

Cultural Humility among School Counselors: Contrasting Self-Reports and Student Voices

Bau Ratu^{*1}, Mardi Lestari¹, Ridwan Syahran¹, Azam Arifyadi¹

Dhevy Puswiartika¹, Dini Rakhmawati²

¹Universitas Tadulako, Indonesia

²Universitas PGRI Semarang, Indonesia

bauratu@untad.ac.id*

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ABSTRACT: Cultural humility is central to culturally responsive school counselling, yet its assessment often relies on counselors' self-reports and rarely incorporates students' perspectives. This cross-sectional study examined cultural humility among junior-high-school guidance and counselling (BK) teachers in Palu City, Indonesia, by integrating counselor self-reports (N = 57) and student evaluations (N = 240). Internal consistency was acceptable for the Multidimensional Cultural Humility Scale (MCHS; $\alpha = 0.816$) and the Cultural Humility Scale for Students (CHS-S; $\alpha = 0.876$ for Positive CH and 0.836 for Negative CH). Descriptive analyses showed that counselors rated their cultural humility in the high range, whereas students evaluated it in the moderate range. Spearman correlations showed that all counselor-rated MCHS dimensions were significantly associated with the total score, as was Positive CH, with self-awareness showing the strongest association among the counselor-rated dimensions; Negative CH was not significantly associated with the total score, indicating a distinct pattern within the student-reported measure. After both sets of scores were linearly rescaled to a common 0–100 metric, the Mann–Whitney U test showed a significant counselor–student difference with a large effect (U = 536.000, Z = -10.842, $p < .001$, $r = .63$). This discrepancy underscores the relational and feedback-sensitive nature of cultural humility. The comparatively weaker position of self-reflection and critique highlights the need for critical reflexivity, reflective supervision, and systematic student feedback in professional development. Limitations include the cross-sectional design, use of different instruments across informant groups, and absence of matched counselor–student dyads. Overall, the findings indicate that integrating student voice with counselor self-report provides a more balanced basis for assessing and strengthening culturally responsive school counselling.

INTRODUCTION

Cultural humility (CH) is a reflexive disposition that emphasizes openness, awareness of personal bias, and a sustained commitment to redressing power imbalances. First introduced in medical education (Tervalon & Murray-García, 1998), CH has since become the gold standard in the

helping professions because it treats diversity not as a static body of facts to be mastered but as a dynamic experience that must be continually negotiated through reflection and self-critique (Lee & Haskins, 2022; Zhu et al., 2021). Its relevance is especially clear in school guidance and counseling (BK), where practitioners interact daily with students from diverse ethnic, linguistic, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds.

The Indonesian context sharpens this urgency. Social-Cultural Statistics show that in Central Sulawesi, an area with high ethno-linguistic diversity, 33.00 % of residents aged ≥ 5 years speak a regional language at home, while 19.98 % use it in social settings (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2025). Junior high school counselors therefore navigate complex patterns of communication. Because schools are never culturally neutral, language-, race-, or class-based marginalization may easily be reproduced (Cénat et al., 2025; Sheperis et al., 2023).

For three decades, multicultural competence (MCC) has dominated counselor training with its focus on bias awareness, cultural knowledge, and discrete skills (Lee & Haskins, 2022). Recent critiques argue that MCC presumes a fixed endpoint, whereas human identities are fluid and intersectional (Zhu et al., 2023). Cultural humility corrects this limitation by positioning counselors in a stance of *not knowing*, recognizing clients as experts on their own lives, and promoting lifelong learning (Chase & Post, 2025; Hook et al., 2013; Owen, 2013). Ego restraint, supportive interaction, and continuous reflection thus become prerequisites for an egalitarian helping relationship.

Empirical evidence corroborates these benefits. A recent meta-analysis found that CH explains around 60 % of variance in the working alliance and 58 % in the real relationship, with empathy as a partial mediator (Lee & Haskins, 2022; Zhu et al., 2021). Similar models account for 58 % of counseling outcomes (Vandament et al., 2022). Client and observer ratings alike indicate that therapeutic relationships feel more positive when therapists are perceived as culturally humble (Anders & Kivlighan, 2023). CH also mitigates the impact of microaggressions by strengthening alliances and supports decolonial practices that challenge power hierarchies (Cabell et al., 2024; Ratanashevorn et al., 2024; Zhu et al., 2023).

Nevertheless, most evidence still comes from adult psychotherapy in Western contexts. Studies of school counseling, particularly in Southeast Asia, remain scarce (Sheperis et al., 2023). A bibliometric review for 2012-2022 showed that CH appears far less frequently than mindfulness or MCC in Indonesian counseling literature (Naini et al., 2022). Moreover, many investigations rely on practitioners' self-reports, even though self-assessment bias often conceals missed cultural opportunities (Gonzalez et al., 2021; Ratanashevorn et al., 2024). Students' perspectives, arguably the most direct indicators of program effectiveness, are rarely explored.

The present study addresses this gap by combining the Multidimensional Cultural Humility Scale (MCHS) for counselor self-report with the Cultural Humility Scale for Students (CHS-S) to capture student perceptions. Its objectives are to (1) map junior-high-school counselors' CH from both perspectives; (2) examine inter-dimensional correlations within each instrument; and (3) compare counselor and student ratings after linear rescaling to a common metric. To the authors' knowledge, this is the first Indonesian study to juxtapose counselors' and students' views of CH at the junior high school level. The findings should foster systemic feedback and reflective professional development, making school guidance services more inclusive and responsive to student diversity.

Rationale of the Study

The rationale for this study rests on the relational nature of cultural humility and the limitations of evaluating it solely through self-report. Cultural humility is expressed not only in counselors' self-perceptions but also in how their attitudes and behaviors are experienced by students. Because self-assessment may overlook culturally incongruent interactions (Gonzalez et al., 2021; Ratanashevorn et al., 2024), comparing counselor and student perspectives provides a more balanced basis for evaluation.

A dual-informant approach can reveal whether counselors' intended culturally humble practice corresponds with students' experiences. Agreement may indicate consistency across perspectives, whereas discrepancy may reveal relational blind spots not captured by self-report. This comparison therefore offers a clearer basis for interpreting cultural humility as a multidimensional and relational construct and for informing reflective, feedback-sensitive school counseling practice.

Study Aim and Hypothesis

Guided by the foregoing rationale, the present study set out to provide a dual-perspective map of cultural humility among junior high school guidance counselors in Indonesia. Using the Multidimensional Cultural Humility Scale (MCHS) for counselor self-reports and the Cultural Humility Scale for Students (CHS-S) for pupil assessments, we first sought to describe how counselors evaluate their own cultural humility and how those evaluations compare with students' perceptions. We then examined the pattern of correlations among the dimensions of each instrument to test whether the constructs operate coherently within both respondent groups. Finally, after linearly rescaling both sets of scores to a common metric, we compared the overall levels of cultural humility reported by counselors with those attributed to them by students.

Based on previous findings, we expected two outcomes. First, the MCHS dimensions were expected to show significant positive associations with the overall construct, whereas the Positive and Negative CHS-S subscales were expected to show associations consistent with their theoretically distinct directional meanings. Second, counselors were expected to assign themselves higher cultural-humility scores than those assigned by students, with the magnitude of the gap reaching at least a medium effect size ($d \geq 0.50$). Confirmation of these expectations would not only substantiate the relational nature of cultural humility but also highlight a perceptual discrepancy that could inform targeted professional development and feedback mechanisms in school counseling practice.

METHODS

Design

A cross-sectional survey with a descriptive–correlational–comparative orientation was adopted. This non-experimental design is widely used to explore relations among cultural humility (CH), the working alliance, and counseling outcomes without manipulating variables ([Vandament et al., 2022](#); [Wilcox et al., 2024](#); [Zhu et al., 2025](#)). Two distinct informant groups—teachers and students—were recruited in line with Gonzalez et al.'s recommendation to reduce single-respondent bias ([Gonzalez et al., 2021](#)). The overall study design and analytical framework are presented in Figure 1.

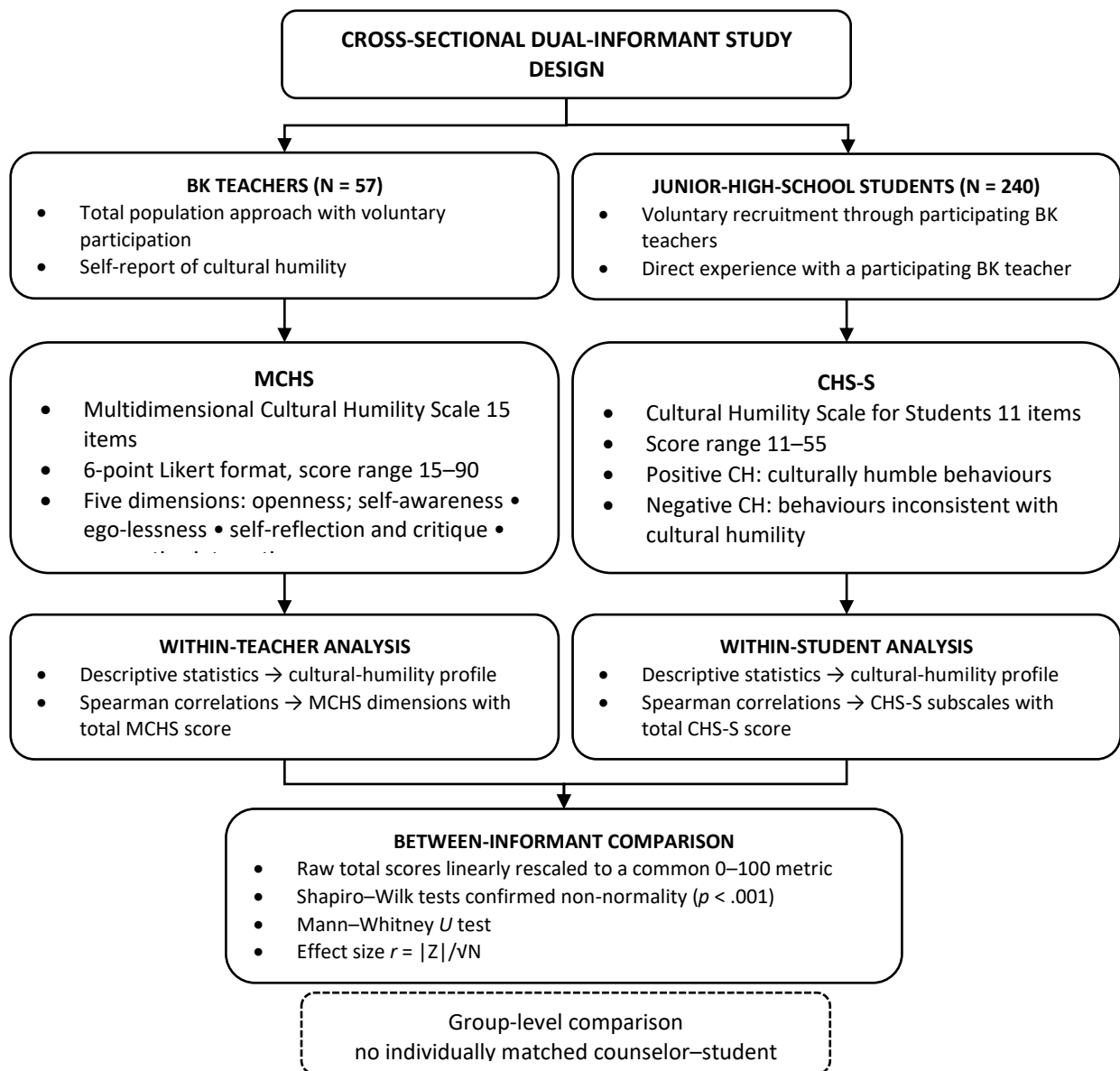


Figure 1. Study design and analytical framework

Participants and Procedure

The study included 57 junior high school guidance and counseling (BK) teachers and 240 students in Palu City. BK teachers were recruited using a total population approach with voluntary participation. The survey was distributed to all active BK teachers at the junior high school level in Palu City. Teachers were eligible if they were currently providing guidance and counseling services and agreed to participate. A total of 57 teachers completed the *Multidimensional Cultural Humility Scale* (MCHS), and all responses were included in the analysis.

Students were recruited through the participating BK teachers. After completing the survey, teachers forwarded the study invitation to students who had previously received guidance and counseling services or interacted directly with a participating counselor. Students were eligible if they were enrolled in a junior-high school in Palu City, had direct experience with a participating school counselor, agreed to participate, and completed the *Cultural Humility Scale for Students* (CHS-S). A total of 240 students met these criteria, and all responses were included in the analysis. Student recruitment therefore relied on voluntary participation through participating teachers according to predefined eligibility criteria rather than random selection.

Schools were not used as sampling units. Recruitment was conducted at the level of the BK-teacher population, and students were recruited through participating teachers. Because teachers' school affiliations were not collected in the survey, the number of schools represented could not be determined. Analyses were conducted at the group level without individually matching teachers and students; thus, the findings represent aggregate tendencies across the two informant groups rather than dyadic agreement. This multi-informant strategy reduces reliance on practitioner self-report (Kondili et al., 2022) and incorporates the perspectives of counseling-service recipients (Slaton et al., 2023).

The teacher group comprised 15 men (26.32%) and 42 women (73.68%). Most were government-employed teachers (ASN/PPPK; 50, 87.72%), whereas seven (12.28%) were non-government-employed. Fifty-five teachers (96.49%) were professionally certified, while two (3.51%) were not. In terms of educational and professional qualifications, 50 teachers (87.72%) held a bachelor's degree in Guidance and Counseling, four (7.02%) held the same degree with additional professional education or training, two (3.51%) held a bachelor's degree in another field, and one (1.75%) held a master's degree in Guidance and Counseling or Education. Years of school counseling experience varied: 19 teachers (33.33%) had less than 5 years of experience, 14 (24.56%) had 5–10 years, 18 (31.58%) had 11–20 years, and six (10.53%) had more than 20 years.

Among the students, 101 (42.08%) were male, and 139 (57.92%) were female. Most had relatively recent contact with a school counselor: 202 students (84.17%) reported contact within the previous month, 13 (5.42%) within the previous 3 months, 11 (4.58%) within the previous 6 months, and 14 (5.83%) more than 6 months earlier.

Instruments

The MCHS followed the original 15-item, six-point Likert format (Gonzalez et al., 2021) and was translated and contextually adapted for Indonesian BK teachers. The CHS-S was adapted from Srisarajivakul's student-focused scale through translation–back-translation and pilot reliability testing with Indonesian adolescents (Srisarajivakul et al., 2023).

The MCHS captures five CH dimensions: openness, self-awareness, ego-lessness, self-reflection and critique, and supportive interactions, whereas the 11-item CHS-S yields two subscales: positive and negative cultural humility. Higher Positive CH scores indicate greater perceived cultural humility, whereas higher Negative CH scores indicate more behaviors that are inconsistent with cultural humility. Expert review and pilot testing preceded main data collection. Pilot testing indicated acceptable internal consistency; Cronbach's α indicated acceptable internal consistency: for teachers ($N = 92$), total $\alpha = 0.816$ with dimension-level α ranging from 0.538 (self-reflection and critique) to 0.916 (openness); for students ($N = 170$), $\alpha = 0.876$ (positive) and 0.836 (negative). Although the self-reflection and critique α was below 0.60, the dimension was retained to preserve the theoretical structure of the MCHS.

Because the MCHS and CHS-S use different score ranges (15–90 and 11–55, respectively), raw total scores were linearly rescaled to a common 0–100 metric before between-group comparison. For each instrument, the observed score was transformed relative to its theoretical minimum and maximum, such that the minimum possible score corresponded to 0 and the maximum possible score to 100. This procedure preserved participants' relative positions within each scale while facilitating comparison across instruments with different scoring metrics. Similar rescaling approaches have been used in informant-discrepancy research (Fraire et al., 2023).

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics first profiled CH levels. Given the ordinal, non-normal data, Spearman's correlations were used to test associations between each dimension and its respective total score. After linear rescaling to a common 0–100 metric, differences between teacher and student ratings

were examined using the Mann–Whitney U test. Shapiro–Wilk tests confirmed non-normality ($p < .001$); therefore, the observed between-group effect size was expressed as $r = |Z|/\sqrt{N}$ rather than Cohen’s d , which had been specified as the a priori effect-size expectation.

Ethical Considerations

Institutional approval was obtained, respondent confidentiality was safeguarded, and only aggregated results are reported. Employing two data sources diminishes self-enhancement bias (Wilcox et al., 2022) and reinforces the relational nature of CH (Lee & Haskins, 2022).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Participant Characteristics

The study included 297 participants—57 junior high school guidance and counseling (BK) teachers and 240 students. Teachers completed the Multidimensional Cultural Humility Scale (MCHS), whereas students evaluated their teachers using the Cultural Humility Scale for Students (CHS-S). The resulting teacher-to-student distribution was 19.19% and 80.81%, providing a service–recipient–centered perspective on cultural humility.

Cultural-Humility Profiles by Informant Source

The teachers rated their own cultural humility in the *high* range ($M = 73.70$, $SD = 7.74$), whereas students placed their teachers in the *moderate* range ($M = 35.96$, $SD = 4.04$).

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics for Cultural Humility by Informant Source

Source	N	Min	Max	M	SD	Category
BK Teachers	57	37.00	87.00	73.70	7.74	High
Junior-High Students	240	24.00	55.00	35.96	4.04	Moderate

Note. M = mean; SD = standard deviation; Min = minimum; Max = maximum.

Distribution of Cultural-Humility Categories

Nearly all teachers (96.49 %) fell in the *high* category, whereas most students (90.83 %) classified their teachers’ cultural humility as *moderate*. Details for each dimension and sub-scale are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Category Distribution of Cultural Humility

Component	N	Low n (%)	Moderate n (%)	High n (%)
Teacher Perceptions				
MCHS (Total)	57	1 (1.75)	1 (1.75)	55 (96.49)
Openness	57	1 (1.75)	1 (1.75)	55 (96.49)
Self-Awareness	57	1 (1.75)	11 (19.30)	45 (78.95)
Ego-lessness	57	1 (1.75)	11 (19.30)	45 (78.95)
Self-Reflection & Critique	57	6 (10.53)	26 (45.61)	25 (43.86)
Supportive Interactions	57	0 (0.00)	6 (10.53)	51 (89.47)
Student Perceptions				
CHS-S (Total)	240	2 (0.83)	218 (90.83)	20 (8.33)
Positive CH	240	0 (0.00)	63 (26.25)	177 (73.75)
Negative CH	240	212 (88.33)	23 (9.58)	5 (2.08)

Note. Teacher total CH = MCHS (Total); Student total CH = CHS-S (Total). Percentages are calculated within each group.

Dimension and Sub-scale Level Means

Means, standard deviations, and percentage-of-maximum scores for each MCHS dimension and CHS-S sub-scale are summarised in Table 4.

Table 4. Means, Standard Deviations, and Percentage Scores for Each Dimension/Sub-scale

Component	N	Theoretical Max	M	SD	% of Max	Category
Teacher Perceptions						
Openness	57	18	15.75	2.17	87.50	High
Self-Awareness	57	18	14.93	2.58	82.94	High
Ego-lessness	57	18	14.75	2.57	81.94	High
Self-Reflection & Critique	57	18	12.54	2.95	69.67	Moderate
Supportive Interactions	57	18	15.72	1.60	87.33	High
Student Perceptions						
Positive CH	240	35	29.31	4.07	83.74	High
Negative CH	240	20	6.65	2.68	33.25	Low

Internal Correlations

Spearman's ρ revealed significant, positive correlations among all teacher-rated dimensions ($\rho = .400-.784$, $p \leq .002$). The strongest association was for self-awareness ($\rho = .784$). Among students, Positive CH correlated strongly with the total score ($\rho = .830$, $p < .001$); the Negative CH sub-scale did not ($\rho = .022$, $p = .737$). These findings supported the expected coherence among the MCHS dimensions and Positive CH, whereas Negative CH showed no significant association with the total score (see Table 5).

Table 5. Correlations Between Dimensions/Sub-scales and Their Total Scores

Component	ρ	p	Interpretation
Teacher Perceptions			
Openness	.715	< .001	Strong
Self-Awareness	.784	< .001	Strong
Ego-less	.724	< .001	Strong
Self-Reflection & Critique	.578	< .001	Moderate
Supportive Interactions	.400	.002	Moderate
Student Perceptions			
Positive CH	.830	< .001	Very strong
Negative CH	.022	.737	Very weak

Note. ρ = Spearman coefficient; $p < .05$ indicates statistical significance.

Rescaled Scores and Group Differences

After transformation to a 0–100 metric, teachers averaged 78.27 (SD = 10.32) and students 56.72 (SD = 9.19) (see Table 6). A Mann–Whitney U test confirmed a significant difference ($U = 536.000$; $Z = -10.842$; $p < .001$) with a large effect ($r = .63$), thereby supporting H_2 .

Table 6. Rescaled Scores (0–100 Scale)

Group	N	Min	Max	M	SD	Median	IQR
BK Teachers	57	29.33	96.00	78.27	10.32	77.33	10.01
Junior-High Students	240	29.55	100.00	56.72	9.19	56.82	11.36

Note. IQR = interquartile range.

Table 7. Mann–Whitney Comparison of Teacher vs. Student Rescaled Scores

Group	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks	<i>U</i>	<i>Z</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>
BK Teachers	57	259.60	14797.00	536.000	−10.842	< .001	.63
Junior-High Students	240	122.73	29456.00	—	—	—	—

Note. *U* = Mann–Whitney statistic; *Z* = *z* score; *r* = $|Z| / \sqrt{N}$ (effect size).

Given the non-normal distributions (Shapiro–Wilk $p < .001$), non-parametric tests were appropriate. The marked disparity ($r = .63$) further supported H_2 , indicating a substantial between-informant discrepancy and underscoring the relational nature of CH.

Summary of Findings

Teachers perceived their cultural humility as high, whereas students viewed it as moderate. Teachers reported the highest scores for *openness* and *supportive interactions* but the lowest score for *self-reflection and critique*. Correlational analyses showed significant associations across all MCHS dimensions and Positive CH, whereas Negative CH was not significantly associated with the total score. The significant teacher–student discrepancy, with a large effect size, supported H_2 and may indicate differences between counselors’ self-perceptions and students’ experiences of culturally humble practice, further highlighting the relational nature of cultural humility.

Discussion

The present findings reveal a substantial discrepancy between junior high school guidance counselors’ self-appraisals of cultural humility and students’ evaluations in Central Sulawesi. Counselors positioned their own cultural humility in the high category, whereas students evaluated it in the moderate range. This gap is not merely a descriptive difference between two respondent groups; it points to a deeper measurement and practice issue in assessing relational professional qualities. Cultural humility cannot be inferred solely from counselors’ intentions, self-concepts, or professional confidence, because it is enacted and experienced in the relational space between counselors and students, where power, language, identity, and lived experience intersect (Zhu et al., 2023). The higher self-ratings among counselors therefore plausibly reflect the self-enhancement tendency often observed when practitioners evaluate their own intercultural responsiveness (Fraire et al., 2023; Kondili et al., 2022).

This discrepancy supports H_2 and strengthens the argument that self-report is useful but insufficient for evaluating cultural humility in school counseling. The large difference between counselor and student ratings suggests that culturally humble intentions may not always be experienced by students as culturally humble interactions. Such divergence may reflect unobserved interactional cues, including defensive responses, premature advice, or culturally generalized assumptions, that students perceive more sharply than counselors themselves. This interpretation is consistent with evidence showing limited concordance between practitioner self-ratings and client or observer ratings in diversity-related domains (Fraire et al., 2023). Importantly, the finding should not be read as a moral indictment of counselors, but as evidence that cultural humility may benefit from external feedback from those who directly experience counseling services.

The correlational findings showed a coherent pattern between the MCHS dimensions and the total score and between Positive CH and the CHS-S total score, whereas Negative CH showed no significant association with the total score. This pattern should be interpreted in light of the CHS-S structure, in which Positive CH reflects culturally humble behaviors, whereas Negative CH captures behaviors inconsistent with cultural humility. The non-significant association may therefore indicate that Negative CH captures a distinct aspect of students’ evaluations rather than simply mirroring Positive CH. This distinction is theoretically important because it cautions against treating all subscales as interchangeable indicators of the same construct. It also supports the need for future

validation work examining how positive and negative student perceptions operate within school-based cultural humility assessment.

Among counselors, *self-awareness* emerged as the strongest correlate of overall cultural humility. This finding suggests that self-awareness is particularly closely aligned with counselors' overall self-reported cultural humility. Theoretically, this is meaningful because *self-awareness* is the entry point into deeper cultural humility: without awareness of one's own biases and interpretive habits, intercultural learning risks remaining performative rather than transformative (Lee & Haskins, 2022). At the same time, the relatively weaker position of *self-reflection and critique* reveals an important gap. Counselors appeared more confident in outward-facing dimensions such as *openness* and *supportive interactions*, but less strong in the more demanding work of sustained critical self-examination. This pattern is consistent with the psychometric challenge of capturing critical reflection as a stable dimension of the MCHS (Gonzalez et al., 2021).

The contrast between strong *self-awareness* and weaker *self-reflection and critique* has important conceptual implications. Awareness of bias does not automatically lead to critical interrogation of privilege, institutional power, or school norms that may marginalize students. A counselor may recognize that diversity matters while still relying on habitual assumptions about language, behavior, family background, or student participation. Thus, the lower standing of *self-reflection and critique* should be interpreted less as an individual weakness and more as a signal that professional preparation may not yet provide sufficient structures for critical reflexivity. Traditional multicultural-competence models that foreground cultural knowledge and skills can unintentionally create a sense of final expertise, thereby weakening the humility-oriented stance of not knowing (Whatley et al., 2024; Zhu et al., 2021). Cultural humility requires counselors to remain epistemically open and to treat students as experts on their own cultural experience.

The theoretical contribution of this study lies in positioning cultural humility as a multidimensional, relational, and feedback-sensitive construct in school counseling. The findings show that counselors' internal self-awareness is necessary but not sufficient; it must be considered alongside students' lived experience of the counseling relationship. Without student feedback, cultural humility risks becoming a self-declared professional virtue rather than an observable relational practice. This is why student-perception data should be treated as a valuable component of cultural humility assessment. Periodic use of the CHS-S could serve as a formative mirror, helping counselors identify blind spots and adjust their practice before relational ruptures become entrenched. Such an approach is consistent with feedback-informed and measurement-based care models that use service-recipient data to strengthen responsiveness and accountability (Duncan & Reese, 2024). It may also reduce expertise complacency, in which professional experience increases confidence without necessarily increasing cultural humility (Coneys et al., 2025).

The findings also extend cultural humility research beyond adult psychotherapy and Western clinical contexts into Indonesian school counseling. Although the present study did not directly assess the working alliance, the results are consistent with prior evidence linking cultural humility to stronger relational processes in counseling (Zhu et al., 2021). In school settings, this relational function is especially important because students may experience counseling not merely as an individual support service, but as part of a broader institutional culture that can either validate or marginalize their identities. Culturally humble counselor-student relationships may be particularly protective for students who feel a weaker sense of belonging in school (Slaton et al., 2023).

The Central Sulawesi context further sharpens the relevance of these findings. In a multilingual province where 33.00% of residents aged five years and older speak a regional language at home, cultural humility also functions as a communicative and interpretive competence (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2025). Students who use regional linguistic patterns or who are less fluent in standard Indonesian may be misread as passive, disengaged, or less capable if counselors have not critically examined their own language expectations. Thus, cultural humility in Indonesian school counseling

is not only an ethical stance but also a practical safeguard against linguistic and cultural bias. Professional development for BK counselors should therefore move beyond descriptive cultural content toward critical incident analysis, language-bias reflection, power-relation awareness, reflective supervision, and systematic engagement with student feedback (Bathje et al., 2022).

Overall, the counselor-student perception gap should be understood as a structural signal that current evaluation systems may underrepresent students' voices. Schools that institutionalize student feedback create a more dialogic ecology of care, where counselors learn from service recipients and where professional growth is grounded in relational evidence. The main contribution of this study is therefore both empirical and conceptual: it demonstrates that cultural humility among Indonesian junior-high-school counselors is more comprehensively assessed through the combined lens of professional self-reflection and students' lived experience.

Implications

These findings have direct implications for the professional development, supervision, and quality assurance of school guidance and counseling services in Indonesia. The discrepancy between counselors' self-appraisals and students' evaluations suggests that cultural humility should be strengthened through structured critical reflection rather than multicultural knowledge alone. Professional development should therefore help BK teachers examine implicit bias, language expectations, power relations, and culturally shaped assumptions through reflective journals, critical-incident analysis, role-play, experiential learning, and guided reflection on student feedback (Bathje et al., 2022). Student feedback should also be incorporated as a formative component of service evaluation, with the CHS-S used periodically to identify relational blind spots and support evidence-informed adjustments in counseling practice, consistent with feedback-informed practice (Duncan & Reese, 2024). Reflective supervision should reinforce this process by providing psychologically safe spaces for counselors to examine uncertainty, mistakes, and cultural misattunement, particularly regarding the weaker dimension of *self-reflection and critique* (Gutierrez et al., 2025). At the policy level, schools and education authorities should consider integrating cultural humility, student feedback, and reflective supervision into routine quality-assurance and counselor-development systems, particularly in culturally and linguistically diverse settings such as Central Sulawesi, to foster more systematic, responsive, and inclusive school counseling practice.

Limitations and Further Research

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional design precludes conclusions about how cultural humility develops over time or relates to longer-term counseling relationships and student outcomes. Second, although MCHS and CHS-S scores were linearly rescaled to a common 0–100 metric, the use of different instruments across informant groups may introduce method variance; accordingly, the observed differences should be interpreted as perceptual discrepancies rather than evidence of absolute scale equivalence. Third, analyses were conducted at the group level without individually matched counselor–student dyads, limiting examination of dyadic concordance, relational mismatch, and counselor-level predictors of student perceptions. Fourth, the study was conducted in Palu City, Central Sulawesi, which may constrain the generalisability of the findings to other Indonesian contexts. Future research should therefore adopt longitudinal, dyadic, and mixed-methods designs across diverse regions, combining repeated surveys with interviews, reflective journals, and naturalistic observation to examine how cultural humility changes over time and is experienced through language, non-verbal behavior, and power dynamics in everyday school counseling interactions.

CONCLUSION

This study mapped cultural humility among Indonesian junior high school guidance and counseling (BK) teachers by integrating counselor self-reports and student perceptions. The correlational findings showed significant associations between the counselor-rated MCHS dimensions and the total score, as well as between Positive CH and the CHS-S total score, whereas the Negative CHS-S subscale was not significantly associated with the total score, indicating a distinct pattern within the student-reported measure. H₂ was supported by the clear discrepancy between counselors' favorable self-appraisals and students' more moderate evaluations, suggesting that cultural humility may not be adequately assessed through counselor self-report alone. The weaker position of *self-reflection and critique* indicates that professional development should move beyond cultural knowledge toward sustained critical reflexivity, feedback-informed supervision, and systematic student voice. Overall, this study positions cultural humility as a multidimensional, relational, and accountability-oriented construct in school counseling in Indonesia, with student feedback serving as a practical mechanism to make BK services more inclusive and responsive to cultural and linguistic diversity.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

All authors made substantial, distinct, and complementary contributions to this study. BR conceived the research idea, secured funding, coordinated the project, and prepared the initial manuscript draft. ML and RS performed the statistical analyses, interpreted the results, and refined the presentation of the findings. AA and DP organized and executed data collection and compiled the tables and figures. DR contributed to the literature review and assisted in revising the manuscript for intellectual content and clarity. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript and accept full responsibility for the integrity of the work.

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