

# The Influence of personal and multicultural wisdom on the adherence to the ethical principles of multicultural counselor's candidates

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#### Abstract

The excellent performance of multicultural counselors are influenced by wisdom and counselor adherence to ethical principles. This study is to examine the influence of personal wisdom and multicultural wisdom on the adherence to the ethical principles of multicultural counselor's candidates. This study used a correlational method with 517 counselor's candidates from 11 Guidance and Counseling Departments in Indonesian. The research data was collected by using Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale-Short Form, the Wisdom Scale for Multicultural Counselors, and the Counselor's Principles of Ethical Scale. The data analysis technique used correlation and multiple linear regressions. The results show that there was a significant positive effect between personal wisdom and multicultural wisdom on adherence to the ethical principles of multicultural counselor's candidates. The implication is that counselor educators need to facilitate the development of personal wisdom and multicultural wisdom to increase adherence to the ethical principles in counseling education and supervision.

**Keywords**: Ethical principles, multicultural counseling, multicultural wisdom, personal wisdom, and three-dimensional wisdom scale

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# Introduction

Wisdom and adherence to the ethical principles possessed and displayed by counselor are a vital and fundamental component in effective multicultural counseling (Durodoye, 2013). Multicultural counselors are expected and required to adhere to ethical principles and have ethical virtues of multicultural counseling. Adherence to ethical principles can guide counselors in dealing with ethical dilemmas, overcoming complex problems, choosing alternatives, making the best decisions, behaving properly and correctly, and overcoming conflicts of interest (Bhola & Raguram, 2016; Durodoye, 2013) either intrapersonal, interpersonal, and extrapersonal between themselves and counselies in a variety of multicultural situations effectively. Adherence to principles, virtues, and counseling codes of ethics can protect counselees and users of counseling services. It is also an confirmation of the counselor's professionalism (Herlihy & Duffrene, 2011).

There are many studies on ethical issues in counseling. They include polarization of ethical concerns in personal therapy (McMahon, 2018), HIV/AIDS counseling ethics (Joe, 2018), ethical issues in the practice of counseling and therapy (Thompson, 2017), ethics in parenting counseling (Van den Berge, 2016), counselor's ethical reasoning (Levitt, Farry, & Mazzarella, 2015), participatory ethics to bridge social justice between counselors and counselees (Tarvydas, Vazquez-Ramos, & Estrada-Hernandez, 2015), teach ethical decision making (Ametrano, 2014), ethical imperatives in trauma counseling processes (Mailoux, 2014), current and urgent ethical issues in counseling (Cartwright & Fleming, 2010), multicultural considerations in the professional code of ethics for rehabilitation counselors (Finn & Barak,

2010; Rummell & Joyce, 2010), and ethics and confidentiality in online counseling (Francis & Dugger, 2014). Previous empirical studies reveal that counselors often face personal and professional ethical dilemmas and conflicts (Har & Jusoh, 2015), conflicts with school leaders when holding ethical principles of confidentiality, even violating ethics when facing dilemmas or ethical conflicts in counseling (Kaplan, 2014). Therefore, multicultural counselors must understand, obey, and conduct ethical judgments before choosing alternatives and making appropriate ethical decisions (Har & Jusoh, 2015).

The various issues require counselors to have ethical competencies (Har & Jusoh, 2015), and to adhere to the code of ethics, ethical principles, and ethical virtues (Durodoye, 2013; Pope & Vasquez, 2011). Multicultural counselors must have a good understanding and obedience to the codes, the principles, and the virtues of counseling ethics before providing alternatives and making decisions about counselee problems that are dilemmatic, complex, difficult, and uncertain.

There are two moral philosophical principles that are important and fundamental in multicultural counseling, namely ethical principles and ethical virtues (Durodoye, 2013). The ethical principle focuses on the application of guidelines and rules that guide the actions and choices of counselors in certain situations (Durodoye, 2013). On the other hand, ethical virtues emphasize the ideals of and the integration and personal quality of counselor (Durodoye, 2013; Koocher & Keith-Spiegel, 2016; Remley & Herlihy, 2016). In multicultural counseling, wisdom is a form of ethical virtue (Durodoye, 2013), the fundamental quality of personality, and the effective peak of competency of multicultural clinical counselors and psychotherapists (Hanna & Ottens, 1995; Hanna, Bemak, & Chung, 1999; Levitt & Piazza-Bonin, 2014). Wisdom experts recommend the importance of distinguishing and examining personal wisdom and general wisdom (multicultural) in multicultural counseling. Personal wisdom is the integration of personality characteristics, including cognitive, reflective traits and awareness of the counselor that are needed to navigate behavior, to choose, to weigh and to make the right and best dilemmatic decisions, to resolve conflicts, and to adapt effectively in a complex and uncertain multicultural life (Hanna, Bemak, & Chung, 1999).

Experts conclude that there is a complex relationship between ethical virtues (personal and multicultural wisdom) and ethical principles (Durodoye, 2013). Other ethics experts, according to (Remley & Herlihy, 2016), suggest the importance of integrating ethical virtues and principles because they can improve ethical behavior and excellent performance and professional counselors in multicultural interactions. However, until now, empirical studies of the relationship between ethical virtues (personal and multicultural wisdoms) and adherence to ethical principles have never been conducted. In fact, wisdom and adherence to ethical principles are vital and fundamental aspects of multicultural counselors. This study is to identify dilemmas and ethical conflicts that are commonly experienced by multicultural counselors in serving diverse cultural counselees. The key findings of this study can be drawn from the implications for education and training and for expanding or revising the professional code of ethics for multicultural counselors.

On this rational basis, this study focused on examining the influence of personal and multicultural wisdoms on adherence to the ethical principles of multicultural counselor's candidates. This study contains two hypotheses. The first, there is a significant positive relationship between personal wisdom, multicultural wisdom, and adherence to the ethical principles of multicultural counselor's candidates. The second, personal and multicultural wisdoms have a significant positive effect on the variability of adherence to the ethical principles of multicultural counselor's candidates.

### Method

This study used a correlational method because it is intended to test the relationship between two or more variables (Heppner, Wampold, & Kivlighan, 2008). The correlational method in this study was performed to test the influence of personal and multicultural wisdoms on adherence to the ethical principles of multicultural counselor's candidates. The study participants are 517 multicultural counselor's candidates, consisting of 135 (26.1%) men and 382 (73.9%) women. The participants were selected using two stage random sampling from 11 Department of Guidance and Counseling in Indonesia higher education institutions.

The data of the personal wisdom of multicultural counselor's candidates was collected by using the Three-Dimesional Wisdom Scale (Ardelt, 2003). The 3D-WS measures cognitive, reflective, and affective dimensions of personal wisdom. This study uses a New 12-Item 3D-WS Short Form (New 3D-WS-SF-12)

adaptation version for Indonesian counselors (Herdi, 2020). The adaptation of New 3D-WS-SF-12 is based on two translation procedures from the native language to Indonesian, and vice versa, by two different English and linguistic experts. The translation results were edited and subsequently used in the study. The test results using Rasch Model v. 3.73 show that all (12) items are fit because they meet the criteria for Infit Mnsq, Outfit Mnsq, and Pt-M Corr, the universality with the Principle Component Analysis (PCA) is 40%, and the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for test reliability is excellent (.85), participant reliability and items are good (.81 and .98) (Linacre, 2019).

The Wisdom Scale for Multicultural Counselors (MC-WiSe) is used to measure the wisdom of multicultural counselor's candidates (Herdi, Kartadinata, & Taufiq, 2019). The MC-WiSe is developed based on the construct of wisdom of multicultural counselors [21,22]. It contains 22 items to measure 2 dimensions and 11 indicators of the wisdom of multicultural counselors. The cognitive dimensions measure meta-cognition, perspicacity, dialectical reasoning, tolerance for ambiguity, finding and solving problems, and coping skills. The affective and measuring awareness dimensions measure empathy, caring, recognizing of feelings, de-automation, and sagacity. Two items represent each indicator. The scale takes the form of a five-level scale, starting from 1 = very irrelevant to 5 = very relevant. The test results using Rasch Model v. 3.73 show that all items are fit because they meet the criteria for Infit Mnsq, Outfit Mnsq, and Pt-M Corr, the universality with the PCA is 30.6%, and the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for test reliability is excellent (.88), participant reliability and items are good (.85 and .87) (Linacre, 2019).

Scale of Adherence to the Counselor's Ethical Principles (SACEP) is used to measure compliance with the ethical principles of multicultural counselor's candidates. It was developed based on Kitchener's construct of ethical principle theory (Kitchener, 1985; Urofsky, Engels, & Engebretson, 2009). This instrument consists of 14 items to measure five dimensions of ethical principles, namely fidelity, beneficence, justice, non-maleficence, and autonomy. Three items represent each dimension, except the dimension of justice with two items. SACEP is in the form of a five-level scale, starting from 1 = very irrelevant to 5 = very relevant. The test results using Rasch Model v. 3.73 show all items are fit because they meet the criteria for Infit Mnsq, Outfit Mnsq, and Pt-M Corr, the unidimensionality with the PCA is 27%, and the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for test reliability is good (.71), participant reliability is sufficient (.68), and item reliability is special (.99) (Linacre, 2019).

The research hypothesis 1 was tested by using bivariate correlation analysis - Pearson's product moment correlation. The research hypothesis 2 was tested by using multiple linear regression. Operationally, the data processing used IBM SPSS Statistics software v.25.0 for Windows.

## **Results and Discussion**

#### Correlation of Personal Wisdom, Multicultural Wisdom, and Ethical Principles

Before the correlation and multiple regression analysis were carried out, the statistical assumption test was carried out first. It covers normality, linearity, autocorrelation, and multicollinearity tests. The test results show all variables are suitable in testing statistical assumptions. Therefore, they can proceed to multiple regression analysis. First, there was no autocorrelation, both positive and negative because the DW value = 1.738 was between 1 < DW < 3. Second, there were no symptoms of multicollinearity because the VIF value of each independent variable <10.00 and the Tolerance value of each independent variable>.100.

Research hypothesis 1: there is a significant positive relationship between personal wisdom, multicultural wisdom, and adherence to the ethical principles of multicultural counselor's candidates. The results of the bivariate correlation test confirms that there is a significant positive relationship among personal wisdom, multicultural wisdom, and adherence to the ethical principles of multicultural counselor's candidates (R = .569; p < .001). The effect size of the correlation between wisdom and adherence to the ethical principles of multicultural counselor's candidates is in the big/strong category (Aron, Coups, & Aron, 2013). This research is relevant to Aristotle's opinion and Freeman's study (Durodoye, 2013; Remley & Herlihy, 2016) that there is a complex relationship between ethical virtues (personal wisdom and multicultural wisdom) and ethical principles. The results of the study are presented in Table 1. Mean, Standard Deviation, Correlation, and Regression of the Personal Wisdom and Multicultural Wisdom and Ethics Principles.

Variable	3d-ws-12	mw	e	
Personal Wisdom (3D-WS-12)	1	.092*	.185**	
Multicultural Wisdom (MW)	.092*	1	.553**	
Ethics Principles (E)	.185**	.553**	1	
M	3.374	3.488	3.726	
SD	.620	.336	.478	
R	.569			
$R^2$	.324			

 Table 1 < Mean, Standard Deviation, Correlation, and Regression of the Personal</td>

 Wisdom, Multicultural Wisdom, and Ethical Principles>

Partially, it is also found the following results. First, there is a significant positive relationship between personal wisdom and adherence to the ethical principles of multicultural counselor's candidates (r = .185; p <.001). Personal wisdom (3D-WS and all three dimensions: cognitive, reflective, and affective) have a significant positive correlation to the adherence to ethical principles and dimensions of justice, non-maleficence, and autonomy. The size of the impact is in the small/weak category (Aron, Coups, & Aron, 2013). Personal wisdom does not correlate with the dimensions of fidelity and beneficence.

Second, there is a significant positive relationship between multicultural wisdom and adherence to ethical behavior of multicultural counselor's candidates (r = .553; p < .001). Multicultural wisdom (the MC-WiSe and both dimensions of cognitive and affective and awareness) are positively and significantly correlated with adherence to ethical principles and five dimensions (fidelity, beneficence, justice, non-maleficence, and autonomy). The size of the impact is in the big/strong category (Aron, Coups, & Aron, 2013). The cognitive dimension of multicultural wisdom does not correlate with justice.

The study also found that there is a significant positive relationship between multicultural wisdom and the personal wisdom of multicultural counselor's candidates (r = .092; p <.05). The size of the impact is in the small/weak category (Aron, Coups, & Aron, 2013). The results of this study are relevant to the opinions and studies of experts who conclude that multicultural wisdom (general) triggers the development of personal wisdom (Csikzentmihalyi & Nakamura, 2005; 2014; Staudinger, Dorner, & Mickler, 2005; Staudinger, 2013). Personal wisdom focuses on the counselor's view of his/her own life and emphasizes personal development and wise behavior (Ardelt, 2003; Ardelt, Achenbaum, & Oh, 2013; Erikson E. H., 1959; Gluck, et al., 2013; Erikson J. M., 2013). On the other hand, multicultural (general) wisdom focuses on the counselor's views on the life of the counselee and others and emphasizes the wise reasoning (Gluck, et al., 2013).

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#### Predictors of Adherence to the Ethical Principles

Research Hypothesis 2: personal and multicultural wisdoms have a significant positive effect on the variability of adherence to the ethical principles of multicultural counselor's candidates. The results of linear regression testing confirm that variability in adherence to ethical principles can be explained by personal wisdom and multicultural wisdom of multicultural counselor's candidates. The results show that the coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) was equal to .324. The coefficient value means that 32.4% adherence

to ethical behavior can be explained by personal wisdom and multicultural wisdom of prospective multicultural counselors; while the remaining 67.6% is explained by other causal factors not examined in this study. This means that the research hypothesis is confirmed to be accepted. Table 2. Test Results for Multiple Regression of Personal Wisdom, Multicultural Wisdom, and Adherence to the Ethical Principles of Multicultural Counselor's Candidates.

Multiple regression equations from Table 2 are  $Y = .689+.104x_1 + .770x_2$ . The regression equation can be explained as follows. The Constants is 2.452. That is, if the variable of personal wisdom and multicultural wisdom is 0, then obedience to the ethical principle (Y) is .689. The personal wisdom variable regression coefficient (X<sub>1</sub>) is .104. That is, if other variables have fixed values and personal wisdom increases by one unit, then adherence to the ethical principles of multicultural counselor's candidates will increase by .104. The multicultural wisdom variable coefficient (X<sub>2</sub>) is 770. That is, if other variables have fixed values and multicultural wisdom increases, adherence to ethical principles will increase by .770. Anova test produces F number of 122, 935 with Sig. = .000 personal wisdom regression model is feasible to use in predicting adherence to the ethical principles of multicultural counselor's candidates.

Table 2. Test Results for Multiple Regression of Personal Wisdom, Multicultural Wisdom, and Adherence to the Ethical Principles of Multicultural Counselor's Candidates)

Independent Variables	В	β	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
Constant	.689		3.492	.001		
Personal Wisdom	.104	.104	3.717	.000	.992	1.009
Multicultural Wisdom	.770	.770	14.827	.000	.992	1.009

This research is relevant to Aristotle's opinion and Freeman's study (Durodoye, 2013; Remley & Herlihy, 2016) that there is an influence of ethical virtues (personal wisdom and multicultural wisdom) on adherence to ethical principles. In Tripartite Model of Wisdom (Ardelt, Achenbaum, & Oh, 2013) it is stated that people who achieve personal wisdom will have a desire to understand the truth and life of intrapersonal and interpersonal in depth, and accept others as dignified individuals; reflective for self-testing, self-awareness, and ability to understand phenomena and events from various perspectives; and sympathize and love others sincerely.

On the other hand, multicultural wisdom can also predict the variability of adherence to ethical principles. This result is relevant to the previous study that multicultural is the application of the tacit knowledge, which is directed by values to achieve general benefit, guiding and directing individuals to a good and righteous life, and can reduce social scales and negative attitudes toward oneself and others. Similar studies also report that multicultural wisdom contributes 15% to multicultural counseling competencies (Phan, Torres-Rivera, Volker, & Maddux, 2009), which is a major ethical issue (Remley & Herlihy, 2016). Through these competencies, counselors will want and be able to be ethically responsible for confronting diverse prejudices and discriminating against individuals, groups, and communities such as racism, sexism, classism, homoprejudice, ableism, ageism, and spiritual and religious bias (Remley & Herlihy, 2016). In addition, a wise multicultural counselor will be free from irrationality and able to penetrate the core conditions of effective multicultural counseling.

A wise multicultural counselor influences adherence to ethical principles. By adhering to ethical principles, counselor will be able to display fidelity, beneficence, non-maleficence, justice, and autonomy as presented by Belmont Report 1978 and Beauchamp and Childress (Bhola & Raguram, 2016; Durodoye, 2013; Kitchener, 1985; Pope & Vasquez, 2011; Remley & Herlihy, 2016). With adequate fidelity, counselors will behave in a trustworthy, honest, committed, responsible, and loyal manner. Through beneficence, counselors will strive to promote the usefulness, kindness, and psychological well-being of counselees through counseling services that are good, appropriate, and useful. Counselors with non-

maleficence will be able to direct and maximize benefits, and avoid and minimize hazards, harm, and pose a risk of loss for each counselee. Justice counselors always provide access and treat fairly and equally to, and offer appropriate interventions for, each counselee they serve. Counselors who respect for autonomy will always respect the rights, dignity, and capacity of counselees to determine their own destiny, voice preferences, and choose, make decisions, and act based on their own logical and ethical scales.

## Conclusion

This study has confirmed that there is a significant positive effect on personal wisdom and multicultural wisdom on adherence to the ethical principles of multicultural counselor's candidates. This means that personal wisdom and multicultural wisdom are proven to be predictors of adherence to the ethical principles of multicultural counselor's candidates. The research implications that personal wisdom and multicultural wisdom need to be considered in developing adherence to the ethical principles of multicultural counselor's candidates in multicultural counselor education and supervision programs. The main principle of counselor education and supervision programs to develop wisdom is to provide the widest possible opportunity for multicultural counselor's candidates to gain concrete experience and practice in authentic scenes, asking questions, gaining practical experience in authentic settings. reflecting, integrating, internalizing, and transforming their experiences in scenes of counseling and multicultural life. Some of the learning methods that can be considered and used to develop wisdom include Socratic dialogue, awareness training, experiential learning, and reflective learning. Subsequent research is needed to examine various antecedent variables and the consequences of personal wisdom, multicultural wisdom, multicultural counseling competencies, adherence to ethical codes and ethical principles of multicultural counselor's candidates, as well as alliances and outcomes of multicultural counseling.

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