



Konseling Edukasi

Journal of Guidance and Counseling

https://journal.iainkudus.ac.id/index.php/Konseling_Edukasi

E-ISSN : 2580-9008

Vol. 8 No. 1 Tahun 2024 | 59 – 86

DOI: [10.21043/konseling.v8i1.27771](https://doi.org/10.21043/konseling.v8i1.27771)

Optimizing Consultation Services Through Spiritual Guidance: Religious Counselors in Overcoming Religious Problems in Kudus Communities

Hasan Bastomi

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Kudus, Indonesia

hasan@iainkudus.ac.id

Akhmad Mundakir

Institut Agama Islam Negeri Kudus, Indonesia

aemdakir@iainkudus.ac.id

Abstract

Optimizing Consultation Services Through Spiritual Guidance: Religious Counselors in Overcoming Religious Problems in Kudus Communities. This research aims to reveal religious counselors in overcoming religious problems in the Kudus community through consultation services. This research on religious instructors in overcoming religious problems in the Kudus community through consultation services was carried out using a qualitative approach with the type of field research with data collection techniques using Interview, Observation and Documentation techniques. The research subjects or informants in this research were religious instructors and the Kudus community. The results of the research show that the Optimization of Kudus Regency Religious Extension Consultation Services in the Development of the Islamic Community is carried out in the form of spiritual counseling to the assisted communities to help them overcome spiritual crises, moral conflicts, or questions about religious beliefs in the Kudus community. For further research, it is recommended to explore more deeply the various factors that influence the effectiveness of spiritual guidance, such as the counselor's educational background, the approach used, and institutional support.

Keywords: Optimization, Consultation Services, Religious Counselors, Religious Problems, Kudus Society

A. Introduction

In an era filled with the challenges and stresses of modern life, more and more individuals are seeking understanding and support to overcome personal problems, stress and value crises. The spiritual aspect or spirituality appears as a significant dimension in providing a meaningful life framework and helping individuals find their life purpose (Budiman, 2017). Spiritual counseling is becoming increasingly important as a means to guide individuals in understanding and overcoming their life challenges on a spiritual basis (Fukuyama & Sevig, 1997).

Psychological well-being cannot be separated from a person's spiritual dimension. Many studies show that individuals with a strong spiritual foundation tend to have higher levels of life satisfaction and better ability to cope with stress (Fehring et al., 1987). Therefore, integrating spiritual aspects in consultation services can be a critical step to achieving holistic healing and growth. Although there has been some research exploring the relationship between spirituality and mental well-being, more understanding is needed about how spiritual guidance practices can be optimized to provide more effective counseling services.

Counseling guidance services enable clients to know themselves, their environment, and be able to plan their future. This is reinforced by the explanation from Prayitno & Amti (2013: 114) that the general aim of guidance and counseling is to help individuals develop optimally in accordance with the stage of development and predispositions they have (such as basic abilities and talents), various backgrounds. existing (such as family background, education, socio-economic status), as well as in accordance with the positive demands of their environment. Counseling guidance services are determined by the cooperation of all school personnel, however, the hard work and seriousness of the counselors in carrying out their duties is the main key to the success of the service, which in the end, is able to contribute to the realization of quality human resources.

The aim of guidance and counseling is to develop potential in individuals as optimally as possible, according to their ability to adapt to their environment, whether school, family or community environment (Bastomi, 2020b). According to Yusuf & Nurihsan in Bastomi (2019b), the Guidance and Counseling process in schools can be successful if it has clear goals to be achieved. Guidance and counseling aims to help students achieve their development goals which include personal-social aspects of learning (academic) and career. Meanwhile, the objectives of Islamic guidance and counseling according to Mubarok in Bastomi (2022) can be briefly formulated as follows: (1) The general objective of Islamic Counseling is to help the counselee so that he has knowledge of his position and has the courage to make decisions, to carry out an action that is considered good, true and beneficial, for his life in this world and for the benefit of his afterlife. (2) The specific objectives of Islamic counseling guidance are: (a) To help the counselee not to face problems. (b) To help the counselee overcome the problems they are facing. (c) To help the counselee maintain and develop good or already good situations and conditions so that they remain good, so that they will not become a source of problems for themselves and others. In order to achieve the goals of counseling guidance as expected, the guidance and counseling management process must run very well.

One component of guidance is consultation services, namely all efforts to provide assistance to all members of the teaching staff at school and to students' parents, for the sake of better student development Winkel (W. Winkel & Hastuti, 2010: 775). Consultation is increasingly recognized as a unique form of guidance service, because school counselors realize that direct service to students in certain circumstances does not bring the expected results or is not the most appropriate route to help counselors (Munandar & Mugiarto, 2017). So, it is necessary to take another route by developing various ways of providing services that have a positive impact on certain individuals, society, or social organizations that create psychological well-being in society.

Indonesia is a country known for its cultural diversity, including the diversity of religions adhered to by its population. With a population of more than 270 million people spread across various islands, Indonesia faces big challenges in maintaining harmony and harmony between religious communities (Bastomi, 2019a). This diversity, although it is cultural wealth, also carries the potential for conflict if not managed well. One important effort to maintain this harmonization is through religious consultation services provided by religious counselors (Pepi, 2016). Religious counselors have a strategic role in providing spiritual guidance that can help people overcome various religious and spiritual problems (Kadir, 2017).

Religious consultation services are an important aspect in people's lives, especially in countries that have religious diversity such as Indonesia (Hardelina, 2009). Spiritual guidance provided by religious counselors is crucial in helping people overcome various problems related to spiritual and religious aspects (Ziaulhaq, 2022). This article aims to examine in depth the role of religious counselors in optimizing religious consultation services and how they can contribute effectively to resolving religious problems in society.

Religious instructors are individuals who are officially appointed by the government or religious institutions to provide education and guidance in the field of religion to the community. Their main task is to spread religious values, give lectures, and provide consultations regarding religious issues (Kusnawan, 2017). This role is very important, especially in areas prone to religious conflict or in communities that face great challenges in maintaining spiritual values (Jaya, 2017).

Religious counselors act as mediators between spiritual values and individual psychological well-being needs. In many societies, the spiritual dimension is an important source of calm, strength and purpose in life (Nurkholis et al., 2020). Religious educators, with their in-depth knowledge of religious teachings and spirituality, can help individuals bridge the gap between spiritual understanding and the challenges of the modern world.

It is important to recognize that, while conventional counseling practices provide psychological support, religious counselors bring an additional dimension, namely a spiritual view that can provide deeper meaning and context in understanding a person's life journey (Rofiqi, 2019). It is important to explore and optimize consultation services through a spiritual guidance approach, with a focus on how the spiritual dimension can improve psychological and emotional well-being. The presence of spiritual elements in counseling is considered an additional source of strength and resilience that can enrich the conventional counseling process (Imaduddin, 2017).

It is important to recognize that modern society is often faced with uncertainty, value confusion, and complex life pressures. Religious educators, with their wisdom and religious knowledge, can provide a balancing view, guiding values, and a deep understanding of the meaning of life. This research aims to explore in more depth the role of Kudus Regency Religious Counselors in optimizing consultation services through spiritual guidance. By understanding the involvement and positive impact that Kudus Regency religious counselors may have, this research aims to provide a basis for developing best practices in utilizing spiritual knowledge to improve individual welfare through optimizing consultation services through spiritual guidance carried out by Kudus Regency Religious Counselors.

B. Method

This research uses a qualitative approach with a case study method (Creswell & Creswell, 2017: 67). A qualitative approach was chosen because this research aims to understand in depth the role and challenges faced by religious counselors in providing spiritual guidance and how religious consultation services can be optimized in overcoming religious problems in the Kudus Community.

The research design used is a case study. Case studies allow researchers to explore phenomena in real-life contexts in depth (Yin, 2018). This research will

take several cases of religious instructors in Kudus Regency to get a comprehensive picture of the role and challenges they face. This research was conducted in Kudus Regency which has diverse characteristics in terms of religion and socio-culture. Research locations include urban, rural areas, as well as areas with a high potential for religious conflict. This location selection aims to obtain varied and representative data.

Research participants are religious instructors who are active in the designated research location. Participant criteria include: (1) Religious instructors who have at least 5 years of experience, (2) Religious instructors who are directly involved in providing religious consultation services and (3) Religious instructors who are willing to be interviewed and participate in research. Data collection techniques in this research include:

1. In-depth interviews were conducted to obtain detailed and in-depth information from participants regarding their roles, experiences and challenges they face in providing spiritual guidance. Interviews were conducted face to face and recorded with the participants' consent (Merriam, 2009: 78).
2. Observations were carried out to see directly the activities of religious instructors in providing consultation services. This observation helps researchers understand the social context and interactions between religious instructors and the community (Huberman, 2014: 91).
3. Data collection through documentation includes analysis of policy documents, programs and reports related to religious education activities. This documentation helps complete data from interviews and observations (Creswell & Creswell, 2017: 78).

In descriptive qualitative research regarding the optimization of consultation services through spiritual guidance by religious instructors in overcoming religious problems in the Kudus community, validity can be achieved through data triangulation, which involves various sources of information (for

example, interviews with religious instructors, field observations, and document analysis) to ensure the accuracy and richness of the data. Apart from that, validity is also strengthened by member checking, where initial findings are confirmed again with the informants to ensure correct interpretation. Reliability in this research was achieved through consistency in data collection and analysis, using a structured interview guide and maintaining detailed field notes as well as transparency in the data analysis process, so that the findings can be replicated by other researchers.

Data analysis was carried out through the following stages: (1) Data from in-depth interviews were transcribed verbatim to facilitate analysis (Yin, 2018). (2) The data that has been transcribed is then coded to identify emerging themes and patterns. Coding was done manually and using qualitative analysis software such as NVivo to help organize the data (Merriam, 2009: 85). (3) The themes and patterns that emerged from the coding process were categorized to facilitate further analysis. This categorization helps in identifying main issues and sub-issues that are relevant to the research⁸. (4) Data that has been categorized is interpreted to answer research questions. This interpretation is carried out by referring to the theoretical framework and relevant literature (Creswell & Creswell, 2017: 83). And (5) Data validation is carried out through triangulation of sources and methods. Data from interviews, observations, and documentation were compared to ensure consistency and accuracy of information (Yin, 2018).

C. Discussion

1. Consultation Services in Guidance and Counselling

Consultation services are a process in an atmosphere of cooperation and interpersonal relationships with the aim of solving a problem within the professional scope of the person requesting consultation. There are three elements in consultation, namely the client, the person requesting the consultation, and the consultant (Mu'awanah & Hidayah, 2012: 70). Prayitno in Tohirin (2013: 65) states that consultations are basically carried out individually in a face-to-face

format between the supervising teacher and the students. In consultation services, there are three parties that cannot be separated, namely supervisors, consultants and third parties. Supervising teachers are counseling experts (professional staff) who have the authority to provide counseling services in accordance with their field of work. Consultants are individuals who ask for help from supervising teachers so that they are able to handle conditions or problems experienced by third parties, at least part of which is their responsibility. , while third parties are individuals whose conditions or problems are questioned by the consultancy.

Consultation is all efforts to provide assistance to all members of the educational staff at school and to students' parents, for the sake of better student development (Winkel & Hastuti, 2010: 89). Consultation is defined as an exchange of ideas to obtain the best conclusions (advice, suggestions) (Petesr & Salim, 1991: 46). Dougherty in Muro and Kottman (1995: 284), consultation is a process in which a professional in carrying out humanitarian services assists the consultant with work related (or care related) to a client's problem, with the aim of helping the consultant and client's problems in some predetermined way . Consulting involves a triangular relationship where the focus of the consultant and consultant is a third person who could be an individual or a system, because in the process involving a third party, the consultant often increases self-understanding with whoever he comes into contact with, however, it is very important to remember that, although Consultation can be therapeutic, but it is not therapy. Consultation is not an intense counseling experience (Neukrug & Milliken, 2011).

Consultation in guidance programs is seen as a process of providing technical assistance to teachers, parents, administrators and other counselors in identifying and correcting problems that limit the effectiveness of students or schools (Nurihsan, 2011: 16). It was also explained that consultation services are services that help students and/or other parties in gaining insight, understanding, and methods that need to be implemented in dealing with counselees' conditions and/or problems. National Education Standards Agency (2006: 6) Brown et al emphasize that consultation is not counseling or psychotherapy because

consultation is not a service that is directly aimed at students, but indirectly serves students through assistance provided by other people (Nurihsan, 2011: 18).

The objectives of consultation as stated by Prayitno (2012: 198) are: 1) General objectives. Consultation services aim to enable consultants with their own abilities to handle conditions and/or problems experienced by third parties. In this case, the third party has a significant relationship with the consultancy, so that the problems experienced by the third party are at least partly the consultee's responsibility.

Meanwhile, the specific objective of the consulting service is the ability itself referred to above which can be in the form of insight, understanding and ways of acting that are directly related to the situation and/or problems of the related parties (understanding function). With its own capabilities, the consultant will do something (as a direct form of the results of the consultation) to a third party. In this regard, the consultation process carried out by counselors on the first side, and the process of providing assistance or consultative action to third parties on the second side, aims to alleviate problems experienced by third parties (alleviation function).

According to Fullmer & Bernard (In Shetzer, 1985: 74) consultation services aim to: (1) Improve and expand the parents' learning environment. (2) Improving communication by providing useful and direct information facilities for the people concerned. (3) Inviting all people who have a function and role in improving the learning environment (4) Expanding the services of experts in providing services to other people who need help (5) Expanding the depth of educational services for counselors to parents, subject teachers and heads schools (6) Helping others learn how to handle problematic behavior in children (7) Mobilizing independent organizations.

Religious consultation services function as a bridge between individuals and their religious teachings. According to research by Stark and Glock (1970), religion has a significant influence in shaping individual behavior and outlook on

life. Religious consultation helps individuals understand and overcome the problems they face from a religious perspective, so they can make decisions that are wiser and in accordance with religious values.

2. Religious Counselor in Spiritual Guidance

Various regions in Indonesia have different approaches to implementing spiritual guidance. In areas with high levels of religious conflict, religious educators often act as mediators to ease tensions and promote peace. A study by Smith and Schreiber (2005) shows that faith-based interventions can be effective in resolving conflict. Meanwhile, in urban areas, religious instructors face the challenges of modernization and secularization, which require them to adapt in order to remain relevant to people's lives.

Religious Counselors are Civil Servants who are given full duties, responsibilities, authority and rights by authorized officials to carry out religious and development guidance or counseling to the community through religious language (Romly, 2001: 21–22). Meanwhile, a religious guide is someone appointed from their own community to carry out religion in that community. Initially, Religious Counselors were the spearhead of the Ministry of Religion in implementing Islamic religious information amidst the rapid dynamics of development of Indonesian society.

Its role is strategic in building mental, moral and devout values as well as contributing to improving the quality of life of the people in various fields, both religious and development. It is impossible for a religious instructor to carry out this quite heavy mandate alone, he must be able to act as a motivator, facilitator and catalyst in an Islamic society (Adam & Junaidi, 2022). This is where the role of Religious Counselors in carrying out their work in the field of Islamic community guidance must have the aim of ensuring that the religious atmosphere can reflect and actualize understanding, appreciation and experience of the values of faith and devotion in the context of social, national and state life (Ilham, 2018).

Religious instructors as implementers of religious broadcasting activities have a very strategic role. Because talking about the issue of da'wah or religious counseling means talking about the issue of the ummah with all its problems. Because in many cases and from many facts of da'wah, signs of the benefit of the ummah (congregation) have not been able to be realized by the implementers of da'wah (counselors). Therefore, extension workers must fully understand the function of extension agents themselves (Hamdani, 2020). Religious instructors as religious leaders always guide, protect and mobilize the community to do good and avoid prohibited acts. Apart from that, Religious Counselors also play a role in inviting people to something that is needed by their community in developing their area for community and religious facilities (Ma'luf, 2015).

As community leaders, Religious Counselors act as priests in religious and social matters, as well as in state matters by trying to make government programs a success. Islamic religious instructors have three functions, namely: first, informative and educational functions: Islamic religious instructors are positioned as preachers in the broadest sense who are obliged to preach Islam. Second, consultative function: Islamic religious instructors provide themselves to participate in thinking about and solving problems faced by society (Sukmawati, 2012). Third Advocative Function: Islamic religious instructors have a moral and social responsibility to carry out activities to defend the people or society from various threats, disturbances, obstacles and challenges (Bastomi, 2020a).

The function of extension is to provide services to individuals and groups, experiencing the usefulness of every program we create for them. Extension is said to function well if the extension we carry out is felt to be useful for other people, conversely if the extension we carry out is not useful it can be said that the extension process does not bring any usefulness or benefits (Ridho, 2014). Counseling is implemented through developing the functions of the Al-Qur'an and Hadith which are used as the main sources, especially for Islamic counseling. The Qur'an discusses various solutions to the problems of everyday life to achieve happiness in life (Silviana, 2014).

The objectives of extension in the context of religious extension are certainly different from the objectives of agricultural extension, according to Nurulita (2021: 98) in terms of the objectives of extension, seen from the perspective of religious extension, the objectives are: (1) Helping to solve problems or problems of the community that arise from personal and group (family) interactions. with an Islamic approach. (2) Helping and solving psychological problems of Muslim families and communities, due to internal problems that occur within the family. (3) Helping to overcome and solve moral or spiritual problems experienced by people with social problems (pathological) and physical disabilities in social rehabilitation institutions, such as the blind, addicted to drugs, prostitutes and so on. (4) Helping to overcome and solve mental or spiritual problems experienced by prisoners in detention centers and correctional institutions. As well as mental development for street children, nursing homes and other social problems. (5) Providing counseling and guidance to employees, workers and soldiers to improve work performance and productivity using an Islamic approach.

Religious instructors are figures who have an important role in society, especially in the socio-religious context. According to the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia (2021), religious instructors are tasked with providing religious counseling and education, as well as being a liaison between the community and the values of religious teachings. Their role is not only limited to spiritual aspects, but also includes social conflict resolution and religious-based psychological support (Nurlaela, 2023).

The role of religious counselors in the context of spiritual guidance is very important in providing spiritual guidance and psychological support to individuals. The role of religious counselors in spiritual guidance combines spiritual dimensions with psychological aspects, forming deep relationships to support holistic individual growth and recovery (Mazid et al., 2021).

Religious counselors have the ability to integrate religious values in the counseling process. The integration of religious values in counseling can provide a deep moral, ethical and spiritual foundation in guiding individuals to overcome life problems or challenges (Bastomi & Aji, 2018). By wisely integrating religious values in counseling, religious counselors can create a holistic and therapeutic approach that respects and understands the client's spiritual dimensions. This provides an opportunity to build strong relationships and help clients achieve deeper growth and recovery (Juningsih et al., 2022).

According to Nabilah & Darmaningrum (2023) there are several ways in which religious counselors can integrate religious values in the counseling process:

- a. Religious counselors can start by understanding the client's religious values. This involves opening a dialogue about religious beliefs, practices, and how these values shape the client's worldview.
- b. Religious counselors can reflect on religious teachings in counseling by using religious teachings and principles to provide views and understanding in the context of counseling. Reflecting on how religious values can be a guide in making decisions and overcoming problems.
- c. In an effort to integrate religious values in counseling, religious counselors can apply religious norms and ethics as an ethical framework in guiding clients. Assist clients in navigating moral or ethical decisions by guiding them back to religious teachings.
- d. Align religious wisdom and teachings with the counseling strategies used by using religious principles as a basis for designing action plans or practical suggestions.
- e. Provides a spiritual perspective to help individuals reflect and find meaning in their life experiences using relevant religious quotes or advice to provide insight and inspiration.

- f. Encourage clients to undergo spiritual growth and seek balance between the spiritual dimension and other aspects of life by providing guidance for spiritual practices or meditation that are in accordance with the client's religious values.
- g. Integrate the hope and calm that can be found in religious teachings into counseling and help clients find strength and support in their religious beliefs.
- h. Provides specialized support for clients experiencing loss or trauma, using spiritual resources and guiding clients to find peace in their faith and religious beliefs.
- i. Aligning mental health practices, such as stress management or relaxation techniques, with clients' religious values and teaching practices consistent with religious beliefs can improve psychological well-being.

3. Religious Extension Consultation Services Through Spiritual Guidance

Optimization of the consultation services for Kudus Regency Religious Counselors in the Development of the Islamic Community is carried out in the form of spiritual counseling to the assisted communities to help them overcome spiritual crises, moral conflicts, or questions about religious beliefs in the Kudus community.

- a. Overcoming society's spiritual crisis

Religious Counselor Opened a spiritual consultation center in Kudus Regency as a safe place for individuals experiencing a spiritual crisis. Assisted communities can implement consultation services flexibly. Because religious counselors have provided flexible schedules to ensure the availability of services for those who need them, namely when religious counselors provide assistance to the community.

In order to help people experiencing spiritual crises, religious counselors are specially trained in aspects of spiritual counseling, including how to overcome spiritual crises. Additionally, religious counselors have a deep

understanding of religious teachings and ethical norms that guide their counseling practices. Kudus Regency Religious Counselors always combine the principles of spiritual counseling with prayer and spiritual growth. This is done because Kudus Regency Religious Counselors are aware of the psychological aspects of a spiritual crisis, with a holistic approach to assist recovery. By wisely integrating religious values in counseling, religious counselors can create a holistic and therapeutic approach that respects and understands the client's spiritual dimensions. This provides an opportunity to build strong relationships and help clients achieve deeper growth and recovery (Juningsih et al., 2022).

In collaboration with community organizations, Kudus Regency Religious Extension Officers often hold regular seminars and workshops to educate the public about the importance of spiritual health and how to overcome crises. In addition, Kudus Regency Religious Counselors also formed spiritual support groups to enable individuals to share experiences and get support from others. The formation of spiritual support groups is often carried out in religious communities to strengthen solidarity and provide emotional and spiritual assistance. In this context, Religious Counselors play an important role in facilitating this support. According to social support theory (Cohen & Wills, 1985), the existence of a support group can reduce the impact of stress and provide a sense of belonging for its members. This spiritual support group also provides "supportive interactions" that help individuals face life's challenges (House, 1981: 87). Religious instructors as agents of social and spiritual change are tasked with not only providing lectures or advice, but also forming communities that support each other. This is in accordance with the concept of guidance and counseling in Islam which emphasizes the importance of ta'awun (mutual help) and ukhuwah (brotherhood) (Al-Qaradawi, 1999: 96).

To help overcome the community's spiritual crisis, Kudus Regency Religious Counselors provide family counseling sessions to guide families in supporting family members who are experiencing a spiritual crisis. This is

done to identify and strengthen the support system in the family as an integral part of counseling. Walsh's (2002) research shows that counseling that involves the family and strengthens family support can improve therapy outcomes and client satisfaction. Meanwhile, Sanders and Turner's (2005) research found that counseling programs that focus on family involvement and family support are effective in reducing behavioral problems in children and improving overall family well-being.

Optimizing the consultation services for Kudus Regency Religious Counselors through spiritual counseling is also carried out with cultural adaptation by understanding and respecting local values and religious traditions of the people of Kudus Regency by using language that is familiar and understandable to the local community. Collaboration with Religious Institutions and community organizations is also carried out by Kudus Regency Religious Counselors in optimizing Kudus Regency Religious Extension consultation services through spiritual counseling. Partner with religious institutions and local community organizations to increase access and support for the community and involve the community in service provision to create active engagement and shared understanding.

In order to optimize consultation services through spiritual counseling, Kudus Regency Religious Counselors carry out periodic assessments. Conducting periodic assessments and evaluations is carried out to see the effectiveness of spiritual consultation services. Community feedback is needed to continue to improve and improve the quality of Kudus Regency Religious Extension services. Research by Zeithaml et al. (1990) showed that customer feedback plays an important role in improving service quality and customer satisfaction. The feedback received allows the service provider to make necessary adjustments. Meanwhile, research by Parasuraman et al. (1988), concluded that monitoring and feedback analysis are key in ensuring high and consistent service quality.

Kudus Regency Religious Counselors always receive continuous training. This activity is carried out so that Kudus Regency Religious Counselors remain updated with developments in spiritual counseling. In addition, with ongoing training, Kudus Regency Religious Counselors can design long-term plans to maintain the sustainability of spiritual consultation services in Kudus Regency. With these approaches, spiritual consultation services in Kudus Regency can become a strong foundation for helping individuals overcome spiritual crises, strengthen religious values, and support holistic growth in the local community.

b. Overcoming moral conflicts in society

Optimizing consultation services through spiritual counseling carried out by Kudus Regency Religious Counselors in overcoming moral conflicts begins with Initial Mapping and Evaluation. This is done in the context of mapping to identify individuals or groups experiencing moral conflict and carrying out initial evaluations to understand the background, causes and impacts of moral conflict.

Personal counseling sessions are carried out by Kudus Regency Religious Counselors in order to optimize consultation services through spiritual counseling to resolve moral conflicts by holding personal counseling sessions with individuals who experience moral conflicts. Through personal counseling sessions, Kudus Regency Religious Counselors can analyze the moral, ethical and spiritual aspects involved in conflicts and design action plans to overcome moral conflicts in the assisted communities.

Apart from personal counseling sessions, Group Counseling Sessions are also carried out by Kudus Regency Religious Counselors to resolve moral conflicts. This counseling is carried out by holding discussion groups with participants who face similar moral conflicts. This is done to encourage the exchange of experiences and strategies in dealing with moral conflicts that occur in the assisted communities.

Integration of Religious Values is carried out by Kudus Regency Religious Counselors, optimizing consultation services through spiritual counseling to overcome moral conflicts. Integration of Religious Values is carried out by integrating prayer and meditation in counseling sessions to provide spiritual support to the assisted communities. Apart from that, the Integration of Religious Values is carried out to guide individuals to apply religious teachings in overcoming moral conflicts in the assisted communities.

Religion plays an important role in shaping individual morality and how religious values can guide daily behavior (Wuthnow, 2003). Religious education is important in the moral development of teenagers and how religious values can help them overcome various moral challenges (Smith & Denton, 2005: 45). Gopin's research (2000: 32), explains how deep religious teachings can be the basis for effective mediation and conflict resolution activities.

To increase public understanding about the dangers of moral conflict, Kudus Regency Religious Counselors held Moral and Ethics Training. Systematic moral training can improve the ability to think advanced morally and make more ethical decisions (Rest et al., 1999: 130). The importance of ethics training in business organizations and how effective training can help create an ethical organizational culture (Treviño & Nelson, 2011: 230). Moral and Ethics Training Activities in the Kudus community, using a case approach to discuss concrete situations and the application of moral values in daily life in society so that moral conflicts do not occur.

The Kudus Regency Religious Counselor continues to carry out program socialization in optimizing consultation services through spiritual counseling to overcome moral conflicts by socializing the spiritual consultation program through educational activities in the community. In addition, involving religious counseling to broaden people's understanding of moral values can provide education to the public about the dangers of moral conflict.

In order to optimize consultation services through spiritual counseling to overcome moral conflicts, Kudus Regency Religious Counselors always utilize online resources. This effort is carried out by providing an online educational portal with resources such as articles, videos and educational materials about handling moral conflicts via WhatsApp and social media. To support the exchange of ideas and solutions among the community, Kudus Regency Religious Counselors also created an online discussion forum via Whatsapp and social media.

To strengthen spiritual support. In order to optimize consultation services through spiritual counseling to overcome moral conflicts, Kudus Regency Religious Counselors collaborate with Religious Leaders and religious institutions. This step was taken to provide spiritual assistance through collaboration with local religious institutions.

Kudus Regency Religious Counselors carry out regular monitoring to measure the effectiveness and positive impact of service activities in order to optimize consultation services through spiritual counseling to resolve moral conflicts. Apart from that, Kudus Regency Religious Counselors also collect feedback from participants to continue to improve the quality of services. To overcome more complex moral conflicts, Kudus Regency Religious Counselors are developing a follow-up counseling program. In dealing with deeper moral conflicts, the Kudus Regency Ministry of Religion also offers additional training for religious instructors.

The development of a follow-up counseling program by Kudus Regency Religious Counselors is a very appropriate step to overcome more complex moral conflicts. This program, with its holistic approach and based on religious values, can provide more in-depth and sustainable support for individuals (Worthington, 2013). Research results show that effective counseling requires a comprehensive approach (Richards & Bergin, 2005), including regular evaluation and continued support.

c. Addressing questions about religious beliefs in society

Kudus Regency Religious Counselor consultation services through spiritual counseling in dealing with questions about religious beliefs in the community are carried out by creating a supportive environment where people feel comfortable to ask questions about religious beliefs and determine community needs and concerns related to religious beliefs which are the focus of counseling.

For individuals who have specific questions or concerns about religious beliefs, Kudus District Religious Counselors hold personal counseling sessions using an approach that is very sensitive to the diversity of religious beliefs and practices of the communities they work with. Meanwhile, to discuss general questions or sensitive issues regarding religious beliefs, Kudus Regency Religious Counselors held Discussion Group Sessions. This activity is carried out to provide education regarding religious values and the main principles that shape the beliefs of the assisted communities.

Optimizing the consultation services for Kudus Regency Religious Counselors through spiritual counseling in addressing questions about religious beliefs in society emphasizes the importance of tolerance and respect for the diversity of religious beliefs in Kudus Regency. This effort is carried out in order to build a platform for positive dialogue and mutual understanding between religious communities in the assisted communities. To equip the community with the skills to dialogue and understand each other's religious beliefs, Kudus Regency Religious Counselors hold interfaith skills training by encouraging active community participation in activities that promote religious understanding and tolerance.

For those seeking meaning in their religious beliefs Kudus Regency Religious Counselors provide personal guidance. This activity is carried out to help individuals respond to doubts or internal conflicts related to religious beliefs in society. In addition, Kudus Regency Religious Counselors also

provide online educational resources which include articles, videos and educational resources regarding various religious beliefs. To convey information and answer questions from the wider community, Kudus Regency Religious Counselors also use webinars and podcasts. To support community questions and concerns regarding religious beliefs, Kudus Regency Religious Counselors collaborate with local religious institutions. Efforts to provide a deeper understanding Kudus Regency Religious Counselors provide spiritual support together with religious leaders

To evaluate the effectiveness and relevance of Kudus Regency Religious Extension service activities. Collect feedback from the assisted community, make program adjustments based on feedback and the actual needs of the community. Optimizing Kudus Regency Religious Counselor consultation services through spiritual counseling in addressing questions about religious beliefs in the community, launching a campaign that promotes understanding, brotherhood and inter-religious cooperation and organizing joint events to celebrate the similarity and diversity of religious beliefs in the community.

Optimizing consultation services through Spiritual Guidance in the Kudus community can be done through various strategies, namely:

- 1) Religious instructors need to be equipped with comprehensive training covering theology, religious psychology and communication techniques. This will increase their capacity to provide effective guidance.
- 2) The use of information technology, such as social media and mobile applications, can expand the reach of consulting services. This technology allows religious instructors to provide guidance more widely and efficiently.
- 3) Religious instructors need to collaborate with various institutions, including the government and religious organizations, to ensure the services provided are in accordance with existing policies and programs.

- 4) This approach involves active religious instructors in the community to understand existing problems and provide appropriate solutions.

The results of research on optimizing consultation services through spiritual guidance by religious instructors in overcoming religious problems in the Kudus community have important implications for the development of science and research policy. In terms of scientific development, these findings can enrich the literature regarding holistic approaches in spiritual guidance, highlighting the effectiveness of spiritual consultation methods in resolving religious conflicts and problems. From a policy perspective, the results of this research can encourage policymakers to design more comprehensive training programs for religious instructors, ensuring they are equipped with relevant and in-depth consultation skills. In addition, this research can also be the basis for developing policies that support the integration of spiritual guidance services in community welfare programs, ensuring that spiritual support becomes an integral part of social services at the community level.

D. Conclusion

Optimization of the consultation services for Kudus Regency Religious Counselors in the Development of the Islamic Community is carried out in the form of spiritual counseling to the assisted communities to help them overcome spiritual crises, moral conflicts, or questions about religious beliefs in the Kudus community. Optimizing consultation services through Spiritual Guidance in the Kudus community can be done through various strategies, namely: (1) Religious instructors need to be equipped with comprehensive training including theology, religious psychology and communication techniques. This will increase their capacity to provide effective guidance. (2) The use of information technology, such as social media and mobile applications, can expand the reach of consulting services. This technology allows religious instructors to provide guidance more widely and efficiently. (3) Religious instructors need to collaborate with various

institutions, including the government and religious organizations, to ensure that the services provided are in accordance with existing policies and programs. (4) This approach involves active religious instructors in the community to understand existing problems and provide appropriate solutions. It is recommended that the training program for Religious Counselors be improved, with a focus on counseling skills and a deep understanding of the social and cultural dynamics of the Kudus community.

In terms of scientific development, these findings can enrich the literature regarding holistic approaches in spiritual guidance, highlighting the effectiveness of spiritual consultation methods in resolving religious conflicts and problems. From a policy perspective, the results of this research can encourage policymakers to design more comprehensive training programs for religious instructors, ensuring they are equipped with relevant and in-depth consultation skills. In addition, this research can also be the basis for developing policies that support the integration of spiritual guidance services in community welfare programs, ensuring that spiritual support becomes an integral part of social services at the community level. For further research regarding the optimization of consultation services through spiritual guidance by religious instructors in overcoming religious problems in the Kudus community, it is recommended to explore more deeply the various factors that influence the effectiveness of spiritual guidance, such as the instructor's educational background, the approach used, and institutional support.

REFERENCES

- Adam, M., & Junaidi, J. (2022). Peranan Penyuluh Agama Islam Non Pns dalam Meningkatkan Motivasi Ibadah Majelis Taklim Al Kahfi Mandar Salurihan. *Alhaqiqah: Jurnal Komunikasi Dan Penyiaran Islam*, 3(2), 38–47.
- Al-Qaradawi, Y. (1999). *The Lawful and the Prohibited in Islam*. Islamic Book Trust.
- Bastomi, H. (2019a). Belajar Toleransi Di Pondok Pesantren Gontor Ponorogo. *Edudeena: Journal of Islamic Religious Education*, 3 (1), 57–71.
- Bastomi, H. (2019b). Konseling Cyber: Sebuah Model Konseling Pada Konteks Masyarakat Berbasis Online. *Konseling Edukasi: Journal of Guidance and Counselling*, 3, No. 1, 19–36.
- Bastomi, H. (2020a). Optimization Of Religious Extension Role In Covid-19 Pandemic. *Journal of Advanced Guidance and Counseling*, 1 No. 2, 157–179. <https://doi.org/10.21580/jagc.2020.1.2.6032>
- Bastomi, H. (2020b). PERBANDINGAN SIKAP EMPATI MAHASISWA SEBAGAI CALON KONSELOR BERDASARKAN ANALISIS GENDER. *Ghaidan: Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling Islam & Kemasyarakatan*, 4 (2), 64–75.
- Bastomi, H., & Aji, M. A. S. (2018). Konseling Rational Emotif Behaviour Theraphy (Rebt)-Islami (Sebuah Pendekatan Integrasi Keilmuan). *KONSELING EDUKASI: Journal Of Guidance And Counseling*, 2, No 2, 25–45. <https://doi.org/10.21043/konseling.v2i2.4465>
- Bastomi, H., Sugiyo, Sutoyo, A., & Awalya. (2022). Implementation of Cyber Counseling in Higher Education Through the My Counselor Application. *Jurnal International Conference*, 8, 709–714.
- Budiman, H. (2017). Kesadaran beragama pada remaja islam. *Al-Tadzkiyyah: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam*, 6(1), 16–26.
- Cohen, S., & Wills, T. A. (1985). Stress, social support, and the buffering hypothesis. *Psychological Bulletin*, 98(2), 310–357.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.
- Fehring, R. J., Brennan, P. F., & Keller, M. L. (1987). Psychological and spiritual

-
- well-being in college students. *Research in Nursing & Health*, 10(6), 391–398.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/nur.4770100607>
- Fukuyama, M. A., & Sevig, T. D. (1997). Spiritual Issues in Counseling: A New Course. *Counselor Education and Supervision*, 36(3), 233–244.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6978.1997.tb00391.x>
- Gopin, M. (2000). *Between Eden and Armageddon: The Future of World Religions, Violence, and Peacemaking*. Oxford University Press.
- Hamdani, M. (2020). Strategi Da'wah Penyuluh Agama Dalam Pembinaan Masyarakat:(Studi Analisis Strategi Penyuluh Agama di Kemenag Kab. Bireuen). *Jurnal Al-Mizan*, 7(1), 1–17.
- Hardelina, N. (2009). *Konsultasi Keagamaan Dalam Menghadapi Masalah Remaja Di Radio Mustang 88, 0 Fm Jakarta*. Universitas Islam Negeri Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.
- House, J. S. (1981). *Work Stress and Social Support*. Addison-Wesley.
- Huberman, A. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis a methods sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks, SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Ilham, I. (2018). Peranan Penyuluh Agama Islam dalam Dakwah. *Alhadharah: Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah*, 17(33), 49–80.
- Imaduddin, A. (2017). Spiritualitas dalam konteks konseling. *Journal of Innovative Counseling: Theory, Practice, and Research*, 1(01), 1–8.
- Jaya, P. H. I. (2017). Revitalisasi Peran Penyuluh Agama Dalam Fungsinya Sebagai Konselor Dan Pendamping Masyarakat. *KONSELING RELIGI: Jurnal Bimbingan Konseling Islam*, 8(2).
- Juningsih, H., Awad, F. B., Ikhsan, M., & Fauziah, S. (2022). Peran Penyuluh Agama Islam dalam Membina Kerukunan Antar-Organisasi Masyarakat Islam di Kecamatan Kambu Kendari. *Gunung Djati Conference Series*, 14, 168–174.
- Kadir, A. (2017). Peran Penyuluh Agama Dalam Peningkatan Kerukunan Umat Beragama Di Kabupaten Mamuju. *MIMIKRI*, 3(1), 91–100.
- Kusnawan, A. (2017). Urgensi Penyuluhan Agama Islam. *Ilmu Dakwah: Academic Journal for Homiletic Studies*, 5(17).
-

<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.15575/idajhs.v5i17.367>

- Ma'luf, F. (2015). *Metode Penyuluhan Agama Islam Dalam Pembinaan Akhlak Narapidana Di LP Wanita Kelas II A Semarang*. Institut Agama Islam Negeri Walisongo Semarang.
- Mazid, S., Rumawi, R., Prabowo, W., & Hakim, S. (2021). Peran penyuluh agama islam dalam pelayanan pembangunan mental spiritual masyarakat di era pandemi covid 19. *Journal of Public Administration and Local Governance*, 5(1), 76–89.
- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*. Jossey-Bass.
- Mu'awanah, E., & Hidayah, R. (2012). *Bimbingan Konseling Islami Di Sekolah Dasar*. Bumi Aksara.
- Munandar, A., & Mugiarto, H. (2017). Implementasi Layanan Konsultasi Bimbingan Dan Konseling Di SMK Negeri Se-Kota Semarang. *Indonesian Journal of Guidance and Counseling: Theory and Application*, 6(2), 58–63.
- Muro, J. J., & Kottman, T. (1995). *Guidance and counseling in the elementary and middle schools: A practical approach*. Brown & Benchmark.
- Nabilah, N. A., & Darmaningrum, K. T. (2023). PERAN PENYULUH AGAMA DALAM KEHIDUPAN MASYARAKAT MARGINAL. *Jurnal Bimbingan Penyuluhan Islam*, 5(2), 198–212.
- Neukrug, E. S., & Milliken, T. (2011). Counselors' perceptions of ethical behaviors. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 89(2), 206–216.
- Nurihsan, A. J. (2011). *Bimbingan dan Konseling dalam Berbagai Latar Kehidupan*. Refika Aditama.
- Nurkholis, N., Istifianah, I., & Rahman, A. S. (2020). Peran Penyuluh Agama dalam Program Desa Binaan Keluarga Sakinah Di Desa Dlingo. *Nuansa Akademik: Jurnal Pembangunan Masyarakat*, 5(1), 25–36.
- Nurlaela, E. (2023). Peranan Penyuluh Agama dalam Dakwah Moderat. *Jurnal Al-Azhary*, 9(1).
- Nurulita, N. (2021). *Penyuluhan Agama Di Era Digital*. Lekkas.

-
- Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V. A., & Berry, L. L. (1988). SERVQUAL: A multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 64(1), 12–40.
- Pepi, S. (2016). Penyuluh Agama dan Isu Kerukunan Antar Umat Beragama di Kota Palu. *Al-Qalam*, 22(2).
- Peter, S., & Salim, Y. (1991). *Kamus bahasa Indonesia kontemporer*. Modern English.
- Prayitno. (2012). *Jenis Layanan dan Kegiatan Pendukung Konseling*. UNP Perss.
- Prayitno, & Amti, E. (2013). *Dasar-Dasar Bimbingan Dan Konseling*. Rineka Cipta.
- Rest, J. R., Narvaez, D., Bebeau, M. J., & Thoma, S. J. (1999). *Postconventional Moral Thinking: A Neo-Kohlbergian Approach*. Psychology Press.
- Richards, P. S., & Bergin, A. E. (2005). *A Spiritual Strategy for Counseling and Psychotherapy*. American Psychological Association.
- Ridho, K. (2014). *Dalam Penyuluhan Agama Islam Dengan Pendekatan Berbasis kelompok terhadap residen dalam pemulihan ketergantungan narkoba di Balai Besar Rehabilitasi BNN Lido Bogor Jawa Barat*. UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2014.
- Rofiqi, M. A. (2019). Relevansi Agama Dan Spiritual Dalam Konseling. *JCOSE Jurnal Bimbingan Dan Konseling*, 1(2), 61–71.
- Romly, A. M. (2001). *Penyuluhan agama menghadapi tantangan baru*. Bina Rena Pariwara.
- Sanders, M. R., & Turner, K. M. (2005). Reflections on the challenges of effective dissemination of behavioural family intervention: Our experience with the Triple P-Positive Parenting Program. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 10(4), 158–169.
- Shetzer. (1985). *Fundamental of Guidance*. Houghton Company.
- Silviana, M. (2014). *Dampak Penyuluhan Agama Islam Dengan Pendekatan Berbasis Kelompok Terhadap Residen Dalam Pemulihan Ketergantungan Narkoba di Balai Besar Rehabilitasi BNN Lido Bogor Jawa Barat*. UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta.
- Smith, C., & Denton, M. L. (2005). *Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers*. Oxford University Press.

- Smith, C., & Schreiber, M. (2005). Religion and the Mediation of Conflict. *Journal of Peace Research*, 42(3), 289–306.
- Stark, R., & Glock, C. Y. (1970). *American piety: The nature of religious commitment* (Vol. 1). Univ of California Press.
- Sukmawati, N. E. (2012). *Peranan Penyuluh Agama Islam dalam Meningkatkan Mutu Pendidikan Keberagaman Anak Di Desa Lassa-Lassa Kecamatan Bontolempangan Kabupaten Gowa*. UIN Alauddin Makassar.
- Tohirin. (2013). *Bimbingan dan Konseling di Sekolah dan Madrasah*. PT Raja Grafindo.
- Treviño, L. K., & Nelson, K. A. (2011). *Managing Business Ethics: Straight Talk about How to Do It Right*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Walsh, F. (2002). *Strengthening family resilience*. Guilford Press.
- Winkel, W., & Hastuti, S. (2010). *Bimbingan dan Konseling di Institut Pendidikan*. Media Abadi.
- Worthington, E. L. J. (2013). *Christian Counseling: A Comprehensive Guide*. Tyndale House Publishers.
- Wuthnow, R. (2003). Studying Religion, Making It Sociological. *Review of Religious Research*, 45(4), 341–354.
- Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications* (Vol. 6). Sage Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Zeithaml, V. A., Berry, L. L., & Parasuraman, A. (1990). *Delivering Quality Service: Balancing Customer Perceptions and Expectations*. Free Press.
- Ziaulhaq, W. (2022). Pelaksanaan Bimbingan Penyuluh Agama Islam Kepada Masyarakat Dengan Menggunakan Bahasa Agama di Kabupaten Langkat. *Formosa Journal of Science and Technology*, 1(2), 85–96.