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# Rethinking the Concept of *Al-Saadah* (Happiness) in Light of the Quranic *Istikhlaf* Framework

## Memikirkan Semula Konsep daripada *Al-Saadah* (Kebahagiaan) Berdasarkan Kerangka *Istikhlaf* Al-Qur'an

Hidayah Wan Ismail\* and Abdelaziz Berghout\*\*

### Abstract

This article analyses the Quranic *Istikhlaf* framework and its impact on redefining the notion of *Al-Saadah* and its different components. To rejuvenate the methods of understanding the Qur'an and implementing it in our present situation, it is essential to develop thorough and ingenious frameworks that are both unique and applicable to our current specific circumstances. This article aims at presenting the *Istikhlaf* framework as a guiding outline for revitalising our comprehension of the profound Quranic methodologies and teachings. Next, utilise the framework to redefine the concept of *Al-Saadah*. The article used an analytical descriptive method to investigate the degree to which the Quranic *Istikhlaf* framework can offer a more profound understanding of the idea of *Al-Saadah*, which is translated into English as happiness. This paper examines the different sources and content pertaining to *Istikhlaf* and *Al-Saadah* to construct the *Istikhlaf* framework. The article shows that there are various methodologies for studying *Al-Saadah*, depending on the different perspectives taken, such as religious, psychological, sociological, philosophical, cultural, economic, environmental and others. The proposed Quranic *Istikhlaf*

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framework offers a comprehensive approach to *Al-Saadah* by examining the four dimensions (4D) analysis: 1) the relationship with God, 2) the relationship with oneself, 3) the relationship with others, and 4) the relationship with nature and the universe. The article concluded that this framework integrates the concepts of religion, holistic man as a vicegerent, society as the centre of human civilisation and *umran*, and the environment and nature as key aspects in achieving *Al-Saadah*. It also emphasises the four aspects of *Al-Saadah* namely, the inner, the outer, the *Dunya* (worldly) and the *Akhirah* (hereafter). The article suggests doing a comprehensive analysis of the Quranic *Istikhlaf* model and utilising it to examine and elucidate the discourse, methodologies, and implementation of *Al-Saadah* approaches and programs in both individual and social contexts.

**Keywords:** Quranic *Istikhlaf* Framework, *Al-Saadah*, Four Dimensions Analysis, Integration.

### **Abstrak**

Kertas kerja ini menganalisis rangka kerja *Istikhlaf* Al-Quran dan kesannya terhadap mentakrifkan semula tanggapan *Al-Saadah* dan komponennya yang berbeza. Untuk meremajakan kaedah memahami Al-Qur'an dan melaksanakannya dalam keadaan sekarang, adalah penting untuk membangunkan rangka kerja yang teliti dan bijak yang unik dan boleh digunakan untuk keadaan tertentu kita sekarang. Kertas kerja ini bertujuan untuk membentangkan rangka kerja *Istikhlaf* sebagai garis panduan untuk menghidupkan semula kefahaman kita tentang metodologi dan ajaran Al-Qur'an yang mendalam. Seterusnya, rangka kerja akan digunakan untuk mentakrifkan semula konsep *Al-Saadah*. Artikel ini menggunakan kaedah deskriptif analitik untuk menyiasat sejauh mana rangka kerja *Istikhlaf* Al-Quran dapat menawarkan pemahaman yang lebih mendalam tentang idea *Al-Saadah*, yang diterjemahkan ke dalam bahasa Inggeris sebagai kebahagiaan. Kertas kerja ini mengkaji sumber dan kandungan yang berbeza berkaitan dengan *Istikhlaf* dan *al saadah* untuk membina rangka kerja *Istikhhaf*. Kertas kerja ini menunjukkan bahawa terdapat pelbagai metodologi untuk mengkaji *Al-Saadah*, bergantung kepada perspektif yang berbeza yang diambil, seperti agama, psikologi, sosiologi, falsafah, budaya, ekonomi, alam sekitar dan lain-lain. Rangka kerja *Istikhlaf* Al-Qur'an yang dicadangkan menawarkan pendekatan komprehensif

kepada *Al-Saadah* dengan mengkaji analisis empat dimensi (4D): 1) hubungan dengan Tuhan, 2) hubungan dengan diri sendiri, 3) hubungan dengan orang lain, dan 4) hubungan dengan alam dan alam semesta. Kertas kerja ini merumuskan bahawa kerangka ini mengintegrasikan konsep Agama, manusia holistik sebagai *khalifah*, masyarakat sebagai pusat tamadun manusia dan *umran*, dan alam sekitar serta alam semula jadi sebagai aspek utama dalam mencapai *Al-Saadah*. Ia juga merangkumi empat aspek *Al-Saadah* iaitu, batin, zahir, *Dunia* dan *Akhirah*. Kertas kerja ini mencadangkan analisis komprehensif model *Istikhlaf* Al-Qur'an dan menggunakannya untuk mengkaji dan menjelaskan wacana, metodologi, dan pelaksanaan pendekatan dan program al saada dalam konteks individu dan sosial.

**Kata Kunci:** Rangka Kerja *Istikhlaf* Al-Quran, *Al-Saadah*, Analisis Empat Dimensi, Integrasi.

### Introduction

The notion of *Al-Saadah* (happiness) has captivated the interest of philosophers, researchers, and experts from diverse specialisations and disciplines due to its multidimensional and complex nature. Throughout history, the notion of *Al-Saadah* has been carefully examined and analysed in practically all classical and current civilisations. Various perspectives, ideas, and methodologies have been developed and used to examine the significance, essence, goals, methods, facets, applications, and implementation of this concept at both the human and societal levels. Thus, it is unsurprising that happiness has consistently been a topic of ethical discussion and a recurring motif since ancient Greek philosophers<sup>1</sup> such as the pre-Socratics.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Fariddanesh, M., & Rezaei, A. M. (2019). Predicting the happiness of Adolescents Based on Coping Styles and Religious Attitudes. *Journal of Religion and Health*, 58(2), 537–553. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-017-0497-7>

<sup>2</sup> Øyvind Rabbås, Eyjólfur K. Emilsson, Hallvard Fossheim, and Miira Tuominen (eds.) (2015), *The Quest for the Good Life: Ancient Philosophers on Happiness*, Oxford University Press, p. 307, reviewed by Riin Sirkel, University of Vermont. ([https://ndpr.nd.edu/reviews/the-quest-for-the-good-life-ancient-philosophers-on-happiness/#\\_edn1](https://ndpr.nd.edu/reviews/the-quest-for-the-good-life-ancient-philosophers-on-happiness/#_edn1))

The origins of the notion of happiness may be traced back to ancient Greek history, where Aristotle<sup>3</sup> was the first known scholar to provide a detailed explanation of it and referred to it as 'eudaimonia'. There has been growing interest in happiness and its history within various disciplines like psychology, social sciences, literary studies, as well as in popular culture. Indeed, this shift of interest has been characterized as a "eudaimonic turn", where "eudaimonic" comes from the Greek *eudaimonia*, standardly translated as "happiness."<sup>4</sup>

In contrast, Muslim scholars use the Arabic phrase '*al-Saadah*' to convey the concept of happiness with a degree of difference due to worldview and cultural contexts. Throughout the ages, this notion has captivated both academics and ordinary people who sought to comprehend their own experiences and derive significance from their personal challenges as they navigate through life seeking happiness.

Undoubtedly, many Arab and Muslim thinkers made significant contributions to the discussion on al-saada and its interconnectedness with other prominent philosophical topics, including the categorisation of sciences. Islamic culture significantly contributed to the concept of eudaimonia, as inspired by Aristotle, through many disciplines and

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<sup>3</sup> Riin Sirkel in her review of the book: *The Quest for the Good life*, mentioned that for ancient philosophers, *eudaimonia* is not a particular kind of experience or feeling, but a particular kind of life, where reason almost always plays an important role. The link between happiness and reason is clearly drawn by Aristotle in *Nicomachean Ethics* (NE) I 7, where he argues that happiness resides in rational activity in accordance with virtue. This argument is discussed by Øyvind Rabbås in "*Eudaimonia*, Human Nature, and Normativity: Reflections on Aristotle's Project in *Nicomachean Ethics* Book I". He aims to explain how Aristotle's ethics can be both naturalist and practically normative, i.e. based in a conception of human nature as a rational being, and at the same time give guidance on how we ought to live. The connection between happiness and reason is particularly tight in the Platonist tradition, with Plotinus identifying the happy life with the life of intellect. Plotinus' thoughts on happiness are discussed by Alexandrine Schniewind (and touched upon by Eyjólfur K. Emilsson and Miira Tuominen). Schniewind shows in "Plotinus' Way of Defining '*Eudaimonia*' in *Ennead* I 4 [46] 1-3" that Plotinus' puzzling remarks about his predecessors in the two opening chapters of *Ennead* I 4 are intended to clear the way for his own definition of happiness, Riin Sirkel, [https://ndpr.nd.edu/reviews/the-quest-for-the-good-life-ancient-philosophers-on-happiness/#\\_edn1](https://ndpr.nd.edu/reviews/the-quest-for-the-good-life-ancient-philosophers-on-happiness/#_edn1)

<sup>4</sup> *The Eudaimonic Turn: Well-Being in Literary Studies*, edited by James O. Pawelski and D. J. Moores, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2014. For a comprehensive account of current happiness research, see *Oxford Handbook of Happiness*, edited by Susan A. David, Ilona Boniwell, Amanda Conley Ayers, Oxford University Press, 2013.



discourses including poetry, philosophy, psychology, and theology, among others.

Historically, the centrality of the pursuit of happiness or *al-saadah* in Islamic ethical thought and contemplation can be traced back to Revelation. Muslim scholars derive the understanding and definition of *al-saada* from the Qur'an, which describes it as a joy or happiness that is everlasting and attainable by everyone (Qur'an 11:105, 11:108). Over time, various questions have been posed to address the question of *al-saadah* as scholars tried to define this elusive concept. From the outset, a preliminary glance at the existing literature on the subject shows that the question of *al-saadah* has been approached from numerous angles and perspectives, and multiple methods have been employed to examine its origins and foundations.

However, while many approaches attempt to address the above questions, there seems to be a lack in the attention given to the framework utilised to describe and drive the discourse on *al-Saadah*. In fact, existing literature on the topic suggests that existing materialistic, naturalistic, positivistic, scientific, and even philosophical frameworks exhibit limits in tackling the subject matter. Most of the scholarship in the area deal with the notion of *al-Saadah* from fragmented and partial approaches, often failing to consider the complete and interconnected composition of the human being as well as his multi-dimensional nature.

This article investigates and introduces the Qur'anic Istikhlaf framework (QIF) for analyzing the concept of *Al-saadah* and its underlying meanings. This article aims to offer insights and guidance on the QIF, which is necessary to understand the concept and identify its characteristics and components. The article offers a concise overview of the significant literature and opinions on *Al-Saadah*, considering both Islamic and contemporary viewpoints. Additionally, it presents a recommended framework for studying *Al-Saadah*, which is based on the Quranic Istikhlaf framework.

The article consisted of an introduction and three main sections: a brief analysis of the frameworks/models for approaching happiness in Western scholarship, a brief analysis of the frameworks/models for approaching happiness in Islamic scholarship, and a proposed Quranic Istikhlaf Framework (QIF) for the study of happiness. The article also included a conclusion and suggestions.

### I- Brief Analysis of the Frameworks/ Models Approaching Happiness in Western Scholarship

Across various civilisations and philosophies of life, attempts have been made to define and elucidate the essence, foundations, means, conditions, and practices of *al-saadah*. Existing literature on the subject demonstrates that a variety of elements, including, among others, the influence of non-Muslim philosophies, have impacted the interpretation and formulation of the notion of *al-saadah* in Islamic thought to a certain degree. In this section a brief account of selected western approaches to the study of the notion of happiness is provided.

Happiness is an essential facet of the human experience. It has undergone thorough examination in multiple fields of study. Ever since the times of Aristotle the western mind has always been occupied by these questions of happiness.<sup>5</sup> In contemporary literature too the questions persisted and become more prevalent. Diener (1984) conducted a comprehensive analysis of the existing research on well-being, which includes happiness, life satisfaction, and positive affect<sup>6</sup>. The review by Sumner (1996)<sup>7</sup> specifically examined the methods used to evaluate subjective well-being, the elements that contribute to it, and the underlying theories. In their study, Singh et al. (2023) did a

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<sup>5</sup> Riin elaborates further, the ancient philosophers' answer to the question "What is happiness?" may be controversial. This is particularly so in the case of Aristotle, who distinguishes between moral virtues and intellectual virtues. His account of happiness in the first books of *NE* suggests that he ascribes the central role to the former, holding that happiness resides in the morally virtuous action guided by reason, whereas his account in the last book of *NE* identifies the virtuous activity that constitutes happiness with theoretical contemplation, and it is far from clear how these accounts are supposed to fit together. This difficulty is discussed briefly by Lear, and mentioned by Fossheim, while others rely on one account or other, without making their view explicit. So Grönroos assumes that the virtuous and happy person is *morally* virtuous, whereas Svavarsson, in claiming that for Aristotle happiness consists in godlikeness, evidently associates happiness with theoretical contemplation. While the expert can orient herself within different interpretations and assumptions, this will be challenging for those not familiar with the issues involved, see Riin Sirkel, [https://ndpr.nd.edu/reviews/the-quest-for-the-good-life-ancient-philosophers-on-happiness/#\\_edn1](https://ndpr.nd.edu/reviews/the-quest-for-the-good-life-ancient-philosophers-on-happiness/#_edn1)

<sup>6</sup> Diener, E.(1984), '*Subjective well-being*'. Psychological Bulletin, 95(3), 542-575. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.95.3.542>

<sup>7</sup>See Sumner, L. W (1999), *Welfare, Happiness and Ethics*, Clarendon Press, <https://global.oup.com/academic/product/welfare-happiness-and-ethics-9780198238782?cc=my&lang=en&#>. See also for same author: "Wellness Happiness and Ethics." 1996. Clarendon Press.

comprehensive analysis to investigate the factors that influence happiness in various cultures.<sup>8</sup> Their objective was to augment scholarly understanding by conducting a comprehensive analysis of the current literature on happiness. In their study, Díaz and Reuter (2020) examined the significance of morality in the popular understanding of pleasure, proposing that it encompasses ethical considerations and the sense of purpose in one's life.<sup>9</sup>

There is an enduring philosophical discourse on whether happiness is solely descriptive in nature or if it encompasses moral issues. Descriptive approaches of happiness argue that happiness is defined by the presence of specific psychological states. Hedonist theories, as proposed by Feldman (2010)<sup>10</sup>, emphasise the pursuit of high pleasure and low pain. Life satisfaction theories, as discussed by Suikkanen (2011)<sup>11</sup>, focus on being content with one's life. Hybrid theories, as described by Sumner (1996)<sup>12</sup>, incorporate both aspects of high pleasure and low pain, as well as life satisfaction. Conversely, normative perspectives argue that happiness is not just determined by psychological states, but also by one's moral character<sup>13</sup>. From this perspective, it is believed that an individual who lacks moral values may never attain genuine happiness, regardless of their temporary feelings of pleasure and overall contentment with their existence<sup>14</sup>. Benuyenah & Pandya (2020)<sup>15</sup> conducted an extensive review of research on the theory of happiness in organisational contexts, providing insights into the perception of happiness in these situations. The objective was to discover the factors that influence happiness within this group, with the

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<sup>8</sup> Singh, S. Kshtrya S, Valk, R. "Health Hope and Harmony: A Systematic Review of the Determinants of Happiness across Cultures and Countries" International Journal of Environment Res. Public Health 2023 . 20(4),3306. Special Issue on Mental Well Being: Feeling Stressed or Anxious?

<sup>9</sup> See Diaz, R., & Reuter, K., (2020) *Feeling the Right Way: Normative influences on people's use of emotion concepts*, Mind & Language 2021. Wiley Online Library.

<sup>10</sup> See Feldman, F. "What Is This Thing Called Happiness?" Oxford university Press. 2010.

<sup>11</sup> Suikkanen ,J. "An Improved Whole Life Satisfaction Theory of Happiness." International Journal of Wellbeing 1(1),2011.

<sup>12</sup> Sumner, L.W. 1996. *op.cit.*

<sup>13</sup> See Foot, P. *Natural Goodness*. Oxford Clarendon Press, 2001.

<sup>14</sup> Díaz and Reuter (2020). *op.cit.*

<sup>15</sup> See Benuyenah, V. and Pandya, B. (2020). *The Meaning of "employee happiness" within the context of complex organisations. An explanatory review on the UAE labour force*. Rajagiri Management Journal, 14(2), 169-180. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ramj-04-2020-0012>

intention of providing valuable insights for policy-making purposes. Şanlı et al. (2019)<sup>16</sup> conducted a study on the Authentic Happiness Scale, examining the relationship between authentic happiness and other psychological concepts.

The notion of happiness has been explored in diverse settings, including public relations discourse<sup>17</sup>, work situations<sup>18</sup>, and among distinct demographic cohorts such as millennials.<sup>19</sup> In this regard, there is a trend to link happiness with subjective wellbeing focusing on the satisfaction of individuals. Furthermore, the perceptions of happiness differ among religions, cultures, and academic fields, leading to continuous discussions regarding its definition and constituent elements. Therefore, the study of happiness involves a diverse range of frameworks and models derived from several academic fields such as psychology, philosophy, sociology, political sciences, economics, and neuroscience. Below are few prominent frameworks and models frequently cited in the literature:

1) *Hedonistic and eudaimonic.*

The concept of well-being in this framework emphasises hedonic well-being, which centres around the pursuit of pleasure and the avoidance of misery. Eudaimonic well-being pertains to living in alignment with one's own self, actualising individual potential, and discovering purpose in life<sup>20</sup>.

2) *Subjective well-being*<sup>21</sup>, an alternative perspective on happiness, is commonly defined as the level of satisfaction with one's life, the

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<sup>16</sup> See Sanli, E., Balci Celik, S., & Gencoglu, C. (2019). *The Validity and Reliability of The Authentic Happiness Scale*. Khazar Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, 22(1), 5–20.

<sup>17</sup> See Minyar-Beloroucheva, A. P., Sergienko, P. I., Vishnyakova, O.D., Vishnyakova, E.A., & Anossova, O.G. (2021) '*Axiological approach to developing spirituality and morality in the process of L2 PR education.*'

<sup>18</sup> See Fisher, Cynthia D. *Happiness at Work*. International Journal of Management Reviews 12 (4),384-412,2010

<sup>19</sup> See Yap, W.M., & Badri, S.K.S. 'What makes millennials happy in their workplace?' Asian Academy of Management Journal, 2020. Vol. 25, No. 1, 103–121. <https://doi.org/10.21315/aamj2020.25.1.6>

<sup>20</sup> Refer to Haybron. Daniel M "*Happiness, The Self and Human Flourishing*" Utilitas 20 (1),21-49,2008.

<sup>21</sup> Refer to Davern, M., Cummins, R. A., & Stokes, M. (2007). *Subjective Wellbeing as an Affective/cognitive Construct*. Journal of Happiness Studies, 8(4), 429 – 449.

experience of pleasant emotions, and the absence of negative emotions, serving as a sign of achieving a certain level of happiness. This paradigm places a strong focus on individuals' self-reported feelings of well-being.

3) Another significant framework is *the PERMA Model*, established by Martin Seligman (2002)<sup>22</sup>. It outlines five essential components of well-being and the achievement of happiness: positive emotion, engagement, connections, meaning, and accomplishment.

4) Moreover, the *Set-Point Theory of Happiness* posits that individuals possess an inherent degree of happiness that remains relatively constant throughout time, influenced by genetic and personality factors, regardless of external circumstances<sup>23</sup>.

5) Another renowned framework in the field of studying happiness and satisfaction of human needs is *Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs*<sup>24</sup>. While not explicitly designed as a happiness model, it is frequently linked to overall well-being. The theory proposes that human behaviour is driven by a progressive hierarchy of wants, beginning with basic physiological demands and progressing through safety, social belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualisation. By fulfilling those needs, an individual might achieve many forms of fulfilment that may contribute to their happiness, based on their personal circumstances, perspective, and contentment.

6) Lastly, one may mention the framework of the "hedonic treadmill." Also known as hedonic adaptation, this framework is an influential model in the study of happiness that originates from the field of positive psychology<sup>25</sup>. It suggests that individuals tend to return to a relatively stable base level of happiness despite major positive or negative events or life changes.

After briefly discussing various frameworks used for analysing the concept of happiness, it is evident that the Western perspective

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<sup>22</sup> Refer to Seligman, M. *Authentic Happiness. Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfilment*. Simon and Schuster. 2002.

<sup>23</sup> See Headey, Bruce (2007). Happiness: Revising Set-Point Theory and Dynamic Equilibrium Theory to Account for Long Term Change *Journal of Contextual Economics – Schmollers Jahrbuch* 127(1):85-94, University of Melbourne. Conferences, no. 103, p. 01024-01024

<sup>24</sup> See Maslow, A.H (1958) "A Dynamic Theory of Human Motivation." Howard Allen Publishers.

<sup>25</sup> Haybron, 2008. *Op. cit.*

emphasises the concept of happiness as being connected to well-being and material possessions. There are less efforts to combine the transcendental, spiritual, and revealed knowledge to understand the concept of happiness, and hardly any consideration of the connection between God and the unseen world's influence on our well-being and happiness.

The frameworks and models influence the prevailing Western viewpoints on happiness orientation, particularly in terms of how happiness is measured and quantified. These approaches tend to prioritise material and worldly desires, so restricting the human experience to the realms of the mind, body, senses, and material possessions and pleasures. When discussing spirituality and morality in this context, they often approach it from materialistic, positivistic, rationalistic, and secularistic perspectives. These perspectives prioritise worldly and materialistic understanding of life, focusing on the human brain, body, senses, and culture, while neglecting the soul-heart and the transcendental aspects of God. These mainstream scientific approaches to happiness exclude the consideration of these spiritual and metaphysical elements from the mainstream scientific approaches and frameworks.

## **II- Brief Analysis of the Frameworks/ Models Approaching Happiness in Islamic Scholarship**

Islamic views<sup>26</sup>, frameworks<sup>27</sup> and models for studying happiness incorporate spiritual and moral aspects alongside conventional psychological perspectives. They view happiness as a condition of equilibrium and balance in an individual's life, in accordance with Islamic teachings and worldview.

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<sup>26</sup> See Al Attas, SN 'The Meaning and Experience of Happiness in Islam'. Consciousness & Reality Chapter. p59-78.

<sup>27</sup> The major questions pertaining to the notion of Al Saada in Islamic thought includes such as Is it material pleasures or spiritual elevation or both? (Bentham, (Nursi 2001); Is it real or imaginary?; Can al-saadah be quantified? (Abdul Rahman, 2020); What are the epistemological foundations of al saadah? (Nasr 2014, El Zeiny 2020). These and other questions have been examined by various scholars.

For example, most Muslim scholars<sup>28</sup> attempt to deal with questions like what is *al-saadah* and what does it require?<sup>29</sup> What are the foundations and elements? Is *al-saadah* transitory or permanent?<sup>30</sup> Is it material pleasures<sup>31</sup> or spiritual elevation<sup>32</sup> or both? Is it real or imaginary<sup>33</sup>? Can *al-saadah* be quantified?<sup>34</sup> What are the epistemological foundations of *al saadah*?<sup>35</sup> These and other questions have been examined by various scholars throughout history. From the outset, a preliminary glance at the existing literature on the subject shows that the question of *al-saadah* has been approached from numerous angles and perspectives, and multiple methods have been employed to examine its origins and foundations.

From a broad standpoint, the Islamic viewpoint on happiness transcends the material and worldly dimensions of human existence. It offers a comprehensive framework that emphasises the equilibrium between the physical and metaphysical aspects and requirements of the individual. Key developments in addressing pleasure from an Islamic perspective include:

1) *Spiritual well being.*

Happiness is regarded as a state of spiritual well-being in Islamic teachings, which emphasise the correlation between spiritual well-being and happiness. Adhering to the religious rituals of Islam, such as

<sup>28</sup> For thoughts of Ibn Miskawayh see Marcotte, R. D. (2012). Ibn Miskawayh's *Tartib al Saadat, The Order of Happiness*. Monotheism and Ethics, 2012. Brill.com.

<sup>29</sup> For the views of Al Farabi see Khademi, A. 'Analysis of Happiness according to A. Farabi', Journal of Philosophical Theological Research, Vol. 10, Issue 2, Serial No 38 Feb 2009, p. 81-107.

<sup>30</sup> Nasr, Seyyed Hossein 'Happiness and the Attainment of Happiness: An Islamic Perspective' Journal of Law and Religion, Volume 29, Issue 1, February 2014, pp.76-91

<sup>31</sup> Bentham, J. 'An Introduction to the Principles of Moral and Legislation'. Oxford University Press. 1970.

<sup>32</sup> Keskin, Z. (2019). *Inner Peace in the Life of Said Nursi*. Australian Journal of Islamic Studies, 4(3), 51–66. <https://doi.org/10.55831/ajis.v4i3.243>

<sup>33</sup> See the views of Arthur Schopenhauer in Samame, L. B 'Virtue and Happiness in Schopenhauer's Ethics'. 2016. Sociedad de Estudios en Espanol sobre Schopenhauer.

<sup>34</sup> Abd Rahman, A, Lukman, Z. M (2018) *Happiness Instrument Development*. International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS) 3(4).

<sup>35</sup> Nasr, Seyyed Hossein, (2014), op.cit., El-Zeiny, I. (2020). *The Semantics and Ethics of Sa'adah (Happiness) in the Qur'an*. Islamic Studies, 59 (1), 95–114. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27088377>

engaging in prayer, observing fasting, and doing charity, is regarded to be a means of attaining inner tranquilly and contentment.

2) *The tazkiyah framework*, also known as spiritual purification, holds great importance in the Islamic faith. Soul purification means eliminating undesirable attributes and cultivating beneficial qualities that enhance one's proximity to God, resulting in elevated levels of happiness and contentment.

3) *Achieving a balance between worldly matters and spiritual matters*, where the quest of happiness is not limited to this life alone, but also encompasses awareness of the afterlife. The definition of pleasure includes not only immediate and temporary satisfaction, but also the ultimate satisfaction of the soul in the hereafter.

4) *The focus of Maqasid al-Shari'ah framework* is on achieving happiness. The primary goals of the Shari'ah are to safeguard fundamental human interests, such as religion, life, intellect, progeny, and property, which collectively enhance general welfare and contentment.

5) *The Islamic Virtue Ethics perspective on Al-saada*. The focus on character and the development of characteristics such as wisdom, courage, justice, and temperance contribute to the attainment of pleasure. These values synchronise individual growth with a collective sense of welfare.

6) *Employing Islamic Scholarship* as a means of aligning oneself and attaining satisfaction in life. The conceptual basis for comprehending happiness in Islam is derived from traditional teachings of Islamic scholars, works on character refinement and the significance of the heart in achieving happiness. The Islamic scholarship's express a concept of happiness that stems from leading a morally upright life and seeking pleasure from the Divine.

7) *The contentment approach to happiness*. Islamic perspectives on happiness emphasise the importance of contentment and thankfulness. By directing their attention towards their blessings rather than their deficiencies, individuals develop a state of tranquillity and satisfaction that fosters joy.



8) *Contemplating the idea of going back to Firaḥ* and exploring the role of human nature in achieving *al Saadah*. The concept of *Fitrah* as a framework serves as crucial in Islam for comprehending the inherent character and need of human beings. Understanding the nature and requirements of human *Fitrah* is crucial for comprehending human beings and implementing effective tactics to achieve pleasure.

The views of Muslim scholars on happiness, which are typically based on the teachings of the Qur'an and the Hadith, have historical and contemporary significance. Al-Farabi, for example, positioned *al-Saadah* as the highest level in the hierarchy of sciences, considering it to be the ultimate theoretical perfection and the ultimate objective of all sciences. Theoretical state of perfection, as described by Bakar (1998)<sup>36</sup>, serves as the ultimate target for all disciplines. His comprehension of the concept of *al-Saadah* was shaped by Greek philosophy. Nevertheless, he also sought to provide his religious exegesis grounded upon his comprehension of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

Al-Ghazali (1058-1111 AD), a very famous Muslim scholar, put forward a comprehensive notion of happiness that encompassed spiritual, intellectual, and ethical aspects<sup>37</sup>. According to Yahya et al.(2020)<sup>38</sup>, Al Ghazzali held the belief that genuine happiness can be obtained via the understanding and devotion to God, as well as by adhering to the teachings of Islam in one's daily life. According to Al-Ghazali's research on psycho-spiritual aspects, happiness is closely linked to emotional well-being and the condition of the soul. Al-Ghazali also says that divine direction can assist individuals in overcoming mental diseases that hinder a balanced and peaceful life.

Conversely, Ibn al-Qayyim al-Jawziyah contented with his framework that the attainment of knowledge and the possession of resolute determination are crucial elements in achieving happiness. He sought to clarify the concept of *al- Saadah* as ultimate happiness and attempted to describe it by depicting descriptions of the heavenly abode

<sup>36</sup> Bakar, Osman. *The Classification of Knowledge in Islam* (Cambridge: Islamic texts Society, 1998), 46-48.

<sup>37</sup> Refer to Al Ghazali. A. H. Field. *The Alchemy of Happiness*. 2015. Routledge.

<sup>38</sup> Yahya, N, Syed Omar, S. H. Yusoff, S.H. M, Shuhari, M.H.S & Rozali, M.H (2020) '*Element of Happiness in Al-Ghazali and its Relation in Psycho Spiritual.*' *International Journal of Academic research in Business and Social Sciences*, 10 (11), 1248-1253. <https://doi.org/10.6007/ijarbss/v10-i11/8202>

of Paradise as described in the Qur'an.<sup>39</sup> The concept of *akhirah* (the afterlife) and *al-Saadah al ukhrawiyyah* (the ultimate happiness) feature prominently in his framework. In a contrasting perspective, Ibn Khaldun ((1332-1406 AD) took a more worldly approach. Although he did not explicitly address the issue of *al-Saadah*, Ibn Khaldun illustrated how it can be achieved by society when it is largely characterised by stability, prosperity, and social harmony (*umran*)<sup>40</sup>. This perspective situates the achievement of *al-saadah* within a sociological-civilisational framework that includes civilisation and human association as crucial components in the equation of attaining happiness and prosperity in this world.

Generally, Muslim scholars promote the concept that happiness is strongly connected to faith (*iman*), virtuous actions (*amal saleh*), a meaningful existence, and maintaining a balance between material and spiritual desires. The focus is on achieving inner tranquilly, satisfaction (*qana'ah*), and a feeling of accomplishment that arises from aligning one's life with their religious beliefs. They frequently promote the exploration of lasting happiness and fulfilment that arises from spiritual development and a bond with the Divine, rather than being fixated on temporary pleasure and materialistic gains. For example, notwithstanding the above there have also been some frameworks proposed considering the spiritual dimension of human nature. One such framework is proposed by Said Nursi in *Risalat-i-Nur*<sup>41</sup>. However, this model falls short of the *istikhlafic* mindset that takes a systemic approach which incorporates all the required dimensions as will be explained in the next section.

### **III- Quranic Istikhlaf Framework (QIF) for the Study of Al Saadah**

This article proposes an integrated framework for examining happiness through an Islamic perspective. The framework is referred to as the Quranic Istikhlaf Framework (QIF). The notion of al-istikhlaf is

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<sup>39</sup> Ibn Qayyim al Jawziyya, *Miftah Dar Al Saada Wa Manshar Wilyat Al Ilm Iradah* (Key to the Blissful Abode), Beirut: Dar Al Kutub al Ilmiyya, n.d), Vol.1, p. 152.

<sup>40</sup> Wan Razali, Wan Mohd Fazrul Azdi & Awang, Jaffary. (2019). Exploring Ibn Khaldun's Views on The Religious Roles Towards Happiness: A Study of Religionswissenschaft in the Muqaddimah. *Ulum Islamiyyah*. 34-46. DOI:10.33102/ulum.2019.27.4.

<sup>41</sup> Aydin, Necati and Manusov, Eron (2014) '*Materialism, Hedonism, Spiritual, and Subjective Well Being: An Empirical Study of Risale -I-Nur (RN) Readers*' *Al Shajarah: Journal of International Islamic Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilisation*, Vol 19 No 2.

fundamental for the existence and continuation of human beings on Earth. The existence of human beings on Earth, along with their vision, mission, responsibilities, trust, objectives, and vicegerent-al project, is a result of al-istikhlaf.

In the Qur'an, Allah has already made clear that human beings are not created without purpose. This can be found in Surah Ale Imran 191, {We have not created all this in vain} and Surah Al Mu'minin 115 {Do you think that you have been created in vain and you will not be returned to us? The True Sovereign is too exalted above that.} and several others in the Qur'an.

Al-istikhlaf, or vicegerency, is a core concept which lies at the very foundation of the Islamic worldview. This important concept is mentioned in Surah al-Baqarah verse 30 where Allah says "*And remember when your Lord said to the angels, {I am going to place a successive 'human' (khalifa) authority on earth}. They asked Allah, {Will you place in it someone who will spread corruption there and shed blood while we glorify your praises and proclaim your Holiness?} Allah responded, {I know what you do not know}*" (Q: 2:30).

The positioning of Man on earth as Khalifah for the function of al-istikhlaf therefore is the most significant historical fact and occurrence that established the civilisation process and human endeavours to populate and establish human existence and civilisation on earth. Thus, it can be argued that all human civilisations and cultures are in fact just different expressions and manifestations of the al-istikhlaf project on earth based on varied human philosophies, worldviews, and frames of reference. This is in line with the finding of Dadou (2016) in a master's dissertation entitled *Mafhum Al-Istikhlaf Al Quranul Karim* that the concept of istikhlaf is the Qur'an's expression of human civilisation<sup>42</sup>.

In relation to ongoing discourse on the happiness index, numerous models and frameworks have been proposed to assess happiness by considering both inner and outer indicators of well-being. The approach indicated below focuses on inner indicators that emphasise characteristics such as achievement, interpersonal

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<sup>42</sup> Refer to Zijnab Ahmed Dadou (2016) - *Mafhum Al Istikhlaf Al Quranul Karim* . Masters Thesis, IIUM, Malaysia. (not published).

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connections, involvement, significance, and good feelings. In addition to outer indicators that encompass various factors like environment, government, community, safety, education, culture, health, and economy. Although the framework and its inner and outer aspects are significant, it is necessary to reformulate the framework to view it from an Islamic standpoint.

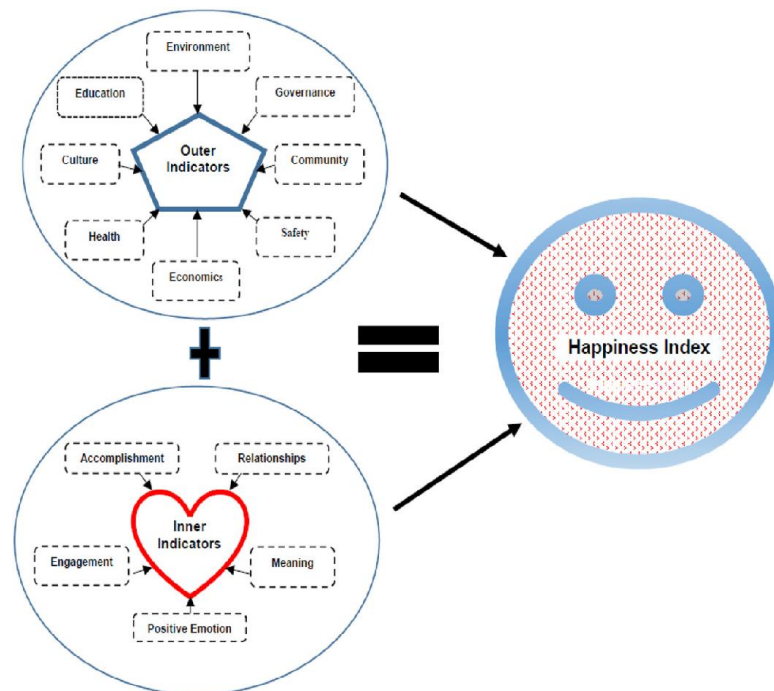


Figure 1. Proposed integrated happiness framework. (A proposed integrated happiness framework to achieve sustainable development, Shay-Wei Choon \*, Chia-Chi Yong, Siow-Kian Tan, Siow-Hooi Tan<sup>43</sup>)

When evaluating models and frameworks for studying happiness from an Islamic perspective, one of the primary aspects that stands out is how these frameworks and models describe the concept of the human being. The inner and outward components of a human being refer to the physical and psychological aspects that make up an individual. Providing

<sup>43</sup> Choon, S.-W., Yong, C.-C., Tan, S.-K., Tan, S.-H., A proposed integrated happiness framework to achieve sustainable development, HELIYON, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2022.e10813>, P. 15.

an Islamic viewpoint on this subject involves two steps: firstly, identifying the primary aspects of human existence, and secondly, determining the appropriate criteria for measuring human happiness.

The provided illustration (Figure 1) offers an in-depth analysis of the nature of a human being and the primary aspects of their existence and life. Applying the Islamic lens, the illustration can be said to depict the human being as a vicegerent on earth who is created and given the responsibility to fulfil the role of *Istikhlaf* (vicegerency) on earth. The central circle portrays the essential elements of the human being, encompassing the brain-mind, soul-heart, body-senses, and *fitrah* (innate human nature). However, the notion of *Ruh*, or spirit, is an integral part of this belief system and is missing from the above diagram. It is of divine nature and a manifestation of Allah's favour and kindness to vicegerent on earth. Without the presence of *Ruh*, human beings would not be able to exist and possess the traits that enable them to act as vicegerents on earth.

If these are the fundamental characteristics that define a human being, it is only obvious that his happiness would be centred upon these aspects of his inherent nature and composition. Put simply, the factors that contribute to happiness for humans should encompass the fulfilment of the cognitive, emotional, physical, economic, social, cultural, and spiritual requirements of individuals, who are regarded as vicegerent on Earth. It follows then that the second circle in the illustration would represent the vicegerent on earth who has been endowed by Allah with specific qualities and attributes. These include being the most excellent of all creations, possessing free will, being dignified and honoured by Allah, having the capacity for critical thinking and logical reasoning, being granted the ability to elevate oneself, having the capability to purify and refine oneself, being able to act, contribute morally and spiritually to culture and civilisation, and being held responsible and accountable for one's actions.

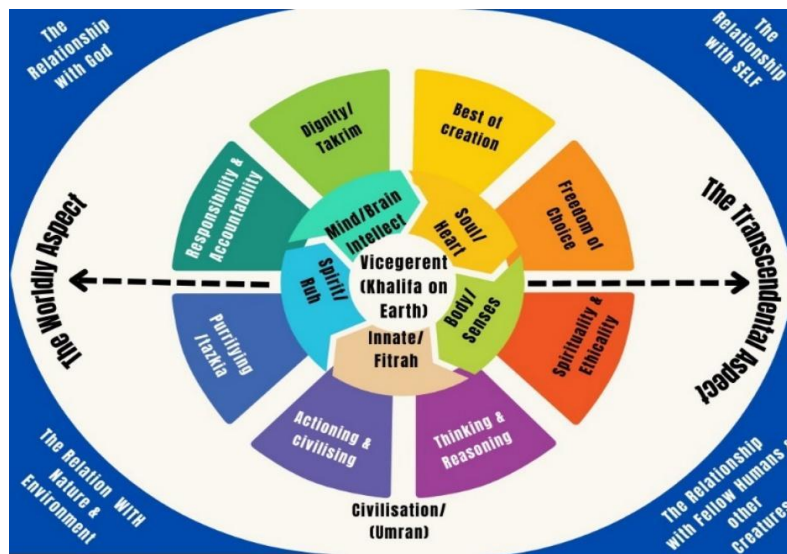
A vicegerent possessing these specific attributes and abilities has been appointed to fulfil the obligations and objectives of vicegerency. The vicegerent-al pact or covenant has bestowed upon this vicegerent the responsibility towards Allah, the omnipotent creator, as well as towards himself as a human being and vicegerent. Additionally, this responsibility extends to his fellow humans, encompassing societies and

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individuals from diverse backgrounds, races, and cultures. Furthermore, the vicegerent is accountable for the well-being of nature and the environment, recognising their integral role within the universe where we reside as vicegerents. These four relationships and interactions are essential for establishing a comprehensive framework for studying and understanding the role of a human being as Khalifa on earth and their well-being.

The illustration would also demonstrate that this representative has been subjected to the considerations and requirements of both the temporal world and the spiritual hereafter. In the Islamic viewpoint, it is not feasible to separate the two lives, as the earthly life serves as the connection and route to the afterlife. The actions of the vicegerent in the realm of *al-dunia* will directly influence their fate, position, and level of success or failure in the afterlife.



**Illustration 1: Hidayah Wan Ismail & Berghout A.: Proposed Components of the Quranic Istikhlaf Framework (QIF)**

In addition, the Quranic Istikhlaf framework (QIF) defines the four essential relationships of man as being the vicegerent on earth. The connection with God emphasises the importance of religion, spirituality, ethics, values, morality, *Shari'ah* and *Al-Akhirah* as the ultimate goal of

the *ibtala'* and trial<sup>44</sup> in *al-Dunia*. The connection of the individual-self emphasises the importance of the holistic human being, encompassing fitrah, mind-brain, intellect, heart, soul, body, and senses, in attaining ultimate happiness and satisfying diverse human wants and needs in this life (*al-Saadah*). The connection between man and society and other humans and communities demonstrate the importance of social relationships, family, community, and social ecosystems in social human existence. This connection encompasses various aspects such as health, economy, culture, arts, education, governance, management, and civilisation. Fulfilling these aspects is necessary for achieving happiness and well-being in this world. The connectedness of man with the universe underscores the importance of nature, the environment, human ecology, and the planetary system in building a fulfilling human existence that leads to ultimate happiness.

The Quranic Istikhlaf framework (QIF) establishes the four crucial connections inside the *Al-Saadah* network of meanings. The relationship with God highlights the significance of religion, spirituality, ethics, values, morality, and *Al-Akhirah* as the ultimate destination of the al-Dunia struggle and test. The interconnectedness of the individual-self, which highlights the significance of the holistic human being (including fitrah, intellect, heart, soul, body, and senses) in achieving ultimate happiness and fulfilling the various human needs in this world (*al Saadah*). The society and social connections exemplify the significance of social relationships, family, community, and ecosystems in human life, encompassing aspects such as health, economy, culture, arts, education, *umran* (civilisation) development, governance, management, and civilisation as aspects that need to be fulfilled if one wants *al-saadah*. The interconnection of the universe highlights the significance of nature, the environment, human ecology, and the planetary system in constructing a good human life that leads to *al-Saadah*.

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<sup>44</sup> As the vicegerent on earth, man is subject to trials and tests in this life. God has designed the entirety of life and death as means to test the vicegerent in various forms, encompassing both positive and negative experiences, moral dilemmas, and the pursuit of worldly pleasures as well as enduring hardships. The concept of vicegerency and the existence of man as Khalifah are inherently connected to the notion of trial.

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The proposed Quranic *Istikhlaf* framework (QIF) offers a comprehensive approach to *Al-saadah* by examining the four dimensions (4D) analysis: 1) the relationship with God, 2) the relationship with oneself, 3) the relationship with others, and 4) the relationship with nature and the universe. This framework integrates the concepts of Religion, holistic man as a vicegerent, society as the centre of human civilisation and *umran*, and the environment and nature as key factors in achieving *al-Saadah*.

Hence, an impartial and accurate interpretation of the notion of *Al-Saadah* can be achieved and expanded upon within an integrated Quranic framework.

### **Implication of the Quranic *Istikhlaf* Framework (QIF) on the Orientation of *Al Saadah*<sup>45</sup> Concept**

According to the provided QIF, the Islamic viewpoint on the notion and orientation of *al-Saadah* goes beyond simply focusing on the inner and outer aspects of happiness, while these indicators are important and essential in the life of every individual, it is important for the vicegerent to achieve genuine happiness through satisfying the demands and criteria of the four mentioned relationships. In this context, it is worth asking can a human being truly achieve genuine and enduring happiness without establishing and maintaining a righteous and virtuous connection with God? Is it possible for a human being to have genuine and enduring happiness without establishing a correct and appropriate connection with oneself, other individuals (society), the natural world, and the universe?

From the standpoint of the Quranic *Istikhlaf* Framework (QIF), it is imperative to develop four key relationships in a harmonic and balanced manner to comprehend the profound essence of happiness and achieve it both in this world and in the hereafter. Undermining any of the relationships, or all of them, will result in a reductionist attitude that deviates from the right path to achieving permanent *Akhirah* happiness and satisfaction as a vicegerent on earth. It is important to emphasise that as a vicegerent on earth (not merely a human being), the ultimate

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<sup>45</sup> This article makes no distinction between the Arabic word for "Al Saada" and the English term "happiness". The primary emphasis lies on the framework of *Istikhlaf* and its influence on our comprehension of *Al Saadah*.



happiness is not solely based on earthly possessions and pleasures, while they are necessary and justified to achieve enduring happiness in the hereafter.

Therefore, any Islamic framework aiming to analyse happiness must explicitly acknowledge and implement this epistemological principle: as vicegerents of God on earth, all types of happiness, whether inner, outer, spiritual, or material, are only temporary and serve as a pathway towards the everlasting and permanent happiness granted by God in the afterlife. Deviation from this principle will inevitably lead to the diminishment of happiness, whether in terms of its constituent elements, purpose, objectives, methods, or approaches.

Illustration number 2 depicts the four interconnected dimensions of happiness according to the Quranic Istikhlaf Framework. In this QIF, it is imperative to not only meet the spiritual, material, and worldly demands and requirements to attain what can be referred to as vicegerent happiness (*istikhlafic saadah*)<sup>46</sup> or *al-Saada al istikhlafiyya*, but it must also be connected to the higher *Akhiratic Saadah* and its corresponding prerequisites. One can achieve the utmost level of inner, outer, and worldly happiness, but if not connected to *Akhirah* it will remain within the confines of worldly happiness. The *Akhirah* imperative expands the dimensions and enhances our comprehension of happiness in its higher and deeper meaning and impact. Furthermore, the *Akhirah* imperative broadens our methods, knowledge, means and objectives for attaining happiness. Therefore, in

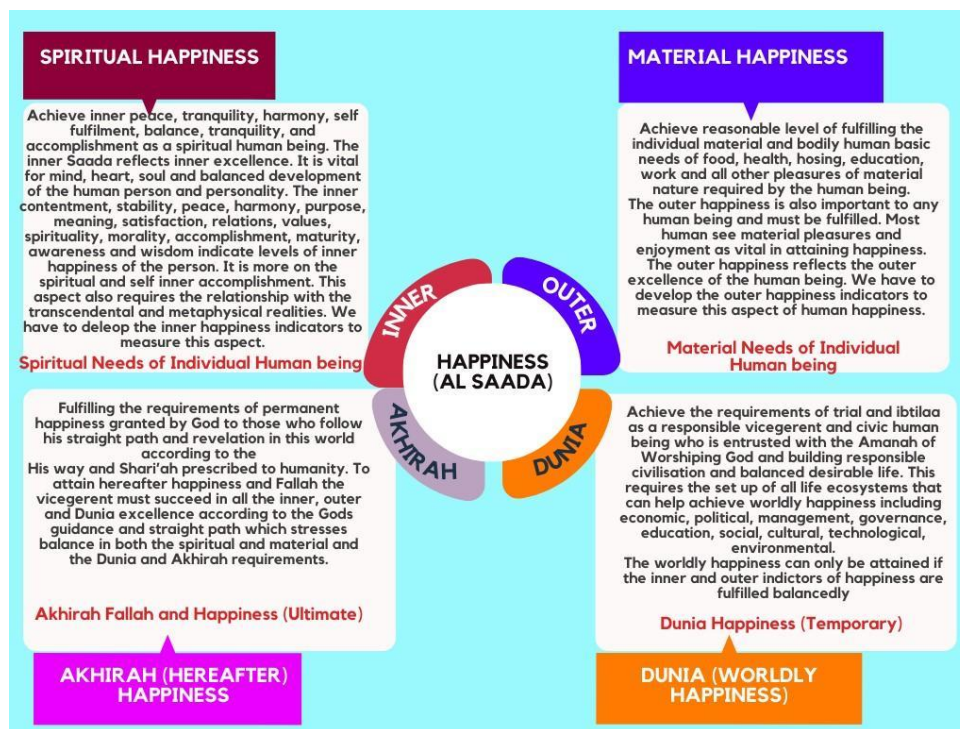
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<sup>46</sup> This is the meaning of Al saadah, which views man as the vicegerent of God on Earth. Khalifa is entrusted with the duty of worshipping God, building balanced civilisation, protecting the environment, establishing a harmonious and desirable way of life, participating in cultural and civilisational exchange, promoting global justice, peace, stability, and security, and maximising worldly life to attain success and ultimate happiness in the afterlife. In this perspective, achieving al Saadah is dependent upon comprehending man as a vicegerent, rather than merely as a human being, citizen, creature, or person. Hence, the happiness of man should revolve around the above meaning and gravitate toward balance between spiritual and material, the outer and the inner, and the worldly and the hereafter objectives, values and conditions. Therefore, human happiness should centre on the aforementioned meanings and strive for equilibrium between the spiritual and material aspects, the external and internal realms, and the earthly and afterlife goals, principles, and conditions.

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this suggested QIF, it is critical to handle the four dimensions - the inner, outer, *Dunia*, and *Akhirah* - in an integrated and balanced manner. The concept of happiness must be examined through four essential dimensions. The vicegerent must possess the necessary levels of knowledge in several domains, including inner, outer, *dunia*, and *akhirah*, to achieve a state of balanced contentment in this world and to prepare for greater happiness in the afterlife.



**Illustration No. 2: Hidayah Wan Ismail & Berghout. A.: Four Dimensions of Al Saadah**

According to this explanation of the concept of happiness, it is necessary for humans, as vicegerents on earth, to have four specific sorts of knowledge: 1) knowledge of inner happiness, 2) knowledge of outer happiness, 3) knowledge of *Dunia* (worldly) happiness, and 4) knowledge of *Akhirah* (hereafter) happiness. Any indicators or metrics established to achieve the happiness of the vicegerent on earth must pertain to these four realms of knowledge. Regrettably, most of the existing materialistic, positivistic, secularistic, and rationalistic

frameworks for studying happiness do not incorporate the analysis and comprehension of the *al Akhirah* component in an objective manner. Moreover, they separate the concepts of inner and outer happiness from their spiritual and transcendental significance and implications. When individuals attempt to connect spiritual matters to their lives, they often view them through a worldly lens, which separates humans from their connection with God and the greater realities of nature, the universe, and the spiritual realm beyond the physical realities.

Unfortunately, as referred to in the ongoing elaboration, the metaphysical and spiritual aspects of a human being as well as his innate nature or *Fitrah* are often neglected in positivistic, and rationalistic narratives, resulting in fragmented discourse on human needs and wants. Consequently, this leads to a reductionist inclination in examining the fulfilment of *al-saada*, as it focuses on certain aspects while neglecting others, such as the spiritual, moral, and ethical components. Likewise, the approaches that focus on the spiritual, moral, and ethical aspects tend to not pay much attention to other aspects such as the social and communal dimensions of the concept. The challenge, therefore, is to rise above these fragmented approaches.

### **A Proposed Framework for the Study of Happiness from QIF Perspective**

The illustration number 3 below presents a comprehensive framework for explaining the notion of Al Saada from the QIF perspective. Within the inner circle, happiness is intricately connected to the *maqasid Al-Qur'an*, which serves as the fundamental basis for any orientation and explanation of the phenomenon of *Al Saadah*. These include preserving religion, life, intellect, wealth, offspring, as well as the broader objectives of constructing and preserving a responsible and harmonious human civilisation, ultimately leading to a desirable life (*Hayyatun Tayyibatun*). The illustration highlights the necessity of the four interrelated dimensions of happiness in QIF, namely inner, outer, Dunia, and Akhirah happiness, as fundamental elements for creating indicators to accurately evaluate genuine happiness.

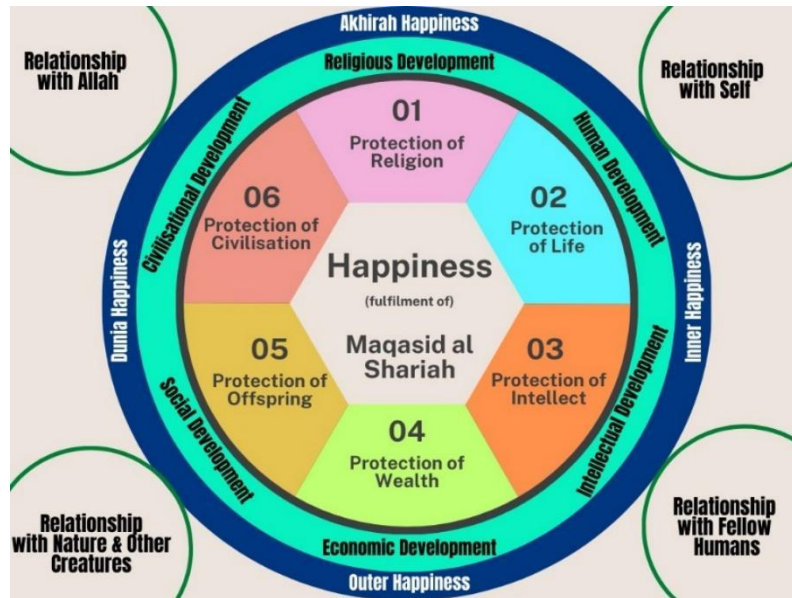


Illustration No. 3: Hidayah Wan Ismail & Berghout. A. : Framework for the Orientation of the Concept of Happiness

The QIF also emphasises the necessity of religious, human, intellectual, economic, social, and civilisational growth of individuals and society to create comprehensive plans and programmes that can effectively accomplish desired levels of happiness and satisfaction. These six domains are essential for achieving specific levels of happiness in this world and preparing for lasting happiness in the hereafter. Furthermore, these six areas are crucial for developing any index, matrix, or model to achieve *al Saadah*. Within each domain, there are numerous sections, elements, indicators, and metrics that need to be satisfied. Collectively, they encompass all facets of human quality life and the means and strategies to achieve them.<sup>47</sup> The outer circle depicts the four relationships of the vicegerent on earth: the relationship with God, Self, Fellow human, and the surrounding universe. Each of these relationships significantly contributes to the comprehension and achievement of happiness in both the *Dunia* (present life) and the *Aakhirah* (afterlife).

<sup>47</sup> It is not in the scope of the present article to delve into the details of the domains and their indicators and measures.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

The article has almost finished presenting the Quranic Istikhlaf framework for studying the concept of *Al Saadah*. The QIF transcends the existing frameworks of addressing happiness from both inner and outer perspectives, as explicitly stated in above literature. The QIF emphasises a comprehensive framework that integrates the spiritual, material, Dunia, and Akhirah aspects in a four-dimensional interrelated manner. The article explores the notion of happiness in the existence of human being as vicegerent on earth, considering the four relationships framework: the relationship with God, self, other humans, society, and the surrounding universe. The article also discussed the western and Islamic contributions to the study of the concept of happiness, highlighting the fundamental and epistemological distinctions between the two worldviews and approaches to happiness. It emphasised the significance of the existing methods, theories, and measures of happiness, both their positive elements and the shortcomings that require improvement.

The QIF is an initial endeavour to establish a framework that aims to enhance the understanding of happiness by emphasising the significance of the four dimensions and their interrelationships. These dimensions and relationships will serve as guiding factors in defining and identifying indicators of happiness in a more comprehensive manner. The article suggests conducting a thorough examination of the QIF and implementing happiness indicators that encompass all the characteristics and relationships discussed within the framework. It also encourages Muslim scholars and researchers to focus more on practical viewpoints and measures of achieving happiness from an Islamic standpoint. We should present effective models, exemplary behaviours, and practical ways for achieving the happiness of individuals from an Islamic standpoint. Researchers at the academic levels must prioritise addressing the Quranic Istikhlaf Framework (QIF) in their master's and doctorate works and research. There is a pressing need to re-examine the Islamic viewpoint on happiness in a comprehensive and cohesive manner, to make it more pertinent and attractive to modern individuals and cultures.

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