A Study of *At-Takhalli* and *At-Tahalli* Practices among University Students

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Abstract

Al-takhalli and *at-tahalli* are among the most important practices in Sufism to develop Muslim spiritual and attitude. *Al-takhalli* means to fight or remove from the character and spiritual the abominable things, while *al-tahalli* means to adorn the Muslim character and spiritual with good things. Studies show that *al-takhalli* and *at-tahalli* practices can form a good religious personality and avoid immoral behavior, while weakness is seen as one of the causes of various social problems among Muslim. In universities, statistics of social problems show that a few of Muslim students involved in the problems and have low levels of religious personality. Thus, the main objective of this study is to examine the level of *al-takhalli* and and *at-tahalli* practices among university students. A survey was conducted at Universiti Teknologi MARA Perlis Branch. A total of 112 students were selected at simple random as respondents. Data were collected through survey techniques using 6 likert scale instruments that had gone through validity and reliability procedures. Descriptive analysis using SPSS 26.0 software was conducted to see the mean and percentage of findings. Overall, the findings of the study indicate that university students perform the *at-takhalli* and *at-tahalli* practices in their lives. However, the findings show that the practice of *al-tahalli* (mean=4.78) is given less attention than the practice of *at-takhalli* (mean=5.16). It needs to be improved in order to ensure the Muslim not only abandons *munkar* or bad things but continues to do good deeds and in turn can produce excellent ummah.

Keywords: *al-Takhalli*, *al-Tahalli*, Spiritual, Religious Personality, Religious Practices

Introduction

The formation of morals and religious appreciation among students, especially in university must be given attention by all parties. This is because they are the educated who will contribute to the development of human capital and subsequently take over the reins of the country's leadership. Thus, issues related to moral defects and social problems involving students in university are often discussed. Although the percentage of involvement is relatively small when compared to the total number of students, it remains a concern and needs to be addressed appropriately (Abu et al., 2008). Many studies have been conducted

related to the appreciation of religion and the formation of students' morals from school to university (Jusoh et al., 2018; Bakar & Majid, 2016; Tan & Abiddin, 2016; Noor et al., 2016). Several studies have suggested that studies related to the elements and factors that motivate and assist in improving the appreciation of religious life be implemented to help the university plan and improve student development programs (Marzuki et al., 2019; Ismail et al., 2019; Tan & Abiddin, 2016; Noor et al., 2016).

However, there is still a lack of research on the practice of the concept of *at-takhalli* and *at-tahalli* among university students. Thus, this study will focus on the practice of *at-takhalli* and *at-tahalli* among university students. Both of these practices are very important to be practiced to form good spirituality and morality among university students. Every shortcoming needs to be improved, so that the process of forming students as holistic human capital is successfully achieved.

Literature Review

According to Al-Ghazali (1988), *al-takhalli* and *at-tahalli* are the most important practices in the process of *tazkiyat al-nafs* (purification of the soul). *At-takhalli* is the process of cleansing the heart from evil deeds such as pride, envy, nifaq, ghurur etc. On the other hand, the process of *at-tahalli* includes admirable moral qualities such as taubah, zuhd, patience, shukr etc. Studies show that the implementation of *at-takhalli* and *at-tahalli* can produce a direct and positive effect on the soul and Muslim attitude (Salleh, 2014). Therefore, all believers should practice this principle in order to free themselves from the shackles of lust and in turn their soul will be the catalyst for admirable values as required by Islam.

Al-takhalli and *al-tahalli* practices complement each other in the development of Muslim personalities (Sham et al., 2013). Therefore, studies show that these two practices have been used in building Muslim character (Supriyadi & Jannah, 2020; Wan Yusnee Abdullah et al., 2017) and produce individuals who are balanced physically and spiritually (Mahpol et al., 2020). A study by Sugianto (2018) show that the implementation of *at-tahalli* and *at-takhalli* concepts can be used as a solution to stress and depression problem. The study found that the concept of at-takhalli, at-tahalli and at-tajalli can serve as a cure for human psychology by building physical, spiritual and mental strength during mental and stress situations. Wahidah (2018), have highlighted the concepts of *at-takhalli* and *at-tahalli* in enhancing resilience among the Muslim community in her study. These concepts can build spiritual and emotional strength in the face of various difficulties in life.

All studies show that the practice of *at-takhalli* and *at-tahalli* can increase the level of religious personality of the Muslim community. Thus, in facing various social problems involving the Muslim community, this approach should be implemented. The Muslim community needs to be given awareness to practice these two practices and improve what is lacking. In order to solve problems among university students, the implementation of these two practices needs to be implemented in balance and complementary. As a result, it will produce good Muslim students and well-balanced human capital for the nation.

Research Methodology

A survey was conducted at Universiti Teknologi MARA Perlis Branch. A total of 112 students were selected at simple random as respondents. Data were collected through survey

techniques using 6 likert scale instruments that had gone through validity and reliability procedures. Descriptive analysis using SPSS 26.0 software was conducted to see the mean of findings.

Result & Discussion
1)   *A-Takhalli* Practices Among University Students

The construct of *at-takhalli* practices is divided into 4 dimensions, i) Physical purification from feces and *hadas*, ii) Physical purification from sinful acts, iii) Spiritual purification from personal sin, and iv) Spiritual purification from sin involves others. The findings for these 4 dimensions are shown in table 1 to table 4 below:

Table 1. Physical Purification from Feces and *Hadas*

No	Item	Mean
1	Keeping the body free from feces	5.58
2	Keeping attires free from feces	5.58
3	Ensuring purity from *hadas*	5.54
Average Mean		5.56

Table 2. Physical purification from sinful acts

No	Item	Mean
1	Trying hard to avoid the sin of mouth	4.64
2	Trying hard to avoid the sin of eyes	4.73
3	Trying hard to avoid the sin of ears	4.57
4	Trying hard to avoid the sin of legs	5.18
5	Trying hard to avoid the sin of hands	5.22
6	Trying hard to avoid the sin of stomach	5.56
Average Mean		4.98

Table 3. Spiritual purification from personal sin

No	Item	Mean
1	Trying hard to avoid arrogant	5.25
2	Trying hard to avoid *riya'*	5.15
3	Trying hard to avoid show off	5.20
4	Trying hard not to overly expecting human appreciation	5.12
5	Trying hard to avoid stingy	5.31
6	Trying hard not to love the world outrageously	5.04
Average Mean		5.17

Table 4. Spiritual purification from sin involves others

No	Item	Mean
1	Trying hard to avoid overly jealous (*hasad*)	5.23
2	Trying hard to avoid hate others	5.14
3	Trying hard to avoid bad suspicion	5.03
4	Trying hard to avoid irritable	4.98
5	Trying hard to avoid slandering others	5.16
6	Trying hard to avoid betrayal others	5.30
7	Trying hard to avoid gossip	5.09
Average Mean		5.13

The findings in table 1 to table 4 show that university students practice the *at-takhalli* elements very well (mean = 5.13). They strive to avoid sins that can lead to inner defilement and the wrath of Allah SWT. The high mean on all tables indicates that the students not only shun sinful and evil deeds from the physical aspect but also in the spiritual aspect. The lowest mean is in table 2 (mean = 4.98) which is the element of physical purification from practices that lead to sin, while the highest overall mean is table 1 (mean = 5.56) which is the physical purification from feces and *hadas*. This shows that students are more concerned with the purification of physical impurities visible to the eye than physical impurities due to invisible sins. The lower mean in table 2 (mean = 4.98) compared to table 3 (mean = 5.17) and table 4 (mean = 5.13) also showed that students had more difficulty abandoning physical sins than sins because of spirituality aspects. This element of *al-takhalli* has a great impact on the formation of students' religious personalities. The imbalance in the aspects of physical and spiritual purification needs to be improved in order to produce better Muslim individuals.

2)   *At-Tahalli* Practices Among University Students
The construct of *at-tahalli* practices is divided into 2 dimensions, i) Performing daily worship and ii) Practicing noble morals. The findings for these 2 dimensions are shown in table 5 and table 6 below:

Table 5. Performing daily worship

No	Item	Mean
1	Pray five times a day	5.17
2	Focus and diligent (*khusyuk*) in prayer	4.29
3	Always recite *al-dzikr* to Allah SWT	4.51
4	Recite al-Quran everyday	4.21
5	Always *salawat* to the Prophet Muhammad SAW	4.55
6	Performing additional (*sunat*) prayers	3.79
7	Performing additional (*sunat*) fasting	3.68
8	Performing night worship (*qiyamullail*)	3.33
9	Worship is solely because of Allah SWT	4.93
Average Mean		4.27

Table 6. Practicing noble morals

No	Item	Mean
1	Fear of Allah SWT punishment	4.37
2	Beware of sinful things	4.96
3	Grateful for favors (*nikmat*)	5.29
4	Simple in life	5.08
5	Be patient with the test of life	5.02
6	Satisfied with the provisions of Allah SWT	5.10
7	Surrender and trust (*tawakkal*) in Allah SWT	5.30
8	Love of Allah SWT	5.36
9	Always remember death	5.14
10	Seriously against lust	4.85
11	Be honest in conversation	4.69
12	Diligently fulfill responsibilities	4.99
13	Generous in giving alms	5.04
14	Be kind to others	4.88
15	Loving the people around	5.21
Average Mean		5.01

The findings in table 5 and table 6 show that the practice of *at-tahalli* is also very well. Even so, there are some practices in table 5 that are given less attention in an effort to equip oneself with the aspects of *at-tahalli*. The practices are performing sunnah prayers (mean = 3.79), performing sunnah fasts (mean = 3.68) and performing *qiyamullail* (mean = 3.33). These three practices are routine worship for the pious ulama' in Islam. Many verses of the Qur'an and the Hadith of the Prophet SAW emphasize the importance of these three practices. Therefore, every Muslim, including students, needs to make improvements by making this practice a habit in the effort of self-purification or *tazkiyyah al-nafs*. Table 6 shows the very excellent noble moral practices among students. This shows that university students care about good moral practices. The highest mean morality is to love Allah SWT (mean = 5.36) and the lowest is to fear the punishment of Allah SWT (mean = 4.37). These findings indicate that there is still much aspects for improvement in practicing *at-takhalli* and *at-tahalli* among students. Both of these practices need to be improved in order to form good and pious students in university and then contribute to the well development of the country.

3)   Average mean scores for *at-takhalli* and *at-tahalli* practices among university students

The overall mean for the practices of *at-tahalli* and *at-takhalli* as in table 7 below:

Table 7. *At-takhalli* and *at-tahalli* practices among university students

No	Item	Mean
1	*At-takhalli practices*	5.16
2	*At-tahalli practices*	4.78

Table 7 shows that the mean value of *at-takhalli* practice is higher (mean = 5.16) when compared to the mean value of *at-tahalli* (mean = 4.78). This shows that students pay more attention to the practice of *at-takhalli* which is they avoid vile things from themselves

compared to *at-tahalli* which is they adorning themselves with noble things. Even so, both are still in the range of high mean values, indicating that both are becoming practical among students and only a small number need improvement.

Conclusion

Allah SWT says: "Whoever does good (as big as a dzarrah seed), he will see it. And whoever does evil (as big as a dzarrah seed), he will see it anyway" (Az-Zalzalah: 7-8). This verse show that the priority in leaving *munkar* and vile and also practicing *makruf* and admirable in Muslim life. Every kindness or evil done even as big as the *dzarrah* seeds (mustard) will be rewarded by Allah SWT. Therefore, rather than just prevent wickedness (*al-takhalli*), every Muslim is also obliged to do good practice (*at-tahalli*). The practice that prioritizes *al-takhalli* and *at-tahalli* has shown good impacts in producing Muslims with good religious personalities. In universities, the social problems that are happening demand more universities to take immediate action to curb from getting worse. Therefore, it is highly hopped the outcome of this research will help the university to overcome the problems among university students. The findings of this study can be used as a guide for the university in looking for the priority of spirituality elements and planning the best student development activities especially in developing moral and spiritual aspect and strengthening religious personalities of the students. Good spiritual development will produce good moral students. This also can be a guide to a further field of study to see how these two concepts affect the construction of religious personalities significantly among university students.

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