

THE CONCEPT OF COUNSELING IMPLEMENTATION IN ISLAM

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Abstract

Islamic religious counseling is essential for enhancing the public's understanding, morality, and piety toward Islamic teachings amid complex and dynamic global and social changes. This study aims to systematically describe the concept of counseling in Islam, starting from the pre-counseling stage, the counseling process, to the post-counseling stage. The research method uses a descriptive qualitative approach through a literature study. Data collection techniques include documentation studies, and data processing involves reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Research findings: Pre-Counseling: A planning stage that includes identifying the target audience (*mad'u*), determining language style, counselor's appearance, selecting material, methods, media, and preparing the counselor's mental readiness. Counseling Process: The implementation phase begins with greetings, sincere intention, sending blessings (*shalawat*), and delivering the material in a polite manner, incorporating humor, and avoiding coercion. Post-Counseling: The evaluation stage, assessing the alignment between implementation and planning, as well as collecting feedback from the *mad'u* for improvement. Conclusion: The concept of Islamic counseling includes the pre-counseling, process, and post-counseling stages, emphasizing planning, respectful implementation, and feedback-based evaluation.

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A. INTRODUCTION

Globalization and technology influence the understanding of Islamic values; therefore, counseling is needed as guidance to enhance public awareness, responsibility, and the ability to solve problems independently (Hidayat, 2019). Islamic religious counseling aims to foster mental strength, morality, and piety by encouraging people to acknowledge Allah and live according to the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah through the guidance of a counselor to the *mad'u* (Hidayat, 2019). The role of counselors in the development of Islamic society includes being facilitators, mediators, educators, communicators, motivators, dynamic agents, and stabilizers, with the primary focus on the educational role facilitated by community developers (Makmun & Faizal, 2021).

Islamic religious counseling helps increase religious awareness, morality, social

resilience, and the quality of worship while maintaining faith in Allah SWT and aligning with social changes without losing identity (Nurkholipah, 2017). Effective Islamic counseling requires preparation before, during, and after its implementation. Counselors build morality, character, and human resources based on Islamic values, strengthening faith through good examples, preaching (*dakwah*), and religious activities (Lase, 2018). The strategies of Islamic religious counselors are adjusted according to the subject, content, and method, supported by collaboration with mosque administrators (*takmir*), though limited by time and personnel shortages, yet still resulting in a positive impact on the congregation (Suryana & Ismail, 2023).

The role of Islamic religious counselors includes being central figures, agents of change, motivators, and facilitators of the Ministry of Religious Affairs, with a focus on encouraging the motivation to read the Qur'an through advice, awareness, and encouragement (Fuadah, 2022). Efforts by Islamic religious counselors to raise awareness of the five daily prayers include various approaches, verbal guidance, practical demonstrations, and motivational support involving facilities, religious leaders, and parental support (Herman, 2021). Islamic counselors serve as *da'i* who guide communities in religious, social, and national matters, acting as development motivators and agents of change, as well as improving knowledge, skills, and experience to fulfill informative, educative, consultative, and advocative functions (Ilham, 2018).

Religious counselors play an important role in providing religious understanding and support, improving quality of life, and assisting marginalized communities in overcoming challenges, as shown in library research studies evaluating their impact (Nabilah & Darmaningrum, 2023). Counselors are key in delivering understanding, empowerment, and advice to communities, conveying Islamic messages, and helping solve problems based on societal values and needs (Ovino, 2020). Religious counselors also act as community leaders, motivating heads of families in Majalengka Regency to earn a living, provide understanding, and offer support to become role models for future generations (Asmawiyah, 2022).

This study aims to describe the concept of counseling in Islam systematically, starting from the pre-counseling stage, through the counseling process, to the post-counseling stage. It seeks to provide a deeper understanding of the stages of Islamic religious counseling, including initial preparation involving community needs analysis, the implementation of counseling through various methods and approaches, and post-counseling evaluation to assess its effectiveness. The expected impact of this research is the improvement of the quality of Islamic counseling, enabling the community to better understand and implement religious teachings in daily life. Furthermore, it is hoped that this will lead to increased awareness and active participation in religious programs. The findings of this study will offer a clear picture of the importance of a systematic approach in religious counseling to achieve more optimal outcomes.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

The research method used in this study employs a qualitative approach through literature review or theoretical development. A qualitative approach was chosen because the aim of this research is to describe and explore an in-depth understanding of the concept of counseling in Islam. This approach allows the researcher to understand religious phenomena holistically and contextually through the analysis of relevant texts and literature. The literature study was conducted to obtain data in the form of information or descriptions related to the focus of the

study being discussed in this research. The selection of sources was based on their relevance and credibility, with an emphasis on scientific works, books, journals, and articles that delve into the theory of Islamic religious counseling. All sources were selected carefully to ensure alignment with the research objectives.

Data collection techniques were carried out through documentation methods, which involved collecting various readings from documented interviews, books, classical texts, journals, and websites relevant to Islamic religious counseling. This data collection aimed to obtain comprehensive information regarding the concept of Islamic counseling to be further analyzed. In data analysis, techniques of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing were employed. Data reduction was performed by sorting information from various sources that were relevant to the research focus, allowing irrelevant data to be eliminated. Data presentation was carried out descriptively in concise, clear, and straightforward language to accurately describe the focus and purpose of this study. Conclusion drawing was done by integrating findings from various sources of study material to formulate conclusions aligned with the research objectives, thus resulting in a more comprehensive understanding of counseling in Islam.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Concept of Counseling

H. M. Arifin (1976) explained that *penyuluhan* (counseling) is essentially a translation of the English word *to counsel*, which means giving advice or suggestions to others through face-to-face interaction. Counseling is defined as giving advice or guidance to another person on an individual basis, carried out through personal interaction (Ilham, 2018). Ban and Hawkins (1999) stated that the term *counseling* is derived from the word *extension*, which implies the involvement of a person in deliberately communicating information with the aim of helping others provide opinions so they can make the right decisions (Kholili et al., 2015).

According to Gondoyoewono, counseling is an enlightening activity that emphasizes a specific object and aims to bring about behavioral changes in individuals or groups, encouraging people to become aware of and willing to implement new ideas (Amri Syarif Hidayat, 2019). Counseling is also understood as an activity that provides understanding and explanation of a concept or theory by an individual or group to others who are the target of *dakwah* (Islamic preaching) (Novaili, 2015). Counseling involves a person consciously engaging in the communication of information to help others express opinions and make correct decisions, with the goal of enhancing a person's knowledge and skills in a non-formal way (Wati et al., 2020).

From the various explanations above, it can be concluded that counseling is an effort to disseminate new ideas so that the community becomes interested, engaged, and willing to implement them in their daily lives. Counseling is also an educational activity aimed at equipping the community with knowledge, information, and new skills, enabling them to form proper attitudes and behaviors in line with expected norms.

2. Counseling in Islam

Islamic counseling is guidance carried out by religious counselors (*penyuluh agama*)



directed toward a target audience (*mad'u*) with the aim of providing understanding and solutions to issues related to Islamic teachings in order to strengthen faith (*iman*) and piety (*taqwa*) to Allah. An Islamic religious counselor is a *da'i* who guides and leads the community in religious, social, and national affairs, with the goal of enhancing the quality of religious life, the well-being of the ummah, and supporting government programs (Ilham, 2018). The Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs (KMA) Number 79 of 1985 states that Islamic religious counselors have roles as community guides, role models, and as representatives in carrying out governmental duties (Mazid et al., 2021). Islamic religious counseling involves providing spiritual and moral development to the community, particularly for targeted groups, in the form of religious activities such as Quranic study circles (*pengajian*), Quran recitation (*tadarus*), and Islamic studies. These activities have a positive impact on mental and spiritual development (Mazid et al., 2021). Counseling in Islam is carried out in three stages: Pre-counseling, Implementation and Post-counseling. The explanation of these stages follows below.

a. Pre-Counseling

In the pre-counseling stage, several aspects must be determined before the counseling session is conducted. These include: identifying the target audience (*mad'u*), selecting the appropriate language style, presentation style, counseling material, counseling method, counseling media, and mental preparation. These are explained as follows:

First, identifying the target audience (*mad'u*). The target of counseling refers to the individuals or groups to whom the counselor will deliver the message (Zulaikha et al., 2021). The target audience has diverse backgrounds and characteristics, which may lead to resistance toward the message being conveyed. The counseling audience is generally classified into the general public, the intellectual elite, and the argumentative group (Rahmatullah, 2016). The general public is typically simple, obedient, and easily persuaded, and thus can be approached through advice and gentle reminders. The intellectual elite are individuals with deeper critical thinking abilities, requiring a more wisdom-based approach. Meanwhile, the argumentative group should be engaged through rational debate (*mujadalah*). The counseling audience also includes various age groups such as children, teenagers, adults, and the elderly (Novaili, 2015). The target of *dakwah*, or *mad'u* in Arabic, refers to individuals or groups who become the object of preaching. It can also be interpreted as those who listen to what a preacher (*da'i*) says or read what the preacher writes (Baidowi & Salehoddin, 2021).

Second, determining the appropriate language style to use. Language style refers to the careful choice of words to express ideas in a way that creates the desired effect. The choice of language significantly influences the delivery of the message. A powerful and appealing style can capture the audience's attention, influence their thinking, and enhance their interest in the message being conveyed (Nurlaela, 2022). According to Keraf (1984), "The accuracy of word choice concerns the ability of a word to evoke the correct ideas in the reader's or listener's imagination, just as intended by the speaker or writer" (Herdiana et al., 2021). Sanie B. Kuncoro identifies several types of language styles, including: repetition, *litotes* (understatement), *erotesis* (rhetorical questioning), *hyperbole*, *paradox*, *simile*, *metaphor*, *synesthesia*, *personification*, *epithet*, *synecdoche*,

metonymy, hypallage, irony, sarcasm, antonomasia, and climax (Ibrahim, 2015).

Gorys Keraf mengklasifikasikan gaya bahasa berdasarkan pilihan kata yang terdiri dari bahasa resmi; tidak resmi; dan bahasa percakapan, berdasarkan nada suara terdiri dari gaya sederhana; bertenaga; dan gaya menengah, serta berdasarkan struktur kalimat yang terdiri dari klimaks; antiklimaks; paralelisme; antitesis; dan repetisi (Rofiq, 2022). Gaya bahasa resmi adalah gaya bahasa yang digunakan pada kegiatan-kegiatan resmi seperti khutbah, pidato penting, acara kepresidenan dan kegiatan resmi lainnya (Jannah, 2018). Gaya bahasa tidak resmi adalah gaya bahasa yang digunakan pada kegiatan-kegiatan tidak formal kalimatnya sederhana, singkat dan kata yang digunakan adalah kata yang biasa digunakan sehari-hari bertujuan untuk supaya *mad'u* lebih memahami apa yang kita sampaikan (Jannah, et. al., 2018). Gaya bahasa percakapan adalah gaya bahasa yang tidak sesuai dengan EYD supaya peran yang ingin disampaikan dapat dipahami secara menyeluruh oleh pendengar (Billah, 2018).

Third, presentation style. The appearance of the counselor greatly influences the counseling process, especially in terms of clothing, as attire is a primary human need. A smart counselor utilizes clothing styles that are currently trendy among youth, while still being neat and in accordance with Islamic principles. This helps attract the *mad'u* to attend the preaching sessions and better engage with the messages being delivered (Fauziyah & Norhidayati, 2021). Appearance is often the first thing noticed upon meeting someone, and it commonly forms the basis of first impressions. In professional settings, individuals are expected to present themselves attractively and modestly (Tampubolon et al., 2022). Physical appearance can be divided into two dimensions: (1) Original physical appearance, which includes the eyes, nose, facial shape, skin color, and body shape; (2) Extra physical appearance, which includes clothing, bags, shoes, accessories, and makeup (Rahardja, 2017).

Fourth, determining the material to be delivered. The content of the counseling session should be tailored to the needs and issues faced by the community. Counseling materials may include: eradicating illiteracy in reading the Qur'an, preventing radicalism and deviant sects, fostering interfaith harmony, managing zakat and waqf, promoting harmonious family life (*keluarga sakinah*), disseminating information on halal products, empowering the Muslim economy, religious moderation, stunting prevention, and raising awareness on avoiding drugs, HIV, and AIDS (Ziaulhaq, 2022). These topics can serve as references for Islamic counseling.

Material refers to a collection of information containing ideas or messages about divine truth and prohibitions, sourced from Allah SWT, to be conveyed to all of humanity. It must be structured in a systematic, well-organized, and easily comprehensible manner, adjusted to the current context and condition of the audience (Baidowi & Salehoddin, 2021).

Before delivering the material, a preacher must prepare and strategize to ensure the *dakwah* runs smoothly and achieves its objectives. One key preparation is mastering the content to be delivered, as preachers are viewed as role models in the community. If a preacher lacks preparation or mastery of the topic, the audience may misunderstand the message (Rofiq, 2022). Therefore, counselors must determine the appropriate material

based on community needs, ensure it is understandable and enjoyable for the audience, and internalize the content thoroughly.

Fifth, determine the method used in the counseling process, which should be adjusted to the number of targets and their capabilities. A method is a way used to implement a previously formulated plan into real and practical activities to achieve the intended goals (Karman, 2018). The methods in counseling consist of individual and group methods. The individual method is a way of delivering information or solutions to individuals, while the group method involves providing information or solutions to a community problem involving more than one person (Rofiki et al., 2022). A method is a technique created procedurally (through several stages) by someone and used to solve problems and achieve predetermined goals (Pane & Dasopang, 2017).

The individual method is carried out through home visits and informal contact. Home visits occur when a counselor visits a person facing a particular issue, while informal contact refers to unplanned meetings between the counselor and someone with a problem, where they engage in casual conversation, and the counselor's advice is well received by the individual (Ramadana & Subekti, 2021). The group method includes lectures, discussions, and seminars. The lecture method is a way of delivering counseling by directly explaining materials to the audience (Amaliyah et al., 2014). The discussion method involves an exchange of opinions between the counselor and the audience, providing understanding or solutions to the issues faced by the audience (Malia & Leni, 2014). The seminar method is a scientific type of counseling that includes a moderator as the host and the counselor as the speaker, along with a question-and-answer session from the audience to the counselor.

Sixth, counseling media. Counseling media refers to all tools used in counseling to achieve a conducive atmosphere and to support the delivery of messages. Media can include paper and pens to take notes, sound systems and microphones to amplify the counselor's voice, LCDs and projectors for seminar or workshop settings, and other tools that support the counseling process. Counseling media encompasses everything that contains messages or information that aids the counseling activity. Media offers numerous benefits, such as making it easier and faster for targets to receive the message, reaching a wider audience, providing accurate and precise information tools, and offering more concrete illustrations through visuals or motion (Leilani et al., 2017).

AECT (Association of Education and Communication Technology) explains that media includes everything (in the form of tools) that a person uses to assist and ease the process of delivering messages or information to others (Tafonao, 2018). The use of counseling media aims to facilitate the counselor's tasks, as the media should be easy to use by counselors of varying educational backgrounds, ages, and socio-cultural conditions. Media can be an alternative solution to address the limited number of counselors and the wide scope of the counseling area (Nurfathiyah & Jamaluddin, 2018).

Seventh, mental preparation. For a counselor, mental readiness plays a crucial role in building a dignified public persona because counselors who can control and manage their mental state while presenting will be able to communicate effectively. One way to prepare a counselor's mental state in public is by engaging in frequent communication with others and avoiding anxiety. This can help smooth the delivery of material and

foster self-confidence. Communication determines the quality of human life; it enables one to express ideas effectively, to understand, see, hear, and feel about oneself, and to interact with the environment from gathering and presenting information to resolving conflicts (Khairunisa, 2019).

b. Counseling Process

In the implementation of counseling, there is a series of processes carried out by the counselor to ensure that the target understands, comprehends, listens attentively, and applies what has been conveyed. The series of processes are explained as follows: First, actualizing what has been planned and determined during the pre-counseling phase, which includes the identification of targets, language style, appearance style, counseling material, counseling methods, counseling media, and mental preparation. Second, entering the gathering by greeting or saying a greeting and displaying good manners. Third, strengthening the intention with sincere determination that preaching to the community is solely for the sake of Allah's pleasure and as a form of devotion to Allah, while continuing the mission of the Prophet. Intention plays a crucial role in any undertaking; good intentions will result in positive outcomes, while bad intentions lead to negative feedback (Tantowi, 2022).

Fourth, carrying out the counseling process, starting with opening prayers to capture the target's concentration and foster a focused attitude. The counselor invites the audience by mentioning the rewards or benefits of the practice, inserts humor to avoid monotony, refrains from coercing the audience, and delivers material supported by Islamic principles, such as the Quran and Hadith. In practice, the material delivered in counseling is based on the community's (ummah) needs, is not forced, is determined by the target's capabilities and circumstances, and is derived from the appropriate discipline (Enjang, 2019).

In the implementation, preaching is carried out with the "uswatun hasanah" approach, where the counselor not only invites or encourages the audience to perform good deeds but also sets a good example. For instance, after counseling, the counselor may lead a congregational prayer, model good manners, such as walking politely in front of the audience. In this case, following the example of a religious counselor, who is believed to have a significant influence on the community. Good counseling activities emphasize real actions, not just words and material (Maqbul et al., 2019). The implementation of counseling is a learning process for the main actors and business practitioners to encourage and enable them to help themselves, organize access to market information, capital technology, and other resources as efforts to improve productivity, business efficiency, income, and welfare, as well as raise awareness for the preservation of environmental functions (Laelani et al., 2015)..

c. Post-Counseling

After the counseling process, the counselor takes steps to evaluate the success of the activities conducted. First, they assess whether a program or activity has been implemented according to the plan and expected goals. Based on the evaluation results, a decision is made on whether the program should be continued, revised, or completely replaced. Evaluation is the process of assessing and obtaining information regarding the

activities that have been carried out. Through evaluation, it can be determined whether a program meets the established criteria (Hajaroh, 2018). Evaluation involves assessing the findings of the performance of the target being supervised, whether positive or negative, and using these findings as a basis for improvement and development in future actions (Baidowi & Syamsudin, 2022).

Second, feedback from the community is considered. If the community can benefit from and learn from the counseling delivered, it can be said that the counseling has been successfully carried out. Evaluation is the process of determining the value (worth) of something, which includes the activity of gathering information used to determine the success of a program, product, procedure, objective, or potential benefit of alternative approaches, in order to maintain a particular approach (Hajaroh et al., 2018). Prayitno explains that the goal of guidance is to help individuals develop optimally in accordance with their developmental stage and predispositions (such as basic abilities and talents), various backgrounds (such as family background, education, and socio-economic status), as well as in accordance with the positive demands of their environment (Rahman et al., 2022).

D. CONCLUSION

The concept of Islamic counseling includes pre-counseling, the counseling process with proper planning and execution, and feedback evaluation to improve the effectiveness and understanding of religion in the community. Counseling is an activity of giving advice or information directly to help individuals make the right decisions. Its goal is to enhance the knowledge and skills of individuals or groups and to change community behavior to align more closely with the desired values and concepts. Islamic counseling is a guidance process provided by religious counselors to offer understanding about Islamic issues and solutions that can increase the piety and faith of the community towards Allah. Religious counselors act as guides for the community in religious, social, and national matters, aiming to improve the quality of religious life and the welfare of the community. Counseling is carried out in three stages: pre-counseling, implementation, and post-counseling. In the pre-counseling stage, the counselor determines the target, material, method, media, and language style appropriate for the intended audience. In the implementation stage, counseling is conducted through lectures, discussions, or seminars, using a non-coercive approach based on the needs of the community. The counselor also sets a good example in daily life to influence the attitudes and behavior of the community. After the counseling, the post-counseling stage involves evaluating the success of the program and collecting feedback from the community. This evaluation is important to determine whether the program should continue, be revised, or be discontinued.

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