



A study of the story of the Prophet Yusuf in the Qur'an with a psychological approach

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the story of the Prophet Yusuf in Surah Yusuf using a psychological approach to understand the spiritual values contained in the story. The method used is a qualitative study with a psychological Quranic interpretation approach through a review of related verses and interpretations from Tafsir Al-Azhar (Buya Hamka) and Tafsir Al-Misbah (Quraish Shihab). The results of the study indicate that the story of the Prophet Yusuf contains important psychological themes such as resilience to trauma, self-control, forgiveness, and spirituality as a foundation for psychic strength. This story not only provides motivation but also psychological solutions in dealing with conflict, social pressure, and life's temptations. In conclusion, the integration of spiritual and psychological values in Surah Yusuf can be used as a reference in the development of spirituality-based therapy and the formation of a resilient and noble Islamic personality. This study has practical implications for Islamic psychology and religious education in the Indonesian socio-cultural context.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The story of Prophet Yusuf immortalized in the Qur'an, especially in Surah Yusuf, is one of the prophetic narratives that is rich in psychological meaning and provides an insight into how to deal with various obstacles in life. This research raises the story as an object of study, with the aim of digging up the psychological values hidden behind every event experienced by the Prophet Yusuf, from childhood until he became a leader in Egypt (Shihab, 2001). Surah Yusuf not only presents an inspiring story but also serves as a reflection for individuals in managing their emotions, maintaining self-control, cultivating a forgiving attitude, and being patient in the face of trials. Through a psychological approach, this study attempts to reveal the psychological side of Prophet Yusuf that can be used as a reference in the formation of a strong Islamic character (Al-Zuhaili, 1998; Shihab, 2001).

Throughout his life, Yusuf experienced various difficult trials symbolized by "darkness," such as conflict with his siblings, betrayal, and imprisonment for slander. However, he successfully faced all these challenges with wisdom, strong faith, and a broad heart. This study examines how spirituality and psychology work together to shape Yusuf's holistic character (Pargament, 2001). One of the main focuses of this study is the aspect of trauma healing. As a child, Yusuf experienced emotional wounds due to the betrayal of his family,

but he did not fall into despair. Psychologically, he managed to transform this experience into strength. This study highlights how revelation and spiritual beliefs provided strength during Yusuf's most difficult times (Pargament, 2001).

Not only is the story of the Prophet Yusuf (Joseph) about trauma, it also highlights extraordinary self-control. In the face of temptation from Al-Aziz's wife, Yusuf demonstrated integrity. He rejected the invitation with dignity, without hurting anyone's dignity. This attitude is analyzed as a concrete example of emotional intelligence from an Islamic perspective (Hamka, 2015). This study also discusses the importance of forgiveness. At the end of the story, the Prophet Yusuf chose to forgive his brothers who had wronged him. He even prayed for their well-being. This process of reconciliation is evidence that forgiveness not only has a spiritual impact but also contributes to mental health and peace of mind (Hamka, 2015; Shihab, 2001; Worthington, 2006).

Analysis of important verses in Surah Yusuf is done by referring to authoritative works of interpretation such as *Tafsir Al-Azhar* by Buya Hamka and *Tafsir al-Misbah* by Quraish Shihab. This comparative approach is intended to gain a comprehensive and applicable understanding of the psychological dynamics in the story of the Prophet Yusuf (Hamka, 2015; Shihab, 2001). In addition to the psychological aspects, Surah Yusuf also contains universal values that teach the importance of steadfastness in faith and a positive outlook on life, especially in the face of severe pressure. Verse 87 of Surah Yusuf explicitly urges people not to despair of God's mercy. Such values are crucial in building psychological resilience (Pargament, 2001).

The spirituality in Yusuf's story serves as the primary foundation for his mental resilience. Contemporary studies have shown that spiritual beliefs can empower individuals to remain optimistic and resilient despite difficult situations or social exclusion (Pargament, 2001). This research is motivated by the need for a spiritual-based psychotherapy approach appropriate to the Indonesian context. The story of Yusuf serves as a conceptual model for formulating an Islamic psychotherapy approach that bridges mental health and faith values (Pargament, 2001).

Data collection in this study was conducted through a literature review of various classical and modern exegetical texts, Islamic psychological sources, and relevant empirical research. The goal was to examine how the synthesis of religious narratives, psychological theory, and classical interpretations can contribute to solutions to contemporary psychological problems (Pargament, 2001). Yusuf's personal experiences serve not only as material for spiritual reflection but also as an example of wise leadership. He was able to strategize, lead during times of crisis, and transform bitter experiences into strengths in governing the country (Hamka, 2015).

The main problem to be answered in this study is the extent to which the psychological values in Surah Yusuf can be used as an actual guide in overcoming family problems, social pressures, and in achieving a balanced life. The formulation of the problem and the objectives of this study are discussed systematically in the following section (Shihab, 2001). Therefore, the results of this study are expected to make a real contribution, not only in the development of Islamic psychology studies, but also in strengthening religious education. The impact is intended not only for the academic environment, but also for the general public as a provision in building character and resilience to face the challenges of the times. In everyday life, many are not aware, some are even unable to control their emotions and maintain their mental health. Muslims should be able to regulate their emotions as taught in the Holy Book.

2. METHOD

This study uses a thematic approach to examine the content of Surah Yusuf. The thematic approach is a method of interpreting the Quran that involves collecting verses related to a particular theme and then analyzing them in depth to discover their implied messages and meanings. In this context, a thematic approach was chosen to allow for a comprehensive and focused analysis of the psychological values in the story of the Prophet Yusuf. The method used in this study is a literature study or *library research*. This is because all the data and information studied comes from written sources such as tafsir books, Islamic books, academic journals, and other scientific documents. This type of research focuses on exploring relevant literature to support the analysis of psychological themes in Qur'anic interpretation (Creswell, 2018).

The type of data used is qualitative. This data is descriptive and analytical, allowing researchers to interpret the meaning in depth. Data were obtained from a study of verses from the Qur'an and interpretations that discuss the spiritual values in the story of the Prophet Joseph. In addition, researchers also collected data from interviews with interpretation experts and observations of the application of these values in the socio-religious context of society (Creswell, 2018). Data sources in this study are divided into two: primary and secondary. Primary data sources include the Qur'an and interpretation books such as *Tafsir Al-Azhar* works by Buya Hamka and *Tafsir al-Misbah* by Quraish Shihab, who directly reviews the story of the Prophet Yusuf. Secondary data sources include scientific books, journal articles, and previous research findings that are relevant and support the discussion of the topic (Hamka, 2015; Shihab, 2001).

Data collection was conducted through documentation techniques. This technique involves recording data from various relevant written sources, including books, journals, magazines, scientific articles, and other religious documents. Through documentation, researchers can access authoritative information and gain a comprehensive understanding of the psychological interpretation of the story of the Prophet Joseph. In addition to documentation, interviews with commentators were also conducted to obtain more up-to-date and in-depth information. These informants are experts in the fields of interpretation and Quranic studies. These interviews aim to complement the library data with contemporary perspectives that can enrich the analysis.

Data obtained from documentation and interviews were then analyzed systematically. Researchers used two main techniques in data analysis: descriptive and analytical methods. Descriptive methods were used to describe the research object and the conditions under study in detail, while analytical methods were used to interpret the data based on scientific and spiritual approaches, including attention to language structure, historical context, and *asbabun nuzul*. By combining a thematic approach, diverse data collection techniques, and structured analysis, this research is expected to yield a deep and comprehensive understanding of the psychological values in the story of the Prophet Joseph. The results are not only theoretical but also applicable to the development of Islamic psychology and character education in real life.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Main Theme: Resilience and Self-Control

The story of the Prophet Joseph in Surah Yusuf is one of the most comprehensive and meaningful narratives in the Quran. This narrative depicts the life journey of the Prophet Joseph from childhood to his rise to leadership in Egypt. The various events that Joseph experienced, from betrayal by his brothers, slander, suffering in prison, to his appointment as a high-ranking Egyptian official, reflect a true depiction of a life full of trials. The main theme of this story is resilience, namely the ability to survive and recover from pressure and trauma, as well as self-control in the face of temptation and slander. This theme aligns with modern psychological theory, which emphasizes the importance of mental resilience and self-regulation as the main pillars of healthy personal development. (Khairi et al., 2025). When Joseph was thrown into the well by his brothers, as mentioned in God's word:

فَلَمَّا دَهَبُوا بِهِ وَاجْمَعُوا أَنْ يَجْعَلُوهُ فِي غَيَابَةِ الْكُتُبِ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِ لَتُنَبِّئَنَّهُمْ بِأَمْرِهِمْ هَذَا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

"So when they brought him and agreed to put him in the bottom of the well..." (QS. Yusuf: 15) (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

This incident reflects severe trauma, both psychologically and socially. Being betrayed by someone close to you can shatter your self-confidence. However, Yusuf maintained hope and faith in God's plan. Buya Hamka's *Tafsir Al-Azhar* mentions that Yusuf's childhood dream became a source of spiritual strength in facing this test (Hamka, 2015). From a modern psychological perspective, Luthar and Cicchetti (2000) emphasize that an individual's ability to survive trauma is not only due to physical strength, but also the ability to manage emotions and maintain optimism (Luthar & Cicchetti, 2000). Yusuf, who did not lose hope despite being defeated, illustrates the ideal profile of resilience. In Surah Yusuf, verse 19, it is stated:

...وَجَاءَتْ سَيَّارَةٌ فَأَرْسَلُوا وَارِدَهُمْ فَأَدْلَى دَلْوَهُ قَالَ يَا بُشْرَى هَذَا غُلَامٌ

"Then a group of travelers came, they sent one to the water-drawer, and he lowered his bucket. He said, 'Oh, good news! Here is a young man!'" (QS. Yusuf: 19) (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

The verse above explains that it signifies new hope, in line with the principle that behind hardship lies ease. Another verse recounts that when Yusuf was in Al-Aziz's house and faced the temptations of his employer's wife, he demonstrated an extraordinary ability to maintain his integrity. Quraish Shihab's Tafsir Al-Misbah explains that Yusuf was able to resist these temptations, demonstrating a high level of self-control (Shihab, 2001). Verse 23 of Surah Yusuf states:

...وَرَاوَدُّهُ الْتِي هُوَ فِي بَيْتِهَا عَنْ نَفْسِهِ

"And the woman tempted him to submit to her, and Joseph (would have) been tempted if he had not seen the proof from his Lord." (QS. Yusuf: 23) (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

Buya Hamka stated that "proof from God" was divine inspiration or guidance that strengthened Yusuf to stay away from sin (Hamka, 2015). In spiritual psychology, faith-based self-control has been proven effective in maintaining morality (Gumiandari et al., 2022). Yusuf's rejection of this temptation led to his being slandered and imprisoned. Surah Yusuf, verses 32–33, illustrates the intense pressure he experienced. Quraish Shihab stated that Yusuf maintained his principles and did not lower his moral dignity despite facing punishment (Shihab, 2001). This demonstrates self-efficacy high, namely strong belief in determining moral choices (Bandura, 1997).

His prison stay became a space for introspection that matured Yusuf psychologically. He not only survived but also benefited by interpreting dreams and giving hope to fellow inmates. This aligns with the theory *post-traumatic growth* which states that trauma can lead to personal growth. Yusuf serves as an example of how faith and fortitude can create positive change (Masoodi & Maqbool, 2017). When Yusuf was finally appointed as a high-ranking Egyptian official, it demonstrated that patience and hard work in the face of life's trials can pay off. Allah says:

...وَكَذَلِكَ مَكَّنَّا لِيُوسُفَ فِي الْأَرْضِ يَتَّبِعُوا مِنْهَا حَيْثُ يَشَاءُ

"And thus We gave Yusuf a position in that land (Egypt)..." (QS. Yusuf: 56) (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

This demonstrates that success is not simply destiny, but rather the result of spiritual struggle and resilience (Khairi et al., 2025). Buya Hamka interpreted Yusuf's transformation from well to palace as a concrete manifestation of trust and effort. This testing process shaped Yusuf's maturity and steadfastness as a wise leader (Hamka, 2015). Verse 24 of the Quran reiterates the importance of self-control:

...وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهِ وَهَمَّ بِهَا لَوْلَا أَنْ رَأَى بُرْهَانَ رَبِّهِ

"And indeed the woman had wanted (to do something) against him, and even Yusuf (wanted to reject it) if he did not see evidence from his Lord..." (QS. Yusuf: 24) (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

The word "burhan" is understood as a spiritual guide that became Yusuf's inner filter so that he would not slip. In Islamic psychology, this is associated with *self-regulation* which is rooted in faith (Utami et al., 2022). The theme of forgiveness appears as the peak of Yusuf's maturity. In QS. Yusuf verse 92, he said:

...لَا تَتْرِبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ يَغْفِرُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ

"There is no slander against you today. May Allah forgive you..." (QS. Yusuf: 92) (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

This attitude demonstrates magnanimity and a form of healing of inner wounds. Quraish Shihab interprets this as a manifestation of emotional intelligence and peace of mind (Shihab, 2001). Yusuf's success in managing trauma and slander demonstrates that resilience and self-control can shape a meaningful life. Rahman (2023) emphasizes that Yusuf's story provides an important psychological model for developing coping mechanisms and spiritual strength (Aswadi et al., 2025). From a social perspective, Yusuf, as a foreigner, was able to build social networks, respect local culture, and demonstrate wisdom. This demonstrates the importance of social intelligence, social and family support in shaping resilience, which, in Yusuf's case, came from the prayer of the Prophet Jacob. Yusuf demonstrates that self-control is not merely about restraining desires, but rather moral courage in facing social risks (Pargament, 2001). This is highly relevant for character education and the mental health of modern

society (Bandura, 1997). Yusuf's spiritual foundations, such as patience and trust in God, are key to his resilience. Allah concludes this story in Surah Yusuf, verse 100:

إِنَّ رَبِّي لَطِيفٌ لِّمَا يَشَاءُ

"Indeed, my Lord is Most Merciful to whom He wills..." (QS. Yusuf: 100) (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

The interpretation of Buya Hamka and Quraish Shihab states that God's gentleness is a form of love for patient servants (Hamka, 2015; Shihab, 2001). Thematic analysis of this story shows that psychological elements such as resilience, self-control, and spirituality shape the character of the Prophet Yusuf. This story serves as a moral inspiration and also a psychological model for trauma therapy and healing (Aswadi et al., 2025). The story of Yusuf teaches that trauma and life's trials can be overcome with patience, faith, and strong self-control. Yusuf shows that from the lowest point, true success can be achieved if one is consistent with the values of goodness. This model is highly relevant to Islamic psychology and character development today (Rofiqoh et al., 2025). Thus, Yusuf's life journey in the Qur'an teaches that through mental resilience and self-control, humans are able to overcome life's trials and achieve success with integrity and wisdom. This story remains an eternal inspiration in education, psychotherapy, and modern human development.

3.2 Themes of Forgiveness and Emotional Health

The theme of forgiveness in the story of the Prophet Joseph begins to emerge slowly when Joseph is finally reunited with his brothers who have hurt him physically and emotionally. Instead of seeking revenge and venting the emotional pain caused by their betrayal, Joseph chooses to forgive, a decision that reflects a very high level of emotional intelligence, as stated in God's Word:

قَالَ لَا تَثْرِيبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ يَغْفِرُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ وَهُوَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ

"He (Yusuf) said: 'Today there is no reproach against you. May God forgive you, and He is the Most Merciful of the Merciful.'" (QS. Yusuf: 92) (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

Yusuf's attitude reflects the process of inner healing from trauma while also paving the way for reconciliation and restoration of damaged family relationships (Hamka, 2015). This interpretation is reinforced by Quraish Shihab, who views Yusuf's forgiveness as a manifestation of emotional intelligence that frees himself and his family from the shackles of past revenge (Shihab, 2001). Yusuf's choice not to seek revenge is an example of a psychologically healthy coping mechanism. In modern psychology, forgiveness and emotional healing are seen as effective ways to reduce stress and improve mental well-being (Worthington, 2006). Yusuf's figure serves as an example of how someone can let go of past emotional burdens and restore harmonious social relationships, while maintaining emotional health.

Study by Schutte et al. (2001) showed that high emotional intelligence significantly influences a person's ability to forgive and repair damaged interpersonal relationships (Schutte et al., 2001). Verses 92-93 of the Quran, Yusuf, contain a universal message about the importance of resolving family conflicts with forgiveness. Yusuf refused to criticize or humiliate his brothers, which could have exacerbated their emotional wounds, and chose the path of forgiveness for the sake of family harmony. In family psychology, this kind of reconciliation is crucial for healing the trauma caused by internal conflict (Christensen & Doss, 2017). Yusuf's attitude proves that forgiveness can be the first step towards emotional health and strengthen family bonds.

In Buya Hamka's interpretation, Yusuf's forgiveness is not merely a moral act, but a reflection of spiritual maturity and maturity in dealing with emotional conflict. Hamka emphasized that Yusuf's forgiveness is evidence of the strength of faith and spiritual maturity that transcends the urge to seek revenge. This reinforces the view that true forgiveness has strong spiritual roots, as also discussed in modern Islamic spiritual psychology (Hamka, 2015). Fuad Nashori (2021) states that strong religiosity has a positive impact on the ability to forgive. Many people who understand and practice Islam show a tendency to forgive easily due to the belief that Allah is All-Forgiving (Nashori, 2021). Quraish Shihab also added that Yusuf's attitude embodies patience and refinement of spirit, a path to inner peace (Shihab, 2001).

Yusuf's forgiveness is closely linked to his long-term emotional health. In psychology, forgiveness healing is understood as the process of breaking the cycle of hostility and hatred that can potentially damage mental and physical health (Toussaint et al., 2016). By forgiving, Yusuf released negative emotional burdens, freeing him up

for a peaceful and productive life. This provides concrete evidence that the teachings of forgiveness in the Bible have a real impact on psychological recovery, as confirmed by psychological research (Lawler-Row & Piferi, 2006).

In a study of older adults, trait forgiveness was found to be associated with healthy behaviors and the opposite of illness symptoms, suggesting that forgiveness has a positive relationship with both physical and mental health. The study showed that individuals who exhibit forgiving traits tend to have a better quality of life, healthier habits, stronger social support, and spiritual well-being, all of which contribute to their psychological health (Lawler-Row et al., 2008). Other research reports that forgiveness (both as a state and as a personality trait) is associated with reduced physiological reactivity to stress—such as heart rate and blood pressure—and improved physical symptoms and sleep quality, which are positive indicators of psychological recovery (Lawler et al., 2005).

Furthermore, Joseph's wise leadership in Egypt was a result of his forgiveness and emotional stability. He did not carry past wounds into his public policies, but instead prioritized justice and compassion. This demonstrates that forgiveness is not only beneficial for personal health but also impacts the social and organizational climate. Chapter in *Leading with Values* David S. Bright asserts that forgiveness is a crucial attribute in leadership. Forgiveness not only helps leaders overcome the disruption caused by others' mistakes, but also serves as a "grease" in interpersonal interactions, allowing organizations to continue operating despite conflict or misunderstandings (Bright, 2010).

Yusuf's attitude in letting go of revenge and inner wounds shows high emotional intelligence, namely the ability to not be controlled by destructive emotions such as anger and hatred, and is able to maintain inner balance through empathy and compassion (Mayer et al., 2004). In the story of the Prophet Yusuf, forgiveness is the main key to promoting mental health which is also a concern in Islamic psychology. Yusuf is an example of how inner strength can maintain peace of mind from psychological disorders such as post-traumatic stress. In QS. Yusuf: 92 which contains the sentence of Yusuf's forgiveness is in line with other verses, such as in:

وَالْكَافِرِينَ الْغَيْظَ وَالْعَافِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

"... and those who restrain their anger and forgive (the wrongs of) others. Allah loves those who do good." (QS. Ali Imran: 134) (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

This verse confirms that forgiveness in the Qur'an is a universal value, both for emotional healing and social empowerment. Yusuf's forgiveness has a deep spiritual, familial dimension and reveals complex social and psychological dynamics. Al-Raghib al-Isfahani, through an analysis of Islamic psychology, states that an open-minded attitude (*pardon*) "sweeter than revenge" and brings gratitude, while revenge actually gives rise to regret, reflecting forgiveness as a universal noble value (Mohamed, 2020). According to Quraish Shihab's interpretation, Yusuf's forgiveness did not emerge suddenly, but rather resulted from a profound spiritual and philosophical perspective. Yusuf recognized that humans are not free from error and that his brothers' actions were part of divine destiny (Shihab, 2001). This attitude reinforces the understanding that forgiveness is a manifestation of spiritual and psychological maturity.

Within the framework of mental health, Yusuf's forgiving attitude can be understood as a form of *letting go* or release negative emotional burdens.

A *systematic review and meta-analysis* concluded that forgiveness-based interventions significantly reduced depression, anger, and stress, and increased positive mood and self-acceptance (Akhtar & Barlow, 2016). This suggests that individuals who are able to forgive past trauma tend to have lower levels of depression, anxiety, and stress, demonstrating a positive correlation between forgiveness and psychological well-being. This aligns with Yusuf's story, where his forgiveness restored his emotional well-being as well as his relationships with his family and community.

By forgiving, Yusuf conveys the message that emotional wounds can be used as life lessons and transformed into wisdom, rather than becoming burdens that damage mental and social health. The transformation from trauma to wisdom through forgiveness is a fascinating study in contemporary Islamic psychology because it combines spiritual values and psychological healing mechanisms (Lawler-Row et al., 2008). Not only did Yusuf gain inner peace, but forgiveness also improved communication and strengthened harmony within his extended family. This aligns with Yusuf's situation, where forgiving his siblings rebuilt trust and harmony within the family (Akhtar et al., 2017). This reconciliation process re-establishes trust and love, essential elements in creating a healthy family. Yusuf's story demonstrates that an individual's emotional stability directly impacts social and societal conditions (Tridiatno, 2021).

Moreover, Yusuf's forgiveness helped erase the negative stigma surrounding both himself and his family in the eyes of Egyptian society. This act became a universal value that strengthened a positive image and social trust, two essential elements in building a healthy society. Yusuf's story teaches the meaning of empathy, which can defuse conflict and strengthen social cohesion. Research from an Islamic perspective confirms that forgiveness helps restore moral and social well-being, while "restoring and rebuilding status as a moral citizen," which is essential for social reintegration after conflict. This resonates strongly with the story of the Prophet Yusuf, who successfully redeemed himself from past stigma and improved the image of himself and his family in Egyptian society (Muhammad, 2020).

Based on the interpretations and psychological studies above, it can be concluded that the theme of forgiveness in the story of Joseph is a manifestation of emotional intelligence and an ancient psychological therapy that is relevant to this day. This proves that conflict resolution with a forgiveness approach is not only religious but also scientific and applicable in the context of mental health and social (Hamka, 2015; Worthington, 2006). The beauty of Joseph's forgiveness not only freed his soul from trauma but also strengthened spiritual and social values that have become exemplary throughout time. His patience and forgiveness reflect a noble character that brings peace, both within himself and those around him, and paves the way to a harmonious and blessed life (Shihab, 2001). In conclusion, the story of the forgiveness of the Prophet Joseph shows that the power of forgiveness is a key bridge to healing inner wounds and establishing strong emotional health, as well as to realizing a psychologically and spiritually mature personality. This theme is highly relevant in the study of Islamic psychology and modern therapy, serving as inspiration for building a peaceful and harmonious life.

3.1. The Theme of Spirituality as a Psychic Foundation

Every phase of the Prophet Yusuf's life in Surah Yusuf is always closely linked to strong and deep spirituality. In the context of psychology, spirituality is not only a religious aspect, but also becomes a psychological foundation that can support a person's mental health in facing various life tests (Pargament, 2001). Faith and trust are the main strengths that support Yusuf when he experiences a life journey full of twists and turns, starting from being a slave, facing slander, until being appointed as a leader in Egypt. As stated in Surah Yusuf verse 25, "And the woman tempted him, and Yusuf would have done it, had he not seen proof from his Lord." (QS. Yusuf:25), this verse emphasizes that divine help played a role in restraining Yusuf from reprehensible actions so that spirituality became the main controller of his behavior (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

The phenomenon of spirituality as the psychological foundation of the Prophet Joseph is not only based on a normative attitude of trust and faith, but also demonstrates how God's presence in Joseph's heart provided inner strength in situations full of pressure and injustice. Buya Hamka, in his Al-Azhar commentary, states: "*Yusuf gained extraordinary strength from his trust in God, so that he remained firm in the face of calumny and hardship.*" (Hamka, 2015). This illustrates that spirituality served as a source of psychological energy that maintained Yusuf's calm and optimism. Yusuf not only believed in God but also prioritized gratitude and patience, which are crucial spiritual dimensions for mental health. In modern spiritual psychology studies, gratitude and patience have been shown to improve emotional balance and reduce stress (Wood et al., 2010).

Yusuf's patience during his imprisonment and his lack of resentment are vivid examples of how spiritual practices can transform negative experiences into opportunities for self-improvement and mental strengthening. In Surah Yusuf, verse 86, the Prophet Jacob taught a prayer for patience: "And patience is the most important thing." (Surah Yusuf: 86) (Al-Qur'an, 2022). Quraish Shihab, in his commentary on Al-Misbah, emphasized that: "*Joseph's spirituality was a light that illuminated his path when all seemed dark*" (Shihab, 2001). This view asserts that spirituality, especially that rooted in belief in God, provides guidance and hope to individuals in difficult situations. Research in the field of psychology of religion distinguishes between *positive religious coping* and *negative religious coping*. Findings indicate that positive spiritual coping, such as seeking meaning, connecting with something higher, and faith support, significantly impacts optimism, acceptance of the situation, and improved interpersonal relationships, including after major trauma (Wolkinson & Weinberg, 2023).

In his psychological process, this spiritual foundation not only motivated Yusuf to persevere but also maintained his vision and dreams. Despite being unjustly imprisoned, Yusuf maintained optimism that Allah had a grand plan for him. Verse 100 of the Quran states, "*And indeed my Lord is very gentle to whom He wills.*" (QS. Yusuf: 100) (Al-Qur'an, 2022). This indicates that faith in Allah's gentleness and mercy was Yusuf's primary driving force to move forward. This belief had a significant impact on his mental resilience, which is known as "*hope*" in positive psychology (Snyder et al., 2000). Yusuf's spirituality also influenced his attitude towards social issues and leadership. When entrusted with the leadership role of addressing the food crisis in Egypt, he did not allow his past circumstances to influence his decisions, but instead adhered to the principles of justice and goodness grounded

in faith. In this case, spirituality is not merely an inner strength, but also an ethical guideline for action, which is relevant to the concept of *integrity* in leadership psychology (Kalshoven et al., 2011).

Yusuf's strength of trust does not mean surrender without effort, but rather a combination of prayer, effort, and hope. Surah Yusuf verse 4 states that Yusuf received revelations from childhood, which symbolizes his early knowledge and spiritual awareness. Buya Hamka interprets this strong spiritual awareness as shaping Yusuf's visionary and resilient personality (Hamka, 2015). This view aligns with the theory of Transpersonal Psychology, which states that spirituality can support the holistic development of human potential (Cherry, 2023). The role of spirituality as a psychic foundation in Yusuf's story also aligns with Usman Lajjati's theory, which asserts that spirituality is the center of psycho-spiritual strength that helps individuals overcome stress and obstacles (Mohiuddin & Radhilufti, 2025).

In the case of Yusuf, spirituality has been shown to facilitate psychological recovery from trauma and adversity, while simultaneously building a strong and wise leadership character. Surah Yusuf verses 43-49, which contain the story of Yusuf interpreting the dreams of prisoners as well as the king's dreams, also shows how his spirituality gave rise to intelligence and wisdom in facing crises, helping to find solutions for the Egyptian people (Surah Yusuf: 43-49) (Al-Qur'an, 2022). This reinforces the idea that spirituality can improve cognitive function and motivation in humanistic psychology (Cherry, 2023). Furthermore, modern research shows a positive relationship between spirituality and mental health such as reducing depression and anxiety (Koenig, 2012). Yusuf as a spiritual figure and leader shows how spirituality also encourages the development of high emotional intelligence, helping to manage emotions and interpersonal skills wisely, as also conveyed in Islamic psychology institutions (Dein et al., 2010).

The Prophet Joseph's spiritual attitude and trust in God did not mean passivity or surrender to circumstances, but rather accompanied by active effort and a well-thought-out strategy in carrying out his responsibilities. True spirituality does not kill rationality, but rather becomes the glue that integrates faith with action. In this context, belief in God serves as a source of motivation that strengthens decision-making, not as a substitute for human effort. This is in line with contemporary research findings that show that healthy spirituality can encourage someone to develop proactive behavior, problem-solving skills, and visionary thinking (Brown et al., 2005).

Yusuf's story also shows that spirituality is not only an inner strengthener, but also a catalyst for improving the overall quality of life, both mentally, emotionally, and socially. He did not allow his past to hinder him, but instead transformed it into a source of wisdom and leadership that benefited society. In positive psychology, the combination of hope (*hope*), patience, and spiritual values have proven to be pillars of mental resilience (*resilience*) that help individuals survive and thrive amidst life's pressures (Koenig, 2012; Snyder, 2002).

From a contemporary perspective, this narrative serves as an inspiring model for developing a resilient and visionary personality. The integration of faith, patience, and hope, as exemplified by Yusuf, can be applied in various areas of life, from crisis management to fostering social relationships. Thus, Yusuf's story is not only a piece of prophetic history but also a source of transdisciplinary knowledge relevant to psychology, sociology, and leadership studies.

In line with these studies, Quraish Shihab's interpretation concludes with the note that spirituality in the story of Yusuf is a concrete example of integration between *faith* with a productive mental attitude and behavior (Shihab, 2001). In the modern era, this concept has inspired many Muslim psychologists and educators to combine religious approaches with contemporary psychology to create holistic mental health. Overall, the strong spiritual foundation of Yusuf's life journey not only provided a solid psychological foundation but also guided him to remain optimistic, visionary, and a leader. Spirituality became a source of strength that enabled Yusuf to overcome various trials and actualize his full potential for the good of the community.

3.2. Psychological Values Studied in the Theme of the Story of Joseph

The story of the Prophet Yusuf (Joseph), contained in Surah Yusuf (The Surah Yusuf), contains rich Islamic psychological messages worthy of study within the framework of personality development and mental health. Four key points that can be drawn from this story are: trauma and resilience, self-control, forgiveness, and spirituality that strengthens hope. The thematic approach to this story not only highlights the psychological aspects of the Prophet Yusuf's experience but also links it directly to the Qur'anic verses that serve as its foundation, accompanied by classical interpretations by Buya Hamka and Quraish Shihab;

First, the aspects of trauma and resilience are depicted when the Prophet Yusuf was thrown into a well by his brothers out of jealousy (QS. Yusuf: 15). This event was a form of severe psychological and social pressure, but Yusuf was able to survive and rise again with undying faith and hope. In his Al-Azhar commentary, Buya Hamka explains that the comforting revelation Yusuf received in the well provided him with peace and motivation for the

future (Hamka, 2015). Quraish Shihab interpreted the revelation as a form of divine intervention that gave Yusuf psychological strength in facing his suffering (Shihab, 2001).

وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِ لَتُنَبِّئَهُمْ بِأَمْرِهِمْ هَذَا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

"And We revealed to him: 'Surely you will tell them about their actions, while they are not aware of it.'" (QS. Yusuf: 15) (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

Second, Yusuf's ability to control himself is very apparent when he is tested by the temptation of Al-Aziz's wife, who tries to trap him (QS. Yusuf: 23). From a psychological perspective, this is clear evidence of self-regulation, namely a person's ability to control impulses and maintain their integrity. Tafsir Al-Misbah states that Yusuf was equipped with "burhān," or guidance from Allah, as the basis for his moral strength (Shihab, 2001). Meanwhile, Buya Hamka emphasized that this assistance was a manifestation of the strength of faith that protected Yusuf from committing sin (Hamka, 2015).

وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهِ وَهَمَّ بِهَا لَوْلَا أَنَّ رَأَىٰ بُرْهَانَ رَبِّهِ

"And indeed she had intended for him, and Joseph had also intended for her, had he not seen a sign from his Lord..." (QS. Yusuf: 24) (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

Furthermore, forgiveness became one of the peaks of Yusuf's psychological development when he met his brothers again (QS. Yusuf: 92). Instead of seeking revenge, Yusuf chose to forgive, saying: "There is no scorn against you today..." This attitude reflects high emotional maturity and is part of the process of healing emotional wounds. In Buya Hamka's interpretation, Yusuf's forgiving attitude demonstrates spiritual maturity that is able to embrace peace (Hamka, 2015)(Hamka, 2015). Meanwhile, Quraish Shihab stated that Yusuf's actions reflected the value of reconciliation which strengthened social psychological balance (Shihab, 2001).

قَالَ لَا تَثْرِيبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ ۖ يَغْفِرُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۖ وَهُوَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ

"He (Yusuf) said: 'On this day there is no insult against you, may Allah forgive you, and He is the Most Merciful among the merciful.'" (QS. Yusuf: 92) (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

Finally, spirituality and hope served as the psychological foundation that supported the entire inner process of the Prophet Yusuf. In Surah Yusuf, verse 100, it is stated: "Indeed, my Lord is Gentle to whom He wills." This verse emphasizes the importance of faith in maintaining spiritual stability and fostering optimism. Both the Al-Azhar and Al-Misbah commentaries state that spirituality provides direction, serenity, and strength to endure life's difficulties (Hamka, 2015; Shihab, 2001). In modern psychology, this is in line with the concept of spiritual coping which makes faith a source of inner resilience (Pargament, 2001).

إِنَّ رَبِّي لَطِيفٌ لِّمَا يَشَاءُ ۚ إِنَّهُ هُوَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ

"Indeed, my Lord is gentle with whom He wills. Indeed, He is the All-Knowing, the All-Wise." (QS. Yusuf: 100) (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

Table 1. Psychological Aspects in the Interpretation of Buya Hamka and the Interpretation of M. Quraish Shihab

Psychological Aspects	Verse	Related Themes	Interpretation of Buya Hamka	Tafsir Quraish Shihab
Trauma & Resilience	Yusuf: 15	Rising from failure, optimism for the future	Revelation of strengthening in the well, tranquility	Psychological support, optimism
Self-Control	Yusuf: 23	Refrain from temptation, maintain honor	Faith and strength repel sin	Ilham, the source of self-control

Psychological Aspects	Verse	Related Themes	Interpretation of Buya Hamka	Tafsir Quraish Shihab
Forgiveness	Yusuf: 92	Forgiveness, family reconciliation	Spiritual maturity and inner healing	Social peace, psychological balance
Spirituality & Hope	Yusuf: 100	Psychic balance, the meaning of life	God's hope and tenderness as a support	Optimism and a vision of life based on faith

By examining the story of the Prophet Joseph thematically through the lens of Islamic psychology, readers gain important lessons on how to interpret trauma as a learning opportunity, manage emotions under pressure, forgive as a process of inner healing, and utilize faith as a primary source of spiritual strength and hope for the future. This narrative is highly relevant as a reference in character education and mental health, both in the academic realm and in the practice of spiritually-based psychotherapy.

3.3. The Contribution of Yusuf's Story to Islamic Psychology

The story of the Prophet Yusuf (Joseph) in Surah Yusuf (The Prophet Yusuf) presents profound Islamic psychological values that remain relevant in shaping human personality today. One of the key themes that stands out is resilience, the ability to transform trauma into strength for growth and positive contribution. Since childhood, Yusuf experienced emotional wounds resulting from the betrayal of his brothers:

فَلَمَّا دَهَبُوا بِهِ وَاجْمَعُوا أَنْ يَجْعَلُوهُ فِي غِيَابَتِ الْجُبِّ ۖ وَأَوْحَيْنَا إِلَيْهِ لَتُنَبِّئَنَّهُمْ بِأَمْرِ هَذَا وَهُمْ لَا يَشْعُرُونَ

"So when they brought him and agreed to put him at the bottom of the well, We revealed to him: 'Truly you will tell them about their deeds, while they are not aware of it.'" (QS. Yusuf: 15) (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

However, Yusuf managed to transform this bitter experience into energy to persevere and maintain his integrity (Harper & Pargament, 2015). This demonstrates that resilience, from an Islamic perspective, is not just physical strength, but also spiritual and psychological strength that grows from a close relationship with God.

Yusuf's spirituality was a major factor in his resilience. In Surah Yusuf, verse 4, it is mentioned that Yusuf's dream was a prophetic sign from an early age:

إِذْ قَالَ يُوسُفُ لِأَبِيهِ يَا أَبَتِ إِنِّي رَأَيْتُ أَحَدَ عَشَرَ كَوْكَبًا وَالشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ رَأَيْتُهُمْ لِي سَاجِدِينَ

"When Yusuf said to his father: 'O my father, indeed I dreamed of seeing eleven stars, the sun, and the moon; I saw them all bowing to me.'" (QS. Yusuf: 4) (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

Buya Hamka interpreted this dream as irhas, namely a divine sign that instills optimism and confidence in the future (Hamka, 2015). This kind of spiritual strength gave Yusuf the resilience to face dark times while maintaining his faith and patience. Another powerful aspect of Yusuf's story is self-regulation, or self-control. When facing temptation from Al-Aziz's wife and the injustice of imprisonment, Yusuf maintained his honor and self-control:

وَلَقَدْ هَمَّتْ بِهِ وَهَمَّ بِهَا لَوْلَا أَنْ رَأَى بُرْهَانَ رَبِّهِ

"And indeed the woman had intended (to do that act) with Yusuf, and Yusuf also intended (to do it) with that woman, if he had not seen a sign (burhan) from his Lord..." (QS. Yusuf: 24) (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

Quraish Shihab explained that the light that Yusuf saw was a divine light that protected him from moral decline (Shihab, 2001). In psychology, this kind of self-control is referred to as an important adaptive strategy in maintaining mental health and preventing excessive stress (Tangney et al., 2004). Yusuf's decision to continue on the path of

truth despite the risks reflects not only faith, but also self-efficacy, namely, belief in his ability to manage difficult situations in a healthy way (Bandura, 1997). This demonstrates the synergy between spiritual and psychological aspects in building resilient character according to the Islamic perspective. The theme of forgiveness is another strong core of this story. When given the opportunity to take revenge, Yusuf forgave his brothers:

قَالَ لَا تَثْرِيبَ عَلَيْكُمُ الْيَوْمَ ۖ يَغْفِرُ اللَّهُ لَكُمْ ۖ وَهُوَ أَرْحَمُ الرَّاحِمِينَ

"He (Yusuf) said: 'On this day there is no insult against you. May Allah forgive you, and He is the Most Merciful among the merciful.'" (QS. Yusuf: 92) (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

Buya Hamka called this action the peak of Yusuf's spiritual maturity and strength (Hamka, 2015). Quraish Shihab also views it as a symbol of emotional intelligence that leads to inner peace (Shihab, 2001). In modern psychology, forgiveness has been proven to be effective in reducing psychological stress and improving quality of life (Worthington, 2006).

Yusuf's emotional intelligence is evident as he rebuilds a fractured family bond. This demonstrates that forgiveness is a vital bridge to emotional health (Mayer et al., 2004). Yusuf was able to transform old wounds into sources of wisdom and harmony, rather than fodder for revenge. Psychological research supports that this attitude can reduce stress and improve well-being (Toussaint et al., 2016). Yusuf's spiritual dimension is also closely linked to inner peace and gratitude. In Surah Yusuf, verse 100, it is stated:

وَرَفَعَ أَبَوَيْهِ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ وَخَرُّوا لَهُ سُجَّدًا ۖ وَقَالَ يَا أَبَتِ هَذَا تَأْوِيلُ رُؤْيَايَ مِنْ قَبْلُ قَدْ جَعَلَهَا رَبِّي حَقًّا...

"And he raised his parents to the throne. They (all) bowed down to him. Yusuf said: 'O my father, this is the interpretation of my previous dream. Truly my God has made it happen...'" (QS. Yusuf: 100) (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

This verse demonstrates God's tenderness and compassion for His patient and trusting servants. This sense of gratitude and faith was the mainstay of Yusuf's mental health. Besides being a spiritual support, Yusuf's spirituality also inspired his just and wise leadership. When entrusted with governing Egypt amidst the threat of a food crisis, Yusuf combined faith with wisdom in his social strategy:

يُوسُفُ أَيُّهَا الصِّدِّيقُ أَفْتِنَا فِي سَبْعِ بَقَرَاتٍ سِمَانٍ...

(QS. Yusuf: 43–49, In short) These verses describe Joseph interpreting the king's dream and devising a social rescue plan (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

According to Quraish Shihab, the revelation and inspiration received by Yusuf was a synergy between spiritual intelligence and practical intelligence (Shihab, 2001). In a study of the thoughts of Muhammad Utsman Najati, it is stated that Islamic Psychology prioritizes the integration of faith and reason as the center of understanding the human mind, a holistic approach that recognizes spirituality as an important foundation in dealing with mental and social stress. Furthermore, in Psychology in the Qur'an by Najati, the concept of inner peace and psychic strength is built through a vertical relationship (to God) which becomes a trigger for mental balance and health (Zaharuddin, 2016). Yusuf's optimistic attitude and growth mindset throughout his life's trials are very much in line with the principles of modern positive psychology which emphasize the importance of hope and the meaning of life (Snyder, 2002). Yusuf's story serves as a profound lesson in character education based on spirituality and resilience. Finally, Yusuf's story also demonstrates the importance of faith-based trauma management. He didn't dwell on past wounds, but transformed them into a passion for good:

إِنَّهُ مَنْ يَتَّقِ وَيَصْبِرْ فَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُضِيعُ أَجْرَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

"Indeed, whoever is devout and patient, then indeed Allah does not waste the reward of those who do good." (QS. Yusuf: 90) (Al-Qur'an, 2022).

Yusuf serves as a vivid example of how emotional wounds can be sublimated into broad social benefits. Therefore, thematically, this story reflects a strong integration of resilience, self-control, forgiveness, and spirituality as the foundations of a strong psychological foundation. These values are highly applicable to mental health and character education today.

4. CONCLUSION

The story of the Prophet Joseph in Surah Yusuf depicts the complexity of a human life journey filled with various trials, such as envy from his brothers, false accusations, betrayal, and the achievement of success and forgiveness. Viewed from a psychological perspective, this story reflects the process of character maturation, the ability to control emotions, and how to manage stress and emotional pain with wisdom. This surah demonstrates that psychological balance and the strength of faith were the main pillars that supported the Prophet Joseph in facing the difficult trials that befell him.

A psychological approach to studying Surah Yusuf is highly relevant, particularly in shaping personality and maintaining mental health. This story is filled with universal values such as patience, honesty, self-control, and forgiveness, all of which are highly influential in building positive psychology and strengthening one's mental resilience. These values are not only important for Muslims but also have broad implications in education, psychological therapy, and general human character development.

The Prophet Joseph's ability to remain steadfast in the face of life's challenges was inseparable from his spiritual strength, close relationship with God, and deep understanding of the meaning of each test he experienced. Furthermore, Joseph also demonstrated extraordinary emotional intelligence, such as his ability to forgive his brothers, maintain his morality amidst temptation, and remain patient when treated unfairly. This combination of strong faith and emotional maturity makes him an ideal figure for overcoming life's difficulties with inner peace and openness.

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