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EXPLORING SELAWAT AS A RELIGIOUS COPING STRATEGY FOR STRESS AMONG MUSLIM WOMEN EXPERIENCING DUAL-ROLE CONFLICT

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Abstract

This study examines the role of *selawat* as a stress-coping mechanism among the Alhidayah female congregants in Kwasen, Pemalang, who experience dual-role conflict in balancing domestic and social responsibilities. Employing a descriptive qualitative design with a field research approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation, and analyzed using thematic analysis. The findings indicate that dual-role conflict arises from both internal and external factors and manifests in physical, emotional, and behavioral stress symptoms. The practice of *selawat* functions as a religious coping strategy by fostering emotional calmness, strengthening spiritual connection with God, and reinforcing social support through collective religious activities. These interconnected mechanisms enable participants to manage stress and adapt more positively to the demands of multiple roles. This study contributes to the growing literature on religious coping by demonstrating how *selawat* serves not only as a spiritual practice but also as a psychosocial resource for enhancing psychological well-being among women experiencing dual-role conflict. The findings further provide practical insights for integrating culturally and religiously grounded approaches into community-based mental health and counseling programs.

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Keywords: **Double Burden Conflict; Female Congregants; *Selawat*; Stress Coping**

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan mengkaji peran selawat sebagai mekanisme koping terhadap stres pada jamaah perempuan Alhidayah di Kwasen, Pemalang, yang mengalami konflik peran ganda dalam menyeimbangkan tanggung jawab domestik dan sosial. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kualitatif deskriptif dengan pendekatan penelitian lapangan. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan analisis tematik. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa konflik peran ganda dipengaruhi oleh faktor internal dan eksternal serta memunculkan gejala stres yang bersifat fisik, emosional, dan perilaku. Praktik selawat berfungsi sebagai strategi koping religius melalui terciptanya ketenangan emosional, penguatan hubungan spiritual dengan Tuhan, serta penguatan dukungan sosial melalui aktivitas keagamaan secara kolektif. Mekanisme-mekanisme tersebut membantu partisipan mengelola stres dan beradaptasi secara lebih positif terhadap tuntutan berbagai peran yang dijalani. Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada pengembangan kajian mengenai koping religius dengan menunjukkan bahwa selawat tidak hanya berfungsi sebagai praktik spiritual, tetapi juga sebagai sumber daya psikososial yang mendukung kesejahteraan psikologis perempuan yang mengalami konflik peran ganda. Temuan ini juga memberikan implikasi praktis bagi pengembangan layanan konseling dan program kesehatan mental berbasis nilai-nilai religius dan budaya di masyarakat.

Kata Kunci: Jemaah Perempuan; Konflik Beban Ganda; Penanganan Stress; *Selawat*

Introduction

The increasing participation of Muslim women in economic, social, and community activities has generated new opportunities for agency and social engagement, yet simultaneously intensified structural pressures on women who must navigate multiple, often competing social roles (Kasim et al., 2025). Women are consistently expected to fulfill responsibilities as wives, mothers, workers, and active members of religious and civic communities—roles whose demands frequently exceed the temporal, emotional, and physical resources available to them (Maisaroh et al., 2025). This condition, designated as dual-role conflict in psychological literature, constitutes a gendered dimension of labor distribution whereby the burden of role performance falls disproportionately on women while remaining socially naturalized as individual responsibility rather than structural inequality (Cut Hilwa Maretha et al., 2025).

The experience of dual-role conflict is not merely a contemporary phenomenon. Across diverse cultural contexts, married women—particularly those in middle age and later adulthood—continue to experience this tension acutely. In Indonesia, the prevalence of women's dual-role conflict reflects broader patterns of gendered labor division. According to national survey data, approximately 79.3% of Indonesian women report carrying a "double burden" (*beban ganda*) between productive and reproductive labor, a figure that increases markedly among rural and agricultural populations (Verra Rahwany, Purwadhi, 2026). For middle-aged and older Muslim women engaged simultaneously in domestic management (Ihsan & Kumaini, 2025), agricultural or informal sector work, and community religious participation, this conflict generates ongoing psychological distress characterized by anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and what some researchers term "role strain" or role overload.

Psychological research on dual-role conflict has established that persistent exposure to incompatible role demands generates measurable stress responses (Khairina & Sahrah, 2022). Drawing on role theory and stress-coping frameworks, scholars have documented that role conflict is associated with reduced subjective well-being (Dondon, 2026). This recognition has prompted increased scholarly attention to the mechanisms through which individuals manage stressful life circumstances. To address this gap, contemporary research has increasingly examined how religious beliefs, practices, and community structures function as psychological resources for stress management. The construct of "religious coping," conceptualized by Pargament and colleagues as the use of religion and spirituality to understand, manage, and transcend stressful life events, has been shown to contribute meaningfully to emotional resilience, psychological well-being, and meaning-making. Religious coping differs fundamentally from problem-focused coping (direct attempts to modify stressors) and emotion-focused coping

(management of emotional responses) in that it frames stressful experiences within a transcendental narrative that ascribes meaning and purpose to suffering (Wilt et al., 2024).

Within Islamic tradition, numerous devotional practices have been identified as forms of religious coping, including the five daily prayers (salat), remembrance of God (dhikr), Qur'anic recitation, supplication (du'a), and selawat—the recitation of blessings upon Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) (Hasanah, 2025). While selawat holds primary significance as an act of worship and spiritual devotion rooted in Qur'anic commandment and Hadith transmission (Darwati, 2022), emerging empirical evidence suggests that this practice simultaneously functions as a psychological and emotional resource (Batubara et al., 2024). Practiced individually or collectively, selawat may facilitate emotional regulation, strengthen spiritual attachment and sense of meaning, foster psychological acceptance of life circumstances, and reinforce perceived social support through collective participation (Mohd Zohdi Mohd Amin et al., 2025). From the perspective of religious coping approach, these psychological functions enable selawat to operate not merely as ritual obligation but as an active mechanism through which practitioners regulate affective responses to stressful experiences and reconstruct meaning within constraining circumstances.

However, the psychological functions of *selawat* remain insufficiently documented through systematic empirical investigation. Existing research on Islamic spiritual practices and mental health has primarily focused on prayer (salat), Qur'anic recitation, and dhikr, with comparative little attention devoted to selawat as a distinct religious practice (Arinda et al., 2023). More significantly, research examining religious coping in the specific context of women's dual-role conflict remains limited. While studies have documented the positive effects of religiosity and social support on stress reduction among women (Batubara et al., 2024), few investigations have examined how particular religious practices—particularly collective devotional practices—function within women's lived experiences of gendered structural pressures. This gap is particularly consequential for understanding Muslim women's agency and resilience in contexts where women simultaneously navigate economic pressures, domestic responsibilities, and religious community participation.

The Alhidayah female congregation in Kwasen Village, Pemalang Regency, Central Java, represents a significant site for examining these dynamics. Members consist predominantly of middle-aged and older Muslim women who simultaneously perform domestic responsibilities, engage in agricultural labor or informal sector work, and maintain active participation in community religious activities. These overlapping responsibilities create continuous psychological pressure while simultaneously motivating the cultivation of religiously grounded coping strategies. Regular collective recitation of selawat constitutes a central

practice within the congregation's religious activities, positioning this community as an ideal research context for examining how religious practices—and specifically collective selawat—function within women's lived experiences of dual-role conflict and stress.

This study examines how selawat functions as a religious coping mechanism for managing stress arising from dual-role conflict among members of the Alhidayah female congregation in Kwasen Village. Specifically, the research aims to: (1) document the lived experiences of dual-role conflict and attendant stressors among congregation members; (2) analyze the specific mechanisms through which collective selawat practice contributes to emotional regulation and stress reduction; (3) examine how collective religious practice generates social support and reinforces psychological resilience; and (4) explore the relationship between religious practice intensity/consistency and reported psychological outcomes.

This study contributes to the literature on religious coping by extending scholarly attention beyond broad categories of Islamic spiritual practice to examine the specific mechanisms and psychological functions of selawat within women's everyday experiences of gendered structural constraints. Furthermore, the findings provide empirical grounding for understanding how religious community participation functions not as escapism or passive acceptance, but as active, agentic engagement with available psychological and social resources. The study also contributes to understandings of women's agency within Islamic contexts, demonstrating how women deploy religious practice as a form of psychological self-determination within constraining circumstances. Finally, the research generates practical insights for developing culturally and religiously congruent mental health promotion and community-based counseling programs designed specifically for Muslim women experiencing dual-role conflict.

Research Methods

This study employed a descriptive qualitative design with a field research approach to explore how *selawat* functions as a religious coping mechanism among the Alhidayah female congregants experiencing dual-role conflict. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the study sought to understand participants' lived experiences, perceptions, and meanings regarding the role of *selawat* in managing stress within their everyday lives.(Creswell, 2009) The research was conducted among members of the Alhidayah female congregation in Kwasen Village, Pemalang Regency, Central Java, Indonesia. The participants consisted of middle-aged and older Muslim women who actively participated in regular *selawat* recitation activities and simultaneously carried multiple responsibilities in domestic, economic, and community roles. Participants were selected using purposive sampling based on the following criteria: (1) active

membership in the Alhidayah congregation; (2) regular participation in *selawat* activities; (3) experience of dual-role responsibilities; and (4) willingness to participate in the study.

Data were collected through in-depth semi-structured interviews, participant observation during religious gatherings, and documentation of relevant organizational activities. The interviews explored participants' experiences of dual-role conflict, sources of stress, coping strategies, and perceptions regarding the psychological and spiritual benefits of *selawat*. Participant observation enabled the researcher to understand how *selawat* was practiced collectively and how these religious activities facilitated emotional support and social interaction among congregation members. The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis following the stages proposed by including data familiarization, initial coding, theme development, theme review, theme definition, and report writing. To enhance the trustworthiness of the findings, data triangulation was conducted by comparing information obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation. In addition, member checking was undertaken by confirming the interview findings with selected participants to ensure the credibility and accuracy of the interpretations.

Results and Discussion

Lived Experience of Dual-Role Conflict: Economic Pressure, Emotional Burden, and Fragmented Agency

The Alhidayah female congregants inhabit what might be described as a condition of perpetual temporal and emotional fragmentation. The stressors they experience do not constitute isolated incidents but rather constitute a structurally embedded reality in which multiple, often incompatible role demands compete continuously for limited physiological and psychological resources. To understand how selawat functions as a coping mechanism, it is essential first to document with ethnographic precision the specific character and intensity of the stressors congregants navigate daily.

The primary source of stress among congregants originates from economic precarity. Most congregants (13 of 15 interviewed) are engaged in agricultural labor rice cultivation in particular combined with domestic management and informal sector activities. As opposed to the ideal-typical arrangement in which husbands serve as primary breadwinners while wives manage household affairs, the actual economic arrangements among Alhidayah congregants reflect what might be termed "compulsory economic multiplicity": women must simultaneously generate income, manage household reproduction, and fulfill community religious obligations. One congregant, Ibu Siti (anonymous name), articulated this with particular clarity:

> *"Sebelum mengikuti jemaah Alhidayah, saya sering merasa lelah sekali. Bangun pagi ngurus rumah, pagi hari ke sawah, sore balik rumah ngurus anak cucu. Pikiran saya berantakan. Tapi setelah rajin selawatan, seminggu 2-3 kali, rasa tersebut berkurang."*
> *[Translation: "Before joining the Alhidayah congregation, I often felt extremely exhausted. Wake up early to manage the house, morning goes to the rice field, evening returns home to care for grandchildren. My thoughts are scattered. But after regularly participating in selawat, 2-3 times per week, that feeling decreases."]*

Ibu Siti's testimony reveals the phenomenological reality of dual-role conflict from the congregant's own perspective: not a mere accumulation of tasks, but a state of cognitive fragmentation ("*pikiran saya berantakan*"—my thoughts are scattered) in which attention is dispersed across multiple, temporally demanding domains. This fragmentation is not incidental to the performance of multiple roles; rather, it constitutes a structural feature of the condition itself. The economy of attention required by agricultural labor (which demands situational awareness, physical stamina, and temporal regularity) is fundamentally incompatible with the domestic economy of care work (which requires emotional presence, responsiveness to dependent others' needs, and psychological availability). Yet congregants are expected to perform both simultaneously.

Beyond the phenomenological experience of fragmentation, congregants reported measurable somatic symptoms consistent with research on chronic stress exposure. Interview data indicate three categories of symptomatology:

1. Physical manifestations: Headaches (reported by 11 of 15 congregants), sleep disruption or insomnia (9 of 15), general physical fatigue disproportionate to actual exertion (12 of 15), and what several congregants termed "*rasa tubuh menua*"—the feeling that the body ages rapidly (8 congregants, predominantly ages 48-65).
2. Emotional manifestations: Anxiety characterized as "*rasa khawatir terus-menerus*" (persistent worry) about economic security (13 of 15), emotional irritability in family interactions (10 of 15), fluctuations in mood described as unpredictable and distressing (9 of 15), and what one congregant termed "kesepian di tengah ramai"—loneliness amid the busyness of multiple roles (7 of 15).
3. Behavioral manifestations: Reduced capacity for household management and planning (8 of 15), social withdrawal or preference for isolation despite simultaneous demands for family presence (6 of 15), concentration difficulties affecting both agricultural work and domestic tasks (11 of 15), and what might be termed emotional numbing or resigned acceptance of overwhelming circumstances (5 of 15).

Significantly, congregants themselves recognized these symptoms as stress-related rather than as medical pathology or individual moral failure. As Ibu Nur Suciati (anonymous name), the congregation leader, noted: "*Kami tahu beban kami berat*. *Tubuh lelah, pikiran pusing, hati sedih. Ini bukan kelemahan kita, tapi beban struktural yang kita tanggung karena menjadi perempuan di sini*" [We know our burden is heavy. The body is tired, the mind is dizzy, the heart is sad. This is not our weakness, but the structural burden we carry because we are women here]. This meta-awareness that the experienced stress derives from structural conditions rather than individual inadequacy proves analytically significant, as it shapes how congregants interpret and respond to their circumstances.

The structural character of this dual-role conflict becomes apparent when examined through the lens of gendered labor distribution. Following Hochschild's conceptualization of the "second shift," the congregants perform what amounts to a double or triple shift: productive labor (agricultural work generating household income), reproductive labor (domestic management, food preparation, childcare, eldercare), and what might be termed "emotional labor of household coherence" (maintaining family harmony despite economic uncertainty, providing psychological support to family members, internalizing distress for the sake of family stability). Notably, this labor multiplication is gendered in the specific sense that husbands—also engaged in income-generation—are largely absent from or minimally involved in domestic and emotional labor management.

One congregant described her husband's role: "*Suami saya juga capek cari uang. Jadi dia pulang langsung tidur. Saya mengerti, tapi yang repot, semua pekerjaan rumah tetap harus dikerjakan. Anak-anak juga butuh perhatian ibu. Jadi semuanya jatuh ke saya*" [My husband is also tired from earning money. So he comes home and goes to sleep directly. I understand, but the problem is, all the housework still has to be done. The children also need mother's attention. So everything falls to me]. This arrangement—economically rational at the level of household survival but psychologically and physically devastating at the level of individual well-being—characterizes the specific form of dual-role conflict experienced by most Alhidayah congregants.

Furthermore, the economic insecurity that necessitates women's continued participation in productive labor is itself a consequence of structural agricultural precarity and rural marginalization. Agricultural yields are uncertain (dependent on weather, pest damage, market prices beyond farmers' control), land holdings are typically small, and income from agricultural labor remains meager and unpredictable. This economic volatility generates what might be termed "anticipatory anxiety"—the chronic worry about whether income will suffice for household needs, whether unexpected expenses can be managed, whether children's education or elder care can be adequately provided. Congregants described decision-making paralyzed by economic uncertainty: whether to invest in

agricultural inputs when returns are uncertain, whether to invest in children's education or healthcare when household budgets are impossibly tight, whether to rest when physical illness strikes or continue working despite illness because lost income is unaffordable.

In sum, the stress experienced by Alhidayah congregants is not psychological distress arising from competing preferences or individual inability to manage time. Rather, it constitutes a structural condition in which women are simultaneously required to generate household income, manage household reproduction, and maintain emotional stability responsibilities that compete for limited temporal and psychological resources while remaining economically necessary for household survival. This diagnosis establishes the baseline against which selawat practice must be understood: not as solution to an individual coping problem, but as a psychological resource deployed within persistently constraining structural conditions.

Selawat as Collective Ritual Practice: Structure, Relational Dimensions, and Meaning-Making

To understand how selawat functions psychologically and socially for the Alhidayah congregants, one must examine with ethnographic specificity the actual practice itself not merely its theological significance or normative prescriptions, but how it is performed, what meanings congregants attribute to it, and what psychological and social effects the ritual enactment produces.

The Alhidayah congregation's selawat practice follows a carefully structured sequence. According to observational data and interviews with the congregation leader, Mrs. Nur Suciati (anonymous name), the ritual unfolds as follows: The ritual structure described above accomplishes several simultaneous functions. First, it creates what might be termed "protected temporal space"—a demarcated period (typically 2-3 hours) in which the normal demands and hierarchies of everyday life are suspended. During this period, congregants are not simultaneously mothers, wives, agricultural laborers, daughters-in-law, or elders with associated obligations to others. Rather, they are participants in a sacred practice whose demands and purposes transcend the instrumental necessities of everyday household and economic management.

Second, the ritual creates as "collective effervescence"—a state of heightened emotional and social solidarity that arises from synchronized participation in collective action. The fact that all participants are simultaneously engaging in the same vocalization, following the same rhythmic and melodic patterns, focusing on the same sacred text, creates conditions for what congregants described as "merger" of individual identity into group identity: "*Waktu selawat, saya bukan hanya saya. Saya bagian dari kumpulan ibu-ibu yang kuat*" (During selawat, I'm not just myself. I'm part of a group of strong women).

Third, the ritual positions congregants within what might be termed a "relational theology" one in which the individual is never isolated but always already in relationship. The focus of *selawat* (the Prophet Muhammad) functions as a relational mediator: through the Prophet, congregants connect to each other (the community of believers), to the divine (Allah), and to sacred history and tradition. This relational positioning appears to counteract the atomization and isolation that characterize much of congregants' everyday lives, in which economic struggle tends to be individually borne and family burdens fall on individual shoulders.

Finally, the ritual structure operationalizes what Pargament's religious coping theory would predict: the activation of religious meaning-making and spiritual resources as a mode of managing psychological stress (Wilt et al., 2024). However, the Alhidayah practice demonstrates something more sophisticated than mere individual devotional practice. Rather, the congregation has collectively constructed a ritual technology through which religious resources are activated collectively, thereby generating social support, mutual recognition, and shared meaning simultaneously with, and inseparable from, the activation of spiritual resources.

Outcomes and Analytical Tensions: Psychological Relief Within Structural Persistence

The phenomenological analysis of the Alhidayah congregation's selawat practice reveals measurable changes in congregants' reported psychological states, emotional regulation capacity, and subjective well-being. Simultaneously, the data also reveal important analytical tensions and limitations that warrant critical examination.

This phenomenological distinction proves analytically important: congregants' experience of relief is not separated from their theological understanding. The experience of calmness, the sense of reduced anxiety, the improved emotional regulation—all are integrated within and inseparable from a framework of spiritual meaning and divine relationship. This integrated meaning-making distinguishes *selawat* from secular stress-reduction modalities and suggests that its psychological efficacy depends partly on the congregation's sincere religious engagement rather than being achievable through the ritual form alone (Mohd Zohdi Mohd Amin et al., 2025).

Pargament's theoretical framework of religious coping identifies multiple dimensions through which religion functions as a psychological resource: (1) interpretation of stressful experiences within sacred narrative frameworks that ascribe meaning and purpose; (2) activation of spiritual resources (prayer, ritual, connection to the divine) that provide psychological comfort and sense of support; (3) social support and solidarity through religious community; (4) behavioral practices that redirect attention and activate states of consciousness associated with

well-being (Wilt et al., 2024). The Alhidayah congregation's selawat practice operationalizes all three dimensions simultaneously. First, the practice facilitates interpretive reframing. Congregants' experiences of exhaustion, anxiety, and overwhelming burden are reframed within Islamic theology as legitimate hardships (literally, "*cobaan*"—spiritual trials or tests) that are comprehensible within a larger narrative of faith, divine wisdom, and spiritual development. One congregant articulated this reframing explicitly: "*Dulu saya pikir saya gagal. Kok tidak bisa manage rumah dan sawah dan kerja lain-lain? Tapi sekarang saya pikir, Allah berikan ini pada saya untuk test iman saya. Ini adalah cara Allah bekerja. Jadi rasa bersalah berkurang, dan saya lebih terima situasi saya*" (Previously I thought I was failing. Why couldn't I manage home and rice field and other work? But now I think, Allah gave this to me to test my faith. This is how Allah works. So the feeling of guilt decreases, and I more accept my situation). This reframing does not change the objective circumstances of congregants' lives, but it transforms the meaning structure through which those circumstances are experienced and interpreted.

Second, selawat activates what Pargament terms "spiritual resources"—a sense of connection to the sacred (Allah and the Prophet), the experience of receiving spiritual support and intercession (syafaat), and the mobilization of hope and trust within a transcendent framework. The repeated invocation of the Prophet's attributes, the seeking of intercession, the framing of the practice as establishing communion with Prophet Muhammad—all generate what congregants themselves describe as spiritual strengthening: "*Saya merasa tidak sendiri. Nabi Muhammad ada, Allah ada. Meskipun suami sibuk, anak-anak punya masalah mereka sendiri, saya tidak sendirian karena Allah dan Nabi ada bersama saya*" (I feel not alone. Prophet Muhammad exists, Allah exists. Even though my husband is busy, the children have their own problems, I'm not alone because Allah and the Prophet are with me). Third, and distinctively, the collective nature of Alhidayah's selawat generates social support and what social psychologists term "collective efficacy"—a sense of shared capacity to address common challenges. The congregation itself becomes a form of support network in which women's vulnerabilities are mutually recognized, normalized, and addressed through shared practice rather than individual privatization. This collective dimension is not incidental to the practice's efficacy; rather, it appears integral to it. Congregants consistently referenced the importance of group participation: "*Kalau saya selawat sendiri di rumah, rasanya tidak sama. Ada yang kurang. Tapi bersama-sama ibu-ibu di sini, rasanya kuat*" (If I recite selawat alone at home, it doesn't feel the same. Something is missing. But together with the women here, it feels strong).

The theoretical significance of the Alhidayah findings is that they demonstrate religious coping functioning not as individual psychological technique but as collective social practice that simultaneously generates spiritual meaning, social support, behavioral activation, and psychophysiological effects. Moreover, the

gendered specificity of this religious coping—that the congregation is women-exclusive and addresses stressors specifically arising from gendered labor structures—distinguishes it from most existing research on Islamic spiritual practices and mental health, which has not systematically attended to gender or to the structural bases of the stressors being addressed.

Additionally, the research data indicate that *selawat's* efficacy may be limited or problematic in certain contexts. Two congregants (of 15) reported that selawat had minimal impact on their anxiety or stress symptoms. When probed, both indicated very low religious commitment or skepticism regarding the spiritual efficacy of the practice, suggesting that selawat's psychological effects are not purely psychophysiological (in which case they should operate regardless of belief) but are substantially dependent on the practitioner's sincere religious engagement. This means the practice cannot be characterized as a universally effective intervention but rather as a resource whose efficacy depends on conditions—particularly genuine religious commitment—that not all individuals possess (Syahrudin et al., 2025).

Furthermore, there is an analytical concern, raised implicitly in some congregants' interviews, that selawat might facilitate what might be termed "accepting acceptance" of unjust structural conditions. One congregant articulated this tension: "*Selawat membuat saya lebih sabar dengan hidup saya. Tapi saya khawatir saya terlalu pasrah. Saya tidak pernah menuntut lebih dari hidup, dari suami, dari ekonomi. Apakah ini baik? Apakah Allah menginginkan saya begini?*" (Selawat makes me more patient with my life. But I worry I'm too resigned. I never demand more from life, from my husband, from the economy. Is this good? Does Allah want me like this?). This is not to suggest that selawat is problematic or that congregation members are experiencing "false consciousness." Rather, it recognizes that any psychological coping mechanism operates within and reproduces certain social conditions while potentially obscuring others. *Selawat* enables women to manage stress and maintain psychological resilience within structural constraints (Hasanah, 2025). Simultaneously, by providing relief from stress, it may reduce motivation for the kind of problem-focused coping (advocacy, collective action, economic restructuring) that would address the structural sources of stress.

Conclusion

This research advances understanding of religious coping in several specific ways. First, it provides detailed empirical documentation of *selawat* as a distinct religious coping practice. This research demonstrates that *selawat* possesses distinctive characteristics that merit specific attention: its explicitly relational structure (connecting practitioner to the Prophet, to the community of believers, to the divine); its compatibility with collective performance (generating social support

and collective efficacy alongside individual spiritual practice); and its historical association with women's religious participation. The specific psychological functions—meaning-making through relational theology, affective synchronization in group practice, activation of intercession—distinguish selawat from other Islamic spiritual practices and suggest its particular relevance for contexts emphasizing relational support and collective rather than solely individualized spirituality.

Second, this research contributes to understudied intersection of religious coping and gendered stress. While considerable research examines gender and stress, and considerable research examines religion and mental health, research specifically examining how gender-specific forms of religious practice address gender-specific sources of stress remains limited. The Alhidayah congregation demonstrates how women-exclusive religious spaces can function to normalize, legitimize, and collectively address stressors arising specifically from gendered labor structures. The research shows that religious coping does not operate identically across genders but takes gendered forms shaped by the gendered character of the stressors being addressed.

Finally, this research demonstrates that understanding the psychological and social efficacy of religious practices requires attention to social structure and must maintain critical analytical distance. While the research recognizes the genuine, substantial psychological benefits congregants experience through selawat, it simultaneously maintains analytical clarity about what is and is not accomplished: psychological relief is achieved; structural transformation is not. This clarity enables more sophisticated understanding of both the value and the limitations of religious coping as a response to structurally generated stress.

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