Analysis of Islamic University Counselor Interpersonal Communication Skills

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia data - National Adolescent Mental Health Survey (I-NAMHS) 2022, provides information about mental health conditions in Indonesia. The survey results stated that as many as 15.5 million (34.9 percent) teenagers experienced health problems. However, there are still very few teenagers who seek formal help by consulting a professional. This research uses a qualitative approach with a descriptive type with data collection obtained through in-depth interviews with 6 pairs of peer-client counselors. The data analysis technique uses interactive analysis with data validity testing using source triangulation. Through the Student and Alumni Development Institute (LPKA), UMY is committed to improving student welfare and health. Based on internal research, the team found facts about the many mental health disorders experienced by UMY students. The campus responded to this phenomenon by establishing a "peer counselor" program to assist students who have potential and have experienced mental health problems. This requires the counselor's communication skills, both verbal and non-verbal, as well as the ability to overcome obstacles. However, some student clients still complain that counselors are less able to establish intimacy in the counseling process. In UMY peer counselors, counselors are proven to carry out effective communication skills so that clients feel satisfied in the healing process for students. Several communication styles chosen by peer counselors include attentive, relaxed, friendly, precise, and argumentative styles. The counselor's verbal communication skills have been combined with non-verbal communication. The counselor's communication style is related to interpersonal communication skills, including paraphrasing, reflecting feelings, interpreting, and summarizing. Counselors' verbal skills appear to be more effective when they combine them with non-verbal skills which include facing the client squarely, adopting an open posture, remembering that it is possible at times to learn toward the other, maintaining good eye contact, and trying to be relatively relaxed or natural in these behaviors. The application of communication skills by UMY peer counselors has been proven to internalize Islamic values written in the Al Qur'an, which include: QS Ali Imran ayat 159: gentle, careful in verbal intonation, emotional management, and dialogic. QS An-Nisa ayat 46: listening, paying attention. QS An-Nisa ayat 46: humble, cool, and calming expressions.

Keywords: Communication Skills, Communication Style, Peer Counselor, Attentive, Mental Health

BACKGROUND

As the country with the fourth largest population in the world (around 270 million people), Indonesia only has around 800 psychiatrists (0.3 psychiatrists per 100,000), 450 psychologists, and 48 mental health facilities. A total of 9 million Indonesians (3.7 percent) suffer from depression. Every hour, a suicide occurs in Indonesia. Meanwhile, 16 million people (6 percent) aged 15 years and over show symptoms of anxiety or depression, and around 400,000 people (1.72 percent) live with illnesses such as psychosis, 19 percent of Indonesian teenagers have suicidal thoughts, while 45 percent admit to committing self-harm. However, accessibility to mental health consultations is a problem in Indonesia. About half of all psychiatrists work in the capital Jakarta. More than half of the 48 mental health facilities are located in four provinces out of 34 provinces alone. However, Yogyakarta is the only city that has succeeded in placing psychologists in 18 public health posts (ourbetterworld.org, 2019).

Mental health is the well-being that an individual is aware of, including the ability to manage normal life stress, work productively, and participate in their community (WHO, 2022). Mental health has become an important issue and has received special attention from the wider community, one of which is at university institutions. This is certainly in line with the high number of mental health problems among students. Obtaining data from Indonesia - National Adolescent Mental Health Survey (I-NAMHS) 2022, found that 15.5 million (34.9 percent) teenagers experienced mental health problems (Arif, 2023). The adolescent age in question is in the range of 10-24 years, which is a transition period in life from childhood to adulthood (Desmita, 2015).

Santrock (John W. Santrock, 2002) said that adolescence is full of conflict and mood swings. Those who are unable to cope with changes in behavior and mood will have an impact on their mental health. Recent research states that teenagers are now becoming aware and seeking help. However, location and limited access impact the minimum number of teenagers seeking formal help such as consulting a professional. On the other hand, their efforts are often in vain because the people around them still have a lack of awareness of the importance of mental health. Surprisingly, the more severe the mental health problems experienced by teenagers, the less effort they make to seek help (Saragih, 2018).

Various perspectives have tried to overcome mental health problems, one of which is the Islamic perspective. The integration of religion in psychotherapy was previously considered impossible due to the value-free requirement in psychotherapy. As it develops, the world increasingly recognizes the need to integrate religion and spirituality in Islamic psychotherapy (Passmore, 2003). Although professional attention to integrating faith and spirituality into psychological practice is increasing, research on the effectiveness of the integration of religious and spiritual psychotherapy in psychotherapy on populations and clinical issues is widely felt to be lacking.

Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY) as one of the Islamic universities in Indonesia is very responsive in facing the challenges of mental health problems among students. Through the Student and Alumni Development Institute (LPKA), UMY is committed to improving student welfare and health. According to LPKA, there are a variety of mental health disorders that often occur in UMY students, including mood disorders, impaired social interaction abilities, sleep disorders (staying up late), excessive anxiety, and appetite disorders. In more severe cases, they suffer from schizophrenia which makes it difficult to differentiate between real life and fantasy. They need healing to overcome their problems, and the most appropriate people are their peers.

Maliki (2016) explained that peer counseling is necessary because teenagers often express their problems with peers rather than with parents, mentors, or caregivers. Problems that are considered very serious will also be told to peers (friends). This problem arises because teenagers have very close interests, commitments, and ties to their peers. Teenagers feel that people from different age ranges cannot understand the problems they are experiencing. As an effort to respond to this phenomenon, LPKA UMY organized a peer counselor program to assist students with potential and experiencing mental health problems.

According to Rogers, a peer counselor is someone with training and guidance experience to provide assistance or assistance to someone of the same age who is in trouble. However, their activities in providing support to peers still require the supervision of a practitioner (Krikorian, 2022). In this research, UMY peer counselors refer to active students currently studying at Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta (UMY) who are willing and meet the qualifications to become peer counselors under the auspices of LPKA. Peer counselors have been trained by certified professional counselors to be able to implement good counseling practices. The university wants to increase awareness of the importance of mental health. This is also to prevent students from bullying those who are exposed to it. Currently, UMY, through the UMY Peer Counselor program, targets to have 1000 counselors who will accompany and accommodate student complaints (Republika, 2023).

Based on research (S. Kamore, Pullah Mitto Tiego, 2015), peer counselors have a very important role in helping peers shape their character, increase self-esteem, improve academic performance, direct their peers to make appropriate decisions, and become positive role models for other peers. Students who are accompanied are more able to express themselves freely when dealing with peers. Therefore, it is important to discuss the

interpersonal communication skills that exist between peer counselors and students who need assistance in counseling sessions. This aims to see how effective the presence of peer counselors is in influencing the attitudes and behavior of students who need assistance so that they can increase students' awareness of their mental health, supported by their peers. Several complaints related to the communication skills of counselors at UMY were expressed by student clients, including that counselors were not friendly enough and were unable to build closeness with clients (interview with student clients, December 2023). The counselor's communication skills influence the client's self-disclosure. This is one way for counselors to help clients reduce, and make patients more positive in the healing process. The implementation of counselor communication skills includes affection, meeting intensity, growth and change, privacy, encouragement, and honesty (Hikmawati, 2012). Based on the background above, the problem can be formulated as follows: How are the interpersonal communication skills of Islamic university counselors: a case study at Universitas Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Interpersonal Communication

Several understandings about interpersonal communication were expressed by experts. Lawrence Kincaid, states that interpersonal communication is defined as "a process in which two or more people form or exchange information with each other, who in turn have a deep mutual understanding" (Cangara, 2000). Meanwhile, Mulyana believes that "interpersonal communication is communication between two people who have intimacy, for example, husband and wife, two colleagues, two close friends, teacher-student, two people who are friends, and so on" (MuIyana, 2007). De Vito (2009) stated that communication is characteristic of intimacy. The topic's depth and the communication distance between participants indicate intimacy.

Two directions generate the messages: an informal environment, instant feedback, individual closeness, and delivery and reception of the message, which characterize communication. The participant relationships have strong, mutually beneficial personal relationships and there is awareness on the part of each individual to think positively about their relationship (Suciati, 2015). Participants focused not only on conveying the message but also on their relationships. On the other hand, the number of people communicating can add complexity to the communication process. The relationship with other people also becomes meaningful in the participant's relationship. This communication is considered the most effective in changing a person's attitudes, opinions, or behavior because the process is dialogical and there is direct feedback.

Ascharisa and Anisa (2020) emphasize four goals in interpersonal communication. The four objectives are; to be understood, to understand others, to be accepted, and to get something done. For more details, here is the explanation:

a.   To be understood
To enable the communicant to receive our message, thoughts and feelings must be communicated verbally and non-verbally to the recipient.

b.   To understand others
We cannot demand that other people understand the message we convey. However, we must also be able to understand what other people convey to us within the scope of the communication we carry out.

c.   To be accepted
Humans have social needs in the form of feeling accepted by other individuals or groups. They must manage relationships through interpersonal communication.

d.   To get something done
This goal explains how an individual and another individual get something that can be solved together.

In addition to these four main ideas of interpersonal communication, several elements necessary for interpersonal communication can be summarized. The following are the elements of interpersonal communication according (Suranto, 2011)to the source or communicator, encoding, message, channel, recipient, interference, and context.

Interpersonal Communication skills

Regarding skills in counseling, Ivey (Anthony Yeo, 2007) said that there are three types of skills of counselors, namely: (1) verbal skills, (2) non-verbal skills, and (3) skills in observing the client/attending. Attending skills are skills that refer to the verbal language of the counseling process. The counselor uses this to pay attention to the counselee which in turn will facilitate communication or conversations between the counselor and the counselee. This attending skill aims to help clients feel comfortable providing information to the counselor so that he or she can understand the counselee's main problems well. This will further foster and lead to an attitude of cooperation between the counselor and the counselee to solve problems.

Meanwhile, Ivey (1987) said that experience shows that effective counselors are those who speak in a moderate tone, not too loud, and with regular pauses. The counselor needs to adapt by making his vocal quality appropriate to the counselee's response and the problem being discussed. Careful listening skills are very important so that the problem does not escalate into other problems. The main message that comes from the counselee is the key to be used as a guide in solving problems. Skills or verbal responses by Anthony Yeo (2007) consist of (1) paraphrasing, namely skills that refer to repeating keywords and thoughts from the counselee which are formulated using the counselor's own words, (2) reflecting feelings or reflection of feelings. This is related to paraphrasing which is directed at the client's feelings, not the content. The client will feel that the counselor has empathy and understands their feelings, (3) interpretation. This skill is rather difficult because it includes positively describing the client's thoughts feelings and behavior, (4) summarizing.

According to Gerard Egan (2010), this non-verbal skill is called visibly tuning in to clients, often referred to as attending and rapport (Willis, 2011). The conditions for implementing visibly tuning in to clients should follow the acronym SOLER which includes the first S of SOLER which is to face the client squarely; O as adopt an open posture; L, remember that it is possible at times to learn toward the other; E, maintain good eye contact and finally R, try to be relatively relaxed or natural in these behaviors Communication skills will also be related to the perpetrator's verbal and non-verbal communication style. According to Norton, Kirtley, and Weaver, communication style is defined as a cognitive process that collects forms of content for micro-level evaluation. Every communicator's style is always a reflection of how they accept themselves and are accepted in social situations. Furthermore, Gudykunst & Ting Toomery observed that communication styles can be considered as meta signals that provide a framework for the recognition and interpretation of verbal messages. Communication motivation is also explained in this definition. Efforts to reflect one's own identity to influence the impression of others are the sole purpose of communication (Liliweri, 2003).

Each person's communication style, which includes communication models, communication processes, forms of expression, and the reactions they give or display when speaking, shows their unique individuality. Norton in (Rahmawati, 2020) classifies communication styles into 10 categories, including the following:

a) Dominant, namely the communicator has the advantage in the conversation. People like this usually want to lead the conversation.
b) Dramatic, when speaking, they often use metaphors, stories, fantasies, figures of speech, and exaggerated sound effects.
c) Expressive Animation styles often use nonverbal cues including body language, gestures, facial emotions, and eye contact to add nuance to their conversations.
d) Open: communicators are approachable, friendly, gregarious, transparent, and have no secrets, thus fostering the development of a sense of trust and two-way communication.
e) Argumentative, communicators tend to like to argue and are aggressive in arguing
f) Relaxed, communicators are more calm, patient and pleasant
g) Friendly, communicators can be positive and supportive of others
h) Attentive, this communicator interacts with other people by being an active, empathetic, and sensitive listener
i) Precise, this communicator focuses more on accuracy, documentation, and evidence in information and arguments and
j) Impression Leaving, namely the ability of a communicator to form an impression on the listener.

One expert argues that communication styles can be described as a collection of specific interpersonal behaviors used in a specific context. Each communication style consists of a collection of behaviors used to obtain certain answers in certain contexts. The goals of the sender and recipient determine whether or not a communication style is appropriate. There are four communication styles proposed by Caroon B. Goode in (Rahmawati, 2020), including:

a)   A behavioral style that prioritizes freedom of self-expression for communicators.
b)   A cognitive style that requires identification and understanding. People with this style are very wise and understanding.
c)   Interpersonal style includes individuals with personalities wanting respect in communication and sincerity.
d)   Affective style: This type of person is sometimes referred to as a dreamer or visionary.

Peer Counselor

Adolescents with the ability to provide health information and help their peers identify problems and realize the need for help (referral) to overcome them are known as counselors or peer counselors. Carl Rogers defines a peer counselor as an individual who has received training, supervision, and advice to help and support others of the same age (Efendi, 2019). These peer counselors do not yet have professional counselor skills, so they rely on guidance from mentors such as adolescent health program managers at community health centers or other facilities, instructors at schools or campuses, or youth community directors (Purwanti, 2022).

Being the same age, this counselor becomes more relaxed and flexible so he can more freely express the problems he faces. They also have the potential to reveal the client's psychological factors due to the same age or level of education, and they will express problems more openly without psychological barriers. Peer counselors are also required to be confident in their abilities in self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is defined as a person's belief that one can control one's behavior to complete a task, overcome challenges, and achieve goals. On the other hand, peer counselors often lack confidence when providing counseling due to a lack of experience. Several obstacles that can be identified include the counselee's lack of openness, lack of counselor capacity to identify and ascertain the nature of the counselee's problem, and the counselor's tendency not to confirm with the counselee after attending peer counseling, which are additional challenges experienced by peer counselors (Fitriana & Hamim Rosyidi, 2021).

Strong communication skills assist counselors in guiding clients toward positive change. By understanding effective communication, counselors can help clients develop new thought patterns and behaviors that support development and well-being. Communication skills are key to creating effective relationships and providing meaningful support to clients. Counselors who can communicate well can provide deeper guidance, support positive change, and play an important role in better individual development (Uncen, 2024).

Peer counselors need to have the necessary skills to conduct peer counseling sessions. According to (Arudo, 2008) a counselor must be friendly, and disciplined, have at least average academic abilities, be an effective listener and speaker, and be able to keep secrets. In line with the opinion of Lutomia and Sikolia in (Fitriana & Hamim Rosyidi, 2021) peer counselors also need to have the following qualities: humility, empathy, good communication, openness, understanding, discipline, and listening attentively.

Listening capacity is also an important skill that is often overlooked in counseling. Carl Rogers calls a humanistic person who is ready to be a source of active listening, which is the basic mindset needed to listen to other people and not be passive. These skills include the ability to ask relevant questions, summarize and paraphrase, make comments, show deeper understanding, and double-check what has been said are examples of active listening. This is complemented by maintaining eye contact, utilizing nonverbal cues such as smiling or nodding and refraining from interrupting the speaker (Fitriana & Hamim Rosyidi, 2021).

Islamic Counselor

An Islamic counselor is based on religiosity in providing guidance and counseling. Counselors position themselves as "helpers", who are required to have an understanding of Islamic values in everyday life. Islamic counselors should be aware that providing guidance and counseling services to clients is an activity that has the value of worship because the process of assisting contains the value of upholding "amar ma'ruf nahi munkar" (commanding goodness and preventing evil), carried out with patience and sincerity. According to Bimo Walgito (2010), the requirements for a supervisor are as follows: 1) A supervisor must have fairly extensive knowledge, both in theory and practice. Theory is important because this aspect is the basis for practice. 2) From a psychological perspective, a mentor can take wise action if the mentor is mature enough in terms of psychology, especially emotions. 3) A mentor must be physically and psychologically healthy. 4) A supervisor must have an attitude of love for his work and also for the students or individuals he is dealing with. 5) A supervisor must have good initiative, to bring progress to the school. 6) A mentor must be sociable, friendly, and polite in attitude and behavior. 7) A supervisor can carry out the principles and ethics of guidance as well as possible.

In an Islamic perspective, counselors implement Islamic values through internalizing several verses of the Qur'an, including:

- QS Ali Imran verse 159: Some of the required counselor skills include several elements: 1) Be gentle with the counselee who comes. 2) Be careful in counseling communication, especially in verbal intonation. 3) Manage yourself well by not getting carried away by emotions in the counseling process. 4) Invite them to talk in a dialogical atmosphere that opens up to each other.
- QS An-Nisa verse 46: It should be directed to the formula: "Hear and obey, and hear, and pay attention."
- QS Al Furqon verse 63: The counselor should be humble and give expressions that are soothing and calming to the counselee.

RESEARCH METHODS

The approach in this research is qualitative research with a descriptive type. Qualitative research itself is research that aims to describe and analyze phenomena, social activities, events, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, and thoughts of people individually and in groups (Sukmadinata, 2007), and aims to explain phenomena through data collection as in-depth as possible (Hariwijaya, 2007).

Data collection refers to the systematic process of obtaining the data required for research (Nazir, 2014). Several methods in the data collection process include interviews, observation, questionnaires, testing, archives, and documents (Suwartono, 2014). The data collection in this research used the in-depth interview method. The purpose of in-depth interviews is to obtain detailed data and information and understand the background, attitudes, and views of the interviewee (Sujarweni, 2014). In this research, in-depth interviews were conducted with 12 informants, consisting of UMY peer counselor informants and UMY student informants. It is hoped that the data from the interviews conducted by researchers will be by the research objectives. In conducting in-depth interviews, there are general steps (Rully Indrawan, R Poppy Yaniawati, 2014), namely:

a) Determine the sample purposively and identify the sources to be interviewed.
b) Make an appointment with the interviewee regarding the time and things that will be discussed in the interview.
c) Determine the type of interview that is in line with the interviewee's problems and circumstances.
d) Using flexible and efficient time and techniques.
e) Stop the interview when you have obtained enough information/data.

Determining informants in this study used a purposive sampling technique, namely a technique for determining samples with certain considerations (Sugiyono, 2016). The informants consist of UMY peer counselors who have worked for at least 1 year and handled at least 10 students. The counselee informants are students who are

handled intensively by counselors. The data analysis technique used in this research uses qualitative analysis. Qualitative data analysis is an effort carried out by working with data, organizing data, sorting it into manageable data units, synthesizing it, looking for and finding patterns, finding what can be learned, and deciding what can be conveyed to other people (Moleong, 2018). Activities in analyzing data according to Miles and Huberman in (Sugiyono, 2016), that is: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion or verification.

The level of data validity is carried out using data triangulation, namely a data-checking technique that uses other things outside the collected data to check or compare the data that has been obtained. In this research, data validity testing uses data triangulation, namely a data collection technique that combines various collection techniques and existing data sources (Sugiyono, 2016). Data triangulation in this research was carried out by comparing observation data with interview results to test the credibility of the data from the source.

INFORMANT PROFILE

Counselor AM and Client B

AM is a 22 year old student, student in the 8th Semester, Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Study Program. During college, AM took a concentration in counseling. Thus, AM's motive for joining as a peer counselor was to improve and increase his experience in the field of counseling. From the start, AM was interested in becoming a psychologist. During his two years as a counselor, AM admitted that he had learned a lot and knew more about various student problems and felt that there were similarities with AM's experience. There are counseling sessions that bring AM and clients together, allowing him to see the various ways a person goes through difficult phases. AM feels more grateful and has a wiser attitude in looking at life.

In 2024, AM's newest client is B. B is a 21-year-old woman who is studying in the 5th semester at the same study program as him. B decided to seek counseling from a peer counselor because B felt he needed a friend to talk to about problems between college and family. B feels a certain fear and lack of trust when he talks to his friends on campus or at home who already know him and usually go out with him. This fear is justified, such as fear that B's friends' perception will be negative if they find out B's story and B will end up being shunned by his friends.

Counselor RD and Client V

RD is a peer counselor who is also 22 years old. He is a 4th-semester Nursing education student. RD has joined as a peer counselor at UMY for two years, starting from when he entered college in 2022 until now. RD's motive for becoming a peer counselor is the desire to be more useful to others by providing motivation and reducing the burden on others. RD believes that not all diseases come from viruses or bacteria, but also from a person's thoughts, such as anxiety and fear. RD is determined to spread enthusiasm so that everyone can live physically and mentally healthy.

One of the clients handled by RD was a Semester 1 student majoring in Accounting, aged 18 years, with the initials V. At first V attended a counseling session to talk about problems in his love life regarding toxic relationships. V decided to tell a story and ask for life views, and love issues that are interfering with college. V wants him not to get caught up in his problems and be able to plan and organize the future.

Counselor AR and Client M

AR is a 22-year-old student majoring in Communication and Islamic Broadcasting Semester 8 who has joined as a peer counselor for 1 year. In 2023, AR decided to register to become a peer counselor with the motive of being useful to other people. Apart from that, AR is also very concerned about the phenomenon of his peers with poor mental health. Many news stories show that society still lacks awareness of mental health, including

several cases of suicide among students. The opportunity to become a peer counselor is a golden opportunity for AR to be able to make a real contribution and apply his knowledge to increase awareness of mental health. During his time as a peer counselor, AR has met various client characters, one of which is a quite quiet client with the initials M. M is a 21-year-old Semester 1 student majoring in Communication and Islamic Broadcasting. MN's motive for coming to the peer counselor was because he was confused about determining priorities and time management between lectures and the organization. As a first-semester student, M was caught in a dilemma, when he wanted to focus on studying and be active in organizations/increasing relationships. Especially in semester 1, M still has a lot of free time to do these two things simultaneously.

Counselor MB and Client A

MB is an 18-year-old 4th-semester medical student. Since 2023, MB has joined as a peer counselor through UMY recruitment. MB's motive for becoming a peer counselor is that he wants to be someone that other people can trust in sharing their life stories so that the burden on other people can be reduced. MB wants to emphasize not to be afraid to talk about anxiety. Apart from that, becoming a peer counselor is one of MB's stepping stones to learning more about counseling, which is in line with MB's dream of becoming a psychiatrist.

MB's busy schedule as a medical student meant that MB only had the opportunity to treat one client, with the initials A. A, 23 years old, was a final semester in Japanese Language Education student. A's motive for coming to a peer counselor was to write her final assignment. Currently, A is writing a thesis manuscript as a graduation requirement. However, during the preparation time, several problems were found which became challenges, such as decreased motivation to complete it. He feels anxious if his final assignment is not completed on time according to the expectations of his parents who are now retired.

Counselor MF and Client C

MF is a 25-year-old student, a 4th-semester recipient of a full study scholarship from UMY. Through his scholarship, MF studied at the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Study Program (KPI). When MF was still in his first semester, he started to be interested in joining to learn about counseling, especially at KPI there was a counseling concentration class. MF decided to join a peer counselor to gain knowledge and experience related to the field of counseling outside of lectures. Then regarding his life motto, MF wants to be a person who can bring benefits to other people.

C is one of the clients that MF has handled. Currently, C is studying at the Islamic Communication and Broadcasting Study Program (KPI) and has just entered semester 4. The academic problems he faces are low achievement and motivation to study. Starting in the middle of semester 3, C experienced a busy lecture schedule and lots of assignments, which became a burden for C. This continued when C entered semester 4. C began to have difficulty adjusting to managing his time and this had an impact on his decline. motivation to learn. On several occasions, C also found it difficult to understand the lecture material.

Counselor DN and Client T

20-year-old student DN is a student majoring in Government Science (IP) in Semester 4. In 2022, DN will join as a peer counselor in a series of programs for students who receive full study scholarships. As a student who receives a scholarship, DN is obliged to take part in one of the service programs at UMY. Through this opportunity, DN succeeded in entering the peer counselor program. He is very grateful for this because DN is very interested in the field of mental health with various new developments in society. DN hopes to contribute to improving the mental health of UMY students with the peer counselor program.

T is a 9th-semester Electrical Engineering student who is one of the counselor DN's clients. T's motive is to do counseling with a peer counselor because there are romantic problems that have an impact on academic problems. In the middle of the final coursework period, T began to lose motivation in completing his assignments. T escapes into romance and spends his time playing around with his girlfriend, especially during

COVID-19. Where all offline guidance and practice must be limited. T has a girlfriend who has a luxurious lifestyle. T has to spend quite a lot of money to support his girlfriend even though, up to now, T's living expenses are still covered by his parents. T experiences a dilemma, on the one hand, T loses motivation to study, on the other hand, T is aware of the responsibility of completing college to his parents.

DISCUSSION

Communication competence is very important in any communication context. This can help us form strong bonds with others and live a prosperous community life. Effective communication requires us to be aware of qualities such as empathy, tolerance, and responsibility, especially when interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds. When we engage in interpersonal communication, we can identify the characteristics of the communicator.

This research refers to the theory of counselor interpersonal communication skills which consists of verbal and non-verbal skills. The research findings revealed that the 6 pairs of informants could be grouped into 5 categories according to the research indicators:

Attentive Style

Informant	Process	Skills
Counselor AM-Client B	Active listener	Reflecting feelings
	Guarantee confidentiality	Summarizing
	Building comfort through stories about self and others	Facing the person squarely
	Building empathy through limited non-verbal communication	Learning Forward
	Note important points as a conclusion	
	Confirm the truth of the client's story	
	Doesn't allow to familiarize yourself	

Relaxed Style

Informant	Process	Skills
	Chat casually	Paraphrase
RD-client counselor V	Observe the client's movements	Interpretation
	Not getting lost in the client's sadness	Eye contact
	Provide questions and solutions according to the counseling situation	Facing the person squarely
	Develop eye contact as a form of	

	attention	

Precise style

Informant	Process	Skills
AR-client counselor M	Greet them in a friendly manner and give them something to drink Ask open questions Answer questions with real-life examples Maintain eye contact, facial expressions, and body posture Write down the answer and confirm	Interpretation Summarizing Facing the person squarely Adopting an open posture Learning Forward Maintaining eye contact

Friendly style

Informant	Process	Skills
MB-client counselor A	Build chemistry by not dominating Active listener Observe the client's response through movements Talk casually and occasionally joke Not immersed in the client's condition Develop smiles and gestures	Reflecting feeling Interpretation Adopting forward Being relaxed Eye contact
MF-Client Counselor C	Create comfort by speaking casually and friendly Do not interrupt the client's conversation Developing storytelling Questions adapt to the client's condition Not distracted by the client's	Reflecting feeling Interpretation Adopting forward Eye contact

	condition Maintain eye contact	

Argumentative Style

Informant	Process	Skills
Counselor DN-client T	Take over the conversation at the end of the session Building commitment Guarantee confidentiality Speak patiently and confidently Maintain facial expressions, embrace, tap shoulders, and eye contact Prompt answers with open questions	Paraphrase Interpretation Adopting forward Eye contact

All counselors use non-verbal symbols in their activities. Communicators are more expressive in expressing their feelings using non-verbal cues, such as body language, gestures, facial expressions, and eye contact to add nuance to their conversations. The client's non-verbal communication helps the counselor understand his every attitude and movement. All UMY peer counselors have carried out basic skills in counseling sessions. As stated by Fauzan (2008), a counselor must have basic communication skills in counseling. Basic counseling communication skills are skills in welcoming, conversation initiation, conversation transition, acceptance, restatement, reflection of feeling, clarification, structuring, sharing of experience, lead/questioning, reassurance, silence, rejection, advice, interpretation, confrontation, summarization, and termination. In this research, the distribution among informants can be seen: reassurance (AM, DN), advice (all counselor informants), reflecting feeling (AM, MB, MF), summarizing (AM, AR), clarification (DN), interpretation (RD, AR, MB, MF, DN), and welcoming (AR).

In understanding the character or nature of other people, nonverbal communication plays a very important role. The percentage of nonverbal communication a person shows can reach 80% of all communication carried out. Body language can also be used to see and understand someone's mental condition (Kusumawati, 2016). Both types of communication will ideally support each other to create an effective communication relationship (Yulistiani, 2021).

The communicator will mix verbal and nonverbal language to create a unified meaning. Facial expressions are one of the nonverbal languages that a person can use. Expressions in the form of facial expressions are used in communicating as a response to situations, either emotionally or through implied messages (Kusumawati, 2016). However, individual characteristics expressed through facial expressions cannot always be controlled by the individual. A person's psychological condition will automatically send signals to the face or other body parts. Apart from using facial expressions, sign language is also an alternative communication medium. Sign language can be expressed through hand or arm movements that have been approved by the user and expressed in spoken language (Nasir, 2021).

All counselor informants use non-verbal communication such as facial expressions, tone of voice, giving the client pause when the client cries or when the client finds it difficult to express, and attitude is also very important in maintaining the client's comfort when communicating. So, clients will be able to relax and calm themselves. The language of motivation/advice is also very necessary to provide and foster client enthusiasm and trust in peer counselors. This can show empathy for the client. All peer counselors believe that body language is very important in every counseling session. According to them, encouraging clients to open up does not only come from calming words from peer counselors but can also be signaled by smiling facial expressions, and eyes that focus on the client. In this way, clients feel cared for and trust grows between peer counselors and clients.

Likewise with eye contact and body gestures used by peer counselors. For example, patting a client on the shoulder when the client is crying aims to calm and provide validation that crying is not wrong. But crying is one way to realize the client's emotions. Apart from that, to show sincerity and empathy to clients. By establishing good communication with the encouragement of non-verbal cues, it will be easier for peer counselors to get the common thread and validity of the client's story. This is because a peer counselor will be more memorized and can read the client's eye contact and body gestures. In line with what Mulyana (2014) stated, non-verbal cues can be a signal of interest in what the person is saying intending to understand how that person thinks. This will help develop open communication with each other.

Growing a client's sense of trust in peer counselors, so that two-way communication can occur with openness. Absolute openness and honesty in interpersonal communication, because can be used as a way to address problems directly and find the right solution (Kristianto, 2021). According to Martin Lister in (Lister, 2009), an open communication style is characterized by giving a friendly and warm impression at the beginning of communication. This aims to enable the interlocutor to share their experiences or opinions regarding the current problem. The counselor can do this by greeting, welcoming, and introducing.

During counseling sessions, several peer counselors also always emphasize to clients that discussions in counseling sessions are confidential, and will be handled using applicable procedures if special situations are discovered in the future and require further assistance. This is conveyed by peer counselors to clients with various sentences aimed at making the client more trusting and validating the client's sense of security. After that, to enter the main conversation, the peer counselor will start the conversation from general topics to more personal topics, such as lectures, the client's social interactions, and even going into the problems the client is facing.

The spontaneity and honesty of clients in counseling sessions are achieved by peer counselors through commitment and building chemistry from both parties. In this case, a person tends to express his feelings honestly to the person he is talking to, verbally or non-verbally (Lister, 2009). This aims to make it easier for clients to accept and understand the feelings of peer counselors, as well as make clients feel more cared for. In line with this, this communication style will be easier for both parties to understand, resulting in a more effective communication effect (Rohim, 2016). This communication is reflected in several cases, where peer counselors also faced challenges when clients were still afraid and embarrassed to tell stories. The client's lack of trust or lack of comfort from the client can be seen from the client's face and body gestures and the lack of initial communication from the client. In counseling sessions, some counselors give calming sentences and maintain confidentiality, such as: "You just stay calm here, you are free to say whatever you want, this is the place for you to talk and I will make sure that your problems are not revealed to other people." This must be taken into account to ensure that communication remains conducive by paying attention to the politeness of one's demeanor and the comfort of the person you are talking to (Rohim, 2016).

The role of peer counselors is not necessarily to be responsible for providing solutions, but to try to guide clients to find solutions that are appropriate and appropriate to their circumstances (Purwanti, 2022). However, a peer counselor must be open to several situations and circumstances faced by the client to make the client comfortable (Desmita, 2015). This is done by several counselors in counseling sessions, where they are asked by clients to provide solutions. In these conditions, the counselor will be happy to provide solutions that are delivered carefully, so as not to appear to be lecturing or patronizing them. When providing solutions,

counselors usually always offer more than one point of view so that clients can also determine for themselves the best solution.

The efforts made by peer counselors as above to foster client openness have been proven to get a positive response from clients. They feel like they are talking and telling their friends during the counseling session. Clients feel comfortable and confident in telling stories to counselors, thereby reducing their psychological burden. Several clients expressed the opinion that the peer counselors in their counseling sessions were quite approachable because they were friendly and not stiff.

Applying a positive attitude in communication is an important thing that must be considered for anyone who wants good two-way communication without one party misinterpreting the message. Communication skills are very necessary in everything because they are useful for increasing individual effectiveness, especially in counseling (Yahono, 2021). Through communication, a counselor knows the feelings or problems a client is suffering from. The more frequently they interact and the more intense the approach is, the more a counselor can understand the client's condition (Satria Lanri Simanjuntak, Nurhasanah Nasution, 2017). Communicating with someone who has a mental health disorder must use special treatment and be careful because some of them usually have quite sensitive feelings. Therefore, it is necessary to take the right approach through communication skills that can give the impression of calm, happiness, and warmth. Even though communication is carried out casually, voice intonation must also be clear and always patient in the counseling process (Gary Ennis, Brenda Happell, Marc Broadbent, Kerry Reid-Searl, 2013).

A relaxed communication style is reflected when the counselor positions himself as a friend who in communication uses words that are not too formal with intonation that is not rushed. Even at the beginning of the counseling session, the counselor gives a warm greeting full of laughter interspersed with general jokes like with friends. The counselor's pleasant communication style and positioning himself as an active listener who reflects empathy can make clients feel valued by peer counselors (Gopalkrishnan, 2018). Not only that, peer counselors also use less formal language in counseling sessions and build communication in a relaxed manner by following the flow of conversation to make it easier to provoke client openness. After that, the counselor opens the counseling session with a light story, exploring general and non-private personal data by positioning himself as a friend of the story. If the client's condition seems comfortable, then the counselor little by little gets into the topic of the problem by gradually asking questions. However, each peer counselor also has other different ways to foster openness from clients according to the client's characteristics (Yahono, 2021).

A relaxed communication situation can be encouraged by the conditions of the location where the communication takes place, both in terms of air temperature and other supporting variables. Comfortable and conducive room conditions greatly influence the client's psychology to be more open (Gary Ennis, Brenda Happell, Marc Broadbent, Kerry Reid-Searl, 2013). Therefore, several counselors always ensure in advance that the counseling room conditions are comfortable in terms of room temperature, as well as the availability of drinks and tissues for clients.

Friendly communication style, which is shown by positive responses and support in responding to each story from the client. Peer counselors always start the counseling session with a greeting and self-introduction which will be followed by light topic conversation. This is done by peer counselors while adjusting body gestures to make clients comfortable and show the enthusiasm of peer counselors in listening to their stories (Desmita, 2015).

A peer counselor is also required to be patient in responding to all clients' statements and questions calmly so that clients feel safe and can be open in telling stories (Satria Lanri Simanjuntak, Nurhasanah Nasution, 2017). In counseling sessions, counselors have also met clients who had difficulty opening up and only answered opening questions with a few words. Facing this, the counselor patiently tries to communicate with topics about things on campus first. For example, discussing activities, tasks, or the organization the client is currently involved in. The choice of topics related to campus was considered very appropriate because peer counselors are part of UMY and it is certain that their clients come from UMY students. Automatically, the counselor and client have the same background as UMY students, so this becomes a topic that can facilitate the approach. As explained by Desmita in (Desmita, 2015), communication can be built more intimately and

interpersonal ties can be stronger, if they have certain similarities, such as background, attitudes, ideology, messages, and so on.

Apart from that, to show their support, peer counselors are always patient and calm when listening to clients' stories. To respond to a client's story, the counselor usually provides a conclusion from the story that has been expressed by the client in the breaks between the client's story. This aims to ensure that the client believes that his or her story has been heard and as a form of clarification to ensure a common perception between the client's story and that of the counselor. The clarification process is important in many communication situations, especially if what is being communicated is an essential matter that requires a common understanding. This process is very necessary, especially in the case of counseling which is very likely to be influenced by sensitive emotions. Moreover, peer counselors listen to complex information from clients (Salmiati, 2018). Thus, a clarification process is very necessary to check that the peer counselor's understanding is correct so that there is no more confusion or misunderstanding.

In other findings, it was described that UMY peer counselors also have an attentive communication style, where peer counselors are always active, empathetic, and sensitive listeners in every client's story. Rahmadiana (2012) explains that in dialogue being an active listener is very necessary to understand the message being communicated. By truly listening, a person can provide a more thoughtful answer by taking the speaker's thoughts and opinions into account. In the counseling session, the counselor found a client who was very open with an enthusiastic speaking style. On the one hand, this condition benefits the counselor, but on the other hand, the enthusiastic and fast speaking style provides challenges for the counselor to understand. As peer counselors, they are afraid that there will be a misperception of the story the client tells. The counselor must remain calm and always listen by slowly responding to the client's story in stages. They will enter into dialogue by pausing the client while telling the story if the client's speaking tone starts to lower. Through this approach, clients will gain more confidence to open up and understand that peer counselors value them.

Factors influencing the counselor's communication style

Saphiere (2005) mentions factors that influence the style of communication between someone, between another:

1. Condition physical, for example, minimal capacity in face-to-face resulting in discomfort And lack of certainty between the sender message And recipient message.
2. The role, namely the perception of one's role and the role of the communicatoraffects how we interact.
3. Context history, that tradition spiritual, and public can with easy influence how people look at each other, thereby influencing the style of communication.
4. Chronology, that interaction becomes a series of events that influence the choice style of communication with somebody.
5. Language, that language which we use can play a role in the style of communication with somebody.
6. Relationships are how well we know another person, and how much we like them or trust others or vice versa.
7. Barriers to communication

Several factors that influence the communication skills of UMY peer counselors include physical, barriers, history, and relationships. In terms of barriers and relationships between counselors and clients, Lesmana (2006) states that communication anxiety is a form of communication anxiety that is especially always present in relationships. The anxiety referred to is associated with the communication of personal data, which arises due to anxiety about the moral judgment of the counselor, the counselee avoids providing information that could give rise to criticism or a bad assessment of the person. On the other hand, in order for the counselor to be open, it can be done by providing open questions and feedback statements (Lumongga, 2011). This activity has been carried out by 4 peer counselors, namely RD, AR, DN, and MF. In terms of language, verbal and non-verbal language are always done side by side by all counselors, starting from greeting, asking how they are, and exploring with open questions to smiles, eye contact, and body language. According to Gymnastiar (2002), just a smile will have an impact on appearance, and mental health, and strengthen social relationships.

The physical aspect includes sufficient face-to-face contact between the counselor and the client. This can be developed through training listening and communication skills to the maximum so that it will cause the counselor not to make conclusions too early, and to draw conclusions too quickly to the detriment of the client. A lot of experience with various complexities will increase the amount of experience and knowledge that is born in an inspiring way (Asrori, 2012). The role of active listener has been carried out by counselors AM and MB. In terms of the history factor, Jones said that mind skills are skills that must be developed by counselors so that they can carry out the counseling process more effectively. This skill can develop well if the counselor can utilize the potential of his mind. By managing the potential of their thoughts, counselors can control how to communicate and how to behave in counseling, so that it leads to counseling that pays attention to the benefit of the counselee (Jones, 2003). This skill is implemented in counselor activities such as examining client movements, establishing chemistry, clarification, and asking open questions (counselors RD, AR, MB, DN).

Analysis of the implementation of Islamic values in UMY peer counselors, as can be seen below:

Table 1: Implementation of Islamic values in UMY Peer Counselors

Verses in the Qur'an	Information	Counselor skill	Informant
QS Ali Imran ayat 159	- gentle -careful in verbal intonation -emotional management -dialogic	-reflecting feeling	MB, MF
QS An-Nisa ayat 46	-listening -paying attention	-interpretation -summarizing	RD, AR,MB,MF, DN AM, AR
QS An-Nisa ayat 46	-humble -cool and calming expressions	-paraphrase	AM, RD, DN

Based on the table above, it was found that the counselor's skills in the Islamic perspective were mostly in interpretation. Interpretation is very beneficial for clients because interpretation can lead to gaining insight. Insight plays an important role in an individual's psychological life and is the basis for behavioral change. Counselors interpret/understand clients by communicating the meaning of the client's messages. Interpretation is used by counselors to explore the meaning and significance behind the client's words or behind the actions/actions that have been told. The counselor will review the client's thoughts, feelings, and behavior/experiences by referring to theories. Thus, the subjective characteristics of the counselor are not included in the interpretation. The main purpose of this technique is to provide references, views, or behaviors of the client so that they understand and change through understanding the results of the new references. Counselors help clients understand events from the past and present, which involve explanations and analysis of various thoughts, feelings, and actions of the client (Mahmud and Kustiah, 2012).

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded about based on the discussion above, it can be concluded about the communication skills of peer counselors at UMY in Figure 1 below:
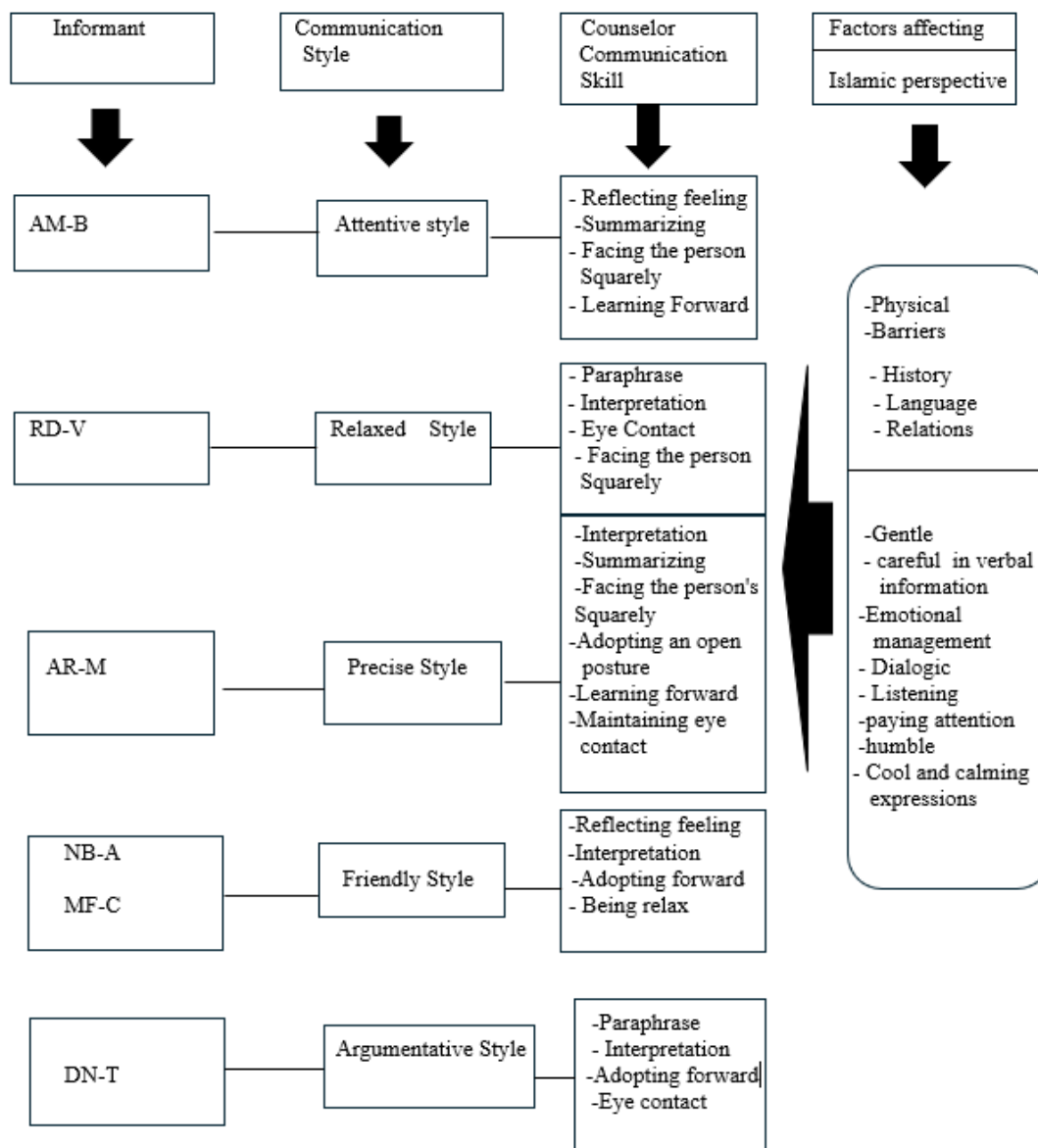

Figure 1: The communication skills of peer counselors at UMY

Based on the chart above, it can be seen that the communication skills of peer counselors at UMY continue to implement Islamic values that support the vision and mission of Islamic higher education.

CONCLUSION

Effective communication is very important in forming a harmonious life in society, including in the counselor-client context in the counseling process. Interpersonal communication skills are essential for peer counselors in their role as actors who contribute to mental health recovery. In UMY peer counselors, counselors are proven to carry out effective communication skills so that clients feel satisfied in the healing process. Several communication styles chosen by peer counselors include attentive, relaxed, friendly, precise, and argumentative styles.

This communication style is related to interpersonal communication skills, including (1) paraphrasing, (2) reflecting feelings (3) interpretation, and (4) summarizing. Counselors' verbal skills appear to be more effective when they combine them with non-verbal skills which include facing the client squarely; adopting an open posture, remembering that it is possible at times to learn toward the other, maintaining good eye contact,

and trying to be relatively relaxed or natural in these behaviors. On the other hand, several things that influence the use of communication skills and styles include physical (face-to-face intensity), language, history, relationships, and barriers. Communication anxiety arises due to anxiety about the moral judgment of the counselor, so the counselee feels doubtful or avoids providing information that could give rise to criticism or a bad assessment of the person.

In the physical aspect, including face-to-face meetings, the counselor develops listening communication skills which are trained to the maximum, so that it will cause the counselor not to make conclusions too early, and to draw conclusions too quickly to the detriment of the client. The counselor develops mind skills so that he can carry out the counseling process more effectively. This skill can be developed well if the counselor can manage the potential of his thoughts, the counselor can control how to communicate and how to behave in counseling, so that it leads to counseling that pays attention to the good of the client. The application of communication skills by UMY peer counselors is proven to have adopted Islamic values written in the Qur'an. Some of the verses included: QS Ali Imran ayat 159: gentle, careful in verbal intonation, emotional management, and dialogic. QS An-Nisa ayat 46: listening, paying attention. QS An-Nisa ayat 46: humble, cool, and calming expressions.

The responses of clients B, V, M, A, C, and T proved positive. This is characterized by an increase in the client's sense of trust in the counselor so that two-way communication can occur with openness, and create a good impression on clients, such as being approachable, transparent, and friendly. The counselor's communication style is considered pleasant and able to make clients feel valued by peer counselors who position themselves as active listeners and reflect empathy. Non-verbal cues add comfort for clients to want to talk openly.

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