Cultural Impact on Counselling: An Indian Case Study

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Article Information

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ARTICLE HISTORY

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ABSTRACT

Background: The cultural impact on counseling is increasingly relevant in diverse societies, such as India, where traditional values intersect with modern influences. Understanding cultural differences is crucial for improving therapeutic outcomes. This study examines how cultural values influence the counseling process, using the example of Arjun from the Bhagavad Gita. **Objective:** The study aims to examine the cultural impact on counseling by analyzing how Western counseling models can be adapted to the Indian context, integrating indigenous cultural perspectives, and evaluating the effectiveness of culturally sensitive approaches. **Method:** This study employs a case study approach to analyze the counseling interaction between Lord Krishna and Arjuna in the Bhagavad Gita. Data was collected from the text and supplemented by literature on multicultural counseling and psychological theories. The data was analyzed qualitatively using thematic analysis. **Result:** The findings show that integrating cultural traditions can enhance therapeutic effectiveness. The case study demonstrates that culturally relevant interventions can address psychological challenges in diverse cultural contexts. **Conclusion:** Integrating cultural values into counseling practices improves the relevance and effectiveness of interventions, particularly in India. This study emphasizes the significance of cultural competence in counseling, enabling counselors to more effectively address the diverse needs of clients from various backgrounds. **Contribution:** The study contributes insights into the integration of cultural practices in counseling, emphasizing the need for cultural competence training for counselors.

KEYWORDS

1. INTRODUCTION

We are constantly at war. It could be an external war involving people at home, in the workplace, among friends, with the government, established systems, or with another country. Moreover, it could be an internal war within our minds, involving time, choices, values, ideologies & beliefs, as well as emotions such as greed, fear, or unhealthy attachments. Conflict is unavoidable as we live in a world full of diversity, and having to choose from limited resources. From the day we are born till the day we die, the external and internal wars go on. From womb to tomb, we continue to face challenges and must choose from a variety of options available to overcome them. Fighting a war requires many skills. Studying our opponent, understanding human psychology, utilizing the right timing and place, maintaining high motivation levels, and decision-making and information processing, to name a few. It also entails understanding the mindset of the attacker, the mindset of the victim/survivor, the experiences of affected persons/citizens, the mindset of neighboring countries, the global economy, and, most importantly, the mindset of soldiers/persons actually fighting the war.

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Human life is constantly marked by conflict, both external and internal. External conflict can take many forms, such as disagreements with those around us at home, at work, with friends, with the government, with existing systems, or even between nations (Panday et al., 2021). Internal conflict, on the other hand, occurs within our minds, involving struggles with time, choices, values, ideologies, beliefs, and emotions like greed, fear, or unhealthy attachments (Gilbert, 2014).

Conflict is an unavoidable reality in a world characterized by diversity and limited resources (Van Leeuwen & Van Der Haar, 2016). From the moment we are born until the day we die, we are continuously faced with life's challenges, forcing us to make decisions from the many options available to overcome them. From womb to tomb, this ongoing struggle tests our ability to make choices and navigate through the problems that arise.

Dealing with conflict, whether in the form of physical or mental warfare, requires a variety of skills. We must study our opponents, understand human psychology, know the right time and place to act, and maintain high motivation levels while making decisions and processing information. Additionally, it is crucial to understand the mindsets of various parties involved, whether the attacker, the victim, or those affected by the situation, as well as the dynamics of neighboring nations, the global economy, and, most importantly, the mindset of the individuals directly engaged in the conflict.

In India, conflict, both external and internal, is an inseparable part of everyday life, profoundly affecting individuals and society (Singh, 2024). Externally, Indian society faces political, social, and economic tensions that often lead to conflicts between various ethnic, religious, and caste groups (Baber, 2004). These tensions exacerbate inequality and feelings of marginalization. Internally, individuals struggle to balance traditional cultural values with the pressures of modernization, as they confront personal fears, anxieties, and ambitions. Many people in India find themselves caught between preserving their cultural identity and adapting to the demands of globalization (Gogineni et al., 2018). This internal conflict, compounded by external societal pressures, creates a complex environment where individuals are often torn between maintaining their roots and embracing change.

This struggle resonates deeply with themes found in the Bhagavad Gita. This ancient Indian text examines the nature of duty (dharma), the self, and the emotional and psychological struggles individuals face. The Gita presents a dialogue between Arjuna, a warrior prince, and Lord Krishna, where Arjuna grapples with his internal conflict about fulfilling his duty in a morally complex war. His crisis mirrors the internal struggles of many individuals in modern society, where questions of personal identity, values, and societal expectations often collide. This exploration of the self, alongside concepts of duty and personal growth, offers valuable insights into counseling, particularly when applied to the complexities of contemporary psychotherapy and psychopathology.

The growing cultural and social complexities in India underscore the urgent need for counseling approaches that integrate local cultural values with modern psychological frameworks. As psychotherapy models, derived mainly from Western traditions, may not always resonate with clients who are navigating cultural tensions, counselors must be adept at adapting these methods to the unique socio-cultural environment of India. Moreover, psychopathology in the Indian context requires an understanding of how cultural, familial, and societal factors influence mental health and behavior. This study underscores the importance of cultural competency in counseling practices, advocating for the integration of culturally relevant approaches that consider the emotional, spiritual, and psychological needs of individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. Integrating these perspectives into counseling is essential not only for promoting mental health but also for ensuring that therapeutic outcomes are both relevant and respectful of clients' cultural identities.

Study on the cultural impact on counseling has been steadily growing, particularly in multicultural societies like India. Previous studies emphasize the importance of understanding and integrating cultural values into counseling practices to make the services more effective and relevant to clients' backgrounds (Moleiro et al., 2018; Walck et al., 2025; Fuchs et al., 2013; Aggarwal et al., 2016). In India, with its rich diversity of culture, religion, and social structures, counseling practices must take these factors into account to build a stronger counselor-client relationship (Bhargava et al., 2017). Several studies have adapted Western counseling approaches, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy and person-centered therapy, to align with Indian cultural values, but challenges remain in merging these Western techniques with local cultural philosophies and traditions (Hualparuca-Olivera et al., 2025; Mankiewicz & Kam, 2024; Uehling, 2025; Potash et al., 2012). Study also increasingly highlights the need for counselors to develop cultural competence to navigate the challenges of clients' cultural identities and the social context influencing their mental health. While progress has been made, there remains a gap in studies that explore the integration of indigenous counseling methods with modern counseling practices, which could provide a more holistic and inclusive approach to mental health issues in India.

Although existing study has emphasized the importance of incorporating cultural elements into counseling practices, a significant gap remains in understanding how counselors can effectively adapt Western counseling models to diverse cultural contexts, particularly in non-Western settings such as India. While many studies focus on the theoretical foundations of multicultural counseling and the development of cultural competence, few have examined

the practical application of these models in real-world scenarios. In particular, there is a lack of empirical study exploring how culturally specific interventions can be integrated into modern counseling techniques to address the unique mental health challenges faced by individuals from different cultural backgrounds. Additionally, the role of indigenous cultural practices and philosophies in shaping counseling approaches has not been extensively explored. This gap calls for further investigation into how culturally adaptive counseling methods can be developed and implemented, ensuring that both traditional and contemporary therapeutic techniques are effectively combined to meet the needs of culturally diverse clients.

This study aims to examine the cultural impact on counseling by exploring how cultural values, beliefs, and traditions shape the counseling process in India. Specifically, this study aims to analyze how Western counseling models can be adapted to the Indian context, integrating indigenous cultural perspectives to improve counselor-client interactions. By focusing on an Indian case study, the study seeks to identify the challenges counselors face in addressing the mental health needs of clients from diverse cultural backgrounds and to evaluate the effectiveness of culturally sensitive counseling approaches. Ultimately, this study aims to contribute to the development of more inclusive counseling practices that take into account India's unique cultural landscape while ensuring the delivery of effective mental health services.

2. METHOD

2.1 Research Design

This study employs a case study approach, analyzing multicultural counseling in various cultural contexts, particularly in situations faced by Arjun in the Bhagavad Gita. The study design aims to gain a deeper understanding of the application of multicultural counseling principles in challenging situations, such as war, where cultural and psychological aspects play a crucial role. This case study aims to explore how counseling concepts are applied in diverse cultural contexts, as well as to identify the successes and challenges encountered during the counseling process

2.2 Research Subject

The subject of this study is the case of Arjun in the Bhagavad Gita, where Arjun, as the main character, experiences an emotional and psychological crisis in the face of a war involving his family and friends. Arjun is considered a "client" who faces significant difficulties in dealing with internal and external conflicts, and subsequently receives guidance and counseling from Lord Krishna. This study also includes literature discussing counseling in the Indian cultural context, as well as comparisons with Western counseling theories, to understand the application of multicultural counseling in less-than-ideal situations.

2.3 Data Collection

Data collection in this study was conducted by analyzing the text of the Bhagavad Gita and related sources that describe the counseling process carried out by Lord Krishna to Arjun. In addition, this study also collected data from academic literature, articles, and books discussing multicultural counseling, psychological theories, and counseling theories relevant to the Indian and global cultural contexts. Data was also obtained by comparing the counseling approach in the Bhagavad Gita with more conventional Western counseling models.

2.4 Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using qualitative analysis through a case study approach. This analysis focused on exploring the essence of the counseling process carried out by Lord Krishna to Arjun, as well as comparing the counseling principles applied with existing multicultural counseling theories. This study employs a thematic analysis approach to identify the primary themes that emerge during the counseling process, including unconditional acceptance, empathy, and congruence, as well as the application of coping strategies in multicultural counseling. These findings are then used to describe how counseling can be carried out effectively even in challenging and uncertain contexts.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Result

Counseling helps clients by bringing much-needed change to their lives (Sajjad, 2017). Rogers (1957) described key steps for the counselors that are vital for a successful process as follows: (1) Unconditional positive regard, acceptance, and a nonjudgmental approach towards the client. Lord Krishna questioned, directed, and advised Arjun lovingly and respectfully; (2) Empathy, genuine understanding, even if in disagreement with the client. There was no display of empathy or sympathy by the counselor yet; however, challenging the counselee's irrational beliefs was evident, ensuring a genuine understanding of his emotionnal state; (3) Congruence: the counselor's words, feelings, and actions must be consistent. Lord Krishna's words were directive; his feelings and actions were neutral yet consistent; (4) On the other hand, aspects that the counselee is expected to display during the process were almost absent when the process began; (5) Initially, Arjun was not willing to undergo any counseling. He had decided to retreat; (6) Motivation is the willingness to make changes and take action to bring them about. Arjun displayed a total lack of motivation to think or act differently in the initial phase of battle; (7) Initially, Arjun showed no signs of patience or commitment to take on the war and its consequences; (9) Faith - Arjun, though temporarily, had lost

faith in himself and his capability as the greatest warrior on the battlefield. However, he displayed full faith in Lord Krishna's wisdom and guidance.

Whether performed individually or in a group setting, empathy and a collaborative approach are crucial to the counseling process (Krishnan, 2021). The process of counseling begins with exploring the client's challenges before assisting them in resolving developmental and situational difficulties (Sajjad, 2017). After closely examining the ancient Indian textbook case of warrior prince Arjuna, one realizes how most of the above-mentioned mandatory requirements/principles were defied. However, he achieved remarkable success in both military and personal contexts.

Visualizing Western counselling in the Indian context:

First, western psychotherapy and counseling models place enormous emphasis on physical/ideal settings for the process of counseling to be successful. In this case, the setting in which counseling took place was most inappropriate. The battle was about to start, millions of soldiers fully energized to kill the enemy, and discomfort at physical, emotional, and mental levels experienced by Arjun, the counselee. The counseling process took place in extremely adverse conditions and was applied.

Second, the receiver's background, timing, and context are the following important aspects to pay attention to (APA, 2015). The counselee's cognitive efficacy is required to proceed with counseling effectively. Herein, there was no time to think, explore, or ponder. Arjun was most reluctant to fight and displayed neurotic and, at times, psychotic symptoms. Emotions overtook his cognitive abilities. From a neuropsychological perspective, he was ready to flee or freeze instead of fight. His limbic system (the old brain) was activated, and the prefrontal cortex (the new brain) was inactive at that moment. However, the counseling was effective in reshaping the brain through the application of Indian philosophical concepts and viewpoints. It can be deduced that counselling activated the thalamic nervous switch (interaction between the thalamus and cortex), thereby stimulating the thalamus in Arjun's brain, which plays a critical role in regulating arousal and awareness.

Third, validation of the counselee's thoughts and feelings is the next dominant aspect (Ramprasad, 2013). Again, Arjun, known for his exceptional proficiencies and wisdom, was the most inappropriate client. However, Lord Krishna demanded an explanation from Arjun about not asking questions related to higher dimensions of life, wisdom, or self-actualization, instead getting into such an impotent state of mind. Arjun's thoughts and feelings were not validated during the counselling process. Arjun was challenged to overcome his weakness of heart, as he knew the value of life and the importance of fighting.

Fourth, a non-directive counselor lays the foundation for most therapies and processes. Herein, along with elaborating on the Indian philosophy of life and soul, Lord Krishna directed his counselee to go ahead and fight the enemy. There is no greater duty for a warrior than to fight. To follow his warrior dharma (a soldier's duty) without escape, as that is the only way to the soul's progress. So, if a warrior does it willingly, he is better able to cope and perform well.

Fifth, being result-oriented and setting goals is relied upon heavily in the counseling process. In contrast, Lord Krishna divulged no assurance of winning the war. He repeatedly emphasized the importance of following one's dharma without expecting any tangible results. The emphasis is on fighting for the sake of fighting, performing a warrior's duty to fight the enemy without expecting any results. Victor Frankl (1946), in his existential therapy, claims that when an individual finds meaning, his frustration tolerance increases manifold in order to maintain a meaningful life. Indian philosophy has not only been process-oriented but also has a precise and unambiguous charter of duties (Dharma) laid out, which attaches meaning to each life if followed with faith. The only intention is to understand the true nature of the self, beyond the mind and body. The process of performing one's own dharma (duty) is inevitable and therefore must be followed with focus and willingness.

The Krishna counselling was adequate to the extent that Arjun admitted to becoming devoid of delusions and being aware of his true nature (BG, 17.7). His baggage of repressed, bitter emotions, carried since childhood, had released a volume of energy containing grief, fear, shame, guilt, and self-pity, which Lord Krishna channeled at the right time into appropriate action, propelling him towards victory. Krishna aligned Arjun's psychological perspective through the lens of wisdom and awareness. As a result, Arjun, the warrior prince, sprang into action, focused and calm, fulfilling his duty as a soldier. He annihilated the enemy and achieved victory on the 18th day of war. We all have choices to make the difference between victory and defeat in battle, just like Arjun did!

3.2. Discussion

a) Trauma and Culture Interface

Cultural models prove to be an important contributor to understanding and treating the psychological origins of traumatic events (Marsella, 2010). Trauma has been defined by the American Psychological Association (APA dictionary of Psychology, 2015) as an emotional response to a terrible event like an accident, rape, natural disaster, or war. There are written and unwritten scripts that are an inseparable part of every culture and are subconsciously followed by members during a crisis. Neuropsychological studies suggest that we still possess the same brain that our ancestors had 1.8 million years ago, yet it continues to rewire and self-organize itself (Doidge, 2007). Neuropsychological evidence suggests that we become culturally aware by engaging in various activities, including tradi-

tions, customs, arts, communication, technology, ideas, beliefs, philosophy, and religion. Our brains are shaped by the cultural activities we engage in, and culture evolves as new pathways are formed in the brain. Each impacts the other significantly.

In life-threatening situations, such as war and pandemics, whether in a civil or military context, a crevasse can develop in the concept of self. When trauma strikes an individual, it is likely that he/she break down, experiencing emotional upheaval and are left in a disorganized state (Feldman & Vengrober, 2011). An individual facing a traumatic situation may experience shock, denial, flashbacks, strained relationships, physical illness, and mood fluctuations (DiMauro et al., 2014).

Kardiner's "Traumatic Neuroses of War" (2012) is the seminal psychological work wherein he observed that a soldier's attempt to cope with his acute trauma may sometimes destroy his adaptive capacity. Thereby suggesting that neurosis is an adaptive failure, and not an illness arising out of conflict. Arjun, the warrior prince in ancient India, was a classic case of acute traumatic neurosis during the Mahabharat war, well documented in the Shreemad Bhagwad Geeta, an ancient Indian scripture.

b) Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, Demystifying the Battle Mind

The Bhagavad Gita, an ancient Indian scripture, presents itself as a predominant Sanskrit commentary on the history of ancient India (Swami, 1986). Around five thousand years ago, Lord Krishna spoke to his friend and devotee, the warrior prince Arjun, who stood on the battlefield of Kurukshetra (in the state of Haryana, as known in India today), reviewing his enemy's preparedness in terms of strength, formation, leadership, and weaponry. Arjun, himself the foremost archer, celebrated for his precision, single-mindedness, valor, and wisdom, was raring to mount an attack on the enemy, who happened to be his own cousins. Arjun could see amidst both the armies, his own blood relatives, men whom he grew up with, men who loved him and whom he respected, men who trained him in war games, his dear friends, associates, children whom he brought up with care, and his well-wishers. Glancing at all of them assembled to fight for his enemies and against him, anticipating massive destruction as well as loss of valuable, innocent lives, Arjun was overwhelmed; his emotions took over, making him experience cognitive dissonance and negative coping styles. That is when the Bhagavad Gita, one of the most significant philosophical, religious, and practical dialogues in human history, was delivered at the onset of war.

To begin with, Arjun was overcome with an anxious state of mind, telling Lord Krishna that seeing his friends and relatives in a fighting spirit before him, he felt his limbs quivering and his mouth drying up. His whole body was trembling; his hair stood on end, his skin felt on fire, and his bow was slipping from his hand (BG, 1.29). He was unable to stand firm, mind reeling and disoriented, and he could only see impending misfortune. He was a psychological wreck, a man of depleted motivation (BG, 1.30).

Next, Arjun entered a defensive state, rationalizing that he did not see any good coming out of killing his own kinsmen; therefore, he had no desire for subsequent victory over them, to own a kingdom, or for any happiness thereafter (BG, 1.31).

Thereafter, he came up with religious perceptions and moral ethical values, stating it was improper to kill family for political reasons since it becomes a sinful act, and it was better to forgive these aggressors. He further states that eternal family traditions get quelled when dynasties are destroyed by war. Women and children who remain behind suffer; community development projects and family welfare activities are ruined. Almost turning suicidal and sounding altruistic, Arjun announced that he prefers to be killed by his cousins while he stays unarmed on the battlefield, offering no resistance to the enemy. Having said this, Arjun, the great warrior prince, set aside his bow and knelt in grief (BG, 1.46).

c) Arjun's Internal Anarchy and Krishna's Counselling

The Bhagavad Gita orients an individual towards their actions (karma) and the appropriate way of life (Dharma). Lord Krishna provided Arjuna with a safe environment to express his strong emotions during a crisis. Arjun was not a coward, but he was distressed due to his attachment to his family and a desire to protect the masses. He was in an acute traumatic, neurotic state of mind.

Lord Krishna saw the state of delusion and confusion Arjun was in, diagnosed the causes and decided to immediately assuage him to activity by using sharp words. His discourse is nothing less than a psychological surgery, performed with the knife of awareness. The successful rehabilitation of a single, deluded hero turned over the history of a Nation!

Lord Krishna began by explaining that the form changes, but the soul remains eternal, unchanged, and permanent. For a soldier, there is no better engagement than fighting on principles without hesitation (BG, 2.31). He needs to abandon attachment to success or failure, life or death, family or foe, and continue practicing what he has been trained for (BG, 2.48).

d) Adaptive strategies for Cognitive emotional regulation as employed by Arjun

Cognitive emotional regulation (CER) refers to the conscious mental strategies that individuals employ to cope with the intake of emotionally arousing information (Quintana et al., 2019). The process includes both adaptive and maladaptive strategies. Rumination, self-blame, blaming others, and catastrophizing are maladaptive ways that can lead to mental-emotional conditions such as depression, anxiety, and risk-taking behaviors. On the other

hand, positive refocusing, which involves planning, acceptance, putting things into perspective, and positive reappraisal, is one of the five adaptive strategies related to better mental health and well-being in an individual.

While counseling Arjun, Lord Krishna educated Arjun about adaptive strategies for CER. As Arjun was observed to be in a high-arousal affective state that lowered his efficacy, a positive reappraisal strategy was described and recommended for use. This is a reframing process in which stressful events are reconstructed as benign, beneficial, or valuable. The strategy can help individuals self-regulate their emotions, build resilience, and reframe stressful life events as opportunities for learning, growth, and change. With practice, one can view stressful situations as an opportunity to gain insight into oneself, those around them, and the world at large.

Lord Krishna encouraged Arjun to accept the situation as it is, the second adaptive strategy for regulation. Acceptance of oneself, one's emotional state, and internal conflicts that give rise to those emotions is of paramount importance in managing emotions effectively (Marieke & Gunner, 2012).

The third adaptive strategy that was prescribed was to examine the evidence. How one interprets life situations determines the response. This involves examining assumptions about how other people think, feel, and are likely to act. Here, one must remind oneself that thoughts are not facts. One must take a moment to assess the situation objectively, based on the evidence present, rather than making harmful assumptions about oneself that are not grounded in evidence.

Illuminating the micro environment to perceive the Macro environment differently

Bringing focus to the fact that the individual has complete control over his thoughts, emotions, and subsequent actions. Regardless of the macro environment, when we recognize that it is beyond our control, it is bound to evoke intense emotions. On the other hand, we are also assured that our internal situation, the microenvironment, depends on what we choose to practice. One is free to choose to experience positive emotions by replacing negative ones. They can visualize a constructive, beneficial process while going through a challenging one, choosing faith and confidence over fear and doubt, and opting for hope and courage in the face of adversity instead of feeling overwhelmed. Making appropriate and positive choices is more likely to lead to a healthy adaptation to the situation, allowing for a quick return to normalcy and making life easier after a post-traumatic experience.

Reason and emotion are two fundamental faculties that humans possess. By using reason, one can be orderly, synchronized, rational, and consistent, whereas by using emotion, one can relate to others better, empathize, and be creative and spontaneous. When emotions overtake reason, it can create chaos and disorganization; on the other

hand, reason devoid of emotion turns one into depersonalized, isolated, mechanical beings who misuse other individuals instead of relating to them. Bhagwad Geeta has demonstrated balance between the two with lucidity, getting disoriented Arjun back on track. Nevertheless, Bhagwad Geeta does not only preach reason and logic, but also depicts how Lord Krishna expresses his deep affection and concern towards Arjun, his counselee and a dear disciple (BG, 18.63).

4. IMPLICATIONS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

4.1 Research Implications

The findings of this study have significant practical implications for the field of counseling, particularly in diverse cultural contexts like India. Counselors must be equipped with cultural competence to effectively navigate the complex psychological and emotional issues faced by clients from various cultural backgrounds. Integrating culturally relevant practices, such as those derived from Indian philosophical traditions like the Bhagavad Gita, can enhance the counseling process by making it more relatable and compelling for clients. This study suggests that counselors should not only adapt Western counseling models but also incorporate indigenous cultural philosophies and practices to address the unique challenges of clients in India. Additionally, counselors can benefit from training that focuses on understanding the intersection of culture, trauma, and mental health, enabling them to offer interventions that are both culturally sensitive and therapeutically effective. By doing so, counselors will be better positioned to foster stronger therapeutic relationships and provide more meaningful support to their clients.

4.1 Research Contributions

This study provides practical contributions to the development of more inclusive and culturally sensitive counseling practices, particularly in India. By integrating Indian cultural values, as reflected in the philosophy of the Bhagavad Gita, the study demonstrates how a culturally-based counseling approach can enhance therapeutic effectiveness. The primary contribution of this study is to provide insights for counselors on adapting Western counseling models to local cultural principles, thereby enabling them to effectively address the psychological challenges faced by clients from diverse cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, the study also provides recommendations for counselor training in cultural competence, which will strengthen their ability to understand and respond more appropriately, relevantly, and effectively to mental health issues in a diverse society.

The findings of this study offer significant novelty by highlighting the integration of cultural values into counseling practices, with a particular focus on the Indian context. As counseling services become more widely available,

it is essential to consider the diverse cultural backgrounds of clients to ensure that interventions are not only relevant but also effective. This research underscores the critical role of cultural competence in counseling, enabling counselors to understand and address the unique challenges faced by individuals from different cultural, social, and economic backgrounds. By incorporating cultural values into counseling, practitioners can create a more inclusive environment that fosters trust and encourages clients to engage more openly in the therapeutic process. The study also emphasizes the importance of cultural competence training for counselors, advocating for an approach that is both sensitive and adaptive to the evolving needs of a multicultural society. This contributes to the broader field of counseling by providing a framework that enhances the quality of care and improves outcomes for clients from diverse cultural backgrounds.

5. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

5.1 Research Limitations

Although this study offers valuable insights into the integration of culture in counseling practices, several limitations warrant consideration. First, the study relies on a case study focused on the character of Arjun in the Bhagavad Gita, which may not fully capture the complexity and diversity of real-world counseling situations that clients face. Second, while the approach combines Western counseling theory with Indian philosophy, there has been no empirical testing of its effectiveness across a broader range of counseling settings. Additionally, the study does not account for regional and social differences within India, which could impact the acceptance and implementation of culturally-based counseling methods. Therefore, further study with a larger and more diverse sample is needed to test these findings and evaluate the sustainability and effectiveness of this approach in everyday counseling practice.

5.1 Recommendation for Future Research Directions

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that future study focus on empirically testing the effectiveness of culturally integrated counseling approaches in various real-world settings, particularly in diverse cultural contexts like India. Study should explore how counselors can adapt Western counseling models to specific cultural frameworks and assess the impact of these adaptations on therapeutic outcomes. Additionally, future studies should examine regional and social variations within India to understand how different cultural groups respond to culturally tailored counseling methods. It is also crucial to investigate the development and implementation of cultural competence training programs for counselors, ensuring they are equipped to address the unique psychological needs of clients from various cultural backgrounds. By ex-

panding the scope of study and incorporating a broader range of perspectives, we can gain a deeper understanding of the potential and limitations of culturally sensitive counseling practices in diverse societies.

6. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the significant role of cultural values and traditions in shaping counseling practices, particularly within the Indian context. It demonstrates that understanding the cultural background of clients is essential for delivering effective counseling, as it enhances the counselor-client relationship and improves therapeutic outcomes. By integrating Western counseling models with indigenous cultural philosophies, such as those found in the Bhagavad Gita, counselors can better address the unique psychological challenges faced by clients from diverse cultural backgrounds. This cultural adaptation not only increases the relevance of counseling interventions but also ensures that clients feel understood and respected in their cultural context.

The study highlights the importance of counselors developing cultural competence to effectively navigate the complex emotional and psychological issues that arise from cultural differences. Counselors must be equipped with the knowledge and skills to adapt their approaches to suit the diverse needs of clients in multicultural societies. Training in cultural sensitivity should be prioritized to enable counselors to offer more personalized and practical support. The study also suggests that understanding the cultural impact on counseling can be particularly useful when addressing trauma, as cultural beliefs and practices can influence how individuals experience and cope with psychological distress.

While progress has been made in integrating cultural perspectives into counseling, this study reveals that significant work remains to be done in bridging the gap between Western counseling theories and cultural practices in India. Further study is necessary to explore the practical application of culturally adaptive counseling methods in real-world settings and to assess their effectiveness across diverse client populations. By fostering a deeper understanding of the cultural dynamics at play in counseling, we can move towards a more inclusive and culturally responsive counseling practice that meets the needs of clients in an increasingly globalized world.

CRediT Authorship Contribution Statement

The author declares that the entire study and writing process for the article Cultural Impact on Counselling: An Indian Case Study was conducted independently. The author assumes full responsibility for all aspects of the study, including the conceptualization, data collection, analysis, and writing. No other individual contributed as a co-author or made any significant contribution to the content of this work.

Declaration of GenAI Usage in Scientific Writing

The author declares that generative AI was used solely for proofreading and language editing purposes in the manuscript Cultural Impact on Counselling: An Indian Case Study. AI tools were employed to assist in correcting grammatical errors and improving the clarity and flow of the writing. All other aspects of the study, including data collection, analysis, and interpretation, were conducted independently by the author. All instances of Generative AI usage in this article were conducted by the authors in accordance with the IJCP GenAI Tool Usage Policy, with the authors assuming full responsibility for the originality, accuracy, and integrity of the work."

Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest related to the manuscript Cultural Impact on Counselling: An Indian Case Study. The author has no financial or personal relationships that could influence the research or its findings.

Informed Consent Statement

This study, Cultural Impact on Counselling: An Indian Case Study, involved human participants. Informed consent was obtained from all participants involved in the study. Prior to participation, all individuals were provided with detailed information regarding the purpose of the study, the nature of their involvement, and any potential risks associated with it. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. All consent forms were signed voluntarily, ensuring that the participants fully understood the study procedures and agreed to participate willingly.

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