

## The Role of Quranic Stories in Promoting Psychological Well-Being and Social Harmony

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### Abstrack

Mental health has become an increasingly primary global concern. The Qur'an, as a divine revelation, holds significant potential to influence human psychology. Numerous studies indicate that reading the Qur'an can positively contribute to mental well-being. Among its many aspects, Qur'anic stories play a central role in shaping psychological stability and fostering social harmony. This study employs a qualitative design using secondary data. Relevant articles and books were collected from Google Scholar and analyzed thematically through psychological and Qur'anic perspectives. The findings reveal that Qur'anic stories promote psychological well-being and social harmony by integrating the processes of learning, teaching, and preaching. These processes strengthen both intrapersonal and interpersonal phases of human development. This mechanism reflects the Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) emphasis on *'allama al-Qur'an* (learning the Qur'an, intrapersonal) and *ta'allama al-Qur'an* (teaching and preaching the Qur'an, interpersonal). Through these two phases, communities are encouraged to mitigate and reduce mental health challenges, ultimately supporting individual and collective well-being.

**Keywords:** qur'anic stories, mental health, psychological well-being, social harmony, intrapersonal and interpersonal development

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### Abstrak

Kesehatan mental semakin menjadi perhatian global yang utama. Al-Qur'an sebagai wahyu ilahi memiliki potensi besar dalam memengaruhi psikologi manusia. Berbagai penelitian menunjukkan bahwa membaca Al-Qur'an dapat memberikan kontribusi positif terhadap kesejahteraan mental. Di antara berbagai aspeknya, kisah-kisah Qur'ani berperan penting dalam membentuk stabilitas psikologis dan mendorong harmoni sosial. Penelitian ini menggunakan desain kualitatif dengan memanfaatkan data sekunder. Artikel dan buku relevan dikumpulkan dari Google Scholar dan dianalisis secara tematik melalui perspektif psikologi dan Qur'ani. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kisah-kisah Qur'ani mempromosikan kesejahteraan psikologis dan harmoni sosial dengan mengintegrasikan proses belajar, mengajar, dan berdakwah. Proses tersebut memperkuat fase intrapersonal dan interpersonal dalam perkembangan manusia. Mekanisme ini mencerminkan penekanan Nabi Muhammad SAW pada *'allama al-Qur'an* (mempelajari Al-Qur'an, fase intrapersonal) dan *ta'allama al-Qur'an* (mengajarkan dan mendakwahkan Al-Qur'an, fase interpersonal). Melalui kedua fase ini, masyarakat didorong untuk memitigasi dan mengurangi tantangan kesehatan mental, sehingga pada akhirnya mendukung kesejahteraan individu maupun kolektif.

**Keywords:** kisah qur'ani, kesehatan mental, kesejahteraan psikologis, harmoni sosial, pengembangan intrapersonal dan interpersonal

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### Article info

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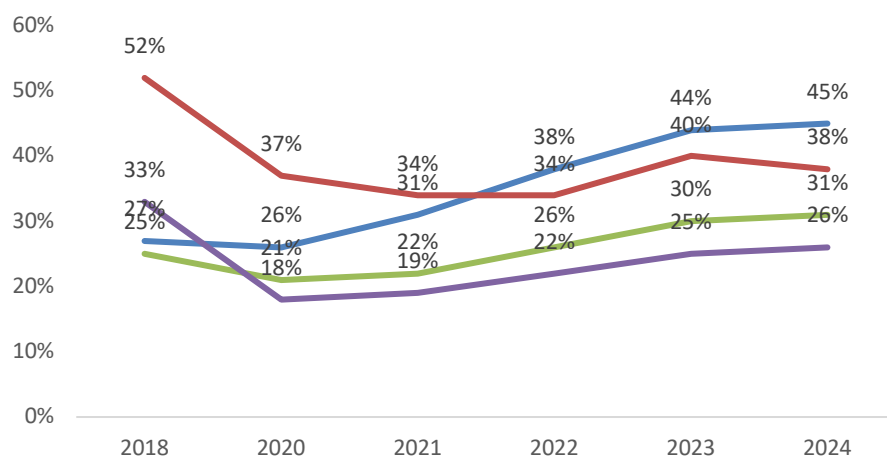


## INTRODUCTION

The Quran, as it is known to Muslims, is a revelation book (Afsaruddin, 2020; Aboamro & Rizapoor, 2023) and is acknowledged as the only transcendent book in its preserved form (Osmani, 2023). It covers all aspects of life, making it a guide for life for all (Imran, 2024). One of its aspects is the educational side, evident in many chapters where reading, learning, studying, understanding, analyzing, and investigating are motivated throughout this Holly Book (Keshavarz, 2010). The richness of its valuable content is encouraging and facilitating human needs to fill their bodies and souls with knowledge (Sultana, 2014). Thus, the Quran is the most glorious and precious legacy left by the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to guide human beings in their role to preserve the world through divine order (Ismail & Berghout, 2024).

The educational side of the Quran is sometimes presented in the form of tales about historical figures, such as prophets and messengers, and their people. Additionally, it discusses historical events and several figures (Sinaga et al., 2020). All the stories in the Quran are narrated for didactic purposes so that people can learn from them. This learning aspect is evident in its storytelling, which is always connected to evaluation and guideline clauses (Salehi, 2016). It is believed that Quranic stories positively stimulate thinking (Hashim & Alias, 2020) and people's character (Fadil, 2020). Accordingly, most people agree that stories are an excellent educational tool. It is widely known that stories align with various aspects, such as social norms, ethical behaviour, education, and psychology (Bandr, 2024).

Despite the positive aspects derived from Quranic stories, there are ups and downs in people's mentality. The big issue on this side is mental health, which has become a global concern (Moitra et al., 2023). IPSOS Health Service reports that mental health is currently exceeding other health problems such as cancer, obesity, and stress. In 31 countries, people are facing mental health issues by 45%, cancer by 38%, stress by 31%, and obesity by 26%. Surprisingly, females are facing mental health by 51% more than 40% of males (IPSOS, 2024).



**Figure 1.** Comparison between Mental Health Issues and Other Health Issues

Mental health is sometimes caused by social conflict (Hou et al., 2020; Ni et al., 2020), poverty (Knifton & Inglis, 2020), or environment (Basu & Banerjee, 2020; Domènech-Abella et al., 2021). We may assume that, despite its psychological aspect in individuals, this issue is shaped by their surroundings. The rise of this mental health as a



public issue is inseparable from personal problems and vice versa. As Emile Durkheim said in his *Le Suicide*, suicide was not only caused by personal temperament but was also triggered by social causes (Rogers & Pilgrim, 2021).

Thus, in recent times, many proposed studies have highlighted the religious approach to coping with mental illness issues, which is explained through social and psychological mechanisms (Prati, 2024). This point of view marks the reemergence of religious influence on healthcare throughout history (Koenig, 2012). Additionally, the data shown in Figure 1 enhances awareness of religious involvement in addressing mental health issues. Additional empirical data from various studies show that the religious aspect yields positive outcomes (Pengpid & Peltzer, 2025). The data, for example, have displayed that lower religiosity in Indonesia raised the odds of depressive symptoms (Peltzer & Pengpid, 2018) and insomnia (Peltzer & Pengpid, 2019).

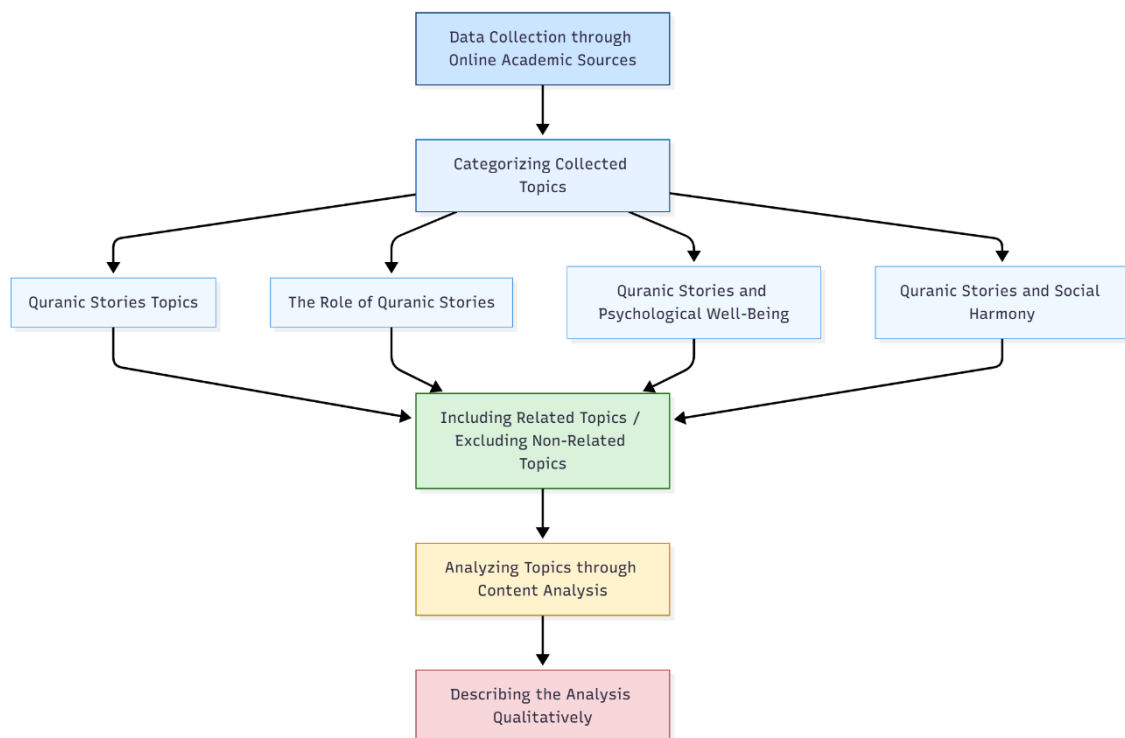
Conversely, intrinsic and non-organizational religiosity decreased the possibility of depression in middle-aged and older adults in India (Pengpid & Peltzer, 2023). Other studies show that adherence to Buddhist norms in the general adult population of Thailand has decreased the likelihood of depressive symptoms (Xu et al., 2020) and increased cognitive function in men (Pothisiri & Vicerra, 2024). In line with the Buddhist population, participation in Islamic practices by its community in Southern Thailand has protected them from psychiatric symptoms (Ford et al., 2017). These empirical outcomes are aligned with positive psychology and religious coping, where both concepts are functioning as developers of positive virtues and human 'health' (Ai et al., 2013). It also stands as a positive psychology of religion for optimizing human functions (Davis et al., 2023).

Based on this problem, when it comes to the extent to which religions strengthen personal character, Quranic stories have a role in fostering well-being and social harmony. Many academicians have conducted studies on Quranic Stories but only from its positive impact in several aspects, such as education (Obaid, 2018) and its teaching in school (Erfani, 2019; Mahmodi et al., 2023), reforming children's behaviour (Hegazi et al., 2021), or its aspect on communication skills (Nakhaei et al., 2022). Yet, this research identifies a gap that this article seeks to address. While prior research examined the educational and moral aspects of Qur'anic stories, limited attention has been given to their potential as an applied model for promoting psychological well-being and social harmony.

## METHOD

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach, with content analysis, to examine how Qur'anic stories contribute to psychological well-being and social harmony. The study relies entirely on secondary data, including peer-reviewed journal articles, books, research reports, and book chapters, collected from online academic sources. The data collection process followed a systematic procedure, as illustrated in Figure 2. First, relevant literature was gathered by screening titles and abstracts to ensure their alignment with the research topic. The inclusion criteria required sources to explicitly discuss Qur'anic stories, their psychological implications, their educational or moral dimensions, or their role in fostering social cohesion. Non-related works were excluded during this stage.





**Figure 2.** The Flow Charted Method

Second, the collected materials were categorized into thematic groups such as 1) Qur'anic stories and their characteristics, 2) the role of Qur'anic stories, 3) Qur'anic stories and psychological well-being, and 4) Qur'anic stories and social harmony. This thematic grouping enabled a structured understanding of how different strands of literature contribute to the research objective. Third, a coding process was conducted to extract key ideas, concepts, and recurring patterns from the selected sources. The coded data were then analyzed using qualitative content analysis, following the procedures outlined by Krippendorff (2018), including organizing the data into categories, identifying conceptual relationships, and interpreting the findings within the study's theoretical framework. Untuk meningkatkan kredibilitas temuan, strategi triangulasi pustaka diterapkan dengan memeriksa silang interpretasi dari berbagai sumber dan membandingkan argumen dari berbagai tafsir Al-Qur'an. Proses ini memastikan konsistensi dan keandalan kesimpulan yang diambil dari data sekunder.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Psychological Well-Being and Social Harmony Through Quranic Stories

The Quranic stories indeed have a special place in the Islamic faith. Especially when this character is named as Surah Al-Qaṣaṣ, the 28th Surah in this Divine Book. Through the stories, it is believed that the Quran uses storytelling to communicate and encourage people to do what is ordered or to avoid what is prohibited (Idrees & Ullah, 2021).

In its original term, the Arabic word story refers to the singular *qiṣṣah* and the plural *qaṣaṣ*. In etymology, the word *qiṣṣah* is derived from its verb root *qaṣṣa*, and *Al-Laiṣ*, as cited by Ibn Manẓūr in *Lisān Al-'Arab*, said that *qiṣṣah* is something renowned (ma'rūfah). Additionally, when it comes from Surah Yusuf: 3, the meaning of *qiṣṣah* in

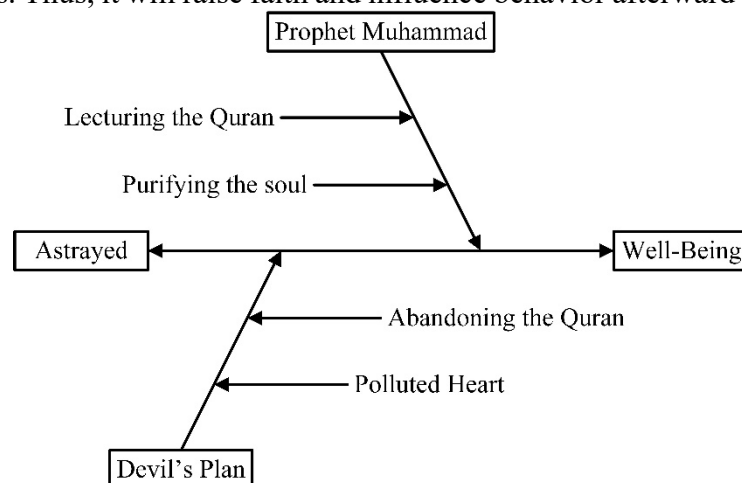


the sentence, “*naḥnu naquṣṣu ‘alaika aḥsanal qaṣaṣi*”, is explained. So, the 3<sup>rd</sup> verse of Surah Yusuf also means, “We are explaining to you the best explanation.” This word also has other meanings, such as “following the trail,” as shown in Surah Al-Qaṣaṣ: 11, “*wa qālat li ukṭihi quṣṣihi*”. Thus, the word *quṣṣihi* means follow his track little by little (Manzūr, 1999). Additionally, Imām Al-Rāzī, in his Quran exegesis, explains that the tale is called *qiṣṣah* because the storyteller narrates it phase by phase (Al-Rāzī, 1981).

Meanwhile, in terminology, the term *qiṣṣah* can be defined into two categories: a general term and a Quranic term. Generally, *qiṣṣah* reveals the vestiges and discloses the (past) forgotten events to retell them again as remembrance advice for people (Al-Khaṭīb, 1975). This meaning is, then, specified in Quranic terms as God's news of what occurred in previous societies with their messengers, what happened between those societies or within them, individually or in groups, and what arose in human nature or in non-human kinds as guidance and lesson (Yāsin, 2022).

The existence of stories in revelation form shows its divine feature. Through its holiness character, the Quranic stories have several objectives. The stories in the Quran preach the oneness of God and the Islamic theological belief that this faith is to be embedded in every single person. The second objective of the Quranic stories is to reveal the existence of messengers (rusul) and pious persons. Third, giving a morality lesson through examples: those who were rewarded and those who were tormented for their sins. Fourth, mental persuasion and emotional influence. Lastly, encouraging to positively employ what the world has offered and everlasting heaven in the hereafter (Abbās, 2010).

Through the definitions and objectives of Quranic stories, where guidance, lesson, persuasion, and influence are being the prominent keywords, we can conclude that the stories are bridging the divine values to the psychological well-being. This bridging notion came based on Surah Al-Jumu'ah: 2, “He is the One who raised for the illiterate people a messenger from among themselves, reciting to them His revelations, purifying them, and teaching them the Book and wisdom, for indeed they had previously been clearly astray”. Ibn Kaṭīr commented that this verse is when Allah assigns the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to be His messenger with the comprehensive law of life (Ibn Kaṭīr, 2000). It clearly shows that lecturing on the revelations is the first step toward purifying people's hearts. Thus, it will raise faith and influence behavior afterward (Rabī'ah, 2019).



**Figure 3.** Cause and Effect Towards Well-Being

As shown in Figure 3, the connection between Quranic stories and human well-being is inseparable. Consequently, well-being is an integrative scheme that emerged



from spiritual insight (Al-Hayali, 2024) and its practical activities through the five essentials of Maqāṣid Al-Syarī'ah (Kader, 2021).

Human well-being in Quranic stories is portrayed in many different contexts, drawing on the previous experiences of prophets and virtuous persons. From the very beginning of human relations, the Quran educates us from two sons of Adam: Habel (Abel) and Qabeel (Cain). This story has been described in modern psychology as the concept of individual differences: positive and negative mindsets (Abbasi et al., 2021). The Quran also taught us about the resilience of the five prophets (Noah, Abraham, Moses, Isa, and Muhammad (Peace be upon them)), whose duty in each society is considerable. Thus, they were awarded by Allah the title of *Ūlul' Azmi*. The visualization of their characters in the tale approach draws us to the psychological aspect that will lead those who read or hear the story to human well-being. These psychological personalities, such as patient, emotional control, emotional intelligence, motivation, and forgiveness, are keys for developing well-being (Mubarak et al., 2023). Thus, psychologically, well-being is an internal cohesion between the inner soul and a person's act. It is the representation of the linearity between faith (*al-īmān*) and good deeds (*al- 'amal al-ṣāliḥ*). This linearity is what the Quran conveyed to its readers through the stories of prophets and noble individuals as examples, even of those who were characteristically evil and received punishment, so that no one would follow their path. Through the good path and evil path, the stories in the Quran once again promote the individual differences theory. One aspect of Quranic stories that aligns with the particular concepts is hope and fear. Hope and fear are human emotions that stand as indicators of the health or unhealthiness of human psychology (Fredrickson, 2000, 2001). In turn, comprehending the Quran and what its stories tell us will improve mental health and emotional well-being. The hope and fear contained in Quranic stories control human emotions, encouraging positivity and mitigating negativity (Lala, 2023). Thus, the story narrated in the Quran is intended to build a positive soul in each individual. That is why all muslims are being instructed to read, learn, and teach the Quran to become mentally healthy and spread it to others as social beings.







**Figure 4.** The Relationship of Quranic Stories and How Individual Produces Well-Being and Social Harmony with it

In terms of individual mental health and psychological well-being, the Quranic stories show that the prophets and messengers were meant to uphold social harmony within society as a whole (Riaz, 2024). That is because, naturally, human are social creatures (Utama, 2021) who need an interaction in their daily life. In sequence, the harmony in social relations is something that humans hope for. Especially in the Islamic perspective, the instruction for harmonizing social interaction is referred to as the notion of ‘togetherness’ (*jamā’ah*). It is where Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said in the hadith, “adhere to the *jamā’ah*, beware of separation, for indeed the satan is with one and he is further away from two”. Psychological well-being is not meant to be owned only by one individual, but by many. Thus, the preaching effort from prophets and messengers in Quranic stories is actually inviting human beings to a better version of society.

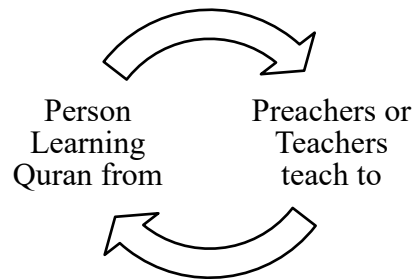
#### **Promoting the Quranic Story and its Values Within Society**

The Quran and its stories are not meant to be written texts to be stored on the library shelf. As a result, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) taught us that the best person is the one who learn the Quran and teaches it. What Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) said, we can derive the core mechanism for how the Quran should actually be treated, so that its values spread and infuse human mentality.

Many have highlighted the values of Quranic stories, especially in the context of education and psychology. Through Adam’s story (PBUH), we can highlight the moral status of being human, especially in this case as a khalifah (caretaker of the earth), and his repentance after violating Allah’s command (Rusdi et al., 2020; Sartika et al., 2024). From Noah’s story (PBUH), we can see a firm personal character that mitigates difficulties (Anakrh, 2021; Zuhriya et al., 2024). Another story from Abraham has shown us the intellectual pursuit that leads him to firm faith (Al-Mutairi, 2024). One of the values is also known as stable personal psychology, from what Moses (PBUH) experienced (Syaripah et al., 2023), and many other values within the previous stories in the Quran.



Despite the presentation of values in Quranic stories by academicians, studies tend to focus on promoting values within a single aspect, such as education in school (Hashim & Alias, 2020) or in the family (Bahri et al., 2024). For this reason, the promotion of Quranic values should be enhanced by entering the key through a keyhole to open the door for a comprehensive view. The early narration of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) teaching and instructing people to learn and teach the Quran is the key we should use. From this narration, the mechanism promoting the Quranic stories and their values comprises two general phases: the intrapersonal phase and the interpersonal phase.



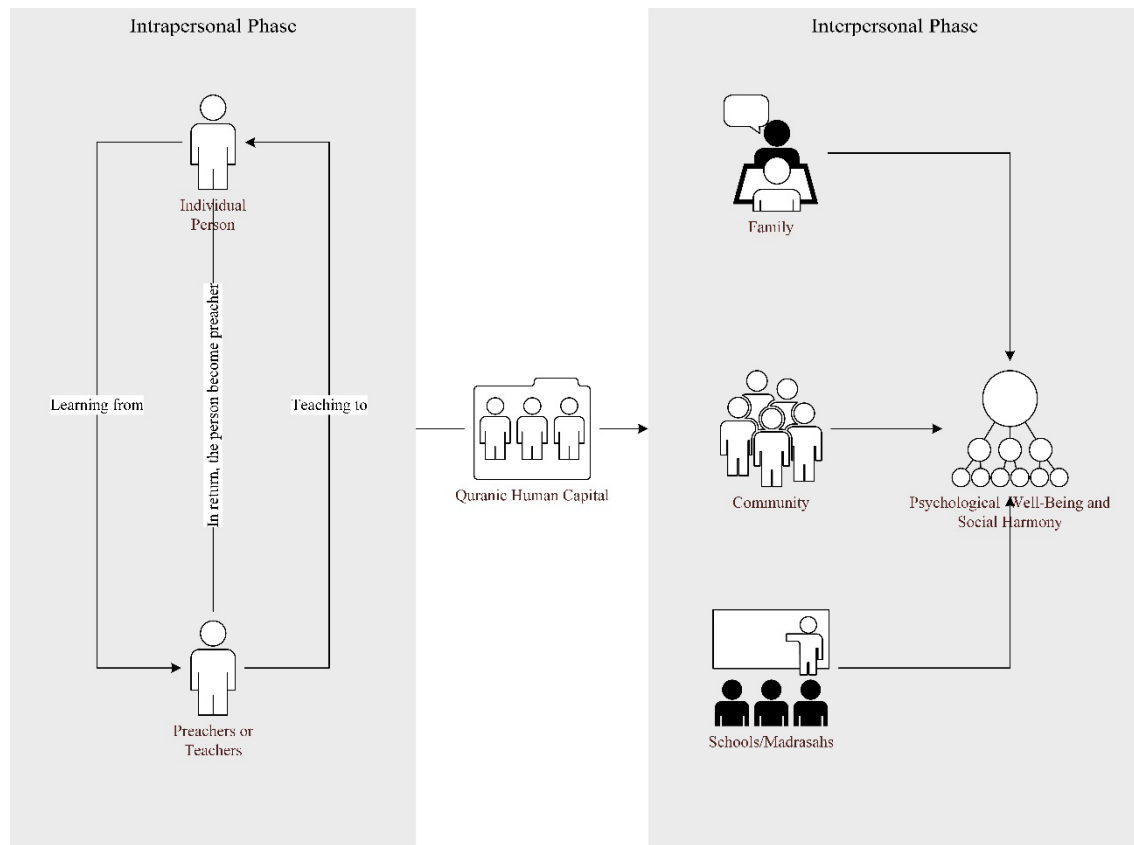
**Figure 5.** Individual Intrapersonal Phase in Cycle Order

The notion of *ta'allamal qur'ān* (learning the Qur'an) is the first step toward promoting the stories and values of the Qur'an. It is an intrapersonal aspect that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) wants us to develop. This stage involves two motions that cycle. To acquire knowledge of the Quran, one person should teach it to others, such as preachers or teachers. Once the person gains knowledge, others will learn from him/her. Thus, he/she will step into the second stage, the one who teaches the Quran (*wa' allamahu*).

The intrapersonal phase is forming the individual being, infused with the values of the Quranic stories. However, this intrapersonal form is clearly not an effective promotion if it is left only in a separate form. It needs to be manufactured by the system that produces many intrapersonal forms. This is precisely why interpersonal is emerging from the system. Family is the first step in the interpersonal aspect. In classical activity, we may include the bedtime stories from the Quranic tales, which show the interaction between parents and their children. From the family zone, the next system to involve is the community. Islamic education within community programs is a rich resource for developing interpersonal character, as in Indonesia, where the Muslim community often offers afternoon Islamic education known as Taman Pendidikan Al-Quran (TPA). Alongside the community part, the schools or madrasahs are no less important. Moreover, all aspects could be further enhanced through digital media content.







**Figure 6.** Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Phases in Promoting Quranic Stories Values

Promoting the Quranic stories and their values is part of the psychosocial aspect. It is where a person's thoughts or feelings are induced by and influence others (Blanco, 2023). The positive values of Quranic stories play a prominent role in instilling within each person's thoughts and feelings. When many have said that Quranic stories have a positive and profound impact, it should be the one that needs to be learnt from and taught to. Through the systematic mechanism in two phases of intrapersonal and interpersonal, Quranic stories could be well-promoted, which consequently establishes psychological well-being and creates social harmony.

## CONCLUSION

The Quranic stories have an impact on the psychological aspect, which accounts for their part as medicine for global current mental health conditions. Through Quranic stories, the psychological well-being can help overcome mental health issues for each person. Each person can be part of establishing social harmony alongside individual well-being. To achieve this objective, there are two stages, both intrapersonal and interpersonal. The intrapersonal is the first attempt from an individual to learn through Quranic stories. Meanwhile, interpersonal as the second step is the communal mechanism involving family, community, and schools/madrasahs to advocate the values from Quranic stories. While this study focuses on how the system could deliver Quranic stories as an instrument to enhance psychological well-being and social harmony, it requires further research to examine communities where the system is applied.



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