

# ISLAMIC INNER ENERGY THROUGH PAPER STROKES: A FREE EXPRESSION OF SWOT ANALYSIS

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## RESEARCH ARTICLE

**ISLAMIC INNER ENERGY THROUGH PAPER STROKES: A FREE  
EXPRESSION OF SWOT ANALYSIS**

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**ABSTRACT**

This study aims to explore the integration of Islamic values in an art-based psychoeducational intervention as a medium for self-reflection among Muslim students. Using the SWOT analysis framework and the Islamic practice of *muhasabah* (self-reflection), this research was designed as a workshop focused on enhancing self-awareness, understanding personal potential, and strengthening the spiritual dimension. Participants consisted of 54 fourth-semester students aged 19–21 from the Psychology Study Program at Universitas Muhammadiyah Surabaya. The intervention was implemented in three sessions: (1) psychoeducation on the concept of self-energy and SWOT reflection from an Islamic perspective, (2) self-reflection through free art expression (paper drawing), and (3) reflective discussion and meaning-making.

Observational findings showed increased self-awareness, stronger emotional engagement, and active participation throughout the intervention. Non-verbal artistic expression effectively helped participants access emotional layers that are often difficult to express verbally. The integration of Islamic values enriched the reflection process by providing spiritual meaning and moral direction. These findings highlight that value-based and art-based psychoeducational approaches can be effective strategies to support mental health and positive identity development among Muslim students.

**Keywords:** *self-reflection, SWOT analysis, muhasabah, expressive art, psychoeducation, mental health*

**ABSTRAK**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi integrasi nilai-nilai Islam dalam intervensi psikoedukatif berbasis seni sebagai sarana refleksi diri pada mahasiswa Muslim. Menggunakan pendekatan SWOT analysis dan praktik *muhasabah* (refleksi diri Islami), penelitian ini dirancang dalam bentuk workshop yang berfokus pada pengembangan kesadaran diri, pemahaman potensi personal, serta penguatan dimensi spiritual. Partisipan dalam penelitian ini berjumlah 54 mahasiswa aktif semester 4 Program Studi Psikologi Universitas Muhammadiyah Surabaya dengan rentang usia 19–21 tahun. Intervensi dilaksanakan dalam tiga sesi, yaitu: (1) psikoedukasi mengenai konsep energi diri dan refleksi SWOT dalam perspektif Islam, (2) ekspresi refleksi diri melalui media seni (goresan kertas bebas), dan (3) refleksi dan diskusi mendalam.

Hasil observasi menunjukkan peningkatan kesadaran diri, keterhubungan emosional, serta keterlibatan aktif peserta selama proses berlangsung. Ekspresi non-verbal melalui seni terbukti membantu peserta dalam

mengakses lapisan emosional yang sulit diungkapkan secara verbal. Integrasi nilai-nilai Islam memberikan makna spiritual yang memperkaya proses refleksi dan pengembangan diri. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa pendekatan psikoedukatif berbasis nilai dan ekspresi seni dapat menjadi strategi efektif dalam mendukung kesehatan mental dan pembentukan identitas positif mahasiswa Muslim.

**Kata kunci :** *refleksi diri, analisis SWOT, muhasabah, seni ekspresif, psikoedukasi, kesehatan mental*

## INTRODUCTION

In the context of Muslim students, the integration of religious values into the process of self-understanding and personal development is crucial. The growing interest in spiritual practices and Islamic values as sources of strength and inner peace among young Muslims indicates the need for a self-development approach that is sensitive to religious beliefs (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2015). SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) is a strategic framework commonly used to evaluate performance, competition, risks, and potential of an entity (Jafar, 2023). Applying SWOT analysis to oneself has the potential to enhance self-understanding, which in turn influences future actions and planning, while also facilitating self-improvement (Jafar, 2023). However, purely analytical verbal approaches often fall short of reaching the deeper emotional and spiritual dimensions. The effectiveness of art therapy and creative expression in facilitating self-understanding and emotional healing has been well documented (Malchiodi, 2003), offering a non-verbal space to explore feelings and thoughts, allowing individuals to access deeper layers of consciousness.

Aligned with Islamic values, self-reflection (*muhasabah*) plays a central role in spiritual growth and self-improvement (Al-Ghazali, 2008). Muslims are encouraged to regularly evaluate themselves, recognize the blessings of Allah SWT, acknowledge their limitations, and understand opportunities and challenges in living according to religious teachings. Integrating the principle of *muhasabah* with creative self-reflection methods is expected to produce a more comprehensive self-understanding.

The Project-Based Learning (PBL) initiative “Islamic Inner Energy through Paper Strokes: A Free Expression of SWOT Analysis” emerges as an innovative response to this phenomenon. Through paper as a medium and the freedom of artistic expression, fourth-semester psychology students will be facilitated to visualize their personal strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within the framework of Islamic values. Free strokes on paper are expected to trigger a more intuitive and emotional reflection process, going beyond the limitations of verbal analysis. The resulting artworks will not only serve as visual representations of their SWOT analysis but also as personal and meaningful self-reflection artifacts—acting as visual reminders and supportive instruments in their self-development journey in alignment with Islamic values.

This activity also aims to provide students with practical experience in integrating psychological principles with Islamic perspectives—an essential competency for future professionals in the field of mental health.

## METHOD

This project employs a workshop method that is practice-oriented. The activity “Islamic Inner Energy through Paper Strokes: A Free Expression of SWOT Analysis” is designed as an intervention aimed at facilitating self-exploration and potential development through creative expression rooted in Islamic values.

The participants in this activity are active fourth-semester students from the Psychology Study Program at Muhammadiyah University of Surabaya, aged between 19 and 21 years old. Participant selection was carried out in collaboration with course lecturers to ensure active involvement throughout the entire series of

activities and self-reflection. A total of 54 students participated in the program.

The workshop consists of three sessions, each with a different focus. The activity begins with a discussion on the concept of inner energy from an Islamic perspective, the importance of self-awareness (SWOT: Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) as part of worship, and how Islamic values can serve as a guide for personal growth. Participants are then guided to engage in initial reflections on their self-identity and potential from an Islamic perspective.



In the second session, participants are given complete freedom to express their SWOT reflections through paper strokes. Each participant may choose their own materials according to personal preference. The emphasis is placed on honest, non-judgmental expression as a means to understand and accept oneself.

The final session consists of a Q&A segment designed to deepen and reinforce the material presented by the resource person.

This study employed a workshop-based intervention using a descriptive qualitative design. Participants consisted of 54 fourth-semester students aged 19–21 from the Psychology Study Program at Muhammadiyah University of Surabaya. Participant selection was conducted through purposive sampling in collaboration with course lecturers. The program consisted of three sessions:

1. Psychoeducation: Introduction to the concept of inner energy, SWOT reflection, and Islamic perspectives on self-awareness.
2. Art-based Expression: Participants freely expressed their personal SWOT reflections through paper strokes, selecting their own materials.
3. Reflection and Discussion: A guided Q&A session to deepen understanding and encourage sharing.
4. Data Collection: Observations, pre- and post-activity reflections, and participant engagement were documented qualitatively.

## RESULTS

The Project-Based Learning (PjBL) activity with the theme “Islamic Inner Energy through Paper Strokes: Freely Expressing SWOT” produced positive and constructive outcomes for fourth-semester psychology students at Muhammadiyah University of Surabaya. Through the combination of SWOT analysis and Islamic values, participants were able to engage in deeper and more holistic self-reflection. This process not only introduced the concept of SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) within the context of personal development but also encouraged participants to view their potential and life challenges through a spiritual lens, as taught in Islam through the practice of *muhasabah* (self-reflection).



The use of free-form art on paper proved to be effective in helping participants express their feelings and thoughts more honestly and intuitively, going beyond verbal limitations that

often hinder self-exploration. The activity also demonstrated success in practically integrating psychological principles with Islamic values. Students gained hands-on experience in linking academic concepts with spiritual practices, which is highly relevant for future professionals in the field of mental health.

Participant enthusiasm was evident through their active engagement throughout the sessions, including during the pre-test, post-test, discussions, and other interactive activities. Guest speaker Marini, S.Psi., M.Psi., Psychologist, also enriched the students' understanding by presenting contextual and applicable material. Overall, the activity strengthened participants' self-awareness, provided a safe and creative space for personal reflection, and served as an integrative and inspiring learning model for Islamic personal development.



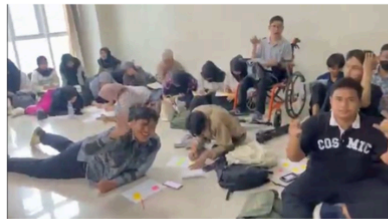
### 1. Observation Results

Based on observations during the activity, students showed high enthusiasm and engagement in each session, especially during the creative exploration using paper media. Participants appeared serious and focused when illustrating their personal SWOT, and most of them linked their strengths and life challenges to Islamic values such as

gratitude (*syukur*), sincerity (*ikhlas*), and trust in God (*tawakal*). Several participants displayed emotional expressions when presenting the meaning of their work, indicating that the activity touched deep psychological and spiritual aspects. Observations also noted that the non-verbal art approach helped those who were less comfortable expressing themselves verbally to remain active and productive during the reflection process.

### 2. Engagement

The level of participant involvement was very high, as evidenced by near-full attendance and active contributions during discussions, pre-tests, post-tests, and pop-up activities. Participants were not only physically present but also demonstrated cognitive and emotional engagement throughout the process. During the Q&A session, many students asked questions and shared personal experiences. The guest speaker also responded positively to their participation, showing that students understood the material and were able to apply it to their personal contexts. This reflects the effectiveness of the Project-Based Learning approach, which encourages active and reflective engagement.



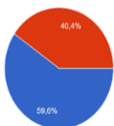
### 3. Expected Reflection

The expected outcome of this activity is that students will be able to recognize themselves more honestly and comprehensively—both their strengths and limitations—and direct their potential in alignment with Islamic values. The reflection process through art is expected not only to serve as a temporary moment but also to become a new habit in *muhasabah* practice. Students are also expected to use the SWOT artwork as a visual reminder to support their spiritual, academic, and social development. With this understanding, they can take concrete steps to improve themselves and lead a more meaningful life in accordance with Islamic teachings.



#### 4. Pre-Test

Prodi & Semester  
52 jawaban

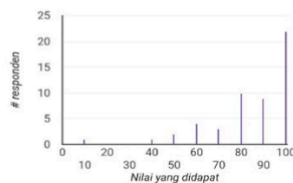


● Psikologi 4A  
● Psikologi 4B

#### Wawasan

Rata-rata	Median	Rentang
84,81 / 100 poin	90 / 100 poin	10 - 100 poin

Distribusi poin total

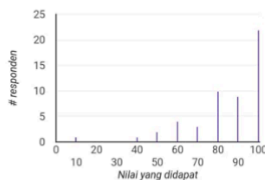


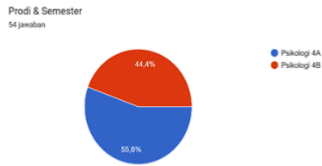
#### 5. Post-Test

#### Wawasan

Rata-rata	Median	Rentang
84,81 / 100 poin	90 / 100 poin	10 - 100 poin

Distribusi poin total





Overall, this intervention produced positive and constructive outcomes. Students reported an increase in self-awareness and a stronger emotional connection to their personal reflections. The art-based medium allowed them to express experiences that were difficult to articulate verbally. The integration of Islamic values reinforced the meaning of the reflection process and provided moral guidance throughout. Observations showed a high level of engagement, with students linking their personal strengths and challenges to Islamic values such as gratitude, sincerity, and trust in Allah. These findings are consistent with previous research on the role of spiritual integration in psychological well-being (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2015).

The workshop model demonstrated that artistic expression can serve as an accessible tool for identity exploration, while the integration of Islamic values ensures cultural and spiritual relevance for Muslim students. This approach offers a practical contribution to psychoeducational interventions within Islamic educational settings.

## DISCUSSION

The findings of this study highlight the significance of integrating Islamic values with creative expression to foster psychological and

emotional growth among Muslim students. The high level of engagement and emotional depth observed during the intervention indicates that non-verbal expression through art can serve as an effective tool for exploring personal identity and processing internal experiences. This aligns with art therapy literature, which emphasizes the capacity of creative expression to access emotional layers that are often inaccessible through verbal processing alone (Malchiodi, 2003).

Furthermore, the integration of *muhasabah*—an Islamic practice of self-reflection—strengthened the spiritual dimension of the intervention. As noted by Al-Ghazali (2008), consistent self-evaluation nurtures both moral consciousness and emotional balance. In this context, SWOT analysis functioned not merely as a strategic reflection tool but as a structured framework that enabled participants to recognize their personal strengths, limitations, and opportunities in line with Islamic ethical principles. This approach resonates with findings from Hisham Abu-Raiya and Kenneth I. Pargament (2015), who emphasized that spiritual integration can enhance psychological well-being among Muslim populations.

The workshop model also reflects a shift toward more holistic psychoeducational practices. Rather than positioning students as passive recipients of knowledge, it actively engages them in reflective processes that integrate cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions. This is consistent with contemporary perspectives in educational psychology, which emphasize student-centered and experiential learning approaches to foster resilience and identity development.

Practically, this model can be applied within Islamic educational institutions as a culturally sensitive intervention that aligns with students' belief systems while simultaneously promoting self-awareness and emotional regulation. Such alignment is crucial for ensuring that psychoeducational programs resonate with participants' values and worldviews, thereby enhancing their effectiveness.

However, this study also has several limitations. The intervention was conducted within a single

institution with a relatively small and homogenous sample, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the study relied primarily on qualitative observation and self-reports, which, while valuable for exploring subjective experiences, may not capture long-term psychological impacts. Future studies could incorporate mixed-method approaches and longitudinal designs to evaluate sustained effects on students' mental well-being.

### CONCLUSION

This project illustrates how the integration of SWOT analysis, Islamic self-reflection, and art-based expression can effectively enhance students' self-awareness and emotional well-being. It provides a promising model for combining psychological education with spiritual development in Muslim contexts. Future implementations may include longitudinal evaluation and broader application in school counseling or mental health promotion programs.

Through the Project-Based Learning Al-Islam Kemuhammadiyah 4 activity with the theme "Islamic Inner Energy through Paper Strokes: Freely Expressing SWOT", the following conclusions can be drawn:

1. The Project-Based Learning activity themed "Islamic Inner Energy through Paper Strokes" successfully served as an integrative medium for self-reflection among psychology students.
2. The integration of SWOT analysis, Islamic *mahasabah* values, and free artistic expression effectively bridged cognitive, emotional, and spiritual aspects of personal development.
3. The activity strengthened participants' self-awareness and provided a safe and creative space for personal reflection.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to LPAIK (Lembaga Pengkajian Al-Islam dan Kemuhammadiyah) UMSurabaya for providing the opportunity and space to conduct this research successfully. We also extend our thanks to the Faculty of Psychology UMSurabaya for assigning this research project and serving as a bridge throughout its implementation. Their constructive feedback, criticism, and suggestions have been invaluable in improving this work.

### DECLARATION OF POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST

We do not work for, consult, own shares in, or receive funding from any company or organization that would benefit from this manuscript and have no other affiliations beyond those stated above.

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Guidelines to Cite in References:

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