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SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING, RELIGIOSITY, TRUST, AND ALTRUISM: AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Subjective well−being (SWB) is often associated with increased productivity, creativity, innovation, and improved social relationships, all of which play a significant role in supporting a country's development. This research was carried out to examine SWB from an Islamic perspective. It also evaluated the importance of religiosity, trust, and altruism to SWB. The library research method was used in this research with data collected from journal articles, books, and the Qur'an. First, journal articles on the topic of SWB from an Islamic perspective were searched. Second, the Qur'an was examined to determine the references to the roles of religiosity, trust, and altruism. Third, the publications on the impact of religiosity, trust, and altruism were reviewed. The topic of SWB, from an Islamic perspective, is associated with happiness, as represented by the terms al−falah and al sa'adah. The implications are for individuals, educators, families, and governments to increase SWB through the enhancement of important indicators. The research strengthens empirical evidence on the positive impact of religiosity, trust, and altruism on SWB. It also proved that Islamic teachings on muamalat (social relations) are universal and provided benefits to non−Muslims.

Individu dengan kesejahteraan subjektif (subjective well-being/SWB) yang baik akan lebih produktif, kreatif, inovatif, dan memiliki hubungan sosial yang baik. Hal tersebut merupakan aspek penting dalam pembangunan suatu negara. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis SWB dari perspektif Islam serta bagaimana peran religiositas, kepercayaan, dan altruisme terhadap SWB. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode studi kepustakaan dengan data berasal dari artikel jurnal, buku, dan al-Qur'an. Pertama, artikel jurnal dengan topik SWB dalam perspektif Islam dibahas. Kedua, peran religiositas, kepercayaan dan altruisme dicari di dalam al-Qur'an. Ketiga, artikel jurnal terkait bukti empiris ketiga variabel tersebut terhadap SWB juga dibahas. Topik tentang SWB dalam perspektif Islam dihubungkan dengan kebahagiaan khususnya dengan istilah al-sa'adah dan al-falah. Implikasi dari penelitian ini adalah untuk individu, pendidik, keluarga, dan pemerintah untuk meningkatkan SWB melalui tiga variabel yang dibahas di sini. Penelitian ini menguatkan penelitian empiris bahwa ada peran positif dari religiositas, kepercayaan terhadap orang lain, dan sifat altruisme dalam meningkatkan kebahagiaan. Penelitian ini juga memberikan bukti bahwa ajaran Islam dalam muamalat (hubungan sosial) bersifat universal dan memberikan manfaat pada manusia bahkan untuk yang tidak beragama Islam.

INTRODUCTION

Topics related to subjective well−being (SWB) are studied by philosophers, psychologists, sociologists, and health practitioners. In economics, Easterlin (1974) analysed 30 national−level survey data from different countries and stated that, generally, a positive relationship existed between income and happiness at any given time. It was also reported that in the U.S, average happiness in the 1970s was not significantly different from the 1940s despite the high−income growth. Easterlin (2013) stated that although real GDP increased four times, life satisfaction failed to increase correspondingly.

Questions on SWB have been addressed in many national, regional, and global surveys, such as the Indonesian Family Life Survey, the World Value Survey (WVS), the German Socio−Economic Panel, the General Social Survey, and the British Household Panel Survey. Happiness, an aspect of the SWB measurements, has been ranked among countries. The 2023 World Happiness Report (WHR) ranked countries based on data from The Gallup World Poll. The SWB measurement in WHR depends on three indicators of well−being, namely life evaluations, positive (positive affect), and negative emotions (negative affect).

The research of SWB can be used to test new theories, formulate public policy, and refine welfare theories, such as happiness, which helps policymakers evaluate public policy alternatives (Majumdar and Gupta, 2015). Previous research stated higher levels of happiness promote individuals to perform better in various aspects of life. According to Maham, Bhatti and Цztьrk (2020), happier individuals are more productive, creative, innovative, and have good social relationships. Meanwhile, Zia et al. (2024) stated that the relationship between Islamic work ethics and innovative behavior was mediated by subjective happiness. Some countries have researched happiness due to the relationship with health and education budgeting (Frey and Stutzer, 2002). Islamic economists generally use the term *al-falah*, meaning success, but the concept of *al-sa'adah* (happiness) is commonly discussed in classical Islamic scholarship on inter－temporal well－being (Kader, 2021).

 The discourse on SWB, especially happiness, has deep roots in Islam, evident in the Qur'an, Hadith, and scholarly works because Islam offers comprehensive teachings that address all aspects of human life, aiming for happiness (Sabjan, 2019). Therefore, Islamic economics plays a critical role in building the concept of happiness (SWB) (Ahyani et al., 2021). To address contemporary challenges, it is essential to conduct research on well－being based on Islamic ontology and epistemology, offering practical solutions (Kader, 2021).

Western conceptions of well－being historically focused on devotion to God as the ultimate goal. The key figures include Saint Augustine (354－430 CE), who linked well－being to knowing God and enduring earthly suffering, Saint Thomas Aquinas (1225－1274 CE), who highlighted the contemplation of divine truth as the highest good, and John Locke (1632－1704 CE), who associated well－being with the pleasure of fulfilling personal desires. However, this emphasis gradually shifted toward personal happiness and satisfaction, particularly as secularism became more prevalent (Joshanloo & Weijers, 2019).

Although it fails to deliver genuine and lasting happiness, capitalist consumer culture and materialistic values continue to spread globally, undermining traditional and spiritual values. These values have become prevalent worldwide, even in former communist nations, and Muslim countries are no exception (Aydin, 2017). Despite the growing body of literature on subjective well－being (SWB), much of the research remains grounded in Western paradigms. This creates a significant gap in understanding SWB from an Islamic perspective. Moreover, studies exploring the roles of religiosity, trust, and altruism in SWB from an Islamic perspective are limited despite these three aspects being key values in Islam. Addressing these gaps is essential for advancing research and practice in this field.

This research aimed to explore SWB within an Islamic framework and also examining the roles of religiosity, trust, and altruism in the SWB. Previous research analyzed SWB from Western and Islamic perspectives (Junoh et al., 2022), while the present investigation focused on SWB from Islamic perspectives and the role of religiosity, trust, and altruism on SWB. The PRISMA framework was employed to address the objective of understanding SWB from an Islamic perspective. Additionally, to explore the role of religiosity, trust, and altruism in SWB, an analysis of Qur'anic verses, Hadith, and relevant empirical studies was conducted.

METHOD

To answer the objective of understanding SWB from an Islamic perspective, this study uses PRISMA framework. Additionally, this paper used a translation of Imam Al－Ghazali' work entitled Kimiya' al－sa'adah (The Alchemy of Happiness), which offering insights

into SWB from an Islamic perspective. Then, to answer the objective regarding the role of religiosity, trust, and altruism in SWB, an exploration of Qur'anic verses, Hadith, and empirical studies was conducted.

The PRISMA framework to get literature on SWB from an Islamic perspective is explained as follows. Sources were obtained from the Scopus databases, retrieved from the Scopus website. The Scopus search was conducted in the Title, Keyword, and Abstract fields. The search terms used Boolean operators AND and OR, as well as asterisks and quotation marks. The search terms are presented in the table below. These search terms in point 1 are intended to capture articles containing the words Islam perspective or Islamic perspective along with any of the following phrases: subjective well−being, life satisfaction, and happiness.

Table 1. Number of documents from Scopus

No.	Search field	Search term	Documents found	Relevant documents	Documents used
1	Title, Keyword, Abstract	"islam* perspective" AND ("subjective well being" OR "life satisfaction" OR happiness)	14	4	4
2	Article Title	sa'adah OR sa'ada	60	5	2

Three documents from Scopus with the keyword *Sa'adah* in the Article Title excluded because they are proceeding, not accessible, or written in a non−English language.

Table 2. Inclusion and exclusion criteria to select literature

Criteria	
When the topic on "Islamic perspective of subjective well−being/life satisfaction/happiness" exist in title or abstract	Inclusion
Gray literature: theses, proceeding, internal report	Exclusion
Documents that are not accessible	Exclusion
Documents that are not written in English	Exclusion
Documents are not conceptual article	Exclusion

In the end, 6 documents that fulfilled the inclusion criteria have remained. The PRISMA flow diagram adapted from (Moher et al., 2009), but without the data duplication removal step at the Identification stage because this study used only one database.

Given the limited literature retrieved from the Scopus database, this study also attempted to search for literature in Google Scholar. A search was conducted in the Google Scholar database using the Publish or Perish (PoP) software with the exact keywords. The results showed that no literature met the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The Google Scholar search generated 256 documents using the keywords "Islam* perspective" AND ("subjective well−being" OR "life satisfaction" OR "happiness"), with the search field set to "Words anywhere in the article" in the PoP software. A search using the keywords *sa'adah* or *sa'ada* in the article title produced 259 and 22 documents, respectively. Screening the abstracts and titles narrowed it down to only 13 documents relevant to the topic of SWB from an Islamic perspective. Among these, only one document met the criteria: Halim (2020), which discussed Imam Al−Ghazali's seminal work, Kimiya as−Sa'adah. It is a journal article from an unindexed international journal.

In the end, 6 documents from the PRISMA framework remained to address the objective of understanding SWB from an Islamic perspective. An exploration of Qur'anic verses, Hadith, and empirical studies was conducted to further answer the objective regarding the role of religiosity, trust, and altruism in SWB.
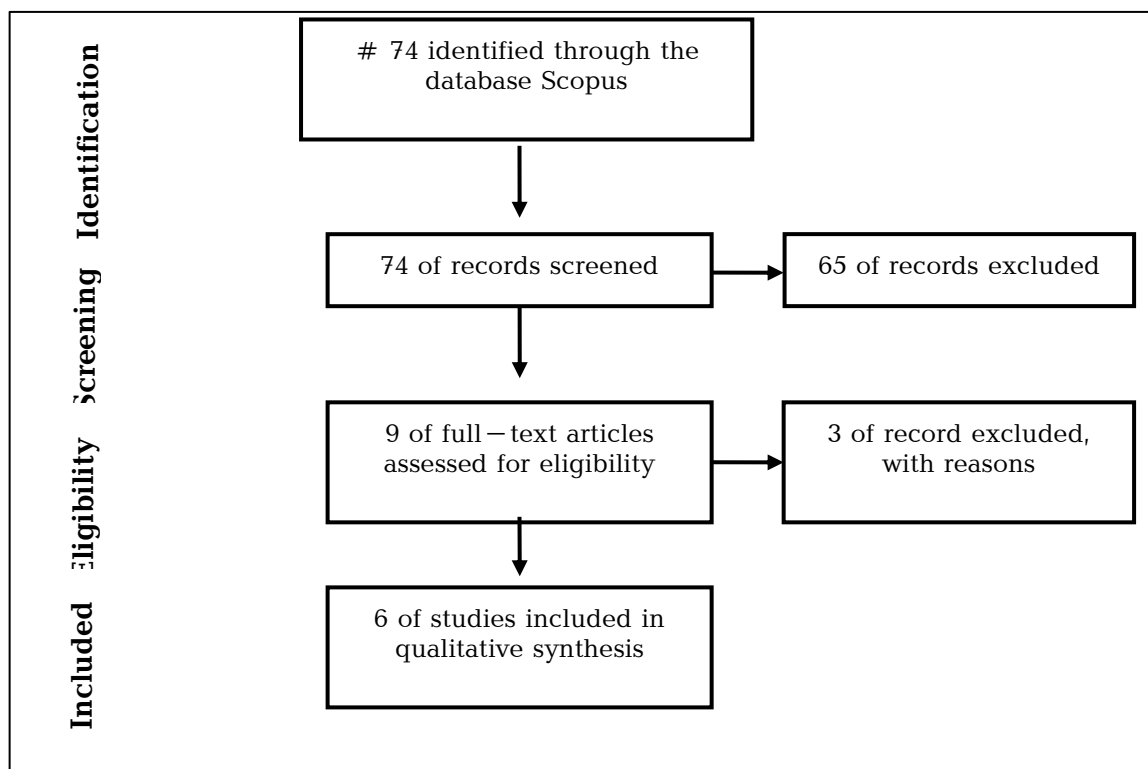
Figure 1. *The PRISMA flow diagram for the search for publications*

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

SWB from an Islamic Perspective

The article journal and book chapter discussing SWB from the Islamic perspective based on the PRISMA framework are in Table 3.

Table 3. Literature on Subjective well-being from Islamic Perspective based on PRISMA Framework

No	Title	Author	Content in a glance
1	Spirituality and subjective wellbeing	(Aydin, 2017)	Examines the connection between consumer culture and free－market capitalism, offering the Islamic perspective on happiness as an alternative to the hedonic happiness encouraged by global consumer culture. He examines existing literature on the inability of consumer culture to deliver genuine happiness It conceptualizes happiness as achieving fulfillment in life through the realization of God and seeking His pleasure by discovering a transcendental purpose in possessing, being, and doing.
2	Islamic perspective on wellbeing (Book Chapter)	(Joshanloo & Weijers, 2019)	Examines the Islamic perspective on well－being and the concept of a good life as reflected in the Quran and themes frequently highlighted in contemporary Muslim scholarship. It explores historical and modern Islamic interpretations of well－being, noting only minor variations between them. The chapter also outlines Islamic guidance on how individuals live to attain well－being. Lastly, it compares Islamic and Western views of well－being, showing that while both initially shared a religious foundation, Western perspectives have shifted to prioritize subjective happiness far more than Islamic understandings.
3	The Semantics and Ethics of	(El－Zeiny, 2020)	Highlights the extensive Arabic and English literature on *sa'dah* (happiness) from a philosophical perspective. This

No	Title	Author	Content in a glance
	Sa'ādah (Happiness) in the Qur'ān		paper, however, focuses on the semantic and statistical role of *sa'adah* in the Qur'an as part of the Islamic ethical discourse, which shapes Muslim worldviews and facilitates communication with other communities. Using Toshihiko Izutsu's semantic analysis model, the study examines the etymological and contextual meanings of sa'adah to uncover the worldview embedded in Islamic ethics.
4	Islamic Notion of Happiness (Al−Sa'ada): An Analysis of Miskawayh's Thought	(Omar et al., 2021).	Based on Miskaway's Tahdhib al−Akhlaq (The Refinement of Character), the study explore the concept of happiness and address specific questions: what is meant by happiness, what it entails, why it is the ultimate goal for which humans were created, whether it can be achieved in this life or the hereafter, who can be considered a truly happy individual, and similar inquiries.
5	Islamic Spiritual and Emotional Intelligence and Its Relationship to Eternal Happiness: A Conceptual Paper	(Wahab, 2022)	Examines the connection between spiritual and emotional intelligence and eternal happiness from an Islamic perspective. Using a qualitative approach, the study employs the NVivo text analysis tool to analyze texts from 43 references (31 journal articles and 12 books or chapters). Drawing on the Qur'an, Sunnah, and prominent Islamic scholarship, the paper deepens our understanding of the Islamic concepts of spiritual and emotional intelligence. It highlights their role in achieving eternal happiness within the framework of Islam.
6	Early Muslim Scholars' Conceptions of Character Development and Contemporary Applications in Mental Health and Well−Being	(Rothman et al., 2024)	Both modern psychological and Islamic theological perspectives regard character development as fundamental to enhancing well−being. However, while modern psychology views character development as merely a means to achieve self−actualization, the Islamic perspective integrates self−actualization with the goals of purifying oneself from worldly and inner evils and seeking the pleasure of God. This paper explores the mechanisms and approaches to character development proposed by early Muslim scholars, such as Abu Zayd al−Balkhi (9th century), Abu Hamid al−Ghazali (11th−12th century), Al−Razi (9th−13th century), and Birgivi (16th century), and examines their potential contemporary applications in light of modern psychological studies.

Six documents from the Scopus database were obtained according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Of the six documents, 4 were journal articles and one was a book chapter. Without limiting the timespan, the oldest article was published in 2017, then in 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2024, one document each. From the six articles, several themes emerge that the author believes are important points, namely (1) happiness in tawhidi paradigm, (2) Qur'anic conception of wellbeing, (3) *Sa'adah* (happiness) in the Qur'an, (4) The worldly and unwordly happiness, (5) Islamic Spiritual & Emotional Intelligence and the Attainment of Eternal Happiness, dan (6) Character Development as a Medium to Happiness.

Happiness in the Tawhidi Paradigm

According to Aydin (2017), despite its success in generating wealth and technological advancements, capitalism fails to deliver genuine happiness, as evidenced by the Easterlin Paradox, which highlights that increased income does not necessarily lead to greater life satisfaction. Within consumer culture, people are more likely to choose to be a happy animal over being an unhappy human, as happiness through consumption is perceived as

the ultimate goal in life. In the Islamic worldview, life's purpose is rooted in the *Tawhidi* paradigm, where work, wealth, and knowledge are considered acts of worship, not a means to pursue power, pleasure, or praise. Instead, they are tools to achieve truth and virtue. The Tawhidi paradigm views Allah (The One) as the ultimate reality and source of meaning, surpassing the significance of worldly possessions and material pursuits (the many), which are temporary and limited. The pursuit of happiness through luxury consumption is incompatible with the Tawhidi paradigm. Luxury consumption in the Muslim world reflects the growing secularization of the mindset.

The ultimate goal in Islam is not merely happiness but human excellence (*insan-i kamil*), characterized by moral and spiritual perfection. True fulfillment in Islam comes from aligning one's life with the relationship between humans and God, guided by the Quran and Sunnah. Happiness is a byproduct of this spiritual journey, achieved through remembrance of God, virtuous living, and focusing on eternal fulfillment beyond material desires (Aydin, 2017).

Aydin's theory of human nature likens the human body to a luxurious recreational vehicle (RV). It identifies various aspects of human nature as the occupants of this vehicle: the *King*, *Judge*, *Wazir*, *Elephant*, *Showman*, *Dog*, and *Driver*. Happiness is described through seven dimensions of human experience, represented by the RV metaphor's occupants. For instance, the King's happiness depends on fulfilling needs for love, compassion, and inspiration, with attachments bringing joy but also potential suffering when broken. Similarly, each occupant experiences both pain and pleasure in daily life. Thus, happiness is defined as the overall subjective well－being of all the vehicle's residents. Life satisfaction is highest when the needs and desires of the first six dimensions are met in a balanced manner while minimizing the influence of the final dimension, the Showman. The Showman represents the self－centered ego that seeks power and possessions to demonstrate its significance to others

Qur'anic Conception of Wellbeing

In Islam, alongside the objective standard of living according to the Quran's guidance, there is also a subjective dimension to well－being. Although the subjective aspect is not as central as the objective one, Islam acknowledges the value of mental and emotional states in contributing to a prudentially good life a life that is beneficial and fulfilling for the individual living it (Joshanloo & Weijers, 2019).

Subjective well－being in Islam is associated with an internal state of tranquility and contentment granted by Allah to those who have strong faith and engage in virtuous actions. This state of peace, referred to as *Al-Nafs Al-Mutmainna* (the tranquil self), arises when individuals overcome internal conflicts between their evil－commanding self and their self－accusing conscience (Joshanloo & Weijers, 2019).

Tranquility, in the context of Islamic well－being, as explained by Joshanloo & Weijers (2019) is achieved by resolving the internal conflict between the "devilish self" (*Al-Nafs Al-Ammarah*) and the "self－accusing self" (*Al-Nafs Al-Lawwama*). When a Muslim attains this state of balance through complete devotion to Allah, Allah grants them a deeply desirable state of mind known in the Quran as the peaceful, serene, or tranquil self (*Al-Nafs Al-Mutmainna*). This state is characterized by an inner sense of assurance, stemming from a deep awareness of one's complete dependence on Allah and the conviction that one's life aligns with Allah's approval. It reflects total internal harmony across all aspects of an individual's being and is considered the pinnacle of psycho－spiritual development in Islam. Only those who have perfected their nature in this manner can experience this profound sense of subjective well－being. The tranquil state

encompasses a lasting sense of contentment with whatever God decrees, accepting all that happens in life.

The Quran emphasizes that living following the shari'a does not guarantee a pleasant or materially prosperous life in this world. There is no inherent connection between objective well－being and worldly pleasures, as Allah may test His servants through favorable circumstances or through challenges and hardships. While otherworldly well－being holds greater importance, Islam acknowledges the possibility of attaining some level of well－being in this life through devotion to Allah, adherence to the shari'a, and fostering a close relationship with Him. Although living according to Islamic teachings does not guarantee worldly comfort or material abundance, it promises ultimate well－being both physical and spiritual in the hereafter as a reward for such a life. From a Muslim perspective, life in this world can be meaningful and valuable, but true and complete well－being is only attainable in the afterlife (Joshanloo & Weijers, 2019).

Joshanloo & Weijers (2019) .also noted that scholars argue that individual well－being is inherently connected to the community's well－being, emphasizing that a person cannot achieve happiness in isolation from others. In other words, living in a society that does not collectively adhere to the shari'a makes it impossible for an individual to attain true well－being.

Sa'ādah (Happiness) in the Qur'ān

Happiness is represented by various synonyms in the Qur'an, including *al*－sa'ada, *al-falah* (prosperity), *al-fawz* (success), *al-salama* (safety), *al-najah* (salvation), *al-ni'ma* (blessing), and *al-rahma* (mercy) (Omar et al., 2021). El－Zeiny (2020) examines the term *sa'adah* (happiness) in the Qur'an by conducting a semantic analysis to uncover both its basic and contextual meanings. The basic meaning refers to the core semantic element that remains consistent regardless of how or where the word is used. In contrast, the contextual meaning pertains to the additional connotations the word acquires when it is positioned within a specific context or field.

The verbal noun (*maṣdar*) *sa'adah* originates from the verb *sa'ida*. According to the Qur'anic lexicographer al－Ḥusayn b. Muḥammad al－Raghib al－Aṣfahanī (d. 502/1108), sa'adah is defined as "divine assistance granted for human welfare," with its highest form being residence in Paradise. He categorizes sa'adah into two types: worldly and otherworldly, with the former further divided into psychological, physical, and external dimensions. Additionally, scholars such as Aḥmad b. Faris (d. 395/1004) and Isma'īl al－Jawharī (d. 393/1003) describe the triliteral root (*s-'-d*) as signifying "welfare and happiness," as well as "good fortune" (El－Zeiny, 2020).

In the Qur'an, the verbal noun sa'adah is not directly mentioned, but its passive form *su'idū* (Surah Hud 11:108) and the adjective *sa'īd* are used, both referring to otherworldly happiness. These terms and their cognates revolve around the concept of divine blessings, leading to eternal happiness, welfare, and prosperity in Paradise. Conversely, its antonym, shaqa' (wretchedness and misery), and its related terms refer to otherworldly suffering. The Qur'an expresses the concept of sa'adah through various synonyms, such as fawz, falaḥ, faraḥ, surūr, ḥubūr, and na'īm, all of which are associated with Jannah (Paradise) and signify everlasting bliss in the hereafter. The frequent use of these synonyms and antonyms in the Qur'an underscores the importance of this concept in shaping the ethical discourse, mentality, and behavior of Muslims (El－Zeiny, 2020).

Happiness in Islam is portrayed as encompassing spiritual, physical, worldly, and otherworldly dimensions, with falaḥ being a key synonym for sa'adah. The triliteral root (*f-l-ḥ)* denotes prosperity, success, or achieving eternal joy, either in this life or the

afterlife. From this perspective, sa'adah in the Qur'an centers on otherworldly happiness, considered the ultimate form of true happiness. The worldly life is seen as a means to attain this eternal joy (El−Zeiny, 2020).

The worldly and otherworldly happiness

Al−Farabi distinguishes between two types of happiness: worldly and otherworldly. He argues that worldly happiness, built on theoretical, intellectual, moral virtues, and applied sciences, serves as a prerequisite for achieving ultimate happiness in the afterlife. Similarly, Al−Ghazali acknowledges the connection between knowledge and happiness, asserting that otherworldly happiness should be the primary goal of life. However, he also recognizes material and spiritual pleasures in worldly life as secondary to ultimate happiness (El−Zeiny, 2020).

In Islam, both worldly and otherworldly happiness depends on adherence to Islamic principles, which, as noted by Izutsu, involve three key relationships: between humans and God, humans and other humans, and humans and nature. This worldview encourages Muslims to strive for the happiness of all beings and uphold ethical behavior in their interactions with society and the environment (El−Zeiny, 2020).

Islamic Spiritual & Emotional Intelligence and the Attainment of Eternal Happiness

Happiness resides in the heart (*qalb*), yet its influence extends to the entire physical body, affecting mental, emotional, and overall health, as well as the soul. The Qur'an (e.g., 89:27) identifies tranquility as belonging to the highest state of the *nafs al-mutmainnah* (the tranquil self). Believers who achieve this state of the soul embody higher virtues such as patience (*sabr*), gratitude (*syukr*), fear of God (*khawf*), trust (*amanah*), and sincerity (*ikhlas*). These virtues contribute to attaining happiness both in this world and beyond (Wahab, 2022).

In Islam, spiritual intelligence (SQ) is deeply connected to the purity of the soul or heart, which fosters a spiritual bond with God. Purifying the soul begins with fear of God, leading believers to recognize His sovereignty and Oneness (Tawhid). This purification process involves submitting to God's Will by practicing good deeds, avoiding evil, performing acts of worship, embodying moral virtues, and worshiping God sincerely and consistently. Through these efforts, believers' hearts can receive Divine light, lifting the veils (kasyaf) that obscure them, ultimately bringing them closer to God. This process signifies the soul's progression from nafs al−ammarah (the commanding self) to nafs al−lawammah (the self−reproaching self) and finally to nafs al−mutmainnah (the tranquil self). At the lawammah stage, the soul distinguishes between good and evil, controls emotions and anger, and balances them with praiseworthy traits. However, only at the mutmainnah stage does the soul achieve perfect control over emotions, character, virtues, and behaviors, enabling believers to maintain emotional balance and experience peace and happiness (Wahab, 2022).

Islamic SQ is closely linked to religiosity and the experience of Islamic spirituality, deeply rooted in the belief in Tawhid. Without this foundation, any spiritual experience remains superficial and cannot lead to the eternal happiness sought by the immortal soul. God bestows perfect SQ upon chosen believers by casting His Divine light into their hearts, granting them the ability to comprehend knowledge of God. In Islam, ladunni intelligence represents a more accurate form of SQ, enabling deeper spiritual understanding. Believers can strengthen their relationship with God through acts such as soul purification, repentance, obligatory and optional worship, continuous good deeds, and avoidance of evil, leading to happiness or at least moments of tranquility in life (Wahab, 2022).

Character Development as a Medium to Happiness

The most renowned work of Miskawayh entitled *Tahdhib al-Akhlaq* (The Refinement of Character), reflects the appreciation of science and truth from diverse sources. Despite being a *Shi'a*, Miskawayh was not fanatical about any particular school of thought and incorporated ideas from Sunni scholars such as Abu Hanifa, and al－Shafi'i, including Aristotle. According to Misakawyh, happiness is synonymous with goodness (*al-khayr*), representing the ultimate fulfillment of a good life. Health, and wealth are beneficial but not the ultimate objective, instead these are methods to achieving true happiness. Furthermore, happiness is subjective, varying among individuals. For example, a philosopher and an individual can be happy but in different ways and standards. According to Miskawayh, true happiness includes physical, spiritual, and mental well－being. A genuinely happy individual is not detached from society but actively engages in social life, displaying the following qualities energy, optimism, confidence, fortitude, independence, and self－satisfaction. Such an individual continually strives for personal, familial, and societal improvement, fulfilling the duties of caliph on Earth (Omar et al., 2021).

Rothman et al. (2024) describe the modern approaches of psychology and Islamic traditions in achieving happiness, including their similarities and differences. To achieve individual authentic happiness and well－being, both the Islamic tradition and positive psychology share a similar perspective, emphasizing that character development is essential for attaining these goals.

The Islamic tradition views character development as a means to achieve spiritual purification (*tazkiyatun nafs*) and gain the pleasure of God. Similarly, positive psychology highlights the role of character strengths in achieving spirituality and transcendence. However, while positive psychology focuses on spirituality as a way to enhance psychological health and well－being, the Islamic tradition prioritizes spiritual goals as central to the concept of well－being. Secular Western psychological models place greater emphasis on physical and psychological well－being, treating spirituality as a secondary aspect. In contrast, Islamic models position the spiritual dimension at the core of well－being and consider it a multidimensional concept that includes social and ecological contexts. Furthermore, while Western models primarily focus on individual well－being and character development to boost self－confidence, self－esteem, and self－worth for life satisfaction and happiness in this world, Islamic models ultimately aim for eternal success in the hereafter (Rothman et al., 2024).

The Alchemy of Happiness

Apart from the six pieces of literature from the PRISMA framework above, a work by the scholar Al－Ghazali which has a translated version in English (Al Ghazzali, 1910) will also be discussed briefly. The term al－ *sa'ādah* was also found in the work of the classical scholar Al－Ghazali entitled Komiyв' al－ *sa'ādah.* According to Al－Ghazali, to achieving happiness entailed understanding knowledge of self, God, the world, and the hereafter. Self－knowledge includes understanding the origin of man, destination, purpose in life, sojourn in the world, and where true happiness is found. In the process of knowing God, human must adhere to the teachings of the prophets and apostles. Without this knowledge, ignorance leads to a dark and suffering soul in the hereafter. Al－Ghazali viewed the world as a temporary stopover where one makes provisions for the journey to the afterlife. During this time, humans engage in two acts, namely, maintaining the soul and caring for the body.

Excessive love for anything other than God would have a harmful effect on the soul. The actual needs of the body are food, clothing, and shelter, and it should be properly cared for as a method for the soul to achieve happiness in the afterlife. What makes something happy depends on what kind of thing it is. The eyes find pleasure in beautiful scenery and the ears in melodious sounds. The ultimate pleasure of the heart is derived from knowing God, because it was created for this purpose. Therefore, knowing God results in greater enjoyment of the heart and soul, leading to ultimate happiness.

The Role of Religiosity

Religiosity, originated from the Latin word *religio*, meaning to bind, signifying the degree of commitment to religious beliefs and practices. Al－Ghazali in *Kimiya Sa'adah* stated that profound knowledge of Allah results in heightened joy in the heart and greater happiness (Mustora Bisri, 2022). This is in line with Surah Ar－Ra'du verse 28, where Allah stated that

"*believers find tranquillity in the remembrance of God experience profound peace.*"

The verse implied that through dhikr, the heart finds calmness and serenity. Scholars interpret the word dhikr as the remembrance of Allah through chanting and knowing God, as well as reading the Qur'an. Furthermore, some scholars believe that dhikr is defined as obedience to Allah (Imam Qurthubi, 2006). Individuals who obey God by keeping the commandments and avoiding prohibitions have peace of mind.

In Qur'an surah An－Nahl (16) verse 97,

"*Whoever does good, whether male or female, and is a believer, We will surely bless them with a good life, and We will certainly reward them according to the best of their deeds*"

Commentators often interpret this good life as referring to the hereafter, implying that worship and righteousness lead to eternal bliss in heaven. However, another interpretation suggests that leading a righteous life in this world accompanied by the attitude of *qana'ah* and obedience attracts taufik and halal sustenance, resulting in a blessed and fulfilling life (Ahmad bin Muhammad al－Shawi 2016).

In Qur'an surah Yunus (10) verses 62－64,

"*There will certainly be no fear for the close servants of Allah, nor will they grieve. ˹They are˺ those who are faithful and are mindful ˹of Him˺. For them is good news in this worldly life and the Hereafter. There is no change in the promise of Allah. That is ˹truly˺ the ultimate triumph.*"

The verse focused on the steadfastness of divine promises, offering believers reassurance and glorious victory. The reference to the saints of Allah (those who are close to Allah) signifies freedom from worldly sadness and fear, suggesting a secured refuge in both temporal and eternal realms (Ahmad bin Muhammad al－Shawi, 2016).

Religiosity is also associated with feelings of sufficiency, where a more religious individual tend to perceive themselves as having a higher economic status than the real economic status, as suggested by interviews and purchasing power (Graham, 2009). According to Graham (2009), belief in God positively influences happiness in all countries that were the object of research. Religion consistently showed a positive relationship with life satisfaction among the 90,000 individuals surveyed across 26 European countries. Moreover, regions with higher levels of religiosity tend to have residents with greater life satisfaction compared to areas with lower religiosity rates.

An analysis of 5,000 Muslims in Russia showed that maintaining a strong connection with God and adhering to religious teachings are crucial for experiencing higher levels of happiness and enduring depression (Amiruddin et al., 2021). In addition, religiosity is also associated with a sense of contentment. Material happiness can be enjoyed in this

world, but true happiness is related to life after death. The belief in lasting happiness enables navigating difficult situations in the present world (Omais & dos Santos, 2022). Religious individuals in religious nations claim to be treated with greater respect, which helps to explain why they are happier and have higher life satisfaction ratings (Stavrova et al., 2013). Mustofa (2022) affirmed that a person's level of religiosity might have an impact on their happiness.

The Role of Trust

A cross－disciplinary concept, trust is employed in the study of economics, finance, psychology, and sociology, among other disciplines. It focuses on the belief in the reliability, truthfulness, or competence of an entity or individual, influencing behaviors related to trust. Trust can also be interpreted as the willingness to invest in another party without any legal commitment.

Trust is closely related to *al-amanah* in Islam, embodies reliability, competence, and fulfilling obligations. It also comprised meeting expectations, keeping promises, working responsibly, and obeying moral principles. In addition to having similar meanings, Amanah is not only oriented towards humanity. Amanah in Islam is a command of Allah and a form of worship, impacting welfare, and maslahah (Herijanto, 2022). Lack of trust negatively affects economic prosperity and limits the satisfaction of basic psychological needs, thereby hindering individual happiness (Conzo et al., 2017). These findings showed that Islamic teachings regarding muamalat (Islamic rules in social relations) are universal.

In Qur'an surah al－Mu'minun (23), verse 8, Allah states the benefits of believers who keep God's commissions and promises.

"*the believers are also ˋ those who are true to their trusts and covenants*"

The mandate in this verse is not limited to humans but also to Allah Almighty in ensuring the conformity of life principles with the teachings of Islam (Ahmad Mustafa al－Maraghi, 1946). Ibnu Katsir (2000) stated that a trustworthy individual embodied three main qualities: speaking truthfully, honouring commitments, and fulfilling entrusted responsibilities. Conversely, a hypocrite is characterized by dishonesty, breaking promises, and betrayal of trust when given responsibility.

At 35, Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was given the nickname al－Amin. When the Kaaba was built, a dispute arose among the tribes over who would return the stone of Hajar Aswad to its original place. Abu Umayyah al－Mughirah suggested that the first individual to enter the mosque the next morning should have the honor. The next day, Muhammad was the first to enter the mosque. The tribes exclaimed this was al－Amin (a trustworthy man) willingly allowed Muhammad to return the stone. The Prophet then spread out the turban, placed the Hajar Aswad on it, and had the leaders of the tribe each holding the tip of the turban. Together, the leaders carried the stone of Hajar Aswad to the original place (Sofiyurrahman al－Mubarakfuri, 2009)

The word *al-amanah* originated from the word *amana*, meaning a state where individuals feel safe, at peace, and free from fear. *Amana* also indicates showing trust in someone or something (Ragib al－Asfahani, 2015). The existence of trustworthiness among fellow humans fosters peace and security. Al－ Qur'an Surah Al－Baqarah (2) verse 283 stated that a debtor may use collateral (rahn).

"*If you are on a journey and a scribe cannot be found, then a security can be taken. If you trust one another, then ˊthere is no need for a security, butˋ the debtor should honour this trust ˊby repaying the debtˋ and let them fear Allah, their Lord. And do not conceal the testimony, for whoever conceals it, their hearts are indeed sinful. And Allah ˊfullyˋ knows what you do.*"

Imam asy－Sya'bi stated that assuming both parties trust each other, it is not a sin not to forego documentation or witnesses in the transaction (Ibnu Katsir, 2000). Supposing

a creditor trusts the debtor and does not require a pledge, the debtor should repay the debt due to the fear of God (Feras Hamza, 2021). Amanah ensures that both parties who signed a contract are not afraid of losing respective properties and are at ease. Trust (Amanah) is an important variable that has been extensively studied, particularly in Islamic economics.

Hardini and Wasiaturrahma (2020) stated that social capital significantly affects happiness levels such as trust, social networks, sanctions, and norms. Lu et al. (2020) conducted an analysis of longitudinal data and reported that a causal relationship existed between social trust and SWB. Interpersonal trust fosters cooperation, maintains close relationships, and enhanced perceived social support, thereby improving SWB (Jovanović, 2016).

The Role of Altruism

Allen (2018) stated that altruism and prosocial behavior are forms of kindness, including helping, cooperating, and donating (both religious and general), besides it is the opposite of egoism. Altruism is defined as a form of motivation mainly aimed at improving the welfare of others. Prosocial behavior are actions viewed by society or social group as beneficial to others. According to the World Happiness Report (WHR), altruism or generosity is a critical factor contributing to differences in happiness levels between countries.

Zakat, a form of altruism even though it is obligatory is a major pillar of Islam. The commandment for zakat implied that Islamic teachings pay great attention to altruism (*ithār*). In addition to zakat, various recommended forms of donations have enormous importance. Throughout history, there have been countless examples of altruism, from Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the wife, and companions, who were renowned for extraordinary altruism. In the Qur'an, this attribute is conveyed through the word *ithār,* which appeared in five verses namely surah an－Nazi'at verse 38, Yusuf verse 91, al－A'la verse 16, Thaha verse 72, and al－Hashr verse 9. Four of these verses were revealed in the period before the Hijra, suggesting a strong connection between altruism and faith. The verse after the Hijra, al－Hashr verse 9 focused on the importance of brotherhood among Muslims, specifically commanding the Ansars to put others first (Azkiya, Halimatussa'diyah and Ilyas, 2023). Other terms that represent the meaning of altruism in the Qur'an are ihsan, sadaqah, and infaq (Miftahul Jannah, 2016).

Based on Qur'an surah al－Baqarah verse 262,

> "*Those who spend wealth for the cause of Allah and do not follow respective acts of charity with reminders of generosity or hurtful words would be rewarded, and not fear, nor grieve.*"

This verse was revealed during the battle of Tabuk, when Uthman bin Affan donated a thousand camels and dinars for the benefit of Muslims. Similarly, Abdurrahman bin Auf gave half of the personal property, amounting to 4000 dinars to support the Muslims. The terms *manna* and *adza* in this context, implied that infaq or alms should not be followed by remainders of generosity or words that hurt the feelings of the recipient. The assurance that these individuals will have no fear or grieve, shows that personal treasures were actually eternal, and the rewards would continue in the afterlife. The individuals are not afraid and grieved by the lack of wealth, as sincere acts of charity are rewarded perpetually (Fakhruraddin al－Razi, 1981). This verse affirmed that those who give infaq and alms sincerely, without seeking recognition or causing harm would be free from worry and sorrow about material wealth.

> "*Abu Hurayrah reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said whoever relieves a believer from difficulty in this world, Allah would*

deliver the individual from difficulty on the Day of Judgment. Whoever makes things easier for those in trouble, Allah will make things easier in this world and the Hereafter. Whoever covered the disgrace of a Muslim, Allah would cover the faults in this world and the Hereafter. Allah would always help His servant as long as the individual helps fellow Muslims. Whoever seeks knowledge, Allah would facilitate the path to heaven. Whenever a group of individuals gather in a mosque (house of Allah) to recite the Qur'an, the individuals would be engulfed in serenity, mercy, and surrounded by angels, and Allah would mention them to those by His side. Whoever misses charity would not be advanced by the noble lineage." (Sahih Muslim 4867)

Human cannot realize *al-sa'adah* individually, it requires collective effort. Al－Farabi stated that the words assistance (*musa'adah*) and happiness (*sa'adah*) originated from the same etymological root (s－a－d), showing the close connection between altruism and well－being. Miskawayh relates happiness to love, friendship, and cooperation (Kader, 2021). Doing good is one of the 17 themes that serve as indicators of happiness based on the search for the term *al-sa'adah* and its synonyms in the Qur'an and hadith (Sofia and Sari, 2018). Altruism, a form of good deeds, is the path to achieving happiness. Al－Ghazali categorized this good behavior into inward and outward actions, with inward actions related to acts of worship addressed to Allah, while outward actions include good deeds performed for the benefit of the family, community, etc (Sabjan, 2019).

Individuals who spend more money on charity tend to experience higher levels of happiness (Utama, Palani and Rabbani, 2021). The findings were obtained from data collected through the Indonesian Family Survey. Similarly, P et al. (2013) stated that a positive correlation existed between altruism and SWB in college students. Several research currently show that altruism is frequently associated with favorable SWB, which includes greater life satisfaction and positive and fewer negative emotions on a daily basis.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, subjective well－being (SWB) was generally measured by happiness and life satisfaction. The concept of happiness in Islam including happiness in the world and Hereafter. Having the world's happiness does not guarantee having the hereafter's happiness, or vice versa. To prevent physically and spiritual pain, every human being is expected to pursue both, i.e., to strive for happiness both here on The world and in the afterlife. The term happiness In Islamic literature was often associated with *al-falah* and *al-sa'adah*. Among the 17 themes identified as indicators of happiness in the Qur'an, Iman and taqwa, were the most common. Empirical research supported that religiosity played an important role in individual happiness. Trust, or *al-amanah* in Islam, was crucial for economic activities and determinant of happiness, therefore, Muslims were commanded to be trustworthy. Altruism, defined as empathy and concern for others, was a teaching in Islam. The role of trust and altruism in achieving SWB had been proven in various research. The present research contributed to the reinforcement that the teachings of Islam were universal and could be applied even by non－Muslims. The method of achieving happiness taught in Islam was discussed in this research in collaboration with empirical evidence from various investigations.

The implications extended to individuals, families, educators, and policymakers, focusing on the optimization of economic development through human resource enhancement, especially in the field of SWB.

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