

# COUNSELING VALUES IN THE TREASURY OF JAVANESE ETHICS

## (An observation towards the Javanese in implementing Javanese ethics education which is relevant to counseling values in life)

Vivi Ratnawati  
Universitas Nusantara PGRI Kediri  
Indonesia

**Abstract**—This article attempts to dissect as well as analyze the relationship between the Javanese ethics and counseling values which commonly referred to as Counseling Guidance. Javanese ethics have plenty of wisdom values, conception of life science and philosophies that are still relevant to the demands of time. The relevance of these concepts is associated with scientific treasures of education in this case counseling values applied to or complement each other with modern counseling science. All this aims for finding and offering the best concepts of counseling guidance science.

**Keyword-Counseling Values, Treasury, Javanese Ethics**

### I. INTRODUCTION

The phrase ‘Javanese ethics’ will drive our mind to a great book that we will impossibly have finished reading it in a short time. Besides having plenty of noble values containing the teachings of life, Javanese ethics functions as prevailing rules of wisdom and philosophy applied into daily life based on the Javanese self-wisdom.

Before further discussing the content of this article, we better elaborate the term ‘Java’ briefly. Java is a name of an island in Indonesia as well as the largest ethnic of the whole population. The island of Java has 1,100 km in length and ranges in width about 120 km, comparable 7% of the whole size of Indonesia. Java Island consists of large lowland with fertile volcanic soil although some areas tend to dry particularly in the Southern part of the island. This island also has many volcanoes and the tropical climate which causes average temperature of the lowland area runs about 26-27 Celsius degree.

The native language used in Java is Bahasa Jawa. Furthermore, the people of Java are actually the native inhabitants of the middle and Eastern part of the island who speak Bahasa Jawa. Most population is Moslems beside other beliefs and various ethnicities and cultures.

Based on many historical literatures, Java had quite long historical background. In the past, Java became the center of great empires such as Hindu-Buddhist Kingdom, Islamic sultanate, and colonial rule of the Dutch East Indies, as well as became the center of the independence movement of Indonesia.

Java Island has great influence to economic, political and social aspect in Indonesia. The great Hindu-Buddhist kingdom such as Majapahit had power overspread the region of South-East Asia. Furthermore, there still existed the other great kingdoms such as Singhasari, Kadiri, Panjalu, Kanjuruhan as well as Islamic sultanate like Demak and Mataram which left their heritage in the form of Keraton Jogjakarta, Keraton Solo and many other historical places. Finally, the existence of temples, inscriptions and ancient books or objects is another evidence of the glory of Java in the past.

The historical evidence of the great Java may draw a picture of great civilization of life it possessed. The existence of great kingdoms in the past becomes the conclusive evidence of this civilization. Each kingdom had its own rule as well as life system. The term *negoro mawa tata desa mawa cara* is a popular proverb among the Javanese. The proverb means that each nation or kingdom must have its own government and rule to manage its people. This kind of governance must also apply social rule such as prevailing norm rules and customs that must be run by its community.

As we have discussed earlier, ethics is defined as a set of rule of value functions as guideline from generation to generation. This ethics should be applied in order to live in harmony either in the national, community, or family context. The Javanese ethics is a Javanese value system contains the teachings of life outwardly as well as inwardly. The Javanese are known to have high spiritual depth. They always put forward their inner feeling to understand life. In the Javanese belief, human psychic has very close relation with divine value sources from God. This inner value is called human conscience value. It means that there is an aura of truth emerges from human heart. As a result the Javanese generally have lifestyle as well as point of view which put forward ‘roso’ or feeling. Their belief about rules as guidelines of life comes from their feeling in which further is manifested in the form of concepts of life. These concepts afterward become the guideline or rule of life in order to promote compatible life system.

The topic of this article discusses the analysis of Javanese ethics which are relevant to counseling values. As we have discussed earlier, Javanese ethics contains an excessive coverage about rules of life. It

encompasses ethics of state, ethics of society and family ethics including the value of education. As one example, Java treasures have a very popular proverb *ing ngarso sung tuladha* which means leaders, teachers, or parents should become good example for their subordinates, children and students. We can draw conclusion that the best teaching is to give good example. In education, teachers are leaders. Hence, they must give good example for their students. Further, the proverb *ing madya mangun karso* means that leaders or teachers place themselves in the middle of their subordinates or students. Here, leaders or teachers take part in activity, blend in and give spirit for the best achievement of their subordinates or students. The last proverb *tut wuri handayani* means leaders and teachers should take their position behind their subordinates and students to motivate, follow them for achieving their goals and success. Wikipedia, Indonesian encyclopedia states that one of counseling principles is *tut wuri handayani*. This principle is adopted from the noble values of Ki Hajar Dewantoro. The principle suggests that the entire service of guidance and counseling can promote a nurturing atmosphere, provide a sense of security, develops exemplary, stimulus and encouragement as well as wide opportunity for the counselees in order to develop their skill.

## II. JAVANESE ETHICS WISDOM AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THE COUNSELING VALUES

The previous section has explained that the Javanese ethics possesses civilization of noble value functions as a rule system order to manage life since the Javanese ethics is sourced from wisdom, creation, feeling and intention owned by the Javanese.[1], the word 'ethics' actually means moral philosophy. Hence, ethics can be defined as systematic science or reflection of arguments, norms as well as moral terms. Further, still according to Franz Magnis-Suseno, ethics broadly defined as the entire norms and assessments applied by the community to seek knowledge about how to behave as a reasonable human being. Thus, it is where they find the answer for the question of how I should behave, of what should I do to achieve the purpose of my life.

Before further discussing the main topic of this article, it is better to define the term counseling guidance. Many literatures discuss the definition of counseling guidance, yet all referring to the same meaning. The following part discusses these definitions in detail. [2] stated that guidance is assistance given to the individuals (learners) with the potential to be able to develop themselves in an optimal way of understanding yourself, understanding the environment, to overcome obstacles in order to determine future plans better. Similar concept was performed by [3], guidance is the process of providing relief by an expert to someone or some people, both children, teens, or adults; keep people who are guided to develop himself and his ability to harness the power of independent individuals and facilities that exist and can be developed based on the prevailing norms.

[4] argued that the definition of guidance is an aid or aid granted to an individual or group individuals to avoid or overcome the difficulties of

his life so that individuals can achieve prosperity in life. Another definition was performed by Chiscolm in McDaniel, in [4], guidance is held in order to help each individual to better recognize various information about himself.

Counseling is defined as personal relationship performed face to face meeting between the counselor and counselee in which the counselor provides learning situation by using his special abilities of counseling. In this relationship, the counselee is given assistance to be able to understand himself, understand his present condition and the probable future circumstances the counselee can create by using all his potential for the sake of personal and community well being. Further, the counselee can learn problem solving strategy and find the future needs [3].

[5] stated that counseling is a professional relationship between a trained counselor and a client. This relationship is usually individual or one at a time, although sometimes involving more than two people designed to help client of understanding and clarifying the view of the scope of his life that he is able to make meaningful choices for himself.

In the Ministerial Regulation of the Ministry of Education and Culture about Guidance and Counseling in Primary and Secondary Education No. 111 year of 2014 Article 1 Point 1 "Guidance and Counseling is a systematic, objective, logical, continuous and planned effort the counselor or guidance and counseling teacher provide to facilitate the development of the counselee/learners in order to achieve independence of life".

The conclusion of several statements above is that guidance and counseling is a process of assistance through counseling interview (face to face) performed by experts (counselor) to an individual who experiences problem or difficulties (counselee) which will lead to the settlement of problem or difficulties faced by the counselee as well as utilize his potential and facilities provided so as individual or group of individuals can understand himself in order to achieve development optimally and independently as well as making better future plans to gain prosperity.

The following section will discuss the wisdom values in the Javanese ethics teachings in the form of ethical wisdom, a philosophical analysis of the Javanese wisdom of life. Javanese ethics is a part of Javanese culture wisdom in which it sources from Eastern culture. Based on the counseling science theory, the model of counseling approach in this article belongs to cross cultural counseling. In the published literature [6], this model is included in culture centered model of counseling. According to [7], the Western culture pointed on individualism, cognitivism, freedom and materialism whereas the Eastern one focuses more on communalism, emotionalism, determinism and spiritualism. Hence, this model mainly focuses on culture. It means that the primary focus of this model comprises proper understanding of culture values that function as individual belief and pattern of behavior. This model of counseling primarily concerns the understanding and finding the root of culture in both counselor and counselee sides. Thus, they capable of evaluating themselves and ultimately understand their identity and unique point of view.

An anthropologist Niels Mulder in *Mistisme Jawa: Ideologi di Indonesia* explained that the Javanese ethics comprises 40% of whole population and 85% of it is Moslem who have different culture and tradition [8]. The Javanese tradition is adopted from the literature of *Sanskerta* which was written thousands of years ago such as *Pararaton*, *Negarakerlagama* and *Babad Tanah Jawi*. From this literature then appears the teaching of *Kejawen* which cannot be categorized as religion, but tend to become ethics and lifestyle inspired from the Javanese thoughts.

Meanwhile, [9] stated that human characteristics are similar with those in the Puppet show. Puppet is a moral view that becomes guidelines of the Javanese behavior. The Puppet show describes human characters which are reflected by the characters of Puppet.

The conclusion of the concept above is that the counseling value in the Javanese ethics which becomes a culture is the topic of discussion. This concept describes proper understanding of cultural values, in this case which has been believed and become individual pattern as a means of making self-evaluation.

The following part will discuss an analysis study of counseling values in Javanese ethics teachings both function as knowledge and approach. The analysis explains that Javanese ethics as a value teaching in Javanese culture gives huge contribution and may offer an alternative thought in the field of counseling guidance for achieving goals. According to P.M. Laksono in his article of [10], "the tradition of Javanese thoughts has been popular among various circles, very detail. The metaphysical thoughts in it will create certain inner power that the Javanese have critical thinking". The Javanese make effort to reach perfect life, overcome difficulties, offering solution, motivate themselves or others as well as educate by applying Javanese ethics model of teaching. [11] stated that the Javanese ancestors have subtle feeling and sharp mind because they prefer *lara lapa* and *tapa brata*. The Javanese are commonly thought *kasampurnaning urip* (perfection of life) which can be reached by performing *cegah dhahar lawan guling* (reduce eating and sleeping) in order to stay away from worldly pleasures. Sensitivity can be obtained by organizing feeling, attempt to be *weninging penggalih* (probity, peaceful of mind), an activity of attempting to achieve perfect personal quality.

Accordingly, the context of this article states that the Javanese ethics has correlation with counseling guidance. Hence, it is applicable in counseling practice or at least it is relevant to the purpose of counseling guidance, in order to liberate people from burden of life. Some Javanese ethics teachings from generation to generation which become the way of life are explained as follow:

1. *Ngelmu iku kelakone kanthi laku*, in order to get knowledge people must make great effort. The meaning of *laku* is an effort to learn that must be undertaken in order to get knowledge. Furthermore, in order to get knowledge people must not just rely on physical effort, yet the meaning of *laku* according to the Javanese is also spiritual effort. Another proverb in Javanese society is *yen kepengen rioyo kudu poso* (before celebrating Islamic fest, Moslem must do fasting

for a month) which means that before enjoying the result people must make efforts. Another proverb is *yen pengen wasis kudu sinau*, means that if someone is anxious to be clever he must learn or study. The term *ngunduh wohing pakarti* has the meaning of whatever people do will have consequences. When someone has desire to obtain good things he must do good things as well and vice versa. In the concept of *ngelmu iku kelakone kanthi laku* reflects a message that in order to get knowledge or something someone should attempt to explore his potential by learning knowledge and spiritual science as well as any life science. In connection with this article, the Javanese ethics base counseling apply the term 'in order to search knowledge someone must take the deed of *laku*'.

2. *Guyub rukun*, the Javanese recognize a life concept that a peaceful community is built from efforts to keep the harmony. *Guyub* means togetherness. The people of Java belief that everything which is done together or *guyub* will create harmony both in one by one relationship and among all members of community because this concept allows people to help each other. In Java, the work model of *guyub* is better recognized as *gotong royong*, such as *sambatan*, a form of cooperation in the community. For example, when someone is building a house, at the stage of finishing the roof, the surrounding neighbors cooperate and work together doing the job without being paid. This *sambatan* is still applied until now especially in rural areas of Java. Consequently, this kind of togetherness has implication for community harmony. Furthermore, the Javanese also recognize *rukun agawe santoso crah agawe bubrah* which means that concord will make us strong and disunited will make us destroyed.
3. *Sopo jujur bakal jejer*, means whoever brings honesty will gain honor, luck. *Jejer* means perform, whoever acts honestly will perform or win the trust of everyone.
4. *Tepo seliro*, means tolerance. It means that based on the Javanese the harmonious life must have mutual respect and taking care of each other.
5. *Sopo salah bakale saleh*, means that whoever makes mistakes, these mistakes then will put him in the low position. Another meaning is that someone must admit his mistake. The Javanese also recognize *becik ketitik ala ketara*, means that good things will show the result and bad things will be revealed. Accordingly, in order to obtain salvation life the Javanese should give priority to the truth and good acts.
6. *Urip iku sejatine urup*, means that in life it is better for us to give advantage for others. *Urip* means life, *urup* means light. The Javanese will obtain self-satisfaction as well as respect and honor if they are useful for others and the universe.
7. *Sabar iku subur*, means that patience is the best act in order to achieve the purpose of life, be patient in doing anything and always expecting *ridho* from God. This kind of patience will lead human being to the dignity of life.
8. *Sepi ing pamrih rame ing gawe*, means that in performing our job or duty we should not merely



- expect the rewards. We should prioritize more on hard working because it is a form of responsibility or trust. Thus, a responsibility should be done as well. More working less speaking, or never demanding before finish working is recognized as dignity.
9. *Andhap asor*, means that we should not be arrogant but we should *jumawa*. Human should have a humble nature. The Javanese also belief in the term *ojo adigang adigung adiguna*. *Ojo adigang* means that people must not be arrogant for the ability they have. *Ojo adigung* means that people must not be arrogant for their position, occupation, power, rank and social status. *Ojo adiguna* refers to prohibition against arrogance for the intelligence, intellectuality and skill people have.
  10. *Narimo ing pandum*. People should be willing to accept whatever they have or achieve because all is the gift of God. The entity of *narimo* is a form of our thankful to God because thankful will bring human into the peaceful of mind as well as life.
  11. *Yitno yuwono mati lena*. In life we should put forward conscience, whoever is careful will be safe and whoever careless will be ill-fated.
  12. *Mikul dhuwur mwndem jero*, means that a sprat must praise or keep up the honor of his parents. He must conceal his parent's mistakes or weakness, not promulgate them.
  13. *Urip kudu ngerti unggah ungguh*, we must respect each other in life, behave politely toward others, the young respect the adult, the adult appreciate the young, performing *asah asih asuh* to everyone.
  14. *Sopo nandur bakal ngunduh*, whoever is sowing seed he will harvest. The definition of this teaching is very wide. It is not only in term of materialism but also spiritualism. People who do good things will gain good things too. Otherwise, if they do bad things they will gain bad things too. As an example in the form of materialism; if a farmer plants rice in his field, and he manage his field well, he will obtain abundant crops.
  15. *Ojo dumeh*, although someone has power, ability, he/she should not be despotic or arrogant.
  16. *Ajining diri saka lathi, ajining raga saka busana*. *Ajining diri saka lathi* means that an individual is honored based on his/her remark. Any word he/she speaks shows his/her personal quality, good or bad side of him/her. When an individual speaks good things, politely, graceful, everyone will feel comfortable and content. *Ajining raga saka busana*, means that according to the Javanese, the body will get respect from others with polite and neat dressing style. In conclusion, in order to gain respect and honor from others an individual should maintain his/her speaks and dressing style.
  17. *Sing weweh bakale pikoleh*. The teaching means that if someone is willing to give he will gain. When people do good deeds they will gain goodness too.
  18. *Sopo ngalah luhur wekasane*, means an individual who are willing to be relented for the sake of virtue, he/she will gain nobility. The proceeding is a form of height of mind and noble heart.
  19. *Sopo taberi nastiti lan ngati ngati mesthi bakal dadi*. The proverb means that in undergoing this life people should always be diligent, hard working, and careful because all of them become the determinants of success of life. Such characters are applicable in various fields of life; to seek knowledge, to achieve goals and to pursue good things in life. This concept may also be applied in developing learners' character in order to promote discipline, hard working and prudent personal characters.
  20. *Gusti Allah mboten sare*, means that Allah or God never sleeps and always taking care of His creatures including human being. The Javanese are well recognized to have high spiritual intelligence. Hence, the concept of *Gusti mboten sare* becomes a belief which is ingrained in the Javanese, that anything happens is in the God's will. This spiritual understanding will ultimately bring peaceful of mind which influences one's mental health.
  21. *Eling lan waspada* is a teaching adopted from a Javanese great poet Ronggowarsito. The teaching stated that human being should always *eling* or attentive which can be defined as self-conscious, aware of the value of truth, aware that God has the highest power above all. The word *waspada* means that in order to be safe in this life one must put forward vigilance based on the value of truth and goodness.
  22. *Tirakat dan semedi*. The Javanese recognize the teaching of *tirakat* which means a spiritual step to forbear that is resist human passions. The Javanese also belief that people will pursue peaceful of mind or success in life by performing *tirakat*. They perform *tirakat* by fasting or doing activity *melek* which means keep awaken for certain length of time, or it can be done by reducing their time of sleeping. All this is done by the Javanese in order to train themselves, enact *tirakat* as *kawah candra dimuka* (a place to train human physic and psychic) to train themselves to be strong, healthy physically and mentally. Furthermore, the meaning of *semedi* or contemplation. The Javanese are performing *semedi* as a mean to remembrance, brood, moment of silence, resting the senses and more concentrate on purity of taste in the deepest heart, contemplate about life or as a mean to draw closer to God. The teaching of *semedi* has been delivered by many ancient Javanese poets, in which one that was delivered is the performing of puppet show. One example is a message in the story of Begawan Mintorogo, in which he attempted to clean his heart and mind by doing *semedi*, prayed to *Gustikang akarya jagad*, asked for the triumph of Pandawa in the battle of *Bharata Yudha Jayabinangun* [12].
  23. *The Javanese ethics teaching in the form of puppet show*. As we have known that puppet show is an original culture of Indonesia which has been recognized by the UNESCO. This is because the puppet show not only gives amusement but also teaches moral lesson. In each performance, the puppet show contains raw story or *pakem* comprises meaningful teaching of

philosophy of life. Until now the puppet performance is still popular among the Javanese. One of puppet stories that teach moral lesson is when the Kurawa alienate Pandawa. After 12 years of period of exile, Pandawa experienced ordea. The four brothers Nakula, Sadewa, Arjuna and Bima passed away after taking water in the lake named Telaga Bening. Yudhistira, the oldest went after them to the lake to seek his four brothers. He met a giant in the lake and the giant admitted that he has killed Yudhistira's brothers. The giant made promise to make Yudhistira's brothers live again if he could answer some questions. The questions are listed as follow:

1. *What kind of book one must learn in order to be sublime? Serat Sruti.*
2. *What must one do to get great degree? Contemplation.*
3. *What is the true character a teacher should have? Sublime.*
4. *What is the most important thing in farming? Water.*
5. *What is heavier than the earth? Mother's love.*
6. *What is higher than the sky? Father.*
7. *What is faster than the wind? Mind-set.*
8. *What is more than the number of grass? Human notions.*
9. *What is sleeping without closing eyes? Fish.*
10. *What is not moving after birth? Egg.*
11. *Who is the fellow of the sick? Doctor, healer.*
12. *Who is the companion of the dying? People who have mercy.*
13. *What is the deepest well? Charity.*
14. *What is recognized as human soul? Son.*
15. *What is considered as a couple of God's gift? Husband and wife.*
16. *What is considered as grand guard? Charity with sincerity.*
17. *What is the most precious thing? Knowledge.*
18. *What is the biggest luck? Patience.*
19. *What if obeyed will regret? Carnality.*
20. *What if left behind will make rich? Desire to be wasteful.*
21. *What if left behind will bring luck? Stingy, greedy.*
22. *What prevents the way to heaven? Wordliness.*
23. *Life is like a death if .... Destitute, foolish.*
24. *Something is considered as useless if .... Applied without knowledge.*
25. *What is called the true science? Knowledge from God.*
26. *What enemy is the most difficult to defeat? Carnality.*
27. *Who is the lover of God? Generous person.*
28. *What is the benefit of having many partners? Easier life.*
29. *What is the benefit of being religious scholars? Glory of the hereafter.*
30. *What is the benefit of understanding others' feeling? Being loved by others.*
31. *What makes people noble hereafter? Goodness.*

32. *Who is considered as rich? People who do not distinguish happy or sad, lost or profit [13].*

### III. CONCLUSION

The discussion above concludes that the Javanese have sharp ability and high civilization in organizing and undergoing their life based on the philosophies of life. This article explains how the Javanese provide counseling to their family, the environment and the community where they live in. It is clear that the Javanese more concern cautions to pursue safety and success of life. This can be seen from the Javanese ethics behavior which is full of wisdom and mature concepts.

This article also explains that we need much more time to study, analyze and dissect the Javanese ethics. There is still much wisdom of Javanese ethics which are relevant with counseling values. In the modern counseling theory, one of counseling guidance purposes is to promote personal development, the Javanese ethics values have actually plenty of teaching about how an individual can develop his/her potential by certain effort in order to achieve success based on the Javanese norms of wisdom.

Hopefully, this article may provide a common ground between the teaching of Javanese ethics and counseling guidance. The similarity of both lies in their goal. The purpose of counseling guidance as well as the Javanese ethics teaching is that individual or group of individuals, human person or community groups are able to understand themselves in order to promote optimal development, independence and capable to determine better future plans to pursue well being. Furthermore, the Javanese ethics as teaching of values has function as guidelines of life as well as counseling in which attempts to relief human being from the burden of life. Consequently, we can find the relevance between the Javanese ethics and counseling value in term of purpose, both attempt to repair human psychic. Hence, the Javanese ethics and counseling are two aspects which complement each other.

Finally, local wisdom among Indonesian people in this case ethics teachings of the Javanese ethnic are relevant with modern science of education particularly in relation to counseling guidance science. The Javanese ethics as an integrated part of the Javanese culture can be an alternative choice or reference material pattern of counseling guidance or counselors which concern the cross cultural counseling model.

Hopefully, this article can provide benefit and can be an inspiration to all.

### REFERENCES

- [1] S. dan F. Magnis, *Etika Jawa : Sebuah Analisa Falsafi tentang Kebijakan Hidup Jawa*. Jakarta: PT. Gramedia, 2003.
- [2] A. Ahmadi, *Psikologi Belajar*. Jakarta: PT. Rineka Cipta, 1991.
- [3] Prayitno dan Erman Amti, *Dasar-dasar Bimbingan dan Konseling*. Jakarta: Rieka Cipta, 2004.
- [4] B. Walgito, *Pengantar Psikologi Umum*. Jakarta: Penerbit Andi, 2004.
- [5] J. Insano, *Bimbingan dan Konseling*. Jakarta:

- Ciputat Press, 2004.
- [6] M. Supriatna, *Bimbingan dan Konseling Berbasis Kompetensi*. Jakarta: Rajawali Pers, 2014.
  - [7] P. Palmer, Stephen dan Laungani, *Counseling in a Multicultural Society*. London: Sage Publisher, 2008.
  - [8] N. Mulder, *Mistisisme Jawa: Ideologi di Indonesia*. Yogyakarta: LKiS Pelangi Aksara, 2001.
  - [9] B. Anderson, *Mitologi dan Toleransi Orang Jawa*. Yogyakarta: Jejak, 2008.
  - [10] *Jurnal Kebudayaan Jawa*. Yogyakarta: Fakultas Bahasa Seni UNY, 2007.
  - [11] K. Purwadi dan Toyoda, *Babad Tanah Jawi*. Yogyakarta: Gelombang Pasang, 2006.
  - [12] W. Susetya, *Dari Ilmu Hasta Brata Sampai Sastra Jendra Hayuningrat*. Yogyakarta: Kreasi Wacana, 2006.
  - [13] Purwadi, *Falsafah Militer Jawa*. Yogyakarta: Sadasiva.