

## **SOCIO-CULTURAL APPROACH IN FORMING INCLUSIVE COUNSELING AND EFFECTIVE AT SMAS MUHAMMADIYAH 1 BANYUWANGI**

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### **Abstract.**

The socio-cultural approach is one of the important aspects in creating inclusive and relevant guidance and counseling services, especially at SMAS Muhammadiyah 1 Banyuwangi which has diverse student backgrounds. This research was conducted to understand how socio-cultural values are integrated into the counseling process to help students overcome various problems, such as adaptation difficulties, social gaps, and interpersonal conflicts. Using qualitative research methods and case study approaches, data were obtained through in-depth interviews, observation of counseling activities, and analysis of supporting documents. The results showed that the application of strategies such as classical tutoring, home visits, and community approaches has been proven effective in strengthening the relationship between counselors and students and improving students' skills in dealing with differences. In addition, the integration of local culture in counseling programs has a positive impact on increasing mutual understanding among students. The implications of this study confirm the need for counselor training to better understand the socio-cultural context of students, so that counseling services can be designed according to their needs and conditions. This research makes an important contribution to the development of a guidance model that respects socio-cultural diversity in the educational environment.

### **Keywords:**

Guidance, Counseling, Socio-Cultural, Inclusive,

### **INTRODUCTION**

Guidance and counseling is one of the important services in the world of education that aims to help students develop their potential, overcome personal problems, and adjust to the school environment. In the context of Indonesia, which has socio-cultural diversity, the guidance and counseling approach cannot be separated from the understanding of the social and cultural backgrounds of students. The factors of the Socio-Cultural Approach in Forming Inclusive and Effective Counseling at SMAS Muhammadiyah 1 Banyuwangi such as traditional values, norms, language, and local traditions have a great influence on the way students understand problems and find solutions (Suparno, 2010). Therefore, counseling services that are not sensitive to socio-cultural diversity are often less effective and can create communication gaps between counselors and students. At the secondary education level, social and cultural issues are increasingly complex. Students face not only academic demands, but also problems in social relationships, adaptation to the school environment, and pressure from family and society.

These problems are often exacerbated by social disparities among students, such as differences in economic status, culture, and mindset. In this situation, an inclusive and socio-cultural-based counseling approach is a strategic solution to create relevant services that

have a real impact (Wibowo, 2018). at Smas Muhammadiyah 1 Banyuwangi is one of the public schools that faces similar challenges. The school is located in an area with a fairly high socio-cultural diversity, where students come from a variety of backgrounds, ranging from urban to rural communities. These differences include lifestyle, language, habits, and values embraced by each student. In their daily lives, teachers and counselors at SMAS Muhammadiyah 1 Banyuwangi are often faced with situations where students experience difficulties in adaptation, social gaps, violations of rules, and conflicts in friendships. Problems that are often found in SMAS Muhammadiyah 1 Banyuwangi include students' difficulties in adjusting to the school environment, feelings of isolation due to differences in social status, and lack of understanding between students of diversity values. For example, students who come from areas with certain traditions may feel less accepted by their peers who have different customs. In addition, social disparities are often times affect student relationships, where certain groups tend to dominate in social activities at school. These issues can have an impact on students' motivation to learn and their involvement in school activities.

To overcome this, SMAS Muhammadiyah 1 Banyuwangi began to implement a socio-cultural-based approach in guidance and counseling services. Programs such as classical guidance, home visits, and cross-cultural competency training are part of the strategies implemented to overcome these problems. One of the programs that has had a positive impact is the preservation of local culture through art and tradition activities, such as Gandrung art performances and Javanese cultural wedding practices. The program not only strengthens students' cultural identities, but also encourages mutual respect among students who come from different backgrounds. This research aims to examine how socio-cultural approaches are applied in the practice of guidance and counseling in SMAS Muhammadiyah 1 Banyuwangi. Using qualitative research methods, this study is expected to can provide an in-depth understanding of the effectiveness of this approach in creating an inclusive, harmonious, and supportive school environment for the overall development of students.

## **THEORETICAL STUDIES**

**Socio-Cultural Theory** The ecological theory of human development developed by Bronfenbrenner (1979) became an important basis for understanding how the social environment affects individual development. Microenvironments, such as family, peers, and schools, interact with macro environments, such as cultural norms and social policies, to shape an individual's character and behavior. In the context of guidance and counseling, this theory is relevant to explain the importance of understanding sociocultural influences in building effective counseling relationships. In addition, Hofstede (1980) introduced cultural dimensions that affect the way individuals think and behave, such as collectivism versus individualism.

In a collectivist society like Indonesia, the values of togetherness and harmony tend to be more prominent than individualism. This is an important consideration for counselors to design counseling strategies that are in accordance with the characteristics of students' cultures, so that the approach used is more relevant and effective. In the educational environment, integrating socio-cultural values is a strategic step to create an inclusive learning environment. Culture-based education not only helps students understand their identity but also encourages an appreciation for diversity. According to Zuhdi (2015), cultural integration in practice Guidance and counseling can be done through the teaching of traditional values, the use of local languages, and the involvement of students in cultural arts activities.

A socio-cultural-based approach has been implemented as part of the counseling curriculum. The program includes cross-cultural training for aspiring counselors to enhance

their ability to understand and respond to students' cultural diversity. In addition, a community-based approach is used to help resolve social conflicts by engaging students in activities that encourage cooperation and tolerance.

## RESEARCH METHODS

**Research Approach** This research uses a qualitative method with Case study approach. This method was chosen to explore in depth the application of socio-cultural approaches in guidance and counseling at SMAS Muhammadiyah 1 Banyuwangi. This approach allows researchers to understand complex phenomena through direct experience and insights from the research subject. Case studies are seen as a relevant approach to explore social interactions and cultural dynamics in the school environment (Sugiyono, 2019). **Location and Research Subject** The research location is SMAS Muhammadiyah 1 Banyuwangi, a school that has a socio-cultural diversity of students. This diversity includes differences in economic status, cultural backgrounds, and unique local customs. The subjects of the study include: 1. Guidance and Counseling Teachers (BK), as the party directly responsible for providing counseling services to students. 2. School principals, as policy makers related to the implementation of socio-cultural-based programs. 3. Students who are recipients of counseling services, especially those who face social problems such as adaptation difficulties or conflicts between individuals. The selection of subjects is carried out purposively, namely selecting individuals who have direct roles and experiences in the application of socio-cultural approaches in schools (Sugiyono, 2019).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-Cultural Problems in Guidance and Counseling of SMAS Muhammadiyah 1 Banyuwangi is one of the schools that reflects the socio-cultural diversity in Indonesia. The students come from a variety of social, economic, and cultural backgrounds, which creates a unique dynamic in the school environment. Based on the results of in-depth observations and interviews, there are several main problems related to socio-culture in the practice of guidance and counseling in this school.

1. **Social Adaptation Difficulties:** New students often have difficulties Adjust to the school environment, especially those from remote areas. The traditional values they bring with them from their home environment are often different from the norms that prevail in schools. This makes some students feel isolated and lack confidence in interacting with their peers.
2. **Socio-Economic Gap:** The gap between students from middle to upper economic families and students from low economic backgrounds is clearly visible at SMAS Muhammadiyah 1 Banyuwangi. Students from well-off families tend to dominate social activities, while students from economically disadvantaged families often feel inferior or marginalized.
3. **Intercultural Conflicts:** Differences in traditions, customs, and lifestyles often trigger minor conflicts among students. For example, differences in the way of dressing or the use of certain regional languages are often a source of debate among groups of students.
4. **Stigma and Stereotypes:** The results of the interviews show that some students have prejudices against other groups based on their culture or background. This worsens interpersonal relationships among students and hinders the formation of positive social relationships. This problem is a challenge for Guidance and Counseling (BK) teachers to create an inclusive and effective counseling environment. Therefore, a socio-cultural-based approach is a strategic step in addressing these issues.

The Socio-Cultural Approach Strategy at SMAS Muhammadiyah 1 Banyuwangi has developed several socio-cultural-based strategies to overcome the problems faced by students. This approach involves a variety of activities and interventions designed to improve understanding and tolerance among students.

- a) **Integration of Socio-Cultural Values in Counseling Programs:** The guidance and counseling program at this school is designed with local values in mind, such as mutual cooperation, tolerance, and respect for traditions. In individual counseling sessions, counselors try to understand the cultural context of the student and use an approach that is relevant to the values embraced by the student (Wibowo, 2018).
- b) **Culturally Based Classical Guidance:** Classical guidance is conducted regularly to discuss socio-cultural issues, such as the importance of respecting differences, avoiding stereotypes, and building harmonious relationships. In one of the sessions, students were invited to discuss the culture of their respective regions and find commonalities that can strengthen relationships between individuals.
- c) **Arts and Cultural Activities:** The school actively organizes arts and cultural activities that involve all students. Art performances, such as traditional dances, Mojang Jajaka competitions, and Sundanese traditional wedding practices, are a forum for students to understand and respect each other's cultural diversity. This activity also aims to preserve local cultural values among the younger generation (Zuhdi, 2015).
- d) **Home Visit:** Counselors conduct home visits to understand the social and cultural conditions of students in more depth. The information obtained from these visits is used to design a more personalized and effective counseling program. For example, if a student shows a closed attitude due to social pressure, the counselor may identify the root of the problem through interaction with the student's family.
- e) **Cultural Competency Training for Counselors:** BK teachers at SMAS Muhammadiyah 1 Banyuwangi participate in special training to improve their understanding of the socio-cultural diversity of students. This training includes material on how to overcome cultural prejudices, build empathic relationships, and create an inclusive counseling atmosphere (Suparno, 2010).
- f) **Collaboration with Subject Teachers:** Counsellors work closely with subject teachers to integrate socio-cultural values into learning. For example, in a history lesson, teachers can discuss how local culture contributes to the formation of national identity. This helps students to understand the importance of cultural diversity in daily life.

The Impact of the Implementation of the Socio-Cultural Approach The results of the implementation of the socio-cultural approach at SMAS Muhammadiyah 1 Banyuwangi show a significant impact on the school environment, including:

- a) **Increased Intercultural Tolerance:** Students show a more open attitude towards cultural differences. This can be seen from the increased participation of students in arts and cultural activities, as well as the reduction of conflicts between individuals
- b) **Creating an Inclusive Environment:** Strategies such as group tutoring and home visits have been successful in creating a more inclusive atmosphere among students. Students from a variety of backgrounds feel more welcome and supported in the school environment.
- c) **Strengthening Local Cultural Identity:** Through arts and cultural activities, students not only learn to appreciate diversity, but also strengthen a sense of pride in their own cultural identity. This helps students to be more confident in interacting with others.

- d) Improved Student Emotional Well-Being: Students who previously felt isolated or unappreciated began to show improvements in learning motivation and social participation. Socio-cultural-based counseling programs provide significant emotional support for students.

### Discussion

Application of Socio-Cultural Approach at SMAS Muhammadiyah 1 Banyuwangi is in line with the theories that underlie the importance of understanding social and cultural diversity in the guidance and counseling process. Bronfenbrenner (1979) explained that individual development is influenced by the interaction between microenvironments, such as family and school, and macro environments, such as cultural norms and social policies.

In the context of SMAS Muhammadiyah 1 Banyuwangi, a strategy based on local culture has proven the importance of the role of cultural values in creating an inclusive learning environment. Hofstede (1980) also emphasized that differences in cultural dimensions, such as collectivism and individualism, influence the way individuals interact and resolve conflicts. The implementation of art and cultural activities at SMAS Muhammadiyah 1 Banyuwangi reflects the importance of collectivism in strengthening social relations between individuals. Students are taught to work together in group activities and understand the values of togetherness that are an important part of the local culture. However, there are challenges that still need to be overcome, such as consistency in program implementation and stronger support from students' families. Some parents are still less engaged in cultural-based activities that

held by schools, so efforts to create continuity between the values taught at school and at home are not fully optimal. Practical Implications The results of this study provide several practical implications that can be applied in other schools:

- a) Expansion of Counselor Training Programs: Cultural competency training for BK teachers must be continuously improved so that they can overcome new challenges arising from socio-cultural dynamics in the school environment.
- b) Strengthening Collaboration with Families: Schools can hold orientation programs for parents to increase their understanding of the importance of socio-cultural values in supporting children's development.
- c) Integration of Cultural Values in the Curriculum: School curricula can be designed to further emphasize local cultural values, such as through lessons in art, regional languages, and local history, that are relevant to students' daily lives. By strengthening existing strategies and facing challenges

Proactive, socio-cultural-based approaches can be an effective model for improving the quality of guidance and counseling in other schools.

### CONCLUSIONS

Socio-cultural approach in guidance and counseling at SMAS Muhammadiyah 1 Banyuwangi has shown significant effectiveness in creating an inclusive, harmonious, and supportive school environment for students' holistic development. With diverse student backgrounds, the implementation of strategies based on local cultural values, such as classical guidance, home visits, cultural arts activities, and cross-cultural training for counselors, has been successful in addressing various social problems in schools. The results show that the integration of cultural values into guidance and counseling programs can increase intercultural tolerance, strengthen social relationships between students, and encourage a sense of pride in local cultural identity. In addition, this approach also contributes to improving students' emotional well-being and creating a more supportive learning environment.

However, challenges such as suboptimal family involvement and consistency in program implementation remain concerns. Therefore, strengthening collaboration between

schools, families, and the community is an important step to ensure the sustainability of this program. Suggestion:

- a) Development of Counselor Training Programs: Counselors need to receive further training on cultural competence, especially in dealing with the challenges of diversity in the school environment. Training materials can include how to identify and overcome stereotypes, build empathy, and design culture-based counseling strategies.
- b) Increasing the Role of Parents: Schools need to involve parents in socio-cultural-based programs. Through activities such as workshops, seminars, or group discussions, parents can be given an understanding of the importance of their role in supporting the development of an inclusive culture in schools.
- c) Integration of Cultural Values in the Curriculum: Local cultural values can be more integrated in the school curriculum, both through art lessons, regional languages, and extracurricular activities. This approach can strengthen students' cultural identities while increasing their awareness of diversity.
- d) Continuous Evaluation: Schools need to conduct periodic evaluations of the effectiveness of socio-cultural-based guidance programs. The results of the evaluation can be used to improve and develop the program to remain relevant to the needs of students and evolving social dynamics.

With consistent implementation and support from all parties, the socio-cultural approach at SMAS Muhammadiyah 1 Banyuwangi can be an effective model to be applied in other schools facing similar challenges. This strategy not only improves the quality of guidance and counseling, but also builds a more inclusive educational environment that respects diversity.

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