



Islamic Counseling : Strengthening the Role of Pondok Pesantren as Islamic Counseling Institution for Muslim People

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Abstract. As a religious institution which is deeply root role in the society, pondok pesantren has contributed significantly to build a nation character based on Islamic teaching. It is a must that pondok pesantren has a mission to prepare a highly integrated generation intellectually and morally. Based on such reality, it is relevant to establish an Islamic counseling service in pondok pesantren. The main aim of Islamic counseling service is to facilitate students to develop their potentiality and achieve developmental tasks (physic, emotion, intellectuality, social, and moral-spirituality) based on Islamic values. This paper mostly discusses the concept of Islamic counseling and Islamic counseling model in pondok pesantren. It is concluded that Islamic counseling service in pondok pesantren can encompass learning guidance service, religious-based life guidance, and mental healthy guidance.

Keywords: Islamic counseling, Pondok Pesantren, Islamic Counseling Technique

A. INTRODUCTION

Pondok pesantren as religious institutions that are rooted in society cannot be separated from their existence to be able to make a major contribution to services in religious life as well as being the main pillar for fortifying the people in the moral formation of the nation (Muhith, A, & Umiarso, U. 2020). As a necessity, like it or not, pesantren are required to strive to produce national cadres who have high integrity, especially in the fields of reason and morals. In the end, the moral enforcement efforts of the pesantren will bring up a positive image for the Islamic boarding schools (Thahir, M. 2014)

Departing from the above understanding, Islamic guidance and counseling services are very relevant to attending in pondok pesantren (Daulay, N., Salim, S., & Putri, D. 2021). The rationale for organizing Islamic counseling guidance at Islamic boarding schools does not lie solely in the presence or absence of a legal basis (legislation) or provisions from the competent ministry, but more importantly it concerns efforts to facilitate students (here in after referred to as counselees), so that they are able to develop their own potential or achieve their developmental tasks (regarding physical, emotional, intellectual, social, and moral-spiritual aspects) based on Islamic values. Santri as counselees at pondok pesantren are individuals who are in the process of developing or becoming (on becoming), namely developing towards maturity or independence. To reach this maturity, counselees need guidance because they still lack understanding or insight about themselves and their environment, as well as experiences that determine the direction of their lives. Besides that, there is a necessity that the counselee's

development process does not always run smoothly, or is free from problems. In other words, the development process does not always run in a linear flow, or in the direction of the potential, expectations and values adopted (Susanto, S. (2021).

Islamic counseling as an approach that directly touches human psychological life is not new, but has been around since the first time the Prophet Muhammad carried out his apostolic duties. At that time it was found that guidance services in the form of counseling were prominent and dominant activities. The Prophet's practices in solving problems faced by friends, for example, can be recorded as an interaction that takes place between the counselor and the counselee, both in groups as in the halaqah al-dars model and individually (fardiah). Therefore, at that time Islam was truly felt as a necessity of life, and the role of the Prophet as a reference for every problem solving was the main key to the success of the actualization of Islamic teachings, so that the principles adopted by the Prophet in making approaches to the problems faced greatly determined the success of the Prophet. in grounding the teachings of heaven.

In the context of education in pondok pesantren, the phenomenon of Islamic counseling in Indonesia has actually been reflected for a long time, namely as old as pondok pesantren. The kiyai, buya, and ajengan are the main figures who are the center for asking questions for the santri and the surrounding community (Kepemimpinan and Kiai 2020). Various problems ranging from economic problems, mental anxiety, match making problems, family disputes, children's education, to severe psychological disorders, are sought for solutions by consulting the kiyai, buya, and ajengan. Thus, individuals feel they have found a satisfactory solution (Dahlan, 2005:11). In this case, history records that pesantren are not only a means of curricular education in the field of Islamic religious sciences, but also play a role as inner protectors of students and society. In general, this paper discusses the Concept of Islamic Counseling and Models of Islamic Counseling Services in Islamic Boarding Schools.

B. DISCUSSION

1. The concept of Islamic Counseling

The term Islamic counseling is based on the term counseling services that are built on Islamic teachings, or in other words services with an approach to Islamic teachings. The presence of Islamic counseling can actually be associated with the concept of Islamization of science and education. In this concept, scientific epistemology that marginalizes revelation and religious values needs to be reviewed. In addition, the way of thinking of scientists and including their behavior also needs to be guided according to the principles of Islamic teachings (Al Migdadi, 2011).

This Islamic counseling service is actually a development of the Vocational Guidance concept pioneered by Frank Parson in 1908 in Boston which developed as the main guidance service in education. The application of Islamic counseling as an alternative guidance service for solving the problems of human life is based on the view of the urgency and familiarity of Islamic counseling with the problems of life itself, and it is a concept that is reflected in the teachings of Islamic values as rahmatan lil 'alamin (Hanin Hamjah, S., Mat Akhir, N.S: 2014).

The formulation of Islamic Guidance and Counseling experts through a seminar organized by the Islamic University of Indonesia (UII) in Yogyakarta in 1985 regarding the meaning of Islamic counseling agreed that Islamic counseling is a process of providing assistance to individuals so that they are aware of their existence again as creatures of Allah Ta'ala who should live accordance with the provisions and instructions of Allah Ta'ala, so as to achieve happiness in the world and the hereafter (Musnamar, et al. 1992:5). Furthermore, Dahlan (2005) argues that Islamic counseling is life guidance which is essentially focused on the realization of the prayer *rabbana aatinaa fi ad-dunya hasanah wa fi al-akhirati hasanah wa qina 'azaba an-naar*. It contains the path to realizing human personality as a creature of Allah Ta'ala by growing a sense of peace in life because you always feel close to Allah Ta'ala and are under His protection.

It is clear that Islamic counseling is a counseling process that is oriented towards the peace of human life in this world and the hereafter (Huringiin, N., Ahmad, M., & Yasmin, A. 2022). The attainment of a sense of calm (*sakinah*) is through efforts to approach ourselves to Allah and through efforts to obtain His protection. *Sakinah* therapy will deliver individuals to work on their own and be able to solve life's problems (Arifin, S., & Baharun, M.: 2021). Thus, it is explicitly said that Islamic counseling contains a spiritual dimension and a material dimension. The spiritual dimension is to guide humans to spiritual life to become faithful and devoted to Allah. While the material dimension helps humans to be able to solve life's problems in order to achieve progress. It is these principles that firmly distinguish the concept of Islamic counseling from the concept of the results of "Western" knowledge and empirical.

2. Spiritual Dimensions and Islamic Counseling Materials

Islamic counseling has two dimensions, namely: the spiritual dimension and the material dimension. The assistance services provided in this case will be adjusted to each dimension which is a priority during the counseling process. Likewise, the role of the counselor will be seen to be more directed to the prioritized dimension.

The spiritual dimension is a central part of Islamic counseling. Solving and solving the problems of human life is not only based on the material (physical) dimension, but is more focused on the spiritual dimension (Ihsan, N. H., Sa'ari, C. Z. B., & Hidayat, M. S. 2022). In fact, all human mental illnesses, such as fear, anxiety, hatred, jealousy, feeling uneasy, feeling threatened, and so on, are centered on the spiritual dimension. While restlessness or disharmony, disorganization, and self-equilibrium (self) is a source of mental illness. In this case, Islam teaches to return every problem of human life to Allah Ta'ala who gives life, a path of ease, strength, help, and healing. There is no greatest power except the power of Allah Ta'ala (QS. 2, al Baqarah: 112, 156, 255, and 284; QS. 3, Ali 'Imran: 159-160; QS. 65, at-Talaq: 3- 4). Thus, happiness cannot be achieved without faith, and faith means nothing if there is nothing to believe in, namely religion (Daradjat, 1998:13).

Mentally healthy humans are characterized by their ability to solve or resolve all inner complications caused by various difficulties in life. In this case, he has a balanced soul, can uphold a personality with integrity, and has the ability to solve all life's difficulties with confidence and courage. In Bishop's criteria (1991: 47) it is called a human being who has personality elements that avoid conflict and always act consistently according to the norms and regulations that apply. Meanwhile, Daradjat (1999: 13) emphasizes that a human being

who is mentally healthy is a human being who can realize the harmony of his soul's functions and has the ability to deal with the problems of his life, and feel positively his happiness (sa'adah) and his abilities.

Happiness in the true Islamic view is only found by believing in the existence of Allah Ta'ala, always drawing closer to Him through worship, and living life according to the instructions directly shown by Allah Ta'ala through His Messenger. Belief in Allah will give people strength, steadfastness, courage and peace without serious conflict with one's own conscience. In addition, through prayer as the main and key worship in Islam, it is hoped that the client/counselee can really feel that he has surrendered all his problems to Allah. Through his dialogue with Allah, he feels that Allah has heard and understood him.

The empirical and physical analysis of material dimensions in Islamic counseling is based on the fact that human mental problems often originate from material (empirical) problems. For example, someone is hurt because he is deprived of the material (goods) he likes so that the material aspect causes him mental illness. Therefore, an understanding of empirical issues is needed to provide Islamic counseling services. The fact shows that human beings who are physical (material) and psychic (spiritual) are faced with problems that mainly reflect the fulfillment of relevant needs for these two aspects.

3. Purposes

Some of the objectives of Islamic counseling can be seen in several opinions expressed by Munandir (1997:9) that the purpose of Islamic counseling is to help a person make decisions and help him develop plans to carry out decisions and help him develop plans to implement them. With that decision he acts or does something constructive in accordance with behavior based on Islamic teachings. Surya (1998:13-14) expressed his goal with the following points: a) So that individuals have the intellectual abilities (knowledge) needed in their work and career; b) To have the ability in understanding, managing, controlling, respecting and self-direction; c) In order to have knowledge or information about the environment; d) To be able to interact with other people; e) To be able to solve the problems of everyday life; f) In order to be able to understand, live and practice the principles of Islamic teachings related to work and career. Furthermore, on the basis of views on human elements and positions, Badawi (1997:2) formulates the objectives of Islamic counseling in the following four points of purpose: a) So that humans can develop harmoniously and optimally in terms of body and spirit and soul, based on Islamic teachings; b) So that the spiritual and soul elements in the individual develop harmoniously and optimally: reason/thought, heart/feel and good/willful desires, based on Islamic teachings; c) In order to develop harmoniously and optimally the elements of individual and social position, based on Islamic teachings; d) In order to develop harmoniously and optimally the human element as a creature that now lives in the world and will live in the hereafter based on Islamic teachings.

It can be seen clearly that the purpose of Islamic counseling has emphasized the side of ukhrawi life as well as the side of worldly life, and has also had a farther reach. Broadly speaking and in general the purpose of Islamic counseling is formulated: 'to help individuals realize themselves as whole human beings in order to achieve happiness in the world and the hereafter. Helping humans "realize themselves as complete human beings" is intended to help realize themselves in accordance with their nature as human beings, to become human beings

who have harmonious development of their elements and the implementation of their functions or position as God's creatures.

Islamic counseling services are aimed at helping humans as much as possible to avoid problems. Even if he has to face problems, it is hoped that he can accept his situation as it is, as a decree and a gift from God. In accordance with the spiritual dimension of Islamic counseling, clients/counselees are assisted to be trusting of Allah by submitting all their problems to Allah's presence.

Islamic counseling aims to instill magnanimity in the client/counselee so that he really realizes that he already has the ability to solve and solve problems. He must feel that this ability is his personal property and becomes an inseparable part of him. He must strive to develop through practice and acts of worship at all times, conditions and places, so that as much as possible he will not face the same problems in his lifetime.

4. Principles, Approaches, and Methods

Building principles, approaches, Islamic counseling methods must depart from the substance and existence of humans as creatures with vertical, horizontal and diagonal dimensions. In the vertical dimension, humans are required to understand the meaning of themselves as servants who have dependence on God. On the horizontal and diagonal dimensions, humans are required to be able to adapt to nature and the social environment (Sudan, S. A.:2017).

Principles are intended as rules, provisions that are applied and used as the basis and guidelines for implementing Islamic counseling, namely: 1) The principle of monotheism. Monotheism is the oneness of Allah which is the main condition for establishing a relationship between the servant and the creator. Tauhid is intended as a total surrender of all matters and problems to Allah so that there is synchronization between human desires and Allah's will. In this case God is made a place as the only source of mental health, the heart. The source of power to solve problems, a source of spiritual calm that is directed to God. This is the most important principle of spiritual life; 2) The principle of amaliah. In the process of Islamic counseling, counselors are required to be realistic with the understanding that before providing assistance, they must first reflect a figure who has integrated knowledge and charity. The counselor's gift to the client/counselee is essentially a reflection of his conscience which has been well conditioned beforehand; 3) The principle of morality al-karimah. This principle covers the purpose and process of Islamic counseling. In terms of objectives, the client/counselee is expected to reach the stage of having noble character. Meanwhile, in terms of the process, the ongoing relationship between counselor and client is based on norms that apply and are respected. In this case, noble character occupies an urgent position; 4) Professional Principles (Skills). Islamic counseling is a field of work that is within the scope of religious issues, so the success of a job is related to one's professionalism. Therefore every counselor so that the implementation does not fail. Expertise in this case is mainly related to understanding empirical problems, psychological problems of clients which must be understood rationally and scientifically. 5) The principle of confidentiality. In connection with this, Islam emphasizes secret disclosure in everyday social life. For that a believer gets a reward for keeping his brother's secret. Thus, in the client's secret counseling process must be guarded by the counselor.

The approach is intended as an effort to how the client / counselee: 1) Natural approach.

This approach views that humans basically have the potential to live healthy physically and mentally, and this is part of human nature. For this reason, individuals are helped to determine their fitrah so that they can always be close to God and guidance to develop themselves, so that they are able to solve their life problems, and can do self-counseling with God's guidance.

2) Sa'adah mutawazinah approach (balanced happiness in the world and the hereafter)

As it is known that Islamic counseling efforts are to solve and resolve the problems of world life, and for that it is needed. If the problems of world life do not exist, of course counseling is not needed. It's just that it must be seen that apart from being empirical in nature the problems of world life will also affect spiritual life, so solving them will be related to efforts to prosper this spiritual life. Precisely the solution to the problems faced by clients is in an effort to gain peace in living in the world and with that peace clients can re-understand their identity and at the same time draw closer to God. This is a reflection of the essential mutawazinah sa'dah and is used as the principle of implementing Islamic counseling.

3) Independence Approach

Efforts to re-understand self-concept for clients should be carried out by counselors by reviving their self-confidence, so that they feel able to solve problems independently. Confidence and independence are phenomena of self-understanding, and one of the results to be achieved from the counseling services provided.

4) Openness approach

Openness here means that Islamic counseling takes place in an atmosphere of openness, both on the client's and the counselor's side. Clients convey complaints openly so that counselors can identify problems so that solutions can be found. Counseling cannot proceed naturally if one or both are not open to each other, and openness must take place accompanied by mutual trust.

5) Voluntary approach

This approach is centered on the client and the counselor because not all clients voluntarily submit their problems to the counselor. So that it can be stated that a relationship based on sincerity in Islamic counseling will be able to create coolness in the hearts of clients. For this reason, the counselor must be able to foster the client's belief that he is dealing with a counselor who provides assistance with sincerity. It cannot be denied that carrying out counseling duties with sincerity solely for the sake of Allah will bring very beneficial results for all parties.

The method referred to is a systematic way of working and related to the strategy for achieving the goals of Islamic counseling that have been determined, namely:

1) Adjustment Method

This method is intended primarily as a service suitability for each individual based on the problem. The pattern of solutions offered to clients should be understandable by clients according to their circumstances and conditions, in this case the counselor is required to have expertise in adapting methods to the uniqueness of the client. In this case, the differences that are owned are of course a consideration to keep adjusting human burdens and obligations based on the level of ability they have (QS. 2, al Baqarah: 233).

2) Dynamic Method

This method means Islamic counseling as an effort to provide assistance so that clients can experience changes in a positive direction, departing from the basic assumption that humans are dynamic creatures. Precisely that changes in client behavior are not just repeating old things and are monotonous, but changes that always lead to more advanced updates.

5. Islamic Counseling Techniques

The technique is intended as a tool and is an alternative that is used to support Islamic counseling methods. Its utilization strictly refers to the instructions contained in the Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet (Jafari, M. F. (1993). In this case Islamic counseling techniques will be persuasive and stimulative towards the emergence of the client's personal awareness to practice his religious teachings. Thus Islamic counseling techniques can be formulated as:

a. Method of Spiritualization (Spiritualism Method)

This technique is formulated on the basis of values which are interpreted as originating from the principle of monotheism, several techniques are grouped under the spiritual method, namely:

1) Spiritual Exercise: In this case the client is directed to seek peace of mind by drawing closer to God as a source of peace of mind, a source of strength and problem solving, a source of healing for mental illness. After the client can feel positive things from what he is doing, the counselor encourages him to continue to train himself on an ongoing basis to continue to remember Allah. 2) Establish affection and gentle attitude to the client. The principle of compassion is an important reference in efforts to protect the psychic life or the human heart. In this case the counselor is required to have these characteristics so that the client can always feel the protection and affection given, so that his life problems can be overcome or at least they are no longer felt as serious problems (Situmorang, J. R. A., & Susanti, V. (2021). 3) Reflection of alqudwah al hasanah (exemplary) In this case, an exemplary situation was created that was not only limited to the time the consultation took place, but outside the activity the benefits were still felt (Hilmia, M., Firdausiyah, U.W., & Wafi, H. A. (2022).

b. Client-Centered Method

The essence of this method is that the client/counselee is believed to have the potential to solve his problems which must be developed through independent endeavor. The principle contained in this method finds legality in Islamic teachings. Islamic teachings encourage a person to explore his potential in order to be able to solve his problems (QS.2, al Baqarah: 31; an-Nisa', 4:113) and be independent (QS. Ar-Ra'd, 13:11). In this case, the counselor must act as a person who helps provide the best conditions by making it easy for clients/counselees to develop their behavior more productively.

6. Model of Islamic Counseling Services at Pondok Pesantren

The model of Islamic counseling services in Islamic boarding schools in addition to having similarities with counseling services in educational institutions at the junior and senior high school levels in general, but also has characteristics (higher values) that distinguish it from other settings. As stated in the section above, Islamic counseling plays an important role in solving problems in human life, and has special value for mental health in its function to guide

humans towards a *sakinah* life in the sense of being prosperous and happy in this world and the hereafter. There are at least three models of Islamic counseling services in Islamic boarding schools, namely: Tutoring Services, Strengthening Religious Life Services, and Mental Health Development Services.

1. Learning Guidance Services

The Learning Guidance Service is directed at guidance for students who have learning difficulties. Concrete actions to help those who experience learning difficulties are in the form of giving attention, motivation, participating in group activities, providing enrichment, and making anticipatory instructional designs. The most important thing in this tutoring service is perfecting the teacher's role as educator and mentor/counselor (Whitney, a.t: 2017)

Al Ghazali applies comprehensive guidance and counseling based on the *sunnah* of the Prophet Muhammad. Al Ghazali's view of tutoring will be seen through the following process:

First, identification of cases, as the first step in classifying students who are classified as requiring assistance services; Second, problem identification, as an effort to understand the types and characteristics of students' problems that are felt as learning difficulties, both in the form of substantial-material, structural-functional, behavioral, and personality aspects; Third, diagnosis, as an effort to find out the background and factors that cause learning difficulties; Fourth, prognosis, efforts to determine the possibility of overcoming learning difficulties by finding alternative solutions; Fifth, treatment (treatment), is an effort to implement improvements or cure learning problems/difficulties taken in the prognosis step. It is carried out with the process of: a) changing the wrong perceptions of students in terms of the benefits of knowledge, b) building cognitive competence of students, so that a commitment is built to take part in individual and group tutoring, and Sixth, evaluation and follow-up, efforts to see the level of influence action of healing assistance (treatment) that has been carried out in solving learning problems/difficulties. Good learning outcomes are expected to be reflected through the following changes in attitude: a) being happy in doing good deeds, b) fighting lust, c) being the way of the wealth of the world as a medium for building happiness in the hereafter, d) making piety a glory, e) being willing to comply with provisions Allah Ta'ala, f) is not hostile to anyone, g) makes Allah Ta'la the goal of life, and h) develops an attitude of trustworthiness.

2. Services to Strengthen Religious Life

Islamic counseling services in Pesantrens also play a role in guiding students and/or pesantren residents to make religion a guide in pursuing happiness in the world and the hereafter and how to instill religious messages in filling the soul spaces so that they guide behavior and motivate them to have good morals and be in harmony between *Habl min Allah* (relationship with Allah) and *habl min al-nas* (relationships with fellow human beings). The counselor fosters the counselee to reach maturity in religion. According to Ibnu Qoyyim (2008) that there are eight indicators of religious maturity: 1) His faith is fostered by constantly improving his quality; 2) Nurturing his spirit by always magnifying and glorifying Allah and trying to achieve His pleasure; 3) Fostering his thinking by always thinking about Quraniyyah verses (verses in the Koran) and kauniyyah verses (the universe); 4) His feelings are fostered by always doing for God's sake; 5) Fostered behavior by always adorned with good morals; 6). Fostering the community by always being aware of its social duty to improve the welfare of its

environment; 7) Foster physical health by always balancing between physical rights and performing worship to Allah Ta'la', and 8) Foster sexual desire by always controlling it according to the teachings of Islam.

3. Mental Health Development Services

Islamic counseling services for mental health start from the principle of cultivating a religious soul in counselees in resolving the life problems they face. With religious inspiration, the counselee is directed to cultivate a religious lifestyle in his person, so that he really realizes and believes that there are no problems that cannot be solved as long as they want to return to religious guidance (Zakaria, N., Mat Akhir, N.S :2017). The counselee is assisted to carry out religious inspiration to the practice of his teachings. In this case, of course Islamic counseling is persuasive and stimulative towards the emergence of the counselee's personal awareness to practice religious teachings (Setiowati, D., Sukma, P. R. K., & Rahim, R.2021). Therefore, the utilization of Islamic counseling will strictly refer to the instructions contained in the Qur'an (QS. al-Nahl, 16:125): Call (humans) to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good lessons and help them with good way. Verily, your Lord is He who knows best who has strayed from His path and He who knows better those who are guided.

C. CONCLUSION

Counseling services in pondok pesantrens are counseling services that are based on a scientific paradigm that integrates Islamic values originating from the Qur'an and as-Sunnah into counseling theory and practice. The main purpose of Islamic counseling services in a pondok pesantren is to help clients solve life problems and achieve happiness based on Islamic guidance. Models of Islamic counseling services in pondok pesantrens can be in the form of learning services, services to strengthen religious life, and mental health coaching services.

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