



THE 2nd INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING
“COUNSELING RESONANCES ON
MENTAL HEALTH EMERGENCIES AND AWARENESS”

COUNSELOR COMPETENCIES ACCORDING TO COUNSELING
MULTICULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

Sigit Ridho Mukti¹, Dzurriah Aninda Syafa², Denisa Aurora Prameswary³, Yunita Dwi
Febrianti⁴

¹State University of Surabaya, Lidah Wetan, Sub-District Lakarsantri, Surabaya, Indonesia,
sigit.22050@mhs.unesa.ac.id

²State University of Surabaya, Lidah Wetan, Sub-District Lakarsantri, Surabaya, Indonesia,
dzurriah.22068@mhs.unesa.ac.id

³State University of Surabaya, Lidah Wetan, Sub-District Lakarsantri, Surabaya, Indonesia,
denisa.22048@mhs.unesa.ac.id

⁴State University of Surabaya, Lidah Wetan, Sub-District Lakarsantri, Surabaya, Indonesia,
yunita.22057@mhs.unesa.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The diversity of cultures and individual backgrounds requires counselors to have competence and sensitivity to culture in providing counseling services. In the context of an increasingly multicultural society, counselors must be able to understand and respect cultural differences and consider their influence in the counseling process. This includes not only differences in language and traditions, but also the values, beliefs, and norms that influence the way individuals understand and respond to life's problems. This research describes how counselors can integrate and apply competency standards in the multicultural counseling process. The aim of this research is to examine the alignment between counselor competency standards and their application in the counseling process. This research uses a literature study method. Data was collected from a study of books, journals, and other sources to explain multicultural counseling, its position as a basic potential counselor, the role of multiculturalism in the implementation of counseling, competency standards for multicultural counselors, and the counseling process. The result of this research is multicultural skills, knowledge, and awareness are important for counselors to have in the counseling process.

Keywords: Counseling, Counselor, Competence, Multicultural

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past four decades, the United States has been in the spotlight as a country with a culturally diverse population, with non-white groups making valuable contributions to its cultural richness. In this period, the focus of attention has increasingly been on valuing the uniqueness and rights of minority cultures. The movement for equal rights and the civic movement, as well as the enforcement of legislation, have paid considerable attention to racial and gender equality in the late 20th century. In addition, the projected growth in the real number and percentage of minority populations in America in the coming decades has increased the urgency to develop positive relationships among all our cultures. This increased national attention is also reflected in the counseling profession, which has experienced a significant increase in attention to emerging multicultural counseling needs and issues in the past three decades.

Indonesia is a country rich in cultural diversity, a priceless gift that must be well preserved. However, this diversity is also a challenge that cannot be ignored. This is because it can lead to various problems such as corruption among fellow ethnicities, the practice of nepotism, poverty, environmental damage, separatist movements, and more seriously, the loss of humanity in respecting individual rights as part of multiculturalism. Therefore, awareness of the importance of multiculturalism is very important.

As intercultural interactions increase, the role of counselors becomes crucial in providing counseling services that are responsive to cultural diversity. Counselors are required to have adequate competence in understanding and appreciating cultural differences in counseling, given the complexity of the increasingly diverse backgrounds of client's. Therefore, research on counselor competence from a multicultural counseling perspective is a very relevant and significant topic to be explored further. In this context, research becomes even more relevant in explaining how counselors can integrate and apply competency standards in the multicultural counseling process.

Multiculturally competent counselors must have a deep self-awareness and understanding of their own culture. They also have knowledge of the cultures of their client's, including their cultural values, beliefs, and practices. Multiculturally competent counselors also have the skills to build respectful and appreciative relationships with client's who come from different cultures. Counselors can also use culturally appropriate interventions to help client's achieve their counseling goals. In the implementation of multicultural counseling, counselors need to have a deep understanding of the cultural diversity and cultural background of their client's. This includes an understanding of the cultural norms, values, beliefs, and traditions that influence the clients perceptions and responses to life issues. Counselors should also be able to understand and appreciate the unique experiences of each individual, without making assumptions or generalizations based on their culture or background.

Counselors also need to have effective communication skills for interactions with clients from different cultures. This includes the ability to listen empathetically, ask open-ended questions that allow the client to share their experiences and communicate empathy and appreciation for cultural diversity. These skills are important for building a strong and trusting counseling relationship between the counselor and the counselee. Counselors should have in-depth knowledge of issues relevant to various cultural differences. This includes an understanding of the experiences of discrimination or marginalization that the client may have experienced due to their cultural identity. By understanding the cultural context of the

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client, the counselor can provide more targeted and relevant counseling interventions. Competent in understanding and responding to the needs of clients from different cultural backgrounds, counselors also need to have a high self-awareness of their own personal identities and values. This self-awareness is important to avoid prejudices or stereotypes that may arise in the counseling process, as well as to understand how their personal identities and values may affect interactions with clients. By developing high self-awareness, counselors can be more sensitive to the needs and experiences of their clients and more effective in helping them achieve their counseling goals. Counselor competence in multicultural counseling is very important because of the increasing cultural diversity and counselors can serve clients from various cultural backgrounds, help clients to better understand themselves and their place in the world, and help counselees to develop the skills they need to overcome problems and achieve their goals according to their individual characteristics.

It is hoped that this study can explore the extent to which multicultural counselor competencies are implemented in daily counseling practice. The results can provide valuable insights into the challenges and barriers faced by counselors in working with clients from different cultural backgrounds, as well as effective strategies to overcome these challenges. By understanding the factors that influence the implementation of multicultural counselor competencies, we can identify areas where improvements are needed in counseling practice, as well as develop better solutions to support counselors in working with clients from different cultures.

METHOD

The type used in this research is a literature study and uses a qualitative approach because the data produced is in the form of descriptions. Literature studies are carried out by looking for information about relevant theories and concepts so that they can be used as references. In this research, data sources or references are obtained through books, journals, ebooks, and previous research. The data collection technique used is the analysis of related literature reviews. The literature obtained is analyzed by reducing the data through selection, classification, comparison, so that conclusions can be drawn that can form a systematic and complete study.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Counseling Multicultural discusses the differences between counselor and client. In areas such as gender, social class, language, ability/disability and race/ethnicity. Point of view multicultural seeks to provide a framework conceptual that recognizes the diversity that is of a pluralistic society and demonstrate a bridge of common concern that connects all people regardless of their differences (Lee & Ramsey in Wibowo, 2002).

Based on some of the opinions above, then it can be concluded that multicultural counseling is a relationship counseling involving two or more people - who plays the role of counselor and client - with differences in cultural backgrounds in terms of race/ethnicity as well as age, gender, socio-economic and the like. Multicultural in the implementation of counseling is a perspective that is used with the aim of

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facilitating the implementation of counseling. Multicultural is also a perspective used by counselors when implementing counseling. Where counselors who have multicultural competence will find it easier to understand and adjust to the counsees they handle. That way the counselee will also be facilitated in carrying out the counseling process, where the client will more easily communicate what he feels and thinks. Multicultural counseling is also one of the counseling that is likely to be very useful for the present. This can be expected because with the development of time, there are more and more classifications in the layers of society, which in turn each layer of society has a different culture. The classification of each society in several aspects is what ultimately causes the culture to be more diverse. Experts also say if counselors with a multicultural perspective have "This curiosity and preparation is expected of counselors working with multicultural clients, as they show respect and deference to clients from cultures that are foreign to them" (Hays, 2008; Toporek & Worthington, 2014). From this statement, it can also be concluded that counselors who have a multicultural perspective in carrying out the counseling process are able to better appreciate cultural differences in the counsees they handle.

The basic potential of counselors is also considered very appropriate if counselors are provided with multicultural counseling skills. It aims to facilitate and make counseling easier and more optimal in dealing with clients from various cultural backgrounds. Multicultural basic skills also increase counselors to be more respectful, where the outcome obtained is that the client feels more valued and feels comfortable because his culture can be accepted and understood during the counseling implementation process. Multicultural also has an important role in the sustainability of counseling for the present. It is also connected to the development of today's increasingly diverse cultures. Multicultural perspectives can be one of the most effective options in carrying out the counseling process with a variety of backgrounds of today's clients.

Everyone has different backgrounds and beliefs, including differences in value systems, culture, religion, customs, politics, and other aspects, making it necessary for counsellors to be multiculturally competent in order to help their clients. Multiculturally competent counsellors have the ability to provide assistance to clients from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The counsellor's sensitivity to cultural diversity is quite important, the counsellor's role is to assist the client in making decisions that are in accordance with his/her worldview, not to live according to the counsellor's values/views. As a counsellor brings his/her own culture into the counselling process, the counsellor needs to understand the various cultural factors that influence the counselling process with the client, ultimately adjusting the approach according to the cultural context. Culture is more than just ethnic or racial heritage, it also includes factors such as age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, physical and mental abilities, and socioeconomic status. Cultural competence is the ability to engage in the act of creating conditions that maximise the optimal development of clients and systems. Multicultural counselling competence is defined as the acquisition of awareness, knowledge, and skills that counsellors need in a pluralistic democratic society (i.e. the ability to communicate, interact, negotiate, and intervene on behalf of clients from diverse backgrounds), and at the same level. Be it the organisational/community level. (DW Sue & Torino, 2005) Sue, Arredondo, and McDavis (1992) and Arredondo and colleagues (1996) have developed a conceptual framework for

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competencies and standards in multicultural counselling. Their dimensions of competence involve three areas:

1. Beliefs and Attitudes (awareness)

Counsellors who do not have awareness will hinder the counselling process because individuals have different backgrounds, whether from gender, family, values, race, religion and so on. The counsellor's awareness that cultural sensitivity is essential for any form of assistance. Counsellors strive to understand clients from their clients' point of view. Counsellors respect clients' religious and spiritual beliefs and values. Counsellors are comfortable with the differences between themselves and others in terms of race, ethnicity, culture, and beliefs. Counsellors also recognise that theories and techniques in counselling may not be sufficient or appropriate for all clients and all the problems that clients face counsellors also need to look at the client's cultural background.

2. Knowledge

In the implementation of multicultural counseling, counselors have certain knowledge such as their own racial and cultural heritage and how it affects them personally. The dynamics of racism, discrimination, and stereotyping are in a position to detect the counselor's racist attitudes and feelings. In this case, the counselor must understand the worldview of clients with various cultural backgrounds and not impose values or expectations and stay away from stereotypes. Counsellors with cultural skills understand that external socio-political forces can affect all groups and their influence on minorities can create barriers that prevent minorities from utilizing mental health services. The form of knowledge that counselors have is the historical background, values, traditions, client population, characteristics, and resources of the community. This also includes minority family structures, beliefs, values and hierarchies. Counselors with cultural skills are able to help clients utilize traditional support. In some areas where counselors lack knowledge, clients can seek out resources that can help them. The more knowledgeable the counselor is about culturally diverse groups, the greater the chance of becoming a multicultural professional counselor.

3. Skills

In the counseling process, counselors are responsible for guiding clients to solve their problems. The counselor's competence in implementing multicultural counseling has certain skills by modifying or adapting interventions to accommodate cultural differences. Counselors do not force clients to follow one counseling approach because they realize that techniques may be culturally bound. It is important for counselors to be able to receive verbal and non-verbal messages and convey them appropriately. What can be done to help counselors in terms of skills is to engage with minority individuals outside the counseling room such as community events and neighborhood groups. In addition, counselors can seek educational experiences as well as training and consultation to help improve skills in the multicultural counseling process. Consulting with culturally sensitive professionals can also be done by counselors to determine follow-up actions.

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In the implementation of multicultural counseling, counselors should have counseling competency standards. So that this can be integrated in the process of implementing counseling. Some journals review and analyze the integration of counselor competency standards

1. A white counselor in a multicultural world: Understanding the need for a spiritual, multicultural counseling course (2020).

What white counselors need to be competent is humility, which expresses the counselor's willingness to enter the client's world and learn from them. By asking questions and being open with the client, it shows genuine respect and a desire to know more about the client's worldview. The counselor is expected to understand the client's culture and develop curiosity. The more effectively the counselor understands the client's story, the more appropriate it is to offer strategies and empathy. The challenge that the counselor may face is in providing attention and understanding because it ensures that the client feels valued without discrimination so the counselor must be aware of limitations and prejudices that may not be realized. Counselors must learn, ask questions, and listen so that openness will be formed. Respect between the counselor and the client arises when a thorough understanding of similarities and differences exists and develops through empathy.

White counselors must enter into an ethnorelative perspective regarding the client. This occurs when individuals observe people and situations from a perspective of openness to new, opposing perspectives. Counselors must continually improve their cultural competence in order to better understand and support their multicultural clients. This involves a deeper understanding of the lives, struggles, and needs of individuals from different backgrounds. Therefore, it is important to understand the cultural complexities between counselors and clients so as to integrate multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills in the counseling process.

2. Theory and practice of counseling and psychotherapy (2017)

Multicultural is a perspective used when implementing counseling where counselors who have competence will more easily adjust clients so that the counseling process runs effectively. Cultural diversity and the classification of society will continue to grow, making multicultural counseling competence very important. that counselors with a multicultural perspective have the curiosity and preparation needed to work with clients from different cultural backgrounds. They appreciate and respect the cultural differences that exist among their clients. This means that such counselors have a deep understanding of how culture influences individual perceptions, values, beliefs, and behaviors. From this statement, it can also be concluded that counselors who have a multicultural perspective in carrying out the counseling process are able to better appreciate cultural differences in the clients.

3. The Counselor Multicultural Competence: An Exploration Study of Counselor Competence in the Counseling Process (2022)

An exploratory study that aimed to provide a comprehensive and detailed picture of counselors' experiences and practices in the field. The study provided evidence that there are significant challenges in understanding and internalizing fundamental cultural values, which is an

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important foundation in multicultural counselling practice as out of 100 respondents only 10 demonstrated a high level of understanding and competence. In addition, it showed a lack of communication skills from counselors as out of 100 respondents only 20 had such skills.

The data proves that counselors have significant shortcomings in integrating multicultural counseling competencies. So further changes need to be made because if this is left unchecked, it will have a broad impact on the counseling process. In this case, additional training and support in improving competencies is necessary. Through comprehensive training programs and opportunities to interact with individuals from different cultural backgrounds, counselors can develop a deeper understanding and the necessary skills to navigate diverse cultural contexts.

In the multicultural dimension of counseling, it is important for counselors to understand and adapt their approach to the client's cultural context. The integration of cultural values and spirituality into client work can foster deeper relationships, better understanding, and more effective therapeutic outcomes. By strengthening multicultural client competencies and attending to the unique cultural needs of their clients, counselors can play a more effective role in helping individuals from various cultural backgrounds.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion above, it is found that it is important for counselors to have cultural awareness. The culture referred to here is all aspects, circumstances, backgrounds, beliefs and so on that are owned by their diverse clients. A multicultural perspective can be an effective option in carrying out the counseling process with diverse client backgrounds. Counselors believe that cultural awareness and sensitivity to one's own cultural heritage are essential in any form of assistance. In addition, counselors also have knowledge of the characteristics and resources of the community. The more knowledgeable counselors are about culturally different groups, the more likely they are to be good multicultural counselors. Counselors are responsible for guiding their clients in the therapeutic process. Counselors modify and adapt their interventions to accommodate cultural differences. Counselors do not force their clients into one counseling approach and counselors recognize that counseling techniques may be culturally bound. Counselors are able to convey and receive verbal and nonverbal messages appropriately. So, it can be concluded that it is important for counselors to have multicultural competencies in multicultural counseling, namely awareness, knowledge, and skills. By strengthening multicultural client competence, counselors can have a good perspective on multiculturalism so that they can play an effective role in helping individuals from various cultural backgrounds.

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