services to be provided based on the students' needs*

**Keywords:** Socioemotional, Student, Gifted and Talented, counselling approach

---

### INTRODUCTION

Gifted and talented students are individuals with high intellectual capacity and proficiency in solving the challenges they encounter. Gagne (1995) defines gifted and talented students as individuals with natural abilities or potential that can be developed into talents through their environment and other factors. In Malaysia, there is a group of gifted and talented students of various ages who qualify as gifted and talented. According to a study by Renzulli (2002), it was found that there is one gifted and talented individual for every 10,000 (1:10,000) people and one highly gifted and talented for every 100,000 (1:100,000) in the population. Intelligence levels can also be divided into an IQ scale for students, such as profoundly gifted (165 and above), exceptionally gifted (155-164), highly gifted (145-154), moderately gifted (135-144), and mildly gifted (120-129). Gifted and talented students also differ from their peers in various aspects of physical, psychomotor, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and social development (Davis & Rimm 2004). Piirto (1999) lists 17 common personality traits of gifted and talented students, including creativity, imagination, intuition, perspective, urgency, risk-taking, efficiency, discipline, pursuit of perfection, openness, tolerance for uncertainty, deep thinking, intensity in behavior, strong work ethic,

gender similarities in thinking patterns, strong desire, and resilience. These traits add value to them compared to their peers.

Although gifted and talented students have unique intellectual abilities, they are also exposed to issues related to asynchronous development, leading to negative socio-emotional development issues. The common belief that gifted and talented students are stable and do not have any problems in physical, psychological, social, and emotional aspects has long been rejected as a myth (Abu Yazid & Aliza Alias 2009, Rosadah Abdul Majid 2004). Like other teenagers and individuals, they cannot escape having internal conflicts. These gifted and talented students have some distinctive characteristics that can expose them to pressure. High perfectionism can drive them to fear failure (Abu Yazid & Aliza Alias 2009), making them quick to despair and easily angered when dissatisfied with their work. Their work can also be delayed because they seek perfection as preparation to start the work and perfection in the final result. In addition, they also have low self-esteem, overexcitabilities, persistent anxiety, and worry (Abu Yazid 2014). Brody (2014) states that gifted and talented students face socio-emotional issues because childhood is a suitable period to identify students' socio-emotional abilities (Idang et al. 2016). However, this happens because they have high abilities and feel that their uniqueness is not understood by others, academic mismatch, school environmental adjustments, and difficulty finding friends who understand them (Jen, 2017). This study is in line with the findings of Bergold et al. (2015), who found that gifted and talented adolescents believe they have lower life satisfaction compared to ordinary students due to the challenges they face in their lives. According to Zahrah (2015), the socio-emotional competence process, if not assisted, will continue from childhood to adulthood."

### **1.1 Socioemotional Issues Among Gifted and Talented Students**

Rorlinda (2017) argues that socioemotional refers to an individual's ability to adapt to others in social processes and emotional control. In the context of gifted and talented students, this group is constantly struggling to make adjustments (Vertenynen 2014), including aspects of peer acceptance, self-interest, motivation due to conflicts in cognitive maturity they face. This statement is also agreed upon by Ogurlu, Yalin, and Yavuz Birben (2018), that psychological effects among gifted and talented students can contribute to socioemotional issues. According to Abu Yazid (2014), through his research, he found three unique characteristics related to socioemotional issues often associated with gifted and talented students are a) striving for perfectionism; b) overexcitabilities and twice-exceptionalities. Additionally, Galbraith (1985) in his study mentions issues and challenges in the lives of gifted and talented students, such as a) feeling different and not being accepted among peers; b) expectations of perfection from parents, teachers, and peers; c) boredom in school; d) frequent teasing by peers at school; e) feeling incapable of solving global issues; f) confusion about various career options.

The concept of perfectionism is defined as a combination of thoughts and behaviors associated with setting high standards or unrealistic expectations for performance (Hamacheck 1978). Silverman (2007) defines that perfectionism can bring both good and bad consequences depending on an individual's level of awareness. For Zainon (2014), perfectionism can act as a motivation that drives remarkable achievements after an individual surpasses the limits they had previously reached. However, uncontrolled perfectionism will have a more negative impact on students, such as procrastination, low self-motivation, mental health disturbances, and unsatisfactory achievement. Schuler (1999) conducted a study stating that excessive perfectionist attitudes commonly bring stress or burdens into individuals' daily lives, and his study also found that 87.5% of gifted and talented students tend to exhibit perfectionism in their daily lives.

Overexcitability is defined as an internal tendency towards various forms of stimulation, either from within or from outside, with an exaggerated display of behavior (Harrison & Van Haneghan, 2011). The use of the word "over" (extraordinary) means excessive excitement exceeding the normal level of student

excitement. Excitement means high stimulation displayed by the student or a feeling of enthusiasm for something. Thus, the combination of the word "overexcitability" means an extraordinary feeling of excitement exhibited to the extent that it generates unique behavior and thinking when observed by society and when compared to same-aged students. Overexcitability causes gifted and talented students to be more sensitive by showing reactions at a higher or heightened rate to every stimulus in their environment, whether they are happy or not, and also excited about something, they can express their feelings more prominently, either verbally or physically. This attitude also poses a risk for gifted and talented students to become stressed more easily than their peers.

Based on the issues related to socioemotional problems, researchers have focused their studies on the following questions:

1. What is the socioemotional profile among gifted and talented students at the National Genius@Pintar Center, UKM?
2. What are suitable counseling approach strategies to address socioemotional issues among gifted and talented students?

## 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Jusiah, Halik, and Sanu (2016), generally, gifted and talented students have good self-adjustment, but there are a few who face socioemotional adjustment problems due to situations that do not support the needs of gifted students, such as academic, environmental, and peer adjustments. Studies by past researchers in the field of gifted and talented have shown that the unique characteristics of these students expose them to socioemotional problems (Abu Yazid & Aliza 2009; Silverman 1997; Chan 2010; Speirs Neumeister & Cross 2012). Perfectionism, social anxiety, and overexcitability have been identified as the main traits faced by gifted and talented students.

Socially prescribed perfectionism and self-oriented perfectionism, driven by the goal of achieving success, also contribute to perfectionism issues among these students (Speirs-Neumeister, William & Cross 2007). Self-oriented perfectionism promotes an individual's success and is a positive perfectionism, while socially prescribed perfectionism leads to negative perfectionism. Therefore, this maladaptive perfectionism needs to be reduced and understood (Colangelo & Wood 2015; Mofield & Peters 2018; Stricker et al. 2020). The negative impact of this perfectionism can affect the academic achievement and future excellence of gifted and talented students (Weidman et al. 2015).

Another issue is the prevalence of anxiety among gifted and talented students due to pressure from an unsupportive environment, along with low self-concept. Social anxiety is known as social phobia. Individuals struggling with this problem will try to limit activities in front of an audience and isolate themselves from facing the public (Firdaus & Oei 2011). Individuals experiencing social anxiety often see the possibility of being negatively evaluated in social performance, making it likely that they will not be able to achieve high levels of performance and will be negatively judged (Rapee & Heimberg 1997). In social anxiety, the use of avoidance behavior disrupts social performance and can reinforce the dysfunction of the beliefs of those experiencing anxiety (Clark & Wells 1995; Rapee Heimberg 1997). Additionally, individuals with social anxiety often have misinterpretations about the reactions of others (Clark & Wells 1995). In reality, social anxiety is an increasingly concerning issue and needs assistance among students. Social anxiety can have a significant impact on the overall personality, academic, and future of teenagers in general (Howell et al. 2016), and gifted and talented students in particular.

Gifted and talented students are more at risk of experiencing overexcitability than typical students (Delgado et al. 2018; Howell et al. 2016; Limont et al. 2014). Students with extraordinary overexcitability often exhibit high-intensity behavior and create problems (Davis et al. 2014). Overexcitability can trigger internal and external potential development that will become strengths and weaknesses among gifted and talented students (Limont et al. 2014). Failure to understand the socioemotional issues of overexcitability can affect the abilities of gifted and talented students in the dimensions of psychomotor, emotional, sensory, intellectual, and imagination (Aliza 2014). For the issue of overexcitability, the unique tendencies of these students need to be translated into extraordinary potential for the gifted and talented group (Chang & Kuo 2013).

Past studies have often linked the relationship between perfectionism, social anxiety, and overexcitability. Some studies that have found a relationship between perfectionism and social anxiety are those conducted by Abdollahi & Abu Talib (2015), Al-Naggar (2013), Chang (2014), Handley et al. (2015), Mansor Abu et al. (2016), Scott et al. (2014), Villiers (2009), Peronne-McGovern et al. (2015), and White (2007). This demonstrates that the selection of the issues of perfectionism, social anxiety, and overexcitability is appropriate as all three are interrelated. Past research on intervention treatment methods mostly revolves around counseling approaches. Among the existing module development studies are the play approach by Nor Hamizah (2019), art therapy by Rafidah (2014), and motivational methods by Jamaluddin (2005)."

### 3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a Mixed Methods research approach. In the quantitative phase, a total of 217 students from foundation 1 to Level 2 at the PUSAT PERMATA@Pintar Negara, UKM, were selected as study subjects. The quantitative phase aims to gather information related to the level of socioemotional issues. The study utilizes the Student Socio-Emotional Stress Instrument (ITSeP), The Overexcitability Questionnaire-Two (OEQII), and the Multidimensional Perfectionism Inventory as instruments. Instrument reliability tests were also conducted, and the results indicate reliability coefficients of 0.974 for the Student Socio-Emotional Stress Instrument (ITSeP), 0.941 for The Overexcitability Questionnaire-Two (OEQII), and 0.912 for the Multidimensional Perfectionism Inventory. In the qualitative phase, 10 individuals participated as informants, selected based on their high levels of socioemotional issues according to socioemotional categories. Based on the analysis of findings from quantitative and qualitative research, a counseling approach model has been developed to assist counselors in conducting effective counseling sessions specifically for gifted and talented students.

### 4.0 RESEARCH FINDING

Based on the survey analysis, the research results are as follows:

1. What is the Socioemotional Issue Profile Among Gifted and Talented Students at the Pusat PERMATA@Pintar, UKM?

**Table 1: Socioemotional Issue Profile Among Gifted and Talented Students at the Pusat PERMATA@Pintar, UKM**

Number	Socioemotional Issue	Minimum	Average (Avg)
1	Overall Perfectionism	4.38	0.71
2	Self-Oriented Perfectionism	4.58	0.83
3	Other-Oriented Perfectionism	4.06	0.73
4	Socially Prescribed Perfectionism	4.50	0.82

The research results indicate that perfectionism scores high for all components, with self-oriented perfectionism being the highest (4.58), while other-oriented perfectionism is the lowest (4.06).

**Table 2: Level of Overexcitabilities (OE) Issue**

Number	Overexcitabilities Issue	Minimum	Average (Avg)
1	Overall OE	3.50	0.57
2	Psychomotor OE	3.13	0.82

Number	Overexcitabilities Issue	Minimum	Average (Avg)
3	Sensory OE	3.73	0.66
4	Imaginational OE	3.29	0.88
5	Intellectual OE	3.61	0.71
6	Emotional OE	3.75	0.60

The research results related to overexcitabilities show that the emotional component records the highest value (3.75), while the psychomotor component is the lowest (3.13).

**Table 3: Other Socioemotional Issues**

Number	Socioemotional Issue	Minimum	Average (Avg)
1	Overall SE	3.06	0.79
2	Emotional SE	3.22	0.99

Number	Socioemotional Issue	Minimum	Average (Avg)
3	Motivational SE	3.19	1.02
4	Self-Oriented SE	3.21	1.15
5	Anxiety SE	3.26	1.04
6	Perfectionism SE	3.22	0.95
7	Resilience SE	3.00	1.06
8	Low Achievement SE	2.47	0.97
9	Social SE	2.65	1.09
10	Fairness SE	4.07	0.78
11	Family SE	2.29	1.08

The analysis results related to other emotional stress issues indicate that the fairness stress component records the highest value (4.07), while the family stress component is the lowest (2.29).

2. What are suitable model counselling approach strategies to address socioemotional issues among gifted and talented students?

#### a) Model of Socioemotional Counselling Approach for Gifted Students

Researcher was able to pinpoint the need for change in the current counselling technique based on the analysis of the findings. The existing counselling approach method is enhanced by the socioemotional counselling approach model for gifted kids, which is tailored to the demands and cognitive capacities of these children. There are typically six levels to the strategy or steps in a counselling session. However, the third, fourth, and fifth processes—Exploration, Conceptual Problem, and Alternative Action—are where this new approach introduces originality.

The use of appropriate assessment instruments, emotional checklists, and appropriate therapeutic activities based on pertinent modules created especially for the type of emotional issue criteria addressed will be the emphasis of counselling sessions implemented utilising this particular technique. Based on the Fig 1 above, the counselling process in this new model is applied in the following ways at each stage:

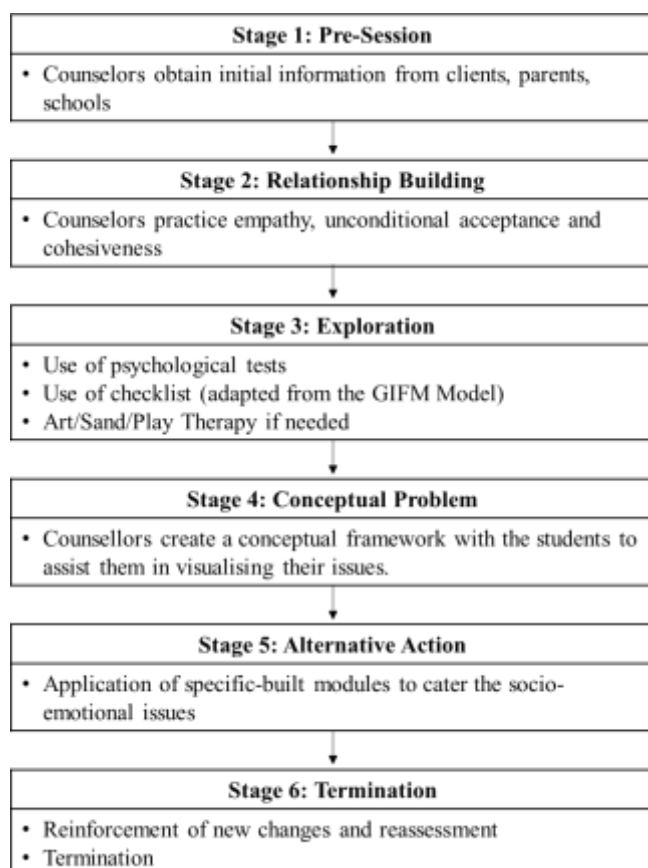


Fig 1 Model of Socioemotional Counselling Approach for Gifted Students



#### A. Stage 1: Pre Session

Before conducting a counselling session, the counsellor will learn about the client's issues from pertinent sources, such as the client's parents or the client's school, in order to get a general idea of the client's personality and issues. If the student has been diagnosed by a professional, the distinctive character qualities gifted students and other pertinent starting information are required.

#### B. Stage2: Relationship Building

Counsellor will gradually develop a relationship with the client based on empathy, unwavering acceptance, and cohesion in order to create an optimum psychological climate and mutual trust comprehend the personality of gifted student, particularly in terms of the distinctiveness of the emotions they possess.

#### C. Stage 3: Exploration

At this stage, the counsellor conducts an in-depth exploration of the client. Counsellors need to identify the exact problems that the clients had at this point given that they may share an assortment of stories that are distressing their emotions. On the other hand, gifted learners who with strong intellectual traits are more adept at using an argumentative technique and searching for logic in the circumstances at hand. Therefore, counsellors are required to use psychological inventories and relevant therapy techniques in addition during the session.

An improvised checklist, named as Gifted Identity Formation Model (GIFM Model), as illustrated in Figure 2, will be applied to gather additional detailed information. The original GIFM emotional checklist sheet has been altered with the addition of a spiritual component to be tailored for the Malaysian cultural setting.

Systems	Construct			
	Validation	Affirmation	Affiliation	Affinity
Self				
Family				
Family of Origin				
Cultural				
Vocational				
Environmental				
Educational				
Social				
Political				
Organic-Physiological				
Developmental				
Spiritual				

Fig 2 Gifted Identity Formation Model (GIFM Model)

#### D. Stage 4: Conceptual Problem

Counsellor will further confirm the information related to the issue faced after having more in-depth understanding of the information obtained at this stage, by creating a conceptual framework with the students to help them better visualise the issue at hand using the Gifted Socioemotional Framework (GISF) method, as shown in Figure 3.

The Gifted Socioemotional Framework is a tool designed to help counsellors be certain that the difficulties and issues they have to address are the same as those that students have expressed, as well as to promote conversation during counselling sessions.

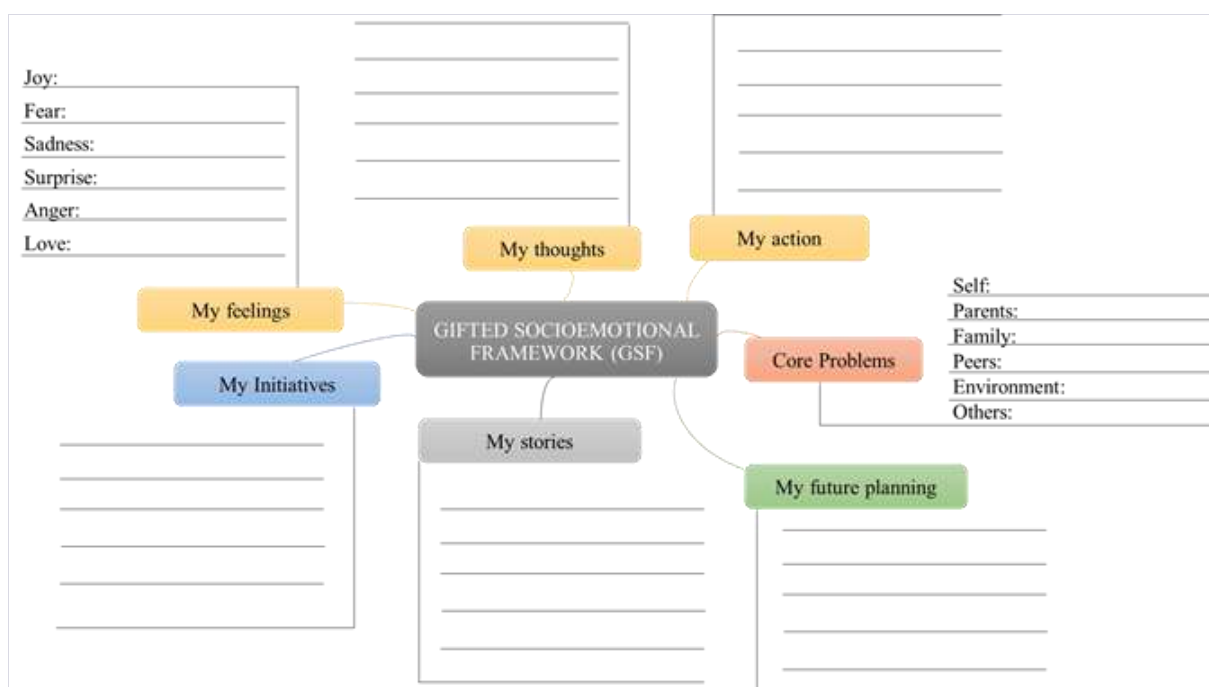


Fig 3: Gifted Socioemotional Framework (GISF)

#### E. Stage 5: Alternative Action

The counsellor will employ an especially designed module for the gifted kid according on the type of socio-emotional problems faced, such as overexcitability, perfectionism, and others, after recognising the primary issue and the reason of the client's problem.

### 5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

#### Model Innovation Effectiveness

For gifted students, a particular counselling strategy can aid in their understanding of the issues they experience. Students can comprehend their actual condition through the required psychological questionnaire, and counsellors can quickly determine the client's emotional makeup and personality. Counsellors may now more easily comprehend the traits of gifted students and the issues that lead to problems, as well as plan the most effective solutions, owing to the usage of GIFM.

In addition to the effectiveness of counselling sessions, the Gifted Socioemotional Framework (GSF), a specially developed conceptual framework, can be used to help clients gain a general understanding of their issues. This is due to the fact that using the GSF as a framework, counsellors and clients can thoroughly explore the issues they are facing and then develop acceptable alternatives by using particular modules for the intervention of socioemotional disorders. The young learners of Pusat PERMATA@Pintar Negara have also benefited from the originality of this particular counselling strategy by treating emotional issues more effectively. Additionally, the counsellors are more competent and assured when addressing counselling for gifted youths.

On the other hand, it is crucial for counsellors to recognise the distinctive attributes and characteristics of these gifted individuals in order for the counselling sessions to progress successfully. Counsellors must be able to present arguments as well as to always being attentive to the distinctive ways that gifted students think from other pupils.

## CONCLUSION

It is vital to develop a specialised strategy to counselling gifted students due to their intellectual talents and socioemotional difficulties. Gifted kids' needs for emotional assistance cannot be met by current counselling techniques utilised with typical pupils. It is easier for the counsellors to manage the counselling session and simpler for the client to comprehend the client's mind thanks to a particular technique that has been improved in the counselling process at every stage.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

A sincere appreciation to the PUSAT PERMATA@Pintar Negara and the Fundamental Research Grant Scheme (FRGS) for their approval and contribution to this research

## REFERENCES

1. Abu Yazid Abu Bakar. (2014). Perkhidmatan Kaunseling Pelajar Pintar Berbakat. Tesis PhD. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
2. Abu Yazid Abu Bakar & Aliza Alias. (2009). Sokongan psikologikal dan sosio-emosi pelajar pintar cerdas. Dlm. Noriah Mohd Ishak, Rosadah Abd Majid & Siti Fatimah Mohd Yassin. (pnyt). PERMATApintar: Pengalaman UKM, hlm. 111- 120. Bangi: Pusat PERMATApintar Negara, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
3. Aliza Alias & Hamidah Yamat. (2009). Ciri Kanak-Kanak Pintar Cerdas. Dlm. Noriah Mohd Ishak, Rosadah Abd Majid & Siti Fatimah Mohd Yassin. (pnyt). PERMATApintar: Pengalaman UKM, hlm. 111-120. Bangi: Pusat PERMATApintar Negara, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
4. Diani Mardiana Mat Zin, Amirah Zainun, Farhana Abdul Razak. (2017). Tekanan Emosi Dalam Kalangan pelajar Pintar dan Berbakat. Jurnal Sultan Alauddin Sulaiman Shah Special Issur. e-ISSN: 2289-8042
5. Leyden, S. (2013). Supporting the Child of Exceptional Ability. ProQuest (Firm)
6. Lovecky, D. V. 1993. The quest for meaning: Counseling issues with gifted children and adolescents. In L. K. Silverman (Ed.), Counseling the gifted and talented (pp. 29-47). Denver, CO: Love Publishing.
7. Pamela, Li. (2023) Asynchronous Development of A Gifted Child And Their Unique Needs. Parenting for Brain. <https://www.parentingforbrain.com/asynchronous-development/>
8. Noriah, M. I., & Abu Yazid, A. B. (2010a). Psychological issues and the need for counseling services among Malaysian gifted students. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 5, 665-673.
9. Noriah, M. I., & Abu Yazid, A. B. (2010b). Counseling for gifted students: implication for a differentiated approach. *The International Journal of Learning*, 17(6), 377-391.
10. Ng Sen Fa (2005). Rahsia Individu Pintar Cerdas dan Masalah Mereka. Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Universiti Malaya. Ng Sen Fa & Sandiyao Sebastian. (2005). Masalah sosio-emosi kanak-kanak pintar cerdas. *Makalah Pendidikan Universiti Maalya* : 5-12
11. Tomlinson, Sally (2008). Gifted, talented and high ability: selection for education in a one-dimensional world. *Oxford Review of Education*. 34(1), 59-74.
12. Yoo J.E. & Moon S.M. 2006. Counseling needs of gifted students: an analysis of intake forms at a university-based counseling center. *Gifted Child Quarterly*. Vol 50, No 1

13. S. Chen, B. Mulgrew, and P. M. Grant, "A clustering technique for digital communications channel equalization using radial basis function networks," *IEEE Trans. on Neural Networks*, vol. 4, pp. 570-578, July 1993.
14. J. U. Duncombe, "Infrared navigation—Part I: An assessment of feasibility," *IEEE Trans. Electron Devices*, vol. ED-11, pp. 34-39, Jan. 1959.
15. C. Y. Lin, M. Wu, J. A. Bloom, I. J. Cox, and M. Miller, "Rotation, scale, and translation resilient public watermarking for images," *IEEE Trans. Image Process.*, vol. 10, no. 5, pp. 767-782, May 2001.

