

## Religiosity of Counselor Candidates in Islamic Counseling: Study of Mixed Methods in Guidance and Counseling Department

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### Abstract

This research is motivated by religiosity or religious adherence to students as potential counselors in Islamic counseling courses. Religiosity affects how individuals view their problems and life at large. In Islamic counseling, religiosity is a mandatory requirement for counselor candidates to develop so that the counselor can transmit in Islamic counseling services. This research aims to study the religiosity of guidance and counseling students at UNNES. The research sample was taken purposively from students who were taking or had been taking Islamic counseling courses in the guidance and counseling department at UNNES with a total of 100 respondents. This study's data collection techniques include two techniques related to the data to be obtained, namely quantitative and qualitative data. The data collection technique for obtaining quantitative data uses a psychological scale. The religiosity scale in this study reveals how high student religiosity is. In addition, to obtain data accuracy to strengthen quantitative data, qualitative data is also needed, collected through a focused group discussion method with two students. The quantitative results showed that the level of spirituality of counselor candidates who took Islamic counseling courses was in the moderate category or was 71%. Meanwhile, the qualitative data shows that several things generally influence the students as candidate Islamic counselors in developing spirituality. These are faith (belief in Allah and pillars of faith), worship such as prayer, fasting, and reading the Al-Qur'an, and experiences such as remembering death, parental advice, and lecturers or listening to the holy verses of the Qur'an.

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## INTRODUCTION

The current paradigm of counseling development that prioritizes a person's potential for problem-solving rather than describing in-depth related problems is a strength-based intervention. So, before giving counselee potential-based intervention, a counselor is also required to maximize his potential to face various problems before giving intervention to the counselee. In positive psychology, one of the potential strengths of humans is religiosity or religiousity. It is one of the various positive human potentials naturally. So, every counselor candidate needs to know this as reference material to facilitate counseling services.

In the Guidance and Counseling Department of Universitas Negeri Semarang (UNNES), there is a religious counseling course that also explores Islamic counseling. Considering that most Indonesian citizens are Muslim, it is a challenge for every counselor candidate to provide excellent service, especially related to religiosity or religion. This paper is a reference in the development of Islamic counseling as an alternative to the current paradigm, namely a religious potential-based approach. This research is broadly motivated by students' religiosity/religious observance as potential counselors in the Islamic counseling course.

Religiosity is a person's attachment to specific religions and organizations (Salquist, Eisenbergh, French, Purwono & Suryanti, 2010). Religiosity shows commitment to religion shown by its adherents by having beliefs, values, and rituals related to their religion. For example, in Islam, adherents believe in heaven, hell, the last day and believe that life in this world is only temporary. In addition, Muslims are required to pray five times a day, fast in the month of Ramadan, and carry out the pilgrimage to the temple of Allah. Religiosity affects how individuals view their problems and life at large.

The side of religiosity has a dimension that cannot be reached by the human mind and mind, including solving problems. A survey in America said that 95% of professions in America believe in God. Then 60% said that religiosity is very important for their lives, followed by 62% believe that religion can answer almost all problems today (Richard and Bergin, 2006).

The role of religion in mental health is essential for mental health practitioners, including counselors. Affandi and Diah's (2011) findings show that religiosity can predict mental health with a capacity of 40.3%. In addition, Monfared (2015) reinforces a positive and significant relationship between religious attitudes and mental health. According to Lee (2012), religiosity is related to Psychological Well Being elements. Such as positive relationships with others, self-acceptance, and life goals. It means that the religiosity side plays a vital role in human life, leading to psychological well-being.

In Islamic counseling, religiosity is a mandatory requirement for counselor candidates to have and develop. A counselor can transmit the values of guidance in Islam, faith, and *ihsan* in Islamic counseling services. Islamic counseling is a form of counseling that incorporates spirituality into the therapeutic process. This type of integrative counseling aims to address various underlying psychological needs from a faith-based perspective. Islamic counseling emphasizes spiritual remedies based on love and fear of Allah and the obligation to fulfill our responsibilities as servants of Allah (Rassool, 2016).

Likewise, the counselor, in general, must exhibit general characteristics such as: having good psychological health; self-awareness; open-mindedness; have empathy; positive reception; authenticity, and harmony; does not justify; tolerance for ambiguity; cultural sensitivity and competence. However, according to Rassool (2016), Islamic counselors recognize Islamic values and address the spiritual-religious dimension in helping counselees. Thus, Islamic counselors should have a good level of religiosity and the processes required for being a student or Islamic counselor candidate.

The results of Rozikan's (2018) study entitled "Awakening the Moral of Religious Counselors in Higher Education" concluded that counselors in tertiary institutions should rely on moral religiosity. So that, the counselor can include religious values in a sensitive multicultural component so that strengthening cultural awareness is an essential thing in counseling.

In addition, the results of Sasmitho's (2018) research on "The Relationship between Religiosity and Self-Concept of the 2010 Student Guidance and Counseling Study Program" showed that religiosity with the self-concept of guidance and counseling students was positively and significantly related. It means that the religiosity side of the above research forms a self-concept as a guidance and counseling student or counselor candidate who also influences behavior.

In Rozikan's (2018) study, some of the studies mentioned above focus on the importance of moral religiosity of counselors to understand multicultural awareness, especially concerning the religion of the counselor and counselee, to create an exciting atmosphere in counseling. This research still has limitations in the study of the implementation of raising religious morals. There is no statement whether through academic activities in the classroom such as special courses in religious counseling or joining a community that can improve the morality of religiosity.

Sasmitho's research (2018) focuses on the relationship of religiosity about the self-concept of guidance and counseling students or counselor candidates. This research is still too broad in the scope of the religiosity variable because it has not led to one religion.

Therefore, this study aims to determine the religiosity of Islamic counselor candidates. Its criteria of having attended a religious counseling course at Semarang State University to maximize the potential or nature of counselor candidates themselves can then be used to develop the nature of the counselee through counseling services.

So, research is needed to thoroughly examine students' religiosity in following Islamic Guidance and Counseling courses. This research aims to study students' religiosity majoring in guidance and counseling at UNNES who are taking/have taken Islamic counseling courses and the factors that influence it.

## **METHOD**

The population in this study were Muslim students majoring in Guidance and Counseling UNNES. The sampling technique used was the purposive sampling technique. Researchers chose participants with this technique because the intended subjects were specific, namely Muslim UNNES Guidance and Counseling students who had attended religious counseling courses, a total of 100 students.

This type of research uses a combined type of research or mixed-method, a combination of quantitative and qualitative research approaches, including qualitative and quantitative research data in a single study (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009: 462).

The Mixed Method research design uses an Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design. This design allows collecting quantitative and qualitative information sequentially in two phases (Creswell, 2015). The design consists of first collecting quantitative data and then collecting qualitative data to help explain or elaborate on quantitative results (Creswell & Clark, 2007).

This study's data collection techniques include two techniques related to the data to be obtained, namely quantitative and qualitative data. The data collection technique for obtaining quantitative data is the psychological scale technique using a religiosity scale. The scale consists of 100 statement items to determine how high student religiosity is as an Islamic counselor candidate. This technique uses construct validity to measure accuracy based on variable theory, and reliability uses the Alpha Cronbach technique. Furthermore, to obtain data accuracy, especially quantitative

data, qualitative data is also needed, taken through the focused group discussion method to examine the factors that affect student spirituality.

The data analysis technique used in quantitative research uses descriptive percentage analysis, and qualitatively, the interviews will be analyzed using Miles and Huberman's analysis (Creswell, 2015; Herdiansyah, 2015).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive quantitative analysis is carried out by first determining the maximum value, minimum value, average value, and standard deviation of the religiosity variable. Furthermore, the maximum value, minimum value, average value, and standard deviation are in table 1 below.

**Table 1.** Maximum Score, Minimum Score, Average Grade, and Standard Deviation of the spirituality of the counselor candidate

Variable	Number of Respondents (N)	Maximum Score	Minimum Score	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)
Spirituality of counselor candidates	100	91	36	59.85	11.196

From table 1 above, the results obtained from the descriptive analysis of the spirituality level of counselor candidates to many 100 respondents had a maximum score of 91 while the minimum score was 36. The average value or mean obtained at 58.85. For standard deviation, the figure was 11,196. To identify the high and low levels of spirituality level of counselor candidates by calculating the average score with standard deviation. Here is how to determine the interval category according to (Hadi, 2015: 185) as follows:

(1) Determine the Highest Category Interval

Average Value + 1 Standard Deviation

$59.85 + 11,196 = 71,046$  (rounded to 71)

(2) Determine the Lowest Category Interval

Mean value - 1 Standard Deviation

$59.85 - 11,196 = 48,654$  (rounded to 49)

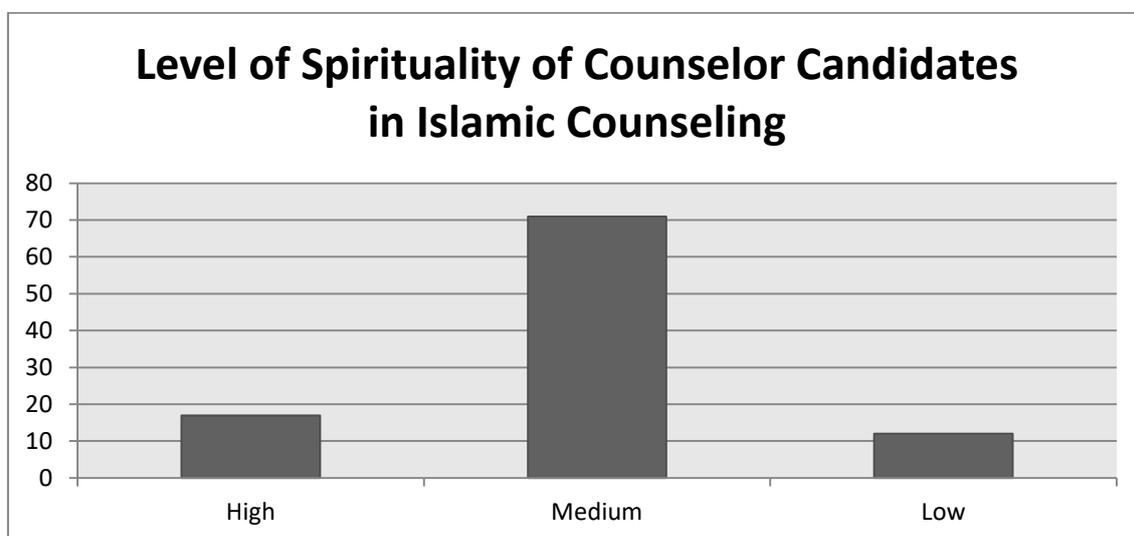
Based on the calculation of the highest and lowest category intervals obtained, then the overall data results regarding the spirituality of counselor candidates are categorized into three levels: high, medium, and low or less. The classification of the level of spirituality of counselor candidates in Islamic counseling practice presented in table 2:

**Table 2.** Classification of Levels of Spirituality of Counselor Candidates

Category	Amount	Percentage
High (> 71)	17	17%
Medium (49 – 71)	71	71%
Low (< 49)	12	12%

Based on table 2 above, the percentage level of spirituality level of Islamic counselor candidates obtained. For students with a high level of spirituality, counselor candidates with a score of > 71 are 17 students with a percentage of 17%. Furthermore, students with an average score for the spirituality level of counselor candidates, with a score of between 49-71 there were 71 students or

71%. Furthermore, for the level of spirituality of counselor candidates in the low category with a <49, there were 12 students or 12%. For more details, explained in diagram 1.



**Diagram 1** Level of Spirituality of Counselor Candidates in Islamic Counseling

Based on the results of the data analysis of research interviews conducted on two respondents, the factors that influence the level of spirituality of counselor candidates in developing spirituality influenced by three main factors. There are (1) faith (belief in God and pillars of faith), (2) worship, for example, praying, fasting, and reading the Qur'an, and (3) experiences such as remembering death, giving advice from parents and lecturers or listening to the holy verses of the Qur'an.

In the first aspect, faith (belief in God and pillars of faith), the exciting thing is that the two respondents stated that it is essential that counselor candidates have a good understanding and spirituality. "Yes, essential, because Allah is also influential, ma'am, in behavior, especially in turning the heart. Because technique alone is not enough and the power of Allah also influences it" (R1: 2-4). "In my opinion, it is crucial, ma'am, especially as humans who are born/have been gifted by God, especially in the sense that religion is something important, ma'am, it can never be separated from life. So, in my opinion, if God does not involve the guidance, it means that it will not materialize, so what is the purpose of guidance" (R2: 6).

However, although respondents stated the importance of good understanding and spirituality respondent, 2 acknowledged the existence of God. However, they still tolerated friends who came to the dukun as a community culture. "Yes, if possible, besides maybe asking but still involving God, we pray as well and maybe add to the effort, for example, asking the position/other parties, ma'am. The problem is not, it is confused if it is called a problem, but it has become the root of the culture. However, if I am honest, it is wrong, Ma'am, in my opinion. I see, but if it has become a culture that is hard to straighten out..." (R2: 14-16).

In the second factor, the practice (Ibadah/Sharia/Islam) of the first respondent is still not fully in carrying out the five daily prayers and has not worn the hijab even though he understands these rules. "Still in a hole, Ma'am, the most frequent Asr prayer, Ma'am. Because yes, maybe you are busy with worldly things, Mom, for example studying or traveling home, Mom" (R1: 17-21). Nevertheless, if I force it, I am afraid, but unfortunately, it will keep going off like that, Ma'am. So I waited ... (R1: 40). Meanwhile, respondent 2, although men prefer to pray to the mosque in the congregation, this is not always possible. "There are certain times, ma'am, sometimes there might be something on campus in the mosque here that means, but sometimes if you are in the course of studying, it means that you are following, Mom, sometimes in the congregation, sometimes not ..."

(R2: 18). "... Maybe the first reason is from me, ma'am. It seems like management is complex between the lecture assignments and from the cottage. There is also memorization. Sometimes that is what I think is like completing the world before I pray, and sometimes my environment is a response to laziness. I am optimistic too, so I have friends who think like that. " (R2: 32)

In the third aspect of Experience (*Akhlak*), the respondent feels closer to Allah or gets a spiritual experience, namely when he remembers death and listens to *murotal*. Always remember death. It must be something. Never mind, maybe later, that is one minute or one second later, we also do not know whether it is still alive or not. Maybe from there - that is more, what? Trying to improve more, prepare for the provision in the afterlife. However, there are also things like that like sometimes I hear *murotal* maybe from certain priests who can cry too "R2: 36). "The video of death is you, Ma'am (R2: 43). "There is Ma'am, and especially I also like listening to people reciting, especially if in the mosque and it was Friday night. Ma'am, the same, sometimes when I thought I had this thought, Ma'am, there will be an end, ma'am, and then think about my life in heaven or hell. God forgave all my sins while in the world, Mom. Furthermore, that is what makes me continue to study religion more, ma'am, remembering like that "(R1: 44).

Meanwhile, figures who inspire and have an essential role in developing one's spirituality are parents and teachers/lecturers. "... For me, especially it is Ma'am, ma'am, who is an inspiration because you also pray diligently. Keep fasting on Monday and Thursday. Koran is also diligent, and that is what inspires me "(R1: 46). "... If I was the inspiration, it was related to Ma'am, the accessor to Pak Anwar. Always recite the holy verses of the Koran and the hadiths and then read them one by one. I really know the meaning, ooo, yes, it is good that the contents of the Koran are also good, ma'am "(R1: 50). "... I am from my parents, ma'am, especially from his father... "(R2: 40).

Based on the research results above, one of the characteristics of counselor candidates, namely having a good understanding of Islamic values, is essential. The counselor should generally exhibit general characteristics such as: having good psychological health, self-awareness, open-mindedness, have empathy, positive reception, authenticity, and harmony, do not justify, tolerance for ambiguity, cultural sensitivity, and competence. However, according to Rassool (2016), Islamic counselors recognize Islamic values and address the spiritual-religious dimension in helping counselees. Thus, there is an expectation that Islamic counselors should have a good level of religiosity and the processes required for being a student or Islamic counselor candidate.

However, the exciting thing in this study is that counselor candidates understand the pillars of faith. However, in the implementation of worship, it has not been fully implemented, such as the five daily prayers, the obligation to wear the hijab, and convince those closest to the shamanism practice. It shows that one's religiosity should recognize and live and implement in everyday life. The difference in the religiosity of Islamic counselor candidates is also inseparable from factors forming the religious spirit, such as internal and external (Jalaluddin, 2016). A person's religiosity is the extent to which religious knowledge is and how strong the belief is. Along with the implementation of worship according to the rules and how "deep" the appreciation of the religion is embraced (Ancok and Suroso, 2011), religiosity includes various dimensions manifested in everyday life through visible and invisible behavior than just worship activities.

As the interviews' results, the factors that determine the spirituality level of Islamic counselor candidates include faith, worship, and experience as Ansari (Ancok and Suroso, 2011: 79) states that there are three parts of Islam, namely *Akidah*, Sharia, and Morals. Each of these parts is inseparable and related to one another like a complete system.

As a complete system, counselor candidates need to assist teachers/lecturers whom their parents also strengthen with full exemplary. As in helping individuals use the methods taught by Allah in Al-Qur'an surah *An-Nahl* verse 125, namely (a) the right way, the correct reference and bring the most significant benefit (*bil hikmah*). (b) with words that touch the heart and lead to

kindness. For these words to touch the heart, those who convey them can give an example (Sutoyo, 2013: 216-217).

## CONCLUSION

The results showed that the level of spirituality of counselor candidates was high, with a score of > 71, with 17 students with 17%. Furthermore, students with an average score for the spirituality level of counselor candidates, with a score of between 49-71 there were 71 students or 71%. Furthermore, for the level of spirituality of counselor candidates in the low category with a <49, there are 12 students or 12%. Thus, the level of spirituality of counselor candidates who take Islamic counseling courses is in the moderate category or is 71%. In developing spirituality, some factors affect the level of spirituality of counselors candidate, namely: (1) faith (belief in Allah and pillars of faith), (2) worship, such as prayer, fasting, and reading the Koran, and (3) experiences such as remembering death, advice from parents and lecturers or listening to verses from the Koran. It is better if both the lecturers who teach Islamic counseling courses and the department understand the conditions of the spirituality level of the Islamic counselor candidates so that they can develop a lecture model that can develop the spirituality level of students. In addition, it is necessary to develop an evaluation model to check religious practices, so that counselor candidates have competency standards as competent counselors in carrying out Islamic counseling service practices.

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