

# Building Bridges: How a Guest Lecture on Bullying Expanded Students' Global Perspectives

**Yoga Prihatin**

Universitas Pancasakti Tegal, Indonesia  
[yogaprihatin@upstegal.ac.id](mailto:yogaprihatin@upstegal.ac.id)

**Justyna Kaczmarczyk**

Tarnowska Szkoła Wyzsza Stosowanych, Poland

## Abstract

Bullying is a global public health issue whose manifestations are deeply influenced by culture, necessitating that counsellor education move beyond domestic paradigms to cultivate global perspectives and multicultural competencies (MCC). To address this need, this study evaluated the impact of an international guest lecture delivered by a Polish expert on bullying to Indonesian counselling students on broadening students' cross-cultural understanding. Using a quantitative, descriptive approach, data were collected via a post-lecture survey from 91 students. The findings were overwhelmingly positive: a significant majority of students found the content relevant (92.3%) and clear (94.3%); most critically, 92.5% reported an expanded global outlook, and 95.6% felt motivated to investigate the topic further. The results conclusively demonstrate that the lecture successfully built educational bridges and achieved the goal of perspective transformation. This validates expert-led international exchanges as a potent, practical tool for developing MCC, and it is suggested that counsellor education programs actively integrate such lectures into their curricula. Future research should employ longitudinal designs to track long-term professional development and replicate this study across diverse institutions to enhance generalisability.

**Keywords:** *Internationalization of Curriculum, Multicultural Counseling Competency, Global Perspectives, Guest Lecture*

## Introduction

Bullying is a major public health concern and a widespread problem in educational systems worldwide, negatively impacting young people's mental health, academic progress, and social integration (Zych et al., 2020). Although it is a global difficulty, its manifestation, the social norms that perpetuate it, and the solutions for dealing with it are heavily influenced by cultural and environmental circumstances. Recognising this intricacy is an essential skill for those training to serve youth.

Undergraduate students of Guidance and Counselling (BK) at Universitas Pancasakti Tegal's Teacher Training and Education Faculty (FKIP) must build multicultural knowledge for their future effectiveness. Contemporary counsellor education must go beyond domestic theories and practices to equip graduates for the complexities of working in varied settings and with global challenges. Cultivating a global perspective enables future counsellors to critically analyse anti-bullying frameworks and tailor interventions to be culturally relevant and effective in addressing bullying.

Internationalisation of the curriculum through guest experts is a well-known approach to developing global competencies. Such projects immediately include international and comparative perspectives into the learning process, breaking down geographical and intellectual barriers (de Wit & Altbach, 2021). A guest speaker from a different cultural setting acts as a direct route for introducing students to alternative scholarly discourses and practical solutions to common challenges.

Poland, a Central European country with a distinct historical and educational background, provides a useful comparison lens. Pyżalski et al. (2024) suggest that examining research on peer victimisation and national prevention efforts can contribute to the global discussion on bullying. This is consistent with the primary mission of multicultural counselling competency, which entails understanding how sociocultural influences shape behaviour and well-being (Ratts et al., 2016).

To this end, an international guest lecture was organised for Indonesian Guidance and Counselling students, featuring a Polish professional. The program aimed to examine bullying as a form of peer-group violence using a Polish cultural and research lens. The goal was to create a concrete, worldwide case study that transitioned from abstract notions to a specific national context.

This effort was basically intended to "build bridges." It sought to connect two diverse educational paradigms—Indonesia and Poland—and link academic knowledge with practical application in a different cultural atmosphere. The purpose was to actively broaden students' global viewpoints, a critical byproduct of modern, internationalised higher education (Leask & Bridge, 2023).

However, the efficacy of such instructional approaches must be empirically validated. Measuring the initial impact on student views is critical for determining whether the goal of extending vistas was achieved and for improving future international programming (Rubin et al., 2024).

This study examines the quantitative feedback gathered from students following the guest presentation. It tackles the research question: To what extent did this international lecture successfully foster cross-cultural understanding and broaden counselling students' global perspectives? By assessing student evaluations of content, cultural awareness, and personal impact, this study emphasises the importance of international information exchange in generating globally competent counsellors.

## **Review of Related Literature**

Bullying is a widespread and harmful issue in schools worldwide and is recognised as an important public health concern that jeopardises children's mental health, academic achievement, and social development (Zych et al., 2020). The negative consequences are prevalent, ranging from increased anxiety and sadness to school avoidance and low self-esteem. Bullying, according to this global theme, is not only a disciplinary issue but also a fundamental barrier to creating safe and inclusive educational settings for all children. Understanding its widespread nature is the first step toward generating comprehensive and multifaceted solutions.

However, cultural, social, and environmental circumstances significantly impact the manifestation, perception, and societal tolerance of bullying. Bullying can be defined differently in different cultures, depending on characteristics such as collectivism versus individuality, power distance, and societal norms regarding conflict and communication. Smith et al. (2019) argue that in some East Asian contexts, indirect forms of social exclusion may be more prominent and destructive, whereas in some Western contexts, direct verbal and physical aggression may be more common. This cultural relativism calls into question the premise of a one-size-fits-all anti-bullying approach to prevention.

Bullying is a complex phenomenon that requires people working with adolescents, particularly school counsellors, to have a broad, multicultural understanding of it. Traditional counsellor education, which is generally based on domestic theories and practices, is insufficient to prepare graduates for the complexities of an interconnected world in which they may serve various populations or face global issues such as cyberbullying that cross boundaries (Singh et al., 2020). Counsellors must be able to identify the cultural basis of behaviours to avoid misdiagnosis and offer effective, culturally appropriate.

The concept of multicultural counselling competency (MCC) provides a foundation for this preparation. Ratts et al. (2016) define MCC as counsellors becoming aware of their own cultural beliefs and prejudices, comprehending the worldviews of culturally varied clients, and implementing culturally appropriate intervention strategies. When applied to bullying, a culturally competent counsellor can better determine whether a behaviour is the result of individual malice, a cultural misunderstanding, or a systematic issue within the school's social order, allowing them to adapt their reaction more effectively.

Internationalising the curriculum is an effective technique for building global and multicultural competencies. IoC is more than just adding international content; it is the intentional integration of international, intercultural, and global dimensions into a curriculum's content, teaching methods, and outcomes (Leask & Bridge, 2023). This method trains students to be active and responsible global citizens and professionals who can navigate and work in a variety of cultural environments.

Incorporating foreign guest experts and virtual exchange programs is an extremely effective educational method for achieving the IoC. As de Wit and Altbach (2021) note, such programs immediately incorporate comparative and international viewpoints into the classroom, reducing

geographical and intellectual isolation. A guest speaker from another cultural and academic tradition acts as a direct conduit for introducing students to alternate scholarly discourses, research methodologies, and practical answers to common problems such as bullying (Rubin et al., 2023).

A cross-cultural comparative lens, such as that used to compare Indonesia and Poland, is of great significance. Comparing anti-bullying activities and research from various regions contributes to better global knowledge of the subject. Pyżalski et al. (2024) show that studying a specific country, such as Poland, can challenge assumptions and disclose fresh insights due to its distinct historical, social, and educational backdrop. This comparative approach enables students to critically assess the transferability and cultural appropriateness of various intervention models in different countries.

Furthermore, international guest lectures act as a catalyst for "perspective transformation," which is an important goal of transformational learning theory (Mezirow, 2018).<sup>9</sup> When students are met with a vastly different point of view from an authority figure, it might shake their previous frames of reference, pushing them to critically reflect on their own cultural assumptions and the universality of their knowledge. This disruption is necessary, and bridge-building is critical for transitioning from a local to a global viewpoint, allowing future counsellors to understand both the universal and culturally unique components of youth development and conflict.

to acquire the deeper cross-cultural knowledge needed for global competency. The ultimate goal of such educational interventions is to "build bridges"—connecting disparate educational paradigms, linking theoretical knowledge with practical application in a foreign context, and instilling a sense of global interconnectedness in future professionals (Leask & Bridge, 2023).

## **Research Method**

This study used a quantitative, descriptive research approach to assess the efficacy and immediate impact of an international guest lecture on bullying from the Polish perspective. This approach was developed to systematically gather, evaluate, and interpret numerical feedback from participants, allowing for a structured evaluation of the lecture's success across key aspects such as content quality, cultural viewpoint, engagement, and overall impact (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This method is useful for assessing the achievement of specific learning objectives and providing empirical evidence for the efficacy of international curriculum interventions.

The participants were 91 undergraduate students enrolled in the Guidance and Counselling (Bimbingan dan Konseling - BK) study program at the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education (FKIP), Universitas Pancasakti Tegal, Indonesia. The research sample comprised 91 individuals who attended the lecture and voluntarily completed the post-lecture evaluation survey. Participation was entirely voluntary and included as part of the course activities. The

sample was a convenience sample of students who attended the guest lecture and filled out the assessment form.

Data were collected using an online post-lecture evaluation survey created using Google Forms. The questionnaire was specifically designed to measure student perceptions by targeting several key constructs critical to the lecture objectives. It first evaluated **Content & Delivery**, gauging the relevance, clarity, and structural coherence of the material presented. Second, it assessed the **Cultural Perspective**, determining the extent to which the lecture provided meaningful international insights and successfully expanded students' global viewpoints. The survey also measured **Engagement & Impact**, evaluating the speaker's ability to captivate the audience, the effectiveness of the interactive Q&A session, and the lecture's overall motivational and inspirational effect. Finally, the **Overall Evaluation** captured the students' holistic assessment, including their likelihood of recommending the lecture and whether the experience surpassed their initial expectations.

All items were assessed using a 4-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, and 4 = Strongly Agree). This forced-choice scale discourages neutral responses and encourages participants to lean positively or negatively toward a response. The survey was conducted in English and Indonesian to ensure clarity and comprehension. Participation in the survey was voluntary and anonymous for this research publication. The data collected (email addresses) were used solely for administrative purposes (e.g. attendance tracking) and were anonymised for analysis. Participants were informed that their feedback would be used to improve future educational programs and academic publications. The principles of confidentiality and data protection were maintained throughout the research process.

An evaluation survey was developed specifically for this study to measure the immediate outcomes of the guest lecture. To ensure content validity, the questionnaire items were aligned directly with the key constructs of the lecture objectives: content delivery, cultural perspective, and engagement. The instrument was reviewed by two senior academics in the field of counsellor education to ensure the items were appropriate, clear, and comprehensive for capturing the intended metrics, a best-practice method for establishing content validity (Boateng et al., 2018).

Descriptive statistics were used to analyse the data gathered. To provide a clear overview of student opinions across all examined dimensions, the responses for each Likert-scale item were combined and transformed into frequencies and percentages. By measuring the distribution of replies and highlighting key trends in students' assessment of lecture efficacy, this analytical method was selected to directly address the study issue.

## **Findings and Discussions**

The quantitative input from the post-lecture assessment survey provides strong empirical proof that the international guest lecture was successful in meeting its key objectives. The data from all constructs—Content and Delivery, Cultural Perspective, Engagement and Impact, and Overall Evaluation—consistently show that the lecture was extremely effective in bridging the gap





Key: Each symbol (■) represents approximately 2.5% of responses.

According to the results, 89% of the students agreed or strongly agreed that the speaker offered meaningful insights from another country (Figure 4).

### Figure 5. Expanded Global Outlook

Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree

Distribution:

1: ■ (1.1%) [1 response]

2: ■ (4.4%) [4 responses]

3: ■ (53.2%) [52 responses]

4: ■ (59.3%) [54 responses]

Key: Each symbol (■) represents approximately 2.5% of responses.

Furthermore, 92.5% of the students reported that the lecture broadened their overall outlook on the world (Figure 5).

### C. Engagement & Impact

#### Figure 6. Audience Engagement

Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree

Distribution:

1: ■ (1.1%) [1 response]

2: ■ (7.7%) [7 responses]

3: ■ (31.6%) [29 responses]

4:   
(51.5%) [47 responses]

Key: Each symbol (■) represents approximately 2.5% of responses.

The data show strong engagement outcomes, with 83.1% of students agreeing or strongly agreeing that the speaker kept the audience interested throughout the entire session (Figure 6).

### Figure 7. Q&A Session

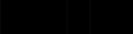
Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree

Distribution:

1:  (2.2%) [2 responses]

2:  (3.9%) [4 responses]

3:  (4.8%) [5 responses]

4:   
 (68.5%) [62 responses]

Key: Each symbol (■) represents approximately 2.5% of responses.

Students reported high satisfaction with the Q&A session, with 73.3% strongly agreeing that it allowed for significant conversations (Figure 7).

### Figure 8. Motivational Impact

Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree

Distribution:

1:  (1.1%) [1 response]

2:  (3.3%) [3 responses]

3:  (36.3%) [33 responses]

4:



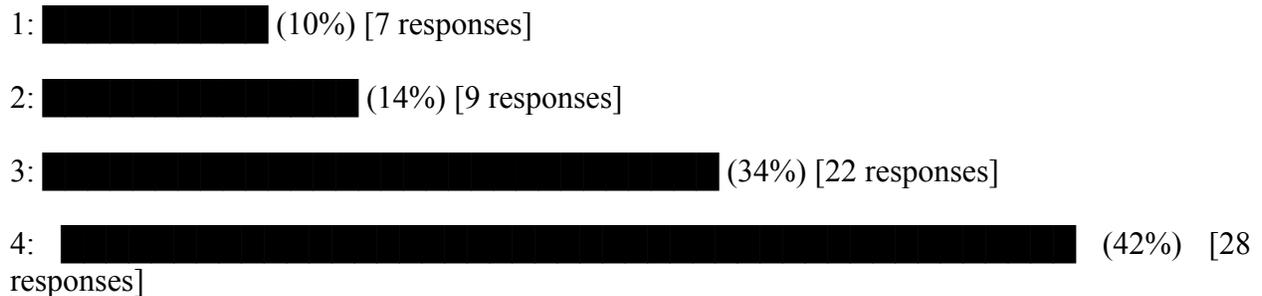
Key: Each symbol (■) represents approximately 2.5% of responses.

An overwhelming 95.6% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the lecture encouraged them to study bullying more, suggesting a significant motivational impact (Figure 8).

Figure 9. Inspiration to Learn About Poland

SCALE: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree

RESPONSES:



0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100%



Finally, 76% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the lecture motivated them to learn more about Poland, indicating a sparked cross-cultural interest (Figure 9).

### Discussions

The overwhelmingly positive results offer compelling empirical proof that the international guest lecture achieved its main goals of fostering cross-cultural understanding and expanding global perspectives of students.

### Bridging Theoretical and Cultural Gaps

The Polish perspective was viewed as immediately relevant to the students' subjects rather than abstract, as evidenced by the overwhelming support for the lecture's content and delivery (92.3%

for relevance, 96.5% for structure, and 94.3% for clarity). A crucial instructional requirement was a high level of communicative and structural clarity. It successfully closed any communication gaps that might have resulted from culturally disparate perspectives on social phenomena (Smith et al., 2019), allowing for a more profound "perspective transformation" that was at the heart of this investigation.

### **Achieving Perspective Transformation and Building Competency**

The key discoveries from the Cultural Perspective were the most significant. The fact that 92.5% of students expressed an enhanced global outlook immediately translates into the "perspective transformation" goal key to transformational learning theory (Mezirow, 2018). Exposure to the Polish framework successfully challenged students' preconceived notions, allowing them to recognise bullying as a worldwide phenomenon with culturally varied manifestations. This shift is critical for building multicultural counselling competency (MCC), as it leads future counsellors beyond ethnocentric perspectives and allows them to recognise the complex connections between culture, behaviour, and intervention (Ratts et al., 2016). The lecture successfully established the conceptual "bridge" required for this development, as proposed by IoC frameworks (Leask & Bridge, 2023).

### **The Role of Engagement in Facilitative Learning**

The strong Engagement and Impact results were not just enjoyable; they were critical to the learning mechanism. The high level of audience participation (83.1%) set the stage for the "disorienting dilemma" that initiates transformative learning (Mezirow, 2018). The extremely effective Q&A session (73.3% strongly agreed) was especially important because it provided a forum for dialogic engagement, allowing students to actively co-construct knowledge and relate theory to practice in a cross-cultural setting. The shift from passive receipt to active discourse is a defining feature of meaningful internationalisation (MI).

### **Catalysing Long-Term Motivation and Curiosity**

Perhaps the most promising consequence is its long-term motivating impact. The fact that 95.6% of students felt encouraged to study more about bullying suggests that the lecture's impact went beyond the classroom, creating an ongoing desire for exploration. This, together with the 76% who were encouraged to study more about Poland, demonstrates that the lecture served as a cultural ambassador, igniting curiosity, which is an important step in supporting the lifelong learning required of globally competent counsellors (Leask & Bridge, 2023). This shows that such interventions might do more than just impart knowledge; they can also inspire a professional attitude toward cultural enquiry and sensitivity among students.

### **Conclusion**

According to the comprehensive assessment data, this international guest lecture effectively accomplished its main goal of creating significant educational connections between Polish and Indonesian perspectives on bullying. The initiative successfully integrated international content

in a way that was both relevant and transformative for counselling students, as evidenced by the overwhelmingly positive responses across all measured constructs, especially the 95.6% who reported increased motivation to further investigate the topic and the 92.5% who agreed that the lecture expanded their global perspectives. The lecture effectively transcended academic concepts to offer useful cultural insights, in line with Mezirow's (2018) framework for changing the mindset.

The results offer compelling empirical evidence in favour of the deliberate internationalisation of counselling programs through cross-cultural, expert-led interactions. The talk successfully promoted the intercultural counselling skills necessary to handle global issues in an interconnected society by introducing students to Poland's unique approach to bullying prevention and intervention (Ratts et al., 2016; Leask & Bridge, 2023). In addition to teaching students that bullying is a culturally driven phenomenon, this method sparked their professional motivation and general cultural curiosity.

The practical implications of this study for counsellor education are obvious: programs should aggressively incorporate expert-led international guest lectures as a crucial, affordable tactic for quickly fostering multicultural competence. By effectively dismantling ethnocentric perspectives and offering students relatable, tangible case studies from various cultural contexts, these interventions can ultimately equip students to become more effective and compassionate practitioners in a globalised world.

Future research should use longitudinal designs to monitor whether the increased motivation and perspectives that students reported result in long-term professional development and behavioural change, such as the use of culturally appropriate intervention techniques in practicum settings or the pursuit of additional cross-cultural training, even though this study only measured immediate impact. Subsequent research should replicate this paradigm across several universities and with guest experts from a wider range of cultural and national backgrounds to improve the generalisability of these findings.

This study has several significant limitations. With no control group or long-term data to evaluate the long-term retention of global perspectives, its conclusions are based on a single institution's one-time intervention. Self-reported data from a homogeneous sample of counselling students were used, which restricts generalisability and could be influenced by social desirability bias. In addition, the results can be affected by the manner of the speaker and the important subject of bullying, and the online delivery format might affect participation more than in-person settings would.

## References

- Boateng, G. O., Neilands, T. B., Frongillo, E. A., Melgar-Quiñonez, H. R., & Young, S. L. (2018). Best practices for developing and validating scales for health, social, and behavioural research: A primer. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 6, 149. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2018.00149>
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- de Wit, H., & Altbach, P. G. (2021). Internationalisation in higher education: Global trends and recommendations for its future. *Policy Reviews in Higher Education*, 5 (1), 28-46.
- Leask, B., & Bridge, C. (2023). *Internationalising the curriculum: A comparative guide across disciplines*. Routledge.
- Mezirow, J. (2018). Transformative Learning Theory. In K. Illeris (Ed.), *Contemporary theories of learning: Learning theorists... in their own words* (2nd ed., pp. 114-128). Routledge.
- Pyżalski, J., Walter, N., & Abreu, R. L. (2024). Cyberbullying and mental health in cross-cultural perspectives: A focus on Poland. In *Routledge Handbook of Cyberbullying and Mental Health* (pp. 215-230). Routledge.
- Ratts, M. J., Singh, A. A., Nassar-McMillan, S., Butler, S. K., and McCullough, J. R. (2016). Multicultural and social justice counselling competencies: Guidelines for the counselling profession. *Journal of Multicultural Counselling and Development*, 44 (1), 28–48.
- Rubin J., Sagar D., & Manalo E. (2023). Evaluating the impact of virtual exchange on intercultural competence development. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 28 (1), 102-120.
- Singh, A. A., Appling, B., & Trepal, H. (2020). Using the multicultural and social justice counselling competencies to decolonise counselling practice: The important roles of theory, power, and action. *Journal of Counselling & Development*, 98(3), 261-271.
- Smith, P. K., Kwak, K., & Toda, Y. (Eds.). (2019). *School bullying in different cultures: Eastern and Western perspectives*. Cambridge University Press.
- Zych, I., Farrington, D. P., & Ttofi, M. M. (2020). Bullying and cyberbullying: Protective factors and effective interventions. *Aggression and Violent Behaviour*, 101343. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.avb.2020.101343>