

Conceptual Exploration of Islamic Reframing and I-Message Techniques in Guidance and Counseling Practices for Handling Psychosocial Problems in Islamic Junior High Schools

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ABSTRACT

Background. Adolescence, the process of building self-understanding, can lead to role confusion, emotional instability, and interpersonal conflict, which have a direct impact on psychosocial well-being.

Purpose. The purpose of this study is to understand the psychosocial problems of MTs students, examine the application of I-Message and Reframing techniques in guidance and counseling practices, and explore the integration of Qur'anic values in the counseling process to produce a more holistic and contextual approach in dealing with student problems.

Method. A qualitative approach with a phenomenological method was used with three research subjects. Data were obtained through interviews, observations, and documentation. Data analysis referred to Miles and Huberman, and data validity was achieved through source triangulation, member checking, and peer debriefing.

Results. The results showed that students experienced social problems such as academic pressure, peer conflict, family conflict, anxiety, low self-esteem, and digital addiction. Here's a shorter version. The guidance counselor used an empathetic and non-judgmental communication approach when interacting with students during the counseling process. The guidance counselor understood reframing techniques not only as a psychological strategy but also as an effort to help students interpret experiences more positively and in harmony with spiritual values. The guidance counselor used Quranic values as psychological reinforcement when students faced emotional stress or difficulties. Students responded relatively positively to the counseling approach, which combined empathetic communication with the process of interpreting problems through Quranic values.

Conclusion. The combination of empathetic communication and Qur'anic values has a positive impact on students' emotional state, helping them to understand themselves better, be calmer, and be more patient and optimistic.

KEYWORDS

Islamic Reframing, I-Message and Psychosocial

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INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a developmental phase marked by significant psychological, social, and emotional changes, and is also a crucial period in the formation of self-identity. During this stage, adolescents are faced with the challenge of understanding themselves, building healthy social relationships, and determining the direction and meaning of their lives (Santrock, 2019). Erikson, (1968) states that failure to form self-identity at the identity vs role confusion stage can cause role confusion, unstable emotions, and social conflict in adolescents. In the context of MTs,

adolescent development encompasses not only academic aspects but also moral and spiritual development based on Qur'anic values (Junaidi & Mahbubi, 2024). Therefore, students' psychosocial issues are inseparable from their religious environment, which research suggests can increase resilience in the face of academic and social pressures (Jeynes, 2003; Atiqur et al., 2025).

However, anxiety, conflict with peers, study pressure, and low self-esteem often accompany the search for meaning in life as Muslim adolescents. This situation requires guidance and counseling services at Islamic junior high schools (MTs) to understand students' problems holistically. Counselors not only consider psychological aspects but also emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions as a basis for determining counseling approaches and techniques (Yusuf, 2009; Corey, 2017). In counseling practice, the Reframing technique is used to help clients reframe negative experiences or thought patterns to be more adaptive and constructive (Ellis, 1962; Beck, 1976). Meanwhile, the I-Message technique is an assertive communication approach that allows individuals to express their feelings and needs honestly without blaming others (Rogers, 1961; Gordon, 2003).

In its implementation in Madrasahs, the application of Reframing and I-Message cannot be separated from the Islamic values that form the foundation of education. Quranic values such as self-reflection, patience, *husnudzan* (reflection on God), and emotional control are integral to the development of the psychosocial health of Muslim adolescents (Shihab, 2002; Rahmawati, 2025). These two techniques have been proven effective in BK practice to manage emotions, improve interpersonal relationships, and increase adolescent self-awareness (Larasati, 2019; Nurdiah, 2025; Habibulloh & Equatora, 2025).

Based on this phenomenon, this study aims to: (1) understand the psychosocial problems of MTs students from the perspective of BK practitioners, (2) examine the application of I-Message and Reframing techniques in counseling, and (3) explore the integration of Qur'anic values so that the counseling approach is more holistic and contextual.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological method, which aims to explore and understand in depth the life experiences of MTs students who experience psychosocial problems. This study was conducted at MTs. PPI 19 Bentar Garut. The research subjects were three students in grades VIII and IX who were selected using a purposive sampling technique. Data collection was carried out using techniques oriented towards exploring subjective experiences, namely interviews, observation and documentation. Data analysis was carried out by following the steps of phenomenological analysis which are reflective and thematic, referring to Miles and Huberman with the following steps: (1) reading the data thoroughly to gain a general understanding of the participants' experiences, (2) data reduction, (3) thematic coding, (4) essential description, (5) drawing reflective conclusions (Sugiyono, 2020). To maintain the credibility and validity of the data, this study applies source triangulation, member checks, peer debriefing.

RESULT

Forms of Psychosocial Problems Experienced by MTs Students

Interviews and field observations revealed that some students exhibited more serious signs of emotional distress, not limited to anxiety or mild psychological stress. In some cases, students exhibited a tendency to self-harm as a way of expressing the pressure they experienced, whether stemming from social relationships or family circumstances. Peer pressure, feelings of

unacceptance, and unsupportive family dynamics were all interacting factors contributing to these conditions.

Guidance and Counseling teachers revealed that some students experienced significant stress, leading to behaviors that led to extreme withdrawal and difficulty managing emotions. This suggests that psychosocial problems in students are not merely superficial but can develop into conditions requiring more intensive attention and treatment.

Based on the data reflection, it can be understood that self-harm behavior in adolescents is often not solely a desire to harm themselves, but rather a maladaptive form of coping in the face of poorly channeled emotional stress. According to a guidance counselor, *"Children often appear fine, but many are actually stressed. Some are worried about grades, others about friendships. Sometimes they turn to their phones, playing constantly to distract themselves,"* (Courtesy Counselor).

Several students exhibited body language indicating discomfort when the conversation touched on the topic of academic achievement. Some looked down, spoke in a lower tone, or hesitated when answering questions. This study also found that social relationships with peers were a significant source of problems for students. Several students expressed difficulty maintaining friendships due to misunderstandings, feelings of being left out of the group, or competition within their social environment. *"Sometimes there are misunderstandings with friends, Ma'am. When that happens, I feel reluctant to go to school because I'm afraid to see them,"* (Student B).

In addition to school and friendship factors, this study also found that some of the students' psychosocial problems were related to their family circumstances. Several students reported that situations at home, such as conflict between parents, poor communication within the family, or high demands for academic achievement, also affected their emotional well-being. In some cases, students found it difficult to express their feelings or problems to their parents. *"It's sometimes uncomfortable at home, too, Mom. If I get a bad grade, I get scolded. So if there's a problem at school, I tend to just keep it bottled up,"* (Student C). Student reflections showed that limited open communication within the family can exacerbate the emotional stress students feel.

Another finding from this study was the tendency for excessive digital media use, particularly through mobile phones for playing games or accessing social media for extended periods. In some cases, this digital media use became a way for students to avoid thoughts or feelings they considered unpleasant. *"When I have a lot on my mind, I usually just play on my phone, Mom. So I don't keep thinking about it,"* (Student D).

Based on the researchers' observations, some students appeared more receptive and open when discussing their digital activities than when asked to directly explain the problems they faced. Based on the overall data obtained through interviews and observations, it can be concluded that the psychosocial problems experienced by MTs students do not arise as isolated issues. These various problems are interconnected and influenced by the dynamics of adolescent development, family conditions, social relations within the school environment, and patterns of digital media use in daily life. Therefore, guidance and counseling services in madrasas need to address psychological, social, and spiritual aspects in an integrated manner so that students can receive more comprehensive support in facing the various developmental challenges they face.

1. Guidance and Counseling Teachers' Understanding of Islamic Reframing in the Counseling Process

Interviews with guidance and counseling teachers revealed that understanding reframing techniques is not only interpreted as a communication strategy within a psychological approach, but also as an effort to help students reinterpret their experiences through a more positive perspective and in alignment with spiritual values. The guidance and counseling teacher explained that in some situations, students come with a tendency to view themselves negatively and their current situation. *"Usually, children come with pre-existing negative thoughts. For example, they feel they have failed or are unappreciated by their peers. I try to encourage them to see the other side, that every problem has a silver lining and can be a lesson for them,"* (guidance and counseling teacher).

This statement indicates that the application of Islamic reframing techniques in counseling practice at madrasas focuses not only on cognitive changes in mindset but also involves a spiritual approach that provides deeper meaning to students' life experiences. Additional data from the researcher's observations also shows that when guidance and counseling teachers encourage students to view a problem from a broader perspective, the students begin to show noticeable changes in their attitudes. Some students who initially appeared anxious or hesitant became calmer and more open in expressing their feelings after they were invited to reinterpret the experiences they were facing.

Focusing on the findings of this study, Islamic Reframing can be understood as an effort to help students reinterpret their experiences through a more constructive perspective by linking them to the values of patience, wisdom, and belief in God's help in facing various life problems.

2. Forms of Counselor Communication in Using the I-Message Principle

The research results show that guidance counselors tend to use an empathetic and non-judgmental communication approach when interacting with students during the counseling process. In practice, guidance counselors strive to respond to student behavior with more reflective language and avoid expressions that could give the impression of judgment or condemnation. *"I usually don't directly say they're wrong. I'd rather say things like, 'I'm worried if you keep isolating yourself like this.' That way, the child usually doesn't feel blamed,"* (Guidance Counselor).

During interviews and observations, researchers observed that the use of more empathetic language made students appear more open in expressing their feelings. Some students even began sharing personal experiences they had previously avoided sharing with other teachers. *"When the guidance counselor speaks kindly, I'm not afraid to share,"* (Student A). These findings indicate that the communication patterns used by counselors play a crucial role in fostering student openness during the counseling process. From the explanation above, it can be understood that the use of I-Message in counseling practices in madrasas can help create a more supportive communication atmosphere so that students feel appreciated, understood, and more ready to reflect on the experiences they have had.

3. Integration of Qur'anic Values in the Reframing Process and Counseling Communication

The guidance counselor explained that the values contained in the Quran are often used as a source of psychological strength when students experience emotional stress or struggle to cope with problems. *"Sometimes I remind them that in life there will always be tests. I*

encourage them to see that difficulties are not the end of the world, but part of the learning process," (Guidance Counselor). In several counseling sessions, the guidance counselor also linked students' experiences to the values of patience and optimism as taught in the Quran. *"When I have a problem, I remember what the guidance counselor said, 'Every difficulty has a solution,'"* (Student C).

Reflecting on the interview data indicates that spiritual values can serve as a source of psychological strength for students in dealing with the various pressures they experience.

4. Student Response to Counseling Approach

Student responses revealed a relatively positive response to the counseling approach, which combines empathetic communication with a process of problem-solving through Quranic values. The approach used by the guidance counselor was deemed effective in fostering a more open dialogue, allowing students to feel valued and receive genuine attention throughout the counseling process. *"I feel more relieved after I told my story. I understand why I need to be more patient,"* (Student C).

In addition to the students' feelings of relief after counseling, the counseling process also helped them re-understand the situations they were facing. When the guidance counselor encouraged students to view problems from different perspectives, they began to realize that their problems did not always have to be interpreted negatively. *"At first, I thought the problem was really difficult, but after it was explained, it felt lighter and I could think about it again,"* (Student B). The researcher's observations during interviews and observations also indicated changes in attitudes in several students after participating in the counseling sessions. To clarify the research findings, the following is a matrix of findings that outlines the data reduction process, categorization, and interpretation of the data obtained.

Table 1. Research Findings Matrix Based on Interview and Observation Results

Research Focus	Code	Findings Category	Verbatim Quote	Thematic Meaning	Interpretation
Psychosocial problems of students	PS-1	Academic pressure	"I'm afraid of getting bad grades, I'll get scolded..." (Student A)	Performance anxiety	Students experience pressure from academic demands and environmental expectations.
	PS-2	Peer conflict	"Sometimes I misunderstood my friends..." (Student B)	Unstable social relations	Social relationships become a source of emotional stress
	PS-3	Family conflict	"Even at home, I often get scolded..." (Student C)	Family environmental pressure	Lack of family support increases psychological stress

	PS-4	Low self-esteem and anxiety	(Observation: students look down, hesitant)	Lack of self-confidence	Students have low self-esteem and fear of assessment.
	PS-5	Escape to digital	“Playing on my cellphone so I don't think about...” (Student D)	Non-adaptive coping	Digital media is used as an emotional distraction

DISCUSSION

Research findings show that some students experience profound emotional distress, which is not only related to psychological aspects but also relates to how they understand and give meaning to their life experiences. This condition indicates that the problems experienced by students are not merely emotional but also touch on the dimension of self-meaning. In this situation, the Islamic reframing approach becomes relevant as an effort to help students reorganize their perspective on their experiences, so that they can be understood more constructively and have spiritual value. Reframing in this context does not simply shift negative thoughts into positive ones, but encourages individuals to view events as part of the learning process of life.

1. Dynamics of Psychosocial Problems of MTs Students

The dynamics of psychosocial problems can be understood as students in Islamic junior high schools face various psychosocial problems, including academic pressure, peer relationship dynamics, family issues, and a tendency to use digital media as an escape from emotional stress. The dynamics of psychosocial problems reveal a dynamic in social relations among students, indicating a strong need for peer acceptance. This phenomenon can be understood within the framework of adolescent development. In early adolescence, individuals are in the process of searching for their identity and seeking recognition from their social environment. In this regard, John W. Santrock explains that adolescence is a transitional period marked by significant changes in biological, cognitive, and social aspects, often giving rise to emotional tension in the process of identity formation (Santrock, 2019). These changes make teenagers more sensitive to other people's judgments and more vulnerable to psychological stress.

Erikson, (1968) suggests that adolescents are in the identity versus role confusion stage, a phase where individuals attempt to understand who they are and what roles they will play in social life. Thus, the findings of this study indicate that the psychosocial problems of MTs students are not only influenced by internal factors but also result from a complex interaction between family conditions, the social environment, and the academic demands they face.

2. Islamic Reframing in Counseling Practices in Madrasas

The implementation of counseling in madrasas using Islamic Reframing shows a tendency to use an approach that encourages students to review their life experiences with a more positive and meaningful perspective (Nuroini et al., 2025). Reframing is closely related to changing the way an individual interprets experiences. Aaron T. Beck explains that

individuals often experience cognitive distortions, namely thought patterns that tend to be negative or unrealistic in understanding an event(Anisah et al., 2025). In other words, reframing, from a psychological perspective, serves to shift interpretations from maladaptive to more rational and constructive ones. Islamic counseling aims not only to help individuals resolve problems but also to guide them in discovering the wisdom and meaning behind the events they experience(Ramadhani & Halwati, 2024).

3. The Role of Empathetic Communication through I-Message Techniques

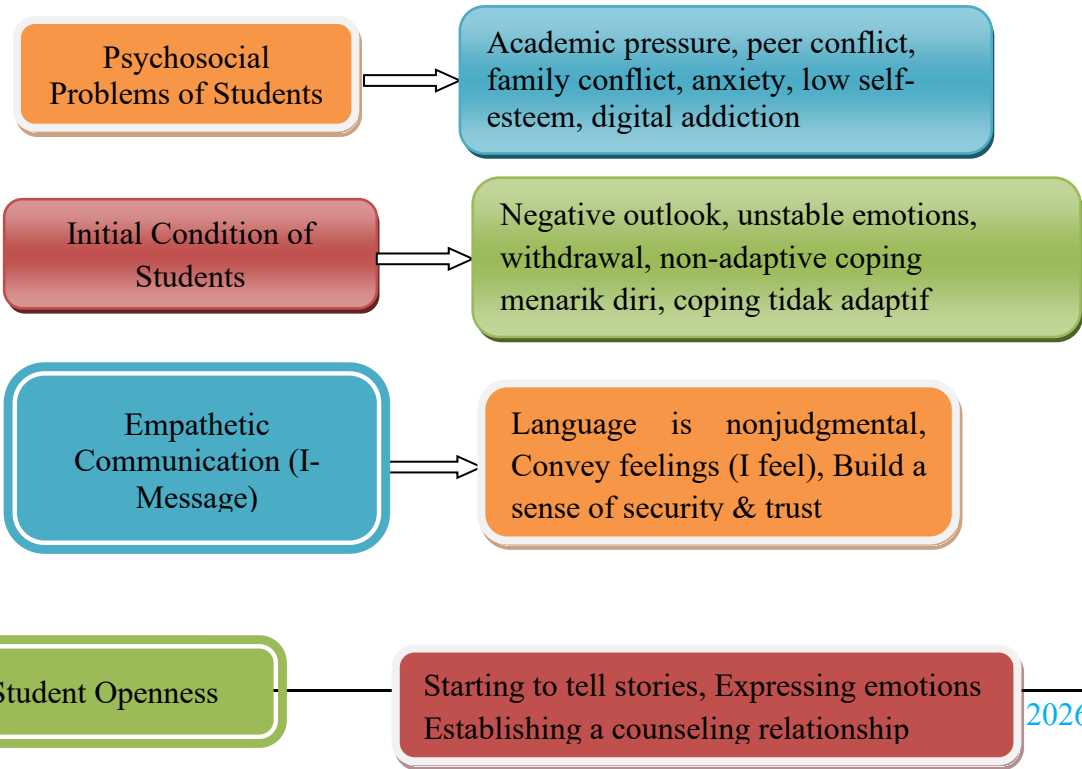
The use of I-Message techniques demonstrated in counselor interactions not only serves as a way of conveying messages, but also as a means of building safer and more supportive relationships for students(Larasati, 2019). Thomas Gordon explains that I-Message is a form of messaging that focuses on the speaker's feelings without cornering the other party. Using I-Message, counselors can convey concerns or hopes more constructively, making it easier for students to accept the message(Gordon, 2003).

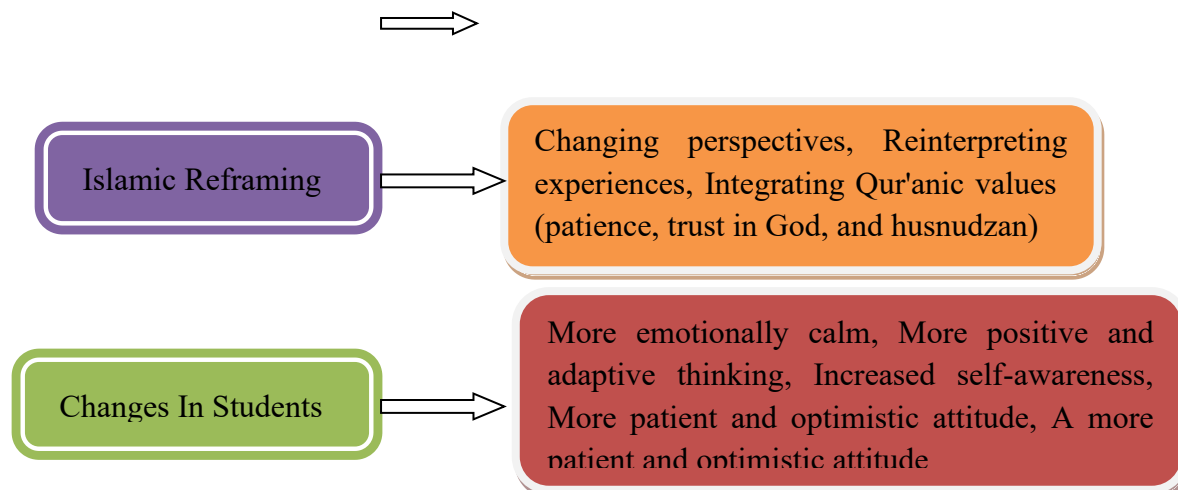
4. Synthesis of Counseling Models: Integration of Islamic Reframing and I-Message in Counseling

In this case, the combination of Islamic reframing and empathetic communication through the I-Message technique appears to form a complementary intervention pattern in helping students face various psychosocial issues. In Islamic psychology, the integration of psychological and spiritual aspects is seen as a comprehensive approach to helping individuals cope with life's pressures. This view aligns with Abdul Mujib's idea, which emphasizes that the counseling process should not only focus on problem-solving but also on finding spiritual meaning that can strengthen individual resilience(Siregar et al., 2025). Thus, the integrative model produced in this study shows that the combination of empathetic communication and Qur'anic value-based meaning is able to form a more comprehensive counseling approach.

Figure 4.1

Research Findings Model: Integration of I-Message and Islamic Reframing in Addressing Students' Psychosocial Problems





Based on this model, it can be understood that changes in students do not occur instantly, but rather through a process that is interrelated and continuous.

CONCLUSION

These problems extend beyond academic pressure, peer relationships, and family circumstances, but also include deeper emotional distress. In some students, this condition manifests as self-harm and indications of a psychological crisis that requires more serious attention. This indicates that some students are unable to manage their emotions optimally and still struggle to understand and make sense of their life experiences. In implementing guidance and counseling services, guidance and counseling teachers use an approach that combines empathetic communication through the I-Message technique with an Islamic reframing process. The I-Message technique plays a role in creating a comfortable and non-judgmental atmosphere, so students feel safer to open up and express their feelings. The combination of empathetic communication and interpretation based on Qur'anic values has a positive impact on students' emotional well-being. Students become more self-aware, calmer in facing problems, and begin to demonstrate a more patient and optimistic attitude.

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