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Indigenous Spiritual Self-Awareness among Muslim Counselors: A Gadamerian Hermeneutic Interpretation of Sheikh Yusuf Al-Makassari's Lontaraq Manuscript

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Abstract

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Spiritual self-awareness is an important dimension of counselor competence because counselors' personal beliefs, values, and spiritual orientations may influence how they understand clients and conduct counseling relationships. This study aims to interpret Muslim counselors' spiritual self-awareness through a Gadamerian hermeneutic reading of Syekh Yusuf Al-Makassari's teachings in the Lontara Riwayaqa Tuanta Salamaqa ri Gowa (RTSG) and to bring the emerging meanings into dialogue with the ASERVIC concept of Counselor Self-Awareness. The study adopted an interpretive-hermeneutic qualitative approach. The primary textual material consisted of the transcription and translation of the RTSG reproduced by Manyambeang, supported by literature on Syekh Yusuf Al-Makassari, spiritual competence in counseling, and Gadamerian hermeneutics. Interpretation involved iterative movement between parts of the text and the text as a whole, reflexive engagement with the researchers' pre-understandings, dialogical questioning, and fusion of horizons. ASERVIC functioned as a contemporary dialogical horizon rather than a predetermined coding framework. Four interconnected hermeneutic formulations emerged: Tawhidic spiritual awareness, Rabbani ethical orientation, spiritual humility, and spiritual integration. Together, these formulations portray spiritual self-awareness as a theocentrically situated form of professional reflexivity involving awareness of one's relationship with Allah, ethical responsibility, recognition of one's spiritual limitations, and congruence between spiritual commitments and professional conduct. These findings offer a culturally situated interpretation of Counselor Self-Awareness rooted in the Islamic-Makassar spiritual tradition for contemporary Muslim counselors.

[Kesadaran diri spiritual merupakan dimensi penting dalam kompetensi konselor karena keyakinan, nilai, dan orientasi spiritual pribadi dapat memengaruhi cara konselor memahami konseli dan menjalankan hubungan konseling. Penelitian ini bertujuan menginterpretasikan kesadaran diri spiritual konselor Muslim melalui pembacaan hermeneutika Gadamerian terhadap ajaran Syekh Yusuf Al-Makassari dalam Lontara Riwayaqa Tuanta Salamaqa ri Gowa (RTSG), kemudian mendialogkan makna yang muncul dengan konsep *counselor self-awareness* dalam ASERVIC. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif interpretatif-hermeneutik. Materi tekstual utama berupa transkripsi dan terjemahan RTSG yang direproduksi oleh Manyambeang, didukung literatur mengenai Syekh Yusuf Al-Makassari, kompetensi spiritual dalam konseling, dan hermeneutika Gadamerian.

Interpretasi dilakukan melalui gerak berulang antara bagian teks dan keseluruhan teks, keterlibatan reflektif terhadap pra-pemahaman peneliti, dialog dengan teks, serta fusi horizon. ASERVIC digunakan sebagai horizon dialogis kontemporer, bukan sebagai kerangka pengodean yang telah ditentukan sebelumnya. Dari proses interpretatif tersebut muncul empat formulasi hermeneutik yang saling berkaitan, yaitu kesadaran spiritual tauhidik, orientasi etis Rabbani, kerendahan hati spiritual, dan integrasi spiritual. Keempatnya menggambarkan kesadaran diri spiritual sebagai refleksivitas profesional yang berlandaskan ketuhanan, mencakup kesadaran akan relasi dengan Allah, tanggung jawab etis, pengakuan atas keterbatasan perspektif spiritual, serta keselarasan antara komitmen spiritual dan perilaku profesional. Temuan ini menawarkan interpretasi *counselor self-awareness* yang berakar pada tradisi spiritual Islam-Makassar bagi konselor Muslim kontemporer, sekaligus menempatkan tradisi lokal sebagai sumber dialog konseptual yang relevan bagi pengembangan pemahaman spiritualitas dalam konseling profesional.]

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Introduction

Religious, cultural, and value system diversity calls for guidance and counseling services capable of understanding spirituality as part of the client's identity and worldview (Scurry, 2024; Mayangsari et al., 2025). Adams et al., (2015) and Mayangsari et al., (2025) note that spirituality is related to beliefs, awareness, the search for meaning, life's purpose, hope, compassion, and humanity's connection to something considered sacred or transcendent. From an Islamic counseling perspective, spiritual intelligence is also understood as an inner quality that helps counselors imbue behavior with religious significance, develop self-understanding, and guide actions based on a divine orientation (Fontaine, 2018; Ibrahim et al., 2025). Therefore, a counselor's professionalism is not sufficiently shaped solely through mastery of theory and techniques but also requires awareness of the beliefs, values, assumptions, and spiritual orientation that the counselor brings into the counseling relationship (Cobb, 2021; Mayangsari et al., 2025).

Although spirituality has increasingly been recognized as an important dimension of counseling, counselors and counselor education programs do not always demonstrate equal readiness to address spiritual and religious issues ethically in practice (Said et al., 2024; Scurry, 2024; Mayangsari et al., 2025). Previous studies indicate that some counselors and counselor trainees receive limited preparation for engaging with spiritual concerns, despite the possibility that their own beliefs and values may influence how they understand and respond to clients (Cobb, 2021; Scurry, 2024). Mayangsari et al. (2025) also report that a considerable proportion of counselor educators feel insufficiently prepared to integrate spiritual and religious competencies into counselor education. Strengthening these competencies therefore requires not only knowledge of clients' spirituality but also continuing self-assessment, reflection, consultation, and epistemological humility (Johns, 2017; Hodge, 2018). These findings reveal an empirical concern: the challenge of spiritual competence lies not only in counselors' ability to understand clients' spiritual perspectives, but also in their capacity to recognize and critically reflect on how their own spiritual beliefs, values, and assumptions may shape the counseling relationship.

Within the framework of the Association for Spiritual, Ethical, and Religious Values in Counseling (ASERVIC), this issue is addressed through the domain of Counselor Self-Awareness, which emphasizes counselors' responsibility to explore their own attitudes, beliefs, and spiritual or religious values and to reflect on how these may influence clients and the counseling process (Cashwell & Watts, 2010; Mayangsari et al., 2025). Such awareness is important because counseling is not a value-neutral activity;

counselors bring personal assumptions, spiritual commitments, and cultural perspectives into their professional relationships (Imaduddin, 2017; Hodge, 2018). Consequently, counselors need to recognize the limits of their own perspectives, identify possible biases, and avoid imposing personal spiritual or religious values on clients (Gutierrez et al., 2020; Hodge, 2018). However, ASERVIC primarily provides a contemporary professional articulation of the competencies expected of counselors and does not specifically explain how spiritual self-awareness is understood within particular religious and cultural traditions. Therefore, rather than being treated as a predetermined analytical framework, Counselor Self-Awareness in this study is positioned as a contemporary professional horizon that can later be brought into dialogue with the historical-spiritual horizon of Syekh Yusuf Al-Makassari's teachings.

In the context of Muslim counselors, spiritual self-awareness involves recognizing personal beliefs and values, reflecting on one's relationship with Allah, acknowledging personal limitations, and maintaining consistency between spiritual commitments and professional conduct (Imaduddin, 2017; Purwasih, 2018; Wahidin, 2022). Existing studies have addressed spirituality among counselors through concepts such as spiritual intelligence, religious competence, and spiritual supervision. Purwasih (2018), for example, emphasizes *zikir*, *fikir*, *tawakal*, devotion, and worship as dimensions of Islamic counselors' spiritual intelligence, while Wahidin (2022) and Wahyuningsih (2018) highlight religious and spiritual competencies in supporting professional counseling practice.

Empirically, recent studies have predominantly examined spiritual and religious competence through competency development, training, supervision, and measurable associations between spirituality and counseling-related capacities, while less attention has been directed to how Muslim counselors interpret the spiritual values that constitute and shape their professional selves (Vieten et al., 2024; Gutierrez et al., 2024; Ibrahim et al., 2025; Mayangsari et al., 2025). Conceptually, contemporary spiritual competency frameworks tend to articulate counselor self-awareness in terms of recognizing personal beliefs, values, biases, and their influence on professional practice (Vieten et al., 2024). Such formulations, however, do not fully capture the relational and theocentric dimensions emphasized within an Islamic worldview, in which spirituality is embedded in one's relationship with Allah and interconnected with moral, psychological, and social life (Cucchi, 2022; Jamaluddin et al., 2026). Culturally, recent indigenous counseling studies in Indonesia have increasingly explored local traditions and culturally embedded values (Umriana et al., 2023; Nelissa et al., 2024), yet these studies have largely focused on identifying cultural values, counseling practices, or their implications for culturally responsive services rather than examining local Islamic textual traditions as sources for interpreting counselors' spiritual self-awareness.

Methodologically, although recent studies have employed phenomenological, ethnographic, descriptive, and some hermeneutic approaches (Umriana et al., 2023; Nelissa et al., 2024; Mubarak et al., 2025), explicit Gadamerian dialogue between a local Islamic textual tradition and a contemporary spiritual counseling competency framework remains underdeveloped. This study addresses these gaps by bringing the Islamic-Makassar textual tradition of Syekh Yusuf Al-Makassari into hermeneutic dialogue with the ASERVIC Counselor Self-Awareness framework. Rather than treating Syekh Yusuf's teachings as direct equivalents of contemporary counseling competencies, the study examines how the encounter between these horizons may generate a culturally situated interpretation of spiritual self-awareness for Muslim counselors.

The Lontaraq manuscript, which contains the life story and advice of Syekh Yusuf Al-Makassari, is one of the relevant local sources for addressing this gap because it contains teachings on faith, knowledge, piety, obedience, compassion, and moral responsibility (Manyambeang, 2014; Hikmah et al., 2025). Manyambeang, (2014), Amirullah et al., (2020) and Hikmah et al. (2025) have demonstrated that Sheikh Yusuf's values are relevant to character development and guidance and counseling services, but have not yet been specifically directed toward the construction of Muslim counselors' spiritual self-awareness. The novelty of this study therefore lies not merely in introducing Syekh Yusuf Al-Makassari's teachings into the discourse of counselor spirituality, but in positioning the Islamic-Makassar textual tradition as an interpretive horizon that enters into hermeneutic dialogue with ASERVIC Counselor Self-Awareness. Rather than treating Syekh Yusuf's teachings as direct equivalents of contemporary counseling competencies, this study examines the convergences, tensions, and meanings that emerge from the encounter between these horizons to develop a culturally situated interpretation of spiritual self-awareness for Muslim counselors.

Sheikh Yusuf Al-Makassari's concept of values is linked to an individual's spiritual understanding, which emphasizes steadfastness in faith, self-reflection, self-control, and a devotion to Allah (Manyambeang, 2014; Imaduddin, 2017; Mayangsari et al., 2025). Because Syekh Yusuf Al-Makassari's teachings emerge from a historical, linguistic, Islamic, and Makassar cultural horizon that differs from contemporary counseling discourse, Gadamerian hermeneutics provides an interpretive basis for engaging with the text without reducing its meanings to predetermined professional categories (Barak, 2022; Bartley & Brooks, 2023). Accordingly, the Lontaraq text is first approached within its own historical-spiritual horizon, allowing its meanings to emerge through dialogue between the text and the researchers' pre-understandings. These emerging meanings are subsequently brought into dialogue with ASERVIC Counselor Self-Awareness as a contemporary professional horizon rather than as a deductive analytical framework. The interpretive encounter therefore attends not only to possible convergences but also to differences, tensions, and extensions of meaning between the two horizons. Through this fusion of horizons, the study seeks to develop a culturally situated interpretation of Muslim counselors' spiritual self-awareness that remains rooted in the Islamic-Makassar tradition while engaging contemporary concerns regarding counselor self-reflection, ethics, and professional practice (Scurry, 2024; Mayangsari et al., 2025).

Method

This study employs a qualitative approach using the Gadamerian Hermeneutics (HG) research method (Palmer, 2022). Gilhus, (2021) explains that Gadamerian Hermeneutics focuses on the act of interpreting texts by directing attention to the consciousness and experiences implicitly contained within them. This process is carried out to gain an authentic and in-depth understanding of the meaning of the text under study. White & Cooper, (2022), further explain that the interpretive approach in qualitative research is based on the concept of "understanding of understanding," which refers to the effort to understand the process by which understanding is formed. In the Gadamerian hermeneutics (HG) method, the core of interpretation lies in the interconnection between the parts of the text and the text as a whole or the "part and whole." Alvesson and Sköldbberg visualize this interpretive relationship through the following "circle of interpretation":

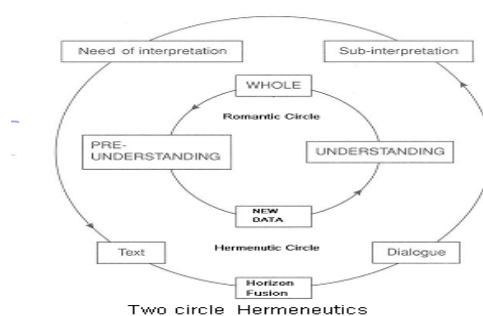


Figure 1 The Part-Whole Hermeneutic Cycle (Sköldbberg & Alvesson, 2017)

White & Cooper, (2022) explain that interpretive qualitative inquiry concerns not only what is understood but also how understanding is formed. In Gadamerian hermeneutics, understanding is historically situated and dialogical, as interpreters approach texts with prior understandings and historically shaped perspectives. Although movement between parts of the text and the text as a whole supports interpretation, Gadamerian hermeneutics is not limited to the part-whole relationship. Understanding develops through dialogue between horizons and may culminate in a fusion of horizons, in which the interpreter's horizon encounters the historical horizon of the text and produces an expanded understanding that cannot be reduced to either horizon alone (Barak, 2022; Bartley & Brooks, 2023).

Accordingly, this study applies Gadamerian hermeneutics as an iterative and dialogical process. The Lontara Riwayaqa Tuanta Salamaqa ri Gowa (RTSG) is interpreted within its historical, linguistic, Islamic, and Makassar cultural horizon while acknowledging the researchers' pre-understandings. Meanings emerging from repeated engagement with the parts and whole of the text are then brought

into dialogue with the contemporary professional horizon of ASERVIC Counselor Self-Awareness. ASERVIC is not used as a predetermined coding framework, but as a dialogical horizon for examining convergences, differences, and tensions. Through this fusion of horizons, an interpretation of Muslim counselors' spiritual self-awareness emerges from the encounter between Syekh Yusuf Al-Makassari's historical-spiritual teachings and contemporary counseling perspectives.

Rather than following fixed analytical stages, this study understands Gadamerian hermeneutics as an iterative and dialogical event of understanding. Researchers do not approach texts from a value-free position; they bring pre-understandings shaped by their cultural, religious, disciplinary, and historical situatedness, which may both enable and limit interpretation (McBride, 2023). These pre-understandings are made reflexively visible and questioned through engagement with the text. Interpretation proceeds through a hermeneutic movement between particular passages and the text as a whole, supported by dialogue and a question-and-answer process in which the text may challenge the interpreter's initial assumptions. This encounter is also shaped by *Wirkungsgeschichte* or effective history, referring to the continuing influence of historical traditions on both text and interpreter. Through this process, the interpreter's horizon and the historical-spiritual horizon of the text may enter into a fusion of horizons, generating an expanded understanding that cannot be reduced to either horizon alone (Barak, 2022; Bartley & Brooks, 2023).

Accordingly, the analysis of the *Lontara Riwayaqa Tuanta Salamaqa ri Gowa (RTSG)* was conducted through repeated engagement with relevant passages and the text as a whole while reflecting on the researchers' prior understanding of Islamic spirituality, Makassar culture, and counseling. Emerging meanings were then brought into dialogue with the contemporary professional horizon of ASERVIC Counselor Self-Awareness. ASERVIC therefore functioned as a dialogical horizon rather than a predetermined coding framework. Understanding emerged through the interaction among the text, its historical tradition, the researchers' situated horizon, and contemporary counseling perspectives, and remained open to revision throughout the interpretive process (Sköldbberg & Alvesson, 2017; McBride, 2023).

The data in this study consist of textual materials derived from the *Lontara Riwayaqa Tuanta Salamaqa ri Gowa (RTSG)*. The study did not analyze the original manuscript directly, but examined the transcription and translation reproduced in Syekh Yusuf dalam *Perspektif Lontaraq Gowa* by (Manyambeang, 2014). The text was selected because it documents the spiritual teachings of Syekh Yusuf Al-Makassari concerning faith, knowledge, piety, obedience, and moral responsibility (Rahmatullah & Suhaeni, 2021; Hikmah et al., 2025). The analysis focused on passages relevant to interpreting Muslim counselors' spiritual self-awareness. From a Gadamerian perspective, the RTSG was treated as a dialogical partner whose historical-spiritual horizon could challenge and expand the researchers' initial understanding. Meaning was understood as emerging through dialogue between the horizon of the text and the situated horizon of the interpreter. Secondary sources on Syekh Yusuf Al-Makassari, Makassar cultural-spiritual traditions, Gadamerian hermeneutics, and spiritual competence in counseling were used to contextualize the interpretation. ASERVIC Counselor Self-Awareness (Cashwell & Watts, 2010), was positioned as a contemporary professional horizon brought into dialogue with the meanings emerging from the RTSG, rather than as a predetermined framework for categorizing the text.

The researcher served as the primary interpretive instrument in this study. In accordance with Gadamerian hermeneutics, the researcher's Makassar cultural background, familiarity with the *Lontaraq* language, and knowledge of guidance and counseling were acknowledged as part of the researcher's historical situatedness and pre-understanding, rather than as a basis for value-free objectivity (McBride, 2023). The study did not analyze the original RTSG manuscript directly; rather, it examined the transcription and translation reproduced in Syekh Yusuf dalam *Perspektif Lontaraq Gowa* by Manyambeang (2014). Relevant books and scholarly articles on Syekh Yusuf Al-Makassari, Makassar cultural-spiritual traditions, counseling spirituality, and Gadamerian hermeneutics were used as secondary sources to contextualize the interpretation. Interpretive credibility was maintained through repeated engagement with the textual material, attention to the contextual meaning of key local terms, reflexive examination of the researcher's pre-understandings, and continuous checking of emerging interpretations against the relevant passages and the text as a whole (Barak, 2022; McBride, 2023). This reflexive process was intended not to eliminate researcher subjectivity, but to make its influence visible and open to questioning throughout the interpretive process.

Result

As the primary instrument in this qualitative hermeneutic study, I acknowledge that my position as a Muslim counselor educator and researcher deeply shapes my engagement with the text. My professional training in Western counseling frameworks, combined with my Islamic faith and Indonesian cultural background, places me at the intersection of the two horizons this study seeks to fuse. This dual positioning is not a limitation but a hermeneutic resource that enables interpretive dialogue. I approach the Lontara Riwayaqa Tuanta Salamaqa ri Gowa (RTSG) not as a detached observer but as a reader simultaneously shaped by contemporary counseling discourse and rooted in the Islamic tradition the text represents. This reflexive awareness guides my interpretive choices, particularly in identifying which passages bear significance for professional counseling practice.

The Gadamerian interpretation was based on the transcription and Indonesian translation of the RTSG reproduced by Manyambeang (2014), rather than on the original manuscript. The researchers did not produce a new translation; instead, the published translation was read alongside the transcribed Makassar text, particularly for culturally and spiritually significant expressions. Key local terms such as *tappaq*, *pangngassengang*, *taqwa*, and *mappakaia* were retained in their original forms to avoid reducing their meanings prematurely to contemporary counseling terminology. Their meanings were interpreted in relation to surrounding passages, Sheikh Yusuf's broader teachings, and the Makassar cultural context. Through this textual engagement, faith, knowledge, piety, obedience, humility, and moral conduct emerged as interconnected spiritual meanings relevant to understanding Muslim counselors' spiritual self-awareness. These meanings were subsequently brought into dialogue with ASERVIC Counselor Self-Awareness, which served as a contemporary professional horizon rather than a predetermined framework for categorizing the text.

The four constructs identified Tawhidic spiritual awareness, rabbani orientation, spiritual humility, and spiritual integration emerge from specific textual passages in the RTSG. Tawhidic awareness derives from passages emphasizing the oneness of Allah (*tappaq*) as the foundation of all knowledge and action. The rabbani orientation is grounded in his counsel on *pangngassengang* (love and compassion) and *mappakaia* (caring for others) as concrete obligations flowing from submission to Allah. Spiritual humility emerges from his descriptions of his own journey, where spiritual experiences are framed as blessings that deepen awareness of human limitation rather than as achievements warranting pride. Spiritual integration draws from his exhortations to fulfill Allah's commands and strengthen the Prophet's sunnah, linking inner devotion to outward action. These interpretive claims remain grounded in textual evidence, avoiding overgeneralization by attending closely to Sheikh Yusuf's specific language and context.

This theoretical framework is not intended to directly equate Sheikh Yusuf's teachings with ASERVIC, but rather to use Counselor Self-Awareness as a framework for understanding the relevance of spiritual values in the RTSG. The dialogue proceeds through a process of question and answer, where the contemporary framework asks what constitutes spiritual awareness, and the historical text responds with understandings that challenge and deepen those questions. When ASERVIC asks about "self-awareness," the RTSG responds with *taqwa* (God-consciousness), shifting the locus from the individual self to divine presence. When ASERVIC speaks of "humility," the text deepens this into servant-humility rooted in creaturely dependence on Allah. This dialogical process yields new meanings that belong to neither horizon alone but emerge from their encounter and it is precisely this emergent meaning that constitutes the fusion of horizons and the contribution of this study. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 The Construction of Spiritual Awareness Among Muslim Counselors Based on the Fusion of the ASERVIC Counselor Self-Awareness Horizon and the Teachings of Sheikh Yusuf Al-Makassari

No	Aspects of Counselor Self-Awareness	Interpretive Indicators	Text Sheikh Yusuf Al-Makassari	Meaning of the Text	Results of Gadamerian Hermeneutics	Construction of Spiritual Awareness in Muslim Counselors
1	Awareness of One's	Counselors understand	"Antu nikanaya tappaq anrong	Faith is the foundation of	Sheikh Yusuf regards <i>tappaq</i>	Tawhidic spiritual

Own Spiritual Value	the beliefs, values, and spiritual principles that form the foundation of their identity.	<i>gurunnai panngassenganga. Naia panngassenganga empoannai mallaka, naia mallaka empoannai mappakaiaya. Naia nikanaya mappakaia, anngassengai napassuroanga Allataala siagang napappisangkanga Naqbia SAW, na nugaukang nikanaya gauq mannyorokana ri Karaenna, nanuballaki mallaka."</i> Meaning:The Master said, "Faith is the teacher of knowledge; knowledge is the foundation of piety; and piety itself is the acknowledgment of the Oneness of Allah. Acknowledging the Oneness of Allah means being able to carry out Allah's commands and avoid the prohibitions of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). We submit ourselves to Allah out of piety. This is what is meant by the acknowledgment of the Oneness of Allah."	knowledge; knowledge is connected to piety, while piety leads to the acknowledgment of the oneness of Allah, which is manifested through the observance of His commands, the avoidance of what the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) has forbidden, and submission to Allah.	as the foundation for the development of human consciousness, which progresses toward <i>pangngassengang</i> (knowledge), <i>taqwa</i> (piety), and <i>mappakaia</i> (obedience). In the context of counseling, this framework indicates that counselors must first understand the values and beliefs that shape them. This aligns with ASERVIC, which identifies the exploration of personal spiritual beliefs and values as a crucial component of Counselor Self-Awareness.	awareness, which is the counselor's awareness that their identity is rooted in their relationship with Allah, religious values, and the moral responsibilities that accompany their role as a counselor.	
2	Reflections on Personal Spiritual Influence	Counselors recognize that their personal	<i>"Iami nakupappisangkang ri taua siagang nakupannag-</i>	Sheikh Yusuf taught people to have reverence and	The text indicates that spiritual values do not reside	The counselor's rabbani orientation.

		spiritual values and beliefs can shape the way they understand people and conduct counseling relationships.	<i>jarrang angkanaya, mamallaqlaloko, numatappaq, numappakaia, nunrannuang ri panngapettainna karaengnu. Numannaqqalaaq ri emposng imang takalapakkanga.</i> " Meaning: Therefore, I teach people to fear Him, to be God-conscious, to affirm His Oneness, and to always hope for His love. Hold fast to faith that is unclouded.	piety toward Allah, to affirm His Oneness, to seek His love, and to hold fast to their faith.	solely in the realm of personal belief but also shape a person's orientation in guiding others. In the context of counseling, one's personal spiritual values must be recognized and reflected upon so that they serve as a source of moral guidance without becoming an imposition of values on the client. This aligns with ASERVIC's emphasis that counselors must continually assess the influence of their personal spiritual or religious beliefs on the client and the counseling process.	that is, the counselor's awareness that the act of helping others is guided by divine values, yet is carried out ethically while respecting the client's identity and beliefs.
3	Spiritual humility	The counselor recognizes his or her own limitations, does not regard personal spiritual experiences as the absolute standard, and values the client's	<i>"I nakkemo anne ciniq, i nakkemo alle rapang. Kuciniqmi nakke panngamaseanna karaengku, Kukasuqmantomm i panngainna ri nakke nasabaq panngamaseanna ri nakke, nakunapiciniki teqnek, nakunasare empoang kabuyu-buyu. Naku i lalangja</i>	Sheikh Yusuf described his experience of receiving Allah's grace and love, as well as a state of great bliss; yet that experience did not diminish his piety and submission to Allah.	A profound spiritual experience, as described in the text, does not lead to a sense of superiority but rather strengthens one's submission to God. Through the fusion of horizons, this attitude is understood as	Spiritual humility. that is, a counselor's ability to recognize the limitations of their own spiritual knowledge and experience, to avoid spiritual superiority, and to respect the client's spiritual

		spiritual experiences.	<i>majannang ri empoang mamaliaka, nakumappakaia ri panngataianna karaengku."</i> Meaning: Tuanta spoke again. "Look at me and take me as an example. I have seen God's mercy toward me, and I have also felt His love for me because of His compassion. I have seen my place a place of great beauty. Yet I remain steadfast in my piety and affirm His Oneness through my love for Him."		spiritual humility: the deeper one's spiritual experience, the greater one's awareness of one's own limitations. In the context of counseling, this attitude is important so that the counselor does not make their own experiences and beliefs an absolute standard for the client. ASERVIC also emphasizes the need for counselors to recognize the limitations of their understanding of the client's spiritual perspective.	journey and experiences.
4	Emergent findings: the manifestation of spiritual values in behavior	Counselors embody their spiritual values and beliefs in their consistent professional attitudes and actions..	<i>"Kammaminjo nutealalo pasayu manngaukang napassuroanga Allataala. Na nujarreki sareaqna Naqbia SAW barang kammai apa nanikamaseangko ri lino tulusuq mange ri aheraq."</i> Meaning: Do not neglect to do everything that Allah has commanded. Uphold the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon	Sheikh Yusuf emphasized that people should not neglect to carry out Allah's commands and should always strive to strengthen their practice of the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as the path to obtaining mercy in this world and the hereafter.	The text shows that spiritual awareness does not stop at the recognition of values and beliefs, but requires actualization through action. In the professional context of counseling, a counselor's spirituality takes on meaning when there is consistency between the	A counselor's spiritual integration, that is, the harmony between their beliefs, values, words, and professional actions is a manifestation of the counselor's responsibility to God and humanity.

him), so that we may receive His mercy both in this world and in the hereafter.

values they hold and the behavior they exhibit.

Discussion

The results of the analysis indicate that Muslim counselors' spiritual awareness is shaped by four interrelated constructs. Tawhidic spiritual awareness serves as the counselor's internal foundation through an understanding of their own spiritual beliefs and values. These findings are consistent with those of Hull et al., (2016); Hodge, (2018); Lu et al., (2018); and Smith et al., (2019), who identify an understanding of one's worldview, beliefs, and personal spiritual values as an essential component of a counselor's spiritual competence. This awareness develops into the counselor's rabbani orientation, which involves making divine values the moral compass in the helping relationship. However, the counselor's spiritual values must not be used as a basis for imposing beliefs on the client. Hodge, (2018) dan Vieten et al., (2024) emphasize the importance of awareness of one's personal values so that counselors can work ethically, sensitively, and with respect for the client's differing spiritual perspectives.

The next finding is spiritual humility, which is the awareness of one's own limitations and the rejection of spiritual superiority. This finding overlaps with Hodge, (2018) concept of epistemological humility, as well as Gladding & Crockett, (2019) emphasis on the importance of self-awareness in the development of counselors' spiritual competencies. Furthermore, the spiritual integration of counselors emerged as a key finding, defined as the actualization of spiritual values in professional behavior. This is consistent with Mayangsari et al. (2025), Vieten et al. (2024), and Gladding & Crockett, (2019), who emphasize that spiritual competence encompasses not only awareness and knowledge but also the ability to apply spiritual values ethically and effectively in counseling practice. Overall, the convergence between ASERVIC's Counselor Self-Awareness and the teachings of Sheikh Yusuf Al-Makassari indicates that the spiritual awareness of Muslim counselors progresses from recognizing divine values, reflecting on the influence of personal values, and recognizing one's own limitations, to the actualization of these values in professional behavior. This finding expands the meaning of Counselor Self-Awareness from internal awareness toward reflective and practical spiritual awareness.

Contemporary scholarship frames spiritual awareness primarily as a cognitive competencyan understanding of one's worldview, beliefs, and personal values that enables ethical practice, with Manderino (2014) operationalizing this through the Spiritual Competency Scale as a manageable attribute. However, Sheikh Yusuf's horizon presents Tawhid not as a competency to be acquired but as an ontological reality that precedes all human existence. The fusion of these horizons reveals that Tawhidic awareness is not merely about knowing one's values but recognizing one's existential position before Allah, transforming "awareness" from a psychological state to a theological posture. While Scurry (2024) and Adams et al. (2015) lament the neglect of spiritual competencies in counselor education, this fusion suggests a deeper critique: the problem is not merely curricular but epistemological, as secular frameworks cannot fully accommodate Tawhidic awareness because they treat spirituality as an optional add-on rather than recognizing it as foundational ground.

The new meaning that emerges is ethical-theological integrationthe understanding that professional ethics are not external standards to be internalized but manifestations of divine will. The counselor does not simply "manage" personal values but submits them to divine judgment, shifting the role from a professional who "has" spiritual awareness to a servant who embodies divine consciousness. This transforms ethical practice into an act of *ibadah* (worship), rendering professional competence inseparable from spiritual devotion. The fusion reveals that counselor education must move beyond "including" spirituality to reconceptualizing the entire enterprise from a Tawhidic perspective, where professional identity is grounded in transcendent accountability rather than competency-based self-management.

Rabbani Orientation: From Moral Compass to Relational Theophany

Contemporary counseling literature understands a moral compass as a set of guiding principles where values like empathy and compassion facilitate therapeutic alliance (Corey et al., 2020; Cobb, 2021). This

represents a humanistic framework where values are instrumental to therapeutic outcomes. Sheikh Yusuf's teachings, particularly *nikatutuinna* (loving and being loved) and *kamaseang* (caring and showing compassion), bring a horizon where love and compassion are not merely therapeutic techniques but manifestations of divine attributes. The fusion of these horizons transforms the rabbani orientation from a moral compass into a relational theophany manifestation of divine presence in the counseling relationship. The counselor does not simply "use" compassion as a skill but becomes a channel through which divine love (*al-Wadud*) and mercy (*ar-Rahman*) flow to the client, transforming the therapeutic alliance from a professional relationship into a sacred encounter.

The new meaning that emerges resolves a tension in counseling ethics: how can religious counselors be authentic without imposing values? The fusion provides an answer: the rabbani orientation embodies divine values rather than demanding clients adopt them. The counselor's spiritual values serve as the source of care, not the content of prescription, preserving client uniqueness because the counselor's love is unconditional, mirroring divine love that invites rather than coerces. Cobb's (2021) finding that personal spirituality correlates with professional competence gains new depth as confidence becomes trust in divine guidance (*tawakkul*), reframing professional competence as spiritual gift rather than personal achievement. The counselor's role is redefined as a spiritual agent who channels divine love through empathic presence, making the therapeutic relationship a microcosm of divine-human relationship.

Contemporary literature frames spiritual humility primarily in epistemological terms as recognition of limited knowledge, openness to others' perspectives, and avoidance of imposing values (Cashwell & Watts, 2010; Mayangsari et al., 2025). Scurry (2024) and Bailey (2026) discuss this practically, noting counselors avoid spiritual discussions due to fear of mistakes, indicating a need for training. Sheikh Yusuf's horizon offers a radically different understanding, describing his spiritual experiences not as achievements but as blessings that deepen submission to Allah, rejecting spiritual superiority not because it is professionally inappropriate but because it is theologically arrogant a form of *kibr* (pride). The fusion generates servant-humility, where humility is not a professional skill but an expression of creaturely status before Allah, transforming humility from a professional virtue to a theological necessity.

The new meaning that emerges is that the counselor does not merely "tolerate" different spiritual views but actively renounces the ego, recognizing that superiority is incompatible with servanthood. The counseling room becomes a space of sacred discovery where both counselor and client are learners before Allah, and the "fear of mistakes" is not merely professional anxiety but healthy spiritual awareness of limitations. Rather than eliminating fear, counselor education should transform it into reverent caution a posture acknowledging that ultimate understanding belongs to Allah alone. This creates a more authentic foundation for humility than purely professional training, moving humility from a cognitive stance (acknowledging limited knowledge) to an active practice (choosing submission over pride), where the client's spiritual journey is revered as a unique path of divine guidance.

Contemporary literature understands spiritual integration as the ability to apply spiritual values in professional practice, moving from awareness to action (Manderino, 2014; Bowser et al., 2022; Mayangsari et al., 2025). Vieten et al. (2024) and Gladding & Crockett (2019) emphasize that competence includes applying values ethically and effectively a framework of competency-based application where values are translated into interventions. Sheikh Yusuf's horizon offers a different understanding, emphasizing fulfillment of Allah's commands and strengthening the Prophet's sunnah, where spirituality is not "applied" to actions but actualized through them. His values of peace *napassamaturuki* (consensus-building) and *pamopporang* (forgiveness) are not just ethical principles but concrete spiritual practices. The fusion generates the concept of *Ihsan* spiritual excellence where belief, ethics, and action become seamlessly unified, transforming integration from a skill to a state of being where professional behavior becomes worship (*ibadah*).

The new meaning that emerges is that integration is not merely consistency between beliefs and actions but the transformation of action into devotion. Nabih et al. (2025) and Harshita & Maheshwari's (2026) findings on spiritual counseling effectiveness are recontextualized as manifestations of divine mercy, where the counselor becomes a vessel for divine healing. Hikmah et al.'s (2025) emphasis on program implications becomes an ontological demand: spiritual integration must be embodied in structured programs because spirituality cannot be separated from action, requiring systemic manifestation. The fusion reveals that integration is not a destination but an ongoing process

through *jihad* (striving) toward *Ihsan*, where professional development becomes spiritual formation, and each counseling interaction is an opportunity for deeper integration. The counselor's harmony between beliefs, words, and actions is not a professional ideal to be achieved but a spiritual reality to be continually actualized, creating a comprehensive model where professional competence is inseparable from spiritual maturity

Conclusion

This study successfully constructed the spiritual self-awareness of Muslim counselors through a Gadamerian hermeneutic interpretation of Sheikh Yusuf Al-Makassari's advice in the Lontara Riwayaqa Tuanta Salamaqa ri Gowa (RTSG) manuscript, by engaging it in dialogue with the ASERVIC Counselor Self-Awareness framework. The four constructs identified Tawhidic spiritual awareness, Rabbani orientation, spiritual humility, and the counselor's spiritual integration form a pattern of awareness that progresses from recognizing divine values, reflecting on the influence of personal values, accepting one's limitations, to the actualization of spiritual values in consistent professional behavior. These findings enrich the concept of Counselor Self-Awareness with an Islamic spiritual perspective rooted in the local traditions of Makassar, while also offering a holistic foundation for Muslim counselors in conducting ethical, humanistic, and contextual counseling practices. The implications of this research are highly relevant for the development of counselor education curricula based on local wisdom in Indonesia, as well as for strengthening clinical training and supervision that are sensitive to the spiritual dimensions of both counselors and clients. However, further empirical research is still needed to test the effectiveness of this construct through experimental studies or quantitative measurements, as well as to expand its scope to other local wisdom texts across the Indonesian archipelago in order to enrich the body of knowledge in Indonesian culture-based guidance and counseling.

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