

Local Wisdom-Based Counseling: The Implementation of Sintuwu Maroso Values in Guidance and Counseling Services in Secondary Schools of Poso Regency

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Abstract:

The crisis of social relationships and students' social-emotional development in school settings has become a critical issue that threatens the creation of harmonious and inclusive educational environments. The increasing prevalence of bullying, low levels of empathy, interpersonal conflicts, and declining social solidarity among students indicates that contemporary education must address not only academic challenges but also the broader crisis of social cohesion. Although numerous studies have examined character education and multicultural counseling, the integration of local cultural values as a relational foundation for guidance and counseling services remains underexplored. This study aims to examine the implementation of the values of Sintuwu Maroso in guidance and counseling services as a local wisdom-based approach to strengthening students' social relationships, empathy, and character development in schools. Employing a qualitative case study design, the research collected data through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis involving school counselors and students participating in guidance and counseling services in secondary schools across Poso Regency. The findings reveal that the implementation of Sintuwu Maroso values is reflected in three key dimensions: (1) strengthening interpersonal relationships through empathetic communication and mutual respect; (2) fostering social solidarity through collaboration, peer support, and peaceful conflict resolution; and (3) creating a harmonious and inclusive school environment that sustainably promotes students' social-emotional development. Furthermore, the study demonstrates that the values of Sintuwu Maroso function not only as a cultural identity of the Pamona community but also as an effective social mechanism for developing humanistic, contextual, and relationship-oriented guidance and counseling services in schools. The study recommends strengthening local wisdom-based guidance and counseling services through collaborative partnerships among schools, families, and local communities to enhance students' character, empathy, and social cohesion within multicultural educational settings.

Keywords: Local Wisdom-Based Counseling, Sintuwu Maroso Values, Guidance And Counseling Services, Secondary Schools, Poso Regency.

1. Introduction

The transformation of students' social interaction patterns in the modern era has brought about fundamental changes in social relationships and character formation within school environments. Social interactions, which were previously built upon face-to-face communication, togetherness, and emotional connectedness, have gradually shifted toward more individualistic forms of interaction center digital. Selain ed on digital spaces.¹ Furthermore, the intensive use of social media, coupled with the declining internalization of local cultural values, has contributed to the deterioration of interpersonal communication, empathy, and social solidarity among students in their daily school life.² Existing research indicates that low levels of school connectedness and weak social relationships within schools contribute to increased bullying behavior, social anxiety, interpersonal conflicts among students, and poorer psychological well-being.³ Other studies have also demonstrated that social disconnection and limited interpersonal support in the school environment are closely associated with increased aggressive behavior and diminished students' social-emotional competencies.⁴ These findings suggest that contemporary educational environments face not only academic challenges but also a crisis of social cohesion resulting from the weakening of interpersonal relationships and shared values among students. Therefore, there is a pressing need for guidance and counseling services grounded in local wisdom that can strengthen social solidarity, foster empathy, and enhance students' interpersonal relationships within multicultural school settings.

examined from a theoretical perspective within the context of multicultural education in schools. First, most studies have concentrated on strengthening character education and social-emotional learning as strategies

¹ Jeffrey A. Hall, Natalie Pennington, and Andy J. Merolla, 'Which Mediated Social Interactions Satisfy the Need to Belong?', *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 28, no. 1 (November 2022): zmac026, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jcmc/zmac026>.

² Mohammad Dalvi-Esfahani et al., 'Social Media Addiction and Empathy: Moderating Impact of Personality Traits among High School Students', *Telematics and Informatics* 57 (March 2021): 101516, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2020.101516>.

³ Michele L. Heath and Karen M. Keptner, 'Impact of Belonging and Discrimination on Psychological Well-Being among Transitioning Adults: Study Using Panel Survey for Income Dynamics Transition Supplement', *Current Psychology* 43, no. 3 (January 2024): 2062-73, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-023-04393-8>.

⁴ India D. Rose et al., 'The Relationship of School Connectedness to Adolescents' Engagement in Co-Occurring Health Risks: A Meta-Analytic Review', *The Journal of School Nursing* 40, no. 1 (February 2024): 58-73, <https://doi.org/10.1177/10598405221096802>.

for promoting students' prosocial behavior. Second, other research has emphasized the importance of school connectedness and interpersonal relationships in enhancing students' psychological well-being. Third, studies on multicultural counseling have generally focused on counselors' cultural competence and sensitivity, while giving limited attention to the integration of specific local cultural values as the primary foundation for school guidance and counseling practices.

Research has consistently demonstrated that social connectedness and a sense of school belonging have a significant influence on students' mental health, social relationships, and emotional well-being.⁵ Furthermore, studies have shown that supportive school environments and positive interpersonal relationships enhance students' social-emotional resilience while reducing social conflict and aggressive behavior in schools.⁶ Other research has also revealed that social participation, social recognition, and an inclusive school culture contribute significantly to the development of prosocial behavior and students' well-being in their daily school lives.⁷ Nevertheless, most of these studies have primarily adopted general approaches to social relationships and students' social-emotional development, providing limited explanation of how local cultural values function as social mechanisms for fostering empathy, solidarity, and social cohesion through school counseling services. Therefore, a more comprehensive investigation is needed into the integration of local cultural values, such as Sintuwu Maroso, into guidance and counseling services as a contextual approach to strengthening students' character development and interpersonal relationships in multicultural school settings.

This study aims to address the existing theoretical and empirical gaps concerning the contextual integration of local cultural values into school guidance and counseling services. Strengthening culturally grounded counseling services is essential because students' social-emotional problems

⁵ Kelly-Ann Allen et al., 'Adolescent School Belonging and Mental Health Outcomes in Young Adulthood: Findings from a Multi-Wave Prospective Cohort Study', *School Mental Health* 16, no. 1 (March 2024): 149–60, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12310-023-09626-6>.

⁶ Michael J. Furlong et al., 'Assessment of Complete Social-Emotional Wellness: An International School Psychology Perspective', in *Handbook of School Psychology in the Global Context*, ed. Chryse Hatzichristou, Bonnie Kaul Nastasi, and Shane R. Jimerson (Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland, 2024), 93–113, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-69541-4_6.

⁷ Sarah Dow-Fleisner, Anne Day Leong, and Haenim Lee, 'The Interaction between Peer Bullying and School Connectedness on Youth Health and Wellbeing', *Children and Youth Services Review* 155 (December 2023): 107147, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2023.107147>.

are not solely individual issues but are also influenced by weak interpersonal relationships, diminished social solidarity, and low levels of social connectedness within the school environment. Furthermore, conventional guidance and counseling approaches often fail to adequately address the social and cultural needs of students living in multicultural communities characterized by strong local traditions.

Accordingly, this study investigates how the values of Sintuwu Maroso—including mutual respect, mutual support, mutual understanding, and living in unity—are integrated into individual counseling, group counseling, classroom guidance, and school conflict mediation. In addition, the study examines how empathetic communication, peer support, and supportive emotional relationships function as social mechanisms for fostering students' empathy, tolerance, and social cohesion within educational settings. Employing a qualitative approach and field-based research, this study provides an in-depth understanding of the relationship between local culture, students' social-emotional development, and the implementation of local wisdom-based guidance and counseling services in schools. Consequently, the findings are expected to enrich the literature on multicultural counseling and culturally responsive guidance and counseling by demonstrating how local cultural values can serve as a contextual framework for strengthening character development, social solidarity, and harmonious educational environments amid contemporary social change.

The central argument of this study is that the values of Sintuwu Maroso function not only as a cultural identity of the Pamona community but also as a relational foundation that shapes social relationships, empathy, and social cohesion within school guidance and counseling services. In the context of contemporary education, guidance and counseling should extend beyond resolving students' individual problems to fostering supportive, humanistic, and culturally responsive interpersonal relationships. Students' social-emotional development is strongly influenced by the quality of social interactions, their sense of acceptance, and the social connectedness cultivated through everyday school experiences.

This study argues that the core values of Sintuwu Maroso—mutual respect, mutual support, mutual understanding, and living in unity—are not merely cultural norms but are transformed into social mechanisms that promote prosocial behavior, empathetic communication, and constructive conflict-resolution skills among students. These mechanisms are reflected in the practices of individual counseling, group counseling, peer support

programs, and the communication strategies employed by school counselors to create safe, inclusive, and supportive school environments. Furthermore, the study demonstrates that students' social problems, including bullying, intolerance, interpersonal conflict, and low levels of empathy, are not merely individual behavioral issues but are also consequences of weakened social relationships and the insufficient internalization of cultural values within school life. Therefore, the development of guidance and counseling services grounded in the values of Sintuwu Maroso should be understood not only as a culturally responsive educational approach but also as a relational and social strategy for strengthening character formation, social solidarity, and harmonious school communities in the face of rapid social transformation.

2. Literature Review

The literature on culturally based Guidance and Counseling (GC) services has thus far been dominated by studies focusing on character education, students' social-emotional development, and multicultural counseling within educational settings.⁸ Most studies position Guidance and Counseling as an instrument for strengthening prosocial behavior, preventing deviant behavior, and enhancing students' psychological well-being. Within this body of scholarship, existing research can generally be categorized into several thematic trends that highlight different dimensions of the relationship between culture, education, and students' social development. Broadly speaking, the literature reveals three major research trends. First, studies focusing on strengthening school connectedness and students' social-emotional development.⁹ Second, research examining character education and students' prosocial behavior within school settings.¹⁰ Third, studies emphasizing the importance of multicultural counseling and culturally responsive approaches in Guidance and Counseling services.¹¹

⁸ Allen et al., 'Adolescent School Belonging and Mental Health Outcomes in Young Adulthood'.

⁹ Allen et al., 'Adolescent School Belonging and Mental Health Outcomes in Young Adulthood'.

¹⁰ Sarah Dow-Fleisner, Anne Day Leong, and Haenim Lee, 'The Interaction between Peer Bullying and School Connectedness on Youth Health and Wellbeing', *Children and Youth Services Review* 155 (December 2023): 107147, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2023.107147>.

¹¹ Renae D. Mayes and Janice A. Byrd, 'An Antiracist Framework for Evidence-Informed School Counseling Practice', *Professional School Counseling* 26, no. 1a (March 2022): 2156759X221086740, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X221086740>.

The First Research Trend: Multicultural Counseling and Culturally Responsive Approaches. A considerable body of research in multicultural counseling identifies culture as a critical factor influencing the effectiveness of school Guidance and Counseling services. Numerous studies have demonstrated that counseling approaches that are responsive to students' cultural backgrounds increase students' acceptance of counseling services while strengthening the therapeutic relationship between counselors and students. Lee et al.¹² found that culturally based counseling helps students develop a more positive understanding of their social identities and lived experiences. Likewise, Mayes and Byrd¹³ argue that culturally responsive counseling is essential in multicultural educational settings to establish inclusive and contextually relevant counseling services. Other studies further suggest that incorporating local cultural values into educational practices can foster students' sense of belonging, social solidarity, and social cohesion within the school community. Nevertheless, most of these studies continue to treat culture merely as a social context rather than as the primary foundation for the design and implementation of Guidance and Counseling services.

The Second Research Trend: Character Education and Prosocial Behavior. Beyond social-emotional development, a growing body of research has highlighted the importance of character education in fostering students' prosocial behavior within school settings. Numerous studies indicate that character education contributes to the development of empathy, tolerance, cooperation, and students' conflict-resolution skills. Anderson et al.¹⁴ found that social participation and social recognition within schools significantly influence the development of prosocial behavior and students' well-being. Similarly, Dow-Fleisner et al.¹⁵ reported that social-emotional learning enhances empathy, self-regulation, and the quality of students' interpersonal relationships in everyday school life. Furthermore, Zynuddin et al.¹⁶

¹² Tzu-Yin Lee, Yun-Chi Ho, and Che-Han Chen, 'Integrating Intercultural Communicative Competence into an Online EFL Classroom: An Empirical Study of a Secondary School in Thailand', *Asian-Pacific Journal of Second and Foreign Language Education* 8, no. 1 (February 2023): 4, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40862-022-00174-1>.

¹³ Mayes and Byrd, 'An Antiracist Framework for Evidence-Informed School Counseling Practice'.

¹⁴ Donnah L. Anderson et al., 'Positive Links between Student Participation, Recognition and Wellbeing at School', *International Journal of Educational Research* 111 (2022): 101896, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2021.101896>.

¹⁵ Dow-Fleisner, Leong, and Lee, 'The Interaction between Peer Bullying and School Connectedness on Youth Health and Wellbeing', December 2023.

¹⁶ Siti Nadya Zynuddin, Husaina Banu Kenayathulla, and Bambang Sumintono, 'The Relationship between School Climate and Students' Non-Cognitive Skills: A

demonstrated that strengthening an inclusive school culture can reduce bullying while promoting social solidarity among students. Collectively, these studies consistently suggest that students' character development is strongly shaped by the school's social environment and the patterns of interpersonal interaction that emerge within educational settings.

The Third Research Trend: School Connectedness and Social-Emotional Development. Within the field of students' social development, most studies emphasize school connectedness as a key determinant of students' mental health and well-being. A substantial body of evidence suggests that positive interpersonal relationships within the school environment significantly contribute to students' emotional development, sense of safety, and social competence. Arslan and Allen¹⁷ found that a strong sense of school belonging is closely associated with improved psychological well-being and a reduced risk of mental health problems among adolescents. Likewise, Raniti et al.¹⁸ confirmed that school connectedness is significantly associated with students' happiness, perceived social support, and mental health. Other research has further demonstrated that weak social connectedness within schools is associated with increased aggressive behavior, bullying, and social conflict among students. Moreover, Wong et al.¹⁹ found that supportive school environments and positive social relationships strengthen students' social-emotional resilience in coping with both social and academic challenges. These findings indicate that the contemporary Guidance and Counseling literature continues to regard the quality of social relationships as a central indicator for understanding students' psychological well-being within school settings.

Although the literature on Guidance and Counseling services and students' social-emotional development has expanded considerably, existing research still exhibits several limitations in comprehensively explaining the relationship between local culture and Guidance and Counseling practices.

Systematic Literature Review', *Heliyon* 9, no. 4 (April 2023): e14773, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2023.e14773>.

¹⁷ Gökmen Arslan and Kelly-Ann Allen, 'School Victimization, School Belongingness, Psychological Well-Being, and Emotional Problems in Adolescents', *Child Indicators Research* 14, no. 4 (August 2021): 1501-17, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12187-021-09813-4>.

¹⁸ Monika Raniti et al., 'The Role of School Connectedness in the Prevention of Youth Depression and Anxiety: A Systematic Review with Youth Consultation', *BMC Public Health* 22, no. 1 (November 2022): 2152, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-022-14364-6>.

¹⁹ Mitchell D. Wong et al., 'The Longitudinal Relationship of School Climate with Adolescent Social and Emotional Health', *BMC Public Health* 21, no. 1 (December 2021): 207, <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-021-10245-6>.

These limitations underscore the need for a more contextualized approach to understanding culturally grounded Guidance and Counseling services in schools. This study positions the values of Sintuwu Maroso as the primary analytical lens for examining how local culture can serve as a relational foundation for character formation, social relationships, and students' social-emotional development. Rather than viewing Guidance and Counseling merely as a mechanism for addressing students' individual problems, this study explores how the values of mutual respect, mutual support, mutual understanding, and communal unity are internalized through counseling practices and everyday social interactions within schools. This perspective is particularly important because students' social development is influenced not only by individual psychological factors but also by the cultural value systems embedded in their social environments. By drawing upon the experiences of school counselors and students as the primary focus of analysis, this study seeks to enrich the discourse on culturally grounded counseling while providing a conceptual foundation for developing Guidance and Counseling services that are more humane, contextually relevant, and responsive to the social realities of students in multicultural schools.

3. Methodology

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach to explore the cultural values of Sintuwu Maroso from the perspective of Guidance and Counseling (GC) services in secondary schools in Poso Regency, Indonesia. A qualitative approach was selected because the study sought to gain an in-depth understanding of the meanings, lived experiences, and social practices associated with the application of the Sintuwu Maroso values in character education and Guidance and Counseling services. This approach enabled the researchers to obtain an emic perspective from participants regarding how these local cultural values are understood, internalized, and practiced within the school environment. The study positioned school counselors, principals, and the educational setting as active sources of knowledge whose experiences, perspectives, and social practices were directly observed. Accordingly, Sintuwu Maroso was understood not merely as a normative cultural concept but as a living social reality that shapes Guidance and Counseling practices, interpersonal relationships, and students' character development within schools.

The unit of analysis focused on the practices, meanings, and implementation of Sintuwu Maroso values in Guidance and Counseling services

in secondary schools across Poso Regency. This focus was chosen because Sintuwu Maroso represents a local cultural philosophy embodying the principles of unity, togetherness, tolerance, and mutual cooperation, all of which are closely aligned with the objectives of Guidance and Counseling in promoting character development and strengthening students' social relationships. These cultural values also play an important role in fostering social harmony within multicultural educational environments. The unit of analysis was examined through the experiences of school counselors and principals in delivering counseling services, implementing character education programs, resolving student conflicts, and strengthening social relationships within the school community. Educational practices and social interactions reflecting the values of Sintuwu Maroso were identified, categorized, and analyzed to reveal patterns of local cultural implementation from the perspective of Guidance and Counseling.

The data were collected through in-depth interviews, field observations, and document analysis related to the implementation of Sintuwu Maroso values in school Guidance and Counseling services. The use of multiple data sources enabled the researchers to obtain a comprehensive understanding of local cultural practices within educational settings while enhancing the credibility of the findings through data triangulation. Information obtained from school counselors, principals, and school documents was considered particularly valuable because these sources possessed direct experience and contextual knowledge regarding the implementation of Sintuwu Maroso in school life. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to allow participants to describe their experiences and perspectives openly. Field observations were carried out to examine firsthand the social interactions, counseling practices, and school culture that reflected the values of Sintuwu Maroso. In addition, documentary evidence—including school archives, Guidance and Counseling program documents, photographs of school activities, and other supporting materials—was used to corroborate and validate the findings obtained from interviews and observations.

Data collection was conducted through semi-structured interviews, direct observations, and document analysis of educational activities and Guidance and Counseling services within the participating schools. This combination of methods generated rich, contextual, and diverse data that provided a comprehensive understanding of how Sintuwu Maroso values were implemented in educational settings. While interviews enabled participants to articulate their subjective experiences, observations and documentary analysis allowed the researchers to gain direct insight into the social realities of school

life. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on predetermined criteria, including professional experience and active involvement in Guidance and Counseling services. Semi-structured interviews were subsequently conducted with school counselors and principals to explore their understanding and implementation of Sintuwu Maroso values in character education. Observations focused on school activities and social interactions among members of the school community, whereas documentary analysis was used to collect relevant written and visual materials that supported the research objectives.

The data were analyzed using the qualitative data analysis model developed by Miles and Huberman, consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. This analytical framework was selected because it facilitates a systematic and iterative analysis process throughout the stages of data collection and interpretation. Qualitative analysis enabled the researchers to identify meanings, patterns, and relationships within the data concerning the implementation of Sintuwu Maroso values from the perspective of Guidance and Counseling. The first stage involved data reduction by selecting and organizing relevant information into thematic categories such as unity, tolerance, mutual cooperation, and character development. The organized data were then presented in a descriptive narrative to facilitate the identification of emerging patterns and relationships. Finally, conclusions were drawn through an in-depth interpretation of the findings to explain how the values of Sintuwu Maroso were implemented within Guidance and Counseling services and how they contributed to students' character formation and the development of positive social relationships in schools.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1.1. School Counselors' Perspectives on the Implementation of Sintuwu Maroso Values in Schools

Sintuwu Maroso represents the local wisdom of the Pamona community, encompassing fundamental principles of social life that emphasize togetherness, unity, mutual care, and social harmony. These values constitute an ethical framework that has been passed down through generations to foster interpersonal relationships based on mutual respect, mutual support, and a strong spirit of collectivism. Within the educational context, the values of Sintuwu Maroso provide an important foundation for students' character development by promoting empathy, tolerance, solidarity, and social

responsibility. Makmur et al.²⁰ argue that the values embedded in Sintuwu Maroso not only shape individual behavior but also strengthen social cohesion and contribute to harmonious community life. Overall, Sintuwu Maroso comprises seven core values that reflect the fundamental principles of social life within the Pamona community. These seven core values are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Core Values of Sintuwu Maroso

No.	Core Value	Meaning
1.	Tuwu Mombetubunuka	Demonstrating respect and courtesy toward others, particularly elders.
2.	Tuwu Mombepatuwu	Providing mutual assistance to promote shared well-being and collective prosperity.
3.	Tuwu Siwagi	Supporting one another in unity without jealousy or personal interests.
4.	Tuwu Simpande Raya	Understanding and accepting differences within a diverse community.
5.	Tuwu Sintuwu Raya	Maintaining unity and preventing division within the community.
6.	Tuwu Mombepomawo	Showing mutual love and compassion within the family and the wider community.
7.	Tuwu Molinuwu	Creating a harmonious life through mutual support and cooperation.

Table 2. Interview Findings: School Counselors' Perspectives on the Implementation of *Sintuwu Maroso* Values in School Guidance and Counseling Services

Sintuwu Maroso Value	Key Findings	Participants' Statements	Meaning from the Guidance and Counseling Perspective
Tuwu Mombetubunuka (<i>Mutual Respect</i>)	Respectful communication, empathy, active listening, non-	<i>"using respectful language," "actively listening," "not</i>	Establishes a safe, supportive, and respectful counseling

²⁰ Makmur Makmur, Ibrahim Ismail, and Uswatun Hasanah, 'URGENSI BUDAYA SINTUWU MAROSO SEBAGAI MEDIA PEMBELAJARAN PENDIDIKAN AGAMA ISLAM DAN BUDI PEKERTI (STUDI MULTISITUS DI SMA NEGERI 1, 2, 3 DAN 4 KABUPATEN POSO)', *Dahzain Nur : Jurnal Pendidikan, Keislaman Dan Kemasyarakatan* 14, no. 1 (June 2024): 39–44, <https://doi.org/10.69834/dn.v14i1.206>.

Sintuwu Maroso Value	Key Findings	Participants' Statements	Meaning from the Guidance and Counseling Perspective
	judgmental attitudes, and maintaining confidentiality	<i>judging students," "maintaining the principle of confidentiality"</i>	relationship between school counselors and students.
Tuwu Mombepatuwu <i>(Mutual Support for Well-Being)</i>	Mutual assistance, community service, Youth Information and Counseling Center (PIK-R) activities, peer counseling, and collaborative group work	<i>"they help one another," "social service activities," "peer counseling," "becoming a good listener for friends"</i>	Promotes social responsibility, solidarity, and prosocial behavior among students.
Tuwu Siwagi <i>(Mutual Support and Cooperation)</i>	Collaboration among school counselors, homeroom teachers, subject teachers, and referral of student cases	<i>"regular coordination," "case discussions," "monitoring students' progress," "referring cases to appropriate professionals"</i>	Strengthens multidisciplinary collaboration in supporting students' personal, social, and academic development.
Tuwu Sipande Raya <i>(Mutual Understanding)</i>	Tolerance, appreciation of diversity, and heterogeneous group activities	<i>"differences are beautiful," "respecting diversity," "heterogeneous group work"</i>	Fosters an inclusive, tolerant, and harmonious school environment.
Tuwu Sintuwu Raya <i>(Living in Unity)</i>	Togetherness, unity, and participation in social and religious activities	<i>"actively participating in all school activities," "community service," "mutual cooperation,"</i>	Develops unity, solidarity, and social cohesion within the school community.

Sintuwu Maroso Value	Key Findings	Participants' Statements	Meaning from the Guidance and Counseling Perspective
		<i>"togetherness"</i>	
Tuwu Mombepomawo <i>(Mutual Compassion)</i>	Empathic communication, care, positive reinforcement, and emotional support	<i>"providing empathic communication," "not judging students," "showing care," "embracing students"</i>	Strengthens emotional support and promotes humane, student-centered counseling relationships.
Tuwu Molinuwu <i>(A Flourishing Life)</i>	Consistent positive behavior, reduced conflict, and improved cooperation	<i>"consistent positive behavior," "reduced conflict," "improved cooperation," "a comfortable school atmosphere"</i>	Demonstrates the sustainability of character development and the establishment of a positive school culture.

Interview findings presented in Table 2 indicate that school counselors perceive the values of Sintuwu Maroso as a fundamental foundation for students' character development and the promotion of harmonious social relationships within the school environment. Values such as mutual respect, mutual assistance, mutual support, mutual understanding, togetherness, mutual compassion, and flourishing community life are reflected in various Guidance and Counseling services, including individual counseling, group counseling, classroom guidance, and character education programs. School counselors emphasized that the integration of these local cultural values not only strengthens students' social interactions but also fosters a school climate that is safe, supportive, inclusive, and characterized by a strong sense of community. Participants' narratives further revealed that the values of Sintuwu Maroso are manifested in students' everyday behaviors through respectful communication, appreciation of others' opinions, tolerance of differences, cooperation in social activities, and emotional support among peers. Consequently, Sintuwu Maroso is understood not merely as a cultural identity of the Pamona community but also as an ethical and social foundation that

informs the implementation of Guidance and Counseling services in schools.

The findings further demonstrate that integrating local cultural values into Guidance and Counseling services contributes substantially to students' social and character development. The value of Tuwu Mombetubunuka is reflected in courteous communication, respectful body language, and respectful interpersonal interactions during counseling sessions. Tuwu Mombepatuwu is manifested through practices of mutual cooperation, community service activities, and peer counseling programs that encourage students to provide support for classmates experiencing personal difficulties. Tuwu Siwagi is implemented through collaborative efforts among school counselors, homeroom teachers, subject teachers, and external professionals in monitoring students' development through regular coordination and referral mechanisms. The value of Tuwu Sipande Raya is fostered by promoting tolerance and acceptance of diversity through classroom guidance, reflective discussions, and heterogeneous group activities. Tuwu Sintuwu Raya is reflected in the active participation of all members of the school community in social and religious activities that reinforce unity and togetherness. Meanwhile, Tuwu Mombepomawo is demonstrated through empathic communication, emotional support, and positive reinforcement that enable students to understand others' feelings and develop healthy interpersonal relationships. Finally, Tuwu Molinuwu is evidenced by the creation of a peaceful school environment characterized by reduced interpersonal conflict, increased cooperation, and a culture of mutual respect. Taken together, these findings suggest that Guidance and Counseling services grounded in the local wisdom of Sintuwu Maroso function not only as a means of addressing students' personal problems but also as a strategic approach to fostering character development, strengthening social cohesion, and creating a harmonious and sustainable educational environment.

4.1.2. Forms of the Implementation of Sintuwu Maroso Values in School Guidance and Counseling Services

To understand how the values of **Sintuwu Maroso** are implemented in school Guidance and Counseling services, this study explored school counselors' experiences and perspectives regarding the strategies, approaches, and counseling practices applied in everyday school life. The interview findings indicate that these local cultural values are not merely understood as normative concepts but are actively internalized through various Guidance and Counseling services, including individual counseling, group counseling, classroom guidance, conflict mediation, and character education programs.

School counselors utilize the values of **Sintuwu Maroso** as a foundation for fostering empathic, supportive, inclusive, and harmonious interpersonal relationships within the school community. The implementation of these cultural values is reflected in respectful communication, the cultivation of empathy, peer social support, the promotion of tolerance, and the creation of a safe and cohesive school environment. The interview findings concerning the implementation of **Sintuwu Maroso** values in Guidance and Counseling services are presented in **Table 3**.

Table 3. Interview Findings on the Implementation of Sintuwu Maroso Values in School Guidance and Counseling Services

Sintuwu Maroso Value	Implementation Focus in Guidance and Counseling Services	Indicators/Strategies Identified	Meaning from the Guidance and Counseling Perspective
Tuwu Mombetubunuka <i>(Mutual Respect)</i>	Promoting respectful behavior during counseling interactions	Respectful language, allowing others to finish speaking, respecting different opinions, positive body language, adherence to counseling principles and procedures	Establishes counseling relationships that are safe, comfortable, and characterized by mutual respect.
Tuwu Mombepatuwu <i>(Mutual Support for Well-Being)</i>	Fostering students' empathy and social responsibility	Group discussions, emotional reflection, role-playing, behavioral observation, and peer support	Encourages prosocial behavior, social responsibility, and emotional support among students.
Tuwu Siwagi <i>(Mutual Support and Cooperation)</i>	Strengthening supportive group dynamics during group counseling	Establishing group norms, ensuring equal opportunities to speak, creating an inclusive atmosphere, and providing positive reinforcement	Develops social support and mutual encouragement among group members.
Tuwu Sipande Raya <i>(Mutual Understanding)</i>	Resolving conflicts through shared	Mediation, impartial listening to both parties, respectful	Promotes tolerance, empathy, and

	understanding	communication, and collaborative problem-solving	peaceful conflict-resolution skills.
Tuwu Sintuwu Raya (<i>Living in Unity</i>)	Strengthening harmonious relationships among students	Classroom guidance, individual and group counseling, emotional regulation, and maintaining confidentiality	Fosters unity, psychological safety, and social harmony within the school community.
Tuwu Mombepomawo (<i>Mutual Compassion</i>)	Developing empathy through counseling techniques	Reflection on personal experiences, role-playing, case studies, group discussions, and active listening exercises	Cultivates compassion, caring attitudes, and students' social sensitivity.
Tuwu Molinuwu (<i>A Flourishing Life</i>)	Creating a peaceful school environment that supports student development	Student needs-based Guidance and Counseling programs, promotion of tolerance, conflict mediation, and collaboration among all members of the school community	Establishes a harmonious school culture that supports sustainable character development.

The interview findings presented in Table 3 demonstrate that the implementation of Sintuwu Maroso values in Guidance and Counseling services is realized through a wide range of counseling practices that emphasize empathy, mutual respect, social responsibility, and harmonious relationships among students. School counselors integrate these cultural values into basic guidance services, responsive services, individual counseling, and group counseling as part of students' character development. Participants consistently described Guidance and Counseling not only as a means of addressing students' personal concerns but also as an important medium for internalizing local cultural values that foster tolerance, empathy, and supportive interpersonal relationships within the school community. In practice, school counselors promote respectful communication, provide safe spaces for dialogue, maintain students' confidentiality, and encourage harmonious social relationships through discussions, role-playing activities, conflict mediation, and collaborative group work. Consequently, students are encouraged not only to understand these cultural values conceptually but also

to practice them through their everyday interactions. These findings indicate that culturally grounded Guidance and Counseling services based on Sintuwu Maroso create counseling processes that are more humane, contextually relevant, and responsive to students' social and developmental needs.

The findings further indicate that integrating Sintuwu Maroso values into Guidance and Counseling services contributes significantly to creating an inclusive and harmonious school environment while promoting students' social-emotional development. The value of Tuwu Mombetubunuka is implemented by cultivating mutual respect through courteous communication, respectful language, and appreciation of others' opinions during counseling sessions. Tuwu Mombepatuwu is reflected in the development of students' empathy through group discussions, case reflection, role-playing activities, and peer support, enabling students to provide meaningful assistance to classmates experiencing personal difficulties. Tuwu Siwagi is evident in group counseling practices that emphasize psychological safety, inclusiveness, and mutual support among group members. Under the principle of Tuwu Sipande Raya, school counselors facilitate conflict mediation by ensuring that students have equal opportunities to express their perspectives while encouraging them to understand the viewpoints of others. Tuwu Sintuwu Raya is implemented through classroom guidance, the enhancement of social skills, emotional regulation, and strict adherence to the principle of confidentiality, thereby strengthening harmonious relationships among students. Meanwhile, Tuwu Mombepomawo is fostered through reflection on personal experiences, case studies, group discussions, and active listening exercises that help students develop a deeper understanding of others' emotions. Finally, Tuwu Molinuwu is reflected in the development of student needs-based Guidance and Counseling programs, the promotion of tolerance and collaboration, and the active involvement of the entire school community in creating a peaceful and supportive educational environment. Overall, these findings demonstrate that the implementation of Sintuwu Maroso values within Guidance and Counseling services extends beyond preserving the cultural identity of the Pamona community; it also provides a culturally grounded foundation for developing counseling services that are contextual, inclusive, and oriented toward the sustainable development of students' character and social well-being.

4.2. Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the values of Sintuwu Maroso serve as an important cultural foundation for the implementation of Guidance and Counseling services in schools. This is reflected in the application

of values such as mutual respect, mutual assistance, mutual support, mutual understanding, unity, mutual compassion, and the pursuit of a harmonious and flourishing community through various Guidance and Counseling services. School counselors incorporate these values into basic guidance services, responsive services, individual counseling, and group counseling using approaches that emphasize empathic communication, tolerance, collaboration, peaceful conflict resolution, and the strengthening of students' interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, the implementation of Sintuwu Maroso values not only assists students in addressing personal and social challenges but also promotes the development of caring, supportive, tolerant, and socially responsible individuals who are capable of living harmoniously within diverse communities. Therefore, integrating the local cultural values of Sintuwu Maroso into Guidance and Counseling services should be continuously promoted as a culturally grounded counseling approach that is contextual, inclusive, and responsive to students' social and developmental needs.

The implementation of Sintuwu Maroso values in Guidance and Counseling is closely associated with the social realities of multicultural communities, where strengthening togetherness, tolerance, and social solidarity has become increasingly important. This need arises from growing concerns regarding social conflict, bullying, individualism, and the weakening of interpersonal relationships amid rapid social change and the expansion of digital technologies that have transformed the interaction patterns of younger generations.²¹ Within this context, integrating local wisdom into counseling services provides an effective means of fostering harmonious social relationships because local cultural values are closely connected to students' lived experiences and social identities, making them more readily accepted during the process of character development. The implementation of Sintuwu Maroso values through empathic communication, group counseling, conflict mediation, collaborative social activities, and peer support demonstrates that culturally grounded Guidance and Counseling services can enhance students' empathy, social sensitivity, and prosocial behavior within school settings.²² Moreover, interpersonal relationships established through humanistic and culturally responsive counseling approaches have been shown to strengthen

²¹ Bau Ratu et al., 'Internalisasi Budaya Damai Nosarara Nosabatutu Untuk Meningkatkan Dispositional Mindfulness Pada Guru', *Jurnal Konseling Dan Pendidikan* 11, no. 2 (June 2023): 103, <https://doi.org/10.29210/184700>.

²² Vira Afriyati et al., 'Research Trend about Counseling Based on Local Wisdom: A Bibliometric Analysis', *Education and Social Sciences Review* 5, no. 1 (May 2024): 11–20, <https://doi.org/10.29210/07essr403600>.

students' sense of safety, trust, and social cohesion within multicultural educational environments.²³ These findings suggest that school Guidance and Counseling services should integrate local cultural values such as Sintuwu Maroso as part of a contextualized multicultural counseling approach that supports character development and social harmony among students in contemporary educational settings.

The implementation of Sintuwu Maroso values in Guidance and Counseling extends beyond serving as a culturally responsive strategy for character education; it also represents a process through which social values are internalized through continuous interaction and shared experiences within the school community. From the perspective of social constructivism, individuals' behavior and identity develop through ongoing social interaction, language, and cultural practices that shape their everyday experiences.²⁴ In this regard, the values of Sintuwu Maroso—including mutual respect, mutual support, mutual understanding, and unity—constitute a system of shared values that fosters students' social awareness through supportive and humane interpersonal relationships. Students do not merely learn social norms as abstract concepts; rather, they internalize them through counseling practices, empathic communication, conflict mediation, and everyday social interactions within the school environment. These experiences shape students' perspectives on interpersonal relationships, tolerance, and peaceful conflict resolution as natural components of communal life. Furthermore, culturally grounded counseling approaches demonstrate that emotionally safe and respectful relationships strengthen students' social-emotional development while fostering a stronger sense of belonging within the school community.²⁵ From a multicultural counseling perspective, local culture serves as a significant source of meaning that enhances the effectiveness of counseling services because students are more likely to embrace values closely aligned with their social identities and lived experiences.²⁶ Consequently, the implementation of

²³ Derrick R. Brooms, "‘He Wanted Everybody to Succeed’: Black Males, Relational Trust, and School Counseling", *Professional School Counseling* 25, no. 1_part_4 (January 2021): 2156759X211040035, <https://doi.org/10.1177/2156759X211040035>.

²⁴ Dale H. Schunk and Maria K. DiBenedetto, 'Motivation and Social Cognitive Theory', *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 60 (January 2020): 101832, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2019.101832>.

²⁵ Donnah L. Anderson et al., 'Positive Links between Student Participation, Recognition and Wellbeing at School', *International Journal of Educational Research* 111 (2022): 101896, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijer.2021.101896>.

²⁶ Charles R. Ridley et al., 'The Process Model of Multicultural Counseling

Sintuwu Maroso values illustrates that local culture functions not only as an expression of the Pamona community's cultural identity but also as a social mechanism for cultivating prosocial behavior, empathy, and sustainable social cohesion among students within educational settings.

The implementation of Sintuwu Maroso values in Guidance and Counseling further demonstrates that students' character development cannot rely solely on academic instruction and formal disciplinary practices but must also be nurtured through supportive, humane social relationships grounded in local cultural values. In school settings, challenges such as interpersonal conflict, limited empathy, bullying, and declining social solidarity should not be viewed merely as individual behavioral problems but also as indicators of inadequate social environments that fail to support students' emotional development.²⁷ In response to these challenges, the values of Sintuwu Maroso—particularly mutual respect, mutual support, mutual understanding, and unity—provide a moral foundation that enables students to develop psychological safety, social connectedness, and a shared sense of collective identity within the school community. Empathic communication, group counseling, conflict mediation, and peer support therefore function not only as counseling techniques but also as social spaces in which students learn to understand others' emotions, develop empathy, and establish healthy interpersonal relationships. Previous studies have consistently demonstrated that students' social connectedness and feelings of acceptance within the school environment significantly contribute to psychological well-being, emotional regulation, and the development of prosocial behavior.²⁸

Furthermore, a supportive school environment grounded in positive interpersonal relationships enhances students' sense of school connectedness and strengthens their social-emotional resilience when facing social pressures and interpersonal conflicts.²⁹ Within the Pamona context, the values of Sintuwu Maroso demonstrate that local culture is not merely a traditional heritage but

Competence', *The Counseling Psychologist* 49, no. 4 (May 2021): 534–67, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0011000021992339>.

²⁷ Bau Ratu et al., 'From Reflection to Action: Empowering Students' Multicultural Self-Efficacy through Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) Group Counseling', *Jurnal Kependidikan : Jurnal Hasil Penelitian Dan Kajian Kepustakaan Di Bidang Pendidikan, Pengajaran, Dan Pembelajaran* 11, no. 4 (December 2025): 1562–73, <https://doi.org/10.33394/jk.v11i4.17638>.

²⁸ Louise Birrell et al., 'Social Connection as a Key Target for Youth Mental Health', *Mental Health & Prevention* 37 (March 2025): 200395, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mhp.2025.200395>.

²⁹ Furlong et al., 'Assessment of Complete Social-Emotional Wellness'.

also a source of social wisdom that emphasizes the importance of living harmoniously within a diverse community. When these values are integrated into Guidance and Counseling services, students not only learn to address their personal problems but also develop social responsibility and a collective awareness of communal life. Therefore, the principal contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that Guidance and Counseling services grounded in local cultural values can function as an effective means of restoring social relationships, strengthening character development, and fostering educational environments that are more inclusive, peaceful, and humane in a sustainable manner.

This study differs from previous research, which has generally positioned culturally based Guidance and Counseling primarily as a vehicle for character education or the promotion of students' moral values. Most earlier studies focused on the effectiveness of culture-based character education in improving discipline, tolerance, and social behavior without specifically examining how cultural values are directly embedded in everyday counseling practices within schools. The present study extends this perspective by demonstrating that the values of Sintuwu Maroso function not merely as normative cultural principles but as a relational foundation for fostering empathic communication, conflict mediation, emotional support, and social cohesion through Guidance and Counseling services. These findings suggest that the effectiveness of counseling depends not only on the application of formal counseling techniques but also on the extent to which counseling services cultivate students' sense of social connectedness and cultural acceptance through values that resonate with their lived experiences. This perspective is consistent with culturally responsive counseling research, which has shown that culture-based counseling enhances students' emotional competencies, psychological safety, and school connectedness within multicultural educational settings.³⁰ The findings also support previous studies demonstrating that supportive interpersonal relationships grounded in local cultural values contribute positively to students' social-emotional well-being and prosocial behavior.³¹

The findings further reinforce previous research highlighting the

³⁰ Mayes and Byrd, 'An Antiracist Framework for Evidence-Informed School Counseling Practice'.

³¹ Leandro I. Chernicoff et al., 'Educating for Well-Being: A Systemic, Culturally Responsive SEL Intervention for Educators in Mexico. Results from a Large-Scale Pilot Study', *Social and Emotional Learning: Research, Practice, and Policy* 5 (June 2025): 100114, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sel.2025.100114>.

importance of relational and social-emotional approaches in educational services, particularly in creating inclusive and harmonious school environments.³² However, this study contributes to the existing literature by positioning Sintuwu Maroso as the indigenous cultural foundation of the Pamona community within the practice of Guidance and Counseling. This perspective demonstrates that local culture serves not only as a marker of community identity but also as a social mechanism for fostering empathy, solidarity, tolerance, and students' conflict-resolution skills in a sustainable manner. Accordingly, this study enriches the literature on culturally grounded counseling by illustrating that integrating local cultural values into Guidance and Counseling services can foster interpersonal relationships that are more humane, contextually relevant, and responsive to the social-emotional developmental needs of students in multicultural schools.

From the perspective of school Guidance and Counseling practice, these findings indicate the need for a paradigm shift from counseling approaches that are predominantly administrative and problem-oriented toward culturally grounded counseling that is more humanistic, relational, and sustainable. Conventional school counseling, which often emphasizes disciplinary issues, academic problems, and short-term interventions, has not always adequately addressed students' deeper social-emotional needs. Consequently, challenges such as interpersonal conflict, bullying, low levels of empathy, and weakened social relationships frequently persist despite existing interventions. A culturally grounded Guidance and Counseling approach offers a more holistic alternative by emphasizing counseling practices that are humane, supportive, and responsive to students' sociocultural contexts. Such an approach requires counselors not only to possess technical counseling competencies but also to understand students' lived social experiences, interpersonal dynamics within the school community, and the local cultural values embedded in their communities. In this regard, Guidance and Counseling services should accommodate students' social experiences by promoting non-judgmental communication, providing safe spaces for dialogue, facilitating empathy-based conflict mediation, and strengthening peer support as integral components of character education and social-emotional development. Furthermore, schools should develop culturally grounded Guidance and Counseling programs that actively involve teachers, parents, community leaders, and cultural organizations so that the internalization of social values extends beyond the counseling office and becomes an integral part of the school's collective culture.

³² Allen et al., 'Adolescent School Belonging and Mental Health Outcomes in Young Adulthood'.

This study also recommends providing school counselors with professional development in multicultural counseling and local wisdom-based counseling to enable the systematic and sustainable implementation of local cultural values in counseling practice. Ultimately, the development of Guidance and Counseling services grounded in the values of Sintuwu Maroso represents an important step toward creating educational environments that are inclusive, harmonious, and capable of fostering students' character development and long-term social-emotional well-being.

5. Conclusion

This study confirms that the implementation of Sintuwu Maroso values in Guidance and Counseling services plays a significant role in fostering students' socio-emotional development and character formation within the school environment. Values such as mutual respect, mutual assistance, mutual support, mutual understanding, unity, and mutual love serve as social foundations that strengthen students' interpersonal relationships in school life. Guidance and Counseling teachers integrate these values through individual counseling, group counseling, classroom guidance, conflict mediation, and peer support programs that emphasize empathetic communication, tolerance, and peaceful conflict resolution. The implementation of Sintuwu Maroso values enables students not only to develop the ability to resolve personal and social problems but also to cultivate empathy, compassion, solidarity, and the capacity to live harmoniously within a diverse community. Furthermore, the integration of these local cultural values contributes to creating a safer, more inclusive, comfortable, and family-oriented school environment, thereby strengthening social cohesion among members of the school community. Thus, the findings indicate that Guidance and Counseling services grounded in Sintuwu Maroso values provide a contextual approach to promoting students' character development and sustainable social harmony.

This study contributes to the advancement of research on culture-based counseling and multicultural counseling approaches within the context of Indonesian education. It positions the local cultural values of Sintuwu Maroso as the primary analytical framework for understanding the development of social relationships, empathy, and students' character formation in schools. The experiences, perspectives, and practices shared by Guidance and Counseling teachers are interpreted as reflections of the social and cultural realities embedded within the Pamona community. By placing local culture at the center of analysis, this study demonstrates that cultural values function not only as

markers of cultural identity but also as mechanisms for shaping social behavior and interpersonal relationships within counseling services. The qualitative approach employed in this study enabled an in-depth understanding of Guidance and Counseling teachers' experiences in integrating local cultural values into individual counseling, group counseling, and character development programs at school. Moreover, the findings demonstrate that a local culture-based approach enriches school counseling practices, which have traditionally relied on generalized approaches that often overlook students' sociocultural contexts. Therefore, incorporating a local cultural perspective offers a meaningful contribution to the development of Guidance and Counseling services that are more contextual, humanistic, and responsive to students' social realities.

This study has several limitations. First, it was conducted within a specific school setting and cultural community, limiting the generalizability of the findings to the broader multicultural educational context of Indonesia. Second, data collection primarily focused on the experiences of Guidance and Counseling teachers and therefore did not fully capture students' own perspectives regarding the implementation of Sintuwu Maroso values in their daily school lives. In addition, this study did not quantitatively examine the effectiveness of integrating local cultural values in improving students' social behavior, reducing interpersonal conflicts, or enhancing their long-term socio-emotional well-being. Accordingly, future studies should incorporate the perspectives of students, parents, and local cultural communities to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the implementation of Sintuwu Maroso values in educational settings. Future research may also develop a more applicable Sintuwu Maroso-based counseling model and evaluate its effectiveness using mixed-methods or longitudinal research designs to examine its long-term impact on students' character development, empathy, and social cohesion. Consequently, this study opens new opportunities for further research on local culture-based Guidance and Counseling services as a strategic approach to strengthening character education in multicultural societies.

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