

Dynamic of Recovery from Marriage Anxiety Through Islamic Integrated Cognitive Behavior Therapy (IICBT) Intervention in Individual Counseling

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Abstract

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The phenomenon of *fear of marriage* is increasingly experienced by young adults, particularly as a result of traumatic relational experiences such as failed serious relationships and betrayal by a partner. This condition causes ongoing anxiety that affects an individual's readiness to commit to marriage. Therefore, a counseling approach is needed that not only focuses on psychological aspects but also integrates spiritual dimensions in accordance with the belief system of Muslim clients. This study aims to analyze the dynamics of recovery from the trauma of fear of marriage through *Islamic Integrated Cognitive Behavior Therapy* (IICBT) intervention in individual counseling. This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method on one early adult Muslim client who experiences fear of marriage. Data collection techniques included in-depth interviews, observations, and counseling process notes, while data analysis was conducted thematically. The results showed that the application of IICBT was effective in facilitating positive changes in the client's cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and spiritual aspects. The client was able to reduce negative thoughts, achieve inner peace, and interpret marriage as a form of worship and a process full of wisdom.

Kata kunci: *Konseling, Ketakutan akan Pernikahan, IICBT, Pemulihan*

Abstrak

Fenomena ketakutan akan pernikahan semakin banyak dialami oleh kaum muda, khususnya sebagai akibat dari pengalaman relasional traumatis seperti hubungan serius yang gagal dan pengkhianatan oleh pasangan. Kondisi ini menyebabkan kecemasan berkelanjutan yang memengaruhi kesiapan individu untuk berkomitmen pada pernikahan. Oleh karena itu, diperlukan pendekatan konseling yang tidak hanya berfokus pada aspek psikologis tetapi juga mengintegrasikan dimensi spiritual sesuai dengan sistem kepercayaan klien Muslim. Studi ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dinamika pemulihan dari trauma ketakutan akan pernikahan melalui intervensi Terapi Perilaku Kognitif Terintegrasi Islami (IICBT) dalam konseling individu. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus pada satu klien Muslim dewasa muda yang mengalami ketakutan akan pernikahan. Teknik pengumpulan data meliputi wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan catatan proses konseling, sedangkan analisis data dilakukan secara tematik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan IICBT efektif dalam memfasilitasi perubahan positif pada aspek kognitif, emosional, perilaku, dan spiritual klien. Klien mampu mengurangi pikiran negatif, mencapai kedamaian batin, dan menafsirkan pernikahan sebagai bentuk ibadah dan proses yang penuh kebijaksanaan.

PENDAHULUAN

The phenomenon of fear of marriage is increasingly common and has become a relevant psychosocial issue in the context of modern relationships (Annisa et al., 2024). This fear

reflects a form of relational anxiety that affects an individual's readiness to make a long-term commitment (Apostolou & Tekeş, 2023). This condition has developed alongside changes in social, economic, and cultural dynamics, particularly in urban areas characterized by increasing life pressures and uncertainty about the future (Azizah et al., 2025; Nilan, 2008).

Theoretically, marital failure can be understood as a type of relationship breakdown caused by traumatic experiences (Rahma, 2025). Individual perceptions of failure are influenced by various psychosocial conditions such as unstable relationships, fear of failure, family problems, communication disorders, and lack of interpersonal trust, all of which impact an individual's readiness for marriage (Quan et al., 2025). This situation requires increased intervention that not only addresses cognitive and behavioral issues but also considers individual religiosity.

One relevant religious approach to understanding the dynamics of recovering from the trauma of fear of marriage is *Islamic Cognitive Behavior Therapy* (IICBT). The IICBT approach is an integrative psychotherapy approach that combines the principles of *Cognitive Behavior Therapy* (CBT) with Islamic spiritual values and practices in individual counseling (Sabki et al., 2019). CBT therapy is a therapy that combines cognition with behavior. Its goal is to change the state of doubt and fear so that negative energy can be redirected toward the positive (Apriyadi, 2022).

Through cognitive restructuring, CBT is integrated with the values of faith, *tawakkal*, and *busnuzan*, as well as spiritual practices such as *mubasabah*, prayer, and *dzikir*, to help reduce anxiety while enhancing an individual's psychological and spiritual readiness to build a marriage commitment based on the Qur'an and Hadith (Nadirah, 2025; Sabki et al., 2018).

However, studies reviewing the dynamics of recovery from fear of marriage trauma through IICBT intervention in individual counseling are still limited. Most studies focus on individual or social aspects separately and have not explored in depth the potential of religious community-based approaches as contextual psychosocial intervention strategies (Hidayat & Fajri, 2025).

Furthermore, studies that specifically highlight young adults as a vulnerable group in the context of fear of marriage through the IICBT approach are still relatively scarce. Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by analyzing the dynamics of trauma recovery from fear of marriage through IICBT intervention that integrates cognitive, behavioral, and spiritual aspects.

METODE PENELITIAN

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study design to explore in depth the dynamics of the client's experience. The research focuses on an early adult client who exhibits a fear of marriage as a result of traumatic relational experiences in the past. To strengthen the accuracy of the data, this study involves the client's family members as supporting informants who provide additional perspectives on the conditions and changes experienced by the client. Data collection was conducted through online counseling sessions using WhatsApp Video Call, with each session lasting approximately 45-50 minutes. Counseling was carried out in three main sessions, followed by a follow-up session one month after the intervention to monitor the continuity of the client's recovery process and development according to their needs.

HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN

Result

Based on the counseling stages, counselors use the IICBT module developed by (Sabki et al., 2018). The module explains in detail how to conduct counseling in each session using an Islamic-based CBT approach, which is then implemented in the counseling process for clients who experience fear of marriage.

In the IICBT module by Sabki et al., (2018), counselors use the *Tazkiyatn Nafs* approach model developed based on al- Ghazali's comprehensive approach to character and personality building. This model has two main components, namely purification of the heart (*takballi*), which is cleansing oneself of negative thoughts and behaviors, and development (*taballi*), which is building positive traits to obtain blessings from Allah SWT. This model is based on five constructs: *Ma'rifah al-Nafs* (knowing oneself), *Takballi* (purification of the heart), *Taballi* (development of the heart), *Muhasabah al- Nafs* (self-evaluation), and *al-Sa'adah* (transcendental happiness), which as a whole emphasize self-transformation through reflection, perseverance, spiritual practice, and strengthening intentions and actions in accordance with Islamic principles (Sabki et al., 2018). In the counseling process, this model helps clients reduce negative thoughts, strengthen self-confidence, and improve psychological well-being through the process of *tazkiyah al-nafs*, which emphasizes purification of the heart.

The client, whose initials are Fulan, is a 28-year-old Muslim man of Bugis ethnicity who works as a civil servant in the field of IT. He experienced a fear of marriage after two failed serious relationships. The first relationship, which was planned to lead to an engagement in 2022, ended due to the partner's betrayal, while the second relationship in 2024, which involved the family and was planned to lead to marriage in February 2025, also failed due to infidelity. These relational experiences triggered recurring anxiety about marriage, even though the client had achieved career and economic stability.

Table. 1 Counseling Stages Using the IICBT Approach

Stage	Description of Activities	Counseling Techniques
Initial Stage (Tuesday, October 21, 2025)	The counselor builds an empathetic relationship and explores the client's experiences related to marital failure and fears of forming new relationships. The counselor explores the connections between thoughts, emotions, and behaviors and provides spiritual reinforcement.	Self- awareness through the <i>Ma'rifah al Nafs</i> technique, such as self- esteem, life goals, and self- limitations.
Thought Identification Stage (Tuesday, October 28, 2025)	Clients identify negative thoughts and generalizations about their partners resulting from past trauma. The counselor helps replace maladaptive thought patterns with more positive understandings.	Purification of the heart (<i>Takballi</i>), emptying oneself of negative traits and thoughts (despair, fear of failure/being hurt, suspicion) that hinder peace of mind. Performing <i>cognitive reframing</i> exercises such as positive thinking (<i>huznuzon</i>).
Final Evaluation Stage (Sunday, November 2, 2025)	The client reflects on positive changes, increased inner peace, and readiness to open up. The session concludes with an evaluation and reaffirmation of the client's intentions.	Heart Development (<i>Taballi</i>) is a process of rebuilding and strengthening the heart through <i>Muhasabah</i> a process of repeating each teep over and over again and finding answers to problems that may arise and corecting them.
Follow Up (Monday, November 24)	In the follow-up session, the counselor evaluated the client's emotional condition two weeks after the last session, as well as the development of their relationship and their views on marriage. The client revealed that	Happiness (<i>al Saadah</i>) - The ability to achieve the highest level of happiness (transcendental) through <i>Taqwa</i> and <i>Ihsan</i> .

anxiety still arose, but its intensity had decreased with the application of counseling techniques such as *ma'rifah al-nafs*, *muhasabah*, *takhalli*, *tahalli*, and cognitive reframing, supported by prayer and positive activities. The client also showed a calmer attitude, was not rushing into the decision to marry, and was able to interpret past failures in a more adaptive way. The session concluded with the formulation of a plan for further strengthening and a joint prayer to affirm the recovery process.

The results of individual counseling using the IICBT approach by Sabki et al., (2018) show positive changes in the cognitive, emotional, and spiritual aspects of clients after participating in three counseling sessions. These changes are presented in **Table 2** below:

Table. 2 Changes in Client Condition Before and After IICBT Counseling

Aspect	Initial Condition	Final Condition
Cognitive	Negative thoughts such as excessive generalization (" <i>all women are the same</i> ") and fear of failing to marry.	More rational and positive thoughts, able to interpret past experiences as tests.
Emotional	Anxious, disappointed, worried, and avoiding the topic of marriage.	Emotions begin to stabilize, feeling calm and accepting oneself.
Behavior	Closing oneself off from new relationships and focusing on avoiding commitment.	Beginning to open up to relationships and engaging in positive activities.
Spiritual	Worship is performed but does not yet provide emotional peace	Improving the quality of worship by participating in religious studies.
Attitude toward Marriage	Viewing marriage as a source of failure	Beginning to view marriage as worship and a process full of Wisdom.

As shown in Table 1, the implementation of IICBT is carried out in three stages, namely the initial stage, identification of thoughts, and the final evaluation stage. In the first stage, the application of the *Ma'rifah al-Nafs* technique helps clients understand their own condition, sources of fear, and the relationship between feelings, behaviors, and thoughts that arise as a result of failed marriages. This process is very important for developing self-awareness and an empathetic therapeutic relationship so that clients feel comfortable enough to express their emotions.

In the second stage, the thought identification process, the counselor helps clients identify negative thoughts and generalizations about their partners, as indicated by the clients' cognitive states (**Table 2**). The application of cognitive reframing and *takhalli* techniques based on Islamic principles encourages clients to identify negative traits, feelings of hopelessness, and fear of failure. This phase contributes to significant changes in cognitive and emotional aspects, as evidenced by the emergence of more rational thinking patterns, *busnuzan* attitudes, and a decrease in anxiety and excessive demands on marriage.

In the final evaluation stage, clients expressed increased confidence in the possibility of new relationships. Through the use of *tahalli* and *muhasabah* techniques, clients were able to begin to measure their gratitude, self-improvement, and *tawakkal*, which were based on improvements in the quality of worship and changes in attitudes toward marriage (Table 2). Overall, the research findings indicate that IICBT is effective in facilitating comprehensive cognitive, emotional, spiritual, and behavioral changes, enabling clients to understand marriage as a process of worship

full of wisdom, not merely a source of failure.

Based on the three stages of IICBT counseling, clients showed positive developments in emotional and spiritual aspects. In the initial stage, clients began to recognize themselves and the source of their fears about marriage. Through the *takballi* stage, clients were able to let go of negative thoughts and feelings such as fear, disappointment, and despair. Furthermore, in the *taballi* stage, clients showed improvement in building inner strength through *dzikir* and *taubat*. The final stage demonstrated the ability to *engage in self-reflection (muhasabah al-nafs)*, where clients were able to reflect on their progress, rekindle hope, and strengthen their intention to make marriage a form of worship. Overall, this counseling helped clients find inner peace, strengthen their faith, and cultivate spiritual readiness to face the future.

DISCUSSION

Islamic Integrated Cognitive Behavior Therapy (IICBT) is a psychotherapeutic approach that integrates the principles of *Cognitive Behavior Therapy* (CBT) with Islamic values derived from the Qur'an and Hadith, structured in accordance with *Sharia* principles. In its implementation, IICBT uses the concept of tauhid as the main foundation in cognitive restructuring and behavioral change, so that the psychological and spiritual dimensions of clients can be addressed in an integrated manner.

Conceptually Sabki et al., (2019) explain that IICBT views psychological disorders as the result of interactions between maladaptive thoughts, negative emotions, dysfunctional behavior, and spiritual imbalance, so that interventions focus on purifying and strengthening the soul through the process of *tazkiyah al-nafs*. This approach combines CBT techniques, such as identifying and restructuring negative thoughts, with Islamic spiritual practices including *dzikir*, prayer, *muhasabah*, and salat to improve emotional regulation and inner peace.

In this study, IICBT was implemented through individual counseling that integrated cognitive behavioral techniques with Islamic spiritual values to help clients overcome premarital anxiety. According to , the religious approach has a connection between thoughts, emotions, and behavior within the framework of *tauhid*, so that the intervention is not only oriented towards psychological aspects but also towards strengthening the spiritual dimension. The application of IICBT is relevant for Muslim clients because it can increase self-acceptance and inner peace through a religious approach that is in line with the client's belief system.

The phenomenon of fear of marriage (or fear of commitment) is understood as a complex psychological response, especially when individuals have had traumatic relational experiences in the past. Experiences such as betrayal, failed serious relationships, or prolonged conflict can form negative cognitive schemas about marriage, which then give rise to anxiety, avoidance of commitment, and overgeneralization about future partners (Annisa et al., 2024; Apostolou & Tekeş, 2023). In this context, fear of marriage is not merely situational but rooted in the interaction between cognitive distortions, impaired emotion regulation, and personal meanings attached to the institution of marriage.

(Apriyadi, 2022) shows that the CBT approach is effective in treating anxiety and relational trauma through the identification and restructuring of maladaptive thoughts that affect an individual's emotions and behavior. However, according to (Çınaroğlu, 2024), for Muslim individuals, the psychological recovery process is often inseparable from the spiritual dimension and religious beliefs that shape how individuals interpret life experiences, including failures and trials in relationships. When psychological interventions ignore the aspect of religiosity, there is a risk of *value incongruence* that can hinder client engagement in the counseling process (Costa & Almeida, 2022).

Sabki et al., (2019) argue that integrating CBT principles with Islamic values allows the therapeutic process to proceed in harmony with the framework of tauhid, enabling clients to reconstruct the meaning of traumatic experiences as part of life's trials, rather than merely personal failures. The IICBT approach has strong relevance in the recovery of fear of marriage trauma because it is able to address the psychological and spiritual needs of Muslim clients simultaneously. In line with the research by (Ariani, 2024), the fear of marriage experienced by clients does not only stem from cognitive distortions due to traumatic relational experiences, but is also related to a disruption of meaning, beliefs, and spiritual orientation towards marriage.

Cognitive restructuring combined with the values of *husnuẓan* (good intentions), *tawakkal* (trust in God), and acceptance of destiny enables clients to reduce negative generalizations and irrational fears about marriage commitments (Nora, 2025). This aligns with (Hadillah et al., 2025), indicating that IICBT views trauma as an imbalance between cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and spiritual aspects, so recovery requires a continuous process of *tazkiyah al-nafs*, not merely superficial behavioral change.

Furthermore, Yılmaztürk (2023) and Cucchi (2022) highlight that IICBT is reflected in the improvement of clients' emotional regulation and inner peace through spiritual practices integrated into the counseling process. According to Graça and Brandão (2024), strengthening worship, self-reflection, and affirming intentions help clients develop a more adaptive attitude of acceptance and psychological readiness for future relationships. IICBT not only functions as a therapeutic approach to reduce the trauma of fear of marriage but also as a contextual and meaningful Islamic counseling model in building holistic marriage readiness, both psychologically and spiritually.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the application of *Islamic Integrated Cognitive Behavior Therapy* (IICBT) in individual counseling is effective in helping early adult Muslim clients recover from marriage phobia trauma. Through the integration of cognitive- behavioral techniques with Islamic spiritual values and practices, IICBT is able to facilitate comprehensive positive changes in the cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and spiritual aspects of clients. Clients showed a decrease in negative thoughts and excessive generalizations about marriage, increased emotional stability, openness to new relationships, and strengthened the quality of worship and the meaning of marriage as a form of worship and a test of life. These findings confirm that the IICBT-based Islamic counseling approach is relevant and contextual for addressing relational trauma related to fear of marriage, while also contributing theoretically and practically to the development of integrative Islamic guidance and counseling services oriented toward the psychological and spiritual well-being of clients.

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