

## **Spirituality Intervention and Outcomes: Corner stone of Holistic Nursing Practice**

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**Background:** Holistic nursing results in healing the whole person as human being that has interconnectedness of body mind social cultural spiritual aspect.

**Objective:** The purpose of this paper is to examine the effects of Islamic spirituality interventions on health outcomes in nursing.

**Method:** Databases searched for electronic journals and books that were published since 1994 to 2010 were included.

**Results:** Spirituality intervention mainly composes of prayer, recitation of the holy Qur'an, remembrance of Allah, fasting, charity, prophets' methods, and modified Islamic methods. Thirteen studies found that various outcomes have been highlighted when applied in several areas of nursing, such as stimulating baby's cognitive ability in maternal nursing, promoting health during eating halal food, fasting, abstinence of alcohol and tobacco consumption, performing regular exercise, reducing anxiety, and pain in medical-surgical nursing. In mental health nursing, six studies explored effects of prayer and religious psychotherapy to enhance happiness and physical health and alleviate anxiety, and depression. Three studies reported Islamic cognitive therapy to alleviate the auditory hallucination, bereavement, and depression. In critical care nursing, three studies employed reciting the holy Qur'an and talqin in end of life care.

**Conclusion:** Although the literature is limited in the amount and quality of spirituality interventions, some evidences have shown as integrative energy in nursing practice to promote health and minimize some symptoms. Spirituality interventions should be performed to acknowledge the high priority in holistic nursing and support interventions.

**Keywords:** spirituality intervention, holistic nursing, Islam

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## **Background**

Holistic nursing is nursing practice resulting in healing the whole person as human being that has interconnectedness of body mind social cultural spiritual aspect (American Holistic Nurses Association, 2009). Holistic nursing consists of two views of holism (1) holism of interrelationships of bio-psycho-social-cultural-spiritual dimensions of patients, and (2) holism of unitary whole in mutual process between patients and environments (Dossey, Keegan, & Guzzeta, 2005). Holistic nursing always correlates with religion or belief system.

Islam as a holistic view provides spiritual tenets, which can be applied in nursing practice. Spirituality intervention comprises of the Islamic tenets based on the holy Qur'an (Syed, 2003), prophet Muhammad's life ways (Loukas, Saad, Tubbs, & Shoja, 2010), and modified conventional methods. Spirituality intervention is applied in many fields of nursing such as medical, surgical, maternity, pediatric, psychiatric, critical, and community nursing. Its benefit has shown in several aspects including helping patients to accomplish spiritual duty and to elicit a relaxation response of calmness and mindfulness and activate neurological pathways for self-healing process by promoting self-preservation on psychological adaptation, physiological status, transpersonal caring relationship, and spirituality for connectedness with God (Hudak, Gallo, & Morton, 1998).

## **Conceptual framework of spirituality intervention**

Spirituality intervention is conceptualized with the Islamic tenets. Spirituality intervention of nursing practice mainly composes of prayer, recitation of the holy Qur'an, Zikr or remembrance of Allah (Syed, 2003), fasting, charity or sedekah, prophets' methods, and modified Islamic methods. Spirituality intervention based on prayers is divided into two types: Sholat or daily prayer and du'a or general prayers. Sholat is performed at five times: early morning, noon, afternoon, evening, and night prayer. Du'a is usually performed by Muslim patients for wishing God bless when they face diseases. Muslim patients or families recite the holy Qur'an to have positive effects to Muslim patients in anxious and critical situations. Zikr composes of remembrance of Allah and syahadatain or the doctrinal testimony of Islam. Zikr benefits to patient to elicit a relaxation response of calmness, mindfulness, and peacefulness. Fasting clearly benefits to patient's health by resting and balancing body metabolism. Charity can develop positive psychological feeling, happiness, and inner beauty that affect positively body metabolism.

In addition, Prophet's methods comprises of adhan and iqomat when baby is born, colostrums or tahnik, aqiqoh, circumcision, breast feeding, family planning, honey, cubing therapy or hijamah, visit patient, end of life care, and dying care. Modified Islamic methods include spiritual cognitive therapy, spiritual cognitive behavioral therapy, and spiritual emotional freedom technique. Most of the spirituality interventions are applied as routine care.

Spirituality interventions comprise of providing facilities, patient preparations, prayer, collaboration with family, and nursing intervention based on Islamic tenets. Nurse usually collaborates with patient, family, and religious leader to care for patients.

### **Definition**

Spirituality intervention refers to nursing intervention based on Islamic tenets including original Islamic methods; prayer, recitation of the Qur'an, zikr, fasting, charity, Prophet's methods, and modified Islamic methods to balance and harmonize body mind spirit of patients.

### **Spirituality intervention: Corner stone of holistic nursing practice**

The holy Qur'an and hadits guide health providers to achieve health promotion and healing by using the legal, the guiding approach, and the direct healing approach. The legal approach is clearly regulated in religion both accepted and unaccepted behaviors. The guiding approach is regulation based on Islamic tenets in particular value and behaviors. The direct healing approach is healing effect resulted from the Qur'an and hadits as God will (Rassool, 2000). Corner stone of holistic nursing practice varies in maternal, pediatric, medical, surgical, critical, mental, and administration nursing.

#### *Maternal nursing*

Spirituality intervention can be developed from routine to nursing practice for maternal patients. Within antenatal care, mother should regularly listen and recite the Qur'an to stimulate baby's cognitive ability. In natal care, calling for praying or adhan on the right ear, and iqomat on the left ear of newborn baby, is usually performed by father or male. Before given with first breast milk, newborn baby should be tahnik that baby is fed with extract kurma, honey, or glucose 5%. The benefit of tahnik is to reduce baby's pain during delivery process and to make baby's tongue soft when sucking mother's nipples. Then, father or

family should read the Qur'an: al ikhlas, al falaq, and an naas. Another spirituality intervention, aqiqoh includes cutting hair, giving charity as gold price as weight of baby's hair, giving a good name, slaughter one lamb for girl baby or two lambs for boy baby.

Health educations based on spirituality should be given to mother that she should not have intercourse during postpartum for 40 days (Bahar, Okcay, Ozbicakci, Beser, Ustun, & Ozturk, 2005), baby should be given with breast milk for 2 years, and should not be given breast milk from other mothers. Family planning can be practiced by abstinence, coitus interruption and contraception can be used if there is no harm for mother.

In addition, Zikr therapy has been approved to reduce preoperative anxiety (Mardiyono, Angraeni, & Sulistyowati, 2007) and postoperative pain (Sitepu, 2009). Because mother usually develops anxiety and pain during delivery baby, it should be researched in maternal patients.

#### *Pediatric nursing*

Spirituality intervention relates to natural development of children. Children grow up and play with toys. They should listen in the Qur'an to develop their memory. Children should be provided toys as prophet suggestions that toys should follow horse model, martial, and swimming. These toys are useful to train them have fun and strong. Another toy is drum, which is usually played by children to have fun and make friendship.

#### *Medical nursing*

Spirituality intervention related to health education comprises of moderate eating to avoid obesity, abstinence of alcohol and tobacco consumption, regular exercise, cleanness, sex with respect marriage (Rassool, 2000). Muslim patients must have halal food or permissible food by the Islamic law and they must abstain from pig meat, claw animal meat, and animal meat slaughtered without pray for Allah (Gulam, 2003). However, Muslim patients are allowed to have ocean fish. Fasting has been known as method to keep body healthy by regulating in take and recover imbalance metabolism of body. During fasting must abstain from eating, drinking, smoking, sex, and use of oral medication (Olgun, 2006). Related eating habit, people should pray before eating and drinking and take salt to stimulate metabolic enzyme for appetite and absorption. In addition, honey is also believed it has many benefits for body especially to enhance body metabolism and power, so body is kept healthy. Honey is also offered as treatment for abdominal discomfort and diarrhea. Water of zam-zam

can decrease fever (Loukas et al., 2010). Charity is not only as a social welfare, but it can also result in recovering disease.

Cubing therapy is usually used for preventing and treating disease by cleaning blood (Loukas et al., 2010). It is believed that disease is manifested by dirty and poisoned blood. By drainage of blood at skin, body can be maintained and balanced for blood circulation to prevent and cure diseases.

#### *Surgical nursing*

Development of spirituality intervention starts from routine to research and to nursing practice. In a regular basis, Zikr therapy is performed twice a day wherever it is convenient to perform either in the morning or the evening (Syed, 2003). Zikr results in peaceful body mind spirit to promote one's optimal harmonization, which enhances psychological, social, spiritual, and physical health status (Abdel-Khalek & Lester, 2007; Syed, 2003). Original Islamic relaxation technique utilizes Zikr therapy. Zikr therapy is the remembrance of Allah, and requires one to sit or lie comfortably, with eyes closed, and practice remembrance of Allah through recitation of: "Subhanallah, alhamdulillah, allahu akbar" "Glorious is Allah, praise to Allah, Allah is the greatest" for 20 to 30 minutes (Damarhuda, 2005; Mardiyono et al., 2007; Purwanto & Zulaekah, 2007; Sitepu, 2009). Zikr therapy could reduce psychological problems. Zikr therapy for 25 minutes reduced preoperative anxiety (Mardiyono et al., 2007). Zikr therapy for 30 minutes could relieve postoperative pain 6-8 hours ( $t=5.29$ ,  $p<.01$ ) and 24-30 hours ( $t=7.79$ ,  $p<.01$ ) in Muslim patients undergoing abdominal surgery (Sitepu, 2009).

Male child is circumcised before puberty to keep penis gland clean. Before starting circumcision, male child should take ablution and state syahadatain (Loukas et al., 2010). During operation, male child should do zikr to reduce pain.

In addition, honey is usually used for wound care. It creates moist wound to enhance topical absorption and grow up granulation of wound, so it is easy removal of dressing on surgical, gangrene, burn, infected wound (Simon, Traynor, Santos, Blaser, Bode, & Molan, 2009), relief of pain, and less irritation of wound (Molan, 2006).

#### *Community nursing*

The SEFT is the modified Islamic relaxation most frequently used, which composes of deep acceptance, self-hypnosis, and meridian therapy. Types of the SEFT include short and

complete version. The short version consists of three steps: the setup, the tune in, and the basic tapping. The complete version comprises the setup, the tune in, the complete tapping including the basic tapping and the nine gamut procedures. The tapping at the meridian points includes peak head, medial eyebrow, side eye, under eye, under nose, chin, collarbone, under arm, and costal bone under nipple, and the nine gamut procedures. As mentioned, deep acceptance, one of the basic tenets of Islam, is used for coping, if Muslims face the fact, weakness, and problems (Zainuddin, 2007).

In addition, the SEFT is performed less than 20 minutes. Before starting and after performing the SEFT, the problem, such as anxiety is measured by the Intensity Meter to assess the changes of problem level or performance. The Intensity Meter is numerical rating scale ranged from 0 to 10 cm, which the highest score indicates the worst problem or the best performance. The SEFT was an effective relaxation method to reduce subjective problems and to enhance personal control (Zainuddin, 2007). The short version of SEFT was effective to alleviate cancer pain ( $t=.047$ ,  $p=.05$ ) (Hakam, 2009).

Religiosity for Muslims includes both daily and optional prayers in particular night prayers, recitation of the holy Qur'an, Zikr (remembrance of Allah), and attending Mosque. Night prayers are recommended as optional prayers have been studied among high school students (Sholeh, 2004). Night prayers typically are performed between 11 to 23 "raka'at" units for 20 to 40 minutes, between 2 and 4 am, in the clean praying carpet. Thus, night prayers are at time when one can dialogue with Allah, and more easily expressed distress. During this time, one is better able to relax, sooth mind, peace spirit, and balance body functions. Therefore, peaceful body mind spirit promotes one's optimal harmonization, which enhances psychological, social, spiritual, and physical health status (Abdel-Khalek & Lester, 2007; Syed, 2003).

Prayer includes formal prayer and general prayer as Muslim performs on daily basis (Syed, 2003). Three correlational studies of Islamic prayer and one study of two group experimental designs were reviewed. Formal prayer has been shown to be an effective way to enhance happiness and physical health (Abdel-Khalek, 2007), alleviate anxiety, and depression among Muslim students, in Iraqi, in Kuwait and USA (Abdel-Khalek & Lester, 2007), in Arabia (Vasegh & Mohammadi, 2007), enhance coping among cancer patients (Rezaei, Adib-Hajbaghery, Seyedfatemi, & Hoseini, 2008). In addition, night prayer or tahajud, an optional prayer performed daily approximately 20 to 40 minutes, was found statistically significant in improved immunity in high school students as shown by an

increase in the number of macrophages after a month ( $p < 0.01$ ) as compared with the baseline (Sholeh, 2004).

#### *Mental health nursing*

Religious psychotherapy, the duration of one session intervention ranged from 20 to 30 minutes for 3-4 months. The frequency and total time of intervention varied from one study to others. The various outcomes were measured and followed within different periods ranged from 3 to 6 months. For the effectiveness of religious psychotherapy on anxiety, two studies were found of significant decreased anxiety within 3-4 months (Azhar, Varma, & Dharap, 1994; Razali, Aminah, & Khan, 2002). The depression (Azhar & Varma, 1995b) and bereavement (Azhar & Varma, 1995a) were also reduced before 6 months. However, the outcome of religious psychotherapy was inconsistent after 6 months. It shows that religious psychotherapy is effective approximately 5 months after giving intervention for 3-4 months.

Another Islamic relaxation, modified cognitive therapy with Islamic tenets, was conducted in two studies with two group experimental design to evaluate on auditory hallucination (Wahass & Kent, 1997), bereavement and depression (Azhar & Varma, 2000). One study of measuring outcome of auditory hallucination was found not significant improvement through out 3 and 9 months caused by the few number of sample size ( $n=6$ ) (Wahass & Kent, 1997). The other studies on bereavement and depression were found significant improvement compared with the ones, who did not receive modified cognitive therapy for 4 months, but the effective was not significant different at 6 months (Azhar & Varma, 2000). In the two studies of modified cognitive therapy with Islamic tenets, physiological outcomes in adult subjects were not evaluated.

#### *Critical nursing*

Several spirituality interventions can be applied in critical nursing. Reciting the holy Qur'an is useful for critical and coma patient to induce auditory response and stay closer to Allah. Reciting the holy Qur'an is also usually performed when patient is threatened death. Euthanasia is not allowed for Muslim patients, because life and death is depend on Allah's will (Gulam, 2003). Especially end of life care includes zikr and syahadatain as talqin or the last word stated by patient (Ross, 2001). Dying care of patient with Islamic way includes eyes and lips shut, chin tied, hands put on abdomen, feet straight tied, nose, ear, anus lit by cotton, nails cleaned, death body cover by white cloth and perfumed (Cheraghi, Payne, & Salsali, 2005).

### *Administration nursing*

In general, administration nursing comprises providing praying room and speaker for adhan, so patients, family, and health staff can pray on time. Separating male and female patients maintains their privacy. Respect to gender, male nurses care for male patients as well as female nurse (Gulam, 2003). For modesty, female patients usually wear scarf or hijab. Male and non-Muslim are prohibited to see Muslim patients without scarf, except close family. In addition, Muslim patients are very close each other, family visit is provided for supporting and praying for patients.

### **Spirituality intervention in nursing process**

Spirituality intervention can be applied in nursing process based on nursing intervention classification (NIC) (McCloskey, Bulechek, Craft-Rosenberg, Daly, Denehy, Glick et al., 1996). Table 1 shows that some interventions have been provided for nursing diagnoses, NIC, but some of them should be developed for nursing diagnosis and NIC.



Table 1 *Diagnose, nursing intervention classification, and spirituality intervention in holistic nursing practice*

Diagnose	NIC	Intervention
Spiritual distress	Spiritual facility	Adhan and iqomat for newborn baby Aqiqoh prepare to take ablution (wudhu or tayamum)
Anxiety	Spiritual support Anxiety reduction  Calming technique	Praying, murotal al Qur'an, istighfar Zikr "subhanallah" for 25 minutes Nursing based Islamic Tapping therapy Spiritual freedom technique short version Pray, istighfar, murotal al Qur'an
Acute pain	Family support Pain management	Family visit and pray Zikr "subhanallah, alhamdulillah allahu akbar" for 30 minutes
Chronic pain	Pain management Cognitive stimulation Memory training	Spiritual emotion freedom technique Murotal al Qur'an (tone, rhythm, length, frequency) Reciting al Qur'an
Ineffective breastfeeding Risk infection Impaired physical mobility Knowledge deficit	Breast feeding education Wound care Exercise therapy: joint mobility Health education  Urinary cleanness Nutrition therapy Smoking cessation Anger control assistance  Play therapy  Prenatal care Family planning End of life care Dying care	Breast feeding for 2 years  Honey treatment Daily prayer  Adhan for newborn baby, aqiqoh, breast feeding, fasting, and acceptance or ikhlas Circumcision Fasting SEFT  Zikr therapy Take ablution Forgiveness/acceptance Playing by swimming, martial and riding horse model  Murotal al Qur'an in pregnancy Interruption method, abstinence Talqin and murotal al Qur'an Islamic dying care

## Conclusion

Corner stone of spirituality starts from routine activities to nursing practice, research to practice, routine care to research to practice, and routine care to research to research to practice. Several spirituality interventions have been applied in nursing practice, such as

prayer, zikr, adhan and iqomat for newborn baby, use of honey, and circumcision. Spirituality interventions including zikr, SEFT, and use of honey have been researched. Many spirituality interventions should be researched and applied in nursing practice by developing nursing guideline. Spirituality intervention is very important to Muslim patients to obey religious duty, adjust to the demanding states of health and illness, and help to recover from diseases. Nurse should understand properly way of life in Muslim patients, so nurse can care for Muslim patients with respect to belief system and religious values.

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