

Finding Ease in Hardship: An Analysis of Individual Reflections on Implementation of Quranic Verse

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ABSTRACT

The Holy Quran guides us how to think rationally during tough times. This consequently lowers the stress caused by hardships. One such verse of Surah Al-Inshirah “*with hardship, comes ease*” (Qur’an 94:6) gives solace when days seem dark. It encourages us find the blessings associated with hurdles. So, the present study was aimed to examine how individuals interpret and apply the Quranic verse during challenging times. Study Design: This was a qualitative research where interpretative phenomenology was employed. Sampling: the research utilized purposive sampling. The interviews of 17 females were included in research. Data Collection: Face to face interviews were conducted. Participants were first given a short session on the understanding of Quranic verse and taught to use it as cognitive restructuring. Then they were instructed to recall a recent stressful incident and find ease associated with that incident in the context of Quranic verse. The researcher assisted participants during the process of finding ease. The participants were given a card on which original Arabic verse along with Urdu translation was printed. Participants were then instructed to write down their responses. Analysis: Based on written responses, systematic coding was done and major themes were derived. There were 5 categories of Hardships including Daily Hassles, Traumatic Events, Physical Illnesses, Financial Problems, and Relationship Challenges. Similarly, 3 central themes of Ease were identified which were Spiritual Growth, Personal Development Skills, Life Management Skills. Findings: The study highlights the significant role of Quranic teachings in promoting psychological well-being. Further research should study this verse’s effectiveness by using experimental design and Longitudinal research methods.

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INTRODUCTION

The scriptural term “*Yusr*” is frequently used to indicate ease and comfort, In contemporary studies it is a source of patience, positive outlook, personal healing (Wahyudin & Hamzah, 2020). Accordingly, it can be said that there are only two *yusr* (dual ease) and one *usr* (hardship). Twofold ease does not indicate to double as much. It actually means “great ease”. Accordingly, to the verse, he will only encounter one type of adversity, but numerous forms of comfort will follow. As reported by Sayyidna Hasan Al-Basri, the Holy Prophet (PBUH) once came out of his house in a n extremely joyful mood and told his companions that “One hardship cannot overcome twofold ease” based on the current passage. As a result, both Muslim and non-Muslim histories and biographies attest to the fact that he was able to

complete even the most challenging and seemingly impossible tasks. Allah fulfilled His promise to them in such a way that the world could clearly witness how the Holy Prophet (PBUH) and His companions experienced an abundance of ease that made their duty easy after every adversity. This verse is not contradictory if someone does not experience “ease” after “hardship”. In reality, Allah’s global principle remained true today. It is necessary to be strong in the face of adversity, trust Allah with sincerity of heart, commit oneself completely to Him, have high standards of expectation for His graciousness, and not give up on His mercy if success is delayed because He will certainly offer relief following every difficulty (Ibn Kathīr).

Linguistically, it originates from the trilateral root *yasara*, which conveys the notion of smoothness and facilitation. In its precise sense, *yusr* refers to actions performed without excessive strain, restriction, or suffering. Scripture consistently emphasizes that God does not impose obligations beyond a person’s capacity, nor does He nullify human ability through unbearable demands. Instead, He determines individual responsibility according to one’s physical, psychological, and material capability (Al-Zamakhsharī, n.d., Vol. 1, p. 408).

Furthermore, the term *yusr* has been described as an act that can be carried out without inducing fatigue, physical heaviness, or exhaustion of the body (Al-Qāsimī, 1957, Vol. 2, p. 427). It also refers to benefits attained without exposure to distress, pressure, or overwhelming burden, and without diminishing one’s physical or emotional capacity. Conversely, physical hardship directly affects bodily endurance and material resources. Examples include performing tasks that exceed normal stamina, such as enforcing fasting under extreme conditions, maintaining prolonged night worship, or compelling individuals to endure physically demanding or harmful acts (Al-Bāḥisīn, 2001, p. 46).

In Islamic jurisprudence, the concept of “immediate hardship” refers to sudden or unavoidable difficulties that arise during religious practice. Such instances include situations where a sick individual is harmed by using water for ablution, difficulty encountered while performing obligatory prayer or pilgrimage rituals, or challenges faced during specific rites such as the symbolic stoning of the Devils in Mina. It also extends to everyday matters, such as avoiding high-risk commercial transactions involving unshelled goods, which may lead to uncertainty or harm (Al-Bāḥisīn, 2001, p. 51).

Scripture further emphasizes complete submission to divine judgment, as expressed in the verse: “But no, by your Lord, they will not truly believe until they make you the judge in all disputes between them and find within themselves no resistance to your decisions, but accept them with full submission” (Al-Nisā’, 4:65). The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), as reflected in the verse: “We indeed know that your heart is distressed by what they say” Surah Al-Hijr (15:97). Failure to reach this level of acceptance can result in frustration, emotional distress, and a sense of loss when expectations are unmet or actions diverge from divine guidance. Such emotional pain may stem from witnessing societal stagnation and moral decline, a burden that deeply affected.

Hardship is an inherent component of human life, and across cultures, individuals rely on meaning-making practices to manage distress, regain agency, and sustain purpose. For Muslims, the Qur’an functions not only as sacred scripture but also as a practical framework for coping with adversity. Its narratives, ethical teachings, and moral guidance help believers reinterpret hardship, cultivate patience (*ṣabr*), strengthen trust in God (*tawakkul*), and guide daily behavior during times of difficulty. Over the past decade, empirical studies have increasingly documented the psychological, neurological, and social benefits of engaging with the Qur’an through listening, recitation, contemplation, and application.

These practices have been associated with reduced anxiety and depressive symptoms, as well as enhanced resilience in the face of illness, loss, and social stressors (Kannan, 2022; Moulaei, 2023).

Throughout the Prophet's lifetime, Qur'anic revelations were delivered gradually in response to real-life events and evolving circumstances. As such, the Qur'an addresses matters of faith alongside practical challenges encountered by individuals and communities, offering guidance relevant to lived experience (Ibrahim et al., 2015). Research focusing on religiosity has demonstrated that individuals who adhere to religious principles often pursue a purposeful life, which in turn strengthens their psychological resilience (Mahdi & Fazlollah; Amir, 2020). Similarly, Lamoshi's study highlights how Islamic teachings can serve as a resilience-building mechanism for younger generations by empowering inner strengths such as cognition, awareness, and thought regulation (Abdulraouf, 2015).

According to recent research, people's ability to "find ease" in the face of adversity is not only a spiritual or existential subject but also a collection of clinically useful procedures for regulating meaning and emotions. Adaptive coping is frequently associated with decreased distress through cognitive reappraisal and coping self-efficacy, according to research testing religious coping strategies. This suggests that religiously structured restructuring can serve as an active coping path to psychological relief rather than just a correlate of wellbeing (Dolcos et al., 2021). Recent global challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic and ongoing socioeconomic instability, have renewed scholarly attention to both the benefits and limitations of religious coping. While religious beliefs and practices can foster resilience and emotional stability, maladaptive interpretations may also intensify feelings of helplessness or depression when individuals perceive suffering as inevitable or punitive (Che Rahimi, 2021).

Moreover, recent studies show that concepts like spiritual resilience that is ability to use spiritual resources to overcome negative emotions are linked to improved psychological outcomes in traumatic situations. This emphasizes the need to update research on hardship-centered coping strategies in order to meet the demands of contemporary clinical and public health (Zhang et al., 2021).

Rationale

The Qur'an serves as a source of reassurance and direction during periods of adversity, particularly through the verse in Surah Ash-Sharh (94:6), which states, "*Indeed, with hardship comes ease.*" This verse is frequently cited to instill hope and perseverance during difficult circumstances. Despite its widespread use as a source of comfort, limited scholarly attention has been given to how individuals personally interpret and apply this message when confronting real-life challenges. This study therefore seeks to examine how people reflect upon and integrate this Qur'anic principle into their daily lives as a means of managing hardship. By exploring individual experiences and interpretations, the research aims to uncover how this message of optimism shapes coping behaviors and strengthens psychological resilience.

The primary focus of this study is to understand the concept of ease (*yusr*) in the midst of hardship. Difficulties may arise in various forms, including physical illness, emotional strain, or financial instability. The Qur'an consistently reassures believers that such trials are temporary and will ultimately be accompanied by relief. This conviction nurtures hope, fosters patience, and encourages individuals to remain steadfast in their faith, trusting that hardship is not permanent and that improvement will follow. Supporting this perspective, findings published in *Psychiatry Research* indicate that individuals

with stronger spiritual engagement and social support systems demonstrated better mental health outcomes during the COVID-19 pandemic. These results emphasize the vital role of faith and community in enhancing emotional well-being and coping effectively with stress and uncertainty (Umarji & Mahmood, 2023).

Research Objective

The objective of this research is to explore people's understanding and in which situations they apply the Quranic concept of "Ease with Hardship" (Verse Number 6, Surah Inshirah).

METHOD

Research Design

This study was conducted using a qualitative research design where interpretative phenomenological analysis was employed to explore participants' lived experiences.

Sampling Procedure

A Purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants. A total of 17 participants were included in the sample.

Inclusion Criteria

Participants with willingness to explore this Ayah's influence on their daily experiences were included. Participants were selected from the college and undergraduate levels to ensure they had the ability to comprehend the Quranic verse and the literacy skills necessary to understand the verse and record their daily reflections.

Exclusion criteria

Those women who reported (by themselves) to have any psychological disorder were excluded from the study.

Procedures

This study adopted a qualitative research approach using interpretative phenomenological analysis to examine the personal reflection that emerged after participants interacted with Quranic verse and made meaning of their lived experience in relation to the verse. The central goal was to understand how repeated, visible exposure to the verse "Indeed, with hardship comes ease" (Inna ma'a al-'usri yusra, Surah Ash-Sharh 94:6) that shape emotional and spiritual experiences during times of difficulty.

This study involved 17 participants, chosen to represent a range of ages and personal backgrounds to ensure a variety of perspectives. Participants were first described the context of this Quranic verse to each participant that how this verse is related to our daily life challenges by giving them daily base examples. And how they find ease in their current life situations by reflecting on this verse. Then, each participant was given a printed card that included. The Arabic script of Surah Ash-Sharh (ayah 6), Its

Urdu translation: “Indeed, with hardship comes ease.” And a question “What relevance does this verse have in your current life situation? Participants were instructed to place this printed ayah card in a frequently viewed location within their home environment, such as a kitchen counter, bedside table, or cupboard. Participants were introduced to the study’s aims and taken their informed consent. Then they positioned the provided verse card in a location they often see throughout the day. Over a span of four weeks, participants were invited to reflect on the verse each time they encountered it. And they must write it down every time they face any hardship and how they found ease in that hardship by reflecting on this ayah, they also have shared their previous recent challenges and how they found ease in their hardships. At the end of the reflection period, participants shared their insights through a short-written reflection. They responded to open-ended prompts such as, in what ways did seeing the verse affect your emotions or mindset during daily life?

إِنَّ مَعَ الْعُسْرِ يُسْرًا

Surely, with hardship comes ease. (94:6)

Data Analysis

The data was collected during interviews and by using personal journaling, a qualitative technique that provides meaningful and thoughtful insights into each participant’s experience. Individuals were encouraged to take part in guided journaling, where they shared their personal thoughts on how they practiced Quranic teachings focusing especially on verses about overcoming hardship, such as “with Hardship comes Ease” (Quran 94:6) during difficult times in their lives.

Rigor

This study adopted a careful and systematic approach to ensure the trustworthiness of the findings. Credibility, accuracy, and transparency were maintained throughout the research process, demonstrating methodological rigor in accordance with the criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Rigor was ensured through credibility, which was enhanced by in-depth interviews and personal journaling, allowing for rich and reflective data. Transferability this research offers thorough descriptions of the research context, participants, and data collection methods. Interviews were conducted until the point of saturation to achieve a rich and comprehensive understanding of the themes and sub-themes derived from the participants. Dependability and confirmability were maintained through systematic qualitative content analysis and careful documentation of analytical decisions. Ethical rigor was ensured through written informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and sensitivity toward religious and spiritual reflections.

RESULTS

Table 1. *Socio-demographic Characteristics of Student Participants*

Demographics	n	%
Gender		
Female	17	100
Age		
19-25	14	82.4
26-30	3	17.6
Education		
Bachelor	15	88.2
M.Phil	2	11.8
Marital Status		
Married	2	11.8
Unmarried	15	88.2
Occupation Status		
Working students	8	47.1
Non-working students	9	52.9

Table 2. *Themes on Hardship and ease*

Themes	Hardships	Ease	Participant Quotes
Daily Hassles			
Exam Stress	Intense exam stress, anxiety, and fear of failure.	Learned time management.	Exams always bring so much panic and fear of failing. But repeating this Ayah keeps my mind steady; it helps me calm down, make a realistic study plan, and focus instead of just stressing out.
Moving to new city	Feeling lonely, homesick, and disconnected.	View the experience as an opportunity for personal growth and independence.	Moving to Bahawalpur for my studies was hard and I felt really homesick. Reminding myself that ease comes with hardship gave me peace and helped me see this as a chance to become strong and independence

Waiting for bus	Daily waiting is frustrating and stressful due to time pressure.	Got a chance to practice mindfulness	Standing at the stop every morning waiting for the university bus used to ruin my mood. Now, I use that idle time to recite the verse, which turns my stress into a moment of calm.
Failure in Exam	Disappointed and discouraged.	Setting new goals, refined self-trust	Failing that test was heartbreaking and I felt so discouraged. But this verse reminded me that failure is just a temporary phase before ease it motivated me to reset my goals and work harder.
Criticism on practicing Islam	Emotional pain due to peer's negative comments and judgment	Forming new friends with like minded, finding tranquility in choosing sincerity over social approval	People around me sometimes make insensitive comments about my practice. It hurt at first, but remembering 'Inna ma'a al-'usri yusra' gave me confidence to stay firm, align with like-minded friends, and find peace in my choice

Traumatic Events

War Attack by Enemy Country	Fear of losing family, home and belongings, fear of death	Started spending more time with family, started simple living, enjoying every day of life	News about war and sudden attacks used to fill me with terrifying anxiety about losing my family. Reciting this Ayah grounded me, reminding me to cherish every peaceful moment with my loved ones and focus on a simple, grateful life.
Road Accident	Physical limitation while routine working	Leave from office, chance to spend time with family	Being bedridden after an injury was extremely frustrating because I couldn't do basic chores. But this verse helped me reframe from it. I used that forced break to slow down and bond with my family.

Physical Illnesses

Cancer diagnosis	Extreme pain, fear of death, Helplessness	Being closed to Allah	When a close family member was diagnosed, helplessness was crushing. Focusing on 'ease with hardship' became my main support; it brought us closer to Allah and gave us peace amidst the pain.
Heart Attack	Intense weakness and fear of death during this suffering, which led to anxiety and	Patience, Spiritual Connection, Gratitude, appreciation for life.	When my mother suddenly suffered a heart attack, the sheer panic and fear of losing

	emotional distress, sadness.		her was suffocating. In those critical moments, reciting this Ayah gave me emotional stability and patience. Seeing her recover filled our entire home with gratitude and brought me so much closer to Allah.
Having a Disabled sibling	Helplessness, Dysfunctional life	Got emotional and practical maturity, learned to take care of sick.	Caring for my disabled sibling often felt overwhelming and exhausting. But this Ayah gave me patience and purpose, helping me grow emotionally mature and view caretaking as a source of blessing.
Stomach Problem	Constant physical discomfort, digestive issues, and daily health-related distress.	Adopting a healthier lifestyle, practicing mindful and disciplined eating habits.	Dealing with persistent stomach problems used to throw off my whole day and make me irritable. Focusing on this verse encouraged me to take action—I shifted toward healthy eating and disciplined habits, which brought physical and mental ease." (P1

Financial Problems

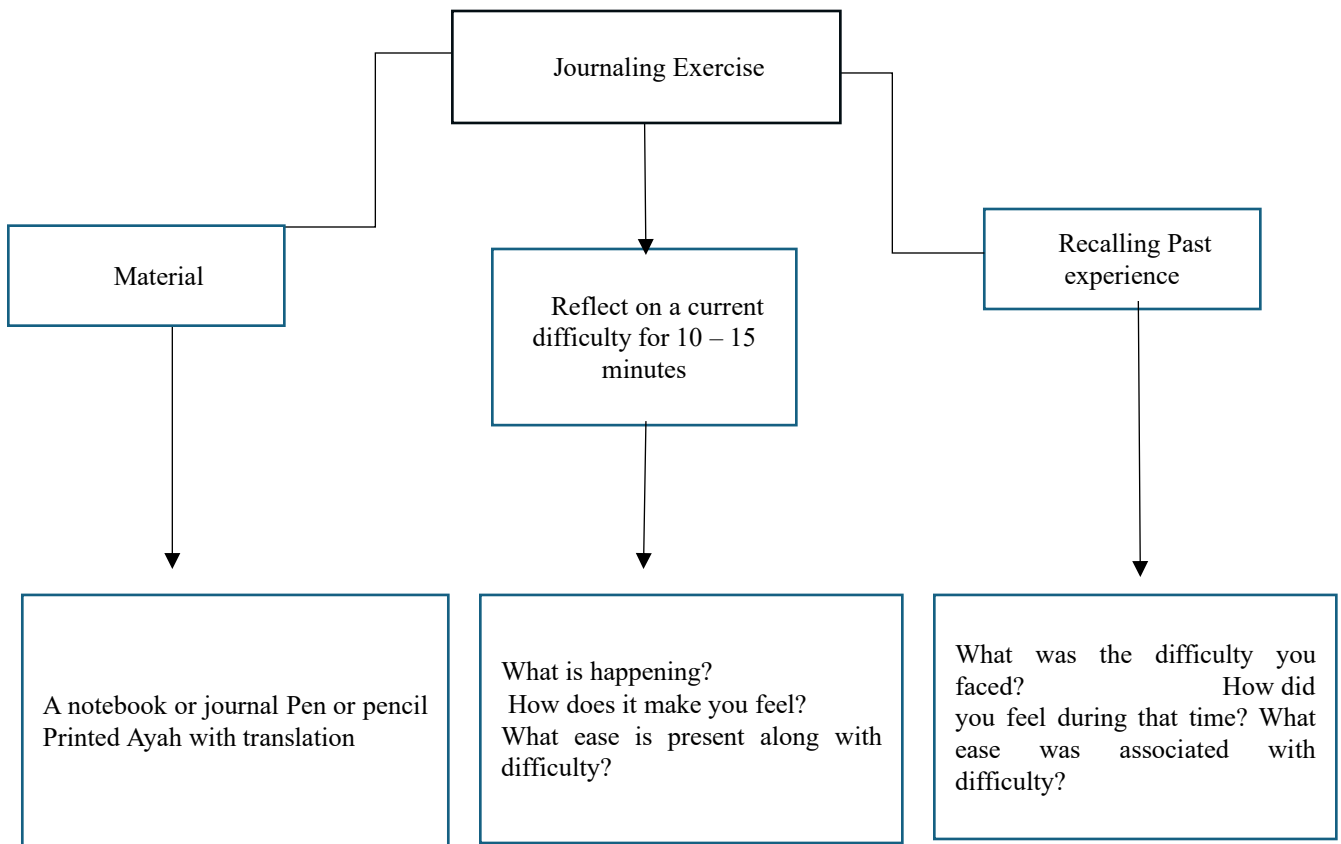
Job loss	Financial instability, stress, and fear about providing for the family after losing their job.	Learning new skills and finding alternative income sources increased self-belief.	Losing my job brought immense financial pressure and a constant fear of how to manage expenses. But reflecting on this, Ayah pushed me out of despair. It motivated me to learn new digital skills and explore alternative earning paths.
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Contract job/Job Insecurity	Job instability, insecurity, anxiety over contract renewal, and workplace pressure.	Behavioral: Working harder to secure position, active performance. Cognitive: Humility of heart, empathy for others with insecure jobs.	Working on a temporary contract kept me in constant fear of losing my livelihood along with financial issues. Reminding myself of Allah's promise pushed me to work harder and improve my performance, while also softening my heart toward others facing job insecurity.
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Relationship Challenges

Conflicts Among Siblings	Daily disputes and emotional friction with brothers/sisters.	Learning independence, focusing on self-growth, and	Arguments with my siblings used to drain my energy every day. Grounding myself in this Ayah helped me detach from unnecessary drama, focus on my own
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		navigating one's own way.	personal growth, and build self-reliance.
Interparental Conflicts	Distress, anxiety, and household tension arising from parental arguments.	Developing emotional resilience, strengthening inner coping, and fostering personal maturity.	Witnessing continuous arguments between my parents was deeply distressing. Reflecting on the verse gave me emotional composure, helping me build inner resilience and stay mature during home tension.
Losing Close Friends	Emotional pain and feelings of isolation	A chance to develop strength through spiritual connection.	Losing my closest friend hurt deeply and left a void. Reflecting this verse shifted my heart back to Allah, making me realize that people may leave, but Allah stays with you.
Financial Dishonesty by In-laws	Emotional betrayal, monetary exploitation, and strain in early marriage.	Establishing clear financial boundaries early in married life.	Facing financial dishonesty from my in-laws right after marriage was a huge shock and emotionally taxing. But reflecting on this, Ayah gave me the strength to handle it calmly and set clear financial boundaries early on in my marriage."

Figure 3. *Journaling Exercise*

DISCUSSION

The present study explores the key themes that surfaced from the qualitative content analysis of participants' reflections on the Quranic verse "Indeed, with hardship comes ease" (Al-inshirah, 94:6). The analysis revealed five primary themes: (1) Daily Hassel (2) Traumatic Events (3) Physical illness (4) Financial Problems (5) Relationship issues. These themes illustrate how individuals encounter various forms of hardship and how they find spiritual ease during these hardships.

Daily Hassel

The first key theme that emerged from participants' reflections was the experience of daily hassles, those seemingly minor, everyday challenges that gradually impact emotional and psychological well-being. They explain how they find ease in these daily hassles. Participants shared various reflections such as:

Exams stress. Academic anxiety and fear of failure emerged as the most prevalent daily hardship, reported by 80% of the sample (n = 12). Feelings of anxiety and mental exhaustion stemming from exam pressure, insufficient preparation, and the fear of not performing well. Unexpected disruptions. Minor but sudden occurrences such as accidents, schedule changes, or transportation delays added to their emotional burden. Waiting for bus, daily transit pressure and idle waiting stress were identified by 66.7% of participants (n = 10). Experiences like waiting for buses after missing them

or being caught in traffic were described as emotionally tiring and spiritually challenging. Relationship issues. The loss of friendships or interpersonal conflict often due to miscommunication caused significant emotional distress. Inner spiritual battles. Efforts to wake up for Fajr prayer, abandon sinful habits, or remain consistent in religious practices amid a demanding routine presented personal struggles. Moving to a new city, Homesickness and feeling disconnected following relocation were experienced by 53.3% of the participants (n = 8). Feelings of loneliness, out of place, Distance from family members, Missing old friends. Although these difficulties were not severe in nature, they often left participants feeling emotionally exhausted, spiritually unmotivated, and at times, burdened with guilt or a sense of disconnection from their faith.

One participant expressed this by saying “I recently moved to a new city, and the adjustment has been challenging. Sometimes I feel lonely and out of place.” Missing family, Then I am implementing the understanding that ease follows hardship. I’ve improved a lot. Now whenever I face challenges, I remind myself that each hardship presents an opportunity for growth and learning. Each time I overcome a hurdle, my confidence increases, and I realize that Allah has a plan for me in every trial I face, allowing me to see these difficulties as steppingstones rather than obstacles. So, I learned from this Ayah that patience and perseverance eventually lead to ease and personal development”

Participants shared that such difficulties often brought about significant spiritual insight and emotional relief. Several reflected on the following positive outcomes; Enhanced time management, the effort to balance religious obligations with daily responsibilities led to better routines, improved task prioritization, and increased personal discipline. Shift in intentions, Ongoing frustrations encouraged participants to move away from seeking validation from people and instead focus on earning Allah’s approval. Strengthened faith, persistently facing obstacles such as staying consistent in prayer or resisting sinful behavior, greater self-awareness and a deeper connection to their religious values. Improved spiritual awareness. The repetition of everyday difficulties prompted more intentional reflection, deeper prayers, and a stronger reliance on Allah for patience and endurance. Perceived divine assistance. Some participants described experiencing moments of unexpected ease, peace, or successful outcomes following their spiritual efforts, which they viewed as signs of Allah’s mercy and support.

One participant mentioned, “Whenever I felt close to giving up on making the right choice, a small moment like calm, fulfilling prayer or something unexpectedly going well would lift me up. It felt like Allah was supporting me through those small tests.”

This theme offers strong evidence for the understanding of the verse “with Hardship comes ease” Participants experienced ease not after the difficulty had passed, but during the hardship itself. Their daily challenges served as opportunities for spiritual development, cultivating patience, strengthening self-discipline, and deepening sincerity in their faith. Even minor struggles were perceived as gentle reminders from Allah, guiding them toward self-purification, personal growth, and inner tranquility.

Qatadah ibn Di’amatah reported that It has been mentioned to us that the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, gave glad tidings to his companions about this verse, “Verily, with the hardship comes an ease, with the hardship comes an ease,” (Al-inshirah, verse no.6)

Criticism on Practicing Islam

Social judgment and negative peer comments regarding religious practice were highlighted by 26.7% of participants (n = 4). They experience social judgment, pressure from peers, and were sometimes viewed in a negative light. Such experiences contributed to deep emotional challenges, resulting in feelings of stress, loneliness, and a sense of being misunderstood even by those closest to them including family and friends. The emotional strain caused by such criticism often affected their feeling of acceptance and connection within their usual social settings. Many participants described finding ease through both spiritual and social growth. They shared that more genuine relationships began to form some even referring to these new bonds as being divinely guided. Several participants noted that certain people drifted away from their lives, making space for more meaningful, spiritually aligned connections. Additionally, periods of isolation were often seen as opportunities to deepen their relationship with Allah, resulting in stronger faith and a sense of inner peace. This process illustrates the Quranic principle that with Hardship comes ease that leads to divine guidance and personal development.

Traumatic Events

A second prominent theme that surfaced from participants' reflections was related to experiences of man-made crises, especially those involving war. Anxiety surrounding conflict and safety concerns was reported by 20% of participants (n = 3). Such circumstances led to intense emotional and psychological distress. Participants expressed a variety of difficult emotions, including anxiety caused by the uncertainty and unpredictability of conflict, Fear of death, both for themselves and for their close family members. Feelings of hopelessness due to the constant threat of violence and instability. Emotional disconnection, driven by concerns about losing friends or being separated from loved ones. These situations were described as periods of extreme emotional vulnerability, where typical ways of coping no longer felt effective. The persistent fear and instability disrupted their sense of control and made it difficult to maintain emotional balance, daily routines, or spiritual focus. As one participant put it: "During the war, I wasn't just scared of dying feared losing the people closest to me. Everything seemed beyond my control."

Participants experienced intense fear and uncertainty, many reflected on how these hardships led to significant spiritual growth and inner transformation. The relief they found was not tied to physical safety or material stability, but rather emerged through: Submission to Allah's decree, recognizing that life and death rest in Allah's control brought a sense of peace and acceptance. Renewal of faith, the emotional weight of war drove participants to strengthen their connection with Allah, often through increased prayer, remembrance (dhikr), and reflection on the Qur'an. Shifting priorities, the experience of conflict prompted a reevaluation of what was truly important moving away from worldly distractions toward deeper attention to faith, family, and spiritual meaning. Valuing time with loved ones, the possibility of loss encouraged participants to be more present, loving, and intentional in their relationships. Developing sabr (patience), Many described feelings spiritually empowered and more resilient after enduring such intense emotional and psychological trials. One participant expressed this

transformation by saying: “Without that fear, I don’t think I would have turned to Allah in the same way. It helped me realize what truly matters.”

Physical Illnesses

A third key theme identified in participants’ reflections centered on their encounters with physical illness, including major health issues like heart attacks, breast cancer, and persistent migraines. Acute emotional distress and fear of losing a parent during a cardiac crisis were noted by 20% of participants ($n = 3$). Extreme helplessness and medical grief linked to oncology diagnoses were reported by 13.3% of participants ($n = 2$). These conditions were described as highly distressing, affecting both their physical well-being and emotional state. Participants expressed a variety of emotional responses, such as: Fear and a sense of powerlessness, whether due to sudden health crises or ongoing medical conditions. Emotional sensitivity, especially during the stages of diagnosis and treatment. Mental fatigue, brought on by managing pain, attending medical appointments, and facing uncertainty about recovery. Feelings of loneliness, as illness often interfered with their ability to maintain social interactions and daily routines. For many individuals, physical weakness served as a powerful reminder of human limitations. Their experiences interrupted normal life and led them to reflect more deeply on mortality, dependence on others, and the importance of seeking spiritual strength and support.

Participants shared that illness became a moment of spiritual renewal and inner transformation. The ease they experienced was in the spiritual clarity and growth that the hardship brought. Participants highlighted several key outcomes including Building inner strength facing ongoing pain and uncertainty helped cultivate emotional endurance and spiritual resilience. Reconnecting with faith, the hardship pushed individuals to turn more sincerely toward Allah through consistent prayer, supplication, and placing their trust in His will (tawakkul). Strengthened relationship with Allah, the experience of illness created opportunities for deeper, more personal engagement with Allah, often described as peaceful and spiritually uplifting. Many shared that practicing sabr during their trials brought a sense of comfort and gave purpose to their suffering. Finding hope in recovery for those who experienced healing, it was seen as a sign of Allah’s compassion, further reinforcing their faith and reliance on Him.

Studies on spiritual coping suggest that physical illness frequently encourages individuals to turn toward their faith for meaning and comfort. Those who perceive their illness as a divine trial tend to show increased levels of patience, emotional resilience, and a sense of spiritual. Religion, spirituality, and health these insights are consistent with participants’ reflections, where faith played a central role in helping them navigate and find relief during times of physical hardship.

Financial problems

A forth key theme identified through participants' narratives was the experience of financial hardship. Economic uncertainty and household financial stress were reported by 20% of participants (n = 3). These challenges were frequently portrayed as highly overwhelming, not only threatening necessities but also impacting emotional well-being and spiritual balance. Participants described a variety of difficulties, such as worry due to inadequate income, financial obligations, or uncertainty about future stability. Financial instability and career stress following job loss were cited by 33.3% of participants (n = 5). A sense of despair, especially when unable to meet the needs of themselves or their dependents. Emotional tension, as continuous financial strain undermined their sense of security, personal value, and ability to make long-term decisions. Feelings of dependency, where relying on others for financial assistance resulted in discomfort or diminished self-esteem. For many, living with financial uncertainty facing limited choices and increasing emotional exhaustion, often accompanied by spiritual doubt or confusion.

Many participants shared that these experiences ultimately led to personal development, spiritual resilience, and practical problem-solving. The ease they found did not always result from immediate financial improvement but rather from their capacity to adjust, strengthen their faith in Allah, and take constructive action. They highlighted several outcomes: Adopting coping mechanisms, Participants managed financial stress by turning to prayer, practicing gratitude, and leaning on their belief in divine guidance. Becoming proactive, financial hardship often motivated them to explore alternative income sources, or working harder. Acquiring new abilities, to better their financial conditions, some individuals learned useful skills such as budgeting, crafting, or other trades that provided support. Deepening trust in Allah (tawakkul), their faith was reinforced as they noticed gradual ease and relief amidst difficulty. Appreciation of small blessings, even slight improvements in their situation were seen as signs of divine mercy, increasing their sense of thankfulness.

Mihjan ibn al-Adra' reported that The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "Verily, Allah Almighty is pleased for this nation to be at ease, and He is displeased for it to be in difficulty," and the Prophet said it three times. (Al-Kabir, Al-Tabarani, Vol. 20, p. 298). Anas ibn Malik reported that, The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, was once standing over a hole and he said, "If hardship were to enter this hole, ease would surely follow it, go inside, and take it out." Then, Allah Almighty revealed the verse, "Verily, with the hardship comes an ease, with the hardship comes an ease." (Al-Mustadrak, 3552).

Relationship Issues

Emotional distress resulting from relational strain or losing close friends was reported by 40% of participants n = 6). The loss of friendships or interpersonal conflict often due to miscommunication caused significant emotional distress. Inner spiritual battles. Efforts to wake up for Fajr prayer, abandon sinful habits, or remain consistent in religious practices amid a demanding routine presented personal struggles.

In addition to individual micro-stressors, relational and familial conflicts represented a significant source of emotional strain among participants. Sub-themes within this domain included sibling conflicts

($n = 2$), witnessing interparental conflicts ($n = 1$), and experiencing financial dishonesty from in-laws ($n = 1$). Interpersonal friction within the home environment often leads to heightened emotional exhaustion, anxiety, and feelings of instability among young adults (Malti et al., 2018; Whiteman et al., 2011).

However, visual exposure to and reflection on Ayah facilitated effective cognitive reappraisal and boundary-setting strategies. Participants exposed to sibling friction and interparental discord reported that internalizing the verse allowed them to emotionally detach from domestic arguments, reframe household tension as a catalyst for personal maturity, and cultivate emotional resilience and independence.

Furthermore, participants navigating severe relational challenges, such as monetary dishonesty within marital structures, utilized the promise of impending ease to maintain emotional stability and establish healthy financial boundaries early in marriage. These adaptive responses align with Family Systems Frameworks (Malti et al., 2018) and Positive Religious Coping Models (Pargament et al., 2011), demonstrating that faith-anchored cognitive reframing enables individuals to maintain psychological equilibrium and enact constructive problem-solving even within highly charged interpersonal dynamics.

Previous studies also shows that Islam is a religion of ease (Ushama, T. 2015). What united all these experiences was the realization that ease did not come solely from a resolution of the hardship itself. Rather, it emerged through a shift in perspective through spiritual clarity, emotional healing, and a deepened relationship with Allah that developed amidst the struggle. This affirms that the promise in the verse is not merely a comforting idea but a lively dynamic reality. These outcomes also reflect broader findings in Islamic psychology and spiritual coping literature, which highlight the protective role of faith in times of adversity. Religiosity has been shown to reduce emotional distress and enhance psychological resilience, confirming what participants in this study personally experienced.

From the Qur'anic perspective, anxiety often stems from a weakened sense of trust and reliance on Allah, which can heighten feelings of uncertainty and distress. However, it is important to understand that the Qur'an does not present a simplistic or deterministic explanation of mental health. Instead, it offers a holistic framework that considers multiple dimensions of human well-being, including personal circumstances, genetic factors, environmental influences, and spiritual connection.

This verse is a powerful message of comfort and glad tidings from Allah Almighty to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and to all believers. It teaches that hardships are never permanent or meaningless every difficulty carries ease along with it. The Qur'an uses the word "ma'a" (with) instead of "ba'd" (after), which emphasizes that ease does not only follow hardship but actually exists alongside it. Scholars also point out a significant linguistic feature in the verse: the word al-'usr (the hardship) appears in the definite form (ma'rifah), representing a single, specific trial, whereas yusr (ease) is presented in the indefinite form (nakirah), indicating diverse and multiple forms of relief (Ibn Kathir, 1373/2000). Grammatically, the repetition of a definite noun refers to the exact same entity, while the

repetition of an indefinite noun implies additional and varying manifestations. Consequently, "a single hardship cannot overcome two easings" (Ibn Kathir, 1373/2000).

From a psychological perspective, this linguistic structure serves as an effective mechanism for Cognitive Reappraisal (McRae & Gross, 2020) and Meaning-Focused Coping (Folkman, 2020). By explicitly framing difficulty as singular and finite (Al usr) while highlighting ease as multifaceted and expansive (yusr), the text facilitates positive cognitive restructuring. It shifts an individual's attentional bias away from catastrophic thinking and redirects focus toward identifying hidden resources and adaptive solutions (Gassner et al., 2022). In Islamic psychological interventions, internalizing this structural distinction enables individuals to process acute life stressors through divine trust and cognitive reframing, ultimately boosting psychological resilience and well-being (Ahmadi et al., 2022; Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2022).

Limitations of the study

The study included only 17 female participants aged 19-30 years, all recruited from educational institutions in Bahawalpur. Participants of the study were young women; future studies should conduct on male as well. This study provides valuable insight into how individuals interpret and live the Quranic verse "Indeed, with hardship comes ease" (Surah Ash-Sharh 94:6), findings the findings should there are several limitations that should be taken into consideration when assessing the broader applicability of the findings

Limited and Targeted Sample. A recognized limitation of this research is its exclusively female cohort (N=17). Data collection was conducted from females only education facilitation (college and university departments) in Bahawalpur due to institutional accessibility. While this homogenous group offered deep qualitative insight into young women's coping pattern, the results cannot be generalized across genders. Future studies should include male cohorts from varied geographic settings to evaluate potential gender differences in faith-based cognitive reappraisal.

Cultural and Contextual Constraints. The participants came from religious environments, which likely influenced both their interpretation of hardship and their coping strategies. As such, the insights gained may not reflect the full diversity of Muslim experiences across different cultural, denominational, or geopolitical settings.

CONCLUSION

This study reinforces the idea that the Quranic promise is not merely a theological belief, but a reality experienced in everyday life. It demonstrates that spiritual reflections and Islamic approaches to coping play a crucial role in helping individuals manage emotions and find meaning during difficult times. The narratives of participants illustrate that faith is not a passive reaction to suffering; rather, it is an active, guiding force that influences how people think, act, and grow through challenges. The verse thus serves as a powerful principle for navigating adversity, offering not only comfort but also a route to spiritual strength, inner peace, and resilience rooted in divine understanding.

Recommendations

Recommendations are suggested to guide and enrich future work in this area, Increase Participant Diversity and Sample Size Subsequent research should aim to involve a broader and more varied participant pool, encompassing different cultural, regional, and denominational backgrounds. A more diverse sample would improve the applicability of the findings and offer a richer, more understanding of how Muslims across various contexts interpret and live the concept of ease amid hardship. Adopt experimental research and Longitudinal Research Methods to capture the evolving nature of individuals' spiritual journeys, future studies could benefit from using longitudinal designs. Monitoring participants' reflections over extended periods or during distinct life phases may reveal how their understanding of adversity and spiritual ease matures over time. Examine Broader Quranic Themes, this study focused on a single verse (with hardship comes ease). But future researches may expand the scope by investigating other related Quranic principles such as sabr (patience), tawakkul (trust in Allah), and healing. Doing so could provide a more comprehensive insight into Islamic approaches to emotional and spiritual well-being. Utilize Mixed-Methods Research incorporating both qualitative and quantitative approaches would add depth and credibility to the findings. Using tools such as spiritual well-being scales or religiosity assessments alongside personal narratives can offer both measurable and interpretive insights into how faith impacts coping with hardship.

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Authors contribution

Sehrish Wazir: Conceptualization and data analysis

Ariba Sarwar: Data Collection

Ayesha Sagheer: Writing Original draft and data analysis

Conflict of interest

There is no conflict of interest declared by the author.

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