Strategic Management of Hybrid Counseling: A Novel Approach to Addressing Quarter-Life Crisis Among University Students in Indonesia

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Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the Hibryd Counseling Service (Islamic counselling) strategy to effectively prevent Quarter Life Crisis and prepare students who become agents of change for a better direction in college. Using interview, observation, and documentation methods, this study seeks to obtain data on the phenomenon of quarter-life crisis and the new approach. The data sources include critical stakeholders in the guidance and counselling laboratory. Data analysis was carried out through data transcription, coding, and categorization. The study results indicate that Islamic counselling is valuable in guiding individuals to overcome quarter-life crises by aligning psychological and spiritual aspects. Islamic counselling significantly contributes to helping individuals overcome quarter-life crises with a holistic approach involving spiritual, psychological, and social factors. Integrating Islamic values in counselling forms a solid framework to support young individuals facing life challenges. These findings provide important insights related to the effectiveness of the Islamic counselling approach in overcoming quarter-life crises through the integration of spiritual, psychological, and social values.

Keywords: *Strategy Management, Hybrid Counseling, Quarter Life Crisis, Spiritual*

Abstrak:

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis tentang strategi Layanan Hibryd Conceling (konseling Islami) dapat secara efektif mencegah Quarter Life Crisis untuk mempersiapkan mahasiswa yang menjadi agen perubahan ke arah yang lebih baik di perguruan tinggi. Dengan menggunakan metode wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi, penelitian ini berupaya untuk mendapatkan data tentang fenomena quarter-life krisis dan pendekatan baru tersebut. Sumber datanya meliputi para pemangku kepentingan utama di laboratorium bimbingan konseling. Analisis data dilakukan melalui proses transkripsi, pengodean, dan kategorisasi data. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pendekatan konseling Islami memberikan kontribusi yang berharga dalam membimbing individu mengatasi quarter life crisis dengan menyelaraskan aspek-aspek psikologis dan spiritual. konseling Islami memberikan kontribusi yang berarti dalam membantu individu mengatasi quarter life crisis dengan pendekatan holistik yang melibatkan aspek spiritual, psikologis, dan sosial. Integrasi nilai-nilai Islam dalam proses konseling membentuk kerangka kerja yang kokoh untuk mendukung individu muda dalam menghadapi tantangan hidup mereka. Temuan ini memberikan wawasan tentang memberikan wawasan penting terkait efektivitas

pendekatan konseling Islami dalam mengatasi *quarter life crisis* melalui integrasi nilai-nilai spiritual, psikologis, dan sosial.

Kata Kunci: *Manajemen Strategi, Hybrid Counseling, Quarter Life Crisis, Spiritual*

INTRODUCTION

The critical period, known as the "quarter-life crisis", is a condition where many individuals are confronted with existential questions about their identity, life goals, and the values underlying their decisions. This crisis typically occurs between the ages of approximately 20 and 30, when individuals feel trapped between social expectations, work pressures, and the search for meaning in life. In psychological terms, the quarter-life crisis is often marked by anxiety, depression, and feelings of insecurity (Fatchurrahmi & Urbayatun, 2022). Amidst this turmoil, various efforts are made by experts who sympathize with the condition. This can be seen in counselling services in various educational institutions, mainly formal ones. The existence of counselling services within the scope of formal educational institutions has become one of the appropriate solutions to anticipate the development of the quarter-life crisis among teenagers. Initially, counselling services were conventional, focusing on mental, behavioural, and cognitive aspects (Hayes & Hofmann, 2021; Stein et al., 2022). However, nowadays, various developments in services and counselling can be found, one of which is Islamic counselling services. Islamic counselling services have become an urgent necessity in helping individuals overcome these challenges and find a more meaningful direction in life. In this context, Islamic counselling services seek to guide individuals in finding the best solutions to their problems by drawing closer to Allah SWT. The prominent presence of Islamic religious values distinguishes conventional counselling services from Islamic counselling services.

According to Robbins and Wilner, the quarter-life crisis is an individual's reaction to instability caused by constant change, too many choices, and anxiety and helplessness in facing various aspects of life. Afnan, Fauzia, and Tanau (2020) suggest that the Quarter-life crisis reflects an individual's journey towards the reality of life, which is full of instability, change, numerous choices, and panic due to future uncertainty. The Quarter Life Crisis is characterized by confusion in determining life direction and anxiety about the future. This is a transitional phase from adolescence to young adulthood, where individuals feel the heavy responsibility of accepting available choices with total commitment. The Quarter Life Crisis is often experienced by individuals in their twenties, characterized by confusion in facing situations that do not meet their expectations (Nugraha et al., 2023). Aristawati et al. (2021) mention that during this period, individuals often experience fear and anxiety about the future, especially regarding careers, relationships, and social life. Atwon & Scholtz, as cited in a study titled "The Relationship between Self-Efficacy and Quarter-Life Crisis in Psychology Students at Medan Area University," indicate that the quarter-life crisis involves feelings of helplessness, self-doubt, isolation, and anxiety about future failure (Malureanu et al., 2021). Thus, it can be understood that this crisis will be experienced by teenagers transitioning into adulthood.

The Quarter Life Crisis arises from significant personal changes from adolescence to early adulthood. Factors contributing to the crisis at this stage include numerous concerns and choices resulting in feelings of helplessness and anxiety (Mofatteh, 2021). Stressors triggering the Quarter Life Crisis include identity confusion, challenges in the workplace and career, dissatisfaction in romantic relationships, feelings of insecurity and worries about the future, disappointment with various aspects, and pressure from others' expectations. In an article citing the views of Robbins and Wilner, it is understood that the sources of stress triggering a quarter-life crisis include identity confusion, challenges in the workplace and career, dissatisfaction in romantic relationships, insecurity, concerns about the future, disappointment, and pressure from others' expectations (Lestari et al., 2022). Overall, the quarter-life crisis reflects individuals' challenges when entering early adulthood. Instability, uncertainty, and pressure from various aspects of life can trigger this crisis (Hasyim et al., 2024). Acknowledging the existence of the quarter-life crisis can help individuals understand and manage the stress associated with this phase and seek appropriate solutions to overcome uncertainty and achieve balance in their lives.

Based on a survey conducted by the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia in 2018, the number of adolescents with mental disorders increased to 9.8% from around 6% in 2013 (Bintang & Mandagi, 2021). This condition experienced a significant increase during the COVID-19 pandemic, reaching 19% (Iqbal & Rizqulloh, 2020). If this condition continues to be left unaddressed, various issues will arise. Meanwhile, the current task for adolescents is to prepare themselves to become a brilliant generation in the future. The phenomenon typically occurs around the age of 25, making it likely for university students to experience it. For instance, students in the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education at PGRI Mahadewa University of Indonesia are affected. This crisis is often driven by concerns about the future, especially regarding employment prospects. The large number of teaching graduates, coupled with the shrinking number of teaching vacancies, has contributed to the spread of the quarter-life crisis among students (Karpika & Segel, 2021). In another study, it was found that university graduates in Manado are also experiencing this crisis. The causes of the phenomenon remain similar, mainly related to future careers and family relationships (Pongantung et al., 2022). If this situation is not addressed, it could lead to various issues. Meanwhile, young people today must prepare themselves to become a promising generation for the future.

The Government makes various efforts to address mental health issues. One of the Government's efforts can be seen in the implementation of Law Number 18 of 2014 concerning mental health. This regulation provides detailed provisions regarding the understanding of mental health. As stated in Article 3, the Government explicitly ensures optimal mental health services for every citizen, both for Individuals with Mental Health Problems (ODMK) and Individuals with Mental Disorders (ODGJ) (Amalita et al., 2020). In several other articles, the Government also explains the rights that must be received by every person with mental disorders, as outlined in Article 70. The existence of these regulations indicates that individuals with mental health disorders also have the right to

opportunities to live normally again and be accepted in Indonesian society (Yustina et al., 2020). This is also in line with the findings of the research cited in an article titled "Implementation of the Sahdzan Concept (Patience and Positive Assumption) as Efforts for Mental Health Care During the Covid-19 Pandemic" (Ross et al., 2020). According to the results of this research, the presence of patience within individuals is believed to be one of the treatments to maintain human mental health. Thus, from this explanation, it can be understood that mental health must be continuously addressed, one of which is through Islamic counselling.

Islamic counselling is an effort to support individuals in strengthening or returning to their fitrah (natural disposition) by strengthening faith and reason. Allah SWT will bestow it, and understanding the teachings of Allah and His Messenger will help develop the fitrah through Islamic teachings. Islamic counselling provides guidance, teaching, and client guidance in developing their intellectual, spiritual, and emotional potential and addressing life problems concerning the Qur'an and Hadith. The primary approach is the lecture method, where the counsellor provides explanations and presentations to several clients at specific times and locations. Although this method effectively conveys information, clients need more room to express their creativity. Steps in using the lecture method include preparation (formulating objectives, determining materials, and preparing aids) and implementation (opening, presenting material, and redirecting back to the material) (Aras & Arhas, 2022).

This study outlines the best ways to address the quarter-life crisis, especially among students. So far, writings about quarter-life crises have been limited to concepts about quarter-life crises, crisis forms, and conventional psychological approaches to dealing with crises. This article provides a different nuance in discussing the crisis in the quarter-life by outlining the implementation of Islamic counselling and illustrating how this approach can be a source of inspiration and support for individuals going through this critical phase. Some articles only discuss the introduction of the Quarter Life Crisis, which portrays the Quarter Life Crisis as a psychological phenomenon involving anxiety, uncertainty, and confusion among individuals in their twenties to early thirties. In this context, literature shows that this crisis is psychological and has significant spiritual dimensions.

There are also studies discussing the role of counsellors in addressing the Quarter Life Crisis. This literature highlights the role of Islamic counsellors as spiritual leaders and guides who can provide profound insights into Islamic teachings in everyday life. Islamic counsellors have a responsibility to help individuals bridge the gap between worldly concerns and their spiritual needs. Furthermore, there are studies discussing the causes of the Quarter Life Crisis. According to this article, one of the leading causes of the increasing number of adolescents with mental disorders is concerns about the future. These concerns trigger the term quarter-life crisis (Salsabila, 2021).

On the other hand, the increasing number of mental health problems among adolescents is also caused by several factors, such as social, academic, and other environmental factors. From the literature above, a study that outlines the strategic management of Islamic counselling used to address student crises has not

yet been found. As it is known, crises in the form of mental and psychological disorders continue to increase from year to year.

Based on this, this research aims to analyze the strategic management of Islamic counseling in addressing Quarter-Life Crises among students in Indonesia. Implementing Islamic counselling is analyzed based on the causes of student crises, forms of Islamic counselling, and strategies. This research focuses on the strategic and methodological aspects carried out by counselors in addressing student crisis problems in East Java.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research reveals data on the strategies for managing Islamic counselling during the Quarter of Life Crisis in Islamic universities. The study also uncovers data on the factors that efficiently cause crises among students at the researched site. Therefore, to obtain this data and because the research focus involves "the process of an event," the study is approached qualitatively. Additionally, the data needed in this research is holistic phenomena (comprehensive and inseparable). This is because it encompasses the entire social situation that interacts synergistically. Hence, in-depth and natural observations are required to uncover the research focus, as mentioned above.

To determine critical informants, the first informant selected should have specific, informative knowledge, be close to the situation that is the locus and focus of the research, and have a special status. Based on this, the first informants selected for this study include the head of the counselling laboratory, laboratory assistants, students, and educational staff in the laboratory. All informants mentioned are considered to have directly experienced or are experiencing the phenomenon under study. They are selected through criterion-based sampling.

In data collection, the researcher utilized in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document study. These in-depth interviews were conducted with heads or managers of counselling services, counsellors, counselling lab assistants, and clients. During the interviews, the researcher recorded the results in two ways. Firstly, the researcher took notes of all the interview outcomes during the interview process. Secondly, the researcher recorded the interview contents (mobile phone) to ensure the accuracy of the interview results. After the interviews, the researcher created interview transcripts based on the written and recorded interview results and confirmed them with the interviewed informants (member check). The second method involved observation. Observation aimed to obtain data related to what was done by the head of the laboratory, laboratory assistants, staff, and students (cultural behaviour) and what was created and used (cultural artifact) by the informants in strategically managing Islamic counselling. The third method involved documentary study. This method strengthens and adds to evidence from interviews and observations. Documents examined included laboratory profiles, counselling activity documents, student data documents, information counselling websites, administrative documents, and others.

In the data analysis stage, the researcher followed the transcription procedure, which involved transcribing the interview data into Indonesian. It was

expected that transcription could be done after each interview was completed. Next was coding and categorization. After reading or sorting out the recording data in the transcripts, observation field notes, and documents, they were coded into categories to create descriptions and broad themes. Categories were based on themes that emerged during the coding process, termed inductive codes by Miles and Huberman. However, as a general guideline for coding, main categories were initially created according to some propositions (conceptual framework), termed a priori codes by Miles. These main categories encompassed aspects related to the research focus. Finally, the data were presented and concluded with the formulation of conclusions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

During the transition to adulthood, many individuals face a crisis often referred to as the "quarter life crisis." This crisis emerges when individuals are in their twenties to early thirties, where they experience confusion, anxiety, and uncertainty about their life goals, careers, relationships, and existential meaning. The quarter-life crisis is not merely a psychological symptom but also encompasses significant spiritual dimensions. Therefore, counselling approaches that integrate modern psychological principles and Islamic values can be relevant and meaningful solutions. Similarly, in addressing the crisis among students at UIN Malang, efforts are made to combine modern psychology and Islamic teachings.

Counselling refers to providing advice or guidance directly to one another and can also be explained as giving advice or direction (Azwar et al., 2022). Counselling is assistance from an expert called a counsellor to individuals facing problems (clients) to overcome those problems (Eseadi, 2023). Counselling is a professional service aimed at helping individuals function well by addressing personal, emotional, or psychological issues. It involves a structured process where a counsellor, using specific skills and theories, provides support and guidance to individuals in overcoming their challenges and improving their overall well-being (Guidi et al., 2021). To effectively achieve counselling that meets needs, strategic management is required.

Effective Factors Influencing Crisis Among Students
Identity Exploration

The causes of quarter-life crises are internal and external (Hasyim et al., 2024). One of the external factors is identity exploration, which involves the search for personal identity and self-understanding. During this phase, students from Gen-Z have become reliant on technology, as social media amplifies opportunities for self-expression while also increasing the risk of unfavourable social comparisons, leading to heightened anxiety and insecurity. The research findings indicate that the psychological effects of social media show that idealized portrayals of others can worsen self-doubt and hinder the development of a healthy identity.

Ms Rika, the head of counselling services at the Faculty of Psychology, said, "Quarter-life crises are common among adolescents transitioning into adulthood, like university students. They often experience anxiety about their lives,

particularly regarding their identity. Many teenagers feel uncertain about their place in the world, which leads them to seek Information or experiment with different things in the hopes of finding what suits them in the future. Information spreads rapidly nowadays, and if not managed properly, it can backfire and have negative consequences for the individual" (Rika, Inter. 1).

The symptoms of anxiety and panic described in the data align with research on quarter-life crises, where external pressures stemming from technology, especially social media, can lead to psychological stress (Lai dkk., 2023). In this context, hybrid counselling offers a flexible and accessible way to address identity-related crises. This approach aligns with Bandura's social learning theory, highlighting the importance of observation and guidance in shaping behaviour (Mukhalalati et al., 2022). Through hybrid counselling, parents, educators, and counsellors can proactively intervene to help individuals navigate the digital world constructively.

Relationship, Education, Career

The external factors influencing the quarter-life crisis, such as family relationships, friendships, romantic relationships, education, and career concerns, align with Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, which posits that young adults face significant challenges in forming intimate relationships and establishing their careers (Nusser et al., 2023). It is challenging, especially since the current generation is dubbed the strawberry generation. "Like strawberries that easily rot, the problems faced by students (adolescents) also add to the burden of issues that teenagers must resolve" (Rika, Inter. 2). The term "strawberry generation" is used because today's teenagers are likened to strawberries. The fruit appears exotic and catches attention, but when it falls when picked, it gets scratched and leaves marks because of its soft, flexible, and easily perishable nature (Rahayu, 2023).

This condition is similar to the current generation, which seems easily discouraged, lazy, indecisive, self-centred, and seeks instant gratification. As a result, the quarter-life crisis among adolescents has worsened with the introduction of this label. Although these are fundamental issues, they can avoid becoming sources of future problems if not addressed efficiently. This phenomenon suggests that hybrid counselling can help adolescents in Indonesia manage external stressors. Such counselling enables them to explore these aspects of life with the necessary support, thereby reducing the emotional burden caused by external factors. This aligns with previous research on the growing role of digital tools in mental health interventions, particularly among tech-savvy youth, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic (Feijt et al., 2023). This will provide a flexible solution that can be implemented and adapted to the needs of this generation.

Hybrid Counseling as an Effective Approach in Crisis Resolution

After identifying appropriate strategies to address the quarter-life crisis among students, the next crucial step is formulating an effective strategy. This is essential because the chosen approach will determine the success of counselling

services in helping students manage their crises. One promising strategy is implementing hybrid counselling, which combines traditional and digital methods. This approach allows for a more comprehensive alignment of techniques and principles, addressing the quarter-life crisis more effectively.

Hybrid counselling also enables the integration of modern psychology with spiritual values, such as Islamic teachings, offering a balanced approach to supporting individuals. This integration helps students understand their challenges and find meaningful solutions. By employing strategic management within hybrid counselling, counsellors can guide individuals through this critical transition more effectively, providing them with clear pathways to personal growth.

The Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT) Based Therapeutic Approach

This approach is instrumental in addressing the quarter-life crisis by modifying unproductive thought patterns and behaviours. CBT techniques, such as cognitive restructuring, positive reinforcement, and systematic desensitization, are designed to help individuals overcome psychological barriers and develop healthier coping mechanisms. This approach aligns with the principles of addressing identity confusion and anxiety, where maladaptive thought patterns can exacerbate feelings of insecurity and distress (Sirois, 2023). By targeting these thought patterns, CBT provides a structured method for managing the emotional turmoil often experienced during this transitional period.

Rofiqoh, as a counsellor, states that "effective service provision involves three key elements: First, clients must show progress or change as a result of the services they receive. Second, counsellors need to develop self-awareness and personal growth, such as recognizing and overcoming their emotional challenges, to support clients better. Third, it is crucial to ensure high service satisfaction, meaning that the interventions should be impactful and clients should leave without any dissatisfaction with the services provided" (Rofiqoh, Inter. 01). Integrating these elements with CBT methods ensures that counsellors not only address cognitive distortions but also facilitate a supportive environment that promotes personal growth and satisfaction, aligning with the strategic objectives of modern therapeutic practices.

Moreover, counsellors' core skills, such as empathy, questioning, summarizing, and problem-solving, are vital for the efficacy of CBT in managing quarter-life crises. Empathy allows counsellors to connect deeply with clients, facilitating a better understanding of their experiences and fostering trust (Dermawan et al., 2022; Levitt et al., 2022; Wilcox et al., 2023). Strategic management, which involves planning and setting priorities, complements these counselling skills by providing a framework for organizing and evaluating therapeutic interventions (Ridley et al., 2021; Magill et al., 2022). Combining individual-focused counselling and strategic planning helps achieve holistic and effective outcomes, addressing the quarter-life crisis with a comprehensive approach that integrates cognitive-behavioural techniques with strategic therapeutic management.

Enhancing Empathy and Personalizing Services through the Screening Process

Screening is a critical stage in managing counselling services. So, counsellors should deepen their empathy skills through various methods, including training, self-reflection, and practical experience. This involves genuinely understanding and experiencing the client's feelings, emotions, and perspectives. By improving their empathy, counsellors can better grasp client needs, build strong relationships, and provide adequate support throughout the counselling process.

Counsellors emphasize that providing effective services involves strengthening empathy. According to Rofiqoh, "Counselors must believe that they are highly needed by clients, as leaving them unattended will worsen the situation. Counsellors must be motivated to provide services to anyone in need because it has been their responsibility since being assigned as counsellors and laboratory heads" (Rofiqoh, Inter. 01). This perspective aligns with recent research that highlights empathy as central to effective counselling, fostering a deep understanding of clients' experiences and perspectives (Winter et al., 2022; Ho, 2024).

At the Faculty of Psychology, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, clients undergo a screening stage to categorize their issues into three levels: light, medium, and high. This screening can be conducted online through the Website or offline through face-to-face interactions. This classification aims to match clients with the most suitable counsellors for their specific problems, allowing for more accurate identification and mapping of clients' issues according to these phases. The quarter-life crisis is divided into five phases (Aristawati et al., 2021), reflecting different difficulties and emotional challenges. In this regard, Based on observations and interviews in the field, Information was obtained that there are three levels of counselling at UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, which can be seen in Figure 1.
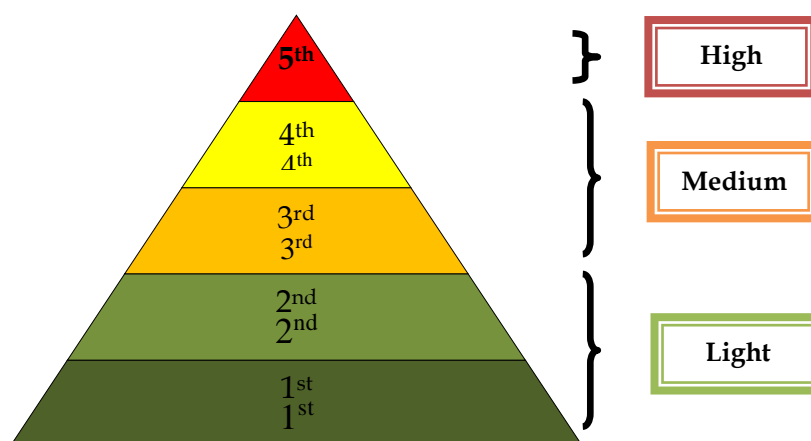

Figure 1 : Quarter Life Crisis Phases

Development of Brain Gym for Improving the Quality of Student Welfare

Counselling services at the Islamic campus environment of the Faculty of Psychology, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, have introduced innovations

by integrating psychological and Islamic values to provide relevant solutions. However, this approach is tailored to individual client needs since not all students choose religion-based solutions. As an alternative, the development of Brain Gym is proposed as a method to enhance inner peace and spiritual quality, which is expected to positively impact clients' physical, cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects.

Rika, the head of counselling services, explained several reasons for developing Brain Gym: "Brain Gym includes breathing exercises and physical activities. When these functions work well, such as blood circulation and oxygenation, it automatically leads to clearer thinking. With clear thinking, negative influences will dissipate, making one less susceptible to external pressures. Brain Gym affects not only physical health but also cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. It can regulate emotions, improve mood, and enhance focus and awareness. The counseling services at the Faculty of Psychology, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, have collaborated with a community that creates Brain Gym, making it an official part of the counselling services" (Rika, Interview 2). This aligns with previous research findings that advocate for integrating physical and cognitive interventions to support mental health (Song et al., 2023).

Counselling must integrate various methods to address the unique needs of individuals experiencing a quarter-life crisis (Septamara et al., 2022). Moreover, this hybrid counselling approach is specifically designed for students in Indonesia. Brain Gym is a series of movements that improve physical fitness and enhance brain function, allowing students to address issues independently before seeking additional help. These movements are associated with improved emotional quality, as adequate blood circulation helps control emotions and enhance mental clarity. Additionally, Brain Gym incorporates a spiritual dimension by including dhikr (remembrance of Allah) and recitation of Allah's name in its movements, aiming to keep Allah in one's thoughts during all human activities.

Development of Counselor Skills in Dealing with Difficult Clients

Counsellors at the Counseling Services of the Faculty of Psychology, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, aim to provide students with the best service and develop critical thinking skills and solution-oriented attitudes in each client. The counselling service strategy emphasizes continuous counsellor training (Fruetel et al., 2022). Their strategy involves the development of specific skills to deal with clients who have difficulty opening up. By acquiring experience, reflecting, and updating knowledge, counsellors can overcome these barriers and support students in resolving their problems. This is an essential step in enhancing the effectiveness of counselling services. In this regard, Rofiqoh, as a counsellor, emphasizes that dealing with clients who are challenging to open up to requires specialized skills from a counsellor.

The laboratory assistant at the counselling service in the Faculty of Psychology, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, mentioned that seminars are regularly conducted to enhance counsellor skills, following the set budget and schedule. A student, reflecting on their personal experience with the counselling services, shared that they had gone through a quarter-life crisis. In carrying out

their role, the counsellor must offer a service that fully satisfies the client's needs. The counsellor thoroughly addresses the issues to their core and helps find appropriate solutions. These solutions must be swift and accurate while ensuring the client feels comfortable, making it easier for them to understand their situation. (Client, Inter.3) The existence of counselling services at the Faculty of Psychology, UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, proves its benefits in helping students overcome quarter-life crises.

Clients stated that the counselling services provided are very effective in helping them overcome these problems. In interactions with counsellors, clients feel engaged in a non-boring question-and-answer process and comfortable with the counsellor's guidance in finding solutions independently. A client expressed that, as an individual with issues, the counsellor is a facilitator for the problems. (Client, Inter. 3) clients and counsellors engage in non-boring question-and-answer sessions throughout the counselling process. Clients feel that the responses provided by the counsellor are comforting. Through this question-and-answer process, the counsellor guides the client to find solutions independently. Therefore, the counsellor needs to provide instant solutions; instead, clients themselves must be able to find their solutions. This makes clients very enthusiastic, and their problems can be resolved promptly. The hybrid counselling approach has proven to enhance accessibility for students, particularly in the post-pandemic.

Islamic Counseling as Psychological Advising and Spiritual Guidance

As a campus that upholds Islamic religious values, UIN Malang has its uniqueness: providing mental and emotional support to address the quarter-life crisis. This integration aligns with findings in Malaysia that highlight the benefits of combining psychological and spiritual elements in counselling (Yusop et al., 2023). Islamic counselling employs techniques such as dhikr (remembrance of Allah), meditation, and prayer to support mental and emotional well-being. This holistic approach recognizes that overcoming crises requires addressing mental and spiritual dimensions. Islamic counselling emphasizes *hablumminallah*, which means that every challenge carries wisdom, and Allah is always present to guide His followers, especially those facing a crisis. This framework not only aids in navigating psychological difficulties but also fosters a deeper spiritual connection.

Islamic counselling addresses quarter-life crises by encouraging individuals to reflect on their beliefs, Islamic values, and their role as stewards on earth. This perspective expands beyond mere psychological support to include spiritual and moral guidance. Techniques such as *ta'awun* (collaboration), *istisharah* (consultation), and *tazkiyat al-nafs* (soul purification) are employed to help individuals apply Islamic principles in their daily lives. This integration of modern psychological methods with Islamic ethics, such as *ikhlas* (sincerity), *sabr* (patience), and *tawakkal* (trust in God), enables individuals to address psychological issues while remaining anchored in their faith. By aligning psychological support with spiritual growth, Islamic counselling provides a comprehensive framework for navigating life's challenges with resilience and clarity.

Research result indicates that individuals receiving Islamic counselling often experience enhanced psychological and spiritual well-being, enabling them to face life challenges with greater resilience and confidence. By viewing crises as tests from Allah, Islamic counselling provides a framework for developing mental and spiritual resilience. This approach supports individuals in self-reflection, finding purpose through religious teachings, and building meaningful relationships with themselves, others, and God. Integrating Islamic values into counselling addresses immediate psychological needs and fosters long-term spiritual growth and clarity (Pahlevi & Hafidz, 2024). So, the counselling services at the Faculty of Psychology at UIN Malang strive to provide solutions from mental clarity and spiritual tranquillity gained through drawing closer to Allah SWT as the source of solutions to life's challenges.

This research significantly contributes to the development of Islamic educational management by integrating a hybrid counselling approach that combines online and offline methods with strategic management principles. Theoretically, this study expands the understanding of how Islamic educational management can leverage modern technology and strategies to address psychological challenges such as the quarter-life crisis and how this integration can enhance counselling effectiveness within an academic context. The research presents a strategic model that Islamic educational institutions can implement to provide more flexible and adaptive counselling services, reaching students in a more effective and relevant manner in the digital age. By applying this strategy, Islamic educational institutions can better support academic and personal well-being and prepare students more effectively for future challenges.

CONCLUSION

This research highlights the significance of hybrid counselling, which combines online and offline methods, in addressing quarter-life crises among university students in Indonesia. The findings show that this innovative approach enhances the accessibility, flexibility, and effectiveness of counselling services, aligning well with the research objectives of providing comprehensive support for students facing psychological and emotional challenges during a critical phase of their lives. By integrating strategic management principles, the hybrid model offers psychological support and incorporates Islamic values, creating a holistic framework for student well-being.

The study successfully answers the research questions by demonstrating that hybrid counselling is a viable solution for managing quarter-life crises, with potential benefits for both the psychological and spiritual aspects of students' lives. The results also emphasize the importance of combining modern technology with traditional counselling methods to create an adaptive support system tailored to student needs. Given the novelty of this approach, further research is encouraged to explore its application on a larger scale and in diverse cultural contexts. Future studies could provide a more comprehensive understanding of its long-term effectiveness and adaptability across educational and cultural settings.

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