FAMILY CULTURAL TRANSMISSION SHAPING DIGITAL COUNSELING IN EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

The development of technology-based counseling services has become an important part of modern educational and psychological practices, especially for reaching individuals and families who face limitations in accessing conventional services. However, the adoption and sustainability of digital counseling does not take place in a socially neutral space. This study aims to synthesize empirical evidence regarding the role of family cultural transmission in shaping the meaning, acceptance, and use of technology-based counseling services. The study uses a *Systematic Literature Review* (SLR) approach with reference to the PRISMA 2020 guidelines. The search was conducted on the Scopus database for articles published between 2020 and 2026 and focused on the contexts of education and psychology. The selection process resulted in four main studies that were analyzed through *narrative synthesis*. The results of the study show that families act as agents of transmission of values, norms, and relationship patterns that significantly influence individuals' attitudes toward digital counseling. Family cultural values also shape trust in services, decision-making patterns, and the sustainability of technology-based counseling use. These findings emphasize the importance of integrating sociological and anthropological perspectives in the development and implementation of digital counseling to make it more contextual, inclusive, and relevant to educational and psychological practices in various cultural settings.

Keywords: Family cultural transmission; Digital counseling; Socio-cultural context; Education and psychology

ABSTRAK

Perkembangan layanan konseling berbasis teknologi telah menjadi bagian penting dalam praktik pendidikan dan psikologi modern, terutama untuk menjangkau individu dan keluarga yang menghadapi keterbatasan akses layanan konvensional. Meskipun demikian, adopsi dan keberlanjutan konseling digital tidak berlangsung dalam ruang yang netral secara sosial. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mensintesis bukti empiris mengenai peran transmisi budaya keluarga dalam membentuk pemaknaan, penerimaan, dan penggunaan layanan konseling berbasis teknologi. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan *Systematic Literature Review* (SLR) dengan mengacu pada pedoman PRISMA 2020. Penelusuran dilakukan pada basis data Scopus untuk artikel yang dipublikasikan pada periode 2020-2026 dan difokuskan pada konteks pendidikan dan psikologi. Proses seleksi menghasilkan empat studi utama yang dianalisis melalui *narrative synthesis*. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa keluarga berperan sebagai agen transmisi nilai, norma, dan pola relasi yang secara signifikan memengaruhi sikap individu terhadap konseling digital. Nilai budaya keluarga turut membentuk kepercayaan terhadap layanan, pola pengambilan keputusan, serta keberlanjutan penggunaan konseling berbasis teknologi. Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya integrasi perspektif sosiologis dan antropologis dalam pengembangan dan

implementasi konseling digital agar lebih kontekstual, inklusif, dan relevan bagi praktik pendidikan dan psikologi di berbagai latar budaya.

PENDAHULUAN

The transformation of technology-based counseling services has become a global phenomenon in contemporary mental health, education, and psychology practices. The development of tele-mental health, courage counseling, mental health applications, and digital psychosocial support platforms are seen as strategic solutions to overcome the limitations of conventional services, especially for groups facing geographical, social, and structural barriers (Torous et al., 2021). The World Health Organization emphasizes that digital transformation is a key element in expanding the coverage of mental health services in a sustainable and inclusive manner across various social and cultural contexts (WHO, 2022; WHO 2024).

However, empirical evidence shows that the effectiveness and desirability of technology-based counseling services are not solely determined by technical quality or digital system design. Social, relational, and cultural factors play a significant role in shaping the acceptance, engagement, and meaning of digital service use by individuals and groups (O'Connor et al., 2016; Torous et al., 2021). It operates in a vacuum but is integrated into existing social structures and often reproduces the values, norms, and power relations that exist within families and communities. In the context of education, recent evidence also shows that digital-based mental health interventions have the potential to improve students' psychological well-being, but their effectiveness is greatly influenced by issues of access equity, social context, and cultural sensitivity in the learning environment (Welsh et al., 2024).

From a sociological and cultural psychology perspective, the family is the primary agent of cultural transmission that shapes how individuals understand mental health, professional authority, and help-seeking behavior. Values inherited within the family, such as collectivism, independence, psychological stigma, communication patterns, and decision-making mechanisms, directly influence attitudes toward counseling services, including technology-based services (Kirmayer 2012; Ungar, 2021). In many cultural contexts, the decision to access and maintain digital counseling services is not individual, but rather negotiated within family relationships.

Furthermore, recent research shows that families often act as *gatekeepers* in the adoption and use of counseling technology, especially among vulnerable groups such as children and adolescents, the elderly, and

individuals with chronic health conditions. Family support, privacy norms, and intergenerational relationship structures determine whether digital services are actively used, interpreted positively, or rejected (Walsh, 2020; Bauernschmidt et al., 2024). Thus, counseling technology has the potential to shape family relationships and cultural values rather than automatically empowering individual users.

In addition, community psychology and public health literature states that failure to integrate family and cultural contexts into the design of digital risk services widens disparities in access and service effectiveness. Counseling technologies built on individualistic assumptions tend to be less suitable when implemented in communities with collectivist or family-centric orientations (Gone & Kirmayer, 2020; Napier et al., 2023). Therefore, sensitivity to family cultural transmission is an important determinant of the peace and sustainability of technology-based counseling services.

Although discussions about digital counseling are growing rapidly, to date there has been limited systematic observation that specifically synthesizes empirical evidence regarding the role of family cultural transmission in technology-based counseling services. Most studies focus on clinical effectiveness, technological readiness, or individual user factors, while families are often treated implicitly or marginally. This gap is crucial given that families are the primary foundation for the formation of meaning, attitudes, and psychological practices across cultures.

Therefore, this *systematic literature review* aims to comprehensively explain how family cultural transmission influences the acceptance, interpretation, and implementation of technology-based counseling services in the context of education and psychology. By integrating sociological, anthropological, and counseling perspectives, this study is expected to provide conceptual and practical contributions to the development of digital counseling services that are more culturally sensitive, contextual, and sustainable

METODE PENELITIAN
Study Design

This study uses a *Systematic Literature Review* (SLR) approach to systematically synthesize empirical evidence on the role of family cultural transmission in technology-based counseling services. The SLR approach was chosen because it allows for the transparent and replicable integration of findings across contexts and research designs. All stages of the SLR were carried out with reference to the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA 2020) guidelines to ensure methodological rigor and reporting clarity (Page et al., 2021).

Search Strategy

A systematic literature search was conducted on one reputable international databases, namely Scopus, which is widely used in counseling, mental health, and social science research. The search was conducted for the period 2020-2026 to capture the latest developments in technology-based counseling. The search keywords were combined using Boolean operators, namely ("technology-based counseling" OR "digital counseling" OR "online counseling") AND ("family culture" OR "cultural transmission" OR "family values"). The search strategy was adjusted to the syntax of each database.

Eligibility Criteria

The inclusion criteria for this study include (1) empirical research articles published in peer-reviewed journals; (2) a focus on technology-based counseling or psychosocial support services; (3) explicit discussion of family, cultural, or value transmission aspects; (4) availability in full text and in English; and (5) publication within a specified time frame. Exclusion criteria include conceptual articles without empirical data, non-journal publications (e.g., proceedings, editorials, or policy reports), studies focusing on technology without relevance to counseling services, and duplicate article
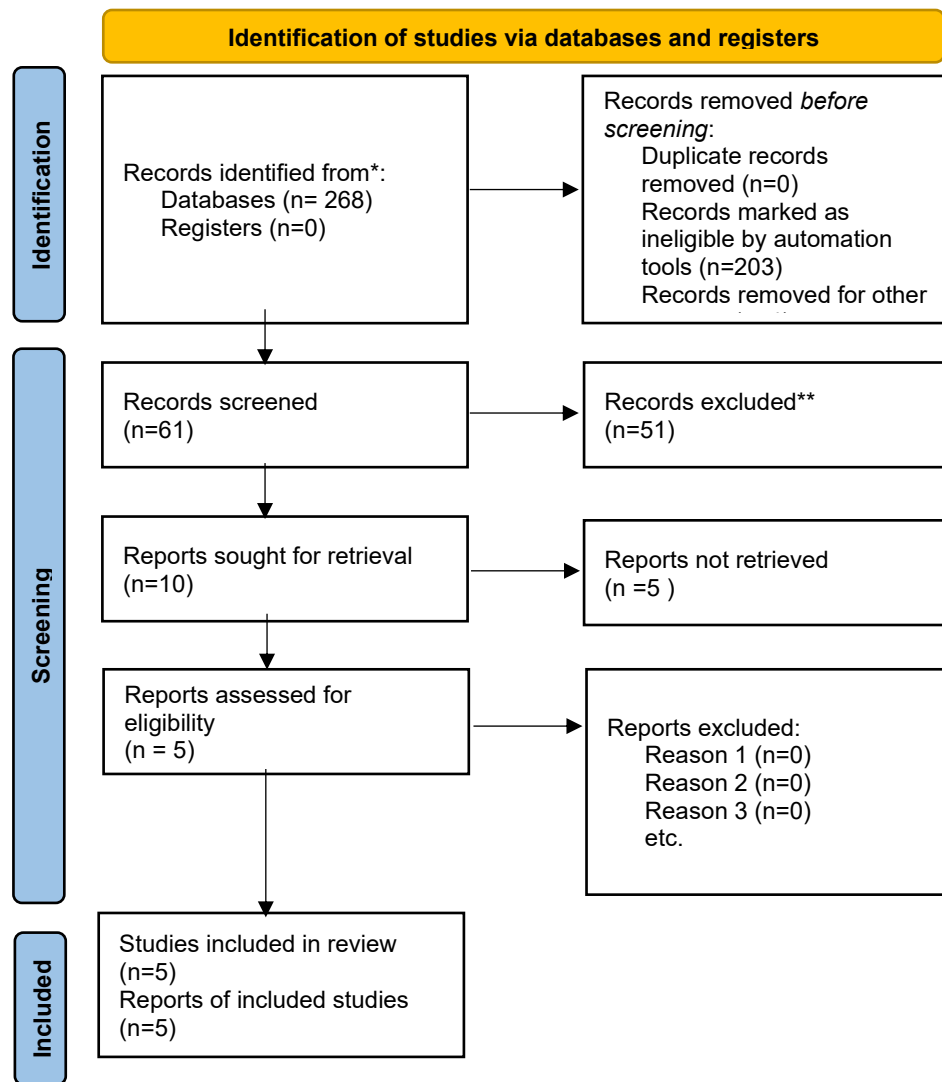
Identification of studies via databases and registers

Identification	
Records identified from*: Databases (n= 268) Registers (n=0)	Records removed *before screening*: Duplicate records removed (n=0) Records marked as ineligible by automation tools (n=203) Records removed for other

Screening	
Records screened (n=61)	Records excluded** (n=51)
Reports sought for retrieval (n=10)	Reports not retrieved (n =5)
Reports assessed for eligibility (n = 5)	Reports excluded: Reason 1 (n=0) Reason 2 (n=0) Reason 3 (n=0) etc.

Included	
Studies included in review (n=5) Reports of included studies (n=5)	

Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 flow diagram

Data Extraction and Data Synthesis

Data extraction was conducted systematically using extraction sheets prepared by the researchers. The information extracted included: author and year of publication, research context or country, study design and population, form of technology-based counseling services, and key findings related to family dynamics and cultural transmission. Data synthesis was performed using a narrative synthesis approach, given the heterogeneity of research designs, socio-cultural contexts, and variations in the forms of technology-based counseling services examined. Findings from the selected studies were translated into key conceptual themes representing the relationship between family cultural transmission and the dynamics of technology-based counseling services.

RESULTS

Studies that met the inclusion criteria in this systematic literature review were summarized based on author and year of publication, research context, population characteristics, main findings, and research conclusions, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics and Main Findings of Studies (n=5)

No	Author & Year	Population	Key Findings	Conclusion
1.	**Hadley (2023)**	Adolescent girls and families	Social media conversations revealed strong cultural stigma, lack of inter-generational dialogue, and family-based norms restricting adolescents' access to counseling and reproductive health services.	Technology platforms reflect and reproduce family-transmitted cultural values, positioning digital spaces as indirect but powerful mediators of help-seeking behavior.
2.	**Izenstark et al. (2024)**	Parents and children	Digital practices within families embodied cultural values such as *familismo* and *respeto*, shaping children's behavior regulation and family cohesion.	Family technology use functions as a mechanism of cultural transmission, indicating that technology-based counseling must align with culturally embedded family practices.
3.	**Palimaru et al. (2024)**	Multigenerational families	Family cultural norms influenced stress responses, coping strategies, and patterns of social support across generations.	Counseling interventions, including digital formats, are more effective when grounded in family-level cultural meanings and intergenerational value transmission.

4.	**Matavel et al. (2023)**	Families and primary healthcare users	Cross-cultural adaptation of counseling-related screening tools increased acceptability, comprehension, and trust within inter al families and communities.	Cultural transmission within families necessitates culturally adapted counseling technologies to prevent misinterpretation and resistance.
5.	Dorothee Bauernschmidt et al. **(2024)**	Older adults and family caregivers	Family cultural expectations shaped caregiving roles, technology acceptance, and engagement with supportive services.	Technology-based counseling is embedded in family cultural systems, where values transmitted across generations determine engagement and sustainability.

DISCUSSION

Family Cultural Transmission as the Primary Filter for Technology-Based Counseling

The synthesis results show that family cultural transmission consistently plays a major role in shaping individuals' perceptions of technology-based counseling services. Qualitative studies confirm that individuals do not enter the digital counseling space as neutral subjects, but rather bring with them meaning schemes that have been formed through family socialization related to communication norms, views on mental health, and intergenerational authority relationships. In the context of education and development, families not only facilitate access to technology, but also frame the psychosocial interpretation of digital counseling services, especially for children and adolescents (Hadley, 2023; Palimaru et al., 2024).

These findings indicate that family cultural transmission functions as the first *cognitive and normative filter* in assessing the legitimacy and usefulness of technology-based counseling. Hadley's (2023) study, for example, shows that family values such as obedience, simplicity, and taboos on sensitive issues are often reproduced in the digital space. Instead of expanding psychosocial support, technology can become a new medium for family normative control. This confirms that barriers to digital counseling are often cultural and relational in nature, rather than purely technological. These findings are consistent with the cross-cultural counseling literature, which places family norms s about honor, social control, and emotional expression as the main determinants of psychological help-seeking behavior (Kagitcibasi, 2007; Sue & Sue, 2016).

Furthermore, family- and community-based studies show that families often function as *gatekeepers* in the use of technology-based counseling. In certain populations, the

decision to use, continue, or discontinue digital counseling services is determined through an intra-family negotiation process influenced by cultural norms, digital literacy levels, and the family's collective experience with the formal service system. This pattern is particularly evident in families with children and vulnerable groups, where family support or resistance directly impacts user engagement in technology-based counseling services (Izenstark et al., 2024; Matavel et al., 2023).

In addition, among adult and elderly populations, family involvement in the use of counseling technology is closely related to care dynamics, functional dependence, and intergenerational relationship structures. Longitudinal and mixed-methods studies report that families act as mediators between technology systems and individuals' psychosocial needs, particularly in the context of chronic health and aging. This role includes technical support, joint decision-making, and interpreting the meaning of digital counseling services within the broader framework of family values (Bauernschmidt et al., 2024). Contextually, these findings align with the family ecology approach, which positions the family as the primary unit of meaning in decision-making related to mental health and the utilization of professional services (Walsh, 2020).

Technology as an Extension of Family Practices

The results of this SLR confirm that technology functions as an extension of family cultural practices, not a space separate from domestic dynamics. The study by Izenstark et al. (2024) shows that the use of technology in Latinx families reflects the values *of familismo* and *respeto*, where technological arrangements become a means of maintaining family cohesion and hierarchy. This pattern provides an important context for understanding how technology-based counseling is perceived and negotiated within families.

In this perspective, counseling technology does not stand as an independent innovation, but rather enters into the ecosystem of existing digital family practices. If everyday technology is associated with control, surveillance, or potential conflict, then technology-based counseling services risk being perceived with similar associations (Izenstark et al., 2024). This finding is reinforced by research on the domestication of technology, which shows that the meaning of technology is shaped through family routines and maintenance practices (Haddon, 2016; Livingstone & Blum-Ross, 2020).

In addition, these results indicate that technology can also strengthen cultural transmission indirectly. Through rules on device use, digital communication patterns, and access restrictions, families transmit values about privacy, authority, and the legitimacy of external assistance. In this context, digital counseling has the potential to be accepted when it is in line with family digital practices, but rejected when it is perceived as disrupting established relational balance (Spanhel et al., 2021).

Intergenerational Mediation and the Role of Family Getekeepers in Digital Counseling Engagement

Cross-research findings indicate that involvement in technology-based counseling is rarely individualistic, but rather mediated by intergenerational relationships and family structures. Studies in the context of dementia care show that family caregivers act as the

primary decision-makers in determining the presence of technology-based counseling services (Bauernschmidt et al., 2024). This confirms that families function as *gatekeepers* in the adoption and implementation of digital interventions.

Furthermore, this *gatekeeping* role is not only practical but also cultural. Family values related to caregiving obligations, loyalty, and preferences for face-to-face interaction often influence the extent to which technology is accepted as a legitimate form of support (Palimaru et al., 2024). These findings are consistent with family systems theory, which emphasizes that individual decisions to engage in are always tied to relational balance within the family system (Bowen, 1978; Walsh, 2020).

An important implication of these findings is that the failure of many technology-based counseling services to achieve sustainability is not solely due to limitations in design or clinical effectiveness, but rather to a lack of family involvement as key actors. The literature on digital mental health implementation also shows that interventions that ignore the role of the family tend to experience high *dropout* rates (Ben-Zeev et al., 2021; Bauernschmidt et al., 2024).

Cultural Adaptation as a Determinant of Acceptance and Sustainability

The synthesis of findings shows that cultural conditions are the main determinants of the acceptance and effectiveness of technology-based counseling. The study by Matave et al. (2023) shows that cross-cultural adaptation that takes into account the social and family context increases users'

understanding and trust in sensitive interventions. These findings confirm that cultural incompatibility can trigger implicit resistance even though the technology is available and easily accessible.

Furthermore, effective cultural adaptation is not limited to linguistic aspects, but includes how problems are understood, power relations within the family, and emotional communication norms. Multicultural counseling literature states that interventions that ignore the relational dimension of the family risk failing to build meaningful therapeutic relationships (Bernal et al., 2009; Sue & Sue, 2016). In the context of technology, this failure is often not immediately apparent, but is reflected in low long-term engagement.

Thus, the results of this SLR reinforce the argument that cultural adaptation should be positioned as a core design principle in the development of technology-based counseling services. This approach is in line with the latest digital mental health literature, which emphasizes the importance of *culturally responsive design* to ensure the sustainability and equitable access to services (Spanhel et al., 2021; Ben-Zeev et al., 2021).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this systematic literature review, it can be concluded that family cultural transmission is a key factor that consistently influences the acceptance, meaning, and desire for technology-based counseling services in various socio-cultural contexts. The findings show that counseling technology does not operate as a neutral intervention, but rather interacts dynamically

with the values, norms, and relationship patterns transmitted within the family system, so that families often act as *gatekeepers* in the process of adopting and using digital services. Technology-based counseling services that do not consider the family risk dimension experience resistance, low engagement, or weak desire, even though they are technically accessible. Therefore, the integration of sociological and anthropological perspectives, particularly related to family cultural transmission, is an important prerequisite in the development, implementation, and evaluation of technology-based counseling services to make them more contextual, inclusive, and sustainable.

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