

## Construction of *Ta'lim Muta'allim* Counseling Based on the Book of Imam Al-Zarnuji: A Hermeneutical Study

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**ABSTRACT:** *The book Ta'lim Muta'allim by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji contains life guidelines for seeking practical knowledge and mardhatillah. This research aims to develop the discipline of counselling based on Islamic values and describe and analyze the construction of counselling in the book Ta'lim Muta'allim. This research uses a qualitative approach with an eclectic type of hermeneutics to understand the text in depth and make correct articulations to capture and interpret the meaning of the book Ta'lim Muta'allim. Primary data includes an analysis of the book Ta'lim Muta'allim by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji. In contrast, additional data was obtained through interviews and observations at Islamic boarding schools that use and teach the book Ta'lim Muta'allim. The validity used includes triangulation, intersubjective validation, and peer review. Eclectic hermeneutic analysis is carried out in several stages, namely the verstehen (understanding) stage, grammatical interpretation and psychological interpretation stage, integration of text and context stage, truth relativism stage, wirkungsgeschichte (awareness) stage, bildung stage and critical reflection stage. Ta'lim Muta'allim's counselling construction presents a form of counselling based on Islamic values that meets the postulates of scientific discipline rules, namely internal coherence, conformity with reality and functionality when applied theoretically and practically. This research has realized counselling constructions such as the basic philosophy of counselling, main concepts of counselling, goals of counselling, counselling relationships and mechanisms for change in Ta'lim Muta'allim counselling.*

Kitab *Ta'lim Muta'allim* karya Syekh Imam Al-Zarnuji berisi pedoman hidup mencari ilmu praktis dan *mardhatillah*. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengembangkan disiplin ilmu konseling berdasarkan nilai-nilai Islam serta mendeskripsikan dan menganalisis secara mendalam konstruksi konseling yang terdapat dalam kitab *Ta'lim Muta'allim*. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis hermeneutika eklektik untuk memahami

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teks secara mendalam dan membuat artikulasi yang benar untuk menangkap dan menafsirkan makna kitab Ta'lim Muta'allim. Data primer meliputi analisis kitab Ta'lim Muta'allim karya Syekh Imam Al-Zarnuji, sedangkan data tambahan diperoleh melalui wawancara dan observasi pada pesantren yang menggunakan dan mengajarkan kitab Ta'lim Muta'allim. validitas yang digunakan meliputi triangulasi, validasi intersubjektif, dan peer review. Analisis hermeneutika eklektik dilakukan dalam beberapa tahapan yaitu tahap *verstehen* (pemahaman), tahap interpretasi gramatikal dan interpretasi psikologis, tahap memadukan teks dan konteks, tahap relativisme kebenaran, tahap *wirkungsgeschichte* (kesadaran), tahap *bildung* dan tahap refleksi kritis. Konstruksi konseling Ta'lim Muta'allim menghadirkan suatu bentuk konseling berbasis nilai-nilai Islam yang memenuhi dalil kaidah disiplin ilmu, yaitu koherensi internalnya, kesesuaian dengan realitas dan fungsionalitas bila diterapkan secara teoritis dan praktis. Penelitian ini telah mewujudkan konstruksi konseling seperti filosofi dasar konseling, konsep pokok konseling, tujuan konseling, hubungan konseling dan mekanisme perubahan konseling Ta'lim Muta'allim.

**Keywords:** *Ta'lim Muta'allim, Counseling Construction, Imam Al-Zarnuji.*

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The fields of counselling and psychotherapy have more ethnically diverse clients (Roberts, 2023). Academic problems in the scientific development of Guidance and Counseling, in general, are still dominated by theories based on the Western culture level of ontology, epistemology, and axiology, which in their studies do not reach the most fundamental dimensions of the human soul, such as spirituality (*ruh*) and transcendentality (*fitrah*) as in Islam which encompasses the dimension of eschatology. These problems also occur when implementing guidance and counselling services in Indonesia, which has a variety of unique local wisdom and cultural values (Habsy et al., 2019).

Counselling as a profession has philosophical, solid, and theoretical roots and a growing body of evidence demonstrating the efficacy of its practice (Lester et al., 2018). The paradigm of counselling approaches commonly used as the primary reference in implementing counselling services in Indonesia is rooted in mainstream views, including counselling approaches from Germany, America, and Russia. These approaches encompass various perspectives, such as the Psychoanalytic counselling approach, which assesses human beings as pessimistic, deterministic, mechanistic, and reductionistic; the Behavioral counselling approach, which views human behaviour as a product of their environment; the Rational Emotive Behavior counselling approach, which posits that humans can act rationally and irrationally; the Reality counselling approach, which suggests that human behaviour is driven to meet psychological and psychological needs; and the Solution Brief Counseling approach, which considers that every healthy and competent human being can construct solutions (Habsy et al., 2019; Mintert et al., 2020; Riggs, 2020).

Counselling approaches in Germany, America and Russia developed from a philosophical foundation about humans. However, the analysis may only sometimes be

relevant when applied to Indonesian culture, which is pluralistic in various aspects. As a result, the results tend to be speculative and tentative, requiring close supervision (Isgandarova, 2019). This must be considered because counselling is a humanities science focusing on spiritual, social, cultural, historical, religious and human life experiences (Athanasiadis et al., 2021). Therefore, it is necessary to study the development of indigenous counselling in an Islamic context by Muslim academics. This study should use an axiological model that respects the values of anthropo-theocentric (inductive-deductive), phenomenological, or interpretive hermeneutics (interlink-interconnection approach) by seriously examining Islamic teachings and values. Indigenous counselling is closely related to the rich norms of each cultural individual, namely the client. In counselling, these norms can guide different interpretations, resulting in expectations of both non-directiveness and directiveness (Ghaempanah et al., 2017; Saper et al., 2016).

For 500 years, indigenous therapies were still not widely known and practised except for early anthropological literature (Imran et al., 2023). Cultural values are not limited to rituals and art objects that contain meaning; they extend to ancient texts by *Hebt* people that still survive today. The use of these values and perspectives requires an understanding that contemporary conceptions of indigenous mental health contain two components: mental health as well-being and mental health as a healing process (Gale et al., 2023). Indigenous therapies, such as counselling services in schools, can provide opportunities for all individuals to gain access to mental health services that are compatible with client values. This is based on the reality that indigenous people are expected to have low levels of access to genetic health services, and cultural issues may be contributing factors that prevent the right to mental health services (Kowal et al., 2015).

People may assume that the counselling profession functions with shared values that promote well-being and mental health for individuals, families, and communities worldwide (Perron et al., 2023). Cashwell & Swindle, (2020) explicitly suggested that religious values become the foundation for formulating alternative guidance and counselling in the era of globalization. According to Haque, indigenous counselling in the Islamic context has been popularly developed in Iran with the *Irfani* epistemological paradigm model as in Sufism combined with philosophy (*Iraqi*). Indigenous counselling in the Islamic context as an attempt to reconstruct and actualize exploring the concept of the human self with an Islamic approach is a form of actualization of the conception of Islam (Haq et al., 2022). In Islamic Sufism, there is also a model of dhikr counselling as a counselling instrument that includes *tafakkur*, *riyadhah*, and *mujahaddah* in problem-solving, making God Almighty the central (Zakaria & Mat Akhir, 2017).

This research is a form of the spirit of modernity in counselling based on the integrity of the counsellor's self-identity as an effort to develop counselling practices that make Islamic teachings and values a reference. One of the supporting rationales is the concern that in multicultural assistance, therapists and counsellors may engage in risky behaviour when they open themselves to ways of seeing, thinking, and feeling that may be very different from their own culture (Beek, 2015). Meanwhile, religious values improve professional competence as a local counsellor, as counselling is usually based on Western models that do not include religious aspects (Sumari & Baharudin, 2016). As reflected in some Islamic spiritual terminologies, counselling is an essential part of religious activities and has been as old as Islamic da'wah activities in society (Sabtilsilwy et al., 2022).

In the discourse of indigenous counselling in the Islamic context, what can be used as a reference to become a process of healing the human mind is the book Ta'lim Muta'allim, which is the work of Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji. The book of Ta'lim Muta'allim is a monumental work of Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji and is highly regarded for its existence. The idea put forward by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji is superbly illustrated in the book Ta'lim al-Muta'allim Thuruq al-Ta'allum. The book of Ta'lim Muta'allim is widely used as an exploration and material reference in preparing logical works, philosophy, and education (Akhyar, 2017; Huda et al., 2017; Mushofa, 2023).

Ta'lim al-Muta'allim distinguishes itself from other Islamic intellectual sources through its unique theories (Huda et al., 2017). The book of Ta'lim Muta'allim by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji has yet to receive severe and adequate attention from Islamic counselling scholars in Indonesia as Islamic teaching with its distinctive character that emphasizes the values of wisdom in the morals of seeking practical knowledge and *mardhatillah* directed towards self-reliance in decision-making by first understanding the existence of his existence. This is an essential element in counselling, so studying the development of indigenous counselling insights based on the Ta'lim Muta'allim book is necessary.

Research on the book of Ta'lim Muta'allim has generally been conducted among Muslim researchers, orientalist, and Western journalists. Among the researchers who have studied and examined the book of Ta'lim Muta'allim include: Tritton, (1948), who wrote "Al-Zarnuji: Ta'lim al-Muta'allim-Tariq at-Ta'allum"; Brickman, who wrote "History of Islamic Origins of Western Education"; Huda et al., (2017), who wrote "Traditional wisdom on sustainable learning: An insightful view from Al-Zarnuji's Ta'lim al-Muta'allim"; and who conducted a comparative study on Sheikh Al-Zarnuji's thought and idealism in the philosophy of education (Dardiri et al., 2017; Kazamias, 1966).

The idea of Al-Zarnuji contained in Ta'lim Muta'allim is the morality of seeking beneficial knowledge and *mardhatillah*. An individual who seeks knowledge and obtains results must utilize the ideas coined by Al-Zarnuji in Ta'lim Muta'allim. In Ta'lim Muta'allim, thirteen ideas are described, which include knowledge of *hakikat* and *fiqh* and their virtues; intention in learning; choosing knowledge, teachers, and friends; respecting knowledge and teachers; earnestness, perseverance, and dreams; the beginning of education, standards, and sequence; *tawakkal*; the period of learning; compassion and advice; taking lessons; being aware when learning; things that make memorization fast and easy to forget; things that bring and prevent sustenance and things that increase and decrease (the blessing) of life (Huda et al., 2017; Tritton, 1948).

Ta'lim Muta'allim means giving guidance to the seeker of knowledge. The book is the work of an imam named Shaykh Tajuddin Nu'man bin Ibrahim bin al-Khalil Al-Zarnuji, widely known as Imam Al-Zarnuji, who was famous in 645 A.H. Al-Zarnuji, the author of this book, was a Bukhara scribe of his time. His work, Ta'lim Muta'allim, has spread in Islamic countries since his lifetime. Many scholars have read, understood, and even provided commentary on the book. Among the researchers who included commentary in the book of Ta'lim Muta'allim is al-Allamah al-Jalili al-Shaykh Ibrahim Ibn Ismail in his book Syarh Ta'lim Muta'allim Tariq al-Ta'allum (Irwandi, 2022; Nuha & Musyafaah, 2023).

The research examines the formulation of Ta'lim Muta'allim counselling based on the book Ta'lim Muta'allim by Imam Al-Zarnuji, which aims to develop a counselling approach based on Islamic values. The aim is to create a universal counselling theory that contributes to the development of science, especially in the field of guidance and

counselling. This research aims to ensure that the counselling approach meets the rules of the scientific discipline, including having clear objectives, formal and material objects, and systematic scope, and is functional when applied. The author sees this as a strategic effort to present the Ta'lim Muta'allim counselling solution package as a basis for counselling practitioners and academics. In particular, this approach is aimed at Islamic counselling practices that can be adapted, integrated, internalized and transferred into formal knowledge taught in the Indonesian guidance and counselling curriculum.

## II. METHOD

The research method used in this study is a descriptive-philosophical qualitative methodology. The aim is to understand and discuss the concept of Ta'lim Muta'allim's counselling theory construction contained in the Ta'lim Muta'allim book. The subject of this research is the book Ta'lim Muta'allim by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji. Therefore, the approach or type of qualitative research used is hermeneutics. Specifically, this study uses a type of eclectic hermeneutics as a process of interpreting texts to find their literal meaning. This approach involves principles or interpretive procedures in understanding and interpreting literary traditions, which can be applied outside the discipline of theology. The aim is to unite the interpreter's understanding with past and present paradigms, forming a productive interpretation (Habsy, 2020). The eclectic hermeneutic method is a type of qualitative research that aims to understand and interpret literalism in-depth and make appropriate articulations to capture and interpret meaning based on its elements. Apart from that, this method also understands elements based on overall meaning.

This research applies a validity system to ensure data accuracy. The validity system used includes triangulation, intersubjective validation, and peer review. The explanation is as follows: 1) Triangulation, which involves comparing data from different methods, including in-depth interviews and observation; 2) Intersubjective validation, which involves re-explaining the results of interpretation or reflection on the subject under study; 3) Peer review, which involves discussions with external parties, namely colleagues, to compare the results of more abstract meanings with the agreement of the subjects studied (Sugiyono, 2015).

In this study, the researcher positions himself as the main instrument, which has a total share as an interpreter in giving meaning and a complete structure to reality. In this case, it is a collection of Ta'lim Muta'allim texts juxtaposed with the opinions of Ta'lim Muta'allim book experts, counselling practitioners, and academics. In this research, data sources are divided into two types, namely primary data sources and supporting data sources. Primary data sources first involve the analysis of the book Ta'lim Muta'allim by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji, which was researched and analyzed by M. Fathu Lillah in 2015. Next, in the same category, is a translation of the book Ta'lim Muta'allim entitled "Active Santri to Gain Knowledge, Benefits and Blessings" by Abu An'im in the same year. Meanwhile, additional data sources were obtained through interviews and observations with the Islamic boarding school and its caregivers who use and teach the Ta'lim Muta'allim book.

The author uses eclectic hermeneutic analysis in this research by carrying out a series of stages as follows: *First*, the *verstehen* (understanding) stage, where the author tries to capture the entire meaning and structure of the text of the book Ta'lim Muta'allim by

Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji. *Second* is the grammatical interpretation and psychological interpretation stage, where the author tries to understand every part of the entire text of the book Ta'lim Muta'allim by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji. *Third*, the stage of combining text and context, where the researcher interprets field data containing interpretive meaning and refers to research objects, such as the results of interviews and observations at Islamic boarding schools and their caregivers who apply and teach the book Ta'lim Muta'allim. *Fourth*, the truth relativism stage, where the author tries to combine the results of the interpretation of the text of the book Ta'lim Muta'allim by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji with the subject's understanding of the structure from the results of interviews, observation notes and other empirical material. *Fifth*, the *wirkungsgeschichte* (awareness) stage, where the interpreter's awareness tries to reproduce the meaning of the text according to the situation and conditions when the text of the book Ta'lim Muta'allim by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji is read and understood. *Sixth* is the *bildung* stage, where the interpreter reconstructs and reproduces the meaning of the text of the book Ta'lim Muta'allim by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji and carries out scientific interpretation with theories that have been tested through empirical or experimental research. *Lastly*, the critical reflection stage is where the interpreter carries out crucial reflection on the reconstruction of the text by relating the rebuilding to the disturbed mental life of the interpreter (Habsy, 2020). This eclectic hermeneutic analysis is depicted visually in Figure 1.

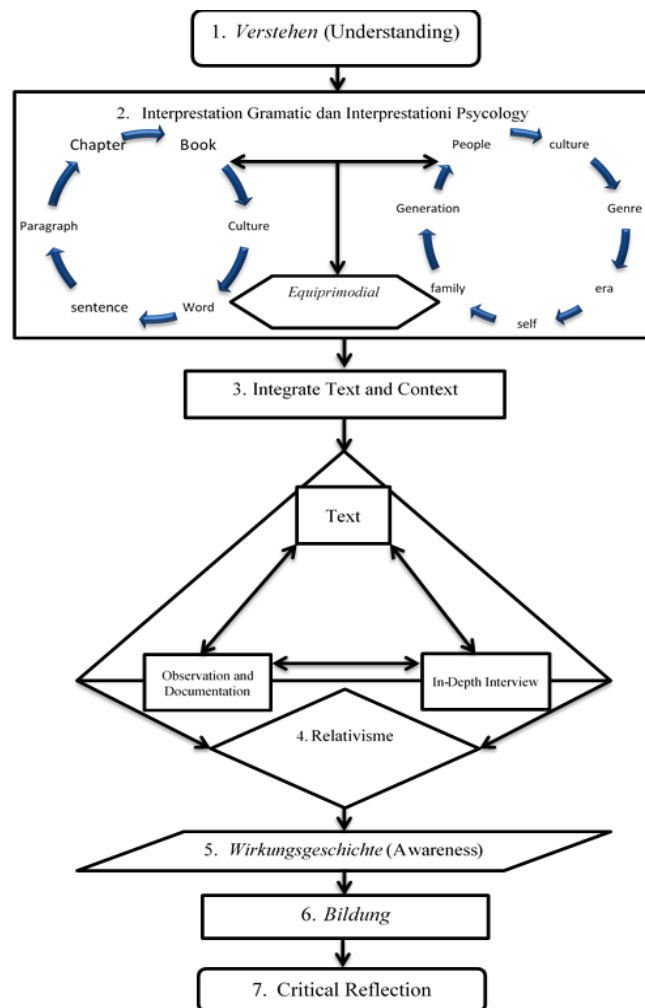


Figure 1. Stages of eclectic hermeneutics

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research results show that Ta'lim Muta'allim counselling, which is based on the Book of Ta'liim Muta'allim by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji, produces a Ta'lim Muta'allim counselling framework that includes several aspects. First, this framework discusses the basic philosophy, which provides an overview of human nature in Ta'lim Muta'allim counselling. Second, the basic concept includes an understanding of the structure of human personality and the process of personality development based on the principles of Ta'lim Muta'allim counselling. Third, this framework also outlines the goals of counselling, which provide direction for clients in the Ta'lim Muta'allim counselling process. Fourth is the counselling relationship, where the counsellor's duties and the experiences experienced by the client during the Ta'lim Muta'allim counselling process are explained in detail. Fifth, counselling techniques include techniques used in Ta'lim Muta'allim counselling to help counselees achieve their goals.

The following table is a data description of the results of Ta'lim Muta'allim counselling research based on eclectic hermeneutic studies on the book Ta'liim Muta'allim by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji:

**Table 1. Description of counseling data based on the book of Ta'liim Muta'allim**

No	Course Group		
1.	Basic philosophy of Counseling Based on the Book of Ta'lim Muta'allim	DT/TM/FTH/2015	Primary data was obtained from the book "Ta'lim Muta'allim" by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji, which was analyzed by M. Fathu Lillah in 2015.
		DT/TM/AA/2012	Primary data was obtained from the book "Ta'lim Muta'allim" by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji, which was analyzed by M. Fathu Lillah in 2015.
		DW/MA/24/07/2022	Additional data was obtained from interviews with KH. Muslich Abbas, S.H on July 24 2022.
		DW/US/25/08/2022	Additional information was obtained through interviews with Hj. Uswah Syauqi, M.Pd, on August 25 2022.
2.	Basic concepts of human personality	DT/TM/FTH/2015	The primary data source is the book "Ta'lim Muta'allim" by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji, analyzed by M. Fathu Lillah in 2015.
		DT/TM/AA/2012	The primary data was obtained from the book "Ta'lim Muta'allim" by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji, which was analyzed by M. Fathu Lillah in 2015.
		DW/MA/24/07/2022	Additional data was obtained from interviews with KH. Muslich Abbas, S.H on July 24 2022.
		DO/PPSFU/24/07/2022	Additional data was obtained through observations at the Fatchul Ulum Pacet Salafiyah Islamic Boarding School.
3.	Counseling goals	DT/TM/FTH/2015	The primary data source is the book "Ta'lim Muta'allim" by Sheikh Imam

			Al-Zarnuji, analyzed by M. Fathu Lillah in 2015.
		DT/TM/AA/2012	The primary data source is the book "Ta'lim Muta'allim" by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji, analyzed by M. Fathu Lillah in 2015.
4.	Counselling relationship	DT/TM/FTH/2015	The primary data source is the book "Ta'lim Muta'allim" by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji, analyzed by M. Fathu Lillah in 2015.
		DT/TM/AA/2012	The primary data source is the book "Ta'lim Muta'allim" by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji, analyzed by M. Fathu Lillah in 2015.
		DW/MA/24/07/2022	Additional data was obtained from interviews with KH. Muslich Abbas, S.H on July 24 2022.
5.	Counselling techniques	DT/TM/FTH/2015	The primary data source is the book "Ta'lim Muta'allim" by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji, analyzed by M. Fathu Lillah in 2015.
		DT/TM/AA/2012	The primary data source is the book "Ta'lim Muta'allim" by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji, analyzed by M. Fathu Lillah in 2015.
		DW/MA/24/07/2022	Additional data was obtained from interviews with KH. Muslich Abbas, S.H on July 24 2022.
		DO/PPSFU/24/07/2022	Additional data was obtained through observations at the Fatchul Ulum Pacet Salafiyah Islamic Boarding School.

The book of Ta'lim Muta'allim contains ethical guidelines and Islamic methods for studying. The purpose of this book is to lead individuals to be good at ethics and good at applying Islamic religious knowledge in life.

### **Basic Philosophy of Counseling Based on the Book of Ta'lim Muta'allim**

The basic philosophy of counselling, which is rooted in Ta'lim Muta'allim, can be divided into two main sub-topics: First, Development History, which includes the historical background and life journey of Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji, which was the forerunner to the emergence of the book Ta'lim Muta'allim. Second is Human Nature, which reviews the basic concepts of human nature in counselling originating from Ta'lim Muta'allim.

#### ***Development history***

The data findings in the table align with Rachmah et al., (2023) opinion that Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji lived in the fourth period of the growth and development of Islam between 750 and 1250 M. In historical records, this period was the golden age or glory of Islamic civilization and extension in general.

According to Suwandi et al., (2020) the Ta'lim Muta'allim book talks about learning methods and explains the technical forms of ideal education that lead to moral formation. Every human being can experience the process of moral formation within the framework of helpful and educational relationships and provide a mutual assessment of the achievement of each other's results. Such needs also occurred at the beginning of



the development of Western counselling models. The emergence of Western counselling models was also based on one of the needs for science used to maintain the existence of human life after the war.

### ***Human nature***

According to Buthomy & Muhid, (2020), the book *Ta'lim Muta'llim* explains that individuals who frequently seek assistance from fellow beings and lack hope in Allah SWT might be considered to disobey Allah Swt. However, if they remain within the boundaries of the law and maintain a fear of Allah, they cannot be deemed to disobey Him. In his work, *Ta'lim Muta'allim*, Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji elaborates that individuals acquire knowledge, skills, morals, and values through the educational experience (Ramdhani & Zulfa, 2020). Human nature, as interpreted in *Ta'lim Muta'llim*, is depicted as inherently dependent, consciously or subconsciously seeking assistance. Their belief in a power beyond human limitations leads them to seek aid from various sources. This aligns with the cognitive counselling model's perspective on human nature, which asserts that individuals typically rely on beliefs and thoughts to sustain themselves (A. T. Beck, 1991; J. S. Beck, 2011).

### **Basic Concepts of Human Personality**

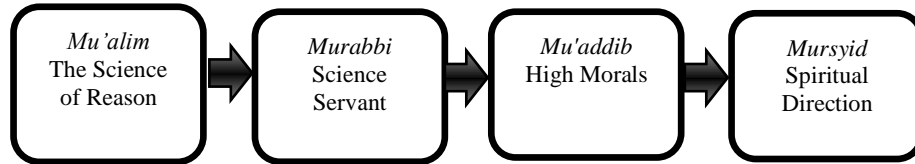
The first level of personality structure is *Mu'alim*, which emphasises the science of reason and is associated with cultivating moral individuals through pure values. This personality structure resonates with cognitive-oriented counselling models such as CBT, REBT, and reality counselling. In the cognitive counselling model, the mind serves as the conduit for all manifestations of human attitudes, emotions, and behaviour (Corey, 2011). From core beliefs to automatic thoughts, human cognition guides individuals in finding, interpreting, and constructing beliefs that shape human life. The *Mu'alim* personality structure forms the fundamental basis and driving force behind an individual's characteristics.

The second level is *Murabbi*, characterised by a spiritual, physical, and mental understanding of the self to apply the acquired knowledge in daily life. *Murabbi's* personality structure aligns with the behavioural counselling model, which suggests that human behaviour, observed through physical and observable symptoms, is shaped by responses to stimuli influenced by sociocultural conditioning (Corey, 2013). Individuals tend to conform to environmental expectations; conversely, the environment shapes human behaviour. A supportive environment fosters numerous educational opportunities (Lauveng et al., 2016).

The third level is *Mu'addib*, encompassing manners, morals, values, and discipline formation. *Mu'addib* embodies high character and nurtures intellectual and physical intelligence with a philosophy that emphasises the development of moral and virtuous individuals in a balanced manner. The *Mu'addib* personality structure reflects the culmination of assessments, beginning with the *Mu'alim* and *Murabbi* structures, as it embodies a character founded on ethics. In psychological studies, ethics are categorised as global characters with established standards of thought and behaviour, encompassing physical and mental dimensions. Psychology recognises that the study of human reality cannot be entirely devoid of values because it must embrace a non-reductionist approach (Giorgi, 2015).

The fourth level is *Murshid*, who is adept at providing spiritual guidance for individuals to reach Allah SWT through an organised Sufi path. The *Ta'lim Muta'llim* counselling

model's ultimate structure manifests as an executor and mentor characterised by self-discipline, aspiring for the environment to follow the same path. One observable reality is the attitude and behaviour of individuals actively teaching goodness. Figure 2 below illustrates the essence of the personality structure in Ta'lim Muta'allim counselling.



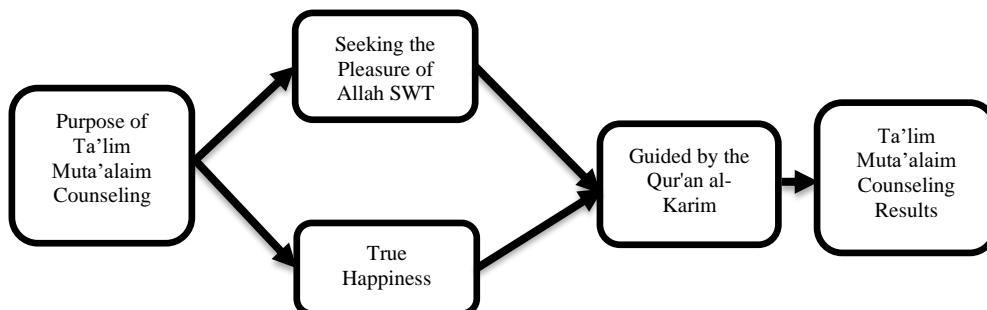
**Figure 2.** Human personality in ta'lim muta'allim counseling

According to Bela et al., (2022), Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji, through his guidance in the book Ta'lim Muta'allim, directs knowledge seekers on how to pursue knowledge based on the texts studied by Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji and the counsel of his wise teachers.

**Counseling Goals**

Syaikh Al-Zarnuji in Ta'lim Muta'allim is closely associated with understanding the purpose of counselling, particularly in cultivating superior individuals. In general, Shaykh Al-Zarnuji's fundamental perspective on the purpose of counselling revolves around three emphases. Firstly, counselling should be directed solely towards seeking the pleasure of Allah SWT. This implies that both the counsellor and the client, in imparting or receiving knowledge, should primarily aim for the pleasure of Allah SWT without seeking personal recognition or rewards from others. This aligns with the view of Rofiqah, (2017), who suggests that through diligent worship and seeking Allah's pleasure, the problems experienced will gradually feel lighter and eventually dissipate. Secondly, counselling aims to attain happiness after death, which entails eternal contentment. Counsellors and clients should understand that worldly life is merely a preparation for the hereafter, where everything achieved here will be repaid in the immortal realm. This resonates with the perspective of Ridwan, (2018), who posits that finding God through reason leads to true happiness. Finally, we need to revive religion, as religion without knowledge cannot thrive, and knowledge without religion lacks utility and value. This aligns with the viewpoint of Mashitah & Lenggono, (2020), who asserts that the Quran is the primary foundation for overcoming challenges and achieving success in life.

The essence of Ta'lim Muta'allim counselling is depicted in Figure 3 below:



**Figure 3.** Purpose of ta'lim muta'allim counseling

**Counseling Relationship**

The traits of the counsellor himself in the Ta'lim Muta'allim book are the moral values of counsellors, which are very good and can be applied in Indonesia. Imam Al-Zarnuji

in providing guidance, resembles an advisor who cannot necessarily go with his client in all matters, where the client must be accessible to complete his orders.

Ideal counselees in Ta'lim Muta'alim counselling possess several key characteristics. They are expected to be avid seekers of knowledge, particularly tailored to their individual needs and circumstances. Prioritizing the study of monotheism and matters of inner spirituality and morality is paramount. Embracing asceticism and striving for holiness are encouraged, alongside a continuous reminder to maintain humility and avoid harmful behaviours. Counselees are taught to approach their actions intentionally and shield themselves from prohibited activities.

Furthermore, they are educated on the criteria for selecting knowledgeable and experienced teachers, emphasizing the importance of careful consideration. Patience, resilience, and the ability to focus on completing tasks without wavering are qualities nurtured in ideal counselees. They are guided to choose companions who share their passion for knowledge and possess positive character traits while avoiding negative influences. Respect for knowledge, scholars, and teachers, along with a sincere commitment to lifelong learning and gradual progress, is instilled. Additionally, ideal counselees are instructed on the foundational learning steps and the significance of discipline in their educational journey. They are cautioned against greed and encouraged to maintain continuous engagement in learning by shifting focus when necessary. Finally, they are advised to approach challenges with patience and to uphold good manners and practices aligned with the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad.

Ideal counselees in Ta'lim Muta'alim counselling exhibit several essential characteristics. They are expected to actively seek knowledge, tailoring their pursuits to suit their circumstances. Prioritising the study of monotheism and matters related to inner spirituality and morality is emphasised. Additionally, they are encouraged to adopt asceticism and strive for holiness. Humility and the avoidance of harmful behaviours are instilled as constant reminders. Intentions must be set consciously in all actions, and vigilance against prohibited activities is taught. Counselees are educated on the criteria for selecting reputable teachers, emphasising the importance of their purity, warmth, and experience. Deliberation in decision-making and patience in undertaking tasks are qualities nurtured in ideal counselees. They are guided to choose companions wisely, avoid negative influences, and foster an environment conducive to learning. Respect for knowledge, scholars, and teachers is cultivated alongside a sincere commitment to lifelong learning and gradual progress.

Additionally, they are instructed on the foundational steps of education and the importance of discipline. Greed and stinginess in acquiring knowledge are cautioned against, encouraging a continuous pursuit of education. Counselees are taught to shift focus when necessary and to approach challenges with patience and warmth, upholding good manners and adhering to the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad.

### **Counselling Techniques**

Imam Al-Zarnuji employs various techniques in advising individuals through the book Ta'lim Muta'allim, aiming to guide them towards ethical, moral, and character-driven decisions in their pursuit of knowledge. One such technique involves instilling a sense of pride in seeking knowledge according to Islamic standards, encouraging clients to prioritise this noble endeavour. Habituation techniques are also emphasised, where in clients are tasked with completing obligations accurately and regularly to cultivate a disciplined approach. Through repetition, clients become accustomed to behaviours

aligned with humility, asceticism, reliance on God, and the avoidance of dishonourable actions that may impede their quest for knowledge. Storytelling and exemplary techniques are employed to convey moral messages and strategies for knowledge-seeking, drawing inspiration from the experiences of Prophet Muhammad and Islamic leaders. Understanding these narratives allows clients to draw parallels and apply the lessons to overcome their challenges effectively. Dialogue techniques involve engaging in discussions to explore various perspectives and arrive at meaningful solutions. While not explicitly outlined, Imam Al-Zarnuji emphasises the importance of communication exchanges between counsellors and clients in addressing issues effectively. Parables and comparison techniques describe, interpret, and approach specific issues, drawing parallels between beneficial and detrimental practices in knowledge-seeking. Introspection techniques encourage clients to self-reflect to foster positive self-improvement and spiritual growth, aligning their actions with moral and ethical principles. Finally, praise and punishment or warning techniques motivate clients, with recognition and appreciation as incentives for diligent efforts in seeking knowledge. In contrast, warnings highlight the potential consequences of deviating from the prescribed path.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Counselling services face ethical challenges due to the unique characteristics of each counsellee and the cultural values of both counsellor and client. As counselling practices evolve, they must address personal growth, self-actualisation, and self-identity. Incorporating religious values from the Ta'lim Muta'allim book can enrich counselling with spiritual insights. Sheikh Imam Al-Zarnuji's Ta'lim Muta'allim counselling integrates Islamic values with modern counselling approaches, such as humanistic, transpersonal, and cognitive behaviour perspectives. This research emphasizes the need for empirical studies to develop a scientifically grounded Ta'lim Muta'allim counselling framework. Future research should focus on creating training programs for counsellors and developing guidelines to enhance the effectiveness and applicability of Ta'lim Muta'allim counselling in practical settings. This effort underscores the potential of integrating Islamic principles into a comprehensive counselling theory that resonates with individuals' spiritual and psychological needs.

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