



THE IMPACT OF TAWAKAL AND DHIKR ON MENTAL HEALTH AND STRESS IN MODERN LIFE

PENGARUH TAWAKAL DAN DZIKIR TERHADAP KESEHATAN MENTAL DAN STRES DALAM KEHIDUPAN MODERN

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Abstract

This study explores the psychological fortification offered by the Islamic practices of tawakal (reliance on God) and dzikir (remembrance of God) in addressing modern challenges, such as increased anxiety due to technological advances and complex social needs. Employing a literature review methodology, this research investigates the influence of these practices on mental health and behavioral implications. The selection of peer-reviewed articles published within the last ten years involved databases like PubMed and Google Scholar with keywords related to Islamic spirituality and mental health. This method allowed a comprehensive analysis of contemporary studies, focusing on the therapeutic benefits of tawakal and dzikir in clinical settings. Results indicate that tawakal significantly reduces anxiety by fostering a relinquishing of control and instilling peace of mind, while dzikir enhances emotional stability through its meditative repetition of sacred phrases, promoting relaxation and reducing stress responses. Both practices not only support spiritual well-being but also offer practical coping mechanisms in stressful situations. The conclusion underlines the potential integration of tawakal and dzikir into conventional psycshotherapeutic practices. It suggests further exploration into the incorporation of these spiritual elements within mental health frameworks to enhance therapeutic outcomes and patient recovery. This research contributes to the broader discourse on the intersection of spirituality and psychology, highlighting the relevance of traditional spiritual practices in contemporary mental health paradigms.

Keywords: anxiety, islamic spirituality, relaxation, spiritual therapy, stress control





Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji penguatan psikologis yang ditawarkan oleh praktik Islam tawakal (bergantung kepada Allah) dan dzikir (mengingat Allah) dalam menghadapi tantangan modern seperti peningkatan kecemasan akibat kemajuan teknologi dan kebutuhan sosial yang kompleks. Menggunakan metodologi tinjauan literatur, penelitian ini mengeksplorasi pengaruh kedua praktik tersebut terhadap kesehatan mental dan implikasi perilakunya. Seleksi artikel yang ditelaah sejawat, diterbitkan dalam sepuluh tahun terakhir, melibatkan basis data seperti PubMed dan Google Scholar dengan kata kunci terkait spiritualitas Islam dan kesehatan mental. Metode ini memungkinkan analisis komprehensif terhadap studi kontemporer, berfokus pada manfaat terapeutik tawakal dan dzikir dalam pengaturan klinis. Hasil tawakal secara signifikan mengurangi kecemasan dengan menuniukkan bahwa mempromosikan penyerahan kontrol dan menanamkan ketenangan, sedangkan dzikir meningkatkan stabilitas emosional melalui pengulangan frasa suci secara meditatif, mendukung relaksasi dan mengurangi respons stres. Kedua praktik ini tidak hanya mendukung kesejahteraan spiritual tetapi juga menawarkan mekanisme koping praktis dalam situasi stres. Kesimpulan menekankan potensi integrasi tawakal dan dzikir ke dalam praktik psikoterapi konvensional. Disarankan untuk lebih lanjut mengeksplorasi pemasukan elemen spiritual ini dalam kerangka kesehatan mental untuk meningkatkan hasil terapeutik dan pemulihan pasien. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada diskusi lebih luas mengenai persimpangan antara spiritualitas dan psikologi, menyoroti relevansi praktik spiritual tradisional dalam paradigma kesehatan mental kontemporer.

Kata Kunci: kecemasan, kontrol stres, relaksasi, spiritualitas islam, terapi spiritual

1. INTRODUCTION

In the modern era marked by technological advancements and increasing social complexity, anxiety has become a common issue among individuals. In addressing these psychological challenges, the Islamic practices of tawakal (reliance on God) and dzikir (remembrance of God) demonstrate potential as psychological reinforcements. Tawakal, which refers to surrendering oneself to the will of Allah, and dzikir, the act of remembering Allah through sacred phrases, are acknowledged for their positive impact in promoting inner peace and tranquility. According to Misnaini et al. (2024) and Haryanto (2023), these two practices are essential in helping individuals achieve emotional and spiritual balance.

Recent literature reviews provide evidence that tawakal and dzikir not only strengthen spiritual connections but also significantly influence mental well-being. Studies by Widyastuti et al. (2019) and Supriadi (2020) explore the theological aspects of tawakal and dzikir as well as their therapeutic effects in clinical settings. These findings affirm that both practices contribute to reduced anxiety levels and enhanced mental resilience, particularly among students, as indicated by the research of Haryanto (2023) and Nabilah & Aktifah (2021).

The application of tawakal and dzikir in clinical and counseling settings, as proposed by Misnaini et al. (2024) and supported by Merdekasari & Rajianti (2019), can enhance the effectiveness of psychological interventions. Engagement in these spiritual practices offers a complementary approach to managing stress and anxiety, demonstrating their relevance and significance in the context of modern mental health. Therefore, this article aims to further explore how the integration of tawakal and dzikir can be adapted into psychological therapy,





contributing new insights to the existing literature and proposing their practical application in mental health care.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, we adopted a literature review approach to explore the influence of tawakal and dzikir practices on mental health. We selected sources published within the last ten years to ensure the relevance of the data. The inclusion criteria comprised peer-reviewed articles that specifically discussed tawakal and dzikir, and were available in English.

The selection process began with keyword searches in academic databases such as PubMed and Google Scholar, focusing on terms like "tawakal," "dzikir," "Islamic spirituality," and "mental health." After reviewing the abstracts, relevant studies were further analyzed. Data collection involved synthesizing information from the selected articles, and data analysis was carried out using content analysis and narrative synthesis methods to identify key themes and trends within the related literature.

This approach aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of tawakal and dzikir on mental health and to propose the integration of these practices within clinical settings.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Findings on the Impact of Tawakal

Tawakal, or surrendering to the will of Allah, has increasingly gained recognition in academic literature due to its role in alleviating anxiety and stress, while instilling a sense of trust and peace. Several studies have documented how religiosity fundamentally contributes to psychological well-being. For example, Eid et al. (2021) found that religiosity acts as psychological protection, enhancing coping mechanisms in stressful situations such as those faced by patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. The ability to trust in a higher power can serve as a protective factor, reducing negative emotions and stress levels during challenging times (Pirutinsky et al., 2020).

Additionally, empirical evidence supports the notion that habitual engagement in tawakal significantly correlates with lower stress levels among students, particularly during examinations. Aten et al. (2019) highlighted the benefits of religious coping mechanisms in disaster contexts, showing that individuals with active spiritual practices often report higher levels of well-being. This aligns with findings by Pirutinsky et al. (2020), who emphasized positive religious coping—such as intrinsic beliefs and strong trust in God—as effective tools for stress reduction during crises.

Moreover, the role of resilience as a mediating factor between religiosity and psychological well-being has been emphasized. Mohammadi et al. (2024) identified resilience as an essential trait that enhances psychological well-being, particularly in older adults, indicating that a strong sense of spirituality can support resilience and improve coping strategies. Similarly, Yıldırım and Arslan (2020) revealed that dispositional hope—often rooted in secure attachment to God—enhances overall well-being and helps individuals navigate stressful situations more effectively.

Further research shows that the relationship individuals form with God—particularly the trust and emotional security derived from this bond—can produce significant psychological benefits. Raj and Sim (2022) elaborated on this dynamic, noting that secure attachment to God is associated with reduced psychological distress. This suggests that individuals who regularly





practice tawakal are often better prepared to manage stress triggers due to their spiritual foundation. Such a spiritual connection can foster a sense of control in otherwise unmanageable situations, which is crucial in today's high-pressure environments.

This literature synthesis demonstrates that engaging in tawakal not only offers a path to peace and trust but also contributes to the development of resilience and psychological health, especially among vulnerable populations such as students during exam periods. It underscores the critical role of spirituality in enhancing mental health and highlights the need for continued exploration of the psychological benefits derived from religious practices like tawakal.

Findings on the Impact of Dzikir

Dzikir, a form of remembering and praising Allah through sacred phrases, has been documented in numerous studies to significantly impact mental well-being, particularly in enhancing relaxation and inner peace. The rhythmic repetition of dzikir allows individuals to shift their focus away from external stressors while immersing themselves in deeper spiritual values, which benefits mental health. Research illustrates the role of dzikir in improving psychological resilience against daily stressors and alleviating symptoms of mood disorders and anxiety. For instance, systematic reviews indicate that spiritual practices like dzikir can enhance emotional stability and serve as effective non-pharmacological interventions for managing anxiety and stress, particularly among vulnerable populations such as the elderly and patients with chronic illnesses (Khosravani & Nejat, 2022; Sulistyawati et al., 2019).

Dzikir functions physiologically by stimulating the parasympathetic nervous system, which promotes relaxation and reduces stress responses triggered by the sympathetic nervous system. This biological interaction is vital, involving neurohormonal regulation where dzikir practice leads to decreased cortisol levels and increased expression of dopamine receptors, correlating with improved mood and emotional well-being (Wilandika et al., 2023; Pahlevi et al., 2017; Setiowati et al., 2022). Furthermore, in therapeutic contexts, dzikir has been integrated into various health interventions, such as nursing practices and mental health therapy, highlighting its effectiveness as a complementary treatment alongside conventional medical approaches (Binoriang & Pramesti, 2021; M et al., 2019).

Beyond these physiological and psychological benefits, dzikir serves as a meditative practice that cultivates mindfulness, enabling practitioners to achieve a state of clarity and mental tranquility. Mindfulness, as explained in Sufi practice, not only aids in emotional regulation but also strengthens the spiritual connection, leading to more resilient psychological states (Applebaum, 2023; Reza et al., 2021). Evidence from various demographic studies supports the claim that regular engagement in dzikir enhances overall psychological health, with findings showing significant reductions in anxiety levels and improvements in emotional resilience across patient groups, including cancer patients and individuals experiencing chronic stress (Irawati et al., 2023; Sulistyawati et al., 2019).

Moreover, the integration of dzikir into daily life has shown effectiveness in stress management among adolescents and adults. By fostering an environment of spiritual engagement and mindfulness, dzikir offers a robust framework for enhancing individual wellbeing, affirming its relevance in modern therapeutic practices (Aliza & Urbayatun, 2023; Septiawan & Idris, 2021). Ultimately, the multifaceted benefits of dzikir—encompassing spiritual, emotional, and physiological domains—underscore its potential as a positive mental health resource and a meaningful practice for cultivating stress resilience.





Psychological Mechanisms in Tawakal and Dzikir

The psychological mechanisms of tawakal and dzikir can be understood through the concepts of stress reduction and heightened awareness, both of which emerge from spiritual practices. Tawakal, as an act of surrender to a higher will, helps alleviate stress by shifting focus from uncontrollable outcomes to the process of acceptance (Wang et al., 2020). This acceptance fosters a sense of calm, reducing anxiety and tension often caused by uncertainty. Research indicates that women are more vulnerable to stress and anxiety during crises, reinforcing the importance of mechanisms such as tawakal in mitigating harmful psychological effects (Wang et al., 2020).

On the other hand, dzikir, as a form of meditation, not only functions as a means to attain tranquility but also reduces cortisol levels, a stress hormone that can disrupt the balance of the autonomic nervous system (Jain et al., 2022). Practicing dzikir has a positive impact on mental health by enhancing individuals' ability to manage stress and improve their psychological condition (Ali & Kazmi, 2023). Through the repetition of spiritual phrases or attributes, this practice helps individuals refine their focus, reduce distractions, and strengthen mental resilience in dealing with everyday pressures (Lomas et al., 2017).

Improved awareness and concentration are directly linked to enhanced focus. Dzikir trains the mind to remain centered on a single object or thought, thereby developing concentration skills essential in high-pressure situations (İzgü et al., 2020). Studies support that meditation techniques, including dzikir, can positively influence individuals in coping with stress and lowering symptoms of anxiety, particularly among students and healthcare workers who often face high levels of pressure (Heinrich & O'Connell, 2023; Breedvelt et al., 2019). With the increased awareness gained from practicing dzikir, individuals are better able to manage their emotions and responses to stressful situations.

In conclusion, both tawakal and dzikir are not merely ritualistic practices but encompass psychological mechanisms that aid individuals in reducing stress and enhancing focus. They also contribute to overall mental well-being by fostering acceptance and awareness, which are crucial in navigating the challenges of daily life. Various studies have shown that integrating practices such as meditation and spirituality into daily life can significantly enhance psychological well-being and alleviate symptoms of anxiety and stress (Doğan et al., 2021; Song et al., 2021).

Spiritual Mechanisms in Tawakal and Dzikir

Spiritual mechanisms in human life profoundly affect mental health and individual spiritual well-being. The concepts of tawakal and dzikir in Islamic spiritual tradition reinforce a person's transcendental connection with God, facilitating access to external sources of strength that help them face life's challenges. Research indicates that spiritual practices such as tawakal and dzikir not only strengthen one's relationship with Allah but also provide a sense of purpose and serenity in daily life (Daniyarti et al., 2023). With such spiritual support, many individuals experience decreased anxiety and stress, positively impacting their psychological well-being (Fiari et al., 2023; Arif et al., 2022).

Dzikir, as a form of spiritual remembrance, also serves to fulfill the basic human need for connection and meaning. The repetition and reflection upon the names and attributes of God in dzikir enhance self-awareness and understanding of the universe. Research shows that the practice of dzikir can internalize positive traits such as peace and lasting contentment





(Daniyarti et al., 2023). This affirms that dzikir can evoke a deep sense of well-being, purifying the heart and eliminating harmful negative traits (Daniyarti et al., 2023).

The access granted through these spiritual practices directly influences one's mental and emotional state. Studies have shown that the presence of spirituality can reduce anxiety levels by stimulating the body's hormonal systems, particularly through mechanisms that lower stress hormones like cortisol (Fiari et al., 2023; Estria et al., 2024). This demonstrates that spiritual belief and regular practice function as psychological interventions that can improve overall quality of life (Estria et al., 2024).

In the context of spiritual mechanisms, the relationship between individuals and God maintained through tawakal and dzikir is not merely an activity, but becomes an integral part of daily living that generates long-term positive impacts. Research shows that individuals engaged in spiritual practice tend to have greater resilience in stressful situations and are more successful in coping with anxiety and other mental health conditions (Fiari et al., 2023; Arif et al., 2022). This affirms the importance of understanding and applying spirituality to support mental health and guide individuals toward a more balanced and fulfilling life.

Integration of Psychological and Spiritual Mechanisms in Tawakal and Dzikir

The integration of psychological mechanisms involving tawakal and dzikir into daily life has a significant impact on individual mental health. In this context, tawakal can be understood as a psychological response that fosters acceptance, which in turn contributes to the reduction of psychological pressure. According to Cahyani and Akmal (2017), spirituality, including tawakal, plays a crucial role in enhancing resilience among students facing stress from academic demands. Their study suggests that strengthening faith and acceptance of one's circumstances can help individuals manage the pressures they encounter.

Meanwhile, dzikir, as a meditative and mindfulness practice, has been found in several studies to assist individuals in coping with stress and improving mental health. Hermansyah and Hadjam (2020) revealed that such spiritual practices can create space for reflection and mental calm, thereby supporting individuals in enhancing their mental and emotional capacity to face everyday challenges. Thus, the combination of tawakal and dzikir forms a psychospritual support system that reinforces internal resources for stress management and facilitates recovery from psychological disorders.

Furthermore, research also highlights a positive correlation between resilience, spirituality, and mental health. Tanamal (2021) explains that religiosity and spirituality not only contribute to increased resilience but also serve as protective factors against mental health decline during times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. In this case, the mental fortitude built through spiritual practice provides a strong drive to adapt to various life challenges and hardships.

In conclusion, the integration of psychological and spiritual mechanisms manifested through the practices of tawakal and dzikir can serve as an effective approach to improving mental health. By reducing stress, enhancing focus, fostering transcendental connection, and fulfilling spiritual needs, these two practices lay a strong foundation for individuals to face life's challenges. This approach highlights the importance of encouraging individuals to incorporate both psychological and spiritual elements into their lives to support optimal mental well-being.





4. CONCLUSION

In concluding this study, it can be inferred that the practices of tawakal and dzikir have a significant impact on reducing anxiety and enhancing mental health. The findings indicate that tawakal, as an act of surrendering to the will of Allah, facilitates stress reduction and fosters inner peace, while dzikir, as the act of remembering Allah through sacred phrases, helps improve focus and tranquility. These two practices not only enhance general mental well-being but also offer effective coping strategies for managing daily stressful situations.

One of the primary benefits of these practices is the strengthening of spiritual connection, which provides psychological support in difficult circumstances. However, the main challenge lies in integrating such spiritual practices into conventional psychotherapeutic approaches, which may require a deeper understanding from mental health professionals regarding patients' spiritual values and beliefs.

This conclusion supports the alignment between the research problem, objectives, and results, clearly demonstrating that tawakal and dzikir play a vital role in supporting mental health. The implications of this study highlight the importance of further incorporating spiritual elements into mental health practices to aid in patient treatment and recovery, as well as to enhance overall quality of life.

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