

The Effect of Lisani Dhikr Therapy with Tasbih, Istighfar, Takbir, and Tahlil Recitations on the Stress Levels of Undergraduate Nursing Students

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Stress is a global phenomenon that can affect anyone, including university students. Academic demands, assignments, and social environments often trigger stress, while not all students have the skills to manage it effectively. This condition may negatively impact physical health, psychological well-being, and academic performance. One religious approach believed to reduce stress is dzikir therapy.

Objectives: This study aimed to determine the effect of dzikir therapy on stress levels among undergraduate nursing students.

Methods: A pretest-posttest design without a control group was used in a quasi-experimental setting. Purposive sampling was used to select 43 respondents from among the 48 fourth-year undergraduate nursing students at Muhammadiyah University Sukabumi. A standardized stress scale questionnaire was used to gauge participants' levels of stress, and the Wilcoxon test was used to compare data before and after the intervention.

Results: The results showed that stress levels significantly decreased following the use of dzikir treatment. According to the Wilcoxon test, dzikir treatment significantly reduced stress in undergraduate nursing students, with a p-value of 0.000 (<0.05).

Conclusion: Dzikir therapy proved to be effective in reducing stress in nursing students. These findings suggest that dzikir therapy can be considered a supportive strategy in stress management programs within higher education, particularly for students with high academic burdens.

Introduction

Stress in students can cause a decrease in their academic ability which impacts their grade point average. This is characterized by difficulty concentrating, tending to procrastinate, skipping class, feeling afraid, anxious, and others (Merry, Mamahit 2020). One of the factors that cause stress is the self-belief possessed by individuals, which is also reinforced by a statement stating that between self-efficacy and academic stress in students has a negative relationship direction (Siregar & Putri, 2020).

According to the World Health Organization (2018), stress is one of the significant risk factors in the development of mental disorders worldwide. Globally, in 2020, it is estimated that 74% of individuals experience high-intensity stress, which illustrates the enormous psychological burden in modern society. Students are particularly susceptible to psychiatric problems because of the demands of their academic, social, and learning environments. According to Riskesdas (2018) data, 9.8% of teenagers and young adults in Indonesia suffer from emotional mental problems. This is a significant number that is relevant to the situation of students. This vulnerability is even more apparent in nursing students, because in addition to academic burdens, they also have to face clinical practices that require physical, psychological,



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and emotional readiness. Research in West Java reports that nearly 40% of adolescent girls experience anemia correlated with academic stress, while more than half of nursing students in this region admit to experiencing moderate to severe stress during clinical practice (Wulandari et al., 2021).

The latest data from the Sukabumi City Health Office in 2024 also shows that health students, especially nursing students, are at high risk of stress due to the combination of academic and clinical demands. This fact confirms that the mental health of nursing students in Sukabumi requires serious attention, making research on stress management interventions, including spiritual approaches such as dzikir therapy, highly relevant and important.

Nursing students are required to be able to handle heavy academic workloads, adapt to clinical practice with real patients, cope with long shifts, and meet professional competency requirements. These accumulated pressures often lead to academic stress, anxiety, and ongoing emotional exhaustion. If not managed properly, this type of stress can have a negative impact on academic performance, reduce clinical performance, and even affect their overall mental health. Therefore, stress management strategies that are quick, appropriate, and can be integrated into students' daily lives are needed.

One approach that can be used is the Islamic approach through dhikr. Bunyamin (2021) explains that dhikr in Islam serves as a means to calm the heart and mind, thereby helping individuals cope with psychological pressure. In the Islamic perspective, peace of mind is referred to as *tatma'inn al-qulub*, as stated in Al-Ra'd verse 28, which means that peace of mind consists of two important components, namely peace (*al-sukun*) and certainty (*al-yaqin*) (Rusdi, 2017). Thus, the practice of dhikr can be a spiritual instrument that provides inner peace and increases a person's psychological resilience.

Empirical research also supports the effectiveness of this approach. Nurfajrin (2023) found that spiritual intelligence has a positive and significant relationship with students' ability to cope with stress, thus reinforcing that spirituality acts as a protective factor. Furthermore, research by Kaisa et al. (2023) shows that the intensity of dhikr affects the results of students' mental health tests. Students who regularly perform dzikir have better mental health scores than students who rarely or never perform dzikir, with the latter group only scoring 77 points. These findings show that dzikir is not just a ritual of worship, but also functions as a potential spiritual therapy medium to improve the mental health of nursing students, especially when they face high academic and clinical demands.

The results of research conducted by Aina and Hermilia Wijayati (2019) show that dzikir can increase intellectual, emotional, and spiritual intelligence, which is characterized by increased empathy and the ability to regulate emotions. Dzikir also deepens a person's relationship with God, provides purpose and meaning in life, and influences mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being. Thus, the practice of dzikir has the potential as a complementary therapy that not only reduces stress but also encourages holistic personal development. However, to strengthen the scientific justification, it needs to be compared with other evidence-based interventions that are already widely used in stress management for nursing students.

One commonly used intervention is mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR), which has been shown to be effective in reducing stress, anxiety, and depression in health students (Bamber & Schneider, 2016). MBSR emphasizes full awareness of the present experience without judgment, thereby helping nursing students manage academic and clinical pressures. Another intervention is cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT), a psychological approach that focuses on restructuring negative thought patterns into more adaptive ones. Recent research shows that CBT is effective in reducing academic stress while improving student learning performance (Regehr et al., 2013). In addition, progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) is also



widely used as a non-pharmacological technique that can reduce physiological symptoms of stress, such as muscle tension and sleep disorders, which are often experienced by nursing students during clinical practice (Chen et al., 2020).

Although these interventions have been proven effective, dzikir has its own uniqueness because it integrates a spiritual dimension into the stress management process. Unlike MBSR, CBT, and PMR, which emphasize cognitive and physiological aspects, dzikir touches on religious aspects that are highly relevant to the cultural context and beliefs of nursing students in Indonesia. This makes dzikir not only a spiritual practice but also a therapy that can increase inner peace, gratitude, and confidence in facing pressure. By combining dzikir with other evidence-based interventions, this study presents a critical and comparative approach, while also confirming that dzikir therapy has the potential to be the best option in line with the needs and values of nursing students in this research environment.

Based on the results of interviews conducted by the researcher, it was found that 2 out of 3 4th year students experienced levels of academic stress characterized by excessive worry and changes in social behavior. This condition impacts academic performance and overall quality of life. Therefore, this study aims to explore the effect of dhikr therapy as an intervention that can help university students manage stress.

Methods

This study uses an experimental approach to determine how certain treatments affect respondents in measurable situations (Sugiyono, 2017). The design chosen is pretest-posttest to compare the conditions of respondents before and after being given treatment in the form of dzikir therapy. Initially, this study was designed as a quasi-experimental study, but because there was no control group for comparison, the most appropriate design was a pre-experimental study with a one-group pretest-posttest design. This design allows researchers to observe changes in respondents' stress levels after the intervention is given, even without a comparison group. The pre-experimental design's drawback is that it may jeopardize internal validity due to factors such as history and maturation effects, but it is still appropriate for use in early studies that seek to determine how effective an intervention is. Researchers at Muhammadiyah University Sukabumi looked at the impact of Dhikr therapy on stress in one group, the intervention group, using measures taken both before and after the intervention. In this study, the population consisted of 48 S1 Nursing Level 4 students of Muhammadiyah Sukabumi University. This study used *purposive sampling* technique, which is deliberate sampling based on certain criteria relevant to the research objectives. From the total population, 43 respondents were selected as samples based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria in this study were S1 Nursing Level 4 Students at Universitas Muhammadiyah Sukabumi in the 2024-2025 academic year and the exclusion criteria were RPL students / students who were taking leave. This study collected data through the distribution of questionnaires containing closed questions. The measurement tool used to measure stress levels is the Student-Life Stress Inventory (SSI), developed by Mohammad Aziz (2017). The questionnaire consists of 40 items, using a Likert scale: (1) Never, (2) Quite often, (3) Often, (4) Always. The Student-Life Stress Inventory (SSI) is a standardized and previously tested instrument, so this study did not conduct a validity test. The Student-Life Stress Inventory was tested using corrected item-total correlation. The results showed that all items in the questionnaire had positive values greater than the threshold value of 0.05, indicating that all items in the SSI were valid for measuring academic stress in students. Reliability testing was not conducted because the instrument used was standard. Student-life Stress Inventory. In



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Seswita's study, Cronbach's Alpha was found to be 0.908. This indicates that the student-life stress inventory measurement tool has high reliability and can be used.

Both univariate and bivariate analysis were employed as data analysis methods. Data analysis that describes the properties of a single variable independently is called univariate analysis. This study's analysis determines the frequency, to determine the distribution of these variables (Notoatmodjo, 2016) . Meanwhile, analysis involving two interrelated variables is called bivariate (Notoatmodjo, 2018).

The data collection process began with the preparation of instruments and obtaining ethical approval from the relevant institutions. After obtaining approval, the researchers provided informed consent to all respondents, explaining the purpose of the study, the rights of participants, and the confidentiality of data. Questionnaires were then distributed directly or online, depending on the conditions and availability of respondents. After the data was collected, the researchers checked the completeness and consistency of the responses before entering the data into the SPSS 20.0 program. Bivariate analysis was used to ascertain the link between two variables using statistical tests suitable for the kind of data, whereas univariate analysis was used to characterize the frequency distribution of each variable.

The Shapiro-Wilk test was used in this study to determine if the data was normal because there were fewer than 50 samples. If the probability was greater than 0.05, the data distribution was deemed normal; if it was less than 0.05, it was deemed abnormal. In the following phase, the hypothesis was tested using the Wilcoxon test, and the Paired Sample T test was employed if the data values were not normal. "Accept" if the p value is more than 0.05 and "Reject" H0 if it is less than 0.05. The p value was used to make the choice.

Results

Univariate Analysis

a. Respondent Characteristics

This chapter describes the results of research conducted to determine the effect of dhikr therapy on stress of undergraduate nursing students at muhammadiyah university in sukabumi, the sample used was 44 students, the results of this study there are several that are described regarding the description of the characteristics of respondents of undergraduate nursing students at muhammadiyah university in sukabumi as follows:

Table 1 . Respondents by gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	12	27,3%
Female	32	72,7%
Total	44	100%

There are 32 female students (72.7%) and 12 male students (27.3%), according to the statistics in Table 1. According to the study's findings, female respondents are more.

b. Before the dhikr therapy intervention, the following values are the mean values of stress levels

Table 2 . Mean before dhikr therapy

Stress level	Average	Frequency (n)	Std.Deviation	Std.Error Mean
<i>Pretest</i>	82.20	44	6.461	.974

Based on the data in the table, it can be concluded that the average value before being given dhikr therapy to 44 students is 82.20 with a standard deviation of 6.461.



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c. After the dhikr therapy intervention, the following values are the average values of stress levels

Table 3 . Mean after dhikr therapy

Stress level	Average	Frequency	Std. Deviation	Std.Error Mean
Posttest	43.00	44	1.220	.184

Based on the data in the table above, it can be concluded that the average value of stress level after dhikr therapy is 43.00 with a standard deviation of 1.220.

Bivariate Analysis

Table 4 . Normality test using Shapiro-wilk

Knowledge	Shapiro-wilk P-value	Conclusion
Pre-test	0.675	Normal
Post-test	0.001	Not normal

Based on the results of the normality test that the pre-test p-value shows data greater than 0.05, namely (0.675) which means normal and post-test shows results smaller than the p-value, namely (0.001) which means the data is not normal.

Table 5 . Hypothesis Test

		N	Mean Rank	Sum Rank	Of Sig (2-tailed)
Pre-test	Negative ranks	44	22.50	990.00	.000
Post-test	Positivityve ranks	0	.00	.00	
	Ties	0			
	Total	44			

According to the Wilcoxon test findings, the p-value is 0.000 <0.05, indicating that dhikr treatment has an impact on stress in Muhammadiyah University in Sukabumi undergraduate nursing students.

Discussion

1. Stress before the dhikr therapy

In this study, it discusses the results before the intervention and the intervention where the results before the therapy are given the average value can be seen in table 1 where the average value shows that stress can occur in students Based on research (D. Al Mustaqim, 2023) students who experience academic stress 72.7% and only 2.73% of students who do not experience academic stress, this explanation shows that stress, especially academic stress in students, greatly affects all aspects of human life and can have a negative impact on academic performance, health, and mental health, student productivity, and social relationships are all affected by academic stress.

In line with research Ramadhanti et al., (2019) that stress occurs when there are demands on someone in the form of a burden that exceeds their abilities. Students usually experience stress for several reasons. These include academic tenure that demands achievement, an uncertain future, and difficulty implementing new systems. Additionally, they deal with family, social, emotional, and physical issues that may impair their capacity to study and do well in school. Negative stress will make students lazy and uninterested in activities. Academic stress is



one type of negative stress that results in a person will experience a decrease in interest in learning when they experience stress.

Stress experienced by students can have both positive and negative impacts. Negative stress is often caused by heavy academic workloads, such as too many assignments and case reports, as well as close supervision and assessment from lecturers. Negative stress can also adversely affect academic performance and academic ineligibility (Goff, 2011). Research conducted Bahadır-Yılmaz, (2016) also explains that one of the sources of stress associated with high academic load is difficulty managing time. The nursing curriculum is different from the curriculum of other professions because the nursing curriculum combines between To become a competent nursing student, nurses must also master both of these things before doing clinical practice. Due to the large amount of material that nursing students have to learn, they have to divide their time for practicum, completing assignments, and studying materials for exams.

The results of this study indicate that the stress level of undergraduate students before getting dhikr therapy intervention is in the moderate category, which indicates a high academic load and emotional pressure during the learning process. This finding is in line with previous research conducted Goff, (2011) found that academic demands and preparation for university entry often cause stress for nursing students. Therefore, it is important to develop strategies to reduce stress among nursing students, such as providing emotional support and building better coping skills, as well as considering dhikr therapy as an alternative for intervention. In addition, it is important to conduct additional research to identify additional sources of stress for university students.

2. Stress after the dhikr therapy

Based on the results of the study after being given the dhikr intervention, the stress level of students can be seen in table 2 and falls into the low stress category, the practice of dhikr in Islam is an example of spiritual health. With dhikr, a person's heart becomes calm and free from negative thoughts or things. This allows them to eliminate negative thoughts and things in themselves. By regularly performing dhikr every day, it will reduce the mental health of people. One way in Islam to focus one's attention on Allah is dhikr; doing so is worth the worship of dhikr done many times in certain situations and times (Hastuti et al., 2019).

Dhikr interventions can also help reduce academic stress. Students' mental well-being, improve their academic ability, and help them succeed in their education. Supported by research conducted by Dwi Kumala et al., (2019) which states that dhikr significantly improves a person's mental well-being. According to the study, dhikr may regulate emotions in the face of excessive worry and thought distortions. In other words, it can bring about peace of mind, which affects how everyone's illnesses are prevented and treated. The findings demonstrate that dhikr treatments can lower people's stress levels.

This is reinforced by the results of research Utami, (2012), This demonstrates a strong correlation between mental health markers and religious coping. Furthermore, the findings of this investigation also demonstrate an interesting association between the two. in line with research findings Faridz, (2018) the results can show a positive relationship between the intensity of students' dhikr and their happiness. That is, the more intense the students' dhikr, the higher their happiness.

The results of this study indicate that undergraduate nursing students experience a decrease in score after dhikr therapy. That this therapy can help students feel more comfortable and calm. Therefore, to improve students' mental health, dhikr therapy as a method of reducing stress, one of which is academic stress in students, should be considered further.

3. The effect of dhikr therapy on student stress



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Based on the results of research conducted by researchers that dhikr therapy can affect stress in students with an average value in table 4.3. Research that Lilis Fitriyah, (2019) shows that dhikr can reduce stress, negative effects, and anxiety disorders. The intensity of dhikr training that is carried out regularly within a certain period of time can also help build the habit of doing dhikr regularly, which is an additional factor that can help reduce academic stress. Supported by research conducted by Ma'rufa et al., (2023) found that dhikr therapy done regularly can significantly reduce students' depressive symptoms. This makes them feel calmer, better at managing their emotions, and supports their overall mental health. The results show that dhikr therapy is one of the effective ways to help college students overcome depression.

Ultimately, this study found that the inclusion of dhikr in final year students with Malay ethnicity had an impact on decreasing the amount of distress experienced. Dhikr can help high school students who often experience academic stress. It helps students become more self-aware, deal with emotional instability, and find balance when facing academic challenges (Azzahrah, 2024). Reinforced by the results of a study conducted at UIN Jakarta's Islamic Guidance and Counseling found that spiritual intelligence helps students cope better with stress, helps them become calmer, and helps them manage stress, especially related to academic, social, and emotional pressures. (Nurfajrin et al., 2023).

The study's findings support the researcher's hypothesis that dhikr therapy significantly lowers undergraduate nursing students' stress levels; the student stress levels before and after dhikr therapy differ significantly, as indicated by the p-value of 0.000. This study shows that dhikr therapy can be an effective method to reduce stress in college students. Based on research results showing a significant decrease in stress levels after dzikir therapy intervention, researchers argue that dzikir not only has spiritual value, but also real therapeutic potential in a psychological context. Dzikir therapy is believed to be able to create inner peace through the repetition of certain phrases that can calm the nervous system and reduce stress responses. In the context of nursing students who have high academic and clinical workloads, dzikir can be an alternative stress management technique that is easy, inexpensive, and can be done independently. Therefore, researchers suggest that dzikir therapy be considered as part of a psychosocial support program in higher education, especially in the field of nursing.

Conclusion

Stress in students is a significant issue that can impact their academic performance, mental health, and social connections, according to the findings of the study that has been conducted. stress in students can be caused by various factors, therefore the application of dhikr therapy is used as a relevant strategy to overcome stress in students, this therapy combines a number of spiritual elements that aim to strengthen and deepen the individual's relationship with God, by applying the principles of uzlah and dhikr, students overcome the stress they experience. This shows that dhikr therapy is effective in reducing stress levels in university students.

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