

Analysis of Character Building through Habituation to Happiness based on Al-Misbah Interpretation

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how selected Qur'anic verses, Surah Āl 'Imrān 191, Surah ar-Ra'd 11, and Surah al-Isrā' 78–79, conceptualize moral flourishing and psychological well-being, a topic that remains underexplored in contemporary Qur'anic studies and Islamic psychology. While previous research has addressed Qur'anic perspectives on ethics and spirituality, few studies have systematically connected exegetical interpretation with modern theories of eudaimonic well-being and habit formation. Addressing this gap, the study analyzes how M. Quraish Shihab's Tafsir al-Misbah articulates the relationship between self-concept, moral habituation, and well-being. Using a library research design and a tahlili exegetical approach, this study draws on Tafsir al-Misbah as the primary source and integrates secondary literature on moral psychology, habit theory, and Islamic ethical thought. The analysis shows that Shihab's interpretation frames well-being as emerging from the alignment of cognitive self-understanding, sustained ethical practice, and reflective awareness. These findings highlight a conceptual convergence between Qur'anic exegesis and contemporary psychological models that emphasize intentionality, consistency, and meaning-making as determinants of eudaimonic well-being. The study contributes to Islamic psychology and Qur'anic studies by proposing a conceptual model that integrates exegetical insights with modern psychological theory, thereby offering a more systematic understanding of how moral habituation functions as a pathway to psychological and spiritual flourishing.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini mengkaji bagaimana ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an, QS. Āl 'Imrān 191, QS. ar-Ra'd 11, dan QS. al-Isrā' 78–79, mengonstruksi konsep *moral flourishing* dan *eudaimonic well-being*, sebuah topik yang masih jarang dibahas dalam kajian tafsir kontemporer dan psikologi Islam. Meskipun penelitian sebelumnya telah menyinggung etika dan spiritualitas dalam Al-Qur'an, masih terdapat kekosongan kajian mengenai integrasi yang sistematis antara penafsiran tafsir dan teori modern tentang pembentukan kebiasaan serta kesejahteraan psikologis. Untuk mengisi celah tersebut, penelitian ini menganalisis bagaimana *Tafsir al-Misbah* karya M. Quraish Shihab menjelaskan hubungan antara konsep diri, habituasi moral, dan kesejahteraan. Dengan desain penelitian kepustakaan dan pendekatan analisis *tahlili*, studi ini menggunakan *Tafsir al-Misbah* sebagai sumber primer dan mengintegrasikan literatur sekunder mengenai psikologi moral, teori kebiasaan, dan pemikiran etika Islam. Analisis menunjukkan bahwa menurut Shihab, kesejahteraan muncul dari keselarasan antara pemahaman diri secara kognitif, praktik etis yang konsisten, dan kesadaran reflektif. Temuan ini memperlihatkan adanya titik temu antara tafsir Qur'ani dan model psikologi kontemporer yang menekankan intensionalitas, konsistensi, dan pembentukan makna sebagai faktor penentu *eudaimonic well-being*. Kontribusi penelitian ini terletak pada perumusan model konseptual yang mengintegrasikan wawasan tafsir dengan teori psikologi modern, sehingga menawarkan pemahaman yang lebih sistematis mengenai bagaimana habituasi moral berfungsi sebagai jalur menuju *psychological and spiritual flourishing*.

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A. INTRODUCTION

Technological advancement has reshaped human perceptions of happiness. Although access to information and digital connectivity has significantly increased, levels of unhappiness and psychological distress continue to rise, including among Indonesian adolescents. Data from the 2022 Indonesian National Adolescent Mental Health Survey (I-NAMHS) shows that one in ten adolescents aged 10–17 reported mental health problems within the past year, while one in twenty experienced emotional disorders, resulting in an estimated 15.5 million adolescents facing mental health issues and an additional 2.5 million experiencing emotional disorders.¹

These findings indicate that individuals with suboptimal mental health tend to experience dissatisfaction, anxiety, and a diminished sense of life meaning. Modern pressures such as social expectations, academic demands, digital fatigue, and the rapid pace of technological change significantly influence overall well-being. Social media exposure, in particular, reinforces comparison-based thinking and undermines self-acceptance, making it increasingly difficult for adolescents to maintain emotional stability and pursue genuine happiness.

In response to these challenges, various scholars emphasize that true happiness is not merely the result of external success or pleasurable experiences. Erich Fromm, in *The Art of Loving*, argues that happiness emerges from love, care, responsibility, and commitment to meaningful actions.² Thus, happiness is closely related to moral qualities, kindness, empathy, sincerity, which guide individuals to do good not only for personal gain but as an expression of inner character.

Martin Seligman, within the framework of positive psychology, strengthens this view by defining happiness as a form of dedication to consistently perform positive actions, driven by virtue and character.³ Happiness, therefore, is not merely an emotional state but a holistic integration of cognitive, affective, social, and spiritual dimensions shaped through one's continuous commitment to noble behavior.

Character becomes an essential foundation in this pursuit of well-being. Quraish Shihab explains that character (*akhlāq*) is formed through repeated habituation of positive behavior, shaping both outward conduct and internal dispositions.⁴ Character does not only reflect personality but encompasses moral strengths and weaknesses that influence decision-making and relationships. In adolescent development, character provides direction for self-awareness, emotional regulation, and the ability to make responsible choices.

Further, Quraish Shihab emphasizes that character is the primary basis of virtuous actions formed through consistent practice.⁵ Its formation is strongly influenced by a healthy and clear self-concept. In line with Fitts' perspective, a positive self-understanding enables individuals to evaluate and respond to themselves appropriately, thereby supporting the development of moral behavior and awareness of the consequences of one's actions.⁶

¹ Amirah Ellyza Wahdi et al., *Indonesia-National Adolescent Mental Health Survey (I-NAMHS)* (Yogyakarta: Pusat Kesehatan Reproduksi, 2022).

² Muskinul Fuad, "Psikologi Kebahagiaan Manusia," *Jurnal Komunika* 9, no. 1 (2015): 112–30.

³ Erich Fromm, *Seni Mencintai* (Yogyakarta: Basabasi, 2018).

⁴ Jusmiati, "Konsep Kebahagiaan Martin Seligman: Sebuah Penelitian Awal," *Rausyan Fikr* 13, no. 2 (2017): 360.

⁵ M. Quraish Shihab, *Yang Hilang Dari Kita: Akhlak* (Tangerang Selatan: Lentera Hati, 2016).

⁶ Laila Meiliyandrie Indah Wardani and Ritia Anggadita, *Konsep Diri Dan Konformitas Pada Perilaku Konsumtif Remaja* (Jawa Tengah: NEM, 2021).

The cultivation of good character requires a process of habituation supported by strong internal commitment.⁷ Self-awareness is crucial in distinguishing habits that lead to happiness from those that do not. As a cognitive ability to understand one's feelings, thoughts, and behaviors, self-awareness significantly influences character quality. Adolescents with higher self-awareness tend to regulate and monitor themselves more effectively, fostering healthier personal conditions. Conversely, compulsive or unconscious habits do not contribute to genuine happiness.⁸

Based on these issues, this study focuses on analyzing character formation through habituation from the perspective of happiness. The research addresses two key questions: what constitutes true happiness, and how happiness is cultivated according to Qur'anic guidance. The aim is to explore the essence of happiness and formulate practical strategies for its development based on Qur'anic teachings, with *Tafsir Al-Misbah* as the primary reference. Previous studies have examined happiness from psychological perspectives or through the views of specific scholars, but few have explicitly linked character formation through habituation to the framework of Qur'anic interpretation. Therefore, this research is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically to understanding the relationship between character building and the attainment of happiness within the Qur'anic interpretive tradition.

B. METHODS

This study employs a library research method by referring to written sources relevant to character building, habituation, and the Qur'anic perspective on happiness. The analysis focuses on Qur'anic verses, Surah Āli 'Imrān 191, Surah Ar-Ra'd 11, and Surah al-Isrā' 78–79, examined through *Tafsir Al-Misbah* using the *tahliḷī* method, which provides detailed explanation according to the *mufasssir's* approach. Secondary sources from books and scholarly articles are also incorporated to provide a comprehensive understanding of the connection between character formation, habituation, and happiness within the Qur'anic framework. Accordingly, this study argues that moral formation through habituation, grounded in Qur'anic teachings, is a fundamental pathway to achieving true happiness.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Structure and Methodology of Tafsir al-Mishbah in a Contemporary Perspective

Tafsir al-Misbah by M. Quraish Shihab was developed with the primary aim of presenting Qur'anic interpretation in a simple, clear, and accessible manner so that its messages can be understood by a broad range of readers. This work emerges from his awareness that many Muslims face limitations in time, knowledge, and reference access, which often hinder a deeper engagement with the Qur'an. Therefore, this tafsir seeks to provide explanations that remain practical without sacrificing interpretive depth.⁹

Comprising 15 volumes, *Tafsir al-Misbah* adopts the *tahliḷī* (analytical) method, interpreting verses sequentially from Sūrat al-Fātiḥah to Sūrat al-Nās in accordance with the mushaf order.¹⁰ Its systematic structure includes several key components: an explanation of

⁷ Dwi Ulfa Nurdahlia et al., "Pembentukan Karakter Komunikatif Melalui 3S (Senyum, Salam, Sapa) Di SDIT Qurrota A'yun Ponorogo," *Ibriez: Jurnal Kependidikan Dasar Islam Berbasis Sains* 8, no. 1 (2023): 65.

⁸ Ruzika Hafizha, "Profil Self-Awareness Remaja," *Journal of Education and Counseling (JECO)* 2, no. 1 (2021): 158–66.

⁹ M. Quraish Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: Lentera Hati, 2002).

¹⁰ Surya A Jamrah, *Pengantar Ilmu Tafsir Mudhui* (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 1994).

the surah names and their reasons for naming; information regarding the number of verses and their classification as *Makkīyah* or *Madanīyah*; the placement of surahs in terms of revelation and mushaf arrangement; the main themes and objectives of each surah; the scholarly perspectives related to these themes; the *munāsabah* (interrelation) of verses and surahs; and the circumstances of revelation for specific verses or surahs.¹¹

In constructing this tafsir, Quraish Shihab applies detailed linguistic and semantic analysis. The linguistic dimension encompasses discussions of stylistic beauty, rhetorical uniqueness (*badī'*), structural meaning (*ma'ānī*), clarity (*bayān*), and the use of literal expressions (*ḥaqīqah*), figurative language (*majāz*), insinuation (*kināyah*), and metaphor (*isti'ārah*). Meanwhile, the semantic analysis involves examining the correlations between verses, legal and ethical principles, doctrinal elements, commands, prohibitions, and underlying wisdoms, including their connections with preceding and succeeding verses.¹²

A distinctive element of *Tafsir al-Misbah* is its emphasis on the science of *munāsabah*, demonstrated through analyses of the coherence of wording, the alignment of content with the ending of a surah, the continuity between consecutive verses, the harmony between the opening and closing of a surah, and the thematic relationship between the conclusion of one surah and the beginning of the next. This framework enriches the interpretive process by highlighting message continuity, thematic unity, and rhetorical harmony.¹³ The tafsir also reflects an *adabī-ijtimā'ī* approach, connecting Qur'anic teachings to social, cultural, and contemporary issues, thus offering interpretations that are relevant to modern human experiences. This relevance becomes particularly significant when addressing contemporary concerns such as the rising sense of unhappiness in society, which often stems from a limited understanding of the Qur'anic perspective on true happiness and the pathways to attaining it.

2. Conceptions of Happiness in Surah Āl 'Imrān 191

The pursuit of well-being in Islamic thought is closely tied to the cultivation of moral excellence. Classical Islamic philosophers, including Nashiruddin al-Thusi, describe *sa'ādah* (happiness) as the attainment of *kamāliyyah* or perfection, namely, the fulfillment of one's essential purpose.¹⁴ In this view, goodness is not merely an ethical preference but a developmental state that enables individuals to actualize their highest capacities. This understanding parallels the contemporary concept of eudaimonic well-being, in which well-being arises from virtue, meaning, and self-realization rather than from hedonic pleasure.

Within this framework, well-being encompasses moral integrity, spiritual orientation, and the capacity to regulate thoughts and behavior in accordance with virtuous principles.¹⁵ Contemporary research in moral psychology likewise emphasizes that enduring well-being is supported by moral agency, the ability to act in ways consistent with one's values, and by the

¹¹ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*.

¹² Kadar M. Yusuf, *Studi Al-Qur'an* (Jakarta: Amzah, 2009).

¹³ Atik Wartini, "Corak Penafsiran M. Quraish Shihab Dalam Tafsir Al-Misbah," *HUNafa: Jurnal Studia Islamika* 11, no. 1 (2014): 109.

¹⁴ Ernita Dewi, *Akhlaq Dan Kebahagiaan Menapaki Jalan Filosofis Ibnu Miskawaih* (Yogyakarta: Zahir Publishing, 2022).

¹⁵ Muammar Abullah, Abd. Muid N., and Nurbaiti Nurbaiti, "Pendekatan Filosofis Terhadap Kebahagiaan Dalam Perspektif Al-Qur'an Bagi Manusia Modern," *Journal of Comprehensive Science (JCS)* 4, no. 3 (2025): 1143-62.

internalization of virtuous habits that contribute to personal and interpersonal flourishing. These insights help clarify that Islamic notions of happiness are best understood not as emotional states but as integrated forms of psychological and spiritual functioning.

Honesty illustrates one of the core moral virtues that contribute to the development of stable moral character.¹⁶ In Islamic ethical tradition, honesty is shaped through continuous habituation rather than momentary behavioral displays. This corresponds to virtue-ethics perspectives in which sustained moral conduct strengthens self-regulation, coherence of self, and long-term flourishing. Thus, cultivating virtues through repeated practice becomes a foundational mechanism for achieving eudaimonic well-being.

The relevance of these concepts appears in QS. Āli ‘Imrān 3:191, which describes the characteristics of *ulū al-albāb*, individuals who integrate cognitive reflection with continuous remembrance of God:

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ

(They are) those who remember Allah while standing, sitting, or lying down, and who reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth.

Tafsir al-Misbah highlights that *ulū al-albāb* are individuals whose remembrance of God persists across circumstances and whose reflective awareness allows them to recognize the purposeful nature of creation.¹⁷ Their acknowledgment of divine intentionality leads to humility, moral responsibility, and an awareness of human limitations. This interpretive emphasis resonates with the psychological construct of spiritual well-being, which refers to a person's sense of meaning, connectedness, and purpose derived from a transcendent framework.

The integration of remembrance (*dhikr*) and reflection (*tafakkur*) represents a form of cognitive, affective regulation that aligns with contemporary notions of flourishing, understood as the optimal functioning of moral, emotional, and spiritual capacities. Remembering God nurtures emotional stability and self-awareness, while reflecting on creation encourages meaning-making and prosocial orientation. These processes constitute what positive psychology identifies as *meaning-centered coping* and *value-based regulation*, mechanisms that are strongly associated with long-term psychological resilience.

The supplication contained in the verse, acknowledging human shortcomings and asking protection from destructive consequences, further illustrates the role of self-awareness in Islamic spirituality. From the perspective of moral psychology, such acknowledgment reflects ethical self-reflection, a process that enables individuals to evaluate their actions, recognize moral vulnerabilities, and mobilize corrective behavior. This dimension strengthens spiritual well-being by fostering humility, responsibility, and openness to moral growth.

Through these interpretive and psychological linkages, QS. Āli ‘Imrān 3:191 can be understood as articulating a pathway toward eudaimonic well-being: continuous remembrance, reflective engagement with creation, acknowledgment of moral limitations, and commitment to virtuous action. In *Tafsir al-Misbah*, these qualities collectively guide

¹⁶ Ainur Rofiq Sofa and Zainul Hasan, "Kejujuran Dalam Perspektif Pendidikan Islam: Nilai Fundamental, Strategi Implementasi, Dan Dampaknya Terhadap Pembentukan Karakter Santri Di Pesantren," *Jurnal Manajemen Dan Pendidikan Agama Islam* 3, no. 1 (2025): 194.

¹⁷ Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*.

individuals toward a state of spiritual-moral flourishing that aligns with Islam's vision of purposeful and meaningful human life.

3. Foundations of Happiness in Surah ar-Ra'd 11 and al-Isrā' 78-79

لَهُ مُعَقِّبَاتٌ مِّن بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ يَحْفَظُونَهُ مِمَّنْ أَمَرَ اللَّهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ وَإِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ سُوءًا فَلَا مَرَدَّ لَهُ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِّن دُونِهِ مِن وَالٍ

For each person there are angels assigned alternately before and behind him, guarding him by the command of Allah. Indeed, Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change what is within themselves. And when Allah intends misfortune for a people, none can repel it, nor do they have any protector besides Him.

The verse states that human beings are accompanied by angels who guard them by God's command, and that "Allah does not change the condition of a people until they change what is within themselves" (Ar-Ra'd/13:11). In *Tafsir al-Misbah*, Shihab explains that this principle refers to the inner dispositions of human beings, such as gratitude turning into ingratitude, obedience into disobedience, or faith into associating partners with God, which then correlate with changes in their external conditions. According to him, this reflects an interrelated and irreversible decree in which shifts in a person's inner state are followed by corresponding transformations in their lived circumstances.¹⁸

What emerges from this verse is an emphasis on the centrality of inward transformation as a causal dimension in the alteration of human conditions. Internal changes, such as shifts in disposition, orientation, or moral commitment, carry consequences for the trajectory of one's life. Within this framework, self-understanding becomes analytically significant: recognizing one's own dispositions enables individuals to direct their attitudes and actions accordingly. In this sense, the notion of self-concept provides an important conceptual basis for understanding how individuals interpret themselves and their circumstances, thereby informing their behavioral orientation.¹⁹ Self-concept, as several scholars have noted, is shaped by multiple key factors.²⁰

Zulkarnain identifies several determinants that shape an individual's self-concept. *First*, experience plays a significant role. Interpersonal encounters, particularly those involving affirmation, acceptance, and emotional support within family or social environments, tend to reinforce self-esteem and strengthen one's sense of personal worth. Such positive relational dynamics contribute to the development of a stable and affirmative self-concept. In contrast, negative interpersonal experiences, including conflict, neglect, or rejection, may weaken an individual's self-regard and lead to a fragile or negative self-concept. These experiences accumulate over time, forming the interpretive lens through which individuals understand themselves and their relationships with others.

Second, competence contributes substantially to the formation of self-concept. An individual's perception of their abilities in domains they value, such as academics, professional performance, artistic endeavors, or social competence, influences how they evaluate themselves. Demonstrated skills and achievements in these domains typically

¹⁸ Shihab.

¹⁹ Iskandar Zulkarnain, *Membentuk Konsep Diri Melalui Budaya Tutar: Tinjauan Psikologi Komunikasi* (Sumatera Utara: Puspantara, 2020).

²⁰ Zulkarnain.

enhance feelings of efficacy and reinforce a positive self-concept. Conversely, repeated failures or perceived incompetence in areas that the individual considers important may diminish their sense of capability and self-worth.

Third, self-actualization constitutes an important dimension in the development of self-concept. The process of realizing and expressing one's fullest potential—whether through intellectual productivity, creative expression, or other forms of meaningful contribution—strengthens one's understanding of personal identity. Individuals who are able to articulate and actualize their talents often experience a heightened sense of fulfillment, which further enriches their self-concept. Through ongoing engagement with their abilities, individuals gain clearer insight into their strengths, aspirations, and personal values.

Taken together, these three factors, experience, competence, and self-actualization, illustrate that self-concept is dynamic and continually shaped by the individual's interactions and achievements over time. A strong and positive self-concept equips individuals with the psychological stability needed to navigate life's difficulties and contributes to the attainment of well-being.

Zulkarnain also describes three schematic structures that constitute an individual's self-concept. The actual self refers to how individuals perceive themselves in the present moment, encompassing their current traits, abilities, and behavioral tendencies. This includes the way a person evaluates their professional competencies, interpersonal characteristics, and everyday functioning.²¹

The ideal self represents the aspirational dimension of self-concept, the version of oneself that an individual hopes to attain. This includes desired accomplishments, personal goals, and future-oriented qualities such as career success, emotional maturity, or expanded creative capacities. The ideal self functions as a motivational guide, shaping one's long-term orientation and direction of growth.

The ought self pertains to the self as defined by social expectations, obligations, and normative responsibilities. This dimension reflects the standards set by significant others, such as parents, teachers, or societal norms, and embodies the duties individuals feel compelled to fulfill. For example, a student may conceptualize their ought self through expectations of discipline, academic commitment, and responsible behavior.

A positively integrated self-concept, comprising coherence between the actual, ideal, and ought selves, provides a solid foundation for the development of moral character. Individuals who possess clarity regarding who they are, who they aspire to be, and what is expected of them are better equipped to align their behaviors with ethical principles. Character formation, in this sense, is not limited to externally observable conduct but is rooted in an internalized moral awareness sustained by psychological coherence. When grounded in a healthy self-concept, character becomes a stable guide in decision-making, interpersonal relations, and spiritual orientation. Ultimately, the cultivation of good character contributes not only to societal harmony but also to personal well-being, forming a pathway toward a deeper sense of happiness derived from ethically oriented actions in everyday life.

A positively formed self-concept serves as the main foundation for the formation of good character. Individuals with a strong self-concept will have a deep understanding of the moral and ethical values that should be upheld. With awareness of the actual self, ideal self, and

²¹ Zulkarnain.

ought self, a person is able to recognize and carry out their moral responsibilities to themselves, others, and God. The formation of good character requires constant awareness of actions that are in line with ethical values. Character rooted in a healthy self-concept not only reflects socially visible goodness, but also becomes a source of true happiness for individuals. Thus, the development of positive character is an important step towards achieving happiness that comes from good deeds in everyday life.

From this verse, it can be inferred that the formation of moral character grounded in a well-integrated self-concept constitutes a significant basis for the emergence of good actions. A coherent understanding of oneself, particularly as a creature endowed with dignity by God, encourages individuals to align their conduct with ethical norms. Such alignment contributes to the generation of positive effects not only at the personal level but also within broader social contexts. In this way, moral transformation rooted in self-awareness becomes part of a cyclical process in which virtuous behavior nurtures both psychological well-being and spiritual fulfillment.

أَقِمِ الصَّلَاةَ لِذُلُوكِ الشَّمْسِ إِلَى عَسْقِ اللَّيْلِ وَقُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ إِنَّ قُرْآنَ الْفَجْرِ كَانَ مَشْهُودًا. وَمِنَ اللَّيْلِ فَتَهَجَّدْ بِهِ
نَافِلَةً لَّكَ عَسَى أَنْ يَبْعَثَكَ رَبُّكَ مَقَامًا مَّحْمُودًا

Establish prayer from the decline of the sun until the darkness of night, and (also perform) the dawn prayer. Indeed, the dawn prayer is witnessed (by the angels). During part of the night, perform the tahajjud prayer as an additional act of worship for you; perhaps your Lord will raise you to a praiseworthy station.

In *Tafsir al-Mishbah*, this passage is explained as a directive for the Prophet and the believers to maintain the prescribed prayers consistently and in accordance with their conditions and prophetic practices. The command encompasses all obligatory prayers beginning from the sun's passing the zenith until the onset of night, as well as the dawn prayer, which is distinguished by the fact that its recitation of the Qur'an is witnessed by the angels. This emphasis indicates the unique spiritual visibility and barakah associated with the early dawn.

Furthermore, the verse instructs the Prophet to rise during a portion of the night to perform the tahajjud prayer, accompanied by the recitation of the Qur'an. This act is described as an additional devotional practice through which one's spiritual rank may be elevated. According to Shihab, these nocturnal acts of worship play a significant role in deepening spiritual consciousness and strengthening one's connection with God, thereby contributing to the cultivation of inward discipline and heightened awareness.²²

What emerges from this verse is a Qur'anic perspective that links disciplined worship, particularly at spiritually significant times, with the development of inner steadiness and moral refinement. Regular engagement in prayer, especially during dawn and in the quiet hours of the night, provides a structured spiritual framework that stabilizes the heart, enhances self-awareness, and supports the broader process of moral and psychological transformation.

The interpretation of this verse highlights the existence of designated temporal frameworks for worship, encompassing both the obligatory prayers and additional devotional

²² Shihab, *Tafsir Al-Misbah: Pesan, Kesan Dan Keserasian Al-Qur'an*.

practices such as *tahajjud*. In *Tafsir al-Mishbah*, Shihab explains that worship, understood as fulfilling God's commands, avoiding His prohibitions, and engaging in actions that cultivate spiritual merit—requires regularity and attentiveness to its prescribed times. Within this exegetical perspective, consistency in performing acts of worship functions as a formative discipline that contributes to one's spiritual refinement and strengthens one's orientation toward divine guidance.

In religious discourse, this pattern of consistent devotion is often conceptualized through the notion of *ṣibghah*, namely the habituation of worship until it becomes an integrated aspect of one's identity. This concept finds further support in exegetical and hadith literature. For example, Risna cites a narration preserved by Imam Muslim that describes the practice of rising during the night for worship, which, through long-term repetition, becomes a stable devotional habit. Such examples illustrate how sustained engagement in worship gradually shapes the contours of one's spiritual life, forming dispositions that support ethical awareness and psychological steadiness.²³

The significance of cultivating such dispositions is further underscored by the hadith of Abu Hurairah, in which the Prophet describes the “piece of flesh” that determines the condition of the entire body as the heart. Classical and contemporary scholars interpret this narration as foregrounding the heart as the locus of moral and spiritual orientation. A sound heart, characterized by clarity of intention, sincerity, and alignment with moral values, manifests itself in constructive behavior and harmonious social relations. Conversely, a corrupted heart generates attitudes such as malice, envy, and hostility, which impede ethical conduct and disrupt interpersonal harmony. In this sense, the hadith positions the heart as the central determinant of the quality of one's behavioral, psychological, and spiritual life.

What emerges from this interconnected body of Qur'anic and hadith teachings is a conceptual framework in which worship, habituation, and inner moral states form a mutually reinforcing system. Regular worship creates rhythms that cultivate attentiveness, self-discipline, and spiritual receptivity. These rhythms, in turn, influence the condition of the heart, shaping the moral dispositions that guide human conduct. The verse in Al-Isrā, together with the related hadith, thus points toward an understanding of human well-being that is rooted not in isolated acts of devotion but in long-term processes of inner formation.

Within this framework, the heart is not presented merely as a moral symbol but as an analytical category that captures the dynamic interplay between spiritual consciousness, ethical behavior, and psychological orientation. A heart oriented toward clarity and goodness enables individuals to interpret their experiences through constructive perspectives, thereby contributing to what the Qur'an describes elsewhere as the condition of a “healthy soul.” Conversely, hearts shaped by distorted orientations correlate with states of inner turmoil and alienation, as suggested in Qur'anic discussions of those who turn away from guidance.

Thus, rather than asserting prescriptive claims about “achieving happiness,” the exegetical synthesis points to a broader conceptual implication: Qur'anic discourse situates human well-being within the domain of moral and spiritual transformation, in which habituated worship and the cultivation of a sound heart serve as interrelated processes that orient individuals toward states of inner stability and holistic well-being.

²³ Risna Mosiba, “Halal Haram Dalam Perspektif Pendidikan (Kajian Hadis Tahlili),” *Inspiratif Pendidikan* 12, no. 1 (2018): 252–62.

Taken together, the exegetical insights from Ar-Ra'd/13:11 and Al-Isrā'/17:78–79, along with the supporting hadith and theoretical perspectives on self-concept, reveal a coherent Qur'anic framework in which inner transformation, disciplined worship, and the condition of the heart operate as interconnected dimensions of human moral development. The verses outline a dynamic view of human agency: internal dispositions influence one's lived circumstances, while habitual acts of devotion create the structures through which these dispositions are gradually shaped. In this framework, the *qalb* functions not merely as a spiritual metaphor but as an analytical category that mediates between cognition, emotion, and ethical behavior.

The consistent rhythm of worship emphasized in Al-Isrā', when read alongside the moral causal principle of Ar-Ra'd, highlights the Qur'anic portrayal of self-formation as a cumulative process in which outward practices and inward states continuously inform one another. The hadith on the centrality of the heart further clarifies this relationship by positioning the heart as the locus where these internal and external dimensions converge. This layered interaction suggests that well-being in the Qur'anic sense is not an isolated emotional state but the outcome of sustained moral orientation, spiritual awareness, and disciplined habituation.

What emerges from this analysis is an integrated conceptualization of human flourishing grounded in Qur'anic anthropology: well-being is linked to the gradual cultivation of moral clarity and spiritual attunement, nurtured through consistent devotional practice and the ongoing refinement of the heart. Rather than offering prescriptive formulas, the texts collectively describe a developmental trajectory in which character, consciousness, and worship form a unified pathway toward stability, purpose, and inner coherence.

D. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that the Qur'anic conception of happiness, as reflected in the selected verses and elaborated through Quraish Shihab's *Tafsir al-Misbah*, aligns with several principles in positive psychology, particularly the emphasis on meaning, self-concept, and moral behavior as psychological determinants of well-being. The exegetical analysis suggests that the Qur'an frames happiness not merely as an emotional state but as a condition emerging from coherence between intention, action, and self-understanding. This perspective resonates with Seligman's view that well-being is strengthened when individuals cultivate sustained engagement in meaningful and morally grounded behaviors. Through theoretical synthesis, the study identifies a conceptual intersection wherein Qur'anic directives on sincerity, purpose, and ethical conduct can be understood as mechanisms that support the development of psychological flourishing. This synthesis contributes to contemporary Islamic psychology by demonstrating how scriptural interpretations may be integrated with positive psychology frameworks to construct a more holistic model of well-being that accounts for both spiritual and psychological dimensions. Methodologically, the study highlights the value of combining exegetical interpretation with psychological theory to deepen the analysis of Qur'anic concepts. However, the scope remains limited to textual interpretation without empirical validation, suggesting the need for further interdisciplinary expansion. Future research may therefore focus on empirically examining the psychological effects of Qur'anic concepts such as sincerity, intention formation, and moral habituation across different demographic groups. Studies may also explore how these concepts can be operationalized into measurable constructs within Islamic psychology or integrated into educational and

clinical intervention models. Such developments would strengthen the field by building evidence-based frameworks that bridge classical Qur'anic insights with contemporary psychological research.

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