

Islamic Psychology

Human Behaviour and Experience
from an Islamic Perspective

G. Hussein Rassool

Islamic Psychology

Islamic Psychology or *ilm an-nafs* (science of the soul) is an important introductory textbook drawing on the latest evidence in the sub-disciplines of psychology to provide a balanced and comprehensive view of human nature, behaviour and experience. Its foundation to develop theories about human nature is based upon the writings of the Qur'an, Sunnah, Muslim scholars and contemporary research findings.

Synthesising contemporary empirical psychology and Islamic psychology, this book is holistic in both nature and process and includes the physical, psychological, social and spiritual dimensions of human behaviour and experience. Through a broad and comprehensive scope, the book addresses three main areas: Context, perspectives and the clinical applications of applied psychology from an Islamic approach.

This book is a core text on Islamic psychology for undergraduate and postgraduate students and those undertaking continuing professional development courses in Islamic psychology, psychotherapy and counselling. Beyond this, it is also a good supporting resource for teachers and lecturers in this field.

Dr G. Hussein Rassool is Professor of Islamic Psychology, Consultant and Director for the Riphah Institute of Clinical and Professional Psychology/Centre for Islamic Psychology, Pakistan. He is accountable for the supervision and management of the four psychology departments, and has responsibility for scientific, educational and professional standards, and efficiency. He manages and coordinates the RICPP/Centre for Islamic Psychology programme of research and educational development in Islamic psychology, clinical interventions and service development, and liaises with the Head of the Departments of Psychology to assist in the integration of Islamic psychology and Islamic ethics in educational programmes and development of research initiatives and publication of research.

“Islamic Psychology is a fast-growing discipline. The present book is a pioneering effort to create a bridge between the conventional psychology, which I regard as reductionist, and the Islamic approach which is holistic and deals with the total human being. I strongly recommend it as a text for graduate programmes in Psychology.” – Professor Dr Anis Ahmad, Vice Chancellor, Riphah International University, Pakistan

“This pioneering work encompasses a variety of psychological topics from an Islamic perspective and is an essential text for students as well as practitioners of Islamic psychology. I congratulate the author for a job well done.” – Professor Dr Amber Haque, Professor of Clinical Psychology, Doha Institute for Graduate Studies, Doha, Qatar

“Prof G. Hussein’s book on Islamic Psychology is a blend of contemporary psychology and Islamic Psychology. The author has distinctively focused on the biological basis of behaviour grounded in Islamic teachings. I presume the mentioning of clinical supervision in this book is a unique contribution, which wasn’t mentioned in the Islamic psychology books previously.” – Professor Dr Muhammad Tahir Khalily, Vice President Academics and Professor of Clinical Psychology, International Islamic University Islamabad, Pakistan

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G. Hussein Rassool

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Abu Hurayrah reported the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) as saying: “If anyone pursues a path in search of knowledge, Allah will thereby make easy for him a path to paradise; and he who is made slow by his actions will not be speeded by his genealogy” (Sunan Abi Dawud).



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Praise be to Allah, we seek His help and His forgiveness. We seek refuge with Allah from the evil of our own souls and from our bad deeds. Whomsoever Allah guides will never be led astray, and whomsoever Allah leaves astray, no one can guide. I bear witness that there is no god but Allah, and I bear witness that Muhammad (ﷺ) is His slave and Messenger (Sunan al-Nasa'i: Kitaab al-Jumu'ah, Baab kayfiyyah al-khutbah).

- *Fear Allah as He should be feared and die not except in a state of Islam (as Muslims) with complete submission to Allah. (Ali 'Imran 3:102)¹*
- *O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person, and from him He created his wife, and from them both He created many men and women, and fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship) Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you). (Al-Nisā' 4:1)*
- *O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah and fear Him and speak (always) the truth). (Al-Ahẓāb 33:70)*
- *What comes to you of good is from Allah, but what comes to you of evil, [O man], is from yourself. (An-Nisā 4:79)*

The essence of this book is based on the following notions:

- The foundation of Islam as a religion is based on the Oneness of God.
- The source of knowledge is the Qur'an and Hadith (*Ahl as-Sunnah wa'l-Jamā'ah*).
- Empirical knowledge from sense perception is also a source of knowledge through the work of classical and contemporary Islamic scholars and research.
- Islam takes a holistic approach to health. Physical, psychological, social, emotional and spiritual health cannot be separated.
- Muslims have a different worldview or perception of illness and health behaviour.
- There is wide consensus amongst Muslim scholars that psychiatric or psychological disorders are legitimate medical conditions that are distinct from illnesses of a supernatural nature.
- Muslims believe that cures come solely from Allah (God) but seeking treatment for psychological and spiritual health does not conflict with seeking help from Allah.

It is a sign of respect that Muslims utter or repeat the words “Peace and Blessing Be Upon Him” after hearing (or writing) the name of Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ).

Note

- 1 The translations of the meanings of the verses of the Qur'an in this book have been taken, with some changes, from Saheeh International, The Qur'an: Arabic Text with corresponding English meanings.

Preface

This book on Islamic psychology is a synthesis of empirical psychology and Islamic psychology. The Islamic nature of the human being is whole, comprehensive and complete according to the Qur'an and Sunnah. It is holistic in both nature and process and includes the physical, psychological, social and spiritual dimensions. In essence, Islamic psychology provides a balanced and comprehensive view of human nature, behaviours and experiences. Islam provides a balanced focus between universal principles of human behaviours (with its universal laws and Shar'iah or Divine laws) and individual differences. The universal laws may include biological, social, psychological and economic dimensions based on empirical research. The Qur'an and Hadith provide guidance and basis to the laws of human nature. These laws can be used as the foundation to develop theories about human nature based upon the writings of Muslim scholars and contemporary research findings.

The concept of this book, reflected in the context and scope, attempts to address three main areas, these being the context, perspectives and applied psychology (clinical applications) from an Islamic approach. The aims of the book are to bring together both contemporary psychology and Islamic psychology, covering theories, application and providing a framework in one volume. It also aims to provide essential knowledge and understanding of the nature and psyche of human behaviour and the subdisciplines of psychology including developmental, social, health, cognitive, biological and abnormal psychology from an Islamic perspective. In addition, the contents of the book take this a step further by addressing existing issues from a more contemporary perspective by unravelling the topic and providing a parallel perspective from Islamic psychology. The book provides both theoretical understanding and clinical applications of the approach, whilst also addressing how to work with a wide range of psychological issues. The contents of the book expand on earlier texts in Islamic psychology and are presented in light of more recent research evidence. The book is, at least in part, a response to the questions posed by researchers, academics and clinicians, concerning the nature and focus of Islamic psychology.

The book is organised into seven parts (Parts I to VII) according to the sub-disciplines of psychology for easier reading, especially for those new to the topic of Islamic psychology. Part I sets the context by examining the concept of psychology, history of Islamic psychology origins and heritage and perspectives on human nature. Part II focuses on biological and developmental psychology, with chapters on the biological basis of behaviour, biological foundation, developmental and reproductive behaviours, lifespan development and learning and conditioning. Part III examines social and personality psychology and includes chapters on social psychology, personality development, emotion, motivation, altruism and helping behaviours. Part IV covers cognitive psychology and includes chapters on consciousness,

sleep and dreams, memory and reason, wisdom and intelligence. Part V is based on the sub-discipline of health psychology including chapters on health psychology and the Islamic model of health psychology. Part VI focuses on general and abnormal psychology with chapters on the psychology of addiction, mental health, spirituality and possession, models and approaches to disability and the anatomy of Islamic counselling and psychotherapy. Part VII is a postscript and deals with decolonising psychology, curriculum development, clinical supervision and challenges and solutions for Islamic psychology.

The features of the book include learning outcomes, summaries of key points and multiple-choice questions based on the contents of each chapter (Chapters 1–24).

The topic of Islamic psychology has received a rapidly growing amount of interest. This book is a core text on Islamic psychology for undergraduate and postgraduate students and those undertaking continuing professional development in Islamic psychology, psychotherapy and counselling. Beyond this, it would be a good supporting resource for teachers and lecturers due to the broad and comprehensive nature of the contents.

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All praise is due to Allah, and may the peace and blessings of Allah be upon our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), his family and his companions.

I would like to thank Eleanor Taylor and other supporting staff at Routledge for their valuable and constructive suggestions during the development of the proposal, and during the process of writing. It is with immense gratitude that I acknowledge the support and help from colleagues at Riphah Institute of Clinical and Professional Psychology/Centre for Islamic Psychology (RICPP/CIP) and faculty members at the Department of Psychology, International Open University, where I developed the undergraduate course in Islamic psychology.

I am thankful to my beloved parents who taught me the value of education. I am forever grateful to Mariam for her unconditional support and encouragement to pursue my interests, and for her tolerance of my periodic quest for seclusion in my home office, during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown in Lahore, Pakistan, to make this book a reality. I owe my gratitude to my family, including Idrees Khattab Ibn Adam Ali Hussein Ibn Hussein Ibn Hassim Ibn Sahaduth Ibn Rosool Al Mauritiusy, Adam Ali Hussein, Reshad Hasan, Yasmin Soraya, Isra Oya and Asiyah Maryam for their unconditional love and for providing unending inspiration. Thank you, Nabila Akhrif, for taking care of me while in London.

The author and publishers would like to thank Oxford University Press, Evelyn De Leeuw and Asim Abdelmoneim Hussein, (1999) for permission to use Figure 18.1, The Ottawa Charter, "Islamic health promotion and interculturalization," *Health Promotion International*, 14(4), 347–353. We would also like to thank the Canadian Cancer Society for the permission to use several figures including Figure 4.1, The structure of a neuron, Figure 4.3, The central nervous system and Figure 4.4, Lobes of the brain, <https://www.cancer.ca/en/cancer-information/cancer-type/brain-spinal/brain-and-spinal-tumours/the-brain-and-spinal-cord/?region=on> (permission 10th June 2020). Thank you to Umair Mudassar, Lecturer, Riphah Institute of Clinical and Professional Psychology, who designed some of the figures in the book.

I would like to acknowledge the contributions of my teachers who enabled me, through my own reflective practices, to understand Islam and from their guidance to follow the right path. Finally, whatever benefits and correctness you find within this book are out of the Grace of Allah, Alone, and whatever mistakes you find are mine alone. I pray to Allah to forgive me for any unintentional shortcomings regarding the contents of this book and to make this humble effort helpful and fruitful to any interested parties.

Whatever of good befalls you, it is from Allah; and whatever of ill befalls you, it is from yourself. [An-Nisā' (The Women) 4:79]



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Part I

Islamic psychology



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Context, definitions and perspectives

Learning outcomes

- Define psychology from a secular perspective.
- Identify the contributions of the Islamisation of knowledge movement in the development of Islamic psychology.
- Identify the problems and issues associated with the secularisation of psychology.
- Discuss the relationship of the Qur'an and psychology.
- Discuss the concept of Islamic psychology.
- Formulate your own definition of Islamic psychology.
- Discuss the different approaches to Islamic psychology.

Introduction

The past decades have seen a proliferation of literature on the soul-searching for an agreed definition, theoretical or conceptual model of Islamic psychology, and its clinical application. Various definitions and attempts to develop a theoretical model, organisational development and a model of the soul have been met with a degree of success (Kaplick and Skinner, 2017; Al-Karam, 2018a,b; Rothman and Coyle, 2018; Keshavarzi et al., 2020). However secular contemporary psychology has been promoted on a global scale, and its dominance has remained unchallenged in most academic institutions in the developing world, especially in majority-Muslim countries. Many Muslim psychologists have been educated in mostly Western universities or even in their own countries have remained in a “psycho-secular bubble.” It is apparent in many Muslim majority countries that the indigenous clinical and counselling psychologists have not only been acculturated by the Orientalist approach to psychology but also have internalised values which are alien to both their culture and Islamic traditions. Some of them have turned into the Muslim Freud with all the psychobabble of the Oedipus and Electra complexes and psychosexual development, and have followed blindly their “master’s voice.” This state of affairs resonates with the experiences of Malik Badri during his first lecture on Islamisation in 1963. Badri states that:

The lay audience liked it but my colleagues in the Department of Psychology were not happy with it. They prided themselves as scientists being guided by a neutral value-free scientific method in which there was no room for religious “dogma”. They used to

sarcastically ask me, “Is there a *fasiq* or evil physics or an un-Islamic chemistry? Then why speak to us about an Islamic psychology? If you do not accept Freudian psychoanalysis, then show us a better way to treat the emotionally disturbed.”

(Khan, 2015, p.161)

The emergence, current conceptualisations and the status of Islamic psychology should be viewed in their broader context, namely, the Islamisation of knowledge (IOK) movement. The Islamisation of knowledge movement gained momentum in the 1970s with the rise of the plight of the Muslim Ummah, the secularisation of the educational system in Muslim majority countries, the global re-awakening of Islamic consciousness and the concern of Muslim scholars towards the adoption of Western-oriented values and life-styles by Muslims. The concept of Islamisation of knowledge was proposed by Al-Attas (1978) who refers it to “The liberation of man first from magical, mythological, animistic, national-cultural tradition, and then from secular control over his reason and his language” (p.41). Al-Faruqi (1982) characterises “Islamisation of knowledge” as “Recasting knowledge according to Islamic tenets. It includes various activities including removing dichotomy between modern and traditional systems of education and producing university level textbooks” (pp.13, 48). According to Ragab (1999), Islamisation refers to the “Integration of Islamic revealed knowledge and the human sciences.” In this context, Islamisation of knowledge also refers to the “Islamisation of contemporary or present-day knowledge.” Yusuf (2015) argues that Islamisation of knowledge

is an attempt to fashion out an Islamic paradigm of knowledge based on the Islamic world view and its unique constitutive concepts and factors. This is because the knowledge as conceived in the West is value laden and has detached itself from Tawhid (unicity and sovereignty of God).

(p.69)

Dzilo (2012) maintains that the concept of “Islamisation of knowledge is not monosemous but involves multiple approaches to the various forms of modern-world thought in the context of the Islamic intellectual tradition, including metaphysical, epistemological, ethical and methodological premises regarding the modern issue of knowledge” (p.247). This means the integration of Islamic theology with scientific knowledge and evidence-based practice in diverse disciplines including psychology, sociology, health and medical sciences, economics and finance. This would result in psychological knowledge based on an Islamic world-view. Rassool (2019b; 2020) suggests that for psychology, the process of desecularisation has begun, and efforts are being made to reconstruct psychology based upon an Islamic epistemological paradigm. Perhaps we need to be reminded of a takeaway message from Malik Badri, the Father of contemporary Islamic psychology, that not all of Western psychology needs to be Islamised. Badri (1979) comments

We do not need to Islamise psychophysics or the physiology of sight and hearing and the anatomy of the eye and ear. Nor do we need to Islamise studies about the role of the brain neurotransmitter serotonin in our sleep behaviour and in adjusting our body clock, the role of the hormone noradrenalin in setting our energy level nor the influence of caffeine, alcohol or heroine on the human nervous system. We do not need to develop our

own Islamic statistical psychology or to raise an ethical battle against neutral theories of learning. Such areas, as I said are “no man’s land” between psychology and other exact sciences.

(p.9)

Contemporary psychology: Definitions

Psychology is a multifaceted discipline and as a science deals with the study of the nature of behaviour and experience. As a science, psychology attempts to study nature and nurture; our cognitive process; emotional behaviour; normal behaviour and abnormal behaviour; animal behaviour; social and collective behaviour; evolutionary behaviour; biological bases of behaviour; developmental process; organizational behaviour; health behaviours and illnesses; and how can we modify or change our behaviour. These are the objects of psychological investigation through research and the use of the scientific method, which entails observation, experiment, cause and effect, comparison, generalisation and robust analysis of data. The main goals of psychology are to describe, explain, predict and change human behaviours and mental processes.

Psychology, etymologically, means the science of the soul, that is, “psyche” means “breath, spirit, soul” and “logia” means “study of” or “research” (Online Etymology Dictionary, 2020).

Psychology is a new scientific discipline, though its origins can be traced back to ancient Greece, 400–500 years BC, and the emphasis was a philosophical one. The intellectual discourse of philosophers including Socrates, Plato and Aristotle focuses on the nature, origin and the destiny of the human soul, free will vs. determinism, nature vs. nurture, attraction, memory and consciousness, etc. The question of nature and environment factors was hotly debated, for example, Plato argued that certain kinds of knowledge are innate or inborn, whereas Aristotle believed that each child is born as an “blank slate” (in Latin, *tabula rasa*) and that knowledge is primarily acquired through learning and experience. The “*tabula rasa*” phenomenon was the seed of a school later known as behaviourism or the behaviourist school of psychology.

The label *psychologia* (or psychology) was first used by Marko Marulić in his book, *Psichiologia de Ratione Animae Humanae* in the late 15th century or early 16th century (Krstić, 1964). In the English language, the earliest known reference to the word psychology was by Steven Blankaart in *The Physical Dictionary* which refers to “Anatomy, which treats the Body, and Psychology, which treats of the Soul,” in 1694 (Colman, 2014). There are several stages in the definition and study of psychology from a historical viewpoint (see Figure 1.1).

- First stage: Psychology was defined as the “study of the soul or spirit.”
- Second stage: It was again defined as the “study of the mind” (Christian Wolff’s *Psychologia Empirica*, 1732).
- Third stage: William James (1890), psychology as the “Study of science of mental life, both of its phenomena and their conditions.” John B. Watson (1913), psychology as the acquisition of information useful to the control of behaviour.
- Fourth stage: Psychology as the study of human behaviour and experiences and the “study of total behaviour” (consciousness and unconsciousness).

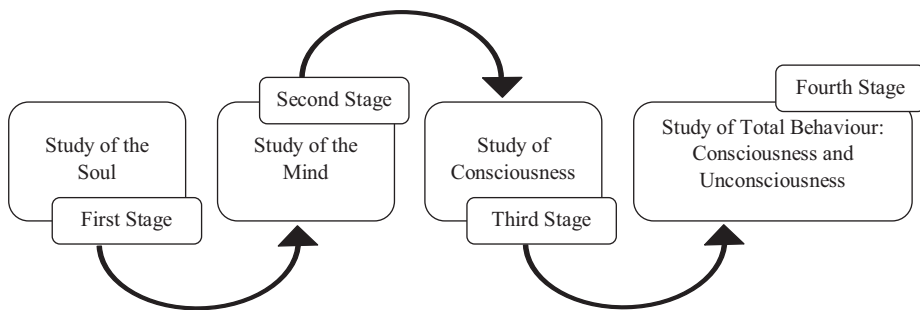


Figure 1.1 Stages in the study of psychology.

The American Psychological Association (2020) defines psychology as “the study of the mind and behaviour. Psychology is a diverse discipline, grounded in science, but with nearly boundless applications in everyday life.” Another definition of psychology is that it is

the scientific study of the mind and how it dictates and influences our behaviour, from communication and memory to thought and emotion. It’s about understanding what makes people tick and how this understanding can help us address many of the problems and issues in society today.

(British Psychological Society)

The definitions of psychology from the literature vary from the scientific study of the human behaviour and experience, to the study of the human mind, its functions and behaviour, and the study of consciousness and unconsciousness. However, some psychologists deny the reality of the unconscious, and a significant majority deny the reality of the soul.

Secularisation of psychology: Whose problem is it anyway?

Historically, before the separation of science and religion and the emergence of the Western scientific paradigm, the study of the soul held a prominent place in discussions related to psychology. The formal separation of science and religion is the result, in part, of the secularisation of Western contemporary societies. This alienation of religion within the paradigm of “soulless” psychology means that “religious ideas, practice, and organizations lose their influence in the face of scientific and other knowledge” (McLeish, 1995, p.668). The emphasis on the secularisation of modern psychology is based on the premise that religion is based upon faith which cannot be evaluated by objective methods, whereas science is based on empiricism and experimentation in order to establish facts that are verifiable.

According to this philosophy, “the universe is self-sufficient, without supernatural cause or control, and that in all probability the interpretation of the world given by sciences is the only satisfactory explanation of reality” (Honer et al., 2015). Heiman (1998) maintains that “Faith is the acceptance of the truth of a statement without questions or needing proof,” and scientists, “question and ask for proof” (p.7). Reber (2006) asserts that “although secularisation

has changed the nature and quality of the relationship between psychology and religion it has not undone the relationship altogether. Religion still matters for many people, including psychologists, at some level” (p.194).

What is of interest here is the work of William James (1902/1999) in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, because he warned about the separation of religious experience from the academic pursuit of understanding human behaviour. James argued that,

to describe the world with all the various feelings of the individual pinch of destiny, all the various spiritual attitudes, left out from the description—they being as describable as anything else—would be something like offering a printed bill of fare as the equivalent for a solid meal.

(p.543)

He made three cardinal points: There is a variety of feelings, attitudes and experience that are religious in nature and significant to human life; religious experiences are as describable as any other human experience; and any description of human life that excludes religious experience will be incomplete in understanding human behaviour.

The problem with secular psychologists including Muslim psychologists in the “lizard’s hole” (see below) is the failure to include ethical behaviours or ethical intelligence within the paradigm of secular psychology. However, despite their recognition of the inclusion of a “Code of Ethics” for therapy or research involving animals or human participants, they still reject that human ethics and values form part of the dimensions of psychology. A more integrated psychology of the 21st century, rather than being stuck in its colonial and Orientalist past, would have ethics and human values of what is right or wrong, good or evil, “as philosophical and religious issues like ethics, human values, aesthetics, and the nature of life have everything to do with psychology” (Reber, 2006, p.200). In summary, Badri (1979) makes this position clear in relation to the “soullessness of Western psychology” by stating that

There is no mention at all of the other aspects of man. The religious, the spiritual or at least the transcendental ... Criteria which fail to include the spiritual side of man can only find anchorage in a society blinded by materialism. In such a society, the behaviour of spiritually motivated practising individuals may brand them as misfits, eccentrics or abnormal.

(p.24)

The main limitations of contemporary secular psychology are presented in Table 1.1.

Despite the claim that psychology is a science, Kuhn (1962) argues as a science emerges and develops, it progresses through four distinct stages: Pre-paradigm, normal science/paradigm, crisis and revolution. Since psychology is in the initial pre-paradigm stage, it is somewhat fragmented and characterised by eclecticism (Kuhn, 1962; Sankey, 2002). That is, the theoretical and conceptual framework and approaches, methodologies and techniques are eclectic and derived from a broad and diverse range of sources. Others believe that psychology has already experienced scientific revolutions. Whether it is pre-paradigm or not should not distract from the fact that the source of psychology is based on philosophical discourse and the study of the human soul.

Table 1.1 Limitations of secular psychology

<i>Authors</i>	<i>Limitations of secular psychology</i>
Badri (1979) p.24	“Criteria which fail to include the spiritual side of man can only find anchorage in a society blinded by materialism. In such a society, the behaviour of spiritually motivated practising individuals may brand them as misfits, eccentrics or abnormal.”
D'Souza and Rodrigo (2004)	Lack of cultural sensitivity and competence in dealing with clients' religious beliefs and practices.
James (1902/1999)	Any description of human life that excludes religious experience will be incomplete and will fail to provide a full and rich understanding of human life.
Plato (trans by Jowett, 1982)	“The cure of the part should not be attempted without treatment of the whole. No attempt should be made to cure the body without the soul. Let no one persuade you to cure the head until he has first given you his soul to be cured, for this is the great error of our day, that physicians first separate the soul from the body.”
Reber (2006) p.200	Exclusion of ethics, human values and the nature of life. What is right or wrong, good or evil?
Reber (2006) p.196	“Modern secularism results in an incomplete psychology of human life because it excludes many religious aspects of life that are widespread and important to many people, including many psychologists.”
Richards and Bergin, (2005) p.37	Scientific naturalism provides an impoverished view of human nature and does not adequately account for the complexities and mysteries of life and of the universe.
Zaraboso (2002) p.49	Humans are viewed as independent of their Creator and Lord.
Zaraboso (2002) p.49	Theories are based upon human intellect alone, while discounting revelation from the Creator.
Zaraboso (2002) p.49	Knowledge and research focus only on the tangible aspects of humans, while ignoring the spiritual and unseen elements.
Zaraboso (2002) p.49	Behaviours are generally seen to be determined solely by drives, reflexes, conditioning and social influences.
Zaraboso (2002) pp.44–45	Dangers of fabricated or secular theories: Leading people to the wrong path for spiritual purification. People are duped into thinking theories that are supported by false but cleverly stated arguments are true and beneficial. The end result is that people can become blind to their misguidedness.
Utz (2011) p.29	The secular definition of psychology “assumes that we were put in this world and left to our own devices, without any divine intervention.”

The Qur'an and psychology

- *Indeed, We sent down to you the Book for the people in truth. So, whoever is guided - it is for [the benefit of] his soul; and whoever goes astray only goes astray to its detriment. And you are not a manager over them. (Az-Zumar 39:41)*

The Qur'an is a guidance for the whole of mankind, not just the believers. The message of the Qur'an has reference to individual self-care, relationships, family, marriage, social welfare, embryological and developmental stages, emotional behaviours, prosocial behaviours, spiritual and ethical intelligence, personality, need for learning and knowledge and many

other holistic facets of human behaviours and experiences. In addition, there are proscribed behaviours including suicide, sexual perversions, gambling, alcohol and drug misuse, crime and racial discrimination. Though the Qur'an is not an encyclopaedia of health, it is a spiritual, social, psychological and economic guide in the understanding of human behaviours and experiences. The messages of the Qur'an that Allah has revealed are crystal clear, and these messages are to be implemented as a complete way of life for all mankind. The verses of the Qur'an encourage us to repeatedly "reflect" on its contents, and to understand, think and put into practice its messages and commands. From its teachings, we discover that at the core, we are both physical and spiritual beings who are in need of the purification of the soul and to sustain a connection with our Creator, Allah. The psychological language of the Qur'an depicts all kinds of human behaviours and psychological experiences. Utz (2011) suggested that

Our thoughts, emotions, will and behaviour must focus on attaining the pleasure of Allah. The key to sound mental health and well-being from the Islamic perspective is submission to Allah, the Exalted, the Almighty and His commandments, and to subsequently purifying the soul.

(p.25)

Allah states in the Qur'an (interpretation of the meaning):

- *We have not neglected in the Register a thing.* (Al-An'am 6:38)

In the above verse, Allah mentions that nothing has been neglected in this Register (Qur'an) and that the knowledge about all things is with Allah. According to the Islamic perspective, the primary source of knowledge and authority in Islam is divine knowledge from the Qur'an, and guidance from the Traditions (Sunnah) of Prophet Muhammed (ﷺ). Allah, the Almighty, has the knowledge of everything and knows us better than we know ourselves. Allah says in the Qur'an (interpretation of the meaning):

- *And with Him are the keys of the unseen; none knows them except Him. And He knows what is on the land and in the sea. Not a leaf falls but that He knows it. And no grain is there within the darknesses of the earth and no moist or dry [thing] but that it is [written] in a clear record.* (Al-An'am 6:59)
- *And We have already created man and know what his soul whispers to him, and We are closer to him than [his] jugular vein.* (Qaf 50:16)

So, Allah knows what is in our heart and soul. According to Ibn Kathir, the above verse (Qaf 50:16) means that "Allah the Exalted affirms His absolute dominance over mankind, being their Creator and the Knower of everything about them. Allah the Exalted has complete knowledge of all thoughts that cross the mind of man, be they good or evil." It has been suggested that

Revelation is the foundation upon which all knowledge is built; it is perfect and complete. This reflects the Muslims' firm and unwavering belief in their scripture (the Qur'an) as the final revealed word of Allah, a conviction that is unique to Islam.

(Utz, 2011, p.39)

One of the first verses of the Qur'an notes this fact (interpretation of the meaning):

- *This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those conscious of Allah.* (Al-Baqarah 2:2)

The divine knowledge of the Qur'an is knowledge of an infinite nature. Allah says in the Qur'an (interpretation of the meaning):

- *Say, "If the sea were ink for [writing] the words of my Lord, the sea would be exhausted before the words of my Lord were exhausted, even if We brought the like of it as a supplement."* (Al-Kahf 18:109)

This means, according to Ibn Kathir, "Say, O Muhammad, if the water of the sea were ink for a pen to write down the words, wisdom and signs of Allah, the sea would run dry before it all could be written down. (even if We brought like it) means, another sea, then another, and so on, additional seas to be used for writing. The Words of Allah would still never run out."

Knowledge is also gained from sense perception and rationalism (logical reasoning), and these sources should not be neglected. Giving priority to revelation does not debase science, knowledge from empiricism, intuition and reason. However, scientific evidence would be judged and evaluated according to the criteria of divine revelation. Muslim psychologists should attempt to put Islamic ethical considerations before rationality, and empirical evidence, and these should become secondary to the primary source. Enquiring or probing is permissible in Islam so as to arrive at the truth (Leaman, 2006, p.571). This is reflected in the following verse (interpretation of the meaning):

- *And [mention] when Abraham said, "My Lord, show me how You give life to the dead." [Allah] said, "Have you not believed?" He said, "Yes, but [I ask] only that my heart may be satisfied." [Allah] said, "Take four birds and commit them to yourself. Then [after slaughtering them] put on each hill a portion of them; then call them – they will come [flying] to you in haste. And know that Allah is Exalted in Might and Wise."* (Al-Baqarah 2:260)

From the verse shown above, it has been suggested that it is evident that Allah entertained the query [from Prophet Abraham] (Leaman, 2006, p.572). In fact, mankind has been asked repeatedly in the Qur'an to contemplate and reflect on the working of nature, paying attention to the signs that they can find within themselves or in the universe and find out the truths. The following two verses illustrate the contemplation and reflection of the universe. Allah says in the Qur'an (interpretation of the meaning):

- *Say, "Observe what is in the heavens and earth." But of no avail will be signs or warners to a people who do not believe.* (Yunus 10:101)
- *We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth. But is it not sufficient concerning your Lord that He is, over all things, a Witness?* (Fussilat 41:53)

It is important to note that

the Qur'an was revealed "to the heart" of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) by [Angel] Gabriel (Al-Baqarah 2.97). At (Ash-Shu'ara 26.193–194) we read that it was transmitted

by the faithful spirit (*Ruh*) “upon your heart”, thus cementing the links between the heart (*Qalb*) of humanity and the spirit (*Ruh*) or [Angel] Gabriel. The psychology of the Qur’an takes seriously the idea that we are in between the material and the spiritual. (Leaman, 2006, p.441)

Evolution of Islamic psychology: Context

During the 20th century, there was an awakening of the Muslim Ummah regarding the encroaching secular ideologies in education and the social sciences. The evolution or the “Dodo Bird Revival” (coined by Rassool, 2019) of Islamic psychology did not materialise in a vacuum. Several Islamic movements, including the Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS), scholars, theologians and revivalists had a significant influence on the “Islamisation of knowledge.” One of the fundamental question of the First World Conference on Muslim Education, held in 1977, was whether partial acceptance of the “Western” mode of secular thought in the field of the social sciences is actually possible without a detrimental impact on the Islamic way of life and thinking. The recommendation made for the social sciences was that the disciplines should be reformulated from an Islamic perspective regarding man and society. Further developments arose as Professor Ismail Raji al-Faruqi founded the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) in the USA, 1981, with the aim of launching a programme of activities concerned with the integration of the revealed Islamic sciences and secular sciences under the rubric of Islamisation of knowledge. Professor Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas founded the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation with the aim to uphold the vision of the First World Conference on Muslim Education. There are several scholars and polymaths, who had contributed to the spiritual development and Islamic perspective on psychology, who directly or indirectly had a significant influence on the Islamisation of knowledge. These include Aḥmad al-Fārūqī al-Sirhindī, Shāh Walīullāh Dehlawī (also Shah Wali Allah), Allama Muhammad Iqbal, and Maulana Abul A’la Maududi and Sayyed Hossein Nasr. Despite four decades of achievements in the recommendations of the World Conferences on Muslim Education in various projects, “the task of Islamisation of Social Sciences and Social Studies has not proceeded as desired” (Saqeb, 2000, p.64).

It is against this background in the late 1970s that Badri (1979) in *The Dilemma of Muslim Psychologists* cautioned Muslim psychologists of blind copying (psychological *Taqleed*) of Western, non-Islamic ideas and practices. The book was based on a paper entitled: “Muslim Psychologists in the Lizard’s Hole” read in 1975 at the fourth annual convention of the Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS) of the United States and Canada. The “lizard’s hole” is a Prophetic Hadith. It was narrated from Abu Hurairah that the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said:

You will most certainly follow the ways of those who came before you, arm’s length by arm’s length, forearm’s length by forearm’s length, hand span by hand span, until even if they entered a hole of a mastigure (lizard) you will enter it too.

They said: “O Messenger of Allah, (do you mean) the Jews and the Christians?” He said: “Who else?” (Ibn Majah).

In the sphere of Islamisation, it has been reported that “Badri was greatly influenced by the writings of Mohammad Qutb, particularly his book titled Islam: ‘The Misunderstood Religion’ and by the writings of Mawdudi [Abul A’la Maududi]” (Khan, 2015, p.160). In the psychological field, he was influenced by both Hans Eysenck, of the Institute of Psychiatry,

Maudsley and Bethlem Hospital, London, and Joseph Wolpe, a South African psychiatrist and one of the most influential figures in behaviour therapy, and Victor Meyer, behaviour therapist at the Middlesex Hospital Medical School. Badri's (1979) warning was to save Muslim psychologists from being trapped in the "lizard's hole" that is implicit in other disciplines of human life and thoughts. However, five decades have passed since the cautionary observations from Badri about the blind following of secular psychology and the development of an Islamic paradigm of psychology. Since then, there have been some significant world-wide developments, slowly but surely, in Islamic psychology and psychotherapy. Haque et al. (2016) in a review of literature identified five themes that have emerged over a period of nine years. The five themes emerged are:

- 1) Unification of western psychological models with Islamic beliefs and practices; 2) Research on historical accounts of Islamic Psychology and its rebirth in the modern era; 3) Development of theoretical models and frameworks within Islamic Psychology; 4) Development of interventions and techniques within Islamic psychology; and 5) Development of assessment tools and scales normed for use with Muslims.

(p.78)

More recently, the literature has been augmented with *Islamic Counselling: An Introduction to Theory and Practice* (Rassool, 2016); an Islamic theory of human psychology has been developed through empirical research (Rothman and Coyle, 2018); integrating the Islamic faith with modern psychotherapy (Al-Karam ed., 2018a); and the clinical application of Traditional Islamically Integrated Psychotherapy (TIIP) (Keshavarzi et al., 2020). In sum, what is at stake is the percolation of the theoretical or conceptual framework of Islamic psychology, and the application of integrated psychotherapeutic techniques down to the grass-root levels, to become available to practitioners in the field for use in their clinical practice, remains distant. The biggest disappointment after more than five decades of the "evolution of Islamic psychology" is that there is a dearth of educational framework and curriculum development in the integration of Islamic ethics in psychology. Despite the absence of educational philosophy and curriculum approaches in Islamic psychology, this has not deterred some institutions from developing professional continuing courses in Islamic psychology, psychotherapy and counselling.

Concept of Islamic psychology

In the literature, the use of the concept of Islamic psychology also denotes Islamic psychotherapy and counselling. Islamic psychology or '*ilm al-Nafs* or the science of the *Nafs* (soul or self) is the philosophical study of the soul from an Islamic perspective. Muslim scholars have used various terms to describe the concept of Islamic psychology and psychotherapy including *Tibb al-nufus*, *Ilaj al-nafts*, *al-Tibb al-ruhaniy*, *Tahdhib al-nufus*, *Tathir al-nufus*, *Tazkiyat al-nafts*, *Tasfiyat al-nufus* and *Mudawat al-nufus*, etc. (Sham, 2015). Other scholars labelled Islamic psychology (or purification of the soul or refinement of the soul) in the following ways:

- Miskawayh in '*Tahdhib al-akhlaq*': *Tib al-nufus*; *Atibba' al-nufus*; or c *Ilaj al-nafts* in the same book.

- Abu Bakar al-Razi in *al-Tibb al-ruhani: al-Tibb al-ruhani*.
- Ibn Bajjah's *'Ilm al-nafs: Ibn Bajjah's Psychology*.
- Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyya in *'Risalat fi amrad al-qulub': c Ilaj al-nafs*.
- Shaykh ibn Ata Allah 'Sakandari in *'Taj Al-Arus Al-Hawi Li Tahdhib Al-Nufus': Tahdhib al-nufus*.
- Muhammad c Uthman Najati in *'Al-Hadith al-Nabawi wa ilm al-Nafs': c Ilaj al-nafs*.

In contemporary times, Islamic psychology has been defined according to the author's orientation to the "Islam and psychology movement" (Kaplick and Skinner, 2017). Some definitions are clearly defined, at times too comprehensively to be operationally used, and others are an amalgam of psychology and Islam. A few definitions can easily be labelled as "old wine in a new bottle." Al-Karam (2018b) argues that

A review of a number of publications that have the term "Islamic Psychology" [IP] in the title reveals two basic trends: scholars either talk about IP without defining it, as if the reader is supposed to know what the author means by the term or as if it some clearly defined and well-understood concept, or they define it, but provide no discussion of the methodology used to come up with the definition. Both trends are problematic.
(pp.99–100)

Let us examine some definitions of Islamic psychology. Although there is no single standard definition, if one examines the many definitions that have been proposed, there are some similarities between definitions. In some cases, different definitions, suitably interpreted, actually say the same thing but in different words. This is purely a subjective selection.

One comprehensive definition of Islamic psychology is from the International Association of Islamic Psychology (2018).

Psychology, as it is generally practiced, only represents a part of the whole. Often the soul is not taken into account. Islamic psychology is a holistic approach that endeavours to better understand the nature of the self and the soul and the connection of the soul to the Divine. It conceptualizes the human being with a focus on the heart as the centre of the person more so than the mind and is grounded in the teachings of the Qur'an, Prophetic teachings, and the knowledge of the soul from the Islamic tradition. Islamic psychology embraces modern psychology, traditional spirituality, metaphysics and ontology.

The definition from International Association of Islamic Psychology is an explanation of what is lacking with contemporary psychology but provide some elements of Islamic psychology based on al-Ghazâlî's concept of the soul. The definition incorporates the science of contemporary psychology. Another comprehensive definition is from Al-Karam (2018b).

An interdisciplinary science where psychology subdisciplines and/or related disciplines engage scientifically about a particular topic and at a particular level with various Islamic sects, sources, sciences, and/or schools of thought using a variety of methodological tools.

(pp.101–102)

The above definition is based on “The Multilevel Interdisciplinary Paradigm” and

This structure serves as a template for how to think about complex and multidimensional disciplines, such as Islamic Psychology, that are inherently interdisciplinary. The template then serves as a methodology for defining the discipline because it is the structure of the model itself that provides it.

(Al-Karam, 2018b, p.101)

In doing so Al-Karam incorporates all the psychology disciplines and their application to all Islamic sects, despite cultural and religious differences, under the umbrella of Islamic psychology. Though this is a comprehensive definition by Al-Karam, the main concern is its fuzziness in contents and approach. The definition focuses on a “one-size-fits-all” paradigm and reads more like the principles of Islamic psychology rather than a definition. However, Al-Karam (2020) has provided a refined vision of Islamic psychology. She maintains that “That vision portrays IP [Islamic psychology] as having an inner [*batin*] dimension and an outer [*dhahir*] dimension and that we should think about it as an integral part of the psychology mainstream.” More refinement is needed for this to be fully accepted as a valid definition. In the same tone, Kaplick and Skinner (2017) did not define Islamic psychology but “Islam and psychology” (referring to the broader movement that relates Islam to psychology in general), is “the interdisciplinary field that explores human nature in relation to Islamic sources and which uses this knowledge to bring human beings into their best possible state, physically, spiritually, cognitively, and emotionally” (p.199). This is a holistic definition of Islam and psychology involving all the dimensions of human nature using knowledge from Islamic sources. Does this mean that knowledge from other sources will not be entertained?

The next categories are definitions of Islamic psychology focusing on the Qur’an, Sunnah, Shari’ah, etc. For instance, Begum (2016) states that

Islamic psychology (Ilm Ul Nafs) is the study of the “self” (*nafs*) or the “psyche” from an Islamic perspective with concepts that are not included in Western forms of studying the field i.e. the unseen influences, the impact of destiny, the sway of the *Shaytaan* [devil] and the inclusion of the soul.

This definition has themes such as the self (*Nafs*), unseen influences (*Ghayb*), destiny (*Qadar*) and control of the devil. This definition is like a mini encyclopaedia of the Qur’an and implicit in the “definition” is that the *Nafs* is not perceived as the soul. Other authors like Siddiqui and Malek (1996) view Islamic psychology as the application of Shar’iah. They suggest that Islamic psychology is “the study of persons who have complete surrender and submission and obey the laws of God.” It is quite a surprising definition, and it is totally unclear how they arrived at that definition. Perhaps what they mean is that by submission to Allah by obeying His command and laws, people may be able to purify themselves. In a similar tone, Vahab (1996) defines Islamic psychology as “the study of the manifestation of God in nature as reflected in the behavioural patterns of all living and non-living organisms in all walks of their lives using the Islamic paradigms.” Yet again, it is unclear what the author’s intention is in his definition.

Betteridge (2012) views Islamic psychology as relating

to all aspects of Islamic teaching from the Holy Qur'an, Hadith and Sunnah which directly mention or relate to aspects of the human psyche, with particular emphasis on maintaining a healthy mental state or causes and treatments of an unhealthy mental state. (p.6)

Abdul Aziz (2018) views Islamic psychology as

the psychology of Self (*al-Nafs*) and specifically, it is the psychology of spirituality. Islamic psychology stresses the idea of spiritual psychology as being the foundation to the development of human personality. In Islamic psychology, the Self conforms to its *fitrah* and it is consistent with the teachings of the Qur'an and Hadith (s).

Alizi (2017) defines Islamic psychology as "The scientific study of manifestation of the soul in the form of behaviour and mental process." Alizi's definition has the dual components of using scientific methodologies (Qur'anic sciences and scientific method) and also the inclusion of the soul. According to Alizi, the "definition will make Muslim psychologists use soul as the general framework in interpreting psychological data (behaviour and mental processes) instead of the limited approach of biological, psychodynamic, behavioural, humanistic, and cognitive perspectives in psychology."

One of the classical and operational definitions of psychology is from Utz (2011). She defined Islamic psychology as "the study of the soul; the ensuing behavioural, emotional, and mental processes; and both the seen and unseen aspects that influence these elements" (p.34). For Utz, it is the soul that drives human behaviour, emotions and mental processes. The essence of man is spiritual and metaphysical. According to Utz (2011),

since its [the soul] true nature is spiritual, the soul requires a spiritual connection to its source, the Creator, just as the body requires food and water to survive. In the Islamic conceptualisation of psychology, aspects of both the seen and unseen world may influence humans. Islamic psychology incorporates additional aspects of the unseen world to explain human nature.

(p.35)

However, this definition has been criticised by Muslim secular psychologists on the grounds that it deals with the soul or the unseen aspects that influence behaviours and experiences. The current scientific paradigm with its secular approach fails to recognise this spiritual dimension of life. However, Utz's definition has been very popular with students of Islamic psychology because of its simplicity, and because it is easy to comprehend and can be related to the real work. It encapsulates what Islamic psychology is and should be without the verbiage that accompanies most definitions in the current literature.

This final definition of Islamic psychology was generated at a workshop on "Islamic Psychology Curriculum Development" at the Riphah Institute of Clinical and Professional Psychology and the Centre for Islamic Psychology, Riphah International University, Pakistan, in February 2020. Small groups of participants were formed, and their task was to come up

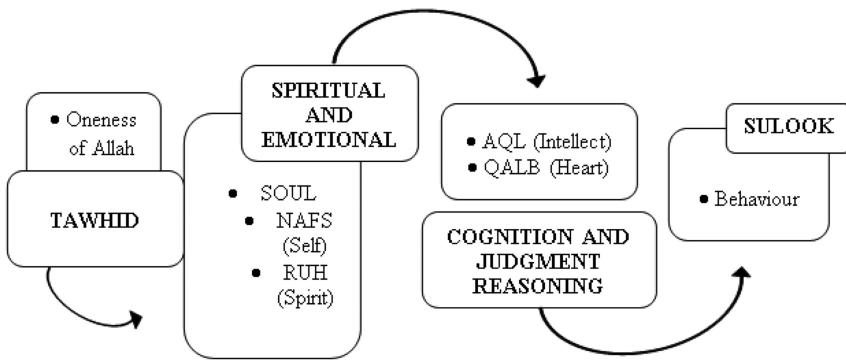


Figure 1.2 Conceptual definition of Islamic psychology.

with a number of definitions of Islamic psychology. Through the process of elimination, a final definition was selected by the 20 participants. The definition is that

Islamic Psychology is the study of the soul, mental processes and behaviour according to the principles of psychology and Islamic sciences.

(Rassool et al., 2020)

In the conceptualisation of Islamic psychology, aspects of the soul and cognitive, affective and behavioural processes are studied within the evidence-based paradigm (compatible with Islamic beliefs and practices) and Islamic sciences. This definition and its conceptual framework are still under construction. Figure 1.2 depicts the conceptual definition of Islamic psychology.

The above section has demonstrated that definitions of Islamic psychology are not a homogeneous academic entity. In reality, there will be multiple definitions of Islamic psychology based on the school of thought, orientation and worldview of the author(s). If Islamic psychology is considered to be holistic in approach, thus diversity in definitions and approaches will be on the agenda of both academics and clinicians. Table 1.2 presents a summary of the themes of Islamic psychology from the literature.

Whither psychology?

There is already a divergence of opinions of what constitutes Islamic psychology, and the same is applicable to Islamic psychotherapy and counselling. A number of schools of thought have emerged in the midst of this knowledge gap. However, before examining the different schools of thought, it is valuable to consider the different kinds of Islamic psychology. Since the 20th century many kinds of “Islamic psychology” have been developed. Ashraf Ali Thanvi (1873–1943), referred to as the “Physician of the Muslims” [*Hakim al-ummat*], can be regarded as “Hakim-Psychologist.” He used various psychosocial and spiritual interventions in the treatment of psychological and spiritual disorders. There is Muslim psychology, developed in Pakistan in the late 1970s by A. A. Rizvi and the establishment of the Institute of Muslim Psychology. Muslim psychology is also taught as a module in the undergraduate

Table 1.2 A summary of the themes of Islamic psychology

<i>Authors</i>	<i>Themes of Islamic psychology</i>
Mohamed (1995, 2009)	Fitra
Shafii (1985); Skinner (1989); Haeri (1989)	Sufism (Tasawwuf)
Khalil (2014)	Rida
Koshravi and Bagheri (2006)	Action
Siddiqui and Malek (1996)	Complete surrender and submission and obey the laws of God
Vahab (1996)	Manifestation of God in nature. Behavioural patterns of all living. Islamic paradigm
Al-Karam (2018a,b)	Tazkiyat al-nafs Inner [<i>batin</i>] dimension and an outer [<i>dhahir</i>] dimension
Haque and Keshavarzi (2013); York Al-Karam (2015)	Islamic concepts or spiritual therapies: Dhikr, Ruqya etc., psychotherapy
Haque (2004); Awaad and Ali (2014, 2015)	Synonymous with the works: Al-Kindi, Al-Razi, Al-Balkhi, Al-Ghazali
York Al-Karam (2018a); Keshavarzi et al. (2020)	Islamically integrated psychotherapy
Utz (2011); Badri (2000)	Western psychology and Islamic theology
Abu-Raiya (2012, 2014); Haque and Keshavarzi (2013); Keshavarzi and Khan (2018); Rothman and Coyle (2018)	Ruh, Qalb, Aql, Nafs, Ihsas, Irada
Bonab and Kooshar (2011); Bonab et al. (2013)	Tawheed, Taqwa, Tawba, Jihad al-Nafs
Rassool (2016); Rassool (2020)	Islamic counselling Soul, mental processes and behaviour: Principles of psychology and Islamic sciences
Kaplick and Skinner (2017); Abu Raiya (2012)	Islam and psychology
Bakhtiar (2019)	Quranic psychology
Betteridge (2012)	Teaching from the Holy Qur'an, Hadith and Sunnah. Human psyche. Healthy mental state
Younos (2017)	Theo-ethics, socio-ethics and psycho-ethics Spiritual diseases of the heart Islamic personality theory Muslim mental health Psychology about Muslim, by Muslims or for Muslims Equate to Western conceptions (such as Freud's) Reliance and attachment to God

Source: Adapted from Al-Karam (2018b, p.98).

psychology programme in four universities in Pakistan. In India, there is the Indian Council on Islamic Perspective in Psychology (ICIPP).

Recently we have a new psychology on the scene called Quranic Psychology (Bakhtiar, 2019). It is stated in the description of the book that

Quranic Psychology has a goal—to prepare us for our return to whence we came—to strengthen or return to our *fitrat* [*Fitra*] Allah as the monotheist we were created

to be through engaging our moral intelligence (MI). We do this, according to Quranic Psychology, by strengthening our *Nafs al-mutma'innah* ('Aql, reason, intellect, spirit) to dominate over our *Nafs al-ammarah* (affect-behaviour) through our reasoning, adhering to our mind (*Sadr*) and *Nafs al-lawwamah*, bringing awareness and consciousness to our *Nafs al-mulhamah* (*Qalb*, "heart") of God-consciousness (*Taqwa*) and the constant Presence of God in our lives.

What is of great interest and challenging is the identification of a fourth Qur'anic aspect of the soul, the *Nafs al-mulhamah* (the inspired soul that fluctuates).

During the past four decades, the emergence of the "Islam and psychology" movement (Kaplick and Skinner, 2017) has nudged Muslim psychologists, clinicians and academics to redefine psychology and its clinical applications in order to meet the psychosocial needs of the Muslim Ummah. Within this movement, there was a growth of a diversity of approach in shaping a valid Islamic psychology discipline. Long (2014) suggests that approaches to Islamic psychology "have taken one of two forms: a critical revision of Western psychology—involving the exegesis of relevant passages from the Qur'an—or an elaboration of the classical Islamic legacy. A theocentric-individualistic outlook marks both strands" (p.15). This is similar to the "Filter and Islamic psychology" approaches as illustrated by Kaplick and Skinner (2017). Kaplick and Skinner (2017) identified three broad approaches to the literature: The Islamic filter approach, the Islamic psychology approach and the comparison approach.

- Islamic filter approach: Critical review of Western psychology paradigm but operating within the framework of Western psychology. Incorporation of "Indigenous" psychology.
- Comparison approach: Finding a common ground between Western psychological concepts and matching those concepts in Islamic sources.
- Islamic psychology approach: Emphasis on traditional Islamic thought at the foundation of the discipline. The classical Muslim scholars as secondary sources and conceptualising Islamic psychology as being derived from Islamic sources

Seedat (2020) commented that

Both the comparison approach, attempting to demonstrate convergences, and the filter approach, aspiring to incorporate "indigenous" Islamic psychological practices into contemporary psychology, seem to be referenced primarily against Western psychological theory and thought. Whether and how knowledge from subaltern cultures may be transposed to dominant ones is highly contested.

(p.2)

In contrast Rassool (2019b; 2020) has identified three schools of thoughts that have emerged in the "Islam and psychology movement": The Orientalist approach, Integrationist approach and the "Tawhid Paradigm" approach. The Orientalist group, with minimalist Islamic traditions embedded within their framework, are, instead of decolonising psychology (Seedat, 2020), globalising Islamic psychology. The Integrationist group, with a mixture of orthodox psychology, mixed with Sufi ideologies and practice, use a mixture of Islamic traditions and folk psychology; and the "Tawhid Paradigm" approach is based on the Qur'an and Sunnah embedded with the framework of the theory and practice of secular psychology that are congruent with Islamic beliefs and practices. However all three approaches claim that they are

in line with the traditions of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jamaa'ah* (those who adhere to the Sunnah and who unite upon it, not turning to anything else, whether that be in matters of belief (*'Aqeedah*) or matters of actions which are subject to *shar'i* [*Shari'ah*] rulings) (Islam Q&A, 2001). These indicated approaches are reflected in their conceptual framework and clinical and educational practices.

Long (2014) argues about the attempts to indigenise psychology “from within” or “from without” are problematic. That is, it becomes apparent that attempts to indigenise psychology are between “Scylla and Charybdis.”¹ Long (2014) maintains that “indigenisation from without” is a paradox because “Western psychology is saturated in a secular metatheory that cannot accommodate the Islamic worldview, any attempted revision must remain, in spirit, no different from the original articulation” (p.17). The other alternative, “indigenisation from within,” necessitates an expansion of the work of classical Muslim scholars. Long regards this as problematic as well. He asserts that

Early Muslim contributions to the field of psycho-spirituality were suitable for the social constellations of the pre-modern Muslim world. In light of the present-day homogenisation of world culture, one may well ask whether Muslim societies consider traditional forms of social organisation to be desirable any longer.

Long (2014) articulates the “indigenisation from within” approach from

Muslim apologists – many of whom have never received professional training in psychology and have focused consequently on the details of Islamic spirituality to the virtual exclusion of the secular discipline. In these cases, it is not psychology that is being Islamicised but Islamic spirituality that is being advocated.

(p.17)

Whether we are able to develop a unified Islamic theoretical framework from “indigenisation from within” and from “indigenisation from without” remains a challenge. However, in order to have a valid and robust Islamic psychology, it must meet all the criteria to be considered “Islamic.” That means it must adhere to authentic sources and proofs that are employed to understand human nature and behaviour from an Islamic perspective.

Summary of key points

- The emergence, current conceptualisations and the status of Islamic psychology should be viewed in their broader context, namely, the Islamisation of knowledge (IOK) movement.
- Islamisation of knowledge is not monosemous but involves multiple approaches to the various forms of modern-world thought in the context of the Islamic intellectual tradition, including metaphysical, epistemological, ethical and methodological premises regarding the modern issue of knowledge.
- Psychology is the scientific study of human behaviour and experience.
- The emphasis on the secularisation of modern psychology is based on the premise that religion is based upon faith which cannot be evaluated by objective methods, whereas science is based on empiricism and experimentation in order to establish facts that are verifiable.

- The message of the Qur'an has reference to individual self-care, relationships, family, marriage, social welfare, embryological and developmental stages, emotional behaviours, spiritual and ethical intelligence, personality, need for learning and knowledge and many other holistic facets of human behaviours and experiences.
- Several Islamic movements, including the Association of Muslim Social Scientists (AMSS), scholars, theologians and revivalists, have had significant influence on the "Islamisation of knowledge."
- Badri's warning was to save Muslim psychologists being trapped in the "lizard's hole" that is implicit in other disciplines of human life and thoughts.
- Islamic psychology is the study of the soul, mental processes and behaviour according to the principles of psychology and Islamic sciences.
- Whether we are able to develop a unified Islamic theoretical framework from "indigenisation from within" and from "indigenisation from without" remains a challenge.

Multiple-choice questions

Identify the choice that best completes the statement or answers the question.

1. Which statement is not correct? Malik Badri, during his first lecture on Islamisation in 1963, stated that:
 - A. The lay audience liked the lecture.
 - B. His colleagues in the Department of Psychology were not happy with it.
 - C. Then why speak to us about an Islamic psychology? If you accept Freudian psychoanalysis, then show us a way to treat the emotionally disturbed.
 - D. They prided themselves as scientists being guided by a neutral value-free scientific method in which there was no room for religious "dogma."
 - E. They used to sarcastically ask me, "Is there a *fasiq* or evil physics or an un-Islamic chemistry?"
2. The emphasis on the secularisation of modern psychology is based on the premise that
 - A. Religion is based upon faith which cannot be evaluated by objective methods.
 - B. Science is based on empiricism and experimentation in order to establish facts that are verifiable.
 - C. Science is based on objectivity and experimentation in order to establish facts that are verifiable.
 - D. Religion is based upon faith which can be evaluated by objective methods.
 - E. A and B.
3. The emergence, current conceptualisations and the status of Islamic psychology should be viewed in their broader context, namely,
 - A. Islam and psychology movement
 - B. Islamisation of knowledge movement
 - C. Anti-Freudian movement
 - D. Indigenous psychology movement
 - E. Psychology and Islam movement
4. The concept of Islamisation of knowledge was proposed by
 - A. Al-Faruqi
 - B. Al-Kindi
 - C. Al-Qayyim

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- D. Al-Attas
 - E. Al-Rushd
5. Psychology, etymologically, means the
- A. Science of the soul
 - B. Scientific study of human behaviour and experience
 - C. Study of the mind
 - D. Science of the spirit
 - E. Science of evolution
6. The second stage of the evolution of the definition of psychology is
- A. Psychology was defined as the “study of the soul or spirit.”
 - B. William James, psychology as the “Study of science of mental life.”
 - C. The “study of the mind” (Christian Wolff’s “*Psychologia empirica*”).
 - D. John B. Watson, psychology as the acquisition of information useful to the control of behaviour.
 - E. Study of total Behaviour (consciousness and unconsciousness).
7. The scientific study of the mind and how it dictates and influences our behaviour, from communication and memory to thought and emotion. It is about understanding what makes people tick and how this understanding can help us address many of the problems and issues in society today. This definition is from the
- A. Islam and psychology movement
 - B. Association of British Counsellors
 - C. American Psychological Association
 - D. British Psychological Society
 - E. International Association of Islamic Psychology
8. This psychologist warned about the separation of religious experience from the academic pursuit of understanding human behaviour.
- A. B. F. Skinner
 - B. W. James
 - C. J. B. Watson
 - D. S. Freud
 - E. Al-Atas
9. Despite the claim that psychology is a science, Kuhn (1962) argues that, as a science emerges and develops, it progresses through distinct stages. Which one is not a stage?
- A. Post-paradigm
 - B. Pre-paradigm
 - C. Normal science/paradigm
 - D. Crisis
 - E. Revolution
10. “Our thoughts, emotions, will and behaviour must focus on attaining the pleasure of Allah. The key to sound mental health and well-being from the Islamic perspective is submission to Allah, the Exalted, the Almighty and His commandments, and to subsequently purifying the soul.” Who made this statement?
- A. Al-Atas
 - B. Al-Faruqi
 - C. Utz
 - D. Al-Karam
 - E. Badri

11. The verse of the Qur'an "This is the Book about which there is no doubt, a guidance for those conscious of Allah." is from
 - A. Qaf 50:16
 - B. Al-Kahf 18:109
 - C. Al-An'am, 6:38
 - D. Al-Baqarah 2: 2
 - E. Al-An'am 6:59
12. This scholar founded the International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT) in the USA.
 - A. Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas
 - B. Ismail Raji al-Faruqi
 - C. Sayyed Hossein Nasr
 - D. Malik. B. Badri
 - E. Shāh Walīullāh Dehlawī
13. *The Dilemma of Muslim Psychologists* cautioned Muslim psychologists of blind copying (psychological *Taqleed*) of Western, non-Islamic ideas and practices.
 - A. Malik B. Badri
 - B. Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas
 - C. Ismail Raji al-Faruqi
 - D. Sayyed Hossein Nasr
 - E. Shāh Walīullāh Dehlawī
14. In the sphere of Islamisation, it has been reported that Badri was greatly influenced by the writings of
 - A. Mohammad Qutb
 - B. Abul A'la Maududi
 - C. Sayyed Hossein Nasr
 - D. A and C
 - E. A, B and C
15. In the sphere of psychology and behaviour therapy, Badri was greatly influenced by
 - A. Joseph Wolpe
 - B. Hans Eysenck
 - C. Victor Meyer
 - D. A, B and C
 - E. A and C
16. Haque et al. (2016), in a review of literature, identified themes that have emerged over a period of nine years. Which one is not a theme?
 - A. Unification of Western psychological models with Islamic beliefs and practices.
 - B. Research on historical accounts of Islamic psychology and its rebirth in the modern era.
 - C. Development of educational models and frameworks within Islamic psychology.
 - D. Development of interventions and techniques within Islamic psychology.
 - E. Development of assessment tools and scales normed for use with Muslims.
17. This definition of Islamic psychology "An interdisciplinary science where psychology subdisciplines and/or related disciplines engage scientifically about a particular topic and at a particular level with various Islamic sects, sources, sciences, and/or schools of thought using a variety of methodological tools." is from
 - A. C. Al-Karam
 - B. A. Utz

- C. M. Badri
 - D. G. Hussein Rassool
 - E. R. Skinner
18. The Islam and psychology movement includes:
- A. Islamic psychology
 - B. Muslim psychology
 - C. Qur'anic psychology
 - D. A and C only
 - E. All of the above
19. Indigenisation psychology from without is a paradox because
- A. Western psychology is saturated in a secular metatheory that cannot accommodate the Islamic worldview.
 - B. It necessitates an expansion of the work of classical Muslim scholars.
 - C. Eastern psychology is saturated in a secular metatheory that can accommodate the Islamic worldview.
 - D. A and B.
 - E. A, B and C.
20. Rassool (2020) has identified schools of thoughts that have emerged in the "Islam and psychology movement." Which one has not?
- A. Orientalist approach
 - B. Qur'anic approach
 - C. Integrationist approach
 - D. "Tawhid Paradigm" approach
 - E. None of the above

Note

- 1 An idiom deriving from Greek mythology, which has been associated with "to choose the lesser of two evils."

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A brief history of Islamic psychology

Origins and heritage

Learning outcomes

- Briefly explain what is meant by the Islamic Golden Age.
- Describe the contributions of the classical philosophers in the development of Islamic psychology and therapies.
- Describe the contributions of the classical physicians in the development of Islamic psychology and therapies.
- Describe the contributions of the classical theologians in the development of Islamic psychology and therapies.

Introduction

Islam's heritage and socio-cultural-scientific achievements is a period in the history of Islam, traditionally dated from the 8th century to the 13th century, and known as the Islamic Golden Age (c.786 CE to 1258 CE). The phrase "Islamic Golden Age" was coined by the 19th-century "Orientalist" movement (Said, 1978). This Golden Age period started with the reign of the Abbasid Caliph Harun al-Rashid (c. 786 to 809) and ended with the collapse of the Abbasid Caliphate following the Mongol invasions and the sack of Baghdad in 1258 CE. Three main dynasties shaped the development of the Islamic Golden Age: (1) the Abbasids in Baghdad (750 CE–1258 CE); (2) the Fatimids in Cairo (909 CE–1171 CE); and (3) the Umayyads in Córdoba (929 CE–1031 CE) in the west (Renima et al., 2016). This is a truly remarkable period in human history with the inauguration of the House of Wisdom (*Bait-al-Hikmah*) in Baghdad, which was a public academy, intellectual centre and library. What is remarkable, in the annals of history, is "The accomplishments made by Islamic scholars, philosophers, humanists, and scientists in all areas of the arts and humanities, the physical and social sciences, medicine, astronomy, mathematics, finance, and Islamic and European monetary systems over a period of many centuries" (Renima et al., 2016, p.25). During the period of the Islamic Golden Age, Europe was still in darkness and contributed comparatively little to human intellectual discourse until a period of awakening for Europe with the emergence of the Renaissance (period from the 14th to 17th centuries CE), and the flourishing of philosophy, the arts, sciences and new political systems.

At the House of Wisdom, there were scholars from diverse communities and religio-cultural backgrounds from various parts of the world who were assembled and mandated to gather and translate all of the world's classical knowledge, including the works of Greek philosophers, to Syriac and then to Arabic. All these scholars made significant and lasting

contributions to Islamic intellectual and scientific achievements. In addition to Bagdad, other Islamic capital cities, like Cairo (Egypt), and Córdoba (Spain-Andalusia), became the main intellectual centres for the arts, science, philosophy, medicine and education. It is within this context that Muslim scholars excelled in the areas of health, medicine and psychiatry. The polymath scholars, including philosophers, physicians and theologians, developed theories and various therapeutic techniques, including psychotherapy and a form of cognitive behaviour therapy and humane treatment for the mentally ill during this period, centuries before the introduction of “humane” therapeutic treatment in the West. From the Judeo-Christian tradition, medieval intellectual discourse was based largely on theology and hence tended to be opposed to science. There have been claims made that medieval medical practitioners were afraid to look into either normal or abnormal psychology (Zilboorg and Henry, 1941), and that demonic possession was held to be a cause of insanity (Kemp, 1985).

The birth and evolution of ‘Ilm al-Nafs, or “knowledge of the soul,” were mooted during the period of the Islamic Golden Age. It has been suggested that

Muslim philosophers considered the quest for knowledge as a divine command, and knowledge of the soul, and particularly of the intellect, as a critical component of this quest. Mastery of this subject provided a framework within which the mechanics and nature of our sensations and thoughts could be explained and integrated and offered the epistemological foundation for every other field of inquiry.

(Ivry, 2012)

Thus, many of these classical scholars were driven by Islamic theological sources, in addition to intuitive and rational sources, in their quest for the study of the soul and for their contributions to psychology. That is

Muslim scientists went beyond this [Deductive method] and based their investigations on observation and experimentation. Muslim scientists Jabir Ibn Hayyan, al-Biruni, Umar Khayyam, Ibn Sina, Ibn Yunus, al-Tusi and others all worked in their own or in state laboratories. This had to do with their belief in the reality of this world and that knowledge of it was possible and that knowledge of it pointed to the Creator.

(Alatas, 2006, p.120)

However, the philosophical paradigm shifted from its dualistic (mind–body problem) metaphysical mould and were replaced by physicalism (the thesis that everything is physical) and eventually with positivism (excluding metaphysical assumption). However, it is argued that “psychologists do not provide scientific explanations, but rather theory-dependent interpretations” (Teo, 2018, p.103). The evolution or the resurgence of Islamic psychology has been due to several factors, and this renewal has been coined by Rassool (2019) as the “Dodo Bird” revival. The factors that facilitated the emergence of the Islamic Golden Age include the emergence of a political system, economic development and trade, language and education (Arabic was the functioning lingua franca of the period) (Renima et al., 2016); and the emergence of “Islamic psychology” as a result of Muslim religious motivation, the quest for knowledge and socio-political factors (Haque, 2004; Ivry, 2012).

An understanding of the origins and historical contributions of the study of Islamic psychology would provide an orientation of where Islamic psychology came from, its present status quo and where it is going. According to Awaad et al. (2020), scholars whose academic

work “has contributed or may contribute to Islamic psychology reveals three main areas of scholarship from which modern attempts at developing an integrated Islamic psychology may draw: philosophy, physiology, and theology/spirituality” (p.66). The categorisation of Awaad et al. (2020) will be followed. The bulleted style will be used for the next sections of this chapter to highlight the contributions of the Islamic classical scholars to the development of Islamic psychology.

The philosophers’ perspective

Context

In order to understand the philosophical perspective and the contributions of Muslim philosophers to the development of psychology, it is valuable to have an overview of the state of philosophy at this particular period in time. During the Hellenistic period, scholarly work was in the Syriac and Greek languages. Many classic works of antiquity might have been lost if Muslim scholars had not translated them into Arabic and Persian and later into Turkish, Hebrew and Latin. It has been suggested that “philosophy (*falsafa*) in the Islamic Golden Age was elaborated as a systematic investigation of problems connected with society, life, nature and sciences in a global religious vision” (Renima et al., 2016, p.31). Under the Abbasid dynasty in the 9th century, two main approaches in intellectual discourses have been identified: *Kalam* (examination of Islamic theological questions, using logic and reflections), and *Falsafa* (interpretations of Aristotelianism and Neoplatonism philosophies in Arabic). There was also the school of *Mu’tazilism* which is viewed as the rationalist school of Islamic theology. The *Mu’tazilites*’ basic premise is that the injunctions of God are accessible to rational thought and inquiry. One of the most contentious questions in Islamic theology is the notion of the *Mu’tazilites* that the *Qur’an*, albeit the word of God, was created rather than uncreated. According to Valiuddin (2003),

The *Mu’tazilites* and the Sunnites differ mostly from one another in five important matters: The problem of attributes; The problem of the beatific vision; The problem of promise and threat; The problem of creation of the actions of man; and The problem of the will of God.

The *Ash’arism* philosophico-religious school of thought was developed as a response to the *Mu’tazilites* as

an attempt not only to purge Islam of all non-Islamic elements which had quietly crept into it but also to harmonise the religious consciousness with the religious thought of Islam. It laid the foundation of an orthodox Islamic theology or orthodox *Kalam* [science of discourse], as opposed to the rationalist *Kalam* of the *Mu’tazilites*. (Abdul Hye, 2003)

It is within this context that came the contributions of some of the Muslim philosophers, with their *Mu’tazilite*’ background, embedded in the Aristotelian and Neoplatonic traditions in their inspirations, visions and intellectual discourse.

Al-Kindī (D.259 AH/873 CE)

Abu-Yusuf Ya‘qub ibn Ishaq ibn as-Sabbah ibn ‘Omran ibn Isma‘il al-Kindi was known as the “Philosopher of the Arabs.” His theological orientation was from the school of *Mu’tazilism*.

Al-Kindī is known in the West as “Alkindus.” It is reported that “Al-Kindī’s father Ishaq ibn al-Sabah, was governor of Kufa under al-Mahdi and al-Rashid and his great-grandfather, al-Ash’at ibn Qays, was a companion of the Prophet (ﷺ). Thus al-Kindī was of noble origin and belonged to the ruling classes” (Qadi Sa’id ibn Ahmad al-Andalūsi).

- Born: about 801 CE in Kufa, Iraq.
- He was acclaimed as the father of Arab philosophy for his synthesis, adaptation and promotion of Greek and Hellenistic speculative philosophies in the Muslim world.
- Philosopher, physician, pharmacist, psychologist, ophthalmologist, physicist, mathematician, geographer, astronomer and chemist.
- He was also concerned with music, logogriphs, the manufacturing of swords and even the art of cookery.
- Ibn abi Usaybi‘ah speaks of the prominent position in the court of al-Ma’mūn and later Abū Ishāq Muḥammad ibn Hārūn al-Rashīd, being in fact tutor to the latter’s son Ahmad.
- Al-Kindī was appointed by the Abbasid caliphs to the “House of Wisdom” to oversee the translation of Greek works into Arabic (Najāfī, 1993).
- One of Al-Kindī’s main contributions to Islamic philosophy was in the field of the formation of an Arabic philosophical terminology.
- Al-Kindī held firm views on the nature and value of divine revelation as a source of knowledge.
- He clearly expressed that revelation from God was superior to human knowledge and reason (Ivry, 2012).
- His ideas on psychology can be traced to Greek sources.
- He refused to completely subordinate his Islamic beliefs to reason and attempted to maintain a balance between revelation and philosophy.
- He talked about revelation (*al-’Ulum al-Naqliyyah aw al-Shar’iyyah*) – transmitted knowledge; and reason: (*al-’Ulum al-’Aqliyyah*) – rational or intellectual sciences.

Al-Kindī’s books on psychology include:

- *Risalah Fī al-’Aql*: An analysis of the nature and divisions of the intellect written in the Aristotelian tradition.
- *Māhiyyat al-Nawm wa al-Ru’yah*: A treatise on dreams and vision.
- *Fī al-Qawl fī al-Nafs al-Mukhtasar min Kitāb Aristū wa Flatun wa sa’ir al-Falasifah*: Discourse on the soul.
- *Kalām fī al-Nafs Mukhtasar Wajiz*: Discourse on the soul, written in the Neoplatonic tradition.
- *Al-Ḥilal li Daf‘ al-Aḥzān: The Strategy for Repelling Sorrow*.

Al-Kindī on psychology:

- Al-Kindī addressed, amongst other diseases, epilepsy: Physiological reasons for the causes of epilepsy.
- Al-Kindī, in his book *‘Aqrabadhin of al-Kindī* (Levey, 1996), states in the introduction: “May God surround you with salvation and establish you in its paths and aid you to attain the truth and enjoy the fruits thereof! You have asked me – may God direct you

to all things profitable! – that I should outline to you the disease called *Sar'* [the falling-sickness, epilepsy].”

- He proposed several theories on perception, sleeping and dreams, and emotional processes (Awaad et al., 2019).
- He was the first to use the method of experiment in psychology, which led to his discovery that sensation is proportionate to the stimulus.
- He was also the earliest scholar to realise the therapeutic value of music.
- Al-Kindī suggested the use of cognitive strategies in the treatment of depression (Awaad et al., 2020).
- In his *The Strategy to Repelling Sorrows*, al-Kindī described sorrow as “a spiritual (*Nafsani*) grief caused by loss of loved ones or personal belongings, or by failure in obtaining what one lusts after” and then added: “If causes of pain are discernible, the cures can be found” (Tahir, 2009).

It has been suggested that

Al-Kindī is the first of a galaxy of great Muslim thinkers whose humanistic and scientific work helped establish the relations of Arab Muslim philosophy with earlier philosophies and with the following generations of Muslim thinkers who deal with metaphysical and scientific problem.

(Atiyeh, 1966, p.viii)

For a more comprehensive account, see Fitzmaurice (1971).

Ibn Miskawayh (D.421 AH/1030 CE)

Abu Ali Ahmad b. Muhammad b. Ya'kub Ibn Miskawayh (also known as Ibn Miskawayh) Miskawayh was born in Rey, Persia (now Iran). He was a philosopher, theologian, physician and historian, and his influence on Islamic philosophy is primarily in the area of ethics.

- Miskawayh worked as a librarian for a number of the ministers (viziers) of the Buwayhids during the Abbasid rule.
- He was very much attracted to Aristotle's and Plato's philosophy.
- He did not aim for a reconciliation between religion and philosophy or attempt to combine them (Abd al-'Aziz Izzat, 1946, p.349).
- He was the author of the first major Islamic work on philosophical ethics entitled *The Refinement of Character (Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq)*, focusing on practical ethics, conduct and refinement of character.
- Miskawayh's development of ethics and moral values is directly related to the education (*ta'lim*) of the individual.

Ibn Miskawayh's books on psychology:

- *al-Sa'ādah fī Falsafat al-Akhlāq (Happiness from the Perspective of Ethical Philosophy)*
- *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq (Refinement of Ethics)*
- *al-Fawz al-Aṣghar (The Minor Victory)*

- *al-Sa'ādah (Happiness)*
- *Risālah fī al-Lazzāt wa al-Ālām (A Treatise on Pleasures and Pains)*
- *Risālah fī Jawhar al-Nafs (On the Essence of the Soul)*
- *Ajwibah wa As'ilah fī al-Nafs wa al-'Aql (On the Soul and Mind)*
- *Questions and Answers on the Soul*
- *Tahārat al-Nafs (Purity of the Soul)*

Ibn Miskawayh's psychology:

- Ibn Miskawayh introduced what is now known as “self-reinforcement” and response cost (Haque, 2004).
- He examined the soul and its virtues.
- His work on moral and positive psychology laid the foundation for many following theories surrounding altering behaviours, attitudes and manners in gradual, concrete steps (Awaad et al., 2019; Leaman, 2001).
- He could also be regarded as an educational, cognitive psychologist for his treatise on *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq (Refinement of Ethics or Characters)*.
- Ibn Miskawayh's book on *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq (Refinement of Ethics)* is related to positive psychology and how to reach supreme happiness.
- He stated that “The knowledgeable one who reaches this degree of supreme happiness is called ‘the one completely happy’, and the pleasure he attains, in this case, is an intellectual pleasure” (Ibn Miskawayh, 1959, p.7).
- To realise happiness and its virtues, some internal and some external conditions have to be met. According to Ibn Miskawayh, the internal conditions include health and temperament. The external conditions are to overcome his weaknesses by having the psychological conditions to achieve happiness that are centred on the human's will, and his ability to raise his inclinations (Jamal al-Din, 1994).
- Ibn Miskawayh also discuss the need for self-awareness and a method of treating the illnesses of the souls.
- The development of our ethical intelligence is influenced by self- and emotional control.
- He narrated that “a Muslim, who feels guilty about doing something pleasurable to his al-nafs al-ammarah, should learn to punish himself by psychological, physical or spiritual ways such as paying money to the poor, fasting, etc.” (Haque, 2004, p.365).

Ibn Rushd (Averroes) (D.594 AH / 1198 CE)

Abu'al Walid Ibn Rushd (Averroes) born in Córdoba, Spain, has been acknowledged as one of the greatest thinkers and scientists of history. In contrast with Ibn Miskawayh, he integrated Aristotelian philosophy with Islamic discourse. For Ibn Rushd, there is no incongruity between religion and philosophy when both are properly grasped. He excelled in philosophy and jurisprudence and was nicknamed “the jurisprudent philosopher” (Famous Scientist, 2020).

- Ibn Rushd's education comprised of studies in Hadith, linguistics, jurisprudence and scholastic theology.
- He was the chief Islamic jurist (*Qadi*) of Córdoba, Caliph Abu Yaqub Yusuf's personal doctor, a philosopher and a scientist (Hillier (n.d.); Urvoy, 2015).
- He wrote on logic, Aristotelian and Islamic philosophy, Islamic theology, the Maliki school of Islamic jurisprudence, psychology, political theory, the theory of Andalusian

classical music, geography and mathematics, as well as the medieval sciences of medicine, astronomy, physics and celestial mechanics.

- The 13th-century philosophical movement in the Latin Christian and Jewish tradition based on Ibn Rushd's work is called Averroism.
- Ibn Rushd was a defender of Aristotelian philosophy against Ash'ari theologians led by al-Ghazâlî. Although highly regarded as a legal scholar of the Maliki school of Islamic law, Ibn Rushd's philosophical ideas were considered controversial in Ash'arite Muslim circles.
- In philosophy, his most important work, *Tuhafut al-Tuhafut*, was written in response to al-Ghazâlî's work.
- Ibn Rushd was criticised by many Muslim scholars for this book *Tuhafut al-Tuhafut* but had a significant influence on European thought in modern philosophy and experimental science.
- However, in his late years, Ibn Rushd was accused of heresy, and his trial ended in his exile and the burning of his books.

Ibn Rushd's books on psychology/philosophy:

- *al-Nafs (The Soul)*
- *al'Aql wa al-Ma'qûl (The Mind and the Rational)*
- *Talkbis Kitab al-Nafs (Aristotle on the Soul)*
- *Tahāfut al-Tahāfut (Incoherence of the Incoherence)*: A polemical response to al-Ghazâlî's *Tahāfut al-Falāsifah (Incoherence of the Philosophers)*

Ibn Rushd on psychology:

- Ibn Rushd's views on psychology are most fully discussed in his *Talkbis Kitab al-Nafs (Aristotle on the Soul)*.
- Ibn Rushd believed in the existence of faculties of the mind, which are intended to accept intelligible forms from the active intellect (Haque, 1998).
- He divided the soul into five faculties: The nutritive, the sensitive, the imaginative, the appetitive and the rational (Fakhry, 2001).
- He argued there are three different types of intellect: The receiving intellect, the producing intellect and the produced intellect (Norager, 1998).
- In his discussions of cognition, he argued that both sensation (perception) and imagination must be used to perceive it objectively (Haque, 2004).
- Ibn Rushd described a three-fold hierarchy of learning. One of the hierarchy of learning comes to assent through dialectical argument (*Jadali*). Another comes to assent through demonstration (*Burhan*). The third comes to assent through rhetorical argument (*Khatabi*).
- On the different types of intellectual discourse, he argued about the understanding each of these forms of arguments to enable individuals to interact with revealed Islamic scripture on two levels: The scripture's apparent (*zāhir*) and hidden (*bāṭin*) levels of meaning (Haque, 2004).
- Ibn Rushd argued that we know from our everyday experience that there exist health and illness, and that religious texts contain important information as to how we should behave (Leaman, 1998).
- In his educational philosophy, the learning and knowledge acquisition strategies suggested by Ibn Rushd include reflection (*i'tibār*), examination (*fahṣ*), deduction and

discovery (*istinbāṭ*), demonstrative study (*nazarburhānī*), *nazarburhānī* (*qiyās ‘aqlī*), comparison and analogy (*tamthīl*), allegorical interpretation (*ta’wīl*), dialectical reasoning (*aqāwīljadalīya*), demonstrative reasoning (*aqāwīlburhānīya*) and rhetorical reasoning (*aqāwīlkhīṭābīya*) (Günther, 2012).

Al-Fārābī (D.340 AH/951 CE)

Abū Naṣr Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad Al-Fārābī, known in the West as Alfarabius. He was Fārāb on the Jaxartes (Syr Darya) in modern Kazakhstan or Faryāb in Khorāsān (modern-day Afghanistan).

- Philosopher, jurist, scientist, cosmologist, mathematician and music scholar.
- In the Arabic philosophical tradition, he is known with the honorific “the Second Master” (*al-Mou’allim al-Thani*), after Aristotle.
- He made contributions to physics, logic, philosophy, music, political philosophy and social and educational psychology.
- Al-Fārābī produced more than 100 works in his lifetime and is recognised as a peripatetic or rationalist.
- He wrote on political philosophy and made commentaries on the ideal state of Plato.
- His most influential work shaped the discipline of social psychology. In his well-known treatise, *Ārā’ Ahl al-Madīnah al-Fāḍilah* (*Opinions of the People of the Righteous City*) he describes several principles of social psychology using invented exemplars (Achoui, 1998; Soueif and Ahmed, 2001).

Al-Fārābī’s psychological treatises:

- *Ārā’ Ahl al-Madīnah al-Fāḍilah* (*Opinions of the People of the Righteous City*)
- *Taḥṣīl al-Sa’ādah* (*Attaining Happiness*)
- *Kitāb al-Tanbīh ‘alā Sabīl al-Sa’ādah* (*A Guide to the Path of Happiness*)
- *Risālah fī al-‘Aql* (*Epistle on the Intellect*)
- *‘Uyūn al-Masā’il* (*The Depth of Matters*)
- *al-Sīyāsah al-Madaniyyah* (*Civil Policies*)
- *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikmah* (*The Cloves of Wisdom*)
- *al-Da’āwī al-Qalbiyyah* (*Internal Claims*)
- *Kitāb iḥṣā’ al-‘ulūm* (*On the Introduction of Knowledge*)

Al-Fārābī on psychology:

- The influence of Aristotelian philosophy is seen in his treatment of the human soul: Appetitive (the desire for, or aversion to an object of sense), sensitive (the perception by the senses), imaginative (the faculty which retains images of sensible objects) and rational (the faculty of intellect).
- Al-Fārābī suggested that the perfect human being (*al-insan al-kamil*) has both theoretical virtue (intellectual knowledge) and practical moral virtues (moral behaviour).
- According to Al-Fārābī, perfection is achieved by an individual with the help of other people (social relationship and network) (Norager, 1998).
- Al-Fārābī specifies that a person’s innate psychological dispositions drive them to maintain social cohesion (Haque, 2004).

- At the heart of Al-Fārābī's political philosophy is the concept of happiness in which people cooperate to gain contentment (Tiliouine, 2014).
- Cohesion, according to Al-Fārābī, is achieved by small groups through sharing interpersonal contact, experiences of conflict, sharing food and drink, confronting threats together and the distribution of pleasure. In contrast, large group cohesion is achieved through sharing personality characteristics, language, speech and living in close proximity to one another (Soueif and Ahmed, 2001).
- Al-Fārābī wrote on dreams and explained the distinction between dream interpretation and the nature and trigger of dreams.
- His writings on the therapeutic effect of music on the soul later influenced modern mental health and treatment (Haque, 1998).

The physicians' perspective

Context

During the Islamic Golden Age, one of the branches of science in which Muslims most excelled was Islamic medicine. Knowledge of the medical sciences and techniques was part of the medical curriculum throughout the world until about a century ago (Nasr, 1968). The issue of education was at the forefront in the minds of the Muslims since the establishment of the first Islamic State in Madinah. The House of Abbasids supported research developments, especially medical research. The Caliph Harun al-Rashid established the first hospital in Baghdad, and by the 9th century, several other hospitals had been reputable in Cairo, Mecca and Medina, as well as mobile medical units for rural areas. Hospitals known as Bimaristans (Persian word "hospital") were built throughout the Islamic state. These Bimaristans treated males and females, had outpatient facilities and offered services for the poor. The medical treatment was free, supported by waqf endowments and government patronage (Sonn and Williamsburg, 2004, p.52). The Islamic state had a pioneering approach concerning mental health and psychiatry. The first psychiatric hospitals were founded in Arabic countries, in Baghdad in 705 AD (during the kingship of the Caliph El Waleed ibn Abdel Malek), Cairo 800 in AD and Damascus in 1270 AD. Many of the hospitals housed libraries, classrooms and a central courtyard with a pool, and the patients were benevolently treated using baths, drugs, music and activities. In contrast, the first psychiatric asylum in Western Europe, the Bethlem Hospital in Bishopsgate, London, was founded in the 13th century (Forshaw and Rollin, 1990).

The important Islamic figures in medicine are Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Zakariya al-Rāzī, Abū Zayd Aḥmad ibn Sahl al-Balkhī and Abū Alī al-Ḥusayn ibn Sīnā. Those physicians produced rich, authoritative, multivolume medical books. It has been suggested that they adopted Hippocratic organic psychiatry (biological psychiatry), but they also applied psycho-social therapeutic methods (Dubovsky, 1983).

Al-Rāzī (D.313 AH/925 CE)

Abū Bakr Muḥammad ibn Zakariya al-Rāzī, known as Rhazes in the West, was one of the greatest Islamic physicians and perhaps second only to Ibn Sīnā in his endeavours. Al-Rāzī was born at Rey, Iran, and became a student of Hunayn ibn Ishaq and later a student of Ali ibn Rabban.

- He studied medicine under the celebrated polymath Abū Ja'far Muḥammad ibn Jarīr al-Ṭabarī (Amr and Tbakhi, 2007).

- Al-Rāzī was appointed Director of the first Royal Hospital at Rey and had a similar position in Baghdad.
- He originated a treatment for kidney and bladder stones, and clarified the nature of various infectious diseases (Afridi, 2013).
- He also established research on smallpox and measles (Alphen and Aris, 2003; Afridi, 2013).
- He was the first to announce the usage of alcohol for medical purposes, and the use of mercurial ointments (Afridi, 2013).
- He developed instruments used in apothecaries (pharmacies) such as mortars and pestles, flasks, spatulas, beakers and glass vessels (Amr and Tbakhi, 2007).
- Part of his treatment package is through accurate and controlled nutrition intake (Afridi, 2013).
- He was also an expert surgeon and the first to use opium for anaesthesia (Afridi, 2013).
- Al-Rāzī advocated the use of honey as a simple drug and as one of the essential substances included in composed medicines (Katouzian-Safadi and Bonmatin, 2003).
- The fame of Al-Rāzī as one of the greatest Muslim physicians is mainly due to the case records and histories written in his book entitled *Kitab Al Mansuri Fi al-Tibb* (Amr and Tbakhi, 2007).
- Al-Rāzī established qualifications and ethical standards for the practice of medicine (Modanlou, 2008).
- The Bulletin of the World Health Organization of May 1970 pays tribute to Al-Rāzī by stating “His writings on smallpox and measles show originality and accuracy, and his essay on infectious diseases was the first scientific treatise on the subject” (cited in Modanlou, 2008).

Al-Rāzī’s selected books:

- *Kitāb al-Hāwī fī al-Ṭibb* (*The Comprehensive Book of Medicine*) is a 23-volume work in which he described many mental illnesses, their symptoms and their cures (Husayn and al-‘Uqbi, 1977; Tibi, 2006).
- *Kitab Al-Hawi* (*Liber Continens*), is a ten-volume treatise on Greek and Roman medicine.
- *Kitab Al Mansuri Fi al-Tibb* (*Liber Medicinalis ad Almansorem*) is a concise handbook of medical science.
- *Kitab Man la Yahduruhu Al-Tabib* (*Book of Who is Not Attended by a Physician or A Medical Advisor for the General Public*). This is equivalent to a modern health education booklet on services and treatment interventions.
- The book *Kitab Man la Yahduruhu Al-Tabib* is dedicated to the poor, the traveller and the ordinary citizen who could consult or refer to it for the treatment of common ailments when a doctor was not available (Amr and Tbakhi, 2007).
- *Kitab Būr’ al-Sā’ah* (*Cure in an Hour*). A short essay on the treatment of ailments including headache, toothache, earache, colic, itching, loss of feeling in numb extremities and aching muscles to be cured within an hour’s time (Amr and Tbakhi, 2007).
- *Kitab al-Ṭibb al-Rūhānī* (*Book of Spiritual Medicine*). Al-Rāzī focuses on the soul (or psyche, mind) and its remedy, spiritually, morally and psychologically (Najāti, 1993).
- *Kitab al-Judari wa al-Hasbah* (*The Book of Smallpox and Measles*).
- *Kitab al-Murshid* (*The Guide*) is a short introduction to basic medical principles that was intended as a lecture to students (Amr and Tbakhi, 2007).

On psychology/psychopathology:

- Al-Rāzī was a pioneer in the treatment of mental illnesses.
- As the director of the hospital in Baghdad, he established special wards for the treatment of the mentally ill and treated his patients with respect, care and empathy (Daghestani, 1997, p.1602).
- He emphasised the importance of the client–practitioner relationship (Farooqi, 2006).
- Al-Rāzī describes memory problems, disturbed thinking, mood disorders (including both melancholic and manic symptoms) and anxiety (Mohamed, 2012).
- He differentiated between the exposure of intrinsic positive reinforcement with extrinsic positive reinforcement when learning new behaviours (Al-Rāzī, 1978).
- Al-Rāzī provided psychiatric aftercare as part of his discharge planning (Daghestani, 1997).

Abū Zayd al-Balkhī (D.322 AH/934 CE)

Abū Zayd Al-Balkhī was born in Shamistiyan in Balkh, Khorasan (present-day Afghanistan). He was a student of al-Kindi, who was known as the “Philosopher of the Arabs.” Like most of the classical Islamic scholars, he was a polymath: A geographer, mathematician, physician, psychologist and scientist.

- Al-Balkhī introduced concepts of mental health and “mental hygiene” related to spiritual health.
- He criticised many doctors for placing too much emphasis on physical illnesses and neglecting the psychological or mental illnesses of patients (Awaad et al., 2019).
- He was the first to successfully discuss diseases related to both the body and the soul.
- Al-Balkhī stated in one of his poems, “Religion is the greatest of philosophies; therefore, man cannot be a philosopher until he becomes a worshipper” (cited in Badri, 2013).

Al-Balkhī’s book on psychology:

- *Masalih al-Abdan wa al-Anfus (Sustenance for Body and Soul)*.
- In this book, Al-Balkhī argues that “since man’s construction is from both his soul and his body, therefore, human existence cannot be healthy without the *ishtibak* (interweaving or entangling) of soul and body” (Al-Balkhī, cited in Deuraseh and Abu Talib, 2005, p.76). That is, the psychosomatic interaction between the soul and the body.
- Al-Balkhī states that “if the body gets sick, the *Nafs* [psyche] loses much of its cognitive and comprehensive ability and fails to enjoy the desirous aspects of life” and that “if the *Nafs* gets sick, the body may also find no joy in life and may eventually develop a physical illness” (Al-Balkhī, cited in Deuraseh and Abu Talib, 2005, p.76).
- Throughout his book, Al-Balkhī offers “Do it yourself” cognitive and spiritual therapies (Awaad and Ali, 2015).

Al-Balkhī’s psychology and pathology:

- Al-Balkhī used the term *al-Tibb al-Ruhani* to describe spiritual and psychological health, and the term *Tibb al-Qalb* to describe mental medicine.

- He was the first to define medical psychology.
- He was a pioneer of psychotherapy, psychophysiology and psychosomatic medicine.
- He suggested that psychological symptoms of anxiety, anger and sadness are common among “normal people,” most of which are learned behaviour and reactions to emotional stress (Awaad et al., 2019).
- Al-Balkhī believed in the interaction of body and mind and the interaction between physical and psychological disorders which resulted in psychosomatic disorders (Mohamed, 2012).
- He systematically distinguished between psychosis and neurosis (Haque, 2004).
- He categorised neuroses into four emotional disorders: Anxiety, fear, aggression and anger, depression and sadness, and obsessions (Haque, 1998).
- Al-Balkhī categorised depression into sadness, normal depression, reactive depression and endogenous depression (Haddad, 1991).
- He is likely to have been the earliest in history to describe, classify and distinguish the illnesses now known as obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) and phobias from other mental illnesses (Awaad and Ali, 2015).
- “The description of obsessional disorders found in al-Balkhī’s manuscript [*Masalih al-Abdan wa al-Anfus*] echoes the description of Obsessive–Compulsive Disorder (OCD) found in modern diagnostic manuals of psychiatry such as the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5) (American Psychiatric Association., 2013)” (Awaad and Ali, 2015, p.187).
- Al-Balkhī observes that: “Obsessive whispers are among the most intrusive psychological symptoms that linger deep within the core of the human being, triggering echoing thoughts that cage the person within themselves” (Al-Balkhī, 2007, p.127).
- He is the father of modern cognitive behaviour therapy (Badri, 2013; Awaad et al., 2019).
- He developed the techniques of reciprocal approaches with respect to imbalance. Later Joseph Wolpe (1968) introduced this idea as “reciprocal inhibition” (Shapiro et al., n.d.).
- He demonstrated in detail the importance of using rational and spiritual therapies to cure specific disorders (Haque, 1998).
- For the treatment of a phobia, Al-Balkhī suggests a technique he calls *riyāḍat al-naḥs* (psyche-training) (Al-Balkhī, Misri, and al-Hayyat, 2005; Awaad and Ali, 2016). That is known as systematic desensitisation or exposure therapy.
- Al-Balkhī promoted the preventive approach which encouraged individuals to keep positive “cognition sets” to use in times of trials and tribulations (stress), comparable to contemporary “rational cognitive therapy” (Badri, 2013).

Ibn Sīnā/Avicenna (D.428 AH/1037 CE)

- Abu Ali al-Husayn Ibn Abdullah Ibn Sīnā was born at Afsana near Bukhara, Samanid Empire (now in present-day Uzbekistan), in August 23, 980. He is known as Ibn Sīnā, and in the West as Avicenna. Ibn Sīnā was one of the most celebrated physicians, astronomers, thinkers and writers in the Golden Age of the Islamic Empire. Ibn Sīnā memorised the entire Qur’an by the age of 10 and became a knowledgeable physician at the age of 16. He introduced new methods of treatments by the age of 18. During his medical career he treated many patients including some governors, politicians and ordinary people without asking for payment. His friends advised him to slow down in his work, but he remained steadfast and answered, “I prefer a short life with width to a narrow one with length” (cited in Roudgari, 2018).

- Ibn Sīnā is called the most significant philosopher in the Islamic tradition and arguably the most influential philosopher of the pre-modern era (Rizvi, n.d.).
- Ibn Sīnā tried to merge rational philosophy with Islamic theology, and his main goal in that regard was to prove the existence of God and His creation of the world by science and logic (Roudgari, 2018).
- As a physician, his major work *The Canon of Medicine* (*al-Qanun fi'l-Tibb*) continued to be taught as a medical textbook in Europe and in the Islamic world until the early modern period (Rizvi, n.d.).
- In the Islamic sciences (*'ulum*), he wrote a series of short commentaries on selected Qur'anic verses and chapters that reveal a trained philosopher's hermeneutical method and attempt to come to terms with revelation (Rizvi, n.d.).
- *The Canon of Medicine* (*Al-Qanun fi't-Tibb*) is a five-volume medical encyclopaedia that was used as the standard medical textbook in the Islamic world and Europe up to the 18th century (McGinnis, 2010), for example, in the University of Montpellier, France (1650). *The Canon of Medicine* still plays an important role in Unani medicine [Perso-Arabic traditional medicine] (Rahman, 2003).
- "Medicine is the science by which we learn the various states of the human body, in health, when not in health, the mean by which health is likely to be lost, and when lost, is likely to be restored to health" (Ibn Sīnā, *Al-Qanun fi't-Tibb*).
- Ibn Sīnā is considered as a father of modern medicine, a pioneer of neuropsychiatry.
- He first recognised "physiological psychology" for the treatment of illness involving emotions.

Ibn Sīnā's books on medicine and psychology:

- *Al-Qanun fi't-Tibb* (*The Canon of Medicine*). Encyclopaedia of medicine.
- *Maqala fi'l-nafs* (*Compendium on the Soul*).
- *Kitab al-shifa* (*The Book of Healing*) on philosophy and existence, the mind-body relationship, sensation, perception, etc. (Haque, 2004).
- *Kitab al-najat* (*The Book of Deliverance*).
- *Andar Danesh-e Rag* (*On the Science of the Pulse*) contains nine chapters on the science of the pulse. This is the "most detailed clinical description on the characteristics of the pulse that had been ever written. The pulse section consists of techniques for feeling the pulse. In this book he explained the certain types of arrhythmias such as atrial fibrillation, premature and dropped beats and more than fifty different pulse" (Roudgari, 2018).

Ibn Sīnā's psychology/psychopathology:

- Ibn Sīnā first described numerous neuropsychiatric conditions, including insomnia, mania, hallucinations, nightmare, dementia, epilepsy, stroke, paralysis, vertigo, melancholia and tremors (Abbasi et al., 2007).
- He called melancholia (depression) a type of mood disorder in which the person may become suspicious and develop certain types of phobias (Majeed and Jabir, 2017).
- Ibn Sīnā identified a condition that seems like schizophrenia and defined as *junun Mufrit* (severe madness) with symptoms including agitation, sleep disturbance, giving inappropriate answers to questions and occasional inability to speak (Majeed and Jabir, 2017, p.70).

- Ibn Sīnā's strategy in assessing his patient is to identify the source of the client's emotional conflict, sometimes using crude bio-feedback techniques (Awaad and Ali, 2016; Farooqi, 2006).
- His therapeutic interventions include meditation, self-awareness, dialogue, reflection, imagery and conditioning to treat mental illnesses (Farooqi, 2006).
- He was a pioneer in psychophysiology and psychosomatic medicine, developing a system for associating changes in the pulse rate with inner feelings. This idea was in anticipation of the word-association test attributed to Carl Jung (Syed, 2002; Mohamed, 2012).
- Ibn Sīnā used both a relaxation method and a form of systematic desensitisation (hierarchy of anxiety-inducing words) with pulse-checking to identify anxiety-provoking words. This was used in the treatment of a prince suffering from anorexia nervosa (Haque, 2004; Awaad and Ali, 2016).

According to Ibn Sīnā,

ordinary human mind is like a mirror upon which a succession of ideas reflects from the active intellect. Before the acquisition of knowledge that emanates from the active intellect the mirror was rusty but when we think, the mirror is polished and it remains to direct it to the sun (active intellect) so that it could readily reflect light.

(cited in Haque, 2004, pp.365–366)

The theologians' perspective

Context

Many Islamic theologians were instrumental in the development of the nature of Islamic psychology because the discipline of *Ilm an Nafs* was linked to Islamic theology and the religiosity of the soul. Awaad et al. (2020) suggested that "Muslim theologians contributed to the development of an 'Islamic psychology' through their work in three fields: (1) Islamic creed, (2) Islamic law, and (3) Islamic spirituality" (p.74). There are many polymaths, scholars and theologians who made significant contributions to Islamic sciences and directly and indirectly enabled the development of Islamic psychology. It is not within the scope of this chapter to include all of them. Some Islamic scholars and theologians include Al-Ghazālī, Ibn Taymiyyah, Ibn Qayyim al Jawiyyah, Al-Raghib al-Asfahaani, Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali, Shāh Walī Allāh and Abul A'la Maududi. Only three theologians' contributions, those of Al-Ghazālī, Ibn Taymiyyah and Ibn Qayyim al Jawiyyah, will be addressed in the next sections.

Al-Ghazālī (D.510 AH/1111 CE)

Abu Ḥamid Muḥammad Al-Ghazālī was born in 1058 CE at Tūs, Greater Khorasan, Seljuq Empire and died on the 19th December 1111. Al-Ghazālī received his early education in his hometown and went on to study with the influential Ash'arite theologian al-Juwaynī (1028–1085) at the Nizāmiyya Madrasa in nearby Nishapur.

- Al-Ghazālī was one of the most prominent and influential philosophers, theologians, jurists and mystics of Sunni Islam.

- He was in close contact with the court of the Grand-Seljuq Sultan Malikshâh and his grand-vizier Nizâm al-Mulk.
- In 1091 Nizâm al-Mulk appointed Al-Ghazâlî to the prestigious Nizâmiyya Madrasa in Baghdad.
- In 1095, Al-Ghazâlî suddenly gave up his posts in Baghdad and left the city.
- Under the influence of Sufi literature, Al-Ghazâlî had begun to change his life-style two years before his departure from Bagdad (Griffel, 2009, p.67).
- After performing the pilgrimage in 1096, Al-Ghazâlî returned via Damascus and Baghdad to his hometown Tûs, where he founded a small private school and a Sufi convent (*khânqâh*) (Griffel, 2020).
- He was active at a time when Sunni theology had just entered a period of intense challenges from Shiite Ismâ'îlite theology and the Arabic tradition of Aristotelian philosophy (*falsafa*).
- His religious work *Tahâfut al-Falâsifa (Incoherence of the Philosophers)* favours Muslim faith over philosophy and was extremely influential in turning medieval Muslim thought away from Aristotelianism, philosophical debate and theological speculation.
- For Al-Ghazâlî “the purpose of society is to apply the *Shari‘ah*, and the goal of man is to achieve happiness close to God. Therefore, the aim of education is to cultivate man so that he abides by the teachings of religion and is hence assured of salvation and happiness in the eternal life hereafter” (Nofal, 1993, p.524).
- Al-Ghazâlî “reinstated the ‘principle of fear’ in religious thinking and emphasised the role of the Creator as the centre around which human life revolves, and an agent intervening directly and continuously in the course of human affairs (once the ‘principle of love’ had gained supremacy among the Sufis)” (Nofal, 1993, p.531).

al-Ghazâlî’s books:

- *Iḥyā’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn (Revival of the Religious Sciences)*
- *Kīmīyā -e-Sa‘ādat (Alchemy of Happiness)*
- *Tahâfut al-Falâsifah (Incoherence of the Philosophers)*
- *Fayṣal al-Tafriqah bayna al-Islām wa al-Zandaqah (The Decisive Criterion for Distinguishing Islam from Clandestine Unbelief).*

Al-Ghazâlî’s psychology:

- Al-Ghazâlî, as a Sufi, was an advocate of introspection and self-analysis to understand the psyche and psychological issues.
- Al-Ghazâlî describes how the concept of the self is expressed by four terms in Arabic (as conceived by the Qur’an).
- These terms are *Qalb* (heart), *Ruh* (soul), *Nafs* (desire-nature) and *Aql* (intellect, reason). Each of these terms signifies a spiritual entity.
- Al-Ghazâlî prefers to use the term *Qalb* for the self in his work. One is essentially required to know this *Qalb* in order to discover ultimate reality (Amer, 2015).
- Al-Ghazâlî believes that our focus should shift from “treating diseases of the body, such diseases compromise an already fleeting life. More attention should be directed to treating diseases of the heart [psyche], which has an infinite lifetime” (Al-Ghazâlî, 2005, p.929).

- Al-Ghazālī believed in the use of therapeutic interventions including negative reinforcement, modelling, labelling and shaping (Farooqi, 2006).
- Al-Ghazālī discusses the spiritual diseases of the heart, including arrogance, miserliness, ignorance, envy and lust (Haque, 2004), and encourages purification of the soul (*Tazkiyat al-naḥs*) (including its cognitions and behavioural inclinations) to cure these diseases (Awaad et al., 2020).

In *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn*, Al-Ghazālī describes six steps for self-purification (Keshavarzi and Haque, 2013):

- *Mushārakah* (self-contract with goals)
- *Murāqabah* (self-monitoring)
- *Muḥāsabah* (self-examination; holding oneself accountable)
- *Mujāhadah* (self-penalisation; implementing consequences for breaking the self-contract [lapse and relapse])
- *Muʿāqabah* (self-struggle; working diligently to overcome sinful inclinations)
- *Muʿātabah* (self-admonition; regretting breaking and recommitting to upholding the contract). (p.242)

Ibn Taymiyyah (D.728 AH/1328 CE)

Taqī al-Dīn Abū al-ʿAbbās Aḥmad bin ʿAbd al-Ḥalīm al-Ḥarrānī, known as Ibn Taymiyyah, was born on January 22, 1263 CE (10 Rabiʿ al-awwal 661 AH) Harran, Sultanate of Rum. He died on September 26, 1328 (aged 64–65) in Damascus, Sham. During his time, Islamic philosophers and theologians had introduced various innovations within the Islamic creed. Ibn Taymiyyah rebutted all the innovations that were prevalent during this period. He rejected innovations, including the veneration of saints and the visitation to their tomb-shrines, which made him unpopular with many scholars and rulers of the time, under whose orders he was imprisoned several times (Laoust, 2012).

- Ibn Taymiyyah was a Sunni Muslim scholar, muhaddith (a scholar of Hadiths), theologian, judge, jurisconsult and logician.
- He has been acknowledged by some as the *mujaddid* (one who reforms in society and gives a new spirit to Islam when it is in danger) of the 7th century of the Islamic calendar (Ansari, 2019).
- A member of the Hanbali school, he is considered to be one of the leading scholars of the *Ahlus Sunnah wal Jamaa* and has been accepted as Sheikh-ul-Islam by all major Sunni schools.
- Ibn Taymiyyah maintains that the Qurʾan and the Sunnah are not only the sources of Islamic law; they are also the sources of Islamic faith and belief (Ansari, 2019).
- His criticism of “Ashʿari kalam, Greek logic and philosophy, monistic sufism, Shiʿi doctrines, and Christian faith have proved great obstacles to appreciating his contribution” (Ansari, 2019, p.xvii).
- He was critical of the Aristotelian and Neoplatonist philosophers, including al-Fārābī, al-Kindī and Ibn Sīnā, for “breaking away from the fundamentals of Islam in their pursuit of knowledge, saying that they were dressing up Greek thought in Islamic clothing” (Awaad et al., 2020, p.76).

- It is through divine revelation, not rationality and emotions, that we can examine the world in order to acquire ultimate truths (An-Najār, 2004).
- Ibn Taymiyyah authored more than 500 manuscripts and short treatises on various branches of the Islamic sciences, 3 of which are related to psychology (Awaad et al., 2020).
- It is reported that Ibn Taymiyyah was a prolific writer. He wrote 40 pages in 1 sitting and was able to produce a complete volume of work in 1 day (Bazzano, 2015).

Ibn Taymiyyah's books:

- *‘ilm al-sulūk*. A chapter on the diseases and treatments of the heart. This was published in his encyclopaedic fatwa collection *Majmū‘ al-Fatāwā*.
- *Risālah fī al-‘Aql wa al-Rūh*. A treatise on the soul and intellect.
- *al-‘Ubūdiyyah*. On obedience.

Ibn Taymiyyah on psychology:

- Ibn Taymiyyah's psychological work is his discussion of moral emotion and the merit of an empathetic sadness (Awaad et al., 2020).
- He examined the relationship between cognitive and affective states and the influence of emotional nuances in the rational thinking process (Awaad et al., 2020).
- Ibn Taymiyyah highlighted constructive and unproductive sadness, urging people to use constructive sadness for a purpose. This is illustrated in the following quote.
- “As for sadness that does not bring about a benefit nor displace a harm, there is no benefit in it, and God does not command that which has no benefit ... However, some forms of sadness are divinely rewarded ... including sorrow over the calamities of the Muslims in general” (Ibn Taymiyyah, 2004, pp.13–14).

Ibn Al-Qayyim (D.751 AH/1350 CE)

Abu ‘Abd Allah Shams al-Dīn Abū ‘Abd Allāh Muḥammad ibn Abī Bakr ibn Ayyūb ibn Sa‘d ibn Harz ibn Makki Zayn al-Dīn al-Zur‘ī al-Dimashqī al-Hanbali, or more commonly known for short as Ibn al-Qayyim, or reverentially as Imam Ibn al-Qayyim in the Sunni tradition.

- Ibn Al-Qayyim was the son of Abu Bakr who was the head of the Jawziyya school in Damascus (Krawietz, 2006).
- Ibn Al-Qayyim received extensive training in the traditional fields of Islamic scholarship including Aqeeda (Islamic creed), Fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence), Tafsir (Qur’an exegesis), Ilm al Kalam (Islamic theology) and Arabic grammar (Al-Mubarak, 2015).
- Having access to the most elite scholars of the time, Ibn Al-Qayyim was given a thorough education in a number of fields, becoming a prolific student of Ahmad bin ‘Abdil Halim Ibn Taymiyyah and an expert Hanbali scholar.
- Ibn Al-Qayyim wrote more than 60 books in various areas of Islam and compiled a large number of studies.
- Ibn Rajab (n.d.) observed about Ibn Al-Qayyim that “he was extremely (*ilā al-ghayah al-quṣwā*) dedicated to divine devotion (*‘ibadah*), spending the night in prayer (*tahajjud*) as well as prolonging ritual prayer, and he invoked the name of God (*ta’allaha*), was

eager to recall him (*lahija bi-al-dhikr*), articulated affection, repentance, and petitions of forgiveness and longing directed to God (*shaffafa bi-al-mahabbah, wa-al-inabah wa-al-istighfar, wa-al-iftiqar ilá Allah*), and expressed that he could be broken by him (*wa-al-inkisar lahu*) and that he is cast into his hands (*wa-al-itrah bayna yadayhi*), [all] while entering or leaving prayer (*'alá 'atabat 'ubudiyatihi*)—to which I never witnessed anything comparable therein [the prayer] (*lam ushahid mithlahu fidhalik*)” (p.xiii).

The famous students of Ibn Al-Qayyim al Jawziyya include:

- Al Hafidh Abul Faraj ibn Rajab: Hanbali legal scholar.
- Al Hafidh Ismail ibn Kathir: Shafi'i traditionalist and historian.
- Al Hafidh Muhammad bin Abdul Hadi.

Ibn Al-Qayyim's selected books:

- *Tahthib Sunan Abi Dawud (Emendation of Sunan Abu Dawud).*
- *Al-Kalam al-Tayyib wa-al-'Amal al-Salih (The Essence of Good Words and Deeds).*
- Commentaries on the book of Shaikh Abdullah al-Ansari: *Manazil-u Sa'ireen (Stations of the Seekers).*
- The book on the 'Medicine of the Prophet' (ﷺ) is extracted from *Zad al-Ma'ad (Provisions of the Hereafter).*

Ibn Al-Qayyim on psychology:

- On psychology, Ibn Al-Qayyim highlighted the importance of meditation, reflection and introspection in the pursuit of happiness (Awaad et al., 2020).
- Ibn Al-Qayyim also highlighted his categorisation of schemes of pleasure in its relation to human experience. This enabled psychologist to understand motivational factors (Hitto, n.d.).
- Ibn Al-Qayyim identified three categories of pleasure: Necessity for survival including food, shelter and procreation; advancing in social and professional circumstances to attain a position of power or authority; and living a life of virtue and dedication to God (Abdul-Rahman, 2017).
- Based on the categories, the first one is meeting basic needs and the two others are more related to achieving high status and being more spiritual, respectively.
- Ibn Al-Qayyim indicates that there are positive and negative kinds of pleasure seeking.
- Illegitimate pleasure is pleasure that results in pain whereas legitimate pleasure is in the worship of God (Abdul-Rahman, 2017).
- In another significant contribution is the act of contemplation. In his work, *Miftah Dar As-Sa'adah* or the *Key to the House of Happiness*, Ibn Al-Qayyim offers a description of the different types and process of thinking, now known as metacognition, the study of how people think (Metcalf and Shimamura, 1994).
- Ibn Al-Qayyim's types of thinking include *tafakkur* (thinking), *tadhakkur* (remembering), *i'tibaar* (realising) and *tadabbur* (deliberating) (Ibn Al-Qayyim, 2011a; Abdul-Rahman, 2017).

- Ibn Al-Qayyim developed a stage theory of cognition and behaviour. “An individual first has an involuntary thought. If the individual chooses to deliberate over this thought, it becomes an emotional motivation to act. If the individual continues to feed the emotional inclination, it will turn into a firm decision to act, and then into an action, and then finally into a habit” (Abdul-Rahman, 2017; Badri, 2013) (cited by Awaad et al., 2020, p.77).
- Ibn Al-Qayyim went on to discuss the issue of satanic whispering or “*waswasa al qahri*,” and he favoured the use of cognitive or conscious interventions to treat this disorder. That is, the individual has to resist the illegitimate pleasure which will enable their resilience (*firasah*) to overcome these negative pleasures and eventually bring the individual closer to God (Abdul-Rahman, 2017).
- It is stated that “The domain of satanic whispering in the unconscious can be tempered through conscious interventions. It is possible that through breaking free of distractions and attaining knowledge and consciousness of God a person can transform the entire dynamic of the unconscious. This struggle between the individual and Satan is a key dimension of the unconscious and the conscious that Ibn Al-Qayyim also speaks about” (Abdul-Rahman, 2017).
- Ibn Al-Qayyim advocated for the importance of mental health as “the second category of diseases of the heart are based on emotional states such as anxiety, sadness, depression, and anger. This type of disease can be treated naturally by treating the cause or with medicine that goes against the cause ... and this is because the heart is harmed by what harms the body and vice versa” (Ibn Al-Qayyim, 2011b, p.26).

Conclusion

This is an overview of the contributions of theologians, philosophers and physicians to the evolution and development of Islamic psychology through the classical Golden Age and beyond. Of course, there are many other scholars like Ibn Tufayl, Ibn Al-Ayn Zarbi, Ibn Bajjah, Al-Majusi, At-Tabari, Ibn Khaldun and others. There are others who may or may not be directly related to the psychology field but who had significant influence on the Islamisation of knowledge and Islamic psychology. These scholars include Allama Muhammad Iqbal, Sayyid Abul A’la Maududi, Ashraf Ali Thanvi, Syed Muhammad Al Naquib Bin Ali Al-Attas, Isma’il Raji Al-Faruqi, Anis Ahmad and many others. The list would be incomplete without the names of contemporary prolific scholars and authors including Malik Badri, Amber Haque, Aisha Utz, the “Malaysian Group” and others. It is evident that the history of Islamic psychology has been greatly influenced by many other Islamic scholars who have further established a foundation for contemporary Islamic academics and clinicians.

Multiple-choice questions

Identify the choice that best completes the statement or answers the question.

1. The Islamic Golden Age was
 - A. A period of darkness in the Islamic world.
 - B. When prominent Muslim scholars and philosophers emerged, producing profound works that revolutionised the social sciences, natural sciences, philosophy, mathematics and medicine.
 - C. The renaissance of the Western civilisation.