



## Constructing the Theory of Human Basic Potential Based on Quranic Messages: Study with Maqasid Methodology

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**Abstract:** The purpose of the study is to construct a theory of human potential based on the Quranic messages. Human potential is defined as psychological endowments that all human beings have and that can be developed throughout their lives. The discourse of this study is Islamic Psychology, which integrates the science of Psychology and Quranic messages. The method that is used in this study is the *Maqasid* methodology by Jasseer Auda (2021) and Ali Abdul Moneim (2018). The result of the study shows the existence of four basic human potentials that argued as the starting point of any psychological dynamics. These four basic human potentials are: (1) sensing, that relates to the five senses; (2) reasoning, that includes the dynamics of cognition, intelligence, rationality, and logical thinking; (3) empathy, that covers the dynamics of emotion, attachment, compassion, care, and love; (4) conscience, that covers issues on spirituality, religiosity, universality, and eternity. These four basic human potentials are argued as the driving force of human freedom or independent will. The application of the theory on human potential is discussed relating to mental health and human development in general. The theory of human potential that is constructed in this study can also benefit in the practice of parenting and education and is also to explain social phenomena, especially in this information era. The comparison of the result of this study with other relevant psychological constructs is discussed.

**Keywords:** conscience; empathy; human potential; Maqasid methodology; reasoning; sensing; the Quran

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## Построение теории базового потенциала человека на основе посланий Корана: исследование по методологии макасыд

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**Резюме:** Целью исследования является построение теории человеческого потенциала на основе посланий Корана. Человеческий потенциал определяется как психологические способности, которыми обладают все люди и которые можно развивать на протяжении всей жизни. Дискурс этого исследования – исламская психология, объединяющая психологию и Коранические послания. Метод, используемый в данном исследовании, представляет собой методологию *макасыд* Джасира Ауды (2021 г.) и Али Абдулы Монейма (2018 г.). Результаты исследования указывают на наличие четырех основных человеческих возможностей, выступающих в качестве отправной точки любой психологической динамики, а именно: (1) ощущение, относящееся к пяти чувствам; (2) рассуждение, включающее динамику познания, интеллекта, рациональности и логического мышления; (3) эмпатию, охватывающую динамику эмоций, привязанности, сострадания, заботы и любви; (4) совесть, которая охватывает вопросы духовности, религиозности, универсальности и вечности. Эти четыре основных человеческого потенциала рассматриваются как движущая сила человеческой свободы или независимой воли. Обсуждается применение теории человеческого потенциала, выдвинутой в данном исследовании, в отношении психического здоровья и человеческого развития в целом, возможность ее использования в практике воспитания и образования, а также для объяснения социальных явлений, особенно в нашу информационную эпоху. Результаты исследования сравниваются с другими соответствующими психологическими конструктами.

**Ключевые слова:** совесть; сопереживание; человеческий потенциал; методология; рассуждение; ощущение; Коран

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### Introduction

Human potential is defined as a psychological endowment that all human beings have, that can be developed throughout their lives [1; 2]. We can also say that human



potential is a psychological modality of every human being which will shape the optimum quality of individuals if they are developed in a good way. This basic potential will remain at the same level of quality if it is not developed or under developed. This study aimed to identify these basic potentials of human beings based on the Islamic resources. The main resources of Islamic teachings are the Quran, the Hadith, and also supported by the works of Islamic scholars. It is assumed that by identifying this basic potential the discipline of Islamic Psychology can develop better understanding about human development, mental health, and individual differences. Furthermore, it could become the basic concept for education, therapy, and parenting, as well as social engineering to build great civilization.

The approach of this study is different from the conventional secular approach. This study is applying the perspective of integrative knowledge which combines evidence from natural science, psychosocial science, and Quranic revelation. As mentioned in the Surah Fussilat verse number 53:

سُرِّيهِمْ ءَايَاتِنَا فِي الْآفَاقِ وَفِي أَنْفُسِهِمْ حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَهُمْ أَنَّهُ الْحَقُّ ۖ أَوَلَمْ يَكْفِ بِرَبِّكَ أَنَّهُ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ

*"We will show them Our signs in the universe and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that this Quran is the truth. Is it not enough that your Lord is a Witness over all things?" (41:53) [3].*

Based on Islamic teaching, the core of human quality is the heart, as mentioned in the Hadith by prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as follow:

أَلَا وَإِنَّ فِي الْجَسَدِ مُضْغَةً إِذَا صَلَحَتْ صَلَحَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ وَإِذَا فَسَدَتْ فَسَدَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ أَلَا وَهِيَ الْقَلْبُ

*«In the body there is a piece of flesh, and the whole body is sound if it is sound, but the whole body is corrupt if it is corrupt. It is the heart» (Bukhari no. 2051 & Muslim no. 1599).*

The same notion was also stated by Al-Ghazali in the introduction of his book *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* [4], that we need to develop the science of the heart to help us understand about ourselves in order to lead a psychologically healthy life. At his time, the most prominent knowledge was in the domain of law («*shari'ah*») and medicine. Al-Ghazali stated that law and medicine are important to manage our lives in this world. However, we need a science of the heart because it is also important for our lives in the hereafter.

Another profound Islamic scholar in Psychology, Abu Zayd Al-Balkhi, focused on the «*nafs*» when he explained about the psychological dynamics [5]. The *nafs* is



translated as the 'soul'. In this article, the «*nafs*» and the «*qalb*» will be the key words in collecting the Quranic verses to identify the properties that are assumed to be the sources of explanation about human basic potential. The simple meaning of the «*nafs*» or the soul is the essence of human being, and the «*qalb*» or the heart means the core of human being. Therefore, both terms are supposed to be connected to each other in a shortened way.

In the Islamic perspective, the heart (*qalb*) and the soul (*nafs*) are fundamental for human psychology. Therefore, in order to develop theory about human basic potential, we need to study further about the «*qalb*» and «*nafs*» and its dynamics. According to the Maqasid methodology [6; 7], the process of constructing knowledge is through a cycle of reflection of the Quran, Hadith, and the existing discourse of the issue to be studied. In the discourse of Islamic Psychology, several theoretical frameworks have been developed that involve the heart or the «*qalb*» and the soul or the «*nafs*». However, the theoretical framework still needs to be critically evaluated, because they argue that the heart or the «*qalb*» is only the one side of human potential. Those arguments were not coherent with the Hadith and the understanding of Imam Al-Ghazali mentioned above.

Rothman [8] has studied the model of Islamic Psychology and Psychotherapy that is based on the works of Muslim scholars starting from the Al-Ghazali's era. The model that is concluded by Rothman & Coyle [9], revealed that there are four components of the model, i.e., «*ruh*», «*aql*», «*qalb*», and «*nafs*». A similar model was also reported by Annafiri & Aziz [2]. What Annafiri and Aziz [2] wrote is as follows.

*"For the spiritual aspect, as Allah SWT says in the Quran, humans have four basic resources or potentials, namely «fitrah», «aql», «qalb», and «nafs». All human beings from Prophet Adam AS until humans are born today, have these four things» [2].*

If the two studies mentioned above combined, there are five elements that are argued to be the core of human potential. These five elements are «*ruh*», «*fitrah*», «*aql*», «*qalb*», and «*nafs*». Those elements were not yet studied in more depth; therefore, it is still problematic because each of these terms is not at the same level of meaning. «*Ruh*», which is translated as spirit in English, is something that is not in the authority of human beings to comprehend. The Quran states that «*ruh*» is the authority of Allah and human beings are only given very little information about it, as mentioned in Quran surah Al-Isra' number 85 below.

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ ۚ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا



*«They ask you, O Prophet, about the spirit. Say, «Its nature is known only to my Lord, and you O humanity have been given but little knowledge» (17:85) [3].*

«Fitrah» means conditions created by Allah. Meanwhile, the «nafs» is the human self which is also created by Allah through the combination of body and spirit. Whereas «aql» and «qalb» are not two things that each stands alone, but both are interrelated. Another weakness of this opinion is that «fitrah», «aql», «qalb», and «nafs» are not something that inspires us to develop them. For example, «fitrah» is something that is fixed, not something that can be developed. This is written in the Quran Surah Al-Rum verse number 30.

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفًا ۚ فِطْرَتَ اللَّهِ الَّتِي فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا ۚ لَا تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ ۚ ذَلِكَ الدِّينُ الْقَيِّمُ وَلَكِنَّ أَكْثَرَ النَّاسِ لَا يَعْلَمُونَ

*«So be steadfast in faith in all uprightness O Prophet—the natural Way («fitrah») of Allah which He has instilled («fitrah») in all people. Let there be no change in this creation of Allah. That is the Straight Way, but most people do not know» (30:30) [3].*

Based on the revelation in Surah Al-Rum verse number 30, «fitrah» means the way of Allah's creation. It is mentioned that Allah created human beings in «fitrah» which is instilled to all human beings. This also means that all human beings are endowed with the «fitrah» that is since the creation. «Endowments» mean a quality of ability possessed or inherited by someone. From this understanding, we can conclude that «fitrah» is something that is given by Allah as a quality of ability/or we can say potential, that all human beings are given since they are created by Allah. This means that human potential is the «fitrah». In other words, «fitrah» is not one of human potential, but it is the Quranic words of human potential which this study is trying to identify.

«Aql» in the Quran is always mentioned in the form of a verb not a noun, while «qalb» is a noun, so is «nafs». When we learn from the Quranic verses, the mentioning of "aql" is in the context of how an individual responds to the facts of life. This means that "aql" in the Quran is the activity of individuals in responding to life events or their experiences. The meaning of "aql" from the dictionary is the act of connecting one fact to another in order to understand the message or the meaning of a group of facts or certain phenomenon. It is mentioned in the Quran Surah Al-Baqarah verse number 164 as follows.



إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَالْفُلْكِ الَّتِي تَجْرِي فِي الْبَحْرِ بِمَا يَنْفَعُ النَّاسَ وَمَا أَنْزَلَ اللَّهُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مِنْ مَّاءٍ فَأَحْيَا بِهِ الْأَرْضَ بَعْدَ مَوْتِهَا وَبَثَّ فِيهَا مِنْ كُلِّ دَابَّةٍ وَتَصْرِيفِ الرِّيْحِ وَالسَّحَابِ الْمُسَخَّرِ بَيْنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّقَوْمٍ يَعْقِلُونَ

«Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth; the alternation of the day and the night; the ships that sail the sea for the benefit of humanity; the rain sent down by Allah from the skies, reviving the earth after its death; the scattering of all kinds of creatures throughout; the shifting of the winds; and the clouds drifting between the heavens and the earth in all of this are surely signs for people of *understanding* (*«ya'qilun»*)» (2:164) [3].

«*Ya'qilun*» in this verse is the active form of «*aql*» which means the action of connecting facts to understand the message or meaning of the phenomenon. «*Aql*» appears as a concept of the Quran in the similar form which is a verb that explains the activity of human beings in understanding the phenomenon or the experience. There are 49 verses in the Quran that mention the concept of «*aql*» in the verb form, for example Ali-'Imran verse 65, Al-Maidah verse 58, Al-A'raf verse 169, and so forth.

«*Qalb*» is the core of human beings, which determines the quality of an individual. This means that «*qalb*» is a system that is dynamic and is always changing. The meaning of «*qalb*» in the dictionary includes turning around or upside down, which illustrates the dynamic nature of the heart. This is written in the Surah Qaf verse number 37 and Surah Al-An'am verse number 110

إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَذِكْرٍ لِمَنْ كَانَ لَهُ قَلْبٌ أَوْ أَلْقَى السَّمْعَ وَهُوَ شَهِيدٌ

«Surely this is a reminder for whoever has a mindful heart and lends an attentive ear» (50:37) [3].

وَنَقَلْبُ أَفْئِدَتَهُمْ وَأَبْصَرَهُمْ كَمَا لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ أُولَٰئِكَ مَرَّةً وَنَذَرَهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ

«We turn their hearts and eyes away from the truth as they refused to believe at first, leaving them to wander blindly in their defiance» (6:110) [3].

Those verses of the Quran describe the heart that can be healthy when they are open, so that they can understand Allah's guidance. But, on the other hand, it could become unhealthy when they are covered or they reject the truth.

«*Nafs*» in the Quran has several meanings that include the soul, individual, identity, and also being alive. The following verse mentioned «*nafs*» that means individual or oneself.



يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ اتَّقُوا رَبَّكُمُ الَّذِي خَلَقَكُمْ مِنْ نَفْسٍ وَاحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنْهَا زَوْجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنْهُمَا رِجَالًا كَثِيرًا وَنِسَاءً ۚ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ الَّذِي تَسَاءَلُونَ بِهِ وَالْأَرْحَامَ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا

*«O humanity! Be mindful of your Lord Who created you from a single individual («nafs»), and from it He created its mate,<sup>1</sup> and through both He spread countless men and women. And be mindful of Allah—in Whose Name you appeal to one another—and honor family ties. Surely Allah is ever Watchful over you» (4:1) [3].*

In a Surah Al-Nisa' verse number 1 above, it is mentioned that Allah created human beings from one «nafs», that means Allah created human beings from one individual, that is the Prophet Adam AS. This means that «nafs» is the whole individual that in it there is a core which is the heart or the «qalb» that determines the quality of the individual. This quality of the individual can change over time, it can go up or down depending on the individual's choice.

This shows that the classification by Rothman [8]; Annafire & Aziz [2] is not fully valid as an identification of basic human potential. Thus, the explanation of human potential which is based on Islamic teaching has not reached its essence which can be used as a basis or guide to the understanding or developing the human soul.

Since the existing studies have not yet successfully identified the basic potential of human being, so there is a need to study more comprehensively and more deeply concerning the human potential from Islamic messages or teaching. The research question of this study is: «*what are the properties of «nafs» and «qalb» that represent the human basic potential?*»

## Method

The method used in this study is the Maqasid Quranic method [5; 6]. «Maqasid» methodology is used to find the messages behind the text and the concept involved in the Quranic verses. This method will create a holistic picture of human nature. The one indispensable feature of the methodology that cannot be replaced or compromised is the Cycles of Reflection upon the Quran and Hadith [5]. The outcome of the Cycles of Reflection is the composite framework that describes reality in any form via the Seven Elements of the «Maqasid» Framework, i.e. concepts, objectives, values, commands, universal laws, groups, and proof [6].

The first method of reflecting the Quranic messages that is used in this study is «tartil», that means studying a group of verses that explain one another. There are two





ways of applying the method of «tartil», i.e., horizontal «tartil» and vertical «tartil» [7]. Vertical «tartil» is understanding a group of Quranic verses based on the order in certain chapters. Horizontal «tartil» is a grouping of Quranic verses that mention specific root words that are intended to be studied.

The second method is «tadabbur», namely understanding the meaning and implied message of the Quranic verses that has been collected by the method of «tartil». Abstraction, logical thinking and critical discourse analysis are some of the techniques that are used in «tadabbur». The result of «tadabbur» is the understanding of the message of the Quranic verses that will be constructed into the theory of human basic potential.

This study used the «*Maqasid*» methodology to understand the true nature of human life. In this study, this «Maqasid» approach is used to find the fundamental characteristics and dynamics of human life as one of the representations of the «*fitrah*», which is the basic design of creation, the beginning of creation, natural disposition of human being. In this study, the sources are integrated between the science of Psychology and Quranic revelations concerning the fundamental characteristics and dynamics of human beings.

The procedure of this study consists of 7 steps as follows:

1. The study started by understanding the verses of the Quran about the origin of human beings as essential information to reveal the basic design of human beings and human life. The verses that are collected are the verses about the creation of human beings, since this study aims to identify the human endowment from the first time that they are created.

2. The second step is collecting relevant verses that explain the issues more comprehensively.

3. From the group of verses collected, an analysis is done to understand the essence of the message concerning the topics.

4. From the findings from the previous steps, the concept of natural human disposition is constructed using terminologies understood by the psychological discipline.

5. In the fifth step, sense-making is conducted to connect all findings, and further study is conducted from the scientific and empirical studies in Psychology. The inclusion criteria for the empirical study is the coherence of the findings with





the Quranic messages. Empirical studies that concluded an incoherent understanding of human beings are excluded. For example, some empirical studies concluded that human beings do not have souls [10; 11], and other studies concluded that human beings are the result of the evolutionary process of primates [12]. Another example excluded from this study is the idea that the essence of the human being is the sexual drive and aggression [13; 14]. This integration is done to comply with the message in the Quran surah Fussilat verse number 53.

6. Then a model of basic human potential is developed as the result of the study.

7. The implication of the model for mental health and also for the purpose of human development is discussed.

## Results

The verses of the Quran that will be studied to build a theory about the basic human potential are the verses about the creation of humans. This is based on the assumption that the basic human potential is something that was created by Allah or bestowed by Allah to humans at the beginning of their creation. Basic human potential is not the result of human efforts but something that allows humans to develop themselves.

From the process of reciting the Al-Quran, in general it can be understood that humans were created from soil, or the elements contained in the soil. This is mentioned in the verse (6:2; 7:12; 23:12; 32:7; 37:11; 38:71; 38:76) [3].

The first stage of human creation is the creation of the body. After the body that was created from the essence of the soil reached its perfection, then Allah breathed the spirit into it, and the human being was complete and alive (Ash-Shaad (38):72). The process of perfecting humans who will perform a mission on the earth («khalifah fil ardh») is further explained in Surah Al-Baqarah verses 30-34.

The discussion of basic human potential is a process of tadabbur or uncovering the meaning behind verses, which can be understood psychologically. An understanding of the meaning contained in the verses of the Quran then constructed into a psychological theory.

After the spirit is blown into the body, the human becomes alive. Everything is called alive because it has a soul. In Arabic, the soul is called «nafs».



كُلُّ نَفْسٍ ذَائِقَةُ الْمَوْتِ

«Every soul will taste death» (3:185) [3].

Furthermore, a person's soul also means the self as a whole, or in psychological terms, it is referred to as the identity of the individual. With this understanding, between the spirit and the body and the soul, there are different layers of existence. When we discuss Psychology, what we are discussing is not the spirit and the body, but the «nafs», or soul, or self, or the identity of the individual. «Nafs» is a complex and multidimensional existence.

The Quran has reminded us that the spirit is an affair of Allah and humans are not given knowledge about it, except for a little.

وَيَسْأَلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ ۚ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ أَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَا أُوتِيتُمْ مِنَ الْعِلْمِ إِلَّا قَلِيلًا

«They ask you, O Prophet, about the spirit. Say, «Its nature is known only to my Lord, and you O humanity have been given but little knowledge» (17:85) [3].

That little knowledge is as far as we know that we live because of the spirit. However, to understand our life in this world, what we need to study and study more deeply is the «nafs», which is mentioned in the Al-Quran in 270 verses. These verses are a source of information for us to develop both theoretical and practical understanding regarding the «nafs» or human self. In This study we will only discuss the sufficient number of verses about the «nafs» that are relevant to the process of creation. This study does not discuss verses of the «nafs» that describe the further dynamics of human life after the creation. To discuss the dynamics of the «nafs» throughout a human life would need another separate study.

The description of the elements of the body and spirit cannot be separated from the process of the creation of the Prophet Adam. The creation of the Prophet Adam is described in the Quran through the mechanism of first creating the body, then being blown with the spirit. After that, it explains the next stage of the creation of Prophet Adam as a human through the process of interaction with Allah, angels and devils, as well as the nature where Prophet Adam lived. After the spirit was blown into Prophet Adam's body, Prophet Adam became alive. The second stage of this creation process can be understood as the process of perfecting the «nafs» of Prophet Adam. This is mentioned in the Surah Ash-Shams verse 7.



وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا

«And by the soul and the One Who fashioned it» (91:7) [3].

The following discussion will focus on the «*nafs*» which is the individual human self. Basic human potential is something that is inscribed by Allah SWT in human self. Humans self as God's creatures are explained in the process of creation step by step. This process of creation will contain a deep meaning. The first step to understanding this basic potential is to read Surah Al-Baqarah starting from verse 30 and 31.

#### Verse 30

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ إِنِّي جَاعِلٌ فِي الْأَرْضِ خَلِيفَةً ۖ قَالُوا أَتَجْعَلُ فِيهَا مَن يُفْسِدُ فِيهَا وَيَسْفِكُ الدِّمَاءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ ۗ قَالَ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

«Remember when your Lord said to the angels, «I am going to place a successive human 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» (2:30) [3].

#### Verse 31

وَعَلَّمَ آدَمَ الْأَسْمَاءَ كُلَّهَا ثُمَّ عَرَضَهُمْ عَلَى الْمَلَائِكَةِ فَقَالَ أَنْبِئُونِي بِأَسْمَاءِ هَؤُلَاءِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ صَادِقِينَ

He taught Adam the names of all things, then He presented them to the angels and said, «Tell Me the names of these, if what you say is true?» (2:31) [3].

Verses 30 and 31 above indicate that the Prophet Adam at the beginning of his creation was endowed with two basic potentials. First, as soon as Prophet Adam was alive, meaning his «*nafs*» began to be active, then Prophet Adam had the ability to communicate with God. This ability to communicate shows that Prophet Adam had the first basic potential related to hearing and sight which are senses. Then, in the next stage, Allah taught Prophet Adam about the names of all things. This event is the next process of creation, namely the creation related to the potential of abstraction. The name is something that is symbolic and can only be understood through an abstraction process. In this second potential, there are indications of differences between humans and angels.

#### Verse 32

قَالُوا سُبْحَانَكَ لَا عِلْمَ لَنَا إِلَّا مَا عَلَّمْتَنَا إِنَّكَ أَنْتَ الْعَلِيمُ الْحَكِيمُ

They replied, «Glory be to You! We have no knowledge except what You have taught us. You are truly the All-Knowing, All-Wise» (2:32) [3].



It is stated in the verse that angels do not have the ability to name things. The reason given by the angel is because God did not give this ability. That is, the basic potential possessed by humans is God's gift which is part of creation which can later be developed by the human being.

### Verse 33

قَالَ يَا آدَمُ أَنْبِئْهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ ۖ فَلَمَّا أَنْبَأَهُمْ بِأَسْمَائِهِمْ قَالَ أَلَمْ أَقُلْ لَكُمْ إِنِّي أَعْلَمُ الْغَيْبَ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَعْلَمُ مَا تُبْدُونَ وَمَا كُنْتُمْ تَكْتُمُونَ

Allah said, «O Adam! Inform them of their names». Then when Adam did, Allah said, «Did I not tell you that I know the secrets of the heavens and the earth, and I know what you reveal and what you conceal?» (2:33) [3].

The message contained in verse 33 above, firstly, shows that Prophet Adam was able to name all things after Allah had taught him. That is, when Prophet Adam was given the potential for abstraction or in this case understanding symbols, Prophet Adam then developed the ability to express this potential by naming things. In the second part of the verse, it is stated that Allah knows what the angels reveal which is the bad tendency of human beings. And Allah also knows the good potential of human beings that angels concealed, which is the intellect. What was stated by the angel at the beginning was the bad nature of humans, namely those who like to destroy and shed blood. Meanwhile, human nature that the angels did not mention, whose meaning is still hidden, is the potential shown by God in the form of the ability of abstraction which is manifested in naming things.

Professor Jeffrey Lang from the University of Kansas [15] interprets the basic human potential mentioned in verses 32 and 33 as intellect. Human intellect is the basic potential that will hamper the human tendency to destroy and shed blood. In the works of classical scholars, this human intellectual potential is referred to as «*aql*». Another term used to describe the basic potential in the form of intellect or «*aql*» is "reasoning". Hereby, we can understand that between the «*nafs*» and «*aql*» are not two separate things. «*Aql*» is one of the basic potentials of the «*nafs*» that can be developed to inhibit other forces that affect the «*nafs*», which in the Quran is called «*hawa*». This «*hawa*» is the one that was detected by the angel who said that humans have a tendency to spread corruption and shed blood. The verse that distinguishes between «*nafs*» and «*hawa*» is found in Surah Al-Nazi'at verse 40-41.



وَأَمَّا مَنْ خَافَ مَقَامَ رَبِّهِ وَنَهَى النَّفْسَ عَنِ الْهَوَىٰ

«And as for those who were in awe of standing before their Lord and restrained themselves («*nafs*») from evil desires («*hawa*»)» (79:40) [3].

فَإِنَّ الْجَنَّةَ هِيَ الْمَأْوَىٰ

«Paradise will certainly be their home» (79:41) [3].

The next process of creation is mentioned in the Surah Al-Baqarah verse 34 as follow:

وَإِذْ قُلْنَا لِلْمَلَائِكَةِ اسْجُدُوا لِآدَمَ فَسَجَدُوا إِلَّا إِبْلِيسَ أَبَىٰ وَاسْتَكْبَرَ وَكَانَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ

And remember when We said to the angels, «Prostrate before Adam», so they all did – but not Iblis, who refused and acted arrogantly, becoming unfaithful (2: 34) [3].

In verse 34, Prophet Adam is introduced to the devil who is referred to as an infidel or a person who denies/covers up the truth. Meanwhile, angels are those who obey God and act according to the truth. At this stage the Prophet Adam was given by God with the ability to distinguish between good and bad. This ability to distinguish between good and bad is called morality. In other words, the basic human potential besides sensory and intellectual is morality.

In the subsequent development of mankind, this human morality is divided into two layers depending on the context. The first layer of morality is morality related to human relations which are influenced by space and time which then form a culture. The morality of this culture differs from one culture to another. The second layer of morality, which is more essential, is morality related to human relations with God which is universal and applies to all human beings wherever they are. Universal morality even applies to the hereafter.

The most representative psychological term to represent what is called cultural morality is empathy. Empathy is an act of understanding each other in a caring and respectful manner. Empathy is a basic potential that can be developed in the context of human relations as mentioned in Surah Al-Hujurat verse number 13:

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا ۚ إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَىٰكُمْ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

«O humanity! Indeed, We created you from a male and a female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you may get to know one another. Surely the most noble of you in



*the sight of Allah is the most righteous among you. Allah is truly All-Knowing, All-Aware» (49:13) [3].*

The message contained in the verse above is not only concern with interpersonal and intercultural understanding which is the context of cultural morality, but also mention about the universal morality that concerned with the relationship between the self and Allah.

Universal morality can be understood by humans through a basic potential known as conscience. This conscience is also something that the human being can develop so that he can strengthen his connection with God. The conscience is the connection between the «nafs» and Allah that is already instill to the spirit as mentioned in Surah Al-A'raf verses number 172:

وَإِذْ أَخَذَ رَبُّكَ مِنْ بَنِي آدَمَ مِنْ ظُهُورِهِمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ عَلَى أَنْفُسِهِمْ أَلَسْتُ بِرَبِّكُمْ قَالُوا بَلَىٰ ۖ شَهِدْنَا ۚ أَنْ تَقُولُوا يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ إِنَّا كُنَّا عَنْ هَذَا غَافِلِينَ

*«And remember when your Lord brought forth from the loins of the children of Adam their descendants and had them testify regarding themselves. Allah asked, «Am I not your Lord?» They replied, «Yes, You are! We testify» He cautioned, «Now you have no right to say on Judgment Day, We were not aware of this» (7:172) [3].*

Based on the process of the creation of human beings mentioned above we can conclude that the basic human potential has four layers. The first layer is sensing which is the ability to detect the surrounding through the five senses. The deeper layer is called reasoning which includes the capacity of cognition, rationality, and logic. The reasoning is representation of «aql» in the form of present continuous verb, coherent with how the Quran always mentioned «aql» in the form of present continuous verb. The deeper layer is empathy, which covers the ability to feel compassion, love, and care for others. The deepest layer of human potential is the conscience which represents the deep awareness of the relationship between the soul and Allah.

Those four basic potentials are instilled in the human soul since the creation and it is pushback to the «unconscious» as mentioned in the Surah Al-Nahl verse number 78. That is why they are called potential that need to be developed throughout human life in this world. One of the Quranic verses that explain this concept is surah Al-Nahl number 78 as follows.



وَاللَّهُ أَخْرَجَكُمْ مِنْ بُطُونِ أُمَّهَاتِكُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ شَيْئًا وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَرَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ، لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ

«And Allah brought you out of the wombs of your mothers while you knew nothing, and gave you hearing, sight, and intellect so perhaps you would be thankful» (16:78) [3].

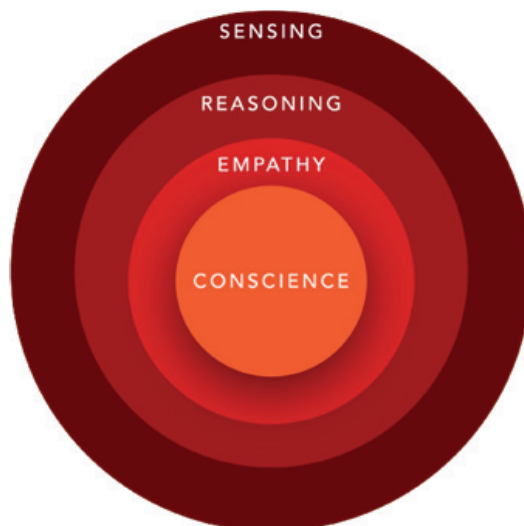


Fig. 1. Basic Human Potentials

«Nafs» is not separate from «qalb» which is the core of human beings. «Qalb» is more than feeling or emotion, but it includes understanding and also sensing as well, as mentioned in surah Al-Isra' verse number 46 and Al-Hajj verse number 46 as follows.

وَجَعَلْنَا عَلَى قُلُوبِهِمْ أَكِنَّةً أَنْ يَفْقَهُوهُ وَفِي آذَانِهِمْ وَقْرًا، وَإِذَا ذُكِرْتَ بِكَ فِي الْقُرْآنِ وَحْدَهُ، وَلَوْ أَنَّ أَزْوَاجَهُمْ يُفْقَرُونَ

«We have cast veils over their hearts – leaving them unable to comprehend it – and deafness in their ears. And when you mention your Lord alone in the Quran, they turn their backs in aversion» (17:46) [3].

أَفَلَمْ يَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَتَكُونَهُمْ قُلُوبٌ يَعْقِلُونَ بِهَا أَوْ آذَانٌ يَسْمَعُونَ بِهَا، فَإِنَّهَا لَا تَعْمَى الْأَبْصَارُ وَلَكِنْ تَعْمَى الْقُلُوبُ الَّتِي فِي الصُّدُورِ

«Have they not traveled throughout the land so their hearts may reason, and their ears may listen? Indeed, it is not the eyes that are blind, but it is the hearts in the chests that grow blind» (22:46) [3].

The verses of the Quran above imply that it is the «qalb» who hears and sees and also reason. Other verses of the Quran mentioned the emotional properties of the heart as follows:





الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ ۗ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

*those who believe and whose hearts find comfort in the remembrance of Allah. Surely in the remembrance of Allah do hearts find comfort (13:28) [3].*

In the Surah Al-Ra'd verse number 28 above, it is mentioned that the feeling of comfort is also the property of the heart. Comfort is a positive feeling that also means peaceful and calm. On the other hand, there is also a negative emotions that the heart can experience when the individuals reject the truth, as mentioned in surah Ali-'Imran verse number 151 as follows.

سَنُلْقِي فِي قُلُوبِ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا الرُّعْبَ ۖ بِمَا أَشْرَكُوا بِاللَّهِ مَا لَمْ يُنَزَّلْ بِهِ سُلْطَانٌ ۚ وَمَأْوَاهُمُ النَّارُ ۚ وَبِئْسَ مَثْوَى الظَّالِمِينَ

*We will cast horror into the hearts of the disbelievers for associating 'false gods' with Allah – a practice He has never authorized. The Fire will be their home – what an evil place for the wrongdoers to stay! (3:151) [3].*

Based on those messages of the Quran about the heart, we can conclude that the heart is also the place for emotion that can be good or bad. Emotion is the object of empathy that it could be calm or restless. The stronger the empathy, the emotion will be more manageable and the heart will become more calm.

Another property of the heart is mentioned in Al-Baqarah verse number 260 about the relationship between prophet Ibrahim and Allah, as follows:

وَإِذْ قَالَ إِبْرَاهِيمُ رَبِّ أَرِنِي كَيْفَ تُحْيِي الْمَوْتَىٰ ۖ قَالَ أَوْفَىٰ بِتُؤْمِنِ ۖ قَالَ بَلَىٰ ۖ وَلَٰكِن لِّيَبْتَلِيَٰنِي ۖ قَالَ فَخُذْ أَرْبَعَةً مِّنَ الطَّيْرِ فَصُرْهُنَّ إِلَيْكَ ثُمَّ أَجْعَلْ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ جَبَلٍ مِّنْهُنَّ جُزْءًا ثُمَّ ادْعُهُنَّ يَأْتِينَكَ سَعْيًا ۚ وَأَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَزِيزٌ حَكِيمٌ

*And 'remember' when Abraham said, «My Lord! Show me how you give life to the dead». Allah responded, «Do you not believe?» Abraham replied, «Yes I do, but just so my heart can be reassured». Allah said, «Then bring four birds, train them to come to you, 'then cut them into pieces, and scatter them on different hilltops. Then call them back, they will fly to you in haste. And 'so you will' know that Allah is Almighty, All-Wise» (2:260) [3].*

In this verse, the story is about the relationship between prophet Ibrahim and Allah, where the heart is mentioned as the hub of that relationship. In this context, it is the strength of the conscience that represent the assurance of the heart. This means that conscience is also the property of the heart that connect the individual or the soul with Allah.

Based on the verses of the Quran about the «*qalb*», we can conclude that the human basic potential that was found when we analyze the creation of the «*nafs*» is also



the property of the heart. This means that sensing, reasoning, empathy, and conscience are also the properties of the «*qalb*», at the same time as they are the properties of the «*nafs*». This finding shows that Islamic Psychology is multidimensional in nature. The «*nafs*», the «*qalb*», and the «*aql*» are not three separate entities, but rather they are multiple dimensions of the human soul. And we can also conclude that this multidimensional self of human being exists as the product of the body and the Spirit combined. Furthermore, we can say that this human basic potential is the «*fitrah*», the way Allah created human being, or the fundamental design of human beings as the creature of Allah.

Another fact that is found from the study of the Quranic verses is the implication of humans independent will. Surah Al-An'am verses number 110 above implies that what Allah did to a human's heart is a response to what the individual did to their heart at first.

وَنَقَلَبْ أَفْئِدَتَهُمْ وَأَبْصَرَهُمْ كَمَا لَمْ يُؤْمِنُوا بِهِ أُولَٰئِكَ مَرَّةٌ وَنَذَرُهُمْ فِي طُغْيَانِهِمْ يَعْمَهُونَ

«We turn their hearts and eyes away 'from the truth' as they refused to believe at first, leaving them to wander blindly in their defiance» (6:110) [3].

This verse implies that it is the individual that has the initiative on how they treat their heart. A person can open their heart for guidance or they can refuse the truth, so that the heart will not function well.

Another verse in the Quran that confirms this phenomenon is Surah Al-Ra'd verse number 11.

لَهُ مُعَقِّبَاتٌ مِّنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ يَحْفَظُونَهُ مِنْ أَمْرِ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّىٰ يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنفُسِهِمْ ۚ وَإِذَا أَرَادَ اللَّهُ بِقَوْمٍ سُوءًا فَلَا مَرَدَّ لَهُ ۚ وَمَا لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِهِ مِنْ وَّالٍ

«For each one there are successive angels before and behind, protecting them by Allah's command. Indeed, Allah would never change a people's state until they change their own state. And if it is Allah's Will to torment a people, it can never be averted, nor can they find a protector other than Him» (13:11) [3].

From the Al-Ra'd verse number 11 above, it is stated that Allah will not change people unless they have the initiative to change themselves. This means that Allah gives human beings the capability to make an initiative so that what will happen to them actually is their own responsibility. This is the concept of independent will based on the Quranic messages.



The four basic human potential that is found in this study is the source of the capability to take initiative. In other words, human's independent will is the result of the existence of these four basic potentials. An individual can initiate something when their sensing works in responding to the surroundings. Initiative can also emerge when the reasoning is active in understanding the meaning of the situation and when there is an awareness of a purpose. Furthermore, empathy can also drive human initiative that relates to interpersonal relationships, like the act of helping those who are in need. The deepest driving force is the conscience that invokes initiatives to behave in a way that makes them closer to Allah, like doing good deeds as a form of compliance to Allah's command.

## Discussion

From the study of Surah Al-Baqarah verses 30–34, it can be concluded that there are four basic human potentials that are part of creation as an endowment from Allah. First, those related to the senses, especially in the form of hearing and sight, are referred to as «sensing» potentials. The second basic human potential which is also a gift from God in its creation is related to abstraction or intellect which is referred to as «reasoning». The third basic potential related to human relations which is part of morality which has a cultural dimension is referred to as “empathy”. Then the fourth basic human potential which is the core of «nafs», is conscience which is a universal morality that determines the strength of the relationship between human soul and Allah SWT.

These four basic human potentials are related to one another and should be coherent so that humans are mentally healthy. Mental in this case is refers to the «*qalb*» or the heart, because the dynamics of the four basic human potential happen in the heart. When the four basic human potentials are not developed properly, then the heart will experience a problem.

For example, healthy empathy is one that doesn't conflict with one's conscience. In other words, conscience constraints and guides empathy. Then, no matter how strong reasoning is, he will not be healthy if he violates or ignores empathy. That is, in developing our reasoning, there are boundaries of empathy that cannot be violated. In other words, reasoning that doesn't care about the benefit of others, will result in something bad, both for himself and for the people around him. Likewise with sensing, which in this case means sensory satisfaction, should not conflict with reasoning or



common sense. Based on this theoretical framework regarding basic human potential, psychological problems will occur when these four potentials are incoherent, unbalanced, or inappropriate.

This framework can be used as an understanding of human psychology in an Islamic perspective, which will be useful for understanding human life in general. The four basic human potentials will be explained in Psychology which does not just explain what humans are like, but has directed them. So not only explaining or giving a description but also prescribing on how to become a better individual.

A more detailed explanation of each basic human potential is as follows:

#### 1. Sensing

Sensing is the outermost potential of the soul which is directly connected to the body. In other words, sensing is in the form of the five senses. It is like the soul as an entity that is attached to the body, its outer shell is directly attached to the body. Sensing is really feeling something concrete, that is here and now, that can be seen, heard, touched, smelled, and even tasted if necessary.

#### 2. Reasoning

The deeper potential of the soul is reasoning. Reasoning potential includes something more than concrete objects. This potential has entered an abstract space. When someone uses reasoning, they can see something deeper than what is detected by the senses. He can describe an abstract concept. When the reasoning is active, an individual can understand the reason of what is happening and also the consequences that are not yet detected by the sensing. Reasoning can also construct meaning of the issue that is experienced by the individual.

Reasoning is able to process something that is observed and felt, more than just describing. In this dimension there is a causal relationship, there is a reason, there is a purpose, and meaning. If sensing is a connection between the soul and the body, reasoning is a connection between the soul and the signs that make humans understand more about the meaning of human life. People who have trouble with reasoning will not understand any explanations. In other words, people who live but are unable to explain, do not have reasons for the actions they have committed, it could be that the reasoning potential in their souls has not been well developed.

Reasoning will stimulate the formation of meaning in a person in interpreting what that person is experiencing. However, it should be understood that the meaning



generated by individuals is not always correct because the rumination process can produce false meanings. According to Riyono [16] (2020b), false meaning is something that seems as if it is a meaning, but is not the real meaning and tends to deceive and cause disappointment. False meaning is short-term, self-centered, illusory, driven by revenge, or superficial understanding. On the other hand, true meaning includes a sense of contribution, a sense of competence, a sense of enjoyment, and a sense of values [16] (Riyono, 2020b).

### 3. Empathy

The potential of the soul that is deeper than reasoning is known as empathy. Empathy is not just a feeling. Empathy is the connection between one's soul and another's soul. In general, empathy for individuals encourages behavior that supports social relations. Thus, it is true that empathy is deeper than reasoning. True love is love that activate the level of empathy from one's soul with another. Recently, certain group of people only talk about love at the level of sensing, so they don't differentiate between love and sexual relations. In the discourse of Conventional Psychology, this view is supported by the theory of Freud [17] who put forward the concept of the «*Id*», which is referred to as the source of sexual libido. Meanwhile, Maslow [18; 19], included love in the category of social needs. Maslow differentiate between love and sex, that he puts sexual need as part of the physiological needs. Beside love, empathy also represents the capacity for compassion for the suffering of others.

### 4. Conscience

The deepest potential of the soul is conscience which is spiritual in nature. Conscience is the potential that is closest to the existence of the spirit, namely the connection between the soul and God which shows human longing for God. An indicator of a strongly developed conscience is the consciousness about the relationship with Allah and the belief of Hereafter. This level of consciousness is the source of endless hope which is the most important element in human motivation [20].

Previous studies have shown the positive impact of spirituality on human life. In an organizational context, spirituality in the workplace is related to an increase in the quality of work [21]. In a clinical context, research from Subandi [22] shows that when patients' understanding of mental illness comes from God, which means it can be cured, it makes psychotic mental disorder patients have hope of solving their problems.



The four potentials of the soul as a whole explain the relationship between the soul and the body, the soul and the universe, the soul and other souls, and the soul with God. The potential of the soul will live and function optimally if the individual knows himself deeply. People who don't know themselves well will have difficulty understanding the importance of reasoning, empathy, and spirituality because they are trapped in the pseudo-pleasure of the sensing layer. When an individual is trapped in the sensory level, they will suffer what is called as sensing mentality [23]. So, in order for an individual to know himself deeply, a sound relationship with himself is needed. It is this relationship between the soul and oneself that ultimately has a major influence on the quality of the individual's soul as a whole.

When someone has developed a strong conscience, it means that their empathy will also develop well. On the other hand, when an individual has no strong empathy their sensitivity of conscience is questionable. If reasoning is developed properly, it can also strengthen the conscience because the relationship between the soul and Allah is rational and logical in nature. That is why the relationship between reasoning and conscience is also reciprocal. A problem will occur when the reasoning is not guided with logic and empathy that it will result in false meaning. The phenomenon of false meaning is mentioned in surah Al-Sajdah verse number 9 as follows.

ثُمَّ سَوَّاهُ وَنَفَخَ فِيهِ مِنْ رُوحِهِ ۚ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ ۚ قَلِيلًا مَّا تَشْكُرُونَ

*«Then He fashioned them and had a spirit of His Own creation breathed into them. And He gave you hearing, sight, and intellect. Yet you hardly give any thanks» (32:9) [3].*

Surah Al-Sajdah verse number 9 above illustrates how some human beings that are given hearing, sight, and intellect still do not comprehend the true meaning of life which is to be grateful (*shukur*). This happens when the reasoning is active but does not work in the right way, so what they find is false meaning. We can also say that the condition happens when the reasoning is active, but it does not connect with the conscience, so that the meaning they conclude is illusory and contains falsehood.

A healthy soul is one that has developed their potential guided by the conscience. Conscience should be the leader in developing the other potentials, which will guide the development of the empathy, reasoning, and sensing potential. However, conscience is the deepest level of the human heart that it is not easy to recognize without deep contemplation. Conscience is also the property of the heart that cannot be detected by



other people, so it has to be activated or developed by the individual self with the help from Allah.

A mentally healthy human being is those who have a clean and strong conscience, so that the empathy, reasoning, and sensing will also be guided. On the other hand, those whose conscience is not clear will experience mental problems because their empathy and reasoning could experience imbalance and misguided. According to Hadith from Rasulullah SAW, a «sin» is something that can contaminate the conscience.

*«If a servant commits a sin, a black spot will be inscribed in his heart. But if he leaves it and makes istighfar, surely his heart will be cleansed of that black spot. Conversely, if he continues to sin, the black spots will continue to increase until they cover his heart. That is the covering wall of the remembrance of Allah» (Narrated by Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah).*

«Sins» are caused by a human's wrong initiative or decisions that will result in sinful behavior. It means that there is a connection between human behavior and human conscience. The act of purifying the conscience from the sins is called «tazkiya». This is mentioned in the surah Al-Shams verse number 9.

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا

*«Successful indeed is the one who purifies their soul» (91:9) [3].*

Theoretical framework from human potential also applicable in the field of parenting and education. The highest purpose of parenting and education is not only to develop knowledge or attitude but it's more to develop the individual to become mentally healthy and mature person. Therefore, the process of parenting or education has to involve all layers or the human basic potential. The core of education and parenting is how to strengthen the conscience through activating sensing, reasoning, and empathy. In children, activities that involve experiences with nature and play are the development of sensing potential. Furthermore, the acquisition of knowledge and understanding of the experience is the way to develop reasoning potential. Thirdly, the development of friendship, social interaction, and caring for others are the development of empathy potential. All of those activities should be connected with the deepest meaning, which will touch the conscience potential by relating them to the greatness of Allah and the attitude of spiritual gratitude. Only by doing this strategy of parenting and education, the purpose to develop mentally healthy and matured individuals will be achieved.

This theoretical framework of human potential can also be used to analyze society and will provide a prescription for the solution of societal problems. The current trends





of social media and artificial intelligence have caused a big change in society in terms of how people think, feel, and behave. Pitirim Sorokin [24], prominent sociologist from Russia has noticed the problem of the society that he called as a sensing culture. Sensing culture is a culture of people or society that is trapped in the sensing layers of the human soul. This society disregards the deeper meaning of life or the idealistic life, but rather only lives by following and satisfying their senses. This sensing culture is currently happening in this social media era that is evidenced by the new terms such as fear of missing out (FOMO), flexing, viral, «gimmick», buzzer, hoax, influencer, celebgram, etc. A society with a sensing culture will suffer from shallowness and lose the meaning of life. One of the indicators of this problem is increasing suicide rates and the rates of the drug abused. The way of solving this problem is to implement social change strategies that promote reasoning, empathy, and conscience through education, social events, community activities, that are supported by government policies.

The framework of basic human potential in this study can also be used as a framework to critically analyze the discourse of Conventional Psychology, especially the positive psychology movement. In the realm of Psychology, some associate this human potential with the positive psychological school of thought [25], which is explained as follows:

*«... Positive psychology, which focuses on people's strengths as the fundamental basis for growth. Seligman speaks about nurturing people's psychological capital in order to help them develop resilience, the capacity to overcome problems and to see new opportunities in times of trouble» [25].*

In the discourse of Positive Psychology there are three important constructs that are argued to have connection with human potential. These constructs are happiness, hope, and gratitude. Seligman [26] in the book *«Authentic Happiness»*, there are three levels of happiness: a pleasant life, a good life, and a meaningful life. This type of happiness if analyze with the framework of four basic human potentials is as follows.

What is called a pleasant life is actually in the level of sensing which is indicated by joyfulness, popularity, parties, and so on. A good life is a result of strong reasoning which manifests as a successful and fulfilling life. But Seligman also indicates that a man with a good life does not necessarily have good social relationships, meaning the empathy potential is not well developed. Seligman illustrates those who have the highest happiness is a meaningful life, which is a life with meaningful relationship with others



and a life that provides benefit for others. This illustration indicates a meaningful life caused by a well-developed empathy. Unfortunately, Seligman stops there. He refused to go further to reach the deeper level of meaning in life which represents the well-developed conscience, because he refused to include a relationship with God in his theory.

When Seligman and his associate in Positive Psychology developed the construct of hope and gratitude, they also stopped at the empathy level which is the relationship between individuals. When Seligman invokes an individual's gratitude, he suggests that they find the significant person in their life and express gratitude to them that will touch their heart. Again, this gratitude is limited to the emphatic layer of human potential.

Conscience is the differentiating factor between the Islamic Psychology and Conventional Psychology. Islamic Psychology covers the issues that are discussed in Conventional Psychology, but it goes further by introducing the conscience potential of human beings. Therefore, Islamic Psychology actually is not a separate discourse that is different from Conventional Psychology, but rather it is a more comprehensive understanding of human beings that provide a complete elements of human life.

## **Conclusion**

The purpose of this study is to construct a theory about basic human potential based on the Quranic messages, through the method of «Maqasid». The «Maqasid» method is a way to find a deeper meaning of Quranic verses that imply the purpose of the messages. This study has found four basic human potentials that are endowed by Allah to all human beings since the process of human creation. This four basic human potential are: (1) «sensing» which involved potential to interact with surrounding through the five senses, (2) reasoning the potential of human beings to understand the meaning of their experience that include the purpose and also the reasons of what is happening; (3) empathy, which is the human potential to connect with each other deeply in a bounding that is beyond time and space; (4) Conscience, the potential of human being to connect with Allah SWT and to prepare themselves in entering the Hereafter.

These four potentials are found as properties of the soul («nafs») and also the properties of the heart («qalb») as well. The heart is the dynamic of human beings that will determine the quality of the individual. The well-developed individual is the one



who opens their heart and grows their potential in a balanced and integrated manner. However, human beings are the ones who make the decision whether they will open the heart for guidance or refuse the truth. When they refuse to open their heart, human beings will suffer mental problems to various degrees. These facts indicate that human beings have independent will and are responsible for the consequences of their own decisions. The framework of human basic potentials can serve as the starting point to understanding the psychological dynamic of human beings, both as individuals and also society. The framework of these four basic human potentials found in this study can also be used to analyze and improve the understanding of human beings and human life beyond the discourse of Conventional Psychology.

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