

From Interpretation to Theory Construction: A Hermeneutical Shākilah-Oriented Explanatory Model in Qur'an-Based Psychology

Bagher Riahimehr ¹ 

Assistant Professor, Qur'an and Oriental Studies Department, Al-Mustafa International University, Qom, Iran.

Article History: Received: 14 September 2025; Accepted: 14 January 2026

ABSTRACT:

Original Paper

The present study aims to design an appropriate methodological framework for research in Qur'an-based psychology. Its central problem is the absence of a coherent and operational model for extracting psychological propositions from the text of revelation. Most existing studies have either attempted to align Western psychological concepts with Qur'anic verses or lacked an internal logic for textual understanding. To address this challenge, the research is organized around hermeneutical analysis and a text-centered approach. It begins with a critical examination of two prevalent methods, namely, the comparative approach and structural semantic analysis. Subsequently, by integrating the logic of revelation with the principles of Islamic jurisprudential reasoning, the study formulates the principles and stages of a new methodological framework called the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model, which is developed through theoretical analysis and analytical comparison. The findings indicate that the *Shākilah*-oriented model has the capacity to elevate Qur'anic understanding from the level of interpretation to the level of scientific theory construction. The method is grounded in the analysis of the triadic structure of the speaker, text, and interpreter, and consists of four stages: problem identification, causal analysis, solution analysis, and *shākilah* structuring. Within this framework, meaning is determined by divine intent and the internal context of the text rather than by external scientific presuppositions. As a result, the psychological propositions of the Qur'an are reconstructed in the form of guidance-oriented laws and the inner structures of the human self, enabling their transformation into scientific models of human behavior and psychological development. Accordingly, this study provides a foundational

1. Corresponding Author. Email Address: dr.riahi@chmail.ir

<http://dx.doi.org/10.37264/JIQS.V5I1.5>

https://iqs.sbu.ac.ir/article_107255.html

Copyright: © 2026 by the authors. Submitted for possible open access publication under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY 4.0) International License (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).



basis for the production of religious knowledge in psychology and paves the way for future empirical studies grounded in the Qur'an.

KEYWORDS: Qur'an and Psychology, Hermeneutics, Psychological Interpretation, Qur'anic Psychology, *Shākilah*-oriented Model, Interpretive Methodology.

1. Introduction

In recent decades, the methodology of religious studies, particularly Qur'an-based psychological studies, has emerged as one of the foundational challenges in the field of Islamic humanities. The necessity of such studies stems from the fact that the Holy Qur'an constitutes the central source for understanding the human being within the Islamic epistemological framework and provides the capacity to reconstruct psychological concepts on the basis of divine will and teleology. Without a systematic framework for extracting psychological propositions from the revealed text, neither the production of religious knowledge nor the development of a coherent theological psychology can be realized. To date, most existing studies have either focused on correlating modern psychological concepts with Qur'anic verses or have remained at the level of general theoretical discussions, lacking an operational and structured pathway for understanding the text. This inconsistency and fragmentation highlight the need for a coherent model grounded in hermeneutics, one capable of demonstrating the interaction between reason and revelation within a systematic inferential process.

The central challenge in current Qur'an-based psychological studies is the absence of a coherent methodological framework. Comparative approaches, which seek to align empirical psychological theories with Qur'anic verses, have largely become trapped within the presuppositions of Western scientific paradigms and, consequently, have distanced themselves from interpreting the text according to the internal logic of revelation. Conversely, purely *ijtihād*-oriented studies have often remained confined to abstract theoretical generalities without clarifying the practical stages involved in extracting psychological laws from the text. In response to these challenges, the present article proposes a *Shākilah*-oriented model grounded in a hermeneutical analysis of revelation and emphasizing the threefold relationship between the Author, the Text, and the Interpreter. This model organizes psychological understanding through a progression from the identification of the problem to the discovery of psychological law, and from law to a guidance-oriented behavioral system.

The present study addresses the methodological vacuum in Qur'an-based psychological research. Despite the expansion of interdisciplinary studies over the past two decades, no systematic, step-by-step scientific process has yet been presented that can derive behavioral propositions and laws from the revealed text systematically and inferentially through an intratextual approach. Most existing efforts either attempt to adapt modern psychological concepts to Qur'anic verses or remain limited to broad theoretical discussions concerning religious science, without specifying the operational stages of textual understanding. Therefore, there is a pressing need to formulate an independent model grounded in the Qur'anic hermeneutics and the logic of *ijtihād* for understanding human psychology through the Qur'anic text.

2. Literature Review

In reviewing the scholarly background of this field, some major works can be identified. Rezaei Isfahani (2009) presents the first structured attempt to establish a connection between the logic of *ijtihād* and scientific methodologies, introducing the Qur'an as a direct source for the production of knowledge in the human sciences. Despite its theoretical comprehensiveness, however, it does not clarify the operational structure for inferring psychological propositions and remains limited to broad interdisciplinary foundations. Golshani (2003) analyzes the philosophical possibility of religious science based on Qur'anic foundations and examines the interaction between empirical reason and revealed reason. Nevertheless, the work lacks a systematic method for extracting psychological knowledge from the text, as it remains at the epistemological level. Bagheri (2010) emphasizes the necessity of reconstructing scientific methodology on the basis of the logic of revelation. Although Bagheri formulates the inferential process of scientific knowledge at a principled level, his treatment of Qur'an-based psychology has not advanced beyond conceptual description to actual inferential derivation.

Pasandideh (2018) represents one of the earliest attempts to design practical stages for the psychological interpretation of Qur'anic verses and narrations. Pasandideh outlines three principal steps, identifying the problem, uncovering the causal structure, and extracting psychological solutions. However, the final process of behavioral modeling from the revealed text remains incomplete and does not develop into comprehensive behavioral theories. Arafī (2000) introduces two approaches to understanding religious texts, intratextual and extratextual, and outlined the *ijtihād*-based foundations for interpreting the human sciences through the

Qur'an. The present article extends these foundations by moving them toward practical application in Qur'an-based psychology.

The novelty of the present article may be explained at two levels: the foundational and the operational. At the foundational level, the article establishes a new theoretical basis for the psychological understanding of the Qur'an by integrating the principles of the Qur'anic hermeneutics with the logic of *ijtihad*. Unlike comparative methods and previous conceptual analyses, this model shifts the axis of meaning from the expectations of the interpreter to the divine will. In other words, the psychological meaning of Qur'anic verses is derived from the internal logic governing the revelation of the propositions rather than from external psychological concepts. The triadic relationship among the Author, the Text, and the Interpreter constructs a novel hermeneutical structure in which human reason becomes active within the text under the guidance of revelation, and the role of the interpreter shifts from that of a passive recipient of meaning to that of a discoverer of psychological laws.

At the operational level, this article presents, the inferential process of Qur'an-based psychology in the form of four explicit stages:

1. Problem Identification: discovering the psychological challenge embedded in the text.
2. Causal Analysis: analyzing the causes and psychological laws underlying that challenge.
3. Solution Identification: extracting strategies for reforming the *shākilah* through the structure of prescriptive propositions.
4. Final *shākilah* Formation: reconstructing the internal system of human belief, motivation, and behavior within the framework of a revelation-based scientific model.

Accordingly, the article establishes a bridge between interpretive understanding and the production of knowledge and may be regarded as the first structured attempt to transform Qur'anic knowledge into psychological theory. While preserving the authority of the sacred text, this model also creates opportunities for empirical testing and further development within the field of religious psychology.

3. Theoretical Framework

From an epistemological perspective, a Qur'an-based methodology is a composite and multidimensional concept in which the two fundamental dimensions of scientific knowledge and method are integrated with the

revelational and hermeneutical foundations of the sacred text. At its core, the term methodology refers to the knowledge of the path and procedure that a researcher adopts to attain a particular epistemic objective (Rezaei Adriani 2024). Methodology is not merely a set of technical rules; rather, it constitutes a system in which the path of knowledge and the logic governing the movement of thought, from question to discovery, are examined and evaluated (Aarabi & Boudlaie 2011). Accordingly, the methodology of any discipline reflects its philosophical foundations, and without a coherent method, no body of knowledge can attain stability and rigor (Jamshidi 2009, 311). From the perspective of the philosophy of science, the investigation of research methods and the critique of their logical structures fall within the domain of philosophy and logic (Fathollahi 2009, 250). Therefore, analyzing a Qur'an-based methodology is, in essence, a philosophical reflection on the epistemic foundations of the Qur'anic revelational system.

The Qur'an, as the most complete source of revelation and the one that provides "a clarification of all things" (Q. 16:89), is not only a source of knowledge but also a guide to methodology itself. One of the distinctive characteristics of the Qur'an is that, alongside its epistemic richness, it possesses an internal coherence and semantic structure that make possible the formulation of a distinct scientific method. For this reason, a Qur'an-based approach to methodology signifies the identification and explanation of valid pathways for understanding in light of revelational criteria, a path that leads from Qur'anic propositions to the discovery of psychological and cognitive principles governing human beings.

Being Qur'an-based in psychology, as Pasandideh (2016) explains, means that all elements of research are grounded in Qur'anic teachings rather than merely supported by occasional references to verses or narrations. The Qur'an itself possesses the analytical capacity to illuminate human behavior, emotion, will, and the transformation of personality. Consequently, a Qur'an-based methodology is not only grounded in a worldview-oriented perspective but is also oriented toward a Qur'anic anthropology and ontology, in which the reality of the human being, conceived as a multilayered being endowed with a divine nature (*fiṭrah*), constitutes the central axis of both the theory and the methodology of knowledge (Kavyani 2020, 38).

Within the theoretical framework of this approach, two central principles can be identified. The first is the principle of revelation-centered knowledge production, and the second is the principle of Qur'anic hermeneutics as the basis of the interpretive process. The principle of revelation-centered knowledge production signifies that the primary epistemic source for

explaining human psychology is divine revelation and Qur'anic discourse. According to this principle, the Qur'an is regarded not merely as a source of data but as the foundational basis for both the research perspective and the methodology employed. Accordingly, the researcher transfers the pathway of understanding from autonomous human reason to reason guided by revelation. In other words, the research method is grounded in the logic of understanding revelation rather than solely in sensory experience detached from it. Within this conception, the Qur'an becomes a primary source for understanding the human psyche alongside reason and experience, and their integration gives rise to what may be termed a Qur'an-based integrated epistemological model.

The second principle, Qur'anic hermeneutics, refers to the necessity of understanding the sacred text in accordance with its own internal semantic rules. In other words, the psychological interpretation of Qur'anic verses must follow the semantic order, contextual relationships, and linguistic mechanisms inherent in Qur'anic discourse. Drawing upon the method of *tadabbur* (reflective contemplation) (Naqipourfar 2002, 183), this approach goes beyond descriptive exegesis and emphasizes the discovery of relationships, patterns, and psychological constructs embedded within the text.

Ultimately, the theoretical framework of a Qur'an-based methodology is grounded in the integration of the logic of revelation with the scientific process of deriving psychological principles. This framework organizes its epistemic foundations around three central axes: (1) revelation as the primary source of knowledge; (2) reason as the instrument for evaluating and analyzing propositions; and (3) human experience as the field for empirical verification and practical application. Such an approach moves beyond purely imitative or comparative methods toward what may be termed a *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model, a model that reconstructs psychological structures from within the Qur'anic text and, on the basis of the Qur'an's internal logic, arrives at a systematic understanding of the human self. Consequently, a Qur'an-based methodology is not merely a research technique but a comprehensive theoretical and philosophical framework that integrates revelational foundations with the structure of modern science, thereby enabling the production of religious knowledge in the field of psychology.

4. Critical Analysis of Prevailing Methods in Qur'an-Based Psychological Studies

4.1. Correspondence-Based Equivalence

Understanding and analyzing scholarly perspectives in any field constitute a fundamental prerequisite for the intellectual development of that discipline. This is particularly significant in the contemporary era, where the proliferation of information and the diversity of theoretical approaches have led to considerable confusion regarding the direction of religious and psychological research. Islamic studies in the field of psychology therefore require a precise and systematic method that moves beyond the mere collection of textual evidence toward a deeper level of epistemic explanation. As Fadakar (2014, 7) has emphasized, many existing works on religion and psychology suffer from methodological deficiencies, and overcoming this situation requires grounding Islamic research in a coherent methodological framework. From this perspective, a fair and balanced critique of the existing methods in Qur'an-based psychology is essential, not by rejecting other viewpoints outright, but by recognizing both their strengths and their limitations, as suggested by Kalantari (2014, 34–65), who advocates a balanced critique of contemporary psychology while benefiting from its useful aspects for understanding human behavior.

Among these approaches, the Correspondence-Based Equivalence method proposed by Dr. Muhammad Uthman Najati (2001) represents one of the most well-known attempts in recent decades to derive psychological concepts from the Qur'an. Najati, a professor of psychology, sought through his works, particularly his well-known book *The Qur'an and Psychology*, to demonstrate that the Qur'an encompasses a broad range of psychological concepts, including motivation, personality, cognition, learning, and psychotherapy (Nobari 2020, 820). Drawing on a thematic method, he attempted to establish correspondences between Qur'anic terms and concepts and the terminology commonly used in contemporary psychology to demonstrate that there is a significant overlap between the findings of modern psychological science and the teachings of revelation.

The epistemological basis of this perspective rests on the assumption that has been described in the literature as the *a priori* presupposition that Islamic psychology already exists. According to this view, Islamic psychology already exists within the Qur'an, and the researcher's task is simply to identify and extract it. In other words, every scientific proposition found in modern psychology is assumed to have a counterpart in the Qur'an

(Ebrahimi Dehshiri & Salehzadeh 2016). Such a presupposition leads the researcher to read the revealed text through the lens of personal expectations and prior assumptions, interpreting its meanings according to individual interests rather than according to the aims and methodological logic of the Author of the text. A hermeneutical analysis of this situation shows that the researcher's system of interests unconsciously becomes the center of meaning, thereby diverting textual interpretation from its authentic trajectory. As Mojtabeh Shabestari (1996, 23) has observed, erroneous interpretation of a text ultimately arises from problematic prior assumptions and expectations on the part of the interpreter.

From the perspective of religious studies more broadly, Najati pays insufficient attention to the intentions of the Author of the text. Interpretation of the Qur'an is valid only when its purpose is to understand the divine message rather than to confirm scientific theories. When an interpreter approaches the Qur'an with a predetermined orientation, the outcome tends to affirm the interpreter's mental presuppositions rather than reveal the divine intent (Jazayeri 2017, 271). Consequently, in Najati's works, we observe a form of comparative interpretation in which figures such as Freud, Skinner, and other twentieth-century psychologists are treated not critically but rather as standards for understanding the Qur'an. For example, in his discussion of the concept of reaction formation, Najati cites verse Q. 63:4 as evidence for this defense mechanism and concludes that Freud's theory had already been expressed in the Qur'an fourteen centuries earlier (Ebrahimi Dehshiri & Salehzadeh 2016). From the standpoint of Qur'anic epistemology, however, this comparison is problematic, since the behavior of the hypocrites described in the Qur'an represents a conscious and deliberate action rather than an unconscious defensive mechanism arising from anxiety.

Beyond these theoretical concerns, the practical procedure employed in Najati's method also presents serious ambiguities. He outlines eight stages for theorizing in Islamic psychology, from mastery of psychological knowledge and Islamic principles to the critique of sources and the redesign of psychology within an Islamic framework, yet the manner in which inference from religious texts is carried out within these stages remains unclear (Najati 1990). Moreover, several of these stages function merely as general prerequisites for research, such as familiarity with Islamic sources, and do not directly contribute to the inferential process itself. As a result, despite its seemingly systematic structure, this approach lacks the logical coherence necessary to transform Qur'anic data into psychological propositions.

At the epistemological level, Najati's approach also exhibits several

structural weaknesses. First, it conflates psychology as a conceptual system of knowledge with psychology as a social institution. Second, it fails to clarify the ultimate purpose of the method and does not establish clear criteria for evaluating its validity. Third, it reduces the Qur'an, from a book of guidance and moral formation, to a collection of scientific evidence. In practice, this method turns Qur'anic verses into tools for validating human achievements rather than into sources of inspiration for transforming our understanding of human psychology. Consequently, the primary function of the Qur'an, guidance and moral cultivation, becomes marginalized, replaced by a process of humanizing the Qur'an in accordance with existing scientific paradigms. As Rajabi (2017, 199) has warned, any attempt to penetrate the deeper meanings of religious texts without observing the principles of rational indication and the established rules of interpretation is methodologically unsound and unreliable.

In conclusion, the Correspondence-Based Equivalence approach may be regarded as a valuable yet incomplete effort. Although it aims to demonstrate the compatibility between Qur'anic verses and psychological science, in practice it often reduces this relationship to superficial or even imposed correspondences. In the present author's view, the fundamental weaknesses of this method lie in three main issues. First, it relies on the *a priori* assumption that Islamic psychology already exists, which leads to the imposition of non-religious concepts upon the Qur'an. Second, it neglects the epistemological foundations of revelation, thereby reducing the Qur'an to a mere source of scientific data rather than recognizing it as a source of ontological and anthropological guidance. Third, it lacks reliable hermeneutical criteria for analyzing meaning. Although Najati's works played a foundational role in the early development of Islamic psychology, progress toward a more adequate model requires moving beyond this comparative stage and adopting methods that derive psychological structures from within the revealed text itself through a hermeneutically grounded and *Shākilah*-oriented logic. Only in this way can Qur'an-based psychology move beyond merely confirming existing knowledge and advance toward the production of authentically revelation-based knowledge.

4.2. Structural Semantics Approach

The Structural Semantics approach, developed by Kavyani (2019) within the field of Qur'an-based psychological studies, represents a serious effort to extract psychological concepts from the revealed text based on the internal logic of Qur'anic language and the relationships among its words and propositions. Influenced by Izutsu's semantic studies and the Qur'an-

by-Qur'an interpretive method, this approach seeks to uncover the conceptual system of Islamic psychology through the network of Qur'anic vocabulary—a network in which each term is connected to others through structural and semantic relationships, and in which meaning emerges not from isolated words but from the web of interlexical connections (Fadakar 2014, 84).

This method rests on the philosophical assumption that meaning is embedded within the structure of the text itself and must therefore be extracted from the internal linguistic system of the Qur'an. In numerous articles, Kavyani (2019, 84) has attempted, within the broader goal of establishing Islamic psychology and attaining an a priori methodological framework for the production of Islamic science, to present Qur'anic psychology as part of the epistemic architecture of Islam. In this structure, theology occupies the apex of the epistemic pyramid, while psychology is situated at lower levels. According to his view, transmitted knowledge (*naql*) possesses epistemic validity not only within the domain of revelation but also in the field of psychology. Accordingly, the Qur'an-based researcher is permitted to integrate revelational data with rational, empirical, and even intuitive methods to formulate psychological theories.

Nevertheless, a critical evaluation of this approach is necessary from several perspectives. First, within Kavyani's epistemological foundations, the priority given to the interpreter's expectations over the intention of the Author becomes apparent. As Mojtaba Shabestari (1996, 23–24) has emphasized, any valid understanding of religious texts requires that the interpreter's interests be aligned with divine purposes; otherwise, interpretation degenerates into the interpreter's own subjective reconstruction. In Kavyani's works (2014, 86), the questions posed to the text often arise from concerns rooted in modern psychology rather than from the revealed text itself. Consequently, the Qur'an risks functioning not as a guiding source but as a means of confirming the researcher's theoretical assumptions. For instance, in his discussion of motivation, Kavyani equates terms such as *ba'th*, *hājah*, and *tahrīd* with the psychological concepts of activation, need, and stimulation, respectively.

In such cases, the analytical movement proceeds not from within the Qur'anic text outward but from external psychological theories inward. The psychological concept is first defined, after which Qur'anic evidence is sought to support it. This process reflects what Najati (1990) has described as the fallacy of associative projection, a common pitfall in interdisciplinary studies whereby researchers inadvertently impose their own conceptual frameworks upon the text. At the level of methodological rules, Kavyani proposes that conflicts between psychological findings and Qur'anic

teachings be resolved through the principles of *ta'ādul* and *tarājih*, concepts derived from the jurisprudential method of Islamic legal theory. While this proposal is methodologically notable within the context of jurisprudence, its application to the psychological interpretation of the Qur'an risks transferring the inferential logic of jurisprudence to the domain of semantic analysis. Such a transfer may carry epistemological consequences, since jurisprudence concerns normative rulings (*ḥukm*), whereas semantics concerns meaning and signification (*dalālah*).

The most significant critique of Kavyani's Structural Semantics approach, however, concerns its method of inference and the sequence of its practical stages. The proposed process includes six stages, from identifying the research problem to extracting Qur'anic propositions. Although this sequence appears coherent, it contains a major gap from the standpoint of the epistemology of religious language: the absence of a clear explanation of the relationship between structural meaning and divine intentionality. In other words, the method successfully identifies conceptual meanings through patterns of lexical association and opposition, yet it neglects the teleological dimension of meaning and its relationship to divine intent, that is, the guidance-oriented purpose of Qur'anic verses. As Va'ezi (2014, 286) has argued in his theory of textual interpretation, any Qur'anic semantic analysis must simultaneously consider the interpreter's mind, the structure of the text, and its ultimate purpose to arrive at a comprehensive interpretation. At this point, Kavyani's method focuses primarily on the second level, the linguistic structure of the text.

From an ontological perspective, the Structural Semantics approach, despite its claim to holism, often results in linguistic reductionism in practice. Researchers tend to concentrate on selected words and propositions while overlooking the broader semantic architecture of entire surahs. As Fadakar (2014, 98) has noted, many studies in Qur'anic psychology neglect the systematic perspective of the surah as a whole and instead become preoccupied with localized details of individual verses. As a result, the semantic coherence and guiding orientation of the text may be compromised, and the extracted propositions fail to achieve practical psychological relevance. Moreover, despite Kavyani's emphasis on the social and cultural functions of Qur'anic psychology, he has not provided concrete and measurable examples of such applications in his writings (Kavyani 2017, 354), even though practical applicability constitutes an essential component of methodological inquiry in the religious human sciences.

In summary, Kavyani's Structural Semantics method possesses notable

strengths, including its attention to the internal semantic system of the Qur'an, its utilization of elements from the logic of *ijtihad*, and its constructive orientation toward establishing Islamic psychology as a discipline. At the same time, however, it faces fundamental epistemological, hermeneutical, and methodological challenges. Rather than moving from the Qur'anic text toward a model of human psychological structure, the approach frequently moves from contemporary psychological theories back toward the text, thereby situating the resulting discourse within the framework of existing scientific paradigms. From the present author's perspective, the primary weaknesses of this method may be summarized in three points. First, it gives precedence to the interpreter's interests over divine intention and fails to align the researcher's objective with the purpose of the text. Second, it relies excessively on modern psychological criteria in defining Qur'anic concepts, resulting in the loss of epistemic independence. Third, it neglects the broader semantic architecture at the level of the surah and the overall conceptual network of the Qur'an.

Accordingly, while Kavyani's efforts represent an important step toward systematizing Qur'an-based psychological studies, achieving a more comprehensive methodological model requires moving beyond purely semantic analysis toward what may be termed a *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model, an approach that preserves the lexical structure of the Qur'an while interpreting it within a teleological horizon and in relation to the existential structure (*shākilah*) of the human being. In this way, meaning can be elevated from the level of language to the level of guidance and psychological transformation.

4.3. General Assessment and Identification of the Research Gap

A comparative examination of the two major approaches currently employed in Qur'an-based psychological studies, namely, Najati's Correspondence-Based Equivalence method and Kavyani's Structural Semantics approach, reveals that, despite their apparent technical and linguistic differences, both approaches suffer from a common deficiency at the level of their epistemological and hermeneutical foundations. This weakness has become a major source of the inconsistencies and theoretical impasses observed in this field. This shared deficiency may be summarized concisely as the absence of a systematic and text-centered process. In other words, neither approach has succeeded in establishing a coherent connection among the three principal domains involved in textual understanding: the revealed text itself, the interpreter's mind, and scientific methodology. As a

result, interpretations of the Qur'an often remain reactive, analogical, or associative rather than methodologically grounded.

In Najati's method, the text occupies the position of a source for confirming scientific knowledge; the Qur'an is used to validate contemporary psychological theories, and the researcher seeks equivalents in the language of revelation for pre-established scientific concepts. By contrast, in Kavyani's approach, the Qur'an is positioned as a source for generating meaning, yet its interpretation continues to be evaluated through extratextual concepts and criteria derived from modern psychology. In both cases, the direction of understanding moves from outside the text toward the revealed text rather than proceeding from within revelation toward a Qur'an-centered anthropology. This externally driven framework has led researchers working within these approaches, despite operating under the banner of Qur'an-based scholarship, to produce analyses that gradually distance themselves from a genuinely internal religious perspective and instead reproduce non-religious scientific knowledge in religious terminology.

From a hermeneutical standpoint, both methods encounter a similar difficulty: the displacement of the center of meaning from divine intention to the expectations of the interpreter. Mojtabeh Shabestari (1996, 23–24) explains that the interpretation of any text is inevitably influenced by the interpreter's horizon of expectations, and when this horizon does not correspond to the horizon of meaning embedded in the text, interpretation becomes an act of projection rather than discovery. Najati's method represents a clear example of this condition. The researcher approaches the Qur'an expecting to find scientific evidence rather than seeking to understand the Qur'anic discourse on the human being. Although Kavyani claims to analyze the structural features of Qur'anic language, the questions guiding his inquiry are primarily derived from modern psychological concerns rather than from the Qur'an's own anthropological framework centered on *fiṭrah* (human primordial nature). Consequently, both approaches may be said to treat scientific knowledge as an interpreter of the Qur'an rather than allowing the Qur'an to serve as the interpreter of knowledge. This inversion of the epistemic framework diverts Qur'anic understanding from its authentic trajectory.

At the methodological level, the shared weakness becomes evident in the absence of a systematic step-by-step process for deriving psychological propositions from the text. Najati outlines eight stages of theorizing; however, these stages largely consist of general research prerequisites and educational guidelines, and they lack a distinct stage devoted to extracting

meaning from the contextual and discursive structure of Qur'anic verses. Kavyani, on the other hand, proposes a six-stage process ranging from the selection of a research problem to the semantic analysis of vocabulary, yet he does not adequately clarify the distinction between linguistic semantics and guidance-oriented semantics within the Qur'an. As a consequence of these shortcomings, the outcome of research in both approaches tends to consist not of Qur'an-based psychological knowledge but rather of a set of lexical correspondences or conceptual parallels. As Nooralizadeh et al. (2018) argue, Islamic psychological studies can be considered scientific only when they are grounded in a method for the scientific understanding of the revealed text rather than merely relying on religious propositions.

At the epistemological level, the absence of a systematic interpretive process produces even deeper consequences. First, it leads to what may be called the *a priori* construction of religious science. As Ebrahimi Dehshiri & Salehzadeh (2016) note, when researchers assume that all psychological concepts already exist fully formed within the Qur'an, the need for explanatory and interpretive effort disappears; understanding is reduced to compilation rather than to discovery and reasoning. Second, this absence undermines the internal coherence of the field, since it lacks a coherent methodological foundation. Third, it removes the role of the hermeneutical mediator, namely reason guided by revelation. Researchers either employ an autonomous form of rationality detached from revelation, as seen in Najati's approach, or substitute linguistic analysis for rational interpretation, as in Kavyani's method. Yet a Qur'an-based methodology requires a text-centered form of reason, a mode of rational inquiry that understands itself in relation to the divine discourse and derives its interpretive principles from revelation rather than from empirical science alone.

From the present author's perspective, the profound research gap between existing approaches ultimately stems from their neglect of the hermeneutical structure of understanding revelation. Qur'anic hermeneutics does not negate semantics or scientific methodology; rather, it integrates them within a framework rooted in the text itself. In this view, methodological inquiry must begin with the Qur'an rather than with external theoretical frameworks. For this reason, proposing an alternative model is not merely a theoretical exercise but constitutes a response to the methodological crisis that has shaped several decades of Islamic psychological research.

Such an alternative model must organize the process of understanding according to the rules internal to the text itself, define clear stages leading from the research question to the inferential conclusion, and ground its epistemological foundations in reason guided by revelation. The framework

proposed in the following chapter seeks precisely to address this gap and move beyond the stage of data collection toward the production of genuinely Qur'anic knowledge. By treating text-centered hermeneutics as the core of the inferential method, this model aims to transform Qur'anic psychology from a reactive discipline of comparative confirmation into an active discipline of explanatory knowledge production.

5. Foundations, Principles and Stages of the Proposed Methodological Model

5.1. Qur'anic and Hermeneutical Foundations

In any methodological framework grounded in the text of revelation, the first step is to determine its theoretical foundations, because a method derives its meaning from the epistemic assumptions and presuppositions upon which it rests. In the field of Qur'an-based psychology, these foundations are not merely philosophical or cognitive in nature; rather, they are fundamentally revelational and Qur'anic. This means that understandings of the human being, knowledge, and the text itself must be organized within the worldview presented by the Qur'an. As Rezaei Adriani (2024) emphasizes, any systematic scholarly activity must first clarify its underlying assumptions and theoretical infrastructure, since these determine both the direction and the quality of the inferential process. These foundations constitute the basis of the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model, distinguishing it from previous approaches based on simple correspondence or purely semantic analysis.

Within the Qur'anic epistemic framework, three principal elements are involved in the process of understanding: the Author (the divine Speaker), the revealed text, and the interpreter (the human recipient of the text). These three elements form the vertices of a triangle whose relationships must be carefully understood for any Qur'anic explanation to succeed. As Alitabar Firouzjaei (2011, 410, 443) notes, every text possesses three fundamental axes, and genuine understanding is impossible without determining the relationships among them: the intention of the speaker, the structural organization of the text, and the interpretive apparatus employed by the reader. In the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model, these three elements are redefined within a specific hermeneutical logic so that the interpretive process may proceed in a text-centered and guidance-oriented manner.

5.1.1. *Foundations Related to the Author: The Centrality of Divine Intention in Understanding the Text*

In Qur'an-based thought, the starting point of interpretation is the intention of God as the Author, rather than the prior assumptions of the interpreter. As Bagheri (2021, 69) notes, the author's intended meaning forms the foundation of interpretation; therefore, the interpreter must seek to uncover the divine intention rather than adapt the text to personal concerns. Within this perspective, the text functions as a window through which one may observe the intentional horizon of the Author and infer divine intent through contextual and internal indicators embedded in the discourse (Alitabar Firouzjaei 2011, 444).

Accordingly, the first foundational principle of the proposed method is the primacy and centrality of the Author in interpretation. Divine intention is not merely an abstract concept but a coherent system of guidance aimed at directing the human being toward psychological and moral perfection. Consequently, psychological propositions derived from the Qur'an must always be interpreted in light of their educational and guidance-oriented purpose.

The Qur'anic verse, “*Alif, Lām, Rā. [This is] a Book We have sent down to you that you may bring mankind out from darkness into light, by the command of their Lord, to the path of the All-mighty, the All-laudable*” (Q. 14:1), indicates that the ultimate aim of the revealed text is the liberation of human beings from inner darkness, not the confirmation of external empirical sciences. This principle distinguishes Qur'anic hermeneutics from purely human hermeneutics: here, ultimate meaning arises not merely from analyzing linguistic structures but from uncovering divine intention within the historical context of revelation.

5.1.2. *Foundations Related to the Text: Purposefulness, Coherence, and Comprehensiveness of the Qur'an*

A defining feature of the Qur'an as a text is its purposeful and structurally coherent nature. Rajabi (2017, 130) explains that understanding a discourse requires knowledge of the speaker's communicative characteristics. Accordingly, each surah, together with its context, must be viewed as a coherent semantic system whose components are internally interconnected. This interconnection forms what may be described as a *Shākilah*-like structure, which constitutes the conceptual foundation of the proposed model. In other words, each surah, through its distinctive conceptual geometry, guides the direction of meaning.

For this reason, extracting isolated propositions detached from the textual context is unacceptable within this model. The Qur'an is not a collection of independent sentences but rather an organic network of statements organized around a unified guidance-oriented objective. Tabataba'i (1996, 13: 230) emphasizes that the only reliable path to meaning is reflection on textual context (*siyāq*) and reliance on both internal and external textual indicators, since context conveys the relationship between cause and purpose in divine discourse. Accordingly, the psychological interpretation of the Qur'an must be structured around the internal contextual framework of its verses and the longitudinal connections among its surahs, thereby avoiding the reductionism that results from fragmentary conceptual analysis.

Another important characteristic of the Qur'anic text is its comprehensiveness in guiding human life. Imam 'Alī states in *Nahj al-Balāghah*: *Indeed, within it is knowledge of what is to come, an account of what has passed, the remedy for your ailments, and the ordering of your affairs* (al-Raḍī 1993, 223).

This statement forms the epistemic foundation of the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory method: the Qur'an is not merely a record of psychological states; rather, it functions as a source of healing and an organizer of the human existential system. This comprehensiveness implies that it encompasses all dimensions of the human psyche, cognitive, motivational, and evaluative, and therefore any method for understanding the Qur'an must take this inclusiveness into account when it is designed.

5.2. Principles Governing the Process of Inference

After establishing the epistemological and hermeneutical foundations of the model on the basis of the Qur'an and reason guided by revelation, the second step in the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory methodology is to determine the practical principles that guide the process of inference. These principles function as guiding principles and evaluative criteria through which the interpreter moves from the level of lexical and conceptual analysis to the stage of discovering meaning and guidance-oriented laws within the text. In effect, the governing principles of inference in this approach resemble the procedural rules of *ijtihād* in the science of legal theory (*Uṣūl al-fiqh*), providing a systematic framework for understanding the psychological propositions of the Qur'an. The objective is to achieve a deep level of semantic understanding and to design a pathway that leads from textual evidence to theoretical formulation. As noted in a foundational study,

the rules of inference from the Qur'an and Hadith consist of formulas and principles that operate simultaneously with the act of deduction and render the process of extraction from revelation methodical (Qodsi 2018, 49).

5.2.1. The Principle of Problem Orientation Rather than Concept Orientation

The fundamental distinction between the *Shākilah*-oriented method and earlier approaches lies in this principle. In many traditional Qur'an-centered studies, interpretation often proceeds from concept to problem: the researcher begins with a psychological concept such as "anxiety" or "motivation" and then searches the Qur'an for words or verses corresponding to that concept. The outcome of such an approach is typically adapted to external theoretical frameworks rather than derived from the text itself. By contrast, the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory method begins with the problem. This means that the first step is to identify the psychological challenge or question that emerges within the text itself, rather than imposing a preconstructed scientific concept drawn from outside the text.

Pasandideh (2016) explains the distinction between these two approaches to the psychological interpretation of religious texts. According to him, understanding individual words and expressions constitutes only a general level of comprehension rather than specialized understanding; genuine scientific inquiry arises when the question shifts from the lexical meaning of a statement to the reason for its utterance. A problem-oriented approach therefore enables the discovery of causal and law-like relationships within the text.

For example, the verse, "*And indeed, you are of a great moral character*" (Q. 68:4), if viewed merely from the perspective of the concept of "great moral character," yields a simple ethical description. However, if the psychological situation of the Prophet in response to the accusation of madness in the opening verses of Surah al-Qalam is examined, it becomes clear that the verse functions as a response to a psychological and social injury, thereby conveying a deeply educational dimension. In this case, understanding shifts from description to explanation. This principle constitutes the *ijtihād*-like spirit of the method, because the mechanical matching of words is replaced by the discovery of the human existential problem addressed by divine guidance.

5.2.2. The Principle of Movement from the Whole to the Part

This principle directly reflects the foundational assumption concerning the coherence and comprehensiveness of the Qur'an as a text. Proper

understanding of the Qur'an does not arise from examining isolated fragments but from comprehensive reflection on the structure of the surah. As Tabataba'i (1996, 13: 230) emphasized, understanding the Qur'an depends upon reflection on context (*siyāq*). Within the proposed model, this principle operates as a surah-centered strategy. The interpretive process therefore begins with the macro-level meaning and contextual atmosphere of the surah and gradually moves toward its individual components and propositions.

Faramarz Qaramaleki (2009, 116), in his methodology of religious studies, notes that the context and framework of a text define its concepts and shape the semantic analysis of its propositions, since meaning emerges within the discursive system of the discourse rather than from isolated words. Accordingly, each surah of the Qur'an is examined as an organized psychological guidance unit: first, its general structure, purpose, and audience are analyzed, and only then are the verses related to the psychological issue under investigation examined within that contextual framework.

The advantage of moving from the whole to the part lies in preventing fragmentary and arbitrary interpretation, because the meaning of any individual element in the Qur'an becomes clear only through its relationship with the overarching purpose of the surah. As Heydarifar (2016, 1: 15–28) explains, the epistemic comprehensiveness of the Qur'an requires that the rules for extracting meaning be structured according to the broader needs of humanity and that each component be understood within the wider conceptual system. Such a holistic perspective enables the interpreter to avoid the repetition of scattered concepts and instead to extract guidance-oriented laws from the relationships among the psychological propositions within the surah.

5.2.3. The Principle of Distinguishing the Level of Description from the Level of Prescription

One of the methodological weaknesses frequently observed in studies of religious psychology is the confusion between description and prescription. Qur'anic statements about human beings may sometimes describe psychological states, yet researchers often interpret them as ethical recommendations or normative commands. The *Shākilah*-oriented method insists on a clear distinction between these two levels, because any valid prescription must be grounded in the discovery of causal and law-like knowledge about human nature within the Qur'an.

Bostan (2013, 2: 65), in discussing the logic governing the relationship between declarative and imperative propositions, demonstrates that a necessary connection exists between the two forms of discourse: prescriptive statements ultimately refer to underlying realities. From this perspective, psychological descriptions of human beings in the Qur'an often contain an implicit law that can subsequently become a prescriptive principle during the explanatory stage. However, these two levels must not be conflated during the interpretive stage. First, the problem and its underlying law must be discovered within the descriptive dimension of the verse; only afterward, at the stage of application, may that insight be translated into educational or therapeutic guidance.

Alamzadeh Nouri (2021, 199), in his discussion of the principle of *tanqīḥ al-manāṭ* in legal theory, explains that deriving lessons from the actions of the infallibles or from behavioral narratives in the Qur'an requires abstracting particular contextual features to identify the essential spirit of the behavior. This distinction reflects precisely the separation between descriptive and prescriptive levels. By adhering to this principle, Qur'anic psychological analysis moves beyond rhetorical moralism and reaches the level of a scientific understanding of human psychological mechanisms grounded in demonstrable textual indications.

5.3. Stages of the *Shākilah*-Oriented Explanatory Model

5.3.1. Stage One: Problem Identification (Applied Example)

In the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model, the starting point for the psychological understanding of the Qur'an is not preconstructed scientific concepts but rather the human problem articulated within the revealed text itself. Accordingly, problem identification refers to recognizing the psychological challenge to which Qur'anic statements respond, namely, the situation that the text addresses in its effort to guide, reform, or heal the human condition.

At this stage, the researcher moves beyond the level of lexical semantics and seeks to determine the actual psychological condition being addressed by the revealed text, as well as the disturbance or imbalance in the inner structure (*shākilah*) of the audience that provided the context for the revelation of the verses.

To illustrate this stage in practice, one may examine the structure of Surah al-Qalam. The opening atmosphere of the surah, beginning with the oath by the Pen and the rejection of the accusation that the Prophet was "mad," indicates that the central issue of the surah is not merely the

description of a moral virtue or a personal trait. Rather, it addresses a serious psychological and social pressure that threatened the perceived psychological stability and credibility of the Prophet. The accusation of madness, functioning as a social label, could undermine the Prophet's self-confidence, psychological tranquility, and the effectiveness of his prophetic mission. Therefore, the verse, “*And indeed, you are of a great moral character*” (Q. 68:4), within this context performs the function of stabilizing the psychological structure of the Prophet rather than simply describing an ethical attribute.

Within this framework, problem identification requires contextual and structural analysis of the verses to determine the role that each statement plays within the semantic network of the surah: whether it presents the problem, explains its causes, or proposes a solution. The distinction between descriptive texts and prescriptive texts, which is established at this stage, enables the extraction of preliminary psychological insights. Descriptive verses report human psychological states and internal conditions, whereas prescriptive verses offer guidance-oriented responses aimed at correcting those conditions. Thus, problem identification, as the first stage of the model, lays the groundwork for the causal and *Shākilah*-based analysis that follows and prepares the transition from interpretive understanding to psychological explanation.

5.3.2. Stage Two: Causal Analysis (Applied Example)

After identifying the psychological problem embedded in the text, the second step in the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model is the analysis of the causes and contextual factors that give rise to that problem. In this method, causal analysis does not merely reconstruct the historical circumstances of revelation; rather, it seeks to uncover the psychological law governing human behavior that is reflected in the revelatory discourse, a law that elevates the discussion from a particular event to a generalizable pattern.

In the case under examination, the opening of Surah al-Qalam, the psychological and social pressure created by the accusation that the Prophet was mad arises from a particular oppositional behavioral pattern. Within this pattern, the polytheistic society attempts to delegitimize the divine message by undermining the character of its bearer. By rejecting this accusation and emphasizing the intellectual soundness and moral firmness of the Prophet, the Qur'an indicates that the source of such behavior lies not in objective reality but in defective psychological structures such as conscious denial, obstinacy, and fear of the collapse of the dominant value system.

From a *Shākilah*-oriented psychological perspective, this situation reflects the confrontation of two distinct inner structures: on one side, a *shākilah* grounded in certainty, inner stability, and a coherent personality represented by the Prophet; on the other, a reactive and unstable *shākilah* characterizing the opposing audience, who resort to labeling and psychological humiliation to preserve their social dominance.

By highlighting this contrast, the Qur'an explains that the origin of the socio-psychological crisis lies not in any weakness in the Prophet's character but in the distorted inner structure of his opponents. Consequently, causal analysis at this stage leads to the discovery of a general psychological principle: whenever the established value system of a society is threatened, defensive psychological reactions, such as denial, projection, and character assassination of the perceived threat, are activated. This psychological law extends beyond the historical circumstances of revelation and can be generalized to similar situations of human behavior. In this way, the revealed text transcends the narration of a specific event and articulates a stable psychological mechanism.

5.3.3. Stage Three: Solution Analysis (Applied Example)

After identifying the problem and explaining its psychological causes, the third stage of the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model focuses on extracting Qur'anic solutions for transforming the human psychological condition. In this method, solution analysis does not consist of collecting scattered moral recommendations; rather, it is an analytical process aimed at discovering the strategies for transforming the *shākilah* embedded in the prescriptive and guidance-oriented statements of the Qur'an.

In Surah al-Qalam, the revelatory response to psychological pressure and social labeling is not limited to rejecting the accusation. Instead, it establishes a new internal foundation. The emphasis on the Prophet's "great moral character" functions as a psychological strategy aimed at strengthening the inner core of his personality and protecting him from the psychological harm caused by social rejection. This statement indicates that psychological resilience is achieved not through reactive external responses but through the strengthening of the ethical and inner structure of the self.

Moreover, the broader structure of Surah al-Qalam, through its depiction of the fate of the deniers and its emphasis on the consequences of arrogance and rejection, promotes a form of cognitive reframing. The audience learns that short-term social pressure should not serve as the criterion for judging truth or personal worth. By linking the present condition to the purposeful horizon of divine guidance, the Qur'an situates social judgment within a

meaningful framework that mitigates the anxiety generated by external evaluation. Thus, the solutions extracted at this stage can be summarized at three levels:

- Strengthening foundational beliefs;
- Stabilizing moral identity;
- Reorienting cognitive evaluations of external pressures.

These strategies are not temporary moral instructions but enduring principles for reforming the human psychological structure, thereby preparing the ground for the coherent reconstruction of belief, motivation, and behavior in the final stage of the model.

5.3.4. Stage Four: Final Shākilah Structuring (Theoretical Formulation)

The fourth stage of the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model represents the transition from dispersed interpretive analyses to a coherent conceptual model of human behavior. At this stage, the findings derived from the previous three steps, the psychological problem, the causal law governing it, and the guidance-oriented solutions offered by the text, are organized into a unified structure that explains human actions on the basis of the individual's inner *shākilah*. The Qur'anic foundation for this stage is the verse, “Say, ‘Everyone acts according to his character (*shākilah*).’ Your Lord knows best who is better guided with regard to the way” (Q. 17:84), which presents human behavior as dependent upon the internal organization of enduring beliefs, motivations, and inclinations.

Within this model, the *shākilah* is not merely an ethical attribute or an isolated psychological state; rather, it is a relational network of internal elements that directs outward behavior. Accordingly, the *shākilah* may be analyzed as a multilayered system consisting of:

- A cognitive layer comprising fundamental beliefs and interpretive frameworks;
- A motivational-emotional layer encompassing inclinations and affect regulation;
- A behavioral layer consisting of stable patterns of action.

These three layers do not operate in a linear sequence but interact dynamically with one another to shape human personality and conduct.

In the case examined (Surah al-Qalam), the stage of *shākilah* structuring

demonstrates that the affirmation of the Prophet's "great moral character" in the face of psychological and social pressure is not merely an ethical recommendation. Rather, it represents the reconstruction of a coherent inner structure in which belief in the truth of the divine path (cognitive layer), inner confidence and emotional tranquility despite external judgment (emotional layer), and steadfastness in the prophetic mission (behavioral layer) operate in harmony. By contrast, the *shākilah* of his opponents is organized around unstable beliefs, defensive emotional reactions, and destructive behavioral patterns.

Technically, reconstructing this *shākilah* in psychological language means transforming interpretive insights into theoretical constructs rather than directly into measurable empirical indicators. At this level, the researcher identifies potential variables, such as cognitive stability, meaning-based emotional regulation, and behavioral perseverance, derived from the network of verses. These variables may later be operationalized in empirical research; however, in the present article they remain at the pre-theoretical stage.

In this way, the final stage of *shākilah* structuring may be understood as a process of modeling religiously grounded human behavior. Through this process, the revealed text is transformed from a collection of descriptive and prescriptive statements into a coherent explanatory system. Such a model does not replace empirical psychological theories; rather, it provides their conceptual and guidance-oriented foundation within the framework of Qur'an-based psychology, serving as a potential point of connection between Qur'anic interpretation, theoretical development, and future interdisciplinary research.

6. The Operational Process and Executive Stages of the Shākilah-Oriented Explanatory Model

6.1. Preliminary Steps: Problem Identification and Causal Analysis

The operational process of the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model begins with two preliminary steps whose purpose is to move beyond a general understanding of the text toward a specialized and scientific level of comprehension. In these stages, the researcher moves from merely observing the surface meanings of words and linguistic constructions to analyzing the underlying problem and discovering the psychological causes embedded within the text.

According to Pasandideh (2018), the general understanding of religious texts results from recognizing their vocabulary and linguistic combinations, whereas specialized understanding requires uncovering the cause of utterance and the structure of implication within revelatory statements. Without this transformation, no genuine psychological knowledge can be derived from the text. These steps constitute the foundational layer of the *Shākilah*-oriented method and resemble the stage of discovering the authoritative textual evidence (*kashf al-naṣṣ*) in Islamic legal theory. They thus form the basis for a systematic and scientific interpretation of the Qur'an.

6.1.1. Stage One: Problem Identification

At this stage, the researcher does not merely engage with the lexical meaning of the verses but rather with the guidance-oriented problem that prompted their revelation. The central assumption is that religious texts reflect the psychological realities of human beings within particular historical and spiritual contexts and that each verse functions as a response to an inner human challenge. For example, when examining the verse, “*Nūn. By the Pen and what they write... And indeed, you are of a great moral character*” (Q. 68:1–4), the purpose is not simply to describe a moral virtue. Rather, the verse responds to a real issue confronting its audience: the social accusation directed at the Prophet and the need to affirm his psychological integrity and personal stability in the face of external pressure. This problem becomes the starting point for a psychological understanding of the text (Pasandideh 2018).

Structural analysis of the text at this stage involves two components: identifying descriptive texts and identifying prescriptive texts. Descriptive texts consist of verses and narrations that report human psychological states, the consequences of behavior, or internal dispositions. Examples include the verses, “*There is a sickness in their hearts*” (Q. 2:10) and “*their hearts had hardened*” (Q. 6:43), which describe psychological illness or inner disorder. These texts represent the primary psychological evidence of the Qur'an and must be analyzed through semantic interpretation and the extraction of psychological indicators from contextual reasoning. Prescriptive texts are verses expressed in the form of commands, prohibitions, or recommendations, such as “*Do not approach fornication*” (Q. 17:32) or “*Do not walk exultantly on the earth*” (Q. 17:37). These texts constitute the guidance-oriented responses to the psychological problem embedded in the context of revelation, aiming to reform behavior and regulate human action.

After distinguishing these two types of texts, the main step becomes

implication analysis that is, determining how each statement relates to the psychological problem. Each verse must be examined within the narrative progression of the surah to determine whether it functions as the presentation of a problem, the explanation of its cause, or the articulation of a solution.

As Elahizadeh (2020) notes, the declarative and imperative statements within each surah reflect human states and the conditions of the audience, and the distinction between these two forms of implication provides the foundation for the psychological analysis of the text. Thus, the stage of problem identification aims to recognize the educational purpose of the statements rather than merely their lexical meaning. From this perspective, the text indicates a need, crisis, or desired state that must be reconstructed. As Pasandideh (2018) states, a problem or difficulty is essentially the absence of the desired condition. Identifying this problem constitutes the entry point for the scientific analysis of human behavior in the Qur'an.

6.1.2. Stage Two: Causal Analysis

Once the problem has been identified, the next step is to analyze the causes and contexts that produced it. This stage corresponds to explaining the context of revelation, while also seeking to discover the relationship between the social or psychological conditions surrounding the revelation and the general laws governing human psychology. As discussed in previous Four, every psychological phenomenon described in the Qur'an is rooted in the lawful structures of the human self. Therefore, the interpreter must determine the causes underlying both desirable and undesirable states (Pasandideh 2018).

In the *Shākilah*-oriented method, causal analysis goes beyond historical reconstruction and includes psychological and structural dimensions. The interpreter must determine what kind of inner structure (*shākilah*) or personality style led to the behavior or discourse addressed by the Qur'an. For instance, when the Qur'an discusses religious superiority or spiritual arrogance, as examined in the analysis of Surah al-Hujurāt, the root of many deviant behaviors is identified as a psychological need for religious superiority. This inner disposition functions as a *shākilah*, which manifests outwardly in observable behavior (Sabouhi 2016).

Causal analysis therefore corresponds to discovering the causal law governing human psychology. What appears at the surface level of textual description must be traced back to the deeper level of the underlying law. This law may involve a psychological motivation, attitude, or structural disposition that explains the emergence of a particular behavior. Faramarz Qaramaleki (2009) emphasizes that identifying the hidden layers that shape

behavior makes it possible both to predict human behavior in different contexts and to formulate effective educational strategies.

At this stage, the central question becomes: What understanding of human psychology did the divine Author presuppose when revealing this statement, and on which psychological reality was the verse based? Answering this question enables the interpreter to move from the level of meaning to the level of law and to explain not merely what the concept is but also why it appears in the text. In this way, the text is transformed from a historical narrative into a scientific explanatory model.

The first two steps of the *Shākilah*-oriented model thus establish the foundation for a psychological understanding of the Qur'an: problem identification views the text in light of the human condition embedded in the discourse, while causal analysis reveals the psychological roots and governing laws of that condition. Together, these steps enable the transition from conceptual analysis to the discovery of guidance-oriented laws, preparing the ground for the subsequent stages of solution analysis and *shākilah* structuring. Through this process, the Qur'an moves from being understood as a report of events to becoming a source for understanding the mechanisms of the human self within the framework of revelation, thereby providing the scientific basis for Qur'an-based psychology.

6.2. Complementary Steps: Solution Analysis and Shākilah Structuring

After completing the first two stages, problem identification and causal analysis, the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory process proceeds to two complementary steps that shape the practical dimension of the model: solution analysis, which extracts Qur'anic strategies for psychological transformation, and final *shākilah* structuring, which constructs a coherent model of religiously grounded human behavior. These stages constitute the theoretical foundation of Qur'an-based psychology, organizing the final conceptual model through the network of Qur'anic verses.

6.2.1. Stage Three: Solution Analysis

At this stage, the researcher must extract from the verses related to the problem and its causes those guidance-oriented propositions that constitute the Qur'anic response to the human psychological crisis or need. Each prescriptive statement indicates an internal law of transformation rather than merely a moral recommendation (Pasandideh 2018). Within this analytical

framework, every verse serves a distinct educational purpose, and its meaning becomes clear only when examined in relation to that pedagogical objective (Fathollahi 2009, 489).

Solution analysis reconstructs the pathway of behavioral transformation by bringing together the descriptive and prescriptive verses of each surah. The Qur'an first describes a negative condition and then provides a corresponding strategy for overcoming it, thereby transforming its network of commands and descriptions into a model of psychological development. Each command or prohibition reflects an inner law of the human self, allowing the text to move from the level of recommendation to the level of guidance-oriented law (Nooralizadeh et al. 2018).

A clear example appears in Surah al-Ḥujurāt. The surah first reports socially destructive behaviors such as ridicule and backbiting and then presents a solution based on humility and communal harmony among believers. This framework is introduced as the Qur'anic path for reforming a narcissistic inner structure (Sabouhi 2016). By linking the causal law identified in the previous stage with the guidance-oriented statements of the text, the researcher uncovers the logic of transformation within the revelatory system. At this point, the Qur'an is no longer treated merely as a linguistic text but as a system for psychological healing and human development.

6.2.2. Stage Four: Final *Shākilah* Structuring

The final stage involves integrating and organizing all the findings into a unified conceptual model that explains the relationships among the problem, its causes, and the proposed solutions, while demonstrating how these are manifested within the structure of human personality. The conceptual foundation of this stage lies in the verse, "Say, 'Everyone acts according to his character (*shākilah*)'" (Q. 17:84). This verse presents human behavior as rooted in the inner structure of the individual (Faramarz Qaramaleki 2009, 96).

Within this model, *shākilah* refers to a set of interrelated attitudinal and motivational patterns that guide behavior (Nooralizadeh et al. 2018). By classifying the data obtained from the previous stages, the researcher reconstructs the inner network of belief, motivation, and action, thereby extracting from the relationships among the verses a comprehensive system that explains human conduct. This process effectively transforms dispersed textual propositions into a theory of religiously guided behavior.

In the example of Surah al-Ḥujurāt, the Qur'an reveals a pattern of religious narcissism underlying various destructive behaviors, while

presenting faith-based humility as the desirable *shākilah* that leads to proper guidance (Sabouhi 2016). The verses thus form a network of contrasting actions and attitudes that together illustrate the law governing inner human transformation.

The ultimate aim of this stage is to uncover the overall logic of divine guidance that is, the organization of human behavior within the framework of divine purpose. The researcher analyzes the verses not as isolated concepts but as components of a coherent system governing the human self, thereby explaining how divine will directs the psychological structure of human beings (Bagheri 2021, 153–154).

Solution analysis transforms the Qur'an from a descriptive text into a strategic guide for human transformation, while final *shākilah* structuring establishes the link between divine law and the psychological structure of the human being. The outcome of these two stages is a coherent theory of religiously guided behavior grounded in revelation, the lawful nature of the human self, and the structural network of the *shākilah*. Such a theory elevates the understanding of the Qur'an from a collection of moral exhortations to a systematic scientific framework for Qur'an-based psychology.

7. Conclusion

The conclusion of this study is grounded in an analytical trajectory that moves from a critical evaluation of existing approaches to the presentation of the *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory model. A comparative examination of previous approaches in Qur'an-based psychological studies reveals that their principal limitation lies not in a lack of data but in the absence of an internal logic for deriving knowledge from the revealed text. In many of these approaches, meaning becomes subordinate to the expectations of the interpreter rather than to the divine will. Consequently, the psychological understanding of Qur'anic verses is often reduced to empirical generalizations or moral exhortations.

Seeking to overcome these shortcomings, the present study proposes a new model grounded in text-centered hermeneutics and the tripartite structure of Author, Text, and Interpreter. The objective of this model is to move beyond mere moral description toward a scientific explanation of human behavior within the framework of divine law. Within this framework, the *Shākilah*-oriented method regards the Qur'an not as a collection of isolated concepts but as a living and law-governed system of behavioral, cognitive, and motivational relations. According to this logic, the researcher

follows a coherent interpretive path consisting of four stages: problem identification, causal analysis, solution analysis, and *shākilah* structuring. This process transforms the structure of interpretation into a structure of theory construction, because each proposition acquires meaning through its relation to its guidance-oriented purpose and is situated within a network of psychological causes and governing principles. In this way, the verses move beyond the level of historical narration to the level of revealing mechanisms of guidance and transformation within the human psyche.

The outcome of this process is the formation of an intratextual logic that views the human being as a creature possessing a *shākilah* that is, an integrated system in which behavior, motivation, and belief operate under divine law while remaining capable of reform and reconstruction. Within this perspective, the Qur'an functions as a source for discovering the laws governing inner transformation rather than merely as a repository of moral exhortations and recommendations. Such an approach creates the conditions for the production of religious knowledge in psychology and opens the possibility of theory development and empirical inquiry within a revelation-based framework.

In conclusion, by presenting this model, the study takes a step toward reconstructing the methodological logic of the human sciences on the basis of revelation. The *Shākilah*-oriented explanatory approach demonstrates that the transition from interpretation to theory construction is possible only by returning to the logic underlying the revelation of divine statements and by analyzing the guidance-oriented structure of the text. This approach may serve as the beginning of a new phase in the production of scientific knowledge grounded in the Qur'an.

Declarations

Funding: No funding was received for conducting this study.

Conflict of Interest: The author declares no competing interests.

References

- Aarabi, S. M., & Boudlaie, H. (2011). Phenomenological Research Strategy. *Methodology of Social Sciences and Humanities*, 17(68), 31-58.
- Alamzadeh Nouri, M. (2021). *Deriving ethical rulings from the conduct and practice of the Infallibles* (in Persian). Research Institute for Culture and Islamic Thought.
- Alitabar Firouzjaei, R. (2011). *Foundations of understanding religion* (in Persian). Research Institute for Culture and Islamic Thought.

- Al-Raḍī, M. (1993). *Nahj al-Balāghah*. Tehran: Hijrat.
- Arafi, A. (2000). The methodology of inferring educational teachings in the mirror of the conduct and sayings of Imam 'Alī. In *Proceedings of the Conference on Education in the Conduct and Sayings of Imam 'Alī* (pp. 211–256). Qom, Iran.
- Bagheri, A. O. (2021). *The role of presuppositions and interests of the interpreter in Qur'anic exegesis* (in Persian). Research Institute of Ḥawzah and University Press.
- Bagheri, K. (2010). *The identity of religious science* (in Persian). Tehran: SAMT.
- Bostan, H. (2013). *A step towards religious knowledge* (in Persian). Research Institute of Ḥawzah and University Press.
- Ebrahimi Dehshiri, M. H., & Salehzadeh, M. (2016). The Nature of Islamic Psychology, a Priori or a Posteriori? *Studies in Islam and Psychology*, 10(19), 135-155. <https://doi.org/10.30471/psy.2016.1266>
- Elahizadeh, M. H. (2020). *Handbook of reflective contemplation on the Qur'an* (in Persian). Institute for Tadabbur in the Word of Revelation.
- Fadakar, F. (2014). *An approach-based evaluation of Islamic psychology studies* (in Persian). Roshde Farhang.
- Faramarz Qaramaleki, A. (2009). *Principles and techniques of research in religious studies* (in Persian). Markaze Modiriat.
- Fathollahi, E. (2009). *Methodology of Qur'anic sciences* (in Persian). Imam Sadiq University Press.
- Golshani, M. (2003). *From secular science to religious science* (in Persian). Tehran: Tarhe No.
- Heydarifar, M. (2016). The epistemic comprehensiveness of the Qur'an in light of human needs (in Persian). In *Proceedings on Methodology of the Qur'an and the Humanities*.
- Jamshidi, M. H. (2009). *Foundations and methodology of explanation* (in Persian). Imam Sadiq University Press.
- Jazayeri, H. (2017). Methodology of interdisciplinary studies of the Qur'an and law (in Persian). In *Proceedings of the International Congress on Qur'an and the Humanities*. Al-Mustafa Publishing.
- Kalantari, M. (2014). The necessity of introducing Islamic thought into psychology. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Research*, (7), 34–65.
- Kavyani Arani, M. (2020). The nature of social psychology of the Qur'an. *The Quran and Science*, 14(26), 35-64. <https://doi.org/10.22034/qve.2020.4598>
- Kavyani Arani, M. (2019). The Perspective of Islamic Psychology as a School. *Studies in Islam and Psychology*, 12(23), 69-100.

<https://doi.org/10.30471/psy.2019.1547>

- Kavyani, M. (2017). Interdisciplinary studies of the Qur'an and psychology (in Persian). In *Proceedings of the First International Congress on Islamic Humanities*.
- Kavyani, M. (2014). *Psychology in the Qur'an: Concepts and teachings* (in Persian). Research Institute of Hawzah and University Press.
- Mojtahed Shabestari, M. (1996). *Hermeneutics: The Book and the Tradition* (in Persian). Tehran: Tarhe No.
- Najati, M. U. (1990). The methodology of Islamic foundationalization for psychology (in Arabic). *Al-Muslim al-Mu'ashir*, 57, 21–46.
- Najati, M. U. (2001). *The Qur'an and psychology* (in Arabic). Cairo: Dār al-Shuruq.
- Naqipourfar, V. (2002). *A study on reflective contemplation in the Qur'an* (in Persian). Tehran: Osveh.
- Nobari, A. (2020). Revisiting the chapter on psychotherapy in the Qur'an (in Persian). In *National Conference on Qur'an and Psychology*.
- Nooralizadeh Mianaji, M., Gramaleki, A. F., Pasandideh, A., & Khanifar, H. (2018). Principles and Criteria for Validation of Scientific Understanding of Islamic Texts in the Humanities. *Journal of Fundamental Research in Humanities*, 3(4), 7-24.
- Pasandideh, A. (2016). Islamic Psychology; Islamization of Psychology, or Theorization of Psychological Teachings of Islam? *Journal of Islamic Psychology*, 1(1), 3-8.
- Pasandideh, A. (2018). The psychological comprehension method of religious texts: Investigating a singular text. *Journal of Islamic Psychology*, 3(6), 67-91.
- Qarai, A. Q. (2004). *Translation of the Holy Qur'an*. London: ICAS.
- Qodsi, A. (2018). *Foundations and principles of deriving knowledge from the Qur'an and Hadith* (in Persian). Qom: Imam Khomeini Institute Press.
- Rajabi, M. (2017). *Method of Qur'anic exegesis* (in Persian). Research Institute of Hawzah and University Press.
- Rezaei Adriani, E. (2024). *Methodology of deriving lifestyle from the Qur'an* (in Persian). Noor al-hayat.
- Rezaei Isfahani, M. A. (2009). *An Introduction to the Methodology of Qur'anic and Human Sciences Studies*. Qom: Jāmi'at al-Muṣṭafā.
- Sabouhi Tasuji, A. (2016). *Reflective contemplation on the Holy Qur'an* (in Persian). Institute for Tadabbur in the Word of Revelation.
- Tabataba'i, M. H. (1996). *Al-Mizān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*. Qom: Jāmi'ah Mudarrisīn.
- Va'ez, A. (2014). *Theory of textual interpretation* (in Persian). Research Institute of Hawzah and University Press.