

Halal Lifestyle and Mental Health: An Islamic Psychological Perspective on a Halal-Thayyib Life

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ABSTRACT

The rising rates of anxiety, stress, and other mental health challenges within the Muslim community particularly among the younger generation have reignited interest in whether contemporary lifestyle psychology models which are largely grounded in secular Western epistemology adequately address the spiritual dimensions of the Muslim experience. This article presents a literature review examining how the Islamic principle of *halalan-thayyiban* (a permissible and wholesome life) relates to psychological well-being through the lens of Islamic psychology. A document-based (library) research method was used to analyze peer-reviewed literature on halal studies and Islamic psychology published primarily between 2012 and 2025, triangulated against core Islamic psychological constructs namely, *fitrah*, *nafs*, *qalb*, and *ruh* as well as the psychospiritual stages of *takhalli*, *tahalli*, and *tajalli*. This review found that halal-thayyib practices serve a purpose beyond mere dietary compliance: these practices are part of the broader process of *tazkiyat al-nafs* (purification of the soul), which Islamic psychology associates with psychological balance and resilience against suffering rooted in *ghaflah* (negligence). Throughout the reviewed literature, adherence to the *halal-thayyib* lifestyle is repeatedly associated with a reduction in risky behaviors, stronger self-regulation, and greater spiritual and psychological peace, although most of the existing evidence remains descriptive or qualitative rather than experimentally validated. This review proposes an integrative conceptual model that maps specific *halal-thayyib* practices onto stages of spiritual purification and concludes that halal should be reconceptualized within the psychological discourse as a lifestyle-level construct rather than a narrow consumption criterion. Practical implications include the potential for *halal-thayyib*-based programs to promote mental health among Muslims in educational, clinical, and community settings. Future empirical research is recommended to quantitatively test the relationship between the *halal-thayyib* lifestyle and validated indicators of psychological well-being.

Keywords:

halal-thayyib; Islamic psychology; mental health; fitrah; lifestyle.

Introduction

Mental health has become one of the most pressing public health issues of the 21st century, and neither Muslim-majority nor Muslim-minority populations are exempt from this trend. Levels of anxiety, stress, and identity-related psychological pressure are reported to be on the rise among Muslim youth, coinciding with the erosion of traditional religious lifestyle practices amid urbanization, digitalization, and global consumer culture. At the same time, the mainstream psychological models used to understand and treat these conditions remain largely rooted in the Western secular epistemological tradition that separates the psychological realm from the spiritual realm of human experience. Scholars working within the emerging "Islam and psychology" movement argue that this separation limits the cultural and spiritual validity of psychological interventions for Muslim populations, and call for the development of an authentic Islamic psychological paradigm rather than merely culturally adapted versions of Western theories (Kaplick and Skinner 2017; Rothman and Coyle 2018).

These concerns are reflected in the literature on Islamic education, which also argues that reductionist, cognition-focused paradigms of education and mental health are no longer sufficient to address various contemporary psychological issues particularly burnout, academic depression, and identity crises reported among students exposed to intensive digital environments and social media (Ma'rifah, Alimuddin, and Supriandi 2026). Both bodies of literature agree on the same diagnosis: psychological well-being cannot be fully understood, in a Muslim context, without reference to spiritual constructs such as *fitrah* (an innate, God-oriented disposition) and *qalb* (the spiritual heart), and without considering the lifestyle practices through which these constructs are nurtured or eroded.

In line with this discourse, the halal industry and Islamic nutritional literature are increasingly moving beyond a narrow, legalistic interpretation of halal as merely something that is permitted. The combination of halal (lawful) with *thayyib* (healthy, pure, and of good quality) in the Qur'an has been interpreted by contemporary scholars as establishing a holistic standard of living that integrates physical, ethical, and spiritual well-being not merely a checklist limited to ingredients and certification labels (Astiwara 2025). Within this *halalan-thayyiban* framework, lifestyle choices related to food, medicine, work, and daily behavior are understood as forming a single, integrated criterion of "goodness" whose implications extend far beyond physical health outcomes to psychological and spiritual well-being (Erol 2021; Nordin et al. 2024).

Although these two bodies of literature share conceptual similarities, they have largely developed in parallel rather than in dialogue with one another. Halal studies tend to emphasize compliance, certification, supply chains, and consumer behavior, while Islamic psychology tends to focus on theoretical models of the soul (*nafs*, *qalb*, *aql*, *ruh*) and their application in psychotherapy, with relatively little attention given to how daily *halal-thayyib* lifestyle practices can function as mechanisms through which these psychological constructs are nurtured or protected. This represents a conceptual gap: if a *halal-thayyib* way of life is indeed holistic, its psychological dimensions deserve closer theoretical articulation within an explicit framework of Islamic psychology, rather than being treated as a peripheral or purely physiological issue.

The uniqueness of this review lies in its integrative approach. Rather than adding yet another descriptive account of the rules governing *halal-thayyib* food, or another theoretical elaboration on the Islamic model of the soul in isolation, this article deliberately examines both bodies of literature side by side to explore what each can offer the other: halal studies offer concrete, everyday, and behaviorally observable practices, while Islamic psychology offers a theoretical framework capable of explaining why these practices may be psychologically and spiritually significant, not merely from a nutritional perspective. Establishing this conceptual link is a necessary prerequisite for the kind of instrument-based empirical research that is currently lacking in both bodies of literature. Compared with existing work, this contribution is specific rather than general: Rothman and Coyle (2018) and Ma'rifah, Alimuddin, and Supriandi (2026) model the structure and developmental stages of the soul without reference to concrete *halal-thayyib* practices, while Astiwara (2025) and Shamsuddin (2022) document the holistic scope of *halal-thayyib* living without situating it within a psychospiritual process model. No study identified in this review explicitly maps categories of *halal-thayyib* practice onto the stages of *tazkiyat al-nafs*. The novelty of this review therefore lies in Table 1, presented in the Results and Discussion section, which proposes this mapping as a first step toward operationalizing *halal-thayyib* living as a measurable, lifestyle-level psychospiritual construct.

This article addresses this gap by posing the question: How can the principle of *halalan-thayyiban* be understood as a psychological construct rather than merely a dietary or legal construct within the framework of Islamic psychology? It has three objectives: first, to synthesize studies on halal and the latest literature in Islamic psychology to identify points of theoretical convergence; second, to propose a conceptual model of a *halal-thayyib* life as a lifestyle-level mechanism of *tazkiyat al-nafs* (purification of the soul) that supports psychological well-being; and third, to outline the practical and research implications of this conceptual bridge. The remainder of this article is organized as follows. The Methods section outlines the literature review procedure. The Results and Discussion section presents a synthesis in five parts: *halal-thayyib* as a holistic paradigm, the structure of the soul in Islamic psychology, the psychospiritual

stages of *tazkiyat al-nafs*, an integrative conceptual model linking the two, and a discussion of empirical evidence, practical implications, and limitations. The Conclusion summarizes the contributions of this review and offers directions for future empirical research. (These constructs, together with the soul-structure concepts of *fitrah*, *nafs*, *qalb*, *aql*, and *ruh* and the three-stage sequence of *takhalli*, *tahalli*, and *tajalli*, are introduced briefly here and defined more fully in the Results and Discussion section below.)

Methods

This study employs a qualitative literature review design (library research) using thematic and conceptual synthesis rather than statistical meta-analysis, given that the source literature is largely conceptual and qualitative in nature, both in the field of halal studies and Islamic psychology.

Sources were identified through a structured search of academic databases and journal repositories including Scopus- and Google Scholar-indexed journals on halal studies, journals on the psychology of religion, and journals on Islamic education using a combination of the keywords "*halal*," "*thayyib*" or "*tayyib*," "*halalan-thayyiban*," "*Islamic psychology*," "*fitrah*," "*tazkiyat al-nafs*," "*mental health*," and "*well-being*." The inclusion criteria were: (a) peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, or comparable academic sources; (b) published primarily between 2012 and 2025, with a small number of earlier foundational theoretical works retained if directly relevant; (c) addressing the concept of *halal-thayyib* in relation to health/lifestyle, or Islamic psychological constructs in relation to well-being. Sources that deal solely with the logistics of halal certification, supply chain management, or industry regulations without reference to health or psychological dimensions are excluded, as are sources for which the full text is not available.

Selected sources were read and thematically coded around four recurring conceptual clusters that emerged inductively during the review: (1) *halal-thayyib* as a paradigm of holistic living, (2) the structural model of the soul in Islamic psychology (*fitrah*, *nafs*, *qalb*, *aql*, *ruh*) and its stages of development, (3) psychospiritual mechanisms of purification *tazkiyat al-nafs*, *tahdhib al-akhlaq*, and *jihad al-nafs*, including the sequence of *takhalli*–*tahalli*–*tajalli* through which lifestyle practices theoretically influence the state of the soul, and (4) empirical or quasi-empirical evidence linking religious/halal lifestyle practices to health and well-being outcomes. These four groups were then synthesized into an integrative conceptual model, presented in the Results and Discussion section, which maps specific *halal-thayyib* practices onto the stages of soul purification and their associated psychological constructs.

Results and Discussions

Halal-Thayyib as a Paradigm for a Holistic Lifestyle

The reviewed literature on halal studies consistently frames *halalan-thayyiban* as more than just dietary rules. Recent conceptual and qualitative studies describe it as a holistic and preventive framework governing food, medicine, and daily behavior, with documented implications for physical, mental, and spiritual well-being (Astiwaru 2025; Shamsuddin 2022). Further comparative analysis notes that, unlike secular lifestyle or dietary movements, the *halal-thayyib* framework explicitly links physical health outcomes to ethical and spiritual responsibilities, positioning purity, legal compliance, and quality as interrelated rather than separate criteria (Astiwaru 2025). Similarly, research on halal food as "medicine" emphasizes that unhealthy diets and the consumption of items prohibited by religion are associated in this literature with increased stress and psychological strain, whereas the *halal-thayyib* diet is associated with a calmer and more balanced mental state (Elgharbawy and Azmi 2022).

This broader interpretation is supported by studies on halal consumer behavior, which show that religiosity and identity not just price or convenience shape how Muslim consumers,

including the younger “millennial” generation, relate to *halal-thayyib* products as part of a coherent lifestyle and identity commitment, rather than as an isolated purchasing decision (Astiwara 2023). Similarly, reviews linking the consumption of *halal-thayyib* food to public health outcomes argue that the criteria of *thayyib* cleanliness, safety, and nutritional adequacy serve as a preventive measure against physical illnesses and psychological stress associated with poor health (Shamsuddin 2022; Nordin et al. 2024). A narrative review of broader Islamic lifestyle practices including *halal-thayyib* consumption, moderation in eating, and regular worship reports an association with reduced physiological stress markers, which the authors link to broader psychological well-being (Khorasgani and Beikzadeh 2023). Overall, this literature supports treating the *halal-thayyib* lifestyle as an integrative lifestyle construct with legitimate psychological dimensions, rather than limiting it to questions of the permissibility of food ingredients.

Islamic Psychology: Fitrah, Nafs, Qalb, and Ruh

To connect this lifestyle framework with a psychological framework, this review draws on the emerging literature in Islamic psychology, which has sought to articulate a theoretical model of the human soul grounded in Islamic epistemology rather than adapted from Western theories. At the core of this literature is the concept of *fitrah*: an innate and pure inclination to recognize and orient oneself toward God, which is believed to be present in every person from birth but which progressively becomes obscured through worldly life (Rothman and Coyle 2018). Based on classical studies, particularly the works of al-Ghazali, this framework further distinguishes four interacting aspects of the soul: *nafs* (the lower self, inclined toward worldly desires), *qalb* (the spiritual-cognitive center, or heart), *aql* (the intellect, located within the *qalb*), and *ruh* (the spirit), which is described as an unchanging point of connection with God (Keshavarzi and Haque 2013). In accessible terms, *fitrah* is the person’s innate orientation toward God and goodness, *nafs* is the lower, desire-driven self that can pull a person away from that orientation, *qalb* is the spiritual-cognitive heart that registers and responds to this pull, *aql* is the reasoning faculty seated within the *qalb* that can discipline the *nafs*, and *ruh* is the God-given spirit that remains constant beneath all of these fluctuations. Together, these five constructs give Islamic psychology a structural vocabulary for describing inner conflict and growth that has no direct equivalent in secular personality theory.

This model further identifies three stages of the soul’s development found in the Qur’an: *nafs al-ammarah* (the soul that is inclined toward evil or negligence), *nafs al-lawwama* (the soul that reproaches itself, where most inner struggles take place), and *nafs al-mutmainnah* (the tranquil soul) (Rothman and Coyle 2018). A related theoretical formulation, which more explicitly draws on the Qur’anic theory of personality, also maps psychological functions onto these developmental stages while incorporating comparative insights from personality theory (Abu-Raiya 2012). Complementary work on the concept of the “three-heart model” associated with Ibn al-Qayyim further elaborates on the *qalb*’s capacity to shift between spiritually receptive and spiritually resistant states, offering a dynamic explanation of how the condition of the heart changes in response to a person’s behavior and environment (Briki and Amara 2018). In this literature, psychological distress is not conceptualized primarily as a deficiency to be corrected in isolation, but rather as a state of disharmony with one’s *fitrah* resulting from the dominance of the lower impulses of the *nafs* a formulation that differs significantly from secular models that focus solely on symptoms and that has been noted as part of a broader movement toward the development of an authentic Islamic psychological paradigm (Kaplick and Skinner 2017).

This structural explanation is reinforced by recent works in Islamic educational psychology, which also organize the human personality around *al-fitrah*, *al-nafs*, *al-qalb*, and *al-aql*, describing them as an integrated diagnostic framework in which an imbalance in any one element whether spiritual, emotional, moral, or cognitive spreads instability throughout the entire personality system (Ma’rifah, Alimuddin, and Supriandi 2026). Within this framework, the highest indicator of psychological health is not merely the absence of disorders, but the attainment of *nafs al-mutmainnah* (a peaceful soul) accompanied by *qalb. salim* (a healthy and

tranquil heart), both of which are described as the result of sustained harmony between behavior, beliefs, and inner character (Ma'rifah, Alimuddin, and Supriandi 2026).

Tazkiyat al-Nafs: Takhalli, Tahalli, and Tajalli as Psychospiritual Stages

In addition to explaining the structure of the soul, the literature on Islamic psychology and Islamic education outlines a model of the process by which the soul moves toward, or away from, harmony with fitrah. Three interrelated mechanisms are identified: tazkiyat al-nafs (purification of the soul), *tahdhib al-akhlaq* (refinement of character), and *jihad al-nafs* (struggle against one's desires) (Rothman and Coyle 2018). Specifically, in *tazkiyat al-nafs*, a three-stage sequence is described: takhalli, the emptying or cleansing of oneself of destructive traits and improper habits; tahalli, the adornment of the self with praiseworthy qualities and beneficial practices; and tajalli, the manifestation of tranquility, spiritual clarity, and closeness to God (Ma'rifah, Alimuddin, and Supriandi 2026). Put simply, *takhalli* is the emptying-out stage, in which harmful traits and habits are actively removed; *tahalli* is the filling-in stage, in which the resulting space is deliberately occupied with praiseworthy qualities and beneficial practices; and *tajalli* is the resulting state, in which the cumulative effect of the first two stages becomes manifest as tranquility, spiritual clarity, and closeness to God. *Tazkiyat al-nafs* is the umbrella term for this entire three-stage sequence, and it is the specific process that halal-thayyib practices are proposed, in this review, to serve.

This process model is presented in the literature as functioning analogously to recognized therapeutic mechanisms in contemporary psychology broadly comparable to the processes of emotion regulation, habit restructuring, and meaning-making while remaining explicitly grounded in the guidance of revelation (the Qur'an and Sunnah) rather than solely on secular therapeutic theories (Ma'rifah, Alimuddin, and Supriandi 2026). Importantly, this literature frames the process as one requiring sustained practice and discipline rather than a single corrective action, and identifies religious practices such as worship, remembrance of God (*dhikr*), and self-reflection (*muhasabah*) as the primary vehicles through which takhalli, tahalli, and tajalli are pursued in daily life (Ma'rifah, Alimuddin, and Supriandi 2026). It is here that this review identifies its primary conceptual opportunity: if *tazkiyat al-nafs* is realized through disciplined daily practices, then halal-thayyib lifestyle behaviors which are disciplined daily practices oriented toward legal compliance and quality constitute a plausible and largely unexplored vehicle for the same psychospiritual process.

Toward an Integrative Conceptual Model: Halal-Thayyib Practices as a Vehicle for Tazkiyat al-Nafs

The conceptual bridge proposed in this review is that *halal-thayyib* lifestyle practices operationalize, at the level of everyday behavior, the processes identified by Islamic psychology as necessary for harmonizing the soul with fitrah. Table 1 summarizes this proposed mapping, linking specific categories of halal-thayyib practices to the corresponding stages of tazkiyat al-nafs and related constructs in Islamic psychology, based on the sources reviewed above.

Halal-Thayyib Practice	Lifestyle	Corresponding Stage of Tazkiyat al-Nafs	Related Psychology Construct	Islamic-	Illustrative Source(s)
Avoiding haram and doubtful (shubhat) food, medicine, and income		Takhalli — cleansing the self of harmful/impure intake and unlawful habits	Restraining nafs al-ammarah; protecting qalb from corruption		Astiwarra (2025); Fadzlillah et al. (2022)

Halal-Thayyib Lifestyle Practice	Corresponding Stage of Tazkiyat al-Nafs	Related Islamic-Psychology Construct	Illustrative Source(s)
Choosing thayyib (clean, nutritious, quality) food and lawful livelihood	Tahalli — adorning the self with wholesome, beneficial habits	Strengthening aql and qalb through quality intake and conduct	Elgharbawy & Azmi (2022); Nordin et al. (2024)
Consistent, disciplined daily practice of halal-thayyib living as worship	Jihad al-nafs — sustained struggle to maintain lawful, wholesome conduct	Movement from nafs al-lawwama toward greater self-regulation	Rothman & Coyle (2018); Keshavarzi & Haque (2013)
Experienced gratitude, calm, and contentment from halal-thayyib living	Tajalli — manifestation of inner peace and closeness to God	Approaching nafs al-mutmainnah; qalb salim (a sound heart)	Ma'rifah et al. (2025); Hassan (2015)

Table 1. Proposed conceptual mapping between halal-thayyib lifestyle practice and the stages of tazkiyat al-nafs.

When interpreted in this way, avoiding haram and dubious (*shubhat*) foods, medications, and sources of income is conceptually consistent with takhalli: the active purification of one's intake and behavior, which, in the literature of Islamic psychology, is described as protecting the qalb from corruption and resisting the dominance of the nafs al-ammarah (Astiwaru 2025). On the positive side actively choosing food, medicine, and livelihoods that are thayyib due to their purity, quality, and benefits aligns with *tahalli*, which is the act of beautifying oneself through beneficial habits, and is associated in the literature on halal studies with strengthened self-regulation and improved lifestyle outcomes (Elgharbawy and Azmi 2022; Nordin et al. 2024). Consistently upholding these choices, especially under social or economic pressure to compromise, reflects *jihad al-nafs*, a disciplined struggle described in Islamic psychology as moving the soul from *nafs al-ammarah* toward *nafs al-lawwama* and ultimately *nafs al-mutmainnah* (Keshavarzi and Haque 2013). Finally, the tranquility, gratitude, and satisfaction associated in the halal studies literature with a sustainable halal-thayyib life can be interpreted, within this framework, as markers of the experience of *tajalli* the manifestation of the qalb salim and the movement toward the *nafs al-mutmainnah* (Hassan 2015; Ma'rifah, Alimuiddin, and Supriandi 2026).

This mapping shows that a *halal-thayyib* way of life need not be treated by researchers or practitioners as a parallel practice or merely one that is compatible with psychospiritual development; rather, it can be theorized as one of the ordinary, everyday vehicles. This reframing has the advantage of providing the abstract stages of tazkiyat al-nafs with a concrete and observable behavioral reference (dietary and lifestyle choices), while also giving the practice of halal-thayyib a deeper psychological rationale beyond mere compliance or health optimization.

Empirical Evidence, Practical Implications, and Limitations

Empirical support for this proposed framework, although largely indirect, emerges from some of the reviewed literature. A survey-based study in Malaysia found that greater adherence to religious practices, including halal dietary practices, was associated with healthier overall lifestyle patterns (Hassan 2015). A public health-oriented review of *halalan-tayyiban* further argues that consistent adherence to the criteria of *thayyib* acts as a protective factor against the growing physical and psychosocial burden resulting from noncommunicable diseases, positioning the *halal-thayyib* lifestyle as a preventive framework with outcomes relevant to mental health (Showole et al. 2024). In parallel, research in Islamic educational psychology reports that the internalization of monotheism (*tauhid*), *ihsan* (spiritual excellence), patience (*sabr*), and reliance on God (*tawakal*) function as spiritual coping mechanisms that reduce anxiety and strengthen psychological resilience, particularly among students facing academic and identity-related pressures (Ma'rifah, Alimuddin, and Supriandi 2026).

These findings are consistent with though do not directly test the claim in Islamic psychology that disciplined lifestyle practices support the soul's movement away from the *nafs al-amarah* and toward the *nafs al-mutmainnah*. What the halal studies literature empirically documents as lifestyle-related health outcomes, the Islamic psychology literature offers a theoretical framework to interpret as evidence of psychological realignment with *fitrah*. When read together, these two bodies of literature suggest that *halal-thayyib* practices are not only compatible with psychological well-being as an external correlate but can also serve as a practical vehicle through which *tazkiyat al-nafs* is pursued in daily life.

This reconceptualization has several practical implications. First, the principles of *halal-thayyib* can be integrated into religion-sensitive mental health promotion programs, psychoeducational materials, and public health interventions for Muslim populations, positioning lifestyle practices as a complement to rather than a substitute for clinical mental health care. Second, in educational settings, integrating the practice of a *halal-thayyib* lifestyle alongside existing character education and *tazkiyat al-nafs* approaches can offer a concrete, behavior-based entry point for strengthening students' spiritual resilience, in line with recommendations that teachers serve not only as educators but also as moral and spiritual role models (Ma'rifah, Alimuddin, and Supriandi 2026). Third, stakeholders in the halal industry and certification bodies may find value in communicating *halal-thayyib* compliance not only in terms of legal permissibility or product safety, but also in terms of its documented and theorized contributions to holistic well-being, which can strengthen consumer engagement grounded in identity and religiosity rather than price alone (Astiwara 2023).

Several limitations constrain this synthesis and should guide future research. First, most of the reviewed literature on halal studies relies on descriptive, qualitative, or conceptual methods textual analysis of the Qur'an and Hadith, policy reviews, or consumer behavior surveys rather than on validated measurements of psychological outcomes, meaning that claims regarding psychological or mental health benefits are largely inferential rather than directly measured (Astiwara 2025; Shamsuddin 2022). Second, the Islamic psychology literature on *fitrah*, *nafs*, *qalb*, and *ruh* is largely theoretical and qualitative, derived from interviews with expert informants or textual-conceptual analysis rather than through instruments suitable for testing associations with everyday lifestyle behaviors (Ma'rifah, Alimuddin, and Supriandi 2026; Rothman and Coyle 2018). No studies identified in this review directly and quantitatively tested associations between adherence to a *halal-thayyib* lifestyle and validated psychological well-being scales. Third, the conceptual mapping proposed in Table 1 is a synthesis developed by this review, not an empirically validated model; therefore, this mapping should be interpreted as a theory-based proposal that identifies promising and under-explored areas for empirical investigation, rather than as proven cause-and-effect relationships.

Comparative Notes: The Islamic and Secular Paradigms of Psychology

It is important to situate this conceptual bridge in relation to the secular paradigm of psychology rather than treating it as a complete substitute. Contemporary secular models of well-being typically emphasize the cognitive, behavioral, and socio-environmental determinants of mental health and have yielded a substantial body of evidence from validated measurement

instruments and intervention protocols. The Islamic psychological literature reviewed here does not directly reject these contributions; rather, it argues that such models often overlook the spiritual dimensions of human experience a person's relationship with God, their sense of purpose within a divinely ordered cosmos, and constructs such as *fitrah* and *qalb* that cannot be reduced solely to cognition or behavior (Kaplick and Skinner 2017; Rothman and Coyle 2018). Whereas secular models define mental health primarily as the absence of diagnosable disorders, the Islamic framework reviewed here defines it also in positive and theocentric terms: as the presence of *nafs al-mutmainnah* and *qalb salim*, which arises from the sustained harmony between beliefs, behavior, and inner character (Ma'rifah, Alimuddin, and Supriandi 2026).

For the practice of a *halal-thayyib* lifestyle, this comparative framework reveals two interpretations that are complementary rather than competing. From the perspective of secular health behavior, *halal-thayyib* practices such as avoiding harmful substances, consuming nutritious food, and maintaining routine and discipline are reasonable contributors to reducing physiological stress and improving mood regulation through well-established biological pathways. From the perspective of Islamic psychology presented in this review, these same practices also hold significance as acts of worship and self-purification that influence the state of the soul. These two interpretations are not mutually exclusive: a *halal-thayyib* lifestyle may support psychological well-being through pathways mediated by both biological and spiritual factors simultaneously a possibility that warrants empirical attention rather than a priori rejection of either paradigm.

Conclusion

This review set out to answer a specific question: how can *halalan-thayyiban* be theorized as a psychological, rather than a purely dietary or legal, construct within Islamic psychology? The synthesis presented here answers this question by proposing that *halal-thayyib* practices function as an everyday behavioral vehicle for *tazkiyat al-nafs*: avoiding haram and *shubhat* items operationalizes *takhalli*, choosing *thayyib* food and livelihood operationalizes *tahalli*, sustaining these choices under social or economic pressure reflects *jihad al-nafs*, and the resulting calm and gratitude mark *tajalli* and the movement toward *nafs al-mutmainnah*. This mapping, summarized in Table 1, is the review's principal contribution: it repositions *halal-thayyib* living from a compliance checklist to a lifestyle-level mechanism of soul purification, and it supplies Islamic psychology's abstract developmental stages with a concrete, observable behavioral referent.

This reconceptualization carries direct implications for practice. Religion-sensitive mental health programs and psychoeducational materials can draw on *halal-thayyib* practices as a complement to, rather than a substitute for, clinical mental health care. Islamic education can use *halal-thayyib* discipline as a concrete, behavior-based entry point for character education and *tazkiyat al-nafs* formation. Halal-industry stakeholders can frame compliance communication around documented and theorized well-being outcomes rather than legal permissibility or product safety alone.

Because the evidence reviewed here is predominantly descriptive and qualitative, empirically testing this model should be the priority for future research, in three directions. Quantitative and mixed-methods studies should test the association between *halal-thayyib* adherence and validated well-being measures across samples that vary in religiosity and cultural context. Context-appropriate instruments should be developed for constructs such as perceived alignment with *fitrah*, *qalb salim*, or progression through the *takhalli-tahalli-tajalli* sequence, so that the mapping in Table 1 can be tested empirically rather than asserted theoretically. Intervention studies should pilot *halal-thayyib*-based psychoeducation or community programs in educational, clinical, or *da'wah* (religious outreach) settings and evaluate their effect on both physical-health indicators and Islamic-psychology-informed measures of well-being. Pursuing these directions would allow the conceptual model proposed here to move from a theory-based synthesis toward an empirically grounded, and eventually intervention-ready, framework for Muslim mental health.

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