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Integrating *Sipakatau*, *Sipakainge'*, and *Sipakalebbi* Values into Empathy Training: A Narrative Literature Review

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Abstract

Purpose : This study synthesizes the literature to examine how Empathy Training techniques can be integrated and communicated through the Bugis-Makassar cultural values of *Sipakatau*, *Sipakainge'*, and *Sipakalebbi* in order to support culturally responsive counseling. It is motivated by the tendency of empathy training programs to be designed universally and to rarely include local cultural values explicitly. Its original contribution lies in a critical synthesis across the literature on empathy, peace education, and local wisdom, grounded in the peace education theory of Navarro-Castro and Nario-Galace (2019), rather than in repeating a four-stage framework that has already been published.

Method : A narrative literature review with thematic synthesis. Sources were searched through Google Scholar and Portal Garuda using Indonesian and English keywords and were then selected according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria described in the Method section. The final corpus consisted of 26 sources (journal articles, proceedings, and books) on empathy, peace education, group counseling, and Bugis-Makassar cultural values.

Results : The synthesis produced four findings. First, empathy is understood as a multidimensional construct that can be trained in a structured way. Second, the three values correspond conceptually to the components of empathy and the indicators of a peaceful personality; this correspondence is a theory-based interpretation by the authors, not an empirical test result. Third, cultural values are communicated through meaning framing, training methods, group interaction rules, and counselor modeling across the four training stages. Fourth, the empirical evidence remains limited: one small quasi-experimental study (n = 18) supports the cultural integration, but its design did not separate the contribution of culture from that of the technique.

Conclusion : Integrating local cultural values into Empathy Training is best understood as a process of communicating meaning rather than adding terms. The resulting framework is hypothetical and cannot yet support conclusions about the effectiveness of its cultural component. It can serve as a basis for multicultural counseling services and for a three-group experimental test in future research.

Keywords: Empathy Training; *Sipakatau*; *Sipakainge'*; *Sipakalebbi*; Bugis-Makassar Culture; Peaceful Personality; Multicultural Counseling.

1. Introduction

Empathy is a core competence in character education and in guidance and counseling services because it sustains healthy social relationships and helps students respond to differences without violence. Research on empathy and deviant behavior links empathy with aggression and bullying (Jolliffe & Farrington, 2021), while interventions that foster empathy are considered to have the potential to reduce antisocial behavior (Trivedi-Bateman & Crook, 2022). Within the peace education framework, empathy is also part of the peaceful personality, a psychological condition characterized by the ability to forgive, respect for oneself and others, control of negative emotions, and compassion (Navarro-Castro & Nario-Galace, 2019; Nelson, 2014).

Empathy Training is a structured program designed to develop the ability to sense, understand, and respond appropriately to other people's feelings (Paulus & Meinken, 2022). Its conceptual reference is Davis's (1996) view, which distinguishes cognitive components (perspective taking and fantasy) from affective components (empathic concern and personal distress), together with the humanistic tradition that treats empathy as a condition of the counseling relationship (Khairuddin, 2023). The approach has been applied in various contexts, for example to increase forgiveness among female students who were victims of dating violence (Reza et al., 2020), to reduce bullying among elementary school students (Biahimo et al., 2025), and to cultivate social care through role playing (Indriyanawati & Utomo, 2024).

This review relies on the peace education theory of Navarro-Castro and Nario-Galace (2019) as its main theoretical framework (grand theory). In this framework, peace education is understood as the process of fostering the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values needed to build a culture of peace, and a peaceful personality is one of its outcomes, with indicators of forgiveness, respect for oneself and others, control of negative emotions, and compassion. The framework was chosen because it provides clear outcome indicators for empathy training and allows local cultural values to be read as peace values that live in everyday practice. Davis (1996) is used as the operational framework for empathy, while Nelson (2014) and Fakhri and Buchori (2022) complete the understanding of intrapersonal peacefulness.

Nevertheless, the studies above, at least those covered in this review, do not position local cultural values as a component of training design. Yet Bugis-Makassar society has a relational ethical system known as the 3S values: *Sipakatau* (mutually recognizing one another's humanity), *Sipakainge'* (mutually reminding), and *Sipakalebbi* (mutually honoring) (Buchori & Fakhri, 2018). These values have been examined in preventing intolerance (Herlin et al., 2020), in preventing bullying by strengthening the bystander role (Halima et al., 2021), and in increasing empathy in social studies learning (Amiruddin et al., 2023). These studies show how close the 3S values are to empathy, but they have not explained how the values are combined with structured counseling techniques.

This gap is both communicative and methodological. Combining technique and culture is not merely adding local terms to an existing procedure. The issue concerns how the technique is delivered: what meanings are used to explain the purpose of an exercise, which methods carry the values, what interaction rules apply in the group, and how the counselor models the values. In the context of multicultural counseling, this question matters because understanding clients' cultural values is needed to optimize counseling services based on local culture (Aswar et al., 2023).

Part of this gap has been addressed by Zakina et al. (2026), who developed a four-stage Empathy Training framework based on Bugis-Makassar values and tested it quasi-experimentally with 18 students. This article does not repeat that framework or its findings as novelty; the study is treated as one illustrative case among 26 sources. The contribution of this article is distinguished in three respects. First, it searches and synthesizes a broader body of literature, namely empathy, peace education, group counseling, and local wisdom, to assess the adequacy of the conceptual basis of that framework. Second, it provides a theoretical justification for the relationship between each 3S value and the components of empathy based on Navarro-Castro and Nario-Galace (2019) and Davis (1996), so that these relationships are not merely asserted. Third, it critically assesses the strength of the evidence and separates claims about the effectiveness of empathy training in general from claims about the specific contribution of cultural integration.

This article aims to synthesize the literature on how Empathy Training is integrated and communicated through the values of *Sipakatau*, *Sipakainge'*, and *Sipakalebbi* in culturally responsive counseling. The review is guided by four questions: (1) how are empathy and Empathy Training conceptualized in the reviewed literature; (2) how do the 3S values correspond to the components of empathy and the indicators of a peaceful personality; (3) through which stages, methods, and interaction rules is the technique communicated with cultural values; and (4) how strong is the available evidence, and what are its limitations?

2. Method

This study used a narrative literature review design with thematic synthesis. The design was chosen because the aim is conceptual, namely to map and connect two bodies of literature that rarely meet, rather than to estimate effect sizes. Accordingly, this is not a systematic review and does not apply the PRISMA protocol. Nevertheless, the search, selection, and analysis procedures are described sequentially below so that the review process is transparent and can be replicated by other researchers.

The search was conducted through Google Scholar and Portal Garuda for sources published up to October 2026. Keywords were formulated in Indonesian and English and combined with Boolean operators: "empathy training" OR "pelatihan empati"; "empati" AND "konseling kelompok"; "Sipakatau" OR "Sipakainge" OR "Sipakalebbi"; "nilai Bugis Makassar" AND "konseling"; "peace education" OR "pendidikan damai"; and "pribadi damai" OR "peaceful personality". The search was supplemented by checking the reference lists of key sources (citation chaining) and of the main theoretical source, the book by Navarro-Castro and Nario-Galace (2019).

The final corpus consisted of 26 sources comprising journal articles, proceedings, books, and one scholarly work by the authors (Zakina et al., 2026), compiled during the preparation of the authors' experimental research. Sources were included if they (a) discussed empathy or Empathy Training; (b) discussed the values of *Sipakatau*, *Sipakainge'*, and *Sipakalebbi* or Indonesian local wisdom in education and counseling; (c) discussed peace education, peaceful personality, or group counseling; and (d) were published between 2014 and 2026, except for Davis (1996), which was retained as the main conceptual reference on empathy. Sources were excluded if (e) their bibliographic data could not be verified on the publisher's website or an official repository; (f) they were opinion pieces or non-scholarly writing without a theoretical or empirical basis; (g) they were duplicate publications; or (h) they discussed empathy without any link to the context of education,

counseling, peace education, or culture. Sources from health settings were retained only as general evidence on the effectiveness of empathy training.

Source selection proceeded in three stages. First, the titles and abstracts of the search results were screened against the inclusion criteria. Second, the sources that passed were read in full to confirm their fit with the review questions. Third, the bibliographic data of every source (authors, year, title, publication name, volume, issue, and pages) were verified on the publisher's website or an official repository. Screening and coding were done manually by the authors.

The analysis was carried out in four steps. First, each source was read and coded according to five categories: the concept of empathy, cultural values, training methods, outcomes, and study context and design. Second, the codes were grouped into four themes aligned with the review questions (Table 1), and codes from different sources were compared to identify similarities, differences, and gaps across sources. Third, the authors mapped the correspondence among the Empathy Training stages, the 3S values, the empathy components according to Davis (1996), and the peaceful personality indicators according to Navarro-Castro and Nario-Galace (2019), which serves as the main theoretical framework. Each mapping was given an evidence status: empirical evidence (reported study results), established theoretical concept (a construct already formulated in the literature), or the authors' interpretation (a relationship proposed by this review). Fourth, the strength of the evidence was assessed qualitatively based on design, sample size, the presence of a comparison group, and type of data; no formal risk-of-bias assessment was performed. The authors' own research data (Zakina et al., 2026) were used as an illustrative case, not as sole evidence, and the four-stage framework and its statistical results are not claimed as new findings of this review.

3. Results

Coding and grouping of the literature produced four themes aligned with the review questions (Table 1). Within each theme, statements are distinguished into three statuses: empirical evidence (results of earlier studies), established theoretical concept (a construct already formulated in the literature), and the authors' interpretation (a relationship proposed by this review). This distinction is maintained throughout the Results and Discussion.

Table 1. Synthesis themes, main codes, and evidence status

Theme (review question)	Main codes and sources	Evidence status
1. Conceptualization of empathy and Empathy Training (Q1)	Empathy as multidimensional and trainable; training methods in schools and in health care. Sources: Davis (1996); Jolliffe & Farrington (2021); Paulus & Meinken (2022); Trivedi-Bateman & Crook (2022); Widyastuti & Savitri (2023); Reza et al. (2020); Biahimo et al. (2025); Indriyanawati & Utomo (2024); Tohirin (2019).	Established theoretical concept (Davis, 1996); empirical evidence from a meta-analysis and intervention studies.

Theme (review question)	Main codes and sources	Evidence status
2. The 3S values and their correspondence with empathy and peaceful personality (Q2)	Meaning and social function of the 3S values; peaceful personality indicators and inner peace. Sources: Buchori & Fakhri (2018); Herlin et al. (2020); Halima et al. (2021); Amiruddin et al. (2023); Navarro-Castro & Nario-Galace (2019); Nelson (2014); Fakhri & Buchori (2022); Chérif et al. (2022); Sikka et al. (2023).	Main theory (Navarro-Castro & Nario-Galace, 2019) and contextual studies; the 3S–empathy mapping is the authors' interpretation.
3. Value communication pathways across training stages (Q3)	Meaning framing, value-carrying methods, group interaction rules, and counselor modeling. Sources: Zakina et al. (2026); Hermina & Hariyono (2018); Khairuddin (2023); Aswar et al. (2023); Buchori et al. (2023); Junaid et al. (2025); Ratu et al. (2019); Setiadi et al. (2017).	Authors' interpretation based on one empirical design and supporting literature.
4. Strength of evidence and its limitations (Q4)	Design, sample size, data type, and presence of a comparison group in the empirical studies in the corpus, especially Zakina et al. (2026).	Authors' qualitative assessment without a formal risk-of-bias assessment.

Theme 1. The reviewed literature views empathy as a multidimensional construct. Davis (1996) distinguishes cognitive components, namely perspective taking and fantasy, from affective components, namely empathic concern and personal distress. A meta-analysis of 13 studies in the health field reported a moderate effect of empathy training (Hedges' g = 0.58) with no significant moderator of content or method, so its authors suggested comparing training components (Paulus & Meinken, 2022). This evidence comes from health settings, so its applicability to school settings is limited. In school settings, recurring methods are role play (Indriyanawati & Utomo, 2024) and group counseling, which is considered effective in developing socialization and communication skills because group dynamics facilitate social learning (Tohirin, 2019). Zakina et al. (2026) adapted Davis's framework into four stages: self- and emotional understanding, others' perspectives, emotion control, and empathic expression in behavior. This four-stage framework is summarized here as material for synthesis and not as a new finding of this review.

Theme 2. Two important patterns emerge. First, Empathy Training studies targeting forgiveness (Reza et al., 2020) and bullying behavior (Biahimo et al., 2025) do not make local cultural values a component of the design. Second, a peaceful personality is understood as starting from intrapersonal peace that then influences social relationships (Fakhri & Buchori, 2022; Navarro-Castro & Nario-Galace, 2019; Nelson, 2014). In the framework of Navarro-Castro and Nario-Galace (2019), the indicators of a peaceful personality, namely forgiveness, respect for oneself and others, control of negative emotions, and compassion, serve as the outcome benchmarks for empathy training. Empathy, compassion, and forgiveness are regarded as character strengths that support inner peace (Chérif et al., 2022), and high inner calm is associated with adaptive emotion regulation (Sikka et al., 2023).

Buchori and Fakhri (2018) describe Bugis and Makassar peace values as a social ethical system rooted in the philosophy of humanity and solidarity. The two traditions use slightly different terms, for example *Sipakainge'* and *Sipakainga* or *Sipakalebbi* and *Sipakalabbiri*, but the essence is the same. For consistency, this manuscript uses the forms *Sipakatau*, *Sipakainge'*, and *Sipakalebbi* (the 3S values) throughout. These values serve a dual function, as a moral guide for individuals and as a social mechanism regulating relations between individuals and groups (Buchori & Fakhri, 2018). Herlin et al. (2020) identified concrete tolerance dimensions in the three values, namely mutual respect, reminding, and appreciation. Halima et al. (2021) positioned them as cultural values for bullying prevention by strengthening the bystander role, and Amiruddin et al. (2023) reported an increase in students' empathy when the values were applied through the rational building model in social studies learning.

Table 2. The 3S values in Bugis-Makassar culture, their English equivalents, and their correspondence with empathy and peaceful personality

Value	Meaning in the literature	Correspondence (authors' conceptual mapping)
Sipakatau (mutually recognizing one another's humanity)	Treating others as dignified human beings who are equal regardless of social, economic, or cultural background.	Self-respect; respect for others (the golden rule); recognition of one's own and others' emotions as part of humanity. Basis: recognition of dignity as the moral foundation for empathic concern (see the justification below the table).
Sipakainge' (mutually reminding)	Giving advice and reminding one another toward goodness in an ethical, persuasive, and compassionate manner; functions as social control.	Perspective taking; empathic concern; ability to forgive; control of negative emotions; constructive communication. Also fantasy through storytelling.
Sipakalebbi (mutually honoring and respecting)	Mutual respect, humility, preserving dignity and grace, and valuing differences.	Respecting others; cultivating compassion; polite speech; emotion management in interaction. Reduction of personal distress.

Table 2 summarizes the meaning of the three values and their correspondence with empathy components and peaceful personality indicators. This correspondence is a conceptual mapping developed in Zakina et al. (2026) based on the frameworks of Navarro-Castro and Nario-Galace (2019) and Davis (1996), not the result of empirical testing. This article re-evaluates that mapping and provides a theoretical justification for each relationship, as set out below.

The theoretical justification for this correspondence is organized into three arguments. First, *Sipakatau* contains the recognition that every person is dignified as a human being (Buchori & Fakhri, 2018). This recognition parallels the indicator of respect for oneself and others in the peaceful personality framework (Navarro-Castro & Nario-Galace, 2019) and serves as a moral prerequisite

for empathic concern, that is, concern directed toward others (Davis, 1996). Emotional self-awareness in the early training stage is read as a form of self-respect; this reading is the authors' interpretation, because emotional self-awareness is not a component of Davis's (1996) model of empathy.

Second, *Sipakainge'* requires a person to understand the situation and viewpoint of the one being reminded so that advice is received persuasively and compassionately (Buchori & Fakhri, 2018; Herlin et al., 2020). This requirement relates to the cognitive component, namely perspective taking and, when character stories are used as media, fantasy (Davis, 1996), while a compassionate tone relates to the affective component of empathic concern. Forgiveness and control of negative emotions, which are also peaceful personality indicators (Navarro-Castro & Nario-Galace, 2019), are conditions for reminding not to turn into judgment.

Third, *Sipakalebbi* emphasizes preserving the dignity of the interlocutor through humility and polite speech (Buchori & Fakhri, 2018). Preserving another person's dignity in emotionally triggering situations requires managing one's own affective reactions, so this value is linked to reducing personal distress (Davis, 1996). This relationship is consistent with findings that inner calm is associated with adaptive emotion regulation (Sikka et al., 2023) and that compassion and forgiveness support inner peace (Chérif et al., 2022). These sources are supporting references and do not test the 3S–empathy relationship directly, so the three relationships above remain conceptual hypotheses.

Theme 3. Synthesis of the integration design in Zakina et al. (2026) and its supporting literature shows that cultural values enter the technique through four complementary communication pathways (Table 3). The first pathway is meaning framing: the purpose of each stage is explained with value terms already familiar to participants, so that exercises in recognizing emotions are understood as the practice of humanizing oneself and others (*Sipakatau*), exercises in taking perspectives as the practice of reminding one another politely (*Sipakainge'*), and exercises in emotion regulation as the practice of preserving the interlocutor's dignity (*Sipakalebbi*). The second pathway is value-carrying methods, namely sharing circles, storytelling, simulations of emotion-triggering situations, and reflection and role play. The third pathway is group interaction rules derived from the values, for example not mocking or judging a friend's story, giving feedback politely, and speaking respectfully. The fourth pathway is counselor modeling: in group counseling, the counselor is expected to present themselves authentically, warmly, and sincerely and to be a role model for group members (Hermina & Hariyono, 2018). These four pathways are the authors' interpretation of the design of Zakina et al. (2026) and the supporting literature, not results that have been tested separately.

Table 3. Communication pathways of cultural values across Empathy Training stages

Training stage	Cultural value	Method	Focus of empathy and peaceful personality	Value communication message
Self- and emotional understanding	*Sipakatau*	Sharing circle	Awareness of one's own emotions; self-respect	Listening without mocking or judging; every emotion is part of a humanity that deserves respect.

Training stage	Cultural value	Method	Focus of empathy and peaceful personality	Value communication message
Others' perspectives	*Sipakainge'*	Storytelling and discussion of the characters' feelings	Perspective taking; fantasy (through character stories); ability to forgive; control of negative emotions	Giving opinions and feedback politely and empathically; reminding in a good way.
Emotion control	*Sipakalebbi*	Simulation of emotion-triggering situations (e.g., being mocked, blamed, or disrespected)	Emotion regulation; reduced personal distress; respect for others	Polite language, a respectful attitude, and self-control when facing unpleasant situations.
Empathic expression in behavior	All three values together	Reflection, role play, and simple social practice	Empathic concern; cultivating compassion; prosocial behavior	Treating friends humanely, offering support or advice in a good way, and speaking respectfully.

Group counseling provides a setting in which these four pathways can operate. The stages of formation, transition, activity, and termination (Hermina & Hariyono, 2018) provide procedural structure, while the activity stage is filled by the four value-based Empathy Training stages (Zakina et al., 2026).

Theme 4. The available evidence can be grouped into three clusters (Table 4). The first cluster comprises empathy training studies without local cultural content that report changes in forgiveness and bullying behavior (Biahimo et al., 2025; Reza et al., 2020). The second cluster comprises studies that use local values or wisdom in learning and guidance, both the 3S values (Amiruddin et al., 2023; Halima et al., 2021; Herlin et al., 2020) and wisdom from other cultures (Junaid et al., 2025; Ratu et al., 2019). The third cluster comprises studies that combine structured Empathy Training with the 3S values in group counseling, which in this corpus is represented only by Zakina et al. (2026). In terms of evidence type, studies in the first and third clusters report intervention results (empirical evidence); studies in the second cluster partly report the results of applying values and partly are exploratory or conceptual; and the theoretical sources (Davis, 1996; Navarro-Castro & Nario-Galace, 2019) provide a conceptual foundation rather than empirical evidence on training.

Table 4. Summary of reviewed studies and their evidence types

Study	Context	Focus and main findings
Reza et al. (2020)	Female students who were victims of dating violence	Empathy Training to increase forgiveness; significant difference between pretest and posttest. Evidence type: empirical (intervention).
Biahimo et al. (2025)	Elementary school students, Gorontalo	Empathy therapy to reduce bullying behavior. Evidence type: empirical (intervention), without local cultural content.
Indriyanawati & Utomo (2024)	Pancasila education	Role playing to instill social care and empathy. Evidence type: learning practice (method).
Herlin et al. (2020)	Study on preventing intolerance	The 3S values contain tolerance dimensions: mutual respect, reminding, and appreciation. Evidence type: exploratory or conceptual study.
Halima et al. (2021)	Bullying prevention	The 3S values can be maximized by strengthening the bystander role. Evidence type: conceptual study.
Amiruddin et al. (2023)	Social studies (IPS) learning	Applying the 3S values through the rational building model increased students' empathy. Evidence type: empirical (application of a learning model).
Ratu et al. (2019)	Peace education based on the local wisdom of Nosarara Nosabatutu	Development of a peace culture and peace competence in schools. Evidence type: development study (conceptual-practical); other culture.
Junaid et al. (2025)	Classical guidance, MAN 1 Majene	Kalindaqdaq Pepaturu values to increase students' empathy. Evidence type: empirical (classical service application); other culture.
Zakina et al. (2026)	Group counseling, MTsN 1 Makassar (n = 18)	Quasi-experiment; experimental group mean rose from 83.33 to 113.00, control from 84.67 to 85.33; p < .001. Evidence type: empirical (quasi-experiment); small sample and self-report data.

In the third-cluster study, the intervention was delivered in six sessions over three weeks to 18 Grade VII students (nine in the experimental group and nine in the control group), using a 40-item peaceful personality scale (Cronbach's α = .908). The experimental group's mean score rose from 83.33 to 113.00, while the control group's moved from 84.67 to 85.33. An independent-samples t test yielded Sig. (2-tailed) = .000 (< .05), that is, p < .001 (Zakina et al., 2026). Effect sizes and confidence intervals should be reported in follow-up studies because nine participants per group make a significance test alone insufficient.

The strength of the evidence needs to be read with caution. The empirical evidence closest to the review questions comes from one small study at a single institution using self-report data (Zakina et al., 2026). The other studies are conceptual or focus on different outcomes, namely empathy, tolerance, bullying, and peace competence, so direct comparison is not possible.

Accordingly, the evidence in this corpus is better described as indicative than conclusive, and it is insufficient to conclude that the cultural component is effective (Paulus & Meinken, 2022; Zakina et al., 2026).

4. Discussion

The synthesis shows that integrating technique and culture is better understood as translating meaning than as adding content. In the framework of Navarro-Castro and Nario-Galace (2019), empathy training can be seen as one effort to cultivate a peaceful personality through changes in attitudes, values, and relational skills, while the 3S values provide the value content that makes that change culturally meaningful. The Empathy Training procedure retains the logic of Davis (1996), moving from recognizing one's own emotions, to taking perspectives, to regulating emotions, and toward empathic expression. The 3S values provide the language and norms that make this logic meaningful to participants. This sequence is also consistent with the finding that empathy mediates the relationship between self-compassion and prosocial behavior in adolescents (Widyastuti & Savitri, 2023): awareness of oneself precedes and supports concern for others. However, that mediation finding is correlational and does not prove the order of the training stages.

Zakina et al. (2026) argued that the peaceful personality framework of Navarro-Castro and Nario-Galace (2019) moves from internal peace toward social relations (inner-to-outer), whereas Bugis-Makassar values move from relational practice toward the formation of internal character (relational-to-inner). This two-way meeting explains why the self-understanding stage is framed by *Sipakatau*: respecting oneself also means respecting others, so emotional awareness does not remain a purely individual matter. This interpretation is conceptual and needs to be tested with qualitative data on how participants make sense of this framing.

The four communication pathways in Table 3 offer an explanation of why interventions based on local culture may succeed, namely that the contextual relevance of values to participants' identity facilitates internalization (Zakina et al., 2026). This explanation is consistent with reports that guidance based on local wisdom can increase empathy and peace competence in other cultural contexts, namely Kalindaqdaq Pepaturu (Junaid et al., 2025) and Nosarara Nosabatutu (Ratu et al., 2019). However, as far as the reviewed sources show, no study has compared a culturally grounded version with a culture-free version of the same procedure, so the internalization mechanism remains a hypothesis.

The discussion of effectiveness needs to distinguish two claims that are often conflated. The first claim, that structured empathy training can produce change, has relatively broader support, including a meta-analysis showing a moderate effect (Paulus & Meinken, 2022) and intervention studies on forgiveness and bullying behavior (Biahimo et al., 2025; Reza et al., 2020). The second claim, that integrating Bugis-Makassar values makes its own contribution, is supported by only one quasi-experimental study with 18 participants, that is, nine per group (Zakina et al., 2026). That study compared the treatment with a control, not a culturally grounded version with a culture-free version, so it cannot prove the effectiveness of the cultural component independently. In addition, the small sample, three-week duration, single site, and self-report data limit confidence in the magnitude and applicability of its results. Other studies in the corpus also have limitations: studies in health settings cannot be generalized directly to schools (Paulus & Meinken, 2022); studies of the

3S values that are exploratory or conceptual have not tested effects (Halima et al., 2021; Herlin et al., 2020); and studies based on the wisdom of other cultures measure different outcomes and contexts (Junaid et al., 2025; Ratu et al., 2019). The conclusions of this review are therefore limited to the status of preliminary evidence and working hypotheses.

The fourth pathway, counselor modeling, demands competence that is often overlooked. Aswar et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of understanding Bugis cultural values to optimize counseling services based on local culture, which means counselors need cultural literacy before facilitating the exercises. Buchori et al. (2023) reported that guidance and counseling teachers' empathy and intrapersonal peacefulness are related to their interpersonal communication skills. This finding suggests that the quality of value communication in group sessions is also influenced by the counselor's own condition, but the relationship is correlational and has not been tested in the context of empathy training.

In multicultural counseling, this integration can be read as an example of culturally responsive counseling: a technique originating from a universal psychological tradition is anchored in values already alive in clients' everyday lives (Zakina et al., 2026). Setiadi et al. (2017) emphasize that building a culture of peace in educational settings requires a deliberately designed pedagogical model rather than simply happening on its own. Designing the integration of values into Empathy Training can be seen as one form of such pedagogical design in the counseling domain.

Two cautions should be noted. First, the 3S values must not be treated as a single characteristic of all students. Counseling groups may include participants from diverse cultural backgrounds, so local values should be used as a bridge of meaning, not as an identity requirement. Second, the Bugis and Makassar traditions themselves have terminological variations (Buchori & Fakhri, 2018), so the terms used need to be adjusted to participants' backgrounds. Studies from other cultures (Junaid et al., 2025; Ratu et al., 2019) show that the idea of anchoring empathy training and peace education in local wisdom has also been developed in different cultural contexts.

The novelty of this review lies in a critical synthesis that yields a mapping of communication pathways between technique and values and a theoretical justification for the relationship of the 3S values to empathy components, not in the four-stage framework or the statistical data already published by Zakina et al. (2026). This review also confirms that no study in the reviewed corpus has separated the contribution of cultural integration. The design of Zakina et al. (2026) compared an experimental group with a control group, not with a version of Empathy Training without cultural content. Consequently, the increase in scores cannot be attributed specifically to the cultural content; it may stem from the technique components themselves or from group counseling dynamics. The small sample (n = 18), short duration, single site, and self-report data further limit generalization. The meta-analytic finding that training content and methods have not been shown to explain effect size (Paulus & Meinken, 2022) reinforces the need for such comparative tests.

The research agenda that follows from this discussion includes: (1) a three-group design comparing standard Empathy Training, 3S value-based Empathy Training, and a control; (2) measurement of implementation fidelity to the four communication pathways; (3) qualitative data on how participants make sense of the values; and (4) a larger sample, more than one site, and follow-up of at least six months, as suggested by Zakina et al. (2026).

Theoretically, the four-pathway communication framework can redirect culturally based counseling research from the question of which values are used to the question of how those values

are delivered, with the caveat that this framework still needs to be tested. Practically, this review proposes five steps for guidance and counseling teachers: (a) formulate the goal of each training stage in value language familiar to participants; (b) derive group rules from the values, for example not mocking and giving feedback politely; (c) choose methods that carry values, such as sharing circles, storytelling, and simulations; (d) prepare oneself as a role model of the values; and (e) use the termination stage to ask participants to reflect on the meaning of the values for them. These proposals are working hypotheses that have not been tested and should be read as such.

This review has five limitations. First, the narrative design does not guarantee a complete search and is vulnerable to selection bias. Second, the corpus was compiled in a single research-preparation process and is largely in Indonesian, so other literature may not be covered. Third, some sources come from different settings, for example health care, and were used only as general evidence. Fourth, the empirical data on integrating technique and values come from the authors' own research and therefore need to be replicated by other researchers. Fifth, the assessment of evidence strength is qualitative without a formal risk-of-bias assessment, so it may be affected by the authors' subjectivity.

5. Conclusion

Integrating Empathy Training with the values of *Sipakatau*, *Sipakainge'*, and *Sipakalebbi* is best understood as a process of communicating meaning. The three values correspond conceptually to the components of empathy and the indicators of a peaceful personality and enter the technique through four pathways: meaning framing, value-carrying methods, group interaction rules, and counselor modeling. These four pathways operate across the four training stages within a group counseling framework. The evidence of effectiveness is still preliminary and indicative, because it comes from a small-scale study and has not separated the contribution of culture from that of the technique; this review does not conclude that cultural integration increases the effectiveness of empathy training. Future research should test a three-group design with a larger sample, more than one site, and follow-up of at least six months, and should examine how participants make sense of the values. For practice, counselors need to equip themselves with cultural literacy so that local values function as a bridge of meaning in multicultural counseling, not as an added label.

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