

Exploring Ibn Taimiyyah's Model of Psychological Resilience in the Light of Islam and Psychology

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Abstract

The concept of psychological resilience and what makes human beings bounce back from adversities has always intrigued philosophers and theologians in the past and continues to fascinate modern psychology. It has been claimed by Western psychology that Emmy Werner, an American developmental psychologist, was one of the earliest scientists to study psychological resilience in the 1980s. In this paper, the author aims to reveal an even earlier presentation of what we understand today as resilience, based on the 12th-century work, *The Principle of Patience*, written by Ibn Taimiyyah during the golden age of Islam. Discovery of this manuscript reveals that Ibn Taimiyyah's twenty recommendations for fostering psychological resilience parallel modern-day therapeutic interventions employed in Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT) and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT). The research also reveals that Ibn Taimiyyah should be credited for identifying acceptance, patience, and forgiveness as key tools for building psychological resilience and highlighting their positive impact on physical and mental health, nearly centuries before modern psychology.

Keywords *Islamic Psychology, Positive Psychology, Trauma, Empathy, Resilience, Faith*

INTRODUCTION

All human beings are tested by Allah with extenuating circumstances at some point in their lives. Stress pertaining to studies, work, relationships, finances, and health affects individuals consistently, spanning from inception to death. Psychology has long been fascinated with the human potential to cope with adversities and understand why humans behave the way they do across different situations, including trauma. In recent times, the positive psychology movement has departed from the illness model where labelling or treating psychological disorders is not the only goal but also identifying human strengths to promote mental health (Maddux, 2008) and as protective measures against mental illnesses (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Indeed, it has been well-established that everyone responds to trauma differently. Some respond through acute distress, some through unexpected health problems, and others through engaging in risky behaviours such as substance abuse or violence. Nevertheless, many individuals surprisingly seem to cope well with no clear apparent disturbance in their daily functioning, such as work and close relationships (Bonanno, 2004). The presence of resilience is what distinguishes the latter group of people from the former. While psychopathology is well-studied such as the genesis of depression, stress, and various cognitive impairments, the origins of human strengths that account for resilience in the face of trauma remains a subject of exploration (Fry & Debats, 2010).

On the other hand, Islamic literature offers a wealth of profound insights into resilience, demonstrating its rich intellectual heritage. Qualities associated with human resilience, such as patience, forbearance, and forgiveness, have been extensively discussed in the Quran and Sunnah

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of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), along with their virtues and rewards both in this life and the next. Thus, the Quran and Sunnah teachings inspired Muslim theologians, notably Ibn Taimiyyah, to further explore the topic of resilience and identify different strategies to cultivate it in everyday life centuries before contemporary psychology.

This paper attempts to present Ibn Taimiyyah's unique framework for cultivating psychological resilience, which includes a series of five steps, namely: acceptance, patience, forgiving others, and remembering the virtues of resilience. Surprisingly, Ibn Taimiyyah's advice on fostering resilience continues to remain relevant in modern therapeutic practices, which, ironically, are largely rooted in Eurocentric Judeo-Christian traditions. Contemporary psychological research further supports Ibn Taimiyyah's findings dating back to the 13th century as acceptance (Miceli, 2019), patience (Sevilgen & Tolan, 2024), forgiveness (Broyles, 2005), and embodying virtues such as courage and transcendence have been found to be predictors of psychological resilience (Deepak & Narayanan, 2012).

LITERATURE REVIEW

What is Resilience?

The term 'resilience' is derived from the Latin word '*resalire*' which literally means to "spring back" (Hu et al., 2014). The problem of arriving at a universal definition of resilience continues to plague psychologists even today (Allen et al., 2011). The debate persists in psychological literature, questioning whether resilience is a personal trait, a process, or an outcome (Ahern et al., 2008). One of the reasons why defining resilience may be a challenge is because of the term's widespread use and association in other fields besides psychology, such as social work and education (Cohen et al., 2011). As a trait, resilience can be defined as "a personal trait that helps individuals cope with adversity and achieve good adjustment" (Sisto et al., 2019). Proponents of this position argue that the association between resilience and certain personality traits, such as openness to experience, conscientiousness, and extraversion (McCrae & Costa, 1997) and the relative stability of resilience across time (Leys et al., 2020) makes resilience more of a trait than an acquired skill. Resilience is a process that involves "positively adapting to adversity through effective coping strategies" (Luthar et al., 2000). Although everyone experiences some adversity, individuals who particularly undergo "chronic, developmental, and genetically causing ailments require resilience to resist, survive, and thrive" (Hephsebha & Deb, 2024). Irrespective of how resilience is approached, two elements remain common throughout all definitions of its occurrence: adversity and successful adaptation (Luthar et al., 2000; Masten, 2001; Schilling, 2008).

Factors Contributing to Resilience

In the modern world, ethical challenges such as the devaluation of human worth, conflicts, dishonest behaviour, wealth accumulation at the expense of others, societal disparities and various other negative social phenomena are plaguing humanity (Ahmad & Bisati, 2023). Lack of social support, financial constraints, severed relationships with family members, and loneliness can make one susceptible to mental health disorders such as depression (Hadiwardjo & Damayanti, 2024). Thus, there is a greater need for psychological resilience, especially when stress is more prevalent than ever. Numerous longitudinal studies have identified diverse factors that determine the development of resilience. These include genetic, epigenetic, developmental, psychological, and neurochemical factors (Wu et al., 2013). Robust social support emerges as a pivotal determinant of psychological resistance, particularly among children. Children who can establish a close relationship with at least one stable caregiver and receive adequate and appropriate attention in the first year of their lives grow up to become resilient individuals (Shonkoff & Meisels, 2000). Furthermore, a child's "capacity to make meaning of challenging experiences in a balanced and

organised manner...contributes to their pro-social resilience in the wake of adversity" (Coulombe & Yates, 2024). Children equipped with a variety of resilient processes and adequate support are at a minimal risk of developing child behaviour problems such as depression and conduct disorder (Park et al., 2024).

Studies have also found certain positive personality characteristics correlated with resilience, such as optimism, a good sense of humour, and empathy (Levine, 2003). Resilient individuals are, therefore, more productive, have better self-awareness, and are sensitive to other peoples' emotions (Levine, 2003). Recent research suggests other personality characteristics associated with resilient individuals, such as self-control (Baumeister & Exline, 2000), forgiveness (McCullough, 2000), and hope (Snyder, 2000).

Contemporary psychology increasingly explores the nexus between religion, spirituality, and resilience. Science demonstrates a fascinatingly complex correlation between spirituality, religion, and resilience. Spirituality is defined as "the human search for purpose and meaning of life experiences" (Sheridan & Hemert, 1999), while religion is "a set of beliefs, practices and language that characterises a community that is searching for transcendent meaning in a particular way, generally based upon belief in a deity" (Sulmasy, 2002). From an Islamic perspective, spirituality and religiosity are inseparable, and one cannot exist without the other. A study conducted through interviews with women aged 80 and older found that spirituality served as a powerful coping mechanism against adversities and a tool to maintain resilience in their lives (Manning, 2013). In children, religiosity has been identified as a source of resilience against stressful life events (Mhaka-Mutepfa & Maundeni, 2019) and can facilitate healing from trauma (Bryant-Davis et al., 2012). Thus, religion is a key factor influencing health promotion (Sarkingobir et al., 2022).

Acceptance vs Resilience in Islam and Psychology

The idea of acceptance is being widely studied to understand different human responses to distressing events in recent times. Psychological acceptance is "a way of moving forward with the full range of one's experience, without needless defence or struggle, in the service of behaving in a way that will lead to a fulfilling, meaningful life" (Herbert & Brandsma, 2015). Acceptance is a broad term and can include acceptance of oneself, others, or the present reality. Many studies indicate that acceptance is linked to improved emotional and psychological health. Accepting negative emotions can lead to experiencing fewer negative emotional states (Ford et al., 2018). Likewise, greater acceptance leads to fewer occurrences of anxiety, depression, eating, and substance abuse disorders (Aldao, 2009). A study by Hisham et al. (2022) on 989 Muslim-Sunni respondents found that self-acceptance is significantly associated with greater mental well-being.

Acceptance can be a critical step towards fostering psychological resilience. For instance, a study by Moens et al. (2022) on chronic pain patients found that acceptance and commitment therapy increase resilience among patients. The patients were taught to be comfortable with unpleasant emotions and thoughts throughout seven therapy sessions using different therapeutic techniques such as mindfulness and cognitive diffusion (Moens et al., 2022). From an Islamic perspective, acceptance is tied down to the concept of *Qadaa wa-Qadr*, i.e. Divine will and Divine decree, one of the six articles of faith. Belief in the Qadaa and Qadr implies acknowledging that everything occurs by the will and decree of Allah. Thus, acceptance for a Muslim implies unconditionally embracing the realities of this world without doubting or questioning the decree of Allah.

Patience vs Resilience in Islam and Psychology

In Islam, patience is revered as a virtue that must be demonstrated both in relationship to people and God (Khalil, 2021). Patience in the Islamic tradition is a prerequisite of faith, as Ibn

Masu'd (may Allah be pleased with him), one of the companions of the Prophet (ﷺ), was reported to have said, "Patience is half of faith" (recorded in *Shu'ab al-Iman*, 9083). Allah commands the believers to exercise patience in all aspects of life. Patience is a highly regarded quality in Islam, such that one of the attributes of Allah is *Al-Saboor*, which literally means The Most Patient.

Several studies indicate that religiosity plays a crucial role in nurturing resilience. Thus, from an Islamic perspective, patience manifests resilient behaviour (Salleh et al., 2020). Those who exercise patience tend to display greater optimism and lower anxiety levels compared to their counterparts (Bülbül & Arslan, 2017). Moreover, individuals exhibiting patience are less prone to impulsive behaviour and contribute positively to their community (Ma'arif et al., 2023).

In Arabic, patience is often translated as *Sabr*, which literally means to "control or restrain oneself" (Lane, n.d). However, it is a broad quality that encompasses many other traits, such as "forbearance" and "steadfastness" (Khalil, 2021). Schnitker (2012) defines patience as "the propensity of a person to wait calmly in the face of frustration, adversity, or suffering." Since patience has cognitive and emotional properties, this suggests that patience is acquired later in life (Bülbül & Arslan, 2017). Ibn Qayyim posits that a person who does not naturally possess the quality of patience can acquire it through imitation, as the Prophet (ﷺ) was reported to have said in a hadith recorded in *Sahih al-Bukhari* (1469), "Whoever remains patient, Allah will make him patient."

According to Ibn Taimiyyah, there are three types of patience: (1) Patience in carrying out the commands of Allah, (2) patience in staying away from the prohibitions outlined by Allah, and (3) patience to endure afflictions. Expanding on Ibn Taimiyyah's categories of patience, Ibn Qayyim further categorises patience into five types, depending on circumstances: (1) Obligatory (*wajib*) patience, (2) encouraged (*mandub*) patience, (3) forbidden (*mandhur*) patience, (4) disliked (*makruh*) patience, and (5) permissible (*mubah*) patience.

Forgiveness vs Resilience in Islam and Psychology

Over the past two decades, psychologists have been keen to explore forgiveness as an imperative factor for strengthening human relationships. Both forgiveness and resilience are significantly correlated (Soni, 2015), and those with a higher tendency to forgive have a higher level of psychological resilience (Kravchuk, 2021). Forgiveness is a core virtue in many religions, including Islam. In the light of Islamic teachings, forgiveness can either mean Allah's forgiveness to His slave or a human's forgiveness of his own self or others (Hamidi et al., 2010). Among the many degrees of forgiveness mentioned in the Quran include *A'fv*, *Sofh*, and *Qofr*. *Afv* means "to erase" and, in the context of the Quran implies forgiving "without seeking revenge from the wrongdoer", *Sofh* means "to turn one's face from something and forgiving the sin and mistake of someone without rebuking them", and *Qofr* understood as "concealing the behavioural flaws of others" (Mohases, 2019). Forgiveness is a virtue that allows an individual to earn the love of Allah.

In addition to the spiritual merits of forgiveness, research indicates that practising forgiveness can improve physical and mental health. For instance, a study conducted on adults suffering from chronic pain found that individuals who were more forgiving experienced milder pain, anger, and distress (Carson et al., 2005). Another study conducted on older adults found that those who had a higher level of forgiveness had lower levels of cholesterol, anxiety, depression, and perceived stress (Toussaint et al., 2016). Interestingly, forgiveness is also linked to familial well-being. Adolescents willing to forgive their parents for shortcomings have improved the quality of the child-parent relationship (Paleari et al., 2010), and parents with a greater tendency to forgive their children also enjoy a better parent-child relationship (Maio et al., 2008).

Ibn Taimiyyah's Life: A Parable of Resilience and Faith

Ibn Taimiyyah was a prominent 13th-century Islamic theologian and jurist, hailing from

Harran, present-day Turkey (Laoust, 2024). As a child, Ibn was taken to Damascus by his father for the pursuit of traditional Islamic knowledge of the Quran, Hadith, Fiqh, and Arabic language. The young Ibn Taimiyyah was known for his exceptional ability to memorise books from various Islamic sciences and rarely forgot (al-Bazzar, 2009). He is known for his extensive writings on several topics that continue to be discussed in contemporary psychology and philosophy. Some of his notable self-help works include *Amraad al-Qulub wa Shifa'uha* (Diseases of the Heart and Their Cures), *Qaaidah fi al-Muhabbah* (The Principle of Love and Desire), (Helpful Guidelines in Enduring People's Harm), and *Qaaidah fis-Sabr* (The Principle of Patience). Ibn Taimiyyah was imprisoned many times since he often found himself at odds with the political authorities of his time. He is said to have served approximately five years of sentence in the last 35 years of his life. Despite his persecution, Ibn Taimiyyah continued teaching and writing from the prison. Later, the Sultan ordered to have Ibn Taimiyyah's paper, ink, and pens confiscated; shortly after, Ibn Taimiyyah passed away in prison due to a heartbreak from being denied writing (El-Tobgui, 2022). His student, Ibn Qayyim, who was also imprisoned alongside his teacher, praised Ibn Taimiyyah through his famous words, "And Allah knows that I did not see anyone live a purer life than him ever...despite what he suffered from imprisonment, restraint, and exhaustion, he was from the purest of people in living and most open-hearted, strong-hearted and most self-contented; the brightness of delight showed on his face" (Taymiyyah, 2015, p.7). It is no surprise that Ibn Taimiyyah's life and legacy is a testament of his resilience.

Ibn Taimiyyah's Twenty Steps for Psychological Resilience

It appears that the concept of psychological resilience was significantly discussed in the works of many Muslim philosophers and theologians, including Ibn Taimiyyah. In his treatise, the Principle of Patience, Ibn Taimiyyah outlined twenty strategies that may help an individual foster resilience in the face of trauma or betrayal from people:

1. Affirming that Allah is the Creator of the servants; whatever Allah decrees comes to pass, while what He does not decree cannot happen. Not a single particle in the universe moves without His consent and command. Therefore, one should direct their focus towards the One who has granted them authority over you and not dwell on their negative conduct towards you; this mindset will alleviate your anxiety, anguish, and sadness.
2. Acknowledging that a person may be overpowered by his enemies due to his own sins. Thus, when the slave of Allah recognises that his sins cause everything undesirable that happens to him, as Allah says in the Quran (42:30), "Whatever affliction befalls you is because of what your own hands have committed. And He pardons a lot." Therefore, one must focus on seeking forgiveness and repentance from Allah.
3. The servant of Allah understands that the most significant rewards Allah promises are for those who forgive and demonstrate patience; as Allah says in the Quran (42:40), "The reward of an evil deed is its equivalent. But whenever pardons and seek reconciliation, then their reward is with Allah. He certainly does not like the wrongdoers."
4. The servant of Allah understands that practising forgiveness and responding positively fosters a compassionate attitude towards fellow brethren while also purifying oneself from resentment, vengeful intentions, treachery, or ill will. In the Quran, Allah refers to such a person (3:134), "...And Allah loves the good doers."
5. The servant of Allah recognises that seeking revenge only brings about humiliation, while pardoning others earns an honour from Allah, as the Prophet (ﷺ) was reported to have said in hadith recorded in Sahih Muslim (2588), "...no one forgives another except that Allah increases his honour..."
6. The servant of Allah recognises that rewards are given in proportion to one's action. The

acknowledgement of one's shortcomings and sins, as well as showing forgiveness towards others, also leads to Allah granting the servant forgiveness.

7. The servant of Allah understands that engaging in revenge and retaliation is fruitless, divides the heart, and leads to missing out on irreplaceable benefits. By forgiving and making excuses, one can free the heart and body to attain more significant benefits than seeking retaliation.
8. The servant of Allah's act of seeking retribution for his own sake is contrary to the Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ), who never sought revenge for himself, considering he was the finest creation in the sight of Allah.
9. If a servant of Allah experiences harm as a result of doing something for the sake of Allah, in accordance with His laws or due to obedience to His commands, he is obligated to demonstrate patience. In such cases, there is no requirement for retaliation; instead, Allah will grant him a reward since he endured hardship for the sake of Him.
10. The servant of Allah understands that by being patient, they can feel the presence of Allah with them, along with His love and pleasure. When Allah is with someone, He protects them from harm or injury in a way that no one else can, as He promised in the Quran (8:46), "Persevere! Surely Allah is with those who persevere."
11. The servant of Allah understands that displaying patience is equivalent to demonstrating half of their faith. They should not compromise any part of their trust in Allah by placing trust in their own abilities because by exercising patience, they uphold and safeguard their faith from diminishing.
12. The servant of Allah understands that exercising patience is a means for him to control and overcome the desires of his self. When one willingly submits to the desires of their self, it can lead to destruction. As a result, patience signifies the ability to conquer the self and the Shaytan, fortifying oneself against adversities.
13. The servant of Allah understands that by demonstrating patience, he will receive assistance from Allah. Indeed, Allah is the protector of those who patiently entrust their oppressors to Him.
14. The patience of a servant of God towards those who harm them can prompt the offender to stop oppressing others, feel regretful, and seek forgiveness. This may lead the wrongdoer to repent after harming the patient individual as a result of shame and remorse for their actions, as Allah says in the Quran (41:34-35), "Good and evil cannot be equal. Respond to evil with what is best, then the one you are in a feud with will be like a close friend. But this cannot be attained except by those who are patient and who are truly fortunate."
15. Perhaps seeking revenge and retaliation could lead to an escalation of the opponent's wrongdoing, strengthening their harmful schemes. However, if a servant of Allah remains patient and forgives, they can protect themselves from this danger.
16. Succumbing to the pursuit of vengeance without practising patience will ultimately lead someone to commit wrongful actions.
17. The adversity experienced by the servant of Allah serves as a means through which his transgressions may be forgiven or his status raised.
18. The ability to forgive and endurance of the servant of Allah are powerful soldiers belonging to him against the oppressors. Those who demonstrate patience and forgiveness will discover that this attitude causes their enemies to feel humiliated and fearful.
19. Pardoning one's opponent might cause the opponent to view the pardoner as superior. Consequently, the opponent continues to see themselves as inferior. This act of forgiveness can be viewed as a virtue and honour.
20. Pardoning and forgiving others are virtuous acts that lead to further positive actions,

creating an ongoing cycle of good deeds. As a result, the accumulation of good deeds for the servant of Allah continues to increase, as the reward for doing good is only good.

RESEARCH METHOD

To understand Ibn Taimiyyah's approach for fostering psychological resilience, the research was conducted in an inductive qualitative grounded theory analysis style. This included a series of following steps:

1. Examining the data: Following the formulation of a research question, data was gathered through analysis of the primary text, *The Principle of Patience (Qaaidah fis-Sabr)* by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taimiyyah. Supplementary sources, such as scholarly articles on Jstore and Google Scholar on psychological resilience, forgiveness, patience, and acceptance, were further reviewed to support the study. The author selected these sources within the framework of mental health and Islam. This, in turn, facilitated a nuanced understanding of Ibn Taimiyyah's approach, consistent with both contemporary psychology and traditional Islamic wisdom.
 2. Creating initial codes: The primary text was subjected to thorough examination, and the author manually assigned each principle in the text a code. These codes included a wide spectrum of themes such as forgiveness, patience, acceptance, compassion, endurance, remorse, resilience, and remembering the virtues of patience and forgiveness.
 3. Identifying core theme: Most frequently repeated codes from initial coding were further analysed, culminating in recognising a core category: psychological resilience.
 4. Identifying main categories: Each principle was narrowed into two overarching themes: psychoeducational and behavioural strategies for cultivating resilience.
- Formulating a theory: The final step involved integrating codes that relate to psychological resilience- such as acceptance, patience, forgiveness, and remembering their virtues, to conceptualize a unified theoretical framework.

To mitigate researcher bias and enhance the validity and reliability of the study, the author solicited peer review of the study findings from colleagues in the field of Islamic psychology.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis consisted of five stages: examining the data, creating initial codes, identifying subcategories, identifying main categories, and formulating a theory. The process entailed studying and reading Ibn Taimiyyah's twenty steps and assigning codes to them according to the above numbers. Some principles encompassed multiple concepts and thus appeared in more than one category.

Table 1. Psychoeducational Recommendations by Ibn Taimiyyah

Principle Number	Positive Outcomes of Patience and Forgiveness
# 4	Free from ill feelings and increase in joy.
# 5	Expiation of sins and immense reward from Allah.
# 6-7	Beneficial to the health of the heart and the body.
# 9-14	Disciplining of the self.
# 18-20	Preservation of faith and amendment of relationships

Principle Number	Negative Outcomes of Impatience and Vengeance
# 5	Earns humiliation from Allah.
# 7	Loss of valuable time and opportunities
# 15	Risk of increased harm from the opponent.
# 16	Leads to anger and violence.
Principle Number	Barriers to Patience and Forgiveness
# 2	Sins
# 8	The Lower self/ego
# 12	Shaytan
Principle Number	Facilitators of Patience and Forgiveness
# 1	Acceptance of the decree of Allah.
# 2	Seeking repentance from Allah.

Table 2. Behavioural Recommendations by Ibn Taimiyyah

Principle Number	Cognitive Restructuring Strategy
# 1	Reminding oneself that Allah is greater than people’s actions.
# 10	The Prophet (ﷺ) never took revenge for himself; how then can we?

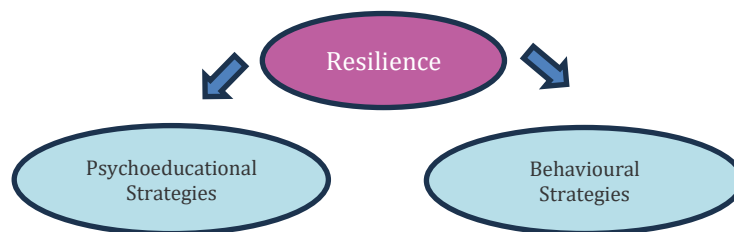


Figure 1. A diagram depicting the influence of psychoeducation and behavioural strategies in fostering resilience.

Discussion

Ibn Taimiyyah's twenty steps can be conceived as a valuable framework for building resilience from an Islamic psychological perspective. These principles, largely psychoeducational, highlight the significance of resilience. Research indicates that psychoeducational interventions can help to enhance functioning, quality of life, reduce symptomatology, and provide favourable outcomes for both individuals with illness as well as their family members (Lukens & McFarlane, 2004). Education, including psychoeducation, is “essential, especially in an era of disruption and moral deterioration” (Uyuni et al., 2023).

Ibn Taimiyyah begins his treatise by urging the readers to embrace the divine decree of Allah to develop patience. His perspective on acceptance parallels the idea of radical acceptance in dialectical behavioural therapy (DBT), advocating for wholeheartedly accepting the reality of the present without judgment, even when the present is uncomfortable. For instance, an individual experiencing chronic pain can adopt the belief that despite their suffering, life holds good moments and that it is worth living. Similarly, Ibn Taimiyyah's advice on surrendering the decree of Allah and completely accepting the highs and lows of life is viewed as a first step towards fostering resilience. Furthermore, Ibn Taimiyyah extensively discusses the virtues of patience and forgiveness while highlighting the negative outcomes of not practising them, using references from the Quran, numerous sayings from the Prophet (ﷺ) and the companions. His advice to abstain from seeking revenge can be integrated within therapy to encourage clients to embrace forgiveness, make peace with reality, and cope with difficult emotions like anger and guilt. A widely used strategy in therapy to promote forgiveness is through writing forgiveness letters.

Additionally, Ibn Taimiyyah's emphasis on pardoning for one's well-being resonates with modern research, underscoring forgiveness to reduce stress (Toussaint et al., 2015) and improve mental health (Akhtar & Barlow, 2018). In contemporary philosophical and positive psychology discourse, the development of virtues is critical for human flourishing and happiness (McManus et al., 2024). Ibn Taimiyyah makes a remarkable discussion on the significance of virtues in relation to resilience and outlines three types of virtues: (1) psychological virtues or benefits of resilience, (2) social virtues or benefits of resilience, and (3) spiritual virtues or benefits of resilience.

Ibn Taimiyyah describes the barriers that may hinder resilience development, such as one's sins, the lower self, and the influence of Shaytan. As he asserts, these barriers must be resisted and overcome through sincere repentance to Allah. The study suggests that Ibn Taimiyyah also incorporated cognitive behavioural interventions like cognitive reframing. He consistently invites the readers to shift their thinking and remain optimistic. Cognitive reframing is a proven therapeutic technique to dispute and modify negative thoughts. It is particularly effective for treating post-traumatic stress disorder (Mueser et al., 2015). It should be noted how Ibn Taimiyyah utilised the concept of cognitive reframing to help readers cope with betrayal and trauma.

Ibn Taimiyyah's resilience paradigm offers valuable insights for individuals dealing with the aftermath of complex trauma, as many of his recommendations on forgiveness and patience are a response to oppression and injustice that someone may be subjected to. Nevertheless, this versatile model applies to various circumstances that demand resilience, such as when navigating war, conflicts in a relationship, or the loss of a loved one.

Ibn Taimiyyah places significant responsibility on the individual for achieving resilience and initiating change, just like conventional therapeutic approaches, where a therapist only facilitates the process of change while the patient actively works towards therapeutic transformation. Ibn Taimiyyah hints at the mind-body connection by briefly discussing how forgiveness can enhance somatic and psychological health, a concept now supported in contemporary psychology. Ibn Taimiyyah's comprehensive understanding of resilience is remarkable as he identifies the role of the lower self (*Nafs*) and Shaytan in impeding resilience. He was truly ahead of his time by delving into the science of *Nafs*, or what we understand today as Islamic psychology. What makes this model further unique is Ibn Taimiyyah's incorporation of not just psychological principles but also principles from the Quran and Sunnah of the Prophet (ﷺ). Ibn Taimiyyah supports his arguments using verses from the Quran and parables from the life of the Prophet (ﷺ). This can be immensely assuring when working with Muslim clients as the model is congruent to Islamic beliefs and practices. Many Muslims find Western psychotherapy inconsistent with their personal values.

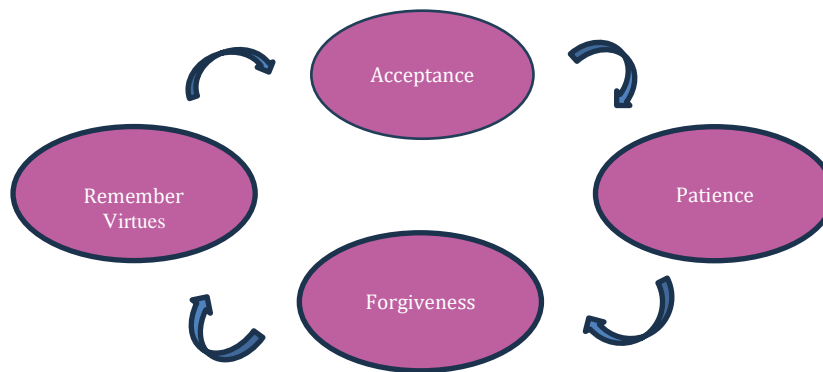


Figure 2. A conceptualisation of Ibn Taimiyyah’s model of fostering psychological resilience.

CONCLUSION

Based on the above findings, it can be argued that Ibn Taimiyyah’s twenty-step framework contains psychoeducational and behavioural interventions aimed at promoting resilience to cope with adversity and trauma. The research study indicates that Ibn Taimiyyah’s model can be delineated as a series of following steps to nurture resilience. These include:

1. Acceptance of the decree of Allah
2. Exercising patience
3. Reframing negative thoughts to forgive others and seeking forgiveness from Allah through resisting the impulses of the lower self/ego and Shaytan.
4. Managing relapses by remembering the virtues of patience and forgiveness.

We can conclude that each of these steps is interconnected and interdependent upon one another. For instance, without acceptance, one cannot achieve patience or pardon oneself and others. One must first develop unwavering confidence in the decree of Allah while recognising that every hardship serves a purpose. Then, one should strive to exercise patience in the face of crisis to the best of their ability.

Patience preserves an individual’s physiological and psychological well-being while earning them the pleasure and aid of Allah. They must then actively restructure their negative thoughts by making excuses for others and pardoning them. He or she should continue resisting the destructive impulses stemming from the lower self and Shaytan by sincerely repenting to Allah because both these influences can lead them into despair, thereby, adversely affecting their mental health. Lastly, they must continue reminding themselves timely of the virtues of resilience, patience, and forgiveness to prevent any relapses. Thus, Ibn Taimiyyah’s model of resilience marvellously aligns with modern discourse on psychological resilience and is a testament to the great intellectual heritage of Islam.

LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

In the process of conducting an inductive grounded theory analysis of Ibn Taimiyyah’s work, the author recognises that there were several limitations in the study. The topic of resilience is widely addressed in Ibn Taimiyyah’s writing. Since many manuscripts attributed to Ibn Taimiyyah have not yet been translated from Arabic to English, an extensive investigation of Ibn Taimiyyah’s understanding of resilience in some of his other incredible works was not feasible.

Since the study analysed a historical work from the past, the author may be guilty of presentism, a common bias in historical analysis, which entails interpreting a historical work using

contemporary understanding. In this study, the author reviewed Ibn Taimiyyah's treatise, the principle of patience, through the lens of modern psychology.

The current research has laid down the foundations for further investigation of psychological interventions found in the classical works of early Muslim thinkers and theologians, such as Ibn Taimiyyah. Moving forward, future research should aim to:

1. Explore how Ibn Taimiyyah's twenty-step model can be incorporated into modern therapeutic approaches such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) and Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT).
2. Investigate if Ibn Taimiyyah's model can be potentially beneficial for treating post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), clinical depression, and prolonged grief disorder (PGD).
3. Identify how Ibn Taimiyyah's psychoeducational advice can be utilized to teach resilience skills to children and young adolescents undergoing mental and emotional crises.

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