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# INTEGRATION OF HUYULA CULTURAL VALUES IN GROUP COUNSELING SERVICES: A LOCAL WISDOM-BASED MODEL FOR GENDER AWARENESS AMONG HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

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**Abstract :** *Gender inequality in secondary schools remains a serious problem characterized by strong gender role stereotypes and low social participation of female students. In Gorontalo Province, this condition is reinforced by patriarchal cultural constructs that are internalized in educational practices and have not been addressed contextually through school services. This study offers a solution through the integration of local wisdom values (huyula) into group counseling services as a culture-based approach to increase students' gender awareness. The study aims to analyze the initial conditions of gender awareness, describe the implementation of huyula-based group counseling, and evaluate changes in students' understanding and attitudes toward gender equality. The study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method in three high schools in Gorontalo Province. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and documentation, then analyzed thematically. The results showed that the integration of the values of mutual cooperation, equal responsibility, and mutual respect in group counseling encouraged a shift in students' perspectives toward a more equal view of gender roles. These findings emphasize the importance of counseling services based on local wisdom as a contextual solution in strengthening gender awareness in schools.*

**Keyword** *: gender awareness; group guidance; huyula culture; multicultural counseling; high school*

**Abstrak :** Ketidaksetaraan gender di sekolah menengah tetap menjadi masalah serius yang ditandai oleh stereotip peran gender yang kuat dan partisipasi sosial yang rendah dari siswa perempuan. Di Provinsi Gorontalo, kondisi ini diperkuat oleh konstruksi budaya patriarkal yang terinternalisasi dalam praktik pendidikan dan belum ditangani secara kontekstual melalui layanan sekolah. Studi ini menawarkan solusi melalui integrasi nilai-nilai kebijaksanaan lokal (huyula) ke dalam layanan konseling kelompok sebagai pendekatan berbasis budaya untuk meningkatkan kesadaran gender siswa. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis kondisi awal kesadaran gender, mendeskripsikan implementasi konseling kelompok berbasis huyula, dan mengevaluasi perubahan pemahaman dan sikap siswa terhadap kesetaraan gender. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus di tiga sekolah menengah atas di Provinsi Gorontalo. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi,

wawancara mendalam, diskusi kelompok terfokus, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis secara tematis. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa integrasi nilai-nilai kerja sama mutual, tanggung jawab yang setara, dan saling menghormati dalam konseling kelompok mendorong pergeseran perspektif siswa menuju pandangan yang lebih setara tentang peran gender. Temuan ini menekankan pentingnya layanan konseling berbasis kebijaksanaan lokal sebagai solusi kontekstual dalam memperkuat kesadaran gender di sekolah.

**Kata Kunci** : Kesadaran gender; bimbingan kelompok; budaya Huyula;
konseling multikultural; sekolah menengah atas

## PENDAHULUAN

Gender inequality in education remains an ongoing issue in Indonesia and Southeast Asian countries. Gender awareness, which includes understanding the equality of roles, rights, and responsibilities between men and women, has not been fully internalized among secondary school students. Various studies show that gender bias in adolescents often manifests itself in different expectations and responses to student behavior based on gender, where the same behavior is interpreted unequally through gender schemes that have been internalized in educational practices (Granger et al., 2024). At the high school level, gender stereotypes often appear in the form of assumptions that men are more suited to be leaders, more active in decision-making, and dominant in public spaces, while women are positioned as supporters and more suited to domestic roles. Such stereotypes also influence learning practices, including a tendency to avoid certain topics or approaches that are considered to trigger gender bias, particularly in science subjects and other strategic academic fields (Abd Razak et al., 2025).

These conditions have a direct impact on the academic and social participation of female students. A school environment that is not gender-sensitive contributes to low female involvement in class discussions, school organizations, and access to leadership roles. The literature shows that more inclusive gender awareness is closely related to increased academic participation, access to leadership, and the quality of students' social interactions in secondary school environments (Jefferson et al., 2023). This is particularly relevant given the high risk of social exclusion and low student engagement in secondary schools in Southeast Asia (Abd Razak et al., 2025). Therefore, strengthening a school climate that supports gender equality is an important protective factor in the social and academic development of adolescents (Çetinkaya & Bulut, 2023).

Gorontalo Province is one of the regions that is still strongly influenced by patriarchal cultural constructs in social and educational life. Patriarchal values tend to be maintained through daily interactions at school, including in the form of normalizing gender role assumptions and microaggressions that frame authority, leadership, and rewards in a gender-biased manner (Ateşoğlu & Demirkasimoğlu, 2025). Empirical findings show that gender role bias is not only formed in the family environment but is also reproduced institutionally through educational practices that are insensitive to equality, where student behavior is interpreted differently based on gender and then

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observed and replicated by the students themselves (Ateşoğlu & Demirkasimoğlu, 2025).

In this context, Guidance and Counseling (G&C) services in schools have a strategic role in building self-awareness, social attitudes, and values of justice in students. G&C services are institutionally designed to address students' developmental needs through assessment, counseling, group guidance, and consultation with parents and school stakeholders. Various studies show that BK services can function as an effective means of promoting gender-sensitive norms through staff training, structured guidance programs, and consultations based on the local cultural context (Roziqi, 2025). However, in practice, BK services are often normative and not fully contextualized with the cultural background of students.

On the other hand, the people of Gorontalo have a wealth of local wisdom that is rich in egalitarian social values, one of which is the culture of huyula. Huyula is a system of mutual cooperation values that emphasizes cooperation, equal responsibility, social solidarity, and mutual respect among community members regardless of background or gender. These values are in line with the principles of gender equality and character education, and have great potential to be integrated into guidance counseling services as a framework for developing students' social awareness. The literature shows that local and indigenous values can be systematically operationalized in school guidance programs as a foundation for strengthening adolescent development (Çetinkaya & Bulut, 2023; Roziqi, 2025).

Previous studies also show that multicultural counseling approaches are effective in increasing social sensitivity, awareness of injustice, and students' understanding of diversity (Muslim et al., 2026; Siregar, 2024). From an educational psychology perspective, multicultural counseling is positioned as an approach that encourages critical awareness of power relations, including gender-based inequalities, and creates a reflective space to challenge practices that have been normalized in schools (Malone et al., 2025). However, most studies still focus on the multicultural context in general and have not specifically explored the potential of local wisdom as a basis for counseling intervention (Hulukati et al., 2025).

Based on this gap, this study offers something new by integrating huyula cultural values into group counseling services as a contextual approach to increasing high school students' gender awareness. This study aims to analyze the initial conditions of students' gender awareness, describe the process of implementing huyula culture-based group counseling, and evaluate changes in students' understanding and attitudes toward gender equality after participating in these services. The research results are expected to enrich the scientific knowledge of Guidance and Counseling, particularly in the development of a guidance and counseling service model based on local wisdom that is relevant to the socio-cultural context of schools.

## METODE

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to deeply understand the dynamics of students' gender awareness in a school context that is laden

with specific social and cultural constructions. The case study approach is considered appropriate because changes in students' gender awareness cannot be separated from the institutionalized gender regime in the school environment, including patriarchal norms that have the potential to limit value transformation through formal education. Therefore, a contextual study that examines how these norms operate locally is essential in this research (Ateşoğlu & Demirkasimoğlu, 2025). In addition, qualitative methodology is conceptually recognized as capable of capturing the diversity of human experiences and subjective meanings that arise in social phenomena that are deeply rooted in a particular cultural context.

The research was conducted in three high schools in Gorontalo Province, which were selected to represent the socio-cultural context relevant to the research objectives. The research subjects included students, guidance and counseling (BK) teachers, and school officials directly involved in the implementation of services. Participants were deliberately selected to obtain rich and in-depth information related to BK service practices and the dynamics of gender awareness in the school environment.

Data collection was conducted through participatory observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGD), and documentation studies. The FGD technique was used to explore changes in students' perceptions and social norms after participating in group guidance services, given that this method is effective in identifying shifts in collective awareness and shared meanings in the context of school-based interventions (Livingston et al., 2024). In-depth interviews were used to explore the subjective experiences of students and guidance counselors regarding their sense of involvement, support, and changes in attitudes toward gender equality, as recommended in context-based educational research (M. J. Ireland et al., 2025).

The research intervention took the form of *huyula* culture-based group counseling services conducted over 8–12 weeks as part of the school counseling practice. The integration of evaluation into group counseling and school consultation activities enabled triangulation between student data, school counselors, and service documents, thereby enhancing the credibility of the research findings (Çetinkaya & Bulut, 2023). The data obtained were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing to identify patterns of change in students' gender awareness in a systematic and sustainable manner.

## HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN

Preliminary study results indicate that students' gender awareness remains low to moderate. Approximately 55% of students exhibit gender role stereotypes, particularly in terms of leadership and social role division, while the influence of patriarchal culture (45%) remains strong in student interactions in the classroom and school activities. These findings are in line with literature documenting the persistence of traditional gender role assumptions and gender-based microaggression practices in school environments, which indirectly shape how students understand authority, leadership, and social role division (Ateşoğlu & Demirkasimoğlu, 2025). In addition, students' gender perceptions are also influenced by values and attitudes transmitted through family and

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intergenerational transmission, which are then reinforced through social interactions at school (I. Chen et al., 2025; W. Chen et al., 2025).
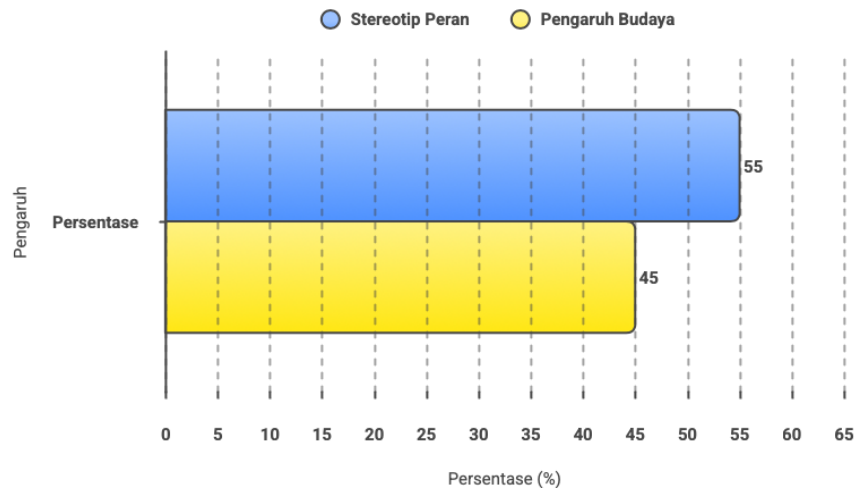


**Diagram 1. Map of Student Gender Awareness Issues**

The implementation of *huyula* culture-based group counseling is carried out by instilling the values of mutual cooperation (30%), equal responsibility (40%), and mutual respect (30%) in each service session. The strategies used include group discussions, role simulations, and cultural value reflections as a means of internalizing social norms oriented towards justice and togetherness. These values represent culturally embedded socio-ethical orientations, such as cooperation, reciprocity, harmony, and respect, which in the literature are seen as important foundations for moral reasoning and ethical decision-making in adolescents (Ntumi et al., 2026). In addition, students' perceptions of fair and respectful relationships in the context of group interactions also contribute to their social engagement and adjustment at school (Tolmacz et al., 2024).

The results of interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) after the intervention showed changes in students' views on gender roles. Students began to view leadership and social participation as shared responsibilities that can be carried out by both men and women, rather than being determined by gender. Although the available literature has not reported much direct experimental evidence on the impact of group guidance on changes in students' gender attitudes, these findings can be understood as a response to efforts to target gender norms that have been institutionalized in schools (Ateşoğlu & Demirkasimoğlu, 2025). Thus, the identified changes are more accurately understood as shifts in students' meanings and social interpretations, rather than as evidence of causality that can be generalized broadly.
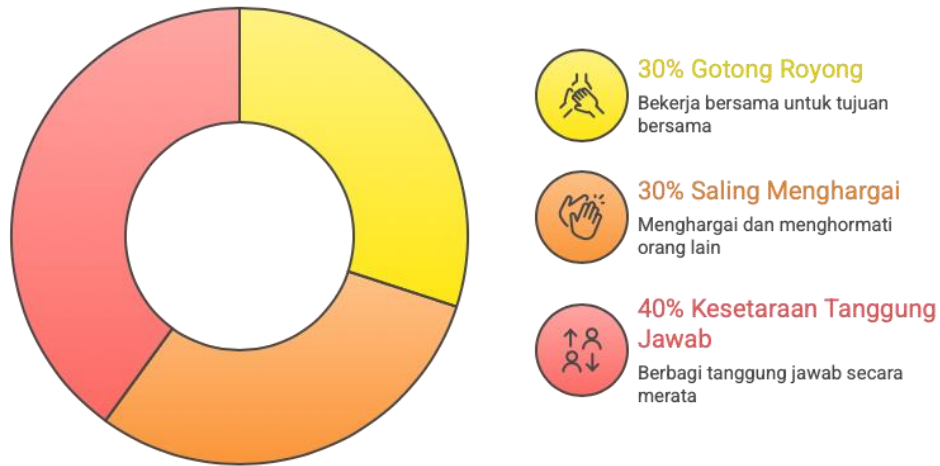
**Diagram 2. Huyula Values in Strengthening Gender Awareness**

The findings of this study reinforce the framework of multicultural counseling and culturally responsive counseling, which emphasizes the importance of alignment between counseling interventions and the socio-cultural context of students. Previous studies have shown that culturally and linguistically responsive school-based group interventions are considered feasible, acceptable, and capable of increasing participant engagement, especially when cultural values are used as an entry point in the counseling process (Lyu & Hyde, 2025; Ma et al., 2023). In the context of higher education, programs that affirm students' cultural identities and values are also associated with increased belonging and sustained participation, which has important implications for the secondary school context (Brooms, 2024).

The integration of *huyula* cultural values in counseling services functions as "value anchors" that help students reflect on and regulate their social relationships in a more just and equitable manner. The literature confirms that local cultural norms that emphasize harmony, cooperation, reciprocity, and mutual respect can improve the fit of counseling interventions and participants' acceptance of the ethical messages conveyed (Jiang et al., 2025). This approach is consistent with the Nusantara culture-based guidance strategy, which is positioned to increase the relevance and acceptability of guidance counseling service implementation in schools, although most of the empirical support is still conceptual and based on implementation feasibility (Roziqi, 2025).

However, the findings of this study need to be understood contextually. Cross-cultural literature reminds us that social processes and the formation of gender awareness are greatly influenced by the context of collectivist values, intra-cultural variations, and local social dynamics, so that the generalization of findings needs to be done carefully (Jiang et al., 2025; Lu et al., 2024; Zhiqiao et al., 2025). Therefore, the results of this study are more appropriately positioned as a contextual contribution that enriches the understanding of the potential of local wisdom-based group guidance in

strengthening gender awareness, while also opening up space for further research with more diverse designs and locations.

## KESIMPULAN

This study concludes that huyula-based group counseling is effective in increasing gender awareness among high school students in Gorontalo Province. The integration of local wisdom into counseling services can reduce gender role stereotypes and encourage students' understanding of social role equality. This approach not only strengthens multicultural counseling practices but also contributes practically to the development of contextual and locally-based counseling services. Therefore, the huyula-based group counseling model is recommended for wider implementation as part of strengthening character education and gender awareness in schools.

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## PERNYATAAN KONTRIBUSI PENULIS

IKS contributed to the formulation of the research idea, development of the conceptual framework, and drafting of the initial manuscript. SK was responsible for the research methodology design and supervision of the data collection process. MRP contributed to qualitative data analysis and interpretation of the research findings. PS was involved in field data collection and research documentation. SRP contributed to the literature review and strengthening of the theoretical framework. JMST was responsible for manuscript editing, formatting adjustments, and final review prior to submission.

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