

THE ROLE OF ISLAMIC BK IN GUIDING STUDENTS TO OVERCOME THE EXISTENTIAL CRISIS IN THE POSTMODERN ERA

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Abstract: - This article discusses the role of Islamic counseling in helping students overcome existential crises in the postmodern era. Postmodern conditions characterized by uncertainty, identity fragmentation, and the weakening of absolute values make many students experience existential anxiety, loss of meaning in life, and spiritual emptiness. Using a descriptive qualitative method based on literature study, this research examines the principles of Islamic counseling such as monotheism, tazkiah al-nafh, self-awareness, and value-based counseling. The results of the study show that Islamic counseling is able to provide spiritual strengthening, help shape life's meaning, facilitate self-transcendence, and provide direction in identity formation. Counselors help students understand inner struggles, reconnect with divine values, and build resilience through spiritual practices. Islamic counseling has proven to be relevant and adaptive in answering students' existential problems in the postmodern era. This article concludes that Islamic counseling has a transformational role, namely not only in emotional support, but also in restoring spiritual stability and meaning in students' lives .

Keywords: Islamic Counseling Guidance; Existential Crisis; Postmodern Era; Meaning of life; Student.

INTRODUCTION

The postmodern era is characterized by rapid technological development, plurality of values, relativism of truth, and weakening of moral and religious authority. This situation creates psychological and spiritual challenges, especially for students who are in the phase of searching for their identity. Many students experience confusion in determining their life goals, fear of the future, academic pressure, and inner anxiety which leads to an existential crisis.

Existential crises often appear in the form of loss of meaning in life, feelings of emptiness, identity doubts, and deep anxiety. Islamic Counseling is present as a relevant approach because it does not only focus on psychological aspects, but also integrates spiritual, moral and divine aspects in the healing process.

In contrast to secular counseling which tends to emphasize cognitive and behavioral aspects, Islamic counseling helps individuals understand themselves in their relationship with Allah, creatures and the purpose of creation. Therefore, it is important to examine how Islamic

Guidance Counseling can play a role in helping students overcome the existential crisis in the postmodern era.

In the context of higher education, high academic pressure is often not balanced with adequate psychological and spiritual support. As a result, students are vulnerable to prolonged inner conflict and have difficulty finding the meaning of life. In addition, the development of digital technology and social media has also worsened students' psychological conditions. A culture of social comparison, demands for self-image, and high social expectations often give rise to feelings of insecurity and existential anxiety. In this situation, students need a guidance approach that is not only rational, but also touches the spiritual dimension.

Islamic Guidance Counseling offers a holistic approach that views humans as physical, psychological and spiritual beings. This approach is believed to be able to help students understand the meaning of life more deeply and build self-resilience in facing the dynamics of postmodern life. Therefore, this study is important to examine in depth the role of Islamic Guidance Counseling in guiding students to overcome the existential crisis in the postmodern era, as well as the extent to which this approach is relevant to the needs of today's students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Existential Crisis in Postmodern Society

Postmodernism rejects absolute truth and gives rise to uncertainty which leads to identity confusion, social pressure, and a vacuum of meaning (Giddens, 2011). This uncertainty causes individuals to have difficulty building a stable life orientation, because values that were previously considered established become relative and debatable. In the context of students, postmodern conditions encourage the emergence of psychological pressure that originates from academic, social and cultural demands simultaneously. Students are faced with various life choices without clear value guidance, so they are vulnerable to experiencing existential confusion and a crisis of the meaning of life. This condition shows that postmodern society creates a life space that is full of value ambiguity and uncertainty about the direction of life. Individuals are required to build their own meaning in life without a definite value framework, so that the process of searching for identity becomes increasingly complex. As a result, inner restlessness and feelings of emptiness often arise in response to ever-changing social and cultural pressures.

Apart from that, postmodernism also encourages identity fragmentation, where individuals fulfill various social roles that often conflict with each other. This situation causes individuals to have difficulty uniting their identity as a whole, so that an existential crisis develops as a response to the social and cultural pressures experienced on an ongoing basis.

2. Characteristics of Existential Crisis in Students.

Students often experience anxiety about the future, identity struggles, loss of life goals, and spiritual emptiness (Yalom, 2008). This symptom arises because students are in an important transition phase in life, namely the transition towards maturity and independence.

An existential crisis can also be characterized by decreased motivation to learn, feelings of emptiness, and doubts about one's values. If this condition is not treated appropriately, students have the potential to experience more serious and prolonged

psychological disorders. Apart from having an impact on the psychological aspect, the existential crisis also affects the social aspects of students. Students who experience a crisis of meaning in life tend to withdraw from the social environment, feel not understood, and lose their sense of belonging to the academic community. This condition can hinder students' personal and academic development if they do not receive adequate assistance

3. Islamic Counseling Guidance Concept

Islamic counseling aims to guide individuals towards holistic well-being (*hayat tayyibah*) through faith, worship, morals and purification of the soul (Amin, 2018). Islamic counseling views humans as creatures created by Allah who have the natural potential to develop towards goodness.

Through Islamic counseling, individuals are directed to understand life problems within the framework of Islamic values. This approach focuses not only on solving problems, but also on personality formation and spiritual strengthening. The Islamic counseling approach places the human relationship with Allah SWT as the center of life orientation. With a strong foundation of faith, individuals are guided to interpret every life event as part of a learning and self-maturation process that has religious and ritual values.

4. Islamic Counseling Principles Relevant to Existential Crisis

Key principles include: Tawheed as the foundation of identity, Tazkiyah al-nafts (purification of the soul), Ma'rifat al-nafts (self-awareness), Qur'anic and Sunnah values in the counseling process, Formation of the meaning of life based on worship and the purpose of creation. These principles are an important foundation in helping students understand their true nature and the transcendental purpose of life. In this way, students are able to face the existential crisis more calmly and purposefully.

5. Islamic Counseling as a Solution to the Crisis of Identity and Meaning

Research shows that Islamic counseling is effective in reducing anxiety, strengthening identity, and restoring meaning to students' lives (Rahman, 2020; Latif, 2019). This shows that Islamic counseling has high relevance in the context of higher education in the postmodern era.

Through an integrative approach between psychological and spiritual aspects, Islamic counseling is able to help students build self-resilience and clarity of life orientation. The counseling process is not only curative, but also preventive and self-development. Thus, Islamic counseling functions as a comprehensive solution in helping students face crises of identity and meaning in life. Students are guided to build a life that is more balanced, meaningful, and in harmony with Islamic values amidst the dynamics of postmodern life

METHOD

This research uses descriptive qualitative methods through literature study. Data was collected from scientific journals, books and publications related to Islamic Counseling Guidance, psychology, existential and postmodern phenomena. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques to find patterns, main concepts, and deep interpretations regarding the role of Islamic counseling in overcoming students' existential crises.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1) Postmodern Era as Trigger of Existential Crisis

Students face academic pressure, social comparisons, unclear future, and weakening spiritual values. This triggers anxiety, loss of direction, and an identity crisis. On the other hand, weakening spiritual values causes students to lose their grip in dealing with this pressure.

This condition shows that the existential crisis is not only an individual problem, but is also a social phenomenon that is influenced by changes in society's culture and values. Apart from these factors, the pressures faced by students in the postmodern era are also strengthened by the demand to always be adaptive to rapid changes. Students are required to be able to make life decisions independently in situations full of uncertainty, so they often experience confusion in determining life priorities and goals. This condition causes the existential crisis to develop in a more complex and sustainable manner.

The influence of digital media and popular culture also worsens students' psychological conditions. Exposure to other people's lifestyles and achievements through social media encourages unhealthy social comparisons. As a result, students easily feel inadequate, lose self-confidence, and experience a void of meaning in life. This phenomenon shows that students' existential crisis is a reflection of the social dynamics of postmodern society which is full of pressure and uncertainty.

2) Islamic Counseling Helps Reconstruct Meaning and Identity

Islamic counseling helps students to recognize the purpose of life based on monotheism, build self-awareness through Qur'anic values, carry out muhasabah (self-reflection), face problems with the values of patience and tawakkal. Through this approach, students are directed to understand themselves as creatures created by Allah SWT who have a clear purpose in life. This awareness helps students build a more stable self-identity and is not easily swayed by the pressures of the postmodern social and cultural environment.

In addition, Islamic counseling encourages students to interpret life experiences, including failures and difficulties, as part of the process of self-formation. Thus, the existential crisis is not seen as a personal failure, but rather as a phase of searching for meaning that can strengthen students' identity and spiritual maturity.

3) A Spiritual Approach reduces anxiety and emptiness

Practices such as dhikr, prayer, recitation of the Qur'an and gratitude can reduce existential anxiety and foster inner calm. This spiritual approach functions as a source of internal strength that helps students manage psychological stress more healthily. Spiritual activities carried out consistently are able to create a balance between emotional and spiritual aspects, so that students are better able to face life's uncertainties with a calm and optimistic attitude.

Apart from that, a spiritual approach also fosters an attitude of trust and acceptance of the realities of life. This attitude plays an important role in reducing excessive anxiety and helping students find the meaning of life that comes from closeness to Allah SWT, not solely from worldly achievements.

4) Counselor as Murabbi (spiritual guide)

Islamic counselors not only act as listeners, but also as providers of moral and spiritual direction who help students build stable life values. The counselor's role as murabbi enables the counseling process to take place in an educational and sustainable manner. Counselors guide students to internalize moral and spiritual values in everyday life, so that counseling does not only function as short-term problem solving.

With this approach, counselors contribute to forming student characters who are more emotionally and spiritually mature. Students are helped to have strong life principles as provisions for facing various life challenges in the future

5) Islamic Counseling is Holistic and Transformational

Islamic counseling not only solves psychological problems, but changes a student's perspective on life to make it more meaningful and focused. The holistic approach in Islamic counseling allows students to understand life problems as a whole, including psychological, social and spiritual aspects. This makes the solution obtained more in-depth and sustainable, because it does not only focus on symptoms, but also on the root of the problem.

The transformation produced through Islamic counseling is long-term, because it encourages changes in the way students think, behave and act. In this way, students are able to build a life that is more meaningful, emotionally stable and spiritually strong in facing the dynamics of life in the postmodern era.

CONCLUSION

Islamic Guidance Counseling has an important role in shaping students to overcome the existential crisis in the postmodern era. Through the integration of spiritual, moral and psychological values, Islamic counseling helps students find the meaning of life, strengthen identity, and build resilience in facing the challenges of the times. Principles such as monotheism, tazkiyah, and self-awareness make Islamic counseling a holistic approach and very relevant for today's students.

Apart from that, the existence of Islamic Counseling Guidance in the tertiary environment is very important as a form of assistance that is oriented towards developing the student's personality as a whole. Islamic counseling is able to bridge students' psychological needs with the values of faith, so that students are not only able to solve the problems they face, but also have a strong spiritual foundation in living their lives.

The Islamic counseling approach also contributes to building students' awareness of the transcendental purpose of life. Through a continuous guidance process, students are directed to interpret every life experience as part of the process of self-formation and devotion to Allah SWT.

Thus, it is hoped that strengthening the role of Islamic Counseling Guidance in higher education can become a preventive and curative strategy in dealing with various students' existential problems. Islamic counseling not only functions as a means of solving problems, but also as a vehicle for character formation, spiritual resilience and personality maturity for students in the postmodern era.

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