

Exploration and Evaluation of PFA (Psychological First Aid): Potential for Development of PFA Online Services in Academic Setting



Eka Widiyari¹, Zahratika Zalafi², Henie Kurniawati³, Diah Ayu Harumbina⁴, Bunga Nur Indah Safitri⁵, Frida 'Atiqotun Nurul 'Amalia⁶

^{1,6} Tasawuf and Islamic Psychotherapy Study Program, Faculty of Ushuluddin, Adab and Humaniora, State Islamic University of Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto

^{2,3,4,5} Islamic Counseling Guidance Study Program, Faculty of Da'wah, State Islamic University of Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto

ABSTRACT: In Indonesia, PFA (Psychological First Aid) services are primarily employed in distress situations; however, a relatively small number are used in crisis situations, mainly in academic settings through the use of digital media, or what is commonly referred to as PFA online services. Teman Sehati, a PFA online service provided by UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto, will be addressed in this study. In order to encourage the use of mental health services in academic settings, this research attempts to present an overview of PFA online services. The CIPPO approach (Context Evaluation, Input Evaluation, Process Evaluation, Product Evaluation, and Outcome) was used in the research to apply qualitative evaluation. Research collection methods include documenting, interviewing, and observation. Sorting, classifying, summarising, indexing, and researching primary and secondary sources are all methods used in data analysis. The results of the study indicate that since rooms, networks, and electronic devices serve as the main method of maintaining the service, it is necessary to increase the availability of reliable internet. Every semester, increasing numbers of individuals are in need of this service due to a variety of issues, including physiologic disorders, bullying, financial difficulties, sexual harassment, work-related issues, psychological disorders, academic difficulties, romantic issues, family issues, and personal issues. The online PFA service at UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto is deemed highly helpful by 92% of service users. Online PFA services can aid in treating students' mental health, despite certain technological challenges; for this reason, it is crucial to implement them in the academic setting.

KEYWORDS: PFA, Online PFA, Academic setting

I. INTRODUCTION

Every aspect of human existence was negatively impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. One of them is related to human mental health, which is a trending topic that worries mental health professionals. Environmental conditions are changing so quickly and rapidly, making it difficult for society to adapt to changes. One of the disorders experienced by people as the result of this situation is fear, anxiety, boredom, stress and the emergence of psychosomatic disorders (Nasrullah & Sulaiman, 2021). Not only does society in general experience this, but also the students, especially individuals who are currently pursuing higher education. Students as individuals who are entering a transition period in the developmental stages of late teenagers to early adulthoods (Kaligis et al., 2021) are in critical period prone to mental health disorders (Dwi Marsela & Supriatna, 2019). It is further explained that students' mental health continues to change for the worse. Students experience depression and high anxiety stemming from academic pressure, self-esteem, body image, relationships with friends and family (Emmertson, Camilleri, & Sammut, 2024). However, existing mental health services do not meet students' needs (Osborn, Li, Saunders, & Fonagy, 2022). Consequently, universities as organisations have a significant role in supporting society's mental health, mainly for its students (Goodman, 2017). However, in response to the shift from offline to online services, mental health services are also evolving (Feijt et al., 2020). Due to these demands and problems, Teman Sehati is established at UIN Prof. K.H. Saifuddin Zuhri Purwokerto (UIN Saizu) providing mental health services of Psychological First Aid (PFA) for students.

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Psychological First Aid is a psychological intervention model that requires providing immediate assistance and support to individuals experiencing difficulties when facing a crisis situation (Minihan, Gavin, Kelly, & McNicholas, 2020). This crisis situation also happens to students. Therefore, if students' mental health needs are not handled properly, it will affect academic performance, in particular for students who experience depression, anxiety and stress, in contrast to students with good mental health who tend to have good academic performance (Rehman, Jabeen, Joseph, & Hina Bhutto, 2023). It is further explained that mental health problems can also interfere relationships with peers, (Ari Setyawan, 2019) and can make their mental health worse (Kaligis et al., 2021). The existence of PFA in the academic setting can help provide initial psychological assistance which has the potential to reduce the risk of more severe mental health problems by identifying individual needs and connecting them with other parties based on their needs (Suresh, Alam, & Karkossa, 2021). Thus, PFA in an academic setting is a service for students that is organized to help resolve student mental health problems and optimize development and academic achievement functions.

Teman Sehati is psychology service that uses principles of online PFA. This service is intended for UIN Saizu students. Teman Sehati is established since June 2020 until now. Teman Sehati continues to strive to improve its services. Therefore, it needs a systematic evaluation regarding this matter as an effort to provide the best service for students. The evaluation of the service uses CIPPO model (Context, Input, Process, Product, Outcome) (Arikunto & Jabar, 2018). Evaluation of Teman Sehati using CIPPO model aims to determine the steps that need to be taken in developing Teman Sehati services in terms of service context, input, process, products and output. The results of this evaluation are the main guideline in improving and developing Teman Sehati services to be even better. Furthermore, evaluation of Teman Sehati UIN Saizu Purwokerto PFA service can be a model for implementing PFA services in the academic setting, as a form of contribution to the society's mental health, mainly students.

II. METHODS

The qualitative method is used in this research, which is including the process of creating, reporting, applying, and characterizing descriptive data in addition to offering insights into a service (Stufflebeam & Zhang, 2017). Application of PFA online services in academic contexts at UIN Prof. K.H. Saifudiiin Zuhri is the subject of the evaluation. This approach is crucial because it can serve as a catalyst for modifications to academic services that were previously implemented in a traditional manner (Flick, Uwe dkk, 2017). Documentation, observations, and interviews are used to acquire data. Call center (CC) and peer counselor (PC) interviews were done, observations were taken during the service, and quantitative data was documented in service documents and monthly assessment records. Model of evaluation based on the research's impact and influence quantitative data recorded in Teman Sehati's service menu is examined using an evaluation model based on the influence and impact of the study program. The service data from July 2020 to June 2023 was used in this study. Clients as service users, online PFA services, CC and PC as service providers, and auxiliary tools make up the evaluation components. CIPPO (Context Evaluation, Input Evaluation, Process Evaluation, Product Evaluation, Outcome Evaluation) is the model used for evaluation.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Context Evaluation

The disturbance in mental health care started with the Covid-19 epidemic. Online mental health treatments are replacing offline ones, ready or not. Online PFA is a way for individualized mental health services to deal with this. This is because PFA services are available to everybody, at any time, in any location, and in the event of a crisis or other difficult situation (Naya Prianka, Laras, & Sirait, 2022). The primary target audience is UIN Saizu Purwokerto students, but along the route, other types of clients, such those from other colleges and the general public, are also served. This service's initial goal is to help students maintain their mental health throughout COVID-19, but it will continue long beyond despite the fact that Covid-19 has passed, because service demand is still rising.

UIN Saizu Purwokerto's Career Development Unit (UPTPKarir) is home to Teman Sehati. Teman Sehati works at this unit's Human Capital section, which is in charge of assisting students with their careers and mental health. Two smartphones for the CC (Call Center) and PC (Peer Consellor) are among the facilities in this service, along with an administration computer and printer, a filing cabinet for documents, and other items. Other than that, there are two service rooms: one for operating credit cards and another for using PCs to assist clients who are online. It is intended that by having these two rooms, CC and PC can concentrate on serving clients.

B. Input Evaluation

Peer counsellors (PCs), call centres (CCs), and the communication tools used to deliver these services are the key elements of PFA services. While CC assists clients with administration, PC is in charge of PFA service. Important components of the online PFA

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service procedure are PC and CC. As a result, it's critical to guarantee that human resources can deliver the best possible service. The human resources were drawn from UIN Saizu Purwokerto students, particularly those majoring in Islamic Guidance Counselling (BKI) in the fourth and sixth semesters for PC and CC, respectively. It is taken into account that the student already knows the fundamentals of counselling from the classes he is enrolled in.

Open recruitment is used to complete the recruitment process, with a focus on BKI students. Administrative selection, interviews, and case study observations are all part of the candidate selection procedure. Selected candidates receive outstanding service, PFA material, and administration-related training. The assessment in the training process focuses on comprehending the service process, discipline, and perseverance (Flick & Dkk, 2017). The lecturer overseeing the programme and the recruitment team do the final evaluation. It is intended that by implementing this very stringent hiring procedure, we will reduce potential roadblocks and deliver the best possible service.

C. Process Evaluation

All UIN Saizu students have access to online PFA services through Teman Sehati. It is accessible from 09.00 to 12.00 WIB every Monday through Friday. This service is available on schedule and is continuously tracked by manual and digital absences. The service can be provided in compliance with their respective responsibilities by PC, who oversees PFA services, and CC, who handles administration.

Regarding the service flow, it can be described as follows:



Figure 1. Online PFA Service Flow

In this instance, CC is the officer who guides the client in accordance with the service flow. For clients, this service flow works fairly well. The steps in this service flow that need to be reviewed have to do with follow-up counselling that is sent to UIN Saizu's psychologists and counsellors. However, because there aren't enough psychologists and counsellors to offer clients exceptional care, this follow-up service has been stopped. It is advised that clients follow up by looking for services in the Purwokerto area.

PFA services can be supported by making the best use of resources and equipment, such as service rooms and communication systems for administrative requirements. The following are the issues that CC encountered in the administration section during the service process: 1. Because two administration devices—a computer and a cellphone—are being used, the client code is out of sync, 2). Some clients discontinue their services by failing to complete the service link;3) Some clients abruptly alter their schedules; and4) It can be challenging to manage multiple incoming service requests at once. However, the issues that PC faces are as follows: 1. Internet access for both the client and the service provider; 2. marital issues that make it challenging for PC to offer their services because PC lacks the necessary knowledge or experience in marriage (when clients are not students); and 3. PC feels less at ease offering services to clients who share their difficulties, and 4. delivering treatment that deviates from PFA norms without the client's knowledge. The issues that the entire team is dealing with include 1. Three things go wrong in a team:1)

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poor communication among members;2) poor physical and psychological health; and3) the team doesn't show up for work on time.

The existence of a routine evaluation programme known as "Resik-resik Jiwo" (mental purification) instantly removes these barriers. It aims to give CC and PC the chance to communicate their feelings as a kind of self-care (Coaston, 2017), exchange client service experiences, carry out ongoing system enhancements so that they can effectively serve, and foster teamwork and dedication. This is an outdoor exercise that lasts 180 minutes and involves a casual talk. The process's evaluation is based on the requirement that this meeting be held regularly in order to conduct Resik-Resik Jiwo for 180 minutes once a month. But Resik-resik Jiwo's duration is insufficient for PC and CC to adequately convey their needs.

D. Product Evaluation

Programme accomplishments, such as a description of the issues consumers confront and the quantity of support requests received each semester, are used to gauge the quality of the product. The following graph provides an overview of the issues clients are facing and support requests:

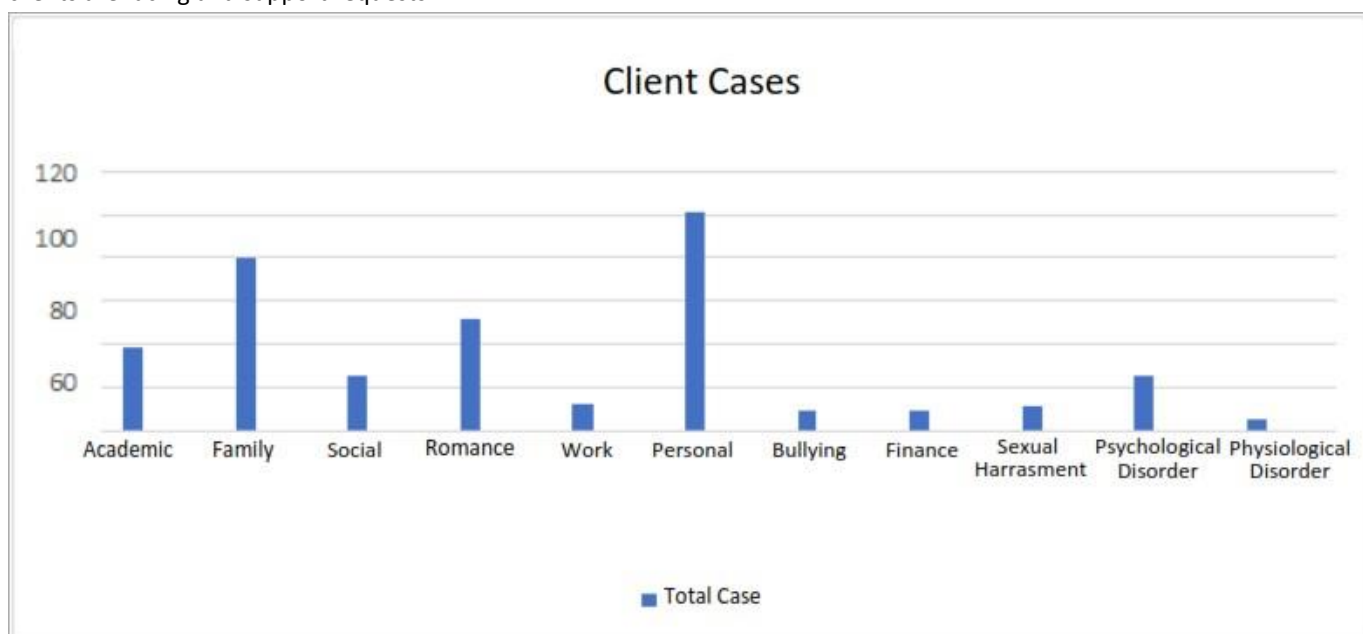


Figure 2. Graphic for PFA Service Cases

This graph shows the problems that clients suffer in order from least to most, including physiological disorders, bullying, finances, sexual harassment, employment, psychological disorders, romance, family, and the most prevalent issue, personal issues. In summary, the issues that clients encounter most frequently are personal issues, such as encompassing their selfevaluation, whereas physiological disorder represent the rarest difficulty that clients encounter. This physiological disorder comprises physical responses from the client's body to the issues they are going through, like nausea, breathing problems, and sleep disorder.

This section also includes a summary of the service requests made each semester, as seen by the customer graph from June 2020 to June 2023.

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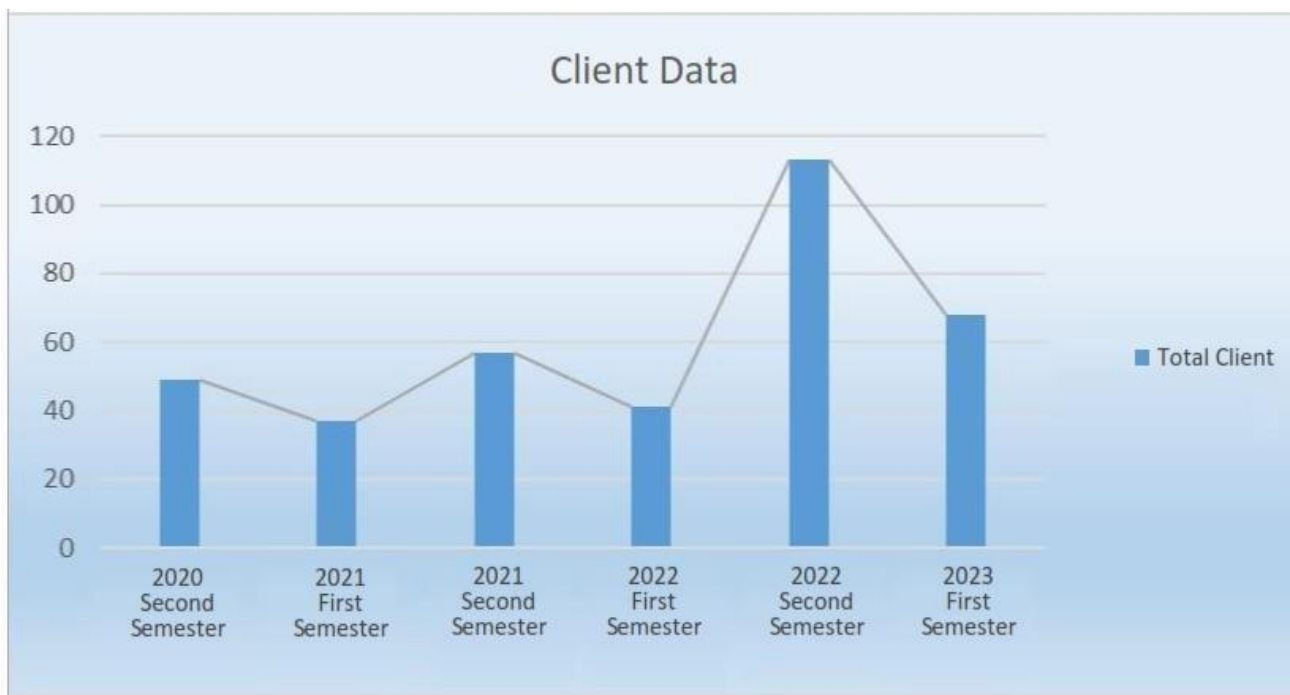


Figure 3. Graphic of PFA Service Request

This graph explains why there tend to be more people using the PFA service each semester. Thus, PFA services are necessary for students at UIN Saizu Purwokerto. Additionally, there are obvious differences in the trends of PFA clients between first and second semesters of the year. It seems that the percentage of clients is higher in the second semester than in the first semester.

E. Outcome

After receiving the service, clients are asked to complete the feedback form available on the provided link. This is how the service is evaluated. When answering the "After receiving PFA Services, how helpful is this service to you rated on a scale of 1–10?" question contained on the link, clients must provide an explanation for their response. The largest scale indicates that the service actually benefits the client, while the smallest scale indicates that the client is not helped at all. 110 clients out of the 362 who received PFA services completed the evaluation form. The graph below displays the outcomes of this service evaluation :

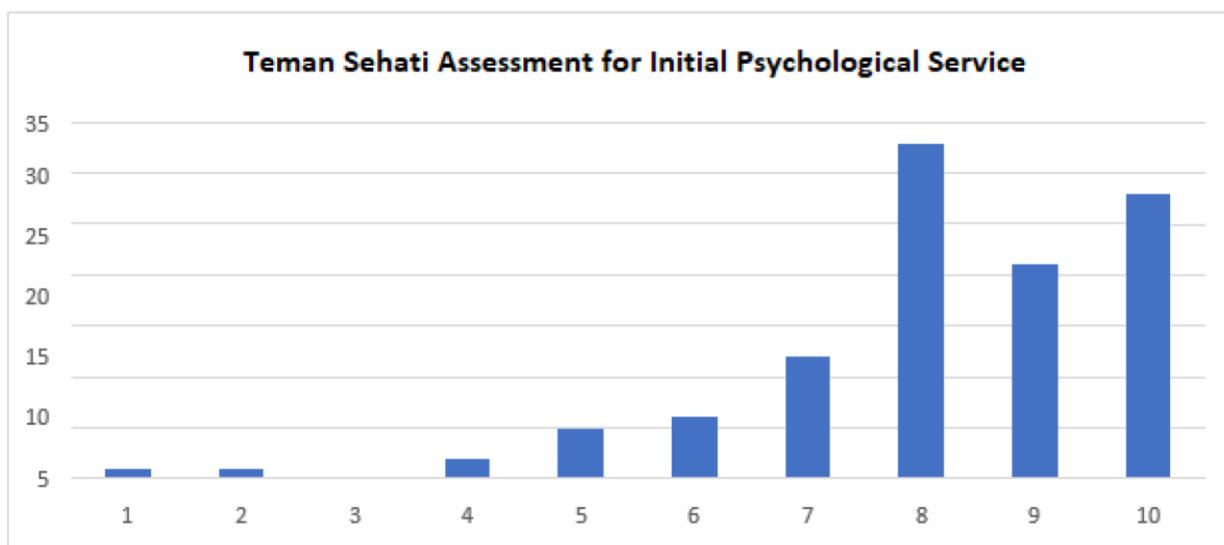


Figure 4. Graphic for PFA Service Assessment

Three types can be identified on the feedback result graph: a). Extremely helpful scoring a 9 out of 10 for 45.5%, b). 46.4% of respondents said it was helpful, and b). 8.1% evaluated as less helpful on a scale of 1 to 5. Based on the comments provided, the client believed that the PFA service at UIN Saizu Purwokerto assisted them in overcoming a psychological crisis.

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In summary, clients feel helped because, with the help of PFA services, they are able to recognise and express unpleasant emotions, feel at ease and unjudged for the issues they are going through, and ultimately solve their problems. Positive behavioural changes also improve their psychological state, and knowing about advanced psychological treatments helps clients feel at ease in receiving services that are tailored to their individual needs. Some clients believe that the 60-minute duration is still short when assessing this service. The clients believe they are still working through the process of comprehending their emotions. In this case, offering additional services at different times is the answer.

IV. CONCLUSION

Every aspect of life, including the management of mental health, are negatively affected by the current technological changes and advancements, particularly in academic settings. If mental health therapy is delayed, it can lead to more serious psychological issues along with a decline in academic achievement. PFA offered in an academic setting is an attempt to deal with this issue.

PFA has assisted students in resolving mental health issues and has been offered at UIN Saizu Purwokerto for six semesters. The CIPPO method is used to analyse this process. This evaluation can be explained as follows **a) Context evaluation**, In this case, the service is considered appropriate with the presence of communication devices and room facilities, but in terms of room privacy, it still needs to be improved **b) Input evaluation**, In order to assess potential service providers' level of commitment and expertise, a very stringent recruitment process is used to identify them. Following the hiring process, PCs (Peer Counsellors) and CCs (Call Centres) receive specialised training on service standards and client-facing PFA skills. **c) Process evaluation**, To ensure that services are provided effectively, Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) are developed, understood, and followed by all participants. However, there are a number of factors that must be taken into account, including the service provider's physical and mental health, the technical issues that both the client and the service provider face, and the regularity with which "Resik-resik jiwa" (mental cleansing) is evaluated as a means of addressing issues that arise during the course of providing the service. **d) Product evaluation**, Every semester, there is a growing trend in the number of requests for PFA services. These requests are related to 11 different problems, which range in frequency from uncommon to common: physiological disorders, bullying, finances, sexual harassment, work, psychological disorders, romance, family, and personal issues, which are the most common. **e) Outcome** In summary, 92% of the clients said that the PFA services they had gotten could assist in resolving the psychological issues they were having.

Based on the previously mentioned explanation, it can be concluded that the availability of online PFA services in academic settings can assist students in resolving psychological issues they are facing. To deliver a more optimal service, communication between service providers, facilities, and evaluation needs to be improved. Online PFA services are therefore important in the academic setting.

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