



## Analysis of Cultural Background Variables and Cultural Biases in Counseling

Yulia Roza<sup>1</sup>, Silvianetri<sup>2</sup>, Syed Ali Kamran<sup>3</sup>, Muqaddas Shah Butt<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> State Islamic University of Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar, Indonesia

<sup>2</sup> State Islamic University of Mahmud Yunus Batusangkar, Indonesia

<sup>3</sup> Sultan Sharif Ali Islamic University, Brunei Darussalam

<sup>4</sup> Champasak University, Laos

**Corresponding Author:** Yulia Roza, E-mail; yuliaroza1989@gmail.com

### Article Information:

Received December 05, 2022

Revised December 05, 2022

Accepted December 18, 2022

### ABSTRACT

The background of this research is the lack of attention to the variables in the cultural background of counselors and clients in a counseling process. In fact, variables such as beliefs or religion, values, norms, traditions, and language have a crucial role in counseling. This research uses a systematic literature study approach with data collected from various sources consisting of books, journals, research reports, and articles on cultural background and cultural bias in counseling. Reference data is sorted by periodization, keywords, and limitations. This study aims to analyze the cultural background variables and cultural biases involved in the counseling process. The results of this study are expected to help counselors to create effective communication in the counseling process and achieve counseling goals.

**Keywords:** *Cultural Background, Cultural Bias, Cross-Cultural Counseling.*

Journal Homepage <https://journal.minangdarussalam.or.id/index.php/jdpe/>

This is an open access article under the CC BY SA license

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>

How to cite: Ilham, M., Desmita, D., Monef, A., & Hizrati, H. (2022). Anxiety Description of Social Workers in Assisting Children in Conflict with the Law. *World Psychology*, 1(1). <https://doi.org/10.55849/wp.v1i1.51>

Published by: Yayasan Minang Darussalam

## INTRODUCTION

An effective counseling process does not only rely on understanding aspects of the counselor's and client's psychology, but also relates to understanding the variables of cultural background along with cultural biases that can be present and interfere with the counseling process. Tribal background, group relationships, beliefs or religions, values, norms, traditions, and language are some examples of cultural variables inherent in both

counselors and clients (Adhiputra, 2013). Meanwhile, cultural bias can be interpreted as a situation where there is no mutual understanding of one culture or another culture (Erida, 2019).

The ability to understand the cultural variables and cultural biases present between the counselor and the client will help a counselor in counseling practice. This ability will create effective communication in counseling because the client will feel that they have a lot in common with the counselor or feel that the counselor can understand them well (Bruns & Roeder, 2019; Friman, 2022; Mudinillah, 2016, 2022; Perry, 2020; Salam & Mudinillah, 2021; Sholih & Dewi, 2021; Vrika et al., 2022). On the other hand, if a counselor fails to understand this in the counseling process, effective communication will not be created so and the counselor will have difficulty in helping the client. For this reason, counselors must have cultural sensitivity that can make them escape from cultural biases, understand and be able to appreciate cultural diversity, and have culturally responsive skills (Syahril, 2018).

The importance of understanding and breaking away from cultural biases so that a counselor can have cultural sensitivity has been widely discussed by counseling practitioners, academics and researchers (Dianovi et al., 2022; Hendra et al., 2022; Nopiana et al., 2022; Rohmalimna et al., 2022). For example, research conducted by Zulfa, Hashim, and Maulida (2022) on the importance of cultural sensitivity as an entry point in a counseling service process. Gumilang's research (2015) on the need for counselor cultural sensitivity in the process of implementing guidance and counseling services. Research by Octavida, Destiana, and Nugroho (2019) on psychopedagogics with a cultural framework to reduce cultural biases in order for students to be interested in the counseling process in multicultural schools (Sima et al., 2019).

Based on existing research, it becomes interesting to analyze more deeply the variables of cultural background and cultural biases involved in the counseling process. Yulita, Silvianetri, and Elviana (2021) stated that guidance and counseling must be held based on considerations of socio-cultural diversity in society (Mudinillah & Putri, 2021). The statement emphasizes that variables in the cultural background of a counselor and client have an important role in counseling, so a counselor must have a good understanding of this so that his credibility is maintained (Hartini et al., 2022; Hikmah et al., 2022; Kartel et al., 2022; Zakaria et al., 2022).

Thus, this study aims to analyze the variables of cultural background and cultural biases involved in the counseling process. The results of this study are expected to help counselors to create effective communication in the middle of the counseling process and achieve counseling goals (Amrina, Gazali, et al., 2021; Ariska & Mudinillah, 2022; Nadya et al., 2022; Trisoni et al., 2022).

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research uses a systematic literature study approach sourced from various literature on cultural background and cultural bias in counseling. Literature review is an objective study through an overview and critical review of research or non-research

references related to the topic studied (Hart, 2018). The literature that is the source of the data is taken from various sources consisting of books, journals, research reports, and articles on cultural background and cultural biases in counseling. The data collected are sorted based on: (1) Disambiguation, published literature from 2012 to 2022; (2) Keywords, literature in selection based on cultural bias keywords, cross-cultural counseling, culturally sensitive counselors; (3) Restriction, referring to the material that most appears to the surface. Furthermore, the author analyzes more about the problems discussed systematically so that they can be used as comprehensive conclusions (Amrina, Mudinillah, et al., 2021; Gabriela et al., 2022; Hikmah et al., 2022; Rezi et al., 2022).

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **A. Cultural Variables In Counseling**

#### **1. Beliefs or Religions**

In the social science point of view, religion is everything that is associated with beliefs and rites that belong together with a community (Marzali, 2017). Meanwhile, in terms of culture, religion or belief is one of the elements that make up a culture. Koentjaraningrat (in Solihah, 2019) states that religion can be interpreted as a cultural value system that is influential in the understandings created in the majority of people's views on matters that are considered valuable in life.

This value system works by providing a purpose, where one of the goals of religion is to provide guidance to humans to return to the divine lap (Mahfuz, 2019). In more detail, Walsh (in Rofiqi, 2019) states that religion provides benchmarks and norms for achieving piety, good interaction with fellow human beings and nature, and building peace, harmony and love in the family.

Many studies show that prospective clients are interested in religious involvement in the counseling process, but excessive focus on this aspect can also be detrimental to the client because it can push the client into a situation of resignation to the situation (Rofiqi, 2019). For this reason, the counselor must be really careful in understanding the client's religious or religious background as well as be aware of the portion of religious approaches used in the counseling process. The counselor should look at a client's religious background as a factor that has a great influence in shaping the character of the individual. Wati, and Silvianetri (2018) stated that in principle the religious education that a person receives focuses on the formation of habits that have conformity with religious provisions. A person who believes in a religion will always follow the values contained in their teachings. This is what then contributes to shaping a person's character in behavior.

#### **2. Values and Norms**

The word value in Indonesian is called *value* in English. Etymologically, *value* in English comes from the Latin *valere* which means to be strong.

Kosasih Jahiri (in Sauri, 2019) defines value as a direction about what is right, good, and just. The values created by this human spirit when approved by a group of people in a community environment will create a value system that then becomes cultural values (Sudjatnika, 2017). Furthermore, spranger ( in Muslimin, Farhan, Hasanah, & Arifin, 2021) mentioned that there are six values that apply in society, namely; the value of science, economic value, religious value, artistic value, social value, and political value. In fact, from these values only one will grow into a strong value of influence so as to shape a person's character (Sudjatnika, 2017).

If nilai is something that comes from a person about what is considered good and bad, then the norm is a barometer used to determine the reasonableness of an act or actions carried out by a person or group of people in society (Elwijaya, Neviyarni, & Irdamurni, 2021) . This would necessarily refer to orders, prohibitions, and punishments for those who violate them. The real manifestation of this norm in a culture can be customary law. Yustim, Nelisma, Silvianetri, and Mazida (2022) explained that etymologically the term customary law has its roots in the Arabic *huk'mun* and *Adah* which means order or provision. This law will bring moral sanctions, exclusion from associations, and other provisions if violated by members of its society.

In the context of cultural culture, values and norms are one of the elements of life fairy that are supported by a community that supports a culture that is used as a guide for social life and develops into a social system (Syamaun, 2019). These values and norms are passed down through generations by members of society from one generation to the next. An individual as a member of a cultural society will experience a process of continuous learning about their cultural values and norms throughout life. This socialization process will directly influence and shape the individual character of the members of the community supporting the culture.

### **3. Tradition**

Mahardhani, and Cahyono (2017) stated that tradisi can be interpreted as a legacy from the past which is the result of human creation whose objects can take the form of objects visible to the eye, beliefs, legends and mites. As a concept, the tradition that lives in the midst of society has several characteristics. Sibarani (2015) explains about three characteristics of tradition, namely; (1) It is a habit as well as a process of jointly owned activities of a community supporting a culture, (2) creating and strengthening the characteristics and identity of the supporting community, (3) being known and recognized by the supporting community.

Every human behavior is born due to the existence of impulses that according to modern psychiatrists are grouped into two main parts, namely physiological and psychic (Syamaun, 2019). Tradition can be categorized as one of the forms of psychic impulses. As a hereditary custom that becomes an

inseparable part of the society supporting a culture, tradition has influenced a person through its various objects within the community. Material objects, beliefs, legends or myths that are present in the midst of society have shaped a person's character and personality because this has been used as the main reference in living a social life.

#### **4. Language**

Sapir (in Suhandra, 2019) explains that language is an intuitive way for humans to convey desires, ideas and emotions through symbols. Furthermore, Suhandra (2019) states that the majority of expert opinions state that language as a means of communication is *manasuka*, based on general agreement, and is a symbol of sound.

Language according to Keraf (in Devianty, 2017) serves as a tool for self-expression, communication, mingling and making adjustments in the social environment, and social control. This makes language have an important role for an individual in his life. From the *bahasa* used by a person, it can be seen that many things become individual characters such as their intelligence, emotions, desires, and origin and cultural background. For a counselor, language and communication skills are competencies that must be improved to overcome differences in cultural backgrounds such as language, race, ethnicity, and skin color in the counseling process (Afrizal, & Silvianetri, 2021). If you don't understand this definition of *bahasa* well, it will be easy to misunderstand the meaning of the language that a person speaks. A word with a positive connotation in one area may have a negative connotation in another, and vice versa. This problem can become more complex if it involves figurative language that is still widely used by people in various regions.

#### **B. Cultural Bias In Counseling**

In the KBBI the word bias means deviation. While in the Oxford dictionary it is defined as a strong feeling in favor of or against a group of people or one of the opinions that is not usually based on a fair judgment. On the other hand, the word culture refers to events in a broad and complicated multi-dimensional scope that are difficult to define (Kusherdiana, 2020). In simple terms, Dewantara (in Kusherdiana, 2020) describes culture as a product of human civilization. Thus, cultural bias can be interpreted as the tendency to support or oppose an outcome or the fruit of another person's civilization based on unjust judgments. This unjust assessment occurs because the interpretation made of other people's cultures is measured based on the meaning or values of the culture they adhere to or believe in.

Darmawati (2022) stated that some examples of cultural influences that can lead to cultural biases are; (1) interpretation of language, (2) ethical concepts of right and wrong, (3) understanding of facts, (4) ethnic or racial biases, whether intentional or not, and (5) religious beliefs. It can be seen that all these examples are influences derived from cultural background variables as previously outlined.

In the counseling process, it often happens that the counselor has a different cultural background from the counselor. These differences in cultural backgrounds can lead to cultural biases that result in ineffective communication. In fact, a complete and thorough understanding and understanding is needed in communication between two people with different cultures in order to create effective communication (Suryani, 2013). Culture and people are aspects that interact with each other in life (Khairiah, & Silvianetri, 2022). This interaction will create a character that will always be attached to the individual self.

To overcome the problem of cultural bias in the counseling process, a counselor must have cultural sensitivity. Counselors must truly understand that everyone has a different character because they are influenced by their respective cultural backgrounds.

## **CONCLUSION**

Beliefs, traditions, values and norms, as well as language are aspects of cultural background that influence the formation of individual character. As a member of a cultural society, an individual has socialized and absorbed all elements of their culture throughout life. The characters created are the fruit of a long process of learning and life experiences in their cultural environment. In the counseling process, two different characters of the counselor and the client meet each other and have the potential to face problems from cultural biases. A counselor must be truly competent in understanding the client's cultural background thoroughly in order to be able to be free from cultural biases and be able to create effective communication during the counseling process so that counseling goals can be achieved properly.

## **REFERENCES**

- Adhiputra, A. A. (2013). *Konseling Lintas Budaya*. Graha Ilmu.
- Afrizal, A., & Silvianetri, S. (2021). Sumbangsih Budaya Terhadap Pola Tutur Kata Konselor dan Klien Dalam Pelaksanaan Layanan Bimbingan Dan Konseling. *Jurnal Al-Taujih: Bingkai Bimbingan dan Konseling Islami*, 7(1), 45-50.
- Darmawati, B. (2022). Cultural Identity And Cultural Biases.
- Devianty, R. (2017). Peran bahasa Indonesia dan bahasa Daerah dalam pendidikan karakter. *Ijtimaiyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Ilmu Sosial*, 1(2), 79-101.
- Elwijaya, F., Neviyarni, N., & Irdamurni, I. (2021). Sistem, Nilai, Dan Norma Dalam Pendidikan Dasar: Sebuah Kajian Literatur. *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 5(1), 1840-1845.
- Erida, E. (2019). Bias Budaya Dalam Pelayanan Konseling. *Al Irsyad: Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling Islam*, 24-31.
- Gumilang, G. S. (2015). Urgensi kesadaran budaya konselor dalam melaksanakan layanan bimbingan dan konseling untuk menghadapi masyarakat ekonomi Asean (MEA). *Jurnal Guidena*, 5(2), 45-58.



- Hart, C. (2018). Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Research Imagination. In *Journal of Perioperative Practice*.
- Khairiah, V. L., & Silvianetri, S. (2022). Penerapan Kato Nan Ampek Dalam Proses Konseling Oleh Seorang Konselor Di Sumatera Barat. *Al-Isyraq: Jurnal Bimbingan, Penyuluhan, dan Konseling Islam*, 5(1), 1-8.
- Kusherdiana, R. (2020). Pengertian Budaya, Lintas Budaya, dan Teori yang Melandasi Lintas Budaya. *Pemahaman Lintas Budaya SPAR4103/MODUL, 1*, 1-63.
- Mahardhani, A. J., & Cahyono, H. (2017). Harmoni Masyarakat Tradisi Dalam Kerangka Multikulturalisme. *ASKETIK: Jurnal Agama dan Perubahan Sosial*, 1(1).
- Mahfuz, A. G. (2019). Hubungan Agama dan Budaya. *Tawshiyah: Jurnal Sosial Keagamaan dan Pendidikan Islam*, 14(1), 41-61.
- Marzali, A. (2017). Agama dan kebudayaan. *Umbara*, 1(1).
- Muslimin, E., Farhan, F., Hasanah, A., & Arifin, B. S. (2021). Nilai-Nilai Karakter Sebagai Pembentuk Peradaban Manusia di Era Globalisasi. *As-Syar'i: Jurnal Bimbingan & Konseling Keluarga*, 3(1), 110-120.
- Oktavida, I. H. N., Destiana, A., & Nugroho, M. A. (2019, July). Konselor Psikopaedagogik Berbingkai Budaya Untuk Meminimalisir Bias Bias Budaya Upaya Menarik Siswa Melakukan Konseling Di Sekolah Berbasis Multikultural. In *SEMBIKA: Seminar Nasional Bimbingan dan Konseling*.
- Rofiqi, M. A. (2019). Relevansi Agama Dan Spiritual Dalam Konseling. *JCOSE Jurnal Bimbingan Dan Konseling*, 1(2), 61-71.
- Sauri, H. S. (2019). Pengertian Nilai. *Diakses Melalui file. upi. Edu*.
- Sibarani, R. (2015). Pendekatan antropolinguistik terhadap kajian tradisi lisan. *Retorika: Jurnal Ilmu Bahasa*, 1(1), 1-17.
- Solihah, R. S. (2019). Agama dan Budaya. *Al-Mada: Jurnal Agama, Sosial, Dan Budaya*, 2(1), 77-94.
- Sudjatnika, T. (2017). Nilai-Nilai Karakter Yang Membangun Peradaban Manusia. *Al-Tsaqafa: Jurnal Ilmiah Peradaban Islam*, 14(1), 127-140.
- Suhandra, I. R. (2019). Hubungan Bahasa, Sastra, Dan Ideologi. *Cordova Journal: languages and culture studies*, 9(2), 172-182.
- Suryani, W. (2013). Komunikasi Antar Budaya Yang Efektif. *Jurnal Dakwah Tabligh*, 14(1), 91-100.
- Syahril, S. (2018). Konseling Lintas Budaya dalam Perspektif Budaya Indonesia. *Jurnal Al-Taujih: Bingkai Bimbingan dan Konseling Islami*, 4(1), 76-86.
- Syamaun, S. (2019). Pengaruh Budaya Terhadap Sikap dan Perilaku Keberagamaan. *At-Taujih: Bimbingan dan Konseling Islam*, 2(2), 81-95.
- Wati, W., & Silvianetri, S. (2018). Pengaruh Konseling Islam Dalam Meningkatkan Kesadaran Sholat Berjamaah Siswa. *Alfuad: Jurnal Sosial Keagamaan*, 2(2), 83-91.
- Yulita, B., Silvianetri, S., & Elviana, E. (2021). Penerapan Konseling Berbasis Budaya Minangkabau. *Jurnal Al-Irsyad: Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling Islam*, 3(1), 155-170.

- Yustim, Y., Nelisma, Y., Silvianetri, S., & Mazida, Y. (2022). Larangan Perkawinan Sesuku Dalam Budaya Minangkabau Dan Implikasinya Terhadap Konseling Budaya. *Jurnal Sekretari Universitas Pamulang*, 9(1), 8-16.
- Zulfa, Z., Hasyim, I., & Maulida, R. (2022). Pentingnya Kepekaan Budaya Untuk Mewujudkan Entry Point Dalam Konseling Lintas Budaya. In *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Bimbingan dan Konseling Universitas Negeri Malang* (pp. 272-280).

---

**Copyright Holder :**

© Yulia Ruza.et.all (2022).

**First Publication Right :**

© Darussalam: Journal of Psychology and Educational

**This article is under:**

