



# Islamic Forgiveness Therapy and Achievement of Psychological Well-Being (Case Study on Adult Women with Childhood Trauma of Ramadhan Healing Journey Participants)

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## ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the experiences of adult women with a history of childhood trauma in undergoing Islamic forgiveness therapy within the Ramadhan Healing Journey program, and to understand its contribution to enhancing psychological well-being. The research employed a qualitative case study method involving three participants who had experienced emotional neglect, verbal abuse, and family conflict. The intervention included psychoeducation, loving-kindness meditation, reflective journaling, and daily prayers over a 21-day period. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and analysis of reflective journals throughout the therapy period. To support the qualitative findings, pre-test and post-test measurements were also conducted using a psychological well-being scale to assess changes before and after the program. The therapy program consisted of forgiveness-themed journaling, loving-kindness meditation, and forgiveness-focused prayers. The results showed that participants experienced positive changes, including a reduction in negative emotions such as anger, resentment, and anxiety, as well as improvements in self-acceptance, interpersonal relationships, and sense of life purpose. Pre- and post-test data also indicated an increase in psychological well-being scores, reinforcing the qualitative findings. This study highlights the potential of Islamic forgiveness therapy as an effective psychospiritual approach for supporting the healing process of women with childhood trauma. It contributes to the development of psychospiritual trauma therapy that is culturally and religiously relevant for Muslim communities.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Psychological well-being (PWB) is essential for balanced emotional, mental, and social functioning. Individuals with high levels of PWB tend to have better life satisfaction, emotional stability, and resilience in facing adversity [1], [2]. According to Ryff and Keyes, PWB includes self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth [3].

Unresolved childhood trauma can significantly disrupt an adult's well-being. Studies show that adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), such as emotional abuse, neglect, and family conflict, are strongly associated with depression, anxiety, low self-worth, and interpersonal difficulties in adulthood [4]–[6]. Fishbane [7] emphasized how childhood wounds often resurface in adult intimate relationships, leading to dysfunctional patterns if left unhealed.

In many Muslim communities, psychological interventions are often disconnected from spiritual and religious values, even though spirituality is central to many individuals' coping mechanisms. Islamic teachings, particularly the concept of al-*'afwu* (forgiveness), offer a framework for emotional release, self-compassion, and spiritual growth [8]. Forgiveness in Islam is more than letting go of resentment; it is an act of spiritual purification and personal liberation [9].

The Ramadhan Healing Journey program was developed as an integrative healing initiative during the spiritually reflective month of Ramadan. Ramadan itself provides a unique momentum for emotional introspection and behavioral change, supported by an atmosphere of prayer, fasting, and community reflection [10]. This study integrates Islamic

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 forgiveness therapy into that setting, combining psychoeducation, journaling, loving-kindness meditation, and spiritual prayer to address childhood trauma in adult women.

The main objective of this research is to explore participants' lived experiences during the 21-day Islamic forgiveness therapy, and to analyze how the therapy contributes to their psychological well-being. The novelty of this study lies in its psychospiritual approach that fuses Islamic values with modern trauma recovery frameworks an approach that remains underrepresented in the literature, particularly within the Indonesian Muslim context.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

This qualitative case study involved three female participants with histories of childhood trauma. The intervention consisted of:

- a. Psychoeducation seminars on forgiveness
- b. Daily journaling (7 days of expressive forgiveness writing)
- c. Loving-kindness meditation
- d. Daily prayer-based spiritual reflection

Data were collected via:

- a. In-depth interviews
- b. Observations of journaling reflections
- c. Pre- and post-test questionnaires on psychological well-being
- d. Thematic analysis was applied to explore patterns in emotional transformation and meaning-making.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on data obtained through in-depth interviews, reflective journal analysis, and pre-test and post-test scores of psychological well-being, the psychological conditions of the participants before, during, and after the intervention were identified, along with how the Islamic forgiveness therapy contributed to their healing process. The findings are categorized into three main themes to illustrate the participants' transformation and the impact of the intervention.

### 3.1 Childhood Trauma and Its Impact

All participants experienced severe emotional neglect, verbal abuse, and parental conflict. These traumas manifested in low self-esteem, people-pleasing tendencies, psychosomatic complaints (e.g., asthma, digestive issues), and emotionally dependent relationships.

### 3.2 Forgiveness Process Experience

Participants described the therapy as emotionally intense yet liberating. Journaling served as a safe outlet to express repressed emotions. The Islamic teachings helped them reframe their experiences spiritually, encouraging acceptance and release of resentment.

### 3.3 Psychological Well-being Improvements

Post-intervention data showed enhanced emotional regulation, reduced anxiety, and stronger self-worth. Subjects reported feeling "lighter," more patient, and hopeful. The Ryff Scale post-test scores improved across all six dimensions, especially in self-acceptance and purpose in life.

## 4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that Islamic forgiveness therapy, when integrated with journaling and relaxation, effectively supports trauma healing and improves psychological well-being in adult women with childhood trauma. The model has strong potential for culturally relevant interventions in Muslim communities.

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