

The Effect of Qur'anic Murottal Therapy on Academic Stress of College Students in Palembang City

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the effect of Qur'anic murottal therapy on academic stress in university students in Palembang City. The method used in this study was a quasi-experimental method with a one group Pre-test-Post-test design involving students with a total of 44 respondents from various universities in Palembang City. Data were collected using a Google Form questionnaire containing a validated academic stress scale instrument with a total of 24 statement items which were then analyzed using the Wilcoxon non-parametric statistical test. The results showed no difference before and after the treatment of murottal therapy of Al-Qur'an Surah Ar-Rahman was given ($p = 0.573 < 0.05$). Therefore, it can be interpreted that there is no effect of Qur'anic murottal therapy on academic stress in students in Palembang City. The research findings contain differences in the results of research conducted by researchers with previous studies which state that there is an influence between Qur'anic murottal therapy on academic stress. Therefore, the researcher reviews various factors that influence the difference in these results, as well as things that are weaknesses in this study.

Keywords : Islamic Psychotherapy, Murottal Al-Qur'an, Academic Stress, College Students

Introduction

Students in the modern era are faced with various complex academic pressures, such as demands for high study loads, expectations to obtain optimal grades, and the need to complete education on time. These various pressures have the potential to trigger academic stress which has an impact on students' mental health and academic achievement (Pascoe, 2020). In addition, students must also face external pressures in the form of expectations from family and society to achieve success in their studies, which can worsen their psychological condition (Beiter, 2015). These high levels of stress are often compounded by limitations in time management skills, the use of ineffective learning strategies, and an imbalance between academic and personal life demands (Shamsuddin, 2013). In addition, new challenges such as the transition to online learning also require adaptation to the use of technology, which in some cases increases psychological distress due to limited social support and lack of direct interaction (Aristovnik, 2020).

This problem is also evident through various studies that show high rates of stress among students. A study conducted in the United States revealed that around 87% of students consider education as the main cause of stress in their lives (American Psychological Association in Pascoe et al., 2020). This condition indicates that academic stress is not only triggered by factors related to academics, but also influenced by students' overall social, economic, and psychological situations. This suggests the need for a comprehensive approach to addressing this issue (Ibrahim, 2013). In addition, one of the relevant studies was conducted by Zamroni, (2015) who evaluated the level of

academic stress in students of Maulana Malik Ibrahim State Islamic University Malang. The results showed that 16.2% of students experienced high levels of academic stress, while the remaining 70.5% were in the moderate category. The highest prevalence rates were found in the Islamic Education (36.7%), Al-Ahwal al-Syakhsyah (30%), and Physics (26.6%) majors, indicating that academic stress is a real problem that is significant and varies between majors within the university.

Researchers Vermunt and Steensman, 2005; Topper, 2007; Malach-Pines and Keinan, 2007; in Khan, Altaf, and Kausar, (2013) stated that stress can be seen as the view of individuals who perceive a mismatch between pressures from the environment (stressors) and their ability to meet those demands. Stress is generally defined as a negative reaction experienced by a person due to excessive pressure or other types of burden. Stressful situations arise when a person is faced with conditions that he or she considers overwhelming and difficult to handle. Stress can occur when the burden borne exceeds the individual's ability. According to Misra and Castillo (2010), sources of stress in the academic environment include students' views on the amount of knowledge that needs to be learned and thoughts about insufficient time to master it. Common academic stressors include family pressure, scholarship demands, financial problems, classroom competition, and courserelated burdens. Agolla and Ongori (2009) cite the views of Erkutlu and Chafra (2006), Polychronopoulou and Divaris (2005), and Misra and McKean (2000) who explain that when these events occur, individuals may lose order, become confused, and consequently become unable to cope, leading to stress-related health problems.

Islamic teachings provide comprehensive guidance for dealing with various life challenges including mental health problems. In Islam, the principle that "with difficulty comes ease" (QS. AlInshirah: 6) is an important foundation that instills hope and serenity in every Muslim. This teaching shows that every test, including stress, anxiety or life pressure is impermanent and always comes with a way out or solution (Sabry & Vohra, 2013). According to Jozaghi & et.al., (2016) Islam not only recognizes stress as part of the test of life but also provides various healing approaches that are spiritual and psychological, one of which is through Islamic psychotherapy. Islamic psychotherapy is a form of therapy that integrates the principles of modern psychology with Islamic teachings, such as faith in Allah's destiny, patience, dhikr, prayer, reading the Qur'an, and selfintrospection (muhasabah). Keshavarzi & Haque, (2013) mentioned that Islamic psychotherapy is not a substitute for medical treatment, this approach serves as a complementary therapy that utilizes religious values and practices to achieve emotional and spiritual balance. Rothman, et al., (2024) also mentioned that, the firm belief in the help of Allah SWT is the main foundation to provide hope and strength in the face of adversity. This therapy helps individuals understand the meaning behind suffering, improve their relationship with Allah, and foster a deep sense of sincerity and tawakal. The strong spiritual values in Islamic psychotherapy not only aim to reduce stress symptoms but also build resilience in the face of life's tests. Therefore, Islam does not deny the existence of stress but offers a comprehensive solution covering spiritual, emotional and cognitive aspects to overcome it with dignity and hope (Rassool & Khan, 2024).

Islamic psychotherapy is a healing strategy that utilizes the Qur'an and As-Sunnah (Hadith) as a reference, as well as theories from counselors or experts in the field of counseling (Karim, 2021). It can be concluded that Islamic psychotherapy is an approach to overcome various mental problems using the principles of Islamic religious teachings. Islamic psychotherapy has an important role in individual mental health. This therapy can help reduce various mental health problems, one of which is academic stress faced by many adolescents. There are various methods that can be applied, including dhikr, Qur'anic murottal, prayer, supplication, ruqyah, and others. However, one of the simplest ways to deal with academic stress is by murottal Al-Qur'an. In this way, individuals experiencing academic stress can feel inner calm.

Qur'anic therapy provides many prayers that contain positive sentences and hope, this can provide mental strength for both readers and listeners, so that it can increase self-confidence, optimism, and heal the soul that is being disturbed (Alam, 2016). Septadiana mentioned that

Qur'anic murottal therapy is a complementary intervention using the recitation of the holy verses of the Qur'an as a healing effort (Gunawan, H. & Mariyam, M., 2022). Referring to the findings of Qudsyi (2022) which indicated that the provision of murottal therapy can significantly reduce stress levels in college students, researchers are encouraged to conduct further studies to evaluate the effectiveness of Surah Ar-Rahman murottal therapy in reducing academic stress. This study focused on students from various universities in Palembang City in an effort to obtain more in-depth empirical evidence regarding the effect of the therapy on the academic pressure they experience.

Method

This study used quasi-experimental research with a quantitative approach. According to Price, Jhangiani, et al., (2015) quasi-experimental research is research that resembles experimental research but is not actual experimental research, quasi-experiments because they are without randomization. Quasi-experiments are often conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of a treatment, perhaps a type of psychotherapy or educational intervention. The research design used is One Group Pre-test-Post-test Design, which is a design that involves one group of subjects who are given an initial measurement (Pre-test), then given treatment (treatment), and ends with a re-measurement (Post-test) to see the changes that occur due to the treatment. According to Stratton (2019), Pre-test and Post-test research is one of many forms of quasi-experimental design. The term "quasi" means that it resembles experimental research, but it does not mean that quasi-experimental methods are true experimental research. This design was chosen to observe changes in subjects in implementing Qur'anic murottal therapy on their academic stress levels, which were studied in the same group without the need for comparison between groups.

The variables in this study consist of independent variables and dependent variables. The independent variable in this study is Al-Qur'an Murottal Therapy, while the dependent variable is Academic Stress. The population in this study were students from various universities in Indonesia, while the sample in this study were students from various universities in Palembang City. The respondents in this study amounted to 44 people with an age range of 19 to 23 years. The instrument used in this study is an academic stress scale adapted from the journal "Preparation of Learning Stress Scale Instruments in New Students" by Solikhah, N. A. & Prawita, E., (2024). This scale consists of 24 items designed to measure the level of academic stress in college students. Assessment is carried out using a Likert scale with five response categories, where participants are asked to provide responses based on the level of conformity to each statement. The five response categories available are: 1 = Very unsuitable, 2 = Unsuitable, 3 = Moderately suitable, 4 = Suitable, and 5 = Very suitable. This scale was chosen because it fits the context of the respondent as a student and is relevant in identifying the intensity of academic stress in research respondents.

The data collection method in this study used a Google Form questionnaire for the Pre-test and Post-test. The data analysis in this study used software assistance in the form of SPSS to conduct the Normality Test and the Wilcoxon non-parametric T-test. According to Handayani and Subakti (2021), the normality test is a test carried out with the aim of knowing whether the distribution of data in a data group is normally distributed or not. The criteria used to determine the distribution of data is said to be normal is if the significance or coefficient value (P-value) on the One Sample Shapiro Wilk Output is greater than the specified alpha of 0.05 ($P\text{-value} \geq 0.05$) (Suryani, et.al., 2019). The P-value result seen from the Shapiro Wilk Output is based on the number of samples < 50 samples. The Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test is a non-parametric test used as an alternative to the paired T-test. This test is used to compare two related or paired samples, such as before and after treatment on the same subject. The Wilcoxon test can be used as an alternative to the Paired sample T-test if the data distribution is abnormal or the normality test results are not significant. The Wilcoxon test itself aims to determine whether or not there is a difference in the average of two

paired samples and comes from two populations whose distribution is unknown or can be said to test the difference in the median of two populations based on two paired samples (Marques, et.al., 2013).

Results

Normality Test

The normality test aims to determine whether the distribution of the data that has been collected is normal or not. The normality test is a requirement for conducting the T test, both parametric and non-parametric. The normality test results will determine whether the T test performed should use parametric or non-parametric statistical analysis with parametric T test criteria if the normality test results are significant or the P-value > 0.05. The following are the results of the normality test that has been carried out:

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Pre Test	.124	44	.088	.889	44	.000
Post Test	.238	44	.000	.869	44	.000

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Based on the normality test that has been carried out, the researchers took the Shapiro Wilk significance value with consideration of the number of samples < 50. In the Shapiro-Wilk column, a significance value of 0.000 was obtained for the Pre-test and Post-test data. Therefore, it can be concluded that the distribution of scores on the murottal therapy Pre-test ($D(44) = 0.889$; $p = 0.000$) and the murottal therapy Post-test ($D(44) = 0.869$; $p = 0.000$) are not normally distributed. Therefore, the researcher continued the non-parametric T-test, namely the Wilcoxon Test.

Wilcoxon T-Test

The criteria for interpreting Wilcoxon test data according to Shadiqi, A. M., (2023), including, if $z \text{ count} < z \text{ table}$ or $-z \text{ count} > -z \text{ table}$ means that there is no difference (H_0 is accepted) and if $z \text{ count} > z \text{ table}$ or $-z \text{ count} < -z \text{ table}$ means that there is a difference (H_a is accepted). In addition, the interpretation of wilcoxon test data can also be seen based on the probability value with the provisions that if the $p\text{-value} > 0.05$, then there is no difference, while if the $p\text{-value} < 0.05$, then there is a difference.

Ranks				
		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
Post Test - Pre Test	Negative Ranks	18 ^a	21.50	387.00
	Positive Ranks	23 ^b	20.61	474.00
	Ties	3 ^c		
	Total	44		

a. Post Test < Pre Test

b. Post Test > Pre Test

c. Post Test = Pre Test

Test Statistics ^a	
	Post Test - Pre Test
Z	-.564 ^b
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.573
a. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test	
b. Based on negative ranks.	

Based on the Wilcoxon test that has been carried out, the Table Ranks shows that negative ranks contain N as many as 18, with a Mean of 21.50 and Sum of Ranks of 387.00. While the positive ranks contain N as many as 23, with a Mean of 20.61 and Sum of Ranks of 474.00. In addition, in the Test Statistic Table, the Z value is -0.564, for a 95% confidence level or sig. 5% and two-sided test, the z table value is -1.96. Therefore, it can be concluded that $-z \text{ count } (-0.564) > -z \text{ table } (-1.96)$, thus indicating that there is no significant difference before and after the murottal therapy treatment (H_0 is accepted). In addition, the results also obtained a significance value or p-value of 0.573, which shows that the p-value ($0.573 > (0.05)$) means that there is no significant difference before and after treatment.

Discussion

This study discusses the effect of Al-Qur'an Murottal therapy on reducing student stress levels which is included in the type of experimental research with the Pre-Post Test One Group Design. Therefore, researchers conducted a comparative test with the requirement of a normality test which obtained the results of the Pre-test and Post-test of murottal therapy amounting to ($p = 0.000$). The normality test results show that the probability value of both the Pre-test and Post-test is not significant because it is $> (0.05)$ means that there is no significant difference before and after being given the Qur'an murottal therapy treatment.

In addition, based on the results of the Wilcoxon Test that has been carried out, the Table Ranks obtained N on negative ranks is 18 while N on positive ranks is 23. The Mean value on negative ranks is 21.50 while the Mean value on positive ranks is 20.61. These results show that the difference in N and Mean values between negative and positive ranks has no statistically significant difference. The difference in values that exist between negative ranks and positive ranks is not enough to be a significant difference between the scores before and after the treatment is given. So based on the research conducted, it can be said that the Al-Qur'an Murottal Therapy given has no significant effect on the academic stress of students in Palembang City. It means that the Qur'anic murottal therapy treatment given is not effective in reducing stress levels in students in Palembang City.

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, researchers found that the Qur'anic murottal therapy Surah Ar-Rahman does not significantly affect the academic stress of students in Palembang City. Students who regularly listened to murottal did not report an increased sense of calm, ability to cope with anxiety, or better concentration when facing academic demands. These results are in line with research conducted by Ubaidillah (2025) which shows that Al-Qur'an listening therapy has no significant impact on reducing academic stress in students at the Faculty of Psychology UIN Raden Fatah Palembang. The results of statistical analysis show a p-value of 0.805, which means that there is no significant difference between academic stress levels before and after murottal therapy is given. According to Ubaidillah himself, one possible reason is the habit of students who have been accustomed to listening to murottal, so they do not feel a significant difference after this treatment. Thus, this finding emphasizes that Qur'anic listening therapy does

not always have a positive effect on reducing academic stress, especially for individuals who are already familiar with this therapy (Ubaidillah, 2025).

On the other hand, the researcher found a difference in the results of the research conducted by the researcher with the results of research conducted by Qudsyi (2022), which states that Qur'anic murottal therapy is significantly able to reduce students' academic stress levels. Qudsyi found a statistically significant reduction in stress levels ($p\text{-value} = 0.009$) and a large effect after students received murottal therapy. However, in this study, no significant difference was found in academic stress experienced by students in Palembang City between before and after being given murottal therapy. Thus, the results of this study indicate that murottal therapy is not always effective in reducing academic stress, in contrast to the findings by Qudsyi who showed the effectiveness of the therapy.

Researchers reviewed the findings in the form of differences in the results that researchers conducted with previous studies which could be motivated by several factors, such as, differences in the process of providing treatment both related to duration and intensity, different sample sizes and populations, different sample characteristics such as the initial psychological condition of the respondents, as well as environmental factors at the time the research was conducted. In addition, the researcher also reviewed the factors behind the normality test results which stated that the data was not normally distributed, which could be due to the variation of respondents who were not homogeneous and the presence of extreme values that were very different from other values (outlier data), which in the research of Pasaribu Berlima et.al., (2024) stated that outlier data is a value that is very different from other values in a data set. Several sources explain that outliers can cause data to not meet the assumption of normality and increase the spread of data from the mean, potentially causing bias in parameter estimation (Barus, 2023; Gregg & Moore, 2023; Quraisy, 2022). Therefore, a deep understanding of the concept of outliers is crucial in data analysis so that researchers can make the right decisions in data management and interpretation Pasaribu Berlima et.al., (2024). In relation to this, the researcher views this review as an important component that should be highlighted in the conduct of future research.

Conclusion

Based on the research results obtained, Murottal Al-Qur'an Surah Ar-Rahman Therapy does not have a significant effect on the academic stress of students in Palembang City. However, this does not necessarily indicate that murottal therapy is not beneficial, especially in other aspects. Basically, the Islamic psychotherapy approach has a good goal, which is to support inner calm and psychological well-being. However, an individual's response to spiritual healing may vary depending on their readiness, understanding and personal experience in receiving and applying the therapy. In addition, as a quasi-experimental design was used, the researcher did not have full control over the independent variables. This means that there could be other factors outside the treatment that influence the results, such as the respondents' initial psychological state, learning environment, or social support. The differences between the results of this study and the results of previous studies can be caused by a number of factors, such as variations in the implementation of the treatment, both in terms of duration and intensity, differences in sample size and population, as well as unequal subject characteristics, such as the initial psychological condition of the respondents, and environmental factors when the study took place. In addition, related to the distribution of data that is not normally distributed, researchers have reviewed the factors that may cause this condition, so that it can be taken into consideration and evaluated in future studies.

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