



## Development of Integrative Islamic Personality Model

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### Abstract

Personality in Islam is understood as an all encompassing way of life, resulting in an approach that is able to connect every aspect of behavior, attitude, and feeling for Muslims. The existing gap in instrumentation capable of capturing the major elements of the Islamic personality can only be filled by beginning with an organic definition and concept for personality from the Islamic perspective. This study presents reconceptualization of personality in religion as an Integrative Islamic Personality Model (IIPM) developed by using the ideas of Carl Rogers and Said Nursi. This model comprised of four constructs; Belief in God, Awareness of Prophetic Teaching, Self-striving and Self-regard. This personality measurement within Islamic and Western perspectives is greatly considered to be beneficial to educators and counselors in order to measure relevant personality of an individual.

**Keywords:** Personality, Islam, Measurement, Self, Rogers, Nursi

## Bütünleştirici İslami Kişilik Modelinin Geliştirilmesi

### Öz

İslamda kişilik Müslümanların davranış, tutum ve duygularını her açıdan bağlayıcı bir yaklaşıma sebep olarak hayatın tümünü kapsayacak şekilde anlaşılır. İslami kişiliğin ana değerlerini kapsayabilecek ölçek için var olan boşluk sadece İslami perspektife bağlı ve kişiliğin orjinal kavramı ile başlanarak doldurulabilir. Bu çalışma Carl Rogers ve Said Nursi'nin fikirlerinden yararlanarak geliştirilen Integrative Islamic Personality Model (IIPM) adında dindeki kişiliğin yeniden kavramlaştırma çalışmasını sunar. Bu model dört bölümden oluşur; Belief in God, Awareness of Prophetic Teaching, Self-striving, ve Self-regard. İslam ve Batı perspektifini içeren bu kişilik modeli bireyin belirtilen kişilik ölçümü için eğitimciler ve rehbercilere büyük oranda fayda sağlayacağı düşünülmektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kişilik, İslam, Ölçüm, Öz, Rogers, Nursi

## Introduction

As personality in religion is primarily studied based on Western philosophy or religion (i.e. Christianity), its use with Muslim population requires an examination and re-conceptualization to increase its relevance to Islam and Muslims, and its accuracy in capturing the view of Islam, particularly the Qur'an and Hadith. There are important implications for measurement arising from the differences in the underlying personality related constructs of existing personality instruments, as opposed to the Islamic. Most important is the disparity in the fundamental understanding or concept of personality itself, compared to the Islamic notion of personality (Haque, 2004). For example, the vast majority of personality measurements are grounded in a secular view, which treats Islam in a manner that isolates it from life's daily affairs. Islam, on the other hand, does not concede to secular dichotomy of the sacred and the profane. Rather, the worldview of Islam projects a view of reality and truth that encompasses existence and life altogether in total perspective whose fundamental elements are permanently established (Al-Attas, 2001). This basic difference between the two worldviews has dramatic consequences for the conceptualization of personality culminating in personality measurements with fundamentally different understanding of what it means to be a good person. Understandably, therefore, personality dimensions extracted from differing underlying worldviews are undoubtedly differ according to the extent to which each worldview is manifested in daily life and practice.

The existing gap in instrumentation capable of capturing the major elements of the Islamic personality can only be filled by beginning with an organic definition and concept for personality from the Islamic perspective. On the other hand, most attempts to date at examining personality among Muslim populations have relied almost entirely on Islamic theology (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2011). Such an approach of adaptation, however, has great limitations in understanding personality from the perspective of specific religious traditions and their unique worldviews (Smither & Khorsandi, 2009). Therefore, integration of Islamic and Western perspectives to personality will be greatly beneficial to Muslim's personality measurement. This paper highlights the theoretical framework of integrative Islamic personality and presents the list of items in Appendix accordingly.

## Self in Islam

Islamic personality cannot be understood except as an all encompassing way of life that defines reality in both personality and Islamic terms, resulting in an approach that is able to connect every aspect of personality to Islam. To sufficiently capture such a dynamic idea of personality, conceptualization of Islamic personality must begin with a comprehensive understanding of the Islamic self



meaning (Smither & Khorsandi, 2009), and the actions or personal characteristics that reflect that worldview in everyday life (Krauss et al., 2012). Furthermore, personality theories, secular personality, avoid considering the reality of an existence of God who is unseen (transcendent). In the researcher's knowledge, the Western psychologists also disregard any languages and theoretical implications related to the Islam doctrine such as Belief in God (Tawhid), and Awareness of Prophetic Teaching (Nubuwwa).

In fact, the Islamic view is that life must be illuminated with the principle of Qur'an. Nursi (1918/1999) emphasized that the fundamental aims of the Qur'an and its main elements are four constructs: Belief in God, Awareness of Prophetic Teaching, Hashr (Awareness of Resurrection of the Dead), and Ibadah (Worship) (Nursi, 1918/1999). However, we focused particularly Belief in God and Awareness of Prophetic Teaching (Ismail & Tekke, 2015) exploited as psychological constructs in this study. It is the testimony (shahadah) that *"I bear witness that there is no god except Allah and I bear witness that Muhammad is the servant and messenger of Allah"*. The importance of Awareness of Prophetic Teaching construct followed by Belief in God is that prophet is the one who answered and interrogated questions which represent the essence of life, as such: "Where are you from? Where are you going? What are you doing? Who is your ruler? And who is your spokesman?" (Nursi, 1918/1999) respectively.

Consistently, Islamic personality can be defined as the study of human nature in relation to the behavior, thinking, and emotions which are based on the values derived from the sources of Islam. The most important part is the spiritual aspect of human in measuring their personality. Thus, it is suggested that the above constructs are essential for an Islamic personality model for each Muslims.

Furthermore, this study utilizes one of the many theories of personality, that of Carl Rogers (1951) and examines the proposed conceptualized Islamic notion of personality theory from Said Nursi (1870-1960), a Turkish theologian and scholar. In the researcher's opinion the contributions of personality theory of Rogers is closely and somewhat related to the Islamic understanding of personality. In his early career, Rogers was concerned about questions regarding the meaning of life for individuals through Christian religious doctrines (Cervone & Pervin, 2008). By drawing upon Rogers's findings, the



researcher hopes that path of modern psychology and Islamic faith can be integrated in this model. Therefore, this study describes the subject of personality development and establishes the research framework respectively through the integration of the Islamic and Western perspectives in order to better understand personality.

Figure 1 indicates the integration of Rogers' self theory and Nursi's Islamic perspective.

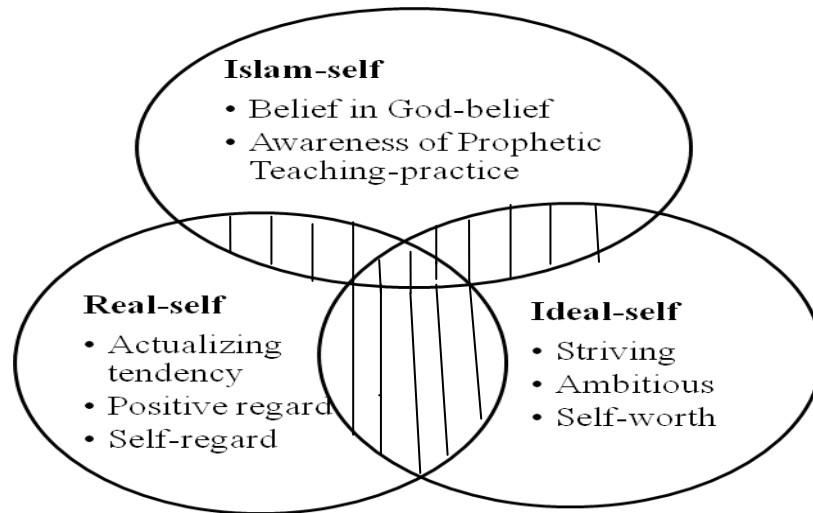


Figure 1. Integrative Islamic Personality: (Shaded area refers to congruency among Islam-self, real-self and ideal self)

The theoretical framework underlying this study rested on a basis of conjunction with the Islamic and Western understanding of the nature of human being referring to the development of human personality. It is an integration process of one whole view of Islam which includes the impact on human behavior.

With this reasoning, the theoretical framework of this study is basically centered on Rogers's personality theory so that Islamic perspective to human personality using the view of Said Nursi is exploited respectively. The reason of the view of Nursi is that integration of Western and Islamic ideas is significantly impressive sources to understand the Muslim personality.

In Islamic personality of psychology, Haque and Mohamed (2009) established their work in the concept of fitrah, which was defined as the "innate and natural disposition of man to believe and worship God". As a further basis for relationship with God, they asserted "the key to knowledge of God is knowledge of one's self both inwardly



and outwardly". In literal terms, the Qur'an states that people's greatest concern should be worshipping God. To some extent, it might be suggested that belief and practice associated with being a devout Muslim could lead to a state similar to self-actualization (Maslow, 1954), or experience of the true self (Winnicott, 1960).

Furthermore, Othman (2008) addressed that any study, without including the spiritual aspect, on biological factors, society and culture will only lead to an obscure description and shallow understanding about personality. Therefore, in Islam-self, Belief in God is related to faith or belief of Muslims and Awareness of Prophetic Teaching referring to awareness of prophetic tradition is associated with practice and following the Prophet's Sunnah (actions and sayings). Nursi (1934/2002) emphasized that both constructs in Islam are inevitably interconnected to each other. Earning a sense of Divine presence in the heart helps individuals enhance the capital of their life all the time for good deeds (Kuspinar, 2008). On the other hand, Rogers (1954) identified the 'real self' is initiated by the actualizing tendency, follows organismic valuing, needs and receives positive regard and self-regard. Rogers believed that we all own a real self. The real self of course is related to inner personality. For ideal-self, it is briefly described as strivings to achieve in a person's goals or ideals. In other words, it is dynamic ambitions and goals.

### **Integrative Islamic personality**

Integrative Islamic personality is the manifestation of Tawhidic (Belief in God) paradigm in particular way of prophet Muhammad expresses his individual traits or adapts to diverse situations in the world – manifested aspects of a personal self, life definition and view – that are guided by teaching of Qur'an and motivated by faith. Islamic personality is thus a personality assessment dimension based on personal and spiritual strivings assessment approach (Abu-Raiya & Hill, 2014), as seen in Figure 2.



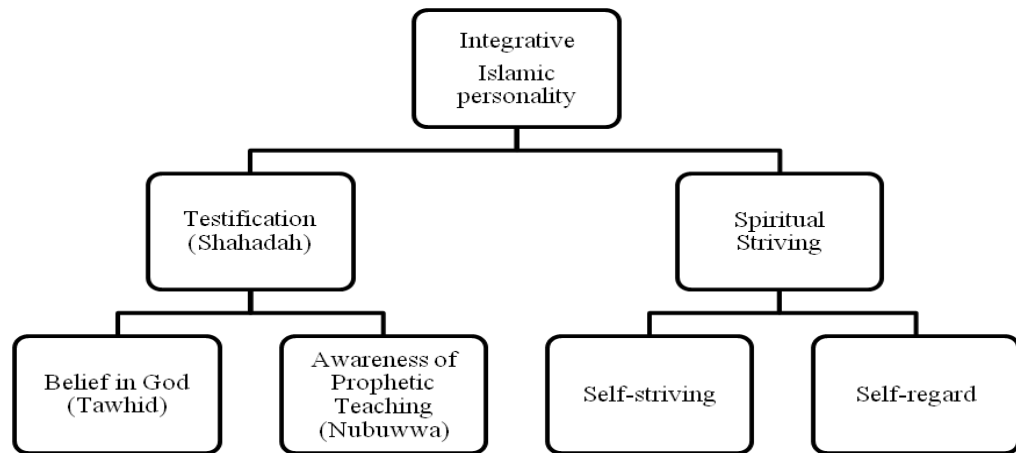


Figure 2. Integrative Islamic Personality Model

“Integrative Islamic Personality Model (IIPM)” was operationalized into two main category of Islamic personality manifestation (four-factor construct). The first category is called the shahadah under the faith, “Belief in God” and “Awareness of Prophetic Teaching”. This includes completely: the testification (shahadah) of the oneness of Allah (God) and the Muhammad as the Messenger of Allah. The second category is called “spiritual striving” referring to self was broken down into two categories; “self-striving and self-regard.” These constructs are about individuals’ behaviors, attitudes, motivations and emotions that accord with Islamic teachings in the above these areas.

The above concepts formed the basis of the integrative Islamic personality. The framework above further illustrates how the IIPM illustrated the personality in Western and Islamic traditional and authoritative knowledge. From the figure, again integrative Islamic personality is comprised of four constructs; Belief in God, Awareness of Prophetic Teaching, Self-striving and Self-regard. With the development of the model for personality from the Islamic perspective, the measurement instrument, the Integrative Islamic Personality Inventory (IIPi), was recently developed (for validity and reliability review, see Ismail & Tekke, 2015).

## Conclusion

This study proposes the unique psychological qualities of an individual that influence a variety of consistent characteristic behavior patterns of Muslims across different circumstance and over time (Corsini, 1978). Today many researchers highlight that the notion of consistency in personality across different situations and over time may not be as simple as previously thought. When human behavior is studied, both personal consistency and variability due to situational influences are observed. Theories and research must indicate when and how life circumstances influence the personal characteristics people bring to those situations, as well as how personality affects reactions to those situations.

Based on the extensive literature, personality from integration of the Islamic and Western perspective is defined as, "One's level of striving to acquire the faith of God and follow the prophet Muhammad as understood according to the *testification* of Islam, and acting in accordance with that faith; the level and manifestation of striving personally in everyday life; and leading to the ability of self worth and regard". Consistently, Nursi (1930/2003) highlighted the belief and good deeds; faith in Allah is root of Islam that might be indicative to philosophy of Islam, and as for good deeds necessitate surely the following the practices of the most noble prophet Muhammad is imperative as striving in a Muslim's personality life, that might be indicative to physical or behavioral part of Islam.

Thus, the existence of the IIPM, which covers the basic components of a good man first and good society latter, would certainly give a helping hand to those who really want to achieve good Islamic personality. Improving an individual self would contribute to the improvement of the society. The self improvement within Islamic teaching and tradition in the Muslim society, particularly Tawhidic and Nuvuwwatic (Awareness of Prophetic Teaching) paradigm, is very essence to self-improvement. All of these points, therefore, the development of an assessment model for educators and counselors to use with Muslim students, and good validated and reliable items of IIPM could potentially demonstrate significance of this study.



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## Appendix

Please read the statements and **CIRCLE** the number which present the best of yourself.

**Scale: 1 ( Strongly Disagree ) 2 (Disagree) 3 (Neither) 4 (Agree ) 5 (Strongly Agree )**

1	I believe that Allah is eternal.	1	2	3	4	5
2	I believe in the Oneness of Allah and there is no resemblance to Him.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I know that Allah loves all of us and his creations regardless of race, ethnicity and colour.	1	2	3	4	5
4	I strongly believe Allah's presence at all time.	1	2	3	4	5
5	I believe that Allah is Almighty.	1	2	3	4	5



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6	I work meticulously to live all my life according to Islamic teachings.	1	2	3	4	5
7	My whole approach to life is based on Islam.	1	2	3	4	5
8	I feel that I have positive feeling towards myself.	1	2	3	4	5
9	I follow the prophet Muhammad`s teachings and traditions all the time.	1	2	3	4	5
10	I love all prophets sent by Allah.	1	2	3	4	5
11	I strongly believe that the moral of prophet Muhammad is in total harmony with the Qur'an.	1	2	3	4	5
12	I am very sure that all prophets used the pleasantest ways to tell people about God.	1	2	3	4	5
13	I am aware that all prophets follow the path of humanity.	1	2	3	4	5
14	I am certain that all prophets are both bringer of good news and a warner.	1	2	3	4	5
15	I feel that I possess good personal characteristics.	1	2	3	4	5
16	On the whole, I am happy with myself.	1	2	3	4	5

