



Faculty of Cognitive Sciences and Human Development

**EXPLORING THE CHALLENGES OF COUNSELLORS IN THE MANAGE
OF MARRIAGE ISSUES**

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SHORT FORM-LIST

APA	American Psychological Association
JAIS	<i>Jabatan Agama Islam Sarawak</i>
UNIMAS	<i>Universiti Malaysia Sarawak</i>
KPDN HEP	<i>Kementerian Perdagangan Dalam Negeri dan Hal Ehwal Pengguna</i>
JKMS	<i>Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat Sarawak</i>
K.B.	<i>Kaunselor Berdaftar</i>
P.A.	<i>Perakuan Amalan</i>

ABSTRAK

Kajian kualitatif ini meneroka cabaran yang dihadapi oleh kaunselor berdaftar dalam menguruskan isu perkahwinan di Sarawak. Melalui temu bual separa berstruktur dengan tiga orang kaunselor berpengalaman daripada pelbagai agensi, kajian ini mengenal pasti halangan utama seperti penolakan klien, ketidaksamaan penglibatan pasangan, dan stigma terhadap perkhidmatan kaunseling. Faktor penyumbang termasuk kekangan dalaman seperti kekurangan pengetahuan khusus dan kesukaran menangani isu keagamaan atau kerohanian, serta pengaruh luaran seperti campur tangan keluarga. Kajian ini turut meneliti pengalaman kaunselor yang menekankan beban emosi, keperluan pendekatan intervensi yang fleksibel dan peka budaya, serta keperluan pembangunan profesional yang berterusan. Dapatan kajian ini menekankan kepentingan meningkatkan program latihan, membangunkan amalan kaunseling yang selaras dengan nilai budaya dan agama, serta mengukuhkan sistem sokongan institusi. Penemuan ini diharap dapat mempertingkatkan kualiti perkhidmatan kaunseling dan menyokong kesejahteraan pasangan dan keluarga dalam konteks masyarakat Sarawak yang pelbagai budaya dan agama.

ABSTRACT

This qualitative study explores the challenges faced by registered counsellors in managing marriage issues in Sarawak. Through semi-structured interviews with three experienced counsellors working in various settings, the research identifies key obstacles such as client resistance, unequal participation of spouses, and stigma associated with counselling. Contributing factors include internal limitations, such as gaps in specialised knowledge and handling religious or spiritual issues, as well as external influences like family interference. The study also examines counsellors' experiences, highlighting emotional burdens, the need for flexible and culturally sensitive interventions, and ongoing professional development requirements. The findings underscore the importance of enhancing training programs, developing culturally and religiously informed counselling practices, and strengthening institutional support systems. These insights aim to improve counselling service delivery and support the well-being of couples and families within Sarawak's diverse cultural and religious context.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This study was undertaken to investigate the obstacles encountered by registered counsellors in addressing marriage-related concerns among couples who require counselling. This chapter aims to provide a general overview of the research. It includes the statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, research hypotheses, conceptual and operational definitions of key terms, a conceptual and theoretical framework, the significance of the study, and a summary.

1.1 Background of Study

In society, marriage is a fundamental institution that serves as the foundation for social stability and family units. The Sarawak counsellor plays a crucial role in addressing marriage issues within the community in Sarawak (Kamarulzaman, 2020). Marriage counseling is an essential service provided by any settings to help couples navigate marital challenges and conflicts. As a government agency, there is responsible for upholding Islamic laws and providing religious guidance and support to the community. One of the core services offered is marriage counseling, which aims to assist couples in resolving conflicts and maintaining harmonious relationships. However, counselors face several challenges in effectively managing these issues, including cultural differences, religious sensitivities, and the complexity of marital disputes (Shabnam, 2024).

In addition, religious sensitivity and the requirement to follow Islamic standards might complicate things for counsellors. They must strike a balance between delivering practical advise and adhering to Islamic beliefs. This balancing act can be particularly challenging in cases involving sensitive issues such as domestic violence, polygamy, and divorce.

Furthermore, many counsellors may lack specialised training in marriage counselling, which can have an impact on their ability to effectively address complex marital issues (Afshan, 2024). Additionally, the growing number of marital conflicts and demand for counselling services can put a strain on setting's limited resources. Although many studies have explored marriage counselling broadly, few have focused specifically on the lived experiences and challenges of counsellors, especially within

the Malaysian or Sarawakian context. Understanding these challenges is essential to strengthening support mechanisms for counsellors, enhancing service delivery, and improving client outcomes.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the challenges encountered by counsellors in any settings in managing marriage issues for improve the quality of marriage counselling services and reduce the incidence of marital conflicts and divorces. By identifying these challenges, the department can develop targeted strategies and training programs to enhance counsellors' skills and effectiveness. This, in turn, can lead to better outcomes for couples and families in the community in Sarawak.

1.2 Problem Statement

Marriage counsellors in various settings, particularly in Sarawak, face a myriad of challenges in effectively managing marital issues within their communities. These challenges include navigating cultural diversity among ethnic groups, addressing religious sensitivities, and working within the limitations of insufficient training and resources. While existing research has examined marriage issues such as polygamy, domestic abuse, and marital conflict from the perspective of couples (Kamarulzaman, 2020), there remains a lack of comprehensive research focused specifically on the lived experiences and obstacles faced by registered counsellors.

For example, Kamarulzaman (2020) highlights the struggles of converts in marriage, including economic hardship, religious adaptation, family pressure, societal acceptance, and divorce. However, studies rarely address how such complex client backgrounds pose practical and emotional challenges for the counsellors themselves. The absence of empirical evidence on this topic limits the ability to develop effective support systems and training frameworks tailored to the unique multicultural and religious context of Sarawak.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the real-life experiences of registered marriage counsellors in Sarawak, identify the factors that contribute to their challenges, and understand how they manage these issues through professional strategies and interventions. The findings are expected to provide recommendations that enhance counselling practices and contribute to more culturally sensitive, competent, and effective support systems for practitioners and the communities they serve.

1.3 Research Objectives

- i.** To explore the challenges faced by counsellors in managing marriage issues among the community in Sarawak.
- ii.** To identify the factors that contribute to the challenges of conducting counsellor sessions.
- iii.** To explore the work experience of counsellors in dealing with the challenges of marriage issues.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. What are the primary challenges faced by counsellors in managing marriage issues among the community in Sarawak?
- ii. What factors contribute to the challenges of conducting counsellor sessions?
- iii. How do counsellors describe their work experience in dealing with the challenges of marriage issues?

1.5 Conceptual Framework

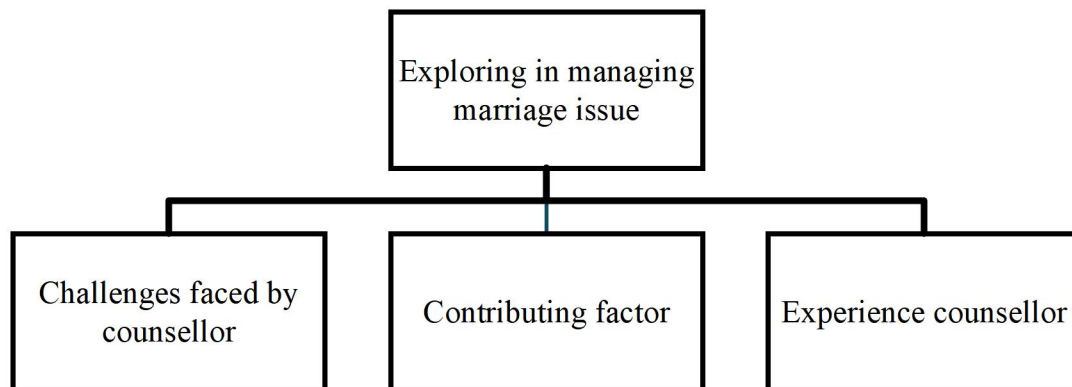


Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework

The purpose of the current study is to exploring the challenges counsellors in the management of marriage issues. According to Figure 1.1, this conceptual framework is intended to help counsellors understand the obstacles they confront when addressing marital issues by studying the different aspects that impact the counselling process. It includes counselling challenges identified from the counselor's experience, the influence of environmental factors, the level of counselor cultural competence, and the alignment of counselling practices. According to Figure 1.1, this study is able to analyze data more

systematically and develop effective recommendations to improve the effectiveness of counsellors in supporting the well-being of couples in Sarawak.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

Reality Therapy, introduced by William Glasser (2014), explains that the core idea of reality therapy is that mental distress is not the result of mental illness. Instead, it arises from universal social conditions when individuals fail to meet their basic needs. A person may choose to feel depressed, anxious, panicked, angry, or behave in a way that others perceive as having mental health issues in order to avoid painful experiences or to seek help. The five basic human needs are Love and Belonging, Power, Survival, Freedom, and Fun. Reality Theory can be adapted to align with Islamic principles and cultural values. Its emphasis on personal responsibility and ethical behavior resonates well with Islamic teachings, making it a suitable framework for Islamic marriage counseling. By integrating religious and cultural considerations, counselors can provide guidance that is both respectful and effective.

1.7 Significance of Study

This study is significant for several reasons, primarily focusing on the improvement of counseling practices, the well-being of Muslim families in Sarawak, and the broader implications for counseling within multicultural and religious contexts. This study will give important insights into the particular obstacles that registered counsellors experience while treating marital issues in the community. The study's goal is to identify particular areas where counsellors may need further help or training. This can lead to the creation of focused treatments and professional development programs to help counsellors be more successful (Ganesan & Amuta, 2020).

However, this study will help identify the training needs and resources needed by the counselor. As such, appropriate training programmes and adequate resources can be provided to help counsellors deal with marriage issues more effectively (Stephen, 2024). Based on that, this study provides a comprehensive overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the counselling services provided by any setting counselling in Sarawak. The results of the study can be used as a basis for formulating new policies or programmes that are more comprehensive and effective in supporting couples in Sarawak. It also assists any setting in improving the quality of their services in line with the needs of the local community.

Last but not least, this study could pave the way for further research on the challenges of marriage counseling in Malaysia, particularly in Sarawak. Additional studies can enhance counseling approaches and contribute to the advancement of knowledge in this field. Furthermore, it provides an advantage to trainee counselors and researchers by offering valuable experience and information that can serve as a future reference.

1.8 Definition of Terms

There are two types of definitions of terms used, conceptual definition which is the definition given by the researcher in the past based on the highlights of the past study while the operational definition is the definition given by the researcher to answer the problem of this study.

1.8.1 Exploration

Conceptual definition: According to Andrea (2021), exploration refers to the systematic investigation of a research problem that is not clearly defined. It aims to gain insights, identify patterns, and establish a foundational understanding of a topic.

Operational definition: In the context of this study, exploration involves conducting qualitative or mixed-methods research to investigate the unique challenges faced by JAIS counselors in managing marriage issues within the Muslim community.

1.8.2 Challenges

Conceptual definition: According to Afaf et. al (2021), challenges refer to the difficulties and obstacles that counsellors face during the counselling process.

Operational definition: In the context of this study, JAIS counsellors face difficulties in dealing with marriage issues during the session.

1.8.3 Marriage Counsellor

Conceptual definition: According to Charles (2019), marriage Counsellor refer to a professional who specializes in providing guidance and support to couples experiencing difficulties in their relationship.

Operational definition: Counsellors who face various challenges regarding domestic violence, polygamy, marriage issues and so on.

1.8.4 Marriage Issues

Conceptual definition: According to Kariev (2023), marriage issues refer to the various problems and conflicts that arise within a marital relationship, affecting the emotional, psychological, and social well-being of the partners.

Operational definition: Marriage issues refer to measurable and observable difficulties within a marital relationship.

1.9 Limitation of Study

1.9.1 Study Area

The limitation of this study is this research was carried out in the state of Sarawak, specifically targeting counsellors who are actively serving registered counsellors. Consequently, the findings and conclusions drawn from this study are not context-specific and may be applicable to counsellors working in other regions, countries, or within organizations as long as has cerificated counsellor. It is important to note that the unique circumstances, cultural context, and operational frameworks may different significantly from those of other institutions, further limiting the generalizability of the results.

1.9.2 A small sample of participants

The limitation of this study mainly include the limitation of participant sample. Since this study only involved three (3) registered counsellors and having 3 years of experience in dealing with marital issues. Nest, the sampling is easy to use, then the findings of the study cannot be generalized to represent the entire target population. The researchers hope that future studies will get a larger sample of participants from various locations.

1.9.3 Perspective of the researcher

The limitation of this study is, this study only focuses on the challenges related to registered counsellor in managing marriage issues. The limitation of this study help the researcher to not deviate from the original purpose of the study. Therefore, there may be some facts that researchers have overlooked. Future researchers who study this topic can update the questions and provide even more accurate information.

1.9.4 Logistical constraints

The limitation of this study is logistical constraints such as distance, time, and limited resources may affect the number of counselors who can be interviewed and their level of openness in sharing experiences and challenges.

1.10 Conclusion

This study aims to provide a review of how registered counsellor deal with challenges in marriage issues. Therefore, the researcher will study the background of the study, problem statement, research objective, research question, conceptual framework, theoretical framework, importance of the study, the definition of terms, and limitations in the study related to the research topic. This chapter will help the researcher clearly understands the elements that the researcher wants to achieve in this research. The related topic based on similar findings will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the challenging of counsellor dealing with marriage issues- related topic and provides an overview of previous similar findings and also a summary of the chapter. The purpose of the literature review was to compile a list of past research on knowledge sharing and internet. This was done part of the emergent research design process to sketch out the essential data-gathering requirements for the primary study to be undertaken.

2.1 Challenges in Islamic Marriage

Islamic marriage counselling addresses marital problems by combining psychological techniques with religious beliefs, which poses special difficulties for counsellors. One of the key obstacles, according to Karim et al. (2024), is the cultural diversity of the Muslim community, which necessitates that counsellors balance religious teachings with a variety of cultural norms and customs. It may be challenging to provide consistent counselling techniques because of this variety, which calls for a thorough comprehension of various cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, a major obstacle to providing good counselling is the stigma associated with mental health in many Muslim communities. Because mental health problems are frequently viewed as personal shortcomings rather than medical diseases, contend that this stigma can keep people from getting the care they need (Ashraf & Majeed, 2023).

To properly combine psychological techniques with religious values, Islamic marriage counsellors also need to have specific training. The significance of cultural sensitivity in counselling is emphasised by Jafari (2022), who points out that counsellors who are not sensitive to cultural differences may unintentionally impede this process. Ineffective assistance and misconceptions may result, for example, from a counselor's failure to recognise the cultural background of a client's problem. Counsellors must continue their professional development and get cultural competency training in order to continue being effective in their positions.

The resource and logistical restrictions that come with counselling services can also make these difficulties worse. According to Haque and Masud (2023), burnout can result from a lack of resources, which can lower the standard of counselling services. With little assistance, counsellors frequently have to handle heavy caseloads, which causes stress and lowers work satisfaction. As conventional beliefs on gender might affect how couples view and handle marital difficulties, point out that cultural conventions and gender roles further complicate the counselling process (Khalid & Rahman, 2023). In order to successfully help their clients, counsellors must have a thorough awareness of the sociocultural and theological forces at work in this complex environment.

2.2 Work Experience of Counselors

The registered counsellors' work experience is essential to comprehending the difficulties they encounter and the methods they use to handle marital problems in the Muslim community. Counsellors have a wealth of expertise handling marital issues, which is essential to their work. In order to offer good counselling, they must navigate intricate cultural and theological issues. Experienced counsellors gain more empathy and cultural competency, which enables them to handle delicate situations more skilfully (Ahmad & Salleh, 2023). Building rapport and trust with clients requires the capacity to empathise and comprehend other cultural viewpoints, which makes counselling sessions more transparent and effective.

The professional experiences of counsellors also emphasise the value of continuous professional growth. According to Jamal and Ismail (2023) emphasise the value of ongoing education and assistance in developing counsellors' abilities. Counsellors who get ongoing training are guaranteed to stay current on the newest counselling methods and best practices, which is crucial for offering couples dealing with marital difficulties excellent support. Professional development opportunities can assist counsellors avoid burnout, a prevalent problem in the counselling field, and maintain their resilience. By making investments in their professional development, JAIS can guarantee that its counsellors are prepared to manage the intricacies of marital counselling in a way that is sensitive to cultural and religious differences.

Additionally, the real-world experiences of counsellors offer insightful information about the particular difficulties they face in their line of work. For example, handling situations with deeply rooted religious or cultural customs calls for a sophisticated response. To provide advice that is in line

with the clients' cultural background and Islamic values, counsellors need to be skilled at striking a balance between these variables. Culturally competent counselling techniques are beneficial in resolving marital problems, as evidenced by the counsellors' experiences with Ahmad and Salleh (2023). Counsellors may better assist couples on their path to a happy marriage by advancing their professional growth and knowledge, which will eventually benefit the general welfare of the Muslim community.

2.3 Factors Contributing

Islamic marital counselling is a complicated and multidimensional procedure that is complicated by a number of issues. Logistical limitations, such the scarcity of resources and counsellors, are a significant problem. According to Haque and Masud (2023), a lack of resources frequently results in counsellor burnout, which lowers the standard of counselling services. The workload for counsellors might become too much to handle when more couples seek counselling and there are fewer qualified specialists available. The counsellors' health is impacted by this burnout, and the quality of their counselling sessions is jeopardised. Counsellors find it challenging to provide regular and thorough services due to these logistical issues, which are further exacerbated by inadequate facilities and financial assistance.

The counselling procedure is made more difficult by cultural boundaries. According to Khalid and Rahman (2023), cultural expectations and conventions, especially those pertaining to gender roles, might obstruct candid dialogue and successful therapy. Traditional ideas about gender roles may influence how couples view and handle marital problems in many Muslim communities. For example, people may be reluctant to publicly discuss private or intimate things, particularly if they are viewed as taboo or culturally sensitive. This cultural reluctance may make it more difficult for the counsellor to comprehend the problems at hand and offer the right advice. Counsellors may also find it difficult to encourage fair and balanced dialogue between spouses due to the power dynamics in marriage, which are impacted by cultural norms.

A further contributing element is the requirement for specific training to provide counsellors the ability to handle these religious and cultural difficulties. In order to effectively integrate Islamic teachings with modern psychological procedures, counsellors need to have a thorough comprehension of them. A lack of cultural sensitivity in counselling can result in inadequate assistance and perhaps

injury, according to Jafari (2022), who highlights the significance of this knowledge. Counsellors must continue their professional development and training in order to keep current with best practices and improve their cultural competency. With the aid of this specific training, counsellors may approach each situation with the requisite cultural and religious knowledge, guaranteeing that their advice is both gentle and effective. By addressing these factors, the effectiveness of Islamic marriage counseling can be significantly improved.

2.4 Literature Review

2.4.1 Overseas

According to Safura and Jamayah (2022), counselors are vital in offering guidance to married couples experiencing marital conflicts. Through counseling sessions, they are responsible for addressing issues related to marriage, such as communication, financial stability, and spousal responsibilities. However, this study revealed that public acceptance of counseling services provided by religious departments remains low. As noted by Elmi et al. (2021), counselors in religious departments frequently deal with cases involving divorce, polygamy, and domestic violence. Nevertheless, the lack of awareness among couples regarding the significance of counseling presents a major challenge for counselors in performing their duties. Therefore, increasing the promotion and dissemination of information about the benefits of counseling is essential to enhance public acceptance.

As stated by Asila and Siti (2019), marriage counseling aids couples in identifying the underlying causes of their conflicts and finding suitable resolutions. They also emphasized that counselors should function as facilitators, educating couples on effective communication techniques as well as their respective roles and responsibilities in marriage. Additionally, counselors should reinforce the psychospiritual approach during counseling sessions, particularly for Muslim couples. This approach helps couples grasp the concepts of patience, responsibility, and love in marriage in accordance with Islamic teachings, as highlighted by Ezdianie (2019).

Adam (2020) found that cultural, religious, and socioeconomic factors influence the stability of marriages in Sarawak. Interethnic marriages in the state frequently encounter difficulties in adapting to differing cultural values and norms. Unlike other states, counselors in Sarawak face distinctive challenges due to the inaccessibility of remote areas. Communication and logistical constraints hinder counselors from providing consistent services to rural communities. The difficulty

in reaching certain locations limits counselors' accessibility, leading them to advocate for the use of technology, such as online counseling sessions, as a solution. Moreover, financial strain and economic pressure are among the key factors contributing to marital conflicts in Sarawak. Thus, counselors must assist couples in managing their finances more effectively while also providing the necessary emotional support.

A study by Abdul (2025) highlights that counseling helps couples gain a better understanding of their responsibilities in marriage and prevents prolonged conflicts. According to Rahimi (2021), couples who engage in regular counseling tend to have more stable marriages compared to those who do not seek counseling. Furthermore, family counseling plays a role in enhancing communication and strengthening relationships between partners. This study recommends a strength-based counseling approach, which focuses on highlighting the positive aspects of a couple's relationship.

2.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter explains the challenges, work experience of counselors and what factors contribute to counselors. Finally, this chapter explains related to previous studies related to the topic. Information on past research described in this chapter is drawn from journals and books. This research will then proceed in further detail in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher will discuss the research methodology used by the researcher in the study period such as study design, population, sample and procedure sampling, pilot study, data collection procedure, data analysis procedure, conceptual framework, and instruments. The researcher also takes seriously the confidential information provided by respondents. This is because it is ethical in doing research. The researcher will also avoid issues of bias against respondents during their voluntary participation in this research study.

3.1 Research Design

In this research, the research design used is designed a qualitative study that exploring the challenges of counsellors in the management of marriage issues. The research will use a semi-structured interview method to obtain data from respondents. This is because the design of this qualitative study can help the researcher explore more information about challenges counsellor. The qualitative research design will allow the researcher analyzes data or findings from interviews obtained with respondents. In addition, the researcher also used observation to support data collection in this research study. This is because observation is a method of support which is information received through interview to make the findings stronger and clearer. Therefore, to do the exploration challenges by registered counsellors, needs to use observation to analyzes all aspects that can give information about what the researcher wants.

3.2 Population, Sample, and Sampling Procedure

Based on Rusli et al. (2014), mention a population is a group of individuals with similar characteristic. In this research, the target population for this research is a group of people who are counsellor working at any settings in Sarawak. For this study, four (3) respondents will be selected using purposive sampling techniques. The sampling technique is intended to be used to set targets for respondents based on criteria that are needed. The criteria set by the researcher is that the respondents must be consisting of counsellors having 3 years of experience in dealing with marital issues. A semi-structured instrument is employed in this study. During the interview session, the researcher is encouraged to record the session for reference in the data analysis process and additionally document

the data in field notes. Prior to recording the interview, the researcher must obtain permission from the respondents to record audio or video. Seeking permission is an essential ethical practice in research to ensure that respondents feel comfortable throughout the interview session.

3.3 Instruments

The instrument that will be used to do the research methodology is with using the interview method. This interview is used to obtain information about the respondents required to be used in this research study. The researcher will prepare questions for the interview in advance whether it is structured, semi-structured, or unstructured. In this study, the researcher will choose to use semistructured questions that will be used in the interview talk with the respondent. The researcher will use a type of interview questions semi-structured because the researcher will ask any relevant questions and be flexible with the research topic during the interview. Therefore, the researcher will get more information to make the study more meaningful, interesting, and easy to understand.

3.4 Pilot Study

A pilot study is an initial study conducted to assess the validity and reliability of the questions that will be used in the interview for the actual research. In this study, the researcher will select one respondent to participate in the pilot study. This ensures that the questions are appropriate for use in the interview session. The term "pilot study" refers to a smaller version of a full-scale study, serving as a preliminary test for specific research instruments, such as an interview schedule. Additionally, a pilot study is a crucial component of a well-designed research process, as it provides valuable insights for other researchers. According to Polit et al. (2001), pilot studies, also known as feasibility studies, are small-scale versions of larger studies.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

3.5.1 Screening

The screening will be done before proceeding with data collection through the interview method. This screening process is used to identify whether respondents have met the criteria or characteristics that have been set for this screening. In addition, the screening process can help the researcher do work more easily and systematically when conducting this research.

3.5.2 Interview

In this qualitative study, the researcher uses the interview method as it is suitable for this research and is both convenient and systematic. A semi-structured instrument is employed in this study. During the interview session, the researcher is encouraged to record the session for reference in the data analysis process and additionally document the data in field notes. Prior to recording the interview, the researcher must obtain permission from the respondents to record audio or video. Seeking permission is an essential ethical practice in research to ensure that respondents feel comfortable throughout the interview session.

3.6 Ethics of Study

In research study, in research studies, researchers must adhere to ethical guidelines to maintain professionalism while conducting their studies. The American Psychological Association (APA) provides essential guidelines that researchers must follow throughout the research process. The researcher will refer to the ethical code outlined by the APA to ensure professional conduct (APA, 2010). These guidelines help prevent any harm or violations against research participants. By following the APA standards, researchers can safeguard respondents and minimize potential risks. The respondents in this study consist of JAIS counsellors.

3.6.1 The Principle of Informed Consent

The researcher will provide informed consent to the respondents, ensuring that they receive sufficient information to make an informed decision about whether they wish to participate in the study (Bryman, 2008). The researcher must explain the study to the respondents and clearly state its purpose, allowing them to decide whether they want to take part in the interview. Respondents will sign the informed consent form if they fully understand the study. The form must clearly outline the research topic, objectives, and a detailed explanation of the study. Additionally, it should state that the respondents' data and information will remain confidential, and the interview findings will be used solely for academic purposes.

3.6.2 The Principle of Confidential and Privacy

Confidentiality and privacy are crucial aspects of research to protect respondents' data and information. This is because the data is used for academic writing. Ensuring confidentiality allows

respondents to feel more comfortable sharing information, knowing that their data remains secure. Privacy, on the other hand, safeguards the received data and determines which information should be disclosed and which should remain undisclosed.

3.7 Data Analysis Procedure

After the interview session with the respondents is completed, the researcher will analyze the data collected from the interviews. The findings from the study will be transcribed and shared with the respondents for review. This is to prevent any misunderstandings regarding the information shared by the respondents during the interview. The researcher will conduct the thematic analysis and categorize each finding into themes and subthemes relevant to the research topic.

3.8 Research Framework

In this study, which is a qualitative research design, the researcher uses interviews as the platform for data collection from the respondents. The researcher will choose to interview respondents as a method to gather data using semi-structured questions. The data collected will be analyzed to support the information obtained from the respondents, and the researcher will use field notes and observations as secondary data to support and strengthen the primary data. The researcher will manually analyze the data to categorize it into specific themes. If there are any gaps in the previous findings, the researcher will repeat the interviews to meet the study's objectives and ensure relevance. The study framework for this research will be provided as shown in Figure 3.1.

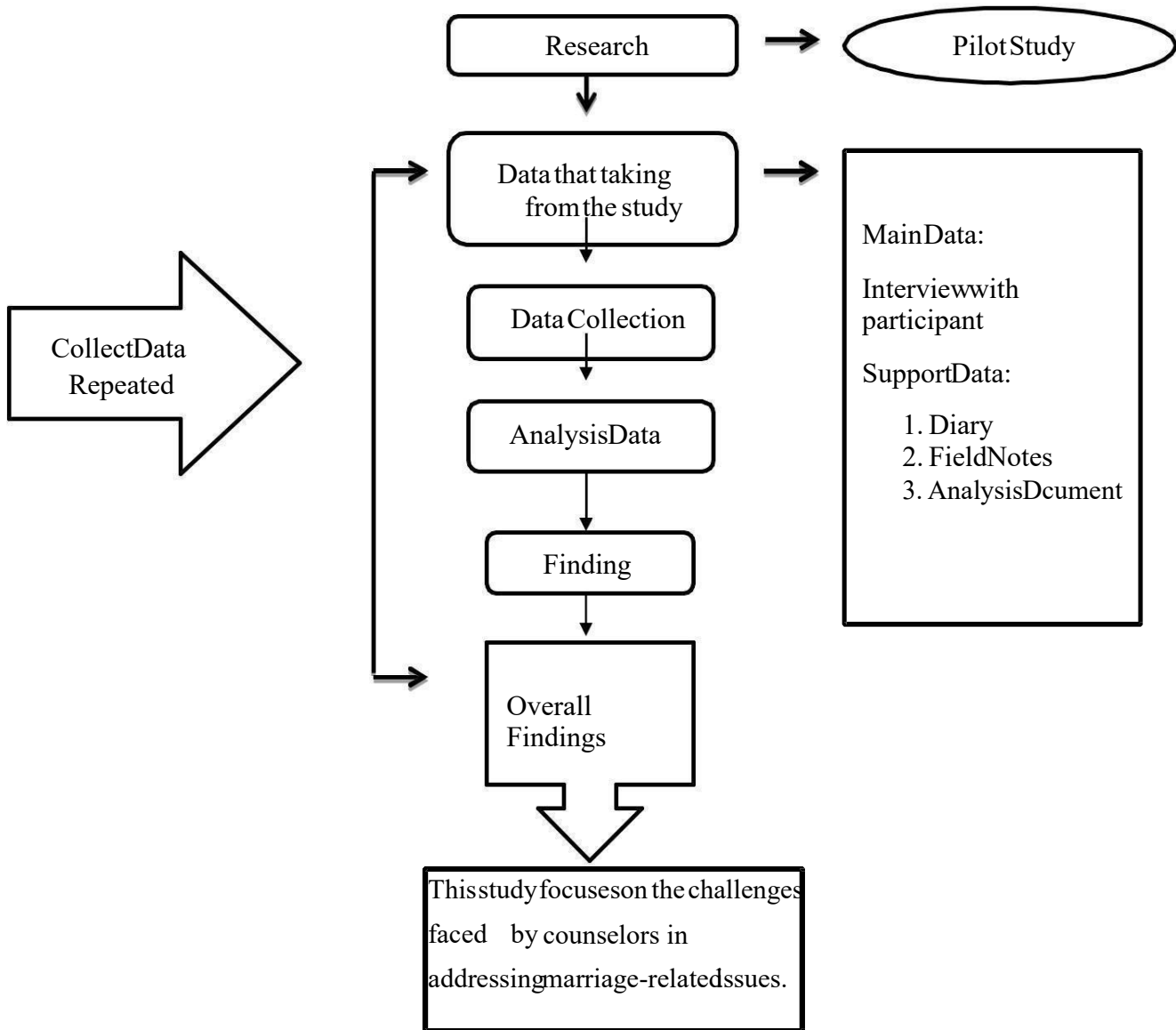


Figure 3.1 Research Framework

3.9 Conclusion

In conclusion, as a whole, this chapter explains the method research methodology used by the researcher, namely study design, population, sample and sampling procedures, pilot studies, data collection procedures, procedures data analysis, conceptual framework, and instruments. Next, data analysis will be on explaining more in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYZE DATA

4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, the researchers will discuss the background of the participants and analyze data that obtain from that had been conducted with the participants through as online platform or a face-to-face interview.

4.1 Background of the Respondent

The researcher had chosen 3 respondent based on the criteria that had been set by the researcher in this research. The table below shows the summary of the respondent involves in this research.

Table 4.1 : Summary of background for the respondent

No (R)	Gender	Age	Settings	Counsellor Status
1.	Female	40	Pejabat Kebajikan Masyarakat Bintulu	Registered
2.	Female	30	Jabatan Agama Islam	Registered
3.	Female	47	Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat Sarawak	Registered

Gender

Overall, of the three counselors selected based on purposive sampling criteria, three (3) were female counselors (100%).

Table 4.2: Gender of study respondent

No	Gender	Respondent (R)
1	Female	3
Jumlah		3

Age

Information on age is useful because it is related to respondents' life experience and maturity in conducting counselling sessions with client on marriage issues. Overall, counselors are over 20 years old.

Table 4.3: Age of study respondent

No	Age	Respondent (R)
1	20-30	1
2	31-40	1
3	41-50	1
Jumlah		3

Background of education

Information about the level and academic education background of the respondent is important to help the researcher see and make connections between the levels of knowledge and the skills and methods of applications that the counsellors use in conducting sessions with clients. All three respondents have master-level qualifications in counselling and degree-level.

Table 4.4: Background education of study respondent

No	Academic Qualifications		Another Qualifications		Respondent (R)
1	Master's counselling, UNIMAS	in	Bachelor's counselling, UNIMAS	in	R1
2	Master's counselling, UNIMAS	in	Bachelor's psychology, UNIMAS	in	R2
3	Master's counselling, UNIMAS	in	Bachelor in Artificial Intelligence		R3

Qualification as a Registered Counsellor

Information about qualifications as a registered counsellor is useful because it is subject to the conditions and requirements for the study conducted because the selected respondents must have qualifications as a registered counsellor. All of the counselors have qualifications as registered counsellors.

Table 4.5: Qualifications as registered Counsellors of study respondent

Respondent (R)	Status	KB	PA
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R1	Licensed	02355	05200
R2	Licensed	11259	10871
R3	Licensed	08106	07687

Detailed Data for Each Respondent

The following data for each respondent who was interviewed. The purpose of this detailed is as a personal record for the researcher and to ensure that the data obtained is more detailed without any respondent information being left out.

First Respondent (R1)

R1 is a female and also a registered counsellor. She is 40 years old and a Malay ethnicity. Her academic qualification is a degree and master's in counselling from University Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS). On 14 April 2010, R1 applied for a registered counsellor license and a practice certificate. After that, R1 served at the Sibu District Police Headquarters in 2010 and is currently serving at the Bintulu Division Social Welfare Office. Her period of service in the counselling field has been 15 years.

Second Respondent (R2)

R2 is a female and also a registered counsellor. She is 30 years old and a Malay ethnicity from Samarahan. Her academic qualification is a degree in Psychology and master's in counselling from University Malaysia Sarawak. R2 has worked at the Sarawak Islamic Religious Department for four years as a psychological administrative officer. His period of service in the field of counselling is 3 years.

Third Respondent (R3)

R3 is a female and also a registered counsellor. She is 47 years old and a Malay ethnicity. The level of academic qualification she has is a degree in Artificial Intelligence in 2002 and continued her master's in counselling at the age of 37 and graduated in 2018. Before serving as a counsellor, R3 has served as an *Pegawai Penguatkuasaan di Kementerian Perdagangan Dalam Negeri dan Hal Ehwal*

Pengguna (KPDN HEP) for 18 years. Then in 2018, R3 applied for a registered counsellor's license and a practice certificate. After that, R3 moved to *Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat Sarawak* (JKMS). Her period of service in the counselling field was 7 years.

4.2 Data Analysis

Before proceeding to data analysis, the process of collecting data had been conducted to make sure the researcher easily to do analysis the data that gain from the participant. The session of collecting data had been started with the pilot study participant which is on 13 June 2025 (Friday). Therefore, the researcher continued to collect the data from the participant that had been chosen as a sample to represent the population of the research that had been conducted. The process of collecting data through the online platform interviews. The interview had been done through Google Meet. Every participant had been informed early about the interview that will be conducted. The interview will be conducted if both sides were agreed on the platform, date, and time that had been suggested. After finishing the interview session, the researcher will do the transcript more easily to the researcher to see the findings of the research that had been conducted.

4.3 Findings

For the findings obtain in this research, the researcher will divide into 3 sections based on the research objective which are the challenges faced by counsellor, contributing factors to counselling challenges and counsellors' experiences.

4.3.1 The challenges faced by counsellors in managing marriage issues among the community

Based on the statement that giving by 3 of the respondents, the challenges faced by counsellors in managing marriage issues among the community have various challenges which is based on their situation and problem.

Table 4.6: The challenges faced by counsellors in managing marriage issues among the community

Theme	Sub Theme	Sub-sub Theme	Respondent
Challenges	Resistance and barriers	Hesitant to share in session	R1, R2, R3

		Uncooperative spouses	R1, R2, R3
	Unequal participation of spouses	Wives as primary attendees	R1, R2, R3
	Stigma	Perception of counselling as last resort	R2

From the table above, the researcher identified three sub-themes that describe the challenges faced by counsellors in managing marriage issues, namely resistance and barriers, unequal participation, and stigma. Under the sub-theme of resistance and barriers, two sub-sub-themes emerged when clients being hesitant to share during sessions and uncooperative spouses, with all respondents emphasising these as significant obstacles to effective counselling. For the unequal participation sub-theme, respondents observed that wives were often the primary attendees, suggesting that gendered expectations and cultural norms constrained male involvement in counselling. Lastly, under the stigma sub-theme, R2 noted that counselling was frequently perceived as a last resort, indicating that negative beliefs about counselling services contribute to reluctance in seeking professional help.

4.3.2 The factors contribute to the challenges in conducting counsellor session

Based on the interview session with three respondents, the researcher found data about the factors contribute to the challenges in conducting counsellor session. Different respondent from different settings has different contributing factors. It is because depending on what challenges them faced in conducting counsellor session.

Table 4.7: The factors contribute to the challenges in conducting counsellor session

Theme	Sub Theme	Sub-sub-Theme	Respondent
Factor	Internal Factor	Limited specialized knowledge	R2, R3
		Gaps in handling religious and spiritual cases	R2
	External Factor	Family interference	R1, R2, R3

From the table above, the researcher found that there are two types of sub-theme which are internal and external factors. In the internal sub-theme, the researcher identified two sub-sub themes. The first is a limited specialized knowledge and gaps in handling religious and spiritual cases due to insufficient knowledge or training. Under the external sub-theme, the only have one sub-sub themes found was family interference. Meanwhile, family interference, reported by all three respondents, shows how external influences from family members can disrupt the counseling process.

4.3.3 Experience counsellors in dealing with the challenges of marriage issues

Based on the interview session with the three respondents, the researcher has found data about counsellor experience in dealing with the challenges of marriage issues. This is because different background of settings them have unique experience they are dealing.

Table 4.8: Experience counsellors in dealing with the challenges of marriage issues

Theme	Sub Theme	Sub-sub-Theme	Respondent
Experience	Emotional burden of counsellor	Stress handling complex cases	R1, R2, R3
	Stratergies and interventions	Flexible application of counselling approaches	R1, R2, R3
		Incorporating religious elements in interventions	R2
	Professional development needs	Training and support needs	R1, R2, R3

From the table above, the researcher found that there are three type of sub-theme which is emotional and mental burden, strategies and interventions, and professional development. In emotional aburden of counsellor, all respondents experienced stress handling complex cases. For strategies and interventions, all respondents applied flexible application of counselling approaches tailored to each couple's needs. Additionally, R2 used religious elements, especially with clients who valued spiritual aspects. In professional development needs, all respondents emphasized the need for ongoing training and support to improve counseling skills and stay updated with marital trends.

Based on table 4.6, 4.7, and 4.8, it shown that the statement of the repondent has similarities and differences in the challenges faced by counsellors, contributing factors and experience counsellors in dealing with the challenges.

4.4 Summary

In conclusion, this chapter is about the research findings that have been analyzed by researchers using manual methods. The researcher transcribed the interviews manually before categorizing the findings into appropriate themes and sub-themes. The findings of the study also show that various forms of factors and challenges contribute to counsellor.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, IMPLICATION, SUGGESTION AND SUMMARY

5.0 Introduction

In this section, the researcher will discuss the findings of the research that had been obtained from the interview that had been conducted with 3 respondent consisting of registered counsellor that had been chosen based on purposive sampling. Based on the findings that had been obtained, it was summarized and supported by the findings from the previous research.

5.1 Discussion

In this section, the research will discuss three themes that had been chosen which are the challenges of the counsellor, contributing factors, and experiences of the counsellor in dealing with the challenges of marriage issues.

5.1.1 Theme 1: Challenge

This theme explores the challenges encountered by counsellors in managing marital issues within the Sarawak community. In each counselling session, counsellors are often confronted with a range of significant difficulties. The findings indicate that most respondents reported facing similar types of challenges. These challenges were found to influence not only the counselling process itself but also the overall effectiveness of the interventions implemented.

5.1.1.1 Sub-Theme: Resistance and Barriers

One of the notable challenges faced by counsellors in managing marriage issues is resistance and barriers encountered during counselling sessions. This includes clients' hesitancy in sharing personal matters and a lack of cooperation from spouses. These behaviours create significant barriers to effective intervention and limit the overall progress of counselling. Respondents R1, R2, and R3 highlighted that many clients were reluctant to open up during sessions, particularly in the initial stages. This resistance may arise from feelings of shame, fear of judgment, or cultural norms that discourage open discussion of marital issues. In the Sarawak context, where cultural traditions value privacy and family honour, clients may perceive counselling as a threat to these values, leading to guarded and defensive responses. Such hesitancy significantly hampers counsellors' efforts to build rapport and gather accurate information necessary for intervention.

The findings indicate that resistance and barriers represent major challenges for counsellors managing marital issues. The interview data highlights various forms of client resistance that disrupt the counselling process and limit its effectiveness. Respondent R1 explained the need to conduct separate sessions for spouses who were unwilling to speak openly together, reflecting early-stage reluctance and discomfort in sharing sensitive matters in each other's presence. This approach underscores the counsellor's need to adapt strategies to address clients' guarded communication and to gradually build rapport and trust. Similarly, R2 described how resistance emerges when one partner, often the wife, prefers to complain privately to avoid feeling at fault, indicating the presence of cultural norms and fear of blame that limit open dialogue. R3 further observed that some wives who did attend sessions remained silent and refused to speak, demonstrating extreme forms of disengagement that pose significant barriers to assessment and intervention.

In addition to this hesitancy, counsellors also reported dealing with uncooperative spouses who were disengaged from the counselling process. These spouses often attended sessions reluctantly, refused to participate meaningfully, or outright rejected the importance of counselling. Respondents described situations where spouses ignored calls to attend, remained silent during sessions, or displayed open resistance. Such lack of cooperation creates an imbalance in the session and undermines the counsellor's ability to facilitate constructive dialogue and fair mediation between partners. This observation is consistent with previous studies indicating that marital counselling is less effective when one partner is unwilling to commit to the process (Williams & Anyawu, 2017).

R1 recounted that even when one spouse initially resisted, it was necessary to invest time in rapport-building to establish a sense of safety and comfort, which eventually reduced their opposition to participating. This highlights the critical role of counsellors in managing client resistance through trust building strategies. R2 noted that clients often arrived with pre-existing negative perceptions about counselling, suggesting that attitudinal barriers shaped by cultural beliefs or stigma limited their willingness to participate meaningfully. R3 described situations where spouses refused to respond to repeated invitations to attend, despite multiple follow-up calls. This lack of cooperation resulted in imbalanced participation, undermining the fairness and effectiveness of mediation between partners.

These insights collectively reinforce the sub-theme of Resistance and Barriers by illustrating that client reluctance manifests in diverse ways from refusal to speak in joint sessions, preference for

private complaints, and silence during meetings, to complete avoidance of participation. Such behaviours are shaped by cultural expectations, fear of judgment, and entrenched stigma about counselling. These barriers significantly impede counsellors' efforts to foster constructive dialogue, build rapport, and implement effective interventions for marital issues.

5.1.1.2 Sub-Theme: Unequal Participation of Spouses

Another challenge highlighted by counsellors involves unequal participation of spouses in counselling sessions. This issue commonly manifests when wives are the primary attendees, while husbands are absent or minimally involved. Respondents R1, R2, and R3 observed that many couples who sought help often had only the wife willing to attend or engage in sessions.

Counsellors observed that wives are more frequently the ones who attend or actively engage in sessions, while husbands are often absent or minimally involved. As R1 noted, complaints brought to counselling sessions typically originate from the wife, reflecting a recurring pattern of imbalance in participation. R2 further explained that even when husbands do attend, it is usually because their wives have initiated the complaint or sought help, suggesting that husbands' involvement is often passive and reactive rather than proactive. R3 added that referrals to counselling frequently result from wives wanting their husbands to attend, indicating that husbands may agree only after being persuaded or pressured

This imbalance reflects cultural expectations and gender norms within the community, where men may perceive counselling as unnecessary or threatening to their authority within the family. In some cases, husbands view counselling as an admission of personal failure or weakness, leading to reluctance or outright refusal to participate. This gendered pattern of participation not only limits the counsellor's ability to address marital issues holistically but also complicates efforts to mediate fairly between both parties.

5.1.1.3 Sub-Theme: Stigma

The findings reveal that stigma surrounding counselling acts as a significant barrier to effective marital intervention. Respondents noted that many clients perceive counselling as a last resort rather than a proactive way to address conflict. As highlighted by R2, there is a widespread belief that counselling is only intended for couples on the brink of divorce, as reflected in the comment that

counselling at JAIS is viewed as “only for those who are divorcing.” This perception discourages couples from seeking help early, often delaying intervention until the relationship is already at a crisis point.

Such stigma are often shaped by cultural beliefs that seeking professional help indicates family failure or personal weakness. The stigma associated with counselling discourages early intervention, making it more challenging for counsellors to assist couples in rebuilding trust and communication before conflicts escalate irreparably. This finding is consistent with previous research that highlights how negative societal views about counselling contribute to its underutilisation (Arumugam & Shanmugavelu, 2020).

5.1.2 Theme: Factor

This theme examines the internal and external factors that contribute to the challenges encountered by counsellors in managing marital issues. Finding these contributing elements is essential, as they offer a deeper understanding of the underlying causes that hinder the counselling process. These factors not only affect the effectiveness of the interventions implemented by counsellors but also influence the level of client participation and commitment in therapy. By recognising the sources of these challenges, practitioners and stakeholders can develop more targeted strategies to enhance counselling outcomes and support counsellors in complex therapeutic settings.

5.1.2.1 Sub-Theme: Internal Factor

Internal factors refer to limitations or constraints that originate from within the counsellors themselves, impacting their ability to manage marital issues effectively. One prominent internal challenge identified by respondents is limited specialized knowledge in marriage and family therapy. While most counsellors possess general training in basic counselling principles, several expressed feelings of inadequacy when confronted with complex marital issues such as infidelity, emotional detachment, or intergenerational conflict. Respondents acknowledged that while they have general backgrounds in psychology and counselling, they lack formal education in religious matters. For example, R2 noted, “background kamek memang psikologi dan kaunseling... I do not have a formal education about background yang agama,” indicating feelings of inadequacy when addressing marital conflicts with strong religious components. This limitation can undermine counsellors confidence and competence when dealing with complex issues such as infidelity, emotional distance, or

intergenerational conflict, especially when these issues intersect with faith-based expectations. Additionally, R3 admitted they might have less knowledge compared to religious authorities at JAIS. This observation aligns with Tadros et. al (2021), who highlight the importance of specialised training in enhancing counsellors' competence and confidence in managing marital conflicts.

In addition, respondents reported gaps in handling religious and spiritual cases. In Sarawak multicultural and religiously diverse context, clients often expect guidance that aligns with their spiritual beliefs. Some counsellors admitted lacking sufficient confidence and knowledge in integrating faith-based elements into the counselling process. This limitation can hinder the development of trust and rapport, making it challenging to address issues rooted in religious expectations or obligations. R2 described struggling to detect religious elements in clients issues and needing to refer them to others with greater expertise. These responses highlight gaps in integrating spiritual and religious considerations into counselling practice. Such limitations can hinder rapport-building and trust between counsellor and client, making it difficult to address problems rooted in religious norms or obligations. Based on Keshavarzi et.al (2020), argue that spiritually informed counselling can strengthen the counsellor-client relationship and facilitate meaningful behavioural change, especially when implemented with cultural and religious sensitivity.

5.1.2.2 Sub-Theme: External Factor

A significant external factor highlighted by the respondents is family interference. Within the collectivist cultural context of Sarawak, extended family members, particularly in-laws often exert considerable influence over the couple's decision making processes. While family support can be beneficial, excessive interference tends to create additional tension and conflict within the marital relationship. Respondents noted that such involvement reduces the couple's autonomy and complicates efforts to facilitate independent problem solving during counselling. This finding aligns with broader literature that recognises family systems' influence on marital stability and the potential for external pressure to undermine the couple's communication and conflict resolution strategies (Asghar & Mumtaz, 2024).

As R1 described, there are cases where husbands simply follow their mothers wishes or even bring family members into counselling sessions, illustrating the strong role of family in shaping marital dynamics. R2 further explained that interference is more common when couples live with their

extended families, leading to parents having greater involvement in their children's marital affairs. Similarly, R3 emphasised that family involvement goes beyond simply being a "third party" and represents a major source of tension and conflict. Such excessive involvement reduces the couple's autonomy and complicates counsellors' efforts to encourage independent problem solving and open communication between partners.

5.1.3 Theme: Experience

This theme explores the lived experiences of counsellors in managing marital issues, particularly within the culturally diverse and emotionally nuanced context of Sarawak. The findings highlight that counsellors often contend with emotional strain, adopt a range of adaptive strategies, and underscore the importance of continuous professional development. These experiential insights provide a deeper understanding of the practical realities underpinning counselling practice and illustrate how professionals navigate the escalating demands of their roles.

5.1.3.1 Sub-Theme: Emotional Burden of Counsellor

A central experience described by respondents is the emotional burden of the counsellor, especially when managing complex marital cases. R1, R2, and R3 all discussed the psychological toll of handling clients in high conflict situations. Such cases often involved open arguments, threats of violence, or deep-seated mistrust between partners. Counsellors reported that sessions could become highly charged, requiring them to stay calm and neutral while mediating intense disputes. This sustained emotional demand left them feeling exhausted, discouraged, or overwhelmed.

For instance, R1 recounted sessions where couples fought so intensely that they nearly resorted to physical violence in front of the counsellor, highlighting the high level of tension and the need for the counsellor to remain calm and neutral while mediating disputes. R2 further emphasised the sense of discouragement that arises from repeatedly facing cases in which clients show little genuine interest in resolving their issues and instead seem intent on pursuing divorce. This constant exposure to unresolved conflicts can lead to demotivation and emotional exhaustion. Meanwhile, R3 noted that both overly talkative clients and those who refuse to speak present significant challenges, as counsellors must work to shift their mentality toward more open and productive communication.

These findings align with Barton (2020), who note that repeated exposure to emotionally taxing client interactions without sufficient coping mechanisms can lead to professional burnout and reduce therapeutic effectiveness. Respondents also noted that clients sometimes held unrealistic expectations for immediate solutions, adding further pressure on the counsellor.

5.1.3.2 Sub-Theme: Strategies and Interventions

Despite these challenges, counsellors reported using varied strategies and interventions to manage client resistance and facilitate progress. Flexible application of counselling approaches emerged as a key practice. R1, R2, and R3 described integrating multiple therapeutic models such as cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT), solution-focused brief therapy (SFBT), reality therapy, and person-centred approaches. This flexibility allowed them to tailor interventions to clients' needs, belief systems, and cultural contexts.

For instance, R1 described preferring systematic approaches that focus on communication patterns to address family or marital issues, highlighting the value of structured interventions in promoting effective dialogue. R2 discussed the application of Choice Theory Reality Therapy (CTRT), recognising that core relational needs such as love and belonging are central to marital dynamics. R3 elaborated on the use of Person-Centred Therapy (PCT) to prioritise empathetic listening, as well as Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT) to help clients modify unhelpful thinking patterns, demonstrating the need for adaptability in therapeutic practice. As Orkibi (2020) highlight, the ability to adopt an integrative framework improves rapport and optimises therapeutic outcomes, especially in pluralistic societies.

Additionally, incorporating religious elements in interventions was identified by R2 as an important strategy, particularly for clients with strong faith-based expectations. Integrating spiritual concepts such as patience, forgiveness, and moral accountability helped foster deeper engagement and alignment with clients' values. R2 identified the integration of spiritual concepts, such as patience, forgiveness, and moral accountability as an important intervention strategy, particularly for clients with strong faith-based expectations. This approach is consistent with Istratii & Ali (2023), who argue that spiritually informed counselling can strengthen the counsellor-client relationship and improve outcomes in religiously embedded contexts like Malaysia.

5.1.3.3 Sub-Theme: Professional Development Needs

The findings indicate that counsellors acknowledge the critical importance of ongoing professional development to enhance their competence in marriage counselling. Respondents identified the need for continuous training and structured support to address gaps in specialised knowledge, particularly in managing complex family dynamics, trauma informed care, and spiritual literacy. For example, R1 emphasised the value of attending formal courses offered by government agencies, such as family therapy and Adlerian techniques, reflecting a proactive commitment to developing professional skills.

R2 described the practice of bringing personal reference materials like the DSM to sessions to ensure accuracy in identifying and addressing client symptoms, demonstrating a dedication to maintaining professional standards and self-directed learning. Additionally, R3 highlighted the importance of consistently upgrading one's knowledge and skills, stressing that counsellors must avoid stagnation and strive for continual improvement. These insights illustrate that counsellors value opportunities for training, supervision, peer discussions, and continuing education specifically focused on marriage and family counselling. Such commitment to professional development not only enhances counsellor competence but also serves as a protective factor against stress and burnout, ultimately supporting more effective and sustainable counselling practice.

5.2 Implications

The findings of this study carry several important implications for researchers, practitioners, and policy-making institutions involved in the field of marriage counselling.

5.2.1 Researcher

This study contributes to the limited body of research exploring the lived experiences of marriage counsellors in Malaysia. It provides empirical insight into how counsellors navigate challenges such as client resistance, cultural and religious expectations, and systemic limitations in counselling practice. These findings may inform future research aimed at developing models of culturally competent counselling practice, particularly in settings with religious and ethnic diversity. Furthermore, the study reinforces the importance of exploring emotional and professional burdens experienced by counsellors, which remains an under-investigated area in local counselling literature.

5.2.2 Counsellor

The study underscores the need for counsellors to possess not only core therapeutic competencies but also specialised knowledge in marriage and family therapy, spiritual literacy, and culturally responsive practice. Counsellors must be prepared to manage emotionally intense sessions, navigate complex family dynamics, and respond to culturally rooted resistance with sensitivity and professionalism. Additionally, the findings highlight the importance of continuous professional development and the need for structured coping strategies to address emotional exhaustion and burnout.

5.2.3 Institutional and Policymakers

The findings highlight a pressing need for institutional support in the form of targeted training programmes, supervision frameworks, and peer support systems. Government and religious agencies such as JAIS and JKM are encouraged to implement structured capacity-building initiatives, particularly in areas related to trauma-informed care, spiritual integration in therapy, and multicultural counselling. Furthermore, institutions should invest in expanding outreach and awareness campaigns to address the negative perception of counselling among the public, thereby improving early access to intervention services.

5.3 Suggestion

After conducting this research, the researcher identified several flaws. As a result, the researcher will divide into a few components to improve the flaws, and future research will be conducted in more detail in collecting more relevant data that is related.

5.3.1 Numbers of Participants

The future researcher can include additional participants in the interview to collect more data to improve this type of study in the future. To get more detailed data for future research and to benefit the society, community, organization, or institutions that have a connection to the study, the researcher advises increasing the number of participants who are registered counsellors in any setting, such as a police department. This is because Sarawak still lacks this kind of study and has a dearth of knowledge.

5.3.2 Counsellor

For counselors, the researcher recommends that the Board of Counselors Malaysia (LKM) provide more focus to modules related to marriage issues. This is because they should provide

continuous education and specialised training in marriage and family therapy, including modules on conflict resolution, infidelity, intergenerational trauma, and spiritual counselling. In addition, counselors can also run programs or webinars about family therapy and marriage. The counselors involved can provide treatment methods that are appropriate to help couples who experience these issues.

5.4 Summary

This chapter provides a broad review of the research from chapters 1 through 5. The results have been carefully examined. The importance of this research to the researcher and other people or organizations was discussed, and this chapter also included the other researcher's recommendations for more research.

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APPENDIX A:

Inventory Questions and Checklist for Protocols When Interviewing Respondents

TITLE: EXPLORING THE CHALLENGES COUNSELLORS IN MANAGEOF MARRIAGE ISSUES

BY: UMMI UMMAIRA BINTI ASBI 86180

Research Objective.

- i.To explore the challenges faced by counselors in managing marriage issues among the community in Sarawak.
- ii.To identify the factors that contribute to the challenges of conducting counselor sessions.
- iii.To explore the work experience of counsellors in dealing with the challenges of marriage issues.

Categories	Question and Check List Researcher for Scope Categories
Categories A Background of Respondent	For and introduction, respondent will be asked to themselves about background in terms of name, age, how long work counselors, and came from. Check List Researcher: i) Name ii) Age iii) Gender iv) Background of study v) How long work as counsellor
Categories B 1. Challenges	Challenges What are the main challenges encountered when conducting marriage related counselling session? Researcher Checklist: i) Challenges

2. Contribute Factor	What internal factors contribute to the challenges in conducting counseling sessions? Researcher Checklist: - i)Internal - ii)External
3. Experience	How long have you served as a counselor, and what significant changes have you observed in marital issues over that period? Researcher Checklist: - i)Experiences - ii)Approaches - iii)Techniques

APPENDIX B: Informed Consent



BORANG IZIN RAKAMAN TEMU BUAL

Saya _____ No.Kad Pengenalan _____
bersetuju rakaman dilakukan semasa sesi temubual ini dijalankan. Rakaman ini turut digunakan sebagai maklumat untuk kajian kajian yang sedang dijalankan oleh pelajar bernama Ummi Ummaira binti Asbi (86180) dari Program Kaunseling, Fakulti Sains Kognitif dan Pembangunan Manusia, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS). Tajuk kajian beliau adalah "Exploring the Challenges of Counsellors in Management of Marriage Issues" iaitu kajian penerokaan kaunselor berdaftar dalam menangani isu-isu perkahwinan. Namun begitu, dari segi etika akademik saya berhak mengambil tindakan sekiranya pelajar ini:

1. Mendedahkan identiti sebenar saya.
2. Maklumat yang diberikan digunakan untuk tujuan keuntungan.
3. Mengeksploitasikan maklumat yang telah saya berikan.
4. Melaporkan kepada pihak berkuasa berkaitan maklumat yang saya berikan tanpa pengetahuan dan kebenaran saya.

Tandatangan,

.....

Nama:

Tarikh:

Masa:



PENGESAHAN DATA RAKAMAN AUDIO OLEH RESPONDEN KAJIAN

Saya dengan ini bersetuju dan mengesahkan bahawa data teks perbualan ini seperti mana yang dilaksanakan oleh pengkaji seperti tarikh dan tempat yang dinyatakan dengan mengikut arahan dibawah.

Arahan: Tanda (/) pada kotak yang berkenaan

Bil.	Pilihan Responden	Tanda
1.	Tanpa pembetulan dan tambahan	
2.	Sedikit pembetulan dan tambahan	
3.	Pembetulan dan tambahan yang besar	

Yang benar;

(Sila tandatangan di atas garisan)

Nama:

Kad Pengenalan:

Tarikh:

Hari:

Masa:

APPENDIX C:

Nota Lapangan

Nota Lapangan Responden Rintis

Tarikh:	13 Jun 2025
Masa:	8.00 petang – 8.30 petang
Tempat:	Melalui atas talian
Kandungan:	Pada malam ini, saya telah melakukan temu bual bersama responden rintis. Pertama kali melakukan panggilan, saya berasa sedikit gugup. Hal ini disebabkan ini merupakan pertama kali saya melakukan temu bual melalui telefon. Saya sedikit takut jika saya terlepas informasi yang responden beritahu kepada saya. Seperti yang saya sedia maklum, melakukan temu bual secara atas talian mempunyai banyak cabaran berbanding secara bersemuka. Salah satu sebabnya adalah rangkaian internet yang tidak baik dapat mengganggu kelancaran temu bual. Temu bual dilakukan pada 8.00 petang kerana hanya pada tersebut peserta rintis dapat meluangkan masa beliau. Saya menggunakan platform panggilan Google Meet namun berlaku sedikit masalah dimana saya tidak dapat mendengar suara beliau dengan jelas. Saya bersyukur kerana responden rintis saya berbaik hati untuk mengulang semula. Responden rintis sangat baik hati dan sedia membantu dengan menjawab semua soalan saya. Di akhir sesi temu bual, saya mengucapkan terima kasih kepada peserta rintis kerana sanggup meluangkan masa beliau dengan menjawab soalan temu bual saya.

Nota Lapangan Responden 1

Tarikh:	16 Jun 2025
Masa:	1.00 petang – 1.45 petang
Tempat:	Melalui atas talian
Kandungan:	Pada petang hari ini, saya telah melakukan temu bual bersama responden 1. Seperti yang saya alami bersama responden rintis, saya berasa sedikit gugup kerana menebual dengan individu yang saya tidak kenali. Saya telah melakukan temu bual pada jam 1 petang kerana hanya pada masa tersebut beliau mampu meluangkan masa bersama saya. Saya berasa sungguh bersyukur dan gembira kerana responden 1 dapat membantu saya menjawab soalan temu bual. Responden 1 merupakan seorang yang berkaliber dan petah berkata-kata. Beliau menjawab soalan saya dengan penjelasan yang mudah saya fahami. Responden 1 merupakan seorang kaunselor berdaftar yang bekerja di Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat Bintulu. Di akhir sesi temu bual, saya memberikan ucapan terima kasih kepada beliau kerana sudi meluangkan masa menjawab soalan temu bual dari saya.

Nota Lapangan Responden 2

Tarikh:	16 Jun 2025
Masa:	2.00 petang – 3.00 petang
Tempat:	Melalui atas talian
Kandungan:	Selang beberapa jam kemudian, saya sambung lagi dengan melakukan temu bual bersama responden 2. Seperti yang saya alami bersama responden yang lain, saya masih berasa sedikit gugup kerana menebual dengan individu yang saya tidak kenali. Saya telah melakukan temu bual pada jam 2.15 petang kerana hanya pada masa tersebut beliau mampu meluangkan masa bersama saya disebabkan pada pukul 3.30 petang nanti beliau ada sesi. Saya berasa sungguh bersyukur dan gembira kerana responden 2 dapat membantu saya menjawab soalan temu bual. Responden 2 merupakan seorang yang baik dan petah berkata-kata. Beliau menjawab soalan saya dengan penjelasan yang mudah saya fahami. Responden 2 merupakan seorang kaunselor berdaftar yang bekerja di Jabatan Agama Islam Sarawak. Di akhir sesi temu bual, saya memberikan ucapan terima kasih kepada beliau kerana sudi meluangkan masa menjawab soalan temu bual dari saya.

Nota Lapangan Responden 3

Tarikh:	16 Jun 2025
Masa:	3.00 petang – 3.30 petang
Tempat:	Melalui atas talian
Kandungan:	Kemudian, saya teruskan lagi dengan melakukan temu bual bersama responden 3. Saya sudah mula berasa sedikit yakin dan tidak takut lagi. Saya telah melakukan temu bual pada jam 3 petang kerana hanya pada masa tersebut beliau mampu meluangkan masa bersama saya. Saya berasa sungguh bersyukur dan gembira kerana responden 3 dapat membantu saya menjawab soalan temu bual. Responden 3 merupakan seorang yang gembira dan petah berkata-kata. Beliau menjawab soalan saya dengan penjelasan yang mudah saya fahami. Responden 3 merupakan seorang kaunselor berdaftar yang bekerja di Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat Sarawak. Di akhir sesi temu bual, saya memberikan ucapan terima kasih kepada beliau kerana sudi meluangkan masa menjawab soalan temu bual dari saya.

APPENDIX D:

Diari

Tarikh	Hari	Masa	Tempat	Proses
12 Jun 2025	Khamis	12.00 tengah hari	Rumah	Saya telah melakukan transkrip untuk responden rintis
13 Jun 2025	Jumaat	8.00 petang	Rumah	Saya telah berhubung dengan peserta rintis melalui aplikasi whatsapp untuk meminta kebenaran beliau melakukan temu bual dan beliau bersetuju.
14 Jun 2025	Sabtu	11.00 pagi	Rumah	Saya telah menghubungi kesemua responden-responden saya untuk ditemu bual
15 Jun 2025	Ahad	7.00 petang	Kolej Rafflesia UNIMAS	Saya menyiapkan transkrip responden rintis. Saya menghubungi responden 1, 2 dan 3 untuk menetapkan masa untuk ditemu bual sekaligus meminta kebenaran.
16 Jun 2025	Isnin	1.00 petang	PeTARY	Saya telah menemu bual responden 1 melalui Google Meet. Saya menghantar link Google Meet kepada responden 2.
16 Jun 2025	Isnin	2.00 petang	PeTARY	Saya telah menemu bual responden 2 melalui Google Meet.

				Saya menghantar link Google Meet kepada responden 3.
16 Jun 2025	Isnin	3.00 petang	PeTARY	Saya telah menemu bual responden 3 melalui Google Meet.
19 Jun 2025	Khamis	4.00 pagi	Kolej Rafflesia, UNIMAS	Lengkap menyediakan semua transkrip bagi kesemua peserta yang menjawab temu bual.

APPENDIX E:

Lisen Berdaftar

Butiran Terperinci

NAMA: **SAMSIAH BINTI JAYOS**
 NO KB: **KB00690**
 NO PERAKUAN: **PA00486**
 TARIKH MOHON PERTAMA: **17/06/2007**
 TARIKH TAMAT PA: **15/03/2026**

AKADEMIK:

Bil.	Institusi	Peringkat	Kursus	Bidang	Tahun
1	UNIVERSITI MALAYA	LIJAZAH SARJANA	SARJANA	KAUNSELING	2005

ALAMAT AMALAN:

Bil.	Alamat	Poskod	Negeri	No Telefon
1	Program Kaunseling Fakulti Sains Kognitif dan Pembangunan Manusia, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak	94300	Sarawak	

Tutup

Butiran Terperinci

NAMA: **MASTURA BINTI ARIFIN**
 NO KB: **KB08106**
 NO PERAKUAN: **PA07687**
 TARIKH MOHON PERTAMA: **14/12/2018**
 TARIKH TAMAT PA: **20/12/2026**

AKADEMIK:

Bil.	Institusi	Peringkat	Kursus	Bidang	Tahun
1	UNIMAS	LIJAZAH SARJANA	SARJANA SAINS	KAUNSELING	2018

ALAMAT AMALAN:

Bil.	Alamat	Poskod	Negeri	No Telefon
1	Jabatan Kebajikan Masyarakat Sarawak Wisma Kebajikan Lot 4273 Blok 14 Off Jalan Siol Kanan	Kuching 93050	Sarawak	

Tutup

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Responden Rintis

BORANG B
(Peraturan 4)

PERATURAN-PERATURAN KAUNSELOR
(PENDAFTARAN DAN PERAKUAN AMALAN) 1999

PERAKUAN PENDAFTARAN

No. Perakuan Pendaftaran : **KB11259**

Adalah diperakukan bahawa

NUR HAMNI BINTI SAZALI
 (Nama penuh kaunselor/pertubuhan perbadanan)*
 di
 Kampung Tanjung Parang 94300 Kota Samarahan Sarawak
 (Alamat kaunselor/pertubuhan perbadanan)*

dengan ini didaftarkan sebagai kaunselor di bawah Akta Kaunselor 1998.

Perakuan Pendaftaran ini habis tempoh pada

N/A
 Tarikh

17/01/2024
(Tarikh)

(Tandatangan Pendaftar)

Responden 2

Responden 3

BORANG B
(Peraturan 4)

PERATURAN-PERATURAN KAUNSELOR
(PENDAFTARAN DAN PERAKUAN AMALAN) 1999

PERAKUAN PENDAFTARAN

No. Perakuan Pendaftaran : **KB02355**

Adalah diperakukan bahawa

KHAIRUNNISA BINTI MOHD MOZIE @ MOHD TUAH
 (Nama penuh kaunselor/pertubuhan perbadanan)*
 di
 No. 4J, Lorong Sibn Jaya 7G, 96000, Sibn, Sarawak
 (Alamat kaunselor/pertubuhan perbadanan)*

dengan ini didaftarkan sebagai kaunselor di bawah Akta Kaunselor 1998.

Perakuan Pendaftaran ini habis tempoh pada

Untuk tujuan rasmi sahaja
 Tarikh

21/05/2012
(Tarikh)

(Tandatangan Pendaftar)

* Sila tanda (L) pada kotak yang berkenaan

Responden 1

APPENDIX F:

Proses dalam kajian



Responden 3



Responden 2

Bukti borang keizinan



BORANG IZIN RAKAMAN TEMU BUAL

Saya KHAIRUNNISA BINTI MOHD MOZIE No.Kad Pengenalan 851201135856 bersetuju rakaman dilakukan semasa sesi temubual ini dijalankan. Rakaman ini turut digunakan sebagai maklumat untuk kajian kajian yang sedang dijalankan oleh pelajar bernama Umni Ummaira binti Asbi (86180) dari Program Kaunseling, Fakulti Sains Kognitif dan Pembangunan Manusia, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS). Tajuk kajian beliau adalah "Exploring the Challenges of Counsellors in Management of Marriage Issues" iaitu kajian penerokaan kaunselor berdaftar dalam menangani isu-isu perkahwinan. Namun begitu, dari segi etika akademik saya berhak mengambil tindakan sekiranya pelajar ini:

1. Mendedahkan identiti sebenar saya.
2. Maklumat yang diberikan digunakan untuk tujuan keuntungan.
3. Mengeksploitasi maklumat yang telah saya berikan.
4. Melaporkan kepada pihak berkuasa berkaitan maklumat yang saya berikan tanpa pengetahuan dan kebenaran saya.

Tandatangan,
Khairunnisa

Nama: KHAIRUNNISA BINTI MOHD MOZIE

Tarikh: 16 JUN 2025

Masa: 1 PM



BORANG IZIN RAKAMAN TEMU BUAL

Saya NUR HAMNI BINTI SAZALI No.Kad Pengenalan 950107135140 bersetuju rakaman dilakukan semasa sesi temubual ini dijalankan. Rakaman ini turut digunakan sebagai maklumat untuk kajian kajian yang sedang dijalankan oleh pelajar bernama Umni Ummaira binti Asbi (86180) dari Program Kaunseling, Fakulti Sains Kognitif dan Pembangunan Manusia, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS). Tajuk kajian beliau adalah "Exploring the Challenges of Counsellors in Management of Marriage Issues" iaitu kajian penerokaan kaunselor berdaftar dalam menangani isu-isu perkahwinan. Namun begitu, dari segi etika akademik saya berhak mengambil tindakan sekiranya pelajar ini:

1. Mendedahkan identiti sebenar saya.
2. Maklumat yang diberikan digunakan untuk tujuan keuntungan.
3. Mengeksploitasi maklumat yang telah saya berikan.
4. Melaporkan kepada pihak berkuasa berkaitan maklumat yang saya berikan tanpa pengetahuan dan kebenaran saya.

Tandatangan,

Nama: NUR HAMNI BINTI SAZALI

Tarikh:

Masa:

Responden 1



BORANG IZIN RAKAMAN TEMU BUAL

Saya MARTIRA LAILA HJ. ARIFIN No.Kad Pengenalan 780213135292 bersetuju rakaman dilakukan semasa sesi temubual ini dijalankan. Rakaman ini turut digunakan sebagai maklumat untuk kajian kajian yang sedang dijalankan oleh pelajar bernama Umni Ummaira binti Asbi (86180) dari Program Kaunseling, Fakulti Sains Kognitif dan Pembangunan Manusia, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS). Tajuk kajian beliau adalah "Exploring the Challenges of Counsellors in Management of Marriage Issues" iaitu kajian penerokaan kaunselor berdaftar dalam menangani isu-isu perkahwinan. Namun begitu, dari segi etika akademik saya berhak mengambil tindakan sekiranya pelajar ini:

1. Mendedahkan identiti sebenar saya.
2. Maklumat yang diberikan digunakan untuk tujuan keuntungan.
3. Mengeksploitasi maklumat yang telah saya berikan.
4. Melaporkan kepada pihak berkuasa berkaitan maklumat yang saya berikan tanpa pengetahuan dan kebenaran saya.

Tandatangan,

Martira K808106 PA - 07687

Nama:

Tarikh: MASTURA BINTI ARIFIN
KETUACAMPAKAN PSIKOLOGI DAN KAUNSELING
Jabatan Pendidikan Masyarakat Sarawak

Masa:

Responden 2

Responden 3

Contoh transkrip responden 1

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Borang pengesahan data

 PENGESAHAN DATA RAKAMAN AUDIO OLEH RESPONDEN KAJIAN Saya dengan ini beretuju dan mengesahkan bahawa data teks perbualan ini seperti mana yang dilaksanakan oleh pengkaji seperti terikh dan tempat yang dinyatakan dengan mengikut arahan dibawah. Arahan: Tanda (/) pada kotak yang berkenaan <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Bil.</th> <th>Pilihan Responden</th> <th>Tanda</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1.</td> <td>Tanpa pembetulan dan tambahan</td> <td style="text-align: center;">/</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.</td> <td>Sedikit pembetulan dan tambahan</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3.</td> <td>Pembetulan dan tambahan yang besar</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> Yang benar; (Sila tandatangan di atas garisan)  Name: ZHAIRAHANI ZA SITI PTI RUMAH BANGLO Kad Pengenal: 551211155856 Tarikh: 14 Jun 2025 Hari: 17/06 Masa: 1 PM	Bil.	Pilihan Responden	Tanda	1.	Tanpa pembetulan dan tambahan	/	2.	Sedikit pembetulan dan tambahan		3.	Pembetulan dan tambahan yang besar		 PENGESAHAN DATA RAKAMAN AUDIO OLEH RESPONDEN KAJIAN Saya dengan ini beretuju dan mengesahkan bahawa data teks perbualan ini seperti mana yang dilaksanakan oleh pengkaji seperti terikh dan tempat yang dinyatakan dengan mengikut arahan dibawah. Arahan: Tanda (/) pada kotak yang berkenaan <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Bil.</th> <th>Pilihan Responden</th> <th>Tanda</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1.</td> <td>Tanpa pembetulan dan tambahan</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.</td> <td>Sedikit pembetulan dan tambahan</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3.</td> <td>Pembetulan dan tambahan yang besar</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> Yang benar; (Sila tandatangan di atas garisan)  Name: NUR HAMIRI BINTI SAZALI Kad Pengenal: 980107-53-6140 Tarikh: 17/06/2025 Hari: SELASA Masa: 0730	Bil.	Pilihan Responden	Tanda	1.	Tanpa pembetulan dan tambahan		2.	Sedikit pembetulan dan tambahan	✓	3.	Pembetulan dan tambahan yang besar		 PENGESAHAN DATA RAKAMAN AUDIO OLEH RESPONDEN KAJIAN Saya dengan ini beretuju dan mengesahkan bahawa data teks perbualan ini seperti mana yang dilaksanakan oleh pengkaji seperti terikh dan tempat yang dinyatakan dengan mengikut arahan dibawah. Arahan: Tanda (/) pada kotak yang berkenaan <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th>Bil.</th> <th>Pilihan Responden</th> <th>Tanda</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1.</td> <td>Tanpa pembetulan dan tambahan</td> <td style="text-align: center;">/</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2.</td> <td>Sedikit pembetulan dan tambahan</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>3.</td> <td>Pembetulan dan tambahan yang besar</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> Yang benar; (Sila tandatangan di atas garisan)  MB - 08106, PA 07687. Name: MAESTURA BINTI ARIFIN Kad Pengenal: 780213135992 Tarikh: 17/06/2025 Hari: SELASA Masa: 0730	Bil.	Pilihan Responden	Tanda	1.	Tanpa pembetulan dan tambahan	/	2.	Sedikit pembetulan dan tambahan		3.	Pembetulan dan tambahan yang besar	
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