



ISLAMIC-BASED COGNITIVE BEHAVIORAL THERAPY TO OVERCOME FUTURE ANXIETY

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Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji penerapan Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) berbasis Islam untuk mengatasi kecemasan masa *depan* (*future anxiety*) melalui studi kepustakaan. Kecemasan ini sering disebabkan oleh distorsi kognitif seperti *catastrophizing* dan *fortune telling*. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa CBT efektif dalam merestrukturisasi pola pikir negatif, sementara integrasi nilai-nilai Islam, seperti tawakal dan doa, memperkaya proses terapi dengan dimensi spiritual. Dengan demikian, CBT berbasis Islam menawarkan pendekatan yang lebih holistik dalam mengatasi kecemasan, menggabungkan aspek kognitif dan spiritual, khususnya bagi individu Muslim.

Kata Kunci: CBT; CBT Berbasis Islam; Kecemasan Masa Depan.

Abstract

This research examines the application of Islamic-based Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) to overcome future anxiety through a literature study. This anxiety is often caused by cognitive distortions such as catastrophising and fortune-telling. Findings show that CBT is effective in restructuring negative thought patterns while integrating Islamic values, such as tawakal and prayer, which enriches the therapeutic process with a spiritual dimension. Thus, Islamic-based CBT offers a more holistic approach to treating anxiety, combining cognitive and spiritual aspects, especially for Muslim individuals.

Key Words: CBT; Islamic-Based CBT; Future Anxiety.

Introduction

Anxiety is a condition that can make an individual feel unsafe and uncomfortable. Feelings of anxiety often trigger fear of the possibility of bad things happening. Anxiety can be experienced by anyone, regardless of age, from children and adolescents to adults and older people (Lailatul Muarofah Hanim & Sa'adatul Ahlas, 2020). One common type of anxiety is anxiety about the future (future anxiety), which is anxiety with feelings of worry or fear about things that have not happened, especially related to the uncertainty of the future. This is a form of anxiety related to hopes, plans, and fears of what might happen in the future (Mafaza Jannati Herman et al., n.d.).

Future anxiety is often associated with feelings of fear of not being able to meet social, academic, or career expectations. Future anxiety or anxiety about the future is a psychological phenomenon that is increasingly found in modern society. This anxiety arises in response to future uncertainty, such as concerns about career, personal relationships, or even self-existence. Symptoms of future anxiety often involve feelings of being unable to control future events, which ultimately hurt a person's mental and emotional well-being (Judith S. Beck, 2020). Future anxiety can also occur in response to uncertainty or upcoming changes in personal life (for example, changes in relationships, work, or health) and broader external factors (such as political instability, economic, or social change). Individuals who are prone to future anxiety tend to focus on things that cannot be controlled, which makes them feel anxious about everything that is to come. Negative thoughts about uncertainty, failure, or possible threats often accompany this condition. Individuals who experience future anxiety may feel that they have no control over future events, and these feelings can interfere with their psychological well-being and quality of life (Hofmann, 2012).

In the context of religion, anxiety about the future is often found in individuals who feel they have no control over their destiny. For Muslims, belief in qadha and qadar (Allah's destiny) is a fundamental concept that can help overcome anxiety about the future (Fatar & Abdullah, 2023). However, in practice, anxiety remains a problem that must be faced, and therefore, an Islamic-based psychological therapy approach needs to be considered. One approach that can be used to help individuals overcome future anxiety is Islamic-based Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), a psychotherapy technique that focuses on changing negative thought patterns and behaviours that trigger anxiety (Judith S. Beck, 2020b). Ahmad Zaky and Mira (2024), in their research, with research titled "Future Anxiety of Final Year Students Reviewed from Gender", namely, Final year students are those who have completed at least seven semesters of college, and they are often plagued by anxiety about the future. Fear of fierce competition in the world of work and feelings of uselessness are burdens in themselves. Interestingly, gender factors also influence the level of future anxiety experienced. Biological, psychological, and social differences between men and women play an important role. A study involving 133 final-year students who experienced future anxiety (Ahmad Zaky Purnomo, 2024). This study emphasises the importance of a therapeutic approach to changing this mindset, such as that offered in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT). Therefore, it is important to understand and manage this anxiety so that individuals can live a more balanced and meaningful life.

However, amidst the growing psychotherapy approaches, such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), there is an alternative that can contribute more to overcoming future anxiety,

namely Islamic spirituality. Islam teaches concepts that can calm the heart and mind, such as tawakal (surrender) and qadha and qadar (God's destiny), which can provide a different perspective in facing the uncertainty of the future. These concepts teach individuals to accept that not everything can be controlled and that worrying about the future will drain mental energy without changing God's destiny.

The principles in Islamic-based CBT, clients are taught to use Islamic teachings to replace negative and inaccurate thoughts with positive principles found in the holy book of the Qur'an, namely: In the Qur'an, Surah An-Naml verse 62 which reads:

أَمَّنْ يُجِيبُ الْمُضْطَرَّ إِذَا دَعَاهُ وَيَكْشِفُ السُّوءَ وَيَجْعَلُكُمْ خُلَفَاءَ الْأَرْضِ ۚ أَعْلَهُ مَعَ اللَّهِ ۚ فَلْيَا مَا تَذَكَّرُونَ

Meaning: "Or who responds to the one in distress when he calls upon Him, removes the distress, and makes you (humans) successors on earth? Is there any god besides Allah? Little do you remember (Him)" (QS. An-Naml: 62).

An integrative approach that combines CBT with Islamic spirituality has excellent potential to help individuals cope with future anxiety more effectively. CBT can help individuals recognise and change negative thought patterns that exacerbate anxiety, while Islamic spirituality provides inner peace and a sense of calm in accepting the uncertainty of life. This approach not only addresses anxiety psychologically but also provides a deep spiritual foundation, thus providing a more comprehensive solution to managing anxiety about the future.

The initial Stage begins with Islamic psychoeducation, namely providing education to clients about the nature of future anxiety from a psychological and Islamic perspective, including the importance of tawakkal, qadha, and qadar, as well as the balance between ikhtiar and acceptance. Next, the counsellor helps the client identify negative automatic thoughts, namely spontaneous, irrational thoughts such as excessive fear of failure or uncertainty of the future that often worsen anxiety (Beck, 2011). After recognising negative thoughts, the client is directed to conduct daily reflection-muhasabah as a form of self-evaluation. This activity helps the client assess the events experienced, emotional responses, and their relationship to spiritual beliefs, with the support of calming verses of the Qur'an such as QS. Al-Baqarah: 286 (Majidah & Lestari, 2023).

The next Stage is cognitive restructuring based on monotheism, which replaces negative thoughts with more realistic beliefs in line with Islamic values, such as the awareness that humans have limitations. The final result is the will of Allah, by the principle of la hawla wa la quwwata illa billah (Mohammed, 2020). This process is reinforced with focused munajat, such as getting used to dhikr of tranquillity, increasing prayers, and performing sunnah prayers such as tahajud and

hajat to increase the sense of surrender and closeness to Allah (Iswandi et al., 2025). Counsellors are also encouraged to develop positive religious coping skills, such as increasing reading of the Quran, listening to mutual, and attending Islamic studies regularly, which have been shown to help reduce anxiety and increase inner peace (Ulya, 2023).

The final Stage is periodic evaluation and spiritual follow-up to assess the client's development in reducing anxiety, changing thought patterns, and the consistency of worship and religious routines. Through this article, we will discuss further the concept of future anxiety, how CBT can be used to overcome this anxiety, and how Islamic-based CBT techniques can enrich and deepen the therapy process, helping individuals face it more calmly and wisely.

Methods

The method used in this study is a literature review. A literature study is a research approach that relies on data collection techniques, such as reviewing and analysing literature relevant to the research theme being investigated. This method explores information in written sources relevant to the topic being studied. Literature studies are more detailed by critically reading relevant references, such as articles, scientific journals, research reports, books, and other scientific works. This data source is used to gain insight, theory, and empirical findings that can provide a basis for further understanding of the problem being studied. Thus, research using the Literature study method is conducted by analysing, comparing, and reviewing literature sources to obtain theoretical data.

Result

1. Theoretical Basis of CBT

Cognitive-Behavioural Therapy (CBT) is a psychotherapy approach developed by Aaron T. Beck in the 1960s. The theoretical basis of CBT focuses on the relationship between thoughts, feelings, and behaviours and how these interactions affect an individual's mental health. In the context of future anxiety disorder, CBT aims to help individuals understand how their thought patterns contribute to the anxiety they experience.

It is important to note that many individuals with future anxiety are trapped in unrealistic negative thought patterns, such as "I will never succeed in the future" or "If I do not control everything now, bad things will happen in the future." These thoughts can worsen anxiety and create a cycle that is difficult to break. CBT aims to break this cycle by providing tools for

individuals to recognise and challenge these negative thoughts and replace them with more realistic and adaptive views of the future (Qolbi, 2020).

2. Signs of Future Anxiety

Future anxiety refers to excessive fear or worry related to events or possibilities that have not yet occurred but are considered to have a significant impact. One of the main signs of this condition is excessive worry about the future. Individuals who experience this anxiety are often trapped in excessive negative thought patterns, such as imagining worst-case scenarios and feeling that bad events in the future will ruin their lives. For example, someone who is anxious might think, "If I fail this test, I will never be successful in life." This thinking is an example of catastrophising, a cognitive distortion that magnifies or exaggerates the possibility of adverse outcomes (Dozois & Beck, 2011). In addition, physical anxiety can also appear in individuals who experience future anxiety. Symptoms such as rapid heartbeat, shortness of breath, and muscle tension often occur in response to ongoing worry about the future. This physical stress is caused by the body's reaction to ongoing worry about the future. This physical stress is caused by the body's reaction to excessive thinking about things that have not yet happened, which is often associated with the "fight or flight" response. These physical symptoms often make anxiety worse, creating a cycle that is difficult to break.

3. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) Based on Islam

According to Michelle J Pearce, religiously integrated CBT is a manual therapy approach designed to help individuals develop positive thoughts and reduce negative thoughts through beliefs, practices, and religion as the primary source (M. J. Pearce et al., 2015). Intervention studies have found that integrating clients' spiritual and religious beliefs in therapy effectively reduces various problems. Along with the development of the times, Islamic-based psychotherapy has been proven effective in helping Muslim clients who experience anxiety and depression (Putri et al., n.d.) A study (Azizi, 2018) found that logotherapy based on Islamic spirituality significantly reduced levels of depression, anxiety, and stress in students, with results showing significant differences between the intervention and control groups ($p < 0.001$). In addition, (Wahab, 2016), in his meta-analysis, reported that Islamic-based psychotherapy interventions that combine dhikr, istighfar, and spiritual reflection have a significant effect in reducing anxiety and depression in Muslim patients, with a large effect size (Cohen's $d > 0.70$). Another study (Salehi, 2019) showed that the application of Islamic-based mindfulness was significantly more effective in reducing anxiety in pregnant women compared to conventional CBT. These findings indicate that the

Islamic-based psychotherapy approach is not only an alternative but has been empirically proven to have a positive impact in helping Muslim clients overcome psychological disorders through the integration of spiritual aspects that are relevant to their beliefs.

This therapy is carried out in stages with the primary goal of helping clients recognise and overcome negative thoughts related to the problems they face. The process begins by encouraging clients to honestly and openly identify negative thoughts that have triggered anxiety, fear, or feelings of helplessness. Clients are guided to write down and express these thoughts in detail so that they can be analysed objectively. After the client has successfully identified their negative thought patterns, the next Stage is to guide the client in linking the problem-solving process with the values of Islamic teachings. Clients are directed to understand that in every problem, Islam has provided guidance through the Qur'an and hadith, which can be used as guidelines for responding to and solving life's problems. With this approach, clients are invited to reason and realise the importance of relying on the principles of faith, such as awake, patience, ikhtiar, and hanuman to Allah. By integrating psychological and spiritual problem-solving, this therapy is expected to provide inner peace and comprehensive solutions for clients facing their problems.

This therapy is carried out by encouraging clients to recognise and significantly identify negative thoughts related to their problems. Furthermore, clients are given guidance to link their problem-solving process with the values of Islamic teachings. Thus, clients are invited to recognise Islamic principles that can be adopted and applied in their thoughts, feelings, and actions (Azhar et al., 1994). Based on this explanation, it can be concluded that religion, in this case, Islamic teachings, can be used as a basis for conducting psychological interventions to help clients overcome their problems. The main objective of Islamic-based CBT Integration is to apply an Islamic approach to the Qur'an and hadith teachings and cognitive restructuring based on the principles of positive values contained in the Qur'an. This approach not only leads to the development of spiritual aspects but also aims to provide structured interventions that can be used to develop CBT counselling integrated with Islam. The goal is to help Muslim clients manage their problems in a way that aligns with their religious values.

4. Islamic-Based CBT Intervention Techniques

The CBT techniques based on Islamic spirituality are an effort to help clients' anxiety problems by conducting collaborative CBT of Islamic spirituality and Islamic values. These techniques also adapt to Islamic teachings and align with the principles of Islamic CBT. Based on the review and analysis process of several journal articles, references from authors or researchers

have discussed the theme of Islamic CBT. Therefore, several Islamic CBT techniques can be used to help clients with future anxiety, focusing on improving their spirituality. The Islamic spirituality CBT techniques are as follows: First Stage, assessment and introduction of Islamic CBT. At this Stage, the counsellor conducts an assessment, exploring the problem, building a positive relationship, and introducing the therapy concept to the client. In contrast, the client conveys the problems and religious beliefs they adhere to.

Stage Two is activation behaviour. At this Stage, the counsellor motivates the client to participate in religious activities that can improve emotional well-being, such as congregational prayer, study, or social activities, which the client actively carries out. In Stage Three, the counsellor teaches the client to identify disturbing negative thoughts while training the client to be aware of their mood and use prayer as a self-calming technique.

In Stage Four, the counsellor helps the client challenge negative thoughts and trains the client to replace these thoughts with more rational thoughts based on Islamic values. Fifth Stage, the counsellor and client together analyse the losses that may arise if anxiety is allowed to continue as a form of building the client's self-awareness. In the sixth Stage, the counsellor helps the client face spiritual struggles and negative emotions by increasing worship and dhikr. Overcome spiritual struggles and negative emotions.

Seventh Stage, fostering gratitude and accustoming the client to interpret positive things in everyday life. Eighth Stage, altruism. The client is invited to do good to others through social activities to implement a more real sense of gratitude. In the ninth Stage, the counsellor helps the client explore the meaning of life and spiritual growth by connecting the experience of anxiety to a more noble purpose in life.

Finally, in the tenth Stage, the counsellor builds expectations and evaluates the client's development during therapy. In contrast, the client is invited to maintain anxiety management skills in everyday life (Anisa Juniarti et al., 2024). Thus, Islamic-based CBT offers a structured intervention, combining cognitive, emotional, and spiritual aspects to support clients in managing their psychological problems holistically. This approach is effective in helping Muslim clients overcome anxiety, improve mental health, and strengthen their relationship with religious teachings, which serve as an important foundation in the healing process.

Discussion

This study focuses on the application of Islamic-based Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) to treat anxiety, especially future anxiety, which is often rooted in cognitive distortions and excessive uncertainty. The results of this study confirm that CBT is effective in treating future anxiety, which is generally triggered by cognitive distortions such as catastrophising and fortune-telling. CBT techniques help individuals replace negative thought patterns with more rational and realistic thought patterns, thereby reducing excessive anxiety about future uncertainty. This finding is in line with the theory put forward by Beck (1976), which states that changes in thought patterns can reduce emotional disorders, including anxiety. Furthermore, this study shows that future anxiety is often accompanied by physical symptoms such as restlessness, sleep disturbances, and difficulty concentrating.

In this context, CBT is effective in helping individuals identify and challenge thoughts that exacerbate anxiety, thereby contributing to improved emotional well-being for clients. This finding is consistent with previous research, including the Islamic-based Cognitive Behavioural Therapy approach used to address social anxiety in prisoners. This approach integrates Islamic values to help clients develop positive mindsets and reduce negative thoughts through religious beliefs and practices as the primary source of strength. The uniqueness of this approach is its use of the Qur'an and Hadith and the client's religious traditions as a basis for identifying and replacing negative thought patterns and behaviours (Farihah & Rachman, 2017). Overall, the results of this study confirm the importance of spirituality in psychological therapy, especially for Muslim individuals. By integrating Islamic teachings, Islamic-based CBT offers a more comprehensive and relevant approach for those seeking solutions not only from the cognitive but also the spiritual side, which in turn helps reduce future anxiety more holistically.

Conclusion

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), especially in Islam, is effective in overcoming future anxiety by restructuring negative thought patterns that arise due to cognitive distortions and uncertainty. Islamic-based CBT addresses not only cognitive aspects but also integrates Islamic religious values, such as tawakal and dhikr, which provide a spiritual dimension to the therapy process. The contribution of these findings to the development of Islamic Guidance and Counselling science lies in the development of a more comprehensive therapy model, which combines psychological and spiritual aspects to address anxiety problems holistically. Thus, this

approach enriches the practice of Islamic guidance and counselling, making it more relevant to Muslim individuals in facing emotional and spiritual challenges in their lives.

Recommendation

The findings of this study provide an important contribution to developing an Islamic-based Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) approach to address future anxiety, especially for Muslim individuals. Therefore, it is recommended that this approach be more widely applied in Islamic guidance and counselling practices in educational institutions, religious institutions, and mental health services. Further researchers can explore more deeply the integration of Islamic values in CBT for other anxiety problems or in more diverse populations, such as adolescents or the elderly. In addition, policies related to training counsellors and mental health workers should emphasise the importance of a holistic approach, combining cognitive and spiritual aspects, to provide more comprehensive services for individuals in need.

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