

Towards Hikmah Therapy: Integrating Ibn al-Qayyim's Tazkiyah and Frankl's Logotherapy in Addressing Contemporary Mental Health Challenges

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Abstract. Mental health is a crucial issue in the 21st century. Global data shows that more than 970 million people suffer from mental disorders. Meanwhile, in Indonesia, the prevalence continues to increase. This phenomenon is not solely related to biological and social factors, but also to the crisis of meaning and spiritual emptiness experienced by modern humans. This study aims to formulate an integrative model between Ibn al-Qayyim's Sufism and Frankl's logotherapy to address contemporary mental health challenges. The method used is a qualitative literature-based study with a comparative-interpretive analysis approach. The results show that, with existentialism as its basic assumption, logotherapy emphasizes the search for individual meaning as a path to healing. Meanwhile, Ibn al-Qayyim emphasizes worship as objective meaning and tazkiyah al-nafs as a path to peace of mind. Integration is carried out by first evaluating the basic assumptions and paradigms of logotherapy. The combination of these two techniques produces the concept of wisdom therapy. This model offers a contribution to the development of a more comprehensive contemporary Islamic psychotherapy.

Keywords: Hikmah Therapy, Ibn al-Qayyim, Tazkiyah al-Nafs, Viktor Frankl, Logotherapy.

1. INTRODUCTION

On the one hand, modern society is known for its advanced science and technology. But on the other hand, it is also known for its anxiety.[1, p. 249] According to WHO records, at least 350 million people suffer from depression and 260 million people suffer from anxiety disorders.[2] In Indonesia alone, the 2022 Indonesian National Adolescent Mental Health Survey (I-NAMHS) showed that approximately 17 million adolescents experienced mental health problems in the past year.[3] Of this figure, at least 2.4 million adolescents experienced anxiety, depression, and Post-Traumatic Syndrome Disorder (PTSD). This global phenomenon of depression is correlated with existential emptiness.[4] This data seems to support Rollo May's assertion that the primary cause of contemporary human mental health problems is emptiness and lack of meaning in life.[5, p. 14]

Addressing this issue requires psychological intervention that encounter not only the symptoms but also the spiritual side of human existence. One healing technique that attempts to deal with this vacuum of meaning is logotherapy. This therapeutic technique, formulated by Viktor Frankl, is considered appropriate because it places the meaning of human existence as its primary focus. When a person realizes the meaning of their life, they will at least avoid false feelings of happiness and gain the ability to survive the hardships they face.[6, p. 16] Although logotherapy has made significant contributions to overcoming psychological problems caused by inner emptiness, this therapeutic technique is still rooted in a Western worldview and does not fully counteracting human spiritual needs from an Islamic perspective.

On the other hand, Islamic tradition has long had an approach to mental health treatment, one of which is in the Sufism of Ibn al-Qayyim.[7, p. 219] In this regard, Ibn al-Qayyim stated that a person's

mental health cannot be separated from the primary purpose of their existence in this life. Someone who is able to realize the meaning of life and apply it in their life will achieve a healthy soul (*al-qalb al-shahih*).[8, p. 152] This shows that long before Frankl, Ibn al-Qayyim had warned that ignoring the meaning of life would lead to serious mental disorders. Unfortunately, this approach has not been systematically developed in contemporary psychotherapy discourse. Starting from this background, this study aims to integrate the principles of logotherapy with the values of Ibn al-Qayyim's Sufism in order to develop a more comprehensive and transformative model of mental healing.

2. FINDINGS

2.1. The Path to Mental Health: Perspective of Ibn al-Qayyim's Sufism

Ibn al-Qayyim's full name is Syamsuddin Abu Abdillah Muhammad ibn Abi Bakr ibn Ayyub ibn Sa'ad al-Dimasyqi al-Hanbali. He was born in a village called al-Zur'i on January 29, 1292, and died on September 23, 1350. His father was a supervisor (*qayyim*) at a Hanbali madrasa in Damascus called al-Jawziyyah. With this profile of his father, Syamsuddin eventually became better known as Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (son of an al-Jawziyyah school supervisor).[9, p. 23-24] From childhood to adolescence, he studied with his father. Then he studied with a number of great Muslim scholars, among them Ibn Taymiyyah. Even Ibn al-Qayyim became one of his main disciple.

Ibn al-Qayyim lived in a complex social and religious context. On the one hand, the Islamic world at that time was experiencing a spiritual rift marked by widespread deviations in Sufism practices. On the other hand, the rational-textual approach had not yet fully addressed the deepest layers of human psychological problems. It was within this context that Ibn al-Qayyim attempted to formulate an approach to Sufism that was firmly grounded in revelation, grounded in reason, and oriented toward purification of the soul and spiritual transformation. Based on this, one of Ibn al-Qayyim's students, Ibn Rajab al-Hanbali, referred to his teacher as an '*arif*' even though he did not declare himself a Sufi.[10, pp. 172–173]

Ibn al-Qayyim is known as a great Muslim scholar in the 13th century with much expertise. As mentioned by Ibn Imad al-Hanbali, Ibn al-Qayyim was a *mujtahid*, exegete, Arabic grammar expert, theologian, hadith expert and Islamic jurist. Likewise, Ibn al-Qayyim was an expert in psychology.[7, pp. 282–284] This is reflected in a number of his works which have contributed and become references in psychological studies. Among his works:

Table 1. Works of Ibn al-Qayyim

No.	Period	Works
1.	Early	<i>Al-Wabil al-Shayyib min al-Kalim al-Thayyib.</i>
2.		<i>Kitab al-Ruh.</i>
3.	Middle	<i>Al-Jawab al-Kafi liman Sa`ala `an Da` al-Syafi.</i>
4.		<i>Bada`I` al-Fawa`id.</i>
5.	Later	<i>Miftah Dar al-Sa`adah.</i>
6.		<i>Rawdhat al-Muhibbin wa Nuzhat al-Musytaqqin.</i>
7.	Later	<i>Syifa` al-`Alil fi Masa`il al-Qadha` wa al-Qadar wa al-Hikmah wa al-Ta'lil.</i>
8.		<i>Ighatsah al-Lahfan min Mashayid al-Saythan.</i>
9.	Later	<i>Madarij al-Salikin bayna Manazil Iyyaka Na`budu wa Iyyaka Nasta`in.</i>
10.		<i>Zad al-Ma`ad fi Hadyi Khayri al-`Ibad.</i>
11.		<i>Al-Thibb al-Nabawi.</i>

In the field of psychology, as noted by Utsman Najati, Ibn al-Qayyim provided a theoretical foundation for human psychological issues, such as the components of the external and internal

senses, needs and motivations, emotions and feelings, and various mental disorders. Not only did Ibn al-Qayyim provide practical insights, but he also provided a philosophical foundation useful for the development of psychology. This is evident, for example, in his comprehensive description of the concept of the human being.

According to Ibn al-Qayyim, humans are beings that consist not only of physical aspects, but also spiritual aspects. Maintaining physical health is important to Ibn al-Qayyim, because it is directly related to human life. However, maintaining spiritual health is even more important.[11, p. 28]

In Arabic, the word *ruh* is derived from the word *raha*. Among other derivatives of this word is *rih*, which means air. This semantic analysis shows that there is a connection between the meaning of air and the human soul. Just as the blowing of air provides oxygen for breathing, the soul also serves as the source of life for the human body.[12, p. 218] Furthermore, Ibn al-Qayyim defines the soul as an abstract body (*jism*) akin to bright, noble light—extremely light and flowing, permeating every organ of the human body much like oil flows and permeates the wick of a lamp.[12, p. 579] This abstract body also possesses the same properties as a concrete body, namely movement, displacement, ascending, descending, and experiencing pleasure and pain.

The human soul or *nafs* can be divided into three parts. Ibn al-Qayyim emphasizes that although the human soul can be divided into three parts, its essence is one. *First*, *al-nafs al-muthma`innah*; that is, the soul that is at peace because it is submissive, obedient, always remembers its Creator, loves and longs for Him, and is fully content with all His decrees. *Second*, *al-nafs al-lawwamah*; that is, the soul that constantly fluctuates (*taraddud*). Sometimes it is obedience, sometimes it is in negligence. *Third*, *al-nafs al-ammarah*; that is, the evil soul that constantly urges toward evil things.

The human soul can also be referred to as *qalb* (the heart). However, the heart here is not a physical organ, but rather a spiritual heart. Like *nafs*, *qalb* also be categorized into three types. *First*, *al-qalb al-salim*. A healthy heart is a heart that is safe or free from all forms of disease and deviation caused by lust and doubt. *Second*, *al-qalb al-saqim*. A sick heart is one that, while having love for Allah, also has a tendency toward desires. Among its characteristics are feelings of envy, jealousy, greed, and arrogance. *Third*, *al-qalb al-mayyit*. A dead heart is one that does not recognize its Creator, so it submits and becomes immersed in its own desires.

From Ibn al-Qayyim's Sufi perspective, a person's mental health is closely related to their awareness of the meaning or purpose of life.[8, p. 115] This fact is quite surprising, considering that Ibn al-Qayyim had already emphasized this before it was recognized by modern psychology. The primary gateway to a calm soul and a safe heart is knowledge of the purpose of life. That life is not a coincidence and that God did not create humans for mere play.[13, p. 23] In other words, someone who does not know themselves and lacks knowledge of the purpose of their existence is at risk of falling into mental disorders.

In Ibn al-Qayyim's thinking, there is a term that encompasses the concept of the meaning of life, namely *hikmah*. Among the meanings of *hikmah* is the ultimate goal set for human existence in this life.[14, p. 85] If not the same, this concept of *hikmah* can be said to be identical to the concept of *telos*, which illustrates that everything in this life has an ultimate goal.[15, p. 11] In *Miftah Dar al-Sa'adah*, Ibn al-Qayyim provides rational evidence of how everything is created for a specific purpose. Over time, this model of proof became popular under the term "argument from design." For example, Ibn al-Qayyim explains that there is wisdom behind the physical form of an elephant, which has a trunk but no neck.

Furthermore, according to Ibn al-Qayyim, the notion that life is meaningless (as espoused by nihilists, absurdist, and some humanists in the contemporary era) is a view that contradicts the principle of divinity. God has good names and attributes, one of which is *al-Hakim*.[16, pp. 159–160] The consequence of this name is that it is impossible for God to create everything without purpose and benefit.

Therefore, Allah is the Most Wise God, and it is impossible for Him to do something in vain and without a meaningful purpose. It is also impossible for God to do something without benefit and wisdom, which is the intended purpose of an action. Know that all His actions are always based on profound wisdom, which is why He does them.[17, p. 399]

Next, for an individual to maintain a healthy state of mind, or to heal their mind if it is disturbed, they need to perform *tazkiyah al-nafs*. *Tazkiyah al-nafs*, *zakat al-qalb*, or *mujahadah al-nafs* is the core of Ibn al-Qayyim's spiritual therapy.[18, p. 55] Through *tazkiyah al-nafs*, everyone is guided to uphold their commitment to the purpose of life that has been established for them, namely, to be a servant and vicegerent of God on this earth. For Ibn al-Qayyim, immoral acts, unethical behavior, and disobedience to God's commands are things that can distance one from the primary purpose of their creation. Therefore, the process of *tazkiyah* begins with purging oneself of such negative elements. The next stage of the *tazkiyah* process involves filling the soul with positive elements that encompass all forms of obedience to God.

2.2. The Principles of Viktor Frankl's Logotherapy

Frankl's full name was Viktor Emil Frankl. He was born in Vienna on March 26, 1905. His father was Gabriel Frankl, a Jewish reformer who worked as a director in the social services ministry. Frankl had a good educational background during his childhood. During his university years, he frequently attended public lectures on applied psychology. He even corresponded directly with Sigmund Freud, and his articles were published in an international psychoanalysis journal.[19, pp. 1-2]

When the wave of individual psychology initiated by Alfred Adler became popular, Frankl was immediately attracted to the trend. He published his second article entitled Psychotherapy and Worldview. After some time immersed in individual psychology, Frankl chose to break away. He initiated the development of a new therapeutic technique he called logotherapy in 1926, a form of mental healing focused on the search for meaning.[20, pp. 18-19] He continued to refine this technique until 1941, when he was captured by Nazi troops and imprisoned at Auschwitz. Rather than abandoning his project, Frankl turned his time in captivity into a period of experimentation. He also referred to the large prisoner camp as a "laboratory of life." Ultimately, he was released from captivity and dedicated the rest of his life to logotherapy.

Frankl's works form the philosophical foundation for the psychology he developed, which later became a reference for many circles. Among his works are (i) *Man's Search for Meaning: An Introduction to Logotherapy*, (ii) *The Doctor and the Soul*, (iii) *On the Theory and Therapy of Mental Disorders: An Introduction to Logotherapy and Existential Analysis*, (iv) *The Will to Meaning: Foundations and Applications of Logotherapy*, (v) *Man's Search for Ultimate Meaning*, (vi) *Yes to Life: In Spite of Everything*.

Compared to other psychologists, Viktor Frankl had a more positive vision. Sigmund Freud, with his psychoanalysis, believed that every individual has a basic instinctive desire to seek enjoyment (will to pleasure). likewise, Ivan Pavlov, with his behaviourism, believed that human personality can be shaped by the environment. This perspective tends to place humans on the same level as animals that can be trained to develop certain habits. Similarly, Alfred Adler, with his individual psychology, believed that human behaviour is always motivated by the will to power in various forms. Meanwhile, in Frankl's vision, humans are considered more dignified entities because they possess a spiritual aspect (*nous*), in addition to their material bodily aspect (*soma*) and psychological aspect (*psyche*).

From Frankl's perspective, this spiritual aspect is at least reflected in the three principles of logotherapy: (i) freedom, (ii) the will to meaning, and (iii) the meaning of life. *First*, freedom. Despite various limitations, humans remain sovereign over the attitudes they choose. As Frankl said, everything a person possesses can be taken away by others, but not their freedom. Even in the most difficult circumstances, they still have the freedom to choose whether to be miserable or remain happy. *Second*, the will to meaning. For Frankl, the primary driving force behind all human activity

is the will to meaning. There are people who are willing to suffer as long as their suffering benefits others. This shows that human motivation is not always about seeking pleasure. *Third*, the meaning of life. This principle states that the meaning of human life can be found in every moment. Frankl mentions that life is never devoid of meaning.

From this philosophical principle, Frankl then formulated what became widely known as logotherapy. Although logos has several meanings, according to Frankl, the term is defined as the existence of humans and the subjective meaning of their lives.[21, p. 34] Logotherapy is a technique for healing the soul based on the philosophy of existentialism. Even before using the term logotherapy, Frankl used the term existential therapy for the psychological healing technique he formulated.

With its spiritual aspect, each individual can even connect with things that are divine and religious. Frankl refers to this as ultimate meaning. This term was chosen for broader use, considering that not all individuals believe in religion and the reality of God. Ultimate meaning can be understood as an individual's responsibility to values beyond themselves; these can include religion, human values, or tradition.[22, p. 135] On another occasion, Frankl explained that ultimate meaning can also be the voice of the heart: "God is humanity's companion in its most intimate thoughts. When one speaks entirely in solitude, with all sincerity, the one to whom one speaks is worthy of being called God."

Beyond the discussion of ultimate meaning, Frankl emphasizes subjective meaning. Unlike ultimate meaning, subjective meaning is more immanent, related to everyday life, and can change in every situation.[23, p. 36] This subjective meaning can be found through three things. *First*, creative value. This value is related to an individual's ability to create something new or innovate in their work. It also includes activities that make a person enthusiastic about living life. *Second*, experiential value. This value is related to the conditions experienced by an individual, whether positive or negative. *Third*, attitudinal value. This value is related to the response a person should choose in their most distressing circumstances.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1. Al-Attas' Theory of the Islamization of Knowledge

Before integrating logotherapy with tazkiyah, there are important and fundamental steps that need to be taken. This step involves evaluating the secular Western values present within a theory. This is because, fundamentally, every theory is built upon a specific scientific paradigm and worldview.[24, p. 6-7] As explained by Thomas Kuhn, a paradigm is a framework of thought, basic concepts, or models accepted by the scientific community within a particular field of study during a specific period.[25, p. 175] In Edwin Hung's interpretation, the scientific paradigm in question is nothing other than a worldview.[26, p. 340]

Meanwhile, from the perspective of Imre Lakatos' philosophy of science, worldviews can be categorized as hard-core. According to him, as he formulated in his scientific research program, every scientific discipline consists of three elements: hard-core, protective belt, and set of theories. The outermost layer, consisting of a series of theories, is the aspect that can be criticized. Meanwhile, the hard-core is the innermost layer that cannot be falsified due to the existence of the second layer, the protective belt. In Muhammad Muslih's explanation, the hard-core in question is none other than the fundamental elements of worldview, such as the concepts of God, humanity, and external reality. At this level, secular modern science and Islamic science can be distinguished. This also affirms that there is a metaphysical aspect in every discipline of science that is developed.

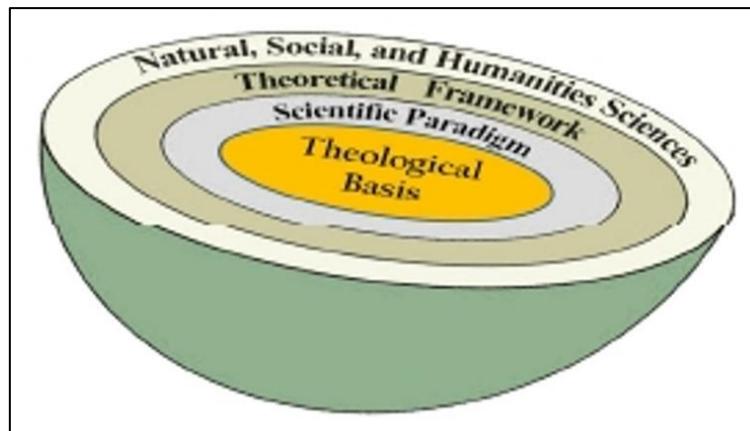


Figure 1. Scientific Building Structure

Source: Mohammad Muslih

In the context of psychology, existing therapeutic techniques are not value-free. There is a value or worldview that forms the main foundation of the theoretical framework. These values are not technical, methodological, or related to practices that can be criticized, but are taken for granted or accepted without question. David Naugle states:

Worldviews must be considered and will emerge in the context of a therapeutic relationship, and therapist must not only recognize their important role but also be capable of expressing her own beliefs and helping her client discover fundamental philosophical principles that will assist in the healing process. The concept of worldview has received significant attention in psychology. A couple things seem clear: any program of psychotherapy, is established upon fundamental worldview assumptions, and philosophical underpinnings as such are extremely influential factors in the overall psychotherapeutic process.[27, p. 197]

As for logotherapy, this therapy is based on the philosophy of existentialism and phenomenology. The term “exist” in existentialism is composed of two words: “ex,” which means “out,” and “sitensia,” which means “to stand.” This philosophical school of thought seeks to help humans discover their true selves. Central themes in this philosophical school include responsibility, individual value, freedom, and the meaning of life. Specifically, regarding the meaning of human life, existentialism generally views life as fundamentally meaningless. Therefore, each individual is responsible for finding their own vision and purpose in life. Existentialism emerged to encourage individuals to shift their way of thinking from “What is the point of life?” to “What is a good life?” From this discussion, readers can identify the secular aspects of existentialism, including logotherapy.

As a set of beliefs and mental categories, worldview determines the way of thinking, moral system, culture, and even the framework of civilization. A society that believes in the existence of God is certainly different from a society that does not believe in Him. Thomas F. Wall further explains that this difference is clearly seen in the way a person interprets his life. Someone who believes in God also believes in the existence of a plan and purpose for life. Similarly, they will tend to believe that the source of morality is divine will, not merely social convention. On the other hand, someone who believes that only this world exists will also tend to reject the existence of a purpose for life and life after death.[28, p. 60] Generally, worldviews are formed from religion, culture, or philosophy. As noted by James Sire, within the category of philosophy, there are at least several schools of thought that shape a person's worldview: deism, naturalism, nihilism, and existentialism.[29, p. 11-13] The following diagram briefly explains the existentialist perspective on the world.

Table 2. Explanation of Worldview Element

Source: James Sire

No.	Worldview Elements	Explanation
1.	Concept of Ultimate Reality	Whether God exists or not is a great mystery that cannot be solved by reason but can only be answered through a leap of faith.
2.	Concept of Human	The existence of humans is more important than the existence of God. Humans are unique and valuable individuals.
3.	Concept of Knowledge	Often, truth is paradoxical. Therefore, what exists is subjective knowledge.
4.	Concept of History	As an event, history is uncertain and insignificant. But as a myth that is perpetuated, it has great significance.

Furthermore, the influence of existentialism in logotherapy appears to be increasingly evident in the following points. *First*, the ambiguous meaning of the term spirituality. The word basically refers to the non-physical aspects of humans related to the divine dimension. On one hand, logotherapy seems to affirm this.[30] In his explanation of the ultimate meaning, although he does not always refer to the figure of God, Frankl emphasizes that fundamentally every individual has an intimate relationship with God, even if humans are not aware of it.[31] This may be influenced by Frankl's strong religious background. However, on the other hand, Frankl also states that spirituality does not always have religious connotations. From a theological perspective, this reduces the meaning of spirituality. The term spirituality is narrowed down to only encompass responsibility, freedom, and humanity's ability to find meaning.

Second, positioning religion as a dogmatic belief. Frankl's contribution in involving religion as a factor that greatly influences mental health is an effort that deserves appreciation. However, his views on the concept of religion also need to be re-examined. In logotherapy, religion is part of the human self that is quite believable. It seems that this view is in line with Kierkegaard's view:

But what is this unknown something with which the Reason collides when inspired by its paradoxical passion, with the result of unsettling even man's knowledge of himself? It is Unknown. It is not a human being, in so far as we know what man is; nor is it any other known thing. So let us call this unknown something: the God. It is nothing more than a name we assign to it. The idea of demonstrating that this unknown something (the God) exists, could scarcely suggest itself to the Reason. For if the God does not exist it would of course be impossible to prove it; and if he does exist it would be folly to attempt it.[32, p. 1884]

These two points are sufficient to explain the existentialist philosophy of logotherapy. This also shows that logotherapy is not value-free. In other words, although logotherapy appears to mediate between all forms of religion and belief, this does not obscure the fact that the theoretical structure of logotherapy is based on a specific ideology. In a simple diagram, the scientific structure of logotherapy theory can be illustrated as follows:

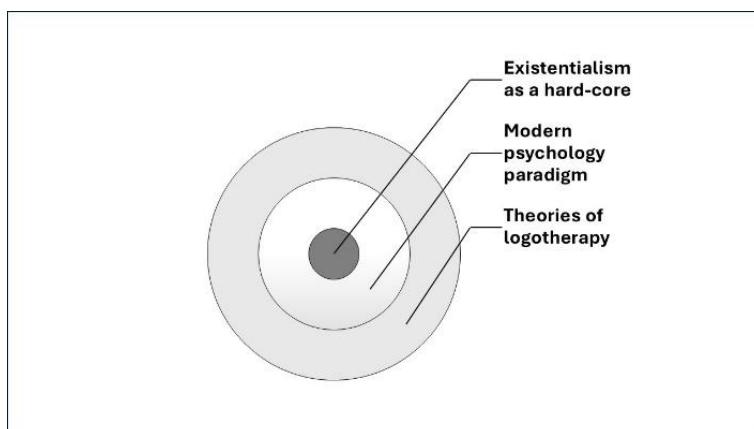


Figure 2. Logotherapy's Structure of Scientific Research Programme.

Source: Author, 2025.

3.2. Towards Hikmah Therapy: A Model for Integrating Logotherapy and Tazkiyah

Beyond its secular worldview, logotherapy still has several positive aspects that deserve appreciation. Logotherapy helps guide people toward the important realization that they have a spiritual side that must not be ignored to maintain their mental health. It can be said that logotherapy has contributed to conveying the humanitarian messages of religion with a louder voice (given that religion has been saying the same thing from the beginning). At this point, a broader space for dialogue opens between modern psychological therapy and classical models of spiritual healing.

On the other hand, classical models of spiritual healing also need to be discussed. Ibn al-Qayyim's theory of *tazkiyah*, for example, if not viewed from a psychological perspective, may only be considered a Sufi theory. It cannot be denied that modern psychotherapy has advantages, especially in terms of its technical application. This means that for this theory to be relevant to mental health issues, it needs to borrow the lens of modern psychology. This also demonstrates that modern psychology remains necessary. Rejecting modern psychotherapy entirely simply because it originated in the West is a naive stance. Therefore, a moderate approach is neither to reject it entirely nor to blindly accept the approaches coming from the West, but to accept them selectively.

The effort to dialogue between logotherapy theory and *tazkiyah* has given rise to a new approach called hikmah therapy theory. In Ibn al-Qayyim's thinking, the word hikmah is synonymous with the word logos as intended by Frankl. The word logos needs to be found its equivalent in the language of the Qur'an because of the important consideration that language is not merely a tool of communication. Language reflects worldview. Therefore, hikmah therapy is not merely a translation of logotherapy. Hikmah therapy is a new approach offered to integrate the positive aspects and strengths of modern psychotherapy with *tazkiyah al-nafs*, while addressing the shortcomings of each.

3.3. Paradigm and Theory

As explained by Muhammad Muslih, every discipline is built on a foundation of worldview and paradigm. In its theoretical structure, wisdom therapy uses Islamic principles as its paradigm. As explained by Malik Badri, the paradigm of Islamic psychotherapy is reflected in the following points.[33, p. 162-164]

First, it focuses on the spiritual side of human beings. This means that Islamic psychotherapy does not only emphasize the emotional or behavioural aspects of human beings that are visible as objects, but also their spiritual aspects. In fact, it is this spiritual side that is the focus of healing in Islam. In Malik Badri's experience, many patients suffer from trauma, depression, and anxiety that appear to be caused by spiritual issues. Through careful diagnosis, Badri concluded that Islamic psychotherapy, which is oriented toward the spiritual aspect, can address mental health issues in society at their root.

Second, make moral values the foundation. Unlike Western psychotherapy, which is non-judgmental, Islamic psychotherapy carefully involves morality as one of the aspects that must be fulfilled in the therapeutic process. In Islam, it is believed that one of the causes of mental disorders is the violation of moral values. Therefore, the first step that must be taken in the therapeutic process is the enforcement of moral principles.

Third, Islamic psychotherapy is complemented by role models in real life. Throughout its history, Islam has recognized the figure of a Prophet who not only conveyed revelation but also served as a model in all aspects of his life. The Prophet's life was a revelation in tangible, concrete, and living form. This revelation encompassed all aspects of life filled with blessings, whether in health or sickness, in suffering or pleasure, and in the form of contemplation or divine consolation. In a simple diagram, the theoretical framework of therapeutic wisdom can be illustrated as follows.

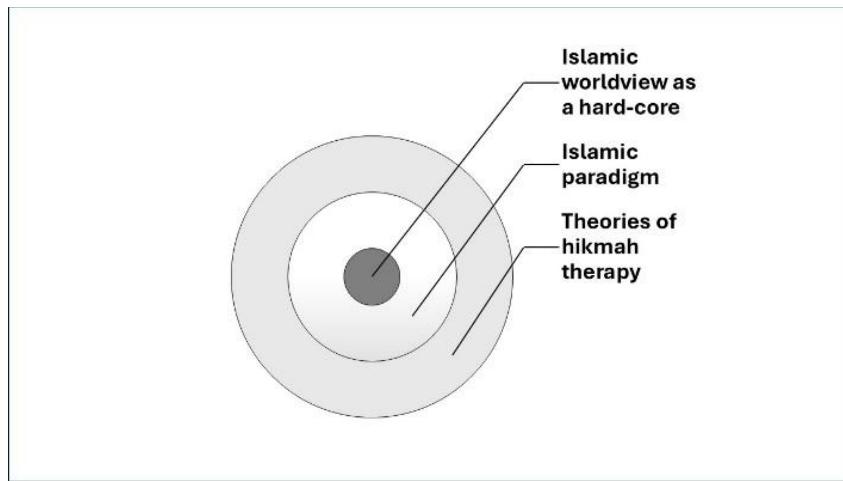


Figure 3. Hikmah Therapy's Structure of Scientific Research Programme.

Source: Author, 2025.

On a more technical level, the initial framework for hikmah therapy can be formulated as follows. *First*, a description of humans as having physical and spiritual aspects. The spiritual aspect of humans enables them to recognize their Creator. Not only that, recognizing God is even an innate condition and tendency of every individual. In Islamic teachings, this innate tendency is known as *fitrah*. Linguistically, *fitrah* means creation. *Fitrah* can also be interpreted as purity. These two meanings are interrelated, as if to emphasize that the original condition of humans when they were created was pure; pure because they were created with an awareness of God's existence.

The spiritual aspect of human beings also gives them the possibility to overcome their ego and negative emotions. Many figures, such as the prophets, were even willing to suffer physically for higher ideals and greater benefits. In Frankl's words, the ability of individuals to transcend themselves and connect with something greater is called self-transcendence. However, in the context of human nature, the ability to transcend one's ego is directed toward something higher, namely the value of divinity. This is reflected in the fundamental questions that often arise in the minds of individuals: "Where did I come from, where am I going, and what is the purpose of my existence in this world?"

Second, the human need for worship is in line with human nature. As stated by Ibn al-Qayyim, every human being essentially tends to submit and obey their Creator. This is also in line with the purpose of their existence in the world. In other words, in accordance with human nature, humans need worship to fulfil their spiritual needs. This explanation affirms the principle of the "will to meaning" from the perspective of logotherapy. However, in the Islamic context, the will to meaning more explicitly states that the purpose of human life is to worship their Creator.

Third, worship as the meaning of life. From the beginning, Islam has rejected the view that human existence in this life is meaningless. Humans were created for a specific and noble purpose: to worship their Creator. Worship is not merely about performing rituals such as prayer, fasting, or the Hajj. According to Ibn al-Qayyim, worship encompasses all verbal, physical, or spiritual activities that are beloved by Allah. Thus, good speech is worship; having good intentions, being grateful, and being patient are worship; receiving guests, doing office work, teaching, trading, or farming are worship. With this definition, worship in Islam also encompasses all worldly activities. This means that Islam does not recognize a separation or distinction between worldly and spiritual activities.

In logotherapy, Frankl formulates three values that can be sources of meaning in a person's life. These three values are creative value, attitudinal value, and experiential value. Creative value can be found in work that is enjoyed, hobbies, or beneficial activities. Experiential value can be found in

friendships, love, or positive interpersonal relationships.[21, p. 85] Frankl also notes that this value includes humanity's ability to create and respond to humour. Meanwhile, attitudinal value can be found in patience when facing suffering.

The three values that are the source of meaning in life fall under the category of worship as long as all of these things are directed toward Allah as the highest meaning. This means that, fundamentally, there is no contradiction between what Frankl formulated and the principles of Islam. Beyond that, there are still some aspects of worship that are not covered in Frankl's formulation. For example, Frankl only mentions that the value of attitude is found in patience in facing difficulties. In Ibn al-Qayyim's formulation, the value of attitude also includes sincerity, trust in Allah, good intentions, and gratitude. Similarly, Ibn al-Qayyim appears to have another classification beyond these three values. Ibn al-Qayyim states that cognitive and intellectual activities such as reflection, contemplation, and self-accountability can serve as important tools to guide one toward a meaningful life.

Fourth, a meaningful life in line with one's nature not only affects mental health but also the purity of the heart. In his famous quote, Frankl states that mental health is not only influenced by a balanced state between desire and self-regulation, nor solely by good relationships among individuals, but what is most decisive is the presence of meaning in life. Someone who lacks a purpose in life is prone to feeling boredom and frustration, or as Frankl calls it, noogenic neurosis.

In Ibn al-Qayyim's explanation, when someone lives in accordance with the purpose of their existence, namely with a vision of worship, they will be mentally healthy. This is characterized by a calm state of mind, or a pure heart. If someone begins to stray from the purpose of their existence, their soul becomes unstable: between obeying God and denying Him. In this case, their heart is in an unhealthy state. If not addressed promptly, their soul will drift further from its life purpose, and their heart will become a dead heart. This explanation highlights one key point: while Frankl asserts that his therapy aims solely to free individuals from mental disorders, tazkiyah seeks to address two issues simultaneously: psychological well-being and the salvation of the soul.

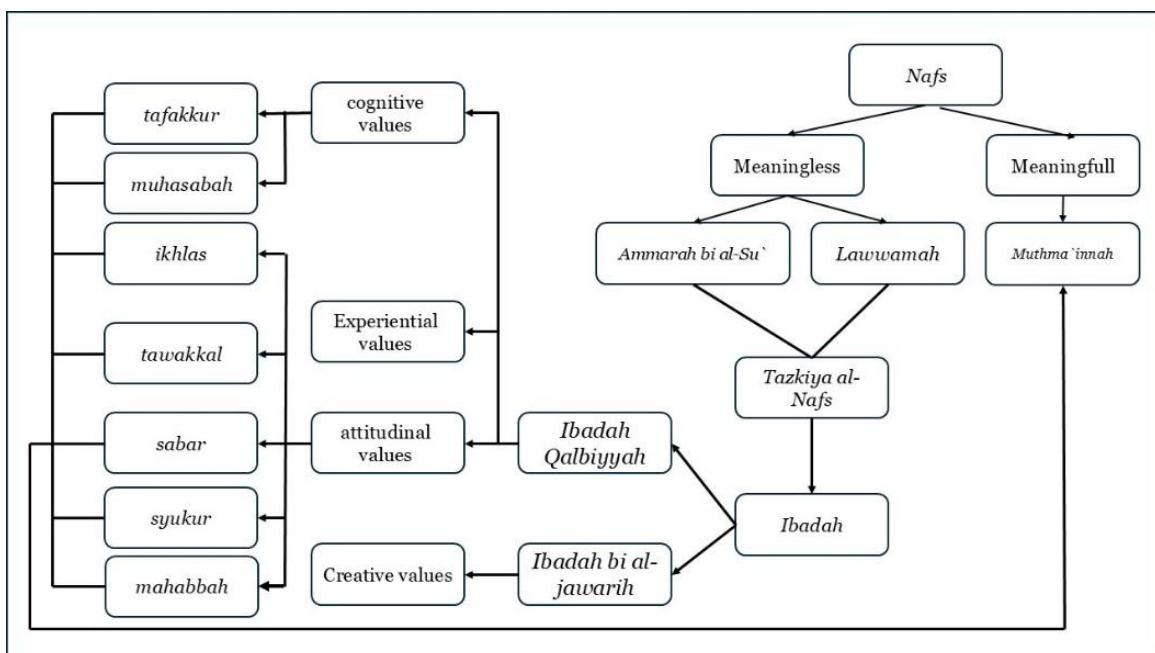


Figure 4. Hikmat Therapy's Scheme.

Source: Author, 2025.

4. Conclusion

Global data on the increase in depression and anxiety disorders—as reported by the WHO and the I-NAMHS survey in Indonesia—shows a phenomenon of existential emptiness underlying contemporary mental health problems. This finding reinforces Rollo May's thesis that a crisis of meaning is at the root of modern psychological problems. Healing efforts that emphasize spiritual aspects, such as Viktor Frankl's logotherapy, have proven relevant because they help individuals find meaning in life. However, logotherapy is still based on a secular Western existentialist framework, so it does not fully address spiritual needs within a theistic framework.

This is where Ibn al-Qayyim's contribution to Sufism becomes significant. Ibn al-Qayyim emphasized that spiritual health depends on awareness of the purpose of human life, which is servitude to Allah. The concepts of tazkiyah al-nafs, qalb, and hikmah that he offered show that long before Frankl, Islamic tradition had emphasized the close connection between the meaning of life, mental health, and spiritual salvation. Thus, the integration of the principles of logotherapy and Ibn al-Qayyim's Sufism in the form of “hikmah therapy” offers a more comprehensive model of healing: not only healing psychological symptoms but also guiding the soul to its true purpose.

The limitations of this study lie in its theoretical and conceptual nature, which has not yet been clinically tested in the context of modern psychotherapy. In addition, the integration of logotherapy and tazkiyah al-nafs still requires further interdisciplinary study, particularly in the field of applied methodology that can be operationalized by counsellors or psychologists.

Therefore, opportunities for further research are wide open, including: (i) developing assessment instruments based on hikmah therapy, (ii) conducting clinical experiments on patients with depression or anxiety, and (iii) expanding comparative studies between Ibn al-Qayyim's Sufism and other schools of existential psychology. This research direction is expected to not only enrich academic discourse but also make a real contribution to Islamic psychotherapy practices that are more relevant to global mental health challenges. []

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