

## Dissatisfaction at The Workplace Using The *Tazkiyah An Nafs* Approach

Nurhikmah Mubarak Ali<sup>1</sup>, Muhamad Zahir Othman<sup>2</sup> & Nor  
Hernamawarni Abdul Majid<sup>3</sup>

Centre For Counselling Studies & Psychology And Services<sup>1</sup>, Kulliyah Usuluddin and Science  
of al Quran<sup>2</sup>, Sultan Abdul Halim Mu'adzam Shah International Islamic University,  
(UniSHAMS), Pusat Pengajian Ilmu Pendidikan<sup>3</sup>, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Pulau  
Pinang.

Email: nurhikmah@unishams.edu.my<sup>1</sup>, muhamadzahir2015@gmail.com<sup>2</sup> &  
norhernamawarni@usm.my<sup>3</sup>

To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJAROSS/v13-i11/19634> DOI:10.6007/IJAROSS/v13-i11/19634

**Published Date:** 26-11-2023

### Abstract

Individuals who face the problem of dissatisfaction at work is one of the problems in the employment sector and this phenomenon appears regardless of whether the organization is large or small. The *Tazkiyah An Nafs* approach is seen to help treat individual dissatisfaction at work. This article can benefit various parties in dealing with the problem of individual dissatisfaction in the workplace based on Islam. The suggestion that can be done in the future is to produce a better, high-quality, and perfect study and be suitable as a guide so that the treatment carried out needs to go through a long period and apply the Islamic approach so that it is more integrated with the soul of a Muslim.

**Keywords:** Dissatisfaction, Workplace, *Tazkiyah An Nafs*.

### Introduction

Job satisfaction is one of the important components of work motivation and is important in ensuring that employees always perform well in their duties (Agusramadani, 2018). A good employee is not only oriented towards the employer but also cares about the aspects of other members. An unbalanced organization may be successful, for example, by emphasizing hard work and putting the employer first to record large profits, but in the long term, it puts stress on the workers. This negative impact will eventually return to the employer when many employees quit and express their dissatisfaction through various means (Deni, 2018).

Individuals who face the problem of dissatisfaction are one of the characteristics of *mazmumah* that affects the individual and other individuals. This trait makes individuals feel that they are not enough with what they have and at the same time gives a sign to someone

who disbelieves favours (Che Long, 2021). Demands from the employer to improve the quality and quality of work should be used as a catalyst among colleagues but what happens is that each feels jealous and indirectly reduces this healthy competition (Kamarudin, 2013). Dissatisfaction at work can also cause stress and mental problems in individuals (Ghani, 2019). The implications of this dissatisfaction have an impact on individuals and organizations (Othman, 2010).

Dissatisfaction can also be helped by using the *Tazkiyah An-Nafs* approach where the purification of the individual's soul needs to be done first by removing *mazmumah* and then adding *mahmudah*. This depends on the will of the individual to clean the mind, *nafs*, and *qalb*. Everything that happens has a reason and happens with God's permission. As an ordinary human being who adheres to the Quran and Sunnah, it is necessary to make efforts, prayers, and trust in making positive changes that are pleasing to God. As found in al-Quran surah Ar Ra'd verse 11:

لَهُ مُعَقِّبَاتٌ مِّنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ يَحْفَظُونَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ  
 اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ وَإِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ  
 سُوءًا فَلَا مَرَدَّ لَهُ وَمَا لَهُم مِّن دُونِهِ مِن وَالٍ ﴿١١﴾

Meaning: "For each person, there is a guardian angel alternately in front of him and behind him, who watch over and protect him (from any danger) by God's command. Indeed, Allah does not change what is in a person until they change what is in themselves. And when God wills to inflict upon a people a calamity (due to their fault), then no one can reject or resist what He has decreed, and no one can help and protect them other than Him."

Identifying the nature of *mazmumah*, which is to remove the negative nature and apply the nature of *mahmudah* in oneself while making the Prophet Muhammad SAW a role model to create change and stimulation towards a more significant direction in facing problems. The process of self-reflection is finding a point of calm and change to remove the pressure faced (Abdul Rahim, 2021). Next, the effect expected by the researcher is the happiness of the world and the hereafter on top of his satisfaction with what happened, all with the permission of God.

### **Tazkiyah An-Nafs**

*Tazkiyah* means purification. In the context of Sufism, *tazkiyah* refers to being clean from the vile nature of oneself. In other words, *Tazkiyah An-Nafs* involves two main processes, namely *al-takhalli* (التخلي) and *al-tahalli* (التحلي). *Al-takhalli* is to cleanse oneself of the reprehensible qualities that prevent one from reaching the presence of God, the Holy One. *Al-tahalli* on the other hand is decorating the soul with noble qualities as demanded by Islam.

*Tazkiyah An-Nafs* is one of the methods in the building of the soul and human moral education. *Tazkiyah An-Nafs* etymologically has two meanings which are purification and healing. *Tazkiyah An-nafs* can only be achieved through worship and deeds performed

perfectly. Tazkiyah as a concept of education and teaching does not only limit itself to the process of knowledge but rather is a task to give shape to the act of obedient life for the individual who does it. Whereas according to Imam al-Ghazali, *Tazkiyah An-Nafs* is understood as *Takhliyatun Nafs* or emptying yourself from reprehensible morals and filling it with *Tahliyatun Nafs*, which is filling it with praiseworthy morals. With the freedom of the soul from reprehensible morals and full of commendable morals, the individual will easily draw closer to Allah SWT.

The concept of *Tazkiyah An-Nafs* is a concept of purification in Islam because its teachings are based on the Quran and the Sunnah. The concept is so broad and covers all aspects of life. This matter can be understood in the concept presented by al-Ghazali and Ibnu Qayyim who emphasize the concept of a good soul, is obedient, just, pious, and true. The author found the meaning of Tazkiyah An-Nafs discussed by al-Ghazali and Ibnu Qayyim to give the same emphasis, which is to cleanse the soul of any *mazmumah* nature and decorate it with *mahmudah* nature. In addition, both figures argue that actions expressed through body parts reflect the state of a person's soul. If his heart is pure, then the resulting actions are also good. If his heart is dirty, then the resulting actions are bad and reprehensible (Hamjah, 2018).

*Tazkiyah* is a way to improve the individual from a low level to a higher level in terms of attitude, nature, personality, and character. The more often a person performs purification on his character, the more Allah takes him to a higher level of faith. As the word of God says in Quran:

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا ۖ وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا ﴿٩﴾

Meaning: "Indeed, successful is the person who makes himself who is already clean become cleaner (with faith and good deeds), And indeed you are the ones who make himself - who is already clean - decrease and sink in cleanliness (due to impurity). "

(Surah As Shams: verses 9-10)

A clean soul will produce good behavior because it is the soul that determines whether an act is good or bad. So, it can be said that the peak of human happiness lies in Tazkiyah An-Nafs while the peak of human misery lies in the act of letting the soul flow according to its natural habits. In the Islamic encyclopedia, *Nafs* is a human spiritual organ that has the most and the greatest influence among other spiritual members that issue instructions to physical members to act (Sarmani and Minggal, 2008).

Imam Al Ghazali in his book *Ihya Ulumuddin* stated that all parts of a person's body are like the people, the heart is like a king and the mind is like a minister. The heart that functions as a king is responsible for controlling everything. If the heart is not able to organize wisely then the country will be destroyed. In addition, as a king, the heart must agree with the minister (mind) in many matters and put the people under the minister's influence. If a structure like this can be established, the country will develop and prosper. The same is the case with humans. The heart must always consult with the mind before taking any action and make lust and anger under the subjugation of reason until happiness is achieved by knowing Allah SWT. This view of Imam al-Ghazali is in line with the teachings of Islam where the Prophet SAW himself stated the importance of people taking care of their hearts because the

determination of a person's good and bad values lies in his heart as the hadith of the Prophet SAW which means

"Truly in the human body, there is a piece of meat. If the meat is good, then all the parts of the body are good. However, if the meat is damaged, then all the parts are damaged. The meat in question is the heart".

(Hadith Narrated by Bukhari from Nu'man bin Bashir: No. Hadith 50/7008)

The heart has two armies, the army that can be seen with the eyes and the army that cannot be seen except with the eyes of the heart. The heart's position is like a king while the two military forces are like assistants to the heart. The military forces referred to here are the visible organs that can be seen with the naked eye such as eyes, hands, feet, ears, and all the outer limbs. All these members obey the instructions of the heart.

### **The Intervention of *Tazkiyah An Nafs* In Dealing With Some Issues Of Dissatisfaction At Work**

#### **Angry toward co-workers**

Individuals feel angry with colleagues who are unfair in doing the duties and responsibilities given by the head of the organization. Individuals feel angry because they have to work overtime (Ishak and Syafruddin, 2021) to complete all the tasks given by the leader, but there are a few colleagues who do not do their jobs well and are having fun chatting about other individuals' matters. This situation invites anger and envy toward the colleague. *Tazkiyah An Nafs* intervention can be done to control feelings of anger and envy towards the co-workers, individuals can remind themselves that every task has a reward in the eyes of God and intend every work done as worship. It is necessary to ignore colleagues who do not do their job well because that is between the individual and Allah. It is possible to reprimand the colleague to do the trust given well and pray for the colleague. If there is still a feeling of anger towards other colleagues, you can take steps to reduce anger, which is following the guidelines given by the Prophet SAW, which is to perform ablution, pray, and perform circumcision prayers of repentance or other circumcision prayers. The habit of water is to put out the fire. Similarly, ablution can extinguish the fire of anger. The Prophet SAW ordered his people to perform ablution when they were angry according to His Majesty's hadith.

"Indeed anger is from the devil and the devil is made of fire and verily fire is extinguished with water. So if anyone among you is in a state of anger, then hasten to perform ablution".

(Hadith Narrated by Imam Ahmad)

"When one of you is angry, and at that time he is standing, then he should sit down. Because that will get rid of his anger. And if not, then he should lie down."

(Hadith Narrated by Muslim)

Among the prayers that can be practiced when angry as in Al Quran Surah Al-A'raf: Verse 126:

وَمَا تَنْقِمُ مِنَّا إِلَّا أَنْ آمَنَّا بِآيَاتِ رَبِّنَا لَمَّا جَاءَتْنَا رَبَّنَا أَفْرِغْ عَلَيْنَا صَبْرًا

وَتَوَفَّنَا مُسْلِمِينَ

Meaning: "And you (O Pharaoh) were not angry (and acted to torture) us except because we believed in the verses of our Lord when they came to us". (They prayed): "O our Lord, grant us patience, and make us die in the state of Islam (surrender completely to You)".

### **Lack of attention from the head of the organization and other colleagues**

There are situations where individuals feel less attention from the head of the organization and other colleagues by looking at the treatment given by the head of the organization and other colleagues to the individual. This situation is further proven through evidence of behavioral changes, individuals feel that the head of the organization is somewhat biased and favoritism between other colleagues. *Tazkiyah An Nafs* intervention that can be done for this situation is that individuals need to understand that attention is sustenance from God. Sometimes it happens when the staff is increasing and there are many in the organization. If the individual feels a lack, then he can ask for God's attention and love. Individuals can place the belief that sustenance is God's provision. Although on the surface the attention and love come from the leader or other colleagues, the one who determines the attention and love is God. Among the words that can persuade the self is, "I consider this lack of attention and love as a test from God and I will use it to gain God's pleasure and love." Apart from calmly accepting the situation of not getting more attention and love, individuals can also make action plans to get love. Action planning that is realistic and based on evidence and experimentation. Clients can be trained to study history and behaviors that lead to better relationships and improve such behaviors. Make respect and effective communication culture in the workplace.

### **Dissatisfied with co-workers**

Individuals often feel dissatisfied when compared to other colleagues. This is a normal reaction because everyone wants to feel more, but is always worried about being less. This tendency causes individuals to often compare themselves with other colleagues and often focus on aspects of themselves that are lacking from others. Among the aspects seen by his colleagues are quick in completing tasks, intelligence, diverse skills, ability to speak in various languages, and so on. This sense of inferiority intensifies when the head of the organization or a colleague is not satisfied with the advantages of the colleague (Zakaria, 2019). Workers can intervene by giving fair focus to all aspects of scientific comparison. The first level of systematic comparison is to look at the quick dimension of doing the task itself. For example, if a colleague is faster in completing a task, the individual may be more thorough and make fewer mistakes and corrections. If the individual feels that he has lost as a whole, then the individual needs to make a systematic comparison on the second level, which is to find advantages in himself from other dimensions besides being quick to do the task - such as being good at talking, good at treating other colleagues and so on. Every human being has strengths and weaknesses given by Allah SWT. Meanwhile, as the head of the organization, it is necessary to practice an open attitude and discuss with employees if there is something that is not satisfactory and give reprimands individually and privately. Leaders can also provide incentives to those who qualify to increase motivation and self-esteem. A study

conducted by Agusramadani (2018) found that the thing that can satisfy employees and increase the level of job satisfaction is the justice practiced by the management.

### **Jealous of the Advantages of Colleagues**

Jealousy is a mental, emotional, and physiological reaction that attacks an individual suddenly. It is related to all the thoughts discussed because feelings of jealousy can be present without any other additional factors. Because it strikes suddenly, this feeling of jealousy often drives individuals to do things they will later regret. Therefore, controlling the attacks of jealousy is an important component of this intervention. In reality, individuals who can do work are bullied with a heavy workload, while those who are lazy are not given appropriate assignments. This will cause dissatisfaction among other individuals in the workplace. *Tazkiyah An Nafs* Intervention steps that can be done to reduce feelings of jealousy and minimize the impact of negative behavioral reactions is to improve negative behavioral patterns. In addition, special measures must also be taken to minimize the occurrence of negative behavior as a result of the reaction from the emotional attack earlier. Working individuals can identify their ability levels and learn to be more assertive. You can train yourself to work as a team and divide tasks according to skills and abilities. In addition, individuals can also use behavioral control strategies such as chanting, reading the Quran, performing circumcison prayers, exercising, doing social activities such as going out with friends, reading motivational books, or doing cheerful activities such as shopping and sightseeing - broadcast with children and family. However, the suggested activities are often long-term preventative measures and are ineffective when a jealousy attack occurs. In Islam, jealousy is allowed but requires healthy competition and looking at the situation. For example, if an individual is jealous of another colleague when that friend likes charity by giving food and donations to colleagues in need. So the individual can be jealous to do the same thing without having the intention of bringing down the colleague.

### **Summary**

*Tazkiyah An-Nafs* is very important in the life of people who want to find well-being in this world and the hereafter. *Tazkiyah* does not mean rejecting the current development of life but controlling the development of his heart. *Tazkiyah An-Nafs* forms the true human soul by doing everything prescribed by Islam in an *istiqamah* manner. The heart is cleansed of reprehensible qualities and decorated with beautiful qualities. *Tazkiyah* needs to go through various methods in addition to guidance and *taufiq* from Allah. Only people with pure hearts can do their job with peace. Every individual who holds the trust and responsibility on his shoulders as an employee must be guided by the Qur'an and Hadith in work so as not to run away from the *Sharia* or against Islam. The success of an organization depends on the staff under its supervision in carrying out the trust that is held accountable together. The treatment method of dealing with the problem of dissatisfaction at work that uses the *Tazkiyah An-Nafs* approach requires the individual to be patient because it takes a long period to change. However, it depends on the condition and situation of the individual. Individuals with clean hearts have good relationships with other individuals. The clarity of a person's heart is the most stable medium of social relations. An individual whose heart is encircled by *nafs al-lawwamah* certainly does not get to socialize well because in his heart are nested all forms of contempt such as envy, hypocrite, and so on.

### **Acknowledgment**

I am thankful to God for simplifying all my affairs and I am sure everything we do only happens

because of God's permission. I got a lot of support from my family especially my parents in preparing this article. I would like to thank my two co-researchers in completing this study, namely, Dr. Norhernamawarni Abdul Majid & Muhamad Zahir Othman and I also take this opportunity to thank Kaizen Sdn Bhd for allowing me to publish and present this writing review.

## Reference

- Abdul Rahim, M. F. (2021). Pendekatan *Tazkiyatun Nafs* Dalam Menangani Masalah Stres Dalam Kalangan Ibu Bekerjaya. *Research Project Paper*. UniSHAMS: Kuala Ketil.
- Agusramadani, L. A. (2018). The influence of job involvement and job satisfaction toward employee turnover intention (Case in Indonesia Broadcasting). *IOSR Journal of Business and Management*, 20(5), Page. 11-18.
- Ahmad, M. M. (2019). *Tazkiyah Al-Nafs* Dalam Ilmu Tasawuf. Negeri Sembilan Government Mufti Website. <https://muftins.gov.my/tareqat-tasauwuf/tazkiyah-al-nafs-dalam-ilmu-tasawuf/April 2019>.
- Ali, A. U. (2011). *Ringkasan Ihya Ulumuddin*. (Translation from the original book of Imam Ghazali). Kuala Lumpur: Darul Nu'man.
- Che Long, S. (2021). Intervensi Terapi Kognitif Tingkah Laku Islam (ICBT) Di Dalam Merawat Ketidakuasaan Hati Individu Di Tempat Kerja. *Research Project Paper*. UniSHAMS: Kuala Ketil.
- Deni, M. I. M. (2018). Budaya Kerja Organisasi Serta Kesannya Kepada Pekerja Dan Keluarga. *4th Muzakarah Fiqh & International Fiqh Conference (MFIFC 2018) in Kuala Lumpur on 17 October 2018*.
- Ghani, F. A. (2019). Tekanan di tempat kerja: Bagaimana untuk bertahan? *Astro Awani*. <https://www.astroawani.com/berita-malaysia/tekanan-di-tempat-kerja-bagaimana-untuk-bertahan-199233>.
- Hamjah, S. H. (2008). Pendekatan Da'wah Al-Irsyad Al-Nafsiyy Menurut Al Ghazali: Satu kajian di pusat kaunseling majlis agama Islam Negeri Sembilan. Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.
- Hamjah, S. H. (2018). *Pendekatan Kaunseling Spiritual Menurut Al-Ghazali*. Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka: Kuala Lumpur.
- Ishak, M., & Syafruddin, S. E. (2021). *Tekanan di tempat kerja*. UKM Medical Molecular Biology Institute website. <https://www.ukm.my/umbi/news/tekanan-di-tempat-kerja>.
- Kamarudin, H. (2013). Faktor Tekanan Kerja Dalam Kalangan Kakitangan MAINS. Holdings SDN. BHD. *Research Project Paper*. Open University Malaysia.
- Nadaf, Z. A. (2018). Comparative study on job satisfaction of J & K Bank employees. *North Asian International Research Journal of Social Science & Humanities*, 4(1), Page. 281-293.
- Othman, Z. (2010). Faktor tekanan di tempat kerja. Laman Web Institut Perakaunan Negara. <https://km.anm.gov.my/Artikel/Faktor%20tekanan%20di%20tempat%20kerja.aspx>.
- Samsudin, N. H., & Rindam, M. (2018). Kepuasan Kerja Dalam Kalangan Pekerja Di Jabatan Keselamatan Universiti Sains Malaysia. *Journal of Human Capital Development*, 11(2) 53-71.
- Sarmani, Y., & Minggal, M. T. (2008). *Teori counseling al Ghazali*. Selangor Darul Ehsan: HIZBI Sdn Bhd.
- Zakaria, M. Z. (2019). Pengaruh tekanan kerja dan kepuasan kerja terhadap prestasi kerja dalam kalangan jururawat di Hospital Sultanah Bahiyah. *PhD Thesis*. Universiti Utara Malaysia.