

# TREATING PEOPLE WITH MENTAL DISORDER: Views from Islamic and Psychology and Sociology

## Abstrak

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*Gangguan kesehatan mental adalah kondisi dimana individu tidak mampu mengenali serta memuaskan kebutuhan-kebutuhannya. Gangguan kesehatan mental lazim terjadi di masyarakat dan berdampak besar pada individu dan komunitas. Artikel ini memberikan gambaran tentang berbagai gangguan kesehatan mental di lingkungan masyarakat. Riset ini merupakan review sistematis atas buku maupun jurnal elektronik yang diterbitkan hingga 2022 mengenai isu terkait, hasilnya lalu dianalisa menggunakan perpektif psikologi dan sosiologi Islam. Artikel ini menunjukkan bahwa terdapat kekeliruan dalam menangani penderita gangguan kesehatan mental di Indonesia. Penderita gangguan mental dianggap berbahaya sehingga banyak masyarakat menghindari bahkan mengisolasi para penderita. Artikel ini menjelaskan bagaimana menangani mispersepsi masyarakat ini lewat bantuan ilmu psikologi dan sosiologi Islam.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Gangguan Kesehatan Mental, Psikologi, Sosiologi Agama.*

### **Abstract**

*Mental health disorders are conditions where individuals are unable to recognise and satisfy their needs. Mental health disorders are prevalent in society and have a major impact on individuals and communities. This article provides an overview of various mental health disorders in the community. It is a systematic review of books and e-journals published up to 2022 on related issues, the results of which are then analysed using the perspectives of Islamic psychology and sociology. This article shows that there is a misconception about how people with mental health disorders are treated in Indonesia. People with mental illness are perceived as dangerous, resulting in the avoidance and even isolation of sufferers. This article explains how to address this misperception through the help of Islamic psychology and sociology.*

**Keywords:** *Mental Health Disorders, Psychology, Islamic Sociology.*

### **The Dilemma of People with Mental Health Disorders**

Mental health disorders are conditions in which a person cannot live normally in his environment. Sufferers usually experience difficulty in carrying out daily activities due to distortion of thoughts. As a result, sufferers are very prone to showing maladaptive behaviour that is difficult for society to accept. Negative stigma towards mental health disorders is widespread, including in Indonesia. Stigma can take many forms, including social or public stigma (negative traits, emotions, and behaviours toward others with mental illness), self-stigma (internalized negative ideas about feelings about self, possible self-limiting or handicapped behaviours), and structural stigma (including political, procedural, and organizational systems that reduce rights and opportunities for individuals with mental illness).<sup>1</sup>

The Indonesian people misunderstand mental disorders. The confusion in responding to mental health problems has led to several misunderstandings like that mental disorders cannot be cured, that people with such problems are disgrace for their family and society, and that a particular demon causes such illness. These misconceptions leave fear on the society towards people with mental disorders. They are neglected and even isolated for they have been regarded as dangerous to the surrounding community. To avoid the adverse effects that may occur on sufferers, it is necessary to provide sufficient information to public to correct this ignorance.

Soebiantoro conducted research on efforts to eliminate bad stigma related to people with mental health disorders. Statistically, this study has shown that social stigma against people with mental disorders can be significantly reduced by mainstreaming good literacy on the issue being discussed. Besides, a government-initiated program

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<sup>1</sup> Keith S. Dobson and Heather Stuart, "*The Stigma of Mental Illness*". (London: Oxford University Press, 2021), p. 2.

to free people with mental disorders from being trapped in a confinement must be supported.<sup>2</sup> Ayuningtyas, Misnaniarti, and Rahyani also examined mental health cases in Indonesia and conclude that intervention from the local and national authorities is required to change stigma against people with mental disorders. In this regard, prevention programs are more effective. They recommended the Government to carry out comprehensive management efforts, including providing special services for those who are mentally unhealthy.<sup>3</sup> In addition, Handayani, Ayubi and Anshari conducted research related to mental health literacy and found that respondents with high mental health literacy are open-minded to accessing services and facilities provided by the government and the society. In the other word, a mental health literacy can affect a person's behaviour in seeking for formal help from practitioners, such as psychologists and psychiatrists.<sup>4</sup> This article aims to further discuss the concept of mental health disorders through the lens of Islamic psychology and sociology in order to better understand how people with them should be treated.

### **The Concept of Mental Health**

According to the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorder (DSM), a mental disorder is caused by a failure of the mental function adaptation reaction mechanism to external stimuli and tension, resulting in functional disturbances or

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<sup>2</sup> Jonathan Soebiantoro, "Pengaruh Edukasi Kesehatan Mental Intensif terhadap Stigma pada Pengguna Layanan Kesehatan Mental", *Insan: Jurnal Psikologi dan Kesehatan Mental*. vol. 2. no. 1 (2017), pp. 1-14.

<sup>3</sup> Dumilah Ayuningtyas, Misnaniarti, and Marisa Rahyani, "Analisis Situasi Kesehatan Mental pada Masyarakat di Indonesia dan Strategi Penanggulangannya". *Jurnal Ilmu Kesehatan Masyarakat*, vol. 9. no. 1. (2018), pp. 1-10.

<sup>4</sup> Trisni Handayani, Dian Ayubi, and Dian Anshari. "Literasi Kesehatan Mental Orang Dewasa dan Penggunaan Pelayanan Kesehatan Mental". *Perilaku dan Promosi Kesehatan: Indonesian Journal of Health Promotion and Behavior*. vol. 2, no. 1. (2020). pp. 9-17.

structural disorders in the organs and mental.<sup>5</sup> The Basic Health Research (Riskesdas) in 2018 conducted by the Indonesian Ministry of Health (Kemenkes) shows that more than 19 million people aged over 15 year experience mental emotional disorders, and more than 12 million people aged over 15 experience depression. Further data from the same ministry show that around 1,800 people suicided per year (5 persons every day), and 47.7% of suicide victims are aged 10-39 years: teenagers and those who are still productive.<sup>6</sup>

Wilopo (2021), a Professor at Gadjah Mada University, examined discriminations related to sufferers of mental health disorders. One form of negative stigma circulating in Indonesian society is when someone goes to a psychologist, psychiatrist, or mental hospital, they are labelled as "crazy". Apart from that, many still associate mental disorders with mystical things, such as demonic possession and other traditional beliefs. In fact, people who declare their mental problems are often seen as merely persons looking for attention. In a more close-minded family, the things are getting worse since they often do the shackling by putting someone who is mentally ill in a particular room while his legs are shackled using a wooden rod so that he or she cannot move. It is commonly thought that this shackling could keep both sufferer of mental illness and the community safe. In fact, there are many good and wiser services that can be given to sufferers. But many families or communities do not have enough resource to access them.<sup>7</sup>

In sociology, social exclusion is done by removing or excluding individuals or communities from the prevailing system. Exclusion and marginalization often occur

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<sup>5</sup> Paisol Burlian, "*Patologi Sosial*". (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2016). p. 68.

<sup>6</sup> Widyawati, "Kemenkes Beberkan Permasalahan Kesehatan Jiwa di Indonesia", (Kemenkes RI, 07 Oktober 2021) URL: <https://sehatnegeriku.kemkes.go.id/baca/rilis-media/20211007/1338675/kemenkes-beberkan-masalah-permasalahan-kesehatan-jiwa-di-indonesia/>.

<sup>7</sup> Siswanto Agus Wilopo, "*Pemikiran Guru Besar Universitas Gadjah Mada: Menuju Indonesia Maju 2045*". (Yogyakarta: UGM Press, 2021). p. 40.

in people who are considered “different”, including those with mental health disorders (in Bahasa Indonesia, they are called ODGJ, *orang dengan gangguan jiwa*).<sup>8</sup> It is doubted whether people with mental health disorders will harm the society, as long as they are given proper services and treatment. Moreover, many people with mental health disorders are still able to carry out their social functions properly. People with mental health problems are categorized into 3 groups: those with acute mental health problems, such as a depression following a loss or some other stressful event, those who have acute mental health problems with chronic conditions although, and those with serious, chronic mental disease that involve significant functional disability.<sup>9</sup> Technically, two identifications are introduced: (1) People with Mental Problems (ODMK) are people who have physical, mental, social problems, growth and development, and/or quality of life so that they are at risk of experiencing mental disorders. (2) People with Mental Disorders (ODGJ) are those who experience disturbances in thoughts, behaviours, and feelings that can cause troubles in carrying out their functions as human beings.<sup>10</sup>

There are many classifications of mental health disorder diagnoses found in Indonesia, for instance: Depression, Anxiety, Bipolar, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD), People with Mental Disorders (ODGJ) or schizophrenia, and so on.<sup>11</sup> In Indonesia, a labelling as "crazy people" to those with mental disorders is very common. This is certainly not a humane thing to do. Apart from being labelled, sufferers are also shunned and exiled. ODGJ often

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<sup>8</sup> William, W. Eaton, and Daniele Fallin, "*Public Mental Health*". (The United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2019). p. 60.

<sup>9</sup> Teresa L. Scheid and Tony N. Brown, "*A Handbook for The Study of Mental Health: Social Contexts, Theories, and System*". (The United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press. 2010), P. 3.

<sup>10</sup> Undang-undang Nomor 18 Tahun 2014 tentang Kesehatan Jiwa. Jakarta. Republik Indonesia.

<sup>11</sup> Kennedy Sihotang and Sahala Martua Solin. "*Rahasia Kematian: Suatu Tinjauan Tentang Makna Kematian Ilahi*". (Bandung: Media Sains Indonesia, 2022), p.171.

receive inhumane treatment such as hurting, violence, and even sexually demeaning. This is caused by a lack of literacy and knowledge about mental health disorders.

### **Impacts of Mental Health Disorders and How to Deal with them**

Psychological impacts on individuals with mental health disorders can vary depending on the specific disorder and its severity. However, some common psychological impacts experienced by individuals with mental health disorders include:

1. *Emotional Distress*: Mental health disorders often lead to intense emotional distress, such as prolonged periods of sadness, anxiety, fear, or irritability. These emotions can be overwhelming and interfere with daily functioning.
2. *Social Isolation*: Many individuals with mental health disorders may experience social isolation or withdrawal. They may struggle with maintaining relationships or participating in social activities due to feelings of stigma, shame, or a lack of energy or interest.
3. *Low Self-Esteem*: Mental health disorders can negatively impact self-esteem and self-worth. Individuals may develop negative self-perceptions, feelings of inadequacy, or a distorted self-image, leading to a diminished sense of confidence and self-belief.
4. *Cognitive Difficulties*: Mental health disorders can affect cognitive functions such as concentration, memory, decision-making, and problem-solving abilities. This can hinder academic or work performance and contribute to feelings of frustration and incompetence.
5. *Disrupted Sleep Patterns*: Many mental health disorders are associated with sleep disturbances, including insomnia or excessive sleepiness. Sleep disruptions can further contribute to fatigue, reduced cognitive function, and emotional instability.

6. *Impaired Functioning*: Mental health disorders often interfere with daily functioning, making it challenging for individuals to fulfil their responsibilities at work, school, or home. Tasks such as maintaining personal hygiene, managing finances, or organizing daily activities may become overwhelming or neglected.
7. *Increased Risk of Substance Abuse*: Some individuals with mental health disorders turn to substance abuse as a way to cope with their symptoms or alleviate emotional pain. This can exacerbate the mental health condition and lead to additional physical and psychological complications.
8. *Suicidal Thoughts or Behaviors*: In severe cases, mental health disorders can increase the risk of suicidal ideation or suicide attempts. Feelings of hopelessness, despair, and a perceived lack of support can contribute to these distressing thoughts.

It's important to note that each individual's experience with mental health disorders is unique, and the psychological impacts can vary significantly. Seeking professional help and support from mental health professionals, as well as implementing appropriate treatment strategies, can greatly improve the psychological well-being of individuals with mental health disorders.<sup>12</sup> Mental health emergencies can be extremely challenging and require urgent attention from a psychological perspective. Here are some key considerations:

1. *Crisis Intervention*: Mental health emergencies often involve acute distress, severe agitation, or potential harm to oneself or others. Crisis intervention techniques aim to de-escalate the situation, provide immediate support, and ensure the safety of the individual. Techniques like active listening, empathy, and reassurance are crucial during these critical moments.

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<sup>12</sup> William, W. Eaton, and Daniele Fallin, "*Public Mental Health*". p. 141.



2. *Risk Assessment*: Assessing the level of risk is essential in a mental health emergency. Mental health professionals evaluate the individual's suicidal or homicidal ideation, the presence of a safety plan, access to lethal means, and overall risk factors. This assessment guides the appropriate interventions and level of care required, including hospitalization if necessary.
3. *Emotional Regulation*: Individuals in a mental health crisis may be overwhelmed by intense emotions and struggle to regulate them effectively. Psychological interventions focus on helping individuals identify and manage their emotions through techniques such as grounding exercises, deep breathing, mindfulness, and coping strategies. These techniques aim to promote emotional stability and reduce distress.
4. *Psychiatric Evaluation*: Mental health emergencies often warrant a comprehensive psychiatric evaluation to assess the individual's mental state, potential psychiatric diagnoses, and the need for immediate intervention. This evaluation helps to determine the appropriate treatment plan and supports ongoing care.
5. *Collaborative Care*: Mental health emergencies often involve collaboration between mental health professionals, emergency medical services, and other healthcare providers. Effective communication and coordination among the involved parties are crucial to ensure a comprehensive and seamless approach to care.
6. *Post-Crisis Support*: Following a mental health emergency, individuals may require ongoing support to aid their recovery. This may include referrals to outpatient mental health services, therapy, medication management, or community resources. Post-crisis support aims to help individuals rebuild their coping mechanisms, enhance resilience, and prevent future crises.
7. *Trauma-Informed Care*: Mental health emergencies can be traumatic experiences for individuals and may exacerbate existing trauma. Adopting a trauma-informed approach involves creating a safe and supportive

environment, recognizing the impact of trauma, and tailoring interventions accordingly. This approach fosters trust, empowerment, and promotes healing.

8. *Family and Social Support*: The involvement of family members, friends, and social support networks is vital during a mental health emergency. Psychological interventions may include providing education, guidance, and support to these individuals, helping them understand the situation, cope with their own emotions, and facilitate the recovery process.

Mental health emergencies require a multidimensional approach, involving psychological, medical, and social interventions. Prompt and appropriate response, along with ongoing support, can greatly contribute to the well-being and recovery of individuals experiencing a mental health crisis.<sup>13</sup>

### **View from Islamic Sociology**

Apart from a psychological perspective, in Islamic sociology, mental health is considered a significant aspect of overall well-being. Urgency in addressing mental health issues is recognized, as they can have profound effects on individuals, families, and communities. Islamic teachings emphasize the importance of seeking knowledge, including psychological knowledge, in order to understand and address mental health challenges. Islamic sociology encourages a holistic approach to mental health, taking into account both spiritual and worldly dimensions. It emphasizes the interconnectedness of the mind, body, and soul and recognizes the impact of social, cultural, and environmental factors on mental well-being. Given the urgency surrounding mental health, Islamic sociology advocates for early intervention and prevention of mental health problems. It promotes fostering a supportive community environment that promotes understanding, compassion, and empathy. This involves

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<sup>13</sup> WHO. *Prevention of Mental Disorders, Effective Intervention and Policy Options (Summary Report)*. Geneva: World Health Organization collaboration with the Prevention Research Centre of the Universities of Nijmegen and Maastricht. 2004.

creating safe spaces for individuals to seek help without fear of stigma or judgment. Islamic teachings also emphasize the role of faith and spirituality in coping with mental health challenges. They encourage individuals to turn to prayer, seek solace in the remembrance of God, and cultivate a strong relationship with their Creator. Islamic counselling and therapy approaches integrate spiritual guidance with evidence-based psychological interventions. In conclusion, from an Islamic sociology perspective, addressing mental health urgency involves recognizing the importance of an early intervention, community support, and integrating spiritual well-being with psychological interventions.<sup>14</sup>

### **Conclusion**

In conclusion, mental health disorders in Indonesia are a pressing issue that requires attention and action. The prevalence of these disorders, coupled with social and cultural factors, underscores the urgency of addressing them effectively. Collaboration between psychologists, sociologists and community leaders is essential for a comprehensive approach to addressing mental health disorders in Indonesia. By combining psychological and sociological insights with religious teachings, a holistic framework can be developed to promote mental well-being, provide effective support, and reduce the stigma associated with mental health issues. Ultimately, the successful management and treatment of mental health disorders in Indonesia require a multidimensional approach that encompasses psychological, sociological, and religious aspects. By working together, we can create a society that prioritizes mental health, supports those in need, and strives for the well-being of all individuals.

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<sup>14</sup> Nuryani Astrida Fitri, and Muhammad Tegar Kusuma Taajmehru. "*PPKM dan Orang dengan Gangguan Jiwa (ODGJ): Sebuah Perspektif Sosiologi Media*", (Klaten: Lakeisha, 2021).

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