

The Impact of Almsgiving Therapy on Volunteer Members' Personal Happiness

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to understand more deeply the extent to which the practice of almsgiving can contribute to increasing subjective happiness in individuals who are active in volunteer activities. In the perspective of Islamic psychology, almsgiving is not just a social activity, but a form of worship that reflects empathy, sincerity, and concern for others, which is indirectly believed to be able to strengthen the emotional and spiritual conditions of the perpetrators. This research uses a mixed methods approach, which combines quantitative data through questionnaires with qualitative data through in-depth interviews. A total of 128 respondents from among volunteers filled out an instrument consisting of a happiness scale based on the PERMA model (Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Achievement), as well as an almsgiving therapy scale that assesses the intensity and consistency of almsgiving activities carried out. The results of statistical analysis show that there is a significant positive relationship between the practice of almsgiving and the level of happiness, with a Pearson correlation value of 0.596. The contribution of almsgiving to happiness reached 35.5% based on simple linear regression results. This finding was reinforced by an interview with one of the participants who indicated positive changes in psychological and spiritual aspects after regularly practicing almsgiving, such as feeling more peaceful, having a more meaningful life, and a greater enthusiasm for sharing. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that almsgiving has great potential as a form of spiritual value-based intervention that can strengthen mental resilience and improve emotional well-being, especially in individuals who are active in social work. This research is expected to be an initial step in the development of a positive psychology approach based on religious values.

Keywords : Almsgiving Therapy, Subjective Happiness, Volunteers, Psychological Well-Being, Mixed Methods

Introduction

One of the main values in the teachings of Islam is as a religion that brings mercy to all nature. Islam emphasizes that every human being has an equal position before Allah SWT. Muslims are encouraged to do infaq and sadaqah. In line with the humanitarian spirit taught in the Qur'an, humanism values such as social justice that is free from discrimination become an important foundation in the implementation of Islamic teachings, especially in the context of Indonesian society.

Allah created human beings with the aim that they should submit and obey all His commands. Good deeds are held in high esteem in Islam and are what Allah wants people to do. However, in practice, doing good every day often requires a strong determination and a sincere foundation of faith. When one realizes that life in this world is only temporary, then we will be more easily encouraged to do good, with the hope of meeting Allah later accompanied by the best provision, namely piety. One form of kindness that every Muslim can do is to give alms. Through almsgiving, a servant can increase his provisions for the afterlife and achieve the love and pleasure of Allah SWT. Almsgiving itself is a form of giving, both material and non-material, which is given voluntarily and sincerely

solely for the sake of obtaining Allah's reward and pleasure. In material form, alms can be in the form of assets distributed to those in need (Jannati, 2021).

Islam as a religion that brings mercy to all creatures holds the basic principle that all humans are equal before Allah SWT. Islamic teachings also encourage people to share through infaq and sadaqah. In line with the message of humanity contained in the Qur'an, humanism values such as social justice free from discrimination are the main foundation in the practice of Muslim charity in various parts of the world, including in Indonesia (Zainudi, 2024).

According to Udin (2016) With the majority of the population being Muslim, Indonesia has great potential in mobilizing the people's economy through the spirit of sharing, especially in the form of alms which is part of the teachings of generosity in Islam. Basically, the main goal is not only to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor, but also to help the poor get out of the shackles of poverty and prevent them from experiencing hunger and suffering in life (Deden, 2020).

According to Islamic teachings, almsgiving includes two important dimensions, namely the spiritual and social dimensions. Spiritually, almsgiving is a means for a servant to get closer to Allah SWT. While socially, alms have a role in strengthening bonds of brotherhood and building solidarity among people (Faizin, 2015).

In general, charity can be interpreted as a form of giving that is done by a Muslim to others sincerely and without coercion, without any time limit or a certain amount. According to Firdaus (2017), this action is a manifestation of the belief and faith that a person has, which is based on the hope of obtaining the pleasure and reward of Allah SWT. On the other hand, those who receive alms will feel a positive impact in the form of ease in meeting their needs.

Almsgiving can be a predictor of mental health where by giving alms it means that a person has given a favor to others either in material or immaterial terms. Thus, there is no envy and jealousy rooted in the human heart because they know that if they do good by giving something to others, they will be happy and will also make others happier. In addition, by giving alms, there is no excessive fear and anxiety about wealth which is a trust from Allah SWT. because they understand that wealth will be eternal by giving alms so they will not experience mental disorders. People who always give alms will also have a positive attitude with others where they will be happy when they see others happy. Thus, it can be understood that mental health will be achieved through charity.

Based on the theoretical description and previous findings regarding the relationship between prosocial behavior and psychological well-being, this study formulates a preliminary conjecture regarding the relationship between the practice of almsgiving therapy and the level of happiness of individuals who act as volunteers. Specifically, this conjecture is expressed in the form of a hypothesis, namely that there is a significant influence between the intensity of almsgiving activities and the personal happiness felt by volunteer members. In other words, the higher a person's involvement in almsgiving activities, the greater the likelihood of that individual experiencing an increase in subjective happiness.

Method

This study uses a mixed method by integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches together. The quantitative approach was conducted through distributing questionnaires to 128 volunteers to explore the relationship between the independent variable, almsgiving therapy, and the dependent variable, volunteer personal happiness. This study used two measurement tools. First, a happiness

measuring instrument adapted from the concept of happiness according to Seligman (2002), which consists of 15 statement items covering five main dimensions, positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and achievement. Second, the almsgiving therapy scale compiled and developed based on research by Rusdi, et al. (2018), consisting of 7 statement items that measure the intensity and consistency of individuals in doing alms as a form of therapy.

On the other hand, a qualitative approach was applied through in-depth interviews with several purposively selected respondents, in order to dig deeper into their subjective experiences and perceptions of the influence of almsgiving therapy practices on their emotional and psychological conditions. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation test, and simple linear regression model to determine the significant effect of almsgiving therapy on the level of volunteer happiness. Meanwhile, qualitative data was analyzed using a thematic approach to identify narrative patterns that emerged from the respondents' experiences.

Results

The study involved a total of 128 respondents, with two main variables observed, volunteer members' personal happiness and almsgiving therapy. All data used was checked and no blank or missing values were found, so the analysis was conducted with complete data. This ensured that all results reflected the full data without the need for additional treatment of missing data.

Based on the results of the analysis, the mean value on the volunteer members' personal happiness variable was 52.20, while the median value was recorded as 53.00 and the most frequently occurring value was 52. The range of volunteer members' personal happiness scores ranged from a minimum of 13 to a maximum of 65, with a spread or standard deviation of 7.83. Meanwhile, almsgiving therapy scores have a mean of 26.77 with the same median and mode of 27. The range starts from 9 to 45, and the spread is smaller than volunteer members' personal happiness, which is 4.15. This shows that the variation in almsgiving therapy scores tends to be narrower than volunteer members' personal happiness.

From the results of the correlation test using the Pearson method, it was found that there is a fairly strong relationship between the almsgiving therapy and volunteer members' personal happiness variables, with a correlation value of 0.596 and a very high level of significance ($p < 0.01$). This means that the higher the SS score owned by respondents, the SB value also tends to increase. This relationship is positive and statistically significant.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's	
Alpha	N of Items
.661	2

Picture 1

The reliability test to measure the consistency of the measuring instrument resulted in a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.661. This value indicates that the instrument used has sufficient internal consistency, although it has not reached the optimal level. For the type of research that is still in the initial or exploratory stage, this figure is still considered feasible to use.

Data distribution was tested using two methods, namely Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk. Both showed significant results ($p < 0.05$), indicating that the data did not follow a normal distribution. However, due to the sufficient number of respondents, non-conformity to the normal distribution is not considered to be an obstacle in the application of parametric statistical analysis such as correlation and regression.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.596 ^a	.355	.350	6.31694

a. Predictors: (Constant), Almsgiving Therapy

Picture 2

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2766.243	1	2766.243	69.323	.000 ^b
	Residual	5027.874	126	39.904		
	Total	7794.117	127			

a. Dependent Variable: Volunteer Members' Personal Happiness

b. Predictors: (Constant), Almsgiving Therapy

Picture 3

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	22.120	3.655		6.052	.000
	SS	1.124	.135	.596	8.326	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Volunteer Members' Personal Happiness

Picture 4

Simple linear regression analysis was used to determine how much influence almsgiving therapy has on volunteer members' personal happiness. The results show that almsgiving therapy significantly influences volunteer members' personal happiness, with an R square value of 0.355. This means that about 35.5% of the variation in volunteer members' personal happiness can be explained by almsgiving therapy. The regression line equation formed is volunteer members' personal happiness = $22.120 + 1.124$ (almsgiving therapy), which means that every one-point increase in almsgiving therapy has the potential to increase the value of volunteer members' personal happiness by 1.124.

The high model significance ($p < 0.001$) reinforces that almsgiving therapy is a relevant predictor of volunteer members' personal happiness.

To complement the quantitative data, the researcher conducted an interview with a participant with the initials AAP, a volunteer who showed a consistent increase in happiness levels after undergoing regular almsgiving therapy. The subject was purposively chosen because it was considered to represent a significant change that wanted to be explored more deeply.

In the interview, AAP said that her regular almsgiving activities had a strong emotional and spiritual impact. She feels more connected to others, calmer inside, and has a more meaningful outlook on life. Giving makes her feel useful and increases her self-confidence.

AAP's experience is in line with positive psychology theory which states that the act of giving, as a form of prosocial behavior, can increase positive emotions, meaning in life, and psychological well-being (Lyubomirsky, 2007; Post, 2005). Thus, charity is not only a social act, but also a psychological approach that strengthens the emotional resilience and personal happiness of the volunteers.

Discussion

The findings in this study show that there is a strong and meaningful relationship between the almsgiving therapy and volunteer members' personal happiness variables. The correlation value of 0.596 indicates that the higher the almsgiving therapy value a person has, the more likely it is followed by an increase in volunteer members' personal happiness value. This relationship reflects a positive association between the two variables that may illustrate the role of factors such as social support, trust, or other interpersonal aspects towards increasing beliefs or psychological aspects represented by volunteer members' personal happiness. Furthermore, the regression analysis results reinforced these findings. Almsgiving therapy was shown to significantly influence volunteer members' personal happiness, with a contribution of 35.5% to the variation in volunteer members' personal happiness scores. The regression model formed-volunteer members' personal happiness = $22.120 + 1.124$ (almsgiving therapy)-indicates that a one-point increase in almsgiving therapy is followed by a 1.124-point increase in volunteer members' personal happiness.

Although the data distribution was not completely normal according to the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, the large sample size allowed the analysis to be carried out properly using parametric methods. On the other hand, the reliability of the measuring instrument, which reached a score of 0.661, shows that the tool used is quite adequate, especially in the context of exploratory research. Overall, these results provide insight that almsgiving therapy has a significant role in shaping volunteer members' personal happiness and open up opportunities for further studies with a more in-depth approach and broader scope.

The findings from the quantitative data were reinforced through an in-depth interview with the subject AAP. From the results of the conversation, it appears that almsgiving activities not only provide emotional satisfaction in a short time, but also have a sustainable impact in shaping a more meaningful view of life. The subject revealed that through giving, he felt more connected to others, felt his existence was more useful, and experienced an increase in the spiritual dimension within himself. He also reported feeling calmer in dealing with personal challenges and more motivated to continue contributing to his community. These positive effects were not limited to the moment of giving, but extended to daily attitudes and behaviors, such as being more patient, empathetic, and

optimistic. This experience is in line with the thoughts of Lyubomirsky (2007) and Post (2005), who emphasize that prosocial behavior can foster positive emotions and support the growth of happiness in the long run. Therefore, almsgiving therapy can be understood as a psychological approach that contributes to strengthening the emotional resilience and meaning of life of the volunteer.

Conclusion

From the overall analysis results, it can be concluded that the almsgiving therapy has a positive and significant relationship with the volunteer members' personal happiness variable. Almsgiving therapy is not only directly correlated, but also has a real influence as a factor that predicts the value of volunteer members' personal happiness. This is evidenced through simple regression analysis, where Almsgiving therapy is able to explain about 35.5% of changes in volunteer members' personal happiness. Thus, it can be said that an increase in SS correlates with an increase in volunteer members' personal happiness value. Although the data distribution is not statistically ideal, the validity of the results remains reliable due to the sufficient sample size. Overall, this study has successfully proven the bidirectional relationship between almsgiving therapy and volunteer members' personal happiness, while providing a basis for further research that can develop a broader understanding of these variables.

Support from quantitative and qualitative data provides a complete picture that almsgiving therapy has a significant impact on volunteers' personal happiness. Interviews with subject AAP revealed a positive transformation in life perception and subjective happiness after participating in regular almsgiving activities. This strengthens the understanding that almsgiving therapy is not only a social action, but also a psychological strategy based on meaning and positive emotions that can be applied in volunteer welfare strengthening program.

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