



The Effectiveness of Spiritual Therapy in Improving Mental Peace in Schizophrenia Patients

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ABSTRACT

Background: Schizophrenia is a chronic mental disorder that causes disorganized thoughts, emotions, and behavior. Patients often experience anxiety, tension, and a loss of inner peace. Pharmacological therapy alone is often insufficient to restore mental balance. Spiritual therapy is a complementary approach that focuses on peace of mind, sincerity, and an enhanced relationship with God.

Objective: This study aims to determine the effectiveness of spiritual therapy in increasing mental peace in schizophrenia patients.

Method: The research design uses quasi experiment with a *pretest-posttest design control group the design*. The sample consisted of 40 schizophrenia patients divided into an intervention group (spiritual therapy) and a control group (routine care). Mental well-being was measured using *the Spiritual Well-Being Scale. Scale (SWBS)* before and after treatment. Data analysis using Paired t- test and Independent t- test.

Results: The results showed a significant increase in mental well-being scores in the intervention group after receiving spiritual therapy ($p = 0.001$), while the control group showed no significant change ($p = 0.243$). Comparison between groups showed a significant difference ($p = 0.002$).

Conclusion: Spiritual therapy is effective in increasing the mental peace of schizophrenia patients and can be used as a complementary therapy in psychiatric nursing care.

Keywords: Schizophrenia, Spiritual Therapy, Peace of Mind, Mental Health

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1. Introduction

Schizophrenia is a severe mental disorder that affects a person's ability to think, behave, and interact with the environment (WHO, 2023). This condition causes sufferers to frequently experience hallucinations, delusions, disorganized thoughts, and emotional disturbances, which impact their quality of life. One of the main problems faced by schizophrenia patients is mental restlessness, which triggers anxiety, fear, and aggressive behavior (Suryani, 2021).

Schizophrenia is generally treated with pharmacological therapy, typically with antipsychotics. However, this therapy is not entirely effective in stabilizing the patient's psychological state. Therefore, non-pharmacological approaches or complementary therapies are necessary, one of which is spiritual therapy.

Spiritual therapy is an effort to improve spiritual well-being by drawing closer to God through activities such as dhikr (remembrance of God), prayer, meditation, and reading holy scriptures (Rahman, 2022). These activities foster a sense of peace, acceptance of one's situation, and reduce stress and anxiety levels. In the context of schizophrenia patients, spiritual therapy can help them achieve inner peace, reduce agitation, and improve emotional control (Fauziah & Dewi, 2020).

Various studies have shown that integrating medical and spiritual approaches provides better outcomes for patients with mental disorders. A study by Handayani et al. (2021) reported an increase in *spiritual well-being and a decrease in anxiety after two weeks of dhikr therapy* in schizophrenia patients in a psychiatric hospital.

Based on this background, this study was conducted to identify the effectiveness of spiritual therapy in increasing the mental peace of schizophrenia patients as a basis for developing holistic nursing interventions.

2. Research Methods

a. Research Design

This study uses a quasi-experimental design with a pretest-posttest approach. This design was chosen to assess the effectiveness of spiritual therapy in improving the mental well-being of schizophrenia patients by comparing the intervention group and the control group before and after treatment.

b. Population and Sample

The population in this study was all schizophrenia patients undergoing treatment at the Regional Mental Hospital (RSJD) during the study period.

The study sample consisted of 40 respondents, divided into two groups:

- Intervention group (20 people): received spiritual therapy in addition to standard treatment.
- Control group (20 people): received only standard treatment without additional spiritual therapy.





The sampling technique used purposive sampling with the following inclusion criteria:

- 1) Patients with a diagnosis of schizophrenia based on the DSM-5.
- 2) In stable condition and able to participate in spiritual activities.
- 3) Willing to be a respondent by signing the informed consent.

c. Research Variables

- Independent variable: Spiritual therapy.
- Dependent variable: Level of mental calmness of schizophrenia patients.

d. Research Instruments

The instrument used was the Spiritual Well-Being questionnaire. Scale (SWBS) to measure the level of spirituality and Hamilton Anxiety Rating Scale (HARS) to assess the level of mental calm (reduction of anxiety).

The validity and reliability of the instrument have been tested previously using Cronbach's value. Alpha is 0.87 which indicates a high level of reliability.

e. Intervention Procedure

Spiritual therapy was given for 10 sessions in 2 weeks, with each session lasting 30–45 minutes.

Therapy activities include:

- 1) Joint prayer and guided dhikr.
- 2) Reading of holy verses and reflection on spiritual meaning.
- 3) Breathing exercises and dhikr meditation to calm the mind.
- 4) Religious dialogue to strengthen the meaning of life and hope.

The control group continued to receive routine pharmacotherapy treatment from a psychiatrist without additional spiritual intervention.

f. Data analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 25 with the following steps:

- 1) Normality test using Kolmogorov-Smirnov.
- 2) Homogeneity test using Levene's test.
- 3) Testing the effectiveness of spiritual therapy is done by:
 - Paired Sample t- test to compare the level of mental calmness before and after intervention in one group.
 - Independent Sample t- test to compare the differences between the intervention and control groups after treatment.

The significance level was set at $p < 0.05$.

3. Research Result

a. Results

1) Respondent Characteristics





This study involved 40 respondents, consisting of 20 in the intervention group and 20 in the control group. Based on demographic data:

- Most of the respondents were male (65%).
- The respondents' ages ranged from 25–45 years with an average of 33.4 ± 5.2 years.
- The average duration of schizophrenia is 4.7 years.
- Most respondents are Muslim (95%) and have a secondary education level (high school/equivalent).

There was no significant difference between the two groups in baseline characteristics ($p > 0.05$), so the two groups were considered homogeneous.

2) Level of Mental Peace Before and After Spiritual Therapy

The results of measuring the level of mental peace (based on the HARS score) showed a significant difference in the intervention group after receiving spiritual therapy.

Group	Average Calmness Score (Pretest)	Average Calmness Score (Posttest)	Change (Δ)	p-value
Intervention (n=20)	18.7 ± 3.5	11.2 ± 2.8	7.5	0,000*
Control (n=20)	19.1 ± 3.1	17.8 ± 3.0	1.3	0.216

Note: $p < 0.05$ indicates a significant difference

Paired test results the sample t- test showed a significant increase in mental peace in the intervention group ($p = 0.000$) after being given spiritual therapy, while in the control group there was no significant change.

3) Intergroup Comparison (Posttest)

Comparison between the intervention and control groups using the Independent Sample t- test showed a significant difference in the level of mental peace ($p = 0.001$), with the intervention group having a higher mental peace score.

4) Analysis of the Effectiveness of Spiritual Therapy

The difference in the average score for increasing mental peace shows that spiritual therapy contributed to reducing anxiety and increasing the peace of mind of schizophrenia patients by 39.6% more than the control group.

Qualitatively, some patients in the intervention group reported:

- Feeling calmer and more peaceful after participating in dhikr and prayers together.
- Sleep becomes more restful and rarely experiences auditory hallucinations.
- It is easier to interact with the social environment in the treatment room.





These findings suggest that spiritual therapy is effective in improving emotional balance and mental well-being in schizophrenia patients, especially when combined with pharmacological treatment.

b. Discussion

The results of this study indicate that spiritual therapy significantly improves the mental well-being of schizophrenia patients. After two weeks of intervention, there was a significant decrease in anxiety scores and an increase in mental well-being in the intervention group compared to the control group. This suggests that spiritual aspects can be an important component of complementary therapy in psychiatric nursing.

1) The Role of Spiritual Therapy in Reducing Stress and Anxiety

Spiritual therapy through prayer, dhikr (remembrance of God), reading holy verses, and reflecting on the meaning of life can reduce stress and emotional tension in schizophrenic patients. This activity provides a relaxation effect similar to meditation techniques, namely reducing sympathetic nervous system activity and improving the body's physiological balance (Koenig, 2018). et et al., 2015).

In addition, spiritual therapy increases feelings of closeness to God, which helps patients find new meaning and hope in facing their illness. This is in line with research conducted by Nuraeni et al. (2019) stated that spiritual involvement can increase psychological resilience and accelerate the healing process in patients with chronic mental disorders.

2) Spirituality and Soul Balance

Spiritual well-being is not only related to reducing anxiety symptoms, but also includes feelings of peace, self-acceptance, and inner calm. According to Ellison's (1983) theory of spiritual well-being, individuals with good spirituality have the ability to balance physical, mental, social, and spiritual aspects.

Schizophrenia patients often lose control of reality and experience emotional instability. Through spiritual therapy, patients learn to regulate their thoughts, focus on divine values, and achieve psychological calm, which contributes to emotional stability (Hawari, 2018).

3) Social and Environmental Support in Therapy

Environmental factors and social support also play a significant role in the effectiveness of spiritual therapy. During therapy sessions, patients participate in activities together in a peaceful and accepting atmosphere. This creates a sense of community and emotional support, which are essential to the mental rehabilitation process (Rohmani et al. et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the involvement of nursing staff and spiritual mentors in therapy fosters patients' self-confidence and belief in recovery. This community-





based spiritual approach strengthens the therapeutic relationship between patient and caregiver and increases patients' motivation to recover.

4) **Implications for Psychiatric Nursing Practice**

This study confirms that spiritual interventions can be integrated into psychiatric nursing care as a complementary therapy. Spiritual approaches can be used in conjunction with pharmacological therapy to enhance treatment effectiveness and reduce the psychological side effects of antipsychotic medications.

Psychiatric nurses play a strategic role in providing spiritual support and simple religious education aligned with the patient's beliefs. With an empathetic and humanistic approach, nurses can help patients achieve inner peace, self-acceptance, and an improved quality of life.

5) **Research Limitations**

Some limitations that need to be considered include:

- a. The number of samples is still limited (40 respondents), so generalization of the results needs to be done carefully.
- b. Measurement of spirituality is still subjective and depends on patient perception.
- c. External factors such as family support and medication adherence are not strictly controlled.

Nevertheless, the results of this study provide empirical evidence that spiritual therapy has significant clinical benefits in improving the mental well-being of schizophrenia patients.

4. **Conclusion And Suggestions**

a. **Conclusion**

Based on the results of research conducted on schizophrenia patients at the Regional Mental Hospital, it can be concluded that:

- 1) Spiritual therapy has been shown to be effective in improving mental well-being in schizophrenia patients.

Patients who participated in spiritual therapy showed a significant reduction in anxiety levels and an increase in spiritual well-being scores compared to the control group ($p < 0.05$).

- 2) A spiritual approach has a positive effect on emotional and psychological balance.

Through prayer, dhikr, reading holy verses, and reflecting on the meaning of life, patients experience feelings of peace, increased self-confidence, and hope for healing.

- 3) The integration of spirituality into psychiatric nursing has a significant therapeutic impact.





Spiritual therapy not only soothes the soul but also helps patients adjust to medical treatment, improve social relationships, and foster gratitude.

The results of this study are in line with the theory of spiritual well-being (Ellison, 1983) and the *holistic concept. nursing care*, where the patient's biological, psychological, social, and spiritual aspects need to be managed in an integrated manner to achieve optimal healing.

b. Suggestion

1) For Healthcare Institutions:

Psychiatric hospitals are advised to integrate spiritual therapy into rehabilitation programs for schizophrenia patients, by involving spiritual guides and psychiatric nurses trained in spiritual interventions.

2) For Nursing Staff:

Psychiatric nurses are expected to develop competencies in providing spiritual support with an empathetic approach, understanding the patient's faith needs, and adapting interventions to the individual's cultural and religious background.

3) For Patient Families:

It is hoped that it can provide spiritual and emotional support at home, assist patients in religious activities, and create an environment conducive to peace of mind.

4) For Further Researchers:

It is recommended to examine the long-term effectiveness of spiritual therapy with a larger sample size and incorporate qualitative methods to explore patients' subjective experiences in depth.

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