

Philosophical Analysis of Huma Betang in Guidance and Counseling

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Abstract. The increasing pace of globalization necessitates the revitalization of culturally relevant approaches to foster social harmony within guidance and counseling. This study focuses on the Huma Betang philosophy, a form of local wisdom from the Dayak people of Central Kalimantan, which embodies values of togetherness, tolerance, and mutual respect. The objective of this research is to analyze and integrate the principles of Huma Betang into modern counseling techniques to cultivate a supportive environment that enhances individual development and strengthens the therapeutic relationship between counselors and clients from diverse cultural backgrounds. This study utilizes a literature review with a conceptual analysis approach, examining academic sources published between 2019 and 2025. The results indicate that the core values of Huma Betang such as mutual cooperation (gotong royong), togetherness, tolerance, and harmony are directly aligned with Carl Rogers' three core therapeutic conditions: unconditional positive regard, empathy, and congruence. The philosophy's emphasis on acceptance reflects unconditional positive regard, its communal nature embodies empathy in action, and its method of conflict resolution through sincere deliberation demonstrates congruence. The integration of Huma Betang offers a significant opportunity to develop a more holistic, humanistic, and innovative approach to multicultural counseling.

Key words: Huma Betang, Guidance and Counseling, Multicultural Counseling, Local Wisdom.

INTRODUCTION

In the increasingly advanced era of globalization, it is necessary to revive relevant approaches to building social harmony. One relevant approach that promotes social cultural issues is multiculturalism, which encompasses a holistic approach. A holistic approach in counseling is a method or way of thinking about a problem that is viewed holistically or comprehensively. Therefore, the existence of local wisdom plays a crucial role in counseling and guidance methods.

Local wisdom is not only present in general education but also serves to enhance community awareness of local culture and recognize that everyone possesses unique qualities (Indah, 2022). One concept related to harmony and emphasizing the values of togetherness is the concept of Huma Betang, originating from the Dayak tribe, particularly in Central Kalimantan (Solikin, 2024). Huma Betang refers to one of the traditional houses in Kalimantan with a distinctive architectural style that is both unique and functional, designed to adapt to the natural conditions of Kalimantan and the social needs of its inhabitants. This structure is a large, elongated raised house, known as a longhouse, with a length ranging from 30 to 150 meters and a width of 10 to 30 meters, capable of accommodating dozens to hundreds of people from several families with kinship ties. The house is built on very tall ironwood (ulin) pillars, typically 3 to 5 meters above ground level. This elevated structure serves as protection against flooding, safety from wild animals, and defense against enemies in the past, with the space under the house often used for raising livestock. The primary material, ironwood, is renowned for its strength, durability, and resistance to termites and extreme weather conditions.

The layout of the Huma Betang is highly communal. The main entrance is usually only one, accessed via a single staircase called a *hejot*, which can be raised at night for security. Inside, there is a spacious veranda or main corridor (*ruai* or *luwur*), which serves as the center for all communal activities such as meetings, traditional ceremonies, and daily social interactions. On one side of this hallway are family rooms (*bilik* or *lamin*) that serve as private spaces for each nuclear family. Additionally, there is a kitchen area at the back and an attic (*sadau*) used as a rice granary and storage for heirlooms. This physical structure reflects the Huma Betang philosophy, which emphasizes the values of togetherness, tolerance, and mutual respect (Fatchurahman et al., 2021). Therefore, the application of the Huma Betang philosophy integrated into multicultural counseling has great potential to improve the therapeutic relationship between counselors and clients from various cultural backgrounds. Despite its clear potential, there has been no in-depth research or study on systematically integrating these philosophical values into modern counseling practices. Many discussions about Huma Betang tend to focus on architectural or sociological aspects, but fail to analyze it as a conceptual framework for therapeutic interventions. This study aims to fill this gap by integrating Huma Betang principles to create an environment that supports individual and community development through modern counseling

techniques. Thus, this research not only revives relevant local wisdom but also bridges the theory with contemporary counseling practice.

METHODS

This study uses a literature review method with a conceptual analysis approach. Data collection was carried out by searching academic information sources such as Google Scholar, Science Direct, Scopus, books, and other relevant references. The literature search was limited to publications from 2019 to 2025, using keywords that included: "Huma Betang", "Kalimantan Tengah", "Nilai-Nilai Huma Betang", "Bimbingan dan Konseling", "Konseling Multikultural", and "Pendekatan Holistik". Through conceptual analysis, the collected literature will be thoroughly examined to understand the theoretical and philosophical foundations of why the Huma Betang philosophy is suitable as a foundation for guidance and counseling practices.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Central Kalimantan itself has been heavily populated by people from other regions. However, the community has developed strong cultural values of tolerance and harmony. These deeply rooted values serve as guidelines for the community in respecting differences and strengthening social cohesion. The value of togetherness in the Dayak Ngaju culture is the main foundation for building harmonious relationships between people (Jeniva, 2025). This can be seen in the construction of traditional Huma Betang houses, better known as Betang houses, in Central Kalimantan, which are very large stilt houses of varying sizes. These houses are scattered in the upstream areas of rivers as the centers of Dayak ethnic settlements. The Huma Betang is built to accommodate several households (families). Each family occupies a room (chamber) within the Betang house (Suswandari, 2022). Drawing from the concept of the Huma Betang, the local wisdom of the Huma Betang philosophy is based on two phrases: "Huma," meaning house or gathering place, and "Betang," meaning long or large. In this context, "Betang" refers to a place that accommodates people, communities, or a harmonious social space (Karimatus Saidah et al., 2020). The Huma Betang concept, which has been practiced for decades, has shaped a social system rooted in the principles of togetherness and mutual respect (Apandie & Ar, 2019). Thus, Huma Betang symbolizes a harmonious gathering place where support both emotional and in terms of values can be shared without discriminating against anyone.

The application of Huma Betang in guidance and counseling involves an approach that respects cultural diversity and local values in line with the recognition of the differences and uniqueness of the counselee. As a foundation, counselors can use the principles of Huma Betang to build strong relationships with clients, facilitate effective communication, and create a safe space for individuals to share their experiences and feelings. The philosophy of Huma Betang can also be used as a guideline or way of life in society. Huma Betang, as a house for communal living, means that everyone lives in harmony in various aspects without discrimination (Nofandi, 2022). According to Noor Hamidah (2019), the values in Huma Betang include: (1) Gotong Royong, which teaches mutual assistance and cooperation. (2) Togetherness and unity, which emphasize the importance of solidarity and a sense of belonging to the community. (3) Tolerance, which emphasizes the importance of respecting others, traditions, and cultures, using dialogue as a means of conflict resolution. (4) Harmony and living in harmony, which means creating a harmonious atmosphere and emotionally supporting others to achieve psychosocial well-being. These values form a unity and pattern of life in society. Gotong Royong can be seen in how people in the past helped each other, whether in building Betang houses or in times of difficulty. Togetherness and unity mean that everyone has equal rights and obligations, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or social status, as seen in the long and open structure of the Betang house. Tolerance in the values of the longhouse is derived from how conflicts are resolved, not by determining who is right or wrong, but through consultation, reinforced by Wiranto's statement in (Jasiah, 2021) regarding the Dayak religious system as a shaper of character, identity, and self-awareness to make peace with ancestors, the universe, and fellow humans and the state. This means that the community is more focused

on restoring harmony. According to Rico (2022), these values have become cultural communication norms that illustrate how cultural communication, particularly in Mandomai Village, Kapuas Barat Subdistrict, Kapuas District, Central Kalimantan, functions. This cultural communication resolves conflicts through harmony rather than punishment.

Through these values, which are in line with the goals of multicultural counseling, namely to increase cultural awareness and develop skills in interacting with clients from different backgrounds (Rizky, 2022). This is reinforced by (Jones-Smith, 2021) that the central aspect of multicultural counseling is understanding clients and appreciating the diversity of the cultural frameworks within them. Therefore, counselors need to be aware that everyone has different perspectives, avoid bias within themselves to become competent individuals, and directly manifest the values of tolerance and respect for other traditions and cultures. In (Corey, 2023), Carl Rogers identified three core conditions that counselors must provide for clients to grow and achieve self-actualization. Unconditional Positive Regard emphasizes creating a comfortable and safe atmosphere by not judging the client. Empathy involves the ability to understand the client's world by actively listening but also comprehending the feelings and meanings the client wishes to convey, and Congruence means presenting oneself authentically to the client. The philosophy of *huma betang*, which describes that everyone is part of one big family and needs to be accepted and valued, is a manifestation of unconditional positive regard. In practice, *huma betang* has a communal, interconnected nature, where it is not only about feeling sadness but also understanding and experiencing it together in helping and realizing it through mutual cooperation, which demonstrates empathy in concrete actions. Congruence itself is manifested in how problem-solving must be done through deliberation, which the community recognizes as necessary to speak sincerely and transparently without hiding one's feelings so as not to disturb or disrupt harmony. Thus, congruence is not a choice but a moral and social expectation for the community to function healthily. Thus, these values can integrate aspects of respect, togetherness, and openness found in the *Huma Betang* concept and practice this as a philosophy of life. By applying the *Huma Betang* principles in counseling, therapeutic relationships between counselors and clients from diverse cultures can be strengthened, creating more positive and inclusive interactions. This philosophy also plays an important role in creating a safe space for clients, where they feel comfortable sharing their experiences and feelings. Additionally, *Huma Betang* helps counselors enhance their multicultural competence, cultural awareness, and skills in interacting with diverse clients. By balancing academic concepts and local wisdom, the resulting interventions become more humanistic and relevant to the client's context.

CONCLUSION

Through these results and discussions, the integration of the *Huma Betang* concept into guidance and counseling not only enriches counseling practices but also contributes to the strengthening of positive social values. Thus, it has great potential in building a more holistic and innovative multicultural counseling. By prioritizing principles of solidarity and mutual respect, counselors can create more positive therapeutic relationships. Additionally, the application of the *Huma Betang* concept in guidance and counseling can serve as an effective tool for building a harmonious and inclusive society.

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