

The Development Theory of Al-'Aql, al-Qalb and Al-Nafs in Islamic Psychotherapy

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Abstract

Islamic psychotherapy is an application of treatment methods for patients or clients through responses of the soul, spiritual, mental, emotional and behaviour to obtain calmness in life. It is a form of psychological intervention to treat and cure emotional, spiritual, cognitive and behavioural disorders. Islamic psychotherapy has integrated spiritual elements with particular focus given on the development of *al-Ruh*, *al-'Aql*, *al-Qalb* and *al-Nafs* in the quest to obtain contentment in life. As such, this study serves to highlight the developmental theories of *al-'Aql*, *al-Qalb* and *al-Nafs* based on reviews of past writings and research. These theories can be applied as a research base when formulating models or modules of Islamic psychotherapy. The research method adopts the qualitative approach based on document analysis conducted through library research to attain data on the position of Islamic psychotherapy as a supportive treatment or to complement mental health and development theories that can be applied in treatment procedures. Research findings indicate that development theories include the reinforcement of *aqidah*, the practicality of *aqidah*, perfection of the *akhlak* (morality), *targhib tarhib*, *ibrah*, repentance (*taubat*), sincerity, strengthening of faith (iman), strengthening of belief in *qada' and qadar* and so on.

Keywords: Islamic Psychospiritual, Islamic Psychotherapy, Mental Health in Islamic Approach, *al-'Aql*, *al-Nafs*, *al-Qalb*

Introduction

Long (2016) states that theory is not a personal opinion but is formulated through past research. Research conducted on theories explains their relevance in the respective research fields. Darusalam and Hussin (2019) further explain that theories are sets of ideas in the form of concepts, idealism and significant research that expounds on the phenomena related to certain research. The background of this research utilizes the development theories of *al-Ruh*, *al-'Aql*, *al-Qalb* and *al-Nafs* that have important elements of spiritual treatment and have

been proven to produce positive effects on mental health. The researcher will not discuss the theory of *ruh*, because the three aforementioned elements of *ruh* exist in the substance (*zat*) of the same individual (Zahid, 2019). According to Hawwa (1999), *ruh* cannot be set apart and is interrelated with *al-'Aql*, *al-Qalb* and *al-Nafs* but are distinguished by their respective elements. The *ruh* that is lured by lust is known as *al-Nafs*, the *ruh* that withstands such lure is known as *al-'Aql* and the *ruh* associated with edification is known as *al-Qalb*. In this way, the *ruh* can truly get to know Allah SWT, thus the individual can play his part accordingly in keeping up with his role as a servant and caliph and so distinguish himself from other creatures and beings. Through such understanding, the development theories of *al-'Aql*, *al-Qalb* and *al-Nafs* are effective in the quest to evoke *al-Ruh* within mankind.

Islamic Psychotherapy As Complementary Treatment For Mental Health

Psychotherapy is an element of psychology that strives to seek a solution for humanitarian issues as well as mental health (Mahmud, 1984). Mental disorders such as neurosis (mental derangement that causes unnecessary worry and misery), pressure and psychosis (a spiritual condition that causes the inability to think sensibly) happen as a result of the imbalance between intelligent quotient (IQ) and emotional quotient (EQ) (Rajab, 2006). This is under the concept of spiritual development stated by Imam al-Ghazali and covers the elements of *'aql* (IQ), *qalb* (EQ) and *nafs* (SQ) (Jodi et.al., 2014). Individuals who prioritize *al-'Aql* will make full use of their thoughts and disregard the social dimensions of their lives. On the other hand, individuals who emphasize more on *al-Qalb* are more inclined towards the observation of societal values and neglect moral issues that arise around them. Hence, every individual is bound by *al-'Aql*, *al-Qalb* and *al-Nafs* and his thoughts will be observed in tandem with controlled emotion until he develops better control of the spiritual aspect (Agustin, 2004). On that note, the framework of Islamic psychotherapy revolves around treatment that aims to strengthen the spiritual elements as one faces the challenges of life.

Islamic psychospiritual is a concept and procedure of the treatment for issues such as mental, spiritual, emotional and moral behaviour based on sources and practices in reference to al-Quran, *al-Sunnah*, *salaf al-Saleh* and knowledge and expertise that are not against the principles of Syariah (Sa'ari, 2019). Rajab (2011) maintains that Islamic psychospiritual is the strength of human emotion resulting from religious practice that covers the aspects of faith (*iman*), worship (*ibadah*) and morality (*akhlak*) that assure psychological harmony. Sa'ari (2019) further explains that Islamic psychospiritual refers to thoughts or research that integrate the elements of psychology and spirituality into the mental and thinking process from the perspective of Islam.

Psychotherapy may be given a literal definition, based on the word psychology and therapy or also widely known as spiritual therapy (Rahman, 2017). In Arabic, the spirit is often associated with the word *nafs*. On the other hand, *shifa'*, *'ilaj*, *tahdhib*, *tathir*, *tib*, *tazkiyyah* refer to therapy (Raba, 2001). Hence, psychotherapy is synonymous with terms such as *shifa' al-Nafs*, *'ilaj al-Nafs*, *tazkiyyah al-Nafs* so on and so forth (Muhammad, 2018). Among other terms used by ulama' include *tib al-Nufus* (Miskawayh in his work, *Tahdhib al-Akhlak*), *'ilaj al-Nafs* (Miskawayh in *Tahzib al-Akhlak*, Ibn Qayyim in *Risalat fi Amrad al-Qulub* and Muhammad Uthman Najati in *al-Hadith al-Nabawi wa 'Ilm al-Nafs*), *tib al-Rahani* (Abu Bakar al-Razi in *al-Tib al-Rahani*), *Tahdhib al-Nufus* (Ibn 'Ata' Allah in *Taj al-'Urus al-Hawi li Tahdhib al-Nufus*) and a few others.

On the terminology side, the definition of psychotherapy itself is rather vague and has multiple meanings. Muhammad (2018); Saad (2018); Wahyudi (1991) consensually agree that the term psychotherapy has been applied in various operations of empirical knowledge like psychiatry, psychology, counselling and education. However, Ainul (2016) defines psychotherapy as an effort to manage psychological issues by integrating the psychological approach with the spiritual approach. Meisil B Wulur (2015) on the other hand, gives a simple definition of psychotherapy, that is spiritual therapy. In line with the development of knowledge on spiritual healing, the term psychotherapy has now been introduced Sa'ari (2012) provides a comprehensive explanation by relating psychotherapy as a method used by therapists to work with clients to modify, alter or encourage more positive thoughts or reduce disturbing factors and consequently lead to a more meaningful and happy life. This view is shared by Stanborough (2020) who defines psychotherapy as a treatment- based working relationship between the therapist and client through the use of various psychotherapy approaches. Concerning that, the study conducted by Sa'ari (2019); Abidin (2018); Musin & Sa'ari (2013) focus on Islamic psychotherapy in terms of its implementation and practicality as psychological intervention and application to treat emotional, spiritual, cognitive and behavioural disorders without the use of clinical medication but through Al-Quran and sunnah, practices of pious figures and knowledge that complies with the *syara'*. This definition implies that psychospiritual and psychotherapy entail the spiritual treatment approach but are distinguished by the theoretical and practical aspects. Psychospiritual is associated with the concept and approach of spiritual treatment whereas psychotherapy is often related to the approach of spiritual treatment and its method of application to the client or patient (Sa'ari, 2019).

Therefore, it can be concluded that the Islamic approach to psychotherapy treatment is the point of study for the relationship between human beings and their spiritual sides. The approach is a treatment process or healing approach that encompasses various techniques to help one overcome psychological or emotional disturbances by managing feelings, patterns of thoughts and behaviour as self-potential is developed through Islamic sources so as not to deviate from the teachings of Islam. The application of effective and successful psychotherapy can only be gained by referring to the al-Quran, hadiths, sirah nubuawah, the practices of *salaf al-Saleh*, the thinkings of ulama' and knowledge that does not deviate from the principles of *syara'* (Muhsin, 2015). As maintained by Sa'adi (2016), Islamic psychotherapy needs to integrate piety, faith, ibadah and righteousness when faced with hardships and tribulations (Sa'adi).

The discussion on Islamic psychotherapy emphasises spiritual development based on faith (*iman*), Islam and courtesy (*ihsan*) (Masrrom, 2016). According to Imam al-Ghazali, the focus is more on achieving *maqam ihsan* which consists of two levels (Sa'ari, 2019):

- a) The individual feels that his every behaviour is observed by Allah SWT.
- b) The individual feels the existence of Allah SWT within his every behaviour.

These levels serve to spur the individual to have an undivided affection for Allah SWT and the Holy Prophet up to the point that he is not easily affected by every success and failure that may have consequences on his mental state, emotion and behaviour. In the words of the Holy Prophet SAW:

Translation: "How remarkable it is for a mukmin. All his deeds are virtuous. Something that only a mukmin is blessed with. He will be graced with gratitude for any gain. That is for his own good. In times of hardship, he will be graced with patience. That is also for his own good."

(HR. Muslim)

Development Theories of *al-'Aql*, *al-Qalb* and *al-Nafs*

The study is conducted based on the development theories of *al-'Aql*, *al-Qalb* and *al-Nafs* which consist of important spiritual elements that have been proven to have positive effects on mental health. The development theory of the *ruh* is not discussed because those three elements are components of the *ruh* that exist within the same individual (Zahid, 2019). According to Hawwa (1999), the *ruh* cannot be divided and is closely linked with *al-'Aql*, *al-Qalb* and *al-Nafs* but are distinguished by their roles. The *ruh* that is dominated by lust is known as *al-Nafs*, the *ruh* can overcome lust is known as *al-'Aql* and the *ruh* that relates to the point of faith is known as *al-Qalb*. Such binding enables the *ruh* to get acquainted with Allah SWT through genuine intrinsic knowledge (*makrifah*) and to conduct himself in accordance with his roles as servant and caliph, in addition to being the main distinguishing point with other creatures and beings (Hawwa, 1999). Through such understanding, the development theories of *al-'Aql*, *al-Qalb* and *al-Nafs* also affect the evolution of the *ruh* within mankind.

The Development Theory of *al-'Aql*

According to Ibn Manzur, *al-'Aql* (mind) literally has the same meaning as *al-Idrak* (awareness), *al-Fikr* (thoughts), *al-Hijr* (self-restraint), *al-Ribat* (binding), *al-Man'u* (prevention), and *al-Nahyu* (prohibition). As such, *al-'Aql* can be interpreted as the shield or defence for mankind to abstain from the lust that may cause harm to himself (Manzur, 1997). In the words of Hamka, *al-'Aql* is the spiritual aspect of mankind that functions to help him restrain from lust (Yudiani, 2013). Therefore, it is a stark contrast to one's foolishness. *Al-'Aql* is a privilege conferred to mankind by Allah SWT to repress ignorance and foolishness (Manzur, 1997). *'Aql* is an element that can distinguish between deeds (*hasan*) and misdeeds (*qabih*), virtue (*khayr*) and iniquity (*syar*) and also the right from the wrong (Al-Arabiyyah, 2004). Hamka further explains that *al-'Aql* is initiated by the three spiritual elements: *al-Fikr* (thoughts), *al-Wijdan* (emotions), and *al-Iradah* (needs) (Yudiani, 2013). Hassan (2019) further explains that *'aql* is not only associated with the brain but also with the heart (*fuad*), (*qalb*) and soul (*nafs*) guided by *taufik* and *hidayah*. So, says Allah SWT:

Translation: Indeed, we have destined many djins and humans for Hell. They have hearts that do not understand with (words of Allah). (Al-A 'raf 7:179)

According to the Western schools of thought, *al-'Aql* is not only regarded as the only tool to obtain knowledge, but also as the instigator of human behaviour. This traditionally leads to the view that knowledge only has physics attributes or something that it is something that can be measured through rationales or considerations of the mind and senses. This belief subsequently leads to the birth of various schools of thought that serve as the basis for the civilization of Western psychology (Cholik, 2015). Such a view contradicts the Islamic perspective that maintains there is a relationship between *al-'Aql* and the heart that serves as the source of knowledge in the quest to understand rational, empirical and metaphysical

issues (Cholik, 2015). Greek and Muslim philosophers have considered the physical and spiritual elements that function as the base for mankind to acquire happiness in life or Hereafter (Akib & Muhsin, 2019). Despite the ability to search for the truth, it does not mean that *al-'Aql* is not without its flaws. Nevertheless, this is the starting point for *al-'Aql* to require knowledge continuously. *Al-'Aql* is influenced by the senses that can only react to physical objects and its ability is only restricted to understanding the frameworks of metaphysics and eschatology (study of life after death). Therefore, *al-'Aql* requires the guidance of the *syara'* for it to be perfectly developed.

One of the development theories of *al-'Aql* can be identified through the study carried out by Aisha Hamdan which discusses the restructuring of cognitive according to the perspective of Islam to function as a medium for cognitive behaviour therapy. Studies have underlined 8 benefits of *al-'Aql* in Islam, namely

a) To comprehend the reality of life which is only temporary
The ability to do so will enable one to have a positive perspective towards *qada'* and *qadar*, be it good or bad for him and is a form of test for life Hereafter.

b) To focus on life hereafter.
Such thoughts may overcome worry about issues in life when one focuses more on his preparation to face Allah SWT.

c) Self-reflect on the reasons Allah puts mankind to test
Mankind will be motivated when realizing that all issues and problems in life are ways of Allah SWT to increase his position, forgive his sins and reward him with a place in heaven. Have Faith and Be Dependent on Allah SWT (*Tawakkal*).

This is an element of *tauhid* that Allah SWT is just and knows what is best for His servant.

d) Believe that every hardship will subsequently be followed by a good outcome.
Such belief is based on Al-Quran and hadiths that explain the matter.

e) Focus on the blessings of Allah SWT.
This serves to remind mankind that the blessings of Allah SWT far outweigh the tests given to them.

f) Remembering Allah SWT.
This notion is based on *zikir* and the recital of the Al-Quran that can appease the spiritual side of mankind.

g) *Du'a*
The notion maintains that every assistance only comes from Allah SWT. *Du'a* provides hope for mankind to overcome all sufferings and restlessness when faced with tribulations.

Aside from that, through his study, Abdullah et.al (2017) has produced 5 methods of cognitive reasoning integrations in accordance with 'Abdullah Naseh 'Ulwan through his writing, *Tarbiyah al-Awlad* ('Abdullah et.al., 2017)

a) Reinforcement of *aqidah*.

He regards the strength of the *aqidah* as most fundamental because it is the source of thinking and action. A well-structured generation has the utmost trust in its ideology and belief. This is proven by the Holy Prophet who sets *aqidah* as the foundation for developing the attributes of a Muslim.

b) Uswatun hasanah.

Allah SWT has prepared mankind with *fitrah* that is pure and innocent. However, the potential can never be properly developed without good and proper conduct. This is extremely vital when developing an honourable personality, particularly in the aspects of effective, cognitive, and psychomotor.

c) Propriety (*istiqamah*)

Developing a consistently favourable atmosphere is essential to achieve conventions in terms of human behaviour. Without consistent propriety, the trait will dissipate and be replaced by ignorance, plagued by detrimental illnesses and detestable traits.

d) Advice and Guidance

Sincere guidance along with efficacious advice will produce inner purity, honesty, as well as sound and healthy mind to great effect.

e) Observation and Monitoring

To ensure that all the commands of Allah SWT are duly heeded and not allow anything impermissible. Observation and monitoring are carried out at the initial stage as a precaution.

Dr Othman Dato' Hj Mohamed has established the Ad-Din cognitive psychology theory to reconstruct *fitrah* in the spiritual context (Sipon & Husin, 2008). The concept of the theory focuses on the creation of mankind as a caliph who is blessed with spiritual elements such as *al-Ruh*, *al-Qalb*, *al-Nafs* and *al-'Aql*. The well-being that is borne from these spiritual elements needs to be approached dynamically and comprehensively through (1) the technique of delivering knowledge in the form of *taqwa* that will in turn produce virtuous values like sincerity, honesty and self-esteem (2) the technique of using wisdom to solve problems (3) the technique of apprising the greatness and might of Allah SWT, the *sirah* of the prophets as told in the al-Quran and hadiths (4) the technique of prior control by instilling newly-found high spirits within the client as implied in the essence of al-Duha that inspires the Holy Prophet to carry on despite all the struggles (Sipon & Husin, 2008).

The Development Theory of *al-Qalb*

Al-Qalb is originally an Arabic term that means the heart (Mokhtar, 2016). Terminologically, the term originated from the word *qalaba* which means to turn over, bob or shaken emotionally when happy or sad, consensual or otherwise (Agustiar, 2017). In many research, the term *al-Qalb* is associated with the heart (Abidin, 2018). *Al-Qalb* is usually translated in English as the *heart* (jantung) and not the *liver* (hati). Only, in the linguistics aspect, the word *al-Qalb* is also used to convey the meaning of feelings which are usually associated with the heart (Diponegoro, 2013). Imam al-Ghazali had classified it into two different dimensions, the physical and spiritual dimensions. According to him, the physical dimension refers to the heart and not the liver (Badaruddin & Ismail, 2015). Also, in the Arabic language, there is a stark

contrast between the word *qalb* which means the heart and *fu'ad* which means liver (Manzur, 1997; Cholik, 2015). As explained in the al-Quran, the use of both words can be seen in actuality (*majaz*). According to Hassan (2019); Fairus (2016), both words function to explain anything good or bad in actuality or through *majaz* (the ability to think and understand). So, says Allah SWT:

Translation: Have they not travelled throughout the land so their hearts may reason, and their ears may listen? Indeed, it is not the eyes that are blind, but it is the hearts in the chests that grow blind (Al-Hajj 22:46)

In this verse, Allah SWT clearly states that *al-Qalb* that carries the meaning of the heart that understands (فُلُوبٌ يَعْقِلُونَ) is *al-Qalb* that is seen in actuality because of its position in the human chest (الْفُلُوبُ الَّتِي فِي الصُّدُورِ). This is a sign that *qalb* refers to the heart (Fairus, 2016). Concerning this, Allah SWT uses the term *faqaha* to elucidate the understanding obtained through *qalb* and the term *'aql* with regards to the meaning obtained through the brain. As *qalb* and *'aql* are associated with acquiring knowledge, Ibn Manzur (1997) treats *qalb* and *'aql* are equal. Hassan (2019) concludes that *'aql* is dependent on *qalb* because thoughts are placed in the heart as the hearing is placed in the ear without disputing views that maintain thoughts are placed in the heart. Diponegoro (2013) asserts that traditionally, the relationship between the heart and mind is one-sided as a result of the reaction of the heart towards the messages conveyed by the brain. However, the latest studies find that two-way interactions including the communication from the heart to the brain do take place in four ways: (1) nerve transmission (2) through biochemistry procedure via hormone (3) through pressure waves and (4) through the energy from electromagnetic wave interaction. The fourth way is the strongest among others and it not only influences the brain but also every cell in the body. What is more interesting, is that his study puts forward the findings of the Institute of Heart that highlights the function of the heart as an organ that is made up of 40,000 neurons with the ability to affect the capability of the mind to think (psychology), to pump blood throughout the body to enable each part to function (physiology) and to possess an electromagnetic field that emits information as well as synchronise it to others' hearts (sociology). Simultaneously, this finding provides a scientific interpretation of the Holy Prophet's words:

Translation: Verily, in the body, is a piece of flesh which, if sound, the entire body is sound, and if corrupt, the entire body is corrupt. Truly, it is the heart.
(HR Bukhari)

Fairus (2016); Van der Wall & Van Gilst (2013); Diponegoro (2013) consensually agree that the heart shares the same characteristics as the brain and has the intelligence to make its own decisions. This is proven by studies that show any individual who undergoes a heart transplant will also be affected emotionally (Abidin, 2018). That is also the *i'jaz al-Lughawi* found in the verses of al-Quran or hadiths by the Holy Prophet. Every aspect of its usage consists of a vast array of knowledge within the spiritual field that can be studied and assessed from time to time.

When discussing the *majazi* approach, al-Timidhi (n.d) explains that *qalb* and *fu'ad* share the same meaning, that is they both mean inner view or *basirah*. *Fu'ad* is regarded as the inner view (*ru'yah batiniyyah*, where *ma'rifah* and *asrar* are placed), and *qalb* is where knowledge is placed. Both are essential when things are to be seen through their meanings and *hikmah*. On that note, al-Hakim places *fu'ad* within *qalb* just as *qalb* is placed within *sadr*, the iris within the eyes or the Holy Kaabah within the city of Mecca. When the view (*fu'ad*) connects with the knowledge (*qalb*), matters that are concealed will be revealed. In other words, if *fu'ad* is yet to be seen, the heart will not gain any benefit from what it had already known (Al-Tirmidhi, n.d), (Hanapi & Alias, 2017).

The use of the term *al-Qalb* in the al-Quran can be described through a few interpretations, namely: (1) about faith (2) the feelings of fear, anxiety, hope and calmness (3) calmness through *zikr Allah* (4) the ability to understand using *al-'Aql* and (5) fortitude, the traits of *mahmudah* and *mazmumah* are borne through the reaction of *al-'Aql* (Maulida, 2016). On the matter of the heart, it is mentioned in the al-Quran that *qalb* brings with it both good and bad elements, among them being ailments (not physically but *amrad al-Qalb*), incredulity, the tendency of going astray, courage, fear, remorse, quaver, doing deeds (repentance on misdeeds), wrath, scepticism, hypocrisy, vanity, faith, love and endearment as well as envy. Hence, Hamka underlines three methods of education for *qalb* (*tarbiyyah al-Qulub* or *Riyadah al-Qulub*) which are, to truly understand al-Quran, to think and observe nature and to recite *zikr* (Musfah, 2006).

Meanwhile, Basri (2021) discusses a few issues about the heart, which involve its position and division, types of heart-related ailments, the effect of vice on the heart, its remedy and the consolidation of the remedy. He mentions fifteen types of remedies for the heart that include penitence (*taubat*), sincerity in doing deeds, seeking knowledge, consolidating the *iman* and *tauhid*, abstaining from anything forbidden, consolidating belief in *qada* and *qadar*, choosing the right friends and acquaintances, visit the sickly and also orphans, to visit graveyards, to appreciate hadiths which soothe the soul, revisit the experience of both devoted and cruel historical figures, to return what is not his, to be reminded of death, reminded of Hereafter and *zikr* (Ibrahim, 2021).

Besides that, the development theory of *al-Qalb* is put forward by the study conducted by Mokhtar et.al (2017) regarding the development theory of the heart according to al-Syaykh Ibn 'Ata' Allah Sakandariy. The study highlights two theories, the first being the genuine fear of Allah SWT and the second, the love and longing for Allah SWT. To achieve both, al-Syaykh Ibn 'Ata' Allah proposes the theory of *hikmah* that can assist the heart through four stages of *zikr*, namely *zikr ghafalah* (negligent heart), *zikr yaqazah* (conscious heart), *zikr hudur* (the heart that never ceases to remember Allah) and *zikr ghaybah* (the heart that believes only Allah exists).

In addition, the study done by Basirah & Zarrina (2013) mentions the therapy suggested by Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Mandili to cure a few heart-related ailments through his writing titled *The Remedy for The Heart*. The heart-related ailments include anger, envy, overly pride, love for worldly materials, *takabur*, *'ujub* and *riyak*. The remedies for these ailments are summarised as follows:

- a) Anger, envy and overly pride need to be overcome through knowledge and deeds. This includes the knowledge of the ill effects that can harm the individual if he fails to abstain from such traits. This can be done along with *ta'awwuz*, performing the ablution, being devout and being happy for others.
- b) Love for worldly materials and *takabbur* can be avoided by realizing the real reason for his creation, and the might Allah SWT has over creatures and beings.
- c) *Ujub* can be avoided through the sense of gratitude for all the things granted by Allah SWT and by realizing that they are only temporary and may be rescinded by Allah SWT at any time.
- d) *Riya'* can be avoided if the individual bears in mind that Allah SWT's detest is far worse than compliments showered by humans. It will not matter if one is loathed by others so long as he is loved by Allah SWT. On the other hand, all the compliments and praises in the world will not matter if he incurs the wrath of Allah SWT.

Muhsin (2012) also deliberates on the concept of *maqamat* taken from *Qut al-Qulub* written by Abu Talib al-Makki. The book consists of 48 chapters that discuss spiritual elements and other-worldly experiences under the *sufi* doctrine. However, the study only focuses on nine *maqams*: *tawbah*, *sabr*, *shukr*, *raja'*, *khawf*, *zuhd*, *tawakkal*, *rida* and *mahabbah*.

The Development Theory of *al-Nafs*

In discussing *al-Nafs*, Ibn Manzur proposes a variety of meanings based on different aspects. Among them is the polemic relating to the view that identifies the similarities or differences between *al-Nafs* and *al-Ruh*. Ibn Sidah concurs that there is a difference between *al-Nafs* and *al-Ruh*. On the contrary, Abu Ishaq and Abu Kharasy maintain that *al-Nafs* is actually *al-Ruh* itself (Manzur, 1997). From the aspect of Arabic language use, *al-Nafs* and *al-Ruh* are the same, just that *al-Nafs* is a *muannath* word, whereas *al-Ruh* is a *mudhakkar*. Yudian (2013) states that *al-Nafs* exists as a result of the combination of two elements, the *ruh* (spiritual) and the *jasad* (physical). She further explains that *al-Nafs* consists of *al-'Aql*, *al-Qalb* and lust with *al-Qalb* being the centre of human spiritual dynamics. From another point of view, *al-Nafs* is seen as the root for *'aql* and *ruh* which are the sources of life (Baharuddin, 2004). Hence, as humans fall asleep, the *nafs* is taken away from them and not the *ruh*, which in turn will be taken away during their times of death (Manzur, 1997). However, if one studies the words of Allah SWT in the al-Quran, the *ruh* which is regarded as the source of life is stated as *al-Nafs*. So, says Allah SWT:

Translation: Allah fully takes away the souls (of the people) at the time of their death, and (of) those who do not die, in their sleep. Then He withholds those on whom He had decreed death, and sends others back, up to an appointed term. Surely, in this, there are signs for people who ponder (Al-Zumar 39: 42)

Another point of view states that Ibn Khalawayh assumes that *nafs* has different meanings, namely (1) *al-Ruh* (2) something that distinguishes (3) blood (4) kinship (5) something that is close by (6) colouring (7) breath (8) heart and soul, and (9) lust (Manzur 1997). Out of all the definitions, *al-Nafs* that is linked with the heart and soul are the most appropriate to the field of study.

Researchers are more inclined to accept the view that *al-Nafs* and *al-Ruh* are two separate entities. According to Sri Astuti (2015), there are three dimensions in the creation of mankind, *al-Jismiyyah* (the physical aspect of the body), *al-Nafsiyyah* (*'aql, nafs & qalb*) and *al-Ruhaniyyah* (*fitriah* and spiritual) (Samad, 2015). She further explains that the term *al-Ruh* which is mentioned 24 times in the al-Quran has three meanings: assistance, Djibril and the human soul. Nabilah Hassan, on the contrary, explains that the al-Quran does not use the term *al-Ruh* but *al-Nafs* about the inner side of mankind that relates to happiness and suffering as well as being given the responsibility for his reward or reprimand Hereafter. So, says Allah SWT:

Translation: By the soul and He who proportioned it and inspired it (with discernment of) its wickedness and righteousness. (Al-Syams 91: 7-8)

Therefore, there is a considerable difference in the interpretation of *al-Ruh* and *al-Nafs* in the Al-Quran among linguists who differentiate the functions of both. *Al-Ruh* is seen as a spiritual entity that corresponds to a relationship with Allah SWT in terms of ownership. This relationship indicates that the *ruh* is a spiritual dimension that gives nuances to *ilahiyyah* (Baharuddin, 2004). The *ruh* brings about the reliance of human *nafs* on the relationship with Allah SWT that evokes spiritual values. This is what differentiates the spiritual dimension of humans from beasts because the human soul is blessed with spiritual strength not found in other creatures or beings (Samad, 2015).

Nevertheless, based on some discussions, *al-Nafs* is always associated with the soul that has negative connotations. Even though in reality, *al-Nafs* appears to show more of its positive side as compared to the negative, the allurements of misdemeanour is more evident. As such, mankind is urged to uphold the holiness of *al-Nafs* (*tazkiyyah al-Nafs*) that can assist one to become the doer of deeds and avoid elements that can defile them (Napitupulu, 2020).

Taha Jabir 'Alwani (2004) explains that *tazkiyyah al-Nafs* by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawzi includes the definition, understanding, types of *al-Nafs*, basics of spiritual cleansing and its preservation. According to him ('Alwani, 2004), among the ways to achieve *tazkiyyah al-Nafs* are:

- a) Strengthen one's faith and diligently do deeds ordered by Allah SWT. Consolidate one's understanding of Al-Quran and sunnah and comprehend the needs and requirements as well as the *manhaj* shown by *salaf al-Salih*. To obey the *syara'* is a deed that is to Allah SWT's liking because abstinence from sin without *amal* does not do much good for the cleansing of the heart and soul.
- b) Abstinence from vice and sin.
 - Encourage virtuous morality to enable the heart to be resolute.
- c) Shun forbidden activities, and eliminate bad behaviours within one's self.

This can be achieved through penitence, self-reflection and practices (*ibadah*) as the principal way of overcoming heart-related issues and safeguarding them from vexation and detestable traits. Self-reflection can be in terms of fulfilling the required practices (*fardhu*) and mending them where appropriate according to *islah*, self-reflection in terms of sinful acts involves correcting oneself through repentance and *istighfar*, self-reflection on negligence can be done through *zikr Allah* and self-reflection on body parts (the mouth that utters words, feet

that take steps, and hands that resort to violence) can be completed through the awareness that everything will be made accountable in the presence of Allah SWT.

Aside from that, Syakh 'Abd al-Razzaq in his writing, '*Asyr Qawa'id fi Tazkiyyah al-Nafs* lists ten important principles of *tazkiyyah al-Nafs* as part of *mujahadah* to improve the life of a Muslim in the quest to make triumph in life and Hereafter a reality (Al-Razzaq, 2020). The ten principles are:

a) *Tauhid* as the basis of soul cleansing.

Acknowledge that Allah SWT admonishes those who do not cleanse their souls with *tauhid* and *iman*. There is no other form of soul cleansing except to discard all forms of *syirik* (associate Allah SWT with other forms or beings) and get rid of elements that may weaken the *tauhid* and *iman*.

b) Du'a as the key to soul cleansing.

Dua' is a form of *ibadah* that relates to one's shortcomings, fragility and needs, as well as acknowledges the might of Allah SWT in providing a remedy for the heart to the believers. It has a major influence on opening up the doors of virtue.

c) Al-Quran as the source of soul cleansing.

In the words of Ibn 'Abbas RA, Allah SWT assures that those who follow the ways of the Al-Quran will not go astray in life or face difficulties afterlife. So, says Allah SWT:

Translation: And if there should come to you guidance from Me – then whoever follows My guidance will neither go astray (in the world) nor suffer (in the Hereafter). (Taha 20:123)

d) Learning from examples.

Emulating the *rasuls* is one way of proving one's love for Allah SWT. Following their deeds and paths is the essence of cleansing the soul and cannot be done in any other way.

e) Cleansing of the soul through *takhliyah* and *tahliyah*.

The soul is cleansed by getting rid of all misdeeds and sins. Those elements are then replaced by faith and *ibadah*.

f) Closing off all the paths that may lead to vice.

Ibn Qayyim explains that most vices are triggered by unrestrained words or views. Both these elements are very easily manipulated by Satan. Therefore, when one distances himself from doing things that bring him no good, it is a sign that he is a man of good virtue.

g) Remembering death and the time when one is obliged to meet Allah SWT. One stands to gain a lot of benefits when remembering death because it can steer him away from negligence towards his duties as a servant to Allah SWT.

h) Choosing companions.

In the words of the Holy Prophet

Translation: From Abu Musa RA, the Holy Prophet once said: A true companion and an otherwise can be compared to a trader of perfumes and a blacksmith. If the trader hands you

perfume as a gift or if you purchase his trades, you are bound to enjoy the scent, but a blacksmith may only cause your attire to be burnt or the unpleasant smell may stick with you.

i) Be wary of becoming conceited

Allah SWT detests the act of being boastful with one's superiority because faith is all a matter of the heart. Such an act will cause one to feel overly proud which in turn can diminish all their deeds.

j) Getting to know the habits of the soul.

Recognize the traits of the soul (*nafs al-Mutmainnah*, *nafs al-Lawwamah* and *nafs al-Ammarah bi al-Su'*) to safeguard, treat and guide it from diseases.

Zaini & Sa'ari (2016) in their study discuss spiritual therapy through the *tazkiyyah al-Nafs* approach introduced by Syeikh 'Abd al-Qadir al-Mandili in his writing titled 'Remedy for The Heart' (Penawar Bagi Hati). He proposes the development theory of *al-Nafs* that concentrates on the 4 stages of *tazkiyyah al-Nafs*:

- a) Control of human physical anatomy by cleansing physical body parts from performing any misdeed, which subsequently leads to the cleansing of the heart (one should safeguard the eyes, ears, tongue, belly, private parts, hands and feet from any form of vice).
- b) Make an effort to enrich the heart and eliminate negative elements, thus return to human nature (*fitrah*) as advocated by the Holy Prophet to avoid *syirik* and other negative elements (gluttony, use of harsh words, anger, jealousy, stinginess, overly proud, love of worldly materials, and egocentricity).
- c) The strengthening of positive traits through the 6 elements of repentance (*taubat*), fear of Allah SWT, asceticism (*zuhud*), patience, sincerity and reliance on Allah SWT (*tawakkal*).
- d) The processes of stabilization and submission are completed through 4 commendable traits: undying love for Allah SWT, willingness to accept the *qada'* of Allah SWT, remembering death and a sense of gratitude.

Faizatul Najihah (2016), in her study, concludes the humanity development theory by Imam al-Ghazali is a process of *tazkiyyah al-Nafs* that requires the components of *mujahadah al-Nafs* and *riyadah al-Nafs* (Azman & Badaruddin, 2016). The component of *mujahadah al-Nafs* includes anger management, not feeling envious of others, refraining from using harsh words, not hating others, not having vengeance and not being overly proud. On the other hand, the component of *riyadah al-Nafs* includes activities like the 5 time daily prayers, obligatory (*sunat*) prayers, recital of the al-Quran, willingness to accept the *qada'* and *qadar* of Allah SWT, being remorseful, believing in the Judgement Day, relying on Allah SWT (*tawakkal*) after striving, *du'a* and self-reflection (Azman & Badaruddin, 2016). Besides that, Zarrina and Basirah (2012) emphasize the element of *tazkiyyah al-Nafs* through self-reflection, *tafakkur*, *zuhd*, sincerity, reliance on Allah SWT (*tawakkal*), gratitude, confidence, *tauhid* among others (Sa'ari & Muhsin, 2012).

Table 3.0

Terms for development theory of al-Aql, al-Nafs and al-Qalb

| Development theories of <i>al-Aql</i>, <i>al-Nafs</i> and <i>al-Qalb</i> | | |
|---|---|------------------------------|
| 1. <i>Al-Aql</i> | The strengthening of <i>akidah</i> (forbearance and faith) | |
| | Focus on Hereafter | |
| | Self-reflection (<i>Muhasabah</i>) | |
| | Submission (<i>Tawakal</i>) | |
| | Believes that there will be a reward for every hardship (<i>qada'</i> and <i>qadar</i>) | |
| | Relish the blessings of Allah SWT | |
| | <i>Zikrullah</i> | |
| | <i>Du'a</i> (all help and aid only come from Allah SWT) | |
| | <i>Uswatun hasanah</i> Learn from the experience of the prophets | |
| | Consistent in doing deeds (<i>Istiqamah</i>) | |
| | <i>Tarhib</i> and <i>tarhib</i> | |
| | Solving problems through wisdom | |
| | Always vibrant | |
| | 2. <i>Al-Qalb</i> | <i>Zikrullah</i> |
| | | Repentance (<i>Taubat</i>) |
| Sincerity | | |
| Strengthening of faith (<i>Iman</i>) | | |
| Strengthening of belief in <i>qada'</i> and <i>qadar</i> | | |
| Choice of Good Companionship | | |
| Visit the Sickly and Orphans | | |
| Visit Graveyards | | |
| Appreciate <i>raqaiq</i> hadiths | | |
| From The Life Experience of The Pious As Well As The Scourges | | |
| Remembering death and Hereafter | | |
| Knowledge and implementation | | |
| Acknowledge the powers of Allah SWT | | |
| Abstinence from <i>mazmumah</i> traits (<i>ujub</i> , <i>riyak</i>) | | |
| Shuns worldly appeals | | |
| <i>Ta'awwuz</i> | | |
| Patience | | |
| Gratitude | | |
| <i>Raja'</i> | | |
| Asceticism (<i>Zuhud</i>) | | |
| Submission (<i>Tawakal</i>) | | |
| Accept Willingly (<i>Redha</i>) | | |
| 3. <i>Al-Nafs</i> | Strengthening of faith (<i>Iman</i>) | |
| | Repentance (<i>Taubat</i>) | |
| | Asceticism (<i>Zuhud</i>) | |
| | Patience | |
| | Sincerity | |
| | Submission (<i>Tawakal</i>) | |
| Accept Willingly (<i>Redha</i>) | | |

| |
|---|
| Gratitude |
| Contemplation (<i>Tafakkur</i>) |
| <i>Zikrullah</i> |
| Love and Affection Towards Allah SWT |
| Remembering Death |
| <i>Du'a</i> |
| <i>Itba' al-Sunnah</i> |
| <i>'Amr ma'ruf nahy munkar</i> |
| Self-reflection and Control of Bodily Parts |
| Anger Management |
| Be Mindful of Ibadah |
| Cleansing of the Heart Through <i>takhliyah</i> and <i>tahliyah</i> |
| The Choice of Good Companionship |
| Getting To Know Habits of The Heart |
| Be Wary of <i>mazmumah</i> traits (envy, <i>'ujub</i> , overly proud, <i>takabbur</i>) |
| Forbearance |
| <i>Tadabbur</i> al-Quran/Study (<i>tadabbur</i>) of al-Quran |

Conclusion

Islamic psychotherapy refers to a form of practical treatment between the therapist and the client in the quest for well-being, happiness, and more meaningful life. Its approach is based on Islamic sources of knowledge that have been proven to have the potential to be further developed as a complementary treatment for mental health issues. The literature review has also explained the development theories of *al-Aql*, *al-Qalb* and *al-Nafs* comprehensively through the integration of spiritual practices such as the strengthening of *aqidah*, practicality of *ibadah*, perfection of *akhlak*, *targhib tarhib* educational approach, learn from lessons and stories of the al-Quran and hadiths, treatment of heart-related ailments, creating a positive atmosphere and choosing the right companions. All the underlined principles may be put into practice in the form of an Islamic psychotherapy module or model.

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