

## Integration and Interconnection of Human Concepts in Islamic and Transpersonal Psychology

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### ABSTRACT

This study describes the interconnection of human conceptions in Islamic and transpersonal psychology. The research method used was qualitative with a library research model and e-journal literature that discusses humans from Islamic and transpersonal psychology perspectives. The data collection technique was through documentation. The researchers documented the literature on human and psychological e-journals and then presented them systematically. The data analysis was carried out by data reduction, data presentation, and concluding. The researchers reduced human data and Islamic psychology accessed in e-journals, then systematically presented and analyzed them descriptively-interpretatively. The results revealed that the interconnection of human concepts in Islamic and transpersonal psychology was found in the following points; (1) examining humans in the three dimensions of somatic (body), psychic (mental), and noetic (spiritual); (2) the central theme of theoretical studies; and (3) spiritual awareness (transcendental).

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## INTRODUCTION

Psychologists have different opinions regarding the human conception (Kartanegara, 2008). Psychoanalysis sees humans as animals with many biological desires. The human image in psychoanalysis is evil, cruel, unethical, and hedonistic behaviors because, according to psychoanalysis, the most prominent impulses in the human psyche are aggressive impulses and sexual desires (Kartanegara, 2008).

Behaviorism will reject if humans have natural potential. This flow assumes that humans do not have the soul, will, and ability to choose their actions (Ancok, 1995). Humanistic psychology argues that humans are superior to animals in terms of cognitive skills. Humanism believes humans are unique, rational, responsible, and conscious creatures. Furthermore, transpersonal psychology shows extraordinary levels beyond human consciousness (Azhari, 2004). In transpersonal psychology, humans can achieve transcendence in the universe, level of consciousness (intuition), and mystical and spiritual experiences (Frankl, 1985). Transpersonal psychology related to humans differs from humans in Islamic psychology, which describes humans as the Qur'an says. In viewing humans, Islamic psychology considers the physical and spiritual aspects. Based on the description above, the authors decided to study the integration and interconnection of human conceptions in Islamic and transpersonal psychology.

## METHODS

The research method used in this study was a qualitative method with a literature study model and research data from the literature that discusses humans from the perspective of Islamic psychology and transpersonal psychology. The data collection technique was done by documentation. The authors documented the literature, then presented it systematically. The data analysis was carried out by data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. The authors reduced the data about humans from the perspective of Islamic psychology and transpersonal psychology, then presented it systematically and analyzed it by the descriptive-interpretative technique.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Human Islamic Psychology Review

According to the Qur'an, Islamic psychology is a human concept that explains humans by starting from what God says about humans (Shihab, 1996). Humans are so complex that only God understands. Islamic psychology describes what and who humans are and introduces and encourages the realization of the tasks humans carry (Faizah & Effendi, 2006).

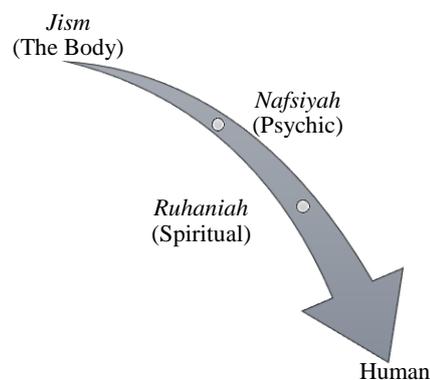
Islamic psychology in formulating what, who and how humans are seen from the physical and spiritual (spiritual) aspects (Mubarok, 2001). Humans, in addition to having a material physical dimension, also have a spiritual dimension. Besides

being created from the essence of soil, humans are also created from the breath of God's spirit (creation). These two diametrically opposite dimensions are fundamentally related; a body without a spirit is inanimate matter, and a spirit without a body is a lost soul because they depend on each other. An intermediary is necessary to accommodate the two elements of soul and body, called the *nafs* (Zuhairini, 2009).

Al-Ghazali (1964) described humans as consisting of the *nafs*, *spirit* and *jism*. *Nafs* is a substance that stands alone and has no place. The spirit is natural heat (*al-hararat al-ghariziyat*) which flows in the arteries, muscles and nerves. While *jism* is composed of material elements. In the human structure, *jism* is the imperfect part, which comes from material elements whose composition can be damaged. Therefore, *jism* has no power. It only has *mabda' thabi'i* (natural principles) that are subject to forces outside of itself (Al-Ghazali, 1968).

Meanwhile, al-Farabi viewed humans as the noblest creatures of two elements: the body and the soul. The body comes from the realm of creation, and the soul comes from the realm of command. According to al-Farabi, the unity between body and soul is an accidental unity, both of which have different substances, so that the destruction of the body does not lead to the destruction of the soul (Nasution, 2013).

Human totality in Islamic psychology is illustrated as follows.



**Figure 1.** Human Structure in Islamic Psychology

Humans in Islamic psychology are not creatures driven by mere biological motives (psychoanalysis), not neutral beings whose lives are determined by the environment (behavioristic), nor are they beings who have sole authority and can perform the role of God (humanistic), and not merely potential beings in which save extraordinary potential (transpersonal). Humans are bio-psycho-socio-spiritual-religious creatures. Beings who recognize the limitations of biological aspects (physiological) and the role of the environment (socio-cultural) recognize potential advantages and play a spiritual role in their lives.

In Islamic psychology, humans are seen as potential beings. Beings who have brought positive nature from birth, such as carrying holy potential, being Muslim, sincere, and able to carry the mandate (caliph and *Abdullah*), have the potential to choose and tend to acknowledge and believe in God (*tawhid*). He is chosen to be a semi-celestial and semi-earthly being in which there is an acknowledgment of a supernatural substance (God), a being who has the freedom and a sense of responsibility towards himself and nature. Angels and devils doubted this good image at first, but after Allah SWT convinced him, the angels believed in human abilities, while the devil, with his arrogance, continued to deny it (QS al-Baqarah 34).

Human is described as noble, with a dual duty as a servant of Allah (*Abdullah*) and God's ambassador on earth (*Khalifatullah fil ardh*). Humans as servants (*abd'*) are required to serve in totality to Him. 'Abd is obedience, submission, obedience to God as human servants cannot be separated from His power because humans have the natural (potential) religion. As *khalifatullah*, humans are historical actors who determine the entire order in this cosmos. He is responsible for the future of civilization on earth so that the order of the cosmos remains in balance (Nawawi, 2000). As representatives of God, humans are given the authority to regulate nature to the best of their ability and to carry out this task, humans have been endowed with revelation and various potentials.

With a special position as Allah's caliph, humans are also referred to as theomorphic creatures (mirrors of God), as human theomorphic creatures have human elements and divine elements. Humans are not only influenced by the past but can also influence the future through their actions. Humans are not only controlled by their environment but also can control their environment. Humans are glorified as caliphs and creatures who can overcome the forces of nature (*taskhir*). However, this situation has the potential to descend to the lowest degree (*asphala safilin*).

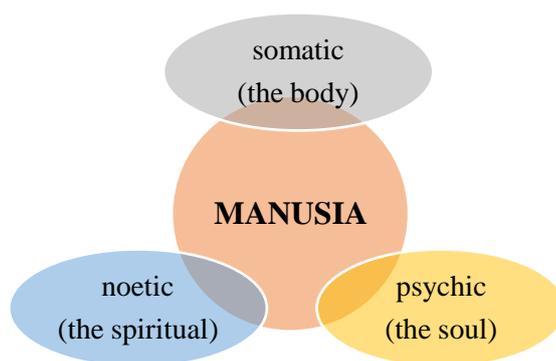
### **Human Transpersonal Psychology Review**

Transpersonal psychology, the fourth school in modern Western psychology literature, views humans differently from previous psychology schools. If psychoanalysis, behaviorism and humanism do not pay much attention to or even ignore aspects of human spirituality, transpersonal psychology focuses on human spirituality, especially about fundamental values, unifying consciousness, peak experiences, ecstasy, mystical experiences, feelings of wonder, self-actualization, the nature of happiness, miracles, self-transcendence, cosmic awareness, and so on which are concerned with transpersonal psychology. Transpersonal psychology is trying to "claim" territory against the previous schools of psychology, which were bound by the objectivity-rationality they built up and neglected man's spiritual side for too long.

The basic idea of transpersonal psychology is to see humans following religious views as beings with spiritual potential. If psychoanalysis sees humans as

negative figures, behaviorism sees humans as animals. Humanism is based on the view of mentally healthy humans. Then transpersonal psychology sees humans as having a divine spiritual aspect (Jaenuddin, 2012). However, among figures in transpersonal psychology, there is an agreement that this school does not identify with a religion. Transpersonal psychology is not religion, ideology, metaphysics, or new age. Although transpersonal psychology claims to be unrelated to religion, this school explicitly acknowledges and even uses the great traditions of religions such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, mystical Christianity, Judaism and Islam.

In transpersonal psychology, the human structure consists of three elements, namely, somatic (body), psychic (mental), and noetic (spiritual). This school understands that humans are not only located in their physical world but believes that the most important core of the individual lies in the abstract spiritual world, which is indicated by various experiences such as the ability to see the future, extrasensory perception (ESP), mystical experiences, spiritual development, peak experiences, meditation transcendental (MT) and various metaphysical studies.



**Figure 2.** Human Structure in Transpersonal Psychology

Transpersonal psychology tries to see humans in harmony with religious views; as beings who have the noble potential of humanity related to phenomena about spiritual unity as an important form of awareness of humanity. Human consciousness is from the resonance of his identity.

Transpersonal psychology has created a revolutionary perspective on humans and their consciousness. It is revolutionary because it penetrates the boundaries of psychoanalysis, behavioristic, and humanistic in addition to studying transpersonal psychology. Basic assumptions in transpersonal psychology also differ from the previous psychology schools. The assumptions of transpersonal psychology about humans can be summarized as follows.

1. Humans have complex physical and metaphysical dimensions of consciousness, which are the driving force behind the development of human consciousness.

2. Every human mind has a realistic and mystical experience that catalyzes the awakening of the collective consciousness of mankind.
3. There are three types of intelligence that humans can cultivate, including physical and spiritual experiences, which increase behavioral intelligence, spiritual intelligence, and education and training.
4. As a component of true human spirituality, humans have a transcendent, inherent potential.
5. Transpersonal psychology recognizes that religious experience has three distinct phases: the peak experience, the plateau (fixed period), and the highest extreme of human nature (the farthest reach).
6. In addition, the spiritual or transcendental part of humans is a psychological need for humans.
7. A person's spiritual potential is closely related to his consciousness (spiritual).
8. A consciousness-raising personality balances concrete values, ideals and behavior, as well as abstract mystical relationships such as the supernatural relationship humans, have with nature or with what is considered the Greatest, among others.
9. A man's authority is effective in changing his life.
10. People, as the personification of self-reliance and single awareness of the two forces, spiritual and physical forces, are a source of inspiration for others.
11. Human intelligence is shown by interpreting his own life experiences and those of others.
12. The importance of meaning in one's life is critical to self-actualization.

Based on the findings, transpersonal psychology attempts to see humans in a way that follows religious beliefs as beings with spiritual potential and awareness.

### **Integration of Islamic Psychology and Transpersonal Psychology**

Specifically, the integration and interconnection of human concepts in Islamic and transpersonal psychology have not been widely studied. However, many studies are in line and can be used as reference sources, including an article entitled Contemporary Sufism published by Charles T. Tart in *Transpersonal Psychologies*. Robert E. Ornstein presented aspects of Sufism related to transpersonal psychology, such as issues of supreme knowledge, spiritual journeys, and mystical experiences (Muhaya, 2017).

Uthman Najati's research is entitled *Al-Qur'an dan Ilmu Jiwa*. This book reviews psychological themes in the Qur'an. The psychological concept put forward by Uthman Najati is not perfect because it is still mystical and limited to the textual arguments interpreted to contain psychological concepts (Najati, 2005). Then Mulyo Martono in *Nafsiologi: Refleksi Analisis tentang Diri dan Tingkah Laku Manusia* offers a reference for Indonesian psychologists to develop Islamic psychology (Jamaluddin, 2006).

Based on the human concept in Islamic psychology and transpersonal psychology, the integration and interconnection of Islamic psychology and transpersonal psychology views on what, who and how humans are can be presented in the following chart.

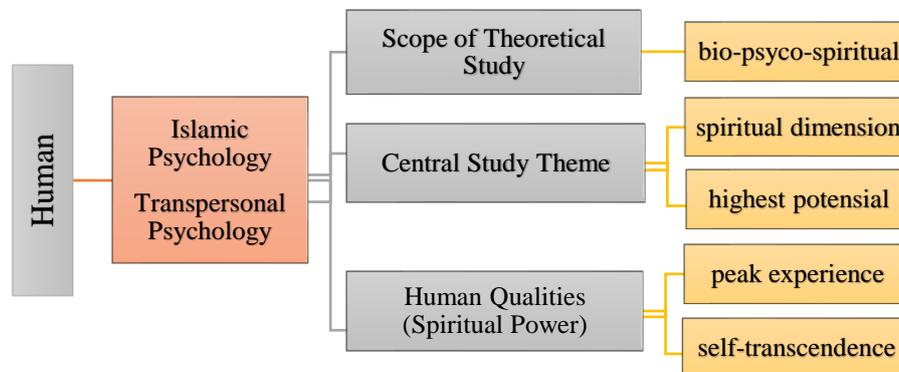


Figure 3. Integration of Human Concepts Islamic and Transpersonal Psychology review

### 1. Scope of Theoretical Study

From the perspective of transpersonal psychology, the human structure consists of three elements: somatic (body), psychic (mental), and noetic (spiritual). These three elements give birth to the will, freedom, the potential to solve life's problems and a belief in generally accepted moral values and principles (Baharuddin, 2004). Parallel to the view of transpersonal psychology, Islamic psychology understands the totality of the human structure as well as three elements: physical, *nafsiyah* and spiritual. The human body consists of one dimension, called the *jism* (body), which is the outermost part of the structure of the human self. The *nafsiyah* element, the intermediary of the physical and spiritual elements, consists of three sub-systems: *qalb*, *aql* and *nafs*. At the same time, the spiritual element consists of two dimensions: spirit and nature.

These human spiritual elements differ from physical elements, solid matter (material nature) or what the senses can touch and see. So the human psychic element is immaterial, Latif, spiritual, rabbinic, and eternal. These psychic elements are human beings, which make humans more human, superior, noble and different from other creatures created by God.

Besides bio-psycho-spiritual beings, humans are also multi-dimensional beings. He is an individual, moral, social, and at the same time, spiritual and religious being. Humans as individuals mean that humans as whole beings (holistic) cannot be divided between physical and psychological unity. As individuals, every human has unique differences in body posture, thinking abilities, interests and talents, hopes and distinctive personality patterns that are different from other individuals, including intelligence. As social beings,

humans cannot live alone because they will not "become" humans if they are alone. Humans will need other people because living in society is a reality that cannot be avoided by humans (QS.al-Maidah/5:2). Humans as moral beings who can reason and make it possible to judge what is good and what is wrong by paying attention to cultural norms that allow humans to behave and act ethically. A moral person is defined as a human being who has values, lives his values, and puts his values into action. Regarding religion, humans believe every individual has a natural inclination or acknowledgment (belief) in a higher power.

There is a strong relationship between these five human qualities. The spiritual dimension occupies a key place in the other four dimensions, acting as a foundation for them. In the three dimensions of individualism, morality, and sociality, there is a strong relationship between the three, and all three are interconnected with the spiritual dimension. However, the religious dimension, with its five dimensions, serves as a framework and the face of the overall actualization of individual life.

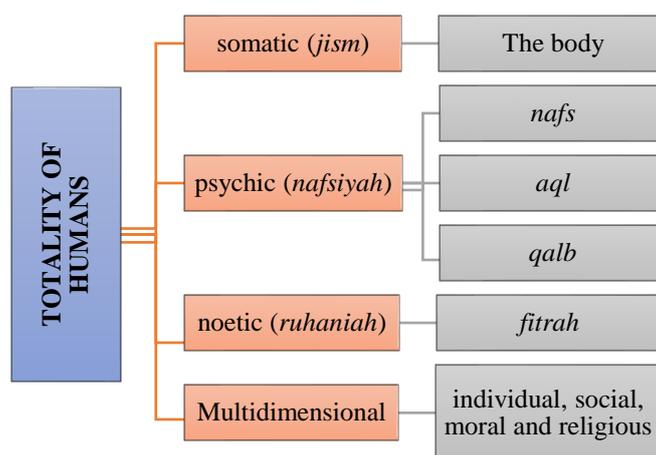


Figure 4. Human Existence Review of Islamic Psychology and Transpersonal Psychology

## 2. Central Study Theme

Islamic psychology is a study of human concepts according to the Qur'an, with the central point of its study on the spiritual dimension. In line with Islamic psychology, transpersonal psychology also pays attention to the spiritual dimension of humans, which turns out to contain extraordinary potential and abilities, especially discussing fundamental values, unifying consciousness, peak experiences, ecstasy, mystical experiences, feelings of fascination, self-actualization, and the nature of happiness.

In transpersonal psychology, spirituality refers only to the human desire for a meaningful life and the source of human qualities associated with transcendent things. It has nothing to do with the spirit, the substance and the quality of the human mind that relates to transcendent aspects (God).

According to Viktor Frankl, spirituality in transpersonal psychology has no religious meaning. Spirituality is defined as human nature, a source of life's purpose, and a potential reservoir for various extraordinary human abilities and noble qualities (Frankl, 1985). Although transpersonal psychology has touched on spirituality, it does not connote the position of the spirit as the central dimension and essence of human life. The spirit is created and related to its creator (God).

This transpersonal psychological understanding of spirituality is the point of difference from Islamic psychology, which understands the spiritual dimension of man not only as an inner quality related to transcendent aspects. Nevertheless, spirituality in Islamic psychology describes God's existence (Al-Ghazali, 1969).

Spirituality is awareness and self-confidence (individual) about origin, purpose and destiny to its Creator (God). However, there are similarities (similarization) and parallels (parallelization) between Islamic psychology and transpersonal psychology regarding human spiritual powers. Islamic psychology understands humans as noble beings with various potentials, not only physical but also spiritual potential, called *fitrah*, which in transpersonal psychology literature is called the highest potential.

*Fitrah* means the condition of human creation that tends to accept the truth (*hanief*), while its complement is *dhamîr* (conscience) as a radiance of desire for goodness, purity, and truth. Human life is from, by and for the absolute and highest truth (God's truth). This truth is the origin and destination of everything. It is inseparable from the basic nature or character of a good human and always wants to return to the true truth (Allah).

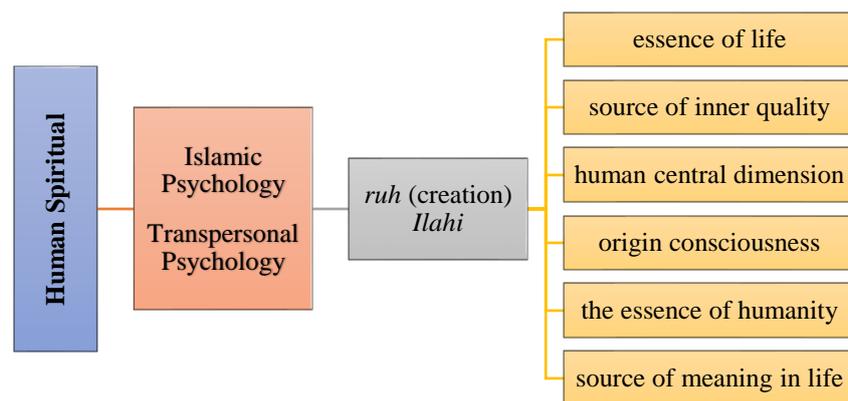


Figure 5. Spiritual Review of Islamic and Transpersonal Psychology

### 3. Human Qualities (Spiritual Power)

Besides the highest potential, the key concept of transpersonal psychology is peak experience (Anas, 2003). Regarding this experience, experts gave specific terms to describe it. F.C Hoppald and Merkur used the term "mystical experience", and William J. Wainwright used the terms "mystical experience"

and religious experience". Charles T Tart used "spiritual experience". William James, Brian Mooris and Erich Fromm used "religious experience". R. Needham used "experience of religious", I. Lewis used "ecstatic religious", Paul Mommaers and Jan VanBragt used "mystical awareness," and Abraham Maslow used the term "peak experience".

From Maslow's perspective, spiritual experience is the peak experience, plateau, and farthest reaches of human nature, which means peak experience, oceanic experience and transcendental experience (Zohar & Marshall, 2007). Supernormal states of health and super health are described as transcendent peak experiences, which Maslow divides into peaker (transcender) and non-peaker (non-transcender) (Zohar & Marshall, 2007). According to Maslow, this peak experience is not always associated with religious beliefs. Everyone can feel it, though at different intensities and levels. Some are common. Others are uncommon; some are hefty, and others are light. The peak experience can be achieved in various situations, such as while working, listening to music, winning a competition, reading a book, or just sitting outside watching the sunset.

In Islamic literature, religious experience (peak experience) also gets attention. Among Muslim thinkers who have discussed religious experience is al-Ghazali. In Islam, the peak experience usually comes from mystical or ecstatic experiences. One who prays fervently can also feel peak experiences. Like Ali bin Abi Talib, when he prayed, he did not realize if the arrow stuck in his back was being pulled out. The highest religious experience humans have ever achieved is the Prophet Muhammad's *Mi'raj*. This event becomes an inspiration that is always missed. *Isra' Mi'raj*, which passed through the sky to 'Arasy, became a subject that never ceased to encourage the soul in worship (QS. al-Israa':1).

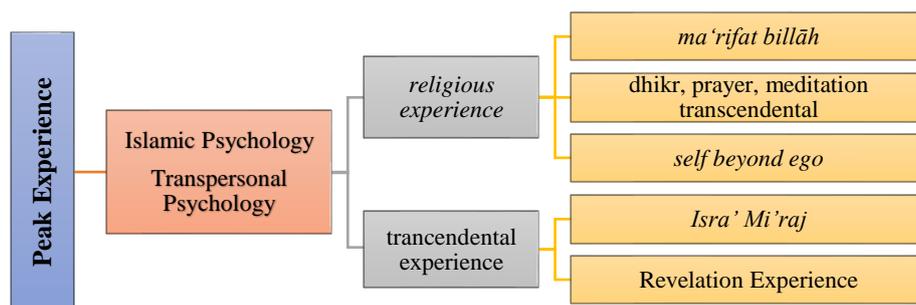


Figure 6. Peak Experience of Islamic and Transpersonal Psychology Review

Spiritual experience, in the sense of feeling religiosity, is an experience that every believer highly covets because religious experience is closely related to fulfilling the peak needs of human life. This need is "universal" after all physical needs are met, namely the need to love and be loved by God, which will give birth to a willingness to serve Him.

### Interconnection of Islamic Psychology and Transpersonal Psychology

Islamic psychology and transpersonal psychology have similarities (similarization) and parallels (parallelization) to complement each other. Studying transpersonal psychology as a (secular) discipline and having a dialogue with Islamic psychology will eliminate the dichotomy between the two. However, an encounter does not always mean a meeting. Islamic psychology places the Qur'an as a source of truth, while transpersonal psychology is human-made knowledge resulting from empirical observations and research. It is necessary to describe that humans are not always in line. Here are some differences in human conceptions in Islamic psychology and transpersonal psychology.

**Table 1.** Differences in Human Concepts in Islamic and Transpersonal Psychology

No.	Islamic Psychology	Transpersonal Psychology
1	Humans are born with the potential for fitrah (Surah Ar-Rum: 30)	Humans store extraordinary potentials in themselves (potential beings)
2	The spiritual in question is the "spirit" created and breathed by God in the human body, which is man's essence and central dimension.	Spirituality is interpreted as the core of humanity and the source of the meaning of life, the potential of various abilities and extraordinary human qualities.
3	Humans have the freedom to try, endeavor, and relate, but the center of the relationship and all decisions on His <i>iradah</i> (anthropo-theocentric).	Humans are the center of all wills and all relationships (anthropo-centric). Humans are the main factor in life (prima causa)
4	Examining the nature and identity of humans through <i>qauliyah</i> verses combined with <i>kauniyah</i> verses, in addition to using reason	Concepting humans through experiments, observations and reasoning that is limited to the support of the mind,
5	Religious experience can be achieved by carrying out religious rituals.	Religious experience is not the result of performing religious rituals.

This difference is reasonable because the study area of transpersonal psychology is limited to empirical-experimental matters, relies on limited logical abilities, and does not refer to the Qur'an as a source of absolute truth. However, this difference does not make the two opposites. On the contrary, they can complement each other to provide a holistic and integralistic understanding of human beings.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on human concepts in Islamic psychology and transpersonal psychology, integration and interconnection can be found in Islamic and transpersonal psychology views regarding humans in the following ways: (1). The scope of the study is to examine humans in the three dimensions of somatic (body), psychic and neotic (spiritual), (2) the central theme of theoretical studies, Islamic psychology understands humans as noble beings which contain various potentials, not only physical potential but also spiritual potential (fitrah), which in transpersonal psychology literature is called the highest potential. This spiritual potential (fitrah-highest potential) makes humans manage and utilize the meanings, values and qualities of spiritual life, have the desire to live meaningfully and motivate humans to find meaning and happiness in life, and (3) spiritual awareness (transcendental), Islamic and transpersonal psychology recognize that humans have spiritual awareness in the peak experiences.

Islamic psychology and transpersonal also have an interconnection in three respects. First, parallelization puts spirituality as the central theme in studying humans, and second, similarity (similarization) and parallelization within the scope of its study, examining humans in the somatic (body), psychic, and neotic (spiritual). Third, there are similarities (similarization) regarding human qualities such as potentiality, self-actualization, love, responsibility, freedom, and spiritual powers.

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