


# Exploration of Zamzam Water Consumption on Toddlers' Expressive Language Abilities: A Review from Islamic and Psycholinguistic Perspectives

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## A B S T R A C T

Expressive language skills are a crucial aspect of toddler development, because they are directly related to communication, social understanding, and learning readiness. Toddlerhood is the golden period in which appropriate stimulation significantly supports optimal language development. In Padangsidempuan City, Zamzam water is better known as holy water consumed in the context of Hajj and Umrah pilgrimages. Its use in supporting child development, especially language development, is not yet a common practice. By highlighting this local context, this study is important to open new horizons where religious beliefs can be integrated with a psycholinguistic approach to support child growth and development, including language. This study aimed to explore the practice and meaning of Zamzam water consumption by parents in supporting toddlers' expressive language skills, viewed from an Islamic and psycholinguistic perspective. Using a qualitative approach with a case study method, data were obtained through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation, and then analyzed thematically. The results showed that providing Zamzam water twice a day for three months with accompanying prayers and verbal interactions demonstrated expressive language development through simple basic vocabulary. These findings indicate that Zamzam water consumption influences toddlers' language development through aspects of family spirituality that improve the quality of verbal interactions, thereby stimulating toddlers' expressive language.

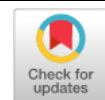
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## INTRODUCTION

Language development is a crucial indicator of a child's growth, particularly during the toddler years (under three years old), known as golden age. During this phase, expressive language skills—namely, a child's ability to verbally express their thoughts, feelings, and desires—play a crucial role in the language acquisition process. Several factors, such as environmental stimulation, parenting styles, and spiritual aspects and beliefs of parents, also influence the development of a child's language skills. From an Islamic perspective, Zamzam water is believed to possess extraordinary physical and spiritual benefits. This belief stems from the saying of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him): "Zamzam water is according to the intention of the one who drinks it" (Narrated by Ibn Majah No. 3062). This hadith forms the basis of the belief of some Muslim parents in using Zamzam water to support their children's intelligence and language development. Previous studies have shown that Zamzam water, with its high mineral content and purity, is safe for infants and children, and has therapeutic potential in supporting neurological function and body metabolism. Expressive language skills reflect children's ability to convey ideas, feelings, and needs through words, expressions, and gestures. This development is influenced by nutrition, health, verbal

stimulation, and the spiritual environment of the family. Zamzam water, in this context, is not only a source of hydration but also part of a religious practice believed to bring physical and spiritual benefits to children. Abdullah MF, Karim MS. (2019), Bhardwaj V. (2023).

However, initial observations indicated that the use of Zamzam water in this context is still relatively limited. However, the integration of spiritual values and scientific approaches, such as psycholinguistics, can provide a holistic perspective for supporting child development. Islamic values are believed to strengthen children's spiritual and emotional aspects, while the psycholinguistic approach emphasizes the importance of verbal environments and interactive experiences in developing language skills. The research problem was formulated as follows: How is the consumption of Zamzam water practiced and interpreted by parents in relation to the expressive language development of toddlers, viewed from an Islamic and psycholinguistic perspective? This research is important to address the scarcity of scientific studies linking religious beliefs and language development while also promoting public understanding of the role of spirituality in children's overall development.

## METHOD

This research was designed as part of a multidisciplinary study between obstetrics, psycholinguistics, and Islamic studies to support holistic child growth and development. This study used a qualitative approach with a case-study type. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to explore in depth the meanings formed by individuals in real-life contexts, as well as to understand the phenomenon as a whole in its natural environment Creswell, JW, & Poth, CN (2018). The subjects of this study were toddlers (aged 1–3 years) who regularly consumed Zamzam Water, along with their parents. The research location was purposively chosen based on active involvement in family spiritual practices and ease of access. In the qualitative research, the researcher acted as the main instrument. To support data collection, the researcher developed supporting instruments in the form of (1) in-depth interview guidelines, (2) children's expressive language observation sheets, and (3) family spiritual documentation formats and child growth and development records. Data collection was carried out using three main techniques: (1) in-depth interviews, namely to explore parents' perceptions and experiences regarding Zamzam Water consumption and children's language development; (2) direct observation, to observe children's verbal behavior in natural situations; and (3) documentation, in the form of records of growth and development, worship habits, and other spiritual practices. Sugiyono. (2019).

Data analysis was conducted using the interactive model of Miles and Huberman (2014) through three main stages: (1) Data reduction: summarizing, selecting the main points, and focusing the data; (2) data presentation: organizing information into narratives, tables, and visual findings; (3) drawing conclusions/verification: finding patterns and meaning from the data obtained.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Practice of Zamzam Water Consumption by Parents

The results of the study showed that the practice of giving Zamzam water to toddlers was carried out differently in each family but followed a relatively similar pattern. All parents routinely provided zamzam water twice a day, with an average dose of 5 ml each in the morning and evening. This procedure was carried out according to the researchers' instructions at the initial stage of the study, namely, by drinking it directly without mixing it with other foods or drinks. Almost all parents recited prayer before giving Zamzam as a manifestation of their belief in their blessings. Thus, the practice of giving Zamzam water is not only a physical act but also a means of prayer and spirituality for Muslim families, which is believed to have a positive impact on children's development.

### The Meaning of Consuming Zamzam Water from an Islamic Perspective

For parents, drinking Zamzam water is not only seen as providing fluids for their child's physical health but also as a spiritual means full of blessings. This belief is based on

Islamic teachings, which place Zamzam water as a special water with religious values and accompanying prayers. In practice, providing Zamzam water to toddlers is always accompanied by prayers, both general and specific. The following is a prayer for drinking Zamzam water from the companion Ibn Abbas (maybe Allah be pleased with him), as narrated by Imam Ad-Daruqutni:

*Allâhumma innî as'aluka 'ilman nâfi'an, wa rizqan wâsi'an, wa syifâ'an min kulli dâ'.*

Meaning: O Allah, truly, I ask you for useful knowledge, extensive sustenance, and healing from all diseases.

This prayer reflects the parents' hope that the child who drinks Zamzam will grow healthy, intelligent, and blessed. Thus, drinking Zamzam serves not only as a physical activity, but also as part of the spiritual education process within a Muslim family.

### **The Relationship between Zamzam Water Consumption and Children's Expressive Language Development**

The research results show that parents' routine practice of drinking Zamzam water is not only interpreted as spiritual fulfillment, but also impacts family communication patterns. Each time a child is given Zamzam, parents recite prayers and Islamic phrases, or provide simple verbal directions. This pattern creates repetitive interactions that serve as verbal stimulation for toddlers. Observations show that children aged 18–20 months generally imitate simple vocabulary such as mamam, minum, and air. Meanwhile, children aged 24–32 months begin to imitate religious vocabulary (bismillah, aamiin, Allah) and social vocabulary (let us pray, mama here). Thus, the vocabulary children acquire is not only derived from basic needs, but also from the spiritual context that accompanies the practice of drinking Zamzam.

These findings align with the psycholinguistic perspective, which emphasizes that children's language development is strongly influenced by the quality of their early verbal interactions (Clark, 2016; Santrock, 2021). In this study, Zamzam Water acted as a symbolic mediator, with each administration always associated with prayer and communication. In other words, it is not Zamzam water that biologically influences language, but rather the surrounding rituals and religious interactions that enrich children's vocabulary.

This also aligns with research by Rahman and Yusuf (2019), who found that the religiosity of Muslim families strengthens communication stimulation in early childhood. Thus, consuming Zamzam can be understood as a spiritual practice that indirectly supports the development of expressive language in toddlers by fostering meaningful communication in the family environment.

### **Summary of Main Findings**

Based on the research results, it can be understood that the consumption of Zamzam water by toddlers' parents is practiced routinely as part of spiritual fulfillment as well as early education efforts. Ratno (2022). The religious significance of Zamzam encourages parents to recite prayers and involve their children in reciting simple Islamic phrases. This practice creates a repetitive communication pattern that serves as a means of verbal stimulation for the children.

From an Islamic perspective, consuming Zamzam water is interpreted as a small act of worship that contains prayer and hope, thereby fostering a spiritual atmosphere within the family. Meanwhile, from a psycholinguistic perspective, the verbal interactions that accompany this practice have been shown to enrich children's vocabulary, both for basic needs and for religious purposes.

Furthermore, observations revealed another positive development after three months of regular Zamzam consumption: an increase in children's emotional intelligence. Children appeared more confident in greeting, shaking hands, and smiling; were less shy in expressing themselves; and exhibited more open social interactions. Physically, children also appear healthier, with increased endurance and signs of improved memory.

Thus, Zamzam cannot be understood solely as a biological factor but rather as a spiritual mediator connecting parents' religious beliefs with everyday communication practices. This relationship contributes to the development of expressive language and

emotional intelligence in toddlers. This finding addresses the scarcity of scientific studies linking religious beliefs and language development, and confirms that Muslim family spirituality plays a significant role in children's overall development.

### Frequency Analysis and Narrative Findings

Based on the frequency analysis, the parents consistently consumed the Zamzam water. Most respondents always gave Zamzam to their toddlers, with only a few frequently giving it, and no responses were found that indicated "rarely" or "never."

Table 1. Frequency of Zamzam Water Consumption and Expressive Language of Toddlers

Dimensions	Always	Often	Seldom	Never	Total
Consumption of Zamzam	28	2	0	0	30
Verbal Expression	14	18	1	3	36
Nonverbal Expression	24	11	1	0	36
Creative-Social Expression	17	15	2	0	34

The results of the above table are then visualized in the form of a graph to clarify the distribution of answers.

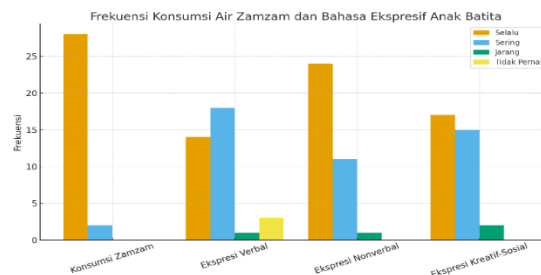


Figure 1. Graph of Frequency of Zamzam Water Consumption and Expressive Language of Toddlers

As seen in the tables and graphs, Zamzam is positioned not just as a drink but as an essential part of the daily routine and a means of prayer. A mother from K2 said, 'Every morning and night, I give my child Zamzam, so it helps them feel calmer and healthier. Otherwise, I feel like something is missing.'

In terms of expressive language, the children's verbal development varied. Most were in the frequent category, with some reaching the always category. Their emerging vocabulary includes both basic needs and religious vocabulary, such as bismillah and amen. K1's mother said, "My child used to be indifferent, but after a month of regularly drinking Zamzam, he often says 'amen' when he hears prayers, is friendlier, and dares to greet others.'

The children's nonverbal expressions appeared more dominant, with the majority falling into the "always" category. The children exhibited more gestural responses, smiling, and intense eye contact. This suggests that Zamzam consumption is not only linked to verbal development but also increases emotional sensitivity and interaction. K3's mother said, 'My child approaches, high-fives, and shakes hands with others more often. He used to be shy, but now he's more confident.'

Mother K4 said, 'My child used to be indifferent and did not want to say hello, but now after always drinking Zamzam water, my child is friendlier, smiles, greets, and really likes singing by replacing the song lyrics with new words that he has learned, for example (bue bue oppung bue).'

Creative and social aspects showed relatively balanced results between the always and often categories. These toddlers began to demonstrate courage in role-playing, singing, and engaging in simple social interaction. This change was significant because some children had previously tended to be passive. K2's mother added, "If a family member is sick, he quickly grabs eucalyptus oil to rub it on. His memory is stronger; he even remembers if he has not drunk Zamzam water, and he asks for it himself."

Overall, these findings demonstrate that consuming Zamzam water not only has physical effects but also acts as a spiritual mediator, strengthening the parent-child bond through prayer and communication. This religious practice also stimulates the development of expressive language, both verbal and nonverbal, and enriches toddlers' emotional, social, and memory skills.

### Qualitative Analysis with Miles & Huberman Model

Qualitative analysis using the Miles and Huberman (2014) model was conducted in three main steps: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was carried out by selecting important quotes from the parent interviews and observation notes. Next, the reduced data are presented in a display table that maps the quotes, codes, categories, and themes.

Table 2. Qualitative Analysis Table with Miles & Huberman Model

Data Citation (Interview/Observation)	Code	Category	Theme
"Every morning and night, I give my child Zamzam water to help him feel calmer and healthier. Otherwise, I feel like something's missing." (Mother K2)	Regular consumption, peace of mind	Consumption practices	Zamzam as a daily spiritual routine
"My child used to be indifferent, but after a month of regularly drinking Zamzam, he started saying 'amen' more often, became friendlier, and dared to greet people." (Mother K1)	Change of attitude, religious speech, social courage	Language & emotional development	Zamzam stimulates religious vocabulary & emotional intelligence
"My child comes closer more often, high-fives and greets other people. Even though he was previously shy, he is now more confident." (Mother K4)	Social interaction, self-confidence	Social development	Zamzam strengthens social & nonverbal expression
"If a family member is sick, he quickly grabs eucalyptus oil to rub on it. His memory is stronger, and he even remembers if he hasn't drunk Zamzam water, so he asks for it himself." (Mother K2)	Caring, memory, initiative	Cognitive & social	Zamzam strengthens memory & social response
"Since I was in the womb, I often drank Zamzam mixed with pregnant milk, the nausea disappeared and my heart was calmer." (Mother K3)	Prenatal experience, calm	Spirituality & health	Zamzam as a biological and spiritual mediator since prenatal

As seen in Table 2, parental quotes indicate that Zamzam consumption is not only interpreted as a daily routine, but also as a means of prayer that brings peace. For example, the mother of K2 emphasized, "Every morning and night I give my child Zamzam, so he is calmer and healthier. Otherwise, I feel like something is missing." This quote was coded as routine consumption and peace, which then fell into the category of consumption practices, with the theme that Zamzam had become a spiritual routine within the family.

Changes in the children's behavior were also clearly recorded. K1's mother said, "My child used to be indifferent, but after a month of regularly drinking Zamzam, he often says 'amen,' is friendlier, and dares to greet others." This quote shows the relationship between Zamzam consumption and the development of children's religious language and emotional intelligence. K4's mother emphasized the social aspect, saying, "My child approaches, high-fives, and shakes hands with others more often. Whereas before he was shy, he was now more confident." These findings suggest that zamzam can act as a spiritual mediator that strengthens social and nonverbal expressions.

Additionally, several parents mentioned their children's memories and social awareness. Mother K2 stated, "If a family member is sick, he quickly takes eucalyptus oil to rub on. His memory is stronger, even remembering if he has not drunk Zamzam, he asks for it himself." This indicates development of the child's cognitive and social aspects. Interestingly, prenatal experiences also emerged, as stated by Mother K3, "Since I was in the womb, I often drank Zamzam mixed with pregnancy milk, the nausea disappeared and my heart felt calmer." This quote reinforces the idea that the practice of Zamzam has both spiritual and biological meanings from pregnancy. These findings emphasize the importance of prenatal education in pregnant women. Trisna, A. & Putri, DK (2023).

Overall, Miles and Huberman's analysis confirms that consuming Zamzam water is not only a religious practice, but also a mediator that stimulates expressive language development in toddlers while strengthening their emotional, social, and cognitive development. These findings demonstrate a close link between religious beliefs and children's psycholinguistic development at an early age.

The results of this study show that the practice of consuming Zamzam water consistently by parents in toddlers has a dual meaning, namely, as a form of small worship full of prayer and as a means of stimulating children's language development. Trisna, A. (2025). This is in line with the Islamic view that Zamzam is water full of blessings, prayers, and syifa (healing), as the prayer narrated by Ibn Abbas ra: "Allâhumma innî as'aluka 'ilman nafi'an, wa rizqan wâsi'an, wa syifâ'an min kulli dâ. ' (Narrated by Ad-Daruqutni).

From a psycholinguistic perspective, the research results show an increase in children's verbal vocabulary, nonverbal expressions, and social interactions after one to three months of Zamzam consumption. These findings support Vygotsky's theory of the zone of proximal development, which states that children's language development occurs through meaningful social interaction. When parents provide Zamzam while reciting prayers or religious words, such as bismillah and amens, children receive repeated language stimulation, accelerating vocabulary acquisition.

Qualitative findings also indicated that Zamzam functions as an emotional mediator. Children become more confident, dare greeting others, and demonstrate social awareness. This is in line with research by Milek et al. (2015), Badri et al. (2019), ) and Al-Ghamdi (2017), which confirms that family interactions imbued with religious values can enhance children's positive emotional expression and language development. Thus, Zamzam is understood not only as a biological but also as a spiritual factor that strengthens parent-child communication patterns.

Furthermore, this study adds to the scarce literature on the relationship between religiosity and early childhood language development. As stated by Al-Awadi and Srikumar (2017), Zamzam water contains unique spiritual and health dimensions, while Clark (2016) and Trisna, Husein, and Pulungan (2020) emphasize that culturally and faith-based verbal stimulation enriches children's vocabulary from an early age. The results of this study bring together these two aspects: religious beliefs through Zamzam consumption, and psycholinguistic processes through verbal stimulation and social interaction.

This study confirms that Muslim family spirituality can be a crucial factor in supporting a child's overall growth and development, particularly in expressive language development. Consuming Zamzam water is not merely a ritual but also an early educational process that instills values, enriches vocabulary, strengthens memory, and fosters emotional and social intelligence in children.

## CONCLUSION

This study concluded that drinking Zamzam water is safe for toddlers and is practiced regularly by parents with special prayers. This practice not only has religious significance but also functions as a stimulus for verbal, nonverbal, and socio-emotional language development. The findings indicated an increase in vocabulary, courage to express oneself, social interaction, memory, and health of children after a period of Zamzam consumption. This is in line with the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ: "Zamzam water is according to the intention of the one who drinks it" (Narrated by Ibn Majah), so that the prayers and hopes of parents are an important part of the process of giving Zamzam. Thus, drinking Zamzam can be understood as a spiritual and educational mediator that contributes to the development of expressive language in toddlers, while supporting their overall growth.

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