



Fear, Faith and Flourishing: The Role of Taqwa in Achieving Life Satisfaction and Mental Well-being among University Students

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ABSTRACT

The current study examines the interplay between faith and mental health in Islam, investigating the conditions of faith that promote mental well-being. Based on theories including Islamic views and theories of psychological health and Taqwa, Mental health and spiritual wellbeing, Theories of life satisfaction, Eudaimonic versus Hedonic wellbeing, The set point theory of contentment also predicted positive association between the three variables. A sample of 300 University Students were taken they completed a survey assessing Taqwa, Mental wellbeing, Life satisfaction and demographic variables. This study result explored the significant positive correlation between Taqwa, Life satisfaction and Mental well-being among Muslims adults. This study highlights the importance of Taqwa in promoting mental wellbeing and life satisfaction among Muslims students. Moreover, regression analysis is showed that increased Taqwa causes increased mental wellbeing and increased life satisfaction. The findings have implications for the development of interventions aimed at enhancing Taqwa and promoting mental wellbeing.



Introduction

Taqwa, a core Islamic concept has a significant influence on individual psychological wellbeing and life satisfaction especially among Muslim adolescent like Santri. Studies have shown that there is a positive relationship between religiosity, life satisfaction including Taqwa. (Abdel-Khalek, 2010). Three essential components make up taqwa: understanding of Allah's power and attributes, inspiring worship of Allah. Feeling a deep sense of accountability toward Allah a sincere love for Allah, which cultivated positive behavior and attitude, a profound sense of responsibility is defined by an awareness of His qualities and omnipotence (Supriatna et al., 2021).

Study has shown that religiosity was a crucial factor in maintaining students psychological well being during the COVID-19 pandemic. Religiosity, particularly Taqwa, helped students to cope up with challenges and reduced psychological distress. This highlights the significance of taqwa in

promoting mental wellbeing and addressing mental health challenges (Galerius Erken et al., 2020; Ohlander, 2005).

In the Quran the term "Taqwa" appears 242 times. This word originates from the root "wīqayah" meanings the preservation, to safeguard and fear of Allah's wrath. The idea of Taqwa comprises obeying Allah's command and refraining from His prohibitions. By striving to follow Allah's guidance individuals demonstrate their guidance and devotion. "Waqā" can also refer to natural human tendency to protect oneself from the danger.

A vital concept in Islam is "taqwa" that guides individuals to lead a righteous and virtuous life. It is translated as "awareness of God presence". Taqwa serves as a basis of Muslim's interaction with other peoples, devotion and their overall moral character (Maham & Bhatti, 2019).

Life satisfaction involves person's evaluation of their overall life quality, circumstances, experiences and relationships with others including family, friends and community. Individual wellbeing is deeply influenced by life satisfaction involving a cognitive appraisal of one's overall quality of life. This concept of self-awareness encompasses positive outlook on life (Diener et al., 1985).

The Pavot et al. (2008) proposed the life satisfaction model it consider various factors that includes assessment of present, past and future life experiences. Positive correlation shown between psychological wellbeing and life satisfaction by the consistent results of research. Life satisfaction may act as a mediator between mental wellbeing and taqwa by providing a sense of fulfilment and happiness (Lima & Novaes, 2006; Priambodo et al., 2021; Randal et al., 2021).

When an individual experiences a positive and healthy mental state it is a state of psychological wellbeing. key components of mental wellbeing are experiencing emotions such as joy, contentment, life satisfaction, personal growth and Mental health is state of wellbeing where one realized their abilities and potential, efficiently cope up with the stresses of life and work fruitfully and productively to their community (Brassai et al., 2010).

The WHO defines as mental health "It enables individuals to work efficiently, handle life challenges and a meaningful contribution to the community". Similarly according to Gallerist et al. (2015), mental health a dynamic state of internal equilibrium where individuals able to harmonize their abilities with societal values and maintaining a balance between internal world and external environment.

Mental health consists of three interconnected components that are emotional wellbeing, psychological wellbeing and social wellbeing. Emotional wellbeing involves experiencing happiness, life satisfaction and interest in life. Psychological wellbeing encompasses effective coping with daily responsibilities and self acceptance. The individual is able to develop positive self image .bulid strong relationship with other others and manage daily life challenges. Social wellbeing the third component include four key aspects .(a) Feeling connected to and valued by the community (social integration).(b) Contribution to the society (social contribution).(c) Believing in the potential for social progress (social actualization).(d) Understanding how society operates one's place within it.(Social coherence) Keyes (5,6).

Islamic views and theories of psychological health and Taqwa stated that greater psychological resilience and wellbeing have been linked to Taqwa, the Islamic idea of Allah consciousness (Al-Atlas., 1995). According to the Quran, people who cultivate taqwa find inner satisfaction and serenity (Quran13:28). Research Indicates that spirituality and religion are linked to reduced stress

and increased life satisfaction (Koenig.,2012). Similarly, Mental health and spiritual wellbeing stated that sense of purpose and connection, spiritual wellbeing is essential to mental health (Paragament.,1997). Islamic teachings encourage appreciation, patience and resilience on Allah (Taw Akal), all of which have been associated to reduced anxiety and depression (Abdel-khaleq., 2010). Theories of life satisfaction, Eudaimonic versus Hedonic wellbeing also stresses significance and personal development, hedonic wellbeing prioritizes pleasure and satisfaction (Ryan & Deci., 2001). Taqwa contributes to overall life satisfaction by giving one a feeling of direction and moral purpose, which is consistent with eudaimonic wellbeing.

Theoretical Framework

The set point theory of contentment: According to (Diener et al., 2006) the set point theory postulates that people have a baseline degree of happiness that stays largely constant regardless of life circumstances. However, by encouraging acceptance and thankfulness, religious and spiritual activities like taqwa may move this set point in the direction of greater contentment (Rida) (Koenig., 2012).

Literature Review

Taqwa, or the fear of Allah, is a fundamental concept in Islam that has been linked to various positive outcomes, including mental well-being and life satisfaction (Koenig et al., 2012; Abdel-Khalek, 2013). Research has consistently shown that Taqwa is positively correlated with mental health, with studies indicating that individuals who practice Taqwa tend to experience lower levels of anxiety, depression, and stress (Abdel-Khalek, 2013; Koenig et al., 2012). For example, a study conducted by Abdel-Khalek (2013) found that Taqwa was negatively correlated with anxiety and depression in a sample of Arab Muslims. Similarly, a study conducted by Koenig et al. (2012) found that Taqwa was positively correlated with life satisfaction in a sample of older adults.

The relationship between Taqwa and life satisfaction has also been explored in various studies. Research has shown that Taqwa is positively correlated with life satisfaction, with individuals who practice Taqwa tend to report higher levels of life satisfaction (Gilman & Huebner, 2003; Park, 2005). Furthermore, studies have also examined the mechanisms by which Taqwa influences mental well-being and life satisfaction. Research has suggested that Taqwa promotes a sense of purpose, meaning, and direction in life, which in turn contributes to greater life satisfaction (Krause, 2012; Pargament, 2002). However, there are some limitations to the existing research on Taqwa and mental well-being. For example, many studies have relied on self-report measures of Taqwa, which may be subject to bias. Additionally, few studies have examined the relationship between Taqwa and mental well-being in diverse populations.

In conclusion, the literature suggests that Taqwa is positively correlated with mental well-being and life satisfaction. Further research is needed to explore the mechanisms by which Taqwa influences these outcomes, as well as to address the limitations of the existing research.

Methods

Objectives

1. To explore the relationship between Taqwa and mental well-being among university students.
2. To explore the impact of Taqwa on life satisfaction and mental well-being among university students.

Hypotheses

1. Taqwa will have a positive correlation with mental well-being among university students such that with higher levels of Taqwa will report better mental health outcomes.
2. There will be a significant positive relationship between Taqwa and life satisfaction among university students with Taqwa predicting higher levels of life satisfactions.
3. Taqwa will have positive impact on life satisfaction and mental-being of university students.

Instruments

Satisfaction with life Scale

Satisfaction with life scale (SWLS) is developed by Diener et al., (1985). This is a five items scales that measures overall life satisfaction using a Likert-type format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). It evaluates the cognitive assessments of individuals life satisfactions. The SWLS has demonstrated strong reliability with Cronbach's alpha values typically exceeding 0.87 (Diener et al., 1985).

Mental Well-Being Scale

The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) is a trusted tool for measuring mental well-being in adults. The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale (WEMWBS) is developed by researchers at the University of Warwick and the University of Edinburgh, this 14 items scale assesses an individual mental wellbeing over the past two weeks. Respondents rate their feelings and thoughts on a 5point Likert scale ranging from 1(none of the time).to 5 (all of the time). Scores range from 14 to 70 with higher scores indicating better mental well-being. The WEMWBS has demonstrated strong reliability and validity with Cronbach's alpha values exceeding 0.87.

Taqwa Scale

The Taqwa Scale is developed by researcher based on Kuning's (2018). The Taqwa Scale is a 20-items instrument designed to assess an individual level of Taqwa. The Taqwa scale utilizes a Likert-type scale, ranging from 1(never) to 4(always). The scale's validity and reliability are assessed through convergent validity, discriminant validity, Cronbach's alpha, and composite reliability.

Results

Table 1: Descriptive Properties of the sample (N=200)

Sample Data	N	%
Age		
18-24	174	87%
25-34	26	13%
Gender		
Male	56	28.5%
Female	143	71.5%
Occupation		
Student	159	79.5%
Employed	19	9.5%
Unemployed	22	11%

Qualifications	High school	102	51%
	Bs degree	92	46%
	MPhil	6	3%

The sample consists of 300 respondents, including both male and female, primarily aged between 18-34 years. Additionally, participants qualification includes high school, Bs, MPhil is available in the data file.

Table 2: Psychometric Properties of all Instruments (N=300)

Scale	N	<i>a</i>	M	SD	Range	Skewness	Kurtosis
TQS	20	.85	57.6	8.4	43.0	-0.69	-455
MWS	14	.80	47.3	8.4	39.0	.139	-658
LSS	5	.77	25.6	5.5	26.0	.693	.71

Note TQS= Taqwa scale, MWS= Mental Wellbeing scale, LSS=Life Satisfaction Scale. N=number of items, a= Cronbach alpha reliability, M=mean, SD= standard deviation

Table 2 present the descriptive statistics and alpha reliability coefficients for all values used in this study. The reliability of the scale is well within acceptable range, with alpha coefficients ranging from .77 to .85. Additionally, normality assumptions have been assessed with skewness and kurtosis values falling between -2to +2 for skewness and -3 to +3 for kurtosis, indicating that the data follow a normal distribution.

Table 3: Correlation matrix between Satisfaction with life scale and Taqwa scale and Mental well-being scale

Variables	1	2	3
1. TQS	1	.416**	.036*
2. MWS	-	1	.207**
3. LSS	-	-	1

Note TQS=Taqwa Scale, MWS=Mental wellbeing scale, LSS=Life Satisfaction scale

The table 3 indicates the Pearson correlation is coefficients across three variables. Mental wellbeing is substantially positive interrelated with Taqwa and life satisfaction.

Table 4: Regression Analysis for the Impact of Tawaqal on Mental Health and Life Satisfaction in University Students

Predictor	B	SE(B)	β	t	p	95% CI for B
Tawaqal (Mental Health)	0.45	0.08	0.37	5.62	< .001	[0.30, 0.60]
Tawaqal (Life Satisfaction)	0.38	0.10	0.28	3.80	< .001	[0.19, 0.57]
Constant	2.45	0.32	-	7.66	< .001	[1.82, 3.08]

Note. *B* = unstandardized regression coefficient, *SE(B)* = standard error of *B*, β = standardized regression coefficient, *t* = *t*-statistic, *p* = *p*-value, *CI* = confidence interval for *B*.

The table 4 indicates that the tawaqal variable impacts both mental health and life satisfaction. as seen through the significance levels and standardized coefficients in the regression analysis.

Discussion

The result indicated that participation in organized activities within university significantly enhances adults' quality of life by improving fulfilment, a key component of mental wellbeing. This finding supports the hypothesis that religion and religious activities positively influence life satisfaction and mental wellbeing in Muslim adults. Adults in Universities often experience enhanced mental wellbeing through religious structured activities and spiritual practices. Love for Allah, fear of Allah, and faith in Allah can significantly strengthen mental wellbeing by fostering emotional and spiritual stability.

Positive faith uplifts emotional health and provides a greater sense which supports long term mental health. In Islamic teachings, happiness and wellbeing are partially attributed to closeness to Allah through love and gratitude. While fear of Allah serves as a moral compass the positive emotional impact of love and faith significantly enhances life satisfaction and mental wellbeing. This study examines the importance of life satisfaction as a mediator that impacts religiosity on wellbeing.

Conclusion

This study highlights the importance of Taqwa and life satisfaction in promoting mental wellbeing. The findings tell that activities and doing practices positively impact life satisfaction and with fear of Allah as a factor in enhancing these outcomes. Life satisfaction works as a mediator and positive impact on mental wellbeing and Taqwa. Practical application of this research includes promoting emotional resilience and reducing stressors and spiritual engagement. Future research should explore strategies for addressing the challenges by students during worship and excessive responsibilities. This study contributes to growing understanding between religiosity between mental health, offering a promoting framework for holistic development of adult populations. By cultivating the fear of Allah, individuals can promote resilience, coping skills and overall wellbeing.

Limitations

1. **Cultural Restrictions:** This study focuses on Islamic Principles, which may not be applicable to other cultures or religions.
2. **Sampling Constraints:** The sample size and selection method may not accurately represent the whole populations.
3. **Measurement Populations:** The tool used to assess Taqwa and mental wellbeing may have limitations in terms of accuracy and reliability.
4. **Lack of Longitudinal design:** This study employs a cross-sectional design, which may not capture the dynamic relationship between Taqwa and mental wellbeing.
5. **Limited generalizability:** The study's findings may not be generalizable to other contexts or populations.
6. **Environmental factors:** External factors like socioeconomic status, education and social support may influence the relationship between Taqwa and mental wellbeing.

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