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Mental Health Mobile Apps Review: Islamic Design and Content Features in Digital Therapeutics

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01 Introduction

- COVID-19 pandemic has caused increasing number of people having mental health issues which lead to adverse effect in our life.
- Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) Health Tracking Poll (2020) indicate the adverse effects on mental health and wellbeing:
  - difficulty sleeping (36%)
  - Eating disorder (32%)
  - increased alcohol or substance use (12%)
  - worsening chronic conditions (12%).
- Many solutions are being offered, this work aims to learn from Islamic perspective; as every illness can be cured or prevented, based on prophetic tradition:
  - "There is no disease that Allah has created, except that He also has created its treatment" (Sahih Al-Bukhari, Book 71, Hadith 582, narrated by Abu Huraira).
- Leveraging on technology to explore provide potential solution, this paper reports a initial review on the interactive and digital therapeutics for treating mental health with focus on exploring the Islamic Design and Content features on the applications.

Literature review

- Qur'an can assist those who are suffering from emotional trauma in searching for a meaningful quality of life Samah (2018).

- Qur'an identified destructive thoughts and negative conditioning as *nafs al-ammara*, or the commanding self

- The Qur'an provides guidance to help mankind overcome the inner turbulence created by *nafs al-ammara* and bring the calm self, *nafs al-mutmainna*, into being - this research evidently showed that Islam values mental health highly as well as teaches us to get rid of any kind of negative or self-destructive thoughts and feelings.

- Surah Ad-Dhuha teaches us, "And [by] the night when it covers with darkness; And He found you lost and guided [you], And He found you poor and made [you] self-sufficient." (93:2, 7-8 Saheeh International

02 Methodology

- Digital Therapeutics (DTx) applications cure medical conditions using mobile phones with applications..

- DTx application category intends to provide *high-quality software-driven evidence-based therapeutic interventions to patients to prevent, manage, or treat medical disorders or diseases.*

- Procedure of mobile application evaluation:
  - Search for application in Apple Store and Google Play: "Islamic Mental Health," "Islamic Meditation," and "Muslim Covid-19 Mental Health."
  - Review of Mobiles Application that fits the DTx features
  - Conduct evaluation on selected DTx : 1. Sabr, 2. Sakeenah, 3. Mindful Muslim, 4. Halaqah, 5. Breath with Qur'an
  - Identify Islamic Design and Content features/elements/aspects
    - navigation, **interactivity**, legitimacy, **objectivity**, authority, **relevancy**, attractiveness, credibility and reliability

03

Result and Finding

1. Sabr

Concerns

1. Anxiety
2. Stress

Goals

1. Guided meditation
2. Spiritually uplifting courses
3. Vocals for calming, sleep, study, stress
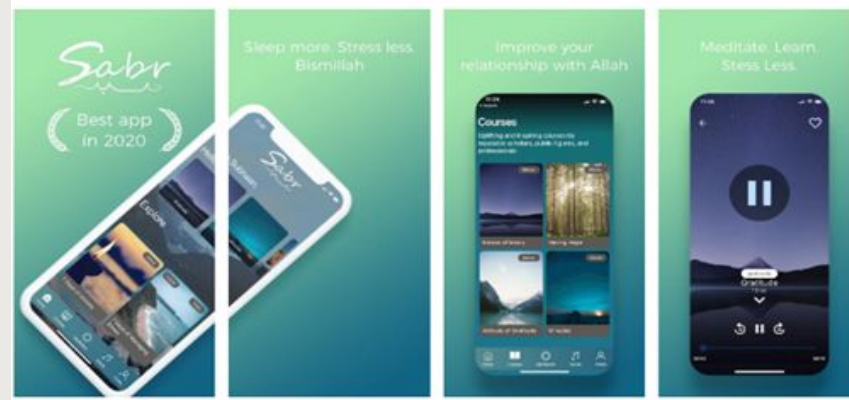4. Increase spiritual relationship with Allah

Courses

- 11 types of Uplifting and motivational courses from notable scholars, experts, and public figures.

Meditation

- Available 12 types of guidance and each provides contains 1 to 7 sessions of 12 different guides

Vocals

- (Nasheed) - 19 albums of Nasheed from several Nasheed artists.

2. Sakeenah

Concerns

1. Anxiety   2. Depression 3. Lack of sleep 4. Emotional issues

Goals

1. Guided audio content series for meditation.
2. Guided modern techniques from Quran and Hadith

Meditation

a) Meditation In Islam - Introduction of meditations in Islam.

b) Reduce Anxiety- Mindfulness meditation to reduce anxiety.

c) Moral Sleep stories- From Islamic History to sleep better.

d) Meditate Now- Short single sessions.

e) By Allah- Guideline about Allah will always provide way

f) Tawakkal Ala'Allah- build trust in Allah's plan.

Meditation

g) Our losses & sabr- Learn to deal with whatever befalls.

h) Our Emotions - acknowledgement of user experience

i) This too shall pass- The art of navigating through life's contractions

j) Qadar- listen as to build a calm unconditional acceptance

h) Ground Yourself- 7-minute session of grounding yourself

k) Dua- Incredibly powerful Dua's that will heighten connection.
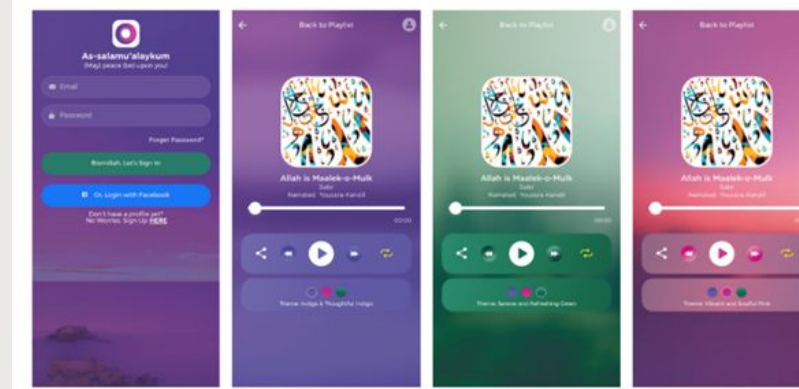
3. Mindful Muslim

Concerns

1. Anxiety
2. Depression
3. Lack of sleep
4. Emotional issues

Goals

1. Provide hopeful and inspirational stories;
2. Guided talk down to boost mental well being
3. Provided Ruqyah section for protection, depression, frightened, against sihir and other general issues

Guided talk down

- Topics covered are anxiety, 12 Lessons of how to deal and cope with several mental issues, Hope, stress, and fear

Build Playlist

- 11 types of Uplifting and motivational courses from notable scholars, experts, and public figures.
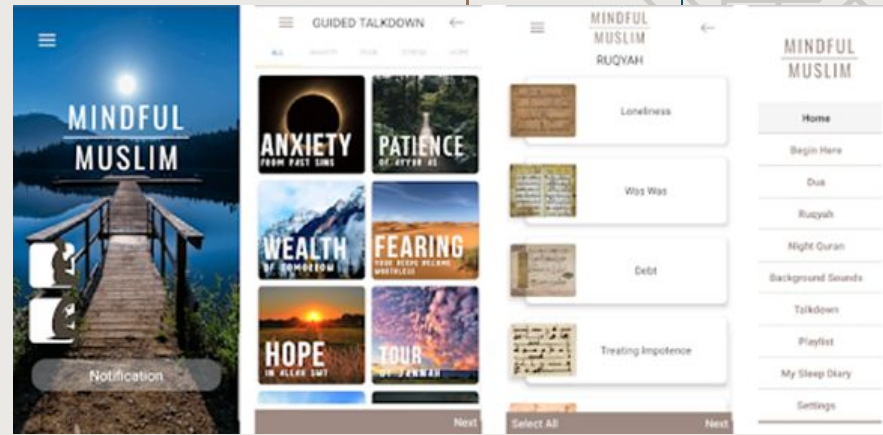
4. Halaqah

Concerns

1. Sadness,
2. Sleep,
3. Stress,
4. Depression

Goals

1. Provide Dhikir sessions to bring peace to heart, 2. Provide collection of Adhkar to reduce stress of daily life, 3. Mindfulness session, 4. Provides motivation courses to boost up mental well being.

Courses:

a. Mindfulness: Total 50 courses to improve mental health, including overwhelmed, anxiety, courage, meditation
b. Purification - 11 courses focus on anger issues, envy lust and death
c. Dhikr - Total 44 minutes and 25 seconds Dhikir to Allah and Salawat.
d. Featured course - Guide to meditation of 13 minutes 30 seconds
e. Inspirational quotes: Downloaded course to view offline

Profile: Update profile, account settings, Contact support
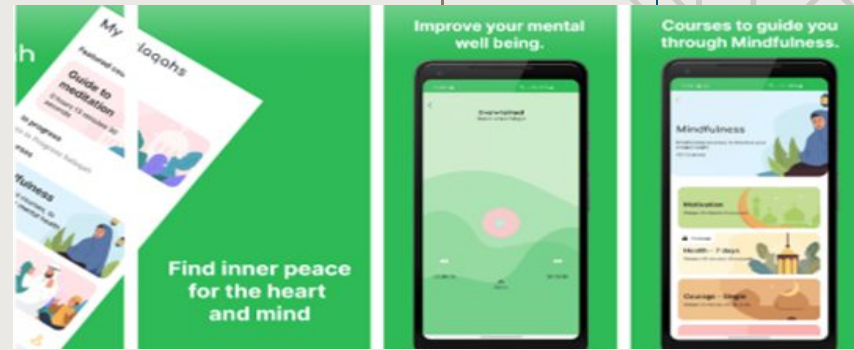
5. Breathe with Qur'an

Concerns

1. Hyperventilation,
2. Anxiety,
3. Unstabilized nervous system,
4. Depression

Goals

1. Several breathing exercise to overcome mental illness such as anxiety,

2. Increase metabolism, 3. Reduce worry, 4. Stabilize nervous system

Homepage

a. Calculate breathing level: Select breathing level from 1-9,Slleep mode

b. Select calming sound l: Choose 13 types of calming sounds

c. Select Surah: Choose 19 surahs

Setting

a. Language: Select language   b. Sound of Nature: Select volume of nature sound

c. Calculate breathing level: Breathe for 60 seconds and count

d. Hyperventilation: Learn technique to control and stop

e. Sleep Mode: Learn 4-7-8 technique and breathing lessons
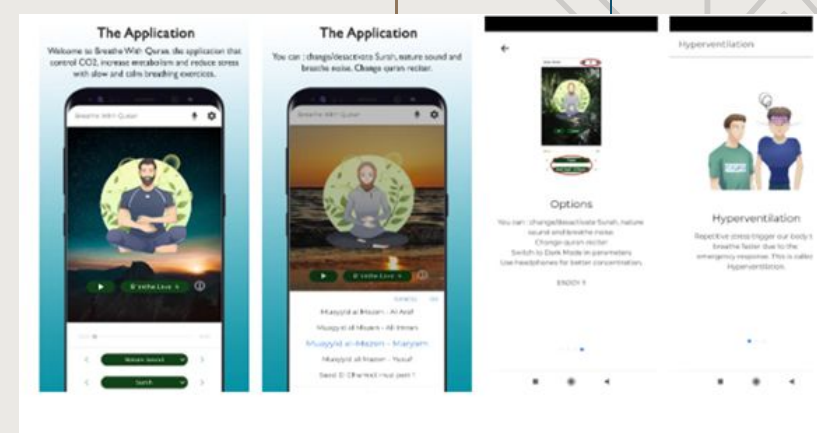
Findings

- Selected DTx could be leveraged to treat Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Sleeping disorder, Emotional issues, Unstabilised nervous system
- Islamic Design and Content features are emerging in DTx
  - User friendly navigation for interacting with applications - easy setting, levels selection, profile updates
  - Motivation and Inspiration using positive words derived from Quranic Verses, Hadith and word of Islamic Scholars
  - Mindfulness techniques- breathing with zikir
  - Calming techniques with sound: nasyeed and sound of nature
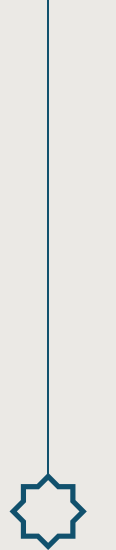 - Guidance for medication

04

Conclusion

Conclusion

- Mobile devices and applications is part of digital living therefore leveraging the usefulness is important
- Responsible use of technology - for good purpose and deter people from wrong doing e.g for healing mental health vs causing mental health
- Recommendation of using DTx with Islamic Design and content has potentials to compliment the treatment for Mental Health Issues such as Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Sleeping disorder, Emotional issues, Unstabilised nervous system
- Future work may explore into user research on the user experience (e.g. look, feel and usability) DTx for mental health to understand if they can be effective as treatment..

As stated in the Qur'an, *"For indeed, with hardship [will be] ease. Indeed, with hardship [will be] ease,"*, Islam encourages people to never give up hope and to seek peace, because Allah aids people who seek assistance for themselves.

— (94:5-6, Qur'an)

Thank You!

جزاك الله خيرًا