Towards an Islamic Perspective of Developmental Psychology

This article seeks to advance an Islamic understanding of the process of human development. It begins with a critique of the Western secular worldview, which relies exclusively on empiricism and reductionism. It also brings out the exclusion of the spiritual dimension and the privileging of materialism in secular developmental psychology. The paper relies on the Quran to determine the factors, heredity and environment, that shape development. It also argues that while there are factors that have a causal effect, in the ultimate analysis everything depends on God's will.

Conceptual Background

Developmental psychology, otherwise called "child psychology," is a branch of psychology that is essentially concerned with the study of the overall processes of human development from conception to old age. The term "process of development" has been used to refer to the stages, aspects, patterns, principles, factors, and agents involved in human development.

In psychology, the term "development" has a wide range of meaning. It means the overall qualitative and quantitative changes that accompany human growth and maturation. In this regard, these two terms (growth and maturation) have also been subsumed under the general meaning of development. The definition given by Lefrancois reveals this wide sense of meaning: "the total process whereby an individual adapts to his environment."1 The scope of developmental psychology is as wide as is implied by the meaning of "development." It thus covers both prenatal and postnatal development-embryonic, infant, child, adolescent, and adult development. By the same token, it covers physical, cognitive, personality, social, emotional, and moral aspects of development.

Modern developmental psychology is an integral aspect of mainstream modern Western secular psychology. By necessary implication, its fundamental paradigms and methodologies and its essential views of man are invariably materialist and secular, just like that of its mother body. Modern psychology has played a significant role in shaping Western man and Western society. As part of the overall product of modernity, the Western worldview is predominantly secular-characterized by atheism, agnosticism, and humanism. In line with this worldview, the dominant trend in Western intellectualism is similarly materialistic and secular.

In modern psychology, man is treated and studied within the purview of the Western materialist worldview. Thus, he is seen and studied fundamentally as a material being.

The spiritual entity or component in him is either less recognized or simply dismissed or dispelled completely. This dismissal of the spiritual component in man became necessary because its presence cannot be established with the standards of rigid empiricism, which came to hold sway over the behavioral and social sciences-the craze for scientific precision and accuracy. In a more apt sense this is called scientism-the mad worship of science.

The Islamic worldview is diametrically opposed to this Western worldview. In the Islamic worldview, man and everything in the universe are a creation of Allah. He created the universe alone and solely sustains and governs it. Man's life has a divine and transcendental purpose because he shall be resurrected in a Divine world (the Hereafter) and shall be made to account for his life in this world. In the Islamic view, man is a creature made up of two components-matter and spirit. He should strive for the betterment of both in equal and balanced ways and manners. The Islamic Law (the Shari'ah), which governs man's life, has been Divinely formulated so that both components in man are catered to in a balanced way. A Muslim's life and by extension the life of the Muslim community is governed and patterned along this worldview, just as the Western community is governed by its worldview.

Therefore, there are sharp differences between the Islamic and Western patterns of life. Similarly, and also necessarily, the patterns and processes of development (especially the moral, emotional, and social aspects of it) must be fundamentally and essentially different. Thus, it is also correct to say that a theoretical model of studying child development that has been conceived, formulated, experimented on, and applied in the West cannot necessarily be applicable for the same purpose in the Muslim world. The fundamental differences in worldview between the two worlds, which subsequently necessitate differences in child-rearing practices between the two cultures, vindicates this assertion.

There is an urgent need for developing an Islamic perspective of developmental psychology whose paradigms, principles, methodologies, and conceptual and theoretical frameworks must evolve out of the Islamic worldview. In the same vein, it must also take into account the peculiar essentials and dispositions of the Muslim ummah pertaining to its belief system, moral codes and etiquette, and all aspects of its life that combine together to make it a distinctive entity. This article is an effort in this direction, attempting to identify and expound some of its basic principles and paradigms.

Before delving into a discussion of the paradigm and principles of Islamic developmental psychology, it seems pertinent to present a more concrete critique of the fundamental epistemological paradigm and methodology of modern psychology. This will reveal its shortcomings and blind spots.2 For the purpose of a comprehensive critique, three basic methodological issues are examined: the source of knowledge in modern psychology, the means of examining the knowledge, and the objectivity of empirical data.

The Source of Knowledge

In modern psychology as in all other modern behavioral and social sciences, the source of knowledge is confined only to human intellect and senses. Revelation is completely dismissed and denied as a source of knowledge; it is simply considered as a myth or superstition. This rejection of revelation as a source of knowledge is a consequence of both historical and philosophical antecedents. It resulted from the conflict between the Catholic Church and the scientists and the subsequent triumph of the scientists which engendered the so-called scientific revolution with all its attendant and associated material advancements.

With the scientific revolution, scientific epistemology, which is purely mundane and even atheistic, gained ground and came to be accepted as an infallible and impeccable paradigm of inquiry. This paradigm of knowledge, according to Abul-Fadl, soon came to assume a position of preeminence among all others, rendering them obsolete and vestiges of the prescientific age. As a result, each discipline was left with the option of either adopting this epistemological model or perishing. Humanity's inquiry into the nature of its social world was forced to adopt this empirical model as its epistemological basis.3

Belief in revelation as an infallible source of knowledge is an essential article of faith in Islam. All Muslims believe in this. This is why Muslims accept the Qur'an and the Sunnah as their primary sources of knowledge. This belief influences the consciousness of a Muslim while he seeks all sorts of knowledge. A Muslim psychologist will, therefore, necessarily face a fundamental contradiction between his faith and the Western empirical epistemological model. For this reason, Muslim psychologists must create an epistemological framework that conforms to their belief. Failure to do this will keep them in perpetual dilemma, as succinctly put by Badri.4

Even more serious, however, is the fact that there is an obvious incongruence in using theories that have been formulated and tested within the purview of this epistemological model to study the development of an individual or a group of

individuals whose belief system is in total opposition to it. Undoubtedly, the desired accurate results cannot be obtained. This point becomes all the more clear if a critical look is cast on the next methodological issue.

Means of Examining Knowledge

Modern social and behavioral sciences, in line with their view about the source of knowledge, recognize experimentation above all other tools as the principle means of verifying knowledge. As a prototype of natural science, social science must avail itself of rigid experimentation to arrive at empirical truth. Logical positivism therefore came to be the dominant methodology in all the behavioral and social sciences, including psychology. Experience alone is claimed to be the origin of all our knowledge, and all nonempirical elements must be purged.5

The natural and logical consequence of this methodology and its epistemological basis is reductionism. Reductionism can be seen in two dimensions: first, as the source of knowledge explained earlier; and second, as the object of study. In the social and behavioral sciences, man and the human communities are the object of study. With the adoption of logical positivism (hypothetical-deductive methodology) as the means of studying man and his social world, the two have been reduced to the level of pure material bodies that can be studied within the confines of control and observation mechanisms. This resulted in a mechanistic view of man and his social world, and ultimately reduces and dehumanizes him and his society. Again, this is the factor that explains why modern developmental psychology limits the study of human development strictly within the confined context of natural forces and influences.

The points made above are made clear by Abul-Fadl: Reductionism does not affect the area of understanding in general or specific areas of inquiry, but its consequences are diffuse and affect attitudes in a more practical context. The distortions attendant on reductionism have not only reflected on the understanding of human nature and the social world, but have also reflected negatively on the attitudes and ethics of social science in a manner detrimental to humanity and society. 6

The greatest problem created by this reductionist paradigm is that it has precluded a correct and accurate understanding of human nature by constricting our vision and confining and reducing life to a narrowed biological conception and its associated sensory world. As Carrel rightly submits, “Man is still unknown . . . and our knowledge about ourselves is still primitive and partial.7

This situation suggests an urgent need for a more comprehensive and more balanced approach to the study of man. This is what Abul-Fadl aptly describes as the median culture approach. The Islamic perspective of social and behavioral sciences qualifies this description and by specification, Islamic perspective of developmental psychology. Without rejecting the usefulness and relative validity of experimentation, the methodology and epistemological model of Islamic social science primarily upholds revelation both as a source and a method of knowledge. Consequently, it also recognizes and takes into consideration the spiritual and material components of human nature and their interactive relationships.

This approach is not only comprehensive and balanced, but it restructures the grounds of inquiry in fields of social studies, investing them with meaning and purpose and also clearing the ground of the plethora of fragmented, dispersed, redundant research whose sole validation lies in their data pooling virtues that become the temptation and justification for a dubious market morality.8

Many a Western writer has echoed similar criticism against this exaggerated materialism and crazy empiricism. Such writers go to the extent of suggesting the need for recognizing other forms of nonexperimental means of studying man. One good case in point in this regard is Hearnshaw. Particularly with respect to psychology, he made the following point: Experimental psychology has vastly extended its boundaries. There are of course, still limits. Experimentation has, so far, not been able, and perhaps never will be able, to embrace either the creative heights or emotional depths of human nature. There are still and perhaps always will be, areas of psychology that transcend the domain of exact sciences. Experimentation, however, is not the sole source of psychological data.9

Harris has further demonstrated the limitations of empiricism in more elaborate forms. He argues that the imperfections and drawbacks of the empirical model of sourcing and examining knowledge are embedded in the following:

Derived conclusions could not be logically valid for generalization because there could be exceptions.

Methodology of data collection is theory laden, that is, the investigator has preconceptions and motives, which influence his choice of methodology of investigation and this subsequently affects the outcome.

In trying to gain data about the world, filtration mechanisms operate between our sensation of the world and our perception of knowledge of it. Such mechanisms include:
Psychological delusions: for instance, insanity affects our perception and there is difficulty in knowing who is a sane person.

If they are inadequate, our conceptual schemes may lead us to describe the world as what it is not.

Social pressure may lead us to accept things simply because they are stated by famous authorities or the majority of people.

Prejudice can lead us to perceive more than we see or to be selective in noticing things.

Our present knowledge, experience, and preconception can allow us to perceive what other people lacking these cannot perceive. A child who is born and reared in a noisy environment may not notice the effects of noise on having a sound sleep as a child from a different environment may.

Mental sets also affect our perception; for instance, in reading a sentence that reads, “The boy is is lazy,” we may fail to notice the double “is” simply because our minds have been set to have the correct sentence.10

Objectivity and Universality of Empirical Knowledge
The essence of logical-positivism or empiricism is observation, measurement, and quantification of sense data available to the observer. In undertaking his observations and quantification, the observer only subjects his object of study to the dictates of natural laws. By doing this, it is assumed and equally believed that he comes up with objective data that are neutral, value-free, and therefore, universal. This is all because, as it is also claimed, the observer has shielded his object of study and his methodology from the influences of all extraneous and confounding variables including his own personal attitudes, values, and biases, by means of rigorous control and conditioning mechanisms.

This assumption of objectivity may be true with regard to the natural and physical sciences, but it is certainly not true with regard to the social and behavioral sciences. In the natural and physical sciences, the data obtained from the observation of nonhuman materials are “dead,” unlike those of human behavior which are alive. The

elimination of the influence of prior notions, prejudices, and biases in the latter case is far from being possible. This point has been intelligently argued by Al-Faruqi. In the first place, he argues that data of human behavior are not impervious to the attitudes and preferences of the observer. They do not simply and ordinarily reveal themselves as they really are to each and every investigator. He maintains that “attitudes, feelings, desires, judgments and hopes of men and women tend to shut themselves off to the observer devoid of sympathy for them.11

Al-Faruqi further argues against the notion of objectivity in behavioral and social sciences from the viewpoint of axiological perception:
In the perception of “dead” objects, the senses of the observer are passive; they are totally determined by the data. In the perception of values, per contra, the observer actively empathizes or “emotes” with the data, whether for them or against them. Value-perception is itself value-determination. . . . A value is said to be cognized if and only if it has moved, affected and stirred up an emotion or feeling in the observer such as its own nature requires. The perception of value is impossible unless the human behavior is able to move the observer. Similarly, the observer cannot be moved unless he is trained to be affected, and unless he has empathy with the object of his experience. The subject’s attitude toward the data studied determines the outcome of the study.12

In light of the above arguments, Al-Faruqi drew the following conclusion:
The humanistic studies of Western man and the social analyses of Western society by a Western scientist are necessarily “Western” and cannot serve as models for the study of Muslims or of their society.13

From the point of view of strict methodological and epistemological criticisms, one would not only agree with Al-Faruqi in this regard, but would also be convinced of the fact that, even in the so-called natural and physical sciences, objectivity may be largely farce or myth. According to Langgulung, research has challenged this traditional realist (empiricist) notion/belief of objectivity, which claims that the physical sciences have always progressed through the accumulation of context-free facts.14

Langgulung further explains that, contrary to what is commonly believed, researchers in the physical sciences have always undertaken their research within the context of an adopted paradigm. Such a paradigm is what Kahn calls a “scientific paradigm” in that it defines the theoretical framework, the way of perceiving and understanding the world of a group of scientists with a particular worldview. According to Kuhn, a scientific paradigm is a socially shared cognitive schema, and just as one’s cognitive schema

provides each of us with a way of making sense of the world around us, a scientific paradigm provides a group of scientists with a way of collectively making sense of their scientific world.15

It can then be argued that research, even in the physical sciences, has progressed through what Langgulung calls “paradigmatic epistemology,” and since paradigms are cognitive schemes that evolve or rather emanate out of particular social contexts, the physical sciences are themselves never completely free of subjectivity and contextuality. This factor casts doubt on the commonly accepted notion that scientific findings are axiomatic truths of universal validity and applicability. Harris actually has argued in exactly a similar way. His arguments are so powerful that they expose clearly the claims of scientific objectivity and universality as farce and false. He says: Knowing the world, or coming to know the world, is not a matter of learning or coming into possession of a set of facts or truths about the world, which are there in the world, and which the world yields up to those who are able to see them; it is rather, a matter of coming to perceive the world in particular ways from particular perspectives, and from particular view points, which are largely determined by and arise out of one’s interactions in and with a particular historical and social context.16

The arguments presented here, even though long, are necessary to refute the claim of universality of the theories and principles of the Western social sciences. While this does not mean that all such claims are false, it must be noted that, as Badri rightly affirms, few Western psychological theories have attained cross-cultural validity;17 rather, a large chunk of them are largely bounded within Western cultural and ideological values. The necessary conclusion is that Muslims must formulate their distinctive perspective of psychology. In this respect, an attempt has been made to expound the Islamic perspective of developmental psychology. Essentially, an effort has been made in postulating its basic paradigm and principles.

Principles of Human Development Derivable from the Qur’an and Hadith

In the opening chapter of the Qur’an, the Fatihah, God declares that He is the Lord and Cherisher of the worlds:

All praises are due to Allah, Lord of the worlds. (1:2)

What this means is that He is the sole creator of the universe and that He nourishes and sustains it. The implication is that He is the originator of everything (seen and unseen, known and unknown) and that everything depends on Him for sustenance, growth, and development. This interpretation is conveyed in the following verse of the Qur’an:

God is the creator of all things, and He is the guardian and disposer of all affairs. (39:62)

These verses provide the background for our discussion on aspects and principles of human development in the Qur'an, particularly cognitive development. In fact, as far as the Qur'an is concerned, the meaning of these two verses is the fundamental principle of human development. So, God is the creator of man, and He is the sole determinant of the pattern and process of his growth and development. The following paragraphs enunciate this dominant principle in forms of subprinciples of human development.

In the Islamic perspective of developmental psychology, the following principles are identifiable.

Human Life (Growth and Development) Is a Gradual Process

This is the first principle of development that can be derived from the Qur'an. Having told us that He is the creator, guardian, and disposer of all things, God also told us that He created man in various progressive stages of growth and development. In other words, man's life has been patterned in stages from conception to death. The stages through which man passes in his growth and development are not merely a matter of chance or accident. They were predesigned, predetermined, and graduated by God Himself. God mentions this basic fact in a number of verses in the Qur'an. Examples of such verses are the following:

It is He Who created all things and ordered them in due proportions. (25:2)

This verse clearly spells out the fact that the life of every thing has been designed in such a way that every aspect of it is proportionately graduated. In the case of human growth and development it means that the various phases mentioned above have been duly proportioned and all humans have to pass through each stage up to old age and death. That growth and development do not take place at once but pass through the duly and proportionately designed phases is what makes them a gradual process. The following verse clearly mentions that we have been created and caused to grow in phases, not at once:

What is the matter with you, that you place not your hope for kindness and long suffering in God? Seeing that it is He that has created you in diverse stages? (71:13-14)

Ibn Kathir reported that Abdullah ibn Abbas (hereinafter referred to as Ibn Abbas) and others interpreted this verse to mean that man has been created from a drop of sperm, then transformed into a clot of blood, then into a morsel of flesh, and so on. Allah says in the Qur'an:

You shall surely travel from stage to stage. (84:19)

Ibn Kathir again reported that 'Ikrimah (one of the disciples of Ibn Abbas) interpreted this verse to mean that man shall grow from one condition to the other such that he becomes a toddler after being an infant, old after being young and strong.

The above verses tell us in general terms that man's growth and development definitely follow certain stages. These stages are specifically spelled out in some other verses in the Qur'an in more elaborate and particular terms. The Prophet himself enunciated and expounded them in more detail in some of his traditions. These will be seen in our subsequent discussions. It is however important to note that the phases through which growth and development pass are themselves spread over two broad stages.
Human life (growth and development) has been categorized in the Qur'an into two broad phases: the prenatal and the postnatal. Each of these phases has been subdivided into different substages having different terms and periods. The following Qur'anic verse succinctly describes the first phase of human life:

He makes you in the wombs of your mothers, in stages, one after another, in three veils of darkness. Such is God, your Lord and Cherisher: to Him belongs (all) dominion. There is no god but He: then how are you turned away (from your true center)? (39:6)

In another verse, the Qur'an describes the two phases in a precise and concise manner:

It is He Who created you from dust, then from a sperm-drop, then from a leech-like clot; then does He get you out (into the light) as a child; then lets you (grow and) reach your age of full strength, then lets you become old-though of you there are some who die before-and lets you reach a term appointed; in order that you may learn wisdom. (40:67)

The Qur'an has also told us that the first phase has a certain fixed and definite term within which it reaches its apex of development. Then it is terminated through birth (by delivery). The Qur'an says:

And We cause Whom We will to rest in the wombs for an appointed term. (22:5)

But in much more elaborate, precise, and detailed terms the following verse further describes these two broad stages with their respective specific phases. It reads thus:

O mankind! If you are in doubt about the Resurrection, then verily, We have created you (i.e. Adam) from dust, then from a nutfah (mixed drops of male and female sexual discharges), then from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood) then from a little lump of flesh – partly formed and partly unformed – that We make it clear to you (i.e. to show you our Power and ability to do what We Will). And We cause whom We will to remain in the wombs for an appointed term, then We bring you out as infants, then (give you growth) that you may reach your age of full strength. And among you there is he who dies (young), and among you there is he who is brought back to the miserable old age, so that he knows nothing after having known. (22:5)

The Prophet (S.A.W.) has precisely and accurately described the first broad stage with fixed time specifications stipulated for each of the phases within it. The hadith reads thus:

Lo! The creation of each one of you is composed in the womb of his mother (first) as a nutfah (mixed drop of sperm and ovum) for forty days then after that he transforms to alaqah (a clot of congealed blood) for a similar term, then he transforms to mudghah (a lump of flesh), and then an Angel is sent to blow the spirit into him.18

The Qur’an has also told us that the first broad stage (prenatal) has a certain fixed and definite term within which it reaches its apex of development. Then it is terminated through birth. Allah says:

And We cause whom We will to rest in the wombs for an appointed term. (22:5)

Therefore, the Qur’an has established that the prenatal period is definite and fixed (usually 9 months under normal circumstances as enunciated in one of the Prophetic traditions) and as experienced practically in daily life. However, the Qur’an further mentions to us that there are exceptional cases whereby the prenatal period terminates, before or after the normal term. And all these happen in accordance with God’s Absolute Will and Decree. The Qur’an says:

He it is that fashions (shapes) you in the wombs as He pleases. There is no god save He, the Exalted in Might, the Wise. (2:6)

This means that the nature, form, size, and time in which individuals are created and shaped in the womb may vary according to the will and wishes of God. Because of this, He affirms that some pregnancies may be delivered before or after the normal time of delivery. But the knowledge of that (addition or reduction in time) is His exclusive preserve:

God doth know what every female (womb) doth bear, by how much the wombs fall short (of their time or number) or do exceed. Every single thing is before His sight, in (due) proportion. He knoweth the unseen and that which is open: He is the Great, the Most High. (13:8-9)

As for the postnatal phase of growth and development, the Qur'an does not mention any fixed span of life that is generally applicable to all individuals; it differs from one individual to the other. That is why the Qur'an says:

And some of you are called to die (at different ages) and some are sent to the feeblest old age. (22:6)

But if the postnatal period is taken in its entirety, Islamic scholars have divided it into four broad stages, and each stage is itself divided into short substages. Allah says:

It is God Who creates you and takes your souls at death; and of you there are some who are sent back to a feeble age, so that they know nothing after having known much. (16:70)

In his commentary on this verse, Gummi (1922-1992) says the following:

Some Islamic scholars have said that man's life (after birth) has four broad stages. The first stage is the stage of continuous growth and development, which begins from 0 to 33 years (the end of youth and the age at which an individual attains full physical and intellectual maturity). The second stage, from 33 to 40, is the stage of constancy in which increase in growth and development is hardly noticeable. The age of 40 is usually considered the stage at which both physical and intellectual ability reach maturity. The third stage is the stage of mid- or proper adulthood (al-kuhulah). From 40 to 60 years man begins to decline physically and mentally though so subtly and steadily that it can hardly be noticed. The last stage, from 60 to the end of life, is the stage of old age and decline (senescence). In this stage decline becomes more obvious and noticeable.19

Pattern of Human Growth and Development

According to the Qur'an, human growth and development follow one common pattern which is applicable to every human being. Despite individual differences this pattern applies to every person. The pattern is that every individual grows and develops from initial weakness to strength and then to weakness. In other words, growth and development follow a certain natural inevitable law of rise and fall. That is to say that when the individual gradually reaches the apex of his development, whether physical or cognitive, he then begins to decline gradually. The Qur'an is very precise about this:

It is God Who created you in a state of (helpless) weakness, then gave (you) strength after weakness, then, after strength, gave (you) weakness and a hoary head; He creates as He wills. And it is He Who has all knowledge and power. (30:54)

It needs to be emphasized here that this single pattern mentioned in this principle and as demonstrated in this verse is applicable to all human beings. We are all created in a state of weakness. This refers to the early stage of our creation right inside the wombs and up to delivery. We are weak at these early stages both physically and mentally. This weakness at the onset of our life is also mentioned in another place (Surat al-Nahl) in the Qur'an but with specific reference to mental weaknesses:

And Allah has brought you out from the wombs of your mothers while you know nothing. And He gave you hearing, sight, and hearts that you might give thanks (to Him). (16:78)

In several other verses this single and common pattern of early weakness that first characterizes every person's life and then strength in later development is also clearly indicated. For example:

We have enjoined on kindness to his parents: In pain did his mother bear him, and in pain did she give him birth. The carrying of the child (in the womb) to his weaving is (a period of) thirty months. At length when he reaches the age of full strength and attains forty years he says, O my Lord? Grant me that I may be grateful for thy favour, which Thou has bestowed upon me, and upon my parents.20

The necessary analogical deduction that can be made from this verse is that each person's life begins in weakness, gradually attains strength, and then gradually declines, just as the first verse under this principle clearly states. The decline is the beginning of a second dimension of weakness that characterizes human life at the end of one's life. And this has also been stated in this verse and several others. This pattern is certainly common to all human beings as it is witnessed in our life experiences.

This principle, it should be noted, does not eliminate the fact of individual differences. What is actually meant is that, although this pattern is applicable to all humans, there are always a number of differences among individuals in terms of specific developmental variables and processes. For the purpose of illustration, let us assume that two identical things are born at the same moment. This principle applies to both of them in the sense that they are both helpless, weak, miniature human beings, and both gradually begin to grow and develop until both attain full strength. However, it may be noticed that one may be dark in complexion while another may be light. Again, while one may be fat, the other may be slim. These are some forms of individual differences. They do not however, like all other forms, eliminate the fact of the common pattern of development represented by this principle, just as the principle itself does not wipe away this very fact of individual differences. A more detailed discussion on individual differences in development comes later in this article.

Human Development Is a Cumulative and Simultaneous Process

If all the verses of the Qur'an that talk about human development in its various stages are taken together, synthesized, and analyzed, it will be seen that the Qur'an had postulated that human development is cumulative in nature. That is to say, any new development acquired or attained by the individual adds up to the already existing one. In this way, development builds one aspect upon another up to the fullest stage. The Qur'an also teaches us that human development is a simultaneously interwoven process. This means that all the aspects of development-physical, mental, social, emotional, moral-are inseparable. Each one reinforces the other. This means that one aspect of development does not wait until another develops to its fullest before it commences. The physical and mental developments of a person for example go together with his social, emotional, and moral development. At each stage, all these aspects increase in growth and maturation proportionally and consecutively, hence, the simultaneous nature of development. Many of the verses that talk about development refer to all its aspects either explicity or implicity. But the physical and cognitive aspects of it are especially explicity tied to each other in several verses of the Qur'an. This is very clear in several verses quoted earlier. The verse in which Allah describes the two broad stages at the same time contains not only mention of physical development but also that of mental development.21 The same thing applies to the verses in which He mentions, "attainment of full strength" in development and growth. Undoubtedly, the full strength so attained is not only restricted to physical strength but also necessarily includes all the other aspects of development. This is all the more obvious in the verses where Allah refers to giving orphans their wealth when they attain "full strength." It certainly means both physical and mental development. While

physical development as implied in the verse is indisputably more obvious from the word “strength” which immediately signifies physical stature and posture, the mental component is definitely included as it is clearly alluded to by another verse of the Qur’an:

Make trial of orphans until they reach the age of marriage: if then you find sound judgement in them: release their property to them; but consume it not wastefully nor in haste against their growing. (4:6)

The mention of age of marriage is a direct reference to physical maturity and growth while sound judgement directly means mental maturity. The fact of the simultaneous nature of growth and development in human life is thus confirmed.

However, the Qur’an also alludes to the fact that some aspects may develop faster than others, thus creating intra-individual differences in development. For example, the individual’s physical development may be faster than his mental development or vice versa. The Qur’an therefore confirms the factor of mental retardation. In this situation, the individual may grow and develop physically but may not grow and develop at the same rate mentally. Allah alludes to this in the following verse where He prescribes recording debt contracts:

If the party liable is mentally deficient, or weak, or unable himself to dictate, let his guardian dictate faithfully. (2:282)

Several other verses mention these cases of abnormal mental development. Another form of abnormal development has also been mentioned in another verse. This is abnormal language development, which causes speech impairment. In a parabolic and euphemistic description of the disbeliever, this factor is denoted, as it appears in the verse:

And Allah puts forward (another) example of two men, one of them dumb, who has no power over anything (disbeliever) and he is a burden on his master; whichever way he direct him, he brings no good. Is such a man equal to one (believer) who commands justice, and is himself on the straight path? (16:76)

In actual sense, since the Qur’an is not a textbook of psychology, only through deductions and inferences can we extract psychological facts from it. This means that it is the apparent significations and connotations of the verses that are taken into

consideration, not necessarily the specific contingencies or instances upon which the verses were revealed. And this is an accepted principle in ‘Ilmul-Usul.22

These verses and several others do confirm that abnormality affects some aspects of a person’s development, just as it can affect it in its entirety.

Human Life (Growth and Development) Transcends Earthly Phenomenal Existence

Whereas all the theories of development in modern developmental psychology are confined only to this earthly (temporal) life, the Qur’an projects human life beyond this life. The Qur’an considers the present life as the foundation of another life that is permanent and everlasting. Man is going to be transformed into a different form of life whose growth and development are transcendental and divine. Such growth and development, however, may be either in endless bliss or torment. This is why in many of the verses where Allah mentions the stages of human development, He links them directly with the life after death. It shall be a continuation of life in some sorts. For example, in Surat al-Mu’minun Allah enumerates the stages of human development in this earthly life. He follows the preceding verses with a mention of the next life:

Man We did create from a quintessence (of clay); then We placed him as (a drop of) sperm in a place of rest firmly fixed; then We made the sperm into a clot of congealed blood; then of that clot We made a (foetus) lump, then We made out of that lump bones and clothed the bones with flesh; then We developed out of it another creature (or full human being). So blessed be God, the Best to create! After that, at length ye will die. Again, on the Day of Judgement, will ye be raised up. (23:12-16)

Therefore, it is clear that for a comprehensive study of man, this aspect of divine life after death should be incorporated. This is because the fear of death and what happens beyond it is inherent in every human being and it has a lot of bearing on man’s psychological dispositions and development. Unless this is done, our knowledge about the nature of man will continue to remain primitive and partial.

Human Life (Growth and Development) Passes through Certain Critical and Sensitive Periods

If some verses and prophetic traditions are studied closely, it will be discovered that Islam has great concern regarding some of the periods and phases of human development. These are essentially the formative period or phases. They lay the foundation upon which later development builds. In this respect the entire prenatal, infancy, childhood, and adolescent periods can all be considered sensitive.

The sensitive nature of the prenatal stage for example can be seen in the fact that Muslims have been enjoined to pray, by the Prophet, just when they are about to copulate.23

This is meant as supplication to Allah for protection from Satan and a sound offering. Soundness here actually means protection from all sorts of ailments that may retard the development and growth of any aspect of the child's life. In the same way, the Qur'an enjoins Muslims to keep supplicating to Allah for a good offspring before and during pregnancy.24 And when a child is eventually born, the call to prayer should be made in his ears; it was done and enjoined by the Prophet. 25

In actual fact, the primary concern of all these is the sound moral development of the child. This concern is an indication of the sensitive and critical nature of this period as the root of the later periods. Over and above all these, the Prophet has told us that it was at this period that certain important things of a person's life are decreed by Allah. He tells us that the angel sent to blow the spirit into the foetus is commanded by Allah to write its provisions (rizq), deeds (amal), life span (ajal), and destiny-whether the person will be in goodness or wickedness (sa'Eµd or shaqiy).26 This decree then runs through a person's life up to the Hereafter. This then makes this period even more sensitive and critical than all the rest since they all depend on it.

After birth, the Prophet enjoins Muslims to be very sensitive and careful with the upbringing of their children. Numerous hadith have been reported in this regard. However, another period that is considered very critical and sensitive is the adolescent period. As a period of transition from childhood to adulthood it constitutes a turning point in an individual's life. It is prone to a lot of exuberance, anxieties excitements and temptations. The Prophet has in a number of his traditions made specific references to this stage, which allude to its sensitivity and importance. One example is the hadith in which the Prophet specially mentions seven categories of people that shall be comforted under the shade of the Glorious Throne of Allah. One of them is a young (adolescent) man who grows up in devotion and commitment to the worship of Allah.27 This hadith alludes to the critical nature of the adolescent period in the sense that, having been full of temptations and exuberance, a young person who resists these temptations deserves to be specially comforted among those who shall attain felicity on the Day of Judgement.

Besides the troubles that characterize the adolescent period, some other reasons that make it a critical and sensitive period in an individual's development are its transitional nature and the fact that it marks the beginning of taklif (legal responsibility). From the

time the individual attains puberty he shall be held responsible for all his deeds. If he commits any sin it shall be recorded against him. This is indicated in many Prophetic traditions, one of which is:

The pen (which records deeds) has been suspended in respect of three people: the child until he attains puberty . . .28

Whatever can be said regarding the critical and sensitive nature of the adolescent period is summed up in this hadith. In a real sense, from the Islamic perspective, an individual's later life (growth and development) is made or marred at this period.

Factors That Influence Development: The Islamic Perspective

In the previous discussion, many mentions were made of God being the Creator of all things and having dominion over all things. What this implies is that He has full control over all things because of His omniscience and omnipotence. In many verses of the Qur'an, He mentions this fundamental fact. Therefore, it means that everything happens in accordance with His absolute will. In other words, He is the ultimate and absolute cause of everything that happens. He says:

But you shall not will except as God wills, the Cherisher of the Worlds. (81:29)

So, the alternation of day and night, hot and cold seasons, rainy and dry seasons, life and death, the germination of seeds, the blowing of winds, in fact everything is caused by Him and happens by His permission and will.

But in spite of this, God has created temporal causes and effects. He governs and directs the universe in accordance with these causes and effects. For example, rain has been made to be one of the causes of seed germination, copulation between male and female has been made to be the cause of pregnancy, hunger has been made to be the cause of eating (eating itself causes satisfaction while eating bad food causes ill health). So, in this phenomenal existence things happen by means of other things. But as far as the Qur'an is concerned, these myriads of causes and effects are part of God's will. In this regard, the degree, rate, magnitude, and level at which a particular cause brings about an effect is something which absolutely depends on God's will. Thus, the effectiveness of a cause in precipitating a certain result or effect is determined by God's will. On a similar note, therefore, the magnitude of the result of a particular cause itself is determined by God's will. This point is precisely enunciated by Rahman: 29

God is the Creator of the universe, the ultimate reality and the cause of all causes. . . . Everything in the universe follows the law of its Creator (His Law) as He says in the Qur'an:

Glorify the name of thy Guardian-Lord Most High; Who hath created, and further, given order and proportion; Who hath ordained laws and granted guidance. (87:1-3)

The foregoing analysis has been made as background to the discussion on factors that influence development. And in the light of it (the analysis), it can be seen that Islam recognizes to certain extents the two important factors which fundamentally influence the growth and development of man, namely, heredity and environment. Numerous textual evidences from the Qur'an and Hadith establish the influence of hereditary and environmental forces on an individual's overall development. But it needs to be emphasized here that the hereditary and environmental influences on the development of a person are themselves subject to the will of God. This means that Islamic psychology does not look at man as a being who is simply subjected to hereditary and environmental forces (i.e., left at their mercy). Islam looks at man as one being among others, who is primarily governed, sustained, guided, and controlled by God's infinite power and will. The forces of heredity and environment which influence man's development are secondary and are, therefore, only mere mediums through which God disposes His Will on man's overall growth and development. For the purpose of clarity, some textual proof from the Qur'an and Prophetic traditions that confirm the influence of heredity and environment on man's development are given below. After that, some other textual proofs that also establish beyond reasonable doubts the Divine control of man's life and development are also given.

Textual Proofs of the Influence of Heredity on Development

Bukhari and Muslim report on the authority of Anas bin Malik the following:

His mother (Anas's mother) Umm Sulaym (one of the female companions of the Prophet) asked the Prophet about a woman seeing a wet dream in her sleep like a man. He answered, "If the woman sees that she should take the obligatory (janabah) bath." Then Umm Salmah (the Prophet's wife who was present) asked shyly, "Does that happen?" The Prophet replied, "Of course it does! Then how does (hereditary) resemblance come about (if it does not happen)? Man's sperm is a white and thick liquid while the woman's egg cell is a thin yellowish liquid. Whichever of the two overcomes the other, the offspring shall resemble him/her." (This version as reported by Muslim.)

Muslim reports on the authority of Thauban, that a Jew came and asked the Prophet numerous questions (in an attempt to challenge the truth of his Prophethood). Among other things, he asked him a question which he (the Jew) claimed nobody could know its answers at that point in time except a true Prophet. The question was about sex determination, i.e., how does it take place? The Prophet gave him the following answer:

The male sperm is white and the female ovum is yellowish. If they meet (get fertilized) and the male sperm cells overcome the female's egg cell, the offspring shall bear a male sex by God's permission. And if the female egg cell overcomes the male spermatozoon the offspring shall bear a female sex by God's permission.

After the Prophet answered the Jew told him that he spoke the truth and that he is truly a Prophet. Ibn al-Qayyim expounded this hadith further:

At the moment of conception (fertilization) two things are involved. These are foremostness and overcoming. The two can happen consecutively, and they can also occur differently. In this regard, if the male sperm cell becomes foremost and still overcomes the female ovum, the offspring shall be male and shall resemble the father. But if the reverse is the case, the offspring shall become female and shall resemble the mother. If, however, one becomes foremost but the other overcomes it, the offspring shall resemble the foremost one and its sex shall be the same with the overcomer, either male or female.

Ibn al-Qayyim, however, cautioned that this sexual determination (and any other thing that goes with it) should not be thought of as merely caused by nature. It is an affair which purely depends on God's will. That is why the Prophet said in another authentic hadith that the Angel sent to blow spirit into the foetus asks Allah:
O my Lord! Should the sex be male or female? . . . Then God determines it according to His Will and the Angel records it.

It is reported that Lian (one of the Prophet's companions Hilal ibn Umayyah) accused his wife of committing adultery with Shuraikh ibn As-Sahma. The Prophet instructed in the following way:
Allow her to deliver, if the child bears so and so traits then he belongs to the accused man. But if the child bears so and so traits the child is then the son of her legitimate husband.30
The textual evidence leaves no doubt that hereditary endowment takes place. But the

ultimate decision of everything depends on God. Heredity, therefore, can influence a person's intellectual development to a certain extent.

Textual Proof of the Influence of Environment on Development

A famous evidence in this regard is a hadith in which the Prophet tells us how parents influence the religious, moral, and general psychological socialization and development of their children. This is one of the most glaring textual proofs of environmental influence upon a person. The hadith reads:

There is not a newborn child who is not born in state of fitrah (divinely endowed natural disposition of Islam). His parents then make him a Jew (if they are Jews), a Christian (if they are Christians), or a Magian (if they are Magians), just as an animal is born intact. Do you observe any among them that are maimed (at birth)?

In another hadith, the Prophet showed how companionship influences a person's behavior, character, and overall conduct. In a parable, the Prophet said:

The similitude of a good companion and a bad companion is like the possessor of musk perfume and a blacksmith. As for the owner of the perfume, he may either give it to you, or you purchase it from him, or at least you may get a pleasing odor from him. But as for the blacksmith, he may either burn your clothes or you get from him a bad displeasing odor.

In a metaphorical sense, the Prophet tells us how good companionship influences a person's character to goodness and how bad companionship induces a person to bad conduct. Environment, therefore, really influences a person's overall psychological development, including, of course, cognitive development.

Textual Proof of God's Will

There is substantial evidence that shows that heredity or environment per se do not in themselves determine an individual's pattern of development; ultimately, everything depends on God's will. The most striking example of this is the story of Jesus, son of Mary. God made him talk in his cradle. As we all know, language development is an integral part of cognitive development. Under normal circumstances children begin to talk around the age of two by rattling and in that way they continue to develop vocabulary. That Jesus talked in his cradle reveals God's power. It was not actually a hereditary endowment, neither was it a product of an "intellectually stimulating" environment. It was simply a manifestation of God's Wisdom, His infinite power, will, and ability to do all things. The Qur'an narrates this incident in several verses. First of all the Qur'an narrates to us how Mary was foretold that her son would talk in his cradle. The verse reads:

He shall speak unto mankind in his cradle and in his manhood and he shall be one of those brought near (unto Allah). (2:46)

And while narrating the full story, the Qur'an says:
At length she brought the (babe) to her people, carrying him (in her arms). They said: O Mary! Truly an amazing thing hast thou brought. O sister of Aaron! Thy father was not a man of evil, nor thy mother a woman unchaste! But she pointed to the babe. They said: How can we talk to one who is a child in the cradle? He (the child) said: I am indeed a servant of God; He hath given me revelation and made me a Prophet; And (He) hath made me blessed wheresoever I be, and hath enjoined on me prayer and charity wherever I be; (He) hath made me kind to my mother, and not over bearing or miserable; So peace is on me the day I was born, the day that I die, and the day that I shall be raised up to life (again)! Such was Jesus the son of Mary: (It is) a statement of truth, about which they (vainly) dispute; It is not befitting to (the Majesty of) God that He should beget a son. Glory be to Him! When He determines a matter, He only says to it, "Be," and it is. (19:27-35)
In a hadith reported by various hadith reporters including Bukhari, the Prophet has told us that this kind of miraculous incident did not only happen in the case of Jesus alone. He said it happened to two other persons, who also spoke in cradle. He said, "three people talked in their cradle." He first of all mentioned Jesus. And then he mentioned the rest of the two. One of them was also a newly born baby who spoke to exonerate a saint (Juraiju) who was mischievously and falsely accused of impregnating a whore, the result of which was the birth of that very child. The child spoke and said his father was the cattle rearer who used to rear his cattle around a mountain close to Juraiju's sanctuary.
Another child who spoke in his cradle was the child who spoke in response to the prayer of his mother when she prayed that God would make her son to be like one gorgeously dressed, arrogant rich man and that the child not be like one wretched, destitute lady who was falsely accused of theft and was also mischievously molested as a result of the false accusation. Both of them passed by her while she was breast feeding the child. In the first case the child turned his head and looked at the man then he said, "O God! Make me not like him." Also in the second case, he turned his head and looked at the woman and he said, "O God! Make me like her.33
What these verses teach us is that, while heredity and environment are indisputable factors that influence man's development, a third, more significant and dominant factor exists. This is the factor of God's infinite will and power. It is the factor which monitors and polices the extent to which the nature-nurture forces influence man's life and development. This is applicable to all aspects of development. The examples given above are specifically relevant to cognitive development. Thus, cognitive development is neither merely a product of genetic inheritance per se, nor a product of environment per se. It is primarily a product of God's will and power. In this regard, hereditary and

environmental forces are simply the medium through which God disposes the pattern of an individual's development. Therefore, these two factors have certain limitations in their influence on a person's overall psychological disposition. Such limitations themselves are predetermined by God.
It is necessary to recognize this factor in psychological studies. A lot of things do happen in man's life which cannot be attributable or ascribable to either heredity or environment (like the above examples). Therefore, such things cannot be explained within the confines of material or empirical investigations and explanations. Unless psychologists widen the horizons of their approach to the study of man by recognizing the factor of God's Divine will and omnipotence upon everything, including human psychological development, psychological research will remain incomplete and our knowledge about ourselves will remain equally incomplete.
The role of God's Will in determining an individual's development as recognized by the Islamic approach will help in understanding or explaining the process of development better than the Western approach in a number of ways. Some of them are: that not all psychological constructs and tendencies can strictly be attributed to the mere influences of heredity and environment.

that as a result of the above reason, individuals sometimes exhibit certain tendencies that clearly defy explanations in terms of hereditary or environmental influences. The case of the speech of Jesus and others in their cradles is a clear testimony to this. In this regard, if this is not attributed to the Will of God, only conjectures would be used to explain this fact.

The Qur'anic View on Individual – Differences in Development
Considering the fact that God's will varies on the particular creation of each individual, it is safe to assert that individual differences are a predetermined matter in human existence. Individual differences are subject to God's will and subsequently depend on hereditary endowment and the influences of environment. God tells us in the Qur'an that He creates and fashions every person in his mother's womb in a distinct and unique way/form as He wishes:

O man! What has seduced thee from thy Lord, Most Beneficent? Him Who created thee, fashioned thee in due proportion, and gave thee a just bias. In whatever form He wills, does He put thee together. (82:6-8)

He it is Who shapes you in the wombs as He pleases; there is no god but He, the Exalted in Might, the Wise. (3:6)

These verses denote that since every individual is fashioned in his mother's womb by God in a peculiar and unique form, individuals are bound to be different in all their physiopsychological dispositions. This is the basic factor behind individual differences among people. Furthermore, and in clearer terms, God has told us in the Qur'an that we are different from one another in our traits, characters, behaviors, and conduct:

Say! Every one acts according to his own disposition. But your Lord knows best who it is that is best guided on the way. (17:84)
This verse means that every single individual has a unique disposition. Such uniqueness may be manifested in terms of physical, cognitive, emotional, moral, and social characteristics. The Qur'an, therefore, recognizes that there are individual differences among men not only in terms of cognitive development but also in other aspects of development. Because of this recognition, one finds that individual differences are perfectly taken care of, even in some Qur'anic commands and exhortations toward obeying God's injunctions and also in the discharge of His obligations. A typical example is the verse in which God exhorts us to obey His rules, as far as we can, both individually and collectively:
So fear God as much as you can; listen and obey, and spend in charity for the benefit of your souls. (64:16)

In the above verse, God addresses us both individually and collectively. Each individual or group of individuals is expected to fear God and obey Him as far as he can bear it individually. This is the meaning that is conveyed by the following verse:

On no soul doth God place a burden greater than it can bear. It gets every good that it earns, and suffers every ill that it earns. (2:286)

Commenting on the above verse, Zaydan and Hash-Shash said, "This verse is a divine indication to the prevalence (existence) of individual differences among mankind.34 So, Islam treats every individual in his own unique and distinct disposition. This establishes beyond any reasonable doubt that there are bound to be differences among individuals in all aspects of their psychological traits and characteristics. This invariably includes cognitive characteristics. But the verse in which Allah clearly alludes to individual differences among people is the following verse. Such differences include intellectual disparities, among others. The verse reads:
And We raise some of them (mankind) above others in ranks, so that some may command work from others. (43:32)

According to Ibn Kathir, God explains in this verse that He created disparities among His creatures (mankind) in terms of what He has endowed them with-wealth, intellect, understanding, and the like-which pertains to both the outward and the inward abilities. 35

In practical terms, the Prophet used to take care of individual differences among his companions through his interactions with them by teaching, responding to questions, and in general dealings with them. He used to assign responsibilities to people according to their respective suitabilities to such responsibilities. He considered such differences in almost everything, including prayers. For example, with regards to leading people in prayers the Prophet used to instruct his companions to take into cognizance the differences which exist among people. He used to instruct them in the following way:

If anyone of you leads a people in prayer he should shorten it. For among them there are the young, the old, the weak and the ones disturbed by the call of nature. But if he prays alone, then let him pray as he wishes (according to his capability). 36

With regards to teaching people, the Prophet used to take care of their peculiarities. He used to take care of their level of intellectual and social development. In that way he instructs or teaches a person according to his mentality and social background. The following are very good examples of this Prophetic method of teaching:

‘Aisha, one of the Prophet’s wives, was reported as having said that the Prophet did not speak superfluously and carelessly as other people do. He used to talk to people in a careful manner, repeating the points which needed to be repeated or emphasized so that every listener understood him.

The Prophet considered people’s social and intellectual background when he addressed them. It is reported that a delegation came to him from Yemen. When he addressed them, he used the language (dialect) they would understand, which was different from the one spoken by his people (of Hijaz). In that way he used to try to interact with people.

The Prophet used to react or give answers to individuals in accordance with their intellectual and social dispositions. He would give different answers to seemingly similar questions and would react differently to the seemingly same action done by different people. For example, a beduin came into the Prophet’s mosque and urinated. His action showed that he had a low intellectual and social development. The

Prophet's companions became harsh with him and started shouting at him. But considering his peculiar intellectual and social background, the Prophet cautioned them saying: (Deal with him) gently. You have been sent to be lenient with people and not (indiscriminately) harsh. The Prophet then ordered that water be poured on the place urinated on. After that, the Prophet called him and explained to him gently in accordance to his mentality. The man became extremely pleased by the Prophet's treatment of him. So much so, that when he prayed and was supplicating, he said, "O Allah! Have mercy on me and Muhammad, and do not have mercy on any other person besides us." The Prophet smiled at him and said, "O! You have narrowed that which is wide." When the man went back to his people, he said, "I have come to you from the best of mankind. 37

Whenever the Prophet wanted to send some of his companions to teach people in other places, he would give them some advice which has some bearing on individual differences. For example, he used to say: Be lenient with people and do not be harsh. Encourage (and do not) discourage or dismiss people. 38

Finally, it was reported that the Prophet used to advise his companions in the following way: Speak to men according to their mental capacities, for if you speak all things to all men, some cannot understand you, and so fall into errors.

It is also pertinent to specifically address the issue of differences between the psychological development of male and female children. The Qur'an has certainly told us that males and females are not the same:

And the male is not like the female. (3:36)

The difference referred to in this verse is of a wide range. Essentially it refers to the differences in biological postures and psychological tendencies. There is no doubt that men and women have different biological postures and traits that create a number differences in their respective developmental patterns. The growth spurt of girls in the adolescent stage has been discovered to be faster than that boys. In another dimension there is certainly a very strong relationship between biology and psychology. Biological processes do really affect and influence psychological tendencies. As long as males and females have certain variant biological components and postures, variation in their psychological tendencies and dispositions is inevitable.

Conclusion

An attempt has been made in this paper to reveal some of the fundamental differences that exist between the Islamic approach to developmental psychology and the Western secular approach. Beginning with a critique of the epistemological and methodological paradigms and frameworks of Western social and behavioral sciences in general, the distinctive Islamic paradigm, which is based on the Tawhidi episteme, was propounded. Based on this epistemological framework an attempted exposition of the basic principles of Islamic developmental psychology was made. With sufficient references from the Qur'an and Sunnah as the Muslim's Absolute Reference Frame, 39 the fundamental differences between the Islamic and Western approaches were clearly expounded and illustrated. In a similar manner, other important issues related to development like the factors, which affect it, and the phenomenon of individual differences were discussed and analyzed. This attempt has certainly suggested a marked deviation from the conventional approach.

A very important element in this Islamic approach which more than any other thing makes it differ from the dominant Western approach is the fact that in the former case God's Will is the central and dominant factor in human development. In the latter case everything is explained within the limited confines of the nature-nurture (hereditary and environment) paradigm. This latter approach in view of the Islamic model is certainly reductionist and cannot lead to perfect understanding of human nature and development.

Because there are sharp contradictions between the Islamic and Western models, primarily due to Muslim belief in the indispensability of the Qur'an and Sunnah, and finally due to the differences between Muslim and Western societies, it must be concluded that it is grossly inappropriate to use Western development theories in Muslim societies. It is also futile or even absurd to keep upholding the Western theories with all their glaring weaknesses, inadequacies, and incompatibilities. It therefore becomes necessary and imperative to propound a more comprehensive adequate and accurate approach. The Islamic approach is certainly one for it can assuredly redeem mankind from misery occasioned by the mechanistic and materialist view of man. It will actually widen our scope of understanding of human developments without any claim of perfection.

Footnotes

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2 – See Omar K. Khaleefa, "The Imperialism of Euro-American Psychology in a non-Western Culture: An Attempt toward an Ummatic Psychology," The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, vol.14, no.1 (1997): 50.

3 – See Mona Abdul-Fadl, "Contemporary Social Theory: Tawhidi Projections," The American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences, vol. 2, no.3 (1994): 316.

4 – Malik Badri, The Dilemma of Muslim Psychologists (London: MWH Publishers, 1979).

5 – Mona Abul-Fadl, "Contemporary Social Theory," 317.

6 – Ibid., 326.

7 – Alexis Carrel, Al-Insan Dhalika al-Majhul (Man: The Unknown).

8 – Abul-Fadl, "Contemporary Social Theory," 327.

9 – L. S. Hearnshaw, The Shaping of Modern Psychology: An Historical Introduction (London: Routledge, 1987).

10 – Harris, Kelvin, Education and Knowledge (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979), 5-27; cited in Suleiman, Said, "Islamization of Knowledge: A Working Concept and Implementation Strategies," an unpublished seminar paper, Muslim Forum Islamization of Knowledge Seminar Series, Bayero University, Kano, Nigeria 1998.

11 – Ismail Raji al-Faruqi, "Islamizing the Social Sciences," in Social and Natural Sciences: Islamic Perspective, edited by I. R. al-Faruqi (Jeddah: King Abdul-Aziz University, 1977), 12.

12 – Ibid.

13 – Ibid.

14 – Hassan Langgulung, "Research in Psychology: Toward an Ummatic Paradigm," in Toward Islamization of the Disciplines (Herndon, Va.: IIIT, 1989), 115-116.

15 – Ibid., 116.

16 – Harris, Education, 2

17 – Badri, The Dilemma of Muslim Psychologists.

18 – Reported by Bukhari on the authority of Abullah ibn Mas'ud on the beginning of creation, in the chapter "Mention of the Angel," vol. 41, Hadith No. 549.

19 – 19. Abubakar Mahmoud Gummi, Radd al-Adhhan ila-Ma'an al-Qur'an (a commentary of the Qur'an) (Beirut: Dar al-Arabiyyah, 1982). 20. Surah al-Ahqaf (46:15). Other chapters and verses in which this attainment of full strength after weakness is mentioned are 40:67; 22:5; 17:34; 28:14; and 12:22. 21. See note (18) above. 22. That is the Science of Jurisprudence in Islam. The Principle referred to here is that which says: "Al-Itibar bi Umum al-Lafz la bi khusus al-ma'ana," i.e., Consideration can be made in juristic decisions to general meaning and implications of phrases or statements, in addition to their specific connotations. 23. A hadith reported by both Bukhari and Muslim on the authority of Abdullahi ibn Abbas. 24. See

Surah al-Ahqaf (46), verse 15 25. A hadith reported by Abu Dawud, Tirmidhi, and Hakim, on the authority of Abu Rafi. 26. See note (19) above.

20 – Ibid, x.

21 – Sabra, "The Astronomical Origin of Ibn al-Haytham's Concept of Experiment, 136.

22 – Boring, A History of Experimental Psychology; Brennan, History and Systems of Psychology; H. Kendler, Historical Foundations of Modern Psychology (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987); D. Schultz, A History of Modern Psychology, 3rd ed. (Orland: Academic Press, 1981).

23 – Boring, A History of Experimental Psychology.

24 – G. Fechner, Elements of Psychophysics, translated by H. Adler, edited by D. Howes and E. Boring (New York: Holt, Rinhart and Winston, 1860).

25 – Brennan, History and Systems of Psychology, 155.

26 – Fechner, Elements of Psychophysics, 10.

27 – Ibid., xxvii.

28 – Ibid., 10.

29 – Ibid., xxviii.

30 – Ibid., xxix.

31 – Schultz, A History of Modern Psychology, 54.

32 – Fechner, Elements of Psychophysics, xxix.

33 – Boring, A History of Experimental Psychology, 283.

34 – Fechner, Elements of Psychophysics.

35 – Ibid., xxiv.

36 – Boring, A History of Experimental Psychology, 293.

37 – Ibid; Brennan, History and Systems of Psychology; Kendler, Historical Foundations of Modern Psychology.

38 – A. Sabra, "Sensation and Inference in Alhazen's Theory of Visual Perception," in Studies in Perception: Interrelations in the History of Philosophy and Science, edited by Peter Machamer and R. Turnbull (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1978), 160-161.

39 – Sabra, Commentary to Ibn al-Haytham's Optics, xii.

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