

Integrating Islamic Values In Counselling

- Dr. Farzana Parveen, Psychological Counsellor, Municipal Corporation of Delhi (East)
- Dr. Mohd. Owais Khan, Assistant Professor, Amity University, Gwalior, M.P.

Abstract

Islamic counseling in a cultural nature is not an explicit process. It manifests as part of ritual healing practices. The motive of this research is to examine aspects of the Islamic approach applied in counseling. While these practices do not consist of formal counseling, it has been shown to hold the same therapeutic value as mainstream counseling approaches. Today's in counseling religious act is being emphasized. Many researchers find that there is a need to apply the religious element in counseling because religion is important in a client's life. Islamic counseling was used earlier and still being used now. It is being offered primarily for religious guidance, which eventually serves as counseling for mental health cases. Islamic counseling like other traditional counseling techniques based on confidentiality, beneficence, non-maleficence and respect which are helpful for treating people suffering from depression, stress many other forms of mental issues. The ultimate goal of Islamic counseling is to connect an individual with Allah (S.W.T) and offering spiritual solutions to their problems. Indeed, these skills and techniques were used perspicaciously by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). The implementation of these techniques by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) illustrated him as the best Islamic counselor who has the ability and skill to heal the people. In addition, Islamic counseling emphasizes spiritual solutions, based on love and deity for Allah and the duty to fulfill our responsibility as the servants of Allah on this earth. It was reported that Prophet Muhammad was a good listener. Allah has described his patience in listening to others in the Holy Quran.

Keywords: Islam, Counseling, non-traditional approach.

Introduction

These days' human beings are encountering with various problems and facing new challenges due to paradigm shift which become the cause of extreme stress and anxiety among them. One of the methods that may help an individual to overcome these problems is Islamic counseling. This is because human life requires them to balance between physical and spiritual needs to achieve wellbeing. Without this balance, human will experience failure.

Islamic counseling is defined as an effort to help individuals to prevent variation possibility of their religious development and make the individual aware their role, finally they could create a good relation with The Almighty Allah, mutually the other human beings, and with the environment. In addition, Islamic counseling emphasizes spiritual solutions based on love and fear of Allah and the duty to fulfill our responsibility as the servants of Allah on this earth (Hallen, 2002).

Allah has given us tools and techniques to solve our problems by using the Quran and Sunnah. However, Islamic counseling was used prior and it still being used now. It was offered for many issues like mental health cases, and for religious assistance. The technique is based on confidentiality, trust, understanding, respect and good habits which is beneficial for self as well as for others. The ultimate goal of Islamic counseling is connecting individuals with Allah (SWT) and offering spiritual solutions for them. Indeed, those skills and techniques were the best used by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). His implementation to those techniques showed him as being the best example in conducting counseling skills and techniques. Furthermore, Islamic counseling emphasizes spiritual solutions based on love and deity for Allah and the duty to fulfill our responsibility as the servants of Allah on this earth. It was reported that Prophet Muhammad was a good listener which is a foremost attribute of a counselor. Quran as the main source of Islamic counseling also teaches us that the private talk in our counseling is to help others to be righteous and make an obedient people to Allah. Therefore, Islamic counseling should be based on great skills and techniques that lead to the best coping skills (S.M.S., Baqutayan, 2011, p. 181).

The ultimate goal of Islamic counseling involves three things:

1. Establishing a harmonious relationship between the client and the social environment.
2. Building a good relationship between the client and Allah SWT.
3. Creating a client's ability to utilize the environment potential as well (Hallen, 2002, p. 18).

Purpose of Islamic Counseling

Islamic counseling is not a new concept. When studying its historical roots, a distinction may be made between cultural and professional approaches of Islamic counseling. In the former, counseling is not an explicit exercise, but alluded to the religion-cultural rituals of Muslim communities.

Cultural approach of Islamic Counseling

If counseling is to be equated with giving advice and guidance then it dates back to the beginning of time, having an array of practitioners including shamans and sangomas, kiths and kin, prophets, priests and soothsayers. Islamic counseling in a cultural mode is not an explicit process. It manifests as part of ritual healing practices. It is clear in some cases how Islamic religious resources can be therapeutically and effectively used in helping processes. The cultural model functions as a system of therapy as far as it employs a structured set of procedures to rehabilitate individuals. While the language is different from that employed in Western psychological idiom, the alleviation of symptoms and the restoration of personal and social functioning are equally effective. In this context, then, it is asserted that when clients from non-western societies are referred to western mental health services for treatment, they do not abandon their perceptions, culture or belief systems of disease or medicine. This is overlooked or mental health practitioners are unfamiliar with a client's culture, results in miscommunication between the client and practitioner, which lead to problems in therapy. Collaborative efforts between modern therapeutic models and the help of traditional healers can prove effective in leading to the recovery of clients.

The cultural counseling practices add weight to a rationale for Islamic counseling in a modern context. They provide guidelines and prescriptions of what is expected in Islamic

cultural counseling and identify considerations that should be borne in mind when working with Muslim clients. However, modern clients do not necessarily want to participate in such practices and therefore a more explicitly defined method of Islamic counseling is necessary consistent with professional standards.

Professional approach of Islamic counseling

Islamic counseling and psychotherapy from a professional perspective is of recent origin. Few scholars have addressed this area of study in a significant way, beyond assertions that Islamic counseling needs to be developed into a well-structured discourse that captures the breath and spirit of Islam in helping people. These contributions are usually directed at the presence of mainstream western counseling paradigms as a dominant force in counseling and social intervention. The following short exposition contextualizes this discussion. Professional counseling and psychotherapy are two separate but closely linked disciplines that are for most part treated equivalently. They are generally understood as disciplines that involve help and healing and by which counselors interact with clients to assist them to learn about themselves, deal with their environments, and understand the roles and responsibilities inherent in these relations. The role of emotions in causing psychological and emotional disturbances is central to understanding and helping clients. Individuals are thus aided to recognize their potential, learn how to utilize this potential, and work towards removing obstacles that block full realization of their capabilities. The counseling profession evolved at the turn of the twentieth century in the United States in response to rapid industrialization and urbanization with its concomitant human resource needs and humanitarian concerns.

A confluence of social and economic problems together with a situation of a new and emerging democracy resulted in increased pressure to assist people to make choices in various areas of their lives. Frank Parsons, a pioneer of the vocational guidance movement of this time, and instrumental in addressing the prevailing concerns through formal vocational counseling, is credited with giving professional counseling its historical roots. Interestingly, from a global perspective, this view is fundamentally challenged by writers who locate the roots of modern concepts of vocational counseling to a tenth century Iraqi text, the *Rasa'il Ikhwan al-Safa wa-Khillan al-Wafa*, or *Treatises of the Brothers of Purity*. They identify this text as the earliest in

Arabic concerned with the fundamental tenets of Parson's work. It contains fifty-one Arabic treatises written around 955 AD by Muslim reformers from the Basra region of Iraq who called themselves the Ikhwan al-Safa. In attempts to reform the sciences in the 10th century Islamic world they surveyed all the learned disciplines and classified it under two headings viz. traditional and foreign. The earlier pertained to disciplines based on the Quran, the latter to those emerging from human invention.

Vocational psychology was located in the foreign science category and included treatises on human character and personality. Based on the information these writers have concluded that the basic elements of vocational counseling was identified a millennium ago by Islamic philosophers. Be this as it may, if Islamic counseling is thought of in professional terms, it could be assumed that what would constitute Islamic counseling, is a convergence of the above elements of counseling and psychotherapy with the central tenets of Islam. This is acceptable in as far as; it provides a broad purpose for Islamic counseling by linking it with an overarching intent of helping clients attain positive change in their lives.

However, as counseling theories take on various philosophical positions such an analysis can become quite problematic. This is especially so given the nature and scope of Islam as a religious worldview, and debates on Islamic counseling that call for the rejection of western counseling theories. Application of Islamic principles to theories outside the realm of Islam or using concepts from mainstream counseling to inform an Islamic approach is therefore discouraged. In such arguments, it is often asserted that Western psychologies are devoid of religion and foster distorted concepts of humankind that are rooted in materialism. Counseling that is based on Islam is then forwarded as a feasible alternative. However, given the difficult task of articulating Islamic counseling methodology writers of such positions do simultaneously allow that western psychotherapy and psychiatry has its merits in dealing with psychological suffering and behavior modification. What is proposed then is that Muslims use the positive aspects of western counseling, integrate it with the spiritual, and develop Islamic psycho-spiritual counseling methodologies that would facilitate positive change in Muslim clients. Exploring the Quran, the Sirah of the Prophet and his traditions, as well as the biographies of the Prophet's companions, will provide detailed instructions for implementing successful therapy. In the main, though, it is Sufism (tasawwuf), the mystical tradition of Islam, which is credited with providing

the basis for Islamic psychology. It is forwarded as the main frame of reference from which to develop a professional Islamic counseling approach.

At a primary level, Sufism posits human spiritual development through a series of stations and states to attain nearness to Allah. The Quran and hadith are continuously reflected upon and union with Allah (ittihad) and the realization of the oneness of Allah (Tawhid) are essential goals. This process, it is asserted and can be used as part of Islamic counseling to develop an Islamic personality that is balanced and directed towards pleasing God so that negative behavior can be successfully overcome. Ultimately, absolute and constant contentment, which is possible through a consonance of the human psyche with Allah, should be sought. This remains the current focal point for theory development of professional Islamic counseling

Principles of Islamic Counseling

There were four principles of Islamic counseling:

1. Preventive: to help individuals maintain or prevent the problem appears in their life.
2. Curative or corrective: to encourage individuals' ability in solving their problems.
3. Preservative: to help individual maintain their good condition.
4. Developmental: to help individuals develop their conditions that have been good become

Better. (Faqih, 2001, p. 37)

Techniques of Islamic counseling

In general, Islamic counseling activity is implemented with the specific technique by using two approaches, they are:

1. Personal Approach: on this approach, the counselors create either direct or indirect relation with the client individually. This method is usually implemented to find out problem solving of personal problem of clients.

2. Group Approach: This method is commonly used especially for client with the big number or in-group. The purpose of this method is to find out the solution of problem through the group activity or group guidance (Setiana, 2005, p. 35).

Apart from these two approaches, Allah (s.w.t) has given us tools and techniques to solve our problems, by using the Quran and Sunnah. We should make lot of dhikr of ALLAH (SWT), as ALLAH (SWT) says in His Majestic Quran:

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ
الْقُلُوبُ

“Those who have believed and whose hearts are assured by the remembrance of Allah. Unquestionably, by the remembrance of Allah hearts are assured.”

When you feel overwhelmed and down with stress, remember ALLAH (SWT) and make dhikr. Dhikr refers to all forms of the remembrance of ALLAH (SWT), including Salat, Tasbeeh, making supplication (Dua), and reading Quran.

The act of wudu' “ablution” and the salat “prayer,” plus the mental preparation and participation, lead to the development of one’s state of calmness, peace, and relaxation, since it entails forbearance, tolerance, and forgiveness and nobility.

The Prophet (saw) also prescribed unique remedies for the treatment of sorrow, apprehension and fear, the major components in stress. He prescribed the reading of the holy Quran specially the Mu’wadhatayn (surat al-Nas and al-Falaq), which teach man how to seek refuge in Allah and ask his protection. These are anchors in the present-day treatment of the neurosis that base is in security and helplessness (Karim, 1984).

According to Sofyan S. Willis (2004) also mentioned that in the process of counseling techniques is the key to success for achieving the goals of counseling. An effective counselor counselee must be able to respond with the correct technique. Counselee appropriate circumstances at the time. Counseling emphasizes communication skills are very harmonious

with the counselee to be able to run different processes in a focused counseling within the corridor are evident.

Conclusion

Islamic counseling increasingly becomes more popular in Muslim as well as in other communities. Islam is a way of living a meaningful life that guides human beings towards a right direction. It guides us to manage stress and cope with its difficulties. However, the Islamic counseling as way of life and based on the above mentioned as Salaat, "Dhikr", Wudu' and Tasbeeh produce mental changes. In Islam, personal development is viewed within a framework of the transformation of the self- based on submission to God. Human life today is exposed to various problems. These problems are frequently linked to modern life such as stress, depression, anxiety and so on. One of the methods, which may help man to overcome these problems, is through Islamic counseling.

This theoretical based research paper outcome explains that the Islamic approach applied in counseling gives positive implications to both the counselor and the client. Hence, it can be concluded that the Islamic approach in counseling has the potential to help the client to overcome problems, and this matter needs to be continued to enhance the effectiveness of counseling. Future research should be conducted to scientifically prove that there is a correlation between Islamic approach and effectiveness of counseling. Islamic Counseling may not be bound by "ego-strengthening", "assertiveness promoting", and "growth gendering" instead Islamic Counseling should promote selflessness, healthy altruism, perfection of oneself, and happiness for others.

References

- Abdullah, S. (2015). An Islamic perspective for strengths-based social work with Muslim clients. *Journal of Social Work Practice*, 29(2), 163-172. doi: 10.1080/02650533.2014.956304
- Ahmad, K. (2013). Quranic Verses Bring to Counseling Skills. *Research on Humanities and Social Sciences*, 3(19), 68-73.

- Baqutayan, S., M., S. (2011). An Innovative Islamic Counseling. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 1(21), 178-183.
- Crabtree, S., A., & Baba, I. (2001). Islamic perspectives in social work education: Implications for teaching and practice. *Social Work Education*, 20(4), 469-481. DOI: 10.1080/02615470120057479
- Dahlan, A., R., B., Rahmat, N., A., S., B., Mazlan, M., B. (2015). Developing e-Counseling System. Counseling Through Online Portal in Islamic Perspective. *International Journal of Management and Commerce Innovations*, 3(1), 269-273.
- Hamjah, S., H., Akhir, N., S., M. (2013). Islamic Approach in Counseling. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 53(1), 279-89. doi: 10.1007/s10943-013-9703-4.
- Jafari, M.F. (1998). Moral and Spiritual Aspects of Counseling: Recent Developments in the West. *Intellectual Discourse*, 6(2), 137-157.
- Karim, G. M. (1984). Islamization of psychology. Third international seminar on Islamic thought. Malaysia: Kuala Lumpur, 26-31 July, 1984.
- Rassool, G., H. (2017). Islamic Counseling, an introduction to theory and practice. London, Routledge.
- Willis, S. 2004. Individual Counseling Theory and Practice. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- http://eprints.walisongo.ac.id/207/3/091111072_Bab2.pdf (accessed 29 July 2017)
- http://www.cci.uct.ac.za/usr/cci/publications/aria/download_issues/1999/1999_Abdullah.pdf