

Integrating *Maqāsid al-Sharī‘ah* into Islamic Psychology: Towards a Holistic Approach to Mental Health and Well-Being

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Abstract

This study explores the integration of Islamic principles into contemporary psychology, presenting a holistic approach to mental health and well-being. The objectives include examining the core elements of Islamic psychology, its therapeutic methodologies, and the integration of Islamic values with Western psychological practices, such as Integrated Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (ICBT). This research adopts a qualitative methodology rooted in the philosophical framework of *Maqāsid al-Sharī‘ah* (Auda, 2008), emphasizing the preservation of the mind (*hifz al-‘aql*) as a higher Islamic objective. By analyzing spirituality, ethical frameworks, and cultural relevance, this research highlights Islamic psychology’s emphasis on self-reflection, personal growth, and community support. The findings reveal that Islamic psychology enhances Western therapies, offering inclusive and culturally sensitive mental health solutions.

Keywords: Islamic psychology, Western psychology, wellbeing, trauma, mental health.

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1. Introduction

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, people's mental and psychological wellbeing have been severely impacted. The trauma of losing a dear one to COVID-19, being diagnosed with the illness, witnessing a loved-one suffering and being hospitalized, and financial hardships as a result of the pandemic caused distress in many peoples' lives. The pandemic also brought about anxiety, fear, isolation, loneliness, grief, loss, tension and stress, burnout, and emotional exhaustion. Mental health issues generally saw an increase during this period.

It is important to note that everyone's experiences during this time were different. Factors such as pre-existing mental health conditions, socioeconomic status, access to support systems, and exposure to the virus all contributed to individual differences in mental health during that time. The pandemic highlighted the need for mental health awareness, access to health resources, and support for individuals.

Providing people with sufficient tools to cope with mental health issues is important. When seeking professional help, the psychology industry offers various modalities and therapeutic approaches to support healing. Western psychology focuses on understanding human behavior and mental processes through empirical research and scientific methods. In contrast, other cultural and indigenous practices, such as Islamic psychology, focus on the mind, body, emotions, and soul to achieve desirable behavior. In this context, these practices are primarily guided in the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah*; the primary sources in Islam (Rothman, Ahmed & Awaad, 2022).

Pargament (2010) has argued that religion plays an important role in the coping process of many people struggling with major life concerns, stressors and traumas. Although, his study focused on the religion of Christianity, there has been a number of research conducted on Islamic psychology (Abu Raya, 2014) as will be seen in this paper.

Islamic psychology integrates therapeutic modality which supplements Western psychology, providing a framework for all-inclusive healing. While Western psychology strongly emphasizes empirical research and theories such as cognitive processes and developmental psychology, Islamic psychology incorporates a spiritual dimension into its healing practices.

Islamic psychology is needed to facilitate integrative healing by focusing on spiritual and mental health using contemporary frameworks and the contributions of both classical and modern Muslims.

Islamic psychology is an emerging field that seeks to integrate Islamic principles and values into contemporary mental health care practices. There has been growing interest in Islamic psychology among Muslim scholars, clinicians, and educators, particularly in Muslim-majority countries and Muslim communities worldwide. In 2016, the president of American Psychology Association (APA), Dr Susan McDaniel, argued that Western psychology can learn a lot from Eastern psychology. She opined that Eastern psychology often have religious or spiritual underpinning. In her article, "Looking East", she called for a commitment to develop a psychology that incorporates Western science and Eastern thought.

A study in Saudi Arabia uncovered that Muslim women who frequently participated in activities such as prayer and *Qur'ānic* recitation experienced lower levels of anxiety and depression than those who did not engage in these practices (Rafique et al., 2019).

Other research has explored the development of culturally sensitive therapeutic interventions that integrate Islamic principles and practices into mental health care. For example, some researchers have developed Islamic cognitive-behavioral therapy (ICBT), which incorporates Islamic values and practices into the traditional cognitive-behavioral therapy framework (Rothman, 2021).

Research into modern Islamic psychology is still in its preliminary stages, and there is a need for more studies that examine the effectiveness of Islamic psychology interventions and approaches. The growing curiosity and interest in Islamic psychology suggest that it has the potential to make significant contributions to mental healthcare and among people from diverse religious and cultural backgrounds (Hague & Rothman, 2021).

There is a need for diverse modalities to provide inclusive healing to individuals, and there is also a need for alternative therapeutic interventions for all those suffering. Thus, a strong argument can be made for Islamic psychology. The preservation of the mind, or *hifz al-'aql*, is one of the most important concepts in the Islam and is fundamental in the study of psychology. This will be discussed later in this paper.

2. Rationale

With the emergence of Western scientific paradigms, and the separation of science and religion, the study of the soul gained less importance. The secularization of Western societies noticed a separation between science and religion, and this separation resulted in religious ideas and practices losing influence over scientific and other knowledge. One of the consequences thereof, meant that the secularization of modern psychology is based on the premise that religion is based upon faith which cannot be evaluated objectively, contrary to science, which is based on “empiricism” and “experimentation” in order to establish facts that are verifiable (Rassool, 2021 & Mcleish, 1995).

Haque (2004) argues that secularization has neglected the moral and spiritual dimensions of human being. He asserts that “secularization of social sciences led to the development of theories that are deterministic and leave little or no room for human volition.” He further adds, that Muslim scientists were also victims of secularization. Haque mentions that, “Muslim social scientists trained in secular education and under the influence of the scientific frame of mind also embraced Western psychology.”

Badri (1979) mentions that some Muslim psychologists have an “anxious zeal to be introduced under the prestigious umbrella of the sciences ... and led them accept blindly the theories and practices unsuitable for application in Muslim countries.”

Western psychology has been the dominant study and practice in approaches to mental health in many contexts for years., While psychology can benefit people generally, it's necessary to consider the unique experiences and challenges of individuals from various cultural backgrounds. Muslims, like humans, face many psychological and traumatic experiences and therefore there is a need to address these.

Islamic psychology offers an inclusive healing approach and practical spiritual measures to help Muslims improve their mental state. The core of Islamic psychology revolves around the concept of the individual as a spiritual being consisting of both a physical body and a soul, or spirit. This spiritual being is nurtured and guided through personal healing principles and supported by external factors such as community support (Rothman & Coyle, 2018).

Islamic psychology offers a holistic, and therapeutic approach to help Muslims cope with mental health challenges. The field of Islamic psychology integrates Islamic sciences with clinical mental health practices. Developing an inclusive theoretical framework and updating established theories within Islamic psychology, will lead to improved approaches to mental health to Islamic psychotherapy (Haque, 2022).

The process of desecularization has gained a renewed interest, and efforts are being made to reconstruct psychology based upon an Islamic epistemological paradigm (Rassool, 2019b; 2020). This provides an opportunity for the production of new knowledge or research, especially in the field of Islamic psychology.

3. Literature Review

Abu Zayd Ahmad Ibn Sahl al-Balkhi, a 9th-century Persian scholar, made significant contributions to Islamic psychology, particularly through his pioneering work on mental. His most notable work, *Maṣāliḥ al-Abdān wa al-Anfus* (Sustenance for Body and Soul) is considered a foundational text in the field (wikipedia, n.d).

Al-Balkhi was among the first Muslim scholar to recognize the interconnection between the body and the mind, advocating for a holistic approach to health. He emphasized that mental and physical health are deeply intertwined, and that treating one without considering the other is insufficient. In *Maṣāliḥ al-Abdān wa al-Anfus*, al-Balkhi categorized mental disorders into two main types: psychological and mental. He distinguished between neurosis and psychosis, providing detailed descriptions of conditions such as depression, anxiety, and obsessive-compulsive disorders. His approach to treatment included both cognitive and behavioural strategies, which align closely with modern cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) (Muslim articles, n.d).

Al-Balkhi's work also delved into preventive measures for maintaining mental health. He advocated for regular physical exercise, a balanced diet, and sufficient sleep, recognizing their importance in sustaining both physical and mental well being. Additionally, he emphasizes the significance of spiritual health, suggesting that a strong spiritual foundation can help individuals cope with life's challenges (wikipedia, n.d).

His contributions laid the foundation for future developments in Islamic psychology and influenced later scholars and physicians. Al-Balkhi's holistic approach to health, integrating physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing, remain relevant and influential in contemporary discussions on mental health (academia, n.d).

Al-Balkhi's insights were centuries ahead of his time, and his work continues to be a valuable resource for understanding the historical roots of psychological practices within the Islamic tradition (Muslim articles, n.d).

Islamic psychology has also been shaped by several other influential figures throughout history such as Al-Kindī, Al-Farābī, Ibn Sinā (or Avicenna), and Ibn Rushd (or Averroes) (Haque, 2004). Their thought included ideas about knowledge of the human mind, behaviors, and emotions. It also included scientific traditions, theology, and *Sufī* mysticism.

Al-Kindī is regarded to have been the first Muslim to seek harmony between philosophy and religion, or reason and revelation. Al-Kindī viewed philosophy as a noble science that aims to strengthen faith as part of Islamic culture. He focused on the notion of divinity in his writings, affirming the oneness of Allah as a fundamental doctrine for Neo-Platonism and Neopythagoreans. To him, philosophy includes divinity, Allah's Oneness, Allah's superiority, and other sciences that teach how to obtain what is useful and avoid what is harmful.

Al-Kindī viewed philosophy as a noble science from which humans can learn about the Divine, reality, and the metaphysical world. For him, philosophy is the science of all sciences, the wisdom of all wisdom and it aims to strengthen religion. He examined the question of God, namely the nature, the existence of God; and the attributes of God. According to Al-Kindī, God is all existence, and His Divine presence is perfect, a proper form, and not preceded by other conditions. God's existence does not end, and Divine existence causes other beings. To prove the existence of God, Al-Kindī propounded three arguments, namely: 1) there cannot be an object that exists by itself, so there must be a first and foremost creator; 2) the propositions of diversity and unity (human beings and their elements) would not have been possible without something to arrange it; and 3) the proposition of natural baharu (dependence/limitations of motion and time

on objects). He asserts that everything in the heavens and the earth exists because of divine design (Mursidin, 2020). Similarly, Islamic psychology has a strong orientation to the Divine and the creation.

Scholars such as Abu Raiya, Norazlina Zakaria, Noor Shakiraj Mat Akhir, and Malik Badri, have attempted to integrate Islamic psychology and Western psychology. They have attempted not to replace Western psychology, but to develop new, inclusive theories in the interests of those suffering and improve mental health.

An article by Abu Raiya (2014) titled “Western Psychology and Muslim Psychology in Dialogue: Comparison Between a Quranic Theory of Personality and Freud’s and Jung’s Ideas” published in the *Journal of Religion and Health* presents an insightful contribution to the field of psychology. The article explores the similarities and differences between the *Qur’ānic* theory of personality and the theories of Freud and Jung. The author identifies parallels between the *Qur’ānic* concepts of personality; namely Freud’s id, ego, superego, and neurosis, and Jung’s collective unconscious archetypes, the self, and individuation. The article discusses the parallels and differences between Western and Islamic psychology in detail and begins to open opportunities for dialogue between Western and Muslim perspectives in the study of psychology. His article also highlights the similarities between the *Qur’ānic* constructs of *nafs* (self), *al-nafs al-marīḍah* (the afflicted self), and Freud’s concept of neurosis. Both models operate outside of conscious awareness, are governed by pleasure and the super-ego (roughly equivalent to the *nafs al-lawwāmah*, or “struggling self”, and have constituents that can lead to a pathological condition. Additionally, both models are structural and topographical in nature. However, the *Qur’ānic* model is based on creationism, whereas the Freudian model is based on secular-scientific principles.

The *Qur’ānic* concept of *rūḥ* roughly corresponds to the Jungian model’s of the psyche and spirituality. The self and *qalb* (heart) are centralizing forces in the psyche, representing the totality of the psyche and the ultimate desired state in psycho-spiritual development.

The similarities between the *Qur’ānic* and Jungian models suggest that religious texts may have a positive psychological impact. Religious texts and teachings can potentially be valuable resources for psychological

understanding, and psychologists can benefit from studying these texts. By considering both perspectives, insight is gained into the nature of personality and the Freudian and Jungian models of psychology (Abu Raiya, 2024).

Norazlina Zakaria and Noor Shakiraj Mat Akhir's (2017) work, "Theories and Modules Applied in Islamic Counseling Practices in Malaysia," published in the *Journal of Religion and Health*, explores the development of professional and qualified counselors in Malaysia. During the investigation, the researchers found that the number of Islamic counseling practitioners in Malaysia was limited and the majority of them knew one another, except for a few, until 2010. The study also found that Islamic counseling moved from the argumentative phase concerning its originality to developing theories and models. The findings also showed that Islamic counseling has a distinct identity compared to secular, Western counseling. Muslim counselors were eager to promote Islamic counseling among the Malaysian Muslim community. Muslim counselors were also determined to infuse Islamic principles into secular counseling. The research also found that Islamic counseling modules developed by Malaysian Muslim counselors could be easily integrated with Western modalities. The research was conducted in 2017 (Zakaria and Akhir, 2017).

Malik Badri's work, "Contemplation: An Islamic Psycho-spiritual Study," published by the International Institute of Islamic Thought, is a valuable work that explores Islamic *tafakkur* (contemplation) in the process of healing. By focusing upon spiritual development and drawing closer to the Almighty, the individual's contentment and tranquility gradually increase. In another article by Badri (2000), "Islamic Psychology: Emergence, Scope, and Challenges," he discusses the emergence of Islamic psychology as a distinct field and the integration of Islamic principles with contemporary psychological theories and practices. The Islamic psycho-social spiritual model that he proposes illustrates the role of spirituality, self-identity and ethical values in psychological well-being. This idea is further supported by an article by Khan, Z. H., Watson, P. J., & Chen, Z. (2012), in their article, "Islamic religious coping, perceived stress, and mental well-being in Pakistanis" published in *Archive for the Psychology of Religion*, 34(2), 137-147. The article found that religious

beliefs and practices among the Muslim community had a positive effect on mental health. Muslims who were diagnosed with psychological challenges exhibited a positive healing rate and productive coping mechanisms in response to stress and trauma. Therapists must be mindful of the client's cultural and religious backgrounds, as suggested by Badri (2017). This theory and proposed model of the soul, spirituality, and human behavior further underscores the relevance of Islamic psychology.

An interesting study by Arthur Saniotis titled, "Understanding Mind/Body Medicine from Muslim Religious Practices of Salat and Dhikr" was published in the *Journal of Religion and Health*, discusses the importance of *dhikr*, which is a meditative practice that can be performed individually or collectively. This theory is founded upon deep meditation and assists in dealing with mental health challenges and healing. Deep meditation and the continuous chanting of specific Islamic phrases are commonly used modalities of healing in Islamic psychology.

Rassool's book (2021), "Islamic Psychology: Human Behaviour and Experience from an Islamic Perspective", draws on the *Qur'an*, *Sunnah*, and the works of classical Muslim scholars, alongside modern psychological research. He attempts to synthesize empirical psychology and Islamic psychology by including the physical, psychological, social, spiritual dimensions of human behavior, and experiences from an Islamic approach. His work provides a balanced view of human nature and behavior, making it an important resource for students and professionals in Islamic psychology, psychotherapy, and counseling.

One of Rassool's key contributions is his exploration of concepts such as the *fitrah* (innate disposition), *nafs* (self), *'aql* (intellect), *rūh* (soul), and *qalb* (heart). He also delves into Islamic healing and spiritual interventions, offering practical applications for therapy and counseling.

Through his extensive writings and teachings, Rassool has helped bridge the gap between traditional Islamic knowledge and modern psychological practices, fostering a deeper understanding of human behavior from an Islamic perspective.

4. Research Methodology and Design

This research is informed by a qualitative design. The theory employed is of integration as proposed by Skinner and Rassool (Rassool & Luqmaan, 2023). Skinner argues for the integration of spirituality into psychotherapy. His theory of integration focuses on holistic healing. Al-Issa's ideas align with those of Skinner. Al-Issa combines integration and inclusivity with spirituality, arguing that Western psychology ignores the spiritual dimension of human existence.

Rassool and Luqmaan (2023) argue that an inclusive and integrated approach is important in clinical settings where understanding the patient's cultural and religious backgrounds can significantly enhance therapeutic outcomes.

In Islamic psychology, spirituality is recognized as a significant state of being that can improve mental health and wellbeing. Carrie York Al-Karam's article "Islamic Psychotherapy: An Integrative Approach" addresses the importance for therapists to be culturally and religiously sensitive when working with clients. Understanding Islamic beliefs, values, and practices is essential in providing appropriate therapy (Al-Karam, 2018). Islamic psychology offers an inclusive, theoretical framework by infusing Islamic values and principles with Western psychology. This makes Islamic psychology somewhat different to Western psychology. The psychotherapy employed following diagnoses, including Islamic teachings, presents a more holistic, complete form of healing. In contrast to the often limited treatments in Western psychology, the holistic approaches in Islamic psychology is generally in the best interest of an individual.

The "higher objectives of Islam", also known as the "*maqāsid al-sharī'ah*" are central in the development of Islamic psychology. *Maqāsid al-sharī'ah* promotes human welfare, the sanctity of life, human rights, the preservation of dignity and honor, promotes justice and equality, and advocates for general wellbeing through the preservation of the mind and intellect, etc. (Auda, 2008). The theories of preservation and protection in particular are frameworks within a *maqāsid* approach that can assist with the development of Islamic psychology and its advancement. In this paper, the qualitative design is drawn from *maqāsid* theories on integration, inclusivity and preservation to argue for Islamic psychology

as a notable science for holistic healing. Auda likewise argues that *maqāṣid* can help with a sense of belonging and identity, essential for promoting good mental health and wellbeing, especially in communities that may feel disconnected from mainstream society (Auda, 2016).

5. Discussion and Analysis

With an increase in mental health issues faced by the Muslim community, Islamic psychology presents an integrated approach to healing and wellbeing. Scholarly works written on the condition of the *qalb* (heart) or *nafs* (self) and the integration of prayer and *dhikr* in psychotherapy by Keshavarzi and Hague, the modality of *ṣabr* (patience) therapy in healing by Qasqas, *jihād* therapy by Saritoprak, the heart method (Lodi, 2018), Islamization of psychology by Safi, psychology from an Islamic perspective by Badri, and What is Islamic psychology? by Skinner (Al-Karam, 2018), among other works in this paper, begin to show an interest in the study of Islamic psychology in the twenty-first century.

The above works consider the intrinsic relationship between human existence and spirituality. It is arguably more valuable and beneficial to have an inclusive and integrated framework with sound therapeutic modalities for those suffering from trauma, depression, anxiety or any mental health issues. In this regard, interest in the individual's psychological wellbeing is important. However, it should be noted that more complex mental health issues disorders usually require professional medical intervention and diagnosis, and perhaps even medication, which Islamic psychology may not provide.

6. Islamic Psychology as a Science

Rabie (1993) opines that interest in understanding human psychology is as old as Islamic culture itself. He argues that the historical origins of this interest can be traced back to the eighth century and two important developments; (1) the *Qur'ān* and Islamic interest in psychology and (2) translation and Islamic interest in psychology.

Ashy (1999) argues that there is a need to introduce Islamic psychology as a new field of study. He asserts that, Islamic psychology is needed because it examines the Islamic understanding of human psychology and in studying the "Islamic world, taking into consideration cultural,

historical and social factors. Islamic psychology also helps reduce the information gaps that separates between West and Islam.”

When it comes to Islamic psychology, there are several challenges and criticisms. These include the need to agree on various concepts and approaches, and the concerns about potential conflicts between religious teachings and psychological theories.

Islamic psychology also focuses upon the concept of unity of the Divine (*Tawhīd*). This principle underscores the interconnections and unity of all aspects of human existence, including spiritual, psychological, and physical dimensions. It also highlights the need to address the whole person in therapy, instead of solely focusing on psychological aspects. This is not necessary the case in Western psychology.

Incorporating Islamic principles when conceptualizing psychological wellbeing should be explored when considering the best interest of the patient. Islamic teachings provide a comprehensive framework for understanding wellbeing, which includes spiritual, psychological, and the social dimensions of human existence.

There are five dimensions of Islamic psychological wellbeing: spiritual connection, personal development, self-regulation, positive relationships, and societal contribution. These dimensions reflect the interconnections between an individual's relationship with the Almighty, personal growth and self-improvement, emotional regulation, meaningful relationships, and contributing to the betterment of individuals (Rothman et al., 2022).

Islamic principles can enhance the effectiveness of therapy by providing a comprehensive framework that addresses both spiritual and psychological aspects of wellbeing. These principles also offer a unique perspective on human behavior and mental processes (Al-Karam, 2018). In Western psychology, the focus is generally upon addressing the psychological wellbeing of patients only, and often ignores external factors such as the society. This is where Islamic psychology differs from Western psychology. The former reflects upon an intrinsic, spiritual relationship between the individual, God, and society. In Islam, spirituality is an important dimension of human existence. It focuses on developing a spiritual connection with the Divine through

worship, and encourages the individual to remain optimistic. While Islamic psychology aims to connect with the spiritual world, Western psychology has a strong orientation to the physical world.

7. Holistic and inclusive healing through Islamic Psychology

The goal of Islamic psychology is to understand the human psyche within the framework of Islam. This includes addressing psychological issues, promoting mental wellbeing, and contributing to the development of individuals and communities. However, it is important to note that the majority of contemporary psychological practices have developed within western societies over time. Therefore, it is crucial to reflect critically on this to avoid potentially ethnocentric biases in the psychological approach. One way to achieve this is by considering diverse cultural perspectives and religious persuasions, including Islamic psychology.

To assess psychological wellbeing from an Islamic perspective, it is necessary to use culturally sensitive measurement tools. The Islamic psychological wellbeing scale (IPWBS), developed by Awaad et al. (2021), is a tool that measures the five dimensions of Islamic psychological wellbeing. This tool explains Muslim populations' psychological wellbeing by considering Islamic values, beliefs, and practices.

Religiosity and spirituality play a vital role in promoting Islamic psychological wellbeing. According to Awaad et al., religious practices, rituals, and beliefs central to Islam contribute to an individual's psychological wellbeing by providing a sense of purpose, guidance, and connection with the Almighty. Therefore, it is essential to consider religiosity and spirituality when assessing and promoting wellbeing from an Islamic perspective.

It is important to strike a balance between upholding Islamic values and embracing Western psychology. It is also necessary to integrate Islamic psychology with contemporary psychological theories and practices while maintaining the authenticity of both disciplines in the interest of the patient. Islamic principles and values must guide this integration, and therapists should encourage clients to trust their Creator while taking responsibility for their own growth and spiritual wellbeing. Establishing a collaborative therapeutic relationship between therapist and client is

crucial, as is creating a safe and non-judgmental space for individuals to explore their concerns within the framework of their Islamic beliefs and values.

Considering a patient's cultural, religious, and spiritual dimensions is an integrative approach to Islamic psychotherapy. This approach should also incorporate Western psycho-therapeutic techniques while recognizing the benefits of integrating Islamic principles, values, and practices into therapy. As noted, there are five fundamentals upon which Islamic psychology is founded, which include spiritual connection, personal development, self-regulation, positive relationships, and societal contribution.

Awaad et al. (2021) emphasize the importance of virtue in Islamic psychology and wellbeing. Virtuous behavior, guided by Islamic ethical values, contribute to psychological wellbeing, and highlights the significance of character development and moral excellence in pursuing wellbeing. Overall, this approach to psychotherapy promotes healing and wellbeing by addressing the spiritual dimension, incorporating Islamic values, and cultural sensitivity when providing therapy to Muslim clients.

By identifying gaps, contradictions, and emerging trends in psychology, researchers can develop new approaches to psychological questions, methodologies, or theoretical frameworks that contribute to advancing knowledge in the field of mental health. Islamic psychology offers unique contributions to psychology, including incorporating spiritual dimensions, recognizing human interconnectedness, emphasizing character development, and integrating Islamic ethical values into therapeutic interventions. The development of Islamic psychology also requires an interdisciplinary collaboration between scholars, theologians, psychologists, and other experts to advance its understanding, importance and application.

While acknowledging the need for further development, dialogue, and research in the field, integrating Islamic principles into contemporary psychological theories and practices can enhance ethical sensitivity and decision-making. Islamic psychology strongly emphasizes collective welfare and social responsibility, encouraging psychologists to consider broader social and cultural contexts within the community.

Furthermore, the challenges Muslims face regarding identity and cultural adaptation in contemporary societies highlight the importance of supporting individuals in navigating identity formation and cultural integration. These insights contribute to the development and expansion of Islamic psychology as an emerging field that offers a unique perspective on understanding and promoting human wellbeing, as argued by Omais and Dos Santos (2022).

Mental health disorders affect millions of people worldwide, making it a global public health concern (Cooperman & Grim, 2009). Providing alternative mechanisms for healing in the interest of a diverse population must be explored if the focus is to provide health care to those in need.

8. Mental health disorders

According to the World Health Organization, over 264 million people globally suffer from depression, and its prevalence has increased by 18.4% between 2005 and 2015. Anxiety disorder is the most common mental health condition worldwide, affecting an estimated 284 million people globally, with a higher prevalence among women. Substance use disorders are also significant in global health, with over 237 million people suffering from drug or alcohol abuse worldwide. Eating disorders and schizophrenia are chronic and severe mental health disorders affecting approximately 20 people globally. These statistics emphasize the need for effective prevention and treatment interventions for mental health disorders globally, although prevalence may vary from country to country (Cooperman & Grim, 2009).

South Africa is not immune to these challenges, with many individuals and communities facing barriers to accessing adequate mental health care. There is limited support for mental health patients in the country, and more needs to be done to ensure that professional mental health care is accessible to those who need it. Fortunately, various facilities and helplines are available in South Africa to assist. These resources include the South African Depression and Anxiety Group, which offers information, support, and referrals for mental health issues. Lifeline South Africa provides a 24/7 helpline offering emotional support, crisis intervention, and suicide prevention services. Childline South Africa is dedicated to supporting and protecting children and youth facing

various challenges, including mental health issues. Suicide Crisis assists individuals experiencing suicidal thoughts or behaviors. These organizations provide valuable assistance in cases of immediate danger or emergencies. Additionally, mental health professionals and support groups in the local communities offer ongoing assistance and guidance for individuals with mental health concerns.

According to the South African Depression and Anxiety Group (Sadag), one in three South Africans have or will have a mental health issue in their lifetime (Sunday Times, 2023). Sadag has also noted a significant lack of mental health care resources in South Africa, particularly in urban areas, due to population increases and the migration of foreigners from neighboring countries, making it difficult for individuals to access the care they need.

Substance use disorders contribute significantly to mental health issues in South Africa, particularly among young people. According to a study published in the *South African Medical Journal*, an estimated 15% of South Africans aged 15 to 24 have a substance use disorder, and alcohol use disorders are pervasive (Bonner, et al., 2020).

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) is another mental health issue in South Africa. This is mainly found among victims of crimes and individuals suffering from trauma. According to a study published in the *South African Journal of Psychiatry*, an estimated 26% of individuals who experienced violence in South Africa meet the criteria for PTSD (Swain et al., 2017) 6% – 9% in North America and at just over 10% in countries exposed to long-term violence. In South Africa, the lifetime prevalence for PTSD in the general population is estimated at 2.3%.
Aim: To examine the prevalence of posttraumatic stress symptomatology and related psychological functioning in a community sample of adolescents.
Setting: Low-socioeconomic communities in KwaZulu-Natal. Methods: Home interviews with adolescents and their maternal caregivers were used to collect the data using standardised instruments. Adolescents completed the Trauma Symptom Checklist for Children; Children's Depression Inventory; Children's Somatization Inventory; and Revised Children's Manifest Anxiety Scale. The Child Behaviour Checklist was completed by the caregivers. The sample comprised Grade 7 (n = 256).

Eating disorders and suicides are a growing concern in South Africa, particularly among young people. An estimated 9% of all deaths in South Africa are due to suicide, the second leading cause of death among young people aged 15 to 29 years (Swain et al., 2017).

The above data and statistics provide evidence for the establishment of more mental health facilities in South Africa. Economic distress and unemployment contribute to mental health issues among students, young adults, and entrepreneurs. This was more visible during the COVID-19 pandemic. Psycho-therapeutic treatment and methods can help people to cope with stress, trauma, medical illness, loss of a loved one, anxiety, etc.

Depression, anxiety, stress, and burnout are mental health disorders commonly experienced by business owners. A National Small Business Association survey found that 49% of participants reported mental health conditions, and 34% reported burnout (Bonner et al., 2020).

Mental health disorders are a significant issue among students, with mental health challenges increasing in recent years. Depression and anxiety, substance abuse, stress, and eating disorders are common mental health disorders among students, with 60% of university students reporting overwhelming anxiety (Bonner et al., 2020). Islamic psychology emphasizes the importance of spiritual and moral values, mindfulness, and a sense of purpose to help students find meaning and direction. It also focuses on social cohesion, community support, and focused spiritual support through prayers and supplications.

Khan (1986) opines that in Islam, treatment can be either through a single remedy or a compound one. He adds, that some diseases require a compound remedy, such as chemical intervention and psychological diagnosis and support. He mentions that the *Qur'ān* was used in itself as a treatment for some diseases.

Al Gesir (1961) argues that many Muslim scientists hold the view that the practise of religion is helpful for health. By way of example, he cites that praying five times a day helps to reduce psychological stress and to keep structure and discipline. It offers both individual and group strength in times of hardship.

Islamic practices can complement professional treatment and support, but individuals experiencing severe mental health issues should still seek help from qualified mental health experts (Tekke & Watson, 2017).

Islamic psychology provides a valuable framework to support mental health and wellbeing, particularly those struggling with stress, anxiety, depression, eating disorders, or substance abuse disorders through inclusive modalities by merging Islamic psychology with Western psychology.

9. The Similarities and Differences Between Western Psychology and Islamic Psychology

Samuel Bendeck Sotillos has made significant contributions to the field of Islamic psychology by bridging the gap between traditional Islamic teachings and modern psychological practices. His work emphasizes the integration of spiritual and psychological wellbeing, drawing from the rich heritage of Islamic thought. Sotillos argues that Western psychology often overlooks the spiritual dimension of human existence, which is central to Islamic psychology (Sotillos, 2022).

In his writings, Sotillos highlights the importance of understanding the human soul (*nafs*) and its connection to the divine spirit (*rūh*). He advocates for a holistic approach that incorporates the principles of the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*, emphasizing that true psychological health cannot be achieved without addressing the spiritual needs. His work also addresses the stigma around mental health within the Muslim communities, promoting culturally sensitive therapeutic practices that respect Islamic values.

Sotillos' contributions are crucial in developing a model of psychotherapy that is both scientifically sound and spiritually enriching. By advocating for the inclusion of Islamic principles in psychological practice, he provides a framework that helps Muslims navigate mental challenges while staying true to their faith (Sotillos, 2022).

As noted mental health disorders affect millions of people worldwide and are a significant global public health issue. Mental health practitioners in psychology provide various therapeutic approaches and techniques to aid the mental health treatments. Current research explores the significance

of Islamic psychology in enhancing mental healing by integrating frameworks and expanding modalities to incorporate cultural and spiritual perspectives (Valaite & Berniunas, 2022).

Western psychology aims to describe, predict, and control human behavior. In contrast, Islamic psychology focuses on the mind, body, emotions, and soul to cultivate desirable behaviors through the teachings of the *Qur'ān* and the *Sunnah*.

Below are some key points of comparison and contrast between Western psychology and Islamic psychology:

- **Philosophical foundation:**

Western psychology is based on largely European philosophical traditions, emphasizing individualism, rationality, and empiricism. Influential figures in this field include Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, and B.F. Skinner. On the other hand, Islamic psychology is rooted in Islamic philosophy and theology, viewing humans as holistic beings that are both physical and spiritual. Prominent scholars, such as Al-Farābī, Ibn Sinā (Avicenna), and Al-Ghazālī, developed an Islamic paradigm of the individual's relationship with psychology, which involves overcoming the influences of the *nafs* and aligning it with the *fitrah* (innate nature).

- **Concept of the “self”:**

Western psychology generally views the self as an individualistic construct, emphasizing personal identity, autonomy, and self-actualization. On the other hand, Islamic psychology regards the self as a servant of the Almighty, connected with the divine and interconnected with others.

- **Treatment approach:**

Western psychology treatments focus on addressing cognitive, emotional, and behavioral patterns. Common therapeutic techniques include cognitive behavioral therapy, psychoanalysis, and humanistic therapy. In contrast, Islamic psychology incorporates spiritual interventions alongside psychological techniques. Prayers, *dhikr* (spiritual remembrance), reciting *Qur'ānic* verses, and seeking closeness to Allah are all emphasized as part of the healing process.

- **Understanding mental health:**

In Western psychology, mental health is primarily viewed through a medical lens focuses on diagnosing and treating mental disorders. It explores biological, psychological, and social factors that impact mental well being. In Islamic Psychology, mental health is integral to an individual's overall well being, encompassing spiritual, emotional, and social dimensions. It emphasizes the purification of the heart and the importance of maintaining a balance through prayers and a virtuous lifestyle.

- **Source of knowledge:**

Western psychology relies on empirical research, scientific methods, and objective observations to understand human behaviors and develop psychological theories. Islamic psychology integrates empirical research with Islamic teachings and sources such as the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah* to provide insights into human behaviors and psychological processes (Rothman & Coyle, 2018).

Islamic psychology approaches mental health care differently from its Western counterparts. While Western psychology place much emphasis on theoretical approaches to psychology, Islamic psychology focuses on external and cultural factors that influence people's life experiences. Islamic psychology also adopts a unique philosophical perspective on human nature, distinct from conventional Western psychology. It builds upon the work of classical scholars from the Islamic tradition, such as al-Ghazālī, al-Balkhī, al-Ḥārith Al-Muḥāsibī, Al Rāzī, and others. It applies these traditions to modern psychology, focusing on practical application.

Islamic psychology differs from Western psychology in that the former includes a strong spiritual dimension. This is illustrated by the following *Qur'ānic* verse, in which it is reported that Prophet Ibrahim (AS) said; "And when I am sick, He (the Almighty) cures (me)." (Sūrah Shu'arā', verse 80). Recognizing the Almighty as the ultimate source of healing, Islamic psychology maintains that deepening one's connection with Allah (SWT) and better understanding their relationship with the Almighty can help individuals overcome life's challenges more effectively.

Incorporating Islamic psychology into commonly used interventions may also aid with navigating life's difficulties in conjunction with psychotherapy principles. While both Western psychology and Islamic psychology are concerned with understanding human behavior, cognition, and emotion, as noted, the former focuses more on the theoretical approaches to psychology rather than cultural or external factors.

While Western psychology views humans as individuals with unique personalities and characteristics, Islamic psychology sees human beings as interconnected in a larger social and spiritual context. Western psychology often emphasizes individual therapy and medication as primary treatments for mental health disorders while Islamic psychology prioritizes an integrated three-tier approach; the self, spirituality, and society. Islamic psychology places importance on the self as a reflection of one's relationship with God and the significance of the collective self in understanding one's identity (Abu Raiya, 2014).

Islamic psychology approaches the conceptualization of human psychology from a distinctly different set of philosophical frameworks from conventional Western psychology. Healing in Islamic psychology begins with understanding that struggles and stressful situations are part of life and involves introducing the individual to the healing sources of Islam; namely, the *Qur'ān* and the Sunnah.

10. Islamic Psychology as a Modality for Holistic Healing to Mental Health and Wellbeing

The *Qur'ān* provides guidance to those who suffer from various types of stress and anxiety. Muslims are encouraged to engage in deep meditation and reflection. In *Sūrah Ra'd* verse 28, the Almighty says, "Surely in the remembrance of the Almighty does the heart find tranquility". This verse has healing and therapeutic potential, especially when one engages in various forms of *dhikr* such as reading the *Qur'ān* and observing prayers. As noted, although the *Qur'ān* provides healing guidelines, more complex or chronic psychological disorders will require deeper diagnosis and possible medication. Nevertheless, Muslims are reminded that in taking to medication, one must also believe that the true cure and healer is the Almighty (which will be discussed later). The *'aql* (intellect), guides an individual towards inclusive and integrated healing.

Islamic psychology can be placed under the preservation of the *'aql* or known as "*ḥifẓ al-'aql*". *Ḥifẓ al-'aql* is one of the five higher objectives of Islam. The other four objectives include:

1. The preservation of religion (*ḥifẓ al-dīn*),
2. The preservation of lineage (*ḥifẓ al-nasl*),
3. The preservation of wealth (*ḥifẓ al-māl*),
4. The preservation of the self (*ḥifẓ al-nafs*).

These five objectives are known as the fundamental principles which must be protected at all times (Auda, 2008). *Ḥifẓ al-'aql* is an aspect of Islamic psychology, which differs from Western psychology as it has a strong undertone of Islamic values and guidance taken from the sources of Islam; namely, the *Qur'ān* and *Sunnah*.

The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) provided a selection of sayings to recite when suffering from anxiety, depression and grief. 'Abdullah ibn Mas'ūd reported that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said:

'Never is a servant struck by worry or grief but let him say, 'O Allah, I am Your servant, the son of Your servant, the son of Your maidservant. My forelock is in Your hand, Your decision over me has passed, and Your decree upon me is in justice. I ask You by every name with which You have named Yourself, or revealed in Your Book, or taught to one of Your creatures, or kept hidden in the Unseen with You, that You make the *Qur'ān* the spring of my heart, the light of my insight, the banisher of my depression, and the expeller of my anxiety,' then Allah will expel his worry and replace his grief with joy.' They said, 'O Messenger of Allah, should we study these words?' The Prophet said, 'Of course, whoever hears them should study them.' (Ṣaḥīḥ Ibn Ḥibbān, *Ḥadīth* 972).

Abū Sa'īd al-Khudrī (RA) said:

One day the Prophet ﷺ entered the mosque and saw a man from the Anṣār who was named Abū Umāmah. He said, 'Oh Abū Umamah, what is the matter that I see you sitting in the mosque when it is not time for prayer?' He said, 'Worries and debts I have, oh Messenger of Allah.' He said, 'Shall I not teach you words if you say them, Allah, Exalted and Glorified be He, would remove your worries and settle your debts?' He said, 'Of course, oh Messenger of Allah.' He said, 'Say in the morning

and in the evening, O Allah, I seek refuge in You from anxiety and grief; and I seek refuge in You from inability and laziness; and I seek refuge in You from cowardice and from stinginess; and I seek refuge in You from being overcome by debt and from being overpowered by men.’ He said, ‘When I did that, Allah removed my worries and settled my debt.’ (Sunan Abī Dawūd, *Ḥadīth* 1555).

Ibn Abbas (RA) narrated that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, ‘If anyone constantly seeks forgiveness (from Allah), Allah will appoint for him a way out of every distress, a relief from every anxiety and will provide sustenance for him where he does not expect it.’ (Sunan Abī Dawūd, *Ḥadīth* 1518).

Rothman and Coyle (2018) argue that Western and Islamic psychology have strengths and limitations. A new approach is required to promote diversity in psychology as the prevailing outlook clashes with Islamic beliefs and culture. In prescriptive treatment, practitioners must consider clients’ cultural and spiritual backgrounds.

Practitioners of Islamic psychology help individuals understand their challenges within an Islamic paradigm, guiding them through difficulties using the *Qur’ān* and the *Sunnah* as a framework and guide towards wellbeing. Islamic psychology incorporates knowledge of the human mind, behaviors, and emotions, Greek philosophy, scientific traditions, theology, and Islamic teachings as part of holistic healing. Scholars such as Al-Kindī, Al-Farābī, Ibn Sinā (or Avicenna), and Ibn Rushd (or Averroes) have written extensively on cultural practices of healing (Haque, 2004). Their work emphasize on the Almighty as the ultimate healer. This is supported by the verse mentioned earlier, verse 80 in *Sūrah Shu’rā’*, “When I am sick, He (alone) cures” and *Sūrah Baqarah* verse 156, “We come from the Almighty and unto him is own return”. By establishing a deep connection with the Almighty, people are better to cope and heal from various emotional and psychological traumas. Moreover, the above two verses are central to the study of Islamic psychology.

Empirical studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of integrating Islamic principles in therapy. A study by Al-Karam and Hague (2020) titled, “Islamically Integrated Cognitive Behavioral Therapy: A Shari’ah-Compliant Intervention for Muslims with Depression”, found that

incorporating Islamic teachings and practices, such as prayer and reflection on *Qur'ānic* verses, helped clients manage anxiety and depression more effectively than the standard CBT alone. This suggests that culturally tailored interventions can significantly improve the outcomes in therapy for Muslim patients (Academia, n.d).

In Islam, the human being consists of a body and a soul. Every human being born is imbued with four distinct qualities that will form part of his existence on earth. This is articulated in the Prophetic narration:

Sayyidinā ‘ Abd Allah ibn Mas‘ūd [may Allah be pleased with him] narrates that the Messenger of Allah [may Allah bless him & give him peace] said: ‘Each of you is constituted in the mother’s womb for forty days, and then he becomes a clot of thick blood for a similar period and then a piece of flesh for a similar period. Then Allah sends an angel who is ordered to write four things. He is ordered to write down his deeds, his livelihood, his [date of] death, and whether he will be blessed or wretched in religion. Then the soul is breathed into him...’ (Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī: 3036).

The *Qur’ān* explains that the Almighty will institute various challenges throughout an individual’s life upon the earth. This will affect the individual psychologically and will influence their behavior. The Almighty says: “And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient...” (Q 2:155).

In the above verse, reference is given to five tests that may afflict a person in life, which are as follows: fear, hunger, economic challenges, the test of life, and the fruits of life. The common fears and challenges in life can also be grouped within the scope of psychology under the five Islamic tests as mentioned in the above verse.

General Fear	Hunger	Economic challenges	Life	Fruits
الخوف	الجوع	نقص من الأموال	الأنفس	الثمرات

Anxiety, depression, fear, worry, tension, trauma, financial strain, financial pressure, work pressure, despair, sadness, hopelessness, rejection, failure, suicidal tendencies, disappointment, depression, schizophrenia, post-traumatic stress disorder, personality disorder, mood disorder, dissociative disorder, bipolar disorder, psychotic disorder, etc.

Rassool (2021) argues that Islamic psychology can be particularly effective in addiction counseling. He asserts that through spiritual practices and community support, individuals are more likely to adhere to treatment plans and achieve long term recovery. He further adds that in these cases, emphasis on community and collective wellbeing provides a supportive network for individuals in recovery.

Hague (2004) opines that Al-Balkhi was probably the first cognitive and medical psychologist who was able to differentiate between neuroses and psychoses, to classify neurotic disorders, and to show how rational and spiritual cognitive therapies can be used to treat certain disorders. He classified neuroses into four main disorders; fear and anxiety, anger and aggression, sadness and depression, and obsessions. Hague further argued that Muslim psychologists interested in the Islamic perspective need to work both at the theoretical and practical levels to bring back their own indigenous psychology. He asserts, that in this case, Muslims must clarify their core beliefs and understandings ... and to redefine the subject matter of psychology from Islamic perspective using the “Tawhidic” paradigm, this would mean studying *nafs* from a Muslim perspective.

There are three places in the *Qur’ān* where reference is made to the soul and its propensity. In these cases, the word soul and the word *nafs* can be used interchangeably. Western psychological diagnoses can be connected to any of the three verses below which informs the behaviour of a person.

Verse One: the *nafs al-ammārah*.

“Indeed the *nafs* that is prone to sin” (12:53).

This *nafs* influences the actions of a person. It has a propensity to sin. Even though this *nafs* may be prone to sin, the Almighty has granted human beings the ability to control these *nafs* and make rational choices. The choices that people make that can affect their wellbeing, such as, poor financial decisions,

the consumption of intoxicating substances, and committing wrong deeds, may be the causes that lead to a depressive lifestyle, anxiety, trauma, and even suicidal behavior in some cases. During these times people may go for counselling in order to deal with the choices they made as they blame themselves for their own failures.

Verse Two: the *nafs al-lawwāmah*.

“And I swear my the self blaming soul” (75:2).

This self-lamenting *nafs* is self-reproaching and can restore an individual’s self-worth. When a person commits errors and makes poor wrong choices, this *nafs al-ammārah* develops a consciousness of remorse and regret. This is when guilt, shame, and embarrassment overcome the individual, and they repent for their unbecoming actions. The path to healing in Islamic psychology is to recognize this state of the self, and that there is a problem. It is only then, that a person is able to cope with depression and different kinds of trauma, and only thereafter set upon direct a pathway to healing.

Verse Three: the *nafs al-mutmainnah*.

“Oh you contented soul, return to your Lord well pleased, and pleasing to Him” (89:27-28).

This is the highest form in which the *nafs* can manifest itself. It is at ease and contented with life. This *nafs* understands the value of life itself, its purpose and that it will return to its creator. It guides individuals to good and pleasing actions where one’s behavior conforms to the teachings of Islam. It is only then that the Creator is pleased and satisfied with the activities of the individual.

The individual is constantly purifying the *nafs* through spirituality and aligning their thoughts toward optimism. Optimism plays an important part in healing. One’s personality and behavior are indications that one is the Creator’s devoted servant (‘*abd*). Finally, one places their trust and conviction in their Creator and is contented with what has been decreed.

Abu Raiya (2012) opines that there is a natural progression of the *nafs* toward growth. In each stage in which the *nafs* finds itself, the potential

exists that it can develop and ultimately become contented and satisfied. By using this approach, Abu Raiya formulates a systematic *Qur'ānic* theory of personality. As the *nafs* move from one stage to the next, they conform and comply with a set behavior pattern.

The research of Haque, Kaplick, and Skinner (2016) in a Cambridge University article calls for developing a theoretical framework to advance the study of Islamic psychology. In their work they discuss the soul and the relationship between it and the heart (*qalb*). Al-Ghazālī's work *Ihyā' al-'Ulūm al-Dīn* describes the qualities and stages of the soul as mentioned earlier. Yahya opines that Al-Ghazālī's division of the *nafs* is more about the structure of the soul.

John asserts that when the individual connects with the self-reflective *nafs* known as the *nafs al-lawwāmah*, it allows the individual to recognize and acknowledge their weakness. By doing so, the healing can begin, as Badri (2017) states.

Islamic psychology distinguishes itself from Western psychology in that healing and coping are manifestations of acknowledgment, recognition, and processing. This is when treatment can be identified and administered using Western psychology methods, modalities and by integrating of Islamic psychology. By integrating Islamic principles with modern psychological practices, therapists can provide culturally and religiously relevant care that enhances therapeutic outcomes. This approach not only addresses the psychological needs of Muslim clients but also respects and incorporates their cultural and spiritual values, leading to more effective and holistic mental health care.

Uthman Nagati opines that an Islamic psychology module must be informed through well-researched studies. He suggests that a seven-step approach must be considered. This approach is summarized in the following table (Haque, 2022). Following Nagati's approach Islamic psychology begins to take shape and align with Western psychology.

Seven-step plan to implement Islamic psychology	
1	Mastery of modern psychology: This will allow an individual to understand the history of Western psychology, methodology, modalities, theories and challenges.
2	Mastery of Islamic traditions: Scholars wishing to specialize in Islamic psychology must understand Islamic principles and foundations within the sources of Islam to develop accurate, well-founded psychological theories. In addition, collaborating with scholars trained in Islamic sciences will also be helpful.
3	Mastery of Muslim history and scholarship within Islamic psychology: Scholars must have the ability to draw a dichotomy with, but also parallels between Western and Islamic psychology, theories, modalities and influential works within the study of psychology. This will allow to create a harmony between the two modalities and/or determine additional guidance for patients.
4	Mastery of critical skills: Scholars must make the best interests and wellbeing of patients a priority. They should develop a blended approach between Western and Islamic psychology to help patient recovery. A critical assessment and analysis of a patient is important to prescribe the best healing guidance.
5	Mastery of research skills: While treating patients, Muslim psychologists should keep a detailed record of all diagnoses and prescribed treatments which will create new modalities and theories for Islamic psychology. This will advance the study of Islamic psychology and research.
6	Mastery of creating awareness: Scholars of Islamic psychology, and Muslim institutions have an important role to play in creating awareness and interest in the study of Islamic psychology. Collaboration and partnership is important for Islamic psychology to be considered an important science and subject at institutions.
7	Mastery in the production of materials: Scholars must produce credible research to advance Islamic psychology. This will include the ability to infuse Islamic principles and values into Western psychology. Articles should be published, and research shared to advance the interests of Islamic psychology.

11. Conclusion

Islamic psychology offers a holistic approach to wellbeing that integrates spiritual and psychological factors. It is essential to balance spiritual, psychological, and social factors to provide comprehensive care for individuals with various mental health issues.

Islamic psychology is an interdisciplinary field that integrates Islamic principles with psychological science, emphasizing the importance of culture and context, and the role of Islamic ethics. It can be integrated into mental health care, aligning spirituality with the healing process. Decolonizing Western psychology must be considered to allow room for the introduction and importance of Islamic psychology. Here more research is required as Islamic psychology has gained a renewed interest recently.

The objective of Islamic psychology is to incorporate Western modalities into traditional counseling practices for a more holistic and inclusive healing. For Muslims, there is an intrinsic relationship and connection between the physical and spiritual worlds. The fundamental belief system of Muslims is that they must conform to religious norms and practices.

Islamic psychology can co-exist with Western psychology to help individuals cope with life's challenges. As mental health support increases, professionals must be aware of their client's cultural and religious backgrounds to provide respectful, responsive care that meets their unique needs and experiences (Swain et al., 2017).

Islamic psychology offers a comprehensive, restorative approach that integrates Western and Islamic concepts and theories into a more holistic psychology framework. The focal point of Islamic psychology is centered around Islam and its principal objectives drawing upon *Qur'ānic* values and Prophetic guidelines. It is not a matter of comparing the superiority of Islamic psychology to Western psychology, but rather striking a balance between the two, which is beneficial for all those suffering from various traumatic experiences and stressful situations.

It must also be noted that Islamic psychology has limitations, such as certain cultural practices, lack of standardized procedures, and the need for integration into Western psychology. It can be valuable for individuals

who follow the Islamic faith but may not address other religious nuances due to cultural and religious differences.

In addition, lack of standardized practices and consensus can occur when scholars and practitioners interpret and apply Islamic principles differently. Islamic psychology aims to integrate Islamic principles with Western psychology theories and practices, which can be challenging given the difficulties in gaining acceptance and recognition from secular psychology.

There is also limited empirical research focused on Islamic psychology compared to Western psychology. Further research is needed to validate and expand the theoretical foundation of Islamic psychology. The dependency on Islamic scholars, theologians, and religious texts for theoretical and practical guidance may limit the development of Islamic psychology and its ability to incorporate diverse perspectives and interdisciplinary approaches (Fahmi & Aswirna, 2022).

While spirituality is an essential component of Islamic psychology, over emphasizing interventions may limit the effectiveness of interventions for individuals with complex mental health issues that require a more comprehensive approach and psychological help.

It is crucial to recognize these limitations while acknowledging the benefits of Islamic psychology. To ensure a well-rounded and inclusive approach to understanding human psychology and wellbeing, interdisciplinary collaborations, empirical research, and critical discussions must address these limitations (Leonard, 1984).

Finally, there is a dearth of educational framework and curriculum development in the integration of Islamic ethics in psychology. This observation is also supported by Rassool (2020), who argues that despite the absence of educational philosophy and curriculum approaches in Islamic psychology, this has not deterred some institutions from developing “professional continuing course in Islamic psychology, psychotherapy and counselling.”

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