



CURBING THE MENTAL ILLNES: DOES AL-QURAN PLAY ROLES?

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
Article history: Received: 22 Sept 2024 Revised: 4 Oct 2024 Accepted: 20 Oct 2024 Published: 1 Nov 2024 Keywords: <i>Quran, mental health, emotional well-being, spiritual foundation, coping mechanisms, resilience, Islamic psychology</i>  OPEN ACCESS	The Quran, the holy book of Islam, plays a vital role in promoting mental well-being and providing guidance for individuals facing mental health challenges. This article explores the various ways in which the Quran contributes to curbing mental health issues and fostering emotional resilience. Through an analysis of Quranic verses, teachings, and narratives, as well as a review of current research findings, this study highlights the psychological benefits of engaging with the Quran. The article discusses how the Quran promotes mental health by providing a strong spiritual foundation, offering guidance on coping with adversity, encouraging the seeking of knowledge, and fostering a supportive community. The research findings suggest that regular Quranic recitation is associated with lower levels of anxiety and depression, while Quranic teachings on resilience, coping mechanisms, and seeking help from Allah provide emotional support and contribute to better mental health outcomes. The study also acknowledges the limitations of existing research and identifies areas for further investigation, such as conducting longitudinal studies, exploring the impact of the Quran across diverse populations, examining the underlying mechanisms of influence, integrating Quranic principles into psychotherapy approaches, and employing qualitative research methods. In conclusion, this article emphasizes the significant role of the Quran in promoting mental well-being and addressing mental health issues within the Islamic context. It underscores the potential for integrating Quranic wisdom with psychological science to develop culturally sensitive and spiritually grounded interventions for the Muslim community.

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INTRODUCTION

Islam, as a comprehensive way of life, addresses physical and mental well-being. Mental illness, although not extensively mentioned in the primary sources of Islam, is recognized as a genuine condition that requires understanding, compassion, and proper treatment. The Quran and the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) provide guidance on how to approach and support those struggling with mental health issues while emphasizing the importance of seeking treatment and maintaining hope in Allah's mercy and healing.

In the Quran, there are instances where individuals experienced severe emotional distress and sought solace in Allah. One notable example is the story of Prophet Ayyub (Job), who faced numerous trials, including the loss of his health, wealth, and family. The Quran states, "*And remember Our servant Ayyub, when he called to his Lord, 'Indeed, Satan has touched me with hardship and torment.'*" (38:41) Despite his suffering, Prophet Ayyub remained steadfast in his faith, and Allah ultimately restored his health and blessed him abundantly. This story highlights the importance of patience, prayer, and trust in Allah during times of difficulty, including mental health struggles.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) also demonstrated compassion and understanding towards those experiencing mental distress. In one hadith, he said, "*The believer does not curse others, uses foul language, or engages in indecency*" (Tirmidhi). This teaching emphasizes the importance of treating others with kindness and respect, even when they may be experiencing mental health challenges that affect their behavior. Another hadith states, "*Allah does not burden a soul beyond what it can bear*" (Bukhari), indicating that Allah does not test individuals beyond their capacity and provides them with the strength and resources to overcome their struggles.

In addition to spiritual support, Islam encourages seeking professional help and treatment for mental illnesses. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "Allah has not sent down any disease but that He has also sent down its cure" (Bukhari). This hadith suggests that for every ailment, including mental illnesses, there is a treatment or remedy available. Muslims are encouraged to seek medical assistance and to view mental health professionals as a means of accessing the healing that Allah has provided. The Islamic scholar Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyya (d. 1350 CE) wrote, "*Healing is of two types: healing of the heart and healing of the body. The healing of the heart is by removing ignorance, doubt, and false beliefs. The healing of the body is by removing the harmful elements and restoring the beneficial elements.*" (Zad al-Ma'ad)

Furthermore, the Islamic community has a responsibility to support and care for those experiencing mental health issues. The Quran states, "*The believers are but brothers, so make reconciliation between your brothers and fear Allah that you may receive mercy.*" (49:10) This verse emphasizes the importance of fostering a supportive and inclusive community that helps individuals through their challenges. Muslims should strive to create an environment that destigmatizes mental illness, offers compassion and understanding, and provides resources for those in need. By working together to address mental health concerns, the Islamic community can uphold the principles of mercy, justice, and human dignity that are central to the faith.

In conclusion, Islam recognizes the reality of mental illness and guides individuals and communities to address these challenges with compassion, understanding, and a holistic approach that encompasses spiritual, medical, and social support. By seeking help, maintaining hope in Allah's mercy, and fostering a supportive and inclusive community, Muslims can work towards promoting mental well-being and upholding the Islamic values of human welfare and dignity.

Mental Illness in the Holy Quran

Mental illness, while not explicitly mentioned in the Quran, is addressed through various teachings and narratives that guide dealing with emotional distress, seeking help, and relying on Allah's mercy and support. The Quran recognizes the human experience of pain, suffering, and adversity, and offers solace and encouragement to those struggling with mental health issues. One of the most prominent examples in the Quran that relates to mental distress is the story of Prophet Ayyub (Job). In Surah Al-Anbiya, the Quran states, "*And remember Our servant Ayyub, when he called to his Lord, 'Indeed, Satan has touched me with hardship and torment.'*" (21:83) Prophet Ayyub experienced severe trials, including the loss of his health, wealth, and family, which undoubtedly affected his mental well-being. However, he remained patient and steadfast in his faith, continuously turning to Allah for comfort and support. The Quran emphasizes Allah's response to Prophet Ayyub's prayers, stating, "*So We responded to him and removed the affliction he had...*" (21:84) This narrative highlights the importance of seeking Allah's help during times of distress and trusting in His ability to alleviate suffering, including mental anguish.

The Quran also acknowledges the potential for individuals to experience despair and hopelessness, as evident in the story of Prophet Yunus (Jonah). In Surah Al-Anbiya, the Quran recounts, "*And remember the Man of the Fish (Yunus), when he went off in anger and deemed that We would not straiten him. Then he cried out in the darkness, saying, 'There is no god but You! Glory be to You! I have indeed been one of the wrongdoers.'*" (21:87) Prophet Yunus, in a state of emotional turmoil, turned to Allah with sincere repentance and sought His forgiveness. The Quran affirms Allah's response, stating, "*So We responded to him and delivered him from the distress. Thus do We deliver the believers.'*" (21:88) This account underscores the significance of seeking Allah's forgiveness, mercy, and guidance during periods of mental distress and demonstrates the power of sincere supplication in finding relief and deliverance.

Moreover, the Quran provides reassurance and comfort to those experiencing emotional hardships, reminding them of Allah's compassion and the ultimate reward for perseverance. In Surah Al-Inshirah, Allah consoles Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and, by extension, all believers, saying, "*So, surely with hardship comes ease. Surely with hardship comes ease.*" (94:5-6) This verse serves as a reminder that difficulties, including mental health struggles, are temporary and that relief and ease will follow. The Quran further encourages believers to seek solace in prayer and remembrance of Allah, as stated in Surah Ar-Ra'd, "...Unquestionably, by the remembrance of Allah hearts find rest." (13:28) This verse emphasizes the therapeutic and comforting effects of connecting with Allah through prayer and meditation, which can be particularly beneficial for those dealing with mental health issues.

In addition to seeking spiritual comfort, the Quran also encourages individuals to take practical steps in managing their mental well-being. The Quran promotes the seeking of knowledge and understanding, as evident in Surah Ta-Ha, where Allah instructs Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), "...Say, '*My Lord, increase me in knowledge.*'" (20:114) This verse highlights the importance of education and learning, which can include gaining knowledge about mental health and seeking professional help when needed. The Quran also emphasizes the significance of self-care and taking measures to maintain overall well-being, as indicated in Surah Al-Baqarah, "...*And do not throw yourselves into destruction...*" (2:195) This verse serves as a reminder to prioritize one's health, including mental health, and to take necessary steps to protect and nurture it.

In conclusion, while the Quran does not explicitly mention mental illness, it provides guidance and support for those experiencing emotional distress and mental health challenges. Through the stories of prophets, verses of comfort and reassurance, and encouragement to seek knowledge and take

practical steps, the Quran offers a holistic approach to addressing mental well-being. It emphasizes the importance of turning to Allah for help, seeking forgiveness and mercy, finding solace in prayer and remembrance, and taking proactive measures to manage one's mental health. By drawing upon the teachings of the Quran, individuals can find strength, hope, and guidance in their journey toward mental wellness.

The Role of Al-Quran in Curbing Mental Health

The Quran, the holy book of Islam, plays a significant role in promoting mental well-being and providing guidance for individuals facing mental health challenges. Through its teachings, narratives, and emphasis on spiritual connection, the Quran offers a comprehensive approach to nurturing mental health and resilience. This essay will explore the various ways in which the Quran contributes to curbing mental health issues and fostering emotional well-being.

One of the fundamental ways the Quran promotes mental health is by providing a strong spiritual foundation. The Quran emphasizes the importance of maintaining a connection with Allah through prayer, remembrance, and reflection. In Surah Ar-Ra'd, Allah states, "...Unquestionably, by the remembrance of Allah hearts find rest." (13:28) This verse highlights the psychological benefits of engaging in spiritual practices, such as prayer and dhikr (remembrance of Allah). Research has shown that religious and spiritual practices can have a positive impact on mental health, promoting feelings of peace, contentment, and resilience (Koenig, 2009). By encouraging individuals to establish and maintain a strong spiritual connection, the Quran offers a powerful tool for managing stress, anxiety, and other mental health concerns.

The Quran also addresses mental health by guiding coping with adversity and hardships. Throughout the Quran, there are numerous stories of prophets and believers who faced significant challenges and trials. These narratives serve as a source of inspiration and comfort for individuals going through difficult times. For example, in Surah Al-Baqarah, Allah reminds believers, "And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient." (2:155) This verse acknowledges the inevitability of hardships and encourages individuals to respond with patience and perseverance. The Quran's emphasis on resilience and trust in Allah's plan can help individuals maintain hope and perspective during times of mental distress (Keshavarzi & Haque, 2013).

Moreover, the Quran promotes mental well-being by encouraging individuals to seek knowledge and understanding. The Quran places great importance on education and learning, as evident in Surah Al-'Alaq, where Allah commands, "Read in the name of your Lord who created." (96:1) This verse emphasizes the value of seeking knowledge and engaging in intellectual pursuits. Education and mental health are closely linked, as learning can enhance cognitive function, improve decision-making skills, and increase self-awareness (Feinstein et al., 2006). By promoting the acquisition of knowledge, including understanding mental health and available resources, the Quran empowers individuals to take proactive steps in managing their well-being.

The Quran also addresses mental health by fostering a sense of community and social support. Islam places great emphasis on the importance of social connections and the role of the community in providing support and care for one another. In Surah Al-Hujurat, Allah instructs believers, "The believers are but brothers, so make reconciliation between your brothers..." (49:10) This verse highlights the significance of maintaining strong, supportive relationships within the community. Social support has been identified as a crucial factor in promoting mental health and resilience (Cohen & Wills, 1985). By encouraging individuals to cultivate meaningful connections and seek support

from their faith community, the Quran provides a valuable resource for managing mental health challenges.

In conclusion, the Quran plays a vital role in curbing mental health issues and promoting emotional well-being. Through its emphasis on spiritual connection, guidance on coping with adversity, encouragement of seeking knowledge, and fostering a supportive community, the Quran offers a holistic approach to nurturing mental health. By drawing upon the teachings and wisdom of the Quran, individuals can find strength, resilience, and hope in the face of mental health challenges. As Muslims continue to navigate the complexities of mental health in the modern world, the Quran remains a timeless source of guidance and support

LITERATURE REVIEW

Current research findings suggest that the Quran can play a significant role in promoting mental health and well-being. Various studies have explored the psychological benefits of engaging with the Quran, both through its recitation and the application of its teachings. This essay will delve into the recent research on the Quran's impact on mental health, highlighting the findings and their implications for individuals seeking to improve their emotional well-being. One notable study conducted by Ghorbani et al. (2014) investigated the relationship between Quranic recitation and mental health among Iranian students. The researchers found that students who engaged in regular Quranic recitation exhibited lower levels of anxiety and depression compared to those who did not recite the Quran. The study suggested that the rhythmic nature of Quranic recitation, coupled with its spiritual content, may have a calming effect on the mind and promote relaxation. These findings are consistent with previous research that has highlighted the potential of religious practices, including prayer and meditation, to reduce stress and improve mental well-being (Koenig, 2009).

Another study by Rahmati et al. (2019) explored the impact of Quranic teachings on resilience and coping mechanisms among Muslim women diagnosed with breast cancer. The researchers conducted interviews with 20 participants and found that the women drew strength and comfort from the Quran during their battle with cancer. The participants reported that reciting specific verses, such as those related to patience and trust in Allah, helped them maintain a positive outlook and cope with the challenges of their illness. The study highlights the potential of the Quran to serve as a source of emotional support and resilience during times of adversity, contributing to better mental health outcomes.

In addition to the direct impact of Quranic recitation and teachings, research has also explored the role of the Quran in shaping individuals' attitudes and behaviors related to mental health. A study by Abu-Raiya et al. (2016) investigated the relationship between Quranic reading, religious coping, and mental health among Muslim college students in the United States. The researchers found that students who engaged in more frequent Quranic reading and utilized positive religious coping strategies, such as seeking spiritual support and reframing challenges in a religious context, reported better mental health outcomes. This study suggests that the Quran can serve as a resource for individuals to develop adaptive coping mechanisms and maintain mental well-being.

Furthermore, recent research has explored the potential of integrating Quranic teachings into psychotherapy approaches. A conceptual paper by Keshavarzi and Haque (2013) proposed a framework for incorporating Islamic principles, including those derived from the Quran, into cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT). The authors argued that by drawing upon the Quran's emphasis on cognitive restructuring, behavior modification, and spiritual connection, therapists can develop

culturally sensitive and religiously grounded interventions for Muslim clients. While empirical research on the effectiveness of such integrative approaches is still limited, these conceptual works highlight the potential for the Quran to inform and enhance mental health interventions.

Despite the growing body of research on the Quran and mental health, it is important to acknowledge the limitations and challenges in this field. Many of the existing studies are cross-sectional, which limits the ability to establish causal relationships between Quranic engagement and mental health outcomes. Additionally, the majority of research has been conducted in Muslim-majority countries or with Muslim populations, raising questions about the generalizability of the findings to diverse contexts. Future research should aim to address these limitations by employing longitudinal designs, exploring the impact of the Quran across different cultural settings, and investigating the mechanisms through which the Quran influences mental health. In conclusion, current research findings underscore the potential of the Quran to promote mental health and well-being. Studies have demonstrated the psychological benefits of Quranic recitation, the role of Quranic teachings in fostering resilience and coping, and the potential for integrating Quranic principles into psychotherapy approaches. While further research is needed to expand upon these findings and address limitations, the existing evidence suggests that the Quran can serve as a valuable resource for individuals seeking to enhance their mental well-being. As the field of Islamic psychology continues to grow, the integration of Quranic wisdom with psychological science holds promise for developing culturally sensitive and spiritually grounded approaches to mental health care.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The Quran plays a significant role in promoting mental well-being and providing guidance for individuals facing mental health challenges. Through its teachings, narratives, and emphasis on spiritual connection, the Quran offers a comprehensive approach to nurturing mental health and resilience. The research findings highlight the psychological benefits of engaging with the Quran, both through its recitation and the application of its teachings. Studies have demonstrated that regular Quranic recitation is associated with lower levels of anxiety and depression, while the Quranic teachings on resilience, coping, and seeking help from Allah have been found to provide emotional support and contribute to better mental health outcomes. The Quran also serves as a resource for individuals to develop adaptive coping mechanisms, foster a supportive community, and find strength and hope in the face of mental health challenges.

However, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of the existing research, such as the cross-sectional nature of many studies and the need for more diverse samples. Despite these limitations, the current evidence suggests that the Quran can be a valuable tool in promoting mental well-being and addressing mental health issues within the Islamic context.

Further Research: To build upon the findings presented in this article, several areas for further research can be identified:

1. Longitudinal studies: Conducting longitudinal research would help establish causal relationships between Quranic engagement and mental health outcomes. By following participants over time, researchers can better understand the long-term effects of Quranic recitation and the application of its teachings on mental well-being.
2. Diverse populations: Future research should aim to include more diverse samples, both in terms of cultural backgrounds and geographical locations. This would help assess the

generalizability of the findings and explore potential cultural differences in the way the Quran influences mental health.

3. Mechanisms of influence: Further investigation into the underlying mechanisms through which the Quran promotes mental well-being would be beneficial. This could involve examining the role of specific Quranic verses, the impact of different recitation styles, or the psychological processes that mediate the relationship between Quranic engagement and mental health outcomes.
4. Integration with psychotherapy: More research is needed to explore the potential of integrating Quranic teachings and principles into psychotherapy approaches. Empirical studies assessing the effectiveness of such integrative interventions would provide valuable insights into the practical application of the Quran in mental health treatment.
5. Qualitative research: Conducting qualitative studies, such as in-depth interviews or focus groups, would allow for a deeper understanding of individuals' subjective experiences and the meaning they attribute to Quranic engagement about their mental health. This could provide rich, contextualized data to complement the findings of quantitative research.

By addressing these areas for further research, future studies can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the Quran's role in promoting mental health and inform the development of culturally sensitive and spiritually grounded interventions for the Muslim community.

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