

Impact of Holy Qur'ān Recitation on Psychological Wellbeing among Muslim Youth

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ABSTRACT

The present study is aimed to examine the relation of Holy Qur'ān recitation and psychological wellbeing among the Muslim Youth. People find no time for offering prayers and reciting Holy Qur'ān because they are very busy in their daily routines and if they do so, they do it for short period of time when they are in some trouble. The objectives include firstly the exploration of the relationship of Holy Qur'ān recitation and psychological wellbeing. Second objective of the study is to explore the correlation of the Holy Qur'ān recitation with depression, anxiety and stress among young Muslims. Study sample comprises of 100 young Muslims (43 males and 57 females) falling between 17 and 25 years from Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Instruments used for data collection include psychological wellbeing scale by Kamman and Flett (1983) and DASS (depression anxiety stress scale) by Lovibond and Lovibond (1995) and a demographic sheet. Results of the study showed that significant positive relationship exists between Holy Qur'ān recitation and psychological wellbeing among young Muslims and Holy Qur'ān recitation negatively relates with depression, anxiety and stress. The present study findings support that those young Muslims who had more rate of Holy Qur'ān recitation were psychologically more stable as compared to non-frequent reciters. In the light of findings of current study, it can be declared as a quintessence that Holy Qur'ān Recitation can serve as an influential element in ensuring the positive mental health of youth. Educators and Policy makers can play a crucial role in promotion of Holy Qur'ān familiarity which will make certain the psychological and mental health of youth and of the society at large.

Keywords: *Holy Qur'ān Recitation, Psychological Well Being, Depression, Anxiety, Stress*

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Introduction

Psychological wellbeing represents mental wellbeing or healthy mental state. It describes how a person is feeling and how well he is coping with the day to day life situations. Psychological wellbeing can be acquired and maintained through adoption of certain supportive practices. Nowadays almost every individual (particularly speaking a Muslim) is psychologically disturbed and suffering from anxiety and depression because they are moving away from prayers and recitation of Holy Qur'an.

The obvious outcome experienced by the person who does not recite the Holy Qur'an daily is the loss of recitation benefits. Allah Almighty has set reward against each and every word of Qur'an, therefore, by reciting Qur'an daily, a person gets ample reward, which he will miss if the recitation is not done by the person regularly. Therefore, in order to gain religious reward, a Muslim needs to recite Qur'an regularly and it will in turn ensure a successful life not only in this world but also in ākhirat (the world hereafter).

QUR'ĀN; the Holy Book

The Holy Qur'an is for all Muslims' Holy Book. It is revealed upon Ḥazrat Muḥammad (ﷺ). It took a period of twenty three years for the Prophet Ḥazrat Muḥammad (ﷺ) to receive the complete Message of Allah. The Holy Qur'an is divided into the thirty divisions and comprises of one hundred and fourteen (114) Surahs. The Holy Qur'an is the supreme guiding book for all the believers of Islam in the world. It is a command to humanity by God that:

﴿ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لَا رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ الَّذِينَ يُؤْمِنُونَ بِالْغَيْبِ وَيُقِيمُونَ
الصَّلَاةَ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ﴾⁽¹⁾

This is the Book. In it is guidance surely without any doubt, to those who fear God, who believe in the Unseen, are steadfast in prayer, and spend out of what we have provided for them.

The Holy Prophet himself declared:

«فَإِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ سَبَبٌ طَرَفُهُ بِيَدِ اللَّهِ، وَطَرَفُهُ بِأَيْدِيكُمْ، فَتَمَسُّوْا بِهِ، فَإِنَّكُمْ
لَنْ تَضِلُّوْا، وَلَنْ تَهْلِكُوْا بَعْدَهُ أَبَدًا»⁽²⁾

Indeed this Qur'an is a rope – one end of it is in the Hand of Allah and the other end is in your hands. So hold firmly to it [the result would be] that you would never go astray and never be destroyed [no matter what the circumstance].

(1) Sūrah Al-Baqarah: 2-3

(2) Ṣaḥīḥ-Ibn-Ḥibbān, p329/1. Ḥadīth no. 122. Imām Albānī declared it as “ṣaḥīḥ” in his book “Ṣaḥīḥ al Targīb wa Tarhīb 124/1

QUR'ĀN; A miracle

It has been a time period of 1400 years since the Holy Qur'an was revealed but Holy Qur'an still challenges the imaginations and the genius of all men today. The Message of this book is really infinite in the wisdom and is eternal for all the peoples of all the times. That is the reason why it is a continuous miracle. If read properly, this book opens the eyes and hearts as well. It guides and convinces a person sometimes very gently, sometimes very powerfully.

It is proven as an authentic and reliable hadith:

«مَنْ قَرَأَ حَرْفًا مِنْ كِتَابِ اللَّهِ فَلَهُ بِهِ حَسَنَةٌ، وَالْحَسَنَةُ بِعَشْرِ أَمْثَالِهَا، لَا أَقُولُ
الْم حَرْفٌ، وَلَكِنْ أَلِفٌ حَرْفٌ وَلَا مٌ حَرْفٌ وَمِيمٌ حَرْفٌ»⁽¹⁾

Whoever reads a letter from the Book of Allah, he will have a reward. And that reward will be multiplied by ten. I am not saying that "Alif, Laam, Meem" is a letter, rather I am saying that "Alif" is a letter, "laam" is a letter and "meem" is a letter.

So it is recommended to raise the recitation of the Qur'an for getting these virtues, and the subsequent advantage as well.

As a Heavenly Book, the Qur'an is not merely words, instead it has a direct sway on a reader's heart and listener's as well. When Qur'an is recited by a Muslim, it impacts the heart and cleans it from all the contamination and uncleanness on it. Allah Almighty says in Qur'an:

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ قَدْ جَاءَتْكُمْ مَوْعِظَةٌ مِنْ رَبِّكُمْ وَشِفَاءٌ لِمَا فِي الصُّدُورِ
وَهُدًى وَرَحْمَةٌ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ﴾⁽²⁾

O mankind! There hath come to you an admonition from your Lord and a healing for the (diseases) in your hearts and for those who believe, a Guidance and Mercy.

Thus, from this ayah of Qur'an it is obvious that one of the aims of Qur'an recitation is to assist in purification of heart and cleaning it from all types of contamination.

Psychological well being

Psychological wellbeing is more than just happiness because it is about living in a manner which is good not only for oneself but for others as well. The feelings of contentment, gratification, self-assurance, and commitment with the world, self-esteem and self-confidence are all components of mental wellbeing. Psychological wellbeing does not reflect the meaning of never experiencing the difficult feelings or situations but it

(1) Sunan Al Tirmadi, Ḥadīth no 2910; Chapter "Fazayl Al Qur'an. Imām Albānī classed as saḥīḥ in Saḥīḥ At-Tirmadhi

(2) Sūrah Yūnus: 57

does mean that one feels to have the buoyancy to cope the times which are harder than usual.

Recitation of the Holy Qur'ān and Psychological Well being

Recitation of Holy Qur'ān is efficient in enhancing psychological wellbeing of the individuals who recite it. People reciting the Holy Qur'ān have much better mental health as compared to other people who find no time for the recitation of Holy Qur'ān. Muslims have to believe in Allah's power of curing sickness. It is also very much evident that,

﴿وَإِذَا مَرَضْتُ فَهُوَ يَشْفِينِ﴾⁽¹⁾

And when I am ill, it is He Who cures me

The Holy Qur'ān and its verses are an authentic source of getting peace and calmness in life. The verse from Holy Qur'ān is added,

﴿يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن تَنْصُرُوا اللَّهَ يَنْصُرْكُمْ وَيُثَبِّتْ أَقْدَامَكُمْ﴾⁽²⁾

O you who have believed, if you support Allah, He will support you and plant firmly your feet.

Researches have been conducted to study the effect of reciting Holy Qur'ān on psychological wellbeing and investigated the relationship of personal meaning, religiosity and psychological wellbeing. Results declared the perception of life as meaningful by Muslim students and they were found indulged in religious activities for derivation of meanings⁽³⁾. Similarly, another study explored the link between psychological wellbeing and religiosity and findings declared that religiosity and psychological wellbeing has positive relationship among the Muslim of Pakistan⁽⁴⁾. (Another research also carried out to look into the impact of religiosity (including recitation of Holy Qur'ān) on psychological wellbeing, uncovered the positive relation of psychological wellbeing with religiosity⁽⁵⁾).

Recitation of the Holy Qur'ān and Reduction of Anxiety, Stress & Depression

The Holy Qur'ān contains the solution of every problem and it provides the full guidance to the Muslims.

Researchers assessed among working Muslim females in Malaysia to

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- (1) Sūrah Al-Shu'arā: 80
 - (2) Sūrah Muḥammad: 7
 - (3) Aflakseir, A. "Religiosity, personal meaning and psychological wellbeing", Pakistan Journal of social and clinical psychology. 9(2) (2012)
 - (4) Ismail, Z., "Religiosity and psychological wellbeing". International Journal of business and social science. 3(11) (2012)
 - (5) Momtaz, Y.A., Hamid, T.K., Ibrahim, R., Yahaya, N., & Chai, S.T., "Mediating effects of social and personal religiosity on the psychological wellbeing of widowed elderly people", 61(2) (2010)

investigate if there is an influence of sound therapy on elevating tranquility & peacefulness and lessening stress. Results indicate that recitation of Holy Qur'an reduces the level of stress and increases the level of calmness. (Recitation of Holy Qur'an has proved the positive effects for the remediation of Anxiety, depression and other mental illnesses.⁽¹⁾ Researchers conducted a research and revealed a decrease in the anxiety level of experimental group before the heart surgery as a result of the Holy Qur'an recitation.⁽²⁾ (Similarly, a research was conducted to find out the effect of Holy Qur'an recitation among women's anxiety level before their cesarean. Results showed that the level of anxiety decreased in experimental group (who went through Holy Qur'an recitation) but remained same in the control group.⁽³⁾)

Another research was conducted to explore the impact of reciting the Holy Qur'an on level of anxiety among the patients prior to their angiography. Results demonstrated that level of state and trait anxiety in experimental group (who were exposed to Qur'an Recitation) decreased significantly as compared to control group.⁽⁴⁾ (Those who recite Holy Qur'an daily have much more stable personalities. A descriptive study was conducted and results indicated that students can reduce the amount of negative stress and improve their mental health by increasing their religious commitment, such as praying and reciting Holy Qur'an.⁽⁵⁾ (When a research was conducted to find out the impact of reciting the Holy Qur'an on perceived stress among workers at personnel of Arak University of Medical Sciences, the results showed that the level of stress in experimental groups and control groups had significant difference.⁽⁶⁾)

Research has shown that religious activities and following relevant practices have a positive impact on the promotion of mental health. In a

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- (1) Baharudin, D.F. & Sumarib, M., "The effect of sound therapy in increasing calmness and reducing stress on working Muslims in Malaysia", *Science Direct: Procedia-Social and behavioral Sciences* (2011)
 - (2) Tajvidi, M. Mohammadi, E. & Memarian, R., "The effect of Holy Qur'an's song on the patient's anxiety before heart surgery", *Scientific information database* (2013).
 - (3) N, M.A. & Ranjbar, N., "Effects of recitation of Holy Qur'an on anxiety of women before cesarean section". *Scientific information database* (2013)
 - (4) Majidi., "Recitation effect of Holy Qur'an on anxiety before undergoing coronary artery angiography", *Scientific information database*. (2013)
 - (5) Akbar, R. & Mazaffar, G., "Religious comment and self-efficacy in the amount and type of perceived stress in university students", *Scientific information database*. (2013).
 - (6) Mohsen, S., Akram, A., Farzaneh, J. & Leila, F., "The effect of Holy Qur'an recitation on perceived stress among personnel of Arak University of medical sciences", *Scientific Information Database, DANESHVAR MEDICINE*, 19(95) (2013)

study⁽¹⁾ the effect of Qur'ān on exam anxiety in nursing students was assessed. Results demonstrated that the sound of Qur'ān before exams can reduce the anxiety level among students. Researchers studied the improvements in the mental health of elderly residence in the nursing homes and the mental health status and results showed that the religious activities promoted the mental health of participants.⁽²⁾ (Similarly, ratings were compared for subjective wellbeing and religious affiliation and found religious affiliation to be the better predictor of subjective wellbeing.⁽³⁾)

Similarly, another research⁽⁴⁾ (investigated the effect of reciting the Holy Qur'ān as well as its teachings on depression among female students. According to the findings of this study, since rhythmic and pleasant recitation of the Qur'ān is a sweet music and its miraculous teachings can be used as an effective non-medical approach to treat depressed patients.)

All the provided information supports, that, much more strong faith upon Allah leads towards more satisfactory life as compared to other peoples who do not seek guidance from Qur'ān. It also converts the excessive worries into satisfaction, contentment and power to face and solve any problem. Therefore the present study is aimed to investigate the impact of Holy Qur'ān recitation on psychological well being among youth.

METHOD

Objectives

Present study satisfies the following objectives:

- To estimate the correlation of Holy Qur'ān recitation and psychological well being.
- To investigate the association of Holy Qur'ān recitation with anxiety, depression and stress.

Hypotheses

- Holy Qur'ān recitation will have a positive correlation with psychological wellbeing.
- Holy Qur'ān recitation will negatively relate with depression, anxiety and stress.

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- (1) Heidari, M., Shahbazi, S. & Bahrami, A., "Assess of the effect of Qur'ān on exam anxiety in nursing and ems students", *International Journal of Review in Life Sciences* (2014).
 - (2) Sooki, Z., Sharifi, K. & Tagharobi, Z., "Role of Qur'ān recitation in mental health of the elderly". 1(1) (2011).
 - (3) Suhail, K. & Chaudhry, R.H., "Predictors of Subjective Well-Being in an Eastern Muslim Culture", *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*. 23(3) (2004).
 - (4) Pashib, M., Khaqani, F., Bahrainian, A. & Abedi, A., "Investigation of the Effectiveness of Qur'ān Recitation and Teachings on Depression of Female Students of Torbat-E-Heidariye University", *Journal of Applied Environmental and Biological Sciences*. 4(12)137-140. (2014).

Sample

Sample of the present study consisted of 100 Muslims (males=43, females=57) with age range of 18 to 25. Sample was selected from the population of Muslims living in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Care was taken to include only those Muslims who were educated.

Instruments

Demographic Sheet

A demographic sheet prepared by researcher, was used to investigate the rate of Holy Qur'an recitation which is reflected by the number of hours and frequency of recitation of Holy Qur'an. More hours and frequency of recitation will show higher rate of Holy Qur'an recitation and lower show vice versa.

Psychological Well-being Scale by Kamman and Flett(1983)

Psychological well-being scale was developed by Kamman and Flett (1983). It consists of 19 items in which 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 15, 17 & 19 are negatively scored and rest are positive. Each item is scored from 1-5 i.e. strongly disagree-5 strongly agree and also reversible scoring for the negative items. High scores indicate high level of psychological well being and lower indicate vice versa.

Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale (DASS) by Lovibond and Lovibond (1995)

DASS was developed by Lovibond and Lovibond (1995). It comprises of 42 items and three subscales including depression, anxiety and stress. It is scored positively for each item with 1-4 likertscale i.e. strongly disagree to strongly agree respectively. High scores indicate high levels of depression, anxiety and stress and lower scores indicate vice versa.

Procedure

In the present study, participants were contacted in their respective institutions and questionnaires were distributed within working hours. Instructions were provided to the participants regarding the nature and importance of the research. Informed consent and confidentiality aspects of ethical guidelines were followed carefully during research. Participants filled the instruments in the presence of researcher and any query was dealt with on the spot.

RESULTS

Present study was carried out to examine the relationship and role of Holy Qur'an recitation on psychological wellness and depression, anxiety and stress among Muslims. Pearson correlation was applied to test the data.

Table 1

Pearson correlation between scores on the Holy Qur'ān recitation and Psychological Wellbeing (N = 100)

Qur'ān recitation	
Psychological wellbeing	.83**

**p<.05

Table 1 shows significant positive correlation of the Holy Qur'ān recitation scores and Psychological wellbeing Scale scores ($r = .83$, $p < .05$). It depicts that higher level of Holy Qur'ān recitation illustrates the higher level of psychological well being.

Table 2

Pearson correlation between scores on the Holy Qur'ān recitation and DASS scores (N = 100)

Qur'ān recitation	
DASS Scores	-.81**

**p<.05

Table 2 shows significant negative correlation between scores on the Holy Qur'ān recitation and DASS (Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale) scores ($r = -.81$, $p < .05$). It means that higher is the level of Holy Qur'ān recitation, the lower will be level of depression, anxiety and stress.

Discussion and Conclusion

Purpose of present study was to examine correlation between Holy Qur'ān recitation and the psychological wellbeing and depression, anxiety and stress among young Muslims. Findings declare that Holy Qur'ān recitation has significant positive correlation with psychological wellbeing. The Muslims who recite Holy Qur'ān daily are psychologically more stable as compared to other Muslims. Results also signify that Holy Qur'ān recitation negatively relate with depression, anxiety and stress.

As a quintessence, present study findings support that Holy Qur'ān recitation enhances the psychological well-being of individuals who recite it and reduces the level of depression, anxiety and stress not only among psychologically ill patients but also in the patients having some physical illness. So Holy Qur'ān recitation is trustworthy to be used as non-pharmacological treatment of depression, anxiety and stress as well.

Implications for Practice

In the light of findings of current study, it can be declared as an implication that Holy Qur'ān Recitation can serve as an influential element in ensuring the positive mental health of youth. Educators and Policy makers can play a crucial role in promotion of Holy Qur'ān familiarity

which will make certain the psychological and mental health of youth and the society at large. Moreover, according to the findings of the present study, since amusing and pleasant recitation of the Qur'ān is a lovable rhythm, so Qur'ān recitation and its miraculous teachings can be used as an effective non-medical approach to treat depressed, anxious or stressed patients and the patients with any other psychological illness.

