

Universitas Negeri Padang & Ikatan Konselor Indonesia

Editorial Office: Jurusan Bimbingan dan Konseling | Faculty of Education | Universitas Negeri Padang

Jl. Prof. Dr. Hamka Air Tawar Barat, Kota Padang, Sumatera Barat, 25130, Indonesia.

☎ +62 (0754) 41650; Website: <http://pps.fip.unp.ac.id/>; ✉ jk@konselor.org / info@konselor.org

Volume 15 Number 1 2026



KONSELOR

ISSN 1412-9760 (Print) | ISSN 2541-5948 (Online)

Editor: Nilma Zola

Publication details, including author guidelines

URL: <https://counselor.pjj.unp.ac.id/index.php/konselor/about/submissions>

Interpreting Sufi Ethical Frameworks for Counseling Practice: A Hermeneutic Analysis of Abah Anom's Teachings

Ishlakhatu Sa'idah, Najlatun Naqiyah, Titin Indah Pratiwi, & Ari Khusumadewi
Universitas Negeri Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia

Article History

Received: Wednesday, November 05, 2025

Revised: Monday, March 02, 2026

Published: Tuesday, March 31, 2026

How to cite this article (APA)

Sa'idah, I., Naqiyah, N., Pratiwi, T. I., & Khusumadewi, A. (2026). Interpreting Sufi ethical frameworks for counseling practice: A hermeneutic analysis of Abah Anom's teachings. *KONSELOR*, 15(1), 19–30. <https://doi.org/10.24036/02026151151-0-86>

The readers can link to article via <https://doi.org/10.24036/02026151151-0-86>

Correspondence regarding this article should be addressed to:

Najlatun Naqiyah. Department of Guidance and Counseling, Universitas Negeri Surabaya. Jl. Lidah Wetan, Surabaya, East Java 60213, Indonesia.

Email: najlatunnaqiyah@unesa.ac.id

SCROLL DOWN TO READ THIS ARTICLE



Universitas Negeri Padang (as publisher) makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of all the information (the "Content") contained in the publications. However, we make no representations or warranties whatsoever as to the accuracy, completeness, or suitability for any purpose of the Content. Any opinions and views expressed in this publication are the opinions and views of the authors and are not the views of or endorsed by Universitas Negeri Padang. The accuracy of the Content should not be relied upon and should be independently verified with primary sources of information. Universitas Negeri Padang shall not be liable for any losses, actions, claims, proceedings, demands, costs, expenses, damages, and other liabilities whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with, in relation to, or arising out of the use of the content.

KONSELOR is published by Universitas Negeri Padang comply with the [Principles of Transparency and Best Practice in Scholarly Publishing](#) at all stages of the publication process. KONSELOR also may contain links to web sites operated by other parties. These links are provided purely for educational purpose.



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](#).

Copyright by Sa'idah, I., Naqiyah, N., Pratiwi, T. I., & Khusumadewi, A. (2026).

The author(s) whose names are listed in this manuscript declared that they have NO affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest (such as honoraria; educational grants; participation in speakers' bureaus; membership, employment, consultancies, stock ownership, or other equity interest; and expert testimony or patent-licensing arrangements), or non-financial interest (such as personal or professional relationships, affiliations, knowledge or beliefs) in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript. This statement is signed by all the authors to indicate agreement that the all information in this article is true and correct.

Interpreting Sufi Ethical Frameworks for Counseling Practice: A Hermeneutic Analysis of Abah Anom's Teachings



Ishlakhatus Sa'idah, Najlatun Naqiyah[♦], Titin Indah Pratiwi, & Ari Khusumadewi

Universitas Negeri Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia.

Abstract: Counselling ethics has been predominantly shaped by Western philosophical traditions, yet its application in culturally diverse settings requires ethical grounding that resonates with local moral understandings. Rather than assuming limitations in international codes, this study examines how a contextualised ethical perspective may complement existing frameworks by exploring the teachings of Abah Anom, a widely respected Sufi guide whose ethical reflections remain influential within Indonesian Muslim communities. His teachings are analysed not as theological prescriptions but as culturally situated ethical resources that illuminate intention, emotional discipline, relational presence, and moral orientation in counselling practice. The study employs a Gadamerian hermeneutic approach, drawing on textual sources, including Miftahus Shudur, sermon transcripts, and institutional documents, and purposively selected informants comprising senior disciples, a Sufi scholar, and counsellors familiar with his teachings. The analytic process followed an iterative part-whole movement, dialogical interpretation, and socio-religious contextualisation to construct meaning across texts, participant experiences, and contemporary counselling concerns. The analysis identifies four ethical dispositions: sincerity, patience, empathy, and service, as dynamic modes of ethical self-formation rather than fixed moral virtues. These dispositions guide counsellors in aligning intention with client welfare, regulating affective responses, deepening relational understanding, and maintaining an orientation of service towards others. A key interpretative insight that emerged is the view of ethical practice as an ongoing cultivation of inner states, offering an alternative perspective to procedural or rule-based approaches commonly emphasised in professional codes. The study contributes by showing how a local Sufi moral framework can enter into constructive dialogue with global counselling ethics and enrich culturally responsive practice without proposing doctrinal authority or universal applicability. Future research may focus on how these ethical dispositions are enacted in real counselling interactions or undertake comparative hermeneutic studies across other Indonesian spiritual traditions.

Key Words: Islamic ethics in counseling; Transpersonal ethics; Local wisdom, Psychological practice; Hermeneutic analysis

INTRODUCTION

Counsellor ethics constitute a central pillar of professional guidance and counselling, ensuring that practitioners safeguard client welfare, uphold integrity, and maintain responsible conduct (May, 2018; Vasquez & Bingham, 2012). International ethical codes, such as those issued by the American Counselling Association (ACA) and the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy

[♦]**Corresponding author:** Najlatun Naqiyah. Department of Guidance and Counseling, Universitas Negeri Surabaya. Jl. Lidah Wetan, Surabaya, East Java 60213, Indonesia. Email: najlatunnaqiyah@unesa.ac.id

(BACP), stress confidentiality, autonomy, non-maleficence, and beneficence (American Counselling Association, 2015; Shapiro, 2016). While these frameworks are well-established, they are shaped by Western philosophical lineages, particularly deontological and utilitarian moral reasoning (Hans-Georg Gadamer, 2004; Ricoeur, 2016). As counselling practice unfolds across diverse cultural landscapes, scholars increasingly recognise that universal principles often fall short of capturing the moral reasoning embedded in communities whose ethical outlooks are informed by religious worldviews and collective values.

Multicultural and cross-cultural ethics have attempted to address these limitations, yet their progress remains incomplete. Although these approaches widen the ethical horizon, they continue to rely on Western assumptions about moral judgement and professional boundaries (Benuto et al., 2020; Frame & Williams, 2005; Isa & Utomo, 2024). Their limitations are evident not only in applied settings but also in the deeper moral logics practitioners rely on when interpreting ethical dilemmas (Sensoy & Ikiz, 2023). In many non-Western contexts, moral intuition and evaluative judgement draw from cultural narratives and spiritual commitments that cannot be captured by procedural codes or culturally neutral guidelines (Crockett et al., 2024; Heir, 2025; Tariq et al., 2024)

These constraints become particularly visible in counselling within Muslim-majority societies, where spiritual reasoning and moral sensibilities permeate personal and communal life. Counsellors in such settings often navigate ethical decisions through frameworks shaped by Islamic teachings, socio-religious norms, and moral exemplars. Yet the scholarly literature on counsellors' ethics in Islamic contexts remains sparse. Studies in Islamic psychology have prioritised clinical models, therapeutic interventions, and scriptural perspectives on mental health, leaving a significant theoretical gap concerning the ethical formation of counsellors and the moral vocabulary they employ (Henry, 2015; Isa & Utomo, 2024; Umriana et al., 2023).

Sufism offers a promising but underexplored ethical reservoir for addressing this gap. Rather than approaching Sufism primarily as a historical or metaphysical tradition, its ethical function is central: cultivating sincerity (*ikhlas*), moral purification (*tazkiyah*), humility (*tawadhu*), compassion (*rahmah*), and spiritual accountability. These virtues foster an inner moral orientation grounded in self-discipline and responsibility before God. They also align with essential counselling dispositions such as empathy, authenticity, trustworthiness, and reflective self-awareness. Through this lens, Sufistic ethics provide a substantive foundation for shaping the counsellor's moral identity.

Abah Anom (KH. Ahmad Shohibulwafa Tajul Arifin, 1915-1999) represents a particularly salient case for ethical interpretation because his leadership in the Qadiriyyah-Naqsyabandiyah (TQN) Suryalaya community offers a documented example of lived moral guidance. His teachings foreground sincerity, patience, compassion, self-discipline, and gentle interpersonal engagement, all of which informed his therapeutic approach to individuals facing addiction, delinquency and existential distress (Edgar Suratman, 2011; Kamaludin & Ula, 2019; Millie, 2023). The significance of Abah Anom lies not merely in spiritual authority but in the demonstrable ways he translated Sufi virtues into relational practices that resemble ethical counselling.

Despite this relevance, the integration of Abah Anom's Sufistic ethics into professional counselling discourse remains underdeveloped. Existing work on Islamic or Sufi-based interventions has largely examined techniques, therapeutic outcomes, or community practices (Isgandarova, 2019; Moh. Kamil Fikri et al., 2025; Ratnasari et al., 2025; Umriana et al., 2023). Very little scholarship has analysed how Sufi teachings shape the counsellor's moral self or contribute to a conceptual ethical framework that complements international standards. This oversight makes a clear theoretical gap: the absence of a systematic interpretation linking Sufistic moral reasoning to counsellor ethics.

A hermeneutic approach offers a suitable methodological response to this gap. Sufistic ethical meanings are embedded in text, oral teachings, ritual and communal narratives, requiring interpretive engagement rather than empirical measurement. A hermeneutic grounded in dialogical understanding allows researchers to uncover how virtues such as *ikhlas*, *amanah*, and *ihsan* are interpreted and embodied within a living spiritual tradition (Palmér et al., 2024; Shah et al., 2020). This interpretive lens reveals ethical dimensions inaccessible to positivistic methodologies that focus on behaviours rather than meaning.

This study aims to interpret the ethical values articulated in Abah Anom's Sufistic teachings and formulate them into a conceptual framework for counsellor ethics relevant to Muslim-majority contexts.

Through an interpretative reading of texts, oral narratives and community practices within the TQN Suryalaya tradition, the study seeks to illuminate the moral dispositions and responsibilities expected of counsellors grounded in Sufistic virtues and ethics. The study's contribution lies in offering an indigenous ethical vocabulary that broadens global discussions on counsellor ethics. It deepens the spiritual dimension of counsellor moral formation, providing a culturally grounded perspective that complements established international codes. By foregrounding Sufistic ethical reasoning, this research enriches the discourse on professional ethics with a contextually sensitive moral framework rooted in lived spiritual practice.

METHOD

The study adopts philosophical hermeneutics as its explicit epistemological foundation. The investigation is situated primarily within a Gadamerian interpretive frame, supplemented by selective Ricoeurian resources where attention to narrative identity or testimonial distinction is analytically useful. This orientation is chosen because the research question concerns ethical meanings that are historically situated, textually inscribed, and socially enacted; such meanings are not reducible to behavioural counts or descriptive typologies and therefore require an approach that privileges dialogical understanding, the part-whole dialectic, the researcher's pre-understanding, and the fusion of horizons that occurs through interpretive exchange. By specifying these philosophical commitments up front, the study avoids vague appeals to interpretive methods and establishes clear epistemic limits: claims are evaluated for interpretive credibility and contextual resonance rather than for positivist generalizability.

The empirical design integrates two complementary data streams, a textual corpus and an experiential corpus, because hermeneutic inquiry treats texts and lived practice as mutually illuminating horizons of meaning. The textual corpus comprises primary Sufistic materials directly associated with Abah Anom, including the book *Miftahus Shudur*, selected archival lecture recordings from 1975 to 1999 held at Pesantren Suryalaya, and published documentation or treatises that the local community attributes to his teaching. The experiential corpus comprises semi-structured interviews and narrative testimonies from participants selected according to explicit criteria: demonstrable, long-term involvement in the TQN community (operationalised as ten years or more for disciples), documented familiarity with Abah Anom's teachings, and direct relevance to counselling practice for practitioner informants. The final interview sample of eight informants, comprising four senior disciples, two Islamic counselling scholars, and two practising counsellors, is justified on hermeneutic grounds: it balances depth of engagement and horizon triangulation while remaining feasible for sustained dialogical analysis; sample adequacy is assessed through interpretive saturation rather than statistical rules.

Data collection followed a staged and documented protocol that mirrors hermeneutic logic, moving from initial assumptions towards dialogic interpretation. Stage 1 involved identifying, authenticating, and preparing the textual corpus: primary items were selected for provenance and thematic relevance, digitised where necessary, transcribed, and annotated with contextual metadata. Stage 2 comprised iterative hermeneutic readings of the corpus, during which researchers recorded pre-understandings, noted recurrent ethical terms, and formulated provisional interpretative questions to guide fieldwork. Stage 3 comprised field engagement: semi-structured interviews of 45 to 90 minutes each, following a flexible guide that invited narrativised exemplars of ethical practice, descriptions of pedagogical routines, and reflections on dilemmas in counselling practice; interviews were audio-recorded with consent and transcribed verbatim. Where permission was granted, limited non-participant observation of dhikr assemblies and mentoring interactions was undertaken, with a specific focus on relational gestures, modes of ethical modelling, and interactional routines that instantiate Sufistic values. Stage 4 returned the researcher to the texts with insights gleaned from field engagement, enabling iterative reinterpretation and integration of textual and experiential horizons; this movement exemplifies the hermeneutic circle and drives successive refinements of the emerging ethical framework.

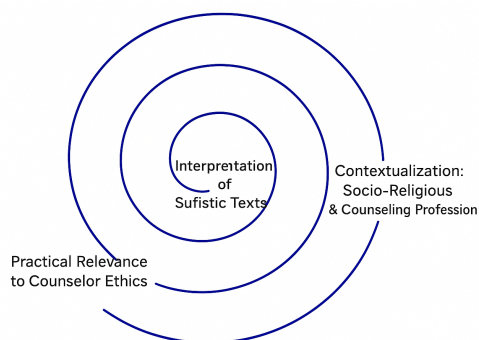


Figure 1. Hermeneutical Spiral Analysis

Analysis proceeded under hermeneutic principles and used practical organisational aids without resorting to mechanistic procedures. Coding was employed as a reflexive and heuristic device to organise excerpts and trace recurrent ethical motifs, but the codes functioned as interpretive sensitising concepts rather than as outputs of a grounded theory procedure. Qualitative software was used only to support retrieval, transparency, and auditability; software-assisted indexing facilitated cross-referencing between textual passages and interview segments, while the interpretive work remained a dialogical activity of reading between parts and the whole. Themes were allowed to emerge through sustained conversation with the material, with provisional readings continually tested against alternative horizons and field observations. Validation strategies reflected interpretive standards: prolonged engagement and thick description supported interpretive credibility; triangulation across textual inscriptions, community practice, and participant narratives helped corroborate and complicate claims; selective member reflection or member checking with a subset of informants was used to ensure resonance and correct misreadings; peer debriefing with colleagues versed in hermeneutics and Islamic studies provided critical challenge; and a reflexive audit trail documented pre-understandings, memos, coding decisions, and interpretive pivots to enable transparent scrutiny.

RESULTS

The research findings indicate that the Sufistic values taught by Abah Anom can be reinterpreted as relevant ethical principles that support professional counselling practice. The hermeneutic analysis demonstrates that each Sufi concept, originally understood within a spiritual and transcendental horizon, resonates strongly with contemporary counsellors' ethics, both in terms of professional integrity and interpersonal engagement with clients. These values are not merely moral guidelines but a comprehensive orientation that shapes how a counsellor acts, responds, and cultivates empathy. Sufistic teachings influence external conduct while simultaneously providing profound psychological and spiritual grounding, equipping counsellors with the inner strength required to navigate the complexities of professional practice. This reading is further reinforced by textual evidence from *Mifathus Shudur*, where Abah Anom states that "*nafs* is like fire: if left unchecked it burns, but if guarded it illuminates", a metaphor that practitioners interpret as the ethical requirement for emotional regulation, self-awareness, and grounded presence in counselling sessions.

One of the most frequently recurring themes is sincerity, which Abah Anom defines as the purification of intention for the sake of Allah. In counselling practice, sincerity becomes more than a spiritual virtue. It serves as a foundational ethical principle that prevents hidden motives, conflicts of interest, and manipulative behaviour. A sincere counsellor is expected to be transparent in intention, free from desires for recognition or personal gain that may obstruct the client's welfare. This perspective appears consistently in interviews with counsellors at Suryalaya. One counsellor stated that "if the heart is not clean, the client can feel it", indicating that sincerity is experienced by clients not as rhetoric but as a relational climate that fosters trust. The grounding of sincerity in the spiritual teaching that "*man 'arafa nafsahu faqad 'arafa rabbahu*" was repeatedly cited by practitioners as a reminder that self-awareness must precede professional service. Through hermeneutic interpretation, this teaching is lifted from its ascetic meaning towards an ethical understanding: counsellors must examine their own

assumptions, biases, and emotional tendencies to avoid imposing personal values on clients. This interpretive movement strengthens the finding that sincerity functions simultaneously as an inner discipline and an interpersonal ethic. The significance of sincerity is further confirmed by its role in shaping the counsellor's perception of the client. A sincere counsellor, according to several interviewees, views the client not merely as a case to be handled but as a person entrusted to them. This orientation extends professional integrity beyond technical requirements to encompass moral and spiritual responsibility. As a result, counselling becomes not only a helping profession but also an embodied form of moral service that blends competence, technical skill, and spiritual accountability. This synthesis is evident in Abah Anom's description in *Miftahus Shudur*, where "service to others is a path of devotion," which practitioners understand as guidance for cultivating humility and commitment in their work.

Another core value is patience, which Abah Anom frames as emotional steadfastness in the face of challenges. A hermeneutic reading of his teachings reveals that patience carries dual significance in counselling. First, it enables counsellors to maintain emotional stability when working with clients who resist, regress, or exhibit unpredictable behaviour. Second, patience fosters the ability to honour the client's pace of growth, avoiding premature interpretations or pressured interventions. Interviews with practitioners confirm this dual role. One counsellor noted that "change comes when the heart is ready, not when we push it," indicating that patience is active, deliberate, and aligned with the ethical stance of respecting client autonomy. Patience also protects counsellors from burnout, helping them maintain equilibrium despite heavy caseloads. This internal discipline corresponds with Abah Anom's metaphor in *Miftahus Shudur* that "the heart must be guarded just as the body must be protected from harmful nourishment," which practitioners understand as an encouragement to regulate internal responses and maintain psychological resilience.

Empathy likewise emerges as a central Sufistic value with direct relevance to counselling practice. In Abah Anom's teachings, empathy is intertwined with *rahmah* (compassion) and *tafahum* (deep understanding), both grounded in spiritual awareness. Empathy is not described merely as a communication skill but as a condition of presence that allows counsellors to meet clients with emotional and spiritual attunement. One practitioner described the Suryalaya approach by saying, "We listen not only with the ear, but with the heart," a statement that reflects the fusion of the cognitive, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of empathy. This finding mirrors textual elements in *Miftahus Shudur* that urge individuals to "see others with softness so that your own heart becomes soft," a teaching that counsellors interpret as guidance to cultivate an inner disposition conducive to deep understanding. Such empathy enhances active listening and reinforces the authenticity of the therapeutic relationship, creating a safe space where clients feel free to reveal their internal struggles without fear of judgment.

Khidmah, or sincere service without expectation of reward, also appears as an underlying ethical orientation within Abah Anom's teachings. Although the term does not appear directly in *Miftahus Shudur*, its spirit permeates the text, particularly in discussions of *dhikr* as service to Allah and humanity. Practitioners consistently described counselling as *amanah*, a trust that must be carried with humility and care. Through interviews, it becomes clear that *khidmah* is enacted when counsellors position themselves not only as professionals offering expertise but as servants of humanity committed to the client's well-being. This understanding aligns with Abah Anom's emphasis that service is transformative not only for those served but also for the servant. Within counselling, *khidmah* helps prevent objectification of clients and reframes the profession as anchored in moral and spiritual obligation.

These layers of meaning become more vivid when reading the convergence between textual teachings and lived experience. For instance, practices such as guiding clients in structured breathing through *dhikr* are interpreted not as ritualistic acts but as grounding techniques that stabilise affect and reduce anxiety before counselling sessions. A senior counsellor explained that "dzikr settles the turbulence inside so the client can speak clearly," demonstrating the fusion of spiritual practice with psychological intervention. The triadic Sufi process of *takhalli*, *tahalli*, and *tajalli* was also cited frequently in interviews. Practitioners reinterpret *takhalli* as assisting clients in identifying and releasing harmful behavioural patterns, *tahalli* as cultivating constructive habits and values, and *tajalli* as the emergence of renewed self-understanding and behavioural transformation. This reinterpretation reveals

a strong parallel between classical Sufi stages and contemporary behaviour-change models, illustrating how spiritual concepts can inform practical counselling strategies.

The incorporation of these Sufistic principles enriches current discourse on counselling ethics, which has traditionally centred on secular frameworks emphasising confidentiality, justice, autonomy, competence, and non-maleficence. While these universal principles remain essential, the findings show that ethical practice can be deepened through a Sufistic orientation that adds existential weight, moral sincerity, and spiritual intentionality to counselling work. Sincerity, patience, empathy, and service shape not only behaviour but the counsellor's inner posture toward clients, offering a multidimensional ethical perspective that extends beyond procedural norms. When compared with Western counselling ethics, such as the ACA Code of Ethics and the IAC Standards, the Sufi approach converges in valuing human dignity, respect, and non-harm, but differs in emphasising transformative spirituality, internal purification, and moral intentionality as ethical foundations. These convergences and divergences indicate that Abah Anom's Sufistic values can serve as a culturally grounded and spiritually enriched ethical framework that complements existing counselling paradigms.

DISCUSSION

The hermeneutic analysis produced four interpretive constructs that illuminate how ethical meaning emerges within Abah Anom's Sufistic tradition: ethical intentionality, ethical self-regulation, spiritual-relational understanding, and service-oriented moral orientation. These constructs were not derived as abstract spiritual virtues but as conceptual insights emerging from the dialogical interpretation of textual teachings, lived participant experiences, and socio-religious practices (Hayat et al., 2024; Muhammad Mohsin Habib, 2025). Together, they reveal an ethical configuration in which moral action, inner disposition, and relational presence form an integrated whole.

These insights emerged through a continuous movement between part and whole, characteristic of hermeneutic inquiry (Hans-Georg Gadamer, 2004). Early readings of *Miftahus Shudur* and oral teachings prompted provisional interpretations, which were later re-evaluated through observations and participant narratives. As these horizons interacted, previously implicit meanings, such as the ethical function of *sabr* and the relational dimension of *tafahhum*, became clearer (Hanin Hamjah & Mat Akhir, 2014; Naqiyah et al., 2022). Interpretation was further shaped by the pesantren environment, where ethical practice is embedded in ritual, daily interaction, and communal responsibility (Masuwai et al., 2024; van Bruinessen, 2015). The findings thus represent a fusion of horizons in which textual meaning expands through lived experience.

Positioning these constructs within the broader field of counselling ethics highlights several intersections. Ethical intentionality resonates with virtue ethics, emphasising the cultivation of moral character. Ethical self-regulation aligns with relational ethics and the demand for emotional responsibility in interpersonal encounters (Iannacone & Anderson, 2022; Pauw et al., 2024). Spiritual-relational understanding parallels multicultural counselling ethics, which insists that empathy must be culturally situated. Service-oriented moral orientation intersects with spiritual-integrative counselling models that foreground moral accountability in helping relationships (Hussein Rassool, 2021; Watson et al., 2025). Rather than opposing Western ethics, the findings show how Sufistic ethics extends and deepens existing paradigms by articulating forms of spiritual humility and accountability that secular frameworks often understate.

The Sufistic orientation contributes several distinctive conceptual resources to global counselling ethics. Ethical intentionality foregrounds the ethical weight of inward motives beyond procedural compliance (Haque et al., 2016; Rejeki et al., 2025). Spiritual accountability frames ethical action as answerable before God, not only to professional norms. Relational humility reframes counselling as a meeting of shared human vulnerability (Bilqies, 2014; McGhee & Grant, 2017; Upenieks & Orfanidis, 2024). Holistic empathy integrates cognitive, affective, and spiritual attunement, expanding technically oriented models of empathic understanding (Jani et al., 2012; Stewart-Sicking et al., 2017). These contributions enrich the global ethical discourse without assuming superiority. In Muslim-majority and culturally diverse contexts, these ethical constructs are relevant to counsellor formation and practice. Ethical intentionality offers a culturally resonant framework for cultivating sincerity, a value deeply

embedded in Islamic moral psychology (Bassar & Hasanah, 2020; Usman et al., 2024). Ethical self-regulation supports counsellors in managing emotional tensions through a spiritually grounded form of patience. Spiritual-relational understanding aligns with expectations of moral sensitivity in Indonesian Islamic communities (Jalaludin Hayat et al., 2025; Naqiyah et al., 2024; Nikic, 2021). Service-oriented moral orientation provides a non-doctrinal way of integrating spiritual values without turning counselling into religious instruction, thereby maintaining both professional boundaries and cultural responsiveness (Auxéméry, 2024; Çerkez et al., 2018; Haryati, 2018).

Despite their potential, these findings carry several limitations. Deriving ethical insights from a single Sufi figure risks narrowing the diversity of Islamic ethical thought (Morris, 2025; Zarrabi-Zadeh, 2024). Integrating spiritual discourse into counselling may produce over-spiritualisation or strengthen hierarchical power dynamics associated with religious authority (Cook & Yucel, 2022; Remley & Herlihy, 2025; Salicru, 2025). In pluralistic settings, Sufistic frameworks may not resonate with clients from different traditions, requiring thoughtful adaptation (Young & Scott Young, 2009). These boundaries underscore the need for reflexivity and caution in applying Sufistic ethical models.

The four constructs offer practical contributions to ethics education and supervision. Ethical intentionality can inform reflective exercises that help counsellors examine their motives (Bulkholder et al., 2020; Scholl et al., 2014). Ethical self-regulation supports supervision practices focused on emotional discipline and resilience (G. Hussein Rassool, 2025). Spiritual-relational understanding enhances cross-cultural empathy training by integrating dimensions of presence, respect, and moral attunement. Service-oriented moral orientation enriches ethics curricula by highlighting humility, responsibility, and care as central ethical dispositions (Cetinkaya & Billings, 2023; Makhmudah, 2025). These implications complement rather than replace existing ethical codes.

The study demonstrates how Sufistic ethics can enrich global counselling ethics through conceptual contributions, including moral intentionality, spiritual accountability, relational humility, and holistic empathy. Theoretically, it shows that local spiritual traditions can generate ethical insights relevant beyond their immediate cultural settings (Draganović et al., 2025; Hariastuti et al., 2026; Hasibuan et al., 2025). Future studies may include comparative analyses across Sufi orders, applied models for ethical decision-making, or integrative frameworks bridging spiritual and professional ethics. These directions strengthen the field's movement toward a more inclusive understanding of global counselling ethics.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the four Sufistic principles articulated by Abah Anom can enrich contemporary discussion of counselling ethics by offering an alternative moral vocabulary grounded in Indonesian Islamic spirituality. Rather than functioning merely as doctrinal teachings, sincerity, patience, empathy, and service emerge through hermeneutical interpretation as experiential modes of ethical self-formation that shape counsellors' understanding of intention, regulation of emotion, relational engagement, and orientation of practice toward the well-being of others. Interpreting these concepts across textual, experiential, and socio-religious horizons suggests that Sufistic ethics does not replace established professional frameworks; instead, it provides interpretative depth, understanding ethical practice as a continuous cultivation of moral character.

The study's contribution lies in showing how local spiritual traditions can enter dialogue with mainstream counselling ethics without collapsing into prescriptive moralism or institutional reform claims. It highlights how practitioners working in Muslim-majority contexts may selectively draw on Sufi insights to refine reflective practice, particularly in areas involving intention-setting, emotional steadiness, and relational presence. These implications remain modest and context-bound, acknowledging the interpretative nature of the study and the situatedness of its findings within the cultural environment of Suryalaya.

Future research can advance this work by focusing on two strategic directions: first, examining how these Sufistic ethical dispositions are enacted in real counselling encounters across different institutional settings, thereby providing empirical grounding for their practical relevance; and second,

conducting comparative interpretive studies with other Indonesian spiritual traditions to clarify which elements of ethical meaning are context-specific and which may hold broader applicability. Such focused trajectories would deepen understanding of how spiritual-ethical frameworks interact with professional practice without overstating their scope or proposing expansive structural reforms.

REFERENCES

- Ahmad, M., Aziz, A., Afad, M. N., Muniroh, S. M., & Qodim, H. (2021). The sufi order against religious radicalism in indonesia. *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies*, 77(4). <https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v77i4.6417>
- Alqahtani, M. M. J., & Altamimi, N. (2016). Code of Ethics and Professionalism in Light of Cultural Competency: A Guideline for Saudi Psychologists, Supervisors, and Trainees. *Psychological Studies*, 61(2), 103–112. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12646-016-0354-x>
- American Counseling Association. (2015). *The ACA Encyclopedia of Counseling*. www.counseling.org
- Aten, J. D. ., & Leach, M. M. . (2009). *Spirituality and the therapeutic process : a comprehensive resource from intake to termination*. American Psychological Association.
- Auxéméry, Y. (2024). What is psychotherapy today? From psychotherapist to “Psybot:” Towards a new definition. *Evolution Psychiatrique*, 89(4), 749–792. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.evopsy.2024.09.003>
- Bassar, A. S., & Hasanah, A. (2020). Riyadhah: The model of the character education based on sufistic counseling. *Journal of Advanced Guidance and Counseling*, 1(1), 23. <https://doi.org/10.21580/jagc.2020.1.1.5763>
- Benuto, L. T., Gonzalez, F. R., & Singer, J. (2020). Handbook of Cultural Factors in Behavioral Health. In *Handbook of Cultural Factors in Behavioral Health*. Springer Science+Business Media. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-32229-8>
- Bester, J. C. (2020). Beneficence, Interests, and Wellbeing in Medicine: What It Means to Provide Benefit to Patients. *American Journal of Bioethics*, 20(3), 53–62. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15265161.2020.1714793>
- Bilqies, S. (2014). Understanding the Concept of Islamic Sufism. In *Journal of Education & Social Policy* (Vol. 1, Issue 1). www.jespnet.com
- Burkholder, J., Burkholder, D., & Gavin, M. (2020). The role of decision-making models and reflection in navigating ethical dilemmas. *Counseling and Values*, 65(1), 108-121.
- Casmini Casmini, F. A. F. F. M. (2020). Menguatkan Psychological Well-being Konselor dengan Praktik Perilaku Sufi Amali. *Al-Tazkiah: Jurnal Bimbingan Dan Konseling Islam*, 9(2), 135–154. <https://journal.uinmataram.ac.id/index.php/altazkiah/article/view/2378>
- Cetinkaya, M., & Billings, J. (2023). Systematic review of the relationship between Islamic-Sufi spirituality and practice and mental well-being. *Mental Health, Religion and Culture*, 26(10), 1065–1080. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13674676.2023.2256265>
- Çerkez, Y., Manyeruke, G., Oduwaye, O., & Shimave, S. (2018). Ethical issues in counseling: a trend analysis. *Quality and Quantity*, 52, 223–233. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11135-017-0604-6>
- Cook, A. B. S., & Yucel, S. (2022). *Soundness of the Heart: An Analysis of the Unique Qualities of the Qalb Salīm*.
- Corey, Gerald., Corey, M. Schneider., & Corey, Cindy. (2018). *Issues and ethics in the helping professions*. Brooks/Cole/Cengage Learning.
- Crockett, M. J., Kim, J. S., & Shin, Y. S. (2024). Intuitive theories and the cultural evolution of morality. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 33(4), 211-219.
- Draganović, S., Hasanović, M., Oruč, B., & Pervan, A. (2025). Islamic Psychological Therapy Interventions Applied by Mental Health Practitioners: A Qualitative Study. *Spiritual Psychology and Counseling*, 10(1), 47–67. <https://doi.org/10.37898/spiritualpc.1340227>
- Edgar Suratman. (2011, October 13). *Guru Sufi yang Peka Masalah Sosial*. NU Online. <https://nu.or.id/opini/guru-sufi-yang-peka-masalah-sosial-8KNJk>

- Evans, C., Brown, D., & Davis, J. (2022). Professional counseling from a Christian worldview. *Journal of Spirituality in Mental Health*, 24(3), 309–326. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19349637.2021.1885004>
- Foy, D. W., Drescher, K. D., & Watson, P. J. (2011). Religious and spiritual factors in resilience. In *Resilience and Mental Health: Challenges Across the Lifespan* (pp. 90–102). Cambridge University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511994791.008>
- Frame, M. W., & Williams, C. B. (2005). A model of ethical decision making from a multicultural perspective. *Counseling and Values*, 49(3), 165–179. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-007X.2005.tb01020.x>
- Francesco Piraino, M. S. (eds.). (2019). *Global Sufism. Boundaries, Structures, and Politics*.
- G. Hussein Rassool. (2025). *Islāmic Counselling and Psychotherapy_ An Introduction to Theory and Practice*.
- Hanin Hamjah, S., & Mat Akhir, N. S. (2014). Islamic Approach in Counseling. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 53(1), 279–289. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-013-9703-4>
- Hans-Georg Gadamer. (2004). *Truth and Method*.
- Haqae, A., Khan, F., Keshavarzi, H., & Rothman, A. E. (2016). Integrating islamic traditions in modern psychology: Research trends in last ten years. In *Journal of Muslim Mental Health* (Vol. 10, Issue 1, pp. 75–100). Michigan Publishing. <https://doi.org/10.3998/jmmh.10381607.0010.107>
- Hariastuti, R. T., Ratnasari, D., Ariyanto, R. D., Naqiyah, N., Winingsih, E., Nuryono, W., & Habsy, B. A. (2026). Sufistic Nature Contemplation (Tadabbur Alam) in Islamic Guidance. *ASEAN Journal of Educational Research and Technology*, 5(2), 131–148.
- Haryati, A. (2018). Personal integrity of islamic counselor on professional ethics commitment. *Islamic Guidance and Counseling Journal*, 1(1), 11–16. <https://doi.org/10.25217/igcj.v1i1.191>
- Hasibuan, A., Mumtaz, N. M., Anwar, K., Haq, M. M. A., & Nurjaman, A. (2025). Sufistic Approach of Character Education in an Indonesian Islamic Boarding School. *Miqot: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman*, 49(1), 184–204. <https://doi.org/10.30821/miqot.v49i1.1332>
- Hayat, T. J., Amin, N., & Nizar, N. (2024). The Epistemology of Sufi Healing in the Book Miftāh al-Şudūr by Pangersa Abah Anom. *Teosofia: Indonesian Journal of Islamic Mysticism*, 13(2), 239–268. <https://doi.org/10.21580/tos.v13i2.21941>
- Hefti, R. (2011). Integrating religion and spirituality into mental health care, psychiatry and psychotherapy. In *Religions* (Vol. 2, Issue 4, pp. 611–627). <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel2040611>
- Heir, A. S. (2025). Rational intuitions: How reason underlies deontological moral judgments. *Philosophical Psychology*, 38(4), 1800–1824.
- Henry, H. M. (2015). Spiritual Energy of Islamic Prayers as a Catalyst for Psychotherapy. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 54(2), 387–398. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-013-9780-4>
- Hood, R. W., Hill, P. C., & Spilka, B. (2018). *The Psychology of Religion: An Empirical Approach*.
- Hussein Rassool, G. (2021). *Islamic Psychology: Human Behaviour and Experience from an Islamic Perspective*.
- Iannacone, J. I., & Anderson, L. B. (2022). Navigating ethical quandaries with close personal contacts in qualitative research. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 51(4), 463–489.
- Isa, N. J. M., & Utomo, P. (2024). Islamic Spiritual Counseling Approaches: Building the Values of Character Education through Ta'alluq, Takhalluq and Tahaquq Methods. *Al-Musyrif: Jurnal Bimbingan Dan Konseling Islam*, 7(2), 209–219. <https://doi.org/10.38073/almusyrif.v7i2.1867>
- Isgandarova, N. (2019). Muraqaba as a Mindfulness-Based Therapy in Islamic Psychotherapy. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 58(4), 1146–1160. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-018-0695-y>
- Jalaludin Hayat, T., Anshori, sum, Abas, A., & Zuhayda Arsyada, A. (2025). *SUFİ ETHICS AND RELIGIOUS MODERATION THROUGH A REVISIT OF MIFTĀH AL-ŞUDŪR FOR CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL HARMONY*. 23, 211–244. <https://doi.org/10.31291/jlka.v23.i1.1311>
- Jamal Malik, S. Z.-Z. (2019). *Sufism East and West*. https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004393929_001

- Jani, B. D., Blane, D. N., & Mercer, S. W. (2012). The role of empathy in therapy and the physician-patient relationship. In *Forschende Komplementarmedizin* (Vol. 19, Issue 5, pp. 252–257). <https://doi.org/10.1159/000342998>
- Kamaludin, I., & Ula, M. N. (2019). Sufism healing method for drugs rehabilitation: A case study in pp. suryalaya tasikmalaya, West Java, Indonesia. *Ulumuna*, 23(2), 384–401. <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v23i2.351>
- Kemenag. (2011, September 4). *Abah Anom Wafat, Indonesia Kehilangan Ulama Besar*. Kemenag RI. <https://kemenag.go.id/nasional/abah-anom-wafat-indonesia-kehilangan-ulama-besar-1y5hwc>
- Khoury, B., & Akoury-Dirani, L. (2023). Ethical codes in the Arab region: Comparisons and differences. *Ethics & Behavior*, 33(3), 193–204.
- Leroy, B. S., Veach, P. M., & Callanan, N. P. (2021). *Genetic Counseling Practice: Advanced Concepts and Skills, Second Edition*. www.hgsa.org.au/documents/item/15
- Makmudah, S. , & A. D. D. C. (2025). Islamic counselling: An introduction to theory and practice. *Journal of Spirituality in Mental Health*.
- Marcia K. Hermansen Saeed, Z.-Z. (2023). *Sufism in Western Contexts*.
- Mark Sedgwick. (2018). Sufi Religious leaders and Sufi orders in the contemporary Middle East. *Sociology of Islam*, 6(2), 212–232.
- Masuwai, A., Zulkifli, H., & Hamzah, M. I. (2024). Self-assessment for continuous professional development: The perspective of Islamic Education. *Heliyon*, 10(19). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e38268>
- Maurya, R. K., DeDiego, A. C., & Morgan, M. M. (2022). Counsellors' lived experiences of empathy & compassion: An interpretive phenomenological inquiry. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research*, 22(4), 1077–1086. <https://doi.org/10.1002/capr.12576>
- May, J. (2018). *What Factors Influence a Client's Choice of Counsellor Or Psychotherapist in a Private Practice Setting?* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Brighton).
- McGhee, P., & Grant, P. (2017). The transcendent influence of spirituality on ethical action in organizations. *Journal of management, spirituality & religion*, 14(2), 160–178.
- Michel, P., Possamai, A., & Turner, B. S. (2017). *Religions, Nations, and Transnationalism in Multiple Modernities Religions, Nations, Religions, Nations, Religions, Nations, and Transnationalism and Transnationalism and Transnationalism in Multiple Modernities in Multiple Modernities*.
- Millie, J. (2023). Graduate attributes, state policy, and Islamic preaching in Indonesia. *History and Anthropology*, 34(5), 844–858. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02757206.2023.2249482>
- Moh. Kamil Fikri, Najlatun Naqiyah, Titin Indah Pratiwi, & Wiryo Nuryono. (2025). The Concept and Effectiveness of Self-Purification in Spirituality from the Perspective of the Sufis: A Literature Review of the Thoughts of Al-Ghazali and Said Hawwa. *G-Couns: Jurnal Bimbingan Dan Konseling*, 9(3), 2458–2473. <https://doi.org/10.31316/g-couns.v9i3.7749>
- Morris, C. (2025). Integrating Positive Psychology and Spirituality to Foster Meaning and Well-Being in Older Adults. In *Rehabilitation and Therapy Commons, Service Learning Commons, Sleep Medicine Commons, Social Justice Commons, Social Statistics Commons, Social Work Commons*. <https://mds.marshall.edu/adsp>
- Mud'is, H., & Mud'is, M. H. (2022). Qalbu Therapy Through Talqin Dhikr Tharekat Qadiriyyah Naqsabandiyah Suryalaya Sirnarasa Ciamis. *Khazanah Sosial*, 4(4), 707–718. <https://doi.org/10.15575/ks.v4i4.20053>
- Muhammad Mohsin Habib, I. U. (2025). THE INFLUENCE OF SUFISM ON ISLAMIC SPIRITUALITY AND CULTURAL PRACTICES. *Advance Social Science Archive Journal*, 03(01). <https://assajournal.com>
- Naqiyah, N., Faidah, M., Hariastuti, R. T., Putri, D. R. K., & Lidyawati, R. (2024). Inclusive Education in Islamic Boarding Schools through Guidance and Counseling for Religiosity and Spirituality. *KONSELOR*, 13(2), 204–212. <https://doi.org/10.24036/0202413296-0-86>
- Naqiyah, N., Kinanti Putri, D. R., & Mutammima, D. (2022). A Student Counseling Study: The Internalized of Islamic Value in Daily Life. *Bisma The Journal of Counseling*, 6(1), 16–24. <https://doi.org/10.23887/bisma.v6i1.45550>

- Nikic, M. (2021). *A SPIRIT IS THE ONE THAT REVIVES: THE PRINCIPLES OF SPIRITUAL THERAPY*.
- Palmér, L., Nyström, M., & Karlsson, K. (2024). Lifeworld hermeneutics: An approach and a method for research on existential issues in caring science. *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences*, 38(1), 200–209. <https://doi.org/10.1111/scs.13201>
- Pauw, L. S., Sun, R., Zoppolat, G., Righetti, F., & Milek, A. (2024). May I help you? The relationship between interpersonal emotion regulation and emotional and relational wellbeing in daily life. *Collabra: Psychology*, 10(1), 90797.
- Pedersen, P. B. (1997). The cultural context of the American Counseling Association code of ethics. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 76(1), 23–28. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.1997.tb02372.x>
- Picken, G. (2005). *Tazkiyat al-nafs: The Qur'anic Paradigm*.
- Ratnasari, D., Supriatna, M., Oktasari, M., Naqiyah, N., Setiawan, C., Winingsih, E., Nuryono, W., & Nadhirah, N. A. (2025). Sufistic Counselling Program: Improving Students' Psychological Flexibility Through Neuroscience-Based Nature Tadabbur. In *Journal of Engineering Science and Technology Special Issue on* (Vol. 20, Issue 3).
- Rejeki, S., Haryono, Sunawan, Mulawarman, & Hakim, A. (2025). Mindfulness Based Sufism Intervention: Systematic Literature Review. In *Ethics, Medicine and Public Health* (Vol. 33). Elsevier Masson s.r.l. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jemep.2025.101180>
- Remley, T. Phant., & Herlihy, Barbara. (2025). *Ethical, legal, and professional issues in counseling*. Pearson Education.
- Ricoeur, P. J. B. (2016). *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*.
- Salicru, S. (2025). A New Evidence-Based Spirituality Framework for Mental Health Practitioners: A Concept Analysis and Integrative Review. In *Spiritual Psychology and Counseling* (Vol. 10, Issue 1, pp. 69–99). Halil Eksi. <https://doi.org/10.37898/spiritualpc.1574613>
- Scholl, M. B., Ray, D. C., & Brady-Amoon, P. (2014). Humanistic counseling process, outcomes, and research. *Journal of Humanistic Counseling*, 53(3), 218–239. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1939.2014.00058.x>
- Sedgwick, M. (2016). *Western Sufism*.
- Şensoy, G., & İkiş, F. E. (2023). Ethical dilemmas of school counsellors: A vignette study. *Journal of Psychologists and Counsellors in Schools*, 33(1), 102–115.
- Shah, R., Clarke, R., Ahluwalia, S., & Launer, J. (2020). Life & times: Finding meaning in the consultation: Introducing the hermeneutic window. *British Journal of General Practice*, 70(699), 502–503. <https://doi.org/10.3399/bjgp20X712865>
- Shapiro, D. L. (2016). Ethical issues in forensic psychology and psychiatry. In *Ethics, Medicine and Public Health* (pp. 45–58). Elsevier Masson SAS. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jemep.2016.01.015>
- Sherhan Syed, Z., Shehram Shah, M., & Shah Syed, A. (2020). Automated Recognition of Sincere Apologies from Acoustics of Speech. In *IJACSA International Journal of Advanced Computer Science and Applications* (Vol. 11, Issue 6). www.ijacsa.thesai.org
- Stewart-Sicking, J. A., Deal, P. J., & Fox, J. (2017). The Ways Paradigm: A Transtheoretical Model for Integrating Spirituality Into Counseling. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 95(2), 234–241. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12135>
- Tariq, S., Alvi, T. H., Saeed, M., Qammar, A., & Wang, Y. (2024). Good/bad apples and good barrels: the interactive effect of religiosity and ethics institutionalization on ethical decision-making. *Current Psychology*, 43(39), 30842–30855.
- Umriana, A., Murtadho, A., & Fahmi, M. (2023). Indigenous Counseling: Suphistic Counseling Practices in Pesantren. *International Journal Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, 25(2), 97–111. <https://doi.org/10.21580/ihya.25.2.16022>
- Upenieks, L., & Orfanidis, C. (2024). Perceived accountability to God, the religious role, and psychological well-being. *Mental Health, Religion & Culture*, 27(3), 215–240.
- Usman, Usman, A. A., Zaman, A., & Azizah, F. P. (2024). THE ROLE OF MURAQABAH IN DEVELOPING PEDAGOGICAL COMPETENCE AMONG ISLAMIC HIGHER

- EDUCATION LECTURERS. *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 10(2), 43–53.
<https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v10i2.38650>
- Van Bruinessen, M. (2015). In the tradition or outside?: Reflections on teachers and influences. *Al-Jami'ah*, 53(1), 53–103. <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2015.531.53-103>
- Vasquez, M. J. T., & Bingham, R. P. (2012). Ethics in Counseling Psychology. In *The Oxford Handbook of Counseling Psychology*. Oxford University Press.
<https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195342314.013.0010>
- Watson, T., Waters, R., Watts, L., & Hodgson, D. (2025). Exploring the Challenges of Empathy in a Therapeutic Context: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/10497323251331460>
- Wichmann, S. S. (2011). Self-determination theory: The importance of autonomy to well-being across cultures. *Journal of Humanistic Counseling, Education and Development*, 50(1), 16–26.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/j.2161-1939.2011.tb00103.x>
- Young, C. S., & Scott Young, J. (2009). *Integrating Spirituality and Religion Into Counseling: A Guide to Competent Practice*.
- Zarrabi-Zadeh, S. (2024). Preface to the Special Issue “Sufism in the Modern World.” In *Religions* (Vol. 15, Issue 5). Multidisciplinary Digital Publishing Institute (MDPI).
<https://doi.org/10.3390/rel15050554>
- Zhao, J.-B., Ji, J.-L., Yang, X.-L., Yang, Z.-Z., Hou, Y.-F., & Zhang, X.-Y. (2011). National Survey of Ethical Practices Among Chinese Psychotherapists. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 42(5), 375–381. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0025138>