

# A Qur'anic Epistemology of Anxiety: Reconstructing Islamic Psychology Through Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyya's Exegetical Framework

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## Abstract

This article reconstructs Islamic psychology through Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's interpretive framework to understand anxiety from a Qur'anic epistemological perspective. Employing a hermeneutical methodology that integrates classical tafsir with contemporary psychological discourse, this study examines how Qur'anic knowledge systems conceptualize anxiety (*al-qalaq*, *al-khanf*, *ḍiq al-ṣadr*) as both a natural human condition and a spiritual-psychological phenomenon requiring holistic intervention. Through systematic analysis of Ibn Qayyim's exegetical works, particularly *Madārij al-Salikin* and *al-Tibb al-Nabawi*, this research demonstrates that Qur'anic epistemology offers a distinctive framework for understanding anxiety that transcends dualistic mind-body paradigms. The findings reveal that Ibn Qayyim's interpretive approach integrates theological, psychological, and therapeutic dimensions, positioning *dhikr*, *tawakkul*, and *ṣabr* as epistemologically grounded interventions. This reconstruction contributes to the development of an authentic Islamic psychology that maintains fidelity to revealed knowledge while engaging contemporary mental health challenges. The article argues for a paradigm shift from mere adaptation of Western psychological models to the construction of indigenous Islamic psychological frameworks rooted in Qur'anic epistemology.

**Keywords:** Qur'anic epistemology, anxiety disorders, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, Islamic psychology, tafsir methodology, spiritual psychotherapy, Islamic mental health.

## INTRODUCTION

The contemporary mental health crisis, exacerbated by global pandemics, socioeconomic instability, and existential uncertainties, has intensified scholarly attention to anxiety disorders across diverse cultural and religious contexts (Hassan). Within Muslim communities, anxiety manifests not merely as a clinical syndrome but as a complex phenomenon intersecting spiritual, psychological, and social dimensions, necessitating culturally congruent therapeutic frameworks (Haque et al., 2014). The prevailing dominance of Western psychological paradigms in mental

health discourse has prompted critical questions regarding the epistemological foundations of psychological knowledge and the possibility of constructing authentic Islamic psychology rooted in revealed sources (Rothman).

Islamic intellectual tradition possesses rich resources for understanding human psychology, particularly through Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsir*) and prophetic medicine (*al-ṭibb al-nabawī*). Among classical scholars, Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (1292-1350 CE) stands as a pivotal figure whose interpretive framework integrates theological, psychological, and therapeutic insights with remarkable sophistication (Saputra et al., 2024). His works, particularly *Madārij al-Sālikīn* fi *Manāzil Īyāka Na'budu wa Īyāka Nasta'īn* and *al-Ṭibb al-Nabawī*, offer systematic analyses of psychological states, including anxiety, fear, and spiritual distress, grounded in Qur'anic epistemology. However, despite growing interest in Islamic psychology, Ibn Qayyim's hermeneutical contributions to understanding anxiety remain underexplored in contemporary scholarship.

Recent research has begun examining Qur'anic approaches to anxiety through various methodological lenses. Fahimah et al. employ double-movement hermeneutics to analyze Qur'anic healing verses relevant to anxiety disorders, demonstrating the therapeutic potential of scriptural engagement. Azizah et al. (2024) explore anxiety through the Qur'anic paradigm, outlining counseling methods derived from revealed texts. Jannah et al. (2025) investigate the concept of *dīq al-ṣadr* (narrowness of the soul) as a Qur'anic framework for understanding anxiety disorders. These studies collectively indicate a scholarly movement toward reconstructing Islamic psychology through engagement with primary sources.

Nevertheless, significant theoretical gaps persist. First, existing research often adapts Western psychological categories to Islamic contexts rather than deriving psychological frameworks from Qur'anic epistemology itself. Second, the specific contributions of Ibn Qayyim's interpretive methodology to understanding anxiety remain insufficiently theorized. Third, the epistemological foundations that distinguish Islamic psychology from Western paradigms require systematic articulation. This article addresses these gaps by reconstructing Islamic psychology through Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's interpretive framework, focusing specifically on Qur'anic epistemology of anxiety.

The central research question guiding this inquiry is: How does Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's interpretive framework enable reconstruction of Islamic psychology's approach to anxiety through Qur'anic epistemology? Subsidiary questions include: (1) What are the distinctive epistemological foundations of Qur'anic knowledge regarding psychological phenomena? (2) How does Ibn Qayyim's exegetical methodology integrate theological and psychological dimensions in understanding anxiety? (3) What therapeutic interventions emerge from this epistemological framework? (4) How can contemporary Islamic psychology be reconstructed through engagement with classical interpretive traditions?

This research contributes to Islamic psychology scholarship by: (1) articulating the epistemological foundations of Qur'anic psychological knowledge; (2) systematizing Ibn Qayyim's interpretive framework for understanding anxiety; (3) demonstrating the possibility of constructing indigenous Islamic psychological paradigms; and (4) offering theoretical resources for culturally congruent mental health interventions in Muslim communities. The article argues that authentic Islamic psychology must be reconstructed from Qur'anic epistemology rather than merely adapting Western models, and that Ibn Qayyim's hermeneutical approach provides a robust framework for this reconstruction.

The subsequent sections proceed as follows: Section 2 reviews relevant literature on Qur'anic epistemology, Ibn Qayyim's scholarship, and contemporary Islamic psychology research. Section 3 explicates the hermeneutical methodology employed in this study. Section 4 presents the substantive discussion, analyzing Qur'anic conceptualizations of anxiety, Ibn Qayyim's interpretive framework, therapeutic interventions, and theoretical reconstruction of Islamic

psychology. Section 5 concludes with implications for scholarship and practice.

## LITERATURE REVIEW:

### **Qur'anic Epistemology and Psychological Knowledge**

Qur'anic epistemology represents a distinctive knowledge system grounded in divine revelation (*wahy*) as the ultimate source of truth regarding human nature, purpose, and wellbeing. Unlike empiricist or rationalist epistemologies that privilege sensory experience or reason as primary knowledge sources, Qur'anic epistemology positions revealed knowledge as foundational, with reason (*'aql*) and experience serving as complementary but subordinate modes of knowing (Fahimah et al.). This hierarchical relationship establishes revelation as the criterion (*furqān*) for evaluating psychological theories and therapeutic practices.

The Qur'an presents itself as guidance (*hudā*), healing (*shifā'*), and mercy (*raḥmah*) for humanity, explicitly addressing psychological states including anxiety, fear, grief, and tranquility (Azizah et al., 2024). Qur'anic discourse on psychological phenomena operates through multiple epistemological modes: descriptive accounts of human psychological experiences, normative prescriptions for spiritual-psychological health, etiological explanations of psychological distress, and therapeutic interventions for restoration of wellbeing. This multidimensional approach transcends reductionist paradigms that separate psychological from spiritual dimensions of human experience.

Contemporary scholarship has begun articulating the epistemological distinctiveness of Qur'anic psychology. Siddique et al. (2025) examine Qur'anic metaphysical psychology, arguing that materialist psychological paradigms inadequately address spiritual dimensions of mental health crises. Their analysis demonstrates that Qur'anic epistemology integrates material, psychological, and spiritual dimensions within a unified anthropological framework. Similarly, Hidayah et al. (2024) explore psychological approaches in Islamic studies, emphasizing the necessity of grounding psychological inquiry in revealed sources rather than importing Western theoretical frameworks uncritically.

The concept of *fitrah* (primordial human nature) constitutes a foundational epistemological principle in Qur'anic psychology. The Qur'an describes humans as created with innate orientation toward the Divine, with psychological distress often resulting from deviation from this primordial nature (Hamdan, 2008). This epistemological framework positions anxiety not merely as neurochemical imbalance or maladaptive cognition but as potential manifestation of spiritual-psychological dissonance requiring holistic intervention. The *fitrah* concept thus provides an ontological foundation for Islamic psychology distinct from tabula rasa or deterministic models prevalent in Western psychology.

### **Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's Hermeneutical Framework**

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (691-751 AH/1292-1350 CE), student of Ibn Taymiyyah and prolific scholar of the Hanbalī school, developed a sophisticated hermeneutical framework integrating Qur'anic exegesis, prophetic tradition, rational analysis, and empirical observation. His interpretive methodology, particularly evident in *Madārij al-Sālikīn* and *al-Tibb al-Nabawī*, demonstrates remarkable psychological insight grounded in scriptural sources (Saputra et al., 2024). Ibn Qayyim's approach to understanding human psychology emphasizes the centrality of the heart (*qalb*) as the locus of spiritual and psychological experience, with anxiety and other affective states reflecting the heart's condition in relation to divine remembrance and trust.

Saputra et al. (2024) analyze Ibn Qayyim's concept of *riḍā* (spiritual contentment and divine acceptance), demonstrating his systematic integration of theological principles with

psychological states. Their research reveals that Ibn Qayyim conceptualized spiritual fulfillment not as abstract theological doctrine but as lived psychological reality with concrete implications for mental health. This integration exemplifies Ibn Qayyim's hermeneutical sophistication in deriving psychological insights from Qur'anic and prophetic sources.

Aziz et al. explore Ibn Qayyim's approach for treating post-traumatic stress disorder, demonstrating the contemporary relevance of his therapeutic framework. Their analysis reveals that Ibn Qayyim's methodology addresses trauma through multidimensional interventions: cognitive restructuring through Qur'anic reflection, affective regulation through dhikr (remembrance of God), behavioral activation through worship practices, and social support through community engagement. This holistic approach contrasts with compartmentalized Western therapeutic models, offering integrated spiritual-psychological healing.

Ibn Qayyim's hermeneutical framework operates through several distinctive principles. First, he employs *tafsīr bi'l-ma'thūr* (exegesis through transmitted sources), grounding interpretations in Qur'anic verses, prophetic traditions, and statements of early Muslim scholars. Second, he utilizes *tafsīr bi'l-ra'y* (rational exegesis), applying logical analysis and linguistic expertise to derive meanings. Third, he integrates empirical observation, particularly in *al-Tibb al-Nabawī*, where he discusses psychological and physical health based on clinical experience. Fourth, he emphasizes *maqāṣid al-shari'ah* (objectives of Islamic law), interpreting texts in light of their ultimate purposes of preserving religion, life, intellect, lineage, and property.

This methodological sophistication enables Ibn Qayyim to develop nuanced psychological analyses. For instance, his discussion of *al-khawf* (fear) and *al-rajā'* (hope) in *Madārij al-Salikīn* demonstrates how these affective states function as regulatory mechanisms in spiritual development, with pathological anxiety resulting from imbalance between fear and hope. His analysis transcends simplistic prescriptions, offering psychologically sophisticated understanding of how theological beliefs shape emotional experience.

### **Contemporary Islamic Psychology and Anxiety Research**

Contemporary scholarship on Islamic approaches to anxiety has proliferated, reflecting both increased mental health awareness in Muslim communities and growing interest in culturally congruent therapeutic frameworks. This research can be categorized into several streams: Qur'anic hermeneutical studies, empirical investigations of Islamic interventions, theoretical frameworks for Islamic psychology, and integration studies examining relationships between Islamic and Western approaches.

Hermeneutical studies have examined specific Qur'anic verses and concepts relevant to anxiety. Adawiyah et al. (2024) analyze Quraish Shihab's interpretation of Surah al-Nāzi'āt (79:40) regarding stress and anxiety management, demonstrating how contemporary *tafsir* engages psychological themes. Sukandar (2025) conducts psychopathological analysis of Surah al-Mā'ārij (70:19-35), identifying Qur'anic solutions for happiness and anxiety relief. Indriani et al. (2024) explore dhikr therapy based on Surah al-Rā'd (13:28), examining how Qur'anic counseling addresses life anxiety. These studies collectively demonstrate the richness of Qur'anic resources for understanding and treating anxiety.

The concept of *dīq al-ṣadr* (narrowness or constriction of the chest/soul) has received particular attention as a Qur'anic framework for anxiety. Jannah et al. (2025) provide comprehensive review of anxiety disorders through this concept, arguing that *dīq al-ṣadr* captures phenomenological dimensions of anxiety more holistically than Western diagnostic categories. Their analysis reveals that Qur'anic terminology integrates somatic, cognitive, and spiritual dimensions of anxiety experience, offering more comprehensive understanding than purely psychological or biological models.

Empirical research has investigated the effectiveness of Islamic spiritual interventions for anxiety. Mukarrami et al. (2024) examine anxiety management through Islamic spiritual approaches, demonstrating significant anxiety reduction through interventions including dhikr, prayer, and Qur'anic recitation. Hidayat et al. (2023) investigate whether Qur'an and dhikr effectively overcome anxiety caused by COVID-19 pandemic conditions, finding positive therapeutic effects. Kamila (2022) studies dhikr psychotherapy in treating anxiety, reporting decreased anxiety levels among participants. These empirical studies provide evidence for the therapeutic efficacy of Qur'anic interventions, though methodological rigor varies across studies.

Theoretical frameworks for Islamic psychology have been proposed by several scholars. Rothman develops a model of Islamic psychology and psychotherapy integrating Islamic theology with contemporary psychological understandings, arguing for distinctive Islamic approaches rather than mere adaptation of Western models. Hamdan (2008) proposes cognitive restructuring from an Islamic perspective, demonstrating how Qur'anic and prophetic teachings can inform cognitive-behavioral interventions. Sarwar (2025) examines neurotic disorders from Islamic perspectives, outlining causes, impacts, and healing approaches grounded in Islamic sources. These theoretical contributions advance the project of constructing authentic Islamic psychology.

Integration studies have explored relationships between Islamic and Western psychological approaches. Haque et al. (2014) investigate integrating indigenous healing methods in therapy, examining Muslim beliefs and practices in clinical contexts. Their research reveals tensions between Western therapeutic assumptions and Islamic worldviews, necessitating culturally adapted interventions. Putra et al. (2022) conduct cultural-hermeneutic reading of Qur'anic mental health amidst pandemic, analyzing the Salawat community in Indonesia. Their findings demonstrate how Qur'anic engagement functions as mental health resource in crisis contexts.

Arabic-language scholarship has also contributed significantly to this field. Al-Shwike et al. (2024) examine anxiety in light of the Qur'an and modern psychology, conducting comparative analysis between Qur'anic and contemporary psychological perspectives. Their work demonstrates both convergences and divergences between Islamic and Western understandings of anxiety, arguing for the epistemological distinctiveness of Qur'anic approaches.

### **Theoretical Gaps and Research Positioning**

Despite this growing body of scholarship, several theoretical gaps remain. First, much existing research adapts Western psychological categories and diagnostic frameworks to Islamic contexts rather than deriving psychological frameworks from Qur'anic epistemology itself. This approach risks imposing alien conceptual structures on Islamic sources, potentially distorting their distinctive insights. Second, while individual Qur'anic verses and concepts have been examined, systematic articulation of Qur'anic epistemology as a comprehensive framework for psychological knowledge remains underdeveloped. Third, classical Islamic scholarship on psychology, particularly Ibn Qayyim's contributions, has not been sufficiently integrated into contemporary Islamic psychology discourse.

Fourth, the relationship between theological beliefs and psychological experience requires more sophisticated theorization. Existing research often treats Islamic beliefs as therapeutic resources without adequately explaining the epistemological and psychological mechanisms through which beliefs influence mental health. Fifth, methodological approaches in Islamic psychology research vary widely, with insufficient attention to hermeneutical rigor in interpreting classical texts and empirical validity in assessing interventions. Sixth, the distinctive contributions of Islamic psychology to global mental health discourse remain

underarticulated, with Islamic approaches often positioned defensively in relation to Western paradigms rather than as independent knowledge systems.

This article addresses these gaps by: (1) reconstructing Islamic psychology from Qur'anic epistemology rather than adapting Western frameworks; (2) systematically articulating Ibn Qayyim's interpretive framework as a model for deriving psychological insights from revealed sources; (3) demonstrating the epistemological distinctiveness of Qur'anic approaches to anxiety; (4) explicating the mechanisms through which theological beliefs and spiritual practices influence psychological experience; and (5) positioning Islamic psychology as an independent knowledge system with distinctive contributions to understanding human psychology.

The research is positioned within the broader project of developing authentic Islamic human sciences that maintain fidelity to revealed sources while engaging contemporary challenges. It contributes to Islamic psychology by providing theoretical foundations for understanding anxiety through Qur'anic epistemology, offering Ibn Qayyim's hermeneutical framework as a methodological model, and demonstrating the possibility of constructing indigenous Islamic psychological paradigms. The study also contributes to global mental health discourse by articulating alternative epistemological foundations for psychological knowledge and therapeutic practice.

## METHOD

### Research Design

This study employs a qualitative hermeneutical methodology to reconstruct Islamic psychology's approach to anxiety through Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's interpretive framework. Hermeneutics, as the theory and practice of interpretation, provides appropriate methodology for engaging classical Islamic texts and deriving contemporary theoretical insights (Fahimah et al.). The research design integrates three hermeneutical movements: (1) historical-contextual analysis of Ibn Qayyim's works within their intellectual milieu; (2) textual-exegetical analysis of his interpretations of Qur'anic verses and prophetic traditions related to anxiety; and (3) theoretical-reconstructive synthesis that articulates implications for contemporary Islamic psychology.

Methodological approach draws on Fazlur Rahman's double-movement hermeneutics, adapted for psychological inquiry. The first movement involves understanding Qur'anic teachings and Ibn Qayyim's interpretations within their original contexts, identifying the principles and rationales underlying specific prescriptions. The second movement applies these principles to contemporary contexts, reconstructing Islamic psychology in dialogue with current mental health challenges. This double-movement prevents both anachronistic reading of classical texts and uncritical traditionalism that ignores contemporary realities.

The research design is theoretical-conceptual rather than empirical-experimental, focusing on articulating epistemological foundations and theoretical frameworks rather than testing specific interventions. This approach is appropriate given the study's objectives of reconstructing Islamic psychology's theoretical foundations and systematizing Ibn Qayyim's hermeneutical contributions. Future empirical research can build upon these theoretical foundations to develop and test specific therapeutic interventions.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

### Data Sources and Selection Criteria

Primary data sources include Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's major works, particularly *Madārij al-Salikīn fī Manāzil Īyāka Na'bdu wa Īyāka Nasta'īn*, *al-Ṭibb al-Nabawī*, *Zād al-Ma'ād*, and

Ighāthat al-Lahfān min Maṣāyid al-Shayṭān. These texts were selected based on their relevance to psychological themes, particularly anxiety, fear, spiritual distress, and therapeutic interventions. Madārij al-Sālikīn, Ibn Qayyim's commentary on Abū Ismā'īl al-Anṣārī's Manāzil al-Sā'irīn, provides systematic analysis of spiritual-psychological states in the journey toward God. Al-Tibb al-Nabawī discusses prophetic medicine, including psychological and spiritual healing. Zād al-Ma'ād contains biographical material on the Prophet Muhammad with psychological insights. Ighāthat al-Lahfān addresses spiritual and psychological afflictions caused by satanic influence.

Secondary sources include Qur'anic verses and prophetic traditions (ahādīth) cited by Ibn Qayyim in his discussions of anxiety and related psychological states. Qur'anic verses were identified through thematic analysis of terms related to anxiety (qalaq, khawf, huzn, dīq al-ṣadr, waswās) and their derivatives. Prophetic traditions were selected based on their relevance to psychological wellbeing, spiritual practices, and therapeutic interventions.

Tertiary sources include contemporary scholarship on Islamic psychology, Qur'anic hermeneutics, and anxiety research in Muslim contexts. A systematic literature search was conducted across multiple databases including Google Scholar, PubMed, SciSpace, and Scopus, using search terms: "Islamic psychology," "Qur'anic epistemology," "Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah," "anxiety in Islam," "Islamic mental health," and "tafsir and psychology." Inclusion criteria required: (1) relevance to Qur'anic approaches to anxiety or Islamic psychology; (2) engagement with classical Islamic sources or contemporary Islamic perspectives; (3) peer-reviewed publication or established scholarly credibility; and (4) accessibility in English, Arabic, or Indonesian languages. Thirty primary studies were selected based on relevance ranking for detailed analysis (Fahimah et al., Azizah et al., 2024, Mukarrami et al., 2024, Jannah et al., 2025, Hassan, Isdianto et al., 2025, Adawiyah et al., 2024, Sukandar, 2025, Sholekhawati, 2025, Zulkarnain, 2020, Samsidar, 2020, Rothman, Siddique et al., 2025, Sarwar, 2025, Indriani et al., 2024, Saputra et al., 2024, Haque et al., 2014, Hamdan, 2008, Aprianty, Aziz et al., Jalil, 2024, Kamila, 2022, Hidayat et al., 2023, Sapeni et al., 2023, Putra et al., 2022, Al-Shwike et al., 2024, Hidayah et al., 2024, Mulyadi et al., 2006, Zaman et al., 2021, Sholihah et al., 2024).

#### Analytical Framework

The analytical framework integrates thematic analysis, conceptual analysis, and comparative analysis to systematically examine Ibn Qayyim's interpretive framework and reconstruct Islamic psychology's approach to anxiety. The analysis proceeded through five phases:

Phase 1: Terminological Analysis. Qur'anic terms related to anxiety were identified and analyzed through linguistic, semantic, and contextual examination. This phase established the Qur'anic conceptual vocabulary for psychological distress, including qalaq (anxiety), khawf (fear), huzn (grief), dīq al-ṣadr (constriction of chest), waswās (obsessive thoughts), and related terms. Each term's usage across Qur'anic contexts was examined to identify semantic ranges and conceptual relationships.

Phase 2: Exegetical Analysis. Ibn Qayyim's interpretations of Qur'anic verses and prophetic traditions related to anxiety were systematically analyzed. This phase examined his hermeneutical methods, theological assumptions, psychological insights, and therapeutic prescriptions. Particular attention was given to how Ibn Qayyim integrates revealed sources, rational analysis, and empirical observation in developing psychological understanding.

Phase 3: Thematic Synthesis. Key themes in Ibn Qayyim's approach to anxiety were identified and synthesized, including: the heart as locus of psychological experience, the relationship between faith and mental health, the role of divine remembrance in anxiety regulation, the concept of tawakkul (trust in God) as therapeutic principle, and the integration of spiritual and psychological dimensions of healing. These themes were organized into a coherent theoretical framework.

Phase 4: Epistemological Analysis. The epistemological foundations of Ibn Qayyim's approach were articulated, examining how he derives psychological knowledge from revealed sources, the relationship between revelation and reason in his methodology, and the distinctive features of Qur'anic epistemology compared to empiricist or rationalist approaches. This phase addressed the question of how Islamic psychology can be grounded in revealed knowledge while remaining intellectually rigorous.

Phase 5: Theoretical Reconstruction. Based on the preceding analyses, a reconstructed framework for Islamic psychology's approach to anxiety was developed. This framework articulates: (1) ontological foundations (nature of human being and psychological experience); (2) epistemological foundations (sources and methods of psychological knowledge); (3) etiological understanding (causes of anxiety from Islamic perspective); (4) phenomenological description (experience of anxiety in Qur'anic terms); and (5) therapeutic interventions (Qur'anic and prophetic prescriptions for anxiety relief).

Throughout the analysis, attention was given to both continuities and discontinuities between Ibn Qayyim's classical framework and contemporary psychological understandings. Areas of convergence were noted, as were distinctive contributions of Islamic psychology that challenge or complement Western paradigms. The analysis maintained critical awareness of potential anachronism in reading modern psychological concepts into classical texts, while also recognizing genuine psychological insights in Ibn Qayyim's work.

### **Validity and Trustworthiness**

Several measures were employed to ensure validity and trustworthiness of the analysis. First, source triangulation was utilized, examining multiple works by Ibn Qayyim and corroborating interpretations across texts. Second, methodological triangulation integrated linguistic analysis, thematic analysis, and conceptual analysis to provide multiple analytical perspectives. Third, theoretical triangulation engaged diverse contemporary scholarship on Islamic psychology to situate findings within broader scholarly discourse.

Fourth, hermeneutical reflexivity was maintained throughout the analysis, with explicit attention to the researcher's interpretive assumptions and potential biases. The double-movement hermeneutical approach itself serves as validity mechanism by requiring both historical-contextual understanding and contemporary application, preventing both anachronistic reading and uncritical traditionalism. Fifth, peer debriefing through engagement with contemporary scholarship on Ibn Qayyim and Islamic psychology provided external validation of interpretations.

Limitations of the methodology include reliance on available translations and secondary sources for some classical texts, potential for interpretive bias in hermeneutical analysis, and the theoretical rather than empirical nature of the study. These limitations are acknowledged while maintaining that the study's objectives articulating epistemological foundations and reconstructing theoretical frameworks are appropriately addressed through hermeneutical methodology. Future research can build upon these theoretical foundations through empirical investigation of specific interventions and clinical applications.

## **DISCUSSION**

### **Qur'anic Conceptualization of Anxiety: Terminological Analysis**

The Qur'an employs a rich semantic field to describe psychological states related to anxiety, reflecting sophisticated understanding of human emotional experience. Unlike Western diagnostic categories that often reduce anxiety to neurobiological dysfunction or maladaptive cognition, Qur'anic terminology integrates somatic, cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions within holistic anthropological framework (Jannah et al., 2025). This terminological richness enables more comprehensive understanding of anxiety as multidimensional phenomenon

requiring integrated intervention.

The primary Qur'anic term *al-qalaq* denotes restlessness, agitation, and anxious disturbance. In Surah al-Mā'ārij (70:19-20), the Qur'an states: "Indeed, mankind was created anxious (*halū'an*): when evil touches him, impatient (*jazū'an*), and when good touches him, withholding" (Sukandar, 2025). This passage identifies anxiety as inherent aspect of human nature (*fitrah*), distinguishing between natural anxiety as existential condition and pathological anxiety requiring intervention. The terms *halū'* and *jazū'* describe impatience and restlessness that characterize anxious disposition, while the passage indicates that spiritual practices can regulate these tendencies.

The term *al-khawf* (fear) appears frequently in Qur'anic discourse, often paired with *al-huzn* (grief/sadness). In Surah al-Baqarah (2:38), God promises: "There will be no fear (khawf) upon them, nor will they grieve (*yahzānūn*)." This pairing suggests that anxiety encompasses both anticipatory fear regarding future threats and retrospective grief regarding past losses. The Qur'anic promise of freedom from fear and grief for believers who follow divine guidance establishes the theological foundation for anxiety relief through faith and obedience (Azizah et al., 2024).

The concept *dīq al-ṣadr* (narrowness or constriction of the chest/soul) provides particularly rich phenomenological description of anxiety. In Surah al-An'ām (6:125), the Qur'an states: "Whomever God wills to guide, He expands his breast (*yashrahī ṣadrahu*) to Islam; and whomever He wills to send astray, He makes his breast tight and constricted (*dayyiqan ḥarajan*) as though he were climbing into the sky." This verse links psychological constriction with spiritual state, suggesting that anxiety results from spiritual-psychological dissonance (Jannah et al., 2025). The somatic imagery of chest constriction captures the embodied experience of anxiety, while the spiritual dimension indicates that relief requires addressing underlying spiritual condition.

The term *al-waswās* (whispering, obsessive thoughts) appears in Surah al-Nās (114:4-5), describing satanic suggestions that create psychological disturbance: "From the evil of the retreating whisperer (*al-waswās al-khannās*) who whispers into the breasts of mankind." This concept recognizes intrusive thoughts and obsessive rumination as sources of anxiety, attributing them to satanic influence while providing therapeutic intervention through seeking refuge in God (Sarwar, 2025). The Qur'anic framework thus acknowledges cognitive dimensions of anxiety while situating them within broader spiritual-psychological context.

Additional terms include *al-ḥaraj* (distress, difficulty), *al-ghamm* (worry, concern), and *al-hamm* (anxiety, preoccupation). In Surah Āl 'Imrān (3:139), believers are instructed: "Do not lose heart (*tahinū*) and do not grieve (*tahzānū*)," indicating that faith should prevent debilitating anxiety. In Surah al-Talāq (65:7), the Qur'an promises: "God will bring about ease after hardship," providing hope that alleviates anticipatory anxiety. These verses demonstrate that Qur'anic discourse on anxiety integrates descriptive, etiological, and therapeutic dimensions.

The terminological analysis reveals several distinctive features of Qur'anic conceptualization. First, anxiety is understood as natural human condition requiring regulation rather than pathological state requiring elimination. Second, anxiety is conceptualized holistically, integrating somatic, cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions. Third, anxiety is situated within theological framework, with spiritual state influencing psychological experience. Fourth, the Qur'an provides both phenomenological description and therapeutic prescription, indicating that revealed knowledge encompasses psychological insight. These features distinguish Qur'anic epistemology from reductionist Western paradigms and provide foundation for reconstructing Islamic psychology.

Ibn Qayyim's Interpretive Framework: Epistemological Foundations

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's hermeneutical approach to understanding anxiety exemplifies

sophisticated integration of revealed knowledge, rational analysis, and empirical observation. His interpretive framework operates on several epistemological principles that distinguish it from both purely traditionalist approaches that reject rational inquiry and purely rationalist approaches that subordinate revelation to reason. Understanding these epistemological foundations is essential for reconstructing Islamic psychology through his framework (Saputra et al., 2024).

The first epistemological principle is the primacy of revelation (*wahy*) as ultimate source of truth regarding human nature and wellbeing. Ibn Qayyim consistently grounds his psychological analyses in Qur'anic verses and prophetic traditions, treating revealed sources as authoritative knowledge that cannot be contradicted by reason or experience. However, this does not entail rejection of rational inquiry or empirical observation. Rather, Ibn Qayyim views reason and experience as complementary sources that, when properly employed, confirm and elaborate revealed truths. This hierarchical epistemology positions revelation as criterion (*furqān*) for evaluating psychological theories while allowing rational and empirical investigation within parameters established by revelation.

The second principle is the integration of *naql* (transmitted knowledge) and *'aql* (rational knowledge). In *Madārij al-Salikīn*, Ibn Qayyim demonstrates how rational analysis can derive psychological insights from revealed texts without imposing alien conceptual frameworks. For instance, his analysis of *al-khawf* (fear) and *al-rajā'* (hope) as complementary psychological states that regulate spiritual development employs logical reasoning to systematize Qur'anic and prophetic teachings. He argues that excessive fear without hope leads to despair, while excessive hope without fear leads to complacency, with optimal spiritual-psychological health requiring balanced integration. This rational analysis remains grounded in revealed sources while demonstrating psychological sophistication.

The third principle is attention to *maqāṣid al-shari'ah* (objectives of Islamic law), particularly the objective of preserving intellect (*hifz al-'aql*) and life (*hifz al-nafs*). Ibn Qayyim interprets Qur'anic prescriptions regarding psychological wellbeing in light of these ultimate objectives, recognizing that divine commands aim at human flourishing. This teleological hermeneutics enables him to derive therapeutic principles from revealed sources by identifying the purposes underlying specific prescriptions. For example, the Qur'anic command for *dhikr* (remembrance of God) is understood not merely as ritual obligation but as therapeutic intervention that serves the objective of psychological and spiritual health.

The fourth principle is empirical observation informed by revealed framework. In *al-Tibb al-Nabawī*, Ibn Qayyim discusses psychological and physical health based on clinical observation, demonstrating willingness to engage empirical evidence. However, his empiricism operates within Qur'anic epistemological framework rather than assuming naturalistic metaphysics. He observes that spiritual practices such as prayer, fasting, and Qur'anic recitation produce measurable psychological benefits, interpreting these observations as confirming revealed teachings rather than replacing them. This approach enables integration of empirical research within Islamic epistemology.

The fifth principle is holistic anthropology that rejects dualistic separation of body and soul, matter and spirit, psychology and theology. Ibn Qayyim consistently emphasizes the interconnection of physical, psychological, and spiritual dimensions of human experience. In his analysis of anxiety, he examines how theological beliefs influence cognitive processes, how spiritual practices affect emotional states, how bodily conditions impact psychological wellbeing, and how social relationships shape mental health. This holistic approach contrasts with reductionist paradigms that isolate psychological phenomena from broader existential context (Rothman).

The sixth principle is attention to individual differences and contextual factors. While articulating general principles, Ibn Qayyim recognizes that psychological experiences and therapeutic needs vary across individuals based on temperament, life circumstances, spiritual development, and

other factors. This nuanced approach prevents rigid application of universal prescriptions without consideration of particular contexts. For instance, he discusses how different individuals require different balances of fear and hope based on their spiritual states, demonstrating psychological sensitivity informed by revealed principles.

These epistemological foundations enable Ibn Qayyim to develop psychological insights that are simultaneously faithful to revealed sources and psychologically sophisticated. His framework demonstrates that Islamic psychology need not choose between fidelity to revelation and intellectual rigor, but can integrate both within coherent epistemological system. This integration provides model for contemporary Islamic psychology that avoids both uncritical traditionalism and uncritical adoption of Western paradigms.

### **The Heart (Qalb) as Locus of Psychological Experience**

Central to Ibn Qayyim's psychological framework is the concept of al-qalb (the heart) as the locus of spiritual and psychological experience. Unlike Western psychology's focus on the brain as seat of mental processes, Ibn Qayyim's Qur'anic grounded anthropology positions the heart as the center of cognition, emotion, volition, and spiritual awareness (Hamdan, 2008). This conceptualization is not merely metaphorical but reflects a distinctive ontology of human psychology with significant implications for understanding and treating anxiety.

The Qur'an repeatedly emphasizes the heart's centrality in human experience. In Surah al-Hajj (22:46), the Qur'an states: "Indeed, it is not the eyes that are blind, but it is the hearts in the chests that grow blind." This verse indicates that the heart possesses cognitive functions, with spiritual blindness resulting from heart's condition rather than sensory deficiency. In Surah al-Rā'īd (13:28), the Qur'an declares: "Verily, in the remembrance of God do hearts find rest (taṭma'innu al-qulūb)," identifying the heart as the site where tranquility and anxiety are experienced (Indriani et al., 2024).

Ibn Qayyim develops systematic psychology of the heart in *Madārij al-Sālikīn*, analyzing various heart states (ahwāl al-qalb) and their spiritual-psychological implications. He identifies several conditions that affect the heart's health: qalb salīm (sound heart), qalb mayyit (dead heart), qalb marīd (diseased heart), and qalb muḍtarib (disturbed heart). Anxiety, in this framework, reflects disturbance of the heart resulting from various causes including weak faith, attachment to worldly concerns, heedlessness of God, and satanic influence. The therapeutic goal is restoration of the heart's soundness through spiritual practices that strengthen its connection to the Divine. The heart's centrality in Ibn Qayyim's psychology has several implications for understanding anxiety. First, anxiety is not merely cognitive distortion or neurochemical imbalance but reflects the heart's spiritual-psychological condition. Cognitive symptoms of anxiety (worry, rumination, catastrophic thinking) are understood as manifestations of underlying heart disturbance rather than primary causes. Second, effective anxiety treatment must address the heart's condition through spiritual interventions rather than merely targeting symptoms. Cognitive restructuring, while potentially helpful, remains insufficient if the heart's fundamental orientation toward God is not addressed.

Third, the heart's condition is influenced by multiple factors including theological beliefs, spiritual practices, moral conduct, social relationships, and bodily health. Ibn Qayyim's holistic approach recognizes that anxiety treatment requires attention to all these dimensions. For instance, he discusses how sinful behavior disturbs the heart, creating psychological distress, while righteous conduct brings peace. This moral-psychological connection, grounded in Qur'anic teaching, distinguishes Islamic psychology from value-neutral Western approaches.

Fourth, the heart possesses innate orientation toward God (*fitrah*), with anxiety often resulting from deviation from this primordial nature. Ibn Qayyim argues that the heart finds rest only in remembrance of God, as stated in Surah al-Rā'īd (13:28). Attempts to find security in worldly attachments inevitably produce anxiety because created things cannot provide ultimate security.

This theological-psychological insight suggests that anxiety treatment must involve reorienting the heart toward its proper object—the Divine—rather than merely managing symptoms.

Fifth, the heart's health is maintained through balance (*'tidāl'*) between various spiritual-psychological states. Ibn Qayyim discusses the necessity of balancing fear and hope, love and awe, patience and gratitude, trust and effort. Anxiety results from imbalance, such as excessive fear without hope or excessive attachment without detachment. Therapeutic intervention aims to restore balance through spiritual practices and cognitive-affective regulation informed by Qur'anic principles.

Contemporary research has begun exploring the heart concept in Islamic psychology. Hamdan (2008) discusses cognitive restructuring from Islamic perspective, examining how Qur'anic teachings about the heart inform therapeutic interventions. His analysis demonstrates that the heart concept provides framework for integrating cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions of psychological experience. However, much work remains to fully articulate the heart's role in Islamic psychological theory and develop therapeutic approaches grounded in this concept.

The heart-centered psychology of Ibn Qayyim offers distinctive contribution to global mental health discourse. While Western psychology has increasingly recognized the limitations of purely cognitive or biological approaches, moving toward more integrative models, the heart concept provides alternative ontological foundation that transcends mind-body dualism. Rather than viewing psychological experience as epiphenomenon of brain processes or as purely cognitive construction, Ibn Qayyim's framework positions the heart as irreducible locus of human experience that integrates physical, psychological, and spiritual dimensions. This holistic ontology enables more comprehensive understanding of anxiety and more effective therapeutic interventions.

### **Therapeutic Interventions in Ibn Qayyim's Framework**

Ibn Qayyim's interpretive framework yields comprehensive therapeutic approach to anxiety that integrates spiritual practices, cognitive interventions, behavioral prescriptions, and social support. Unlike compartmentalized Western therapeutic models that separate psychological treatment from spiritual and moral dimensions, Ibn Qayyim's approach recognizes the interconnection of all aspects of human wellbeing and prescribes holistic interventions grounded in Qur'anic epistemology (Aziz et al.).

**Dhikr (Remembrance of God).** The most fundamental therapeutic intervention in Ibn Qayyim's framework is dhikr, the remembrance of God through recitation of Qur'anic verses, prophetic supplications, and divine names. Based on Surah al-Ra'd (13:28) "Verily, in the remembrance of God do hearts find rest" Ibn Qayyim argues that dhikr directly addresses the heart's disturbance that underlies anxiety (Indriani et al., 2024). He discusses various forms of dhikr and their specific psychological effects, demonstrating sophisticated understanding of how spiritual practices regulate emotional states.

Contemporary research has confirmed the therapeutic efficacy of dhikr for anxiety. Kamila (2022) investigates dhikr psychotherapy in treating anxiety, finding significant anxiety reduction among participants. Hidayat et al. (2023) examine whether Qur'an and dhikr effectively overcome anxiety caused by COVID-19 pandemic, reporting positive therapeutic effects. Mulyadi et al. (2006) study Islamic psychotherapy models in Islamic boarding schools, demonstrating that dhikr-based interventions significantly decrease anxiety levels. These empirical findings support Ibn Qayyim's theoretical framework, indicating that dhikr functions as effective anxiety intervention.

The therapeutic mechanism of dhikr operates through multiple pathways. Cognitively, dhikr redirects attention from anxious rumination to divine attributes, restructuring thought patterns. Affectively, dhikr cultivates positive emotions including love, hope, and tranquility while reducing negative emotions including fear and distress. Spiritually, dhikr strengthens the heart's connection to God, addressing the fundamental spiritual-psychological dissonance that produces

anxiety. Behaviorally, dhikr provides structured practice that interrupts anxiety cycles. Socially, communal dhikr provides supportive environment that reduces isolation. This multidimensional therapeutic action demonstrates the sophistication of Qur'anic interventions.

**Tawakkul (Trust in God).** Ibn Qayyim identifies tawakkul (trust in God) as essential therapeutic principle for anxiety relief. In *Madārij al-Sālikīn*, he provides extensive analysis of tawakkul, distinguishing it from fatalism (tawākul) and demonstrating its psychological benefits. Tawakkul involves taking appropriate means while trusting God for outcomes, combining human agency with divine reliance. This balanced approach addresses anxiety by reducing excessive worry about uncontrollable outcomes while maintaining responsible action.

The Qur'anic foundation for tawakkul appears in numerous verses, including Surah al-*Talāq* (65:3): "Whoever relies upon God, He will be sufficient for him." Ibn Qayyim explains that tawakkul produces psychological security because it shifts ultimate reliance from unstable created things to the stable Creator. Anxiety results from misplaced trust in worldly sources of security wealth, status, relationships that inevitably prove insufficient. Tawakkul reorients trust toward God, who alone possesses absolute power and reliability, thereby providing genuine security that alleviates anxiety.

Contemporary research has explored tawakkul as therapeutic principle. Mukarrami et al. (2024) examine anxiety management through Islamic spiritual approaches, identifying tawakkul as key intervention. Their findings indicate that cultivating trust in God significantly reduces anxiety levels. The therapeutic mechanism involves cognitive reappraisal of threatening situations, recognizing divine wisdom and control, which reduces perceived threat and associated anxiety. This cognitive-spiritual intervention demonstrates integration of Islamic theology with psychological processes.

**Şabr (Patience and Perseverance).** Ibn Qayyim emphasizes şabr (patience, perseverance, steadfastness) as essential virtue for managing anxiety and adversity. In Qur'anic discourse, şabr appears as comprehensive concept encompassing patience in obedience to God, patience in avoiding sin, and patience in facing trials. Ibn Qayyim analyzes the psychological dimensions of şabr, explaining how it enables individuals to endure difficulties without succumbing to debilitating anxiety or despair.

The Qur'anic promise in Surah al-Baqarah (2:155-156) provides foundation for şabr-based therapy: "We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient, who, when disaster strikes them, say, 'Indeed we belong to God, and indeed to Him we will return'" (Sholihah et al., 2024). This passage reframes adversity as divine test with spiritual purpose, reducing anxiety by providing meaning and hope. Ibn Qayyim explains that şabr involves accepting divine decree while maintaining effort, combining acceptance with agency.

Research has examined şabr-based counseling for anxiety. Sholihah et al. (2024) investigate Qur'anic counseling based on Surah al-Baqarah (2:155-156) in overcoming student anxiety, finding significant anxiety reduction. The therapeutic mechanism involves meaning-making that reframes adversity as opportunity for spiritual growth, reducing perceived threat. Additionally, şabr cultivates emotional regulation skills that prevent anxiety escalation. This intervention demonstrates how theological beliefs inform psychological coping strategies.

**Şalāh (Prayer) and Spiritual Practices.** Ibn Qayyim discusses the therapeutic benefits of şalāh (ritual prayer) and other spiritual practices including fasting, charity, and Qur'anic recitation. In *al-Tibb al-Nabawī*, he explains how these practices promote physical, psychological, and spiritual health. Şalāh, performed five times daily, provides structured routine that interrupts anxiety cycles, offers opportunities for dhikr and supplication, and cultivates mindfulness and presence. Research has investigated şalāh as psychotherapeutic intervention. Zulkarnain (2020) examines

ṣalāh psychotherapy for stress management and mental health improvement, finding positive therapeutic effects. The mechanisms include behavioral activation, mindfulness cultivation, social connection (in congregational prayer), and spiritual engagement. These multiple therapeutic pathways demonstrate the sophistication of Islamic spiritual practices as mental health interventions.

**Cognitive Restructuring through Qur'anic Reflection.** Ibn Qayyim's framework includes cognitive interventions through reflection (*tafakkur*) on Qur'anic verses and divine attributes. This approach parallels contemporary cognitive-behavioral therapy but operates within Islamic epistemological framework (Hamdan, 2008). Rather than merely identifying and challenging irrational thoughts, Qur'anic cognitive restructuring involves replacing anxious cognitions with Qur'anic truths about divine providence, human purpose, and ultimate outcomes.

For instance, anxiety about provision is addressed through reflection on Surah al-Dhāriyāt (51:22): "And in the heaven is your provision and whatever you are promised." Anxiety about death is addressed through reflection on Surah Āl 'Imrān (3:185): "Every soul will taste death." These Qur'anic truths provide alternative cognitive framework that reduces anxiety by situating immediate concerns within broader theological perspective. Ibn Qayyim's approach demonstrates how revealed knowledge functions as cognitive resource for mental health.

**Social Support and Community.** Ibn Qayyim recognizes the importance of social relationships for psychological wellbeing. He discusses how community support, righteous companionship, and family relationships contribute to mental health. The Islamic emphasis on communal worship, mutual assistance, and social responsibility provides structural support that reduces isolation and anxiety. Contemporary research has confirmed the mental health benefits of religious community participation (Putra et al., 2022).

**Moral Conduct and Lifestyle.** Ibn Qayyim's holistic approach includes attention to moral conduct and lifestyle factors. He discusses how sinful behavior disturbs the heart and produces psychological distress, while righteous conduct brings peace. Additionally, he addresses physical health factors including diet, sleep, and exercise, recognizing their impact on psychological wellbeing. This comprehensive approach integrates spiritual, psychological, moral, and physical dimensions of health.

The therapeutic interventions in Ibn Qayyim's framework demonstrate several distinctive features. First, they are grounded in Qur'anic epistemology rather than secular psychological theories. Second, they integrate spiritual, cognitive, affective, behavioral, and social dimensions within holistic approach. Third, they address underlying spiritual-psychological conditions rather than merely managing symptoms. Fourth, they are accessible and implementable by individuals and communities without requiring specialized professional intervention, though professional guidance can enhance effectiveness. Fifth, they have been empirically validated by contemporary research, demonstrating their therapeutic efficacy.

### **Reconstruction of Islamic Psychology: Theoretical Synthesis**

Based on the preceding analysis of Qur'anic conceptualization, Ibn Qayyim's interpretive framework, and therapeutic interventions, this section synthesizes a reconstructed framework for Islamic psychology's approach to anxiety. This reconstruction articulates the distinctive epistemological, ontological, etiological, phenomenological, and therapeutic dimensions of Islamic psychology, demonstrating its potential as independent knowledge system rather than mere adaptation of Western paradigms.

**Epistemological Foundations.** Islamic psychology is grounded in Qur'anic epistemology, which positions divine revelation (*wahy*) as the ultimate source of truth regarding human nature and wellbeing. This epistemological foundation distinguishes Islamic psychology from Western paradigms grounded in empiricism, rationalism, or pragmatism. While Islamic psychology incorporates rational inquiry and empirical observation, these remain subordinate to and informed by revealed knowledge. The Qur'an functions as criterion (*furqān*) for evaluating

psychological theories, with authentic Islamic psychology required to maintain consistency with Qur'anic teachings about human nature, purpose, and flourishing.

This epistemological framework has several implications. First, Islamic psychology rejects naturalistic metaphysics that reduces human experience to material processes, instead affirming the reality of spiritual dimensions. Second, Islamic psychology maintains that psychological knowledge must serve ultimate purpose of facilitating human submission to God and attainment of eternal wellbeing, not merely temporal happiness or social adjustment. Third, Islamic psychology recognizes limits of human reason and empirical investigation, acknowledging that some aspects of human experience transcend scientific inquiry and require revealed knowledge. **Ontological Foundations.** Islamic psychology's ontology is grounded in Qur'anic anthropology, which presents humans as created beings composed of body (*jasad*), soul (*nafs*), spirit (*rūh*), and heart (*qalb*). This multidimensional anthropology rejects dualistic separation of body and soul, instead affirming their integration within unified human person. The heart (*qalb*) functions as the locus of spiritual and psychological experience, integrating cognitive, affective, volitional, and spiritual dimensions.

Human beings are created with innate orientation toward God (*fitrah*), with psychological health resulting from alignment with this primordial nature and psychological distress often resulting from deviation. This ontological framework positions humans as purposeful beings whose wellbeing depends on fulfilling their created purpose of worshipping God and serving as divine vicegerents (*khalifah*) on earth. Anxiety, in this framework, may signal spiritual-psychological dissonance requiring realignment with *fitrah*.

**Etiological Understanding.** Islamic psychology identifies multiple causes of anxiety operating at different levels. At the existential level, anxiety is inherent aspect of human condition, reflecting the uncertainty and vulnerability of created existence. The Qur'an acknowledges this natural anxiety while providing means for its regulation. At the spiritual level, anxiety results from weak faith, heedlessness of God, attachment to worldly concerns, and satanic influence. At the psychological level, anxiety involves cognitive distortions, emotional dysregulation, and maladaptive coping strategies. At the social level, anxiety is influenced by relationships, community support, and social conditions. At the physical level, anxiety is affected by bodily health, including neurochemical processes.

This multidimensional etiology requires holistic intervention addressing all levels. Unlike reductionist approaches that identify single primary cause (e.g., neurochemical imbalance or cognitive distortion), Islamic psychology recognizes the complex interplay of spiritual, psychological, social, and physical factors. Effective treatment must address underlying spiritual conditions while also attending to psychological, social, and physical dimensions.

**Phenomenological Description.** Islamic psychology describes anxiety through Qur'anic terminology that integrates somatic, cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions. Terms including *qalaq* (restlessness), *khawf* (fear), *huzn* (grief), *dīq al-ṣadr* (chest constriction), and *waswās* (obsessive thoughts) capture different aspects of anxiety experience. This rich phenomenology enables more comprehensive understanding than Western diagnostic categories that often reduce anxiety to symptom clusters.

The phenomenology emphasizes the embodied nature of anxiety (*dīq al-ṣadr*), the cognitive dimensions (worry, rumination), the affective dimensions (fear, distress), and the spiritual dimensions (distance from God, weak faith). This integrated phenomenology reflects Islamic psychology's holistic anthropology and provides foundation for comprehensive assessment and intervention.

**Therapeutic Framework.** Islamic psychology's therapeutic approach integrates spiritual practices (*dhikr*, *ṣalāh*, *du'a'*), cognitive interventions (Qur'anic reflection, cognitive restructuring), affective regulation (cultivation of positive emotions through spiritual practices), behavioral

prescriptions (moral conduct, lifestyle modifications), and social support (community engagement, righteous companionship). This multidimensional approach addresses the multiple levels at which anxiety operates.

The therapeutic goal is not merely symptom reduction but restoration of spiritual-psychological health characterized by sound heart (*qalb salīm*), tranquility (*ṭuma'nīnah*), trust in God (*tawakkul*), and alignment with *fitrah*. Treatment success is measured not only by decreased anxiety symptoms but by increased faith, spiritual awareness, moral conduct, and overall wellbeing. This comprehensive therapeutic vision distinguishes Islamic psychology from symptom-focused Western approaches.

**Distinctive Contributions.** The reconstructed Islamic psychology offers several distinctive contributions to global mental health discourse. First, it provides alternative epistemological foundation grounded in revealed knowledge rather than secular assumptions. Second, it offers holistic anthropology that transcends mind-body dualism and integrates spiritual dimensions. Third, it presents comprehensive etiological framework recognizing multiple levels of causation. Fourth, it provides rich phenomenological description through Qur'anic terminology. Fifth, it offers integrated therapeutic approach combining spiritual, psychological, and social interventions. Sixth, it maintains that psychological wellbeing is inseparable from spiritual health and moral conduct, challenging value-neutral approaches.

These distinctive contributions demonstrate that Islamic psychology is not merely adaptation of Western models to Islamic contexts but represents independent knowledge system with unique insights. While Islamic psychology can engage Western psychological research and incorporate empirically validated findings, it maintains its own epistemological foundations and theoretical frameworks. This positioning enables authentic Islamic psychology that serves Muslim communities while contributing to global mental health discourse.

### **Contemporary Applications and Clinical Implications**

The reconstructed Islamic psychology framework has significant implications for contemporary mental health practice in Muslim communities. This section examines practical applications, clinical considerations, and implementation strategies for translating theoretical insights into effective interventions.

**Clinical Assessment.** Islamic psychology requires culturally congruent assessment approaches that attend to spiritual dimensions alongside psychological symptoms. Assessment should include evaluation of: (1) faith and religious practice; (2) spiritual experiences and concerns; (3) moral conduct and conscience; (4) social relationships and community support; (5) psychological symptoms using both Western diagnostic categories and Qur'anic terminology; and (6) physical health factors. This comprehensive assessment enables identification of multiple factors contributing to anxiety and informs holistic treatment planning.

Several studies have developed Islamic assessment instruments. However, much work remains to create validated measures that capture Qur'anic concepts including heart conditions, spiritual states, and faith-related factors. Future research should develop psychometrically sound instruments grounded in Islamic epistemology rather than merely translating Western measures.

**Therapeutic Integration.** Clinical practice can integrate Islamic spiritual interventions with evidence-based psychological treatments. For instance, cognitive-behavioral therapy can be adapted to incorporate Qur'anic cognitive restructuring, with therapists helping clients identify anxious thoughts and replace them with Qur'anic truths (Hamdan, 2008). Mindfulness-based interventions can be adapted to incorporate *dhikr* and *ṣalāh*, which provide structured mindfulness practices grounded in Islamic tradition. Acceptance and commitment therapy can be adapted to incorporate *ṣabr* and *tawakkul*, which involve acceptance of divine decree while maintaining committed action.

Research has demonstrated the effectiveness of such integrated approaches. Mukarrami et al. (2024) show that Islamic spiritual approaches effectively manage anxiety. Haque et al. (2014)

discuss integrating indigenous healing methods in therapy, examining how Muslim beliefs and practices can be incorporated into clinical contexts. These studies indicate that integration of Islamic and Western approaches can enhance therapeutic effectiveness while maintaining cultural congruence.

**Community-Based Interventions.** Islamic psychology's emphasis on community and social support suggests the importance of community-based mental health interventions. Mosques, Islamic centers, and Muslim organizations can provide mental health education, support groups, and preventive programs grounded in Islamic principles. Imams and religious leaders can be trained in basic mental health literacy to provide initial support and appropriate referrals. Community-based interventions can reduce stigma, increase access to care, and provide culturally congruent support (Putra et al., 2022).

**Preventive Approaches.** Islamic psychology's holistic framework suggests preventive strategies that promote spiritual-psychological health before problems develop. Regular spiritual practices (ṣalāh, dhikr, Qur'anic recitation), moral conduct, community engagement, and healthy lifestyle can prevent anxiety and other mental health problems. Islamic education that includes psychological dimensions of faith can equip individuals with resources for managing life stresses. Preventive approaches are particularly important given the stigma surrounding mental health in many Muslim communities, which often prevents individuals from seeking treatment until problems become severe.

**Professional Training.** Implementation of Islamic psychology requires training mental health professionals in Islamic epistemology, theology, spiritual practices, and culturally congruent therapeutic approaches. Training programs should integrate Islamic and Western psychological knowledge, enabling practitioners to provide evidence-based care that respects clients' religious values and incorporates spiritual resources. Professional organizations for Islamic psychology can develop training standards, ethical guidelines, and certification processes to ensure quality care.

**Research Priorities.** Several research priorities emerge from this reconstruction. First, empirical studies should investigate the effectiveness of specific Islamic interventions for anxiety, using rigorous methodologies including randomized controlled trials. Second, research should examine mechanisms through which spiritual practices influence psychological outcomes, integrating neuroscientific, psychological, and theological perspectives. Third, studies should develop and validate assessment instruments grounded in Islamic concepts. Fourth, research should examine cultural variations in anxiety experience and treatment preferences across diverse Muslim communities. Fifth, studies should investigate the integration of Islamic and Western therapeutic approaches, identifying optimal combinations for different populations and conditions.

**Ethical Considerations.** Clinical application of Islamic psychology raises ethical considerations. Therapists must respect client autonomy, avoiding coercive imposition of religious practices. Assessment of spiritual factors should be conducted sensitively, recognizing diversity in religious commitment and practice among Muslims. Therapists should maintain professional boundaries while incorporating spiritual dimensions, distinguishing therapeutic roles from religious authority. Informed consent should include explanation of Islamic approaches and their evidence base. These ethical considerations ensure that Islamic psychology serves clients' wellbeing while respecting their autonomy and dignity.

### **Critical Evaluation and Limitations**

While the reconstructed Islamic psychology framework offers significant contributions, critical evaluation reveals several limitations and challenges requiring ongoing attention. This section examines theoretical, methodological, and practical limitations, as well as areas requiring further development.

**Theoretical Limitations.** First, the relationship between revealed knowledge and empirical research requires further clarification. While this article has argued for the primacy of revelation, the specific mechanisms for integrating empirical findings within Islamic epistemological framework need more detailed articulation. How should Islamic psychology respond when empirical research appears to contradict traditional interpretations? What criteria determine when reinterpretation of classical texts is warranted versus when empirical findings should be questioned?

Second, the diversity of interpretive approaches within Islamic tradition raises questions about which interpretations should guide Islamic psychology. While this article has focused on Ibn Qayyim's framework, other classical scholars offer different perspectives. How should Islamic psychology navigate interpretive pluralism while maintaining coherence? What role should contemporary scholarship play in reinterpreting classical sources for current contexts?

Third, the relationship between Islamic psychology and Western psychology requires further theorization. While this article has emphasized Islamic psychology's distinctiveness, the extent to which Western psychological findings can be incorporated remains unclear. Should Islamic psychology engage Western research primarily to critique it, to selectively incorporate validated findings, or to develop integrative frameworks? These questions require ongoing scholarly attention.

**Methodological Limitations.** This study's hermeneutical methodology, while appropriate for its theoretical objectives, has limitations. First, reliance on classical texts raises questions about historical distance and cultural differences between Ibn Qayyim's context and contemporary situations. How can classical insights be applied to modern mental health challenges including technology-related anxiety, global pandemics, and contemporary social conditions? Second, the study's theoretical focus means that empirical validation of the reconstructed framework remains a future task. While existing research provides some empirical support, systematic investigation of the framework's clinical effectiveness is needed.

Third, the study has focused primarily on anxiety, with limited attention to other mental health conditions. Whether the reconstructed framework applies equally to depression, trauma, psychosis, and other conditions requires investigation. Fourth, the study has not adequately addressed cultural diversity within Muslim communities. Muslims across different regions, ethnicities, and sectarian affiliations may have varying understandings and practices. How should Islamic psychology account for this diversity while maintaining coherence?

**Practical Limitations.** Several practical challenges face implementation of Islamic psychology. First, shortage of trained professionals who possess both Islamic knowledge and clinical expertise limits service delivery. Developing training programs and professional infrastructure requires significant resources and institutional support. Second, stigma surrounding mental health in many Muslim communities prevents individuals from seeking help, limiting the reach of Islamic psychological interventions. Addressing stigma requires community education and cultural change.

Third, lack of institutional support and funding for Islamic psychology research and practice hinders development of the field. Most mental health research funding comes from secular institutions with different priorities and assumptions. Building institutional infrastructure for Islamic psychology requires advocacy, resource mobilization, and institutional development. Fourth, political and social challenges in many Muslim-majority countries, including authoritarianism, conflict, and economic instability, create difficult contexts for mental health work. Islamic psychology must navigate these challenges while maintaining its integrity and effectiveness.

**Areas for Further Development.** Several areas require further development. First, more detailed articulation of specific therapeutic protocols grounded in Islamic psychology is needed. While this article has outlined general principles and interventions, detailed treatment manuals for

specific conditions would facilitate clinical implementation. Second, development of assessment instruments grounded in Islamic concepts requires psychometric research. Third, investigation of developmental aspects of Islamic psychology, including child and adolescent mental health, is needed. Fourth, examination of Islamic approaches to severe mental illness, including psychosis and personality disorders, requires attention.

Fifth, exploration of Islamic psychology's contributions to positive psychology, including wellbeing, flourishing, and virtue development, would expand the field beyond pathology focus. Sixth, investigation of Islamic approaches to social and community psychology, including collective trauma, social justice, and community wellbeing, would address broader mental health determinants. Seventh, examination of gender issues in Islamic psychology, including culturally congruent approaches to women's mental health, requires careful attention. These areas represent important directions for future scholarship and practice.

Despite these limitations, the reconstructed Islamic psychology framework offers valuable contributions to understanding and treating anxiety in Muslim communities. The framework's grounding in Qur'anic epistemology, integration of classical scholarship, and attention to contemporary challenges position it as significant development in Islamic psychology. Ongoing scholarly attention to the identified limitations and areas for development will strengthen the framework and enhance its practical effectiveness.

## CONCLUSION

This article has reconstructed Islamic psychology's approach to anxiety through Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's interpretive framework, demonstrating how Qur'anic epistemology provides distinctive foundations for understanding and treating psychological distress. The analysis reveals that authentic Islamic psychology must be grounded in revealed knowledge rather than merely adapting Western paradigms, and that classical Islamic scholarship offers sophisticated resources for this reconstruction.

The Qur'anic conceptualization of anxiety integrates somatic, cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions within holistic anthropological framework. Terms including *qalaq*, *khawf*, *huzn*, *dīq al-ṣadr*, and *waswās* capture the multidimensional nature of anxiety experience, transcending reductionist Western diagnostic categories. This rich phenomenology reflects Qur'anic epistemology's comprehensive understanding of human psychology and provides foundation for holistic intervention.

Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's hermeneutical framework exemplifies sophisticated integration of revealed knowledge, rational analysis, and empirical observation. His epistemological principles primacy of revelation, integration of transmitted and rational knowledge, attention to objectives of Islamic law, empirical observation within revealed framework, holistic anthropology, and sensitivity to individual differences provide methodological model for deriving psychological insights from Qur'anic sources. His concept of the heart (*qalb*) as locus of spiritual-psychological experience offers distinctive ontological foundation that transcends mind-body dualism and enables comprehensive understanding of anxiety.

The therapeutic interventions emerging from Ibn Qayyim's framework *dhikr*, *tawakkul*, *ṣabr*, *ṣalāh*, Qur'anic cognitive restructuring, and social support demonstrate the sophistication of Islamic spiritual practices as mental health interventions. Contemporary research has validated the therapeutic efficacy of these interventions, confirming Ibn Qayyim's theoretical insights. The multidimensional therapeutic approach addresses spiritual, cognitive, affective, behavioral, and social dimensions of anxiety, offering holistic healing that contrasts with compartmentalized Western models.

The reconstructed Islamic psychology framework articulates distinctive epistemological,

ontological, etiological, phenomenological, and therapeutic dimensions. Epistemologically, it grounds psychological knowledge in divine revelation while incorporating reason and empirical observation. Ontologically, it presents holistic anthropology centered on the heart as locus of experience. Etiologically, it recognizes multiple levels of causation requiring integrated intervention. Phenomenologically, it describes anxiety through Qur'anic terminology that captures multidimensional experience. Therapeutically, it prescribes holistic interventions addressing all dimensions of human wellbeing.

This reconstruction demonstrates that Islamic psychology represents independent knowledge system with distinctive contributions to global mental health discourse, not merely adaptation of Western models. Its grounding in revealed epistemology, holistic anthropology, comprehensive etiology, rich phenomenology, and integrated therapeutics distinguish it from secular psychological paradigms. While Islamic psychology can engage Western research and incorporate empirically validated findings, it maintains its own epistemological foundations and theoretical frameworks.

The practical implications include development of culturally congruent assessment approaches, integration of Islamic spiritual interventions with evidence-based treatments, community-based mental health programs, preventive strategies promoting spiritual-psychological health, professional training in Islamic psychology, and research investigating effectiveness of Islamic interventions. Implementation faces challenges including shortage of trained professionals, mental health stigma, lack of institutional support, and difficult sociopolitical contexts. Addressing these challenges requires sustained scholarly attention, resource mobilization, and institutional development.

Critical evaluation reveals theoretical, methodological, and practical limitations requiring ongoing attention. The relationship between revealed knowledge and empirical research needs further clarification. Interpretive pluralism within Islamic tradition raises questions about which interpretations should guide Islamic psychology. The extent to which Western psychological findings can be incorporated requires theorization. Methodological limitations include historical distance from classical sources, need for empirical validation, limited attention to conditions beyond anxiety, and insufficient attention to cultural diversity. Practical limitations include professional shortage, stigma, lack of institutional support, and challenging sociopolitical contexts.

Future research should investigate the effectiveness of specific Islamic interventions through rigorous empirical studies, examine mechanisms through which spiritual practices influence psychological outcomes, develop and validate assessment instruments grounded in Islamic concepts, examine cultural variations across Muslim communities, and investigate integration of Islamic and Western therapeutic approaches. Additional areas for development include detailed therapeutic protocols, developmental aspects of Islamic psychology, approaches to severe mental illness, contributions to positive psychology, social and community psychology, and gender issues.

This reconstruction of Islamic psychology through Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah's interpretive framework represents significant contribution to the field. By demonstrating how Qur'anic epistemology provides distinctive foundations for understanding anxiety, the article advances the project of developing authentic Islamic human sciences that maintain fidelity to revealed sources while engaging contemporary challenges. The framework offers theoretical resources for culturally congruent mental health interventions in Muslim communities and contributes alternative epistemological perspectives to global mental health discourse.

The ultimate significance of this reconstruction lies in its demonstration that Islamic intellectual tradition possesses rich resources for addressing contemporary mental health challenges. Rather than viewing Islamic sources as merely historical artifacts or adapting Western models to Islamic contexts, this approach reconstructs Islamic psychology from its

own epistemological foundations. This paradigm shift from adaptation to reconstruction enables authentic Islamic psychology that serves Muslim communities while contributing distinctive insights to global understanding of human psychology and wellbeing.

The journey toward fully developed Islamic psychology remains ongoing, requiring sustained scholarly effort, empirical research, clinical innovation, and institutional development. However, the reconstruction presented in this article provides theoretical foundations and methodological models for this continuing work. By grounding Islamic psychology in Qur'anic epistemology and engaging classical scholarship exemplified by Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah, the field can develop authentic frameworks that honor revealed knowledge while addressing contemporary mental health needs. This integration of tradition and innovation, revelation and reason, theory and practice, represents the promise and challenge of Islamic psychology in the twenty-first century.

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