

Reconstruction of Cultural Psychology Based on Islamic Spirituality: An Integrative Model of Human Behavior in a Multicultural Context

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ABSTRACT

The development of cultural psychology has expanded the understanding of human behavior by emphasizing the role of cultural context in shaping identity, cognition, emotion, motivation, and social interaction. However, contemporary cultural psychology remains predominantly grounded in empirical paradigms and provides limited attention to spirituality as a transcendental source of meaning, moral orientation, and self-regulation. This study aims to reconstruct cultural psychology based on Islamic spirituality by developing an integrative model of human behavior in multicultural contexts. The study employs a library research approach with a conceptual analysis design. Data were collected from primary and secondary sources, including the Qur'an, Hadith, books on cultural psychology and Islamic psychology, and relevant scholarly literature. Data were analyzed using content analysis combined with thematic synthesis. The findings indicate that human behavior emerges from dynamic interactions among Islamic spiritual values, local culture, individual psychological processes, and multicultural social interactions. The resulting model positions Islamic spirituality as an epistemological foundation that integrates cultural, psychological, social, and transcendental dimensions. The model contributes theoretically by expanding the cultural psychology paradigm and practically by providing a conceptual foundation for multicultural education, cross-cultural counseling, religious moderation, and character development. Future research should empirically test the model using quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods approaches across diverse multicultural contexts.

Keywords: Cultural Psychology, Islamic Spirituality, Islamic Psychology, Spiritual Value

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INTRODUCTION

The development of psychology in the 21st century has witnessed a paradigm shift from approaches that are solely oriented toward the individual toward approaches that are more contextual and holistic (Tumober et al., 2026). One of these developments is marked by the emergence of cultural psychology as a discipline that views human behavior as inseparable from the cultural context in which it is embedded. From this perspective, culture is not merely a social backdrop but a system of meaning that actively shapes how individuals think, feel, interpret experiences, construct identities, and interact with their social environments. Culture is manifested through language, symbols, traditions, norms, values, and everyday life practices that are continuously reproduced through intergenerational social interactions. Therefore, human behavior is understood as the outcome of reciprocal relationships between cultural structures and individual psychological processes, such that every behavioral expression possesses interconnected historical, social, and cultural dimensions.

The development of cultural psychology has made a significant contribution to challenging the universality of Western psychological theories, which tend to generalize the characteristics of individualistic societies as representations of human behavior in general. Various cross-cultural studies have demonstrated that cognitive processes, emotional regulation, self-concept, motivation, and decision-making are influenced by the cultural values embraced by a particular society (Suci, 2026). Thus, an understanding of human behavior can no longer be separated from the cultural context in which individuals grow and develop. Nevertheless, although cultural psychology has successfully expanded the scope of analysis in modern psychology, most of its theoretical constructs are still built upon a positivistic paradigm oriented toward empirical observation and scientific rationality, with primary emphasis on social and cultural dimensions. This paradigm provides relatively limited space for the spiritual dimension as a source of meaning in life, moral orientation, and the regulation of human behavior.

This limitation becomes increasingly apparent when cultural psychology is applied to societies that regard religion as a fundamental foundation of social life, such as Muslim communities (Atari et al., 2023). In this context, religion is understood not merely as a formal identity or a system of religious rituals, but also as an epistemological framework that shapes how individuals understand themselves, others, and the realities of life. Islamic spirituality provides a set of values that guides an individual's psychological orientation through concepts such as *tawhid*, *ihsan*, *taqwa*, patience (*sabr*), gratitude (*shukr*), trustworthiness (*amanah*), sincerity (*ikhlas*), and moral character (*akhlaq*) as foundations for character formation. These values regulate not only the vertical relationship between humans and Allah (*ḥabl min Allāh*), but also integrate horizontal relationships with fellow human beings (*ḥabl min al-nās*) and responsibility toward nature as part of the human role as *khalifah* (steward). Thus, from an Islamic perspective, human behavior is influenced not merely by cultural constructions but also by spiritual consciousness, which serves as a source of intrinsic motivation, self-control, and the construction of meaning in life.

The relevance of integrating culture and spirituality has become increasingly significant in the era of globalization, characterized by increased human mobility, advances in information technology, and an unprecedented intensity of intercultural interaction. Contemporary societies exist within increasingly multicultural social

spaces, requiring individuals to adapt to diverse systems of values, identities, and traditions. On the one hand, this condition creates opportunities for constructive cultural exchange; on the other hand, it also generates various psychological challenges, such as identity conflicts, crises of meaning in life, social polarization, intolerance, and the weakening of moral orientation. These phenomena demonstrate that explanations of human behavior are no longer sufficiently addressed through cultural or individual psychological approaches alone but require a conceptual framework capable of simultaneously integrating psychological, cultural, and spiritual dimensions.

In Muslim societies living within multicultural environments, Islamic spirituality has a strategic function as an integrative mechanism capable of bridging cultural diversity without eliminating religious identity. Universal Islamic principles, such as justice (*al-'adl*), compassion (*rahmah*), brotherhood (*ukhuwwah*), tolerance (*tasāmuḥ*), and moderation (*wasatīyyah*), provide an ethical orientation that enables individuals to interact adaptively with diverse cultural groups (Amanah et al., 2026; Mashuri & Syahid, 2024; Sa'diyah et al., 2026). Therefore, spirituality functions not only as an individual religious experience but also as psychological and social capital for building cohesion within multicultural societies. This perspective demonstrates that the integration of culture and spirituality is highly relevant to explaining the dynamics of human behavior in pluralistic societies.

Nevertheless, the development of studies concerning the relationship between culture, religion, and human behavior still reveals several conceptual limitations. Previous studies have generally positioned culture as an independent variable influencing behavior, while spirituality has been treated as a moderator, mediator, or additional predictor of various psychological indicators, such as subjective well-being, resilience, life satisfaction, and mental health. Although this approach provides important empirical contributions, it has not yet been able to explain how spirituality functions as an epistemological foundation throughout the entire process of human behavioral formation. In other words, the relationship between culture and spirituality is still understood in additive rather than integrative terms. Consequently, cultural psychology models developed to date have not fully represented the complexity of behavior in religious societies, particularly Muslim communities that regard Islamic values as the primary source of orientation in life.

Furthermore, Islamic psychology studies themselves have focused largely on concepts such as *fitrah*, *qalb*, *nafs*, *ruh*, Islamic mental health, or character education, without systematically connecting these concepts to cultural constructions within multicultural societies. Conversely, cultural psychology emphasizes the influence of cultural systems on behavior without integrating the transcendental dimension that lies at the core of the Islamic worldview. The separation between these two intellectual traditions has resulted in the absence of a conceptual framework capable of explaining how culture and spirituality interact in shaping individuals' cognitive, affective, motivational, and social behavioral processes. Thus, a theoretical gap remains in the form of the absence of a cultural psychology model that explicitly positions Islamic spirituality as a conceptual foundation for understanding human behavior within multicultural societies.

Based on this gap, this study offers a novel contribution through the reconstruction of cultural psychology based on Islamic spirituality by developing a

conceptual synthesis of cultural psychology theories, Islamic psychology, and spiritual concepts derived from the Qur'an, Hadith, and contemporary Islamic literature. Unlike previous studies that merely associate culture and spirituality as two separate variables, this study positions Islamic spirituality as a paradigm that integrates cultural, psychological, social, and transcendental dimensions into a single conceptual model of human behavior. This integrative model is expected to provide a new perspective for understanding the processes of identity formation, emotional regulation, cross-cultural adaptation, decision-making, and prosocial behavior among Muslim communities living in multicultural environments.

Through a library research approach, this study aims to reconstruct a cultural psychology paradigm based on Islamic spirituality by synthesizing various theories of cultural psychology, Islamic psychology, and concepts of Islamic spirituality to produce an integrative model of human behavior in the context of multicultural societies. Theoretically, this study is expected to enrich the development of cultural psychology by expanding its analytical dimensions to include transcendental aspects. Practically, the resulting model is expected to serve as a conceptual foundation for the development of multicultural education, cross-cultural counseling services, character development, the strengthening of religious moderation, and the formulation of more contextually appropriate social policies for Muslim communities in the global era.

METHOD

This study employs a library research approach with a conceptual analysis design to reconstruct a cultural psychology model based on Islamic spirituality through the synthesis of various relevant theories and concepts (Hadi et al., 2025). This approach was selected because the study focuses on developing a conceptual framework rather than collecting empirical data; therefore, the analysis is conducted systematically and critically on a range of scholarly literature. The data sources consist of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include the Qur'an, Hadith, Qur'anic commentaries (tafsir), books on cultural psychology, Islamic psychology, and philosophy of science, as well as reputable scholarly articles addressing culture, spirituality, and human behavior. Secondary sources include supporting books, dissertations, theses, conference proceedings, and previous research findings relevant to the focus of the study.

Data collection was conducted through documentary research by searching scholarly literature in academic databases, including Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, DOAJ, and nationally accredited journals. The literature search employed keywords related to cultural psychology, Islamic psychology, Islamic spirituality, multiculturalism, and human behavior. The literature was selected based on thematic relevance, source credibility, and conceptual contribution, with priority given to recent publications while also incorporating classical works that serve as foundational references. Data analysis employed content analysis combined with thematic synthesis. The stages of analysis included: (1) identifying the main concepts in cultural psychology; (2) identifying concepts of spirituality from an Islamic perspective; (3) grouping themes that demonstrate connections between the two perspectives; (4) conducting a conceptual synthesis through comparative and interpretive analysis; and (5) developing an integrative model of cultural psychology based on Islamic spirituality as a conceptual framework for understanding human behavior in

multicultural contexts. To ensure the credibility of the research findings, a triangulation of literature sources was conducted by comparing various theoretical perspectives, accompanied by critical appraisal of each piece of literature utilized. The entire analytical process was carried out systematically to produce a conceptual model with theoretical coherence and relevance as a foundation for the development of cultural psychology based on Islamic spirituality.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

The synthesis of various sources of literature indicates that the development of cultural psychology has made an important contribution to explaining how culture shapes human behavior through processes of meaning-making, value internalization, identity formation, and social interaction. Various perspectives within cultural psychology emphasize that individuals never develop in a value-free space; rather, they are always situated within cultural systems that provide a set of symbols, languages, norms, traditions, and social practices as frameworks for understanding reality. Therefore, psychological processes such as perception, cognition, emotion, motivation, and decision-making are the outcomes of continuous interactions between individuals and their cultural environments (Mamis et al., 2025; Sihabudin, 2022). The literature synthesis also demonstrates that cultural psychology has successfully shifted the paradigm of psychology from a previously universalistic orientation toward an understanding that human behavior is always contextual and influenced by diverse social experiences across cultural groups.

Nevertheless, the findings indicate that most contemporary cultural psychology models are still grounded in empirical paradigms that position culture as a primary determinant of behavior without providing adequate attention to the transcendental dimension. Various theories tend to explain the relationship between culture and identity, social adaptation, psychological well-being, and prosocial behavior primarily through socio-cognitive mechanisms, while the spiritual dimension is generally positioned merely as an independent psychological variable. Consequently, explanations of human behavior in religious societies remain less comprehensive because they have not fully considered spirituality as a system of meaning that influences how individuals interpret life experiences, regulate behavior, and establish relationships with their social environments. These findings indicate the need to reconstruct the paradigm of cultural psychology to enable a more comprehensive integration of cultural and spiritual dimensions.

On the other hand, a synthesis of the literature on Islamic psychology demonstrates that human behavior is understood as a manifestation of the interaction among the physical dimension, intellect ('aql), heart (qalb), soul (nafs), and spirit (rūḥ), all of which are oriented toward the principle of tawhid. This perspective views human beings as creatures influenced not only by social and biological experiences but also by spiritual qualities that shape their life orientations, value systems, and existential purposes. Spiritual values such as tawhid, ihsan, taqwa, gratitude (shukr), patience (sabr), reliance upon God (tawakkul), trustworthiness (amanah), and moral character (akhlaq) function as mechanisms of self-regulation that guide individuals in controlling emotions, making moral decisions, building social relationships, and realizing behaviors oriented toward the common good (maslahah).

The integration of findings from cultural psychology and Islamic psychology produces an integrative model of cultural psychology based on Islamic spirituality, which explains that human behavior is the result of dynamic interactions among spiritual values, cultural systems, individual psychological processes, and multicultural social environments. This model consists of five interconnected main components, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Integrative Model of Cultural Psychology Based on Islamic Spirituality

Component	Conceptual Description	Function in the Model	Expected Outcomes
Islamic Spiritual Values	<i>Tawhid</i> , <i>ihsan</i> , <i>taqwa</i> , <i>amanah</i> , gratitude (<i>shukr</i>), patience (<i>sabr</i>), reliance upon God (<i>tawakkul</i>), and moral character (<i>akhlaq</i>) serve as the foundations for the formation of an individual's life orientation, value system, and moral standards.	Serve as an epistemological foundation that guides self-regulation, character formation, and decision-making.	Spiritual awareness, moral integrity, self-control, and behavioral orientations aligned with Islamic values.
Local Culture	Culture, in the form of norms, traditions, symbols, language, and social practices, serves as a medium for actualizing Islamic spiritual values in community life.	Internalize spiritual values into cultural practices and strengthen socio-religious identity.	Adaptive and moderate cultural expressions that are aligned with Islamic values.
Individual Psychological Processes	Include perception, cognition, emotion, motivation, self-identity, and self-regulation, which are simultaneously influenced by culture and spirituality.	Integrate cultural experiences with spiritual orientations in the formation of behavior.	Mature identity, emotional regulation, intrinsic motivation, and psychological adaptability.
Multicultural Social Interaction	Processes of communication, adaptation, and identity negotiation within pluralistic societies based on the values of <i>tasāmuḥ</i> , <i>ukhuwwah</i> , <i>ta'āwun</i> , <i>rahmah</i> , and <i>wasāṭiyyah</i> .	Implement spiritual values in cross-cultural relationships and strengthen social cohesion.	Tolerance, empathy, social harmony, and the ability to coexist within diversity.
Prosocial Behavior and Psychological Well-Being	The outcome of the integration of spirituality, culture, and psychological processes, reflected in	Serve as the ultimate outcome of the overall integrative process within the model.	Prosocial behavior, resilience, meaning in life, psychological well-being, and improved quality of social relationships.

Component	Conceptual Description	Function in the Model	Expected Outcomes
	adaptive behavior and holistic well-being.		

Based on Table 1, the resulting model demonstrates that the five components form an interconnected system that cannot be understood in isolation. Islamic spiritual values constitute the primary foundation that provides moral orientation and meaning to all of an individual's psychological activities. These values are then actualized through local culture, which functions as a social medium for transforming spiritual teachings into norms, traditions, and everyday life practices. Subsequently, the internalization of these values influences individual psychological processes, including how individuals perceive reality, regulate emotions, construct identities, and determine their actions.

Psychological processes that have been shaped by culture and spirituality are subsequently manifested in multicultural social interactions, namely the ability of individuals to adapt, communicate, and establish harmonious relationships with groups from different cultural backgrounds. At this stage, Islamic values such as tolerance (*tasāmuḥ*), brotherhood (*ukhuwwah*), compassion (*raḥmah*), cooperation (*ta'āwun*), and moderation (*wasatīyyah*) serve as ethical mechanisms that strengthen social cohesion while maintaining individuals' religious identities.

The integration of these four components culminates in the development of prosocial behavior and psychological well-being as the primary outcomes of the model (Karisma et al., 2026; Puspitasari, 2022). The synthesis findings indicate that individuals who are able to integrate spiritual values with cultural experiences tend to have better self-regulation abilities, adapt more easily to multicultural societies, demonstrate empathetic and cooperative behavior, and possess a stronger sense of meaning in life. Thus, psychological well-being in this model is not understood merely as a positive emotional state, but as a harmonious condition that reflects alignment among spiritual, psychological, social, and cultural dimensions.

Overall, the findings of this study produce a conceptual construction demonstrating that human behavior cannot be explained solely through cultural or psychological factors considered separately. Behavior is the result of multidimensional interactions among Islamic spiritual values, culture, individual psychological processes, and continuously evolving social dynamics. The resulting integrative model expands the scope of cultural psychology by positioning Islamic spirituality as an epistemological foundation that connects all components shaping human behavior within multicultural societies. This model constitutes the primary conceptual contribution of the study while also offering a new framework for the development of a more holistic and contextual cultural psychology.

DISCUSSION

The findings of the study demonstrate that the reconstruction of cultural psychology based on Islamic spirituality can broaden the cultural psychology paradigm by integrating cultural, psychological, and spiritual dimensions in explaining human behavior. Cultural psychology views individual behavior as a product of social construction shaped through the internalization of values, symbols, language, and cultural practices (Shweder, 1991; Cole, 1996). This perspective has

made a significant contribution to explaining how culture influences identity formation, cognitive processes, emotional regulation, and social relationships. Nevertheless, this paradigm remains predominantly influenced by empirical approaches that position culture as a primary determinant of behavior and therefore does not fully accommodate the spiritual dimension as a source of meaning in life and individual moral orientation (Valsiner, 2014). Therefore, the findings of this study demonstrate that integrating cultural psychology with Islamic spirituality can address this conceptual gap through a more holistic approach.

The findings reveal that Islamic spirituality functions not only as an individual religious dimension but also as a value system that guides the process of interpreting cultural experiences. From the perspective of Islamic psychology, human beings are understood as an integrated unity of the physical body, intellect ('aql), heart (qalb), soul (nafs), and spirit (rūḥ), all of which are oriented toward the principle of tawhid (Badri, 1979; Haque, 2004). Thus, human behavior is influenced not only by social and cultural experiences but also by spiritual qualities that shape motivation, self-control, and life orientation. This finding is consistent with Pargament's (1997) view that spirituality serves as a primary source in the search for meaning (meaning-making) and as a mechanism of religious coping when individuals face various challenges and dynamics in life.

The resulting integrative model demonstrates that Islamic spiritual values serve as the foundation for behavioral formation through an internalization process that takes place within a cultural context. Values such as tawhid, ihsan, taqwa, amanah, gratitude (shukr), and patience (sabr) function as self-regulation mechanisms that guide individuals' perceptions, emotions, motivations, and decision-making. These findings extend the concept of self-regulation, which has traditionally been explained primarily through socio-cognitive perspectives (Bandura, 1986) and Self-Determination Theory, which emphasizes intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2020), by adding a spiritual dimension as a source of transcendental motivation that shapes moral responsibility and behavioral orientation.

On the other hand, the findings indicate that local culture is not an entity that conflicts with Islamic spirituality but rather serves as a medium for actualizing spiritual values in social life. In Islam, culture is regarded as a product of human creativity that may develop as long as it does not contradict the principles of Islamic law (sharia). Therefore, the relationship between culture and spirituality is dialogical and mutually complementary. Universal Islamic values such as al-'adl (justice), raḥmah (compassion), ukhuwwah (brotherhood), tasāmuḥ (tolerance), and wasatīyyah (moderation) provide an ethical foundation that enables individuals to adapt positively within multicultural societies. This finding reinforces the view that cultural and religious identities can develop harmoniously without necessarily negating one another (Aboi, 2024; Jamil & Firmansyah, 2025).

Furthermore, this study demonstrates that individual psychological processes are shaped by the interaction between culture and spirituality. Culture provides a framework for interpreting social reality, while spirituality offers a normative orientation for making sense of those experiences. Their interaction produces individuals who are better able to develop empathy, tolerance, resilience, and adaptability in the face of cultural diversity. This finding supports Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological theory of development, which explains that human behavior results

from interactions between individuals and their environments. However, this study extends the theory by positioning spirituality as a factor that integrates the various environmental systems involved in behavioral formation.

The primary contribution of this study lies in the development of an integrative model of cultural psychology based on Islamic spirituality that positions spirituality as an epistemological foundation for understanding human behavior. Unlike previous studies that generally position spirituality as an additional variable in explaining psychological well-being or mental health, the resulting model demonstrates that spirituality constitutes a system of meaning that influences the entire process of identity formation, self-regulation, cultural adaptation, and social interaction. Thus, this study offers a conceptual novelty by expanding the cultural psychology paradigm through the integration of biological, psychological, social, cultural, and spiritual dimensions into a more comprehensive framework.

The implications of this study are not only theoretical but also practical. The resulting integrative model can serve as a foundation for developing multicultural education based on spiritual values, cross-cultural counseling services that are more sensitive to religious dimensions, as well as programs for strengthening religious moderation and character development in pluralistic societies. In addition, this model provides an alternative paradigm for developing a more contextually relevant psychology for Muslim communities while maintaining constructive dialogue between modern psychology and the Islamic intellectual tradition. Nevertheless, the model developed in this study remains conceptual in nature. Therefore, future research should empirically examine the validity of the relationships among the components of the model through quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods approaches across diverse cultural and social contexts.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the reconstruction of cultural psychology based on Islamic spirituality produces an integrative model that positions spirituality as the primary foundation for understanding human behavior in multicultural societies. The synthesis of the literature demonstrates that human behavior is the result of dynamic interactions among Islamic spiritual values, local culture, individual psychological processes, and social interactions. This integration expands the cultural psychology paradigm by introducing the transcendental dimension as a source of meaning-making, self-regulation, identity formation, and prosocial behavior. This study has limitations due to its use of a library research approach; therefore, the resulting model remains conceptual and has not yet been empirically tested. Nevertheless, the study provides a theoretical contribution through the reconstruction of cultural psychology by integrating the perspectives of cultural psychology and Islamic psychology into a more holistic conceptual framework. Practically, this model has the potential to serve as a foundation for the development of multicultural education, cross-cultural counseling services, the strengthening of religious moderation, and character development based on spiritual values. Future research is recommended to test this model through quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods approaches across various multicultural communities. In addition, the development of instruments for measuring cultural psychology based on Islamic spirituality, as well as comparative

studies across diverse cultural contexts, is necessary to strengthen the validity of the model and expand its implementation in the fields of psychology and social sciences.

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