



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF ACADEMIC RESEARCH IN BUSINESS & SOCIAL SCIENCES



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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v8-i6/4254>

DOI: 10.6007/IJARBSS/v8-i6/4254

Received: 11 May 2018, **Revised:** 20 June 2018, **Accepted:** 23 June 2018

Published Online: 29 June 2018

In-Text Citation: (Ping, Hassan, Noah, Krauss, & Zainudin, 2018)

To Cite this Article: Ping, S. L. S., Hassan, S. A., Noah, S. M., Krauss, L. S., & Zainudin, Z. N. (2018). Unveiling the Experiences through Feeling in Undergoing Spiritual Hypnotherapy with Islamic Approach (SPHIA) for Female Children Victim of Incest. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 8(6), 507–519.

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Vol. 8, No. 6, June 2018, Pg. 507 - 519

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Unveiling the Experiences through Feeling in Undergoing Spiritual Hypnotherapy with Islamic Approach (SPHIA) for Female Children Victim of Incest

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Abstract

Spiritual hypnosis is one of the specific treatment techniques in hypnosis, with the additional spiritual component. Spiritual interpretation suggested during hypnotic trance, and the reframing of symptoms to emphasize their spiritual meaning. Reframing must be in accordance with the client's belief system in order to be accepted and for a change to take place. The study objective is to explore on what the informants experienced through listening when they are experiencing the Islamic spiritual hypnotherapy approach. A qualitative study using phenomenological research design was used to unveil the experiences of feeling with six female children who had histories of incest using spiritual hypnotherapy with Islamic approach. The individual stories of hypnotherapy experiences were collected through in depth interviews. Ethical issues were addressed. Spiritual Hypnotherapy with Islamic Approach (SPHIA), few elements that inserted in the hypnotherapy scripts are *Dua*, *Azan*, *Dhikr*, *Surah Recitation* and *Salat*. The script's content has been validated by Islamic authorities in Malaysia. In the findings, the informants experiencing calmness, serenity and gratefulness during the process of hypnotherapy. Integrating Islamic Spiritual elements in hypnotherapy can help individual who lost and need help.

Keywords: *Spiritual Hypnotherapy, Islamic Approach, Incest*

Introduction

Every child has the right to live in health and free from violence. Each year, thousands of children in Malaysia are reported as victims of child abuse and neglect. Child abuse is a huge global problem with a serious impact on the child's physical and mental health, well-being and development throughout their live (Che Noh & Wan Talaat, 2012). Statistic obtained

from Sexual and Child Investigation Division (D11), Criminal Investigation Department, Royal Malaysia Police (PDRM), Bukit Aman reveal that cases of child sexual abuse are most highest than other abuse. . According Child Investigation Division (D11) reported that 100% victims of incest were female. Children are being sexual abused at a very worrying rate and need to be approached with caution because it almost always happens in privacy and secrecy (Fourie & Guse, 2011). Victims of incest are the most severely traumatized. Sexual abuse by a family member is a form of incest, and results in more serious and long-term psychological trauma, especially in the case of parental incest (Obineli, 2013).

Sexually abused children experience clinically significant symptoms in the affective, cognitive, physical and behavioral domains (Shaw, Lewis, Loeb, Rosado, & Rodriguez, 2000). Generalised anxiety, eating disorders, sexual problems, addictions, depression, anxiety, fears, regressive behaviors, nightmares are common presenting symptoms (Darken, 1992, Kendall-Tackett, Williams, & Finkelhor, 1991). Incest victims are more traumatized than others victim sexual abuse cases (Obineli, 2013). All of these risks are strongest in intra familial abuse (incest) which normally occurs over a long period of time and involves more serious sexual activity. In the case of chronic, escalating incest without protection or intervention, the child is essentially trapped and powerless and must find ways to cope. Most, if not all, child victims develop negative self-attributions (Courtois, 1997). Incest victims commonly re-experience their traumas as memories, flashbacks, and recurrent and disturbing dreams (Beveridge & Cheung, 2004). Without clinical intervention, the abused child may grow up to face life-long struggles with trauma-related symptoms, including poor affect regulation, hyper arousal, intrusive experiencing, self-destructive behavior, unmodulated sexual involvement and other psychological as well as psychiatric problem (Wai-ling, 2007). It is important to provide effective treatment to address the host of issues that are presented in therapy by the victims according to each sexually abused person's unique experience (Fourie & Guse, 2011).

Malaysia has established non-government and government organisations to counter child abuse problems including the Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) Team, is one of the Malaysian Association for the Protection of Children, Protect & Save the Children, and the Children's Department under the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development. These organisations were established to help victims in many areas and provide counselling services, legal advice, shelters, and medical assistance. Indeed, these organisations involve professionals with different specialisations including police officers, social workers, nurses, counsellors, psychologists, medical doctors and advocates (Nen, 2010). But in Malaysia, there is a dearth of research on Child Sexual Abused and no formal surveillance system of abuse in children. Research in the field of child sexual abuse is lacking in Malaysia (Wahab et al., 2013). CSA research in Malaysia is still new and the topic of CSA has not been fully explored by local researchers (Nen, 2010). Lack of research in this area has restricted our ability to gain knowledge and understanding about the treatment in Hypnosis for sexually abused children in Malaysia among counsellor, psychiatry, doctor, psychology and therapist. None of research in Hypnosis of Sexually Abused Children in Spiritual Hypnosis from an Islamic Approach in Malaysia. Without clinical intervention, the abused child may grow up to face life-long struggles with trauma-related symptoms, including poor affect regulation, hyper arousal, intrusive experiencing, self-destructive

behaviour, unmodulated sexual involvement and other psychological as well as psychiatric problems (Wai-ling, 2007). Clinical as well as empirical research, has long proved that sexually abused children suffer profoundly following the abuse (Nen, 2010). Many of the victims live their adulthood with the hidden scars of sexual abuse and the painful consequences live on (Fourie & Guse, 2011).

In this study, researcher used a spiritual hypnotherapy script with Islamic approach for female children of incest. Hence, the aim of this study is able to unveiling the experiences of undergoing this hypnotherapy from the informants. This study can be a practical resource for government, institutions, doctors, psychiatrists, counsellors and psychologists to better understand in the hypnosis treatment of sexually abused children from an Islamic approach. This understanding may assist the professional to develop or strengthen the recovery plan for sexually abused children using this Hypnotherapy. Besides that, children also given the education of self-hypnosis, they may grow up happiest and knowing to use self-hypnosis to help themselves to heal the traumatic symptoms. This study gives a guide to integrate hypnotherapy with Islamic approach for children especially traumatic children, and can provide information so that professionals feel more competent and have more realistic expectations about what they can accomplish in their professional roles.

This research is thought to be important for providing both theoretical and practical implications. As there has been no research done on Spiritual Hypnotherapy in Malaysia so far. Thus, this study can make a significant contribution to improve knowledge base in the domain of child hypnotherapy. From the theoretical viewpoint, this research was conducted by a desire to understand the experiences of child victims of incest in Spiritual Hypnotherapy from an Islamic Approach. The findings of this research are significant in providing new knowledge regarding the experiences of Hypnotherapy base on Islamic approach from the perspective of the traumatize school age incest children. In addition, the findings are also important providing additional perspective to the specific elements of Islamic spirituality experienced by child victims of incest. In fact, the findings have addressed the existing gaps in the literature regarding the construction of child victims of incest spiritual worldview through the Hypnotherapy treatment in Islamic approach.

Sexual abuse impacts negatively to the children during their childhood and future adulthood in physical, emotional, and psychological context. Preview studies found that the victims of the sexual abuse are traumatized greatly in life compared to other types of child abuse. A child who is abused will be traumatized and will need counselling and professional intervention by a child psychologist or psychiatrist. It is important because when a child is sexually abused they are scared, frightened, and do not know what to do (Othman & Yahaya, 2013). From the practical point of view, I believe that this study can be a practical resource for government, institutions, doctors, psychiatrists, counsellors and psychologists to address the critical issues faced by professionals and/or to better understand in the hypnosis treatment of sexually abused children in Islamic approach. This understanding may assist the professional to develop or strengthen the recovery plan for sexually abused children using Spiritual Hypnotherapy in Islamic approach. Children may grow up happiest and knowing to use self-hypnosis to help themselves to heal the traumatic symptoms. This study can highlight the areas of concern thus provide ideas to inform strategic plans and

suggested areas for improvement. This study gives Malaysian professionals such as psychotherapists, psychiatrist and counsellors a guide to integrate spiritual hypnotherapy from an Islamic approach for children especially traumatic children, and can provide information so that professionals feel more competent and have more realistic expectations about what they can accomplish in their professional roles.

Therapeutic process consists of supplication (Du'aa) with the use of the Quran, hadeeth. Modern psychologists acknowledge the fact that a person having a strong belief and practicing religion can better cope with psychological disorders than the one who does not practice religion. It is evidence that Islamic therapy treats sicknesses that human medicine cannot cure and those whose medical cause(s) could not be diagnosed, we proposed in line with (Sulaiman & Gabadeen, 2009) that Muslims therapists and mainstream therapists should integrate spiritual/religious techniques into western techniques to develop psych spiritual counselling methodologies that would facilitate positive change in clients. Therapists especially Muslims must begin to realise the need to have adequate knowledge and understanding of the healing process in Islam, the importance of tawakkul, holy Qur'an, and the interventions of Allah (SWA) in dealing with all crises. Many magical methods of treatment are still in close touch with religion (Battiss, 1989).

The different methods of healing in Islam (Sulaiman & Gabadeen, 2009) are:

1. Tawakkul (faith, believe or submission) Tawakkul that is trust in Allah, Trust in Allah (Sura 19, Verse 96), is the core aspect of healing in Islam, a Muslim must believe that He alone can ward off the harms of this world, provide blessings and sustenance and can ease challenges. The Quran makes it clear that Tawakkul is not an option but a requirement. Allah says in Quran 17:82 " We have sent down in the Quran that which is healing and a mercy to those who believe". Hence, a believing Muslim will put his/her trust in Allah (SWA) irrespective of his/her problem(s). This enables him/her to be relieved from unnecessary anxiety, worry, and depression because Allah is believed to be in control and will manifest himself over his/her affairs.

2. Du'aa (Prayer, Supplication), Prayer and worship (Sura 25, Verse153) is very beneficial and includes both protection and treatment. As far as protection is concerned, the Muslim is obliged to turn to Allah and pray to Him for refuge from distress and to keep him away from it. Du'aa is the most beneficial types of healing, it is the enemy of illness and affliction repressing it, treating it, preventing its occurrence, removing it and or alleviating it. It is the weapon of the believer, his/her sword with which he/she protects him/herself from any danger or arm. As protection, a Muslim is enjoined to recite after every Salat (daily prayer), Surahs Al-Baqarah, (ayat-ul-Kursy Q 2:225), Al-Falaq (Q 113) and An-Naas (Q 114) before sleeping, every morning and every evening. It is also used as a cure when read over the sick. A du'aa made at any of the following period with tawakkul brings about healing and protecting.

3. God says about Qur'an...It (Qur'an) is a:-guide and a healing to those who believe" (S.41: V. 44). "Says: To the believers it is guidance, and a healing" (Sura 41, Verse 44); "And We send down, of the Quran, that which is a healing and a mercy to the believers" (Sura 17, Verse 82) (Seghatoleslam, Habil, Hatim, & Rashid, 2015). God says in Qur'an about

psychological and social diseases and cures in several surah. The Islamic principles which are based on Qur'an and Hadith are the best form of prevention and treatment of emotional disturbances. Spiritual healing can be based on or inspired by the knowledge from Qur'an and Sunnah (traditions) of Prophet Muhammad. 'But he guides to himself those who turn to him in patience, those who believe and whose hearts find peace and satisfaction in the remembrance of God: For without doubt in the remembrance of God do hearts find satisfaction and peace (Quran 5.13:27-28). Muslims believe Muhammad as the last prophet of Allah and that Qur'an was revealed to Muhammad from Allah. Certain verses of the Qur'an declare the unique healing properties of this name and five verses refer directly to their spiritual healing qualities (Haque & Keshavarzi, 2014). The holy Quran is healing for all ailments (Q17:82) when the Quran is read and blown on somebody, a positive energy is received that counter the negative energy that has taken over the body, soul or mind of the person.

Dhikr (Remembrance of Allah) Dhikr is the most praiseworthy work to earn Allah's pleasure, the most effective weapon to overcome the enemy, and the most deserving of deeds in rewards. It is the flag of Islam, polish of hearts, essence of the science of faith, immunization against hypocrisy, head of worship, and the key of all success. There are no restrictions on the modality, frequency, or timing of dhikr. Allah placed His remembrance above prayer in value by making prayer the means and remembrance the goal. He said "Lo! Worship guards one from lewdness and iniquity, but verily, remembrance of Allah is greater/more important." (Q 29:45). Engaging dhikr in abundant elicits physiologic relaxation response, freedom from anxiety, stress and fatigue. Dhikr has also served as cure and prevention of attacks from jinn (demons).

Prayer is regarded as an important therapy for Muslim. Prayer from Islamic conception is an act of addressing God with reverence, offering praise, giving thanks, affirming and confirming one's total dependence on God, and asking His grace, mercy, and help. According to scientific research, all the act and recitations in Muslim prayer have a corresponding relationship with our spiritual and mental well-being. The benefits of performing specific movements and recitations each day come from the correct rendition of the position or action itself, the length of time the position is held, and from careful and correct recitation techniques. Therefore prayer is relaxing and highly spiritual and contemplative ritual which at times takes the faithful into a divine journey of tranquility and closeness to God. (Nik Rosila Nik Yacob, 2013).

Method

A qualitative methodology was the research design employed in this study. Phenomenological design was considered to be the best fit for this study because the main purpose of this study is define as unveiling the experiences of undergoing spiritual hypnotherapy with Islamic approach from female children of Incest. The data obtained serves as the foundation on which the findings are based on participants' experiences, and this evidence is used by the researcher for the explication of the data to produce an in depth description of the experience. The researcher applied the coding system using Nvivo Software.

As for research subjects, 6 female informants were selected which fit these criteria:

- incest cases who experienced sexual abused among the family members.
- age between 10 to 18 years old.
- practicing the Islamic teaching.

As for the Spiritual Hypnotherapy with Islamic Approach (SPHIA), few elements that inserted in the hypnotherapy scripts are *Dua* (pray), *Azan* (summons call for prayer), *Dhikr* (practice of uttering Allah's name out of devotion to Him), *Surah Recitation* and *Salat* (praying; ritual worship of the Muslim). These elements are placed accordingly in the 6 stages of hypnotherapy that are Pre-Induction, Induction, Deepening, Depth Level Test, Suggestion Therapy, and Termination. The script's content has been validated by Islamic authorities in Malaysia.

Findings

There are few themes that emerged from the experiences through feeling in undergoing Spiritual Hypnotherapy with Islamic Approach (SPHIA) among female children victim of incest that were shared by the in-depth interview informants. The findings will discuss according to the Islamic elements in the hypnotherapy scripts.

During Dua script

During under hypnotized for dua' script, most of the informants stated that they have the feeling of hope. These informants experienced trauma in their life by persons that they rely to. After the incidents, most of them had giving up hope. However, through these sessions they revived their hopes.

I feel different. I feel that I really put my hopes high and I believed that the Al-Mighty listens to my dua' and will granted it. I feel so calm. I never had these feelings of hope before. (Diana)

I have requested something good, something good for me and my family. And I am very sure that Al-Mighty will grant it at the appropriate time. I am feeling so hopeful now. I know my life will be better. (Amalina)

Informants also expressing their relieved in this dua' sessions. They have been occupied with guilty feelings over years believing that they are the reasons of the incidents. After these sessions, they expressing that they are calmer and relax now.

I really sad and I miss my family so much. I really want to be with my family again. After dua', I feel so relieved, I know that Allah will help me to be with my family again. (Nadatu)

During the dua', I really asked forgiveness from the Al-Mighty. I really pray hard. And I know that Al-Mighty will forgive me. I am feeling relieved now. (Sheila)

I cried during dua' session. I really feel sad. But I know that Al-Mighty hears me out. And I feel relieved because I know Al-Mighty will help me out. (Amalina)

During the Azan script

Most informants mentioned that they missed their family when they hear the script.

I feel sad, seems like call for Salat Raya. I suddenly remembered my mother and my siblings. I really miss them. (Saidah)

I feel so sad when I heard the azan. I know that azan is a call for prayer but I don't know, I suddenly remembered my family, my mother and my siblings. (Saidah)

When I hear the azan, I felt like I am in front of Kaabah, I feel so calm and serene (Diana)

During Dhikr Script

Informants mentioned that after dhikr session, they feel that hatred and anger dissolve. They eliminated the vengeance that had been with them for so long. They feel so grateful to dissolve that feeling.

I dhikr alhamdulillah for 11 times, then Al-Ikhlas 3 times, and after that I have this kind of feelings. I feel that my anger disappeared. I don't feel revenge anymore. I feel so calm and I feel that my heart is enlightened now. (Nadatu)

I really cried during dhikr. It really touches my heart. And when I dhikr Alhamdulillah, I feel so grateful to Allah. I can feel the weight in my heart lifted and disappeared. I feel relieved and no more stress. (Diana)
All this while I feel so empty. But after reciting dhikr, I have the new belief that only Salat and Reciting Al-Quran will help me. Then, I feel so calm, no more anger in me. (Nadatu)

I feel so calm, my mind is empty and I think about nothing. I like that feeling. (Rawidyah)

During Surah Recitation Script

After surah recitation sessions, the informant stated that they fell calm and blessed. They are more grateful and have high hopes.

I feel so peaceful and I feel perfect. During the session I met my sister and I felt so happy. Then I know that I have to put away my anger. I feel new light in my heart. (Nadatu)

I cried. I feel so sad. I didn't know why. However, I felt calm after that. I also feel grateful after reciting the surah. I am so blessed. (Diana)

During Salat Script

Some of the informants mentioned that they feel calm and relax after salat. They are happy and grateful to have these feelings again.

I feel so soothe and calm after taking the wuduk. (Sheila)

I feel so grateful after salat. I feel that I am close to the Al-Mighty. I feel so relieved and calm again. (Sheila)

When I started my prayer, I feel so serene, calm and feel that Al-Mighty is close to me. Never had that kind of feelings in my daily salat. I feel total calmness, no disturbance or distraction. (Diana)

I feel so close with the Al-Mighty. I know that I can asked anything and the Al-Mighty will grant it. I feel so calm... so happy. (Amalina)

The others also mentioned that salat makes them forget about the past and they are happy to forget those painful memories.

After salat, I know that I have strengthen my faith. I want to change myself. I want to put behind everything. (Saidah)

After salat I know that I have changed. I want to forget the past. Yes, I forgot my past already after the salat. (Nadatu).

I feel that I changed. Salat changed me. I am ok now. (Radawiyah)

After completing the hypnotherapy sessions

Most of the informants mentioned that they feel so happy after receiving this treatment. They feel more calm, focus and grateful.

I am grateful that the Al-Mighty is always there for me, now I feel safe (Amalina)

Alhamdulillah, now I feel so much relieved. Thank you Al-Mighty for giving this feeling to me (Diana)

I am grateful to the Al-Mighty for sending someone to me, I feel happy and relieved since there is someone who can listen to me and cheer me up. (Sheila)

I am grateful to the Al-Mighty, and I highly believed that He has made my faith and belief stronger after having this session. (Nadatu)

I now let everything to the Al-Mighty, because He knows what the best is for me. (Radwiyah)

Discussions

Every Muslim believed that God has created man in a very beautiful mould. Man not only having a beautiful physical outlook, but also has been endowed by God the inner aspects which could not be interpreted and measured in empirical way. Man is constituted of two elements; the body and the soul. Al-Ghazali describes human nature as an integration of spiritual and bodily forces. The body and the soul are very closely interrelated, which means without the soul, the body alone cannot be named as man. Likewise, without the body, one cannot be a man. Nevertheless, the real essence that gears the physical body to function is the soul and not the body (Nik Rosila Nik Yacob, 2013). Muslim everything in life is religion we can also say that everything in life of Muslim is spiritual. According to Al-Ghazali on the conceptualization of the human soul, there are four aspects of a person that signify his or her spiritual identity. These are the ruh (the spirit), nafs (ego or the self), aqal (cognition) and qalb (heart) (Abu-Raiya, 2012 and Haque & Keshavarzi, 2014).

The findings show that hypnosis with spiritual elements did help the clients in disengaging with their hatred and fear. This finding is parallel with Sulaiman & Gabadeen (2009) and Battis (1989) statements that he approaches using doa, dhikir, salat and al-Quran recitation that blended in hypnotherapy can be considered a success when dealing with clients who are drowned of their guilt, anger and hatred. Hypnosis has in reality always been integral to the experience of spirituality. The understanding and use of hypnosis however can simplify and enhance spiritual growth. Hypnosis is a learnable and specific process which can be the means for achieving trance, transcending the rational and entering into a mystical, spiritual experience which taps into the spiritual and un-conscious resources of the individual and into that part of the psyche which is open to the influence of God and the Cosmos. The comprehension of God is beyond the limits of the conscious mind. Rather, God is in all and within each person and can be experienced within the darkness of the unconscious. It may be from this state that God's words are experienced or it may be, as is more usual, that the God within directs the actions and thoughts of the person such that we have some confidence of God's will (Mehtheson, 1986; Moore et al., 2012). By using prayer, meditation, or attending a religious institution, informants who did use this resilience strategy differed in how they experienced and understood religion and/or spirituality over the life span (Singh, Garnett, & William, 2012).

Conclusions

Integrating Islamic Spiritual elements in hypnotherapy can help individual who lost and need help. Hypnosis can also make use of relaxing and containing techniques, which will reduce the child's feelings of anxiety and enable them to feel safe and secure (Leask, 2012). The findings show that using the approaches using doa, dhikir, salat and al-Quran recitation that blended in hypnotherapy is a great success in helping incest victims with the feeling of guilt, fear, anger and trauma. All the approaches help the victims manage to forgive themselves as well as others and make them feel closer to God. Spiritual Hypnotherapy with Islamic Approach (SPHIA) has been proven empirically in helping the incest victims.

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