

**IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY**

**MASTER THESIS**

**EXPLORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ISLAMIC  
THOUGHT TO PSYCHOTHERAPY: A THEMATIC  
ANALYSIS OF ISLAMICALLY INTEGRATED  
PSYCHOTHERAPY PRACTITIONERS**

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**ISTANBUL, 2021**

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by

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**A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in  
Clinical Psychology**

**THESIS SUPERVISOR**

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**ISTANBUL, 2021**

## ACADEMIC HONESTY ATTESTATION

I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name Surname: M. Furkan Cinisli

Signature:



## ÖZ

# İSLAM DÜŞÜNCESİNİN PSİKOTERAPİYE KATKISINI KEŞFETMEK: İSLAMLA BÜTÜNLEŞİK PSİKOTERAPİ UYGULAYICILARININ TEMATİK ANALİZİ

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İslam dini, teşekkül etmeye başladığı dönemden itibaren hiçbir zaman diliminde yalnızca belirli pratikler ve inanç bütünü olarak görülmemiştir. Bunun aksine İslam, hayatı bütünüyle kuşatan ve hayatın her alanında insana inanç üzerinden bir perspektif çizen bir medeniyet inşa etmiştir. Bu medeniyet ontolojik olarak insanın varlığına dair tespitlerde bulunurken, epistemolojik olarak da bilgi edinme süreçleri üzerinde kurallar koymuştur. Bununla birlikte, din-hayat ilişkisi modern dönemde ciddi bir kesintiye uğramış ve sosyal bilimlerin her alanında bu kesinti daha da genişlemiştir. Bu çalışma, İslam düşüncesinin psikoterapi alanına sağlayabileceği katkı üzerinde durmaktadır. Araştırma çerçevesinde İslam düşüncesi ile psikoterapiyi bir arada düşünmeye çalışan 8 terapist ile yapılan görüşmelerin tematik analizi yapılmıştır. İslami kavramların terapi tekniği olarak entegre edilmesi, diğer terapi metotlarının entegre edilmesi, İslam düşüncesinin terapiye aktarılmasındaki zorluklar, İslam düşüncesinin terapi ortamına uygulanmasının önemi ve İslam düşüncesinin terapi ortamına aktarılmasının klinik psikolojiye katkıları başlıklarıyla 5 kategoride 22 temaya ulaşılmıştır. Çalışma çerçevesinde bu temaların modern literatürdeki gelişimi ve gelecek çalışmalara katkıları tartışılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** İslam, Psikoloji, Psikoterapi, İslami Psikoloji Tematik Analiz

## ABSTRACT

### EXPLORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF ISLAMIC THOUGHT TO PSYCHOTHERAPY: A THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF ISLAMICALLY INTEGRATED PSYCHOTHERAPY PRACTITIONERS

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The religion of Islam has never been seen as only a set of certain practices and beliefs in any period of time since its beginning. On the contrary, Islam has built a civilization that encompasses all of life and draws perspectives on human belief in every aspect. While this civilization built ontological basis on human existence, it also focuses on the processes of obtaining information epistemologically. The relationship between religion and life has been severed in the modern period and this rift has expanded in every field of the social sciences. Psychology, which is one of these fields, is on the verge of abandoning religion or spirituality. Although the foundations of this break are deeper and more philosophical, it is a much more practical way to start from its reflections. Islamic thought, which can make a significant contribution especially in terms of psychotherapy, is currently ignored and not given enough attention. In this study, thematic analysis of interviews with 8 therapists who incorporate Islamic principles into their psychotherapy was conducted. A total of 22 themes were found in 5 categories. These five categories (integration of specific methods of Islamic thought into psychotherapy, integration of specific methods of other therapy methods with the Islamic psychology approach, difficulties in transferring Islamic thought to therapy, importance of applying Islamic thought to the therapy setting and the contributions of transferring Islamic thought to the therapy environment in clinical psychology) are

analysed and discussed within this dissertation. Finally, the contributions of these themes to the current situation and future were discussed.

**Keywords:** Islam, Psychology, Psychotherapy, Islamic Psychology Thematic Analysis



To my father...



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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

Developments in the field of psychology over the last century have led to its solidification as an independent discipline. Over time, new insights and perspectives led to the development of subspecialties demonstrating the richness and abundance of modern psychology. This development on the one hand gave birth to understandings of human psychology that provided a more comprehensive view of the human psychological experience, led to greater specificity over the different aspects of human psychology, and stimulated an endless supply of potential research topics. However, on the other hand, these developments and advancements often took place within the context of monolithic approaches, reductionism, Eurocentrism, and a rigid medical model that was dismissive of the intellectual contributions of diverse peoples.

Despite all of these achievements within the field, the field was and is still largely dominated by secular and Eurocentric approaches. Psychology's attempts to be recognized and accepted within the broader medical community has led to the field being dominated by the medical model that placed an emphasis on the admissibility of psychological data that is limited to that which is observable and measurable. Consequently, the religious experience and spiritual components of the psyche were disregarded in favour of a more secular and pragmatic positivist-empiricist worldview within the tendency towards empiricism. All other forms of data were rejected to the extent that even cognition was rejected altogether until the early 70s. Then the field of psychology witnessed the cognitive revolution, which gave way to a gradual softening of this rigidity that allowed for the admissibility of the subjective self-report and experiences and a broadening of the types of knowledge considered to be empirical.

Psychology did not escape overly reductionist and mechanistic until post-modernist theorists emerged and pushed for psychology to broaden its field and allow for a

greater inclusion of more diverse perspectives, emphasizing the need for psychology to position itself as a 'soft science'. As a result, empirical data is now defined in psychology in a manner that attempts to be more representative of the broad diversity of scholarly perspectives, theories, and approaches (2006 APA report on evidence-based practice).

As psychology evolved over time, more space began to be given to new views. This has especially led to the emergence of schools that offered a healing-oriented approach to clinical psychology instead of a disease-oriented view. In addition, instead of psychological studies based on a single culture, more emphasis is given to cross-cultural studies. Such developments led to the emergence of new theoretical and practical methods that continued to expand psychology's boundaries. To explain this change and transformation, Susan H. McDaniel, the president of APA in 2016, says "...these countries have some of the most advanced civilizations in human history with philosophies that do not always fit with the tenets of Western psychology. (...) All psychology is cross-cultural. It can be challenging to avoid projecting our own values and intentions in science and practice. (...) The commitment is clear to develop a psychology that incorporates Western science and Eastern philosophies (...) however, not everything important, is verifiable through our scientific methodology. (...) This is a challenge because some assumptions of Western models (individual, mind-body separation, etc.) do not fit the Eastern experience" (2016, p. 5). Given the traditionally adversarial relationship between psychology and religion in the West, the significance of this comment from the leader of one of the most prominent organizations in psychology cannot be overstated. This whole evolution of ideas has taken a long time to come to fruition. In fact, for the past few decades, religion has been one of the most active fields of psychological research. This surge in study interest peaked in the West in 1976, when the American Psychological Association established Division 36: Psychology of Religion (Piedmont, 2013). As a result of this interest, apart psychology of religion and spirituality, applied psychology and psychotherapy began to examine spirituality. This interest is increasing day by day and it reveals new ideas.

It is within this context of the field's openness to diverse perspectives, as exemplified by Dr. McDaniel's statement, that this dissertation is presented. Despite an interest in diverse perspectives, Islamic views of human psychology and its potential to treat psychological illnesses are still underrepresented in the field. Establishing an

Islamically oriented approach to psychotherapy based within an Islamic framework and its sources and techniques of psychotherapy would be extremely beneficial to both the Muslim world and the area of mental health. Research has demonstrated that religiously oriented therapy methods, specifically have the most favourable effects in therapy with clients who are more religiously committed or whose symptoms and treatment aims are tied to religion (Martinez et al., 2007; Worthington et al., 2011).

Starting from this point, this dissertation aims to (a) introduce the richness of the Islamic intellectual heritage as it pertains to human psychology by drawing upon some significant Islamic scholarly works and (b) explore the applicability of this tradition within the context of psychotherapy through interviews with therapists who treat Muslim clients. Given that certain past attempts to formalize the theory of Islamic psychology have yielded practical results, it is becoming particularly crucial to introduce Islamic heritage and the relevance of this tradition. In the coming chapters, the case for this will be argued in detail.

After this introduction, the thesis will cover four more chapters. The second chapter provides an overview of research in the fields of religion and psychology, as well as a theoretical background of human psychology in Islamic thought and literature that aids in defining Islam for the purposes of the thesis, and classical and modern research in the fields of Islamic thought and psychology. The Muslim population will also be examined in the literature study, as well as the problems they experience in getting their psychosocial needs met. The third chapter provides a brief overview of qualitative research methodologies, examines the technique chosen for this research project, and includes information about participants, measures, procedures and data analysis. Lastly, the fourth chapter presents a general discussion of the findings from both themes and the thesis.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

A review of the literature on the integration of Islamic thought in psychotherapy can help to emphasize some of the previous essential ideas in the introduction, as well as some considerations that are important with regard to both Islam and psychology. The purpose of this literature review is to scrutinize the written sources on the issues that must be considered when transferring Islamic thought to the field of psychotherapy. In addition, it aims to draw attention to the historical transformations of these sources and the difference between the knowledge of today and the past. While doing so, the treatment-seeking behaviour of today's Muslims will be taken into consideration along with the results achieved. Thus, in the next section, a thematic analysis of practitioners' experiences will be examined based on this literature. This will be performed through a literature review based on the following topics: Definition of Islam & Muslims, theoretical background of human psychology in Islamic thought, classical history of Islamic thought and human psychology, modern history of Islamic thought and psychology, and treatment of mental illness in Islamic tradition and Muslim attitudes toward mental health in modern era.

#### **2.1. Definition of Islam & Muslims**

It is important to clarify the concept of Islam for a better understanding of the study. Indeed, determining exactly what principles and beliefs comprise Islam can be challenging, considering the various interpretations, ways of practicing, and definitions of Islam even among the global Muslim population. Thus, one group of people's definition and identification of Islam may be significantly different from another group's. Also, it can be said that numerous factors influence people's perceptions of Islam and their experiences as Muslims (Esposito, 2011). A short review of the Islamic doctrines and key concepts, which is derived from its agreed

upon invariable essence, will be presented for this study's objectives. The aim of this review is to reveal more clearly the role of Islam in the lives of Muslims. It is hoped that through gaining a better understanding of Muslim culture, mental health practitioners will be able to provide more effective and beneficial therapy services to their Muslim clients.

Islam, like Judaism and Christianity, is one of the three Abrahamic faiths that exist today. Primarily, Islam considers itself a continuation of the messages that came before it. Muslims believe that God revealed to Prophet Moses first, then to Prophet Jesus, and finally to Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings be upon him) (Sinanoğlu, 2001). Therefore, God sent Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings be upon him) as the last prophet to summon all humanity back to God's oneness and a lost way of life. This is because Muslims believe that Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings be upon him) received revelation after the distortion of the original messages of Moses and Jesus (Harman, 2001).

Over time, a community of traditional Muslim religious experts formed an Islamic orthodoxy in attempt to establish conformity in Islamic teachings in the most literal form possible, as conveyed by and through the Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings be upon him). This tradition of Muslim orthodoxy aided in the development of a distinct Islamic theology. *Islam*, as an Arabic word, implies "submission" which refers to the act of submitting oneself to God's oneness (*tawhid*). Thus, one of the most significant characteristics of a Muslim is submission. For Muslims, surrendering to God means to be aware of God in all of one's deeds. Accordingly, Islam's first pillar is to bear witness to the fact that there is only one God and that Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings be upon him) is His final messenger (Topaloğlu, 2001). From this point of view, Muslims must not only follow the Qur'an's orders, but must also obey the sayings and teachings of Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings be upon him), which are preserved in the *hadith*. *Hadith*, an Arabic word for "traditions", is a collection of what Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings be upon him) taught, said, and performed. Hadiths have been passed down orally and in writing and covered all aspects of Prophet Muhammad's (peace & blessings be upon him) life, from extremely personal to highly public concerns, as well as political and social issues (Bardakoğlu, 2001). In addition to the *Qur'an* which is considered as a guiding resource for

Muslims, Prophet Muhammad's (peace & blessings be upon him) life and teachings are equally essential as the living embodiment of the Qur'an. Therefore, the two main sources of the religion of Islam are the Qur'an and the way of the Prophet (peace & blessings be upon him). Under these two principles, Muslims believe that this world is only transient and that there is a hereafter where God will judge each soul for its actions in this life. Thus, the idea of the hereafter is a critical part of Islam. As a result, Muslims consider Islam to be a way of life. They seek direction for their lives from the Qur'an and Prophet Muhammad's (peace & blessings be upon him) hadiths (Sinanoğlu, 2001).

In addition to these basic rules of creed, there are five basic principles of worship in Islam. *The five pillars of Islam* are (a) the declaration of faith that “there is only one God and that Muhammad is His messenger”, the five daily prayers (*salat*), fasting during the month of Ramadan (*sawm*), giving the *zakat*, a tax of 2.5% of one's annually-accumulated wealth, to the poor, and making a pilgrimage to Mecca at least once in one's lifetime (Sinanoğlu, 2001; Esposito, 2011). As Islam is a way of life for devoted Muslims their faith influences their approach of minor and major issues in life. Therefore, professionals dealing with Muslims must have a thorough understanding of Islam's history, doctrines, and functions in a Muslim's life.

Despite the difficulty of defining Islam and Muslim, Muslim scholars have put forward some basic statements about the nature of human being in Islamic thought. In the next section, these general statements will be discussed and the basic theoretical framework of human understanding will be tried to be expressed within the framework of the ideas of Islamic thinkers.

## **2.2. Theoretical Background of Human Psychology in Islamic Thought**

A working definition, as well as a conceptual or theoretical framework, are fundamental components of every academic discipline. This framework connects the idea to other work in the field and also reveals the main subjects of the discipline. Significance of the theory and proposed theoretical background will be outlined and discussed in this chapter.

Currently, most psychotherapy approaches are built on a Western paradigm. However, Western psychotherapy may not always fit with an Islamic paradigm's primary assumptions, conceptions, and values (Haque, 2008). As a result, the establishment of a distinct framework for an Islamic psychology paradigm, within which an Islamic approach to psychotherapy is located, must be characterized by the values and concepts that are vital to Islam's philosophical and theological worldview. Ideas and notions, which generate this framework, should arise from established scholarly sources that follow the religiously acceptable structure for comprehending and interpreting religious knowledge. Also, this framework exists in different disciplines within Islamic thought which will be covered in the next chapter.

The main purpose of this study is not to form the theoretical basis of Islamic thought's view of the human being in all its details, but to determine the main arguments and to create a horizon for further studies. Only arguments that are commonly-accepted by Islamic scholars will be expressed. These arguments may be difficult to comprehend in nature, as they are ideas that have been reached as a result of deep discussions taking place over centuries. However, it is critical to consider these ideas in order to construct a psychology that is more applicable and representative of Muslim populations because many of the Muslim practitioners try to help Muslim communities through their psychological education and training, which are derived from Western approaches. This dominant view in psychology does not accept anything other than the scientific and empirical as valid including religion and spirituality, as it emerged as a result of a materialist philosophy. This materialist paradigm emphasizes objectivity and takes a neutral attitude on religion or any other type of human transcendent experience (Rothman, 2020). Although these well-intentioned attempts may help clients in some sense, they are often unaware of how such treatments may be at odds with the client's Islamic faith's guidance in some aspects. Therefore, many researchers try to adapt pre-existing Western psychotherapy procedures to Muslim service consumers in the middle of the process and just some of them truly comprehend the underlying ramifications of doing so (Abu-Raiya, 2012; Amer, 2012; Dharamsi, 2012; Utz, 2011). Moreover, in order to be accepted by the Western-dominated discipline of psychology, Muslim psychologists may be tempted to shed their religious orientation and worldview, basically forsaking their own paradigm for another, even if it contradicts their religious beliefs. Muslim psychologists frequently overlook the

concept of an underlying paradigm in their efforts to assist their Muslim community from inside their academic and professional disciplines (Skinner, 2018; Plante, 2008). When the underlying perspective is based on a worldview that excludes and rejects the concept of God, it can drastically different, and even antagonistic.

Although there are some different perspectives, arguments and definitions about human being in Islamic thought within the framework of different schools, Islamic scholars have reached common conclusions on some points in order to establish a framework as conveyed by the Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings be upon him). While the diversity of interpretations remained and evolved over time, Islamic scholars not only provided a structured route for discussion but also built up a communal understanding. These points are critical in terms of not only providing psychological support to people who define themselves as Muslims but also considering the construction of a psychology that is more applicable and representative of Muslim populations. Regardless of their creedal or legal school, the basic assumptions of Islamic scholars are expressed by Türker and Üçer (2019) as follows:

1. According to Islam's view of life, human existence has a beginning, but is without end. The existence of man transcends the borders of the world we live in. Thus, existence in Islam presents a human image that fits the material world in this life, but transcends the material world in the next. Islam's expectations of human beings are based on the awareness of the material structure of the human and the whole.
2. In Islam, a human being is considered a causal entity, and it has been accepted that the human being requires cause in both essence and existence. This ontological deprivation, which means needing a cause, is an inseparable part of man in terms of the beginning and continuation of his existence.
3. The being that is the cause of human beings and all of existence cannot be identified with any element in the causal realm. For this reason, the source of all existence must be attributed to an uncaused entity that has no deficiencies and possesses an absolute will.

4. As a compulsory requirement of the principle of monotheism, (*tawhīd*), Islam describes a clear ontological difference between the original being that is the cause of existence and between created beings, including humans. Therefore, in terms of the Islamic view of life, human beings cannot be identified with this original being, as in Christianity, Brahmanism, and other mystical traditions. In this respect, all explanations regarding human's attributes in the tradition of Islamic thought can be considered as various expressions of servitude.

5. The channels of communication between human beings with this necessary being have been kept open within the possibilities provided by the idea of anthropomorphism (*tashbīh*). Islam, as an unchangeable principle, has revealed that man has an aspect that transcends the material world. Possessing consciousness and will, man is equipped with the privilege of addressing God's revelation.

6. Prophecy (*nubuwwah*) is accepted as the most important channel that connects people to the divine order according to all traditions of Islamic thought. The Prophet (peace & blessings be upon him), as the exemplary manifestation of knowledge and behaviour, represents the standard to which all Muslims strive to achieve by way of imitating his actions.

7. The idea of rational and moral competence is closely related to the emphasis on the beginning of man, the finite life of this world, and the eternal life that follows. This life is between man's beginning and his/her end and is considered a realm of tests and trials, with eternal happiness as a reward in the afterlife. In this context, individual and social life is seen as valuable and indispensable as it is the only grounds that prepares for the perfect contentment with God's will and happiness in eternal life. The temporal worldly life is deemed valuable only inasmuch as it prepares one for the afterlife.

8. In order to validate this test, it is one of the essential principles of human nature that human beings possess free will and therefore are responsible for their choices. In terms of the Islamic view of life, man's freedoms and responsibilities and the prior knowledge of God about the universe are seen as complementary, not mutually exclusive. Although the human is primarily responsible to God, who built the realm of

tests in which he lives, this responsibility is tested in the relationship of man, him/herself, nature and other people.

9. The basis of liability from the human point of view is free will based on volitional choice for those who are of sound mind. However, it is divine guidance that determines the limits or content of liability. For this reason, human being is characterized by the need for divine guidance. Humans need not only to maintain their natural and social life for themselves, but also need external aid to distinguish good from bad. The messengers and revelation fulfill this guidance need.

10. Every person has an individual existence and responsibility that cannot be transferred to anyone else in temporary realm whose limits are determined by God. This individual existence and the immunity of life, mind, modesty, honour, belief, and property, which are seen as an integral part of it, have been seen among the basic principles that protect people against all kinds of abuse.

11. At this level, people are seen as equal. From this point of view, people are superior only by moral competence, not by lineage, wealth, political or social positions. Moral competence also means being close to divine order, and in this sense, moral concepts such as piety, reward, and sincerity (*ikhlas*) are also considered as metaphysical concepts.

These statements are the basic ideas accepted by all schools of Islamic thought. However, the interpretation of these statements may vary according to different schools. It is essential to consider these statements for the models that are desired to be developed within the framework of Islamic thought. In the next section, how different schools in the classical period interpreted these statements from their own perspectives in terms of explaining human being will be explained.

### **2.3. Classical History of Islamic Thought and Human Psychology**

Many Muslim scholars have written and taught about ideas of the human psyche from within the context of Islamic knowledge throughout the history of Islamic thought and from within the context of a religiously defined corpus of Islamic knowledge (Haque,

2004; Mohamad, 1996). Islamic thought has the resources and theoretical background to develop a holistic view of the human psyche (Keshavarzi, 2020). There are already teachings and materials to form a whole theoretical orientation. However, this knowledge is dispersed over numerous streams of knowledge rather than being grouped under a single topic of study, as psychology is in Western academic. These schools can be explained basically under four headings: Discursive theology (*Kalam*), Islamic Philosophy, Islamic Mysticism (*Tasawwuf*) and Islamic Law (*Fiqh*). One reason for this diversity is that the conceptualization of psychology and the study of the psyche in Islam developed under the influence of religious thought. In other words, there is no necessary boundary between “psychology” and “theology” from the perspective of an Islamic worldview, which interprets things in the ways revealed in the Qur'an and from the Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings be upon him). Based on this, it is only possible to understand Islamic thought on the human psyche through studying the different perspectives of all these schools (Mohamed, 1995; Majeed, 2017).

### **2.2.1. The Discursive Theology (*Kalam*) Conception of the Human**

In Islamic thought, *kalam* refers to the discipline of debating and arguing Islamic doctrines and beliefs based on *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* (the tradition based on the Prophet Muhammad's (peace and blessings be upon him) statements, behaviours and consents) for theological knowledge (Fahri, 1998; Wensinck, 1932; Wolfson, 1976). It does not only explain the core Islamic principles and concepts that all Muslims must adhere to such as God's unity or divine attributes but also defends and argues Islamic creed against any other arguments. The *kalam* scholars created a formulating and defending religious beliefs against competing teachings and schools. The Holy Qur'an itself is the source of this dialectical approach and rational argumentation about Islamic ideas, which has been followed up by the Prophet's (peace & blessings be upon him) statements (Fahri, 1998; Çınar, 2020).

There are different schools of *kalam*. The foremost among them is the *Mu'tazila* school. Wasil b. Ata' (d. 131/748 ) created the this religious movement in Basra in the first part of the 2nd/8th century, and it grew to become one of Islam's most influential theological schools (Fahri, 1998; Wensinck, 1932; Wolfson, 1976). It had a crucial

role in Islamic history and thinking, especially during the early period, when it was adopted as the official theology by the ‘Abbasid caliph al-Ma'mun. The *Mu‘tazila* created a form of rationalism that was influenced by Greek philosophy to some extent (Yar, 2017). The second significant kalam school is *Ash‘ariyya*. It is one of the largest Sunni theological schools and was named after its founder Abu 'l-Hasan al-Ashari (d. 873-935). It is a theological school that advocates using reason and revelation to defend the faith (Eş'arî, 1977). The last significant kalam school is *Māturīdiyyah* which adopted a common point of view with *Ash‘ariyya* on many issues (Topaloğlu, 2010). Sunni orthodoxy has been characterized by *Ash‘ari-Maturidi* theology and called *Ahl Sunnah* for over a thousand years (Fahri, 1998; Topaloğlu, 2020)

Along with these three main schools *kalam* was the first school of thought that tried to explain the relationship between religion and the material world based on the revelation (Kaya, 2013). In this context, scholars of *kalam* have made some explanations about the structure of the world, the relationship between God and the world, the nature of human being, and the relationship between God and human (Haklı, 2018). These explanations differentiated them from other schools, which will be mentioned in the next sections and allowed them to develop a unique ontology and epistemology. One of the important points of *kalam* scholars within this scope is the concept of human understanding. In order to understand this viewpoint, it is necessary to know their model of explaining the universe, because according to *kalam* scholars, there is a clear distinction between God and the material world, and as a result of this distinction, the way of explaining the universe is related to the way of explaining the human being. In this context, it is crucial to know the model which named *atomism* used by *kalam* scholars to explain the universe and, accordingly, human beings (Yazıcıoğlu, 1997; Kazanç, 2020).

Atomism is defined as the belief that all objects in the universe are made up of indivisible pieces known as atoms. This notion, which was originally adopted around the end of the 2nd/8th century, is a critical part of classical Islamic thought. Theologians concluded that all created objects including human being are made up of atoms (Alnoor, 1994). Since the existence of human beings is also considered within this scope, the human is considered to be composed of atoms, too. Therefore, the theologians developed a human understanding compatible with their ontological

framework and defined human as a “living (*hayy*), knowing (*âlim or âqil*), powerful (*qâdir*) and willing (*murîd*) thing/substance” (Türker, 2019; Kazanç, 2020). Although this description expresses the functions of man, it does not contain any explanation about the components of man’s externally accrued existence. For this reason, theologians have said that it is the mind that distinguishes man from other living things (Haklı, 2018; Çınar, 2020).

On the other hand, when we look at *kalam* literature in Islamic thought, it is possible to see different understandings of the human. It is possible to examine theologians in three groups in terms of understanding human nature. Some theologians argued that human beings consist of only body. *Behshemiyye*, whose influence began before the fourth century and became the dominant school in the fourth century, claimed that human beings consisted only of the body under the leadership of Abu Hashim al-Jubbai. On the other hand, *Mu’tazila* and *Ahl Sunnah* theologians dealt with people in a dualistic structure and stated that human beings consisted of body and soul (*rūh*). These two schools advocate that the soul is a delicate (*latîf*) substance that has penetrated, settled, or is with the body (Mâtûridî, 2010). Like the angels, the soul may not be suitable for perception with our sense, but it is still substance. It is delicate (*latîf*) because of the rarity of the atoms that make it up. The last view is that the soul is a spiritual substance separate from the body. However, this idea was put forward by the *Mu’tazili* theologian Muammar b. Abbâd (d. 215/830), was not influential in the *kalam* tradition because he could not harmonize this view with *kalam*’s ontological and epistemological understanding (Türker, 2020).

As a result, although theologians have different views regarding the distinction between soul and body, they evaluate human beings within the frame of the atomism model. Also, they claim that human has been brought to this world to be “tested”, the term that describes his existence is “servitude” and the goal of man is to attain contentment with God's will (Türker, 2020). Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings be upon him) represents the most complete realization of both servitude and the goal of contentment with God's will.

### 2.2.2. The Islamic Philosophy Conception of the Human

Islamic philosophy is a field of Islamic thought that has attempted to reconcile philosophy (reason) and Islamic religious teachings (faith). It is similar to *kalam* in terms of its purpose but differs from it in terms of methodology. The *kalam* scholars accept or deny arguments or numerous metaphysical truths, then provide evidence to advocate them. The philosopher, on the other hand, accepts no such initial principles and strives to reason to a specific goal. The differences between the two groups gradually widened to include a variety of other questions in theology, science, sociology, and other matters concerning man and the resurrection (Fahri, 1998; Durusoy, 2008).

In order to understand the perspective of Islamic philosophy on human beings, it is critical to understand more closely the sources of derivation. Thus, the sources and the form of explanation with which its human explanation is related can be understood more clearly. The main source of Islamic philosophy is Greek philosophy. The scientific heritage of the Greek tradition was transferred to Arabic during the Abbasid period between 200-220 AH. As a result of this transfer, known as the translation movement, a new school different from *kalam* began to emerge and forwarded new explanations about existence and the human being. The conception of human and the theory of knowledge in connection with this understanding developed by Islamic philosophers are based on aspects inherited from ancient heritage. Although there are differences of opinion among prominent philosophers such as Fârâbî, Ibn Sînâ, Abu'l-Berekât al-Baghdâdî, Ibn Bajja and Ibn Rushd, it is possible to say that the philosophical tradition in general is a common framework that will allow to identify a new human understanding.

According to Islamic philosophers, man is made up of two substances, soul and body. While the soul is a purely spiritual or mental substance, the body is a material substance. Therefore, while man is a physical presence in his body, he/she has a genuinely metaphysical presence in terms of his soul. The human being perceives external stimuli through his/her outer senses and perceives internal stimuli through his/her inner senses. In other words, the body communicates with physical objects and perceives things that are touched, smelled, tasted, and heard through the five external

senses. Through these senses, the inner senses become active and gain functionality with the information they receive from outside. According to the philosophical view, there are five inner senses: Common sense (*al-ḥiss al-mushtarak*), power of imagination (*al-quwwa al-musawwira/al-ḥayāl*), power of envisagement (*al-quwwa al-mutahayyile/mufakkira/mutafakkira*), power of delusion (*al-quwwa al-wahmiyya*), and the power of remembering (*al-quwwa az-zākira /al-ḥāfiẓa*). All of these senses are found in the brain. The common sense (*al-ḥiss al-mushtarak*) gathers information from the external senses and transfers it to the power of imagination (*al-ḥayāl*). The task of the power of imagination is not only to store, but also to produce new forms by combining and separating. These newly produced forms are perceived by the power of delusion (*al-quwwa al-wahmiyya*), and judgments are made regarding these perceptions. Although the power of delusion has the work of abstraction, it is a concrete power in the brain. For this reason, it does not have the opportunity to isolate the meanings entirely it has obtained from material world. Similarly, it cannot make judgments related to matters beyond the physical world. The power of delusion has no power of storage. For this reason, the meanings in its comprehension are stored in the power of remembering (*al-quwwa az-zākira /al-ḥāfiẓa*) and brought back through remembering.

These five inner senses are a primary tool for the mind to produce abstract meanings. According to the philosophers, the feature that distinguishes man from other living creatures are not these five inner senses, but the understanding of the meanings abstracted by power of delusion (*al-quwwa al-wahmiyya*), through reason. In other words, all human cognition processes are governed by the mind (Göz, 2018). This is precisely what makes human beings human. When the mind manages the processes of perception up to the level of abstraction, the meaning of the thing abstracted from all physical situations comes from the *wāḥib as- suwar* (active intellect), which is a metaphysical presence that corresponds to the angel Gabriel (*Jibril*) according to the philosophers (Tiryaki, 2019). Therefore, the definition of human by Islamic philosophers can be summarized as a rational living being (*ḥayawān an-nātiq*). The word “rational” refers to the soul, while the word “living” refers to the body. Also, this power of reason is different from other creatures in the world. This power of reason, which is unique to human being, enable one to connect with the metaphysical world.

This is why perfection of the mind occurs independently of material world and in relation to metaphysics (Tiryaki 2019, Durusoy, 2008).

Consequently, Islamic philosophers differed from other schools in Islamic thought with their sources and methodologies. As a result, they suggested a new definition of human that was unique to themselves and brought detailed explanations for this definition.

### **2.2.3. The Islamic Sufism (*Tasawwuf*) Perspective on the Human Being**

*Sufism* is fundamentally based on spirituality, with the primary goal of self-purification and consciousness improvement based upon *Qur'an* and Prophet Muhammad's (peace & blessings be upon him) way of life (Kılıç, 2019; Yılmaz, 2020). Al-Ghazālī (d. 1111), who is one of most illustrious and influential theologians, jurists, and mystics, identifying Sufism as a refinement of the soul and directing it toward God. Sufis try to detach from everything else for the express aim of being attached to God. Al-Ghazālī (1971, p. 72) states that "The aim of their knowledge is to lop off the obstacles present in the soul and to rid oneself of its reprehensible habits and vicious qualities in order to attain thereby a heart empty of all, save God, and adorned with the constant remembrance of God".

Sufis considered the Prophet Muhammad's (peace & blessings be upon him) model to be the foundation for spiritual experience, as well as moral and constitutional guidelines (Çağrıçı, 2015; Yılmaz, 2007; Erginli, 2010; Türer, 2001). Therefore, Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings be upon him) and his prominent companions were the first figures claimed by the Sufi movement, and their oaths of devotion to God and prophecy based on Qur'anic teachings provided the paradigm for the master-disciple relationship in Sufism. From this point of view, Sufi piety became defined by reverence for the Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings be upon him), both for his individual merits and in his duty as intercessor for all humanity (Şimşek, 2016).

Although Sufism gained a systematic identity after the 3rd/9th century, from the 1st/7th century on, there was a group of Muslim whose action based on purity of heart, morality and maturity of the soul, aiming to turn towards the hereafter rather than the

world, and to try to become believers that are more qualified (Demirli, 2008). Hence, it appears to be a distinct field of study in terms of its topics and problems, as well as its conceptions and terminology. From that point of view, Sufism has adopted a different understanding of ontology and epistemology than the other schools. As a result, its point of view of the human has also changed and tried to deal with it from different aspects. Contrary to the traditions of theology and philosophy, sufism claims that the results of the deduction (*istidlâl*) method are limiting (Sirhindi, 1899). According to the understanding of Sufism, the main method that leads to the truth that appeared in Prophet (peace & blessings be upon him) is a kind of “constructive imitation” (Türker, 2020) and elimination of the hedonistic drives (Suhrawardi, 1970). This understanding led the Sufis to a heart-centred human model, rather than mind-centred one. According to Sufi paradigm, along with the physical heart, there is a concept of metaphysical heart (*qalb*) which is the vehicle of knowledge and cognition. Sufis entitled this heart as a “divine subtle faculty” (*latifa al-rabbaniyya*) to describe its uniqueness and sacredness. According to Imam Rabbani (1899), who is the one of the most significant Sufis of the 10th century, the heart is the most significant aspect of the human being, because it brings together many of the attributes that make a person human. The term “heart” (*qalb*) is also used in these main Islamic sources including *Qur'an* to describe a person's ability to comprehend, perceive, think, and penetrate the realities of world. Thus, it is conceptualized as underlying attributes that distinguish humans from other living creatures (Başer, 2019). Consequently, the heart is regarded to be the respondent of divine address and to be accountable and responsible because it is the component of the human person that senses, knows, and grasps.

Based on this understanding, grasping the truth of the religion conveyed by Prophet (peace & blessings be upon him) includes the activity of reasoning on the holy verses, but essentially requires the believer to rebuild the consciousness and state of servitude that the Prophet (peace & blessings be upon him) manifested in his own life. Sufis claimed that the method of understanding to achieve this goal is to perform obligatory and voluntary worship in the way that Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings be upon him) himself did in order to purify one's heart (Şimşek, 2016; Başer, 2019). Therefore, Sufis emphasized the heart's religious and moral significance, emphasizing the heart's purification and the subsequent effect of worship and good behavior, and emphasizing

the importance of having a sound heart as a requirement of salvation in the afterlife. Sufis came to the conclusion that this is a skill that transcends the understanding that theologians and jurists can reach (Çağrıç, 2015; Yılmaz, 2007).

The difference that distinguishes Sufis from other schools is that they maintain a systematic relationship between their religious practice and meanings. Thus, the purpose of Sufism appears as the determination of human abilities and the results of these abilities. Therefore, they preferred to determine human characteristics rather than analysing human's physical structure (Türker, 2020). According to them, "divine subtle faculty" (*latifa al-rabbaniyya*) forms the basis of man's understanding of the metaphysical field which is correspond to spiritual side of the human. On the other hand, the body is the locus of the movements that make the soul's abilities functional. In this context, Sufism's teachings attached great importance to states and the names of God because these names and states can build a bridge between human and God. In other words, the understanding of Sufism argues that communication between God and human beings consists of the communication between states and names. While it is a "state" that binds the servant to Allah, the divine names make the relation of Allah possible (Erginli, 2010).

As a result, different from the other two schools, the idea of Sufism has brought new explanations in terms of God, the universe, and the understanding of human being. Sufis focused on the heart and its spiritual discovery and inspiration, while theologians focused on the mind and deduction, jurists on analytical deduction and personal opinion. In this context, the point that needs to be emphasized is strengthening the spiritual bond of a man with God and trying to approach the level of the perfect human being, which was realized by the Prophet (peace & blessings be upon him). Today, Sufism is a component of Islam's rich history and, in certain ways, goes on in the lives of Muslims (Erginli, 2010).

#### **2.2.4. The Islamic Jurisprudence (*Fiqh*) Perspective of the Human Being**

Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) can be characterized as a branch of Islamic thought which include methodological research of deriving a collection of rules from the primary (*Qur'an* and *Sunnah*) and secondary resources (interpretation, analogy, consensus and

rigorous inquiry). It is a dynamic discipline that deals with the practical norms and rules of the Islam, such as worship, marriage or financial contracts. Because *fiqh* refers to Islam's legal character it is designed to make it easier for people to apply Islamic principles to their daily activities and interactions. Therefore, it welcomes a variety of approaches and constantly evolves in the context of various cultures and traditions. In short, *fiqh* refers to jurists' efforts to comprehend and apply God's guidance and will at the intersection of personal, social, and communal situations (Abu Zahrah, 1957).

Unlike the other three schools, the Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*) tradition in Islamic thought does not claim any ontological or epistemological argument. The subject matter of *fiqh* is the action of the legally accountable human being. In this context, the science of *fiqh* is more concerned with religious actions that people deal with such as “fasting is obligatory” or “consuming alcoholic drink is prohibited” rather than their nature. However, this does not mean that the science of *fiqh* does not have any understanding about the human being. On the contrary, *fiqh* has to have an understanding of human in order to determine rules that regulate persons's life. Thus, to decide the applicability of the Islam's rules, *fiqh* has developed a perceptive of the human and put the concept of “liability” at the centre of its perspective (Köksal, 2011).

By the end of the 10th century, the Sunni Islamic understanding shaped in terms of legal terminology, and it was organized around four schools of law, which are still considered equally valid. *Hanafi*, *Shafi'i*, *Maliki*, and *Hanbali* are the four schools of legal thought (Okuyucu, 2019). While these four schools agree that the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah* are the main sources, they differ from each other in terms of using secondary methods like interpretation or analogy. These four schools try to define the human understanding of the *fiqh* discipline in a similar way. However, Abu Hanifa's definition of *fiqh*, who is the founder of the Hanafi school, is remarkable in terms of human understanding. He defines *fiqh* as “Knowledge (*ma'rifat*) of the self (*nafs*), its rights (*ma laha*) and its' responsibilities (*ma aleyha*)” (Zernûci, 1980). These issues cover all the situations of human daily life. When Abu Hanifa's definition of *fiqh* is examined, it is seen that the word “self” (*nafs*) is included in the definition. The reference of a state of consciousness about the situations that people may encounter in life explains *fiqh*'s viewpoint on human being distinctively. According to some other scholars, the word of “self” in the definition points out to the human soul and

emphasizes that *fiqh* is concerned with the self's acts and the provisions that are subject to these acts (Erkoç Baydar, 2019).

Apart from its definition, there is also another critical aspect in the *fiqh* perspective. According to the scholars of *fiqh*, to establish a human understanding in terms of with legal principles, it is necessary to understand the Qur'an's attestation of a primordial covenant (*qalu bala*) between God and humanity. Before God created the universe and the entities in it, He created the spirits of all people. He gathered them in a place known as the realm of spirits. He then summoned all of them to his presence and asked: "Am I not your Lord?" All spirits answered: "Yes, you are". As a result of this agreement the human being has to obey and live according to the rules that Allah has set on the world. *Fiqh* scholars have stipulated the conditions of competency for this obligation. In other words, for a person to be subject to divine rules, they must possess certain attributes (Düzgün, 2013). The vital part of this issue is that for the tradition of *fiqh*, understanding the human is in a position equivalent to the understanding of competence and liability. The concept of competence comes to life when a person falls into the mother's womb and goes through several stages until the age of adulthood. Since the concept of competence is directly related to mental development, the shape of competence changes and develops with the change of development periods. Due to this change, Islamic jurists divide human life into various parts such as the fetal period, childhood, distinction (between right and wrong), puberty and maturity. While the jurists distinguish these periods from each other, they took reaching the age of puberty in addition to reason as essential criteria (Erkoç Baydar, 2019)

As a result, it can be said that the classical human understanding in Islamic thought is formed by the combination of these four perspectives (Discursive theology, Islamic philosophy, Islamic mysticism and Islamic law). While theologians and philosophers focused on the mind and deduction, Sufis focused on the heart, its spiritual discovery and inspiration and jurists dealt with analytical deduction and personal opinion. Given the abundance of material available, the depth of intellectual work across Muslim history and culture has not been researched as thoroughly as it should be. Theoretical frameworks based on the philosophy of Islamic thought and within the Islamic heritage must be expanded. Many books still require translation and interpretation in order to make sense of their meanings in the perspective of modern psychology. Many of the

current research focuses on broad Islamic concepts, rather than a more detailed articulation of the human psyche that could be found in the vast body of untouched Islamic literature. In the next section, it will be focused on how the connection between Islamic thought and psychology is tried to be revealed in the modern period and it will be tried to understand how the legacy of the classical period is inherited.

#### **2.4. Modern History of Islam and Psychology**

Although concepts such as God, man, universe, knowledge and being were thought of in conjunction in the classical period, they became separate concepts in the modern period and all of them have become independent and distinct fields of investigation. Psychology was a similar case as it is also a field independent from philosophy. In the modern period, Muslims grasped this change more slowly and tried to adapt to the transformation with reference to religion (Boehenlein, 2006; Mirdal, 2012; Mohamed, 1995). As a result, the attempt to establish a deeper relationship between Islam and other social sciences is a more recent effort. This effort has emerged from classical sources and has followed a similar course in terms of psychology today. Thus, researchers interested in psychology began to do new studies and tried to come up with original solutions by examining the psychological conditions of Muslim societies (Abu Raiya & Pargament, 2011; Mohamed, 1995; Haq, 2009; Haque, 2004).

Before a study of Islamization of psychology, it is necessary to mention the studies concerning all social sciences. The “Islamization of Knowledge” is a broad phenomena that re-establishes knowledge on its original foundation. The studies of thinkers such as Faruqi and Muhammed Iqbal especially have an important place in terms of social sciences (Ead, 1999; Faruqi, 2006; Iqbal, 2013). These studies also influenced and led to the emergence of later studies in psychology. The source of these studies is the schools mentioned in the previous section and the system of thought that created classical Islamic thought. The main purpose of this movement was to initiate a transformation in all social sciences and Islamize the social sciences. This understanding resonated in the Muslim community and the process of “Islamization of knowledge” began in social sciences such as sociology, finance and politics. This process generally involved attributing a knowledge produced by the West to the sources in Islamic literature and gaining a similar result with this perspective. Although this quest is fundamentally valuable and important, it is open to some

criticism in terms of its content. This transition is notable for research in modern psychology. Although the break between Islam and social sciences came to the fore with the attempt of “Islamization of knowledge,” it did not progress within the framework of this thought, especially in terms of psychology. In this context, instead of Islamizing the existing system of thought, it has instead tried to determine its own interpretations and points of emphasis (Ahsan et al., 2013).

Since the second half of the 20th century, studies in Islamic psychology have gained momentum under the leadership of Malik Badri with the influence of Islamization of knowledge. In this context, Badri, who received reactions from even Muslim psychologists, made this area even more pronounced with his book *The Dilemma of Muslim Psychologists* in 1979. Malik Badri continued his own studies and research in modern psychology, despite the negative reaction, and came to the forefront as a founding figure of *Islamic psychology* in the modern period. His basic argument/proposition was that Muslims have abandoned their own beliefs and have blindly adopted a secular understanding of psychology. Badri compared apologetic Muslim psychologists to a hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings be upon him), wherein he stated that Muslims would follow the Christians and the Jews to the point that they would follow them into a lizard hole. Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings be upon him) said that “You would tread the same path as was trodden by those before you inch by inch and step by step so much so that if they had entered into the hole of the lizard, you would follow them in this also” (Sahih Muslim 2669 a: Book 47, Hadith 7). The “Islamization of knowledge” trend has expanded in these years to include all social sciences and has become noticeable in psychology. Badri continued this tradition and argued that a new understanding can only be created with a broad perspective (Haque, 1997; Hökelekli 2016).

The researchers in this period, pioneered by Malik Badri, tried to examine the differences between Islamic thought and Western thought more closely, and to filter modern psychology through Islamic principles. In this pursuit, researchers identified unsuitable aspects of modern psychology such as elimination of spiritual aspect of human being and questioned these aspect’s admissibility into the Islamic psychology. For instance, there were fierce critics of the psychoanalysis and behaviorism schools, on account of their belief of their incompatibility with Islam (Badri, 2018; Hamid,

1997; Karim, 1984; Skinner, 2018). The primary source of their criticisms was due to these schools' model of the human psyche contradicting Islamic belief. One such foundational problem with these models is their secular nature that is dismissive of the human being's spiritual essence. As a result, Islamic discourse is often ignored given that Islamic scholarly works are replete with spiritual ontological structures of the human psyche. This period can be seen as a period of awakening in which Muslim researchers tried to determine the ways in which realized that the longstanding western thought was not suitable for Muslims. At this stage, in which the main agenda was determination and evaluation, Muslim researchers questioned the existing paradigms and made comparative readings with principles of belief and religious traditions (Ağılkaya Şahin, 2019; Kaplick & Rüschoff, 2018).

The conclusion reached as a result of the comparison is clear to Muslim researchers: Muslims need a new model and understanding. Thus, new quests emerged at the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st century. The basic question was to analyse the basic principles of this new possible model. In this context, thoughts that made room for spirituality in Western thought become a current issue and Muslim researchers attempt to reorganize them in accordance with their principles of belief (Haque & Mohamed, 2011; Hamjah & Akhir, 2014; Abu-Raiya, 2015; Naz & Khalily, 2015). This adaptation study seems quite normal, because studies emphasizing the spiritual aspect of human beings were carried out before the 20th century and reached a certain level of development. In addition, the evolution of psychology and religion over time has resulted in a blooming of interest and ideas in this field, making this a particularly fertile period in history for furthering specific religious and spiritual approaches to psychotherapy (Sperry & Shafranske, 2005). It can be said that there is a similar development not only in the east, but also in the west. In fact, many of America's first psychologists were highly affected by religious beliefs and affiliations in the late 1900s (Richards, 2009). Many of the studies that looked at spiritually-centred therapies in general discovered that these types of methods allow clients to connect ideas of trust and meaning against their clinical symptoms (Brown, 1985; Main, 2008). This surge in study interest peaked in 1976, when the American Psychological Association established Division 36: Psychology of Religion. Thus, Muslim researchers initially thought of integrating these studies for their own purposes (Ağılkaya Şahin, 2019; Kaplick & Rüschoff, 2018; Haque & Keshavarzi, 2014).

The second period in the modern history of Islamic psychology thus gained prominence as the period of searching. In this time period, researchers tried to search for the foundations of new models, present evidence about them, and make a new synthesis with modern psychology methods, based on the results of the previous period. This search has brought with it new concepts and propositions about human understanding. In this context, researchers' main recommendation is to develop an understanding in which Islamic thought is centred (Karim, 1984; Hamid, 1977; Shahid, 1977; Badri, 2018). The basic principles of this understanding are to create a model in line with the *Qur'an* and Prophet's (peace & blessings be upon him) *Sunnah* (the tradition based on the Prophet Muhammad's statements, behaviours and consents).

Theoretical discussions on *Islamic psychology* started for the first time in this period (Ansari, 2002; Kaplick & Rüschoff, 2018). This period, which corresponds to the beginning of the 21st century, can be seen as a process in which a new understanding has emerged. For this reason, the nature of the thoughts written in this process is open to discussion (Kaplick, 2018). On the other hand, this period is of greater importance in terms of Islamic psychology compared to the first period, because for the first time attempts to find a distinction between Islamic thought and psychology were made at the theoretical and practical levels. It can be said that this period is still continuing in a more structured way. Muslim psychologists have not yet been able to break out of the paradigm imposed by modern psychology (Haque, 2004, Abu Raiya & Pargament, 2011). However, they have recently brought awareness to new institutions and associations, magazines, and academic activities in this field. This awareness shows signs of taking firm steps towards becoming the beginning of a new era. This period led to the establishment of many institutions and research journals such as the North American Association of Islamic and Muslim Studies, International Institute of Islamic Thought, The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, Islamic Psychology Association, and the Association of Islamically Oriented Psychology Therapists (Skinner, 2018). In addition, therapy centres especially for Muslim clients, have started to open, such as IHSAAN in the UK and the Khalil Center in the USA.

## **2.5. Treatment of Mental Illness in Islamic Tradition and Muslim Attitudes toward Mental Health in Modern Era**

Islamic thought has emerged as a broad discipline from the earliest times. In this context, it presented satisfactory propositions about human existence by firmly centring ontological and epistemological foundations. Islamic theologians, who produce ideas in all areas of social sciences, also put forward original ideas in the field of psychology (Fahri, 1998). Given that the Muslim population is the fastest growing religion in the world (Pew Research, 2015), it is not possible to ignore this knowledge accumulation, which has been disregarded for a long time and seen as unnecessary and inappropriate within the framework of modern thought (Abu-Raia & Pargament, 2010). Therefore, the work done in this area has been limited and on a small scale. Despite the high rate of Muslims, evidence for the efficacy of therapies and interventions that include Islamic religious beliefs into psychotherapy with Muslim clients currently makes up a substantial gap in research. The main reason for this situation is the sharp distinction between religion and science. Therefore, there is a great need and lack of scientific resources in the field (Hamdan, 2008; Haque & Keshavarzi, 2014; Ağılkaya Şahin, 2019; York Al-Karam, 2018a). Furthermore, inadequate attempt has been made to combine existing religious teachings and indigenous aspects to psychotherapy (Beshai et al., 2013).

Although there has accumulated a huge corpus of studies, there is a practical problem in the mental health of the Muslim clients (Ağılkaya Şahin, 2019). Therefore, Muslims seek to original ways to solve their psychological problems. These ways can be structured under two headings as small scale and large scale. Since religion is an inseparable part of life in the Islamic world, Muslims try to find treatments for their psychological problems in small scale first in their community and the solution was sought by the clergy. In this context, local imams who are the head of the Muslim community were determined as the first authority for problems including psychological ones. In addition to local imams, the treatment methods used by Islamic scholars in hospitals were also determined as secondary solution suggestions. Psychological hospitals, the number of which increased especially during the Ottoman period, can be seen as a way of treatment for Muslims. Thus, it can be concluded that

there are two ways of treatment seeking behaviour in Muslim community. The main issue is to determine and try to understand the main motivations of Muslims in seeking treatment from history to the present. Thus, in the modern era, these sources of motivation may have the opportunity to turn into scientific research. In short, the small scale and large scale treatment methods of Muslims will be examined in this section and the view of Muslims towards contemporary treatment methods in the modern period will be examined.

### **2.5.1. Local Imams**

First of all, researches indicate that Muslim communities have tried to meet their spiritual or psychological needs in local ways (Aydeniz, 2020). In this context, they consult to Imams (religious leaders) for their psychological problems and found it more appropriate to share their problems with them. In a study conducted with Muslims, it was determined that religious authorities were the first line of consultation for mental health problems (Marzuk & Milstein, 2005; Rassool, 2016). However, other studies reveal that the imams are mostly unprepared for such responsibilities because of the professional illiteracy about psychology and counselling (Topuz, 2014; Aydeniz, 2020).

The situation is similar in Turkey. As a result of the work done among Muslims living in Turkey, a similar picture has emerged (Topuz, 2014). In this context, it can be concluded that, Muslims consult local imams and religious officials or try to find solutions through religious rituals. This poses similar results to work done outside of Turkey (Abu Ras et. al., 2008; Ali & Milstein, 2012; Ali, Milstein and Marzuk, 2005; Heise et al, 2011; Padel et al, 2012). Similarly, studies conducted with Muslim individuals suggested that one of the duties of mosque imams is to provide advice and improvements in the mental health of Muslims (Padela et al., 2012).

### **2.5.2. Hospitals (Shifahane)**

Until the beginning of the 19th century, while patients who lost their mental health were described as cursed people in Europe, different classifications were developed in the Ottoman Empire and genuine attempts were made to understand the nature of these

diseases. The reason why the Ottomans took care of the mentally ill is their closeness to the Islamic belief and their understanding of nature. In this context, it is not accepted that the person is born as a sinner and the legal system prioritized reformation over criminalization.

Since the early ages, Muslims have tried to meet mental health need in different ways and developed their own methods. As a result, certain institutions and hospitals were established and theories gained the opportunity to turn into practice. These hospitals paid special attention to psychological disorders and gave importance to treatment. In this context, certain rules were introduced and the relationship between the patient and the doctor was shaped within the framework of certain ethical principles. Here, the patients were shown flower landscapes, listened to the sounds of birds and water, given flowers to smell, and given arts and crafts to occupy themselves with (Hatunoğlu, 2016). The main hospitals established during the Seljuk state can be listed as follows: Sivas, Divriği, Konya, Amasya, Tokat and Kastamonu. In the Ottoman period, healing centers were opened in different centres, the primary ones of which were Bursa, Fatih, Edirne, Manisa, Suleymaniye, Haseki, Atik Valide and Sultan Ahmed.

Similar attempts were made in the Ottoman period. In this context, the ideas and treatment protocols of Muslim thinkers were implemented in these hospitals. When Bursa became the capital, a social complex was built by Yildirim Bayezid II. The most important social service function among the buildings built by Bayezid in Edirne is the *darushifa* (Cantay, 1992). In the Ottoman period, patients with melancholy and schizophrenia were treated with different methods. Medicine, flower scents, water and music sounds, and treatment methods were used in these institutions. Since the musical modes and methods affected people differently, the *makams* (musical modes) were used according to the patient's ailment, requiring a certain amount of musical knowledge. Many different methods were used in these hospitals and the suitability of treatment protocols were tested according to personality characteristics. Therefore, many different techniques such as bloodletting, herbs, fragrances, music, sherbet, water and scenery were applied in these hospitals (Dündar et al., 2019).

After the 19th century, Muslims' political decline led them to an intellectual decline as well. In this case, the source of knowledge shifted to the West, and the treatment

methods in the field of psychotherapy were guided by the parameters of Western psychology. Accordingly, treatment methods became an imitation of Western practices. One of the studies show that many of the theorists are prone to overlooking the incompatibly underlying theological presuppositions between Western perspectives on human nature and the Islamic religion at the beginning of the 21st century due to the residual effects of colonialism (Rothman, 2019). Malik Badri has criticized this imitation much earlier and then it has since become the beginning of a new period of searching for treatment applicable for Muslims' needs. According to a study, which aims to classify Muslims' research topics between 2006 and 2015 argue that these topics can be evaluated under the following five headings: Unification of western psychological models with Islamic beliefs and practices; research on historical accounts of Islamic Psychology and its rebirth in the modern era; development of theoretical models and frameworks within Islamic Psychology; development of interventions and techniques within Islamic psychology; and the development of assessment tools and scales normed for use with Muslims (Haque et al., 2016). This classification shows the effort of Muslim psychologists to reveal, re-evaluate and regenerate possible practices that are suitable for their own values and beliefs in the modern era. Various theological systems are continually being investigated in the hopes of gaining a better knowledge of human nature and functioning. These studies have uncovered new psychological concepts and procedures that have aided the area of psychotherapy.

In conclusion, many studies have supported the important role religion plays in human well-being and that it is a serious positive resource in terms of psychological coping (Topuz, 2014; Aydeniz, 2020). Additionally, different variables between religion and psychotherapy attracted the attention of researchers and the studies in this area have increased exponentially. In this context, studies dealing with psychology and psychotherapy of many religions, especially Islam and Christianity, increased more than ever. The meaning of religious belief in terms of psychotherapy has become an important research topic. As a result of this demand, certain outputs began to be put forward, paving the way for joint studies with models based on religious belief or mainstream psychology trends. The fact that these studies have attracted great interest and favour among the public and researchers in different areas of the world also indicates the importance of this field for therapy. It is not strange that people who adopt

a religiously-oriented lifestyle seek solutions for their mental problems through religion. Even if this situation was noticed earlier in Western thought and some measures and initiatives were initiated, these studies were basically shaped within the framework of Christian doctrine. However, the increasing Muslim population in the world means it becomes an important target group in this regard. In other words, the relationship between religion and psychotherapy has started to be examined within the framework of Islamic thought, and new studies have increased day by day (York Al-Karam, 2018b; Rothman, 2020; Keshevarzi, 2020).

### **2.4.3. Muslim Attitudes Toward Mental Health**

As pointed out in this chapter, classical and modern literature shows that there is a many resource for Muslims in the field of psychology. Therefore, there has been a growing interest in incorporating Islam into psychotherapy with Muslim service users in recent years (Haque et. al, 2016). Within the framework of transforming religious thought and perception, it has been proven that the sources of religious thought offer a rich field in terms of therapy (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2010; Barnett & Johnson, 2011; McAdie & Morris, 2008; Post & Wade, 2009). Moreover, there is a link between well-being and religious activities and beliefs, according to research (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2010; Barnett & Johnson, 2011; McAdie & Morris, 2008; Post & Wade, 2009; Tan, 1996). Thus, this predicament has brought the subject of how best to assist this demographic to the forefront for social service and mental health practitioners. The majority of the research in this area has concentrated on adapting general Islamic principles and beliefs to Western psychotherapy models, as well as efforts to make therapeutic procedures more culturally relevant to Muslim service users (Haque et al., 2016). Modifications and interventions to mainstream modalities and treatments have been made in an attempt to make them more culturally acceptable to Muslim beliefs (Rothman, 2020).

On the other hand, recent studies show that although the Muslim population has psychological problems and resources, they do not seek treatment because religious values are ignored (Cragun & Friedlander, 2012; Sisemore & Knabb, 2020; Haque, 2008; Ağılkaya Şahin, 2018). Clients who follow a particular religion are more likely to seek treatment that incorporates their religious beliefs (Worthington & Sandage,

2001). They consider themselves as religious and seek secular psychotherapy treatment struggle to connect with and believe the therapist's therapeutic aims. Thus, many Muslims are hesitant to seek psychotherapy because they believe that therapists do not interact with religious ideas in a thoughtful and open manner (Killawi et al., 2014; Mayers et al., 2007; Khalil Center Report, 2019). Despite the significant presence of the Muslim population, Muslims have progressively unfulfilled treatment needs because there is no method they can rely on and feel safe (Abu Raiya & Pargament, 2010; Amer & Bagasra, 2013; Haque, 1998, 2004; Hodge & Nadir, 2008). In addition, there is a lack of research on what Islam offers to the world of psychology even Islamic thought incorporates many psychological elements. The reasons of this issue may be the subject of different studies, but this data is very critical for this dissertation as establishing the relationship between Muslim's values and psychotherapy will fill an essential gap and may be helpful for the treatment of a large population. There has recently been a lot of effort put into developing religiously integrated psychotherapy treatments that are in line with clients' religious traditions (Ağılkaya Şahin, 2019; Haque et al., 2018). As researchers continue to integrate religious knowledge and techniques into psychotherapy, promising outcomes have resulted in the development of religiously integrated psychotherapeutic therapies that are effective with religious clients (Rassool, 2016; Majeed & Jabir, 2017). Therefore, in accordance with this need and effort, the aim of this study is to show the applicability of the Islamic tradition to therapy within the framework of the findings obtained as a result of interviews with psychotherapists who integrate religious knowledge and techniques into psychotherapy. Investigating what these practitioners have to offer the field of psychology can help not only to improve the effectiveness of therapy with Muslim clients, but also to increase psychology's understanding and provide implications for psychotherapeutic practice.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHOD**

Qualitative research designs enable a more in-depth understanding of the phenomena being investigated (Creswell, 2009). Ethnography, phenomenology, thematic analysis, grounded theory and case studies are some of the examples of qualitative research approaches. All of these methods have some aspects in common, such as a concentration on the natural environment, an emphasis on process, providing descriptive data, substantial reliance on interpretations and inductive analysis. Through qualitative research, the participants are able to convey the substance of their experiences in this way, resulting in a higher degree of consciousness and revealing a broader base of knowledge regarding the phenomena under investigation. Therefore, the goal of qualitative research is to describe and explain experiences and events rather than to forecast them (Lyons & Coyle, 2016). Research questions also guide qualitative research. The research question of this dissertation is “What are Muslim psychologists' experiences in incorporating spirituality and religion into clinical practice?” To explore and identify this research question, a thematic analysis was used. In this section, the participants, measures, research strategy, procedure and data analysis are given.

#### **3.1. Participants**

Thematic analysis research requires the purposeful selection of participants. This is required because only those selected can offer insight into the experience (Creswell, 2012). Therefore, purposeful sampling was conducted for this study with the following inclusion criteria: (i) Having Islamically Integrated Psychology training (having at least coursework or certificate) or theological study as defined by formal coursework in the foundations of the Islamic tradition, and (ii) having at least one year of field experience utilizing Islamic orientation in a clinical mental health setting. The aim of creating such a sample was to reach people sharing similar experiences of a particular situation or a phenomenon.

At the beginning of the study, it was aimed to reach ten people. However, after attempts to reach psychologists who fit the criteria, this number became clear as 8. Participants were recruited from different countries.

**Table 3.1 Demographic Information**

<b>Age</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>%</b>
30-39	(n=2)	<b>Male</b>	(n=5)
40-49	(n=5)	<b>Female</b>	(n=3)
50-59	(n=1)		
<b>TOTAL:</b>	8		8

<b>Education</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Ethnic Background</b>	<b>%</b>
University	27% (n=2)	South Asian	27% (n=2)
Master/PhD	75% (n=6)	South African Indian	27% (n=2)
		Arab	50% (n=4)

<b>Predominant Role</b>	<b>%</b>
Psychiatrist	27% (n=2)
Psychologist	75% (n=6)

### 3.2. Measures

In this study, the Demographic Information Form was used to obtain necessary information about participants (Appendix B). In this form, the participants' age, gender, education level, and profession were asked. Secondly, a semi-structured interview form prepared by the researcher was used (Appendix C). This form was generally used to understand how participants integrated Islamic thought into their practice and to understand how to deepen it. The questions asked examined not only the models on which the participants have based their theoretical assumptions but also specific examples of their clinical experience. A meeting was held with the per participant based on the structure that is integrated with Islamic thought in their own world of thought, the model they use, the other models they use, the client population they work with, the contributions of this model to the clinical field, and future studies. The researcher did not adhere to the form completely but went through discourses as required by qualitative studies.

### **3.3. Procedure**

Ethical committee approval for the procedures planned had been approved by the Human Subject Ethics Committee of IHU (Appendix A). The participants were reached through the collaboration with the clinical psychologists and psychiatrists working with the sample group at Khalil Center. An invitation mail was sent to potential participants, and in this mail, information was given about the researcher, the nature of the study, and its contribution to the field. The researcher received feedback from the participants who were interested in and eligible for the project via e-mail. An appointment was made to meet these participants through an online interview application (zoom), and then online interviews were done with the participants who accepted. Before the interview, the participants were informed about the study. A consent form was submitted so that participants were aware of the purpose, confidentiality, risks of the study and had an opportunity to share any concerns or questions. Similarly, during the interview, participants were informed verbally about the subject, purpose, and nature of the study. As a result, the participants were asked verbally and in written form whether they were willing to participate. Also, participants were informed about confidentiality both verbally and in written form, following the APA guidelines. It was emphasized that their name and personal information will remain confidential. Before the interviews were recorded, which covers anonymity, the consent of the participant was obtained. All participants have committed to participate in the study under these conditions and have given consent to be enrolled.

Semi-structured, experience-centered, and in-depth interviews were conducted according to the qualitative research style to better understand the participants' experiences. In accordance with the semi-structured interview, questions were used to direct and deepen the conversation. The questions were used as a guide and were not administered in a sequential manner. Participants were encouraged to share their experiences within the framework of questions. Each participant was interviewed once, and the interviews lasted approximately 50-60 minutes. Throughout the interview, the researcher took notes on the feelings and thoughts in the sections that were striking or related to the subject (Smith et al., 1999). All interviews were recorded and transcribed by the researcher. Although there are four different ways to collect

data in qualitative studies, the in-depth interview technique was used for this study (Creswell, 2012). These interviews can be face-to-face or online through different applications. The fact that all of the participants live abroad has made it compulsory to conduct interviews online. Thus, all participants were interviewed online via the zoom program.

### **3.4. Data Analysis**

Braun and Clarke (2006) provided a six-phase guide for conducting thematic analysis. In the first phase, the researcher familiarizes with data, focuses on reading and re-reading the data, and notes down initial ideas (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). To ensure, the researcher completed this phase of analysis and immersed in the data. The interview sessions were transcribed and re-read at least twice to begin to identify patterns and meaning. Notes were taken through the process (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In the second phase, the researcher generates initial codes: “coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). This phase was focused on reducing the data and the production of initial codes (Attride-Stirling, 2001; Braun & Clarke, 2006). The data was coded into “meaningful and manageable chunks of text, such as passages, quotations, single words...” (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 391). This phase was focused on the development of themes; it is the first and most basic level of analysis that is used as an organizational tool (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In the third phase, the researcher searches for themes, collates codes into potential themes, gathers all data relevant to each potential theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). This phase was used as the draft of theme development and code placement. In the fourth phase, the researcher reviews themes, checks if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set, generating a thematic ‘map’ of the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). This phase was focused on refining the draft themes identified in the third phase using a two-level analysis of the codes. The first level involved reading through the codes for each theme and determining if a coherent pattern has developed (Braun & Clarke, 2006). If a coherent pattern was identified, the researcher moved on to the second level of analysis. If codes did not fit, it had to be

determined if the theme itself was the issue or the codes and information for that specific theme. To complete the second level analysis, the entire data set is read through to ensure the themes fit in relation to the data. This also gives the opportunity to check if any additional data missed that needed to be coded (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In the fifth phase, the researcher defines and names themes, does ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells generates clear definitions and names for each theme (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). The goal of this phase is to be able to "...clearly define what your themes are and what they are not" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 92).

Finally, in the sixth phase, the researcher produces the report and has the final opportunity for analysis. This phase includes selecting vivid, completing extract examples, the final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research questions and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). This is the final phase which focused on analyzing the data and writing a narrative about the data that "...goes beyond description of the data, and make an argument in relation to your research questions"; while it also "...provides a concise, coherent, logical, nonrepetitive and interesting account of the story the data tell-within and across themes" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 93).

# CHAPTER IV

## RESULTS

### 4.1. Themes

In this section, the results of the analysis and emerging categories will be illustrated.

Five categories were identified:

1. Integration of specific methods of Islamic thought into psychotherapy
2. Integration of specific methods of other therapy methods with the Islamic psychology approach
3. Difficulties in transferring Islamic thought to therapy
4. Importance of applying Islamic thought to the therapy setting
5. The contributions of transferring Islamic thought to the therapy environment in clinical psychology.

#### 4.1.1. Category 1: Integration of Specific Methods of Islamic Thought into Psychotherapy

Six themes emerged in the first category, entitled “Integration specific methods of Islamic Thought with Psychotherapy”. Table 4.1 shows the different integration styles. The repetition of some themes showed their importance for the participants. Each theme of Table 4.1. is explained in the following.

**Table 4.1. Themes and Subthemes for Category 1**

Themes	Subthemes	n of Participans	% of Participants
Using Verses of Qur'an		8	100
Using Prophet's <i>Hadith</i>		7	88
Use of <i>Dhikr</i>		7	88
	<i>Dua</i>	6	75
	Names of God	5	63
	<i>Tawba</i>	3	38
Love of God		6	75
Using Islamic Concepts to Explain Human Behaviour		5	63
Life of Prophets		4	50

- **Using Verses of Qur'an**

All participants in the study stated that they are using Qur'an verses in their practice with the client. The implementation of Qur'anic verses may vary from person to person, and the content of use can be very diverse. An example of this can appear in the participant's statements:

I can use Quranic verses in many different ways. Sometimes I use as a way to relax or become more open to communication in a particular pathology, and sometimes as a psychoeducational tool. As a result of this, a serious relaxation and comfort take place in the person. This is very useful in the context of therapy and has an accelerating effect.

Another participant states that:

I use the metaphors in Qur'anic verses time to time. An analogy that I often use is that dead earth and resurrection. Dead earth that is revived to life the crops grow from it then winter comes and they are out there destroyed but then again the new season turns around and again the earth is revived. That is as an analogy of the human. It is a deeply chronic analogy but also very very helpful to explain that at the moment you are in winter that's why you are feeling the way that you are feeling. These verses make sense and appropriate for people to get better again after a bad situation. This offers a good starting point for therapy.

- **Using Prophet's Hadith**

Several participants (n = 7) mentioned that they often carried the example of the Prophet (peace & blessings be upon him) and his words into the therapy environment. Considering that the only person who should be taken as an example for a Muslim is the Prophet (peace & blessings be upon him), its effect and importance become clear. In this context, therapists also mentioned hadiths within their own practice. One participant expressed this as follows:

Of course, the client does not always have to believe my word. I try to support what I am saying with different sources. In this case, I refer to the hadiths that are the words of the Prophet. In this case, the client absorbs more easily. By the way, what we are trying to do is not separate from the life of the Prophet. His life is the best example for us and we have a lot to take. So, I am not saying here the Prophet is a therapist, but some of his practices and words are so valuable and important. It is impossible to ignore the importance of this for a Muslim. Bringing the Prophet to our time and introducing him to today's Muslims makes person to remember again what he believed. This brings energy and motivation to the person. I have seen this clearly in my applications and I have seen how much people benefit from this way. As I said before, these are all intertwined issues.

- **Use of *Dhikr***

Another issue that the therapists talk about is use of *dhikr*. The issue of *dhikr* in Islamic thought is considered as a matter that brings people closer to Allah and relieves them spiritually. Many of the participants stated that they are using *dhikr* as a technique. *Dhikr* means thinking and repeating a phrase or a word in general. Any phrase can be used in the form of *dhikr*. However, some recommended prayers or certain words

came to the fore. In this context, three types of *dhikr* were identified from the participants. These are *dua* (invocation), names of God and *tawba* (repentance). A participant describes this as:

It becomes difficult to maintain permanence without *dhikr*. Also, al-Ghazālī makes many warnings about this issue. It is very important to keep one's heart clean and to do this constantly. *Dhikr* is not just to repeat something with the language, maybe it is the case at the beginning, but then it goes to the heart and keeps this person's heart connected with God. (...) I especially think that *dhikr* has a helpful effect because it paves the way for certain changes in both cognitive and behavioral terms and affects the client's world of meaning. Others call this effect mindfulness. Seeing this as remembrance is more effective for Muslim clients.

Another participant state that:

Allah introduces himself to people by names and wants to be called by these names, so why shouldn't I bring this to therapy room? Allah has the name *Rahman*, this name points to His mercy. There is the name *Ghaffar*, this name indicates that He is forgiving. *Razzaq*, *Fattah*, *Vadud* etc. Explaining the meanings of these names to the client and encouraging them to remember Allah with these names touches their soul.

Another participant state that:

Sometimes, we want God to be with us, but we do not know how to make *dua* to him, and we may not know exact words to turn to him. A person or client can only think about on some wishes from his heart, but cannot put them into words. In this case, some of the *duas* form *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* could help. Many *duas* have reached us from the mouth of the prophets in the *Qur'an*. Also, *Allah* himself also told us how we should pray. Our Prophet [peace & blessings be upon him] always has own *duas*. There are also many examples of *duas* that related to during illness or difficult times. A Muslim can pray in his own language, but these sources also guide us. From time to time, I read and teach these *duas* together with the client as a *dhikr*. I write them and give it to my clients and encourage them to read it again and again after the daily prayers. This makes easy for them to say what is in their hearts with the tongue, and enable them to turn to God.

- **Love of God**

One of the most important points that Muslims connect with their existence can be seen as love of God. Interestingly, therapists who try to establish a connection between Islamic thought and therapy use this concept abundantly in their practice. This is actually seen as an important resource, as a people think that they are loved and respected by an all-Benevolent Entity. In this context, 75% of the participants emphasize the love of God. This is a phenomenon that has an impact on both sides. In other words, according to the participants, showing love of God toward the clients and the love for God of clients have a twofold effect and emerges as an important theme.

One participant explained this situation as follows:

For example, now *fajr* prayer is late, so people sometimes wake up for *fajr* without an alarm. So, Allah is calling you, He is checking on you. He is so Divine and He is calling you to check in on you to ask you how are you doing. Imagine how much He loves you to check on you. Last time you think about prayer, know that it is not that you remember it. That is Allah reminding you to come. His love for you reminding for you.

- **Using Islamic Concepts to Explain Human Behavior**

Some of the participants mentioned that they tried to understand and explain pathology through a new human model. In this context, they expressed those concepts such as *rūh* (soul), *nafs* (self), *qalb* (heart) and *aql* (mind). These concepts were used as reference points in Islamic thought and drew attention to these aspects of human beings. 63% of the participants stated that they used a model produced within the framework of Islamic thought. One of them said:

I was having my own struggle of having a need of framework and essentially, what it is. The framework is that of Islamic *ilm al-nafs* [psychology] and *tasawwuf* [Sufism]. That goes back a long way but it was never articulated in a way for treatment and diagnosis and so I would say I very much use this framework. (...) The model that I'm using is also integrating that in a way that honours the reality of the spiritual being of the human being. That is not limited to just trying to help a person understand himself or trying to heal different blockages or problems in the soul but actually who is fundamentally allow the space for the soul which is metaphysical spiritual reality of that human being.

Another participants said:

We define the source of knowledge, how do we understand knowledge and use it. We have three sources: *Wahy* [divine revelation], our sense, and *aql* [mind]. Through these sources we gather information. So, based on these three knowledges, we come up with a theory. As long as it goes under the filter of these three sources, we accept it as Islamic. We try to conceptualize our ancestors in the past, we took their writings, and we also use the modern data, and we try to present it in a more applicable way. (...) *Aql* is cognition, *ihsās* is the emotions, the *rūh* is the spiritual aspect of our being especially for connecting to Allah. I also believe that how our relationship with Allah is destroyed because of our human relationship with other individuals.

- **Using Life of Prophets**

Another subject that seems similar to the second theme but is quite different from it is the lives and examples of the prophets. The names of 25 prophets are mentioned in the *Qur'an*. However, it is stated in the narrations that it is more than this. The prophets mentioned in the *Qur'an* are the most well-known prophets. Prophets have experienced many different events in their lives and entered into exemplary situations. In this context, the therapists who participated in the study tried to help clients in different ways by making use of these examples. A participant explains this situation as follows:

(...) I also refer time to time stories of the prophets. At the beginning of the speech, I mentioned the prophet *Ayyūb*. This is not the only example, besides, all prophets are going through some tests and they serve as an example. The stories of the prophets *Nūh*, *Hūd*, *Ṣālih*, *ʿIsā* and *Mūsā* are told over and over again in the *Qur'an*. Each one appeals to people from a different side. I think that knowing that the prophets also had some tests and seeing their reactions to these tests contain important lessons for all of us.

#### 4.1.2. Category 2: Integration of other therapy methods with the Islamic psychology approach

The second significant issue that emerged as a result of the interviews was to consider Islamic Psychology and other therapy methods together. In this context, although Muslim therapists try to use Islamic thought and its framework, they also utilize mainstream therapies and the techniques of these therapy methods. Four themes emerged under this category.

**Table 4.2. Themes and Subthemes for Category 2**

Themes	Subthemes	n of Participants	% of Participants
CBT Integration		6	75
Emotion Focused Therapy		5	63
Rogerian Therapy		3	38
Integration			
Gestalt Therapy		2	27

- **CBT Integration with the Islamic Psychology Approach**

The most common method used by participated Muslim therapists is to use CBT together with Islamic thought. This theme emerged for 75% of the participants. It means that 6 of the 8 participants integrated CBT with Islamic models in their therapy approach. An example of this is:

Yes, as a Muslim therapist, I use the knowledge of Islamic Psychology that came until today but the way I use it goes with CBT in general. I benefit from the applications of cognitive therapy in many aspects such as negative thoughts, emotion-thought fusion, formulation, cognitive distortions... I try to rethink this in a way that suits the Muslim client but I would really say my practice is predominantly CBT.

Another participant state that:

(...) I mean, I use variety methodology or therapy. So, I use for example mostly cognitive behaviour therapy. I work on thought, but I also use my Muslim identity while doing this.

- **Emotion Focused Therapy Integration with the Islamic Psychology Approach**

Another important method is emotion focus therapy (EFT). 63% of the participants stated that their methods benefited from some applications and models from EFT. One participant expressed this as follows:

(...) Especially when dealing with *ihsas* [emotion], EFT is very helpful because there is a similar understanding. Here I can focus more on emotions and I want the person to focus here. So, the person experiences the emotions, feels much more closely and can see with other areas. In these cases, I can say that, EFT draws a very appropriate framework. Emotions can sometimes be neglected, but in my experience, it is as important as thought and plays an important role for *qalb selim* [translation]. The more intense and intimate experiences of emotion, the more his bond with God expands and he interprets it more accurately.

- **Rogierian Therapy Integration with the Islamic Psychology Approach**

Another theme related to integration is Rogierian Therapy. This theme emerged for 38% of the therapist. Therefore, 3 of the 8 participants use Rogierian Therapy for their Muslim clients. One of the participants statement is as follows:

So, sometimes it is more appropriate to use this method because you know in Rogierian therapy, the person is centred and the main thing is to keep the relationship with the client well. They sometimes just need positive regard, because he or she never experienced positive regard. It is like making them feel accepted or whatever right. (...) That may be an issue for them sometimes and they may need to relate to somebody on some really colloquial surface-level and in that case the technique I might be using referencing my knowledge of pop culture movies or music and then that in and of itself is the therapeutic tool that's working the best or more specifically.

- **Gestalt Therapy Integration with the Islamic Psychology Approach**

The last theme that occurs above this category is Gestalt therapy. Some of the participants mentioned that they reorganize the Gestalt techniques in a way that suits their point of view. This turned out to be less than other themes (2 out of 8). One participant stated that:

I have benefited from Gestalt therapy. My grandfather actually helped to develop this method of Gestalt therapy by Fritz Perls who started that and so I spent quite a lot of time with the community of those psychologists who developed that to sort of learn these type of techniques. So, I definitely incorporate some of which part of being like bringing awareness to what's happening in the body. Even asking the client, like, "I noticed that you just twitched right there and your shoulder can you tell me what's that about" and they may be like "what do you mean? what's that about? I don't know it's just a twist" so I say, okay sure "how do you feel in your shoulder right now" and I just ask questions about bringing them into the present moment and this Gestalt therapy. It's a very Islamic directive it's very Islamic approach that you find in some practices of bringing the person's awareness to their body.

#### **4.1.3. Category 3: Difficulties in Transferring Islamic Thought to Therapy**

The third category was about the problems experienced while transferring Islamic thought to the therapy setting. Therapists working in this field stated that the therapeutic relation becomes difficult or does not occur due to some situations. Many different problems can be expressed under this category, but some problems were

repeated by many participants. Thus, a total of four different categories emerged in this category.

**Table 4.3. Themes and Subthemes for Category 3**

Themes	Subthemes	# of Participants	% of Participants
Lack of Research		5	63
Negative Attitudes Toward Spirituality		3	38
Problematic Categorization		2	27
Abuse of Spirituality		2	27

- **Lack of Research**

In the third category, the first theme is the lack of research. More than half of the therapists participating in the study stated that the biggest difficulty in transferring Islamic thought to therapy was due to the scarcity of studies in the field. New studies emphasize more the role of religion in therapy and facilitate integration with Islamic thought. This theme appeared in 5 out of 8 participants, in other words it was seen at a rate of 63%. One participant said that:

The most important absence or handicap in the development of Islamic psychology is that there is not enough work in this field. I don't see enough resources. I think I see the efforts of fragmented conferences and activities to try and bring the ideas together but still the efforts are not enough. Recently, this rate has been increasing, but still, studies that will be adapted to therapy need to be more generalizable. These make it difficult for Muslim therapists to clearly see what to do and how. Different concepts and models can be used. When someone says that I am using *Qur'an* therapy, how do we base it, how do we generalize it more? This all depends on new studies. Without them, Islamic psychology becomes something that is only spoken in a small group and is open to questioning competence.

- **Negative Attitudes Toward Spirituality**

In the third category, the second theme is “Negative Attitudes Toward Spirituality”. Some of the therapists stated that religion is a feared concept and many therapists hesitate to include it in therapy. 3 out of 8 therapists stated that this obstructed Islamic psychology studies and that this should be overcome. One participant said that:

I think the main obstacle or challenge is people's fear of religion and the fear of the medical model. Feeling like there is no space for religion is a big problem. Muslim therapists are having that same fear. We are biased. We go to a doctor for healing, we go to an imam for religious guidance, we go to a therapist to get our head straight. I think an Islamic approach is all those

together combined but many of people think they should be separated. I think that the obstacle is that people think categorically and disaggregated until it's hard to create spaces where those things exist in one place.

- **Problematic Categorization**

The third theme in this category is “Problematic Categorization”. Some of the participants (2 out of 8) stated that the sciences classification was wrong and a different classification was made in the religious literature. In this context, the elimination of spirituality becomes easier and cannot find a place in the scientific framework. One participant expressed this as follows:

... In the religious literature, sources of information are grouped under three headings, which are *aql* [healthy intellect], *wahy* [divine revelation] and *khobar al-sadiq* [true narrative]. This is the same for al-Ghazālī, and the same for other scholars. So it actually offers a more general perspective. But in today's classification of sciences, only reason or *aql* is important and regards it as valid knowledge. This directly disables revelation and true transmission. However, spirituality is not something that can be understood with the reason totally. This classification makes it difficult to treat spirituality as a field of study. So, it becomes impossible to conduct a scientific study on it. I think this categorization needs to be pointed out at the most fundamental, and it is a serious obstacle and rooted problem for Islamic psychology studies. This categorization did not happen in a day, it certainly will not change in a day, but I think this is one of the most serious problems in the field, I hope I could explain it correctly.

- **Abuse of Spirituality**

The fourth theme in this category is “Abuse of Spirituality”. In this context, some of the participants talked about people and institutions who misused spirituality and stated that this damaged the relationship to be established between Islamic thought and psychology. One participant expressed this as follows:

... On the other hand, I find it very understandable for some scholars to exclude spirituality. If I were in their place, I could easily decline it, because nowadays there are so many people who use it for their own gain ... Every corner there could be a person saying "Hey, do you need any psychological support? Do you want to try spiritual therapy?" It has become normal now. Regardless of whether they have education or not, anyone can get into this job, and people can really get hurt. I also do not confirm this with certainty and I think it blocks the way for the actual work. This situation harms studies in this area more than good. Some people can do this for little benefit. There are even those who open up training in this field without clinical training and experience, and people's feelings and thoughts are exploited. Some people are so desperate that they see it as a solution and then regret it.

#### **4.1.4. Category 4: Importance of Applying Islamic Thought to the Therapy Setting**

The fourth category that emerged as a result of the interviews was "Importance of Applying Islamic Thought to the Therapy Setting". In this context, the participants mentioned why they had to do some practices in line with their beliefs and about the

importance of this for the current Muslim population. Four themes emerged in this category.

**Table 4.4. Themes and Subthemes for Category 4**

Themes	Subthemes	n of Participans	% of Participants
Spirituality as a Part of the Human Being		6	75
Shaping Human Life		5	63
Opposing Colonization		2	27
Religious Responsibility		2	27

- **Spirituality As a Part of The Human Being**

The first theme that emerges in this category is that spirituality is a part of human beings. According to participants, in terms of human psychology, spirituality is as important as other parameters such as emotion, thought and behavior and it should be discussed in the therapy environment. At this point, the therapists state that this is something that has been overlooked for a long time and they feel the need for this to change. In this context, 75% of therapists (6 out of 8) drew attention to this need and emphasized the importance of integrating Islamic thought into the clinical environment in terms of spirituality being a part of the human being. One participant stated this as follows:

One thing has been highlighted since Maslow, but it is gradually losing its importance in modern psychology. The modern psychology tries to present human as a non-metaphysical living being, but human being is a metaphysical creature. We cannot deny this. The spiritual aspect of man is so strong. Sometimes people sacrifice many things when the time comes, and sometimes leads them to do some things even if he does not want to. Look, this can either be for the better or for the worse. For example, sometimes wrong beliefs can lead people to do bad things. Things like, harming other people can be done for belief. How does this person do this? How does that power make him believe in his conscience, in his mind? This is a big and important question. These kinds of questions are ignored today. Most of practitioners do not care about the soul of human, the spiritual side of human and even they underestimate it. But this is such a field that many interventions are incomplete because we do not know this enough, we cannot fully understand what we call human. Allah says we have little knowledge of the soul in the Qur'an, but that does not mean that we have no knowledge. If we pretend that this field does not exist at all, we will miss a large part of the human being. For this reason, studies such as this one you are doing are very important for the development of this field. We need a system where we can understand human beings in a holistic way. Recently, it has started to be studied in the west, but it is very important for this field to examine this from the eyes of a Muslim.

- **Shaping Human Life**

The second theme in this category is that applying Islamic thought to the therapy setting is important because spirituality shapes human life. Participants stated that

beliefs guide the lives of Muslim clients and their way of looking at life. In this case, they emphasized that this is a parameter that should not be overlooked. This theme emerged in 50% of the participants (4 out of 8). One participant expressed this as follows:

How can I contact the client? Some Islamic rituals were performed at the birth of the client, he was circumcised in his childhood, a celebration was held, marriage is according to the religion, raised his children with this mindset, celebrated religious holidays every year, etc. The whole mindset, or in other words, the scheme is built on this basis. How can I contact the client independently from this now? How can I apply techniques without being familiar with them or knowing this point of view? This is not possible. (...) In psychology, we have to base the view of Islamic thought on human beings, otherwise we will turn our backs on these clients and ignore them. I think this is our duty as Muslim psychologists. We need this information in order to understand it and to take appropriate action within someone whose whole life is framed by religion, let alone being our duty.

- **Opposing Colonization**

The third theme that emerged in this category was found to be opposition to colonization. In this context, therapists talked about the effects of change and transformation in every field of social sciences and its reflections on psychology. In this context, participants pointed out the importance of this field in breaking this effect and establishing its own systematic. This theme emerged in 27% of the participants (2 out of 8). One participant said:

There are many things in the outside world that try to break us from our spiritual ties. People outside, social media, the film industry, the shopping culture... There are many things that will distract us from the road. This is normal anyway, we do not have the idea to make everyone the same but this becomes a problem when it comes to science. Because when science is concerned, it affects the society more deeply. (...) What is a human? The answers to the question constitute a large psychology literature, but here our view as a Muslim stands in a small place. We need to have the power to rebuild this knowledge and, most importantly, to bring it to the clinical environment. Otherwise, we will gradually move further away from this bond and become prisoners of other beliefs. We have become alienated from ourselves, we have become unfamiliar with ourselves. More precisely, they alienated us from ourselves. Our goal is to re-establish the bond between God and human.

- **Contribution to Cultural Studies**

The last theme in this category is the contribution of Islamic thought to practice in the context of cultural studies. Participants pointed out that this Islamic thought has its own understanding of culture and civilization and this should be taken into account. One participant expressed it as follows:

Since the arrival of the Prophet, Muslims have done all worldly affairs in their own way. It could be the cure for illnesses, the state administration, the raising of children, or economic things. There has been an accumulation of culture and civilization in every field. Now, I think that those who want to keep this accumulation alive and see themselves as Muslims and live this way deserve it. I think this area is especially valuable in terms of intercultural psychology. There are many issues that other cultures and civilizations should take from us. We are getting

a lot of things from them anyway, right? From this point of view, you know the saying of the Prophet that wisdom is the lost property of a believer, this is exactly something suitable here. But of course, this does not mean that the believer will find everything outside. To put it briefly, I would like to draw attention to the connection between Islamic thought and psychology in the context of intercultural studies.

- **Religious Responsibility**

The last theme in this category was determined as the responsibility of religion. Some participants stated that this integration is important because they see it as a religious responsibility. In this context, they pointed out the necessity of working in this field as a Muslim therapist. One participant expressed this as follows:

God created me as a psychologist for a purpose. I am somehow in this field and I think I should work on this path as far as I can. What we call religion is such a thing, which includes all areas of life and is not independent from each other. How can I say that I am a Muslim now but do not work in this field? This is not suitable at all. I think Muslim psychologists should work in this field as much as they can. This religion is a responsibility imposed on us, we cannot escape from it.

#### 4.1.5. Category 5: The Contributions of Transferring Islamic Thought to the Therapy Environment to Clinical Psychology

The last category in the study is "The Contributions of Transferring Islamic Thought to the Therapy Environment to Clinical Psychology". In this context, the participants pointed out the benefits of Islamic thought in the clinical setting. The benefits of these applications in the clinical environment and their effect on the client are emphasized. Five themes have emerged under this category.

**Table 4.5. Themes and Subthemes for Category 5**

Themes	Subthemes	# of Participants	% of Participants
Providing Comfort		8	100
Symptom Relief		6	63
Facilitating Cognitive and Emotional Acceptance		3	38
Improving Relationships		2	27

- **Providing Comfort**

The first theme that emerged in this category was to provide a comfortable environment. In this context, all of the participants emphasized that the clients had the opportunity to speak more comfortably. Similarly, when the clients interviewed in the

context of their own beliefs, they stated that they felt more understood. All of the participants mentioned this theme and emphasized its importance. One participant expresses it as follows:

Many Muslim clients do not go or do not intend to go to the therapist because they think it is not suitable for them. There are also those who see this as wrong or contrary to belief. But the Muslim therapist can easily overcome this prejudice, make the client feel more comfortable and open up. To whom does a Muslim who does not go to a psychologist tell his problem? Of course, the imam around him tells the person whose religion he trusts. But this may not always be a good option. Because anyone who knows religion may not know psychology. For this reason, I think the biggest contribution of Muslim psychologists to the field is to provide a comfortable environment for Muslim clients.

Another participant stated this as follows:

Do you know what is the question that is always asked me? Do you know a Muslim psychologist for a sibling's psychological problem? Do you know someone who suits our sensitivities? Do you know someone who can help us? What does this mean? This actually points to something important. Muslim clients are looking for a therapist who can understand them. I am not saying that other treats do not understand Muslims here. Although there may be some who do not really understand, but I make a determination. If we want to reach Muslim clients and care about their mental health, we need to pay attention to this.

- **Symptom Relief**

The second theme that emerges in this category is symptom relief. In this context, the participants stated that their practices, regardless of whether they are in cooperation with another school or independent practices, helped to eliminate the symptom of the client. One participant expressed this as follows:

Of course, the feedback from clients is very positive. The reason for the arrival and the severity of the disease are also important in this. But in general, in my experience interventions help to alleviate symptoms. (...) I usually measure this with pre-test post-test. I look at it weekly and then evaluate it on a general scale. As a result, I am trying to understand whether the interventions I made had an effect. Of course, we cannot ignore the effect of the therapeutic relationship here, I have mentioned this before, but besides this relationship, there is a more serious effect. I think this happened with the interventions I applied. The question of how does this contribute can be answered differently. This, I think, gives therapy tremendous momentum.

- **Facilitating Cognitive and Emotional Acceptance**

The third theme in this category is "Facilitating cognitive and emotional acceptance". Participants clearly state that Islamic thought is helpful in terms of the client's acceptance of the problem and its openness to therapy interventions. This contributes positively to their treatment process. One participant stated this as follows:

When therapy is viewed as two Muslims leading each other to the right, suddenly the frame changes greatly. Here, the therapist-client relationship is preserved, but the person no longer sees himself as "mental". What is described in psychoeducation or therapy is more easily accepted by the client because the client thinks the therapist is trying to do his best. This saved me a lot of time during therapy.

- **Improving Relationships**

The last theme in this category was the development of relations. Participants stated that the interventions made, if supported by Islamic thought, contribute to the regulation and development of the client's life relationships. In this context, 2 out of 8 people touched on this theme and stated that their practices contributed to the lives of clients in this context. One participant expressed this as follows:

I attach importance to relational identity in my own practices and try to bring this up as much as possible. I think this is a reflection of the *ummah* [translation] consciousness and today's Muslims need it very much. This is not only a general determination, but also in therapy, this relational identity helps the client in many ways. I have pointed out this before. The person actually cannot maintain his mental health within a context or his mental health becomes worse in a context. It is important to understand and reorganize this context. I encourage clients to use their religious bonds or understandings mostly from this aspect, and it works. The relationship of the person with himself, with God or with other beings becomes functional through these conversations. I purposely said other beings here because I am not just referring to other humans, this could be any living or non-living entity other than other humans. Recognizing oneself in this network of relationships and reconsidering this network of relationships with one's Muslim identity makes an important contribution.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION

As clearly demonstrated within the framework of this study, the use of religious references in the counselling services of Muslims helps them in many ways. This situation can be expressed as a benefit that covers the whole process starting from seeking treatment and ending the treatment. It is not surprising that this is the case for those who put religion at the centre of their life because human beings interpret mental illnesses within the framework of their own values and acceptances and try to make inferences about the illness jointly with his past experiences. Within the framework of this study, interviews were done with therapists who were trying to transfer Islamic thought to the clinical environment, and this process was tried to be understood better, and possible themes were revealed. In addition, it is thought that this study will help clinical studies that will be put forward together with Islam and psychology. Accordingly, it has been demonstrated that practices combined with Islamic thought provide positive feedback for clients.

#### **5.1. Examining the Results of the Category 1**

In the first category, "Integration specific methods of Islamic thought with psychotherapy" counsellors' techniques were examined, and the prominent ones were presented. In this context, the use of verses and hadiths came to the fore. Understandably, they are the primary reference sources for counsellors because all other practices result from the definitions and practices emerging within the framework of the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*. Furthermore, some researchers have expressed these primary sources as the main sources of counselling and therapy. Thus, they base the sources of Islamic psychology, counselling or psychotherapy on the *Qur'an*, Hadith and Sharia (Hamid, 1977; Haque, 1998b; Sudan, 2017; Khan, 2018). This conclusion may be reconsidered in order to discuss the client's religiosity, because what the therapist's duty is has been determined within the framework of ethical rules. As the *Qur'an* is the word of God, it is considered to be preserved in the religion of Islam.

Therefore, the primary source that God communicates directly with people in the Qur'an. For a person who defines himself as a Muslim and claims to live in accordance with the religion of Islam, the orders, prohibitions, recommendations, and avoidance of the *Qur'an* envisage a life order. The prominence of this title within the first category seems understandable from this point of view. Participants have integrated these two resources into their practice in different ways. None of them developed a different or opposing view of these two sources, all of them used in their practice in a harmonious manner. This conclusion seems to be consistent with the general literature. Studies show that the Qur'an and Sunnah are tried to be integrated and that these two sources are tried to be used in therapy with different aspects (Abu Raiya & Pargament, 2011; Thomas & Ashraf, 2011; Abu-Hamid & Hughes, 2015; Utz, 2011 Hamjah & Akhir, 2014). Especially in the period called the period of quests, Muslim researchers tried to reveal the basic sources of religious thought within the framework of original methods and techniques (Kaplick & Rüschoff, 2018; Haque, 1998; Skinner, 2010; Ansari, 2002).

Another important point in this category is that therapists use *dhikr* intensely, although not as much as the Qur'an and hadith. There may be many different reasons for this. However, it appears to be the most straightforward and most useful practical *dhikr* in daily practice. In recent studies, the importance and effectiveness of *dhikr* were emphasized. In this context, researchers have dealt with *dhikr* as a mystical practice and have associated it with Sufism (Bedri, 2018; Özelsel, 1995; Kıymaz, 2002; Goels, 1996). In addition, there are studies that emphasize the relationship between Sufism and psychology from a in general and draw attention to the importance of this subject (Fragar, 2005; Wilcox, 2003) Repeating a word in the language of the client at every moment of the day, but without tiring the mind or body of the client, provides a connection to God. This link constantly reminds the person of his values and the change he wants to make so that he can put them into practice quickly but effectively. Although *dhikr* can take many different forms, three sub-themes emerged within the scope of the study. This can be considered as the three forms of *dhikr* that the therapists use most. It is interesting that the most common sub-theme is *dua* (invocation). People understand their deficiencies and turn to God and constantly acknowledge this with their language has been seen as a factor that positively affects the treatment process. *Dua* is a different concept from *dhikr* in general. In Islamic thought, these two concepts

are defined separately from each other and *dua* is not seen as a sub-branch of *dhikr*. However, it was seen that some of the participants gave the *duas* that have taken from the Qur'an and the Sunnah to the client in the form of *dhikr*. In this context, the person repeats something from Allah as it is in the Qur'an and the Sunnah, not within the framework of the concept of *dua*. For example, one participant stated that he taught the client to repeat 201st verse of Surat al-Baqara five times after prayers. In this context, besides being a general concept, the use of *dua* in the form of *dhikr* is remarkable.

In addition, the names of God and the repentance seem appropriate to the emphasis in the general Islamic literature (Rajaei, 2010). These remembrances, which the Prophet Muhammad (peace & blessings be upon him) recommended most and that he also made continuously, were evaluated and applied by therapists to provide functionality in therapy. Reframing worship more consciously and turning it into a practical technique is a subject that has been widely discussed in the literature. Especially recently, not only the psychological benefits of worship such as reading the *Qur'an*, *dhikr* or prayer have been brought to the fore, but also suggested to be used in the treatment of certain psychopathologies (Karim, 1984; Haque, & Keshavarzi, 2014; Hamja et al., 2017; Hamja & Akhir, 2014; El Azayem & Hedayat-Diba, 1994; Babamohamadi et al., 2015; Tekke & Watson, 2017). While these initiatives become more consistent when presented within a certain framework (Keshavarzi & Haque, 2013; York Al-Karam, 2015), they represent a more limited function when presented individually (El Azayem & Hedayat-Diba, 1994; Babamohamadi et al., 2015).

Perhaps one of the most original themes emerging in this category is the love of God. Previously, some researchers tried to define man as a being related to God (Ghobary-Bonab and Koohsar, 2011). However, within the framework of this study, love of God seems to have a different meaning. More than half of the participants emphasized the power of love and identified love as one of the critical aspects of belief in God. This situation can be explained by the more emotion-focused work of therapists who try to establish the link between Islamic thought and psychotherapy. In this context, human models that have emerged so far in connection with Islamic thought have tried to re-define concepts such as soul (*rūh*), heart (*qalb*), mind (*aql*), and self (*nafs*), and drew attention to the importance of the heart in terms of mental health (Keshavarzi, 2020).

However, the dominant emergence of this theme within the framework of our limited study shows the intensity given to the emotional field while transferring the concepts in Islamic thought to the therapy environment.

Another of the most original aspects of his integrated studies is that the participants try to explain human behaviour with Islamic concepts. This title which is one of the essential themes in this category, also includes a philosophical discourse. The participants highlighted some deficiencies in today's modern paradigm's definition of human and thought these would complement Islamic thought. This situation works with practice but leads to a conclusion whose theory is not fully established. There are some attempts at present for explaining human from Islamic models. Researchers are using concepts like *rūh* (soul), *qalb* (heart) and *aql* (mind) to point out different aspect of human being (Haque, 2018; Öz & Kaplick, 2016; Abu-Raiya, 2012; Mohamed, 1995; Haque & Keshavarzi, 2014; Rothman, 2018). However, the use of these concepts and references created by therapists' use of religious literature suggests that this problem is a point to be emphasized.

Finally, it is noteworthy that the lives of prophets are exemplified in the context of this category. In the literature, there is an emphasis on the stories of the prophets in the Qur'an under the name of bibliotherapy (Aracı, 2007; Atalay, 2011; Cook et al., 2006; Forgan, 2002; Grier, 2006; McCulliss, 2012; Öncü, 2012; Yılmaz, 2002). In this context, the stories of the prophets also stand at an important point for the clients. Half of the participants, by giving examples from the prophets' lives, identify a reference point for the clients to compare themselves in a sense. This is a fundamental issue that needs attention because although there is a measurable part of the spirituality like effectiveness of the spirituality on stress and emotion regulation (Hamja et al., 2017) or religious coping scale (Sarıtoprak et al., 2018) the immeasurable aspect of belief and spirituality always stands constantly. However, an exemplary human model is valuable in terms of realizing one's potential and being hopeful. The therapists discovered this resource, brought it to the clinical environment, and drew attention to its usefulness.

## 5.2. Examining the Results of the Category 2

The second theme is “Integration of other therapy methods with the Islamic psychology approach”. This theme is vital in expressing the schools that therapists see as close to their practices in general. However, considering the method integrated with Islamic thought together with a different school does not always mean that therapists adopt it and see it as the most appropriate school. Therapists may try to integrate their comparisons and the schools they practice in their own contexts with Islamic thought in their educational processes. In this context, knowing which therapy method is used more intensively may not directly represent information. Among schools, first of all, integration with CBT has emerged. The fact that CBT is the most effective and common school for therapist candidates in formal clinical education may have facilitated the combination of this school and techniques in accordance with Islamic thought (Hamdan, 2008; Irfan et al., 2017; Husain & Hodge, 2016). In addition, some researchers have developed new models focused on CBT. For example, with a client-centered approach, Lodi (2018) developed the HEART model (Healthy Emotions Anchored in the RasoolAllah's Teachings) on the basis of CBT. There are general CBT adaptations as well as more specific studies like HEART model (Hamdan, 2008; Irfan et al., 2017; Husain & Hodge, 2016). Similarly, these studies include reframing anxiety disorders such as anxiety or obsessions (Abdullah et al., 2012; Abdul Razak, 2014).

The second important school emerging in this category is emotion-focused therapy. This is interesting because the currently widely used therapy methods place more emphasis on the cognitive state. While interventions to cognition are common, it is noteworthy that more emphasis is placed on emotion. However, as stated before, the human understanding of Islamic thought is open to both fields. Many therapists interviewed emphasized emotion in this thought system and supported an implementation plan for it. Trying to integrate concepts such as heart and soul into the clinical field may have brought emotion-focused therapies to the fore. This is because Islamic thinkers such as al-Ghazālī, al-Ṭūsī, and Ibn Miskawayh emphasized the heart issue more intensely and tried to justify it spiritually (Abu-Raiya, 2014; Skinner, 2018; Keshavarzi & Haque, 2013; Kaplick & Skinner, 2017).

Another critical title emerging in this category is Rogerian therapy. This method, which is also known as client-centered therapy, puts the person in the centre. One of the most important reasons for the therapists to use this area effectively may be that the relationship has an important place in religious thought. In this context, Rogerian therapy focuses on the relationship rather than technique and works on the therapeutic aspect of this relationship. This situation presents a similar situation in Islamic thought. For, the hadith that Muslims are only brothers and sisters in the *Qur'an* shows this relationship. The emergence of Rogerian therapy techniques within the framework of this study seems very important from the perspective of therapy. Because in the client-centred understanding, it is possible to understand the feelings and thoughts of the client, in other words, to see the person as the diligence of the treatment. In this context, the effort to make the client the object of treatment in the modern period is seen as insufficient in thought integrated with religious thought. This situation is actually a result of the idea that the therapist can emerge with a divine force, not through his own effort. In this context, therapists who are haemorrhagic with Rogerian therapy can integrate the techniques into their practice more easily.

Finally, the theme that emerged in this area was determined as Gestalt. This can again be seen as a result of the search for integrity. The emphasis on wholeness and unity in Gestalt is valuable for counsellors because the spiritual aspect of the person can be addressed in this context, and work can be done accordingly. At this point, even methods such as Gestalt, which are not one of the mainstream therapy methods and do not seem compatible with religious thought, are tried to be adopted by the therapists. This can happen due to two situations. First, therapists may see in themselves the ability and competence to integrate their perspective into any school. This may mean that religious thought is suitable for a wide variety of schools. This breadth of Islamic thought has been emphasized by other researchers as well. However, this situation may bring about a religious thought shaped according to the school the therapists are trained in, which seems dangerous in some ways. On the other hand, therapists may be trying to attribute it to Islamic thought by naming the concepts of the schools they use in different ways, which is one of the most dangerous situations because this means not only the therapist's treatment method but the religious thought is understood and explained in a distorted way.

Besides the themes emerging under this category, it is also essential which themes do not appear. In this context, acceptance and determination therapy, which has emerged recently and has made a significant development, has not emerged as a theme. There may be many reasons for this, and the fact that it has not yet been the subject of efforts to integrate it with Islamic thought can be shown as one reason. It is noteworthy that ACT did not appear in this context because it represents a structure that attaches importance to people's values in terms of its theory and practice and carries this into the therapy environment. As the studies in the field of Islam and psychology become widespread, integration efforts are likely to emerge in the context of this school. Another therapy method that does not appear in the context of the theme but is noteworthy is narrative therapy. Narrative thought presents a post-modern structure by emphasizing the dreams, skills, hopes, and desires of people in life. In this context, narrative therapy strives to enrich whatever the person values. This did not emerge as a theme in the study, either. This situation can be explained by the fact that narrative therapy is a new school-based on post-modern acceptance. In the first case, the idea that there is no attempt to establish a relationship with Islamic thought is in the foreground. In contrast, in the second case, it can be concluded that it cannot be integrated with Islamic thought.

### **5.3. Examining the Results of the Category 3**

The third category deals with the difficulties and obstacles in transferring Islamic thought into the therapy setting. In this context, the study participants tried to define these difficulties and difficulties according to their own experiences. The most apparent theme within this category is seen as a lack of research. The participants state that it is possible to integrate with Islamic thought, but this is not translated into concrete evidence. This is an expression that the position it deserves is not given because it is not proven empirically. It can be seen as a relatively new idea to consider Islamic thought within a new human model framework. However, the origins of this idea go back to old times. Since this source is not formed with today's understanding of science, there seems to be an incompatibility. This will be completed with new studies and grounds. The lack of resources can be evaluated in two ways. It can be stated in recent studies that research on spirituality has increased and the relationship between theory and practice has been revealed more clearly (Ağılkaya Şahin, 2018,

Haque et al., 2018). In this sense, spirituality has been tried to be reconsidered in a way that is compatible with every field of psychology and many new models have been put forward (Hamid, 1977; Vahab, 2018; Khan, 2018; Al-Attas, 1990; Bedri, 2018; Hussain, 1984; Khalili, 2008; Khosravi & Bagheri, 2006; Skinner, 2018; Necati, 2011; 2008; Rezaeitalarposhti & Rezaeitalarposhti, 2013). However, the second important point of the issue can be seen as the weak link established with classical works. The classical sources of Islamic thought expressed in the theoretical part of this research have been little reviewed in the modern period. In particular, areas more closely related to religious thought, such as *kalam* and *fiqh*, await re-evaluation in terms of psychology.

It is also important to note that the participants did not trust evidence-based information and thought this should be a situation that needs to be established in terms of the relationship between Islam and psychology. This is quite normal for today's paradigm. Because empirical proof of new therapy techniques and methods has been accepted as a condition, how long this condition should be tolerated is another question mark. It does not seem possible to prove or examine some issues empirically when establishing a connection between Islamic thought and psychology. For example, the TIIP (Traditionally Islamically Integrated Psychotherapy) model, which has been introduced recently, has included the heart in human thought and revealed what kind of applications can be made for a benign heart (*qalb selim*) (Keshavarzi, 2020). However, it is not possible to measure or evaluate this heart. In this context, although this category is essential in terms of modern psychology, it is necessary to review how Muslim psychologists interpret this understanding of "objectivity".

The second category is defined as the fear of religion. Participants stated that being afraid of talking about religion or spirituality in therapy was problematic for integration. In modern psychology, religion or spirituality has been viewed as inaccessible or unthinkable. In this context, the idea that the therapist should stand "objective" left the religion out of the therapy room. It is crucial that this theme emerges and that the participants see it as a problem. Because the foundations of this problem correspond to the period when the foundations of modern psychology were laid and philosophically broken. The stark distinction between physics and metaphysics has spread across the social sciences. One of the areas most affected by

this situation has been psychology. Man's search for meaning and his connection with God has been ignored because they cannot be understood and empirically studied. This situation became ideological in the later period and brought about the total rejection of religion in therapy. This ideology became more widespread among Muslim therapists after a while, and therapists who were influenced by the intellectual currents imported from the west claimed that it was wrong to bring their religion to the clinical environment. The situation expressed within the framework of this theme is the emphasis that this corruption blocks the way for new studies. Therapists who want to combine Islamic thought with clinical experience stated that social pressure and fear make integration difficult. While the first theme in this category is a more technical issue, this issue is more social. The desire to help the counselee was imposed as an unusual situation within the framework of one's belief, and Muslim therapists began to act accordingly. The emergence of this situation as a theme within the framework of this study indicates the importance of this fear as a barrier between Islamic thought and clinical practice.

The third theme emerging in this category is the problematic category. This theme stands out in this category and is one of the most critical themes in social sciences philosophy. Speaking in the context of this theme, therapists identified religious thought and spirituality as areas that should be excluded from therapy and made an objective categorization. This situation differs from the previous periods in terms of human models, and aspects that could not be examined were ignored. However, at the beginning of the science of psychology, studies on this were made, and it was considered a subject of study. These determinations and analyses of human beings required a new categorization of the subjects to be examined, and thus some areas were expelled. According to some of the participants, this new categorization blocked Islamic thought into the clinical field and built a new mindset. Although there are many theoretical researches about Islamic psychology (Hamid, 1977; Vahab, 2018; Khan, 2018; Al-Attas, 1990; Bedri, 2018; Hussain, 1984; Khalili, 2008; Khosravi & Bagheri, 2006; Skinner, 2018; Necati, 2011; 2008; Rezaeitalarposhti & Rezaeitalarposhti, 2013), these studies based on this categorical mindset. In this period, which is called the awakening period (Kaplick & Rüschoff, 2018), the researchers pointed out the unacceptable aspects of the current psychotherapy paradigms by Muslim therapists. According to Kaplick and Rüschoff's (2018), the theories in Skinner (2018) and

Keshavarzi and Haque (2013) aim to better understand human psychology, pathology, clinical symptoms and therapy process. In the theme that emerged within the framework of this study, the participants named this phenomenon differently.

#### **5.4. Examining the Results of the Category 4**

The fourth category is on the importance of integrating Islamic thought into the therapy setting. In this context, the participants stated why they should establish a link between Islamic thought and clinical practice. This category brings along fundamental themes. Combining Islamic thought with clinical experience is not richness or a difference but a necessity. Instead of restricting their religion to a specific time and place, Muslim therapists see and adopt it as a phenomenon to spread to all areas of life. Thus, instead of adopting two separate concepts called psychology and Islam, they want to gather all their thoughts on life under the umbrella of Islam.

The first theme emerging in this category is spirituality being a part of the human being. Based on the rich literature in the ancient past, the participants think that Islamic thought has a different aspect of modern human definition in terms of human definition. As a result of this, the thought of Islam has approached people in a more way and emphasized the person's belief in this approach. Thus, therapists working in this field claim that the current human perception misses an important point. When spirituality is determined as an aspect that people cannot ignore, it becomes necessary to put forward studies. This integration is very important for therapists because the spiritual aspect of the human being is one of the most fundamental. Transferring this to the therapy setting and accepting it is essential for Muslims and the whole psychology literature because it is seen as a deficiency. In this context, the central importance of establishing the link between Islamic thought and the clinical environment is to put it on the agenda on the spiritual side of human beings. As a result, researchers have placed an important emphasis on spiritual aspect of human beings and have tried to introduce new concepts to the literature in order to better explain this aspect. Therefore, studies on classical key concepts such as *fiṭra* (way of being created), *rūḥ* (soul), *qalb* (heart) and *aql* (mind) are central in Islamic psychology literature (Haque, 2018; Öz & Kaplick, 2016; Abu-Raiya, 2012; Mohamed, 1995; Haque & Keshavarzi, 2014; Rothman, 2018).

The second theme in this area is the idea that spirituality shapes human life. According to the participants, spirituality and belief in God, one of the most fundamental aspects of human beings, rather than they are just beliefs. On the contrary, this belief leads people to certain behaviors in many areas of life, and these behaviors form identity. This is a clinically significant issue because the person who comes to therapy behaves within this behavioral pattern (Koenig & Al Sohaib, 2016; Rüschoff, 2017). Previous studies in this area have found that the mental health of the Muslim population is affected by the culture, social environment and culturally shaped religious practices and rituals (Keshavarzi & Haque, 2013; Ahmed & Amer, 2012; Dwairy, 2006; Koenig & Al Sohaib, 2016; Rüschoff, 2017; Maynard, 2008; Laabdallaoui & Rüschoff, 2005). This is true not only for Muslims but also for all social contexts. For this reason, the statements of the participants within the framework of this theme are supportive of the general findings. Another critical issue regarding this theme is that Muslim clients seek and select counselors that fit their belief patterns. In other words, the religious thought that shapes the whole life has a structure that shapes the person's life in terms of the attitude of going to therapy. In this case, the effort to combine a phenomenon that shapes an individual's mental health behavior with clinical practice becomes more meaningful and necessary.

The third theme in this category is opposing colonization. Participants stated that knowledge is imposed as a tool of domination and exemplified the dominant paradigm trying to suppress others. In this context, psychology has become an ideology in the modern period and wanted to weaken or suppress those other than its own claims. Islamic civilization has faced this pressure and challenge in every field and has so far opposed the domination of the Western paradigm. Reviewing Islamic thought and psychology together is vital in reviving the knowledge formed in its own civilization. There is a similar reflex at the beginning of Islamic psychology studies mentioned in the theory part of this study. Especially after the awakening period when Malik Badri came to the fore, many studies against colonization emerged in connection with the Islamization of knowledge. These studies define Islamic psychology as psychology based on the Qur'an and Sunnah and ontologically base it on the Islamic tradition rather than the secular Western paradigm (Utz, 2011; Haque, 1998; Rothman, 2018; Keshavarzi, 2020). Participants expressed this as opposing colonization and stated that it was not suitable for Muslim culture. Considering Islamic thought and clinical practice together is a necessity in this respect. Otherwise, Muslims will be dominated

by a civilization that is not suitable for them and will lose their values and systems of thought.

The last theme in this category is the issue of exploiting spirituality. This issue is an important issue both in Turkey and in other countries (Düzgüner, 2013). The basis of this issue is that deep spirituality rather than measurable parameters cannot be examined within the framework of scientific criteria. When the modern paradigm identified spirituality as unobservable, it regarded its phenomena as unscientific and out of the field. In this case, the main focus of the researchers shifted from this area, and it did not seem reasonable to work on unacceptable issues in a scientific framework until the beginning of the 21st century. Thus, the link between religious thought and mental health has been limited to secondary or tertiary studies and has become open to abuse. There may be a misuse of incorrect data and sampling style and many ethical violations, including distortion of results and ideological inferences, in scientific studies. However, the relationship between religious thought and therapy has been coded in this context as an area more open to exploitation. This was seen as an essential obstacle to integration for both researchers, clinicians, and clients. In this context, the participants made an important point and saw this abuse as an obstacle to integration. A final point that can be expressed in the context of this theme is that the abuse of religious thought does not diminish the importance and place of religious thought. Although misuse makes it difficult for researchers working in this field, they should never compromise its importance.

### **5.5. Examining the Results of the Category 5**

The fifth category is concerned with the clinical benefits of the applications of Islamic thought to date. In this context, the participants expressed their experiences so far by centring their own clinical experiences and expressed how they contributed to the clinical field due to these experiences. In the literature, the contributions of theories in Islamic thought to psychology have been generally examined (Haque & Mohamed, 2009; Utz, 2011; Haque, 2004). These texts are important and valuable in terms of their general contributions. The results emerging in the context of this research highlight techniques that can be integrated into the clinical setting, consistent with other researches. However, more detailed research, especially in the context of

specific techniques, will help to deepen the subject. It is especially important to reconsider the concepts and methods of classical Islamic thought within the framework of modern studies.

The first theme that emerges is to provide a comfortable environment for the client. This situation is compatible with themes in other categories. It can be said that the clients express themselves more comfortably if they talk to therapists in accordance with their beliefs. Muslim clients found it more convenient and comfortable to share with close therapists who respect their own beliefs. This factor facilitates the establishment of the therapeutic relationship, which is one of the most important therapy parameters. This relationship is put at the centre of some schools of therapy like client-centered therapy. In this context, establishing a healthy and solid relationship brings along better results with interventions (Sudan, 2017). It is important that all participants agree on this issue. Clients expressed this comfort, and it was a facilitating factor for therapists. This made it easier for Muslim clients to talk about themselves and take more evident treatment steps. Considered pragmatically, this relationship alone shows how important it is to establish the link between Islamic thought and therapy.

The second theme is symptom relief. Participants stated that the complaints of Muslim clients have decreased due to treatments and techniques appropriate to their beliefs. This has also been an important resource for therapists, and they have had the opportunity to organize their practice around this feedback. Symptom reduction was seen as a contribution for more than half of the participants. Participants stated that methods integrated with Islamic thought are instrumental in terms of mood and anxiety disorders.

The third theme is the facilitation of cognitive and emotional acceptance. The third theme in this category points to a clinically important issue. Therapy is generally a matter of perspective change. When this is a psychoanalyst, revealing the unconscious is aimed at increasing awareness while gaining awareness with thoughts in cognitive therapy and trying to provide a perspective change against thoughts. Trying to understand thoughts and emotions and increasing awareness with the therapist's guidance is a significant change parameter. Religious thinking can be a hindering or

facilitating factor in this change. Especially in Islamic thought, the protective aspect of belief in mental health can be misunderstood from time to time. In this case, Muslims may think that they should not experience any mental illness just because they are believers. This thought is not only wrong but also an aggravating way of thinking. The change and transformation of this can happen more quickly with the hands of faithful psychologists. This activity is an important point in psychoeducation because the beginning of treatment depends on the person having insight and finding the motivation for change with this insight. Since Muslim clients are involved, methods integrated with religious thought facilitate acceptance and speed up the process. This is not just about wrong cognitions and acceptances. The participants stated that the Muslim clients more readily accepted the techniques or instructions they applied, and they stated that they could do the homework more comfortably. This situation is valuable in the context of the perspective that prioritizes clinical benefit. Similarly, it becomes more appropriate in terms of client-centred understandings. The client's openness to cognitive and emotional acceptance points to a much more critical point. The client identifies the orientations made with religious references with his/her own belief system and perceives this in its entirety. This paves the way for him to take therapy seriously as a religious duty and be open to a change of perspective. The background of this acceptance and change should be more seriously explored.

The last theme in this category is a religious responsibility. Participants stated that it is vital to integrate Islamic thought into the clinic environment as it is a religious responsibility. This perspective is meaningful because there is an understanding of the human and the universe that Muslim researchers must base on their own beliefs. This understanding was formed within the framework of theology, philosophy, and Sufism at the peak of Islamic civilization and emerged as different schools. The thinkers of that period saw a belief-centred system, grounding the understanding of existence and knowledge as a duty, responsibility, and even an obligation. With the separation of sciences into different fields in the modern period, this situation has been reorganized to be valid for each field. A similar situation exists in social sciences. This has occupied the agenda of Muslim thinkers more intensely, especially in the modern period, as they faced accusations and non-denials against their beliefs and saw it necessary to specialize in these fields to protect their beliefs. In areas such as history, sociology, economics, philosophy, anthropology, and politics, the paradigm imposed

by the Western civilization was opposed, and alternative thought was tried to be produced. The Islamization of knowledge also emerged as a result of this. Participants expressed their own stance with similar sensitive people. According to them, it is indispensable for a group of Muslims to analyze psychology and human nature from within religious thought. It is necessary to do so within their own power, and they are responsible for it. This is one of the most important reasons why Islamic thought and clinical practice should be integrated. Otherwise, Muslims will have to be identified with unsuitable models and treated with a descriptive paradigm, which they do not tolerate.

### **5.6. Limitations and Future Research**

Although the study has some unique findings and results, it also has some limitations due to its nature. One of these limitations is the number of participants. In qualitative studies, the average number of participants is between 5-12. The number of participants in the study was targeted as ten people, but it was limited to 8 due to communication and compliance problems. This situation is also related to the low number of therapists working in the field and meeting the study's criteria. Although many therapists worldwide are interested in Islamic psychology and integration studies, only a small number of people with sufficient qualifications have been identified who practice it over a while. The small number of therapists with these competencies can be considered a limitation for the study. Similarly, all therapists working in the field are outside of Turkey. This can be considered as a limitation in terms of selecting suitable participants and communicating.

In addition to the number of participants, the variety of participants is also limited. In this context, participants from the US, England, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates were reached, and their experiences were sought. Considering that Islamic psychology studies have begun to be investigated with new dimensions according to different countries and cultures, it can be predicted that different themes may emerge in the future.

One of the most critical findings revealed by this study is that future studies are very necessary. The limited number of studies conducted in the field was emphasized many times by the participants. It was stated that the development of the field was delayed

due to the scarcity of this literature. It is possible to predict two main areas for future studies: Theory and practice. Studies in the field of the theory are very important and necessary. However, these theoretical studies cannot be limited to a new human model. What we mean by theoretical studies is a much more general and comprehensive study of change. It is about the change of paradigm and has a philosophical background. The outputs of Islamic thought cannot be directly linked to today. The only reason for this is the understanding of science in the modern period and the resulting social sciences classification. In this case, the groundwork for the understanding that sees human as a servant disappears and is limited only to the world seen. However, neglecting the spiritual aspect of the human being, which is one of the most crucial emphases in this study, is not only a clinical and practical problem. This is a much more fundamental and nuanced problem. The work to be done in science that has emerged from this change is also carried out within the same paradigm. It is essential that future studies underline this situation, put their problems more clearly and emphasize their requirements.

On the other hand, there is currently a severe gap and insufficiency in the practical field. Muslim clients have specific needs in the process until the end of the treatment, especially when applying for treatment. There is a need for studies to meet these needs in practical terms and describe the treatment protocols of clients who define themselves as Muslim. Recently, studies in this area are promising and there are many of new areas and researchers (Ağilkaya Şahin, 2019; Haque et al, 2016) However, the part of Islamic thought related to classical period and relation to this part with psychology has not been brought to light adequately. It seems to be a priority for studies in this area to be familiar with this literature and start new studies.

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# APPENDICES

## APPENDIX A

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 28.01.2021-544



T.C.  
İBN HALDUN ÜNİVERSİTESİ  
Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler Bilimsel Araştırma ve Yayın Etiği  
Kurulu Başkanlığı

Sayı : E-71395021-020-544  
Konu : Muhammed Furkan CİNİSLİ-Etik  
Kurul Kararı

### İLGİLİ MAKAMA

Kurulumuza başvuran Muhammed Furkan CİNİSLİ'nin "Exploring the contributions of Islamic thought to Islamic psychotherapy: A thematic analysis of Islamically integrated psychotherapy practitioners" isimli projesi; amaç, araştırma türü, veri toplama araçları, süreç ve işlemler, veri analizleri dikkate alınmak suretiyle 21.01.2021 tarihinde değerlendirilerek 2021/01-2 karar numarası ile etik açıdan uygun bulunmuştur.

Bilgilerinizi arz/rica ederim.

Prof. Dr. Ali YEŞİLİRMAK  
Başkan

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[http://belge.ibnhaldun.edu.tr/en/Vision/Validate\\_Doc.aspx](http://belge.ibnhaldun.edu.tr/en/Vision/Validate_Doc.aspx)  
Bilgi için: Neslihan Pala  
Unvanı: Sekreter



## APPENDIX B

### Informed Consent Form

#### EXHIBITOR INFORMATION and CONSENT FORM

**Title of the Research:** Exploring the Contribution of Islamic Thought to Psychotherapy: Thematic Analysis of Islamic Integrated Psychotherapy Practitioners

**Name of Project Coordinator/Researcher:** Muhammed Furkan Cinisli

**Address:** Ibn Haldun University Clinical Psychology Department Başakşehir, Istanbul  
PK: 34342

**E-mail Address:** furkan.cinisli@ibnhaldun.edu.tr

**Project Topic:** In this study, the study method of Islamic Integrated psychotherapy practitioners, who they work with and how they have experience are investigated.

**Consent:** We invite you to our research where we examined the psychotherapy method you have applied. In this study, we hope to better understand the methods of religion integrated therapy. The study takes about 60 minutes. Your participation will be voluntary. Your identity will remain anonymous if you agree to participate in the research. You can stop participating in the study at any time. In this case, the data we have received from you will be deleted. The research we want to do is not expected to bring you any physical or emotional risk.

Before you sign this form, please ask if you have any questions about the study. Then, if you have any questions, you can ask Muhammed Furkan Cinisli, a student of Ibn Haldun University Clinical Psychology Department. You can also consult with the Ibn Haldun University Human Research Ethics Committee about your rights related to the research.

I understood what was told to me and what was written above. I received a copy of this form.

I agree to participate in the study.

Participant Name-Surname: .....

Signature: .....

Date (day / month / year): ..... / ..... / .....



## APPENDIX C

### Demographic Information Form

Please provide a response for each of the following questions:

1. What is your age? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your gender?

Female  Male

3. What is your marital status?

Single  Married  Separated  Divorced  Widowed

4. What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?

Less than high school degree  High school degree or equivalent (e.g., GED)

Some college but no degree  Associate degree

Bachelor degree  Graduate degree

5. How would you describe your ethnic origins?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. What is your current occupation (or, if you are no longer working, what was your last occupation?)

\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX D

### **Semi-Structured Interview Questions**

1. How do you describe Islamically Integrated Psychotherapy or Islamic Psychology?
2. How do you describe your personal application and practice of therapy within an Islamic context?
3. Do you utilize a specific framework/approach? If so, can you describe this framework?
4. How did you come up with this framework/approach?
5. Which client populations do you work with?
6. Which client groups or symptoms does Islamically Integrated Psychotherapy approach work best? Are there particular populations that it is not appropriate for?
7. Can Islamically Integrated Psychotherapy be applied to those who are not Muslim or not religiously adherent clients?
8. How you reconcile Islamic interventions and mainstream interventions or approaches?
9. Could you share a case that has a meaningful impact on the client?
10. Can you describe a particular intervention that you used with this patient that you found to be effective?
11. Are there any other approaches (apart from Islamically Integrated Psychotherapy) that you draw benefit from while in your clinical work?
12. Does your model/framework shape your professional identity as a psychotherapist? If so, how?

13. What is the role of the therapist in Islamically Integrated Psychotherapy?

How does this role differ from a generic mental health provider?

14. With regards to the clinical practice, in which ways Islamically Integrated

Psychotherapy approach adds some benefits?

15. In your clinical practice are there any Islamically Integrated Psychotherapy

techniques that you struggle with or have difficulties to practice?

16. What are the reactions, responses and feedbacks of clients toward your

approach?

17. What do you see as the future of Islamically oriented mental health

care? What are the obstacles and challenges?

## CURRICULUM VITAE

### Personal Information:

Name - Surname: Muhammed Furkan Cinisli

### Education:

2012-2017 BA in Islamic Studies, Istanbul Sehir University, Turkey

2013-2018 BA in Psychology, Istanbul Sehir University, Turkey

2017-2019 MA in Islamic Studies, Tafsir (Exegesis), Istanbul 29 Mayıs University, Turkey

2019-Present MA in Clinical Psychology, Ibn Haldun University, Turkey

### Experience:

2019 Ibn Haldun University, Istanbul, Turkey.

Clinical Psychology Internship, Psychotherapy and Research Center of Ibn Haldun University

2018 Istanbul Sabahattin Zaim University, İstanbul, Turkey.

Research Assistant, Islamic Studies