

MENTAL HEALTH FROM A QUR'ANIC PERSPECTIVE: CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR ISLAMIC RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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Abstract

Mental health has become a critical issue in contemporary life characterized by social, economic, and technological pressures. This study aims to analyze the concept of mental health from the perspective of Qur'anic values and to examine its contribution to Islamic Religious Education. This research employs a qualitative library research method using thematic analysis of Qur'anic verses related to inner tranquility, supported by classical and contemporary Qur'anic exegesis. The findings indicate that Qur'anic principles—such as recitation of the Qur'an, remembrance of God (dhikr), and piety (taqwa)—play a significant role in fostering inner peace and reducing anxiety. The implications of this study highlight the importance of integrating Qur'anic spiritual values into Islamic Religious Education learning processes as a holistic strategy to develop students' mental and spiritual well-being, ultimately shaping a generation that is faithful, emotionally healthy, and morally grounded.

Keywords: *Mental Health; Qur'anic Perspective; Islamic Religious Education.*

Abstrak

Kesehatan mental merupakan isu krusial dalam kehidupan kontemporer yang ditandai oleh tekanan sosial, ekonomi, dan perkembangan teknologi yang pesat. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis konsep kesehatan mental dalam perspektif nilai-nilai Al-Qur'an serta mengkaji kontribusinya terhadap Pendidikan Agama Islam (PAI). Penelitian ini menggunakan metode studi pustaka dengan pendekatan kualitatif melalui analisis tematik terhadap ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an yang berkaitan dengan ketenangan jiwa, yang diperkaya dengan telaah tafsir klasik dan kontemporer. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa prinsip-prinsip Qur'ani, seperti membaca Al-Qur'an, berdzikir, dan ketakwaan, berperan signifikan dalam menumbuhkan ketenangan batin serta mengurangi kecemasan. Implikasi penelitian



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ini menegaskan pentingnya integrasi nilai-nilai spiritual Qur'ani dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam sebagai strategi pembinaan mental dan spiritual peserta didik secara holistik guna membentuk generasi yang beriman, berkarakter, dan sehat secara emosional.

Kata Kunci: Kesehatan Mental; Perspektif Al-Qur'an; Pendidikan Agama Islam.

INTRODUCTION

Mental health has emerged as a critical global concern in contemporary society, affecting not only individual well-being but also social stability and educational development. The acceleration of digitalization, globalization, and socio-economic competition has intensified psychological pressures across age groups. According to the World Health Organization (2022), mental health disorders have significantly increased worldwide, particularly among adolescents and young adults. Recent empirical studies further demonstrate that excessive social media exposure correlates with anxiety, depression, and decreased subjective well-being (Keles et al., 2020; Rohman & Wibowo, 2024). These findings indicate that mental health is no longer merely a clinical issue but a multidimensional societal challenge requiring integrative approaches that encompass psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions.

Despite growing awareness of mental health, many contemporary interventions remain predominantly biomedical and psychological, often neglecting spiritual and existential dimensions. This limitation becomes problematic in religious societies where faith and spirituality play central roles in shaping meaning, resilience, and coping mechanisms. Studies indicate that religiosity and spiritual practices significantly contribute to emotional regulation and psychological resilience (Captari et al., 2018; Garssen et al., 2021). However, the absence of a well-formulated conceptual framework rooted in sacred texts—particularly the Qur'an—creates a gap between religious belief systems and structured mental health discourse, especially within Islamic educational settings.

In educational contexts, particularly in Islamic schools and universities, increasing levels of academic stress, emotional instability, and identity confusion among students have become observable phenomena. Research in Islamic higher education institutions reveals a significant relationship between academic pressure and reduced spiritual well-being (Rohman & Wibowo, 2024). Furthermore, mental health literacy among students in Islamic institutions remains relatively limited, despite the strong presence of religious instruction (Mahfud & Prasetyawati, 2024). This paradox—where religious education is present but not systematically integrated into mental health development—demonstrates the urgency of

reconstructing a Qur'anic-based framework that can holistically address students' psychological needs.

Recent scholarship has explored the relationship between Islamic spirituality and mental health, highlighting the positive effects of religious coping, dhikr, and spiritual intelligence on psychological well-being (Ismail & Salleh, 2023; Siregar & Lubis, 2022). Other studies emphasize the role of Islamic counseling and character education in strengthening students' resilience (Chow et al., 2021; Çınaroğlu, 2024; Devianti & Safitri, 2025; Suhertina, 2025; Zahrah et al., 2025). Additionally, thematic discussions on mental tranquility in Qur'anic discourse have been conducted (Nurdin & Sari, 2022; Sulaiman & Huda, 2023). These contributions confirm that Islamic values are relevant to mental health discourse.

However, most previous studies either focus on applied counseling practices or general discussions of religiosity without systematically constructing a conceptual model based directly on thematic Qur'anic analysis integrated with classical and contemporary exegesis. Few studies synthesize tafsir literature with modern psychological frameworks in a coherent epistemological structure. Consequently, the theoretical foundations of Qur'anic mental health remain fragmented and insufficiently articulated within the domain of Islamic Religious Education (Eayaz et al., 2025; Omais & Santos, 2026). This gap is significant because without a solid conceptual framework, the integration of spiritual values into education risks becoming normative rather than analytically grounded.

This study offers a novel contribution by developing an integrative thematic analysis (tafsir maudhu'i) of selected Qur'anic verses related to mental tranquility, synthesizing classical and contemporary interpretations, and reconstructing them into a conceptual framework applicable to Islamic Religious Education. Unlike prior research that emphasizes practical religious coping, this study positions the Qur'an as the primary epistemological foundation for mental health conceptualization. By bridging Qur'anic exegesis, contemporary Islamic psychology, and educational theory, this research advances a state-of-the-art integrative model that responds to contemporary psychological crises within faith-based educational environments.

Accordingly, this study addresses the following central question: How does the Qur'an conceptualize mental health, and how can its spiritual principles be systematically integrated into Islamic Religious Education? The objectives of this research are (1) to analyze thematically selected Qur'anic verses related to inner tranquility through classical and contemporary tafsir, and (2) to formulate their educational implications within Islamic Religious Education. This study argues that Qur'anic spiritual practices—such as recitation, dhikr, and taqwa—constitute a holistic framework for mental health development that integrates spiritual,

emotional, and psychological dimensions. By articulating this framework, the research contributes theoretically to Qur'anic studies and Islamic psychology, and practically to the transformation of Islamic Religious Education in addressing contemporary mental health challenges.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative research design using a library research approach to reconstruct a Qur'an-based conceptual framework of mental health. A qualitative design was selected because the research objective is interpretive and theory-building, focusing on meaning, concepts, and contextualized understanding derived from textual sources rather than measuring variables empirically. Qualitative inquiry is especially appropriate when the study aims to develop analytic explanations and conceptual models grounded in interpretive traditions (Creswell & Creswell, 2022; Creswell & Poth, 2023). As a library-based study, the research relied on primary and secondary textual materials, enabling systematic engagement with authoritative sources and interpretative synthesis, which is consistent with methodological guidance for text-based qualitative research within information and social sciences (Connaway & Radford, 2021). The research was conducted from July to December 2025, covering stages of source identification, document selection, thematic mapping, interpretive comparison, and conceptual reconstruction.

Data collection was conducted through documentation techniques by identifying, selecting, and organizing Qur'anic verses explicitly relevant to mental tranquility and spiritual well-being. The Qur'an served as the primary data source, while secondary data were derived from authoritative classical and contemporary Qur'anic exegesis and recent scholarly literature in Islamic psychology and Islamic education. The selection of secondary sources emphasized scholarly credibility, interpretive authority, and relevance to modern psycho-spiritual discourse. This documentation-based strategy is widely recognized as a rigorous technique for qualitative studies that analyze written materials and published texts as core datasets (Connaway & Radford, 2021; Creswell & Poth, 2023).

Data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis integrated with a thematic (tafsir maudhu'i) approach to generate patterns of meaning across the selected texts. The analytic procedure followed iterative reading, coding, and categorization to identify recurring concepts and link them into higher-order themes. Thematic analysis was employed because it is a flexible and well-established qualitative analytic method for producing meaning-based patterns (themes) from textual datasets, particularly suitable for conceptual and interpretive

research (Braun & Clarke, 2021; Terry & Hayfield, 2021). To enhance analytic structure, qualitative content analysis principles were applied to guide systematic coding, category refinement, and interpretive synthesis, supporting transparency and consistency in the construction of the conceptual framework (Schreier, 2012). The final synthesis stage integrated Qur'anic themes with interpretative insights from tafsir sources to articulate implications for Islamic Religious Education.

To ensure trustworthiness and rigor, this study employed source triangulation by comparing multiple tafsir traditions (classical and contemporary) and cross-checking interpretations with recent scholarly discussions in Islamic psychology and education. Methodological rigor was strengthened through analytic transparency (documenting coding decisions and theme development), iterative verification during theme refinement, and confirmability procedures by grounding claims in cross-source convergence. These strategies align with contemporary qualitative standards emphasizing credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability as core dimensions of trustworthiness (Ahmed, 2024; Holland, 2025). Although interpretive subjectivity is an inherent limitation of library-based qualitative studies, triangulation and systematic analytic documentation were applied to minimize bias and strengthen the credibility of the conceptual findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Conceptualizing Mental Health in Psychological and Islamic Perspectives

The concept of mental health has evolved significantly within contemporary psychology. Modern discourse no longer defines mental health merely as the absence of mental disorders, but rather as a dynamic state of well-being in which individuals are able to realize their potential, cope effectively with life stressors, function productively, and contribute meaningfully to society (WHO, 2022). Recent empirical studies emphasize that mental health is closely related to emotional regulation, resilience, and a sense of meaning in life (Captari et al., 2018; Garssen et al., 2021). Furthermore, the integration of spirituality within psychotherapeutic approaches has been shown to strengthen psychological stability and enhance subjective well-being (Koenig, 2020; Pargament et al., 2013). These developments indicate that contemporary psychology increasingly recognizes spirituality as a significant dimension in constructing a comprehensive understanding of mental health.

From an Islamic perspective, mental health is conceptualized as a holistic balance between physical, psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions. Contemporary Islamic psychology emphasizes that inner tranquility (*ṭuma'nīnah*), purity of heart, and closeness to God are fundamental indicators of mental well-

being for a Muslim (Lubis et al., 2023; Rosmalina et al., 2023). This conceptualization is rooted historically in classical Islamic scholarship, such as Abu Zayd al-Balkhi's theory of *al-tibb al-ruhani* (spiritual medicine), which modern scholars identify as an early foundation of clinical psychology within the Islamic intellectual tradition (Awaad & Ali, 2020). Al-Balkhi argued that emotional disturbances such as anxiety, sadness, and fear reflect an imbalance of the soul requiring both rational and spiritual intervention. Therefore, mental health in Islam is not merely psychological stability but an integrated harmony between faith, intellect, emotion, and behavior within the framework of devotion to God

Thematic Analysis of Qur'anic Verses on Mental Health

The Qur'an, as the primary source of Islamic guidance, provides foundational principles relevant to mental and spiritual well-being. Numerous verses emphasize inner peace, patience, reliance upon God (tawakkul), and emotional self-regulation as essential for maintaining psychological balance. A thematic analysis of selected verses reveals three principal spiritual practices that contribute to mental health: recitation of the Qur'an, remembrance of God (dhikr), and piety (taqwa).

1. Qur'anic Recitation as Spiritual Therapy

For Muslims, life's challenges and uncertainties require not only psychological coping strategies but also spiritual reinforcement. The Qur'an explicitly describes itself as a source of healing, as stated in QS. Yunus [10]:57:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَتْكُمْ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَشِفَاءٌ لِمَا فِي الصُّدُورِ وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِّلْمُؤْمِنِينَ

"O mankind, there has come to you an instruction from your Lord and a healing for what is in the breasts, and guidance and mercy for the believers."

The phrase *"a healing for what is in the breasts"* (shifā'un limā fī al-ṣudūr) indicates that the Qur'an functions as a remedy for inner disturbances, including doubt, confusion, anxiety, and spiritual emptiness. According to Ibn Kathir, this healing refers primarily to spiritual and psychological ailments, cleansing the heart from misguidance and restoring certainty and faith. The Qur'an thus acts as a transformative force that removes internal unrest and instills clarity and moral direction.

Similarly, contemporary interpretation in Tafsir al-Mishbah emphasizes that *shifā'* encompasses spiritual restoration, emotional reassurance, and existential orientation. Reflective recitation and sincere engagement with the Qur'an generate tranquility, cognitive clarity, and emotional balance. These

findings resonate with contemporary research demonstrating that religious engagement and scriptural meditation contribute positively to emotional well-being and stress reduction (Garssen et al., 2021; Rohman & Wibowo, 2024). Hence, Qur'anic recitation may be understood as a form of spiritual therapy that nurtures mental resilience.

2. Dhikr as a Source of Inner Tranquility

One of the principal practices believed to bring tranquility to the heart and mind is *dhikr*—the remembrance of God through various forms of worship as well as in daily activities. Through *dhikr*, a Muslim may experience inner peace, emotional composure, and a balance of the soul that is difficult to attain through worldly means alone. As affirmed in the Qur'an, "*Verily, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest*" (Qur'an, Surah Ar-Ra'd [13]: 28).

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

"Those who believe and whose hearts find tranquility in the remembrance of Allah. Indeed, in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find tranquility."

This verse establishes a direct relationship between spiritual consciousness and psychological calmness. Tafsir al-Mishbah explains that tranquility (*tuma'ninah*) emerges when believers internalize awareness of God's presence, power, and mercy. Dhikr is not limited to verbal repetition; rather, it involves deep spiritual consciousness that stabilizes thoughts and emotions.

Ibn Kathir similarly interprets this verse as evidence that remembrance of God removes fear and anxiety by strengthening reliance upon divine protection. Contemporary empirical studies further confirm that dhikr and other Islamic spiritual practices contribute to anxiety reduction and improved emotional regulation among Muslim students (Siregar & Lubis, 2022). Thus, dhikr integrates spiritual awareness with psychological stability, functioning as an effective mechanism for mental health maintenance.

3. Taqwa as Protection from Anxiety and Grief

Anxiety and sadness are universal human experiences often intensified by uncertainty and worldly pressures. The Qur'an offers spiritual reassurance through the concept of *taqwa* (God-consciousness). QS. Yunus [10]:62 states:

أَلَا إِنَّ أَوْلِيَاءَ اللَّهِ لَا خَوْفٌ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

“Indeed, the allies of Allah—there will be no fear concerning them, nor will they grieve.”

Exegetical works such as Tafsir al-Jalalayn and Ma’arif al-Qur’an clarify that this promise applies not only in the Hereafter but also reflects spiritual security experienced in worldly life. Those who maintain closeness to God are not immune from hardship; however, they do not succumb to excessive anxiety or despair because their hearts are anchored in trust and divine decree.

From a psychological perspective, taqwa fosters cognitive reframing, resilience, and existential security. Contemporary studies indicate that religious coping mechanisms strengthen mental resilience and reduce depressive symptoms by providing meaning and perceived divine support (Captari et al., 2018). Therefore, taqwa functions as a spiritual buffer against anxiety and depression, aligning Qur’anic teachings with modern resilience theory.

Contributions of the Qur’anic Mental Health Framework to Islamic Religious Education

The integration of Qur’anic mental health principles into Islamic Religious Education (IRE) offers both theoretical and practical contributions. First, systematic incorporation of Qur’anic recitation and reflective engagement within educational settings may enhance students’ emotional regulation and spiritual awareness. Research indicates that consistent religious practices are associated with improved psychological well-being and reduced academic stress (Mahfud & Prasetyawati, 2024; Rohman & Wibowo, 2024).

Second, Islamic counseling models grounded in Qur’anic values—such as sabr (patience), shukr (gratitude), tawakkul (trust in God), and taqwa—can be institutionalized within school guidance programs. Such integration moves beyond ritualistic instruction and transforms religious education into a holistic developmental framework that addresses spiritual, emotional, and cognitive dimensions simultaneously (Díaz-Tejo & Vega-Ramírez, 2025). In this sense, Islamic Religious Education becomes not only a medium of doctrinal transmission but also a transformative platform for cultivating resilient, emotionally balanced, and spiritually grounded individuals.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that mental health in the Qur'anic perspective is conceptualized as a holistic integration of spiritual, emotional, and psychological dimensions grounded in faith and God-consciousness. The thematic analysis of selected verses (QS. Yunus [10]:57; QS. Ar-Ra'd [13]:28; QS. Yunus [10]:62) demonstrates that Qur'anic practices such as recitation, remembrance of God (dhikr), and piety (taqwa) function as mechanisms for fostering inner tranquility, reducing anxiety, and strengthening resilience. These findings reinforce contemporary discussions that acknowledge spirituality as an essential component of mental well-being.

In the context of Islamic Religious Education, integrating Qur'anic spiritual principles into pedagogical processes offers a holistic framework for nurturing emotionally balanced and spiritually grounded students. Islamic education, therefore, should move beyond doctrinal transmission toward transformative character and mental development.

However, as a qualitative library-based study limited to selected verses, the findings remain conceptual and interpretive in nature. Future research is recommended to conduct empirical investigations within educational settings to assess the practical effectiveness of integrating Qur'anic spiritual values into mental health development programs. Expanding thematic analysis to additional Qur'anic concepts may also contribute to a more comprehensive and applicable Islamic mental health model.

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