

WELLNESS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ISLAMIC PSYCHOLOGY: INTEGRATING THE JASADIAH, NAFSIAH, QALBIYAH, AND RUHANIYAH DIMENSIONS IN HUMAN WELL-BEING

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Abstract

The concept of wellness in contemporary psychology is largely grounded in a secular-Western paradigm emphasizing physical, psychological, and social dimensions, while spirituality is often treated as a supporting variable rather than the core of well-being (Ryff, 1989; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). For Muslims, spirituality fundamentally shapes views of the self, life, and happiness (Haque, 2004). This article examines wellness in Islamic psychology, identifies its key dimensions, and analyzes its relevance to contemporary well-being models. A descriptive-analytical qualitative approach was employed through library research on primary sources—the Qur'an and Hadith—and relevant scholarly articles, analyzed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Findings indicate that Islamic wellness is multidimensional, encompassing jasadiyah (physical), nafsiyah-aqliyah (psychological-cognitive), qalbiyah (emotional-heart), ruhaniyah (spiritual-transcendent), and ijtima'iyah (social) dimensions, converging toward sakinah through tazkiyatun nafs and practices such as dhikr, sabr, shukr, and tawakal. These findings align with evidence linking religiosity and subjective well-being among Muslims (Abdel-Khalek, 2022). Islamic wellness therefore offers an integrative framework enriching Ryff's psychological well-being and PERMA by positioning the human-God relationship at its core.

Keywords: Islamic psychology; wellness; psychological well-being; tazkiyatun nafs; sakinah; religiosity

INTRODUCTION

The World Health Organization (WHO) has long defined health not merely as the absence of disease, but as a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being (World Health Organization, 1948). This definition paved the way for the development of wellness or well-being as a distinct field of study within psychology, particularly following the emergence of the positive psychology movement pioneered by Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi in the early 2000s (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). Various contemporary wellness models—such as Diener's subjective well-being, Ryff's six-dimensional psychological well-being, and Seligman's PERMA model (Positive Emotion, Engagement, Relationships, Meaning, Accomplishment)—have contributed substantially to mapping the factors that support optimal human flourishing (Diener, 1984; Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Seligman, 2011; Butler & Kern, 2016).

Nevertheless, these models originate from Western scholarly traditions that are largely rooted in a secular paradigm, in which the spiritual or transcendent dimension tends to be positioned as merely one supporting variable rather than as the core of well-being itself (Rothman, 2021). For religious communities, particularly Muslims, spirituality is not merely a complement but the very foundation that shapes one's view of the self, life, suffering, and happiness (Haque, 2004; Skinner, 2019). A number of studies indicate a positive relationship between religiosity and subjective well-being among Muslim populations, in which religious practices such as prayer (shalat), remembrance of God (dhikr), and supplication (du'a) function as effective coping mechanisms against stress and psychological distress (Abdel-Khalek, 2022; Ghiasi & Keramat, 2018; Achour, Bensaid, & Nor, 2016).

Meanwhile, Islamic psychology, as a continually developing discipline, seeks to build a paradigm of mental health grounded in the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the intellectual heritage of classical Muslim scholars such as Ibn Sina, Al-Ghazali, and Ibn Miskawaih (Norman, 2021; Subandi, Derin, & Setiyawati, 2024). Within this view, human beings are understood as holistic creatures composed of jasad (the physical body), aql (reason/intellect), nafs (the

soul/self), qalb (the heart), and ruh (the spirit), in which the balance among these dimensions is the primary determinant of inner tranquility, or *sakinah* (Erwahyudin, Muzakki, & Latief, 2024; Keshavarzi & Haque, 2013). Unfortunately, studies on wellness from the perspective of Islamic psychology remain scattered across various disciplines—Sufism (tasawuf), Qur'anic exegesis (tafsir), Islamic counseling, and clinical psychology—and have not yet been widely integrated into a single, systematic conceptual framework, nor have they been extensively and explicitly compared with contemporary wellness models (Skinner, 2019).

Based on this background, this article aims to: (1) examine how the concept of wellness is understood in the literature of Islamic psychology; (2) identify the key dimensions of Islamic wellness along with their indicators and practices; and (3) analyze the relevance and contribution of the Islamic wellness concept to contemporary models of psychological well-being. This review is expected to provide a theoretical contribution to the development of Islamic psychology as a discipline, as well as a practical foundation for counseling practitioners, educators, and mental health professionals in designing interventions that are sensitive to Islamic values.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Concept of Wellness in Contemporary Psychology

In contemporary psychology, wellness is generally approached through two major traditions: hedonic well-being and eudaimonic well-being (Ryff, 1989). The hedonic tradition is represented by Diener's concept of subjective well-being, which emphasizes individuals' cognitive evaluation of life satisfaction as well as the balance between positive and negative affect (Diener, 1984; Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985). The eudaimonic tradition, meanwhile, places greater emphasis on the actualization of one's potential and life meaning, as reflected in Ryff's model of psychological well-being, which comprises six dimensions: self-acceptance, positive relations with others, autonomy, environmental mastery, purpose in life, and personal growth (Ryff, 1989; Ryff & Keyes, 1995). These two traditions were later synthesized within the positive psychology movement, giving rise to Seligman's PERMA model—encompassing positive emotion, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment—as a framework for understanding flourishing, or the state of optimal human development (Seligman, 2011; Butler & Kern, 2016). These models have been widely applied across cultures; however, some scholars have criticized them for tending to assume the individual as an autonomous entity oriented toward self-fulfillment in this world, such that the vertical relationship between human beings and God—which constitutes the core worldview of religious communities—receives insufficient central attention in the construction of well-being (Rothman, 2021; Skinner, 2019).

2.2 Human Beings as Holistic Creatures in Islam: Jasad, Aql, Nafs, Qalb, and Ruh

Islamic psychology views human beings as holistic creatures composed of several interrelated components: *jasad* (the physical body), *aql* (cognitive/rational capacity), *nafs* (the soul or self), *qalb* (the heart, as the center of emotion and moral awareness), and *ruh* (the spirit, the spiritual-transcendent dimension that constitutes the essence of human religiosity) (Erwahyudin, Muzakki, & Latief, 2024; Skinner, 2019). This view differs fundamentally from classical Western psychology—whether psychoanalysis, behaviorism, or humanism—which tends to reduce the human psychological structure to biological aspects, observable behavior, or self-actualization alone, without adequately accommodating the dimension of the spirit (*ruh*) and humanity's innate religious disposition (*fitrah*) (Haque, 2004; Rothman, 2021).

Classical Muslim thinkers such as Ibn Sina, in his work *Kitab al-Nafs*, divided the *nafs* into three categories—*nafs nabatiyah* (vegetative), *nafs hayawaniyah* (animal), and *nafs natiqah* (rational)—which form the basic framework for a holistic Islamic psychotherapy that integrates physical, mental, and spiritual aspects (Norman, 2021). In contemporary tafsir studies, the concept of the human soul is also understood in layers: the *al-jismiyah* (physical) dimension relates to the body and bodily organs, the *al-nafsiyah* dimension encompasses reason, soul, and heart, while the *al-ruhaniyah* dimension consists of the spirit (*ruh*) and the innate spiritual disposition (*fitrah*) as the essence of human spirituality (Erwahyudin, Muzakki, & Latief, 2024). The balance among all these dimensions is what determines an individual's personality and inner tranquility (Keshavarzi & Haque, 2013).

2.3 Tazkiyatun Nafs and Sakinah as the Core of Well-Being

One key concept in Islamic psychology is *tazkiyatun nafs*, the process of purifying the soul aimed at controlling negative impulses (*hawa nafsu*) and directing psychic energy toward goodness (Zerni, Zaini, & Irman, 2026). This process involves spiritual exercises such as *dhikr*, prayer, *muhasabah* (self-introspection), and other acts of worship, which cumulatively are directed toward achieving psychological and spiritual balance (Erwahyudin,

Muzakki, & Latief, 2024; Ghiasi & Keramat, 2018). Within this paradigm, mental health is understood not merely as a balance of biological and psychological functions, but as the harmonization of reason (aql), heart (qalb), and spirit (ruh) oriented toward closeness to Allah (Keshavarzi & Haque, 2013; Subandi, Derin, & Setiyawati, 2024).

The concept of qalbun salim (a sound and pure heart) is often used as the ideal reference for a heart free from spiritual diseases such as envy, arrogance, and greed, thereby able to hold sakinah (tranquility) (Subandi, Derin, & Setiyawati, 2024). Within this context, sakinah can be understood as the pinnacle of psychological well-being in Islam—an inner state that is calm, stable, and peaceful even when an individual faces pressure or hardship in life, sustained by faith, meaning, and spiritual closeness to Allah (Zerni, Zaini, & Irman, 2026; Skinner, 2019).

2.4 Religiosity, Coping, and Subjective Well-Being: Empirical Evidence

A number of systematic studies provide empirical evidence regarding the relationship between religiosity and well-being among Muslim populations (Abdel-Khalek, 2022; Koenig, 2012). A systematic review of two decades of research on religiosity and happiness among Muslim groups found strong evidence of a positive correlation between religiosity and subjective well-being, with almost all studies—unlike some findings among Christian samples that showed inconsistent results—consistently demonstrating this positive association (Abdel-Khalek, 2022).

In the domain of stress coping, a systematic literature review on stress management from an Islamic perspective found that dimensions of religiosity such as positive Islamic coping, Islamic identity, and commitment to worship correlate negatively with perceived stress and positively with mental well-being, with Islamic identity even acting as a mediator in this relationship (Achour, Bensaid, & Nor, 2016; Wahyuni, 2023). Furthermore, the integration of Islamic values into educational curricula has also been found to prevent burnout and improve students' mental health, with social support from family, educators, and the community also contributing to psychological resilience (Agustin & Hidayah, 2024).

2.5 Positive Psychology within an Islamic Framework

The development of positive psychology has also spurred studies on how positive psychology principles—such as resilience, optimism, and gratitude—can be integrated with Islamic values in psychological intervention practices within Muslim communities (Anlı, 2025; Ali, Ahmed, Bhatti, & Farooq, 2020). A systematic review of positive psychology practices in Muslim communities shows that interventions combining mindfulness-based techniques with Islamic principles can enhance psychological well-being, reduce stress levels, and promote post-traumatic growth among populations such as healthcare workers, humanitarian workers, and university students (Anlı, 2025; Abdulkarim & Li, 2022).

At a more conceptual level, several scholars have developed character-development frameworks (husn al-akhlaq) based on the integration of spirit (ruh), heart (qalb), and soul (nafs) as a foundation for psychological resilience, emotional well-being, and human flourishing, drawing on classical ideas such as the concept of insan kamil (the perfect human) (Rassool, 2024; Subandi, Derin, & Setiyawati, 2024). Such frameworks affirm that Islamic positive psychology does not merely adopt Western constructs and attach an Islamic label, but rather builds its conceptual foundation from Islamic sources themselves, while remaining open to dialogue with modern psychology (Keshavarzi & Haque, 2013; Rothman, 2021).

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive-analytical qualitative approach using library research. This approach was chosen because the research aims to explore, identify, and synthesize the concept of wellness from the perspective of Islamic psychology based on written sources, rather than to empirically test relationships among variables. The data sources in this study consisted of two categories. First, primary sources comprising Qur'anic verses and hadiths relevant to the themes of mental health, inner tranquility, and self-purification. Second, secondary sources comprising national and international scholarly journal articles, books, and works of classical scholars (such as Ibn Sina and Al-Ghazali) that discuss the concepts of the human being, the soul, and well-being in Islam (Norman, 2021; Subandi, Derin, & Setiyawati, 2024).

The secondary literature search was conducted through academic databases such as Google Scholar, ScienceDirect, Springer (Journal of Religion and Health), Scopus, DOAJ, and the Garuda portal, using combinations of the keywords “Islamic wellness,” “Islamic psychology,” “psikologi Islam,” “kesejahteraan psikologis Islam,” “nafs qalb ruh,” “tazkiyatun nafs,” and “Islamic positive psychology.” The inclusion criteria used were: (a) articles discussing the concept of well-being, mental health, or wellness from an Islamic perspective; (b) published within a

time range relevant to the development of contemporary Islamic psychology studies; and (c) available in Indonesian, English, or Arabic with accessible abstracts/texts. Articles that were thematically irrelevant or duplicative were excluded from the analysis.

The data analysis technique used was thematic analysis, conducted through several stages: (1) familiarization, i.e., reading all sources thoroughly to obtain a general overview; (2) coding, i.e., identifying key concepts related to the dimensions of well-being in Islam; (3) theme categorization, i.e., grouping codes with similar meanings into broader themes; and (4) synthesis, i.e., arranging these themes into a coherent conceptual framework and comparing them with wellness models in contemporary psychology (Braun & Clarke, 2006). To maintain the credibility of the findings, source triangulation was carried out by comparing findings from tafsir studies, contemporary Islamic psychology studies, and empirical research on Muslim populations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results with clear descriptions. Results can be supplemented with tables, graphs (pictures), and/or charts. The discussion section describes the results of processing data or information, interpreting the findings logically, linking them to relevant reference sources, and the implications of the findings. [Times New Roman, 12, normal].

Thematic analysis of the reviewed literature produced one overarching theme at the core of the wellness concept in Islamic psychology, namely *sakinah* (inner tranquility) as an integrative outcome of balance across five human dimensions: *jasadiyah*, *nafsiyah-aqliyah*, *qalbiyah*, *ruhaniyah*, and *ijtima'iyah* (Erwahyudin, Muzakki, & Latief, 2024; Zerni, Zaini, & Irman, 2026). These five dimensions, along with their indicators, key practices, and corresponding outcomes, are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Dimensions of Wellness in the Perspective of Islamic Psychology

Dimension	Definition/Focus	Key Indicators & Practices	Purpose/Outcome
Jasadiyah (Physical)	The well-being of the body as a trust (<i>amanah</i>) and a means (<i>wasilah</i>) for worship	Halal-thayyib diet, maintaining cleanliness, adequate rest, exercise, avoiding harm to the body	A healthy body as an optimal means for worship and activity
Nafsiyah-Aqliyah (Psychological-Cognitive)	Managing the self, thoughts, and impulses (<i>hawa nafsu</i>)	Mujahadah (self-control), positive thinking, self-planning and evaluation (<i>muhasabah</i>)	Cognitive stability and the ability to direct impulses toward goodness
Qalbiyah (Heart/Emotion)	Managing emotions and the state of the heart	Patience (<i>sabr</i>), gratitude (<i>shukr</i>), sincerity (<i>ikhlas</i>), forgiveness, avoiding diseases of the heart (<i>envy, arrogance</i>)	<i>Qalbun salim</i> — a pure and tranquil heart
Ruhaniyah (Spiritual-Transcendent)	The vertical relationship between humans and Allah	Prayer (<i>shalat</i>), dhikr, supplication (<i>du'a</i>), trust in God (<i>tawakal</i>), piety (<i>taqwa</i>), <i>tazkiyatun nafs</i>	Closeness to Allah and appreciation of life's meaning
Ijtima'iyah (Social)	The horizontal relationship among fellow human beings	Maintaining kinship ties (<i>silaturahmi</i>), brotherhood (<i>ukhuwah</i>), mutual assistance, almsgiving (<i>sedekah</i>), respecting others' rights	Social harmony and community support

The *jasadiyah* dimension indicates that physical well-being in Islam is not understood merely as an end in itself, but as a means (*wasilah*) for optimally carrying out the functions of worship and human stewardship (*khilafah*) (Haque, 2004). The recommendation to maintain a halal and thayyib (wholesome) diet, cleanliness, and balance between activity and rest reflects the view that the body is a trust (*amanah*) that must be safeguarded (Keshavarzi & Haque, 2013).

The *nafsiyah-aqliyah* dimension relates to individuals' ability to manage thoughts, impulses, and behavior through mechanisms such as *mujahadah* (struggle against base desires) and *muhasabah* (regular self-introspection) (Zerni, Zaini, & Irman, 2026). The reviewed literature shows that this capacity for self-control correlates with a reduction in perceived stress and an increase in mental well-being, consistent with findings that Islamic identity and

commitment to worship serve as protective factors against stress (Achour, Bensaid, & Nor, 2016; Wahyuni, 2023). The qalbiyah dimension positions the heart (qalb) as the center of emotional regulation and morality (Subandi, Derin, & Setiyawati, 2024). The concept of qalbun salim—a heart free from spiritual diseases such as envy, arrogance, and greed—recurs throughout the literature as an indicator of ideal mental health (Subandi, Derin, & Setiyawati, 2024). Practices such as patience, gratitude, sincerity, and forgiveness are consistently associated with individuals' ability to cope adaptively with life's pressures (Ali, Ahmed, Bhatti, & Farooq, 2020; Rassool, 2024).

The ruhaniyah dimension is the dimension that most distinguishes the Islamic concept of wellness from secular wellness models (Rothman, 2021). The vertical relationship between humans and Allah—through prayer, dhikr, supplication, and tawakal—is found across various studies to be a primary source of inner tranquility (sakinah) and life meaning (Zerni, Zaini, & Irman, 2026; Keshavarzi & Haque, 2013). Empirical evidence from systematic reviews shows a consistent correlation between religiosity and happiness among Muslim populations across various cultural contexts, as well as the role of dhikr and Qur'anic recitation in reducing anxiety and depressive symptoms (Abdel-Khalek, 2022; Ghiasi & Keramat, 2018).

The ijtimai'iyah dimension affirms that well-being in Islam is not individualistic, but closely tied to the quality of social relationships (Abu Raiya & Pargament, 2010). Values such as maintaining kinship ties, brotherhood, mutual assistance, and almsgiving are found to function as forms of social support that contribute to community resilience and mental well-being, as seen in studies on the integration of Islamic values in education that succeeded in reducing student burnout through strengthened support from family, educators, and the community (Agustin & Hidayah, 2024; Anli, 2025). Overall, the synthesis of findings indicates that these five dimensions do not stand independently, but are interrelated and converge toward a single integrative state called sakinah—a calm, stable, and meaningful inner condition achieved through the ongoing process known as tazkiyatun nafs (purification of the soul) (Zerni, Zaini, & Irman, 2026; Subandi, Derin, & Setiyawati, 2024).

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study indicate that the concept of wellness in Islamic psychology has a significant area of overlap with contemporary wellness models, while also offering fundamentally distinguishing elements (Rothman, 2021). For example, the ijtimai'iyah dimension within the Islamic framework has conceptual similarities with the positive relations dimension in Ryff's psychological well-being model and the relationships dimension in PERMA (Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Butler & Kern, 2016). Likewise, the ruhaniyah dimension—particularly the aspect of appreciating life's meaning through closeness to Allah—can be juxtaposed with the purpose in life dimension (Ryff) or meaning (PERMA) (Ryff, 1989; Butler & Kern, 2016). However, the fundamental difference lies in the position of the vertical human-God relationship: within the Islamic framework, this relationship is not merely one source of meaning among others, but the core that overarches and integrates all other dimensions (Rothman, 2021; Skinner, 2019).

The implications of these findings are quite significant for counseling and mental health practice, particularly among Muslim populations (Keshavarzi & Haque, 2013). Psychological interventions that target only the cognitive-behavioral dimension without considering the qalbiyah and ruhaniyah dimensions risk being less effective or less acceptable to highly religious clients (Abdulkerim & Li, 2022). Conversely, integrating practices such as dhikr, prayer, and the values of patience and gratitude into counseling frameworks—as demonstrated by various studies on Islamic counseling and culturally adapted mindfulness-based interventions—has been shown to increase clients' acceptance of interventions as well as their effectiveness in reducing anxiety and enhancing psychological well-being (Kadafi, Alfaiz, Ramli, Asri, & Finayanti, 2021; Anli, 2025; Ghiasi & Keramat, 2018).

On the other hand, this study also identifies several limitations in the existing literature. First, most studies on Islamic psychological wellness remain conceptual-normative in nature (library research) and have not been widely tested empirically using psychometrically validated instruments (Skinner, 2019). A systematic review of positive psychology practices in Muslim communities, for instance, found only a small number of studies meeting the inclusion criteria after the screening process, indicating that the empirical evidence base in this field remains limited and requires further development (Anli, 2025). Second, there is not yet a widely recognized, integrated instrument for measuring Islamic wellness that encompasses all five dimensions (jasadiyah, nafsiyah-aqliyah, qalbiyah, ruhaniyah, and ijtimai'iyah) simultaneously (Rothman, 2021). Third, most existing empirical studies remain focused on particular geographic and cultural contexts, so cross-cultural generalization across the global Muslim community still requires further investigation (Abu-Ras, Suárez, & Abu-Bader, 2018).

Based on these limitations, this study recommends several directions for future research: (1) the development and validation of an Islamic wellness measurement instrument encompassing the five dimensions identified; (2) empirical research (both quantitative and qualitative) examining the relationship between Islamic practices (dhikr, patience, gratitude, tawakal) and indicators of psychological well-being across various age groups and cultural contexts; and (3) the development of counseling and psychotherapy intervention models that systematically integrate the five dimensions of Islamic wellness, so that their effectiveness can be empirically tested.

CONCLUSION

This literature review shows that wellness from the perspective of Islamic psychology is a multidimensional construct encompassing five key dimensions: jasadiyah (physical), nafsiyah-aqliyah (psychological-cognitive), qalbiyah (emotional-heart), ruhaniyah (spiritual-transcendent), and ijtimai'iyah (social) (Erwahyudin, Muzakki, & Latief, 2024). These five dimensions are interrelated and converge toward a single integrative state called *sakinah*, achieved through the process of *tazkiyatun nafs* and practices such as dhikr, patience, gratitude, and tawakal (Zerni, Zaini, & Irman, 2026; Subandi, Derin, & Setiyawati, 2024).

Compared with contemporary wellness models such as Ryff's psychological well-being and Seligman's PERMA, the Islamic concept of wellness shows similarities on several dimensions (social relations and life meaningfulness), while offering a distinctive contribution by positioning the vertical human-God relationship as the core that integrates all other dimensions of well-being (Ryff & Keyes, 1995; Butler & Kern, 2016; Rothman, 2021). Thus, the framework of Islamic wellness has the potential to enrich contemporary positive psychology discourse, while also providing a theoretical basis for developing measurement instruments and intervention models that are culturally and spiritually relevant to Muslim populations (Keshavarzi & Haque, 2013; Anli, 2025).

As a literature review, this study has the limitation of being conceptual in nature and not yet empirically-quantitatively tested. Therefore, further empirical research—whether through instrument development, correlational studies, or intervention studies—is greatly needed to strengthen and validate the Islamic wellness framework proposed in this study.

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