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THE LIVED EXPERIENCES OF STRESS MANAGEMENT THROUGH CALLIGRAPHY ART THERAPY: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL APPROACH

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Abstract

Stress is the inability of individuals to cope with stressful conditions in their environment. Each individual has different ways of dealing with it, one of which is through art therapy. This method is a therapeutic practice often used by several members of the PP. Annuqayah Lubangsa Putri Calligraphy Institute. In addition to being a routine activity, several members report that calligraphy has therapeutic benefits in reducing stress levels. This study aims to explore two aspects: first, how members of the Calligraphy Institute experience stress, including both stressors and stress symptoms; and second, the significance of calligraphy as art therapy for members of the Calligraphy Institute who experience stress. The researcher employs a phenomenological method, incorporating two theories—Farid Mashudi's stressor theory and Sarafino's stress symptom theory—as well as Malchiodi's art therapy perspective theory, to uncover the therapeutic significance of calligraphy art for members of the Calligraphy Institute. This study concludes that there are three types of stressors experienced by members of the Calligraphy Institute, namely: psychological stressors such as negative thinking and frustration; biological stressors such as dissatisfaction with body shape; and social stressors such as social conflicts and a busy schedule. The identified symptoms encompass both psychological and biological aspects. Psychological symptoms include difficulty concentrating and reduced focus, while biological symptoms include headaches, eating disorders, and digestive problems. Furthermore, the informants conveyed several meanings of calligraphy art, including: calligraphy as a medium of expression and communication; a source of meditation

and relaxation; a means to enhance self-understanding; a way to create personal- al satisfaction; a contributor to psychological well-being; and a support for strengthening spiritual aspects.

Keywords: *Calligraphy, Art Therapy, Stress*

Abstrak

Stres merupakan ketidakmampuan individu dalam menghadapi kondisi penuh tekanan yang ada pada lingkungan sekitar. Dalam menanganinya, setiap individu pasti memiliki cara yang berbeda, salah satunya ialah melalui *art therapy*. Metode ini merupakan praktek terapi yang sering digunakan oleh beberapa anggota Lembaga Kaligrafi PP. Annuqayah Lubangsa Putri. Selain menjadi kegiatan rutin, beberapa anggota mengatakan bahwa seni kaligrafi memiliki aspek terapeutik dalam meminimalisir tingkat stres. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengungkap dua hal: pertama, bagaimana pengalaman stres anggota Lembaga Kaligrafi, baik dari aspek *stressor* serta gejala stres yang dialami. Kedua, apa makna seni kaligrafi sebagai *art therapy* bagi anggota Lembaga Kaligrafi yang mengalami stres. Peneliti menggunakan metode fenomenologis dengan dua teori, yakni teori *stressor* Farid Mashudi dan gejala stres Sarafino, serta teori *Art Therapy* perspektif Malchiodi guna mengungkap makna terapi seni kaligrafi bagi anggota Lembaga Kaligrafi. Penelitian ini menghasilkan kesimpulan bahwa terdapat tiga *stressor* yang dialami anggota Lembaga Kaligrafi, yaitu: *Stressor* psikologis seperti *negative thinking* dan frustrasi, biologis seperti merasa bentuk tubuh kurang ideal, dan sosial seperti konflik sosial dan kegiatan yang padat. Sedangkan gejala yang dialami meliputi gejala psikologis dan biologis. Gejala psikologis meliputi gangguan konsentrasi dan menurunnya daya fokus. Sedangkan gejala biologis meliputi sakit kepala, masalah makan, dan masalah pencernaan. Beberapa makna seni kaligrafi yang dikemukakan oleh beberapa informan yaitu: seni kaligrafi sebagai sarana ekspresi dan komunikasi, memberikan efek meditasi dan relaksasi, meningkatkan pemahaman diri, menciptakan rasa kepuasan pribadi, memberikan implikasi terhadap kesejahteraan psikologis, dan membantu meningkatkan aspek spiritual.

Kata Kunci: Seni Kaligrafi, *Art Therapy*, Stres

Introduction

In this modern era, the phenomenon of stress is becoming increasingly prevalent. Nicola states that stress is a psychological condition that adolescents are particularly prone to experiencing. When stress occurs, the brain releases two chemicals—adrenaline and cortisol—which cause the body to respond with symptoms such as restlessness, panic, constant worry, and even difficulty sleeping, making it hard for adolescents to concentrate (Mulyawan et al., 2023). A study by Siti Roihanah revealed that stress in adolescents is caused by several factors, namely their environment, pressure, demands, and mindset. If they experience a lot of stress, this leads to higher stress levels; conversely, if adolescents experience low stress, they also have low stress levels (Roihanah & Arsy, 2022).

In this context, boarding school students—who are, by definition, adolescents—are also vulnerable to stressful conditions. Generally, students at Islamic boarding schools must juggle various activities simultaneously, both academic and non-academic. Additionally, they live in a highly social environment, resulting in a very close-knit atmosphere within the boarding school. Students must adapt to a diverse

range of cultures (Roihanah & Arsy, 2022). This is especially true for teenage students, who will inevitably face many challenges in their lives at the boarding school that can cause stress, as adolescence is a time of rapid physiological and emotional changes. Consequently, these factors result in students having varying sources of stress.

In managing this stress, each individual has their own unique approach. One such method is *art therapy*—an approach that uses art as a medium for expressing emotions and feelings. *Art therapy* is implemented through a creative process using art media such as painting, markers, colored pencils, paint, and so on. This can help students express themselves, improve their coping skills, manage stress, and boost their self-confidence (Harahap, 2025).

At PP. Annuqayah Lubangsa Putri, there is a Semi-Autonomous Institution (LSO) dedicated to the art of calligraphy, namely the Calligraphy Institute. Within this institute, members delve into various visual arts, primarily calligraphy. Artistic activities are conducted consistently with the aim of further enhancing members' creativity in the field of calligraphy, including manuscript calligraphy, Quranic calligraphy, decorative calligraphy, and even contemporary calligraphy. To date, the Calligraphy Institute at PP. Annuqayah Lubangsa Putri has become highly significant due to its vital role in preserving religious and pesantren culture.

As an art of writing with deep roots in cultural and religious traditions, calligraphy is not merely a form of artistic expression but also holds significant therapeutic potential. Calligraphy is viewed as a form of non-clinical therapy to support mental and emotional well-being. Through this activity, individuals are given the opportunity to express emotions and feelings, manage stress, and enhance their psychological well-being. (Harahap, 2025).

This aligns with a study by Ida Wahyu Yunitaningrum titled “The Effect of Calligraphy *Art Therapy* on Depression Levels Among the Elderly at the Aisyiyah Surakarta Nursing Home.” The study's results indicate that there were changes observed before and after the implementation of calligraphy art therapy among the elderly. This means that calligraphy art intervention is capable of reducing depression levels among the elderly (Yunitaningrum et al., 2024). Another study, presented by Fatmawati in “The Calligraphy Art Therapy Approach for Patients with Hallucinations,” found a reduction in the intensity of auditory hallucinations following general therapy and calligraphy art therapy. Patients also reported feeling calmer, with improved focus and concentration, good eye contact, and no signs of talking to themselves (Fatmawati et al., 2024).

In addition to being a routine activity, several members of the Calligraphy Institute noted that calligraphy has therapeutic benefits in reducing stress levels. Furthermore, these activities also yield positive outcomes, such as a sense of calm, physical relaxation, and the ability to channel emotions effectively. Thus, *art therapy* in

the form of calligraphy serves as an effective tool for them to manage stress, particularly within the often-rigid environment of a pesantren. Additionally, *art therapy* helps individuals express themselves through calligraphy, providing a space for them to release pent-up emotions.

Numerous studies have shown that art, including calligraphy, can play a significant role in addressing mental health issues such as anxiety, depression, and stress. Calligraphy can serve as a medium that allows individuals to focus on calming activities while strengthening their spiritual and emotional connections. However, there has been little research that deeply and explicitly examines the experience of stress among Islamic boarding school students and the application of calligraphy as a form of therapy to address that stress. The subjects of this study are female students who are also calligraphy artists at the Annuqayah Lubangsa Putri Islamic Boarding School.

Based on this, the study titled “The Lived Experiences of Stress Management Through Calligraphy Art Therapy: A Phenomenological Approach” is important to explore the meaning of calligraphy as art therapy for members of the Calligraphy Club (LK). In this context, the author will subjectively examine the stress experiences they have encountered. Furthermore, this study aims to determine the significance of calligraphy as *art therapy* for members of the Calligraphy Institute. It seeks to determine whether *art therapy* truly has a positive impact on their psychological well-being and what implications this has for their psychological well-being.

Thus, this study is expected to contribute to a deeper theoretical understanding and insight into participants’ subjective experiences of stress and *art therapy*, as well as how they interpret these experiences. Specifically, this study can serve as a guide for members of the Calligraphy Institute on how *art therapy* in the form of calligraphy can be used as a tool to reduce the stress they experience.

Research Method

This study is qualitative in nature and employs a phenomenological approach. A qualitative approach is used to investigate, discover, describe, and explain qualities or characteristics that cannot be measured or depicted through a quantitative approach. Meanwhile, phenomenology is a form of qualitative research whose primary focus is on phenomena that appear as the subject of the study but are free from the researcher’s biases or subjectivity (Nindito, 2020).

The aim is to explore participants’ subjective experiences regarding stress and the significance of art therapy in their lives. Data collection was conducted using three techniques: interviews, observation, and documentation.

Interviews were conducted with five informants who have experienced stress and use calligraphy as a form of therapy to minimize that stress. The informants

interviewed included three board members of the Calligraphy Institute and two active members of the Calligraphy Institute. The interview results will be compared with observations to strengthen the findings.

Data analysis employed a phenomenological approach using two theories: Farid Mashudi's stressor theory and Sarafino's stress symptoms theory, as well as Malchiodi's perspective on art therapy, to uncover the significance of calligraphy art therapy for members of the Calligraphy Institute.

Research Results and Discussion

Stressors and Symptoms of Stress Among Students at the Calligraphy Institute

In the Islamic boarding school environment, the phenomenon of stress experienced by students is not a new occurrence. Many factors contribute to the onset of stress among students, ranging from academic to non-academic activities. The sheer number of these activities is a common source of stress among students, and students at PP. Annuqayah Lubangsa Putri are no exception.

The stress experienced by students naturally stems from a variety of issues and manifests in different symptoms. Generally, according to Farid Mashudi, stressors are divided into three categories: psychological, biological, and social (Mashudi, 2014). Based on interviews with several informants, the stressors faced by Lubangsa Putri students—particularly members of the Calligraphy Club—can be classified as follows:

Psychological Stressors

Based on the experience shared by Informant B, one of the factors causing her stress is the constant presence of negative thoughts (negative thinking), and she often feels frustrated when faced with a problem. Unlike Informant B, the psychological stressor experienced by Informant A is more related to a state of frustration resulting from failing to obtain something she desired. This led to him being forced to live at the Islamic boarding school at his parents' insistence, which in turn caused him to feel stressed and under pressure.

Based on the experiences shared by Informants A and B, it can be concluded that the stressors they experienced fall into the category of psychological stressors. This aligns with Farid Mashudi's view that psychological stressors are triggers of stress stemming from a person's psychological state. Some of these are characterized by envy, negative thinking, hostility, jealousy, frustration, personal conflicts, and desires that exceed one's capabilities.

Alimul's research also explains that psychological stressors originate from within the individual themselves. Generally, this is due to a conflict between desires and reality—in this case, various problems that arise that are inconsistent with the

individual's expectations and cannot be resolved, thereby leading to a state of stress (Susapto, 2018).

Thus, it can be understood that the negative thoughts and feelings of frustration frequently experienced by Informants A and B are categorized as psychological stressors because they stem from internal factors or their psychological state.

Biological Stressors

Informant D stated that he had experienced stress stemming from his physical condition. Throughout his life, he frequently faced body shaming from those around him. Consequently, this led him to constantly perceive his body as imperfect. He felt pressured to meet the expectations of the people around him. The lack of support and positive affection from his friends also caused him to lose self-confidence. Consequently, this disrupted his thoughts and affected his mental state.

This statement aligns with the definition of a biological stressor—that is, a stress condition related to an individual's physical state. Some physical causes of stress include incurable illnesses, physical disabilities, impaired function of a body part, and a body posture perceived as imperfect (Mashudi, 2014).

A similar point is explained in a study conducted by Intan Nuraini, who noted that biological stressors can stem from poor physical conditions, such as lack of sleep, an unbalanced diet, or illness, all of which can contribute to stress (Nuraini, 2024).

Thus, it can be concluded that the feelings of distress experienced by Informant D due to perceiving their body posture as less than ideal are one of the factors influencing their stress. Consequently, the form of stress experienced by Informant D is a type of biological stressor.

Social Stressors

Islamic boarding schools are known for their highly social environment. Consequently, nearly all informants stated that their stress stemmed from their social environment, such as the social conflicts experienced by Informant B. According to him, the conflicts he faced within his social environment at the boarding school caused him significant distress and were a major contributor to his stress. Additionally, Informant B experienced social stress not only from his environment at the boarding school but also from his family. He noted that his strained relationship with his family was another factor contributing to his stress. Unlike Informant B, Informant C's stressors stemmed from demands within his environment, such as institutional activity requirements, pressure to submit calligraphy works by the deadline, a packed class schedule, the pressure to consistently meet aesthetic standards, and the pressure stemming from the community's expectations regarding his artistic work.

These experiences align with Farid Mashudi's explanation in his book, which states that social stressors are stress factors that do not originate from within the individual but rather from the environment or external factors. There are three social factors that can cause stress: family environment, work-related factors, and the broader social environment (Mashudi, 2014).

A study also explains that social stressors originate from outside the individual—including family conflicts, conflicts with friends, work demands, the institutional environment, academic pressure, limited institutional facilities—and that social pressure can also affect an individual's mental well-being (Nuraini, 2024).

The stress factors experienced by Informants B and C can be identified as forms of social stressors. The social conflict experienced by Informant B and the demands from the environment experienced by Informant C are examples of social stressors.

The various forms of stressors experienced by the informants indicate that the factors underlying their stress are highly complex. There are several aspects that trigger stress among students—particularly members of the Calligraphy Club—including both internal and external factors.

The stress experienced by the informants certainly has a significant impact on their psychological well-being. According to Sarafino, stress symptoms can be grouped into two components: biological and psychological symptoms (Aditama, 2017). Some of the responses or symptoms experienced by the informants when under stress include:

Biological Symptoms

In this study, biological symptoms resulting from stress were reported by informants B, C, and E. The symptoms experienced included headaches, sleep problems, digestive issues, eating disorders, and excessive sweating. These symptoms were experienced by the informants as a result of various stressors and stressful experiences.

The symptoms experienced by some informants are classified as biological symptoms because the response to the stress they experienced took the form of physical symptoms. According to Damar, the physical symptoms of stress experienced by individuals include headaches, sleep problems, digestive problems, eating problems, skin problems, and excessive sweating.

On the other hand, in the theory presented by Philip L. Rice, these symptoms are categorized under biological stress theories or relate to the body's response to stress. One concept discussed therein is the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS), which defines stress as a nonspecific demand on the body that disrupts its equilibrium.

This theory, pioneered by Hans Selye, explains that when an individual is exposed to a stressor, there are three distinct stages. First, the alarm stage, which is

typically marked by symptoms such as muscle tension, increased blood pressure, a faster heart rate, and others. Second, the resistance stage, with symptoms such as anxiety, tension, and lethargy. Third, exhaustion, with symptoms such as high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, diabetes, and even death (Ekawarna, 2018).

The biological symptoms experienced by some informants can be identified as being in the first and second stages. In the first stage, Informant A experienced symptoms such as a faster heart rate when faced with unpleasant situations. This serves as an alarm or the body's initial reaction to stress. In addition, the stress symptoms experienced by Informant B were found to have already entered the second stage. When under stress, he reported that he often felt lethargic and lacked the energy to do anything. These symptoms indicate that a person is resisting stress, a process known as "resistance."

Psychological Symptoms

In addition to biological symptoms, the stress experienced by the informant can cause psychological symptoms, such as:

Cognitive Symptoms

Cognitive symptoms of stress were demonstrated by Informant A. He stated that he often feels unfocused while performing daily activities, including when communicating with others; in one particularly severe instance, he even lost consciousness during a social interaction.

Furthermore, Informant D also revealed that they frequently experience difficulty concentrating. They tend to struggle to focus on any task, such as during college lectures, Diniyah school classes, and when creating projects.

The descriptions of stress by Informants A and D align with Cohen's assertion that stress can impair memory and cognitive function. Stressful situations can disrupt a person's thought processes; they tend to experience impairments in memory, attention, and concentration (Aditama, 2017).

In a study conducted by Rafidah, the negative effects of stress were described as having a significant impact on a person's psychological state when the stress exceeds their ability to cope with it. Stress can also have a positive effect if it remains at normal levels. Conversely, if stress levels exceed normal limits, they will have negative consequences for an individual's cognitive and mental well-being. Excessive stress weakens the human brain and impairs cognitive abilities.

From the above discussion, it is evident that the stress experienced by the informants affects their cognitive functioning. This is because the concentration difficulties experienced by Informants A and D are one of the effects of stress, which weakens their brain function.

Emotional Symptoms

Several informants stated that stress causes them to feel easily angered, excessively anxious about everything, and overly sad. Informant B mentioned that when facing a problem, they often feel excessive anxiety and worry. This even interferes with their daily activities, including their artistic work.

A study shows that in addition to affecting cognitive function, stressful situations can also disrupt a person's emotional stability. People experiencing stress may exhibit symptoms such as anger, excessive anxiety about everything, sadness, and depression (Aditama, 2017).

Other researchers have also found that stress can lead individuals to feel depressed. Consequently, this then affects their emotional state. Individuals may easily experience feelings of anxiety, restlessness, constant rumination, difficulty concentrating, and excessive worry about many things (Gaol, 2016).

The symptoms experienced by some informants, such as being easily anxious and angry, are individual responses to stress stemming from their emotional state. This indicates that the symptoms they experience are psychological symptoms rooted in their emotions.

The Significance of Calligraphy as Art Therapy for Members of a Calligraphy Organization Experiencing Stress

Calligraphy is a form of art psychotherapy that integrates the fields of human development, visual arts, and the creative process with counseling and psychotherapy models (Yunitaningrum, 2024). In a number of studies that have been conducted, calligraphy has emerged as a technique rarely explored by previous researchers, yet one that has been shown to offer significant benefits.

In its role, art therapy is not merely a creative activity but can also serve as a therapeutic approach to resolving psychological issues. Furthermore, calligraphy contributes to emotional stability, stress management, and provides new insights or perspectives for individuals in addressing problems.

This statement aligns with the American Art Therapy Association, which notes that art therapy—in addition to serving as psychological therapy—can also help resolve conflicts, broaden perspectives, reduce problematic behaviors, and improve quality of life (Sari, 2021).

All informants reported experiencing the benefits of art therapy in managing stress. In addition to being a routine activity at the institution, they use calligraphy as a means of reducing stress. Some of the meanings of calligraphy mentioned by several informants include:

Calligraphy as a Means of Expression and Communication

According to Malchiodi, an art therapist and counselor who has written numerous books on art therapy, art therapy is a form of psychological therapy based on the idea that the creative process of producing art facilitates an individual's recovery and serves as a form of nonverbal communication regarding their feelings and thoughts (Saputra et al., 2018).

Sharing a similar view, Margaret Naumberg, one of the pioneering psychologists in art therapy, states that art therapy is a form of psychological therapy involving nonverbal exploration through images, which can bring about positive changes in individuals. It can be said that this therapy uses art as a medium for expressing feelings and thoughts (Fintania, 2022).

This view aligns with the experiences of members of the Calligraphy Institute. Based on interviews with five informants, several of them interpreted calligraphy as a means of expression and communication. For them, the significance of art extends beyond being a routine activity of the institute; it also serves as expressive therapy for psychological issues. Calligraphy is also an alternative outlet for their emotions.

As Informant A explained, when engaging in artistic activities, they can express all their feelings, emotions, and thoughts through a positive and creative medium. According to them, stressful situations sometimes involve emotions that are difficult to put into words, such as anxiety, sadness, and trauma. Additionally, individuals who feel overwhelmed and unable to resolve their problems may be experiencing this due to a lack of effective communication. Thus, art therapy in the form of calligraphy serves as a nonverbal means of communication for them, allowing them to freely express all their emotions and thoughts.

Informant B felt the same way, stating that when engaging in artistic activities, she could forget all the problems she was facing. They feel a sense of calm and satisfaction after being able to express their emotions. In fact, based on their experience with art therapy, they mentioned that they once experienced stress and released it by creating art for nearly an entire night. "When engaging in artistic activities, I can fully vent all my feelings and thoughts. Moreover, when my mind is focused on the artwork, I can forget all the problems I'm currently facing."

Furthermore, Informant D had a similar experience; for her, calligraphy serves as a form of therapy that facilitates communication by exploring thoughts, beliefs, perceptions, and experiences—particularly in the emotional realm.

The experiences described by several informants also align with research conducted by Andi Saputra, which found that the application of art therapy to several participants can reduce symptoms of depression. This occurs because the art therapy process provides participants with a space to express sadness and feelings through the medium of drawing—emotions that are difficult to articulate through

words. This ease of self-expression ultimately brings relief to individuals and, in turn, reduces depressive symptoms (Saputra et al., 2018).

In this context, for some members of the Calligraphy Institute, calligraphy art therapy serves as an expressive medium for channeling all forms of emotions and feelings through the drawings or paintings they create. Consequently, this helps them regulate their emotions effectively.

Calligraphy Offers Meditative and Relaxing Effects

Soukotta & P. Satiadarma (2018) argue that art contributes to maintaining mental health and fostering a positive mood in individuals. The art therapy process also serves as a relaxation session in itself, helping individuals manage anxiety and practice positive thinking amid the challenges they face.

In line with the statement above, Informant D noted that any physical movement focused on creative activities—such as forming calligraphic letters and the like—can influence psychological calm and provide a relaxing effect. Consequently, thoughts that were initially filled with worry, anxiety, and other negative emotions become more positively directed.

The role of calligraphy in promoting meditation and relaxation was also demonstrated in a study conducted by Hajra and Saleem (, 2019;), which showed that calligraphy activities performed by several participants induced a sense of relaxation in both body and mind, a feeling of calm, and freedom from stress.

Another study also explains that art therapy provides meditative and relaxing effects. Calligraphy involves structured rules and techniques, as well as repetitive movements that can have a calming impact similar to meditation and relaxation, thereby alleviating cognitive and emotional stress such as difficulty concentrating, trouble understanding lessons, and anxiety (Harahap, 2025).

These findings indicate that calligraphy plays a crucial role in maintaining emotional stability. Every artistic activity serves as a space for meditation; thus, on a subconscious level, participants' thoughts and feelings are directed toward creative activities that divert them from negative thoughts. Consequently, this helps to soothe and provide a sense of relaxation for both physical and psychological well-being.

Thus, in this study, the art of calligraphy is not merely an activity encompassing aesthetics and creativity but also involves the individual's emotional aspects. Every process carried out in the activities at this institution—such as forming calligraphic letters, drawing patterns, arranging designs, and mixing colors—has a positive influence on their cognition and emotions.

Calligraphy Can Enhance Self-Understanding

According to Martin, art therapy can help individuals get to know themselves and reconnect with their true selves. In its role as a form of psychological therapy, art therapy helps individuals explore and understand themselves. When engaging in artistic activities, they feel relieved and free because they can effectively regulate their emotions. This can help them understand themselves and reconnect with their true selves (Adi, 2022).

Informant D experienced this firsthand; they explained that in addition to providing a space for self-exploration and creativity, art can also be used to better understand oneself and find solutions to the problems they face. Through artistic activities, they were able to understand their emotions and thoughts well. As a result, they were also able to control themselves when facing a problem.

Satiadarma (2020), in his research, also demonstrated that one of the benefits of calligraphy art therapy is that it enables individuals to observe and perceive more clearly what is happening within themselves, leading them to ultimately gain new insights into their own selves, their relationship with the problems they face, and their lifestyle patterns.

Informant D's experience with art therapy indicates that engaging in calligraphy on a regular basis helps them understand more clearly what is happening within themselves—whether in terms of emotions, thoughts, or feelings. Thus, through self-exploration in artistic activities, they can gradually discover their true selves.

Calligraphy Creates a Sense of Personal Fulfillment

Martin states that personal satisfaction is derived from creativity and analysis within an artistic process. Thus, individuals can build self-confidence through tangible recognition. Art therapy not only serves as a solution to problems but also acts as a medium for enhancing an individual's self-confidence. This self-confidence then fosters an increase in the individual's self-esteem. Ultimately, individuals come to better appreciate and recognize the potential within themselves (Adi, 2022).

This view is also supported by research conducted by Kurniasih K. & Natalia (2021), which found that art-based activities help individuals—particularly adolescents—develop a greater sense of self-worth through the works they create. Consequently, the sense of satisfaction gained has a positive impact on aspects of personality and personal development.

Based on the research findings, the sense of satisfaction derived from artistic activities was described by Informant C. According to her, art therapy can boost self-confidence. The satisfaction gained after creating a work of art has a positive impact on personal development. When creating a piece—especially when that work is recognized by those around her—she experiences a unique sense of fulfillment within herself. She feels more able to value herself after realizing her own potential.

The statement made by Informant D serves as concrete evidence of calligraphy's contribution to enhancing an individual's sense of satisfaction. The satisfaction gained can foster increased self-esteem and personal development in individuals. Consequently, this will have a positive impact on an individual's psychological well-being and help minimize stress.

Calligraphy's Implications for Psychological Well-Being

Malchiodi, in his writing, states that art therapy is a flexible tool, as it can help a person develop a sense of life's meaning, broaden their horizons, manage emotions, process trauma, address problems, and foster well-being in daily life. Art therapy has a positive impact on emotional states, thoughts, and feelings. This, of course, significantly influences the development of positive behavior as well (Sholiha, 2022).

A similar finding was reported in a study conducted by Weny Nurrohmah, which noted that one of the benefits of art therapy is helping individuals express their emotions, reduce stress, come to terms with past issues, strengthen cognitive abilities, and recognize the joyful aspects of life (Utami et al., 2023).

Another study also revealed that engaging in artistic activities is a process that involves creative, cognitive, and affective functions. This means that when engaging in artistic activities, the interplay between the heart, brain, mind, and physical activity reflexively occurs simultaneously. Consequently, at that moment, a person's psychological state becomes organized to release all emotional expressions during recreational time. Concurrently, the affective aspect—which encompasses emotions—is stimulated, causing emotional stagnation to thaw and function normally again. Meanwhile, cognitive processes are automatically stimulated as part of the effort to express an individual's thoughts (Sholiha, 2022).

Based on the statement provided by Informant B, the art of calligraphy is known to have a positive influence on their psychological state. Calligraphy serves as a form of therapy for addressing psychological issues, such as stress, anxiety, emotional regulation, and other psychological problems. Consequently, this also leads to positive behavioral outcomes.

Based on Informant B's experience, it is evident that the art of calligraphy has proven capable of serving as a form of therapy to maintain an individual's psychological well-being. Artistic activities that simultaneously engage the brain, mind, and body stimulate positive psychological aspects through creative engagement, making the art of calligraphy an effective alternative for reducing stress.

Calligraphy Helps Enhance Spiritual Well-being

A study shows that calligraphy art therapy not only affects mental health but also spiritual well-being. Calligraphy can serve as an effective medium for addressing

psychological issues, as through this activity, individuals can express their emotions. Through calligraphic works, individuals are not only engaged in creative activities but are also encouraged to “ ”—remembering Allah—thereby opening their spiritual souls (Fatmawati et al., 2024)

The significance of calligraphy in a spiritual context was conveyed by Informant E, who noted that calligraphy serves not only as a form of therapy for an individual's psychological issues. There is something more essential that she finds exclusively in calligraphy. Calligraphy is a creative activity rooted in Arabic script, including verses from the Qur'an. Thus, within the Islamic context, calligraphy is a form of artistic and spiritual expression that upholds religious principles and aesthetic values.

Based on her experience, she revealed that when her fingers are focused on tracing the letters of verses from the Qur'an, she feels a sense of calm and freedom in her mind, because in the art of calligraphy, in addition to sharpening one's imagination and creativity, one simultaneously reads and reflects on the Qur'anic verses being written.

Thus, it can be concluded that one of the benefits of the art of calligraphy is that participants are not only engaged in a creative activity but also remember Allah, thereby opening their spiritual souls. Artistic activities provide individuals with a space to express their emotions in a positive way while guiding them to constantly remember Allah. Therefore, in this study, the art of calligraphy serves as one of the pathways to enhancing their spiritual aspects.

Conclusion

There are three stressors experienced by members of the Calligraphy Institute: psychological stressors such as negative thinking and frustration; biological stressors such as feeling that one's body shape is less than ideal; and social stressors such as social conflicts and a heavy workload. Meanwhile, the symptoms experienced include both psychological and biological symptoms. Psychological symptoms include concentration difficulties and a decline in focus. Biological symptoms include headaches, eating disorders, and digestive problems. Some of the meanings of calligraphy art mentioned by several informants are: calligraphy as a means of expression and communication; providing meditative and relaxing effects; enhancing self-understanding; creating a sense of personal satisfaction; contributing to psychological well-being; and helping to enhance spiritual aspects..

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