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Beyond Ritualistic Practices: the Transcendental Meaning of *Wirdul-Lathif* and its Role in Students' Psychological Well-Being

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Abstract

The mental health crisis in the modern era necessitates the development of psychospiritual approaches grounded in religious traditions. This study aims to describe the spiritual meanings and identify the psychological relevance of Wirdul-Lathif recitation at Pesantren Sunan Gunung Jati , Cirebon Regency. This qualitative study employs a phenomenological approach. Data were collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The findings indicate that Wirdul-Lathif recitation is not merely a ritual routine but also fosters transcendental awareness and strengthens the inner resilience of santri (students). This is attributed to the practice of dhikr, which promotes spiritual tranquility (*tuma'ninah*), emotional regulation, anxiety management, and a positive life orientation. The study highlights the relevance of daily wird as a form of religious coping and a psychospiritual approach to supporting students' psychological well-being in Pesantren.

Keywords: *Wirdul-Lathif, Mental Healt, Pesantren.*

Abstrak

Krisis kesehatan mental di era modern mendorong pengembangan pendekatan psikospiritual berbasis tradisi keagamaan. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan makna spiritual dan mengidentifikasi relevansi psikologis terhadap pembacaan Wirdul-Lathif di Pesantren Sunan Gunung Jati, Kabupaten Cirebon. Penelitian kualitatif ini menggunakan pendekatan pendekatan fenomenologi. Data diperoleh melalui observasi partisipatif, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan pembacaan Wirdul-Lathif tidak sekedar menjadi rutinitas ritual, namun juga membentuk kesadaran transendental dan memperkuat resiliensi batin santri (peserta didik). Hal demikian disebabkan praktik zikir tersebut menghadirkan ketenangan jiwa (tuma'ninah), regulasi emosi, pengelolaan kecemasan, dan orientasi hidup positif. Kontribusi temuan penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa relevansi wirid harian dapat menjadi praktik koping religius dan pendekatan psikospiritual dalam mendukung kesejahteraan psikologis peserta didik di Pesantren

Kata Kunci: *Wirdul-Lathif, Kesehatan Mental, Pesantren.*

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INTRODUCTION

Mental health is one of the key aspects of human life that plays a major role in determining quality of life. Individuals in good mental health tend to be able to think clearly, manage their emotions adaptively, form positive social relationships, and carry out their daily activities to the best of their ability. However, in recent decades, the prevalence of mental health conditions such as stress, anxiety and depression has risen significantly. In modern psychology, these conditions are often referred to as mental distress or psychological pressure, where modern people are experiencing a crisis of values and spirituality that renders their minds unstable and easily shaken by the dynamics of life. Symptoms such as restlessness, excessive fear, a loss of inner peace, and emotional exhaustion have become characteristic of contemporary society. (Hasna, 2025) Data from the World Health Organisation (2022) indicates that one in eight people worldwide live with a mental health condition, which has a serious impact on productivity, interpersonal relationships and general psychological well-being. (Rovila & Fadilah, 2026)

Islam offers many solutions to all manner of life's problems, including mental health issues, to help overcome mental disorders. Drawing on the Qur'an and the Hadith, one of the therapies recommended in these sources is the practice of *zikr* (Waluyojati, 2024) For a Muslim is commanded to remember Allah SWT at all times in their heart, through their words, and with their limbs because remembrance of Allah is a remedy for peace of mind, which forms the basis of human behaviour; as Allah says in the Qur'an:"(Namely) those who believe and whose hearts find peace in the remembrance of Allah. Remember, it is only through the remembrance of Allah that the heart finds peace." (Quran 13:28). (Kemenag, 2019).This verse describes the inner condition of those who believe: their hearts are calmed not by the possession of worldly things, but by remembering Allah. The peace referred to here (*tumaninah*) is a settled and assured state of the heart that replaces restlessness, anxiety, and doubt, and it is closely linked to faith. The remembrance of Allah mentioned in the verse covers every form of dhikr, from glorifying and praising Allah to reciting and reflecting on the Qur'an. The closing sentence of the verse states this as a general principle: the heart, which is easily unsettled when it is bound to the changing conditions of the world, finds its stability only by returning to Allah. For this study, the verse provides the theological basis for understanding dhikr, including *Wirdul-Lathif*, as a means of attaining inner peace and mental stability.

In a Hadith narrated by Imam al-Tirmidhi, the Prophet Muhammad once said: "Every word spoken by the children of Adam will be held against them; they will receive no reward except for remembering Allah, enjoining what is good, or forbidding what is evil." (Al-Haddad, 2018).This Hadith explains that human speech is never a neutral matter: every utterance will be accounted for and, in principle, counts against a person unless it falls into one of three categories, namely enjoining what is good, forbidding what is evil, or remembering Allah (*dhikr*). Dhikr is therefore presented as one of the few forms of speech that is wholly beneficial, because it turns the tongue and the heart towards Allah and away from idle or harmful talk. For the practice of *Wirdul-Lathif*, the hadith shows that reciting

litanies of remembrance is a meaningful act of devotion as well as a discipline of speech and thought that benefits the person who practises it.

Zikr which literally means 'remembering Allah', is a spiritual practice in Islam that involves the repetition of the names of Allah, blessed phrases, or verses from the Qur'an. (Mulya, 2025) Various types of *zikr* have been compiled by the Salaf ulama, including morning and evening practices. One of these is the *"Wirdul Laṭīf" Zikr*, which is a highly virtuous practice because it contains verses from the Holy Qur'an and a series of supplications. This *wirid* can be practiced to ask Allah to grant all one's needs, purify the heart, and also to ward off jinn and their disturbances, thereby making the Islamic boarding school safer, calmer, and more peaceful. (Masyath, 2025) Based on several Islamic psychotherapy studies that have been conducted, *zikr* is believed to be one of the therapies capable of fostering a deep sense of security, peace, and tranquility as a gift from Allah (tumakninah). (Rozak, 2021)

Zikr itself is not limited to reciting the words of *tayyibah*; reciting verses from the Holy Qur'an and the Hadith is also a form of zikr. (Rofiq, 2023) Indeed, the sacred verses of the Qur'an possess immense virtue as a remedy for purifying the heart and cleansing the soul; through remembrance (*Zikr*), contentment and a sense of spaciousness become more deeply rooted in the heart, and one will experience inner peace. In order to attain a peaceful soul, remembrance of God plays a fundamental role in human life, for it is one of the inner needs of human beings who seek peace and happiness. It also guides the human soul, motivating one to do good and refrain from evil, to mend a heedless heart, and to deepen inner peace so that one may always remember Allah SWT. (Aushafi, 2017) Based on the presentation and analysis of the data, the results indicate a significant difference between the calculated value and the observed data. The calculated value was 1,698, while the p-value at a 5% significance level was 3.97. It can be concluded that there is a significant difference in the effect of *zikir* on inner peace. (Aushafi, 2017)

Various acts of worship, especially the recitation of zikr, have a significant impact on promoting health and strengthening the body's immune system. A servant's closeness to Allah is measured by the frequency of their *zikr*, and their distance from Allah is also measured by their neglect of *zikr.* The hormones epinephrine and norepinephrine, produced by the adrenal medulla, can be regulated through dhikr meditation. As the heart rate slows, blood vessels dilate, vascular resistance decreases, and the heart's pumping action slows all of which can inhibit the production of angiotensin, which in turn can lower blood pressure. The hypothalamus adjusts; the sympathetic nervous system becomes less active, and the parasympathetic nervous system becomes more active when the body is in a more relaxed state and all bodily systems function optimally as a result of meditation. This leads to a disruption of physiological reaction patterns, indicators, or symptoms. (Aushafi, 2017).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach with a phenomenological perspective, conducted as a case study of the practice of *Wirdul-Lathif* at the Pesantren

Sunan Gunung Jati, Cirebon Regency, West Java, Indonesia. This approach was chosen to explore in depth the phenomenon of how students (santri) interpret *Wirdul-Lathif* and how this practice affects their psychological well-being within the pesantren environment, as experienced and described by the participants themselves. The research was carried out in the Kopi Subuh assembly, where *Wirdul-Lathif* is recited collectively after the dawn prayer under the guidance of the assembly leader. The data sources consisted of the leaders of the pesantren and the assembly, the students and congregants who routinely practise the dhikr, and the documents and scholarly publications that discuss *Wirdul-Lathif, zhikr*, and mental health.

Data were collected using three techniques. First, participant observation was used to follow the *Wirdul-Lathif* sessions directly, including the opening prayers, the recitation itself, the closing prayer, and the studies that follow, as well as the interaction between the leader and the congregation. Second, in-depth interviews were conducted with the leaders and the students to explore the meanings they attach to the dhikr and the changes they experience in their emotional and psychological condition. Third, documentation was used to gather written sources, namely the text and background of *Wirdul-Lathif* and relevant scholarly publications. The data were then analysed in three interrelated stages: data reduction, in which the data were selected, simplified, and organised according to the research focus; data presentation, in which the findings were arranged in a descriptive narrative; and drawing conclusions, in which the patterns of meaning and the psychological relevance of the practice were interpreted and checked against the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The *Wirdul-Lathif*: Tracing the Intellectual and Sufi Legacy

Zikir Wirdul Lathif is a dhikr compiled by Habib Abdullah bin Alwi al-Haddad. This dhikr contains recitations of prayers sourced from the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad Saw and verses of the Qur'an consisting of Qs. Al-Ikhlas verses 1-4, Qs. Al-Falaq verses 1-5, Qs. An-Nas verses 1-6, Qs. AlMu'minun verses 97-98 and verses 115-118, Qs. Ar-Rum verses 17-19, Qs. Al-Hasyr verses 21-24, and Qs. Ash-Shaffat verses 79-81. (Amirah et al., 2025)

The word *"wirid"* is a loanword from Arabic. In the Al-Munawwir dictionary, this word is defined as "wirid," or the daily recitations (prayers and remembrances of God). (Hadi, 2024). *Wirdul Latif* was written and composed by the great imam, the renowned al-Quthb, al-'Allamah al-Imam al-Habib Abdulloh bin Allawi bin Muhammadd Al-Husaini al-Hadrami Asy-Syafi'i, who is known as al-Haddad. (Sentiani, 2023). *Wirdul Lathif* is a daily remembrance recited every morning and evening. This means that those who practice Wirdul Lathif begin and end their day with remembrance. Wirdul Lathif is a remembrance derived from a compilation of prayers compiled by the renowned Sufi scholar Al - Imam Al-Qutb Abdullah Ibn 'Alawi Al-Haddad (5 Safar 1044 AH/1624 CE–7 Zulkaidah 1132 AH/1712 CE). Imam Al-Haddad compiled several popular *zikrs,* including Al-Wird Al-Kabir. Because the *Al-Wird Al-Kabir* was too lengthy, he composed a more concise dhikr that takes about 15 minutes to recite and is easy to understand; this dhikr is called *"Wirdul Lathif".* As

with his other works, Imam Al-Haddad supported this dhikr with verses from the Quran and hadiths that contain i'jaz and khawas. It is called "*Wirdul Lahif*" (the gentle dhikr) because it is pleasant to recite and resonates deeply in our hearts. This dhikr is ideal for reciting at the start of daily activities, as it contains prayers. (Zerin Amalina, 2023)

His spiritual guide was Al-Imam Al-Allamah Al-Habib Abdullah Ibn ʿAlawi Al-Haddad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Ibn Abdullah Ibn Muhammad Ibn ʿAlawi Ibn Ahmad Ibn Abu Bakr Al-Tawil Ibn Ahmad Ibn Muhammad Ibn Abdullah Ibn Ahmad Bilfaqih Ibn Abdurrahman Ibn ʿAlawi Ibn Muhammad Ibn Sahib Mirbat Ibn ʻAli Kha'li Qasam ibn ʻAlawi ibn Muhammad Sahib Sawma'ah ibn ʻAlawi ibn Ubaydullah ibn Al-Muhajir illa Allah Ahmad ibn Isa ibn Muhammad Al-Naqib ibn ʻAli Al - Uraidi ibn Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq ibn Muhammad al-Baqir ibn Ali Zain al-Abidin ibn Imam al-Sibt al-Husain ibn al-Imam Amir al-Mu'minin Ali ibn Abi Talib, husband of al-Zahra Fatimah al-Batul, daughter of the Messenger of Allah, Muhammad, may Allah's blessings and peace be upon him.(Zerin Amalina, 2023)

Al-Habib Abdullah Ibn ʿAlawi Al-Haddad, the author of "*Wirdul Lathif*" better known as Ratib Al-Haddad is a familiar name to people in Indonesia, India, Pakistan, and Muslim countries in the Middle East. These devotional practices and remembrances were written approximately four centuries ago and have been widely practiced by the Muslim community. (Abdurakhman, 2024)

Al-Habib Abdullah Ibn ʿAlawi Al-Haddad was born on the night of Thursday, the 5th of Safar 1044 AH, on the outskirts of Tarim a well known city in Haḍramaut, now a province of the Democratic Republic of South Yemen and was raised there. There, he studied the Qur'an and memorized it; however, while he was delving into other fields of knowledge, he lost his eyesight at the age of four due to smallpox. This was a form of Allah's care for him, as Allah protected his eyes from what is forbidden. Allah took away his physical sight but replaced it with an inner vision that is far better and more valuable. This was one of the driving forces behind his tenacity and diligence in seeking Allah's light and pursuing religious knowledge. (Maskur & Anwar, 2019)

Thanks to his perseverance and noble character, which he possessed from a very young age, he was recognized by Allah and his teachers as a preacher; He became known as a great Sufi figure, a scholar who put his knowledge into practice, a preacher whose words captivated his listeners, an imam of his time who served as a role model for the community, and a skilled writer whose writings particularly in the fields of Sufism and ethics—were deeply moving and captivating. For this reason, his name was renowned throughout the Hadramaut region; the fame of Al-Habīb Abdullah Ibn ʿAlawi Al-Haddad drew students from both within and outside Hadramaut. They come to seek knowledge, listen to his advice and teachings, and seek blessings and prayers from Al-Habib Abdullah Ibn ʿAlawi Al-Haddad. (Maskur & Anwar, 2019)

a. The students of Al-Habib Abdullah Ibn ʿAlawi Al-Haddad are:

1) Al-Habib Ḥasan Ibn Abdullah Ibn ʻAlawi Al-Haddad.
2) Al-Habib Aḥmad Ibn Zayn Ibn ʿAlawī Ibn Aḥmad Ibn Muḥammad Al-Ḥabsy.
3) Al-Habib Ahmad Ibn Abdullah Bilfaqih.
4) Al-Habib Abdurrahman Ibn Abdullah Bilfaqih.

As well as producing scholars specialising in religious studies, he also nurtured an outstanding generation who were expected to carry on the mission of his forefather, the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him. he was also active in compiling and authoring books of advice and wise sayings, both in the form of treatises and poetry; as a result, many of his works have been published and printed, studied and taught, read and translated, making his knowledge highly beneficial. Nor should we forget that he composed devotional practices and remembrances used for *Taqarruban ila Allah* (drawing closer to Allah, subḥanahu wa ta'Ala) and beneficial for one's faith, this world and the Hereafter; '*Wirdul Lathif*' is one of the most famous examples. He composed this devotional practice on the night of Lailatul Qadar in the year 1071 AH. (Maskur & Anwar, 2019)

He once said, "I have never spent a morning or an evening harbouring hatred or envy towards anyone." He preferred to adhere strictly to the hadith of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him: "A believer who associates with people and is patient in the face of their harassment is better than one who associates with people but is not patient in the face of their harassment." He did not care for luxury, nor did he like to be praised. In this regard, he preferred to emulate the character of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him. (Abdurakhman, 2024)

Al-Habib (*Rahimakumullah*) is a role model for humanity in both word and deed, embodying noble character and the spirit of the Prophet Muhammad, which flows through his life. He also possesses a strong religious zeal and hope, and has great affection for seekers of knowledge and those who set their hearts on the Hereafter. (Maskur & Anwar, 2019) As well as religious knowledge, he was also well-versed in agriculture; indeed, it was not uncommon for him to sit with farmers to teach them about farming. (Abdurakhman, 2024) With this, Al-Habib Abdullah Ibn 'Alawi Al-Haddad spent his life seeking knowledge and putting it into practice, preaching whilst setting an example. He returned to the Almighty at the age of 98 on Monday night into Tuesday, 7 Zulkaidah 1132 AH, leaving behind many students, works and a legacy of honour from his lifetime. He was laid to rest at Zanbal Cemetery, in the city of Tarim, Hadramaut, Yemen. (Abdurakhman, 2024)

b. The teachers of Al-Habib Abdullah Ibn 'Alawi Al-Haddad

Al-Habib Abdullah Ibn 'Alawi Al-Haddad had 140 teachers, including:

1) Abdullah Ibn Syaikh Mawla 'Ala Al-Adid.
2) 'Umar Ibn Abdurrahman Al-'Attas.
3) Abdullah Ibn Aḥmad Bilfaqih.
4) 'Aqil Ibn Abdurrahman Al-Saqafi.
5) SahAl Ibn Ahman Bahasan Al-Hudaili Ba'Alawi.
6) Muḥammad Ibn 'Alawi Al-Saqafi, ulama Makkah. (Maskur & Anwar, 2019)

c. The works of Al-Habib Abdullah Ibn 'Alawi Al-Haddad have left a rich legacy of knowledge for the Muslim community. Among his most valuable writings and poems are the following:

1) Nashoihuddiniyyah wa Al-Wasaya Al-Imaniyyah.
2) Da'wah Al-Tammah wa Al-Tazkirah Al-'Ammah.

3) Risalah Al-Mu'awanah wa Al-Muwazarah wa Al-Muzaharah li Al- Ragibina min Al-Mu'minina fi suluki Tariqi Al-Akhirah.
4) Risalah Al-Muzakarah maʿa Al-Ikhwan Al-Muhibbin min Ahli Al- Khayri wa Al-Din.
5) Risalah Adab Suluki Al-Murid.
6) Ithaf Al-Sa'il bijawabi Al-Masa'il.
7) Sabil Al-Adkar wa Al-Iʿtibar bima yamurr bi Al-Insan wa Yunqaḍi Lahu min Al-Aʿmari.
8) Al-Fusul Al-'Alamiyyah wa Al-Usul Al-Ḥukmiyyah.
9) Al-Nafa'is Al-ʿAlawiyyah fi Al-Masa'il Al-Sufiyyah.
10) Kitab Al-Ḥikam.
11) Al-Dur Al-Manzum lizawi Al-ʿUqūl wa Al-Fuhum, a collection of poetry and other works. Wasilah Al-ʿIbad ila Zadi Al-Maʿad, a collection of devotional prayers and remembrances (Maskur & Anwar, 2019)

The Phenomenology of *Zikr*: Spiritual Transformation, Sufi Values, and Mental Well-Being through *Wirdul-Lathif*

According to the Qur'an, the word '*Zikr*' appears 267 times in various forms. In its many meanings*, 'Zikr'* refers to remembering Allah, whereby Allah is constantly present in one's heart. From a linguistic perspective*, 'zikr'* means 'to remember', whilst in technical terms it refers to moistening the tongue with words of praise addressed to Allah. (Anisah, 2023) Zikr is also a way to always remember the creator of the universe and mankind. Zikr should be done at all times, both verbally and in the heart.(Atamimi, 2026) It is hoped that the members of the Subuh Coffee Gathering at the Sunan Gunung Djati Islamic boarding school in Cirebon, who have been practising this zikr, will be able to gain lessons and benefits from what has been imparted by the leader of the Subuh Coffee Gathering particularly the Sufi teachings derived from the *zikr* practice. Consequently, based on the findings of this research, it is hoped that practitioners will be able to draw wisdom and lessons from the *Wirdul Lathif zikr*. In this final section, the researcher aims to explore the impact of the '*Wirdul Lathif' zikir* on mental health. The Sufi meaning is developed gradually from the ẓāhir to the isyārī meaning, gaining legitimacy through dialogue with various interpretive authorities, and is transformationally oriented, leading the reader to inner purification through divine light and the interconnectedness of al-ʿusr and al-yusr.(Makmun, 2026) Sufi education has pedagogical relevance through tazkiyat al-nafs (self-control), riyāḍat al-nafs (self-control), mujāhadah (religious guidance), tahdhīb al-akhlāq (religious practice), dhikr (remembrance of God), spiritual habits, and the exemplary behavior of the murshid (leader).(Ihwan, 2026)

The *Wirdul Lathif zikr* is one means of cultivating a Sufi spirit in accordance with the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the practices of the early scholars. Through the Wirdul Lathif zikr practised at the Dawn Coffee Gathering at the Sunan Gunung Jati Islamic Boarding School in Cirebon, the congregation benefits by finding structure in their daily lives, which requires good mental health. This is because the Wirdul Lathif zikr practised by the congregation of the Subuh Coffee Gathering, when applied in

daily life, enables them to put into practice knowledge that is beneficial and blessed within the community. In the book *Advice and Testaments of Imam Haddad*, Imam Haddad states that remembering Allah SWT is a most noble act, the foremost form of worship, and the most efficient way to draw closer to Allah SWT. May Allah SWT make us all among those who frequently remember Him and among those whose wealth and children are not squandered whilst remembering Allah SWT. (Al-Haddad, 2018)

Furthermore, once we recognise the importance of the *zikr* practised at the Dawn Coffee Gathering at the Sunan Gunung Jati Islamic Boarding School in Cirebon, we can experience the blessings of zikr and, of course, hope for the pleasure of Allah SWT. When it comes to *zikr* and prayer, it is best to have a purpose and intention, and of course to hope that what we do will earn the pleasure of Allah SWT; this should be intended from the very beginning, and the primary aim is to gain His pleasure and have our prayers answered by Allah SWT. We can attain all these hopes without any barriers standing between us and Allah SWT. (Khotimah, 2024)

From the various definitions outlined above, it can be analysed that the practice of zikr carried out at the Subuh Coffee Gathering at the Pesantren Sunan Gunung Jati is about becoming a good person who is of benefit to others whilst maintaining one's own mental well-being; furthermore, it guides the congregation towards achieving the highest possible level of *habluminal with Allah*, which is why *zikr* is necessary.

If one observes closely what the congregation and the spiritual guide do at the Subuh Coffee Gathering at the Pesantren Sunan Gunung Jati, one will find Sufi values that are certainly in line with what was taught by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the scholars; indeed, in the past, when the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) preached to his companions, he employed the same method, guiding them so that their worship might be maximised and they might understand the meaning of worship and remembrance (*zikir*) not merely words, but tangible actions so that the Companions might know and comprehend the true essence of worship: submitting oneself to Allah (SWT). Indeed, we are fully aware that we are merely lowly and powerless servants; only Allah (SWT) is the All-Powerful. Therefore, as lowly and powerless servants, to waste time on worldly matters and be negligent in remembrance of Allah (SWT) is to be counted amongst the arrogant and negligent servants. (Iqbal, 2023)

Regarding the effect of *zikr* on mental health practised by the congregation of the Subuh Coffee Gathering at the Pesantren Sunan Gunung Jati which, in this case, utilises the *Wirdul Lathif zikr* method the researcher's observations indicate that it is quite effective, as by using this method the congregation can experience the benefits of the *Wirdul Lathif zikr*. This is because through the recitation of the *Wirdul Lathif zikr*, one can gauge the progress of one's mental health whether one has become a servant who behaves well or still needs to improve oneself. For the essence of the *Wirdul Lathif zikr* lies in one of the gentlest aspects of human nature, and the Most Gentle can be easily approached through gentleness as well. (Safitri et al., 2017)

Therefore, a deep understanding of *zikr* is essential for the congregation to grasp the true nature of dhikr and to devote themselves to Allah, (Khotimah, 2024) Therefore, a

congregant must be steadfast in practising *zikr*, which many people nowadays regard as a practice that is not very effective, as people are currently preoccupied with worldly matters and tend to prioritise them over matters of the Hereafter. Consequently, the intention of a congregant and the sincerity of the leader of the gathering play a vital role in this regard; without the sincerity of the leader, it is impossible (impossible) for a congregant to receive the blessings of what they have practised.

Then, regarding the leader of the assembly in the *Wirdul Lathif zikr* and his duties as the head of the Pesantren Sunan Gunung Jati, that is not all. The most fundamental duty of a leader of the assembly is that of a murobby; the book Ta'limul Muta'alim also explains the role of the *murobby.* The head of the Islamic boarding school, or Kyai, is likened to a spiritual parent, whilst biological parents are likened to physical parents. The parent who plays the most significant role in this regard is the spiritual parent that is, the Kyai or head of the Pesantren who guides the congregation to become good individuals, both spiritually and in terms of character, whilst biological parents are the ones who teach them about behaviour.

From the perspective of reverence, a congregant is expected to obey the instructions of the Kyai or the Leader of the Assembly known in Javanese as 'sendiko dawuh' so that whenever the Kyai or the Leader of the Assembly issues an instruction or makes a request, the congregant should comply, provided they are not engaged in any pressing matters, even if this occasionally conflicts with their own personal views. That is why the role of the Kyai or the Assembly Leader tends to be that of a '*murobby*' (spiritual guide), as they are aware of the capabilities of their congregation and, naturally, understand what is best for them.

Wirdul Lathif is a form of dhikr recited in the morning and evening; it was composed by Al Habib Al Imam Al Qutub Abdullah Bin Alawy Al Haddad, better known as Imam Al Haddad. He was a great scholar, a highly learned expert in hadith who was widely renowned, and was even awarded the title of Hujjatul Islam. It is called *Wirdul Lathif* because it is easy to recite, easy to practise, and its effects are easily felt in our hearts, bringing peace of mind and inner tranquillity. Within *Wirdul Lathif* there are numerous virtues and benefits, both for worldly matters and for matters of the Hereafter. Indeed, its benefits are not limited to oneself alone; they can extend to and be felt by others, particularly our families. (Al-Haddad, 2018)

The Transformative Power of Islamic Spirituality: Exploring Religious Coping and Mental Well-Being through *Wirdul-Lathif*

Mental health is a fundamental aspect of human life that is often overlooked in many societies, even though it has a significant impact on a person's quality of life. (Pratama, 2025) Mental health refers to the overall well-being of all aspects of a person's development, both physical and psychological. Everyone's mental health is different because people are constantly faced with situations in which they must have options or ways to resolve the problems they encounter. Mental health is a vital aspect of achieving holistic well-being. (Amelia, 2023)

In Indonesia, the number of people suffering from mental health conditions such as depression is rising every year. Those affected by such issues include teenagers, adults and even the elderly. Cases of abuse and rape are widespread in everyday life. Many of those affected experience feelings of distress, sadness or gloom, and are usually unable to resolve their problems on their own, which ultimately leads to self-harm or even taking their own lives in tragic ways. According to the 2022 Indonesia-National Adolescent Mental Health Survey, 15.5 million (34.9 per cent) adolescents suffer from mental health problems. Of that number, only 2.6 per cent have access to counselling services, whether for emotional or behavioural issues. (Amrullah, 2024)

Concepts from Islamic psychology, such as *nafs* (soul), *qalb* (heart), *ruh* (spirit) and *aql* (reason), form a comprehensive framework for understanding human mental health. (Majdi et al., 2026) Mental health in Islam is conceptualised in terms of the emotional connection to happiness. In truth, happiness comes from two sources: from human beings and from God. Thus, mental health is an individual's ability to adapt to their environment and the people around them, thereby enabling them to foster happiness for themselves and others. This is possible because mental health is linked to every aspect of a person's life. Mental health is therefore of the utmost importance in this life; however, in reality, life does not always go according to one's plans or expectations. At the very least, as human beings, we have strived to the best of our ability to ensure our hopes are realised. A key characteristic of mental health is the ability to adjust positively to reality, even when that reality does not align with one's expectations, and to derive a sense of satisfaction from the results of one's efforts. One feels greater satisfaction in giving than in receiving. Being relatively free from anxiety and worry. Interacting with others in a spirit of mutual support and fulfilment. Accepting disappointment and using it as a lesson for the future. Channelling hostility towards creative and constructive resolutions. Possessing a great capacity for compassion. (According to the WHO).

The mental well-being experienced by worshippers varies according to their behaviour, ranging from their commitment to managing anxiety through remembrance of God (*zikir*) to how they achieve the mental well-being that is hoped to benefit them, enabling them to experience inner peace, emotional stability and a deeper understanding of religious knowledge. Consequently, they can apply the religious knowledge they have acquired and demonstrate good manners in order to behave in accordance with social norms and noble moral values in their daily lives at home, in religious gatherings or Islamic boarding schools, and within the wider community. In this way, the congregation serves as an example to others, encouraging them to participate in the practice of *zikr* in their daily lives. *Zikr* is an activity designed to draw one closer to Allah SWT so that one may always be granted physical and spiritual health. *Zikr* is a remedy for nourishing one's soul. When the congregation fully embraces the meaning of zikr, they will experience and discover inner peace and attain true mental well-being. (Rahayu et al., 2025)

The mental well-being of the students is evident in their interaction with the wider community; they are able to socialise easily with those around them, which involves helping the local community and helping to maintain the good reputation of the Islamic

boarding school amongst the local community. This is consistent with findings from religious studies, which state that an Islamic boarding school is a place to acquire knowledge both for one's own benefit and for the benefit of others. For students who regard dhikr as a necessity, missing their daily dhikr routine leaves them feeling a sense of loss or deprivation; there is a void within them if they do not perform dhikr. Similarly, worshippers who practise *'Wirdul Lathif'* will feel a sense of protection and peace of mind, and their anxiety will dissipate when they perform this zikr; for within '*Wirdul Lathif'* there are many verses that signify protection, whether from fellow human beings or other creatures.

Based on the observations made by the researcher, it was also noted that worshippers who consistently practise the *'wirdhul lathif'* remembrance and remain steadfast in performing it lead better lives, in accordance with the guidance of the leader of the congregation: '*Sopo wonge seng cedhak karo Gusti Allah, 'Monggo Gusti Allah luwih cedhak karo awakmu kabeh'* – meaning that whoever is close to Allah, Allah will be closer to you all. It is from this teaching that the congregation holds fast to attain peace of mind in their daily lives.

Furthermore, the congregation's mental well-being is evident when facing problems. Generally, when people have problems, they tend to deal with them '*adag-udug'* in Indonesian, this means acting hastily, without first considering the consequences of making the wrong decision. This is not the case with the congregation who have practised the 'wirdhul lathif' remembrance; they tend to be calmer when making decisions, and all their decisions are based on a calm heart and mind.

Furthermore, the family also experiences inner peace in ensuring that *the 'Wirdhul Lathif'* zikr continues to be practised; may Allah grant them ease in all their daily affairs, from their sustenance to the upbringing of their children. Many congregants continue to practise this '*Wirdhul Lathif'* zikr even after moving to a new location or changing their place of residence. They practise the zikr they used to perform whilst still attending the majelis, and they hope that this *zikr* will not be practised solely by members of the Majelis; they hope that other Muslims may also practise the *'Wirdul Lathif' zikr*, so that they too may lead the lives they dream of.

Overall, the '*Wirdul Lathif' zikr* offers numerous benefits for mental health. By drawing closer to Allah, individuals can experience a deep sense of tranquillity and peace, which is hard to find amidst the hustle and bustle and stress of modern life. Therefore, *zikr* is not only important as a form of worship but also as a tool for achieving greater mental and emotional well-being. Various studies over the past decade have shown that spiritual practices such as zikr can form an important part of a comprehensive mental health strategy. (Nurani, 2024).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the practice of *Wirdul-Lathif* at the Kopi Subuh Assembly of Sunan Gunung Jati Islamic Boarding School in Cirebon constitutes a form of collective spiritual discipline that contributes to the congregation's perceived psychological well-

being. Performed regularly after the dawn prayer under the guidance of the assembly leader, this practice encompasses a structured sequence of religious activities, beginning with *tawasul* and prayers for the deceased, followed by *istighfar, shalawat*, the recitation of *Wirdul-Lathif,* and Qur'anic readings, particularly Surah Yasin, Surah Al-Waqi'ah, and Surah Al-Mulk. The gathering concludes with collective supplication and religious instruction covering Hadith, Sufism, and Fiqh. These interconnected practices demonstrate that *Wirdul-Lathif* extends beyond repetitive devotional recitation to become an integrated process of spiritual formation and religious learning. The principal findings indicate that consistent participation in this practice is associated with enhanced spiritual awareness, strengthened faith, a deeper sense of closeness to Allah, and greater inner tranquillity. Furthermore, participants' experiences reveal several supporting psychological dimensions, including patience, optimism, emotional stability, and a sense of comfort in navigating everyday challenges. These findings suggest that collective dhikr functions not only as an expression of religious devotion but also as a form of religious coping through which spiritual commitment and perceived psychological well-being are mutually reinforced.

The contribution of this study lies in expanding the understanding of Islamic devotional practices as a psychospiritual resource within contemporary Islamic educational communities. It demonstrates how the integration of collective zikr, spiritual guidance, and religious instruction can provide a meaningful framework for nurturing spiritual resilience and psychological well-being among pesantren communities. Practically, Islamic boarding schools and religious institutions may consider incorporating structured *zikr* activities into their educational and spiritual development programmes while maintaining the importance of sincerity, consistency, and appropriate guidance from religious leaders. Nevertheless, this study has limitations, particularly its focus on a single religious community and its reliance on qualitative observations and participants' subjective experiences. Consequently, the findings cannot be generalised to all Islamic boarding schools or interpreted as evidence of clinical improvements in mental health. Future research should employ comparative and longitudinal designs involving diverse Pesantren communities, complemented by validated psychological assessment instruments, to examine the relationship between *Wirdul-Lathif* practice, religious coping, spiritual resilience, and psychological well-being more comprehensively.

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