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# The need for Islamic premarital counseling in Indonesia by professional school counselors

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## **ABSTRACT**

The challenges of premarital counseling arise due to early marriage, divorce, marriage due to prior pregnancy, or various partner problems. As educators for students and prospective couples, counselors can conduct premarital counseling based on needs. The premarital counseling model has yet to be formed for the profession's development, so this study aims to analyze the needs of premarital counseling. The research method type is quantitative descriptive, with 21 students as subjects and a purposive sampling technique. The research instrument was an open questionnaire analyzed using quantitative description through percentages. The results of the study found five basic and salient needs for premarital counseling regarding the conditions for pillars of marriage to be valid, knowledge to form a happy family, setting goals for marriage, selecting criteria for a good husband/wife candidate in religion, and understanding the wisdom behind the prohibition to marry individuals who different faiths. Premarital counselors, as educators who are Islamic, competent, professional, and have integrity, use the Al-Qur'an and Sunnah in answering life's problems with a positive counseling mindset so that they know the relationship with God, application in life, awareness, and meaningful self-quality. The five needs of premarital counseling with an Islamic approach are the basis for developing a premarital counseling model with an Islamic system to be implemented in group and individual counseling. The design of Islamic premarital counseling can be designed for the prevention of early marriages and unwanted cases.

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#### Introduction

Complex challenges to premarital education for Indonesian youth at the high school level with the influence of the family economy, environment (Amalia & Nasution, 2021.) or lifestyle (Shaluhiyah & Ford, 2014). The premarital education policy in Indonesia is a community guideline, while Malaysia's is a mandatory requirement (Bidayati et al., 2020; Kamarusdiana et al., 2022; Yusuf et al., 2022). Conditions in Indonesia for marriage are pressure on being single or not having a girlfriend/boyfriend (Himawan, 2019). There is no difference in knowledge of premarital sexual behaviour and stress from peers in urban and rural adolescents (Yusran et al., 2022). This means that adolescents with sexual ability (0.159) and pressure from peers (0.219) have an impact on the desire for premarital sex and pregnancy outside of marriage, as well as the divorce rate. Premarital sex affects early marriage, pregnancy out of wedlock, and emotional conditions that aren't by Islamic teachings (Idayanti & Natalia, 2022). Divorce arises from jealousy, moral, economic, irresponsible, or disharmonious (Yudhiani et al., 2019).





The challenge of counselors in schools as competent guidance and counseling teachers can carry out premarital counseling. The need for premarital counseling is due to preventing sexual behaviour that isn't yet optimal and social control over premarital pregnancies that aren't yet on target in every village (Wahyuningsih, 2020). Another condition is that premarital education hasn't run optimally (Harahap et al., 2022). With a majority Muslim population, Indonesia is an important cultural factor for premarital education and counseling interventions (Ezenkwele & Roodsari, 2013). School counselors, as educators with therapeutic counseling skills (Patterson et al., 2018), can assist adolescents in counseling victims/offenders, preventing sexual behaviour, and contraceptive counseling (Gabler et al., 2023). Premarital counseling can be integrated with Islam to protect oneself, offspring, mind, and property (Aprian, 2020) to maintain personal health and family planning (Farnam et al., 2011).

Premarital counseling in Indonesia requires an urgent need, but it is necessary to analyse the requirements from a religious perspective. The need for premarital counseling in Indonesia will differ from other countries as a form of renewal of Indonesian youth culture and problems. The design needs as a basis for designing Islamic counseling to prevent early marriage and pregnancies outside of marriage. Premarital counseling with a spiritual approach has three significant aspects of faith as faith, worship as righteousness, and morality as norms (Hanin Hamjah & Mat Akhir, 2014). Islamic counseling creates awareness of the values that shape anti-free sex behaviour as good behaviour. Islamic counseling can integrate cognitive change with prophetic studies and Islamic theory and deals with the Qur'an and Sunnah (Sudan, 2017; Zakaria & Mat Akhir, 2017). The complexity of the problems raises the need for Islamic counseling (Lubis, 2011), especially for premarital issues. The strategy used to achieve the objectives of this research is to formulate premarital counseling. So the purpose of this study is to analyse the need for premarital counseling with an Islamic religious approach.

## 2. Method

# 2.1. Research design

This study aims to analyse the need for premarital counseling with an Islamic religious approach for adolescent school counselors. The quantitative and descriptive research design from factual data examines the need for premarital counseling with an Islamic approach to the premarital phenomenon. Quantitative descriptive results from the distribution of questionnaires can bring up various conditions from indicators put forward by research respondents.

# 2.2. Participants

The research subjects involved in this study were 21 students and active youth in the Ngijo Village, Gunungpati District, Semarang City, Central Java Province, Indonesia. The research subjects were selected based on a purposive sampling technique or all active students or youth in the research location as research subjects.

# 2.3. Data collection tools

An open questionnaire regarding the need for a premarital counseling Islamic approach was used in this study. The questionnaire was designed openly with various available questions to get a variety of salient needs for premarital counseling with an Islamic religious approach.

## 2.4. Research procedure

Several scientific procedures were carried out to analyse the need for premarital counseling with an Islamic approach. In the first stage, the researcher prepared various open questions so respondents could answer the questionnaire openly about the need for premarital counseling with Islamic practice. In the second stage, the researcher begins to recap the results of the various conditions students or youth have. In the third stage, the researcher selects five salient states for presentation. In the last step, the researcher analysed and determined the need for premarital counseling with an Islamic approach. Analysis of the five basic needs of premarital counseling as the basis for developing premarital counseling with Islamic practice.

## 2.5. Data analysis

Data analysis in this study through descriptive quantitative with percentages so that the five basic needs and the most prominent of the various needs in Islamic premarital counseling are

known. Data analysis with percentages as a basis for determining the need for Islamic premarital counseling.

# 3. Results and Discussion

The results of processing the instrument questionnaire to 21 students or active youth in the Ngijo Village, Gunungpati District, Semarang City, Central Java Province, Indonesia, raise five basic and salient needs in premarital counseling with an Islamic approach. First, 90.48% of the need for pre-marital counseling with an Islamic practice is based on knowing the conditions for the pillars of marriage to be valid. The second is that 85.7% of the need for premarital counseling with an Islamic approach is based on knowledge to form a happy family. The third is 85.7% of the need for premarital counseling with an Islamic practice based on the formation of marriage goals. Fourth, 85.7% of the need for pre-marital counseling with an Islamic approach is based on selecting the criteria for a prospective husband/wife who is good in religion. Finally, or fifth, 80.95% of the need for premarital counseling with an Islamic approach is based on understanding the wisdom behind the prohibition of marrying individuals of different religions. Figure 1 shows the analysis results of the five prominent choices as a percentage summary.



Fig. 1. Percentage Summary of Premarital Counseling Needs with a Religious Approach

Islamic professional counselors, as individuals with quality and integrity in upholding ethics in premarital counseling services (Haryati, 2018), can develop an understanding of the needs of students (Rassool, 2015a). Counselors can apply Islamic values in counseling services (Hodge & Nadir, 2008) with various needs as a form of multicultural counselor competence (Darmawani et al., 2021). There are also four basic principles in applying Islamic counseling for Muslim students so that they understand counseling, know their relationship with Allah better, use it in life, and increase meaningful counselor competence as educators (Ridwan et al., 2020; Sumari & Baharudin, 2016). Suppose students already have guidelines with the Al-Qur'an and Hadith. In that case, awareness arises about the urgency of religion in premarital and marriage counseling (Ermalianti & Ramadan, 2022) because religious counseling is very urgent in preparation and marriage (Worthington Jr et al., 2003).

The first requirement of premarital counseling with an Islamic approach is that students can master the needs of the pillars of marriage to be valid. Pillars of legal marriage as a form of trust and faith in Allah SWT from counselors to students (Muslikah et al., 2021; Rahman et al., 2023). Counselors in individual counseling or group leaders in group counseling as Imams (Rassool, 2015b) can become leaders in implementing counseling services. Faith in the pillars of law in marriage is a human (student) religious commitment that impacts behaviour by Islamic norms

(Hikmawati, 2013). The posts of law in marriage for Muslims are Ijab and Qabul (Faisal et al., 2021). Students and counselors understand each other about Ijab and Qobul as a philosophy that is divine, perfect, global, universal, easy, systematic, sacred, rational, realistic, and humane (Munawaroh et al., 2022). Pillars in a valid marriage also fulfil their rights and obligations as future husbands/wives (Mintarsih & Mahdami, 2021).

The second need for premarital counseling regarding knowledge to form a happy family or shekinah (Batubara et al., 2023) is feminist knowledge (Bell, 2018). Knowledge is an individual condition in cognitive thinking with reality or factual in personal awareness (Zagzebski, 2017). According to the Qur'an and Sunnah, the formation of a happy family is the role of husband, wife and children as family members who are exemplary in their positions (Tibek et al., 2015). The counselor's role is to direct students to become ideal family members so that the enjoyment of a good, peaceful life (A. Ismail et al., 2015) and full of love is formed (Hermann, 2010). Students as family members have a shared role in struggling, feeling, thinking, suffering subjects, obedient and disobedient, and being controllers for themselves, fathers, mothers and siblings (Gabriel, 1999). Happy families play a role in a team or complement each other (Gibbard et al., 2017), so counselors can create awareness of the mindset that happy families impact individual thinking (Noor, 2014).

The third need is premarital counseling regarding the formation of goals from marriage in fulfilling religious instincts and instructions (Andri et al., 2020). Instinct needs aren't just about sexual relations but more than that about responsibility (Yudhiani et al., 2019) and the welfare of the family (children, wife and husband) (Rossin-Slater, 2017). The purpose of marriage is a mutual agreement without coercion, although some couples marry because they are forced to. One of the compulsions is getting pregnant out of wedlock. Various theories in marriage counseling, from Adlerian, Cognitive Behavior, Behavior, Religion, Multicultural, and Integrative Counseling (Baird & Redfering, 1975; Beshai et al., 2013; Charaf, 2022; Devlin et al., 2019; Pew & Pew, 2013), all require partner communication. The main goal of marriage and formed in Islamic counseling is a partner who is Sakinah, mawaddah, and warahmah, without divorce (Utari et al., 2022).

The fourth need for premarital counseling is regarding selecting criteria for a good husband/wife candidate in religion. The choice of a life partner in Islam is a person who is kaffa'ah or obedient to Islamic teachings or believers (A. H. Ismail, 2020). Prospective husbands/wives are directed to have maturity because various problems will arise in the family (Nidlom & Andrina, 2021). In addition, pre-marital conditions occur due to pregnancy outside of marriage, so unwanted marriages or khalwat arise (Mansari et al., 2020). Counselors play a significant role in this condition by educating and directing through counseling so that Sakinah families are formed to prevent divorce (Samsul & Husen, 2020).

The last or fifth need in premarital counseling is understanding the wisdom behind the prohibition of marrying individuals of different religions. The indicator of an ideal life partner is the same faith or the same religion, namely the husband (male) and wife (woman) have the Islamic religion because if different religions, it is complicated to form the same ideology to live a lifetime (Suhasti et al., 2018). In addition, problems arise related to religious doubts in couples of different religions, and various issues arise with multiple solutions, resulting in different beliefs (Guenther, 2014). The counselor's role is to convince students to explore the wisdom in choosing a life partner.

The five needs in premarital counseling are compiled in the next model. In addition to the model, counselors use premarital counseling support modules, namely the Sakinah module (Agustiani & Tamam, 2020). Formation of a Sakinah family in pre-marital counseling with an Islamic approach can prevent divorce (Samsul & Husen, 2020). Premarital counseling plays a role in marital relations or spouses because it is trained in shared responsibility, leadership, communication and authority (Nyundo et al., 2021). Premarital counseling integrates the answers to life in the Qur'an and Sunnah so that a spiritual awareness arises that marriage is worship, belief, social responsibility, and morals (Bensaid et al., 2014). The answers to problems in marriage and premarital life through the premarital counseling process can be answered and mediated in the Al-Qur'an and Sunnah (Meyer, 2020).

# 4. Conclusion

Islamic counselors, as professional educators with integrity, quality, and ethics, play a role in premarital counseling services. Premarital counselors with an Islamic approach can apply Islamic values, namely the Qur'an and Sunnah, for students to fulfil the five basic needs. Five primary and salient requirements for premarital counseling regarding the conditions for the pillars of marriage to be valid, knowledge to form a happy family, setting goals for marriage, choosing criteria for a good husband/wife candidate in religion, and understanding the wisdom behind the prohibition to marry individuals of different religions. Five basic needs in premarital counseling as a need to develop a premarital counseling model for students and students or prospective brides. As Muslim counselors and Muslim students, premarital counseling prepares individuals with premarital pregnancies to always be responsible. Counselors also formed premarital counselor competence as educators. Research is limited to identifying the need for premarital counseling. The next step is to design premarital counseling to prevent early marriage and pregnancy outside of marriage.

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required instruments, explored research data, and compiled scientific articles. Firdian Setiya Arinata, Dita Kamila Rahmawati, Ashrofa Wahyu Aiman, and Agus Supriyanto designed research publications

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