

# Mental Health in the Perspective of Hadith: Utsman Najati's Concept and Its Contribution to Islamic Education

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## Abstract

This study aims to analyze the concept of mental health in the thought of M. Utsman Najati and its contribution to the Islamic education paradigm. The research employs a qualitative approach, utilizing thematic analysis and hadith contextualization, to interpret the integration between revelation and psychology. The findings indicate that Najati's key contribution is challenging the reductionist tendency of Western psychology by integrating spiritual, psychological, social, and biological dimensions into a unified, prophetic paradigm as the basis for achieving inner balance (*at-tawāzun an-nafsī*). He introduces a conceptual model for Islamic education that aims to develop the *insān kāmil* (complete human being), characterized by emotional stability, mental health, and spiritual resilience. The study's novelty lies in using hadith as an epistemological source for Islamic mental health theory and applying a prophetic-psychological approach to character education. However, this study does not empirically test Najati's concept within educational institutions. Therefore, future research is recommended to develop pedagogical models and mental health assessment instruments grounded in Islamic spirituality, to enhance the effectiveness of Islamic education in nurturing a resilient generation rooted in tawḥīd values.

**Keywords:** *Muhammad Utsman Najati, Hadith, Mental Health, Islamic Psychology, Islamic Education*

## Introduction

The development of human resources is a strategic national agenda in Indonesia. It aims to nurture a generation that is intelligent, healthy, productive, and morally upright. Achieving this vision requires multidimensional readiness. This includes economic and technological advancements, as well as personal qualities and mental well-being among citizens. Education holds a key position in this context. It shapes holistic individuals who are faithful, knowledgeable, and virtuous. According to the National Education System Law, education should develop human potential and shape character, fostering a dignified civilization that helps advance the nation's intellectual life.<sup>1</sup>

This ideal has not been fully realized in educational institutions. The increasing prevalence of mental health disorders among students shows this shortfall. Reports from Indonesia's Ministry of Health and the National Criminal Information Center reveal that about 20 percent of the population is vulnerable to psychological disturbances.<sup>2</sup> Many cases of suicide linked to mental illness are found among educated youth. The rapid rise of technology and the widespread use of social media have exacerbated this condition. The emergence of the "strawberry generation" youth who are emotionally fragile, easily stressed, and who lose focus due to excessive digital use shows the growing psychological fragility among the young.<sup>3</sup>

This phenomenon shows a weakened balance between intellectual ability and psychological stability. Modern education has yet to develop strong mental resilience. This situation underscores the importance of integrating spiritual and psychological dimensions for character development and emotional well-being. Islamic education plays a key role here. It nurtures students with sound mental health and strong moral character. Islamic values provide a spiritual foundation that guides learners toward inner balance, tranquility, and a deeper understanding of their purpose and meaning. By internalizing Islamic principles, individuals can foster true mental well-being.

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<sup>1</sup> Nasrul, "Kepemimpinan Strategis Sebagai Fondasi Menuju Indonesia Emas 2045," *Jurnal Kewarganegaraan* 7, no. 2 (2023): 18.

<sup>2</sup> Nabilah Muhammad, "Ada 971 Kasus Bunuh Diri Sampai Oktober 2023, Terbanyak di Jawa Tengah," (2023), <https://databoks.katadata.co.id/-/statistik/d46526aff6a2134/ada-971-kasus-bunuh-diri-sampai-oktober-2023-terbanyak-di-jawa-tengah>, diakses 30 Oktober 2025, pukul 02.25.

<sup>3</sup> Renald Kasali, *Strawberry Generation* (Jakarta: Mizan, 2017), v–vii.

In Islam, mental health means more than just the absence of psychological disorders. It is a state of holistic integration between the physical, intellectual, and spiritual dimensions of the self. Many Prophetic traditions emphasize self-restraint, patience, and inner peace. These are genuine indicators of mental health. Yet, the interpretation of hadiths related to psychological well-being remains underdeveloped in modern Islamic education. Dominant psychological paradigms from Western thinkers, such as Freud, Maslow, and Rogers, place humans within a materialistic and anthropocentric frame. As a result, the spiritual dimension of *tawhīd* (Divine unity) is often neglected in mental health discussions. In contrast, Islam via Prophetic tradition offers a prophetic psychology.<sup>4</sup> This approach fosters personal balance, moral consciousness, and spiritual awareness, which are the main goals of Islamic education.

Muhammad Utsman Najati is one of the foremost scholars who has systematically integrated hadith and Islamic psychology within a comprehensive scholarly framework. The selection of Najati in this study is grounded in his distinctive approach to treating hadith not merely as a normative source or a form of ethical legitimation, but as an epistemological foundation for understanding human mental health. His seminal work, *al-Ḥadīth al-Nabawī wa 'Ilm al-Nafs*, makes a significant contribution by asserting that genuine mental health is achieved through a balance between bodily and spiritual needs, leading individuals toward the attainment of *an-nafs al-muṭma'innah* the tranquil soul.<sup>5</sup>

In contrast to other figures, Najati's thought has direct relevance to Islamic education because it places mental and spiritual cultivation at the core of the educational process. The revelation-based psychological paradigm he proposes affirms that Islamic education should not be oriented solely toward cognitive development, but should also aim to cultivate a balanced integration of rationality, emotionality, and spirituality in learners. Therefore, the selection of Najati aligns with the objectives of this study, which seeks to examine hadith-based perspectives on mental health and their contribution to the development of an Islamic educational paradigm.<sup>6</sup>

This study aims to expand the scholarly discussion on hadith. It does so by examining Najati's concept of mental health and its relevance to Islamic education. The

<sup>4</sup> Muhammad Utsman Najati, *Hadits Dan Ilmu Jiwa*, (Bandung: Pustaka, 1988), hlm. v–vii.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.* 291.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid*

research employs a qualitative, library-based approach, incorporating thematic analysis and hadith contextualization. This method interprets Prophetic traditions in the context of today's mental health issues and links them to Islamic education practice. The study aims to enrich hadith-based Islamic psychology and suggest educational models that develop mental, spiritual, and moral well-being for future generations.

Numerous previous studies have examined the thought of Muhammad Utsman Najati in the fields of Islamic psychology and hadith studies. Dewi explains the concept of Islamic psychotherapy from a hadith-based perspective, emphasizing spirituality as a means of healing the soul in Najati's thought.<sup>7</sup> Fatmah examines the methodology for understanding hadith in Najati's work *al-Ḥadīth al-Nabawī wa 'Ilm al-Nafs* however, her analysis is limited to methodological aspects of hadith and does not directly relate them to Islamic education.<sup>8</sup> Another study by Novitasari et al. focuses on the concept of the soul in the Qur'an according to Najati, but does not explore its implications in depth for mental health and Islamic education.<sup>9</sup> The study that comes closest to the present research is that of Badriyyah, which focuses on the integration of Islamic Religious Education and psychology based on Utsman Najati's thought; however, it primarily emphasizes pedagogical aspects of psychology learning.<sup>10</sup>

In contrast, this study examines Najati's concept of mental health from a hadith perspective and positions hadith as an epistemological foundation for both mental health and Islamic education. Accordingly, the novelty of this research lies in its effort to reconstruct Islamic education through a mental health framework rooted in prophetic tradition.

This article differs from previous studies by employing hadith as the primary source for constructing the concept of Islamic mental health. It also systematically analyses the contributions of Muhammad Utsman Najati's thought to the development of Islamic education. The originality of this study lies in integrating hadith studies,

<sup>7</sup> Dinda Rosiana Dewi, *Psikoterapi dalam Perspektif Hadis (Studi atas Pemikiran Muhammad Utsman Najati)*, skripsi, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2021.

<sup>8</sup> Fina Fatmah, *Konstruksi Metodologi Hadis tentang Kesehatan Mental dalam Kitab al-Ḥadīth al-Nabawī wa 'Ilm al-Nafs Karya Muhammad 'Usman Najati*, skripsi, UIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta, 2021.

<sup>9</sup> Sindi Novitasari, Sumarto Sumarto, dan Febriansyah Febriansyah, *Konsep Jiwa dalam Al-Qur'an (Perspektif Muhammad Utsman Najati dalam Psikologi Islam)*, skripsi, Institut Agama Islam Negeri Curup, 2023.

<sup>10</sup> Badriyyah, "Model Integrasi Pendidikan Agama Islam dan Psikologi dalam Perspektif Utsman Najati," 2022.

Islamic psychology, and Islamic education into a unified framework, with the aim of highlighting mental health as a central concern in Islamic education.

### Intellectual Biography

Najati is a key figure in shaping modern Islamic psychology. He combined Western empirical approaches with the revelatory values of Islam. Born in Khartoum in 1914, he died in Cairo in 2000. His life took him across Sudan, Egypt, the United States, Kuwait, and Saudi Arabia. This mix of cultures enriched his intellectual outlook. Najati began his education in Fayoum, Egypt. He earned a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from the Faculty of Arts at Fouad I University (now Cairo University) in 1938. He continued there for a Master's degree in 1942. He went on to Yale University, earning a second Master's degree (1948) and a Doctorate (1952).<sup>11</sup> This blend of Eastern and Western education shaped his broad scientific worldview. He recognized the spiritual dimension of human nature while valuing empirical methods.

After completing his studies, Najati pursued an illustrious academic career across various Arab countries. He served as a lecturer at the Faculty of Arts, Kuwait University, where he became the first professor to institutionalize psychology as an academic discipline and was later appointed Dean in 1965. He also taught at Imam Muhammad bin Abdul Aziz University in Riyadh, focusing on the integration of psychology and Islamic values. His scholarly activities included research, lectures, and publications at various institutions such as the Cairo Institute of Teacher Training. Najati's intellectual engagement extended beyond academia through his involvement in transnational scholarly initiatives, including the establishment of the Association for Civilization and Comparative Studies, as well as active participation in international psychological associations in Egypt, the United States, and Belgium.<sup>12</sup>

Najati's intellectual commitment is reflected in his works, which focus on the Islamization of psychology grounded in the Qur'an and Hadith. His seminal books *al-Qur'ān wa 'Ilm al-Nafs* (The Qur'an and Psychology, 1987) and *al-Ḥadīth al-Nabawī wa 'Ilm al-Nafs* (Prophetic Hadith and Psychology, 1988) emphasize revelation as a

<sup>11</sup> Aseeralkotb, "Muhammad 'Uthmān Najātī," <https://www.aseeralkotb.com/ar/authors/محمد-عثمان-نجاتي.html>, diakses 30 Oktober 2025, pukul 15.00.

<sup>12</sup> Zaharuddin, "Telaah Kritis Terhadap Pemikiran Psikologi Islam Muhammad Utsman Najati," *Psikis: Jurnal Psikologi Islami* 1, no. 2 (2015): 100.

conceptual source for understanding the human essence and the balance of the soul. Likewise, *Ad-Dirāsāt an-Nafsāniyyah ‘Inda al-‘Ulamā’ al-Muslimīn* (Psychological Studies among Muslim Scholars, 1993) highlights the contributions of classical Muslim thinkers in constructing an Islamic psychological foundation derived from religious texts. His book *Maḥmūd as-Sihhah an-Nafsiyyah fī al-Qur’ān al-Karīm wa al-Ḥadīth asy-Syarīf* (The Concept of Mental Health in the Noble Qur’an and the Prophetic Hadith, 1984) explicitly articulates the notion of mental health within Islam’s two primary sources. In addition to his original works, Najati translated and edited several Western psychological texts, including those of Sigmund Freud, to expand the Arabic intellectual corpus and foster a critical dialogue between Eastern and Western scientific traditions.<sup>13</sup>

The scientific paradigm developed by Najati rejects the reductionism of Western psychology for its neglect of the human spiritual dimension. He advanced an *integrative-prophetic* model a psychological framework rooted in divine revelation, yet rational and empirical. For Najati, the human being is a multidimensional entity encompassing biological, psychological, and spiritual aspects, and mental health can only be achieved when these three dimensions are harmoniously balanced. This perspective positions Najati as a pioneering figure in formulating an epistemology of Islamic psychology grounded in the Qur’an and Hadith.<sup>14</sup> His intellectual legacy provides profound inspiration for the development of a holistic and contextually relevant Islamic scientific paradigm. Najati’s works serve as foundational references in shaping the theoretical frameworks of *Islamic mental health* and *prophetic education models*, which are now widely adopted in international academia. Through his ideas, Hadith is no longer viewed merely as a normative text but as an epistemological source for building a civilization characterized by psychological balance and spiritual awareness. Najati’s thought underscores that the future of Islamic education lies in its ability to harmonize knowledge, moral values, and psychological dimensions—thereby cultivating a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent but also emotionally mature and mentally stable.

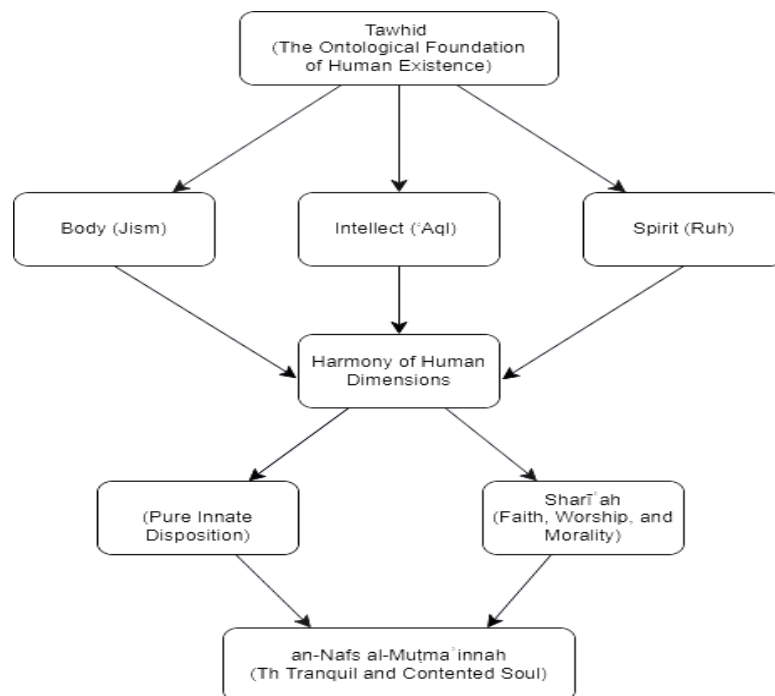
<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.* 101.

<sup>14</sup> Muhammad Utsman Najati, *Al-Aḥādīth al-Nabawiyyah wa ‘Ilm al-Nafs* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2005), 276.

## The Concept of Mental Health

Najati's conception of mental health emerged as a critique of the limitations of modern psychology, which tends to separate the material and spiritual dimensions of human nature. He asserts that true mental health originates from the harmony between body, intellect, and spirit, all of which are rooted in *tawḥīd* (the oneness of God) as the foundation of human existence. The Qur'an describes the ideal state of the soul as *an-nafs al-muṭma'innah* a tranquil and contented self—while the *hadith* refers to *al-fiṭrah* as the pure and truth-oriented innate disposition. For Najati, these two concepts form the basis of psychological integrity that can only be maintained through the practice of Islamic law (*sharī'ah*). A serene soul cannot be attained without nurturing one's *fiṭrah* through faith, worship, and self-control. Hence, for a Muslim, mental health does not merely imply the absence of psychological disorders but the ability to sustain balance between physical and spiritual needs within the framework of obedience to Allah.<sup>15</sup>

**Figure 1:** Conceptual Model of Mental Health Rooted in Tawḥīd



<sup>15</sup> Muhammad Utsman Najati, *Hadis dan Ilmu Jiwa* (Bandung: Pustaka, 2005), 291



Various scholars have defined mental health through five progressive levels, ranging from the mere absence of psychopathological symptoms to the realization of inner harmony and social adjustment. While these formulations reveal the complexity of human psychology, they remain primarily oriented toward psychological and social functionality. Najati appreciates these views but argues that they fail to encompass the spiritual dimension that constitutes the essence of human life. He maintains that authentic mental health not only involves harmony among the internal faculties of the soul but also the complete connectedness between the human being and the Creator. Emotional and social equilibrium, therefore, only acquire meaning when rooted in faith that engenders inner peace. Najati thus expands the framework of Islamic psychology by asserting that *fiṭrah*, *‘aqīdah*, and *sharī‘ah* are the central axes of a personality that is mentally and spiritually healthy.<sup>16</sup>

Contrary to the medical and social approaches prevalent in Western psychiatry, Najati formulates the concept of *at-tawāzun an-nafsī* (psychological balance) as a middle path in fulfilling the needs of both body and spirit. The body, he explains, requires nourishment, rest, and physical comfort, while the soul needs spiritual sustenance through worship, remembrance (*dhikr*), and communion with God. An imbalance between these two realms leads to psychological distress and loss of inner peace. In this sense, Najati’s framework aligns with Islamic teachings that prohibit extremism in worldly affairs or acts of worship. Islam, in his view, is a religion of balance—granting space for biological satisfaction without neglecting spirituality. This principle of equilibrium underpins Najati’s assertion that mental health must encompass physiological, social, moral, and spiritual dimensions in proportional harmony.<sup>17</sup>

Najati highlights the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as the ultimate model of human perfection who exemplified harmony between the physical and the spiritual. The Prophet fulfilled his biological needs within proper limits, actively engaged in social life, and maintained an intimate spiritual connection with God through worship, *dhikr*, and contemplation. In Najati’s interpretation, the Prophet’s personality embodies *prophetic mental health*, characterized by inner tranquility,

<sup>16</sup> Muhammad Utsman Najati, *Al-Aḥādīth al-Nabawīyyah wa ‘Ilm al-Nafs* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2005), 276.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*



emotional stability, and moral purity.<sup>18</sup> The Prophet never lost composure amid adversity whether in warfare or humiliation because his heart remained firmly bound to Allah. For Najati, this prophetic example constitutes empirical evidence that spirituality forms the foundation of psychological resilience. Consequently, Islamic education must regard the Prophet's character as the model for shaping moral integrity and strengthening students' mental well-being.

Najati frequently cites a *hadith* narrated by Imam Muslim, which serves as the principal foundation for psychological stability:

عَجَبًا لِأَمْرِ الْمُؤْمِنِ كُلِّهِ حَيْرٌ، وَلَيْسَ ذَلِكَ لِأَحَدٍ إِلَّا لِلْمُؤْمِنِ، إِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ سَرَاءٌ شَكَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ، وَإِنْ أَصَابَتْهُ ضَرَاءٌ صَبَرَ فَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُ

*"How wonderful is the affair of the believer! For everything that happens to him is good, and this is true for no one except the believer. If something favorable befalls him, he is grateful, and that is good for him; if adversity strikes him, he is patient, and that too is good for him."* (Sahih Muslim)<sup>19</sup>

This authentic narration, as verified by Mustofa Deeb al-Baqi, is interpreted by Najati as the cornerstone of Islamic positive psychology.<sup>20</sup> For the true believer, every life event carries inherent goodness: joy invites gratitude, while hardship cultivates patience. These two attitudes *ṣabar* and *sukur* maintain emotional balance and safeguard against psychological disturbance, including among students. Awareness of divine wisdom behind every trial fosters spiritual resilience and prevents emotional instability amid life's uncertainties.<sup>21</sup>

Najati's view of patience and gratitude as therapeutic virtues resonates with the modern psychological notion of resilience—the capacity for positive adaptation in the face of stress. Yet, Najati contends that the true source of resilience lies not merely in emotional maturity but in spiritual submission to God. Within the framework of faith, hardship is not perceived as punishment but as a means of purification and moral growth. Thus, the believer is shielded from chronic stress by a powerful system of

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.* 299

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* 276

<sup>20</sup> Abul Ḥusain Muslim bin al-Ḥajjāj al-Qusyairi an-Naisaburi, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim* (Beirut: Dār Iḥyā' at-Turāṭs al-ʿArabī, 1955), 2295.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.* 297.

meaning through which suffering is reinterpreted in a constructive manner. This perspective reveals that Islamic spirituality functions as a dynamic coping mechanism for maintaining mental and emotional equilibrium.

In Najati's thought, faith (*īmān*) occupies the central position within the entire structure of psychological well-being. He argues that faith strengthens not only spiritual faculties but also directs human cognition and behavior. Belief in divine destiny, mercy, and justice fosters optimism and acceptance, even in the face of despair. This stands in stark contrast to Sigmund Freud's claim that religion is an illusory escape from reality. Najati, conversely, regards faith as the highest form of human consciousness—uniting reason and intuition within spiritual harmony. In the context of Islamic education, *īmān* must be cultivated not merely through ritual memorization but through pedagogical processes that awaken divine consciousness and existential meaning.

Najati's concept of balance also resonates with al-Ghazali's emphasis on *tazkiyah an-nafs* (spiritual purification) as a path toward inner peace. However, Najati complements al-Ghazali's mystical insights with an empirical psychological approach. He explains that spiritual practices such as patience, sincerity, and gratitude have measurable physiological effects on hormonal stability, cardiac rhythm, and cognitive function. This suggests that spirituality has a tangible influence on mental health. Accordingly, Islamic education can employ *tazkiyah* values as a scientifically grounded and applicable framework for students' psychological development—teaching not only moral precepts but also methods of internalizing them through continuous emotional reflection and discipline.

Najati also rejects the dichotomy between worldly and hereafter-oriented happiness. For him, *as-sa'ādah al-ḥaqīqiyyah* (true happiness) is a tranquil state born from complete obedience to Allah. He rejects the hedonistic notion that equates happiness with material pleasure, asserting instead that genuine joy stems from spiritual awareness that enables moderation and moral direction. This stands in opposition to Abraham Maslow's theory of self-actualization, which emphasizes individual potential and growth. Najati argues that the highest human actualization lies not in self-realization but in the consciousness of servitude to God. In Islamic education, this view necessitates the integration of spiritual values throughout the curriculum, so

that the ultimate aim of learning transcends intellectual achievement and achieves a balance of existence.

Methodologically, Najati constructs a synthesis between psychology and *hadith* sciences. He treats *hadith* as an empirical foundation for understanding human behavior and assessing mental health from an Islamic standpoint.<sup>22</sup> In this framework, the Hadith is not merely a source of law, but also a psychotherapeutic guide that leads humanity toward self-balance and harmony. By interpreting *hadith* through a psychological lens, Najati opens a new space for integration between science and religion without subordinating either. This approach enriches the Islamic intellectual tradition, which has often been fragmented between religious studies and modern social sciences.<sup>23</sup>

In the context of Islamic education, Najati's concept of mental health holds profound relevance. Education should not be confined to cognitive development but must also nurture spiritual, moral, and emotional balance.<sup>24</sup> The values of patience, gratitude, and reliance on God (*tawakka*l), as taught in the *hadith*, provide a solid foundation for students' psychological well-being. Modern Islamic educational institutions, therefore, need to develop a *prophetic education* model that cultivates meaning, sincerity, and inner peace. Through such integration, Islamic education becomes an instrument for forming resilient personalities capable of withstanding social pressures and navigating the challenges of modernity.<sup>25</sup>

Najati's thought ultimately affirms that prophetic spirituality is an inseparable dimension of human mental health. Inner tranquility, endurance in trials, and the ability to interpret suffering positively are hallmarks of a mentally sound individual in Islam. In an era marked by disruption and instability, this paradigm provides an educational framework that fosters moral and emotional resilience, grounded in divine revelation.

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<sup>22</sup> Fina Fatmah, "Konstruksi Metodologi Hadis tentang Kesehatan Mental dalam Kitab Al-Ḥadīth al-Nabawīyyah wa 'Ilm al-Nafs Karya Muhammad Utsman Najati" (Skripsi, UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2021), 25–27

<sup>23</sup> Zaharuddin, "Telaah Kritis Terhadap Pemikiran Psikologi Islam Muhammad Utsman Najati," *Psikis: Jurnal Psikologi Islami* 1, no. 2 (2015): 95–114.

<sup>24</sup> Tedi Kurniawan dan Muhammad Nur Shiddiq, "Teori Usman Najati: Solusi Hadis Nabi untuk Mental Health Gen Z," *Hadisuna: Jurnal Studi Ilmu Hadis* 1, no. 1 (2025): 45–48.

<sup>25</sup> Hasan Langgulung, *Pendidikan Islam dan Peranannya dalam Pembangunan Umat* (Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Husna, 1986), 72.

Therefore, Islamic education must adopt the insights of *hadith* and Najati as conceptual references for constructing a holistic, humanistic, and transcendental learning system.

### The Mentally Healthy Human Being

Najati defines a mentally healthy human being as one who can maintain balance among the physical, intellectual, and spiritual aspects of life, and who manages life's pressures with unwavering faith. True mental health, according to Najati, is not merely the absence of psychological disorders but a state of inner tranquility grounded in the consciousness of divine unity (*tawhīd*). A peaceful soul represents an individual capable of subduing desires, regulating emotions, and sustaining harmonious relationships with both God and fellow humans. Within the framework of Islamic education, such indicators serve as the foundation for nurturing students' personalities—not only fostering intellectual intelligence but also establishing spiritual resilience as the basis of mental well-being.<sup>26</sup>

Najati emphasizes that the central characteristic of a mentally healthy individual lies in the ability to interpret every life event through the lens of faith. He refers to the *hadith* narrated by Anas in *Sunan Ibn Mājah*:

عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ قَالَ : قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ : إِنَّ عِظَمَ الْجَزَاءِ مَعَ عِظَمِ الْبَلَاءِ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ إِذَا أَحَبَّ قَوْمًا ابْتَلَاهُمْ فَمَنْ رَضِيَ فَلَهُ الرِّضَا وَمَنْ سَخِطَ فَلَهُ السَّخَطُ

*"The magnitude of the reward corresponds to the magnitude of the trial. When Allah loves a people, He tests them. Whoever is content with it will earn the pleasure of Allah, and whoever is displeased will earn His wrath."*<sup>27</sup>

Najati interprets this *hadith* as an indicator of psychological firmness. A mentally healthy person is one who accepts trials with serenity, recognizing that hardships are expressions of divine mercy rather than punishment. Contentment (*riḍā*) with God's decree constitutes the highest form of spiritual health, protecting individuals from anxiety and anger toward fate. This awareness reinforces the concept of a *religious coping mechanism* the capacity to face life's pressures through a transcendental orientation.

<sup>26</sup> Muhammad Utsman Najati, *Al-Aḥādīth al-Nabawīyyah wa 'Ilm al-Nafs* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2005), 297.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

In another *hadith* narrated by Abu Hurairah and recorded in *Sunan al-Tirmidhī*, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:

مَا يَزَالُ الْبَلَاءُ بِالْمُؤْمِنِ وَالْمُؤْمِنَةِ فِي جَسَدِهِ وَمَالِهِ وَوَلَدِهِ حَتَّى يَلْقَى اللَّهَ وَمَا عَلَيْهِ خَطِيئَةٌ

*“Trials will continue to befall the believing man and woman—in their selves, their children, and their wealth—until they meet Allah free of sin.”*

According to Najati, this *hadith* underscores the profound connection between patience and mental well-being. Life’s difficulties are not sources of psychological suffering but means of spiritual purification. Individuals who perceive the spiritual meaning behind trials do not easily succumb to despair or emotional breakdown; rather, they cultivate resilience and embrace life with optimism. In the context of Islamic education, this principle can be translated into character education that fosters *emotional resilience* rooted in faith and spiritual awareness.<sup>28</sup>

Another key indicator of mental health, according to Najati, is the ability to regulate emotions and control instinctive drives within the boundaries of Islamic law. He asserts that mentally healthy individuals are those not dominated by their lower desires (*nafs al-ammārah bi-s-sū’*), which stand in contrast to *an-nafs al-muṭma’innah* the tranquil self. Self-control in Islam is not repression but a form of spiritual awareness that liberates humans from the tyranny of transient impulses. Hence, the balance between biological and spiritual needs is essential for inner peace. In educational practice, this entails instilling spiritual disciplines such as prayer, *dhikr* (remembrance of God), and self-reflection as methods of emotional regulation and moral development.

In contrast to Western psychological theories such as Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, which positions self-actualization at the peak of human fulfillment Najati asserts that the highest actualization of the human being lies in *al-qurb ilā Allāh* (nearness to God). The realization of one’s potential, in his view, must be directed toward worship and social benefit. A mentally healthy individual is thus productive, creative, and beneficial to others, yet remains sincere and balanced in life.

<sup>28</sup> Muhammad Utsman Najati, *Al-Aḥādīth al-Nabawiyyah wa ‘Ilm al-Nafs* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2005), 297.

Consequently, Islamic education should guide students toward self-actualization, fostering meaningful spiritual service and moral excellence.<sup>29</sup>

Najati further connects mental health with moral sensitivity and social empathy. A sound soul achieves equilibrium between personal happiness and concern for the well-being of others. Such individuals live in social harmony and find inner tranquility through acts of kindness and altruism. This view aligns with the fundamental aim of Islamic education to form the *insān kāmil* (complete human being), one who is rational, virtuous, and socially conscious.<sup>30</sup> In Islam, mental health is not measured solely by individual well-being but also by one's contribution to communal harmony. Practically, this demands the balanced integration of spiritual, emotional, and social learning within the educational process.

Therefore, Najati emphasizes that mentally healthy individuals are those who possess inner serenity, the capacity to interpret trials as a manifestation of divine compassion, and steadfast endurance rooted in spiritual values. Such individuals are not easily shaken by external pressures because they possess a profound sense of meaning and a deep spiritual connection with God. At this point, mental health transcends mere psychological stability; it becomes the embodiment of faith and moral consciousness. From the perspective of Islamic education, this paradigm offers a foundational framework for cultivating resilient, character-driven learners who are capable of living with wisdom, composure, and spiritually grounded self-awareness.<sup>31</sup>

### **The Mentally Ill Human Being**

Najati frequently defines a mentally ill human being as an individual who has lost the equilibrium among the physical, intellectual, and spiritual components of the self. Such a person can no longer assess, control, or interpret life in a holistic manner. According to Najati, this imbalance originates from a weakened spiritual relationship with Allah and the loss of moral awareness in managing one's desires. He argues that mental disorders do not stem solely from biological or psychological factors as

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<sup>29</sup> S. E. Asch, "Effects of Group Pressure Upon the Modification and Distortion of Judgment," *Psychological Monographs: General and Applied* 70, no. 9 (1951): 20..

<sup>30</sup> Hasan Langgulung, *Pendidikan Islam dan Peranannya dalam Pembangunan Umat* (Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Husna, 1986), 72–73.

<sup>31</sup> Sindi Novitasari, Sumarto, dan Febriansyah, "Konsep Jiwa dalam Al-Qur'an (Perspektif Muhammad Utsman Najati dalam Psikologi Islam)" (Skripsi, IAIN Curup, 2023), 59–60.

explained in general psychology but rather from spiritual degradation that leads to existential emptiness.<sup>32</sup> Within the context of Islamic education, this condition becomes particularly concerning, as the failure to cultivate spiritual balance produces a generation that is intellectually bright but emotionally and morally fragile.

Najati associates the symptoms of mental disorder with the Qur'anic verse in *Surah al-Baqarah* (2:10):

وَفِي قُلُوبِهِمْ مَّرَضٌ فَزَادَهُمُ اللَّهُ مَرَضًا وَلَهُمْ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ۖ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْذِبُونَ

*"In their hearts is a disease, and Allah has increased their disease; and for them is a painful punishment because they [habitually] used to lie."*

According to Najati, the "disease" mentioned in this verse refers not only to the weakening of faith in the truth brought by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) but also to the impurity of the heart that generates envy, hatred, and resentment. This spiritual ailment becomes the root of mental disturbance, as dishonesty of the soul breeds inner conflict and existential anxiety. In modern psychology, such a state is referred to as *existential neurosis* a condition in which an individual experiences a loss of meaning in life. Najati extends this concept by asserting that spiritual disease infects moral and social dimensions, ultimately eroding personal integrity and disrupting social relationships.<sup>33</sup>

In Najati's view, the mentally ill individual is unable to understand and accept themselves objectively. Such a person tends to be anxious, pessimistic, and lacking in self-confidence when confronted with life's realities. Najati describes this as a form of spiritual unrest, wherein one fails to place dependence upon Allah as the primary source of inner strength. In general psychology, these symptoms correspond closely to depression and anxiety disorders. Yet Najati interprets them more profoundly as a crisis of faith that corrodes the structure of human personality. Hence, Islamic education must facilitate pedagogical processes that reinforce spiritual consciousness and cultivate patience as the foundation of students' mental resilience.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Muhammad Utsman Najati, *Al-Aḥādīth al-Nabawīyyah wa 'Ilm al-Nafs* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2005), 251.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> Zaharuddin, "Telaah Kritis Terhadap Pemikiran Psikologi Islam Muhammad Utsman Najati," *Psikis: Jurnal Psikologi Islami* 1, no. 2 (2015): 108–109.



Najati further explains that mental disturbance is reflected in an individual's inability to adapt positively to their social environment. A person with a diseased mind tends to withdraw, act aggressively, or deviate from social and religious norms. Such an individual lives in social tension, having lost empathy and the sense of communal belonging. In modern psychological terms, this condition is classified as *maladjustment*, which refers to the failure to adapt to social reality. Najati emphasizes that the root cause of maladaptation lies not merely in external pressures but in the loss of inner balance resulting from spiritual weakness. At this point, Islamic education is expected to function as a medium for reviving the values of *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) and *ta'āwun* (mutual cooperation) as social therapies that restore harmony between individuals and their communities.<sup>35</sup>

Furthermore, Najati asserts that the mentally ill person is characterized by moral decline and spiritual frailty. Such a person rejects ethical and religious principles, engages in deceitful behavior, and allows base desires to dominate their actions. Najati identifies a close relationship between mental disorder and the *amrāḍ al-qulūb* (diseases of the heart) mentioned in the Qur'an. This moral pathology causes individuals to lose tranquility and wisdom in confronting life's challenges. In the context of Islamic education, morality should not be taught merely as behavioral norms, but rather internalized as a spiritual awareness that functions as a form of immunity against psychological disorders.

Najati identifies several key indicators of mental illness, including feelings of inadequacy, insecurity, low self-esteem, emotional immaturity, and dissatisfaction in social relationships. Such individuals tend to be reactive, irritable, and struggle to control their impulses. In modern psychology, these symptoms are associated with *affective instability*. Najati, however, attributes the root of such instability to spiritual immaturity. Therefore, mental health restoration cannot rely solely on medical or psychological therapy but must also involve purification of the heart through worship, *dhikr* (remembrance of God), and strengthening one's spiritual connection with Allah.<sup>36</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Khairunnas Rajab, "Kontribusi Tasawuf-Psikoterapi Terhadap Pendidikan Islam," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 28, no. 1 (2023): 103–106.

<sup>36</sup> Muhammad Utsman Najati, *Al-Aḥādīth al-Nabawīyyah wa 'Ilm al-Nafs* (Cairo: Dār al-Shurūq, 2005), 276.

In conclusion, the mentally ill human being, according to Najati, is not merely one suffering from clinical psychological disorders but a person who has lost spiritual and moral balance. This disorder emerges when the heart becomes diseased, faith weakens, and the relationship with Allah is severed. Najati offers an alternative paradigm in which mental healing begins with the restoration of faith and the reorganization of the soul. From the perspective of Islamic education, this concept affirms that students' mental well-being cannot be achieved solely through psychological interventions but must also include the reinforcement of spirituality, moral awareness, and the habituation of patience in facing life's trials.

### **Methods for Developing Mental Health**

According to Najati, the development of genuine mental health cannot be achieved solely through medical or psychotherapeutic approaches; rather, it must be rooted in the spiritual dimension, which serves as the foundation of human personality. He argues that many contemporary psychologists fail to grasp the essence of mental well-being because they neglect the spiritual aspect as the central axis of human balance. Therefore, Najati proposes an integrative approach that positions revelation (the Qur'an and Hadith) as the normative basis, while the findings of modern psychology function as empirical tools to deepen understanding of the human psyche. Through this integrative model, Islamic education serves not only as a medium for knowledge transmission but also as a transformative process to cultivate spiritual, emotional, and social equilibrium in the pursuit of *insān kāmil* the perfect human personality.

To realize *insān kāmil* with sound mental health, Najati introduces several essential methods that can be applied within Islamic education. The first is the consolidation of the spiritual dimension. For Najati, faith (*īmān*), monotheism (*tawḥīd*), and worship (*ʿibādah*) constitute the three main pillars of psychological well-being. *Tawḥīd* liberates humans from the fear of creation by positioning Allah as the sole source of strength and security. Najati emphasizes that a true believer remains emotionally stable and spiritually serene (*iṭmi'nān*), undisturbed by external pressures, because their orientation is toward God. Beyond faith, Najati situates *taqwā* (piety) as the practical manifestation of belief. *Taqwā* serves as a behavioral regulator, shielding

individuals from moral stress and inner conflict. Likewise, worship acts as spiritual therapy, strengthening inner tranquility and self-control. Acts of worship such as prayer, fasting, and almsgiving train emotional discipline, patience, and social solidarity. Najati refers to the Prophet's saying, "Prayer is the comfort of my heart" (*Sunan al-Nasa'i*), as evidence that ritual devotion harmonizes the body and the soul.<sup>37</sup>

The second method for developing mental health is regulating the physical dimension. Najati underscores the importance of balancing biological needs with spiritual nourishment. He asserts that basic human needs such as eating, sleeping, and engaging in sexual relations are part of human *fitrah* (nature) that must be fulfilled lawfully and proportionately. Failure to meet these needs disrupts psychological balance. Najati cites medical research demonstrating that excessive behaviors, including overeating or uncontrolled sexual activity, can trigger emotional and psychological disorders. He also highlights the significance of emotional control as the core of mental health, referring to the Prophet's saying: "The strong man is not the one who defeats others in wrestling, but the one who controls himself when angry" (*Sahih al-Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim*). Najati interprets this Hadith as the essence of Islamic psychotherapy true strength lies in regulating, not repressing or destructively expressing, emotions. In modern psychology, this corresponds to theories of emotional regulation, which emphasize the conscious management of emotions. However, Najati extends the concept by asserting that emotional regulation is truly effective only when grounded in faith, for faith provides an inner stability that transcends external pressure.<sup>38</sup>

The third method proposed by Najati involves cultivating positive habits in social life. Drawing upon the Prophet Muhammad's pedagogical example, Najati promotes values such as *qanā'ah* (contentment), patience, responsibility, independence, self-confidence, and consistency as behavioral habits that form the foundation of sound mental character. This concept aligns with behavioral learning theory, which posits that behavior can be shaped through repetition and reinforcement. However, Najati insists that such habituation must be morally anchored in divine revelation to produce holistic personality development. The social dimension of Najati's

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<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.* 277.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* 282.

method also includes fostering inner peace and communal solidarity. He believes that a healthy social environment plays a crucial role in sustaining emotional and spiritual balance. This perspective aligns with the modern psychological theory of social support, which affirms that positive social interactions enhance resilience against stress. Nonetheless, Najati distinguishes the Islamic concept of solidarity as more than social interaction—it is a manifestation of collective faith that reinforces shared spiritual consciousness. Within Islamic education, cultivating a supportive learning community thus becomes a vital strategy for nurturing collective mental well-being among students.<sup>39</sup>

The fourth method articulated by Najati emphasizes maintaining biological equilibrium. He affirms that physical health is a prerequisite for mental well-being. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) encouraged physical activities such as archery, swimming, and horseback riding as forms of exercise that strengthen both body and soul.<sup>40</sup> Najati explains that physical weakness can lead to emotional disturbances because the body and mind are intrinsically interconnected. In modern psychology, this relationship is known as the *mind-body connection*, emphasizing that physical health reinforces psychological stability. However, Najati reminds us that maintaining biological health in Islam transcends mere physical fitness; it is a spiritual responsibility entrusted by Allah to humanity.<sup>41</sup>

All the methods proposed by Najati culminate in the concept of holistic equilibrium that integrates spiritual, psychological, social, and biological dimensions. True mental health emerges when these dimensions interact harmoniously. Najati asserts that the Prophet Muhammad exemplifies the ideal model of a balanced human being who proportionally fulfills both physical and spiritual needs.<sup>42</sup> He critiques modern psychology for fragmenting the human being into biological and social aspects while neglecting transcendence. Islam, in contrast, teaches that genuine well-being arises from the unity between self-awareness and divine consciousness (*ma'rifatullāh*).

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<sup>39</sup>*Ibid.* 285.

<sup>40</sup> Dar al-Ifta al-Mishriyah, *Fatwa No. 6282* tentang hadis “Ajarilah anak-anakmu berenang, memanah, dan berkuda” (Kairo, 2021).

<sup>41</sup> Fina Fatmah, “Konstruksi Metodologi Hadis tentang Kesehatan Mental dalam Kitab Al-Ḥadīth al-Nabawīyyah wa ‘Ilm al-Nafs Karya Muhammad Utsman Najati” (Skripsi, UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2021), 60–62.

<sup>42</sup> Muhammad Utsman Najati, *Hadis dan Ilmu Jiwa* (Bandung: Pustaka, 2005), 282–283.

In the context of Islamic education, Najati's ideas inspire the development of a *spiritual-psycho-pedagogical* approach—an educational model that integrates spiritual training, moral cultivation, and emotional development to produce mentally healthy and holistically balanced individuals.<sup>43</sup>

## Conclusion

Najati's conception of mental health presents an integrative paradigm that unites the spiritual, psychological, social, and biological dimensions of human existence into a holistic framework. He rejects the reductionist orientation of Western psychology, which tends to marginalize the spiritual dimension in constructing a balanced understanding of human psychology. By grounding his theory in divine revelation—particularly the Prophetic Hadith Najati asserts that authentic mental health can only be attained through spiritual submission to Allah and the embodiment of prophetic values in everyday life. Within the context of Islamic education, his thought emphasizes the need to establish an educational ecosystem that focuses not only on intellectual development but also on fostering students' spiritual and emotional formation. This approach aims to cultivate *insān kāmil* a complete human being who is stable, resilient, and morally grounded. Through his prophetic psychology framework, Najati enriches the discourse of Islamic education by redefining Hadith not merely as a normative text but as an epistemological foundation for personality development and psycho-spiritual therapy.

The novelty of this study lies in demonstrating that, in Najati's perspective, mental health is inseparable from the structure of faith and Islamic morality, as well as from the integration of Hadith within the construction of Islamic psychological theory. His ideas provide a methodological basis for Islamic education to design pedagogical models oriented toward spiritual-psychological equilibrium, an area that remains insufficiently explored in contemporary scholarship. Nevertheless, this study acknowledges its limitation in not empirically testing the practical application of Najati's concepts within modern educational settings. Hence, further research is recommended to develop empirical approaches assessing the effectiveness of Najati's

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<sup>43</sup> Khairunnas Rajab, "Kontribusi Tasawuf-Psikoterapi Terhadap Pendidikan Islam," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 28, no. 1 (2023): 103–104.

mental health framework in Islamic educational institutions, thereby reinforcing its relevance for nurturing a spiritually resilient, morally upright, and prophetically inspired generation.

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