

## The Potential and Integration of Nusantara Games as a Multicultural Approach in Guidance and Counseling

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**Abstract:** The cultural and traditional diversity found in Indonesia has given rise to various innovations in many fields. One of these is the traditional games of the Nusantara. These games, in relation to guidance and counseling, carry meaningful and relevant social, emotional, and spiritual values in the context of individual development. This study aims to explore the potential of Nusantara games as an alternative medium in a multicultural counseling approach. The research method used is a literature review through literature search, identification and selection of literature, synthesis analysis and evaluation of selected literature, drawing conclusions, and discussing the results of the review. Through a qualitative approach, this study analyzes the integration of Nusantara games in multicultural counseling. Ten Nusantara games were identified, including their general characteristics, related aspects, and effectiveness based on previous research. The findings indicate that Nusantara games have interrelated aspects in individual development, including personal, social, learning, and career aspects. The utilization of Nusantara games is important both as a means of cultural preservation and as a strategic approach in the counseling process. This study has limitations on the variety of games that do not include all kinds of traditional games in Indonesia, and only focuses on the potential and integration of games as a multicultural approach in Guidance and Counseling. The implications of these findings support the integration of Nusantara games as contextual and adaptive facilitators in counseling services.

**Keywords:** Nusantara games; multicultural guidance and counseling; cultural wisdom; potential game; self-identity

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## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is one of the countries that has a very diverse culture. Indonesia is rich in cultural arts found in each region or region. There are various kinds of wealth owned by Indonesia, such as traditional specialties, traditional dances, traditional clothing, and traditional games. Indonesia is a pluralistic country, with ancestors from generation to generation. These cultural values are very crucial to always be empowered and maintained so that the identity of a nation is not lost or extinct. Cultural values such as courtesy (Javanese) and responsibility (Batak) are shaped through nurturing and contribute to individual self-control (Trismayangsari, Hanami, Agustiani, & Novita, 2023). Culture contains a set of norms, customs, and unwritten rules that are used by the community as guidelines in interacting with others and in responding to various life situations (Mardian, Syamsir, Vanessa, Putri, & Nufus, 2024).

The diverse cultures and customs of Indonesia have given rise to various innovations in various fields, for example, the existence of cross-cultural counseling (multicultural counseling). The use of cross-cultural counseling is currently starting to develop and vary in its implementation. This is supported by the many diverse cultures owned by Indonesia. Cross-cultural counseling, or universal multicultural counseling, is a counseling process that connects counselors with cross-cultural clients and is carried out by observing the culture of the people participating in counseling (Widodo, Rahmad, & Rachman, 2023). When counseling looks at culture, this type of counseling is integrated with partners from different cultures, such as between national groups, ethnic groups, or groups with different cultural roles. The use of cross-cultural counseling can be used to help counselees in overcoming their problems, especially in school problems.

Counselors as professionals in guidance and counseling services are required to be sensitive to the surrounding environment, especially to their counselees. According to Corey's opinion in Setyaputri & Hanggara (2022), effective counselors are counselors who understand their cultural circumstances. This is reinforced by the

opinion of Gumilang (2015) that dignified counselors are counselors who have good cultural respect and can make comfortable counsees who have cultural backgrounds.

Multicultural counseling is increasingly important in addressing the diversity of cultural backgrounds of counsees, especially in Indonesia, a country rich in ethnic and cultural diversity, where counselors are required to have multicultural competence to understand the differences of counsees (Umami, 2022). On the other hand, Indonesia is a country rich in cultural heritage, encompassing hundreds of tribes, languages, traditions, and values that shape the identity and social dynamics of its people (Mulya, Rohani, & Naldo, 2025). One of the most important cultural assets is traditional games that reflect the local wisdom of each region. Traditional games are not only part of cultural heritage, but can also play an important role in shaping one's character through the values taught (Zahnnisa et al., 2023).

Traditional games as a valuable medium in education, which can be used to promote social cohesion, emotional intelligence, and personal development of students (Aulia & Sudaryanti, 2023). Given the importance of culture in shaping an individual's identity and social behavior, it is imperative to explore how these traditional games can be integrated into various aspects of education and counseling to encourage understanding of multicultural values and enhance interpersonal dynamics. Counseling approaches often fail to integrate culturally relevant methods, potentially resulting in a less effective counseling process (Arredondo et al., 1996).

The study results indicate that there is a need for culturally sensitive counseling approaches, especially in multicultural societies such as Indonesia (Elizar, 2018). The use of local cultural elements, such as traditional games, is seen as an innovative way to bridge cultural gaps and enhance the therapeutic process. Recent studies have shown the therapeutic potential of game-based interventions to be effective in reducing anxiety, improving social skills, and supporting emotion regulation (Drewes & Schaefer, 2016). Integrating culture in counseling is an approach that results in more meaningful interactions as well as a deeper understanding of the values and needs of the counsee to provide effective services (Ilyas & Chalidaziah, 2022). Therefore, the development of culture-based communication skills is essential in counseling practice, including in use of traditional games as media (Firman, 2018).

Traditional games have the potential to be used in counseling as a method to build multicultural competence. Research shows that folk games containing cultural values and philosophies can be used as innovative counseling techniques (Ariantini, Naser, & Hanafi, 2019). However, there is still limited application of Indonesian traditional games in counseling, especially as a method to promote multicultural understanding and address the emotional and social needs of individuals from various cultural backgrounds. This research aims to explore and identify the potential of Nusantara games as a multicultural approach in counseling and to understand how Indonesian traditional games can be used as tools to enhance intercultural understanding in the counseling context. In addition, this research also aims to examine the extent to which traditional games can enrich existing counseling approaches by considering local cultural values, as well as to identify the benefits that can be gained in their application in various counseling settings.

## **METHODS**

The research method used in the preparation of this article is a qualitative approach with a literature review method. Literature review is a type of research that involves efforts to collect information that is relevant to the topic or problem being studied. Literature review is a research method carried out by collecting data related to a particular topic, then processing, identifying, selecting, reviewing, and evaluating the results of previous research. The purpose of this method is to provide a comprehensive understanding of existing knowledge or research, as well as reveal new findings generated through the literature review (Agus et al., 2023).

The procedure for conducting a literature review consists of five stages, starting from collecting literature to discussing this study. The stages are: 1) Searching for literature relevant to the research topic, this data source was obtained using Publish or Perish software and Google Scholar database. Data sources are articles, journals, and proceedings that contain data and information relevant to the topic of this research; 2) Identifying and selecting literature based on time constraints, namely in the last five years, namely 2019-2024 with Indonesian-language articles, 157 articles were obtained that were following the topic; 3) Analyzing, synthesizing, and evaluating selected literature; 4) Concluding the results of the review; and 5) Discussing the results of the review that have been obtained.

**Table 1.** Summary of games found and potential in a multicultural approach

No.	The Games	Aspect				Articles that were found	Effectiveness	
		Personal	Social	Learning	Career		Yes	No
1	<i>Engklek</i>	√	√			(Rachmawati & Nur, 2022) (Munawaroh, Budiono, & Mutakin, 2019)	√	
2	<i>Domikado</i>	√	√			(Farmathalia, Anggriana, & Kadafi, 2023) (Putri, Mappiare-AT, & Radjah, 2021)	√	
3	<i>Jamuran</i>	√	√	√		(Damiri & Juwantara, 2023) (Syofiyanti & Marjuk, 2023)	√	
4	<i>Boi-boian</i>	√	√			(Lusi'ani & Khusumadewi, 2020) (Khisma, Rondli, & Kuryanto, 2023) (Mukhlisina, Putri, Permatasari, Oktaviani, & Salimi, 2022)	√	
5	<i>Congklak/Dakon</i>	√	√		√	(Marta, Ratnawati, & Krisphianti, 2022) (Fatimah & Sari, 2023)	√	
6	<i>Gobak sodor</i>	√	√		√	(K. K. Hidayah, 2021) (Reforwati, 2022)	√	
7	<i>Bentengan</i>	√	√			(R. N. Hidayah & Hargiyansari, 2019) (Fajri & Aini, 2023)	√	
8	<i>Cublak cublak suweng</i>	√	√	√		(Ningsih, Muslihati, & Hidayah, 2021) (Sari & Risalah, 2022)	√	
9	<i>Lompat tali</i>	√	√			(Nurrokhmah, Munawar, & DH, 2023) (Istirahayu, 2020)	√	
10	<i>Ular tangga</i>	√	√		√	(Septyanti & Annisa, 2022) (Wulandari & Pravesti, 2021)	√	

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Results

#### Game of The Nusantara

Games are something that is closely related to students, this is because games provide activities for students to do spontaneously, without demands, and provide a sense of fun and joy to the players (Putri et al., 2021). Besides that, games are the essence of real-life images; in playing, children tend to develop their effectiveness and role control because the actions they take from a game produce conclusions (Agustina, Supriatna, & Peniasiani, 2023). This is supported by the opinion of Agustina et al. (2023) which states that play is an effective and efficient, and important means to entertain, educate, have a positive impact, and raise each person. Through play, it is expected to provide opportunities for children to explore, create, and learn in a fun way. Game media is the right solution as a medium that can support character education in schools, according to the needs and character of students (Lusi'ani & Khusumadewi, 2020).

According to Santrock (2015) play is a fun activity that is carried out for the benefit of the activity itself. Play is a form of individual self-adaptation that is very useful in helping children master anxiety and conflict. At its core, play is social, involving learning, obeying rules, problem-solving, self-discipline, and emotional control, and the adoption of leader roles with members, which are all important components of socialization. Games must have four main components, including players, environment, place of interaction, game norms or procedures, and goals to be achieved. Games have several advantages, including that they are fun to do and something exciting. Games allow active participation of students in learning, games can provide a direct response, games allow applying concepts and roles in situations that occur in society, games can be easily made and reproduced (Lusi'ani & Khusumadewi, 2020).

After engaging in a variety of intense academic activities, students often experience boredom or mental fatigue, which results in decreased motivation and learning focus. By engaging students in fun and interactive games, the learning atmosphere becomes more relaxed and motivating (Setyaputri & Hanggara, 2022). This is also supported by several studies that prove that using games can improve reading skills, social interaction skills, self-esteem, reduce fear in speaking and interpersonal competence, and increase students' academic self-efficacy. According to Liza & Rusandi (2017) mentioned that there are characters possessed by traditional games that can form positive characters, namely having noble values and certain moral messages, namely the value of togetherness, responsibility, an airy attitude, encouragement to achieve, and obeying the rules. According to Misbach also argues

that traditional games can stimulate various aspects of child development, which can include motor, emotional, language, social, cognitive, spiritual, ecological, and value/moral aspects of society (Liza & Rusandi, 2017).

Games can be an effective and appropriate tool in the context of learning and developing various aspects of students' abilities, both physically, cognitively, and socially. In general, games are categorized into three types, namely games of skill, games of strategy, and games of chance, which have their benefits and challenges (Setyawati & Wahyuningtyas, 2021). For the benefit of guidance and counseling services, the right type of game to use is strategy games, because in strategy games, intellectual strengths and weaknesses can be observed, activating ego processes, concentration, and self-control. This is in line with the functions of games in guidance and counseling services, including gaining self-control over the problems faced, gaining strength in themselves, expressing their emotions, forming problem-solving and decision-making skills, building social skills, building self-concept and self-esteem, improving communication skills, and adding insight.

By considering the various functions and benefits of games, especially traditional games, their integration into guidance and counseling services is a strategic step that is full of meaning. Traditional games not only touch the cognitive and social-emotional aspects of students, but also able to create a participatory, contextual, and inclusive learning space. When counselors utilize traditional games as a medium in counseling sessions, counselees will find it easier to express themselves naturally and without pressure, as play activities have a fun and non-intimidating feel. This strengthens the active engagement of the counselee in the counseling process and supports the achievement of developmental goals more effectively.

Traditional games can also be used to facilitate cross-cultural understanding and develop learners' social sensitivity. As a cultural heritage full of local values, traditional games contain elements of togetherness, cooperation, and tolerance that can strengthen interactions between individuals from different backgrounds. The use of traditional games such as *Gobak Sodor*, *Domikado*, or *Bentengan* can be a bridge to build intercultural dialogue in a fluid and constructive atmosphere. Thus, the Nusantara game-based approach is an innovative alternative that not only strengthens the effectiveness of counseling services but also enriches students' learning experiences in building self-identity, social empathy, and cultural awareness.

### The Diversity of Nusantara Games and Their Effectiveness as a Multicultural Approach in Guidance and Counseling

Nusantara games are a cultural heritage that reflects the richness and diversity of ethnic groups, customs, and local values in Indonesia. Each region has its unique games, such as *congklak*, *gobak sodor*, and *domikado*, which are not only entertaining but also rich in social values, cooperation, and sportsmanship. In the context of guidance and counseling, these Nusantara games can serve as an effective medium for introducing local culture and internalizing multicultural values among students. Through an enjoyable and contextual approach, students can appreciate cultural differences, build empathy, and enhance social skills in an inclusive and participatory environment.

To provide a clearer picture of the diversity of traditional games in the Nusantara, the following table presents several examples of games along with a general description, internalization of personal and social aspects of learning, career development, and previous research on the effectiveness of games. This table is intended to facilitate understanding of how each game not only has distinctive local cultural characteristics but also has great potential in supporting a multicultural approach in guidance and counseling. Through an understanding of these games, it is hoped that an inclusive space can be created to continue preserving and deepening diversity while fostering mutual respect among fellow students.

**Table 2.** The Diversity of Indonesian Games as Potential in a Multicultural Approach

No.	The Games	Overview	Aspect	Previous Research
1	<i>Engklek/Sunda Manda</i>	<i>Engklek</i> is a traditional game of jumping on a flat plane drawn on the ground by making a checkered image, then jumping with one foot from one box to the next. This game is usually done individually and in groups, usually played by girls, but not infrequently, also boys play. It is usually played by 2-5 participants and requires a large playing area.	<b>Personal</b> Problem-solving ability, language development and verbal ability, motor skills  <b>Social</b> Social interaction, empathy	Implementation of <i>Engklek</i> Traditional Games on Character Strength Wisdom of Elementary School Students (Rachmawati & Nur, 2022), the results showed a significant increase in students' character strength wisdom.  Efforts to Improve the Independent Character of Kindergarten B Puspa Melati Jember Students Through the Media of <i>Engklek</i> Folk Games

No.	The Games	Overview	Aspect	Previous Research
		The traditional game of <i>engklek</i> has values that are implied from each of these games to train children from an early age to be more disciplined in everything, and train children physically and mentally, such as jumping with one foot, it also has the benefit of training children's physical balance, and mental children when a player is declared defeated.		(Munawaroh et al., 2019), shown in the last cycle, that students have developed as expected and even developed very well.
2	<i>Domikado</i>	<i>Domikado</i> game is a traditional game that is played through <i>domikado</i> chants/mantras, namely " <i>do mikado, mikado, eska, ekado, eskado, beya beyo, cis cis, one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine, ten</i> ". This game is done by sitting in a circle, participants put their left hand under the right hand of another participant, then start singing the <i>domikado</i> song while clapping their hands on the palm of the other player. This game emphasizes the values of honesty, cooperation, mutual respect, sportsmanship, and relies on accuracy.	<p><b>Personal</b> Emotional skills, waiting for your turn, getting used to queuing, patience, hand dexterity, and careful decision-making.</p> <p><b>Social</b> Social interaction with friends, open-mindedness.</p>	<p>Utilization of <i>Domikado</i> Game Media in Group Guidance Services to Improve the Honest Character of Class VII Students of SMP Negeri 11 Madiun (Farmathalia et al., 2023), games are chosen because they can create their reality, develop the ability to interact with others, and in social skills that others need to have.</p> <p>Development of <i>Domikado</i> Game as a Counseling Technique to Improve Social Skills of Elementary School Students (Putri et al., 2021), the results of the assessment of learning media experts, counseling experts, and potential users show that this game has high validity with the first validator index or very good acceptability.</p>
3	<i>Jamuran</i>	This game is a game that is done by singing <i>jamuran</i> songs and ends with answers to challenges that must be done. All players are in a circle except the player who is the mushroom in the center. The chant is " <i>jamuran yo gegethok, mushroom apa yo gegethok, mushroom gajih mrecicik sak ara ara, sira dadi mushroom apa?</i> " The middle player will answer, for example, wood mushrooms, then all children must run to find wood and return with wood; mushrooms vehicle, then all children will form a line like a vehicle. This game is played with 8-20 players.	<p><b>Personal</b> Tolerance with friends, imaginative ability, creativity, openness, empathy, and accepting mistakes.</p> <p><b>Social</b> Social interaction, not discriminating against social status, and empathy with others.</p> <p><b>Learning</b> Encourages self-expression, cooperation, and communication, and enhances cultural understanding through songs and movements.</p>	<p>Improving Students' Interpersonal Communication Skills Through <i>Jamuran</i> Traditional Games for Class VII Students at SMP Negeri 32 Bandar Lampung (Damiri &amp; Juwantara, 2023), it is shown that through the game, students' interpersonal communication with three meetings.</p> <p>Local Wisdom of <i>Jamuran</i> Game as Strengthening Student Character through Counseling Guidance Services (Syofiyanti &amp; Marjuk, 2023), obtained the results that traditional <i>Jamuran</i> games with a group guidance approach can be used to instill student character to be even better.</p>



No.	The Games	Overview	Aspect	Previous Research
4	Boi-Boian	<p>The <i>boi-boian</i> game is a game that is played by combining handball. This game is done by piling up the center of the shards of tiles or sandals/shoes then taking turns participants throwing towards the pile, if the pile falls then the game starts with the player who so will throw the ball towards other players, while the other players are tasked with avoiding the ball and must rearrange the middle pile earlier. A neat pile back then, the game is over. This game is done in groups of 7-8 players.</p>	<p><b>Personal</b> Agility, teamwork, tenacity, patience, and cooperation</p> <p><b>Social</b> Cooperation between players, social interaction.</p>	<p>Development of <i>Boi-Boian</i> Traditional Game Media to Improve the Character of Elementary School Learners (Lusi'ani &amp; Khusumadewi, 2020). This media has gone through media expert tests and prospective user validation tests and meets product acceptability criteria based on criteria of usefulness, feasibility, accuracy, and appropriateness.</p> <p>The Effect of <i>Boi-Boian</i> Traditional Games on Increasing Social Interaction in Students of SDN 2 Hadipolo (Khisma et al., 2023). It was shown that the significance value obtained a value of <math>0,000 &lt; 0.05</math>, so there was a significant influence between the game and increased social interaction.</p> <p>Traditional Games in Character Education Strengthening Programs in Elementary Schools (Mukhlisina et al., 2022), it is shown that strengthening character education can be formed through traditional games of <i>gobak sodor</i> and <i>boi-boian</i>, which are implemented in sports education and scouting learning.</p>
5	Congklak/ Dakon	<p>In the Javanese language, <i>congklak</i> is called <i>dakon</i>, which means recognizing something as his own or being recognized. This game is played by 2 people using a <i>congklak</i> board that has 16 holes and <i>congklak</i> seeds. There are 2 kinds of holes, small holes and large holes, as a home or a place to collect <i>congklak</i> seeds.</p>	<p><b>Personal</b> The value of strategy in making choices about something, problem-solving skills, and discipline.</p> <p><b>Social</b> Social interaction, cooperation.</p> <p><b>Career</b> Make choices, take responsibility for choices.</p>	<p><i>Congklak</i> Game as a Means to Optimize Learners' Career Planning Skills (Marta et al., 2022) it is a conceptual study that can be a recommendation to optimize learners' career planning skills.</p> <p>The effectiveness of <i>Congklak</i> Traditional Games through Group Guidance to Improve Class VIII Students' Cooperation at SMPN 31 Banjarmasin (Fatimah &amp; Sari, 2023) it shows that the results after being given treatment increased to 53.40% in the moderate category, so that this game is quite effective in improving cooperation among students.</p>

No.	The Games	Overview	Aspect	Previous Research
6	<i>Gobak Sodor</i>	It is a type of physical game that is carried out by passing the opposing group through the <i>gobak sodor</i> box. This <i>gobak sodor</i> game is outdoor and requires facilities in the form of a large field/yard. This game is played by two groups, namely the guard and the play groups.	<p><b>Personal</b> Value sportsmanship, strategizing, and leadership.</p> <p><b>Social</b> Cooperation between players, social interaction.</p> <p><b>Career</b> Decision-making, the ability to find and alternatives and selection strategies.</p>	<p>Analysis of Traditional Game Values of <i>Gobak Sodor</i> with Krumboltz Career Decision Making Theory (K. K. Hidayah, 2021) shows that the value of the traditional game of <i>gobak sodor</i> can be applied in career decision making, namely, the value of cooperation, strategy, leadership, and alternative search.</p> <p>The influence of the traditional game <i>Gobak Sodor</i> based on the Socratic Method in developing Students' Courage Character in Elementary School (Reforwati, 2022) demonstrated the influence of the game in increasing students' courage (determination, courage, perseverance, honesty, vitality).</p>
7	<i>Bentengan</i>	It is a game of maintaining the defense of the area carried out by two groups of players, consisting of 12-14 players in each group. Each group will choose a fort in the form of a tree/wall/pole. The opposing player must seize the opponent's fort and take the opposing player by chasing each other and avoiding the touch of the opposing team.	<p><b>Personal</b> Children's motor skills, sensitivity between players, mutual respect, and mutual help determine strategies.</p> <p><b>Social</b> Social interaction, cooperation, positive social relationships, and prosocial skills (sharing, cooperation, honesty, generosity).</p>	<p>The effectiveness of cooperative learning through the traditional game "<i>Bentengan</i>" in early childhood at Dharma Wanita Insani Probolinggo Kindergarten (Fajri &amp; Aini, 2023) showed the results that the effectiveness reached 88% which showed learning through the game was very effective.</p> <p>The Counselor's Role in Improving Children's Prosocial Behavior with <i>Bentengan</i> Game Media (R. N. Hidayah &amp; Hargiyansari, 2019) shows that the service with <i>bentengan</i> media effectively fosters students' prosocial behavior.</p>
8	<i>Cublak-Cublak Suweng</i>	It is a game performed by singing or lyrics of <i>cublak-cublak suweng</i> " <i>cublak-cublak suweng, suwenge teng gelenter, mambu ketudhung gudhel, pak empo lera lere, sopo guyu ndhelikake, sir pong dele kopong</i> ". This is done by the finished player who will prostrate in the center, then the other player will place his left hand on the guard player's back, then the lyrics of <i>cublak-cublak suweng</i> are sung while rotating	<p><b>Personal</b> Honesty, responsibility, generosity, wisdom.</p> <p><b>Social</b> Togetherness, obeying social rules.</p> <p><b>Belajar</b> Strengthening the character of Pancasila students.</p>	<p>The effectiveness of self-control training for junior high school students through the game <i>Cublak-Cublak Suweng</i> (Ningsih et al., 2021) indicated that the positive values of the game <i>cublak-cublak suweng</i> are internalized to improve the management of thoughts, emotions, and behavior.</p> <p>Strengthening Pancasila Character in the Traditional</p>

No.	The Games	Overview	Aspect	Previous Research
		coins (interpreted as valuable items) on each player's left palm. At the end of the song, the player will hide the coin on one of the players, and the prostrate player will guess who hid the coin.		Game of <i>Cublak-Cublak Suweng</i> (Sari & Risalah, 2022) shows that the lyrics of the game have extensive activities and behaviors and have the purpose of strengthening Pancasila character (P5).
9	<i>Lompat Tali</i>	It is a game of agility in which 3 or more players hold a rubber rope at both ends, and the player in the middle will jump and avoid the rope.	<b>Personal</b> Agility, cooperation, responsibility.  <b>Social</b> Social interaction, regardless of social strata, involves social communication.	Counseling Services Through the Application of Traditional Games Jumping Rope Against Cooperation Attitudes (Istirahayu, 2020) the results showed good cooperation, common goals, mutual assistance, obeying rules, responsibility, and division of tasks in the group.  Efforts to Improve Children's Gross Motor Skills Through Traditional Games Jumping Rope in Group B Ages 5-6 Years at Bakti Pertiwi 01 Semarang Kindergarten (Nurrokhmah et al., 2023) concluded that the achievement of gross motor skills through games increased to 87% in the category of developing very well.
10	<i>Ular Tangga</i>	In a game played on a playing board consisting of many squares, players will move their pawns on each square until the end of the game. Usually randomized through 1-2 dice. Players consist of 2-4 players.	<b>Personal</b> Problem-solving ability, strategy, cooperation, and confidence.  <b>Social</b> Social interaction and cooperation.  <b>Career</b> Making choices, choice strategies, and responsibility.	Snakes and Ladders Game Media for Career Planning (Septyanti & Annisa, 2022) the results of this study indicate that Snakes and Ladders games can be used in student career planning, which has been researched by several previous studies and can be proven by the data obtained.  Development of Confidence Ladder Game in Increasing Self-Efficacy of Junior High School Students (Wulandari & Pravesti, 2021) in the user test, the results were 92.3% with a very valid category, limited tests were carried out with a significance value of 0.027 <0.05 so it was concluded that the snakes and ladders game media was effective for increasing student self-efficacy.



## Discussion

### The Potential of Nusantara Games as a Multicultural Approach for Guidance and Counseling

Cross-cultural counseling is a process of assistance provided by counselors to counselees while paying attention to the operation of cultural factors and how these cultural factors become one of the assistance processes (whether in the form of media, tools, or processes) in achieving the success of the goals to be achieved (Nuzliah, 2016). Cross-cultural counseling is also used as an alternative to counselors in providing appropriate services to counselees to achieve their goals. The use of cross-cultural counseling can be used to assist counselees in overcoming their problems, especially school problems.

The potential use of Nusantara games in counseling services is supported by previous studies, which will be discussed here. This can be an innovative strategy in providing guidance and counseling services to be more optimal. The Nusantara games that are present in the service are expected to be able to be used in achieving a certain goal and becoming a solution to a problem in the field of guidance and counseling. According to Putra in Setyawati & Wahyuningtyas (2021) that there are three elements of innovation strategies, including what it looks like, its function, and its meaning. So that the Nusantara game, which was originally only done to get fun, satisfaction, and victory, now functions as a strategy in providing guidance and counseling services.

Indonesia, with its cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity, is a challenging terrain but also rich in opportunities for the application of multicultural counseling. Counselors are required to understand local culture as a foundation for building empathic relationships and bridging differences. In this context, local culture is not only a background, but also a resource that can be optimized in the counseling process (Corey, 2013). Nusantara games, as part of cultural heritage, have symbolic power that not only entertains but also conveys moral and social values rooted in local culture. In the context of multicultural counseling, these values can be used to bridge understanding between counselors and counselees who have different cultural backgrounds. For example, the *domikado* game, which teaches about honesty, patience, and cooperation, can be used in group guidance services to develop students' prosocial character (Farmathalia et al., 2023).

In addition, the values contained in traditional games such as *jamuran* and *bentengan* reflect various important aspects of social life, including the ability to appreciate diversity, establish harmonious cooperation, and develop interpersonal communication skills. These games are not only a means of entertainment but also a vehicle for social learning that teaches tolerance, empathy, and solidarity between players. In the context of multicultural counseling, these values are relevant because this type of counseling emphasizes the importance of building cross-cultural communication bridges in an effective and balanced manner. Counselors are required to be able to understand and respond to clients' various cultural backgrounds sensitively and inclusively. A study by Damiri & Juwantara (2023) even showed that the *jamuran* game has effectiveness in improving students' interpersonal communication skills in a relatively short time, which indicates the great potential of traditional games as an intervention medium in developing social skills that support the success of multicultural counseling.

The use of play in counseling practice is actually not new. The play therapy approach developed by Hall, Kaduson, & Schaefer (2002) shows that games can serve as an effective communication bridge between counselors and clients, especially in dealing with child clients who are often unable to express their feelings verbally. Through play, children can channel emotions, express experiences, and build relationships with counselors in a more relaxed and safe atmosphere. In the local context of Indonesia, traditional games of the Nusantara have similar potential. Games such as cricket, *gobak sodor*, or hide-and-seek are not only entertainment, but also expressive media that are fun and familiar to counselees from certain cultural backgrounds. Since cultural and social values are embedded in these games, their use in counseling can help create a more open and inclusive communication space and strengthen the emotional connection between counselor and counselee.

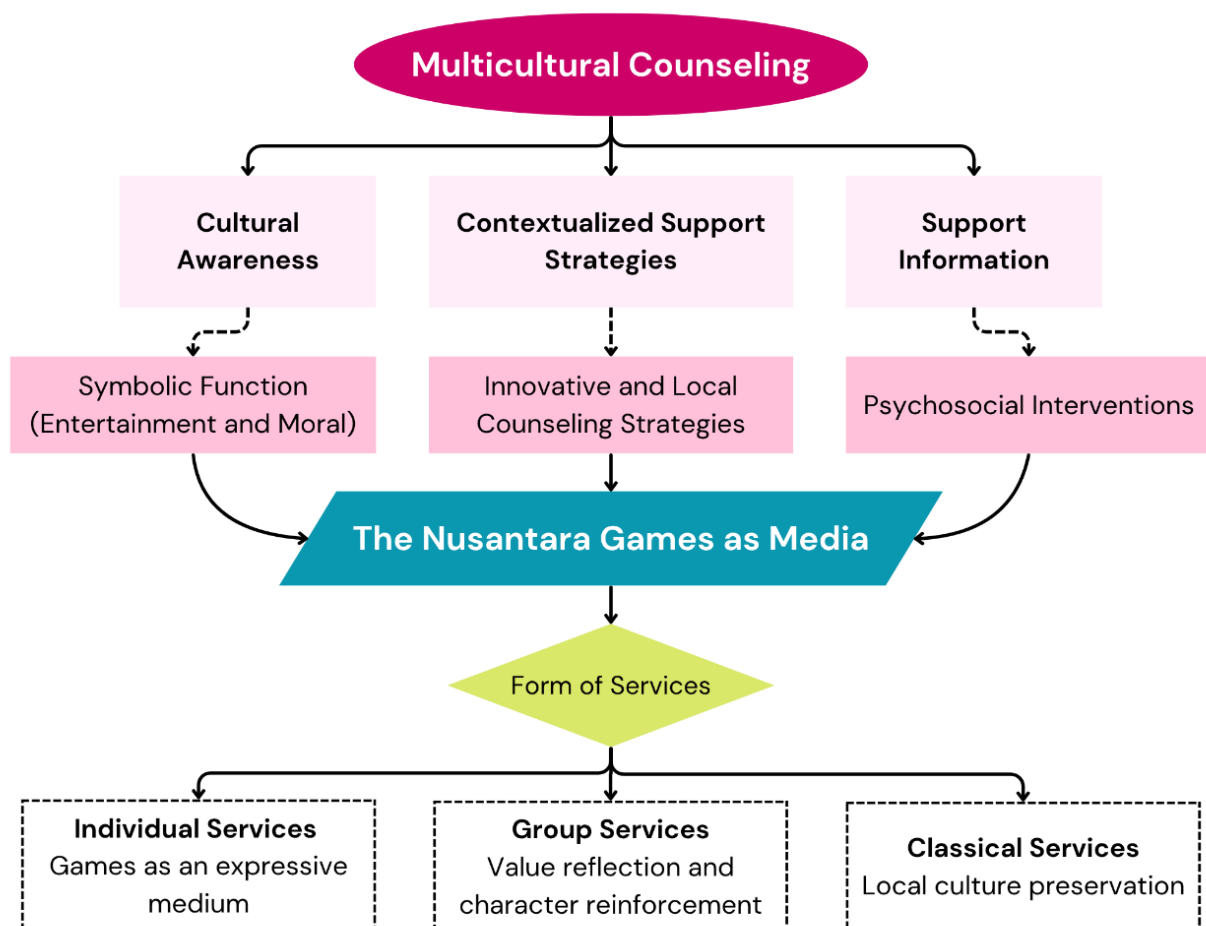
As a multicultural approach, traditional games also assist counselors in tailoring interventions to the socio-cultural context of the counselee. For example, the seemingly simple game of *engklek* turns out to contain deep meanings about patience, strategy, and perseverance. This game has been proven effective in improving character strength and social interaction skills (Dewi & Christiana, 2014; Rachmawati & Nur, 2022), making it a relevant tool in building students' resilience to social pressures. Each traditional game reflects the cultural values of its home community. For example, the *congklak* game popular in eastern Indonesia illustrates strategy, patience, and respect for turn-taking. While the game *engklek* teaches balance and perseverance. Through these games, counselors can introduce and revive the counselee's cultural values, strengthen cultural identity, and create deeper emotional connections.

Counselors act as facilitators as well as cultural agents who are able to interpret and synergize cultural elements in counseling services. When counselors can raise the Nusantara game as an approach, they are not only culturally sensitive professionals but also agents of preserving cultural identity. This competency is in line with the ethical standards of multicultural counseling that emphasize cultural self-awareness and understanding of the cultural values of the counselee (Asbi, Apriananda, & Sembiring, 2024). Traditional games allow for more collaborative and contextual counseling practices. In group sessions, counselors can invite students to play while

reflecting on their experiences in their respective social and cultural contexts. This is in line with the constructivist approach in counseling, which emphasizes the importance of constructing meaning socially and contextually through interaction (Corey, 2013). Through play activities, counselees are invited to understand themselves and others within the framework of living local values.

The integration of traditional games in counseling also plays a role in building children's cultural identity. When children are reintroduced to local games that may have long been abandoned, they not only play, but also reconstruct cultural values that have begun to be eroded by globalization. In this case, counseling becomes a vehicle for cultural preservation as well as psychosocial interventions that pay attention to children's diversity and cultural identity. One important aspect of multicultural counseling, according to Alamsyah, Muslihati, & Peng (2024) is the strengthening of *cultural awareness*, both on the part of the counselor and the counselee. Games such as *Cublak-Cublak Suweng* can be used to explore local values related to responsibility, honesty, and courage to make decisions. Research by Ningsih, Muslihati, & Hidayah (2021) even shows that the game is effective in improving students' self-control, an important aspect in character development. However, not all traditional games contain the same cultural content, so counselors need to understand the context, meaning, and function of the game according to the cultural background of the counselee so that it can be used appropriately in services. Therefore, improving cultural literacy and counselor training is crucial to support the adaptation of relevant counseling methods. In practice, the Nusantara's games can be applied through simulations, role-plays, or group activities that are structurally designed to achieve specific goals such as building cooperation, reducing social anxiety, and strengthening self-esteem.

## Integration of Nusantara Games in Cross-Cultural Counseling



**Figure 1.** Integration of Nusantara Games in Cross-Cultural Counseling (Author's Work, 2025)

Nusantara games can be integrated as multicultural counseling media through three approaches: cultural awareness, context-specific support strategies, and supporting information. Games are used to convey symbolic values, locally charged counseling strategies, and psychosocial interventions, which can then be applied in local culture-based counseling services.

Despite having great potential in supporting the counseling process, the application of traditional Nusantara games as a medium in counseling services has not been done massive scale. Some of the obstacles that are often encountered include limited references or documentation of counseling practices that use local game-based approaches, a lack of training that equips counselors with culture-based methods, and low cultural literacy among educators and counseling practitioners (Anisa & Ipungkarti, 2021; Chidliir, 2023). This condition causes the use of traditional games to be seen only as a recreational activity, not as a strategic approach in the guidance and counseling process. However, these obstacles can also be read as opportunities to develop innovative counseling services based on local wisdom. These steps not only strengthen cultural roots in counseling practices but can also increase the relevance and acceptability of services in the eyes of counselees from various cultural backgrounds.

Considering all the findings and implications of the previous studies, it is clear that Nusantara games have great potential as a multicultural approach in counseling. Besides strengthening student engagement in the counseling process, this approach also facilitates character building, cultural preservation, and deep cross-cultural understanding. Therefore, the integration of Nusantara games in counseling services needs to be further developed through practical guidelines, counselor training, and educational policies that support local culture-based approaches.

## CONCLUSION

Games are a form of activity that is carried out for many purposes, most of which are for the purpose of developing social skills. With games, the skills to be taught will be fun and memorable. The potential of Nusantara games in Indonesia can be a means to be introduced to today's children. In addition to the value of the game, there is also the value of preserving Indonesian culture, which is increasingly eroded by the times. The potential of Nusantara games can also be applied to guidance and counseling services, especially for students at the elementary school level. At this level, teaching will be effectively done through games because it will continue to be remembered, foster togetherness, and improve social skills. The values in Nusantara games include the value of cooperation, strategy, decision-making, responsibility, interpersonal communication, and so on. Therefore, the potential of games is so great that be able to continue to be developed, adopted, and adapted to guidance and counseling services at other levels.

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