TAZKIYYAT AL-NAFS, DHIKR, AND SENSITIVITY AS CULTURAL MODEL OF INDONESIAN COMMUNITIES IN FACING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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Abstract: This article used a qualitative method with the approach of studying literature in the fields of religious psychology, Islamic psychology, and culture to obtain concepts and theories that are relevant to studies on facing the anxiety and worries caused by the outbreak of COVID-19. The results reveal the COVID-19 outbreak has various impacts on Indonesian people, they are encouraged to express optimism, psychological sensitivity, and social piety through various empathical (caring) ways as the implementation of the theology of al-Ma'un. And through tazkiyyatu al-Nafs and dhikr as models to eliminate anxiety and worries caused by COVID-19. Media reporting about COVID-19, besides being informative, also causes anxiety so that sensitivity and social piety of the community are needed. This article explained that through the rites of tazkiyyatu al-Nafs, dhikr, and implementation of al-Ma'un theology developed by KH. Ahmad Dahlan, as well as a collaboration of cultural approaches with the psychology of religion, can reduce the level of anxiety, worry, and fear of the people caused by COVID-19.

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- **Keywords:** Psychological sensitivity, *Tazkiyyatu al-Nafs*, Theology of al-Ma'un, Social piety, anxiety.
- Abstrak: Artikel ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi literatur di bidang psikologi agama, psikologi Islam, dan budaya untuk memperoleh konsep dan teori yang relevan dengan kajian menghadapi kecemasan dan kekhawatiran akibat wabah COVID-19. Hasil mengungkapkan wabah COVID-19 memberikan dampak yang beragam bagi masyarakat Indonesia, mereka didorong untuk mengekspresikan optimisme, kepekaan psikologis, dan kesalehan sosial melalui berbagai cara empati (kepedulian) sebagai implementasi dari teologi al-Ma'un. Dan melalui tazkiyyatu al-Nafs dan dzikir sebagai model untuk menghilangkan kecemasan dan kekhawatiran yang disebabkan oleh COVID-19. Pemberitaan media tentang COVID-19 selain informatif juga menimbulkan kecemasan sehingga dibutuhkan kepekaan dan kesalehan sosial masyarakat. Artikel ini menjelaskan bahwa melalui ritus tazkiyyatu al-Nafs, dzikir, dan implementasi teologi al-Ma'un yang dikembangkan oleh KH. Ahmad Dahlan, serta kolaborasi pendekatan budaya dengan psikologi agama, dapat menurunkan tingkat kecemasan, kekhawatiran, dan ketakutan masyarakat akibat COVID-19.
- **Kata Kunci:** kepekaan psikologis, *Tazkiyyatu al-Nafs*, Teologi al-Ma'un, Kesalehan sosial, Kecemasan.

A. INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 pandemic is not only a problem in Indonesia but also in all countries of the world. Indonesian people, in particular, experience psychological anxiety caused by COVID-19. Society is demanded to adapt to all changes in the cultural theory instincts Utami (2015), adaptation is a problem that needs to be solved when a person or group communicates with other parties of different cultures. The intercultural adaptation process is an interactive process that develops through the communication activities of individual migrants with their new socio-cultural environment. As a Muslim, of course, a person has principles in looking at this problem. Moreover, this problem can adversely affect a variety of psychological, social, and cultural conditions, coupled with mass media coverage every day that is more dominant related to this pandemic. According to Syaiful Hamali (2012), the existence of religious psychology is that a religious group is known by the

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Islamic community, namely, groups of people who live based on faith because faith in Allah will form noble character and high social awareness.

Indonesian people consume news every day about the dangers of COVID-19, especially how the transmission is very terrible. Purwanto W. (2019) and Survadilaga (2013) explain that disasters will always be present on the surface of the earth in various forms. It certainly can affect the psychological community that will tend to be more scared after the news. They assume that corona is very dangerous and can cause death. Besides that, as a religious community, according to Syaiful Hamali (2012), people should only fear Allah SWT. As people of faith, they need to develop psychological sensitivity amid a pandemic COVID-19 that the virus, according to Usman MH., (2020) and Shi et al., (2020), was first discovered in Wuhan, China, at the end of 2019, as happened in the Caliphate of Umar Bin Khatab, where an outbreak had occurred in Jerusalem, Palestine. Virus outbreaks that disturb people are not only happening now but also in the past. It answers some of the growth responses and the media that always aired about the transmission of the coronavirus, causing fear of transmission, making people more often experience excessive panic. It is also because the symptoms caused by this virus are common symptoms that often occur when experiencing a common cold.

In addition to making the community a stricter judge of people in social groups, the threat of disease can make it more distrustful of strangers, and strangers in the social environment do not feel comfortable with the surrounding community's attitudes. There is also someone who just returned from out of town to feel isolated or out of place after being treated like a criminal. Extreme attitudes like these can trigger individualistic attitudes in the social environment. The community must be careful and vigilant but not be disgusted due to excessive fear. This excessive attitude of fear will only cause people to experience psychological disorders. In particular, all religions and Islam strongly encourage each other to work hand-in-hand, help, and support each other so that the community is always strong and optimistic about being able to face all kinds of trials while putting forward optimism that various wisdom will be present. Sofwan N. (2018) terms these qualities by glorifying each other.

The Indonesian Ministry of Health said that COVID-19 has a significant impact on people's lives. Usman MH. (2020) affirms the COVID-19 virus that is pandemic to all countries in the world clearly causes social conditions to be difficult, which in Islamic legal terms, it is called the essence of emergency. COVID-19 is mentioned to cause mental health disorders so that psychological assistance is needed, especially for positive patients of COVID-19. Therefore, according to Khaeruman et al. (2020), fatwa and government regulations must be obeyed by all people, including Muslims. However, it is really ironic, according to Khaeruman et al., (2020), together with the sophistication of information technology until now, the vaccine has not been found. On the other hand, if it is examined closely, it is a secret and a trial from Allah SWT as well as measuring the extent of patience and fortitude of humans and Muslims in particular. According to Hafiz (2019), the concept of religious psychology is how the role of religion in one's morality. He proved that supernatural theories of punishments or trials of God, such as the concepts of sin and hell, can improve individual moral behavior.

The enthusiasm and support of family and friends are essential for positive patients of COVID-19, as stated by Rifqi (2019), it is a form of implementation of individual social piety into communal piety. It is a form of anticipation for someone who becomes a conversation in the community not to experience stress and down. Therefore, as Muslims, all brothers and sisters need to work together to provide support so that optimism for recovery is increasing. Furthermore, it is very sinful if someone says the words that make the community affected by COVID-19 down, especially to people who are positive COVID-19. Both social and religious norms strictly prohibit it.

Individual piety under these conditions is indispensable. Sueca IN. (2019) explained that the role of scientists in providing correct views and perspectives is a social responsibility to the community. Islam teaches people always to do good to others and open their eyes and be mature in thinking and understanding that what is dangerous is not the virus. One of the easiest forms of social exclusion, according to Isti'anah (2019), is a status update that contains positive things. All people feel the impact of the current trials; therefore, all communities must implement their respective religious advice as a form of obedience to God. As stated by Anggraini (2017), the role of educational institutions and parents is vital to encourage their children to play an active role

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as part of the problem solver as a form of positive contribution at this time.

The piety and sensitivity of both psychological and social individuals in their role against the COVID-19 virus can be implemented in various ways. First is awareness of quarantining oneself and family as a form of obedience to government and religious policies. Quarantine is very necessary so that this virus can be overcome and not spread too broadly. Second is always washing hands before and after doing activities, using masks such as WHO and Islam that teaches that cleanliness is part of faith. The third is by implementing social distancing, which is to keep a distance while avoiding activities where there are many people or crowds of people. It is done in order to narrow the spread of this virus. If all is done, someone can also be called a health hero for those vulnerable to contracting this virus. Eating, exercising, and adequate rest is also essential as immunity.

Besides that, Islam has warned that "When someone hears about a plague infecting a country, do not go to that country, and if the plague strikes in a country where someone is, then do not leave the country because one wants to run away." Ibn Abbas said: Umar bin Khaththab then thanked Allah; after that, he left. (Hadith by al-Bukhari and Muslim). "Do not be sick people mixed with healthy people." (Hadith by Bukhari and Muslim from Abu Hurairah). Furthermore, according to Khairani (2020) and Kurdie S., Purnomo H., (2015), a way to convey various things to the community is no less important that must be with the approach of the psychology of communication and reinforcement. Cultural theory, as explained by Keesing (2014), is that human biological forms are open-ended and recognize that the way they are perfected and adjusted through the process of cultural learning enables them to shape and develop life in specific ecological environments. Likewise, in the perspective of religious psychology, according to Hamid (2017), the relationship between religion as faith and mental health lies in the attitude of one's surrender to a Supreme High power. Based on the cultural theory and psychology of religion, all people who have a particular religion will always adapt to natural changes and remain oriented to God's presence in him.

B. RESEARCH METHODS

This article used a qualitative method with literature review approach techniques in the fields of religion psychology, Islamic psychology, and

cultural theories to obtain concepts and theories relevant to studies facing the COVID-19 pandemic. Inferential, according to Engkus et al., (2020), is a research method for actual problems that are happening in the community. The data obtained were through the search for various literature in the psychology of religion, Islamic psychology, and culture. Thus, the data obtained were classified as secondary data types, which were subsequently changed in the form of descriptive qualitative narratives. In the next stage, the data were analyzed based on the theories and concepts of social psychology, Islamic psychology, and culture, and were given meaning through the process of interpreting the data in the form of research reports.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Tazkiyat al nafs, in the context of amaliah, according to Zainol (2019), involves *al-takhalli* () and *al-tahalli* (). Al-takhalli is a process of selfcleansing from bad traits, while *al-tahalli* is a process of decorating the soul with noble qualities taught by Islam. This tazkiyat al-nafs ritual is for Muslims, according to Faiz et al. (2019), can bring peace of mind to various life problems experienced. As the Sufi saying goes, whoever knows himself, he will know his God. The dhikr carried out full of meaning, according to Nasution (2018), can bring peace of mind in all conditions. In the context of community anxiety caused by the COVID-19 pandemic that occurred in Indonesia, *tazkiyatu al-Nafs* and dhikr therapy can bring inner peace and other factors that influence. Tazkiyatu al-nafs, as stated by Hutami (2019), is a way to improve the personal of human to be an elegant person and Islamic, which is ideal according to the faith and good deeds in Islam—for example, improving someone from a low level to a higher level in terms of behavior or attitudes, personality, character, and human nature. In this case, someone who always does *tazkiyah* is getting smarter, and the soul becomes calm.

Tazkiyatu al-Nafs and dhikr as a medium for presenting a sense of peace of soul must be accompanied by appreciation in totality. In practice, according to Hasan (2019), *tazkiyatu al-Nafs* is carried out with the guidance, supervision of assistance, and guidance of the *kiyai* or cleric. This direction is an effort before the implementation of the guidance of dhikr. Supervision of the cleric is an effort during the implementation of the guidance of dhikr. Besides, the assistance of the cleric is an effort after the implementation of the guidance of dhikr. Syafrudin (2017) research concluded that the more the intensity of

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the remembrance carried out using the correct method according to the guidance of the Qur'an and as-Sunnah and in the guidance of a *murshid* teacher, the more the benefits of dhikr will be produced. It is explained in the *Tafsir Al Misbah*, as in the Qur'an that zikr is classified into four forms: with the tongue through speech, with the limbs through practice, with the mind through contemplation that leads to knowledge, and with the heart through awareness of His greatness that produces religious emotions and true beliefs.

Behind the plague, COVID-19, with all the damage it causes, as a Muslim, according to Usman MH. (2020), someone certainly not limited to seeing it as a mere disaster. However, it should be seen as a provision of Allah SWT that applies to humans and the earth and the universe. For Muslims, this condition must be momentum for *muhasabah* themselves and remain optimistic. Ideally, this condition needs to be strengthened by various elements, including media coverage. It is just that what happens in the news in all media, in addition to telling informative things, it also affects the community's psychological condition. Encouraging a realistic sense of optimism, hope, and control over a person's illness or ability to cope with it, according to Pragholapati (2020), might be beneficial for the community and a counterweight to media coverage, which might create anxiety for some people.

Public panic and anxiety over the current conditions, as stated by Septiadi (2020), began when Chinese media reported the ease of spreading the virus and the number of victims that continue to grow every day. Various media reports have made people worried. According to Soliha (2015), public anxiety is not only because of this plague but also is coupled with media reports that are consistently not accompanied by refreshment for the emotions and psychic community. Therefore, the role of social piety and religious community, in this case, is needed to balance social conditions. At the same time, no less important, according to Khairani (2020) and Praama, R. Dandy Juriandra (2020), to all informants related to COVID-19, it is necessary to have good and critical communication psychology in selecting information on social media. It is done to avoid the real and hoax news as a trigger of public anxiety in the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Socio-religious sensitivity is very much needed in the form of social piety as a medium of guidance to the community to avoid anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic and even able to support and motivate the community

to rise from adversity. According to Anwar (2018), the concept of KH. Ahmad Dahlan, in al-Ma'un's theology, is oriented to the practice of alleviating poverty. Pertiwi et al. (2020) and Devi (2016) offer a form of family and community group guidance services that is considered very useful. The Islamic perspective responds to all anxiety conditions experienced by the community amid this COVID-19 disaster *Tazkiyat al-nafs*, prayer, and dhikr, according to Khotib & Mubin (2019), Kumala D., et al. (2019), and Rusdi A. (2016), in the form of ritual worship can bring a sense of comfort to humans, while being able to create social piety in humans. The forms of implementation of *tazkiyat al-Nafs* are also very diverse, ranging from the worship of maghdhah and social worship. The behavior of all society's elements at all levels experienced a shift so that in addition to the government's task, it is also an obligation together to get out of the anxiety zone. Therefore, individuals' and communities' social piety is vital to be present amid society, especially for those affected by COVID-19. This impact not only attacks private institutions, such as foundations but also government institutions, such as educational institutions and religious institutions.

Islam teaches that if there is an outbreak or trial that endangers oneself and others, it is strictly forbidden to cause problems for themselves and others. It is in the manner as in the context of COVID-19 to continue to comply with health protocols established by the government. Furthermore, if there is indeed a positive patient of COVID-19, the community is not permitted to isolate the person concerned or his family because it can cause psychological disorders. Answering feelings of anxiety and excessive fear caused by COVID-19 can be eliminated by strengthening ritual worship through dhikr and *tazkitatu al-Nafs*, according to Zidni Nuran Noordin & Zaizul Ab. Rahman (2017), its scope consists of *riyadlatu al-nafs* and *mujahadat al-nafs*. According to him, if this ritual is done sincerely, it can bring inner strength that enlightens the heart and psychic, so that objective assessment is maintained to Allah SWT.

Mujahadah al-Nafs process based on research by Zidni Nuran Noordin & Zaizul Ab Rahman (2017) found that al-Ghazali and Ibn Qayyim have similarities in defining it as a process of removing bad qualities from oneself, such as arrogant, arrogant, angry, loving the world, and greedy *haloba*. This process requires effort, stubbornness, and a strong desire in a person to ensure

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the mission to validate the despicable traits prevail. However, the discussion made by al-Ghazali and Ibn Qayyim is seen differently, in which al-Ghazali's views are put forward in detail and rankings by presenting 12 despicable traits along with treatment methods to overcome them, while Ibn Qayyim only briefly explains regarding the process this.

From Zidni Nuran Noordin & Zaizul Ab Rahman's (2017) point of view, al-Ghazali is so meticulous in explaining each of these despicable qualities to presenting its treatments that were practical and based on the Qur'an and al-Sunnah. The tense and chaotic atmosphere prevailing in his day encouraged him to provide public education so that he could purify the soul from all the diseases of the heart that could bring destruction to the self. These heart diseases can be treated by adorning themselves with noble morals and always watching every behavior and self-conduct so as not to deviate from Islamic law. It is supported by Abdul Munir (2017), who said that al-Ghazali was able to return Muslims to faith in Allah SWT by trying to improve the morals of the Islamic community to form a civil society. Efforts to improve community morals are made by improving human hearts and minds. It is because if the human heart and mind can be improved, then all actions, conversations, and lifestyle will be good. Orientation to improve morals is the primary basis of al-Ghazali towards awakening the minds of the people, as confirmed by Allah SWT in the Qur'an Surah Al-Ra'd, 11 that Allah SWT does not change what is in a people, so they change what is in themselves.

Furthermore, the process of *Riyadah al-Nafs*, according to the study of Zidni Nuran Noordin & Zaizul Ab Rahman (2017), concerning this process, found that the views of al-Ghazali and Ibn Qayyim have similarities in sharing the process with the three, namely strengthening faith, enhancing worship, and applying the qualities of *maḥmūdah*. However, the results of their research found that al-Ghazali's views are seen as systematic and profound compared to Ibn Qayyim's views, which are viewed concisely. For the aspect of faith, the authors hold that it is a crucial element for every Muslim. It is because it can be a fortress and a shield for Muslims instead of falling into the valley of disobedience that invites the wrath of Allah SWT. Besides, the faith that is sown within the souls of every Muslim may give birth to feelings of love for Allah SWT, does not hang any hope other than to Him, and does action only because of Allah SWT. The study carried out by Abdullah Firdaus (2002) states

that al-Ghazali emphasizes aspects of faith, not just beliefs based on theoretical and abstract truths, but it is a faith that arises from both reason and heart at the same time. Faith that starts from this kind of awareness will give birth to servitude to God based on ma'rifah, feelings of awe, gratitude, love, and sacrifice. Abdullah Firdaus (2002) explained again that al-Ghazali seeks to interpret all forms of terms oriented to the principle of al-Iman in the scope of Islamic Sufism, such as al-mahabbah, altawakkul, al-ikhlās, and al-sabr, according to the context and needs of the time. This case is carried out by presenting an ideal interpretation accompanied by a definite explanation. Salasiah (2008) explicated that the process of establishing faith involves an effort to strengthen belief in the six pillars of faith, including faith in God, angels, apostles, the Book, the Day of Judgment, and the Oadha Oadar of Allah SWT, which is discussed explicitly by al-Ghazali in the book Iya 'Ulum al-Din. Besides, according to Muhd Nasruddin, Zawiyah, and Muhd Surur (2010), Ibn Qayyim links the aspect of faith with the temptation of Satan, in which Satan does not have the power or ability to incite someone if the person who is instigated has a strong fortress of faith. Indeed, Allah SWT will test those who believe to prove they genuinely believe. At that time, it is known whether they believe in the hereafter or not. Those who have remained faithful and believe that only Allah can give everything will bow, love, and worship Allah SWT. It is because they feel confident with the reward that will be gained from his actions so far.

Furthermore, the government's task in this matter is the Ministry of Communication and Information of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemenkoinfo RI) to supervise and stop hoax news that has already been disseminated to the public as well as providing news about COVID-19 and accompanied by psychological education to the public. The government also has the right and authority to block fake accounts and, at the same time, give a deterrent effect to persons spreading hoax news because all laws and freedom of the press in Indonesia have been regulated in the Constitution.

Coverage in the mass media and newspapers that continuously broadcast about corona can severely impact people's psychology. The media should provide positive shows, such as showing educational things related to COVID-19 as well as entertaining and motivating them to be able to fight this virus. Therefore, the level of anxiety and fear of the public can be muted. Because both directly and indirectly, basically, this virus can be resisted, such

as providing support through the media or directly by the community. Spiritual and psychological support is needed for victims, families, and the community in general.

Coronavirus is undeniably has claimed many lives both in Indonesia and countries in the world. It encourages certain attitudes of diversity among Muslims and other religious communities as a form of concern both in the name of religion and social society. Islam teaches people to keep trying as much as possible, pray, and resign to Allah SWT for all these trials. It is just that Islam teaches its people if there is a trial, then it must remain *Husnudzon* to Allah SWT and believes that the outbreak of COVID-19 is a form of trials to Muslims. Scientifically, health experts explain that COVID-19 has been proven to be contagious and spread very quickly. Therefore, the obligation that must be obeyed by the community is to avoid the activities of many people or gather in large numbers that have the potential to bring *mudhorot*, such as transmitting and spreading the coronavirus with direct physical contact.

Trying to the maximum, praying, and resignation to Allah SWT is obligatory. Whoever wants to endeavor, it will be recorded as a worship value. If his efforts come to fruition, then at least he will get two benefits. First, he will get merit from Allah SWT. Second, he will get success or benefit from what he has worked. Conversely, if the endeavor has not been successful, then at least, he still gets the reward from Allah SWT, and if he is patient, then it will get multiple rewards. The next step that Muslims must take is a concrete step from the efforts of prayer and resignation, namely avoiding and inviting the community to maintain immunity so that they do not become agents of propagation or victims of COVID-19. "Pray for me; surely, I will grant it." As Muslims, people must have full confidence that Allah SWT will answer and provide answers to what has been sought. Allah SWT is a Realm that is omniscient, so keep on praying and asking Him with confidence.

Allah SWT loves those who are patient, make full efforts, pray full of hope, and trust. Allah Almighty surely gives an illness by providing the antidote. Thus, as a believing Muslim, one must believe that through maximum effort, prayer, and resignation, He will present an antidote. Muslims must also be sure and believe that Allah will not test a community beyond their means. Patience is key to all trials suffered.

The term lockdown during the COVID-19 pandemic is actually the same as the time of the Prophet Muhammad said if, in an outbreak, those in the area do not leave the area. Those outside the area do not go to the place of the plague. Indonesia is a country with a Muslim majority population to know the explicit message always to maintain cleanliness. Furthermore, for the term social distancing, every community can keep their distance and stay at home during the COVID-19 virus pandemic as a form of endeavor.

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) recommends that each of his people adopt a clean attitude. Because by implementing a healthy lifestyle with cleanliness, it will be able to avoid viruses or germs. "Whoever falls asleep and has fat in his hand (food waste) and has not washed it, then he is crushed by something he must not reproach but with himself. It is very relevant between the teachings of Islam and health protocols applied by the government of Indonesia always to wash hands to stay awake in cleanliness.

The disease caused by the COVID-19 virus has so far been proven to be cured by treatment. It is as has been explained in a hadith "O Messenger of Allah, may we seek treatment? He answered yes, O servants of Allah, seek treatment. Because God did not put down a disease but also put a cure except one disease, they asked what illness he was answering, the disease of old." (Hadith by Ahmad, Bukhari in *Al-Adabul Mufrad*, Abu Dawud, Ibnu Majah, and at-Tirmidzi).

Islam encourages people to maintain health as ordered by health experts so that people continue to maintain immune stability. First is by eating halal food and *thayyib*, which contain proper nutrition needed by the body. Thus, it is not only halal but must *thayyib* for the body. Second is adequate rest. Rasulullah SAW once reminded his friends who continued to use his night to worship by saying that all bodies have the right to rest so that the whole body is not easily fragile. The third is by keeping emotions, remaining optimistic, not need to be upset and anxious, letting alone panic, and angry until having a negative mind.

Muslims, according to Phelan (n.d.), have obedience to the teachings of the religion and strict rules as a form of implementation of fear of Allah SWT by putting forward the kind thought to Allah, considering it as a form of testing from Him, and putting forward an objective assessment of Him. Patience and sincerity in dealing with it is a suggestion of Islam as a form of

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optimism, as evidenced by maximum effort, prayer, and resignation. Do not panic excessively because, in truth, God will not give trials beyond the limits of ability. These qualities are termed by Khotib & Mubin (2019) as a form of *tazkiyyatu al-nafs*, where obedience and adherence to the rules of religion to be carried out in accordance with the *Shari'ah* to get the pleasure of Allah SWT and salvation. Zainol (2019) explained Said Hawwa's view of Islamic psychology that is needed to be addressed to meet the needs of Muslims to the psychological aspects of dealing with harsh and abusive relationships. It is very much in line with the condition of the people in Indonesia experiencing various changes in the situation caused by the COVID-19 epidemic.

D. CONCLUSION

This COVID-19 pandemic can have a negative impact on all sides of people's lives. The news that aired in the mass media can cause psychological disturbances, especially for positive patients and their families because of panic or excessive anxiety. Society and Muslims must be good at sorting out news from various media and remember that Allah will not give disease without providing the antidote. *Tazkiyyatu al-Nafs*, through *mujahadatu al-Nafs* and *riyadlatu al-Nafs*, zikr, and implementation of al-Ma'un theology developed by KH. Ahmad Dahlan is a ritual of worship that can be used as a medium of enlightenment to the heart and bring inner peace to the people amid the COVID-19 pandemic and to avoid various fears and anxieties.

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