

**The Influence of Prayer, Al-Quran Recitation, Physical Exercise, and Holidays on Positive Thinking:
Exploring Stress Coping Strategies for Mental Well-Being**

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Abstract: This research delves into how prayer practices and recitation of Al Quran, along with activity and holidays, contribute to nurturing perspectives as ways to deal with stress effectively in the workplace setting where job-related stress can significantly impact both personal well-being and productivity within organizations. It is crucial to comprehend and encourage beneficial coping mechanisms in such scenarios. The study investigates the correlation between these coping strategies and positive thinking, recognized for their role in bolstering mental well-being and stress handling. A quantitative cross-sectional approach was employed for this study. Participants filled out questionnaires to measure how often and how much prayer practices like reciting the Al Quran, engaging in exercise, and holidays influenced their outlook on life. Researchers used linear regression analysis to determine how important each activity was in boosting thinking. The results showed that prayer sessions, physical activity, and spending time with family during holidays positively promoted positivity in individuals' minds; among these activities, holidays seemed to have an effect. However, reciting the Al Quran did not have an impact, based on the analysis of this study. The findings emphasize how adding rituals and hobbies to our routines can boost mental health and help us manage stress better in the long run. This research provides tips for people looking to manage stress and maintain a positive mindset.

Keywords: *Job Stress, Positive Thinking, Coping Strategies, Mental Well-being, Stress Management*

1. Introduction

In today's workplace, more people recognize job stress as a problem. These stresses occur when work demands exceed a person's capabilities or ability to manage them, leading to emotional responses. This stress can enormously affect one's professional and personal life. Stress can present in different forms, including feelings of nervousness and burnout, issues with focus and attention, headaches, and muscle tension.

If job stress is poorly handled, it results in high absenteeism rates, low productivity, and high workplace accidents. It also raises the risks of developing a chronic health condition, including heart disease, diabetes, and a deep feeling of depression. Thus, it becomes vital to identify the symptoms of job stress and learn how to prevent or cope with it. Job stress, defined as a negative reaction to elevated job demands or lack of enough resources, does not only pertain to the individual level; it has a ripple effect on individuals, organizations, and the larger society. This common problem mostly affects the employee, though the impact is broader, leaving ripples that affect different life facets.

Some of the resulting signs, which are physical, include headaches, muscle tension, digestive problems, and compromised immunity. Some studies suggested that chronic work stress is associated with cardiovascular disease, diabetes, sick cancer, etc. (Steptoe & Siegrist, 2002). Daily job stress includes constant pressure and emotional stress, which affects mental health. Another study by (Akerstedt et al., 2004) has revealed that job stress leads to anxiety, depressed mood, and burnout. Such mental disorders can, in turn, worsen the existing physical ailments, which can culminate in a cycle of struggles.

This means that when one is stressed, one will not be able to concentrate, make good decisions, and perform tasks effectively. As supported by (Kelloway & Wright, 1995), this kind of decline in productivity is likely to hurt the worker and the organization. This is so because, with job stress, individual employees experience a negative impact, reducing organizational productivity. Research by Wright and Tetrick (1991) has established that stressed-out employees will likely lead to low organizational production. This means that when employees are chronically stressed at work, they are likely to be more absenteeism due to health issues or even look for a new

job. They highlighted that absence, and turnover rates may lead to severe monetary losses to the organizations by consuming manpower and training costs and eradicating employee morale.

Long-term job stress results in low morale and organizational climate, lack of cooperation, and high staff conflict. As Westman and Haynes (1991) pointed out, this negativity can increase stress levels and thus contribute to a vicious cycle that is often hard to control. Thus, increased cases of job stress mean that society incurs great costs in terms of healthcare expenditure and loss of productivity. New health problems due to stress also result in increased use of healthcare facilities, leading to pressure on facilities. In addition, when people are unable to work to the best of their potential because of job stress, total output in the economy reduces, and this might stunt growth and development.

Given these realities, the search for ways to reduce stress has become even more crucial. This has led to recognizing positive thinking as one of the most effective ways of helping individuals cope with life challenges and enhancing their mental health. Optimism, or having a positive attitude to events in life, reinforcing aspects of solutions rather than dwelling on problems, has boosted psychological well-being and quality of life. Positive thinking is most applicable when people try to make sense of modern-day stressors, which could be at different levels, such as individual, organizational, or general stress. Besides positive thinking, other strategies like prayer, reciting Al-Quran, exercise, and family holidays have also been investigated in terms of self-assertiveness and mental health.

Prayer has been assumed to be a religious activity that yields comfort, tranquillity, and a feeling of association with the divine power, which gives hope for a positive mind. Likewise, in many Muslim societies, reciting the Al-Quran is considered one of the most effective ways to manage stress and ease the mind, buttressing faith, positivity, and sound mental health. Exercise, fundamental to boosting physical health, is equally effective in improving mental 'strength' and optimism. Exercise directly enhances the manufacture of body chemicals that improve moods, thus making it handy to enhance positive mental status when stressed. Finally, general outings, which include family holidays or family trips, provide relaxation, recreation, togetherness, positivity, and, thus, an emotional boost.

This research focuses on these coping mechanisms: prayer, recitation of Al-Quran, exercises, and holidays, as well as how they impact the generation of positive thoughts. Focusing on shifts in an individual's way of thinking due to these practices, this study seeks to contribute towards a better understanding of how various coping strategies can improve one's mental health and attitude to life. The implications of this research will help to increase the knowledge about stress and positive psychology to a significant extent and provide practical recommendations for people who have problems with stress and want to change their attitude to life and possibilities to be content.

Research Objectives

The main objective of this research is to explore the impact of various coping strategies (prayer, Al-Quran recitation, physical exercise, and holidays) on fostering positive thinking. Specifically, the study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- To examine the effect of prayer on positive thinking.
- To analyze the relationship between Al-Quran recitation and positive thinking.
- To assess the influence of physical exercise on positive thinking.
- To determine the impact of holidays on positive thinking.
- These objectives will help guide the research in understanding how coping mechanisms influence and promote positive thinking, providing insights into effective stress management strategies.

Research Questions

- What is the relationship between prayer and positive thinking as a coping strategy for managing stress?
- How does Al-Quran recitation impact the development of positive thinking in individuals experiencing stress?
- What is the effect of physical exercise on promoting positive thinking in response to stress?
- How do holidays influence positive thinking for stress relief?

2. Literature Review

Positive thinking

Positive thinking is considered a coping strategy for dealing with stress. Developing realistic and health-improving positive thinking is believed to help individuals overcome stress and improve their overall well-being (Bessaraba et al., 2022). Coping with stress involves detecting, appraising, and responding to stressful encounters, and positive thinking is seen as one of the ways individuals vary in their coping responses (Zimmer et al., 2023). Stress arises when individuals interpret a situation as taxing their available resources, and coping strategies can be categorized as emotion-focused or problem-focused (Knapp & Sweeny, 2022). Effective stress interventions often include cognitive-behavioral elements and can be directed toward the individual or the organization (Reif et al., 2021). In the context of hypertension, positive thinking training has been found to significantly reduce stress levels in individuals with hypertension (Aulia & Widyana, 2022). Overall, positive thinking is seen as a valuable coping strategy for managing stress and improving well-being.

Prayer

Prayer is a coping strategy commonly used to deal with academic stress. Several studies have explored the relationship between prayer and stress in different populations. For example, a survey conducted with Chilean students found that prayer was negatively related to stress and positively predicted subjective well-being, especially when students felt a close bond with God (Sari et al., 2023). Another study focused on nurses and found that religious coping, including prayer, was commonly used to reduce work-related stress (Wnuk et al., 2023). Additionally, a scale called the Using Private Prayer for Coping (UPPC) was developed to assess the use of private prayer for coping with crisis or distress, and it showed satisfactory psychometric properties (Nopa et al., 2023). Overall, prayer appears to be a valuable coping strategy for individuals facing various types of stress, including academic stress. Based on the rationale, individuals who frequently engage in prayer may foster a mindset of optimism, hope, and resilience, leading to increased positive thinking. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Prayer has a significant positive effect on positive thinking.

Al-Quran Recitation

Reciting the Qur'an is an effective coping strategy for managing stress (Ridzuan et al., 2020; Darwati, 2022; Hasan et al., 2021; Pratiwinata & Tohdeng, 2023). Research by Mahmoud & Saleh (2023) shows that the Al-Quran guides how to deal with stress and offers various coping mechanisms. It emphasizes the importance of sincerity, patience, remembrance of Allah, repentance, prayer, positive thinking, and optimism. Reciting the Al-Quran helps individuals focus and find solace in spirituality. It has been shown to reduce academic stress among students. Memorizing the Al-Quran is also associated with lower levels of psychological stress. The Al-Quran significantly alleviates stress and promotes mental well-being, making it a valuable resource for individuals seeking effective coping strategies. Based on the above discussion, reciting the Al-Quran may help individuals develop a more positive outlook by reinforcing messages of patience, faith, and hope. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H2: Al-Quran recitation has a significant positive influence on positive thinking.

Physical Exercise

A cross-sectional study by Pyun et al. (2022) has shown that physical exercise can help manage stress (Zhou et al., 2022). Stress management and enhancement of mental health by exercising physically have also been discovered (Slukhenska, 2018; Popov et al., 2021). Regular physical activity can decrease perceived stress levels and enhance the ability to cope with stress (Ferlazzo et al., 2020). It also helps people to have a better mood, increased self-esteem, and a healthy body. Some hormonal effects include adrenaline, noradrenaline, and cortisol, which are known to be affected by physical activity. They play a role in regulating the body, enabling it to cope with stress and recover from its effects. Thus, exercising can help to reduce stress and is a true medicine for the body and mind. Based on the above discussion, regular physical exercise is associated with mental clarity and emotional well-being, which can foster more positive thinking. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H3: Physical exercise significantly contributes to positive thinking.

Tour holiday family trip

Coping with stress during a family holiday trip can involve various strategies and approaches. Recognizing that stress arises when individuals perceive a situation as taxing their available resources (Knapp & Sweeny, 2022). Coping strategies can be problem-focused, emotion-focused, or relationship-focused (Zimmer et al., 2023). Problem-focused coping directly addresses and solves the issues or challenges during the trip. Emotion-focused coping focuses on managing and regulating one's emotions in response to stressful situations. Relationship-focused coping involves managing and preserving relationships while dealing with stress (DeLongis & Newth, 2001). Additionally, coping flexibility, which refers to the ability to adapt one's coping strategies based on the demands of the situation, is crucial for effective coping (Bartram & Gardner, 2008). It is also essential to consider individual differences in coping responses and the potential for resilience and growth following stressful events (Krohne, 1986). Based on the above discussion, relaxing family vacations or holiday trips can reduce stress and promote a positive mindset, providing opportunities for recreation, bonding, and emotional rejuvenation. Therefore, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H4: Family holidays or trips have a significant positive impact on positive thinking.

3. Research Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative cross-sectional design to investigate the relationship between individual coping strategies (prayer, Qur'an recitation, physical exercise, positive thinking, and family holiday trips) and stress reduction. The target population for this study includes individuals who use various coping strategies to manage stress. A sample size of approximately 150-200 participants was selected to ensure the representativeness and statistical power of the findings. A stratified random sampling method was employed to ensure a diverse sample representing different age groups, professions, and religious affiliations. The study used self-administered structured questionnaires to collect data from participants. The questionnaires were distributed via online survey platforms. The anonymity and confidentiality of participants' information were strictly maintained. The data were analyzed using SPSS. Multiple Linear Regressions were conducted to assess the relative contribution of each coping strategy to positive thinking.

4. Data Analysis

Demographic Analysis

Table 1: Demographic Analysis provides a snapshot of the respondent profile.

Indicator	Item	Proportion
Gender	Male	25.2%
	Female	74.8%
Age	Up to 25 years	11.3%
	26 to 35 years	43.5%
	36 to 45 years	17.4%
	46 to 55 years	25.2%
	Above 55 years	2.6%
Marital Status	Single	23.5%
	Married	73.9%
	Divorced	0.8%
	Widowed	1.8%
Educational Qualification	Undergraduate	2.0%
	Professional certificate	5.0%
	Diploma	13.9%
	Bachelor's degree	53.0%
	Masters/PhD degree	26.1%
Job Experience	< 5 years	22.6%
	5 to 10 years	33.0%
	11 to 15 years	16.5%
	16 to 20 years	5.3%

	>20 years	22.6%
Monthly Income	<RM5,000	51.3%
	RM5,001 to RM10,000	33.9%
	RM10,001 to RM15,000	13.0%
	RM15,001 to RM20,000	1.0%
	>RM20,000	0.8%

The sample is predominantly female, constituting 74.8% of the respondents, while males account for 25.2%. Most respondents fall within the age group of 26 to 35 years (43.5%), followed by 36 to 45 years (17.4%). A relatively smaller proportion belongs to the younger age group (up to 25 years) at 11.3%, while a minimal percentage is above 55 years (2.6%). Most respondents are married (73.9%), followed by single (23.5%). Divorced and widowed individuals represent a small proportion of the sample. The sample is highly educated, with a majority holding a bachelor's degree (53.0%). Masters/PhD degrees account for 26.1%, while diploma holders constitute 13.9%. A small percentage holds professional certificates or undergraduate degrees. Most respondents have job experience ranging from 5 to 10 years (33.0%), followed by those with less than five years (22.6%). A significant proportion also has more than ten years of experience. Most respondents have a monthly income below RM5,000 (51.3%), followed by the RM5,001 to RM10,000 income bracket (33.9%). The higher-income group represents the smallest proportion of the sample.

The demographic profile of the respondents provides valuable context for understanding the research findings. The predominance of females in the sample suggests that the results may be more representative of women's perspectives and experiences. The relatively young age of most respondents implies that the findings might be more applicable to younger working professionals. The high educational attainment of the sample indicates a higher level of awareness and engagement in various aspects of life, which could influence their responses to the study's questions. The income distribution suggests that a significant portion of the respondents belong to the middle-income group, which might affect their consumption patterns and lifestyle choices.

Through the demographic analysis of the respondents, it is possible to gain a broader understanding of the outcomes of the study. This means that the study results may offer a more feminine perspective, as most of the sample comprises females. The fact that most respondents were relatively young indicates that the results might be more relevant to young employees. Therefore, the high educational level of the sample means that the people have a better understanding of different aspects of life, which might affect their answers to the questions posed in the study. This pattern implies that most of the respondents can be considered middle-income earners, which is likely to influence consumption patterns and lifestyle choices.

Multiple Regression Analysis

The results of the multiple regression analysis are presented to examine the relationships between the dependent variable (Positive Thinking) and the independent variables (Holiday, Prayer, Physical Exercise, and Al-Quran recitation). Multiple regression analysis was conducted to determine how these variables predict positive thinking and assess each predictor's unique contribution while accounting for others' influence.

The following sections will provide detailed results on the model's overall fit, the statistical significance of each predictor, and their respective impacts on positive thinking. The discussion will interpret these findings in light of existing research and provide insights into their practical and theoretical implications. The limitations and potential areas for future research will also be considered.

Table 2: Analysis of Variance ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	60.627	4	15.157	16.546	.000 ^b
	Residual	100.764	110	.916		
	Total	161.391	114			

a. Dependent Variable: Positive

b. Predictors: (Constant), holiday, prayer, pe, alquran

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) indicates that the regression model is statistically significant, with an F-value of 16.546 and a p-value of 0.000. It suggests that the independent variables (holiday, prayer, PE, and Al-Quran) collectively explain a significant portion of the variance in positive thinking.

Table 3: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.018	.355		.050	.960
	prayer	.301	.120	.249	2.502	.014
	alquran	.071	.103	.069	.687	.493
	pe	.243	.097	.225	2.511	.014
	holiday	.304	.095	.277	3.206	.002

a. Dependent Variable: Positive

The coefficients table provides detailed insights into the individual contribution of each predictor. The unstandardized coefficient for prayer is 0.301, with a p-value of 0.014, indicating that prayer significantly contributes to higher levels of positive thinking. The unstandardized coefficient for AlQuran is 0.071, with a p-value of 0.493, showing that this predictor is not statistically significant in explaining positive thinking. The coefficient for pe is 0.243, with a p-value of 0.014, suggesting a significant positive relationship between pe and positive thinking. The coefficient for holidays is 0.304, with a p-value of 0.002, indicating that holidays significantly promote positive thinking among individuals.

Table 4: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.613 ^a	.376	.353	.95710

a. Predictors: (Constant), holiday, prayer, pe, alquran

The total Sum of Squares is 161.391, with the regression model explaining 60.627 and the residual sum being 100.764. This demonstrates that the set of predictors included in the model explains a considerable portion of the variability in positive thinking.

Discussion

The multiple regression analysis conducted in this study aimed to examine the combined and individual effects of four independent variables: holiday, prayer, PE (physical exercise), and Al-Quran, on the dependent variable, positive thinking. The goal was to determine which factors significantly influence positive thinking and to quantify their contributions to this psychological construct. The discussion below interprets the statistical results, considers the implications of the findings, and reflects on their broader context considering existing research.

The ANOVA table indicated that the overall regression model was statistically significant ($F = 16.546, p = 0.000$), meaning that the independent variables collectively explain a significant portion of the variance in positive thinking. It is an important finding because it supports the hypothesis that multiple aspects of an individual's life, including holiday, prayer, physical exercise (PE), and engagement with Al-Quran recitation, are related to their capacity for positive thinking. The total variance explained by the model, as seen in the sum of squares, shows that 60.627 units of variance are attributable to the regression model. In comparison, 100.764 units remain unexplained, corresponding to the residual. Although the model accounts for a significant portion of the variance, there is still a substantial amount of unexplained variance. It suggests that other factors not included in this analysis may also play an important role in influencing positive thinking, and these should be explored in future research.

The coefficients table provides crucial insights into the contribution of each predictor to the overall model. The unstandardized coefficients (B) show how much positive thinking is expected to change with a one-unit change in each predictor while holding the others constant. The coefficient for prayer was 0.301 with a p-value of 0.014,

indicating that this predictor had a statistically significant positive impact on positive thinking. This finding aligns with the broader literature, which often points to the role of spiritual practices in enhancing well-being and promoting a positive outlook on life. Prayer is likely associated with mental clarity, a sense of purpose, and emotional regulation, all of which contribute to positive thinking. The coefficient for Al-Quran was 0.071, and the p-value of 0.493 indicates that this predictor did not significantly contribute to positive thinking. This non-significant result suggests that, within this sample, engagement with religious texts did not have a measurable impact on positive thinking. The influence of Al-Quran on positive thinking might depend on factors such as the depth of engagement or personal interpretation.

Further research might explore moderating variables, such as religious commitment or frequency of study, to better understand this relationship. The coefficient for PE was 0.243 with a p-value of 0.014, indicating a significant positive relationship between physical activity and positive thinking. This result is consistent with a wealth of research demonstrating the mental health benefits of regular physical activity, including enhanced mood, reduced stress, and improved cognitive functioning. Physical activity likely boosts endorphin levels, contributes to overall well-being, and fosters a sense of accomplishment, all promoting positive thinking. The coefficient for a holiday was 0.304, and the p-value of 0.002 indicates a strong, statistically significant impact on positive thinking. Time spent on holiday or leisure activities has long been associated with mental rejuvenation, relaxation, and a break from the stresses of daily life. The significant positive effect found in this study reinforces the notion that holidays allow individuals to reset mentally, thus fostering a more positive outlook.

The findings from this multiple regression analysis have several practical implications, particularly for mental health practitioners, educators, and policymakers aiming to promote positive thinking and overall well-being. The significant contributions of prayer, PE, and holidays to positive thinking suggest that interventions designed to enhance individuals' spiritual, physical, and leisure experiences could effectively improve their mental health. For those who comprehend the benefits of spirituality, it is possible to help them set a routine of prayer or meditation, as a combination of these two can be strength-building. Spiritual practices may complement what is taught in mental health courses or may be presented as other materials that a learner may find helpful in coping with stress or building up a positive outlook. Both conceptual and empirical evidence of different forms of exercise programs and initiatives for introducing exercise in society can be beneficial in boosting the physical and psychological condition. Corporate programs and institutions such as schools might focus on enforcing more chances for exercise to enhance an individual's mood and, subsequently, their cognition to spread positive thinking. Since holidays positively impact one's thinking, the importance of relaxation can be underlined. Reminding people to take time off work by going on vacation or engaging in properly prescribed leisure activities is necessary within society and for the individual. Such measures, which are better working conditions, adequate paid time off, and the encouragement of employers to take such time off, are crucial to influencing a positive workforce outlook.

5. Conclusion, Limitations and Future Research

While the model provides valuable insights into the predictors of positive thinking, several limitations should be noted. First, the model's relatively modest portion of variance suggests that other unmeasured variables may significantly influence positive thinking. Factors such as personality traits, social support, or life stressors might also play crucial roles in shaping an individual's mindset and could be included in future research. Additionally, the non-significant finding for Al-Quran recitation raises questions about the contextual and individual factors that moderate the relationship between engagement with religious texts and positive thinking. Future research could investigate whether this relationship is stronger in more religiously observant populations or individuals who interpret religious teachings in specific ways. Finally, the cross-sectional nature of the data limits the ability to draw causal inferences. While the analysis suggests associations between the predictors and positive thinking, longitudinal studies are needed to confirm these relationships and explore potential causal pathways.

Conclusion

The multiple regression analysis revealed that prayer, pe, and holidays significantly predictors positive thinking, while Al-Quran recitation did not significantly contribute to this context. The findings underscore the importance of integrating physical, spiritual, and leisure activities to enhance positive thinking and mental well-

being. Individuals and communities can cultivate more positive mindsets by fostering environments that promote regular physical activity, provide opportunities for spiritual reflection, and encourage work-life balance. Future research should continue exploring the complex interactions between various predictors and positive thinking to provide a more comprehensive understanding of what drives this important psychological construct.

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