



## CULTURAL SKILLS PROFILES OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING STUDENT

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### ABSTRACT

*This study aims at revealing profile the cultural skills of guidance and counseling student. The cultural skills are one of the important components that influence the effectiveness of counseling services. The design of this study is a survey research. Subjects of this study are 120 guidance and counseling students' class of 2013 in three universities sampling with cluster random sampling technique. The research instrument used questionnaire. Data analysis is a descriptive method using percentage. The results obtained were as follows, 1) the cultural skills of 78,7% of students categorized as good, and 2) the cultural skills of 21,3% of students categorized as adequate. The description of the cultural skills of guidance and counseling student will be explained in detail based on a review of relevant research results.*

**Keywords: Profile, cultural skills, guidance and counseling student**

### INTRODUCTION

Therapeutic relationships will be intensified in the counseling process the moment the counselor is able to position the counselee equally in the effort to solve the problem or obstacles encountered by the counselee. Counselors should always look at the counselee as an individual who has the potential and able to utilize its potential in order to solve the problems or obstacles. To be able to facilitate the counselee in realizing and exploiting his potential well, the counselor should establish a positive relationship with the counselee.

Positive relationships with the counselee will be realized by the growing awareness of the counselor to realize that the counselee comes with a different set of values or/ cultures (Sue, 1992). Different cultural sets in the counseling process require more understanding and compassionate from the counselor. The counseling process will be performed smoothly and thoroughly if the counselor is able to understand well the counselee served hence, the counselee feels comfortable and able to be themselves in the counseling process.

Hogan (2013) states that cultural skills are an ongoing and multi-layered process that involves a wide range of personal, interpersonal, and organizational levels within the individual. Therefore, there are four dimensions that are required to become a culturally competent practitioner that understands culture as a multilevel and multidimensional set, understanding cultural barriers, practicing culture-centered communication skills, designing and implementing organizational culture. The four skills, as a matter of fact, discuss two main themes: the first two skills to enhance understanding and cultural awareness, while the third and fourth skills deal with the effective interpersonal techniques and organizational change strategies.

Counselor's cultural skills are positively correlated with counseling skills. In addition, culturally-centered counseling approaches are positively correlated with treatment outcomes (West-Olatunji, 2009). Culturally-related counseling consists of practice between individuals from the different background which is based on race, ethnicity, ability, sexual orientation, religion, origin and National culture (Sue, 2001). Pursuant to



the result of the study of Pattersen(2004), it is important to grow multicultural awareness in the counseling process. The growing need for counseling services and the increasing number of ethnic minority counselors demands counselors to be culturally competent to inhibit potential factors that hamper the counseling process. Counselor's inability in culture will cause friction with the counselee since the counselee comes with a different set of values with the counselor. This indicates that the continuous effort of the counselor to continuously improve his personal capacity thus, his counseling service is a meaningful service for the life of the counselee.

Empirical findings indicate that cultural skill is an important aspect that prominently contributes to the counseling process. Hays(2008), Pen & Post(2012), Sue & Sue(2012), reveal that multicultural competence has a significant impact on the outcomes of counseling. These findings suggest that counselors as professional practitioners should be experienced assisting counsees who come from diverse backgrounds (Collin & Arthur, 2010). Therefore it is imperative for counselors to master and acquire cultural skills. The importance of cultural skills possessed by counselors is shown by the research of Constantine(2002) and Fuertes & Brobst(2002) which shows that the multicultural skills of counselors are variants that contribute significantly to the level of satisfaction of minority counselors. In addition, demonstrating the mastery of cultural skills when interacting with counsees can strengthen the working alliance and encourage the realization of a positive therapeutic experience(Fuertes et al.,2006; Inman,2006).

Students of counseling candidates are considered to possess sufficient counseling competence when they possess the adequate cultural skill. This means that it is important for prospective students to have an awareness of cultural differences and to develop their multicultural competencies(CARCREP,2015). Multicultural competence is urged to be trained and possessed by prospective counselor students as it is a significant predictor of the increase in multicultural competence(Johson & Jackson Williams,2014). In addition, the increasingly diverse population of backgrounds with diverse needs also requires the counseling profession to be responsive to the needs of such diverse counselors(Evans & Ramsay,2015).

This present study on the profile of these cultural skills involves students in guidance and counseling (BK) study program. This present study is important in order to enforce better understanding the cultural skills of the students on guidance and counseling study program who contribute to the establishment of the counseling competencies and in order to improve the quality of the preparation of professional counselor candidates. This research is aimed at obtaining an idea about the cultural skills of students of guidance and counseling program. Information on cultural skills contributes to the formation of counseling competencies and it is important to be perceived and learned by the students in order to make they prepare and foster their counseling competencies as well as it is necessary for effective counseling services. In addition, the cultural skills profile of students of guidance and counseling program are expected to be one of the study materials for universities in formulating the curriculum of guidance and counseling particularly for the subjects related to the formation of counseling competence.

## **METHOD**

The design of this present study was using survey approach. The subject involved were the students of guidance and counseling program in 7th Semester AY 2016/2017 from three universities namely Universitas Negeri Malang, Yogyakarta State University, and Indonesian University of Education. The subjects were 120 students. The technique of sampling in this present study employed cluster random sampling. The open questionnaire was used for data collection instrument. The data analysis of this present study employed a descriptive analysis using percentage model.



## RESULTS

Cultural skill is a mastery of guidance and counseling students regarding the cultural aspects that contribute to the satisfactory performance of the counseling process. The instrument for measuring guidance and counseling student cultural skills was developed from the theory suggested by Hogan (2013). The cultural skills tool consists of 4 dimensions: 1) culture as a multilevel element, 2) cultural barriers, 3) cultural-centered communication skills, and 4) design and implementation of organizational culture. The cultural skills tool consists of 25 items of questions. From the total of 25 items used to measure cultural skills, there are eight items to measure the cultural dimension as a multilevel element, eight items for measuring cultural barriers, five items for measuring cultural-centered communication skills, and four items for measuring the design and implementation of organizational culture.

Before the instrument was being used for data collection, validity testing and instrument reliability were performed. Instrument validity was tested by product moment Pearson, while reliability was using Cronbach alpha. The result of the instrument validity test obtained the result that all items have value more than 0.576 and it can be concluded that all items are valid. Instrument reliability test results obtained the value of Cronbach alpha of 0.727. The reliability of instruments  $>0.600$  indicates that cultural skills instruments have good reliability.

The results of basic communication skills of 120 students of guidance and counseling program are described as follows. From 120 students, 94 students(78.3%) of their cultural skills are in the high category, and 26 students(21.7%) are in the medium category. No students whose cultural skills are in the low category. This study also describes the description of variable data. Description of variable data is intended to describe the average respondent's response to the variables of cultural skills and their dimensions. The description is done on minimum, maximum and average value parameters. An item description of a cultural skill variable is presented in the following Table 1.

**Table 1. Cultural Skill Variable Item Description**

Dimension	Indicator	Item	STS		TS		N		S		SS		Mean
			f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
KB1	KB1.1	1	0	0%	4	3%	30	25%	55	46%	31	26%	3.94
		2	2	2%	6	5%	37	31%	57	48%	18	15%	3.69
	KB1.2	1	1	1%	5	4%	27	23%	60	50%	27	23%	3.89
		2	0	0%	3	3%	42	35%	60	50%	15	13%	3.73
	KB1.3	1	0	0%	1	1%	12	10%	50	42%	57	48%	4.36
		2	0	0%	11	9%	59	49%	34	28%	16	13%	3.46
	KB1.4	1	1	1%	2	2%	19	16%	61	51%	37	31%	4.09
		2	1	1%	16	13%	54	45%	37	31%	12	10%	3.36
	<b>Mean of Cultural Dimension as Multilevel and Multidimensional</b>												<b>3.81</b>
	KB2	KB2.1	1	0	0%	2	2%	24	20%	57	48%	37	31%
KB2.2		1	0	0%	1	1%	21	18%	59	49%	39	33%	4.13



KB2.3	1	0	0%	3	3%	15	13%	34	28%	68	57%	4.39
	2	0	0%	19	16%	44	37%	39	33%	18	15%	3.47
KB2.4	1	0	0%	3	3%	40	33%	57	48%	20	17%	3.78
	2	0	0%	12	10%	49	41%	37	31%	22	18%	3.58
KB2.5	1	1	1%	4	3%	26	22%	60	50%	29	24%	3.93
KB2.6	1	2	2%	5	4%	38	32%	48	40%	27	23%	3.78
<b>Mean of Cultural Obstacles Dimension</b>												<b>3.89</b>
KB3.1	1	2	2%	3	3%	24	20%	36	30%	55	46%	4.16
	2	1	1%	7	6%	45	38%	37	31%	30	25%	3.73
KB3.2	1	2	2%	4	3%	21	18%	54	45%	39	33%	4.03
KB3.3	1	0	0%	4	3%	20	17%	68	57%	28	23%	4.00
KB3.4	1	1	1%	6	5%	19	16%	65	54%	29	24%	3.96
<b>Mean of Culturally-centered communication skill dimension</b>												<b>3.98</b>
KB4.1	1	2	2%	4	3%	16	13%	45	38%	53	44%	4.19
	2	0	0%	1	1%	24	20%	60	50%	35	29%	4.08
KB4.2	1	1	1%	2	2%	21	18%	46	38%	50	42%	4.18
	2	1	1%	5	4%	51	43%	52	43%	11	9%	3.56
<b>Mean of cultural organization dimension</b>												<b>4.00</b>
<b>Mean Variable of cultural skill</b>												<b>3.92</b>

The result of the item description of the cultural dimension as multilevel and multidimensional shows that the score of the answer of the majority of items is 4, which means the subject of research shows sufficient understanding of the problem and all the requirements regarding the task are contained in the answer. The average dimension score of 3.81 indicates that respondents respond positively to the cultural dimension as multilevel and multidimensional. The item with the highest score is the KB1.3 indicator (recognizing the culture as multidimensional) item 1 is "Explain why it is important for counsellors to recognize and understand all aspects of culture that counselees bring in the counselling process?" Which means that respondents respond most positively to the cultural dimension as multilevel and multidimensional through the item?

The item description of the dimensions of cultural barriers shows the score of answers to the majority of items is 4, which means the subject of research shows sufficient understanding of the problem and all the requirements of the task are contained in the answer. The average dimension score of 3.89 indicates that respondents respond positively to the dimensions of cultural barriers. The item with the highest score is the KB2.3 indicator (able to recognize the preconceptions, stereotypes, and discrimination) item 1 that is "Explain why it is important for counsellors to provide counselling services to all counselees who come?" Which means that respondents give the most positive response to the cultural barriers through the item?



International Journal of Humanities and Applied Social Science (IJHASS)  
E-ISSN: 2471-7576  
E-mail: editor@ijhassnet.com  
<http://ijhassnet.com/>

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The item description of the culturally-centered communication skill dimension indicates the score of the majority answer item is 4, which means the subject of research shows sufficient understanding of the problem and all the requirements regarding the task are contained in the answer. The average dimension score of 3.98 indicates that respondents respond positively to the dimensions of culture-centered communication skills. The item with the highest score is the KB3.1 indicator(having sufficient personal capability) item 1 that is "Explain why it is important for counsellors to show a personal capacity that is tolerant of cultural diversity in the counselling process?" Which means that respondents provide the most positive response to the skill dimension culturally-centered communication through the item?

The item description of the organizational culture dimension shows the score of the majority answer of the item is 4, which means the subject of research shows sufficient understanding of the problem and all the requirements regarding the task are contained in the answer. An average score of dimensions of 4.00 indicates that respondents respond positively to the organizational culture dimension. The item with the highest score is the KB4.2 indicator(able to recognize and implement the external relations of the organization) item 1 that is "Explain why it is important for the counsellor to foster good relations with other parties and stakeholders related to the counselee problem?" which means that respondents provide the most response Positive to the organizational culture dimension through the item.

The average score of cultural skill variables of 3.92 indicates that respondents provide a positive response to the overall culture skill variables. The dimension with the highest average score is the organizational culture dimension with an average score of 4.00 which indicates that respondents give the most positive response to the cultural skill variables through the aforementioned dimension.

## DISCUSSION

According to the analysis of the research results, it shows that most of the guidance and counseling students(78.3%) were categorized as a high category for aspects of cultural skills. This was also shown by the relatively good average value of each dimension. When observed from the four dimensions of constructing a cultural skill, it was found that all average dimensions get a relatively high score. The dimension that has the highest average score is the organizational culture dimension. This means that guidance and counseling students already possess these four dimensions well, particularly in the cultural organization dimension.

Culture is a mindset and pattern of action of an individual. Thus, different individuals have different cultures. Culture is meant for the overall way of living together of a group of people, which includes their forms of thinking, acting, and feeling that is expressed, for instance in belief, law, language, art, and custom, as well as in stuff such as houses, clothing, and tools. Therefore it requires a counselor's understanding and self-awareness regarding the individual, particularly the counselee that is very diverse and unique. Counseling which does not take into account different counseling cultures will disservice the counselee. Counseling has been used as a means to suppress (press) and is designed to instill individualistic cultural values(Sue, 1992).

In the counseling process, the counselor should be sensitive and responsive to cultural diversity and cultural differences between client groups and between their own counselors and clients. Counselors should be aware of the cultural diversity implications of the counseling process. Cultures adopted by the individual are prone to cause problems within human interaction in everyday life. Problems can arise from individual interactions with the environment. It is entirely probable problems occur in relation to the elements of culture, a culture that is embraced by individuals, cultures that exist within the individual, and the demands of other cultures that exist around the individual.



International Journal of Humanities and Applied Social Science (IJHASS)  
E-ISSN: 2471-7576  
E-mail: editor@ijhassnet.com  
<http://ijhassnet.com/>

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In the counseling process, there is an interaction between counselors and counsees involving different cultures. When the counselor does not have sufficient knowledge of cultural skills, then it is feared that the counseling process will be disrupted. Knowledge and understanding of the important cultural factors are required to be comprehended by counselor since in the interaction with the counselee they will encounter cultural differences in which if it is not anticipated properly it will be an obstacle to the process of changing the counselee. Cultural barriers in the counseling process are not just language differences but differences in beliefs and even understanding of disease can cause problems in intercultural communication (Van et al 2002).

Positive relationships with the counselee will be realized by the growing awareness of the counselor to realize that the counselee comes with a different set of values or cultures. Different cultural sets in the counseling process require more understanding and comprehension from the counselor. Counseling process will be performed effortlessly and thoroughly when the counselor is able to understand well the counselee served hence the counselee feel comfortable and able to be himself in the counseling process. In counseling, communication counselor should pay attention to cultural background and habitual individual counselee (Ivey, 2010).

Corey (2013) asserted that counseling is conducted wherever, which is essentially not a cultural bias. Counseling should consider the various cultural content involved in the process. Counselee mindset and counselee pattern are an absolute element which must be understood in the context of helping counselee. Therefore, cultural counseling skills (cross-cultural counseling) need to be trained to the counselor to improve the effectiveness of their performance.

The counseling process is required to pay attention and respect the cultural elements. The eradication of individual problems is highly associated with cultures that affect individuals. Counseling services awaken counsees involved with a particular culture; Realize the problems that arise, experienced related to certain cultural elements, and ultimately the alleviation of individual problems need to be associated with the cultural elements concerned. It can be concluded that the absolute cultural skills to be mastered by the counselor since it becomes an imperative factor in dealing with counsees who come from various backgrounds. Therefore, it is expected that the counselor's education program can reformulate effective strategies in the formation of multicultural competencies in prospective counselor students. The effectiveness of the establishment of multicultural competence of counselor candidates one of them is through the change of learning strategy. The use of a combination of didactic instruction, experiential activities, watching films, creating journals, inviting speakers, and group processes are seen as contributing to the formation of multicultural competence (Roysircar et al, 2003).

## CONCLUSION

In accordance with the result of this present study regarding cultural skill profile of guidance and counseling students, it can be concluded that the cultural skills they possessed are relatively high. Pursuant to the result of this present study, it is suggested to Guidance and Counseling Department to be able to reformulate curriculum and competencies accomplishment for subject course related to counseling, particularly cultural skill as a means to qualify a professional and competent counselor.

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