

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

MASTER THESIS

**THE CONSTRUCTION OF AN ISLAMICALLY-
INTEGRATED PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING
MODEL**

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**THESIS SUPERVISOR
ASST. PROF. DR. HOOMAN KESHAVARZI**

ISTANBUL, 2022

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INTEGRATED PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING
MODEL**

by

FATMA SENA AYCAN

**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
ASST. PROF. DR. HOOMAN KESHAVARZI

ISTANBUL, 2022

APPROVAL PAGE

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology.

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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.

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ÖZ

İSLAMİ ENTEGRE BİR PSİKOLOJİK İYİ OLUŞ MODELİNİN
GELİŞTİRİLMESİ

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Eylül 2022, 117 sayfa

Psikolojik iyi oluş, başkalarıyla olumlu ilişkilere sahip olma, kişisel hakimiyet, özerklik, yaşamda bir amaç ve anlam duygusuna sahip olma ve bireysel büyüme ve gelişim gibi yaşamın çeşitli yönlerindeki bireysel tatmini içeren olumlu işlevsellik olarak tanımlanmaktadır. Psikolojik iyi oluş üzerine literatürde pekçok teori bulunmasına rağmen çağdaş araştırmalar teorinin tamamen Batılı kavramsallaştırmalarına odaklanmış ve onu tanımlamada çok önemli bir rol oynayan kültürel ve dini faktörleri çoğunlukla ihmal etmiştir. Bu çalışmanın genel amacı, psikolojik iyi oluşun boyutlarını İslami bir bakış açısıyla tanımlamak ve sınıflandırmaktır. Psikolojik iyi oluşun İslami bir bakış açısından kavramsallaştırılması için Modifiye Delphi yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Bu yönetime uygun olarak ilkin psikolojik iyi oluşu felsefi ve tasavvufi perspektiflerden ele alan iki klasik İslami eser [Ebu Zeyd el-Belhi'nin (2013) *Beden ve Ruhlu Sağlığı* ve İmam Birgivi'nin (2005) *Hz. Muhammed (Sallallahu Aleyhi Ve Sellem)'in Yolu*], tematik analize tabi tutulmuştur. Bu eserlerin analizi, ortaya psikolojik iyi oluşun farklı elementlerini içeren bir model çıkarmış ve bu model daha sonra uzman panel üyelerine sunulmuştur. Uzmaların tamamı modelin psikolojik iyi oluşu açıklayan örnek bir model olduğu konusunda fikir birliğine varmıştır. Bu çalışmanın sonuçları, mevcut literatürün yanı sıra çalışmanın literatüre katkıları, sınırlılıkları ve çalışmanın gelecekteki uygulama ve araştırmalara etkileri ışığında tartışılmıştır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Modifiye Delphi yöntemi, Müslüman Alimler, Psikolojik İyi Oluş, Tematik Analiz.

ABSTRACT

CONSTRUCTION OF AN ISLAMICALLY-INTEGRATED PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING MODEL

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Psychological well-being is defined as an individual's overall functioning that includes fulfillment in various aspects of life such as having positive relationships with others, personal mastery, autonomy, having a feeling of purpose and meaning in life, and personal growth and development. Despite the abundance of literature on psychological well-being, contemporary research have focused almost entirely on Western conceptualizations of the concept, while mostly neglecting the cultural and religious factors that play a crucial role in defining it. The overall objective of this study is to classify and operationalize specific dimensions of psychological well-being from an Islamic perspective. A Modified Delphi method was used in an interdisciplinary team of experts to reach a consensus on the conceptualization of psychological well-being from an Islamic perspective. First, two classical Islamic works [(i.e., Abu Zayd al-Balkhi's (2013) *Sustenance of Body and Soul*, and Imam al-Birgivi's (2005) *The Path of Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him)*], address psychological well-being from Islamic philosophical and Sufic perspectives were analyzed in a thematic analysis. The results of the analysis of these sources brought together a model consisting of different dimensions that later became the statements of the first and second surveys for the Delphi process. Expert panel members reached a consensus that the two Islamic sources laid out a widely accepted foundational model for psychological well-being. A total of three main themes (i.e., knowledge, intention, and action) and eleven subthemes emerged as a result of the study. The results of the

study are discussed in light of the existing literature as well as the study's contributions to the literature, its limitations, and implications for future practice and research.

Keywords: Modified Delphi Method, Muslim Scholars, Psychological Well-Being, Thematic Analysis.



DEDICATION

Nenejime...



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious and Merciful.

First and foremost, I am grateful to Allah Almighty for giving me the strength, knowledge, ability and opportunity to undertake this study and complete it satisfactorily.

Secondly, I would like to express my deep and sincere gratitude to my revered teacher, supervisor and thesis advisor, Prof. Hooman Keshavarzi, for his invaluable guidance during my research. I am very grateful to him for all that he has taught me. I would also like to thank him for his friendship, his empathy, and his great sense of humor. I would also like to thank my committee members, Prof. Naime Doğru and Prof. Taha Burak Toprak, for making my defense an enjoyable moment and for their encouraging comments: thank you.

I would also like to express my heartfelt thanks to my classmates and future colleagues at "Klinik Çalışma Grubu" and my best friends.

I am very grateful to my parents for their love, prayers, care and sacrifices with which they raised me and prepared me for my future. I look up to you in everything that I do. My gratitude also goes to my sisters, grandmother, and grandfather for their never-ending support, appreciation, encouragement, and keen interest in my academic achievements. No achievement at any level could have been completed without your support and sincere prayers.

Fatma Sena AYCAN

İSTANBUL, 2022

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary literature on psychology contains a plethora of research that addresses psychological well-being, which is the key to achieving prosperity, and a lens through which to make sense of the 'good life' (Diener & Diener, 2011). Psychological well-being is defined as an individual's overall functioning that includes fulfillment in various aspects of life (Ruggeri et al., 2020). Contemporary research has emphasized the various components of psychological well-being, including but not limited to having positive relationships with others, personal mastery, autonomy, having a feeling of purpose and meaning in life, and personal growth and development (Ryff, 1989). The increased interest in the concept of psychological well-being, especially in recent years, is due to the positive effects psychological well-being has on an individual's quality of life. Studies have discovered psychological well-being to be positively associated with numerous tangible benefits such as enhanced physical health (Hernandez et al., 2017), greater productivity (Hao, 2008), better emotion regulation (Nyklíček, 2011), more resilience (Klainin-Yobas et al., 2021), better academic achievement and success (Rapuano, 2019), better social skills (Segrin & Taylor, 2007), optimism (Ferguson & Goodwin, 2010), and more fulfilling relationships (Kubzansky et al., 2018). Likewise, it was discovered that lower levels of psychological well-being are predictive of increased mortality risk, and psychopathology, and reduced quality of life (Huppert & So, 2011; Goodman et al., 2018). Given these notable benefits, it is necessary to further examine the nature and ingredients of psychological well-being.

The concept of psychological well-being has a history dating back to ancient times. Historically, this concept has been widely discussed by scholars from various fields, leading to the growth and development of the literature ever since. More importantly, early Muslim scholars from various disciplines such as philosophers, Sufis, scientists, and physicians have dedicated their lives to answering the question of what constitutes

a good life (Ghazali, 1965; Kindi, 2012; Balkhi, 2013; Birgivi, 2005; Miskawayh, 1968). According to Muslim scholars, psychological well-being or what constitutes a good life is intertwined with submission to God and such well-being involves great emphasis on spiritual and religious fulfillment (Joshani, 2017). As also stated in the Qur'an "The hearts find peace only in the remembrance of Allah" (13:28).

Despite the abundance of literature on psychological well-being, contemporary research has focused almost entirely on Western conceptualizations of the concept while mostly neglecting the cultural and religious factors that play a crucial role in defining it (Joshani, 2017; Koç & Kafa, 2019; Rogers-Sirin et al., 2017). On the other hand, researchers instructively argue that definitions of psychological well-being are inherently rooted in the cultural and religious contexts of human beings. As Carol Ryff, the originator of one of the most widely accepted theories of psychological well-being puts it, "...cultural contexts shape the ideal formulations of human well-being as well as the practices by which it is to be promoted" (Ryff et al., 2014). Conceptualizing psychological well-being in isolation from its cultural and religious components leads to an inaccurate representation of its understanding (Joshani & Niknam, 2019; Christopher, 1999). The implications of this inaccurate representation may be seen in the results of studies comparing psychological well-being across different cultures/religions, which consistently show that the well-being of people in the West is significantly higher than that of other societies (Kuyumcu, 2012; Joshani et al., 2021).

Given that Islam plays a central role in the well-being of Muslims, I argue that contemporary scholarship should pay more attention to the rich legacy of scholarship written by Muslims in the field of psychological well-being. Greater attention is required to avoid a lack of understanding or a distorted understanding of what constitutes a good life from the Islamic perspective. It is important to consider this body of (Islamic) literature, which, although centrally concerned with the definition of psychological well-being, has not been adequately explored in contemporary research (Badri, 1979). Therefore, it is necessary to examine the shortcomings of previous Eurocentric conceptualizations of psychological well-being and develop a model based on uniquely Islamic constructs, which draws upon the rich heritage of Islamic literature. Without a representative understanding of psychological well-being

informed by the Islamic tradition, mental health researchers and professionals lack a holistic view of what constitutes a good life.

There have been many a research within Muslim mental health literature that stress the importance of integrating religious aspects of Islam when examining psychological constructs (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011; Al-Karam, 2018; Toprak, 2018; Keshavarzi et al., 2021; Razali et al., 2002; Saged et al., 2022; Şirin & Göksel, 2020). Furthermore, many researchers have successfully modified Western psychological models, scales and interventions to be more religiously and culturally sensitive (Haque et al., 2016; Tanhan, 2019). To my knowledge, however, there is no previous model in the academic literature that conceptualizes psychological well-being drawing upon uniquely Islamic constructs. By proposing a theoretical framework for understanding psychological well-being from an Islamic perspective, this study aims to fill this important research gap. The overall goal of this study is to classify and operationalize the dimensions of psychological well-being and develop a model based on the unique Islamic constructs of psychological well-being informed by the Islamic literature and evaluated by scholarly expertise.

The first objective of this study is to conduct a thematic analysis of two prominent books dealing with psychological well-being from an Islamic perspective, namely, Abu Zayd al-Balkhi's (2013) *Sustenance of Body and Soul*, and Imam al-Birgivi's (2005) *The Path of Muhammad* (peace and blessings be upon him), and to develop a model based on these books. The second objective is to further explore the above model by consulting an interdisciplinary team of experts to reach a consensus on the concept of psychological well-being from an Islamic perspective. Based on the thematic analysis and data provided by the experts, this study will contribute to the literature by integrating the views of early and contemporary Muslim scholars and promoting an interdisciplinary understanding of psychological well-being from an Islamic perspective.

The significance and novelty of this research lie in its presenting a unique model of the concept of psychological well-being in Islam by bringing together an interdisciplinary team of experts and integrating their views with those of early Muslim scholars. It is hoped that drawing from the rich Islamic heritage will provide a more

thorough lens by which to view psychological well-being among Muslim individuals. Furthermore, this study will contribute to future studies, particularly in the areas of cross-cultural psychology, psychology of religion, and interdisciplinary research, by facilitating interaction among experts of various disciplines with overlapping interests.

Another significance of the study is the impact a well-thought out, integrative, widely accepted understanding of psychological well-being will have on the field of mental health. The understanding of mental health practitioners of psychological well-being is essential to facilitating the well-being of their patients. Therapists frequently work with their clients to enhance their psychological well-being and facilitate a healthy and meaningful life (Breitbart et al., 2015) through helping cultivate self-awareness (Salvatore et al., 2012), psychological growth (Lysy & Piechowski, 1983), virtues, fulfilling relationships, and a positive outlook on themselves and their lives (Jankowski et al., 2020). Mental health professionals who have a thorough knowledge and understanding of psychological well-being from an Islamic perspective are better equipped to help individuals who are seeking culturally and religiously attuned mental health services (Keshavarzi et al., 2021). This can only happen when there is a representative, research-based conceptualization of an Islamically-integrated understanding of psychological well-being. Beyond clinical practice, this study will expand the discussion on psychological well-being and move the conversation to the cross-cultural research. Lastly, the development of a representative, articulated theory will lead to the ability of researchers and practitioners in mental health field of to effectively communicate with their clients as well as with one another.

Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the components of a psychological well-being model that is built upon uniquely Islamic constructs?
2. What are the components of an Islamic psychological well-being model as evaluated by scholarly expertise?

The hypotheses of this study are as follows:

1. Islamic intellectual heritage elicits a holistic conceptualization of the components of psychological well-being.

2. Scholarly expertise evaluates the components of the Islamic psychological well-being model.



CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, the historical background for the emergence of a theory of psychological well-being will be examined. Following this historical review, different conceptualizations of psychological well-being in contemporary psychology literature will be highlighted. By contemporary Eurocentric conceptualizations” I refer to theories of psychological well-being that are based on Eurocentric culture and values and lack an inclusion and understanding of the various dimensions of well-being influenced by other religious and cultural values, in particular those found within Islam. Lastly, the elements of psychological well-being and their relation to religion and religiosity will be discussed.

2.1. Historical Background of the Psychological Well-Being Theory

For centuries, people have asked themselves the question of what it means to live a good life. From ancient Greek philosophers to the Romans, from the major world religions to the spiritual traditions, different ideas, perspectives, and theories about the nature of well-being have been proposed, leading to the emergence of different perspectives to conceptualize what it means to be psychologically well. Therefore, it is important to first make distinctions between these different views. In mainstream psychology, there are two overarching views that define the concept of well-being, both representing different paths to a good life: i) The hedonistic perspective, and ii) the eudaimonic perspective. As stated by ancient Greek philosophers Democritus (d. 370 B.C.E.) and Epicurus (d. 270 B.C.E.), hedonism is "an ethical position which claims that pleasure or happiness is the highest or most intrinsic good in life, and that people should pursue as much pleasure and as little pain as possible" (Bunnin & Yu 2004, pp. 298-299). Accordingly, the hedonistic perspective associates the good life with the absence of negative emotions, the presence of positive emotions, and overall life satisfaction, which is often summarized as happiness (Diener, Oishi, & Tay, 2018).

In contemporary psychology, a shift in terminology has led to less frequent use of the concept of hedonism. Contemporary well-being researchers who adopt the hedonistic view prefer the term subjective well-being (SWB) when conceptualizing the good life (Joshanloo & Weijers, 2019). In the conceptualization of SWB, positive and negative affect correspond to the ancient Greek philosophers' notions of pain and pleasure, which bring about hedonic levels. Therefore, according to this view, life satisfaction—defined as an overall appraisal of one's life—corresponds to people's overall hedonic level in their lives (Joshanloo & Weijers, 2019).

Whereas the hedonistic perspective's focus on pleasure versus pain links well-being to living in accordance with idiocentric values, the eudaimonic perspective links well-being to achieving outcomes that are valuable not only personally but also morally (Ryan & Deci, 2001). As the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle (d. 322 B.C.E.) stated in *Nicomachean Ethics*, the highest of all human goods is "eudaimonia," that is, living a life in accordance with virtues (Annas, 1998). The eudaimonic tradition holds that people can live good lives only when their thoughts, intentions, and actions are consistent with their deeply held values and they realize their human potential by fulfilling those values (Lamb et al., 2021; Ryan and Deci, 2001). Contemporary well-being researchers who embrace the eudaimonic view use the term psychological well-being (PWB) to refer to the domain of well-being inspired by the eudaimonic school of thought (Ryff, 1989).

Most researchers agree that well-being is a multidimensional concept and that a comprehensive understanding of well-being requires the inclusion of both hedonic and eudaimonic dimensions (Ryff et al., 2021; Vanhoutte, 2014). However, it is important to emphasize that the conceptualization of hedonic well-being is not based on a theory of what constitutes overall positive functioning (Ryff et al., 2021). Rather, hedonic or subjective well-being is a simple and practical way to examine how people rate the extent to which they are satisfied with different areas of their lives and how happy they are. Psychological well-being (PWB), on the other hand, is a broader perspective that focuses on fulfillment and growth in various life domains, such as the pursuit of meaningful goals, satisfying relationships, positive attitudes toward self and others, emotional stability, and resilience in the face of adverse life situations (Huppert & So, 2013).

For centuries, psychology was largely viewed as a philosophical and academic field concerned with the study of the conditions for a good life (Aristotle, 2011) and the cure of mental illness (Breuer & Freud, 1895). However, in response to the growing demand for psychiatric treatment due to the increasing number of psychiatric cases after World War II, psychology became a science primarily concerned with curing mental illness (Seligman, 2002; Bazar, 2015). Psychologists and psychiatrists focused on remedying psychological harm using a disease model of mental health (Seligman, 2002). This exclusive focus on psychopathology overshadowed people's ability to reach their highest potential (Rogers, 1961), strive for fulfillment through meaning (Frankl, 1992), improve character (Birgivi, 2005), and demonstrate resilience in the face of adversity (Balkhi, 2013), all of which are indicators of psychological well-being. The overemphasis on mental illness has also led to a conceptualization of psychological well-being that is simply understood to mean the absence of mental illness (Jahoda, 1958; Ryan & Deci, 2001). This resulted in an inadequate understanding of well-being since the individual cannot be understood as having an isolated symptom but must be considered in the context of the cultural norms and values of the community in which the symptoms are being observed (Jahoda, 1958). The dual continua model, a contemporary model of mental health and illness, also implies that the absence of psychopathology is no guarantee of the presence of psychological well-being (Tudor, 1996; Keyes, 2002; 2005).

It did not take long for psychologists to oppose such an understanding. The first contemporary psychologist to argue against this conceptualization of psychological well-being was Marie Jahoda (1958). In her seminal book, *Current Concepts of Positive Mental Health*, Jahoda (1958) argued that "the absence of illness is a necessary but not a sufficient criterion for mental health" (p. 15) and that the achievement of psychological well-being requires healthy psychological functioning in several areas of life, (e.g., autonomy, stress resistance, self-esteem), and motivation to grow as a person. Her proposal of psychological well-being has cultivated what we now call positive psychology (Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

In the last 20 years, the positive psychology movement has gained much attention and popularity (Weijers, 2021). As a scientific approach to the study of human thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, positive psychology focuses on the concepts of eudaimonia,

building a good life, character strengths, and virtues (Peterson & Seligman, 2004; Peterson et al., 2008; Park & Peterson, 2008; Warren & Donaldson, 2017). It is often described as having three levels (Seligman, 2002). The subjective level focuses on feelings of happiness, flow, satisfaction, hope, optimism, and well-being. The individual level focuses on the positive individual qualities known as virtues, such as the capacity for love and calling, courage, perseverance, forgiveness, spirituality, and wisdom. Finally, the group level focuses on civic virtues such as responsibility, caring, altruism, and courtesy, which strengthen social bonds among people. With the advent of positive psychology, researchers began to focus their attention exclusively on issues such as optimism (Huppert & So, 2013), strength of character (Peterson & Seligman, 2004), resilience (Rusk & Waters, 2015), growth, and other aspects of healthy psychological functioning, all of which are indicators of a good life. Contemporary psychology continues to try to answer the question "What constitutes a good life?" and the various answers to this question form the rich background of psychological well-being theories.

2.2. Contemporary Eurocentric Conceptualizations of Psychological Well-Being

As discussed previously in this chapter and the preceding one, researchers and practitioners from various fields have constructed different conceptualizations of psychological well-being from a Eurocentric perspective. This section breaks down these conceptualizations in terms of their philosophical and historical roots including the contemporary and the Islamic understandings of the elements of psychological well-being.

2.2.1. Jahoda's Conceptualization of Psychological Well-Being

The earliest conceptualization of psychological well-being in contemporary psychology is usually attributed to Marie Jahoda (1958). Her proposition of psychological well-being laid the foundations of what we today call positive psychology (Peterson & Seligman, 2004, p. 65). Benefiting from the recurring themes in the previous conceptualizations of mental health, Jahoda (1958) conceptualized psychological well-being as consisting of six major categories: "attitudes of an individual toward his own self", "personal growth or self-actualization", "integration",

“autonomy”, “perception of reality” and “environmental mastery” (p. 23). She explained the mentally healthy attitude toward the self as learning to live with oneself, accepting both the limitations and the possibilities found within oneself, perceiving the self as good, capable, and strong, and having the ability to be independent of others (i.e., self-confidence). Personal growth or self-actualization is explained in terms of dedication to a life task, motivation to grow, and the extent and quality of a person's interest in other people and the world. Integration refers to a balance of psychological forces in the individual, a unifying outlook on life, an emphasis on the cognitive aspects of integration, and resilience to stress. Autonomy emphasizes the regulation of behavior from within, in accordance with internalized norms, and the outcome of the decision-making process in the form of independent actions. Perception of reality is explained in terms of the process of viewing the world in such a way that one is able to deal with reality without distorting it according to one's desires, and social sensitivities, i.e., treating others as a matter worthy of one's concern and attention. Lastly, environmental mastery emphasizes the efforts that individuals make to master their environment (Jahoda, 1958).

2.2.2. Ryff's Conceptualization of Psychological Well-Being

Influenced by Jahoda and many other theoretical viewpoints on well-being, Ryff (1989) defined psychological well-being as the positive psychological functioning of the human being. Carol Ryff benefited from the extensive literature defining positive psychological functioning in formulating her theory of well-being. This extensive literature includes the perspectives of Maslow's (1968) concept of self-actualization, Rogers' (1961) concept of optimal functioning, Jung's (1924) concept of individuation, Allport's (1961) concept of maturity, Erikson's (1959) theory of psychosocial development, Buhler's (1967) theory of personal life fulfillment, and Jahoda's (1958) view of positive psychological health.

Consequently, Ryff identified six major categories of psychological well-being: Positive relationships with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, purpose of life, and self-acceptance. Self-acceptance is defined as an overall positive appraisal of the self in which a person has a positive attitude toward the various aspects of the self, which include one's qualities and present and past life experiences. Positive

relationships with others are defined as warm, satisfying, and trusting relationships with others, concern for their welfare, and the ability to empathize with others and show affection and intimacy. Autonomy is defined as the ability to make choices and manage one's own life by resisting social pressures and evaluating oneself according to one's own standards. Environmental mastery is defined as a sense of competence in dealing with the environment by making effective use of environmental opportunities and being able to choose or create contexts that meet personal needs and values. Purpose in life is defined as a sense of directedness that is accompanied by the feeling that life has meaning. It also means having beliefs that give meaning to life. The final dimension, personal growth, is defined as a sense of continually evolving, being aware of one's potential, and changing in ways that reflect greater self-knowledge and effectiveness (Ryff, 1989).

2.2.3. Keyes' Conceptualization of Psychological Well-Being

According to Keyes (2002), even though philosophical, psychological, and cultural theories consistently highlight human beings as social creatures, contemporary research on the topic of well-being reflects a bias toward subjective or psychological dimensions of the concept. Keyes' conceptualization adds on to the former theories through the argument that a well-functioning human being not only attains high levels of subjective and psychological well-being but also functions well in the social aspects of life. Accordingly, his conceptualization of well-being combines the two fundamental theoretical frameworks including Ryan and Deci's (2001) concept on subjective well-being, and Ryff's (1989) conception on psychological well-being, in addition to his research on social well-being.

The subjective dimension of Keyes' conceptualization is very similar to the hedonistic concept of well-being, while the psychological dimension is taken from Ryff's theory and is consistent with a eudaimonic approach. The social dimension of well-being in his theory is composed of five elements which are social integration, social acceptance, social contribution, social actualization, and social coherence.

Social integration is defined as the extent to which people feel they have something in common with individuals that are part of their society and community (e.g., neighbors,

classmates, co-workers) as well as the degree to which they feel that they belong to their communities and society. Social acceptance is defined as an overall positive appraisal of other people in which a person has trust in others, thinks that they are capable of kindness, and believe that people are diligent and hardworking. Social contribution is the assessment of one's social worth that includes the sense of being a vital member of society accompanied by the belief that one has something valuable to give to the world. Social actualization is holding a positive and hopeful view regarding the potential of society and its state of affairs, which includes the belief that others are potential beneficiaries of societal growth and development. Lastly, social coherence is the overall positive perception of the quality and the organization of the social world. It includes a concern for knowing about the larger world, with maintaining a desire to find meaning in life (Keyes, 2002).

2.2.4. Diener's Conceptualization of Psychological Well-Being

Drawing from the works of previous researchers, such as Ryff (1989), and Csikszentmihalyi (2008), Diener and his colleagues (2009) came up with a brief yet comprehensive model of psychological well-being that includes eight key elements that constitute a good life. These include having meaning and purpose in life, establishing supportive and rewarding relationships, being able to live in the present moment and becoming fully immersed in an activity (i.e., engagement), contributing to the well-being of others, being competent, having a positive attitude toward the self (i.e., self-acceptance), being optimistic, and being respected. The elements of this model mostly drew upon Ryff's (1989) and Ryan and Deci's (2000) concept of healthy psychological functioning, which comprised the need for autonomy, competence, rewarding relationships, and self-acceptance. They also drew upon Csikszentmihalyi's (2008) conceptualization of flow and engagement, as well as Seligman's concept of optimism and meaning in life (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). Finally, they drew upon views related to self-esteem, feeling respected, and contributing to the well-being of others from Maslow's (1958) theory of universal human needs.

2.2.5. Seligman's Conceptualization of Psychological Well-Being

In his seminal book *Flourish* (2011), Seligman defined psychological well-being as consisting of five dimensions, including positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning in life, and accomplishments (pp. 16 - 25). PERMA (Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, and Achievement) is an acronym that stands for the five dimensions that describe what constitutes a good life. According to Seligman, individuals are high in well-being if they regularly experience positive relative to negative emotions, have accomplishments that they are proud of, are engaged in life and the things they do, believe their life has a meaning, and have pleasing relationships.

Capturing the hedonic side of well-being, positive emotions include experiencing higher levels of happiness, pleasure, joy, and contentment (Seligman, 2011; Butler & Kern, 2016). Drawing upon Csikszentmihalyi's (2008) concept of flow, Seligman defined engagement as living in the present moment and having complete absorption in an activity. Relationships in the model address the connection with others, and include the feelings of being supported, loved, and cared by other people. Meaning is defined in terms of belonging and serving something greater than oneself. Having a purpose and direction in life is defined as having the sense that one's life is valuable and worthwhile. Lastly, accomplishments, also known as achievements or mastery, involves a sense of working toward and reaching goals, having competence to complete tasks at hand, and being self-driven to finish what one sets out to do (Seligman, 2011).

2.2.6. Huppert and So's Conceptualization of Psychological Well-Being

Although there is significant overlap between the above-mentioned theories of psychological well-being, each theorist has their own preferred list of elements. A more recent model developed by Huppert and So (2013) aimed to conceptualize psychological well-being in a more objective manner. Huppert and So proposed a single, underlying well-being spectrum, with psychological ill-being at one end, and psychological well-being at the opposite end. They conceptualized psychological well-being as the opposite pole of common mental disorders, including but not limited to

generalized anxiety disorder and depression, as described in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* (DSM-IV), and the *International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems* (ICD-10). Their examination of the symptomatology of these disorders led to a theory of well-being that proposed ten key elements of positive psychological functioning, mirroring images of each psychological disorder. This resulted in a model of psychological well-being that entails the elements of competence, emotional stability, engagement, meaning, optimism, positive emotions, positive relationships, resilience, self-esteem, and vitality.

The model defines competence as the ability to concentrate, pay attention and make decisions. Competence mirrors the symptoms of depression including reduced concentration and attention. Emotional stability is defined as being even-tempered, accompanied by a stable feeling of calmness and a relaxed mood. Engagement corresponds to interest and involvement in a wide range of activities and mirrors symptoms of generalized anxiety disorder that include having an excess amount of anxiety and worry and feeling wound up, tense, and irritable. Meaning is defined as having a sense of purpose and mirrors the symptoms of depressed mood indicated by feelings of sadness and emptiness. Self-esteem is defined as having a sense of worth and mirrors symptoms of depression that include feelings of worthlessness or excessive or inappropriate guilt. Optimism is the extent to which one feels optimistic or hopeful about the future and mirrors the symptoms of depression that include bleak and pessimistic views of the future, accompanied by ideas or acts of self-harm or suicide. Positive emotions entail experiencing happiness, contentment, and cheer, while vitality is defined in terms of feeling energetic, both mirroring the symptoms of depression that indicate a depressed mood and reduced energy. Positive relationships refer to being socially effective and having meaningful relationships, and mirror the negative signs for personally and socially well-functioning individuals. Lastly, resilience is defined in terms of emotional resilience and entails the ability to manage anxiety and worry. Resilience mirrors the significant difficulty in controlling the anxiety and worry that is prevalent in generalized anxiety disorder (Huppert & So, 2013).

2.2.7. Nested Model of Psychological Well-Being

According to Henriques and his colleagues (2014) psychological well-being can be achieved when there is positive alignment of four domains which are: i) The subjective domain, ii) the health and functioning domain, iii) the environmental domain, and iv) the values and ideology domain. The subjective domain refers to the extent to which one experiences satisfaction with and happiness in their life. The health and functioning domain refers to the extent to which one functions well psychologically and biologically. While biological functioning corresponds to the healthy physiological functioning of human beings as a whole, psychological functioning corresponds to the healthy functioning of personality. The environmental domain refers to the extent to which one has access to essential materials and social resources to have their needs met. While material resources include meeting the fundamental material needs that are required to sustain health and functioning (e.g., access to food, water, and money), social resources refer to the network of relationships and social institutions. This includes relationships with family, friends, and romantic partners, as well as the person's sense of identity related to their religious, political, and national values. Social resources also refer to the position of an individual on a social-economic scale and their geographical positions (i.e., urban vs. rural). Lastly, the values and ideology domain refer to the extent to which one has a moral direction in life, and engages with the world purposefully. It corresponds to living an ethical life that relates to the individual's beliefs and central values.

2.2.8. Kushlev's Conceptualization of Psychological Well-Being

Kushlev's (2017) model of psychological well-being, called ENHANCE (Enduring Happiness and Continued Self-Enhancement) is designed as a comprehensive intervention program to increase well-being in a wide-range of important aspects of life. It consists of ten elements and associated interventions based on the past empirical evidence and literature related to well-being (Quoidbach et al., 2015). Even though their model focuses on improving subjective well-being, it entails concepts drawn from both theoretical traditions of well-being, namely the hedonic and the eudaimonic.

The intervention program Kushlev and his colleagues designed is organized around three main theoretical themes namely the core self, the experiential self, and the social self. Participants focus on their core self by working on their goals, values, and character strengths in the first three sessions. Here, participants identify their values and make a plan to take value based actions; and learn about their character strengths. In the next three sessions, participants focus on the experiential self through mindfulness, savoring, cognitive restructuring, and self-compassion. Here, participants learn about essential mindfulness skills; savoring pleasant activities in here and now and challenging their automatic negative thoughts through cognitive techniques. The last four sessions center around the social self where participants learn to foster well-being by their social relationships. In these sessions, participants learn about developing satisfying relationships and showing gratitude. According to Kushlev and his colleagues, success in these elements leads to psychological well-being.

Table 2.1. Contemporary Eurocentric Conceptualizations of Psychological Well-Being

Jahoda (1958)	Ryff (1989)	Keyes (2002)	Diener (2009)	Seligman (2011)	Huppert and So (2013)	Henriques (2014)	Kushlev (2017)
Attitudes toward the self	Positive relationships with others	Social integration	Meaning and purpose	Positive emotions	Competence	Satisfaction with life	Values and roles
Personal growth	Autonomy	Social acceptance	Supportive and rewarding relationships	Engagement	Emotional stability	Happiness	Goals
Integration	Environmental mastery	Social contribution	Engagement	Relationships	Engagement	Biological functioning	Character strengths
Autonomy	Personal growth	Social actualization	Contributing to the well-being of others	Meaning	Meaning	Psychological functioning	Mindfulness

Table 2.1. (cont.)

Perception of reality	Purpose of life	Social coherence	Competency	Accomplishment	Optimism	Access to environmental resources	Dealing with negativity
Environmental mastery	Self-acceptance		Self-acceptance		Positive emotion	Access to social resources	Savoring
			Optimism			Values and Ideology	Close relationships
			Being respected				Gratitude
							Social interactions
							Prosocial behavior

2.3. Critique of Contemporary Eurocentric Conceptualizations of Psychological Well-Being

As stated in the previous section, various theories have been advanced about the nature of psychological well-being. However, there is no consensus among researchers about what constitutes a good life, leading to difficulties in interpretation and divergence in practice. Some researchers believe this is because psychological well-being cannot be understood in isolation from its cultural components. Rather, various cultural factors such as philosophy, ethnicity, religion, values, and worldviews shape the understanding of its nature and meanings (Joshani & Niknam, 2019; Christopher, 1999; Henriques et al., 2014). Culture greatly shapes one's evaluation of what is valuable, essential, and meaningful, all of which contribute to and deepen one's understanding of the good life (Delle Fave et al. 2011; Joshani, 2013). On the other hand, contemporary theories offer an understanding of well-being that is specifically attuned to Eurocentric culture and values and their philosophical and religious foundations. While the term eudaimonia has its roots in ancient Greek philosophy (Ryan & Deci, 2001) and is based on the concept that the acquisition of any kind of knowledge or truth is possible without religious or supernatural explanations (Bryant, 1986), studies of the validity and reliability of models espousing a eudaimonic view have only been conducted in Western societies (Huppert & So, 2013). Consequently, these conceptualizations fail to offer a deeper understanding of the multiple dimensions of well-being that are influenced by other religious and cultural values such as in the case of Islam.

2.4. Elements of Psychological Well-Being and Their Relation to Religion

Despite the fact that the vast majority of the world's population identifies with a religious tradition, while for many, religion is the most important aspect of their life, religiosity is an often-overlooked aspect of a person's psychological well-being (VanderWeele et al., 2021, p. 577). The failure of contemporary theories to recognize human beings as having religious identities leads to an inadequate conceptualization of psychological well-being.

Meanwhile, there is a growing body of literature in the field of psychology that demonstrates how various aspects of religion play a central role in people's psychological well-being (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011; Sateemae et al., 2015; Moreira-Almeida, 2006; Amer et al., 2008; Ismail & Desmukh, 2012). In this section, the essential elements of the good life as presented by contemporary theories are examined and their relationship to religion and religiosity is discussed. Throughout the section, the discussion is underpinned by research studies conducted with people from different religious backgrounds, including but not limited to an Islamic background.

2.4.1. Concepts of Meaning and Purpose

While most schools of philosophy and religious traditions consider living a good life as an important aspect of human existence, according to the Islamic tradition, the “good” life is related, but not limited to, the state of well-being experienced in this life. In Islam, every believer’s life has a meaning and purpose that fits into the divine purpose, which is to walk on a path that will ensure salvation in the Hereafter and gain the approval of Allah Almighty (Keshavarzi et al., 2021, p.20). It is made clear in the Holy Qur’an that the ultimate function of human existence is to worship and serve Allah in the following verses: “And I have not created the jinn and the men except that they should serve Me” (Qur’an 51:56), and “It is He who created death and life, to test you in order to discern which of you is best in deeds” (Qur’an 67:2). The Qu’ran calls upon believers to be mindful of their supreme purpose of existence by empathically commanding and encouraging them to contemplate deeply on the temporality of this world and the permanence of the Hereafter. Of the thousands of verses mentioned about this in the Qur’an, Allah states in three verses:

Have they not reflected upon their own being? Allah only created the heavens and the earth and everything in between for a purpose and an appointed term. Yet most people are truly in denial of the meeting with their Lord! (Qur’an 30:8).

Be mindful of the Day when you will all be returned to Allah, then every soul will be paid in full for what it has done, and none will be wronged (Qur’an 2:281).

Say, O Prophet, “I advise you to do only one thing: stand up for the sake of Allah, individually or in pairs, then reflect. Your fellow man is not insane. He is only a warner to you before the coming of a severe punishment (Qur’an 34:46).

Accordingly, Islam establishes life’s meaning on the basis of believers’ ultimate function, which is to attain God’s pleasure through worshipping Him (Joshnloo,

2017, p.117). Furthermore, in the Islamic tradition what constitutes a good life or psychological well-being, is the fulfillment of this function (Joshani, 2017, p.117). In the Holy Qur'an the believers are reminded that they will be rewarded by a good life, both in this life and in the Hereafter, if they live in accordance with the guidance and commandment of Allah. In one verse in the Holy Quran in this regard, Allah states: "Whoever does good, whether male or female, and is a believer, We will surely bless them with a good life, and We will certainly reward them according to the best of their deeds" (Qur'an 16:97). Moreover, the Holy Quran points out that the human psyche can only find satisfaction through the remembrance of Allah (Quran 13:28), and rejoice through showing gratitude to His bounties, and blessings (Qur'an 10:58).

Current research has also proven the crucial role religion plays in finding meaning and purpose in one's life. A study conducted by Mohammad and his colleagues (2011) showed that Muslim students perceive that having a close relationship with God, serving God's purpose, living a life that is linked to the Hereafter, and acting in accordance with moral virtues helps them perceive life as meaningful. A number of other studies have also highlighted the strong positive correlation between religious involvement, purpose in life, and psychological well-being (Moreira-Almeida, 2006; Wang et al., 2016; Bamonti et al., 2016). In their study conducted with 3,500 adults Stroope, Draper, and Whitehead (2013) found that closeness to and consistent worshipping of God was positively related to a greater sense of meaning, purpose in life and well-being. Abu-Hilal and his colleagues (2017) conducted a study with 344 Muslim college students and found that while religiosity and consistent worshipping of God helped Muslims find meaning in life, it also provided patience and a sense of protection, increasing their ability to cope with stressful life events.

2.4.2. Concept of Psychological Resilience

The ability of religion to give meaning to life is especially evident in the context of coping with adverse life events. Religious coping is defined as the extent to which religion is part of the process of understanding and managing critical life events (Pargament et al., 2005, p. 482). While positive religious coping includes seeing the Creator as a partner in dealing with difficult life situations, and is characterized by the belief that life has ultimate meaning (Koenig, 2018, p.166), negative religious coping

includes a shaken worldview that is characterized by religious conflict and alienation (Abu-Raiya et al., 2019). Literature on religious coping shows negative religious coping is associated with lower levels of life satisfaction, and physical, social, and psychological functioning (Taheri-Kharamah et al., 2016; Hebert et al., 2009). On the contrary, individuals that use positive religious coping are better able to adjust and overcome life stressors (Pargament et al., 1998), have high levels of life satisfaction and well-being (Scandrett & Mitchell, 2009; Bergan & McConatha, 2001), and resilience toward mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety (Mahamid & Bdier, 2021; Chow et al., 2021). Hence, religious coping has a unique function when it comes to psychological resilience. According to the Religious Coping model, positive attitudes towards religion and positive religious beliefs act as a protective factor against high stress levels that are caused by difficult life situations or traumatic experiences (Park, 2005). The model suggest that religion operates as a meaning making framework leading to the belief that all events and experiences occur through God's will, and are means to gain either strength or understanding from God (Emam & Al-Bahrani, 2016; Mickley et al., 1998).

Certainly, turning to religion for coping with traumatic or stressful life events is particularly widespread among religious individuals (Maynard et al., 2001). Furthermore, in the Islamic tradition, the Qur'an, and Sunnah there is a great emphasis on using religious beliefs, practices and teachings as means for coping with the challenges and stressful situations life inevitably brings about (Aflakseir, 2012). One of these religious beliefs is contentment with divine decree. According to Al-Rāzī, (1981) contentment with God's will is an essential coping strategy that protects psychological well-being, especially in the face of difficulty and misfortune. Other Muslim scholars such as Balkhi (2013) postulated that contentment with God's will helps sustain well-being via shifting focus from personal wishes and desires towards accepting situations that are outside of one's control, consequently alleviating psychological suffering, and enhancing resilience in the face of difficulty (p. 31; 53-54). In his book the *Wisdom and Benefits of Trials and Tribulations*, Imam al-'Izz bin 'Abdus-Salam (2004) attaches seventeen benefits of being subjected to a calamity from learning patience and steadfastness, to showing mercy to those who undergo affliction and helping them.

Another common religious belief that help people in the face of adversity is that all pain and suffering experienced in this life has a purpose and meaning (Koenig, 2018, p. 52). For example, in Islam, trials and tribulations are seen as opportunities for getting closer to Allah, and the expiation of sins (Ibn al-Jawzi, 2018, p. 728). The Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him) said, “No fatigue, nor disease, nor sorrow, nor sadness, nor hurt, nor distress befalls a Muslim, even if it were the prick he receives from a thorn, but that God Almighty expiates some of his sins for that.” Numerous Qur’anic verses also address the God Almighty’s purpose in adversity, which is essentially to benefit the subject in the Afterlife (Hamdan, 2008). In the Qur’an, it is emphasized that Allah tests the believers by giving them the opportunity to grow closer to Himself and be successful through their good deeds and acts of worship (2:155–57, 32:24, 47:31, 94:5–8).

Current research has proven the notion that religion provides a framework for making meaning out of life’s challenges and using religion as a coping mechanism helps people in effective adaptation to life’s difficulties, consequently, having positive effects on their well-being (Emam & Al-Bahrani, 2016; Gholamzadeh et al., 2014; Aflakseir, 2012; Pargament et al., 2005). A study conducted by Abu-Raiya and Sulleiman (2020) examined a sample of 204 Muslim parents who lost their children due to a traffic accident and found that positive religious coping associated positively with post-traumatic growth. In the study, parents who were able to cope with their loss by turning to God for support showed greater post-traumatic growth than those who did not. Researchers also found a positive link between negative religious coping and poorer health and other well-being outcomes. Another research examined the relationship between religious coping, satisfaction with life and positive affect among 132 Palestinian-Muslims living in occupied regions who lost a beloved person through death and found that individuals who adopted positive religious coping methods showed greater satisfaction with life and positive affect (Abu-Raiya & Jamal, 2019). Religious coping has also been found to help people cope with and adapt better to terminal illnesses such as advanced cancer (McCoubrie & Davies, 2005; Tarakeshwar, 2006; Balboni et al., 2007; Vallurupalli et al., 2012) and advanced heart disease (Abu et al., 2018). Other studies have shown that religion enhances the quality of life by providing coping strategies for struggling against the uncertainties, losses, and difficulties experienced by older adults (Vitorino et al., 2016; O’Brien et al., 2019).

One of the most important factors that has made religion a crucial element for psychological well-being is its ability to help facilitate a meaningful life. Many researchers agree that religion can provide powerful resources to find meaning and purpose in life, which in turn enhances psychological resilience and psychological well-being (Krok et al., 2021; Krok, 2014). Furthermore, from an Islamic perspective, religious beliefs are essential building blocks of living a good life, and the one who seeks to find meaning in life should worship Allah Almighty, and follow the guidance of Him (Joshanloo, 2017, p. 128).

A fundamental divergence between the contemporary conceptualization of psychological well-being and an Islamic one is that Islam doesn't restrict well-being to a temporal one that pertains solely to acquiring the goods in this life (i.e., happiness, life satisfaction, close relationships, positive emotions, psychological and physical health, meaning and purpose etc.). In the Islamic tradition, overall human functioning encompasses both temporal and eternal well-being, with eternal well-being being the component that is most central, that which brings a person to his or her final end in God (Joshanloo, 2017, p. 120). Nonetheless, while for most Muslims the religion of Islam is an overriding component as something that gives their life meaning, contemporary conceptualization of meaning shows a bias towards a secularist view while excluding religion as being a higher value worth pursuing to bring about psychological well-being (Joshanloo, 2013). According to the prevailing view, humans are free to create their own meanings in isolation from religious values or traditions (Schweiker, 2009). However, researchers suggest that meaning making cannot be boiled down to a personal, intra-psychic phenomenon, but is a part of the religious notions to which people ascribe (Park, 2005). Furthermore, secularizing religion this way ignores the fundamental belief of most religious people - that there is a God whom people build powerful attachments to and rely on, which has positive effects on their psychological well-being (Nosrati et.al., 2020; Reber, 2006; Bonab & Koohsar, 2011).

2.4.3. Concept of Positive Emotions

The role religion plays in the happiness of people has newfound interest among scientists and clinical practitioners in recent years due to its immense contribution to

psychological well-being (Al-Karam, 2018; Koenig, 2018; Keshavarzi et al., 2021). However, even though contemporary research has shown that happiness is an essential component of well-being, the pursuit of happiness is conceived differently in the Islamic tradition than in contemporary view. The extensive literature in the Islamic tradition on emotions and their role in psychological and spiritual well-being has long focused on the deeper meaning of positive emotions and what it means to achieve happiness (Keshavarzi & Keshavarzi, 2021, p. 172). Al-Kindi (c. 801–873 C.E.), the first philosopher in the Islamic world, wrote an epistle on treating emotional dysregulation, and healing from sadness and grief (Adamson & Pormann, 2012). Similarly, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya (1997) wrote about the role of patience and gratitude at times of trial and adversity, providing strategies to build patience and coming closer to God. Al-Jawziyya (2020) in his famous book, *Ranks of the Divine Seekers*, has also devoted a section for grief, describing the stages and types of it, its adaptive and maladaptive forms, and adaptive emotional experiences' role in gaining proximity to God and the expiation of sins. Imam al-Birgivi (2005), in his *The Path of Muhammad* (peace and blessings be upon him), also wrote about the role of contentment, surrendering to the decree of God, and demonstrating gratitude. In his book, he also provided cognitive, emotional, and behavioral strategies for growing out of adversity, and maintaining psychological well-being. Likewise, Imam al-Ghazali (1965), in his *Revival of the Religions Sciences, Book of Fear and Hope*, wrote a thorough essay concerning the therapeutic application of hope to overcome fear and despair.

According to this extensive literature, belief in God and His revelation is a fundamental source for experiencing positive emotions and living a good life (Nasr, 2014). Furthermore, the pursuit of happiness in Islamic thought is primarily concerned with achieving eternal happiness rather than the more temporary forms of happiness conceptualized in modern theories (Joshanloo, 2017). Islamic scripture especially concerns itself with attaining happiness that is not restricted to the worldly life, but is everlasting and permanent (Nasr, 2014). In accordance with this view, Muslim scholars postulate that happiness that transcends worldly life can only be achieved through closeness to the Creator by getting to know Him and worshipping Him (Chittick, 1989). In the Islamic tradition, knowing Allah has been a guide to achieve happiness and avoid dissatisfaction with life (Bircan, 2013: 663-664). It is clearly

stated in the Qur'an that people can only feel peaceful, calm and satisfied in the remembrance of Allah: "[T]he ones who believe and their hearts are peaceful with the remembrance of Allah. Listen, the hearts find peace only in the remembrance of Allah" (Qur'an, 13:28). Allah Almighty also states in the divine revelation that straying away from Him leads to having a depressed life: "[W]hoever turns away from My remembrance – indeed, he will have a depressed life, and We shall raise him up blind on the Day of Judgment (Qur'an, 20:124).

According to Keshavarzi and Keshavarzi (2021) emotional expression in the Islamic tradition is praiseworthy, especially when it is directed toward God. For example, In Islam, the feeling of gratitude (*shukr*) coupled with patience (*sabr*) are important characteristics of a believer (Ali et al., 2020). Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) is reported to have said: "I am amazed by the believer. If he is granted goodness, he praises Allah and is grateful. If he is afflicted with a calamity, he praises Allah and is patient. The believer is rewarded for every matter, even feeding a morsel of food to his wife." Furthermore, it is stated in the following verses of the Holy Qur'an that people will be rewarded in accordance with the gratitude they show: "As for the grateful ones, Allah will swiftly reward them" (Qur'an, 3:144). "If you are grateful, I will surely give you more and more" (Qur'an, 14:7). Furthermore, many positive emotions such as gratitude, humility, awe, compassion, contentment, peace, love, hope, optimism, kindness, and forgiveness are viewed as religious in nature (Abu-Raiya & Ayten, 2019; Miller-Perrin & Krumrei Mancuso, 2015, p 23-61). What is meant by viewing these emotions as religious in nature is that they are more likely to be triggered in religious contexts, such that they operate as important channels for religious and spiritual experiences and religious performance (Keshavarzi & Keshavarzi, 2021, p. 175). Numerous research studies have proved that people experience certain positive emotions regarding a religious experience (Cummins & Stille, 2021; Van Cappellen et al., 2013; Van Cappellen et al., 2014).

Several empirical studies have also established relationships between different aspects of religiousness, such as religious beliefs and involvement, and well-being. For example, among Muslims, gratitude towards Allah has been shown to have a positive relationship with psychological and subjective well-being, and resilience, and a negative relationship with mental health disorders such as depression and anxiety

(Aghababaei, Błachnio, & Aminikhoo, 2018; Hasan et al., 2021; Aqababaii, Farahani, & Tabik, 2012). Research also indicates the effectiveness of patience in reducing mental health problems (Uyun & Witruk, 2017), and increasing satisfaction with life and general health among Muslims (Aghababaei & Tabik, 2015).

Islamically integrated interventions have also been tested as a treatment for Muslim individuals. For example, Al-Seheel and Noor (2016) examined the efficacy of an Islamic based gratitude exercise in a sample of Muslim individuals. A total of 60 students were randomized to either Islamic based gratitude exercises, secular-based gratitude exercise, or a waitlist control group. Results suggested that Islamic-based gratitude exercises are more effective in enhancing the happiness levels of Muslim individuals as they fit with their beliefs and values. Another randomized clinical trial compared the effects of Islamic hope therapy to conventional hope therapy and a control group in the treatment of depression and anxiety. Researchers found that Islamic hope therapy is more effective in reducing anxiety than conventional group therapy and control group (Masjedi-Arani et al., 2020). Finally, Babamohammadi and his colleagues (2015) examined the effects of an Islamically integrated intervention on anxiety in a sample of 60 Iranian hemodialysis patients. Patients were randomized to either interventional group, which involved listening to the Qur'an being recited, or a control group. Results indicated a significant reduction in anxiety in the intervention group compared to the control group.

2.4.4. Concept of the Self

Certainly, the concept of self is central to most theories of psychological well-being, including the notions of self-actualization (Jahoda, 1958; Ryff, 1989), attitudes of an individual toward his own self (Jahoda, 1958), self-acceptance (Ryff, 1989; Diener et al., 2009), autonomy (Ryff, 1989), and self-esteem (Huppert & So, 2013). Contemporary research on psychological well-being provides evidence for self-actualization, self-acceptance, autonomy, and self-esteem in maintaining and enhancing the optimal human functioning (Ryff et al., 2014). However, there are cross-cultural and religious differences regarding the emphasis given to the self, as opposed to others when conceptualizing well-being.

For instance, early and contemporary Western psychologists conceptualized the ability to resist social pressure, and make evaluations according to internalized norms and personal standards, as essential components of psychological well-being (Jahoda, 1958; Ryff, 1989). This conceptualization represents the ideal notion of self as independent, as opposed to an Islamic notion of self that emphasizes each individual as a part of social unity (Hayatullah, 2014). It is stated in the Holy Qur'an "The believers are none but brothers unto one another" (Qur'an, 49:10). Indeed, Islam lays a strong emphasis on community welfare, social responsibility, and contributing to the well-being of others (Birgivi, 2005). On many occasions, the Qur'an stresses the importance of showing dedication to the community through collaboration, and facilitation of collective social justice (Qur'an 2:83, 2:215, 16:90), and commitment to parents through righteousness, respect, and kindness (Qur'an 17:23–24, 31:14, 46:15).

Worship Allah and associate nothing with Him, and to parents do good, and to relatives, orphans, the needy, the near neighbor, the neighbour farther away, the companion at your side, the traveler, and those whom your right hands possess. Indeed, Allah does not like those who are self-deluding and boastful (Qur'an 4:36).

Following the teachings of the Qur'an, along with the Prophetic tradition, Muslims are encouraged to collaborate, honor, and help each other. The prophetic tradition captures this in the hadith:

Whoever relieves a Muslim of a burden from the burdens of the world, Allah will relieve him of a burden from the burdens on the Day of Judgement. And whoever helps ease a difficulty in the world, Allah will grant him ease from a difficulty in the world and in the Hereafter. And whoever conceals (the faults of) a Muslim, Allah will cover (his faults) in the world and the Hereafter. And Allah is engaged in helping the worshipper as long as the worshipper is engaged in helping his brother (al-Muslim, 2006, Hadith 2699).

Consistent with these teachings, the collective Muslim identity has a profound impact on the psychological well-being of Muslims. The sense of Muslim brotherhood functions as a form of social and religious consciousness that constantly reminds believers to lead virtuous lives, helps them achieve spiritual fulfillment and a strong sense of shared religious identity, steers clear of a pleasure-oriented life, and promotes self-regulation in the emotional, cognitive, behavioral, physical, and spiritual realms (Fischer et al., 2010).

There is a large body of research demonstrating the role of a collectively aligned Muslim identity in the well-being of Muslims. One study examining how people from different religious backgrounds cope with adversity and found well-being showed that Muslims are more likely to choose interpersonal and collectivistic coping strategies, whereas Christians are more likely to adopt personal and individualistic strategies (Fischer et al., 2010). Similar research has also shown that collectivistic coping strategies help Muslims promote psychological well-being and prevent mental illness. For example, Guerin, Elmi, and Guerin (2006) examined the relationship between mental health and coping strategies among Somali migrant women in an ethnographic study. Researchers found that participation in community activities helped Somali women better adapt to their new environment, increased their psychological well-being, and prevented the onset of psychological disorders. The authors conclude that despite the absence of mental health professionals, Somali refugees were able to cope with the negative effects of migration by creating a therapeutic communal environment that helped improve and protect their well-being. Similar conclusions also emerged from a qualitative study examining the important role that family members play in facilitating the recovery process of Muslim patients with mental health problems. In this study, Eltaiba and Harries (2015) found that family members supported patients by encouraging them to seek psychiatric treatment, by helping them to view their negative thoughts through a religious lens, and by offering them other religious coping strategies.

A recent study that collected data from 245 Muslim caregivers for palliative care patients during the mourning period has also shown that religious and cultural practices such as arranging a funeral feast, , visiting the graves, and reading the Qur'an together help bereaved individuals cope with the absence of their loved one (Ümmühan, Gül, & Behice, 2022). Other studies have shown collective religious rituals as an essential part of Muslim identity, and well-being. In an article examining the effects of religious participation on social inclusion and existential well-being of Muslim refugees and immigrants living in Turkey, Çetin (2019) found that religious participation fostered existential well-being, through the mediating role of social inclusion. In a recent study, Siddiq, Elhaija, and Wells (2022) also found that interventional programs that emphasizes community engagement and social connectedness were especially useful in the healthy adaptation of Muslim refugees to their new country. Further research

investigated the contributions of religious commitment and religious involvement to post-pandemic well-being among university students from different religious backgrounds. The researchers found that showing collective involvement at worship-related services were associated positively and significantly with post-pandemic well-being for all religious groups (Hu, Cheng, & Lai, 2022).

Research proves that people across cultures and religions pursue different types of well-being, with non-Western peoples emphasizing the effect of relatedness in well-being, and Westerners emphasizing the effect of independence (Joshani, 2014; Guerin, Elmi, & Guerin, 2006; Kuyumcu, 2012). However, theories of psychological well-being reflect, embody, and support a Western worldview that is based on the ideals of individualism, while an Islamic worldview highlights the sociocentric and collectivistic aspects of well-being that stress community welfare, and contributing to the well-being of others (Joshani & Weijers, 2019; Joshani, 2013). For this reason, theories of well-being fall short of conceptualizing what constitutes a good life from an Islamic point of view.

It is clear from the literature review that all the elements of well-being as presented by contemporary theories are closely related to religion and indices of religiosity. However, the contemporary models of psychological well-being do not explicitly include the religious domain of psychological well-being, or in the case of the value-based approaches to well-being, they attempt to do so by integrating Eurocentric culture and values. In this way, existing approaches fail to capture the deeper understanding of well-being that is influenced by religious and cultural values in Islam. Therefore, an examination of the Islamic understanding of well-being is necessary to identify and conceptualize a psychological model of well-being that is religiously appropriate. To the best of our knowledge, there is no previous model in the academic literature that examines the dimensions of psychological well-being from an Islamic perspective. The overall aim of this study is to develop a model of psychological well-being that builds on the unique Islamic constructs of psychological well-being found in the Islamic literature and assessed through scholarly expertise.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research design, rationale and the procedure followed in participant selection and recruitment, and the conducting of the two phases of the data collection process.

3.1. Research Design and Rationale

The Delphi method, also called the Delphi technique or the Delphi process, is a systematic process that helps develop a theory in a research area by seeking consensus among experts through a set of surveys interspersed with summarized information and feedback of opinions based on earlier responses (Lynn, Layman, & Englebardt, 1998; Wiersma & Jurs, 2009). In a Delphi process, experts answer surveys in two or more rounds, and the researcher designs the surveys in each round according to the collected responses from the previous round. The researcher does this by providing a summary of the experts' projections from the previous round, and asking them to revise their earlier responses in the light of other experts' responses. While the mean or median scores of the final round determine the results (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000), the number of rounds depends on the level of consensus among the experts (Fink-Hafner et al., 2019). However, there are several factors that affect the decision of when to stop the rounds of a Delphi survey, and researchers usually accept that expert panel members will not gain consensus after three rounds and stop the process herein. In the Delphi method, sometimes the elements that do not gain consensus are as important in terms of results as those elements that do gain consensus (Keeney, Hasson & McKenna, 2011).

The Delphi technique has been proven to be especially effective in five situations: 1) The knowledge about a given phenomenon is deficient (Blalock, 2014); 2) the exploration of a research area where controversy, debate, or a lack of clarity exists

(Iqbal & Pipon-Young, 2009); 3) investigating areas where empirical data are lacking 4) the multilayered nature of a phenomenon necessitates interdisciplinary work (Birtles, 2018); and 5) the development of a taxonomy about a given phenomenon is needed (Nambisan, Agarwal, & Tanniru, 1999).

Due to the flexibility it provides to the researcher, the Delphi technique has evolved into numerous variations over time, such as the Modified Delphi, Decision Delphi, Policy Delphi, and Argument Delphi (Keeney, Hasson & McKenna, 2011). Although there are various versions of how to conduct a Delphi process, all Delphi techniques begin with an in-depth review of the literature. The key difference among the Delphi techniques is seen in the different procedures followed while preparing the survey for the first round of the research. The flexible methodology of the Delphi technique allows researchers to either depend entirely on expert panel members in all phases of the study or rely on literature review in the preparatory phase of the study to generate items or statements on the research topic (Basinska et al., 2020; Eubank et al., 2016; Woodcock et al., 2020). For example, in classical Delphi, the researcher lets experts express their views on the research topic and identify specific themes drawing upon these views to develop a survey (Keeney, Hasson, & McKenna, 2011). In Modified Delphi, the researcher develops an initial survey according to the literature review and presents this to the experts in the proceeding rounds (Quyên, 2014). While classical Delphi can be a time-consuming and laborious process for the expert panel members, causing dropouts during the process due to the long temporal commitment, and distraction between rounds (Donohoe & Needham, 2009), Modified Delphi provides sounder results by allowing for an in-depth exploration of the research topic, and improving the initial round response rate (Custer, Scarcella, & Stewart, 1999).

In Modified Delphi, the researcher incorporates qualitative aspects in the preparatory phase of the study, and quantitative aspects in the following phases of measuring levels of consensus among the experts regarding their agreement on different elements (Fink-Hafner et al., 2019). Due to the multidimensional and complex nature of the research topic and to overcome the disadvantages of the classical Delphi, the researcher used a Modified Delphi method in this study. In using Modified Delphi, the researcher incorporated qualitative aspects in the preparatory phase of the study by conducting a thematic analysis of the concept of psychological well-being in Abu Zayd al-Balkhi's

(2013) *Sustenance of Body and Soul*, and Imam al-Birgivi's (2005) *The Path of Muhammad* (peace and blessings be upon him). This phase was a substitute for the explorative round of interviews conducted in the classical method of Delphi. We suggest that relying entirely on experts to identify specific elements related to psychological well-being is insufficient (Fink-Hafner et al., 2019). We also argue that while conceptualizing an Islamically integrated theory of well-being, an in-depth analysis of the prominent works of early Muslim scholars would provide a more comprehensive theory than solely consulting experts. This method incorporated the quantitative aspects in the following phases of measuring levels of consensus among the experts regarding their agreement on different elements of psychological well-being. In the following section, the researcher will describe in detail the two phases of the data collection process.

3.2. Phases of the Study

3.2.1. Phase 1: Preparing the Delphi

Phase one of the Delphi process consisted of a literature review. Initially, the researcher reviewed scientific journals and books related to conducting thematic analysis, and the Modified Delphi method. After this, the researcher mainly conducted a thematic analysis on the concept of psychological well-being in Abu Zayd al-Balkhi's (2013) *Sustenance of Body and Soul*, and Imam al-Birgivi's (2005) *The Path of Muhammad* (peace and blessings be upon him). The researcher then generated an initial survey for the first round of the Delphi process by creating a list of elements as dimensions of psychological well-being, drawing upon the content analysis conducted in the prior step.

The reason pre-modern works were chosen to describe psychological well-being is that the concept of psychological well-being transcends current literature and is informed by early philosophical, religious, and cultural traditions. However, the most widely used contemporary psychological well-being theories find their roots in ancient Greek philosophy, consequently they do not offer a conceptualization of psychological well-being rooted in the early works of Muslim scholars. On the other hand, many Muslim scholars from various disciplines have given tremendous value Islam brings to the lives

of people laying the foundation for how to live a good life. The two works that the researcher chose were written by famous polymaths in their time and provide an understanding of the good life from an Islamic perspective while also allowing for an interdisciplinary approach when conceptualizing a multi-dimensional concept, such as well-being. Bringing together the teachings of the Sufi (Birgivi, 2005) and applied philosophical traditions (Balkhi, 2013), the integration of both books provides a representative and organized conceptualization of psychological well-being from an Islamic perspective.

After preparing the initial survey drawing upon the thematic analysis of the two sources, the researcher prepared a list of panel expert members who would be invited to participate in the Delphi study. The selection of experts was based on the following:

3.2.2. Participant Selection and Recruitment

An important aspect of this Modified Delphi study was the development of a heterogeneous sample of participants involving experts with varying experiences, thoughts, perspectives, and skills to provide a holistic and comprehensive result. Hence, the participants of this study were selected based on their ability to integrate Islamic spirituality into modern mental health care, and their ability to provide mental and spiritual health care in multi-religious, multi-ethnic, and multicultural contexts. The researcher also chose experts from various fields of psychology, psychiatry, and Islamic studies to provide an interdisciplinary discussion on the subject matter. Eventually, a list of relevant experts was generated and each expert was contacted through information found online at their professional websites.

Table 3.1. Demographic Characteristics of Expert Panel Members (N = 6)

Characteristics	n	%
Gender		
Male	4	67%
Female	2	33%
Age		
30 – 39	3	50%
40 – 49	3	50%
Level of Education		
Masters	3	50%
PhD	3	50%
Predominant Role		
Psychiatrist	1	17%
Psychologist	4	67%
Islamic scholar	1	17%
TOTAL	6	

Note. Percentages may equal more than 100 due to rounding.

3.2.3. Phase 2: Gathering and Analyzing the Data

The initial step in this Modified Delphi Study was to conduct a thematic analysis on the concept of psychological well-being in Abu Zayd al-Balkhi's (2013) *Sustenance of Body and Soul*, and Imam al-Birgivi's (2005) *The Path of Muhammad* (peace and blessings be upon him). The results from the qualitative analysis of the two prominent books became the statements on the first and second surveys. Following the initial step, a series of two surveys were sent to expert panel members inviting them to respond with their opinions on the dimensions of psychological well-being informed

by the Islamic literature. While the first survey was created based on the thematic analysis, the second survey was created based on the feedback expert panel members provided in the previous survey. Both surveys included an instruction sheet on how to complete the surveys. Expert panel members were asked to select a response for each statement to reflect their importance on a Likert scale (1= not important at all, 2= not important, 3= neither important or not important, 4= important, and 5= extremely important). During the rounds, each statement was analyzed for median to provide feedback on the convergence of opinion (Keenay, Hasson, & McKenna, 2011).

The Delphi process took place by way of Internet communication in early March 2022 by sending the seven experts an explicit cover letter (Appendix C) outlining the aim and purpose of the research, and the working of the Delphi. The letter asked experts to complete the consent form (Appendix A) and demographic form (Appendix B) if they agreed to participate in the study and informed them that they would receive the first survey (Appendix D) shortly after receiving the attached consent form and that simple and specific instructions would be provided for each survey. Six experts accepted to participate in the study, and were sent the first survey. The experts were asked to complete the Delphi survey as fully as they could, and return the first survey to the researcher's e-mail address in seven days. Further assistance was offered to experts by the researcher when needed.

After receiving the first survey, the researcher analyzed the results obtained in the first round of the Delphi process and prepared the second survey (Appendix E). The researcher used descriptive statistics to analyze the data collected via the Likert scale in both surveys. In the second survey, they were three columns besides each statement. Column one showed the expert's previous responses to each statement, and column two showed the overall group responses (median) in the previous round. Both columns appeared as a number corresponding to the likert scale. The final column was left blank for expert panel members to reconsider their responses, taking into consideration the mean of the panel. Expert panel members were asked to return the completed Round Two Survey via e-mail within seven days. Experts who didn't return their survey were sent reminder emails one day before the deadline. After obtaining the results from the second round of the Delphi survey, the researcher analyzed the results and synthesized the agreed upon elements to give the model its final form.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter presents the results of the qualitative content analysis of the two sources dealing with the topic of psychological well-being, as well as the results of the two surveys completed by the expert panel members. The results of the thematic analysis of the two sources formed the statements for the first survey. The results of the first survey became a part of the first and second rounds of the study. Results obtained in the second round of this Delphi study is the result of the sum of all the steps mentioned earlier.

4.1. Results from the Thematic Analysis

The qualitative content analysis conducted on Abu Zayd al-Balkhi's (2013) *Sustenance of Body and Soul*, and Imam al-Birgivi's (2005) *The Path of Muhammad* (peace and blessings be upon him) resulted in a three-step process entailing what he calls "knowledge", "intention", and "action" for psychological well-being that one can achieve either by oneself or with the help of an external aid (i.e., a therapist or spiritual guide). This three-step process is described as follows: Knowledge includes knowledge of virtues and vices; knowledge of the self (self-awareness); knowledge of psychological health and dysfunction; and knowledge of Islamic creed and Islamic ethics. Intention includes setting pure specific intentions, self-evaluation, and bringing to mind knowledge of category A. Actions include acting in accordance with knowledge of a) virtues b) psychological health and dysfunction, and c) Islamic creed and ethics. These subthemes are described in detail in the following pages. The results may be viewed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1. Results of Thematic Analysis

Themes & Subthemes
Theme 1: Knowledge
Knowledge of Vices: Aggression, maleficent ambition, envy, arrogance, avarice, careless haste, hopelessness, hypocrisy, and other social offenses.
Knowledge of Virtues: God-reliance, submission, piety, humility, contentment, forgiveness, gratitude, positive evaluation of others, generosity, patience, and love of knowledge.
Knowledge of the Self (self-awareness)
Knowledge of Psychological Health and Dysfunction: Knowledge of nature of the worldly life, knowledge of nature of the human beings, knowledge of psychological disturbances
Knowledge of Islamic creed and ethics
Theme 2: Intention
Sincerity
Self-evaluation
Bringing to mind knowledge of vices, knowledge of virtues, and knowledge of psychological health and dysfunction, and knowledge of Islamic creed and ethics
Theme 3: Action
Acting in accordance with knowledge of virtues
Acting in accordance with knowledge of psychological health and dysfunction
Acting in accordance with the Islamic creed and ethics

4.1.1. Theme 1: Knowledge

4.1.1.1. Knowledge of Vices

According to Birgivi (2005), the first and foremost way of improving one's well-being is by acquiring knowledge about the vices (p. 111). A vice is an immoral personal characteristic that negatively affects one's well-being in this world and his position in

the Hereafter (p. 169–174, 247). Knowledge of vices include knowledge of aggression, maleficent ambition, envy, arrogance, avarice, careless haste, hopelessness, hypocrisy, and other offenses. A list of common vices and their definition may be viewed in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2. Common Vices and Their Definition

<i>Aggression</i>	Aggression is an instinctual response associated with physiological arousal, propelling one to act to repel a threat or in response to injustice and is experienced as a strong feeling of distress (Birgivi, 2005, pp. 178-9).
<i>Maleficent Ambition</i>	Ambition or <i>hawa'</i> is a sickness of the heart whose principal symptom is a desperate desire for long worldly life without any thought of death. Extreme ambition causes a person to forget any intention to improve his spiritual state (Birgivi, 2005, p. 133).
<i>Envy</i>	Envy or <i>hasad</i> is wishing that a person whom one dislikes either should have never gained a good that Allah has bestowed upon him or to wish that he might lose what he has already received. (Birgivi, 2005, p. 169).
<i>Arrogance</i>	Arrogance or <i>kibr</i> is a state in which one is convinced that one has the right to be above others (Birgivi, 2005, p. 154).
<i>Avarice</i>	Avarice is not giving up on the material gain that one holds, which is a sign of a lack of faith in God, who provides the sustenance of His creatures (Birgivi, 2005, p. 184, 194).
<i>Careless haste</i>	Haste is an emotional impulse that pushes a person hurriedly in the direction of a thing wished for, without much reflection as to whether that thing itself is desirable or good or whether one's hurried action is right (Birgivi, 2005, p. 212).
<i>Hopelessness</i>	Hopelessness or <i>y'as</i> is a state of disappointment when one doesn't attain what one hopes (Birgivi, 2005, p. 225).

Table 4.2. (cont.)

<i>Hypocrisy</i>	Hypocrisy or <i>nifāq</i> is pretending to be more virtuous in one's actions and devotion than is the case (Birgivi, 2005, pp. 125-6, 148).
<i>Social Offenses</i>	A social offense is a violation of the rights of others who are members of the community, which can damage social harmony (Birgivi, 2005, p. 253; 286). Here is a summary list of social offenses Birgivi has generated: Sacrilege, hypocritical talk, lying, gossip, accusation, contradicting and opposing truth, ridiculing and embarrassing people, obscenity, duplicity, cursing oneself and others, claiming permissibility for matters God has forbidden, leading people to revolt, disbelief and wrongdoing; argumentativeness, not helping others, not attempting to change the bad being done or fulfilling civic responsibilities (pp. 261; 285-6).

4.1.1.2. Knowledge of Virtues

According to Birgivi (2005), the second step of improving psychological well-being is by acquiring knowledge about virtues (p. 75). Virtue is a quality that is acquired by following moral and ethical standards (p. 75, 108). Birgivi (2005) postulates that virtues help in overcoming vices, and that acquiring this quality necessitates one to make a great deal of effort to fight against and overcome their vices (p. 75, 82, 110, 278). Knowledge of virtues include knowledge of God-reliance, submission, humility, piety, contentment, forgiveness, gratitude, positive evaluation of others, generosity, patience, and love of knowledge. A list of common virtues and their definition may be viewed in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3. Common Virtues and Their Definition

<i>God-Reliance</i>	God-reliance, or <i>tawakul</i> means relying only on God to protect oneself from potential harms and help overcome difficulties after putting in the necessary effort to achieve a goal (Birgivi, 2005, p. 219).
<i>Submission</i>	Submission or <i>taslimiyah</i> means recognizing that everything that happens to oneself and around oneself is in God's hands, that all and everything is His; and all He is and all He does and gives, and everything He directs one to do, is good (Birgivi, 2005, p. 221).
<i>Humility</i>	Humility is felt when one is fully aware and in awe of God's greatness and power, in contrast to one's nothingness (Birgivi, 2005, p. 221).
<i>Piety</i>	Piety or <i>taqwa</i> means the care one takes to distance and protect oneself from conditions that could bring harm in the Hereafter. A highly developed version of this pursuit is to avoid any thought, feeling, or action that might be construed as assigning partners to Allah. Its very highest point is to avoid everything that might distance one from the truth, and to undertake everything that might bring one close to the Lord. Allah Himself describes <i>taqwa</i> as fearing Him as He should be feared (Birgivi, 2005, p. 104)
<i>Humility</i>	Humility is felt when one is fully aware and in awe of God's greatness and power, in contrast to one's nothingness (Birgivi, 2005, p. 221).
<i>Contentment</i>	Contentment or <i>qanaat</i> is being satisfied with little, with nothing more than one truly needs (Birgivi, 2005, p. 201).
<i>Forgiveness</i>	Forgiveness is no longer feeling angry about nor wishing to punish or retaliate against others that have wronged one (Birgivi, 2005, p. 180, 186).
<i>Gratitude</i>	Gratitude is recognizing blessings as sent by God, valuing what one receives, and expressing appreciation to the One who gives (Birgivi, 2005, p. 217).
<i>Positive evaluation of others</i>	Positive evaluation of others or <i>husn-zan</i> means considering the good intentions of others and having a favorable opinion about them (Birgivi, 2005, p. 183) while eliminating any doubts about the goodness in them (Birgivi, 2005, p. 189).

Table 4.3. (cont.)

<i>Generosity</i>	Generosity is recognizing others have rights over whatever good fortune God has bestowed upon one (Birgivi, 2005, p. 196).
<i>Patience</i>	Patience is the ability to accept or bear problems or suffering without giving in to despair (Birgivi, 2005, p. 216).
<i>Love of Knowledge</i>	Love of learning corresponds to both seeking and possessing knowledge, and spreading and facilitating the acquisition of it (Birgivi, 2005, p. 72) Knowledge includes knowledge of Allah, principles of the Prophet and the religion, and particular fields of study (Birgivi, 2005, 75-6, 88, 95-100).

4.1.1.3. Knowledge of the Self

Knowledge of the self or self-awareness indicates having a clear understanding of one's weaknesses and strengths. Self-awareness is the key to effectively managing internal events (i.e., psychological states) and external events (i.e., helping one to wisely choose and create conditions suitable to his temperament (Balkhi, 2013, p. 33; Birgivi, 2005, p. 182).

4.1.1.4. Knowledge of Psychological Health and Dysfunction

Balkhi (2013) postulates that when the soul is afflicted with psychological pain, the body becomes more prone to further physical illnesses and psychological disturbances. Hence, knowing how to deal with psychological disturbances is the first and foremost way of preserving and sustaining one's psychological well-being (p. 29). Knowledge of psychological health and dysfunction includes knowledge of a) nature of worldly life, b) nature of human beings, and c) psychological disturbances. Explanation of these may be viewed in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4. Knowledge of Psychological Health and Dysfunction

<i>Knowledge of nature of the worldly life</i>	
Balkhi (2013) postulates that “this world is the abode of anxiety, sadness, worry, and calamity” (p. 34).	This knowledge about the nature of worldly life helps one shift his focus from personal wishes and desires (p. 31) towards accepting situations that are outside of one’s control, alleviating psychological suffering.
<i>Knowledge of nature of the human beings</i>	
<p>Balkhi (2013) postulates that “by his very nature, it is not possible for one to keep his soul in perpetual tranquility and peace without being subjected to anger, fear, distress, and similar psychological symptoms. Due to the essential nature of the soul and its volatile essence and changeability, it is unlikely for human beings not to be afflicted by psychological symptoms” (i.e., anger, anxiety, sadness, etc.) (p. 34).</p> <p>Knowledge of the nature of human beings helps one adopt a psycho-spiritual cognitive outlook, making him more prepared to face, and accept any psychological state that might be disturbing. This knowledge also helps one in managing his condition by directing him to receive the necessary help he needs (i.e., psychological and medical treatment, and social support, etc.).</p>	
<i>Knowledge of psychological disturbances</i>	
<p>Balkhi (2013) postulates that anyone that looks after their well-being should protect it from psychological disturbances by acquiring knowledge about them. According to him anxiety is the root cause of all psychological disturbances, while happiness is the root causes of PWB. Psychological disturbances that emerge from anxiety are rage, panic, depression, and obsession.</p> <p>Rage: Rage is a negative symptom of the soul that is generated from distress. When a person is in a state of rage and fury, he embeds himself in a condition of nervousness that increases circulation of the blood, changes his color, raises body temperature and causes him to engage in maladaptive behaviors that could either harm oneself or another (Balkhi, 2013, p. 38).</p> <p>Panic: Panic afflicts a person when he is exposed to a fearful thing or situation. Panic can result in a person losing their ability to think properly to the extent of failing to find a solution to rescue him from the frightening object or situation. This panic develops from the fear that overwhelms a person if he thinks or imagines a scary thing (or more so) if he sees or experiences it (Balkhi, 2013, p. 38).</p>	

Table 4.4. (cont.)

Depression: Depression afflicts a person due to the loss of something he likes or loves, the deprivation of which results in sadness or grief. If the sadness or grief increases in intensity, it then becomes outright depression and melancholy. A person suffering from this extreme state will succumb to hopelessness and impatience. The states of hopelessness and impatience, are often associated with certain very unpleasant reactions and bodily symptoms (Balkhi, 2013, p. 38).

Obsession: Repetitive inner rumination or whisperings of the soul that recurs in an obsessive manner brings fearful thoughts or disturbing images to mind. These repetitive inner whisperings cause excessive anxiety and fretfulness, interfering with everyday chores (p. 55-58).

4.1.1.5. Knowledge of Islamic Creed (*I'tiqadi*) and Ethics (*'Amal*)

Psychological well-being includes beliefs that give one the feeling there is purpose in and meaning to life (Birgivi, 2005, p. 36-37; 52). According to Birgivi (2005), Islamic creed and ethics provide an understanding of the overall purpose and meaning of existence. Hence, bringing to mind knowledge of Islamic creed and ethics play an important role in improving one's well-being by creating a sense of directedness and intentionality in one's life (Birgivi, 2005, p. 4-5, 21-28). Explanation of these may be viewed in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5. Knowledge Islamic Creed and Ethics

Islamic Creed
Islamic creed is to believe, without a shadow of doubt, in everything that has been established by the Qur'an and reported by the Prophetic tradition. These are the theoretical basis of the religion. Islamic creed entails the six pillars of faith which are: 1) belief in the existence and oneness of God, 2) belief in all messengers of God, 3) belief in the angels, 4) belief in all revealed books, 5) belief in the Hereafter 6) belief in doom and divine decree.

Table 4.5. (cont.)

Islamic Ethics
Islamic ethics is the system that entails the fundamental set of Islamic rules. The law in Islam organizes the relationship between man and God, man, and his fellow Muslims, man and his fellow human beings, man and the universe, and man and life in general.
Ethics encompasses the knowledge of and fulfilling the necessary duties that God has made incumbent upon the believers. These are knowing how to pray, fast, pay alms, perform the pilgrimage; how to deal with other people, how to lead one's life while avoiding unlawful actions, how to fear and love God, how to depend on Allah alone, and how to seek His approval, how to try to come close to Him in a way that He expects. (Birgivi, 2005, p. 94).

4.1.2. Theme 2: Intention

According to Birgivi (2005), the superiority of knowledge depends solely on the sincerity of the intention to act upon it (p. 158). Intention (*niyyah*) is the ultimate foundation of one's actions. Intentions form a bridge between knowledge, and action, directing one on what he should do, and how he should do it (Birgivi, 2005, p. 100). Hence, the second step of improving psychological well-being is by forming an intention and making an effort to remove vices from one's life. Birgivi (2005) postulates that vices can be removed from one's life by acting from virtues. However, it is difficult to cultivate virtues by resisting the corresponding vices. It necessitates forming an intention and making a great deal of effort. The intention and the effort consist of setting pure intentions, self-evaluation, and bringing to mind knowledge [*of category "A"*] to respond to situations one confronts" (Birgivi, 2005, p. 110; Balkhi, 2013, 31, 63). We call the process of "bringing to mind and becoming cognizant of the information in response to a present circumstance" mentioned in the "knowledge" section above as "*istihdar*". Intention includes setting pure intentions, self-evaluation, and maintaining cognizance of knowledge [*of category "A"*] (i.e., *istihdar*). Definitions of indices of intention and mental strategies to practice them to enhance psychological well-being may be viewed in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6. Indices of Intention and Mental Strategies for Practice

Setting pure intentions (sincerity)	
<p>Setting pure intentions (i.e., sincerity) is a prerequisite for deeds to be religiously valid (Birgivi, 2005, p. 52-55). Sincerity means to undertake good deeds and behavior in harmony with one's faith and religion, out of concern for salvation and peace in the Hereafter and a pure wish to come close to one's Lord (Birgivi, 2005, p. 125).</p> <p>Setting pure intentions is a prerequisite for any of my deeds or actions to be religiously valid (i.e., accepted by God). Pure intentions turn good deeds into acts of worship while impure intentions (i.e., hypocrisy) taint them (Birgivi, 2005, p. 129).</p>	
Self-Evaluation	
<p>According to Birgivi (2005), knowing one's ills requires one to be in a constant state of self-evaluation through reflecting upon his current state (i.e., intentions, emotions, thoughts, and behaviors). Self-evaluation corresponds to analyzing one's current feelings, thoughts, and actions. This process helps maintain a continuous state of self-examination to fight against and overcome vices (Birgivi, 2005, p. 96, 110, 143, 154; Balkhi, 2013, p. 31, 63).</p>	
Bringing to mind knowledge of vices	
<p>According to Birgivi (2005), the first step of improving one's well-being is by being aware of one's vices through addressing the causes and effects of each (p. 111). After learning how to address each vice one by one, the second step of improving one's well-being is by contemplating the effects and causes of vices and intending to eliminate them from one's life (p. 110; 174). This second step is called "bringing to mind knowledge of vices". Bringing to mind knowledge of vices entails bringing to mind the negative influences that vices have on one's well-being when dealing with a present circumstance (Birgivi, 2005, p.110).</p>	<p>Here's an example of one mental strategy that can be utilized to enhance psychological well-being by bringing to mind knowledge of vices-<i>envy</i>:</p> <p>Envy causes one to feel hostile, resentful, and angry (Birgivi, 2005, p. 176), keeping him in a constant state of ungratefulness and hopelessness. An envious person is continuously punished by none other than himself (Birgivi, 2005, p. 174).</p>

Table 4.6. (cont.)

Bringing to mind knowledge of virtues	
An additional way of improving one's well-being is by bringing to mind information about the positive opposites (i.e., virtues) of vices and utilizing them when dealing with a present circumstance (Birgivi, 2005, p. 110). Bringing to mind knowledge of virtues entails bringing to mind the positive influences that virtues have on one's well-being and utilizing them when dealing with a present circumstance (Birgivi, 2005, p. 110).	Here's an example of one mental strategy that can be utilized to enhance psychological well-being by bringing to mind knowledge of virtues- <i>God-reliance</i> : No bad luck can prevent me from what is required of me or what I must do. In any difficulty I encounter, my Lord is the only one who can remove it from my life and grant me success. I have no power other than what my Lord gives me. (Birgivi, 2005, p. 192).
Bringing to mind knowledge of the self	
An important way of improving well-being is by becoming self-aware. Self-awareness entails contemplating the extent to which one can effectively manage his internal and external events by taking into consideration one's strengths and weaknesses.	

4.1.2.1. Bringing to Mind Knowledge of Psychological Health and Dysfunction

An additional way of improving one's well-being is through protecting oneself from psychological disturbances. Balkhi (2013) postulates that one can preserve and sustain their well-being by changing their cognitive outlook (p. 31). According to him, anyone that looks after their well-being should be the watcher of their thoughts, addressing the negative ones as they emerge and simultaneously generating positive ones to oppose them (p. 63). Adopting this approach would not only preserve one's well-being but also sustain it (p. 30). One can preserve and sustain his well-being by bringing to mind knowledge of a) nature of the worldly life b) nature of the human beings and c) psychological disturbances. Definitions of indices of bringing to mind knowledge of psychological health and dysfunction, and mental strategies to practice them to enhance psychological well-being may be viewed in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7. Indices of Psychological Health and Dysfunction and Mental Strategies for Practice

Bringing to mind knowledge of nature of the worldly life	
<p>Bringing to mind knowledge of the nature of worldly life helps shift focus from personal wishes and desires (p. 31) towards accepting situations that are outside of one's control, helping alleviate the effects of psychological disturbance. This cognitive outlook necessitates one to contemplate the temporariness of this world and the permanence of the Hereafter.</p>	<p>Here's a list of mental strategies that can be utilized to enhance psychological well-being by bringing to mind knowledge of nature of the worldly life:</p> <p>This world is not the abode of perpetual joy and happiness, nor the abode of avoiding any loss of loved ones or sought-after desires (Balkhi, 2013, p. 52).</p> <p>If trials and tribulations are a normal part of worldly life, then all the pleasures I obtain in life are but additional gifts that I should be grateful for. Likewise, my losses and the things that I have been unable to attain are not to cause me much sorrow and bereavement (Balkhi, 2013, p. 52).</p> <p>I am here in this world for a moment, but I will be in the Hereafter for eternity. My life is not in my hands. I do not know when the end will come. If I leave what I was ordered to do today until tomorrow, tomorrow may never come. Every moment of my life is for a purpose. Now is the time to do what is to be done now. And now is the only time (Birgivi, 2005, p. 140).</p>
Bringing to mind knowledge of nature of the human beings	
<p>Bringing to mind knowledge of the nature of human beings helps realize it is in the essential nature of all human beings to suffer from psychological</p>	<p>Here's an example of one mental strategy that can be utilized to enhance psychological well-being by bringing to mind knowledge of nature of the human beings:</p> <p>Everyone is prone to experiencing all kinds of psychological disturbances. By his very nature, men can't be in a constant state of tranquility and peace without</p>

Table 4.7. (cont.)

disturbances. This cognitive outlook necessitates one to contemplate the essential nature of human beings.	being subjected to psychological disturbances (Balkhi, 2013, p. 34).
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4.1.2.2. Bringing to Mind Knowledge of Psychological Disturbances

Bringing to mind knowledge of psychological disturbances helps one become aware of his psychological condition (i.e., symptoms), making it easier to fight against and overcome psychological disturbances. This necessitates one to contemplate psychological disturbances, their causes, and effects, and how to fight against, and overcome each. Definitions of indices of bringing to mind knowledge of psychological disturbances, and mental strategies to practice them to enhance psychological well-being may be viewed in Table 4.8.

Table 4.8. Indices of Psychological Disturbances and Mental Strategies for Practice

<p>Panic</p> <p>When one is anxious, he often focuses on the worst possible outcome. In this case, it will be helpful to realize that other people have gone through similar experiences to his. On the other hand, many of these people found ways to think their way out of anxiety. Observing those who have successfully dealt with anxiety-evoking situations and implementing them in one's life is another way of coping. Thinking;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">Who else might have experienced something like this?What strategies might they have used in order to cope with this situation?What can I learn from their experience? <p>It is not unusual for an anxious person to exaggerate the intensity and duration of an anticipated outcome, only to learn later those things turned out better than expected (Balkhi, 2013, p. 46). Another mental tactic one can use to overcome panic is to decatastrophize the situation via thinking: Most of what I fear can't harm me.</p>

Table 4.8. (cont.)

<p>This situation is not as scary as I think it is. I'm just uncomfortable/panicking a bit too much. I know that I will make it through this just like I always have.</p>
<p>Rage</p> <p>A mental tactic to overcome extreme anger is to contemplate bodily disorders that can be caused by it. One should think sensibly about the effects extreme anger can have on his physical health. Extreme anger can harm the body, generating short- and long-term health problems. Among the short-term consequences of anger are rising temperature, trembling, apprehension, arousal and other bodily disturbances (p.41). In the long-term, it can make one more prone to further physical and psychological pain (Balkhi, 2013, p. 29, 33, 66).</p> <p>All in all, the angry person suffers more harm than the hurt he would wish to inflict upon whom made him angry. So instead of getting even with the latter what he actually does is to injure more himself (Balkhi, 2013, p. 41)</p> <p>An additional mental exercise is to challenge the negative thoughts. Challenging the negative thoughts is achieved through generating a collection of counteracting arguments one can employ to cancel out the negative thoughts in one's mind (Balkhi, 2013, p. 63). Counteracting the thoughts which cause anger towards others necessitates concentrating one's negative feelings towards the wrong deed of the subject concerned, and not towards the offender as a human being. This counteracting thought helps one realize that no human being is free from making mistakes (Balkhi, 2013, p. 43).</p> <p>Another mental exercise is to reflect on the consequences of acting upon rage: It only takes a moment of giving into extreme anger and doing something which one regrets and instantly wishes to take it back (Balkhi, 2013, p. 41). The effect of anger is violence and destruction, while the effect of its opposite, patience, is compassion and peace of mind (Birgivi, 2005, p. 179).</p> <p>Another mental exercise is to study multiple sides of an affair. Studying multiple sides of an affair necessitates one to work on accepting that one is not always right, and that things appearing to be wrong to him at first sight, may not turn out to be so as he adopts a more flexible mindset (Birgivi, 2005, p.218).</p>

Table 4.8. (cont.)

Depression

A mental exercise to modify extreme sadness is to reflect on its consequences, such as weighing the excessive bodily harm that continued sadness and depression can cause to one's body. Depression can leave one vulnerable to other bodily disorders and weaken one's psychological resilience (i.e., the ability to cope with and overcome undesirable worldly situations (Balkhi, 2013, p. 33, 66).

Doing a values clarification would also help the depressed person convince himself that his overall health is the most beloved thing to him (Balkhi, 2013, p. 51).

An additional mental exercise to modify depression is to reflect upon the nature of worldly life. Reminding oneself that, "Life in this world, by its very nature, is not the abode of perpetual joy and happiness, nor the abode of avoiding any loss of loved ones or sought-after desires (Balkhi, 2013, p. 52)" helps to shift focus from personal wishes and desires (p. 31) towards accepting situations that are outside of one's control, alleviating psychological suffering.

Obsession

A mental exercise to modify the effects of obsessive thinking is to generate counteracting arguments to help cancel out the negative whispers (Balkhi, 2013, p. 63). One can do this by challenging their unwanted thoughts through imagining themselves arguing in a court of law against the allegations raised by an opponent (played by their negative whispers), falsifying their claims and rendering them invalid and illogical.

An additional mental exercise to modify the effects of obsessions is to work on detaching from them (Birgivi, 2005, p. 139). Cognitive detachment helps one become more aware of the maleficent influence the Devil has in one's mind and helps one attribute the negative thoughts to these maleficent influences through addressing, identifying, and externalizing them.

Reminding oneself that "The Devil is a pet created to persistently attack me. Like a vicious dog, it will chase me if I run. If I respond to it or even look at it, it will keep

Table 4.8. (cont.)

barking at me. But if I hold my position and ignore it, it may leave me alone'' (Birgivi, 2005, p. 139).

If the mind is not occupied by outward conversation, it has no alternative but to employ inner thought and past reflections (Balkhi, 2013, p. 60). Hence, another mental exercise to modify the negative effects of negative self-talk is to busy oneself with thinking, memories and reflections.

4.1.3. Theme 3: Action

Birgivi (2005) postulates that the superiority of knowledge depends on the intention to act upon it (p. 158). The last and final step of sustaining and improving one's well-being is by acting upon the knowledge one has acquired. This includes acting in accordance with knowledge of a) virtues b) psychological health and dysfunction, and c) Islamic creed and ethics. Behavioral strategies to enhance psychological well-being may be viewed in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9. Indices of Action and Behavioral Strategies for Practice

Acting in accordance with knowledge of virtues
Acting in accordance with virtues entails manifesting the virtues one has learned through one's actions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Here is an example of a behavioral strategy that can be utilized to enhance psychological well-being by acting in accordance with one's knowledge of virtues-pious asceticism (<i>qanaat</i>): One may practice pious asceticism through giving away the things that are more than one needs (Birgivi, 2005, p. 201).• Here's an example of a behavioral strategy that can be utilized to enhance psychological well-being by acting in accordance with one's knowledge of virtues-generosity: One may practice generosity through spending from his means for the near of kin, the orphan, the needy, and the wayfarer (Birgivi, 2005, p. 194).

Table 4.9. (cont.)

- Here's an example of a behavioral strategy that can be utilized to enhance psychological well-being by acting in accordance with one's knowledge of virtues-love of knowledge: One may practice the virtue of love of knowledge through fulfilling his civic responsibilities through teaching others, encouraging them to do right and preventing them from doing wrong, and guiding them towards the truth (i.e., *fard kifayah*) (Birgivi, 2005, p. 94).

One may also practice this virtue through organizing his works. One can achieve this via creating a time management plan where one balances time for working with time for recreation (i.e., rest, sleep, amusement) and acting upon it (Birgivi, 2005, p. 122).

4.1.3.1. Acting in Accordance with One's Knowledge of Psychological Health and Dysfunction

Acting in accordance with knowledge of psychological health and dysfunction entails seeking psychological and medical treatment, socializing, engaging in recreation activities, and sticking to certain healthy life habits. The list of behavioral strategies that can be utilized to enhance psychological well-being by acting in accordance with one's knowledge of psychological health and dysfunction may be viewed in table 4.10.

Table 4.10. Indices of Psychological Health and Dysfunction and Behavioral Strategies for Practice

Seeking mental health support

Listening to the advice of others, whose (therapeutic) discussion (or counseling) would help reduce and overcome psychological dysfunction (p. 35). This necessitates one to appoint wise men to discover with him the effects, causes, and treatment methods of their psychological disturbances (Balkhi, 2013, p. 40). A mental health professional can utilize cognitive, emotional, behavioral, social, and spiritual interventions that help increase psychological well-being.

Table 4.10. (cont.)

<p>Socializing</p> <p>Humans are naturally predisposed to connect with others and seek social support when they suffer from any hardship life brings about, including psychological pain. Thus, having sincere and trusted friends to help one (i.e., social support) is extremely important. Balkhi (2013) suggests that a supportive friend could be as helpful to someone who is psychologically dysfunctional as a good physician is helpful to a patient suffering from physical illness (p. 61).</p>
<p>Engaging in recreational activities</p> <p>If one does not take up an activity that externally consumes one's time, one's soul will naturally turn to internal activity, which would obviously lead to harmful whispers. It is thus recommended to avoid idleness and unemployment as well as develop new interest in things that consume their spare time (Balkhi, 2013, p. 61). One can listen to music and songs, look at delightful landscapes and beautiful objects and do similar activities (i.e., walking, reading, playing games, watching a movie, etc.) that would give him both pleasure and contentment (Balkhi, 2013, p. 51). Such leisure activities are also very beneficial in helping distract one's attention away from one's negative thoughts (Balkhi, 2013, p. 62).</p>
<p>Lifestyle habits</p> <p>Lifestyle habits such as having proper nourishment with healthy foods and drinks, having a good sleep, and having good personal hygiene play an important role in increasing psychological well-being.</p>

4.1.3.2. Acting in Accordance with the Islamic Creed and Ethics

Ethics transforms a Muslim's belief in the creed into actions and deeds. Islamic ethics encompasses the knowledge of and fulfilling the necessary duties that God has made incumbent upon the believers. These are: knowing how to pray, how to fast, how to pay alms, how to perform the pilgrimage; how to deal with other people, how to lead one's life while avoiding unlawful actions, how to fear and love God, how to depend

on Him, how to seek His approval, how to try to come close to Him in a way that He expects, and so on. (Birgivi, 2005, p. 94).

As mentioned earlier, the subthemes described in the above tables are subthemes that evolved from the content analysis of the two sources, Abu Zayd al-Balkhi's (2013) *Sustenance of Body and Soul*, and Imam al-Birgivi's (2005) *The Path of Muhammad* (peace and blessings be upon him). These subthemes were turned into statements for the first survey of the Delphi process. For each survey, an interdisciplinary team of experts responded to the importance of the subthemes (i.e. statements) as they related to the conceptualization of psychological well-being.

4.2. Results of Delphi Round I and II

The aim of this Modified Delphi Study was to gain consensus among an interdisciplinary team of experts on the conceptualization of psychological well-being from an Islamic perspective. In the Delphi literature, there are various views as to how consensus can be reached (Keeney, Hasson & McKenna, 2011). However, the most common practice to illustrate consensus in a Delphi study is through the usage of measures of central tendency (especially the median) based on Likert-type scale (Ab Latif et al., 2017). In this study, the researcher adopted the approach proposed by Green (1982). According to Green, consensus is reached if 70% of the panel members select responses within two categories (i.e. level of importance).

Findings in each round of this study showed that the expert panel members reached consensus with 100%, with the experts selecting either 'important', or 'extremely important' to each statement. All statements reached a consensus among the experts. In other words, expert panel members strongly aligned with the proposed Islamic psychological well-being model. Below is a table illustrating the medians of how the experts responded to each statement on the first and second rounds of the study. Of the six initial participants, all six completed the first and second survey. The first and the second survey consisted of 22 statements each to be ranked on their importance on a scale of 1 = not important at all, to 5 = extremely important.

Table 4.11. Round One Survey Results

Research Question 2: What are the dimensions of an Islamic psychological well-being model as evaluated by scholarly expertise?

Statements:

1. Knowledge of vices is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

2. Knowledge of virtues is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

3. Knowledge of the self (self-awareness) is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

4. Knowledge of the nature of worldly life is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

5. Knowledge of the nature of human beings is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

6. Knowledge of psychological disturbances/disorders is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Important; Median 4).

7. Knowledge of Islamic creed and ethics is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

8. Setting pure intentions (sincerity) is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

9. Self-evaluation is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

10. Maintaining cognizance of knowledge of vices is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

11. Maintaining cognizance of knowledge of virtues is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

12. Maintaining cognizance of knowledge of nature of the worldly life is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Important; Median 4).

13. Maintaining cognizance of knowledge of the nature of human beings is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

Table 4.11. (cont.)

-
14. Maintaining cognizance of knowledge of the nature of psychological disturbances/disorders is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Important; Median 4).
-
15. Maintaining cognizance of knowledge of Islamic creed and ethics is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).
-
16. Acting in accordance with knowledge of vices is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).
-
17. Acting in accordance with knowledge of virtues is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Important; Median 4).
-
18. Acting in accordance with knowledge of the self (self-awareness) is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).
-
19. Acting in accordance with knowledge of nature of the worldly life is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Important; Median 4).
-
20. Acting in accordance with knowledge of the nature of human beings is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Important; Median 4).
-
21. Acting in accordance with knowledge of psychological disturbances/disorders is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Important; Median 4).
-
22. Acting in accordance with the Islamic creed and ethics is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

Table 4.12. Round Two Survey Results

Research Question 2: What are the dimensions of an Islamic psychological well-being model as evaluated by scholarly expertise?

Statements:

1. Knowledge of vices is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

2. Knowledge of virtues is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

3. Knowledge of the self (self-awareness) is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

4. Knowledge of nature of the worldly life is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

5. Knowledge of nature of the human beings is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

6. Knowledge of psychological disturbances/disorders is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Important; Median 4).

7. Knowledge of Islamic creed and ethics is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

8. Setting pure intentions (sincerity) is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

9. Self-evaluation is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

10. Maintaining cognizance of knowledge of vices is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

11. Maintaining cognizance of knowledge of virtues is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

12. Maintaining cognizance of knowledge of nature of the worldly life is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Important; Median 4).

13. Maintaining cognizance of knowledge of nature of human beings is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

Table 4.12. (cont.)

-
14. Maintaining cognizance of knowledge of nature of psychological disturbances/disorders is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Important; Median 4).
-
15. Maintaining cognizance of knowledge of Islamic creed and ethics is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).
-
16. Acting in accordance with knowledge of vices is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).
-
17. Acting in accordance with knowledge of virtues is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Important; Median 4).
-
18. Acting in accordance with knowledge of the self (self-awareness) is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).
-
19. Acting in accordance with knowledge of nature of the worldly life is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Important; Median 4).
-
20. Acting in accordance with knowledge of nature of the human beings is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Important; Median 4).
-
21. Acting in accordance with knowledge of psychological disturbances/disorders is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Important; Median 4).
-
22. Acting in accordance with the Islamic creed and ethics is an important dimension of an Islamic psychological well-being model (Extremely important; Median 5).

In conclusion, participants responded to a total of 44 statements concerning the dimensions of an Islamic model of psychological well-being. Descriptive statistics for each statement presented in Round 1 and 2 are shown in the above tables. Although an interdisciplinary team of experts reached a consensus on the concept of psychological well-being from an Islamic perspective, the level of importance has varied from important to extremely important.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The first objective of this study was to conduct a thematic analysis of the concept of psychological well-being in Abu Zayd al-Balkhi's (2013) *Sustenance of Body and Soul*, and Imam al-Birgivi's (2005) *The Path of Muhammad* (peace and blessings be upon him) to develop a preliminary model of psychological well-being based on these sources. The second objective was to further investigate the above model by consulting an interdisciplinary team of experts to reach a consensus on the concept of psychological well-being from an Islamic perspective. In line with this research objective and research questions, three main themes and eleven subthemes were revealed. In this section these themes will be discussed in light of the existing literature and theories. Contributions of this research study, its limitations, and implications for future practice and research will also be highlighted.

5.1. Bridging the Terms Knowledge, Intention, and Action: Adapting the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) to the Current Islamic Model of Psychological Well-Being

The theory of psychological well-being is predominantly concerned with people's evaluation of their optimal functioning in various aspects of their internal and external life such as relationships, accomplishment, competence, engagement, emotional stability, and self-acceptance (Ryff, 1989; Huppert & So, 2013). However, psychological well-being extends beyond this. The current Islamic model of psychological well-being suggests that psychological well-being develops in a sequential order in three stages consisting of knowledge, intention, and action. Therefore, the proposition that the current model makes goes beyond the early idea that psychological well-being is a simple and one-dimensional theory that is comprised of isolated constructs, independent from one another. According to the current model, having a complete understanding of psychological well-being necessitates

appreciating the sequential order and the relatedness of all three stages. The transitional processes between these three stages indicate that one should first gain knowledge regarding the constituents of psychological well-being and then, turn this into action with full presence of mind and intentionality that entails being cognizant of these values whilst performing such actions.

This sequential model of an Islamically-integrated psychological well-being could be seen most comparable to the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975, 2010). According to the Theory of Reasoned Action, human actions (behaviors) are volitional and a function of their beliefs (e.g., attitudes, values, cognitions, norms, etc.), their perceived behavioral control (i.e., self-efficacy), and their intentions. The Theory of Reasoned Action was originally derived from the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), and researchers typically credit both theories due to their subtle differences (Tanhan & Young, 2021). More specifically, both theories assume that the intention to perform a behavior is highly influenced by certain attitudes, normative beliefs, and control beliefs that people hold about the behavior, and that people put their intentions into action when they decide that they have the necessary skills (e.g., knowledge about a particular topic or self-efficacy beliefs) (Yzer, 2017). Both theories provide thorough information regarding the understanding for the facilitation of a behavior, illustrating a step-by-step approach to utilize the performing of an intentional behavior.

TRA had been used by previous researchers from various fields such as management (Palm, Seubert, & Glassel, 2019), ethics (Kurland, 1995; Randall & Gibson, 1991), psychological counseling (Romano & Netland, 2008), public health (Conner et al., 2017; Downs & Hausenblas, 2005), and Muslim mental health (Amri & Bemak, 2013; Tanhan, 2017). For example, Tanhan and Young (2021) systematically reviewed 300 research articles about the challenges Muslims face when attempting to utilize mental health services. After a thorough analysis of the literature, researchers offered a theoretical framework that is based on TRA to elucidate Muslim individuals' decision-making when seeking mental health treatment, and their underutilization of the services, in order to contribute to the service delivery of Muslims. The researcher's objective was to offer a dynamic and comprehensive concept map to help professionals identify barriers of seeking treatment among Muslim individuals and develop an

interventional program that included the following: providing accurate knowledge about the nature and purpose of the mental health services; facilitation of positive intentions regarding seeking treatment; and facilitation of the actual utilization of mental health services.

TRA has also been applied to ethical decision-making in various subjects such as business ethics (Celuch & Dill, 2011), ethics in advertisement (Dubinsky & Loken, 1989), illegal software copying (Moore & Chang, 2006; Aleassa, Pearson, & McClurg, 2010), and church avoidance (Gorsuch & Ortberg, 1983). Researchers revealed that thoughts and beliefs regarding moral obligation significantly predicted individuals' intentions to act upon them, and their ethical behaviors (Kurland, 1995). For example, Randall and Gibson (1991) found that knowledge regarding moral obligations had a significant contribution to predict moral intentions and moral behavior in medical professionals.

Other studies have also shown the strong effect knowledge of virtues has on intentional actions and moral behaviors. For example, Pinto et al. (2011) tested the influence personal values and virtues have on environmental awareness (i.e., responsible water consumption) and found that beliefs regarding values and virtues strongly predicted environmentally aware behavior. A similar study examining the motivating factor of values revealed that values such as enjoyment of life, belonging, and self-respect were strong predictors of intentional actions and value-based behaviors of purchasing green products (Choi & Johnson, 2019).

Even though researchers made various modifications to the original TPB/TRA in different fields and subjects, no study utilized the TPB/TRA to examine the concept of psychological well-being. On the other hand, given its explanatory power in predicting and explaining the facilitation of intentions and healthy behaviors, TPB/TRA could be an important framework to understand the facilitation of psychological well-being. Furthermore, TPB/TRA provides a complementary and useful theoretical framework to understand psychological well-being from an Islamic perspective given both of their emphasis on the interaction between knowledge, intention, and action.

The three concepts of knowledge, intention, and action are conceptualized as three fundamentally related aspects of a single underlying process. In other words, subthemes interact with one another, and have varying degrees of relationships with psychological well-being. Hence, in the following section separate themes that make up these concepts will be identified and discussed in light of the existing literature. The following discussion does not purport to be exhaustive but focuses on highlighting the sequential order and the transitions between the stages to provide a better understanding of the current model.

5.1.1. The Concept of Knowledge

In the current Islamically-integrated psychological well-being model, the first stage of knowledge corresponds to seeking and grasping information about a particular subject field. The concept of knowledge in the TRA corresponds to the cognitive component of attitudes that consists of a person's knowledge and perceptions regarding a subject matter (Breslin et al., 2019; Choi & Johnson, 2019). Many research on consumer behavior have found that specific cognitions related to a behavioral outcome strongly predicted intention, and the behavior itself. For example, a study conducted with English consumers, discovered that knowledge about environmental issues were significantly and positively associated with the intention of purchasing environment-friendly products (Bohlen Schlegelmilch, & Diamantopoulos, 1993). Other studies found that when consumers gained knowledge regarding environmental problems they became more willing to pay higher prices for environment-friendly products (Amyx et al., 1994; Tilikidou, 2007). A similar study found a significant and positive association between knowledge about environmental issues and environment-friendly behaviors (Vicente-Molina, Fernández-Sáinz, & Izagirre-Olaizola, 2013). Numerous other studies have revealed the strong effect knowledge has on intentional actions, and related behaviors (Bamberg & Möser, 2007).

Given its practical implications in research and practice, researchers have also proposed using TRA to design various interventions for behavioral change by focusing on the constructs of knowledge and attitudes (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010; Tanhan & Young, 2021). Over the years, many empirical studies utilized the theory as a framework to design effective interventional programs (Ajzen, 2015; Conner et al.,

2017; Palm, Seubert, & Glasel, 2019). For example, Breslin and colleagues (2019) used TRA to explain the extent to which athlete's acquisition of knowledge about mental health problems, their treatment, and their prevalence predicts the intention to interact with people with these problems. The researchers found that the model of TRA explained a significant amount of the variance in intentions, with knowledge about people with mental illnesses significantly predicting better intentions. Researchers used this result to develop an evidence-based mental health awareness program for athletes.

Research has also shown that overcoming the lack of knowledge about mental health services among Muslims was very crucial since Muslims face many psychological, interpersonal, and intrapersonal problems (Toprak, 2018; Kadir & Griffiths, 2021; Szafarski & Bauldry, 2019; Saged et al., 2022; Alsaïdi et al., 2021; Chapman et al, 2013), and are yet reluctant to seek mental health services. Barriers that prevent Muslims from seeking treatment include: public and self-stigma, distrust of the Western mental health system, past racial interactions and discrimination, language barriers, fear of acculturation and enculturation, and adjustment difficulties (Zia, Abdulrazaq, & Mackenzie, 2019; Amri & Bemak, 2013; Abu-Bader, Tirmazi, & Ross-Sheriff, 2011). In a study aiming to understand Muslims individuals' approach to utilizing mental health services based on TPB/TRA, Tanhan and Young (2021) indicated that lack of knowledge about mental health services was one of the main influences why Muslims were reluctant to seek mental health services in the first place.

5.1.2. The Concept of Intention

The motivation or readiness to act on a certain behavior corresponds to the intentional stage in the theory of reasoned action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010), and the current model of Islamically-integrated psychological well-being. Furthermore, in this model, intentions function as the ultimate foundation of one's actions, bridging the gap between knowledge and action and guiding individuals to engage in behavior that is consistent with their faith and religion. In other words, in the proposed model of Islamically-integrated psychological well-being, intentions not only correspond to readiness to act on any behavior, but to undertake good deeds and behavior in harmony with one's faith and religion, out of concern for salvation and peace in the Hereafter

and a pure wish to come close to one's Lord (Birgivi, 2005). The divergence that needs to be addressed here is that it is not action per se that produces psychological well-being, as contemporary theories of well-being suggest, but the sincere intentions (*niyyah*), or intentionality that bridge the gap between these actions and one's knowledge. Hence this model recognizes human beings as volitional creations of God, able to contemplate the effects and consequences of multiple alternative mental and physical acts, and predict the outcome of each to act in the right manner.

Even though the concept of intention is an essential component of both the theory of reasoned action and the Islamic tradition, it is immensely understudied in the literature of Muslim mental health (Tanhan & Young, 2021). In Islam, intentions are given more importance than the behavior itself in certain circumstances. In a Prophetic narration, Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) states: "Actions are (judged) by intentions (*niyyah*), so each man will receive what he has intended for" (al-Bukhari, 2000, vol. 1, Hadith 1). Tanhan (2019) has a thorough explanation on Islam's formulation of one's intentions that draws from four different scenarios. In the first scenario, the individual pleases Allah and is rewarded if he holds a meaningful intention (i.e., the intention to benefit himself or his surroundings) and attempts to act in accordance with it. In the second scenario, the individual pleases Allah and is rewarded if he has a meaningful intention but cannot act upon it. In the third scenario, the individual pleases Allah and is rewarded if he has a detrimental or senseless intention but makes an effort not to act upon it even though he is able to do so. In the final scenario, the individual displeases Allah, and is charged on account of his behavior if he has a detrimental or senseless intention and acts in accordance with it or strives to act accordingly but cannot. In this last scenario, Allah holds the individual accountable for his negative intention irrespective of whether the outcome is good or bad, since the intention and the following action were detrimental or senseless. Tanhan successfully implemented this logic in the use of committed actions in acceptance and commitment therapy (Hayes et al., 2012) to help increase well-being of the Muslim clients (Tanhan, 2019).

5.1.3. The Concept of Action

Action speaks to the definite act on a certain behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2010), and corresponds to the third and final stage in the TRA and the current model of Islamically-integrated psychological well-being.

Tanhan (2019) also called attention to how intentions and actual behavior are interconnected in Islam and how behavior becomes more crucial in certain circumstances. He explained in further detail how behavior (i.e., deeds and actions) is emphasized in the Islamic scriptures (e.g., Quran and hadith) (Tanhan & Francisco, 2019). In the Holy Quran, the term action or deed is second only to faith, and people are continuously advised to perform meaningful actions for themselves, and for the creation around them (Tanhan, 2019). A person pleases Allah and is rewarded greatly if he has a meaningful intention that is also followed by a meaningful action in a gradual manner. In Islam gradual and intentional actions are recommended rather than thoughtless and hasty actions (Keshavarzi & Nsour, 2021; Birgivi, 2005).

Although the current model of Islamically-integrated psychological well-being could be seen as resembling to the TRA in overarching assumptions, the specific tenets such as knowledge of virtues and vices, the self, and the Islamic creed and ethics are inherently Islamic. Literature also supports the findings of this study regarding the effects of Islamic constructs such as virtues, vices, self-knowledge, and Islamic creed and ethics have on psychological well-being. In the following section, some of these unique constructs and their relation to psychological well-being will be discussed in light of the existing literature.

5.2. The Concept of Virtues and Vices

Virtues are “discrete organized systems of thought, reason, emotion, motivation, and action” (McCullough & Snyder, 2000, p. 3) that work to enhance individual and societal well-being (Schuermans-Stekhoven, 2010). Virtue is considered a fundamental characteristic religious and moral philosophers value that encourages one to think, feel, and act in a morally right way. In his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle (2011) equates happiness with acting in accordance with virtue. In addition, vices are

morally bad dispositions or ways that cause one to think, feel, or act in the wrong way (Aristotle, 2011; Peterson & Seligman, 2004).

This study has shown that acting in accordance with knowledge of vices and virtues is a crucial component of psychological well-being. There are a number of studies that provide evidence to support the relationship between virtues and psychological well-being in the literature (Demirci & Ekşi, 2018). Fiksenbaum, Koyuncu and Burke (2010) investigated the relationship between virtues and psychological well-being among managerial women in a Turkish bank. Researchers found that virtues of gratitude, optimism, and proactive behaviors were associated positively and significantly with psychological well-being. Furthermore, bank managers who scored higher on virtues were more engaged in their work, found more satisfaction at what they did, and had less job stress and lower quit intentions. Another study focused on measuring the effect virtues of Islamic spirituality has on the well-being of Muslim female academicians. In this study, Achour, Grine and Nor (2014) found that virtues of God-reliance, submission, forgiveness, patience, and thankfulness not only helped participants to cope with adverse life situations, but also enhanced their well-being, and increased the quality of their decision making.

A recent study also investigated the effect Islamic virtues has on psychological well-being of Muslim graduate students. Researchers found that virtues such as generosity, humility, forgiveness, steadfastness, tolerance, compassion, and patience positively predicted psychological well-being (Farhan, Dasti, & Khan, 2015). A similar study conducted by Bulut and Dilmaç (2018) investigating the relationship between values and psychological well-being among Muslim college students found that acting in accordance with spiritual and moral values including generosity, love of knowledge, humility, positive evaluations of others, and reliance on God, associated positively and significantly with psychological well-being. Bonab and Koohsar (2011) specifically emphasized the role reliance on Allah plays in different aspects of well-being among Muslim individuals. According to them, relying on Allah provides a secure base that helps Muslim individuals to mature as believers, and positively effects different aspects of their well-being. Other studies have also shown relying on God to be associated with an increased use of healthy coping strategies (Belavich & Pargament,

2002), lower levels of depression, and psychological distress (Hatcher, 2001), and higher levels of life satisfaction (Krause & Ironson, 2019).

The contribution of generosity and helping others on the psychological well-being of individuals have also been shown in many studies (Vecina & Fernando, 2013; Kahana et al., 2013; Wang et al., 2014). A study investigating the relationships between religiosity, prosociality and well-being among Turkish Muslims found that helping behaviors mediated the relationship between religiosity and well-being (Ayten & Korkmaz, 2020). Other studies examining the association between the virtue of generosity and well-being of the disabled's caregivers found that generosity and kindness were positively correlated with psychological well-being, and negatively correlated with caregiver burden (Anum & Dasti, 2015; Azad et al., 2018).

Other studies have also highlighted the positive relationship between various virtues such as gratitude (Göcen, 2012; Kardas et al., 2019; Daulay et al., 2022), patience (Schnitker, 2012; Salleh, 2020), positive evaluations of others (Özdemir & Koruklu, 2011; Arifin et al., 2022; Salleh et al., 2015), piety (Karşlı, 2021; Ayhan, 2019), forgiveness (Çardak, 2012), humility (Temiz, 2020; Tong et al., 2018), and pious asceticism (Gökcan, 2018; Sayın, 2018) and different indices of well-being.

Research on moral values and ills has also shown a negative relationship between vices and psychological well-being, supporting the findings of this study. Psychological entitlement or arrogance has been associated with less forgiveness (Exline et al., 2000) and more antisocial behavior (Bushman & Baumeister, 2002). Furthermore, aggression has been associated with many negative outcomes such as decreased physical health and increased psychological and emotional problems (Johnson, 1990; Musharraf & Anis-ul-Haque, 2018). Researchers have also found a positive link between envy and depression and a negative association between envy and psychological well-being (Pera, 2018). Likewise, vices such as avarice (Gentina et al., 2020), careless haste (Singh & Sharma, 2018), hopelessness (Abdel-Khalek & Lester, 2017), social offenses (O'Connor et al., 2011; Lerner et al., 2005) has been shown to have a negative correlation with different indices of well-being.

Even though no study on the relationship between malicious ambition, hypocrisy and psychological well-being was found in the contemporary literature, Islamic scholarly literature on character has mentioned the importance of abstaining from these vices for the development of good character and acquisition of virtues (Taşköprîzâde, 2014; Kınalızâde, n.d.; Miskawayh, 1968; Tûsî, 2005).

5.3. The Concept of Knowledge of the Self

The injunction to 'know thyself', which dates back to ancient Greek philosophy, has encouraged people to embark on a quest to understand themselves. Interdisciplinary studies of Eastern and Western philosophy have shown that philosophers, clergy, and psychological theorists from around the world have emphasized the importance of self-knowledge for centuries (Hadot, 2002). Islamic mystical ideal also assumes that the "perfect man" or *Ensân-e Kâmel* is achieved through self-knowledge and self-control. According to this view, self-knowledge that leads to using the moral intellect as the ultimate guide to lead behavior results in the purification of the self/*nafs* (Keshavarzi et al., 2021; Shimamoto, 2008). This purification subsequently helps bring one closer to God and attain ultimate happiness (Miskawayh, 1968). This is also demonstrated in the following hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him): Whoever knows himself, knows his Lord.

In philosophy, self-knowledge means, either knowing one's mental states or knowing one's nature. Knowing one's mental states means being aware of certain sensations, experiences, and attitudes. Knowing one's nature means being aware of one's ontological nature or properties such as values, abilities, and character (Cassam, 2010). The results of this thematic analysis show that knowledge of the self involves both the first and second meanings. Balkhi (2013) postulates that knowledge of the self helps people to effectively choose and create the conditions that suit their temperament, thus enabling growth through certain pains and sufferings. According to Balkhi (2013) and Birgivi (2005), a clear understanding of one's states (i.e., intentions, emotions, thoughts, feelings, and behaviours), dispositions, traits, and abilities is an essential component of maintaining and improving psychological well-being. The concept of eudaimonia, upon which the theory of psychological well-being is based, refers to the need for people to discover their true self (daimon) and live accordingly (Ryff &

Singer, 2008). Knowledge of the true self (daimon) and the ability to use that knowledge in order to reach personal potentials is central to the eudaimonistic approach of well-being (Waterman, 2011).

Contemporary research also supports this conclusion. Self-knowledge has been found to be related to various aspects of psychological well-being such as self-esteem (Caprara et al., 2013; Ghorbani et al., 2014a; Hajifathali, Ghorbani, & Rostami, 2021), autonomy, competency, relatedness, constructive thinking, and subjective well-being (Ghorbani, Watson, & Hargis, 2008), self-control (Ghorbani et al., 2016), job-related well-being (Sutton, Williams, & Allinson 2015), self-compassion (Ghorbani et al., 2012), and marital satisfaction (Ghorbani et al., 2014b). Likewise, self-knowledge has been found to have a negative relationship between depression, anxiety, and stress (Valikhani et al., 2018; Behjati et al., 2011; Ghorbani et al., 2014a; Ghorbani et al., 2011; Hajifathali, Ghorbani, & Rostami, 2021), pathological narcissism (Ghorbani et al., 2010), somatization (Noorbala et al., 2018), physical and mental fatigue (Darviri et al., 2016), and social anxiety and obsessive thoughts (Ghorbani et al., 2008). In addition, self-knowledge was found to be negatively related to self-criticism and interpersonal problems (Mousavi & Ghorbani, 2007).

Research has also found that people who have high levels of self-knowledge are socially more adventurous in terms of having healthier and more healing relationships (Yan & Wong, 2005; Dobie, 2007; Rasheed & Parveen, 2015). This finding can be explained by the study Ghorbani and his colleagues (2003) conducted. According to Ghorbani and his colleagues, people who have high levels of self-awareness are better equipped with abilities to communicate personal desires and ideas, have better self-control, better emotional and behavioral self-awareness, and are more sensitive to the effect their behavior has on others.

Many studies have also been conducted with health practitioners that reveal the importance of self-awareness for psychological well-being (Richards et al., 2010; Harrington & Loffredo, 2010). Sansó and his colleagues (2015) surveyed 387 palliative care professionals and found that self-awareness positively predicts compassion satisfaction, healthier coping strategies that facilitate resilience, and

negatively predicts burnout and compassion fatigue. In a similar study, Rupert and Kent (2007) conducted a study with 595 psychologists and found that self-awareness is associated positively and significantly with lower levels of emotional exhaustion, and a better sense of personal accomplishment. In contrast, low levels of self-awareness has been linked to impaired professional competence and psychological distress for practicing psychologists (Barnett et al., 2007). In addition, the importance of self-knowledge, i.e., awareness and understanding of one's own feelings, thoughts, and intrinsic motivations is emphasized in many therapeutic approaches (Keshavarzi et al., 2021; Coholic, 2011; Salvatore et al., 2012; Mojta, Falconier, & Huebner, 2013; Lundqvist et al., 2010; Axelrod, 2012).

5.4. The Concept of Islamic Creed and Ethics

This study has found that psychological well-being includes beliefs of Islamic creed and ethics, postulating they play an important role in improving one's well-being by creating a sense of directedness and intentionality in one's life (Birgivi, 2005).

Several studies in the last decades have shown the role Islam and religious experiences play in the happiness of Muslims. Researchers have found that Islamic religiosity is associated positively and significantly with positive emotions and satisfaction with life (Ramsay, 2019; Abdel-Khalek, 2019; Abdel-Khalek & Lester, 2018; Abdel-Khalek and Singh, 2019; Abdel-Khalek et al., 2019; Maham, Bhatti & Öztürk, 2020). In a sample of 474 Iranian Muslim university students, Aghababaei and colleagues (2016) examined the impact religious attitudes have on life satisfaction, happiness, and self-esteem, and found a positive association between Islamic religiosity subjective well-being and self-esteem. In another study examining the associations between religiosity and subjective well-being, a sample (N = 702) of Muslim Arab college students were recruited. Findings suggested that Muslim students who identify with their religious values are more likely to perceive themselves as self-efficacious, and to experience greater levels of happiness (Abdel-Khalek & Lester, 2017). Similar conclusions also emerged from a recent study that explored the links between religious involvement, subjective well-being, and interpersonal forgiveness in a sample of 706 Muslim college students. Results indicated that religious involvement was a significant predictor of mental health and well-being of Muslims, and that interpersonal

forgiveness had a mediating role between religious involvement and mental health and well-being (Abu-Raiya & Ayten, 2019). In a comprehensive meta-analytic review examining the factors affecting happiness, Sharifzadeh, Mirmohammad Tabar, and Adlipour (2018) reported that for Iranian Muslims, Islamic religiosity is one of the factors that influences happiness. Islamic religiosity has also been shown to have salutary effects on optimism. A recent study exploring the effect of Islamic religiosity on optimism, depression, and death anxiety in cancer patients found that Islamic religiosity is associated positively and significantly with optimism. Furthermore, Islamic religiosity lead to keeping positive attitudes, which decreases depression and death anxiety among cancer patients (Abbas et al., 2022). Another study conducted in a sample of 155 Muslim individuals found that optimism mediated the relationship between Muslim prayer (*salah*) and psychological well-being (Albatnuni & Koszycki, 2020). Another research exploring the links between religiousness and subjective well-being among 264 Palestinian college students found that religiousness was positively correlated with subjective happiness and positive emotions (Abu-Raiya & Agbaria, 2015). The study also found Muslim individuals who scored higher on religiousness were more likely to perceive challenges as tests from God, which resulted in experiencing less negative emotions.

The protective impact of religiosity is also apparent for suicidal behavior. Dadfar, Lester, and Abdel-Khalek (2021) reported a positive association between religiosity and happiness, and negative associations between religiosity and suicidal ideation in a sample of 102 Muslim psychiatric outpatients. Findings of the study showed that religiosity has a positive impact on happiness, and is associated negatively and significantly with suicidal behavior for the psychiatric outpatients. Results also indicated that encouraging religious activities for psychiatric outpatients might increase their subjective well-being, and reduce the risk of suicide.

5.5. Conclusion

Despite the abundance of literature on psychological well-being, contemporary research has focused almost exclusively on Western conceptualizations that offer an understanding of well-being specifically attuned to Eurocentric culture and values and their philosophical and religious underpinnings (Joshi, 2017; Koç & Kafa, 2019;

Rogers-Sirin et al., 2017). On the other hand, definitions of psychological well-being are inherently rooted in people's cultural and religious contexts, and a Western theory that attempts to understand the good life leads to an inaccurate representation of the understanding of psychological well-being in Muslim populations (Joshani & Niknam, 2019; Keshavarzi et al., 2021; Badri, 1979).

Even though researchers have strived to develop frameworks within Islamic psychology, and have successfully modified Western psychological models, scales and interventions to be more religiously and culturally sensitive (Haque et al., 2016; Tanhan, 2019), there has been a noticeable lack of a psychological well-being model built upon uniquely Islamic constructs in the literature. This study attempted to close this research gap by proposing an Islamically-integrated psychological well-being model that both builds on unique Islamic constructs, and is assessed by the scholarly expertise. The current model suggests that psychological well-being develops in a sequential order in three stages consisting of knowledge, intention, and action. The stages in the model incorporate i) knowledge of virtues and vices; knowledge of the self (self-awareness); knowledge of psychological health and dysfunction; and knowledge of Islamic creed and Islamic ethics, ii) bringing to mind or becoming cognizant of this knowledge; setting pure intentions, and self-evaluation, and iii) acting in accordance with this knowledge and intentions. By proposing this model, this study closed another research gap in the literature which was the lack of studies in terms of TRA/TPB and psychological well-being. The researcher also provided the implications of study for research and practice and limitations of the study.

5.6. Implications for Future Research and Practice

The current study presents various implications for future research and practice that includes developing theoretical frameworks and assessment tools, developing therapeutic interventions/techniques to integrate in mental health practice, and gathering larger samples of interdisciplinary researchers including experts whose research interests include TPB/TRA. These will help the proposed model become more structured and systematized leading to effective empirical-based practices. The following paragraphs highlights these implications in detail.

The first implication is the improvement of further models that are built upon uniquely Islamic constructs in order to better understand psychological well-being. Researchers are also encouraged to facilitate the development of a valid and reliable scale that is appropriate to the current model since there is no empirically tested model of psychological well-being that is inherently Islamic. After the development of a valid and reliable scale, future researchers can also test the adaptability of this scale to see the extent to which it is applicable to Muslims across different countries. In addition, future researchers may also conduct cross-cultural studies to assess the level of psychological well-being of individuals from different cultures.

The second implication could be developing therapeutic interventions to integrate in mental health practice and creating experimental studies to measure their efficacy. For example, researchers may provide psychoeducation that corresponds to the knowledge construct of the current model and then examine the scores for the other constructs to measure the extent to which knowledge predicts intentional actions, actions themselves, and the overall psychological well-being of individuals. Researchers and mental health practitioners can use the data drawn from experimental and correlational studies to better understand which constructs have essential contributions to psychological well-being, and how further interventions can be designed to increase psychological well-being. Researchers, mental health practitioners and community responders can utilize such interventions in psychoeducational programs, workshop projects, and different types of therapies (e.g., motivational interviewing, cognitive behavioral therapy, acceptance and commitment therapy, and culturally sensitive therapy) to help enhance psychological well-being of individuals.

The final implication may be the need to conduct further research on psychological well-being that assembles larger samples of interdisciplinary researchers that include experts whose research interests include TPB/TRA to better understand the intersection of the two theories. Because the concept of intention and the sequential process between knowledge, intention, and action are essential components of both TRA and the Islamic theory of PWB, it is critical to conduct further studies that utilize both theories.

5.7. Limitations of the Study

One of the limitations of this study was the number of expert panel members. In addition, the study was limited to the opinions of selected academic experts from the fields of psychology, psychiatry, and Islamic studies. Hence the lack of participation of experts from other research fields could be considered a limitation.

Another limitation of the study was that only a limited number of books were subjected to thematic analysis in the development of the current model. In this sense, future researchers could benefit from a variety of different sources found in the Islamic scholarly tradition.

The final limitation was the fact that no instrumental tool was developed as a result of this study.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent Form for _____

This informed consent form is for selected experts working in the field of Psychology and who we are inviting to participate in the research titled “Construction of an Islamically-Integrated Psychological Well-Being Model”

I have read the foregoing information, or it has been read to me. I consent voluntarily to be a participant in this study.

Name of the Participant _____

Signature of the Participant _____

Date _____

Day/month/year

APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHIC SURVEY

Demographic Survey for Research

Name: _____

After finishing the survey, please email it back to ***** along with a signed version of the informed consent form.

Present job title:

Are you male or female?

Male

Female

What age are you?

What is the highest level of education you have completed or received?

High school degree

Bachelor's Degree

Master's Degree

Ph.D. or higher

Prefer not to say

What city and country do you currently live in?

What best describes your religious affiliation?

a. Muslim - Sunni

b. Muslim - Shia

What school of thought (madhab) do you adhere to?

Hanafi

Shaf'i

Hanbali

Maliki

Jafari

Unaffiliated

Other

i. _____

If applicable, please list your qualifications:

If applicable, please indicate how many years experience since qualifying



APPENDIX C

COVER LETTER

al-Salām ‘Alaykum Respected Scholar,

We would like to invite you to share your expert opinions with us by participating in a study that investigates the components of psychological well-being from an Islamic perspective. Psychological well-being is defined as the healthy psychological functioning of people that comprises different areas of life such as: positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, the purpose of life, and self-acceptance (Ryff et al., 1989); positive emotions, flow, meaning, and success (Seligman, 2011); emotional regulation, competence, optimism, resilience, self-esteem, and vitality (Huppert & So, 2011).

Research Problem

While research on psychological well-being has grown dramatically in the past three decades, it has focused almost entirely on Western populations and largely neglected people from other religions and cultures (Joshanloo, 2013).

Furthermore, given that many components of mainstream psychological well-being models are socially constructed based on Eurocentric culture and values, this leads to an inaccurate representation of the understanding of psychological well-being in Muslim populations.

It is possible to see the effects of this inaccurate representation in results of cross-cultural studies that compare well-being across different cultures, which consistently show Westerners' well-being to be significantly higher than non-Western peoples.

This lack of representation may also cause Muslims to score lower in life areas where Western culture and values are brought to the fore. Such that Muslims' may potentially be dissatisfied when evaluated by Western standards (e.g., lower scores on autonomy which is deemed more ideal for people coming from Western cultures), but may, in reality, be personally satisfied as reflected by social, cultural, and religious standards prevalent in their own culture (Joshanloo, 2013).

Aim of the Study

The overall aim of this study is to construct a psychological well-being model that is built upon uniquely Islamic constructs of psychological well-being informed by the Islamic literature and appraised by scholarly expertise. The aim of this study will be achieved through the following process:

Method of the Study

First, based on the qualitative data drawn from the literature, the study will identify the indicators of psychological well-being from an Islamic perspective and consequently formulate a conceptual definition of it.

Phase 1: Model Creation

The researcher has generated a psychological well-being model built upon uniquely Islamic constructs and informed by Abu Zayd al-Balkhi's (2013) *Sustenance of Body and Soul* and Imam al-Birgivi's (2005) *The Path of Muhammad* (peace and blessings be upon him).

Phase 2: Model Evaluation by Experts

Phase 2 is where we will need your particular expertise. This phase will be to identify important dimensions of psychological well-being from an Islamic perspective by employing a Modified Delphi survey method. Delphi is a survey method to help develop a theory by seeking consensus among selected experts in a given research area. This method consists of multiple rounds depending on the experts' level of agreeableness among the given dimensions in the survey. In these rounds, the researcher will ask you to review the above-mentioned model and rate your level of agreeableness on a 5 point Likert scale (where 0 is not at all important, and 5 is extremely important) on the different dimensions of psychological well-being.

Process

- With your permission, the surveys will be e-mailed to you. After receipt of the enclosed consent form, you will shortly receive the first survey. Simple and specific instructions will be provided for each survey.
- The amount of time necessary for the completion of each round will vary with each panelist, but should range from approximately 30-40 minutes for each round.

- How many rounds the study will take depends entirely on the degree to which you, the experts, agree on the given dimensions. A cover letter with clear instructions explaining what is expected from you for each round of the study will be sent to you before all rounds.
- There are no right or wrong answers to the survey. This study is seeking your expert opinion.

Your Rights

Please be assured that participation is entirely voluntary and you will be able to withdraw from the process at any time. The results of this study will be published in my final Master's dissertation.

If you would like to obtain any further information on details of the survey, please contact me via e-mail at *****

We feel that your expertise would be extremely beneficial to developing a credible model of psychological well-being from an Islamic perspective and would be very grateful if you would consider participating in this study. If you would like to contribute please sign the informed consent form, and finish the demographic survey, and we will forward the instructions for the first Delphi round.

Organisers of the survey

Sena Aycan, an MA student at Ibn Haldun University under the supervision of Prof. Dr. Hooman Keshavarzi.

Jazāk Allāhu Khayran,

Sena Aycan

APPENDIX D

DELPHI ROUND 1

al-Salām ‘Alaykum Respected Scholar,

Thank you for agreeing to share your expertise with us by participating in our study.

You will find enclosed with this letter an instruction sheet and the first-round Delphi survey. Please read the instructions carefully and complete the Delphi survey as fully as you can. Return of completed Delphi Round 1 implies consent to participate.

If you could return the questionnaire to the researcher’s e-mail address in seven days, we would be most grateful. If you wish to discuss any aspect of this further, please contact the researcher.

Thank you for your participation in this study.

Jazāk Allāhu Khayran,

Sena Aycan

Delphi Round One

Please place an X in the box which you feel best describes how important each dimension is.

Dimensions & Subdimensions of Psychological Well-Being

Dimensions & Subdimensions	Not important at all	Not important	Neither important or not important	Important	Extremely important
Dimension 1: Knowledge					
Knowledge of vices (i.e., aggression, maleficent ambition, envy, arrogance, avarice, careless haste, hoplessness, hypocrisy, and other social offenses).					
Knowledge of virtues (i.e., God-reliance, submission, piety, humility, contentment, forgiveness, gratitude, positive evaluation of others, generosity, patience, and love of knowledge).					
Knowledge of the Self (self-awareness)					

Knowledge of Psychological Health and Dysfunction					
Knowledge of nature of the worldly life					
Knowledge of nature of the human beings					
Knowledge of psychological disturbances					
Knowledge of Islamic creed and ethics					
Suggestions:					
Dimensions & Subdimensions	Not important at all	Not important	Neither important or not important	Important	Extremely important
Dimension 2: Intention					
Sincerity					
Self-evaluation					
Taking cognizance of					
knowledge of vices					
knowledge of virtues					
knowledge of psychological health and dysfunction					
Cognizance of knowledge of psychological health and dysfunction					
Cognizance of knowledge of nature of the worldly life					
Cognizance of knowledge of nature of the human beings					
Cognizance of knowledge of psychological disturbances					
Suggestions:					
Dimensions & Subdimensions	Not important at all	Not important	Neither important or not important	Important	Extremely important
Dimension 3: Action					
Acting in accordance with one's knowledge of virtues					
Acting in accordance with one's knowledge of Psychological Health and Dysfunction					
Acting in accordance with the Islamic Creed and law					
Suggestions:					

APPENDIX E

DELPHI ROUND TWO

al-Salām ‘Alaykum Respected Scholar,

Thank you for returning the first round Delphi questionnaire. Attached to this letter, you will find the second round Delphi questionnaire which includes details on the subdimensions that you have rated in relation to their importance in the first round. Here, you will see the subdimensions that have already reached consensus on their importance in the prior round. In this round, we ask you to reconsider your original response in the context of the other scholars’ responses.

Below, you will see three columns beside each subdimension. Column one shows **your** response to the subdimension. This will appear as a number that corresponds to the same scale as in Round 1 that is outlined below. Column two shows the group response (median) to the subdimension. Again this will appear as a number that corresponds to the scale below:

- 5 – Extremely important
- 4 – Important
- 3 – Neither important or not important
- 2 – Not important
- 1 – Not important at all

Column three is blank and is provided as an opportunity for you to reconsider your response since Round 1. We would appreciate it if you would reconsider your original response in the context of the group responses to each benchmark. If you wish to change your response, please do so by placing an X in the appropriate box beside each benchmark. Please note that you do **not** have to change your original response if you do not wish to.

Once you have completed the questionnaire, please return it to the researcher’s e-mail address by **04/30/22**. Thank you for your continued participation in our study.

Round 2: Dimensions & Subdimensions of Psychological Well-Being

Dimensions & Subdimensions	Your response from Round 1	Overall group response (median)	New response				
Knowledge			1	2	3	4	5
Knowledge of vices							
Knowledge of virtues							
Knowledge of the self (self-awareness)							
Knowledge of nature of the worldly life							
Knowledge of nature of the human beings							
Knowledge of psychological disturbances/disorders							
Knowledge of Islamic creed and ethics							

Dimensions & Subdimensions	Your response from round 1	Overall group response (median)	New response				
Intention			1 2 3 4 5				
Sincerity							
Self-evaluation							
Knowledge of vices							
Knowledge of virtues							
Knowledge of nature of the worldly life							
Knowledge of nature of the human beings							
Knowledge of psychological disturbances/disorders							
Knowledge of Islamic creed and ethics							

Dimensions & Subdimensions	Your response from round 1	Overall group response (median)	New response				
Action			1	2	3	4	5
Acting in accordance with knowledge of vices							
Acting in accordance with knowledge of virtues							
Acting in accordance with knowledge of the self (self-awareness)							
Acting in accordance with knowledge of nature of the worldly life							
Acting in accordance with knowledge of nature of the human beings							
Acting in accordance with knowledge of psychological disturbances/disorders							
Acting in accordance with the Islamic creed and ethics							

CURRICULUM VITAE

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- 2019 - 2022 İbn Haldun Üniversitesi Klinik Psikoloji Yüksek Lisans Programı
- 2019 – 2020 İstanbul Üniversitesi, Cerrahpaşa Hasan Ali Yücel Eğitim Fakültesi, Pedagojik Formasyon Eğitimi Sertifika Programı
- 2019 Okul psikolojik danışmanı
İstanbul Üniversitesi, Edebiyat Fakültesi, Psikoloji

Experience:

- 2021– Present Khalil Center, Research & Content Development Fellow
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- 2019 – 2021 İbn Haldun Üniversitesi, Psikoloji Bölümü Asistanı
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