

A Thematic Qur'anic Exegesis of Neuro-Linguistic Programming: A Cognitive Psychology Perspective

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2026.1017PSY0031>

Received: 05 May 2026; Accepted: 11 May 2026; Published: 03 June 2026

ABSTRACT

This study examines the conceptual correspondence between selected Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) related mechanisms and Qur'anic teachings through the perspectives of cognitive psychology and Islamic epistemology. Using thematic Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsīr mawḍū'ī*), the study explores themes related to cognition, language, emotional regulation, and behavior within the Qur'anic corpus. A qualitative interdisciplinary design was employed, integrating thematic content analysis, cognitive-linguistic mapping, operational construct definitions, and triangulation with classical and contemporary *tafsīr* traditions. A preliminary perception survey involving Muslim university students was also conducted to examine perceived relevance of Qur'anic based cognitive approaches. The findings reveal conceptual correspondences between selected NLP related constructs such as reframing, cognitive restructuring, emotional regulation, persuasive language patterns, and behavioral reinforcement and Qur'anic themes emphasizing self-awareness, ethical communication, moral accountability, and habit formation. Survey findings indicate generally positive perceptions toward spiritually grounded cognitive approaches among Muslim students. Based on these findings, the study introduces Neuro-Linguistic Qur'anic Programming (NLQP) as a culturally grounded conceptual framework that reinterprets selected NLP related mechanisms within Qur'anic ethical and theological principles. The study contributes to interdisciplinary scholarship by demonstrating how psychological models may be critically integrated with religious epistemologies while maintaining conceptual clarity and methodological transparency. Future research should examine NLQP through experimental, longitudinal, and cross-cultural designs to evaluate its broader psychological applicability.

Keywords: Thematic Qur'anic Exegesis; Neuro-Linguistic Programming; Cognitive Psychology; Language and Cognition; Islamic Psychology

INTRODUCTION

The growing interaction between psychological science and religious traditions has generated increasing interest in culturally and cognitively grounded frameworks for understanding human thought, language, emotion, and behavior. Within cognitive psychology, substantial evidence demonstrates that mental representations, linguistic framing, and learned behavioral patterns play significant roles in emotional regulation, self-concept formation, and behavioral change. Consequently, the integration of psychological models with religious epistemologies has emerged as an important interdisciplinary direction, particularly in societies where religious belief systems strongly influence meaning making, moral reasoning, and psychological well-being.

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP), originally developed by Richard Bandler and John Grinder in the 1970s, examines the relationship between neurological processes, language use, and learned behavioral strategies in shaping cognition and action. NLP proposes that modifying internal representations and linguistic patterns may facilitate changes in emotional responses and behavior (Kotera et al., 2018). Several NLP related mechanisms, particularly reframing and representational restructuring, demonstrate conceptual convergence with established constructs in cognitive psychology, especially cognitive restructuring within Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) (Clark, 2014; Purdon, 2021). Recent empirical findings further suggest that cognitive restructuring

functions as a central psychological skill across different developmental stages, reinforcing its relevance for emotional and behavioral regulation (Johnco et al., 2025).

Despite these conceptual intersections, NLP remains a debated framework within mainstream psychological science. Although NLP techniques have been utilized in psychotherapy, coaching, communication training, and organizational development (Rosa et al., 2023), concerns persist regarding its empirical validation, theoretical consistency, and methodological rigor (Kattimani & Abhijita, 2024; Passmore & Rowson, 2019). Such critiques emphasize the importance of situating NLP derived techniques within stronger theoretical foundations, ethical considerations, and culturally meaningful contexts rather than treating them as universally neutral intervention tools.

In parallel, Islamic psychology offers a holistic epistemological perspective that integrates Qur'anic concepts such as *fitrah*, *nafs* (self), *qalb* (heart), and *rūḥ* (spirit) with contemporary psychological understanding (Rassool, 2023a). Within this framework, cognition, language, and behavior are viewed as morally situated processes embedded within ethical and spiritual dimensions of human existence. Contemporary Islamic psychological scholarship further stresses the need for culturally congruent psychological models capable of preserving the spiritual, ethical, and anthropological dimensions of the self in Muslim societies. Linguistic and psychological studies additionally demonstrate systematic relationships between language use, emotional states, and identity construction, including associations between emotional lexicons, pronoun patterns, depression, and neurotic tendencies (Behdarvandirad & Karami, 2022). From an Islamic developmental perspective, cognitive, emotional, moral, and spiritual growth are deeply interconnected, highlighting the psychological significance of behavioral regulation, reflective awareness, and habit formation (Hashim, 2025).

This study is situated at the intersection of cognitive psychology, NLP, and Islamic epistemology by examining conceptual correspondences between selected NLP principles and Qur'anic teachings through thematic Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsīr mawḍū'ī*). The analysis incorporates perspectives from both classical and contemporary exegetical traditions, including *al-Ṭabarī*, *Ibn Kathīr*, *al-Rāzī*, and *al-Qushayrī*. Unlike verse-by-verse interpretation, *tafsīr mawḍū'ī* organizes Qur'anic verses around coherent thematic categories, enabling systematic exploration of cognitive, linguistic, behavioral, and spiritual dimensions across the Qur'anic corpus. This method aligns with qualitative thematic approaches commonly employed within interpretive, cultural, and cognitive psychological research (Fuadia et al., 2024).

Although NLP applications in psychological and therapeutic contexts have been widely discussed, limited scholarship has examined their conceptual resonance with Qur'anic epistemology. Similarly, while *tafsīr mawḍū'ī* has been extensively applied to theological and ethical themes, no previous study has systematically explored the correspondence between NLP's neuro, linguistic, and programming dimensions and thematic Qur'anic interpretation. This study addresses this gap by proposing explicit operational criteria for examining NLP related constructs within thematic Qur'anic exegesis. In this study, constructs such as reframing, linguistic conditioning, and cognitive representation are operationally understood as processes involving reinterpretation of experience, language mediated cognition, and learned behavioral patterning situated within spiritually grounded systems of meaning. Nevertheless, the correspondences identified in this study are interpreted as heuristic and conceptual parallels rather than definitive ontological equivalences between Qur'anic teachings and NLP theory.

Accordingly, this study does not claim that the Qur'an inherently contains NLP theory, nor that classical Islamic scholarship anticipated contemporary psychological terminology. Rather, the proposed correspondences are intended as interpretive and heuristic intersections designed to facilitate culturally meaningful dialogue between Qur'anic concepts and modern cognitive frameworks. Such an approach seeks to maintain epistemological humility while encouraging interdisciplinary engagement between religious and psychological knowledge systems.

To situate this integration within contemporary psychological scholarship, this study also draws upon culturally and religiously adapted CBT models. Existing scholarship demonstrates that cognitive interventions tend to become more ethically coherent, psychologically sustainable, and culturally effective when aligned with clients' spiritual and cultural worldviews (Costa & Moreira-Almeida, 2022; Naeem et al., 2019). These findings provide

an important precedent for examining NLP derived mechanisms within an Islamic moral and cognitive framework rather than assuming cultural neutrality. However, while Islamically integrated CBT primarily focuses on restructuring maladaptive cognitions through religiously congruent beliefs and coping strategies, NLQP extends this orientation by emphasizing Qur'anic linguistic framing, symbolic cognition, spiritually grounded language patterns, and reflective meaning structures as mechanisms influencing perception, emotional regulation, and behavioral transformation.

In addition to its conceptual foundation, the present study is supported by a preliminary perception survey involving Muslim university students exploring the perceived spiritual, psychological, and cultural relevance of Qur'anic based cognitive approaches. Preliminary descriptive findings demonstrated generally positive perceptions regarding the role of Qur'anic reflection, emotional regulation, cognitive reframing, and spiritually informed behavioral development within psychological and educational contexts. Although exploratory and non-clinical in nature, these findings provide initial empirical support for the perceived cultural plausibility and applicability of the proposed framework.

Accordingly, this study introduces Neuro Linguistic Qur'anic Programming (NLQP) as a secondary conceptual extension of NLP situated within Qur'anic ethical, spiritual, and epistemological principles. By integrating thematic Qur'anic exegesis with contemporary cognitive psychology and Islamic psychological scholarship, NLQP seeks to contribute a culturally grounded and theoretically reflective framework for understanding cognition, language, and behavior in Muslim contexts. Unlike conventional Islamically integrated CBT models that primarily emphasize cognitive restructuring, NLQP places stronger emphasis on Qur'anic linguistic framing, symbolic cognition, reflective spiritual language, and meaning centered behavioral transformation.

Finally, this study is positioned within integrative interdisciplinary frameworks such as the Multilevel Interdisciplinary Paradigm (MIP) and SALAAM, which facilitate structured dialogue between Islamic epistemology and empirical psychological inquiry (Kaplick et al., 2019; Rassool, 2023c). Contemporary scholarship further highlights the importance of conceptual precision and terminological alignment when relating classical Islamic psychological constructs to modern psychological nomenclature (Al-Karam, 2018; Elzamzamy et al., 2024). By critically integrating cognitive psychology, thematic Qur'anic exegesis, and contemporary Islamic psychological scholarship, this study seeks not only to explore conceptual intersections between language, cognition, spirituality, and behavior, but also to contribute toward the development of culturally grounded psychological frameworks that remain theoretically reflective, ethically informed, and epistemologically responsible within Muslim contexts.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Neuro-Linguistic Programming and Cognitive Restructuring

Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) conceptualizes human experience as an interaction between neurological processes, language patterns, and learned behavioral strategies that shape cognition, emotional responses, and behavioral orientation. Within psychological discourse, several NLP related mechanisms, including reframing, representational change, and self-monitoring, demonstrate conceptual proximity to cognitive processes examined in cognitive psychology, particularly those associated with cognitive restructuring. In the present study, cognitive restructuring is operationally understood as the process of identifying, evaluating, and modifying maladaptive cognitive appraisals that influence emotional regulation and behavior (Clark, 2014; Purdon, 2021). Likewise, reframing refers to the reinterpretation of experiences or internal representations in ways that alter emotional responses and behavioral orientation, while representational change refers to modifications in internal cognitive and linguistic processing associated with meaning making and self-perception.

Within cognitive psychology and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), cognitive restructuring is widely recognized as a central mechanism underlying emotional and behavioral change. Beyond functioning merely as a therapeutic technique, cognitive restructuring represents a broader cognitive capacity supporting adaptive thinking, self-regulation, and behavioral flexibility across the lifespan (Johnco et al., 2025). From this perspective, selected NLP related practices may be analytically interpreted as applied or informal variants of

cognitive restructuring processes, particularly when they target meaning making, habitual cognitive responses, internal representations, and language mediated perception.

In applied psychological settings, NLP has been utilized to support communication training, emotional regulation, motivation enhancement, and behavioral modification in psychotherapy, coaching, and organizational development contexts (Kotera et al., 2018; Rosa et al., 2023). Nevertheless, the conceptual relevance of NLP becomes clearer when its techniques are examined as mechanisms operating at the level of cognition and language rather than as an independent or unified intervention system. Such reframing allows selected NLP related practices to be situated within established cognitive psychological processes instead of being positioned as an alternative psychological paradigm.

From an Islamic psychological perspective, cognition and language are not regarded as value neutral mechanisms but as morally and spiritually situated dimensions of the human self-connected to *qalb* (heart), *nafs* (self), and intentionality (Rassool, 2023a). Contemporary Islamic psychology further emphasizes that psychological interventions within Muslim contexts should preserve ethical coherence, spiritual accountability, and culturally meaningful frameworks of self-understanding (Al-Karam, 2018). This perspective supports the reinterpretation of selected NLP related mechanisms within Qur'anic ethical and cognitive frameworks rather than adopting NLP as a complete therapeutic system.

In this context, the proposed Neuro-Linguistic Qur'anic Programming (NLQP) framework does not seek to validate NLP as a comprehensive scientific theory. Rather, it selectively examines cognitive and linguistic mechanisms associated with NLP through the lens of cognitive psychology and Qur'anic epistemology. Accordingly, NLP related constructs in this study are approached analytically and heuristically, with emphasis placed on their potential relevance for understanding language mediated cognition, reflective meaning making, and spiritually grounded behavioral transformation within Muslim contexts.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Culture-Adapted CBT

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) remains one of the most empirically supported approaches within contemporary psychology, emphasizing the reciprocal interaction between cognition, emotion, and behavior (Clark, 2014; Purdon, 2021). Central to CBT is the assumption that cognitive processes are shaped not only by individual perception but also by broader cultural meanings, moral frameworks, and systems of belief. Consequently, increasing scholarly attention has been directed toward culturally adapted CBT models that integrate clients' religious commitments, ethical orientations, and worldview assumptions into cognitive interventions.

Systematic reviews of religion adapted CBT demonstrate that incorporating religious beliefs and spiritual values may enhance therapeutic acceptability, client engagement, and treatment effectiveness, particularly among populations in which religion plays a central role in identity formation and psychological meaning making (Costa & Moreira-Almeida, 2022). Such adaptations do not fundamentally alter the cognitive mechanisms underlying CBT but contextualize cognitive restructuring and behavioral activation within culturally meaningful narratives and spiritually relevant interpretive frameworks.

Similarly, research on culturally adapted CBT indicates that aligning cognitive interventions with local cultural systems significantly improves therapeutic relevance and sustainability across diverse populations (Naeem et al., 2019). These findings are especially pertinent within non-Western societies, where psychological well-being, moral reasoning, and self-concept are frequently embedded within communal, ethical, and religious frameworks rather than predominantly individualistic assumptions.

Within Islamic psychology, cognitive and emotional transformation is closely associated with moral accountability, spiritual refinement, and self-regulation. Qur'anic concepts such as *nafs* (self-regulation), *qalb* (moral cognition), *fitrah* (innate disposition), and *tazkiyat al-nafs* (purification of the self) provide culturally grounded cognitive schemas through which individuals interpret experience, regulate behavior, and construct meaning (Al-Karam, 2018; Rassool, 2023a). Classical and contemporary Qur'anic exegetical traditions further describe cognition and emotional regulation as interconnected with spiritual reflection (*tadabbur*), ethical

communication, intentionality, and behavioral refinement, particularly within interpretive discussions developed by *al-Ṭabarī*, *Ibn Kathīr*, *al-Rāzī*, and *al-Qushayrī*.

From this perspective, integrating Qur'anic epistemology with cognitive restructuring principles may be understood as a form of culturally grounded cognitive intervention rather than a departure from psychological science. However, the proposed Neuro-Linguistic Qur'anic Programming (NLQP) framework differs from conventional Islamically integrated CBT models in several important respects. While Islamically integrated CBT primarily emphasizes restructuring maladaptive beliefs and behaviors through religiously congruent coping strategies, NLQP places greater emphasis on Qur'anic linguistic framing, symbolic cognition, reflective language patterns, and spiritually grounded meaning systems as mechanisms influencing perception, emotional regulation, and behavioral transformation.

Critical Perspectives on Neuro-Linguistic Programming

Despite its practical appeal and widespread popular application, NLP has been subject to sustained academic criticism concerning its theoretical coherence, methodological rigor, and empirical validation. Systematic reviews have raised concerns regarding the lack of consistent empirical evidence supporting NLP as a unified intervention model, as well as the tendency for some claims associated with NLP to exceed available scientific support (Passmore & Rowson, 2019). More recent psychiatric evaluations similarly emphasize the need for conceptual caution and methodological clarity when NLP techniques are incorporated into therapeutic or clinical settings (Kattimani & Abhijita, 2024).

These criticisms do not necessarily require the wholesale rejection of all NLP related practices. Rather, they highlight the importance of critical integration and conceptual decomposition. From a cognitive psychological perspective, certain NLP related mechanisms may become theoretically defensible when analytically aligned with established cognitive constructs such as attention regulation, cognitive appraisal, emotional regulation, language mediated cognition, and restructuring of maladaptive beliefs. When situated within ethically grounded and culturally meaningful frameworks, the risk of manipulative or mechanistic application may also be reduced.

Islamic psychology provides an additional ethical and epistemological corrective by conceptualizing cognition and language as morally accountable processes rather than neutral instruments of persuasion or behavioral control. Qur'anic teachings consistently emphasize truthful speech, reflective awareness, moral intentionality, self-regulation, and ethical communication as integral dimensions of psychological well-being (Rassool, 2023c; Rassool & Keskin, 2025). Contemporary Islamic psychological scholarship likewise stresses the importance of conceptual precision and terminological alignment when integrating modern psychological constructs with classical Islamic concepts (Al-Karam, 2018; Elzamzamy et al., 2024).

At the same time, the conceptual correspondences explored in this study should be understood as interpretive and heuristic rather than as definitive equivalences between Qur'anic teachings and NLP theory. The thematic mappings developed through *tafsīr mawḍūʿī* remain context dependent and may vary across exegetical traditions, theological assumptions, and psychological paradigms. Accordingly, this study does not claim that the Qur'an inherently contains NLP theory, nor that classical Islamic scholarship anticipated contemporary psychological terminology. Instead, the proposed correspondences are intended to facilitate interpretive dialogue between Qur'anic concepts and modern cognitive frameworks within culturally meaningful contexts.

Recognizing these interpretive limitations is essential for maintaining methodological transparency, epistemological humility, and conceptual balance while avoiding reductionist readings of Qur'anic concepts into purely psychological terminology. Such caution is particularly important in interdisciplinary studies involving religion and psychology, where conceptual overlap does not necessarily imply theoretical equivalence.

Taken together, these theoretical perspectives support a critical yet integrative approach to NLP by situating selected NLP related mechanisms within cognitive psychology, culture adapted CBT, and Qur'anic epistemology. This interdisciplinary foundation provides the conceptual basis for the proposed Neuro-Linguistic Qur'anic Programming (NLQP) framework developed in the subsequent sections of this study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Research Design

This study employs a qualitative interdisciplinary research design to examine the conceptual correspondence between selected Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) principles and Qur'anic teachings. The research integrates cognitive psychology, applied linguistics, and Islamic studies through thematic Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsīr mawḍū'ī*) as the primary analytical framework. A qualitative design is considered appropriate because the study seeks to explore meaning-making processes, cognitive constructs, linguistic patterns, and ethical-spiritual dimensions embedded within sacred texts rather than to test causal relationships or measure clinical outcomes.

The study is theoretically situated within cognitive psychology, particularly in relation to cognitive restructuring, language mediated cognition, emotional regulation, reflective awareness, and behavioral regulation. Qur'anic verses are approached as textual data containing cognitively and linguistically meaningful structures that may be systematically analyzed in relation to psychological constructs. This approach allows for an interpretive yet analytically grounded examination of cognition, language, and behavior within a culturally and religiously embedded framework.

In addition to the conceptual analysis, the study incorporates a preliminary exploratory perception survey involving Muslim university students to examine the perceived relevance and applicability of Qur'anic based cognitive approaches within psychological and educational contexts. The survey component was not intended to establish therapeutic efficacy or clinical effectiveness. Rather, it was designed to provide initial empirical insight into the cultural plausibility, psychological relevance, and perceived applicability of the proposed Neuro-Linguistic Qur'anic Programming (NLQP) framework.

The study is further positioned within integrative paradigms such as the Multilevel Interdisciplinary Paradigm (MIP) and SALAAM, which facilitate structured dialogue between Islamic epistemology and contemporary psychological inquiry (Kaplick et al., 2019; Rassool, 2023b). These frameworks are particularly relevant for interdisciplinary studies seeking conceptual alignment between classical Islamic concepts and modern psychological terminology while maintaining methodological transparency, epistemological humility, and interpretive integrity.

Analytical Framework: Thematic Qur'anic Exegesis

The primary analytical framework employed in this study is thematic Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsīr mawḍū'ī*). Unlike traditional verse by verse exegesis, thematic exegesis organizes Qur'anic verses according to conceptual categories and recurring themes rather than sequential textual order. This method enables a comprehensive and integrative exploration of themes associated with cognition, language use, emotional regulation, moral intentionality, and behavioral guidance across the Qur'anic corpus (Fuadia et al., 2024).

Methodologically, *tafsīr mawḍū'ī* aligns with qualitative thematic analysis commonly employed in interpretive, cultural, and cognitive psychology, where texts are systematically analyzed to identify patterns, symbolic structures, conceptual relationships, and interpretive meanings. This method is particularly suitable for interdisciplinary inquiry seeking to bridge classical textual traditions with contemporary psychological theory while preserving theological coherence and interpretive rigor.

To strengthen interpretive inclusivity and theological balance, the analysis incorporates perspectives from both classical and contemporary exegetical traditions, including *al-Ṭabarī*, *Ibn Kathīr*, *al-Rāzī*, and *al-Qushayrī*. These exegetical perspectives were consulted to contextualize themes related to self-awareness, cognition, emotional regulation, moral intentionality, spiritual reflection, and behavioral transformation within broader Islamic intellectual traditions.

At the same time, the thematic correspondences identified in this study are interpreted as heuristic and conceptual parallels rather than definitive equivalences between Qur'anic teachings and NLP theory. This methodological

position was intentionally adopted to avoid reductionist interpretation and to maintain analytical caution when relating modern psychological constructs to sacred textual sources.

Verse Corpus Selection and Screening Criteria

The Qur'anic verse corpus was constructed through a multi-stage selection process guided by explicit inclusion and exclusion criteria. Relevant verses were initially identified using thematic concordances, Qur'anic indices, and classical *tafsīr* sources. Inclusion criteria required that verses demonstrate direct or indirect relevance to cognitive processes, linguistic mechanisms, emotional regulation, or behavioral regulation, including themes such as self-reflection, moral decision-making, linguistic persuasion, habit formation, self-awareness, attentional focus, and self-regulation.

Verses were excluded when their content lacked discernible psychological relevance or when cognitive and behavioral implications were considered excessively abstract, contextually ambiguous, or insufficiently supported by exegetical interpretation. This selective procedure was intended to preserve methodological focus while minimizing interpretive overextension beyond plausible conceptual boundaries.

Operationally, cognitive constructs within this study refer to processes associated with appraisal, reflection, attention, self-awareness, meaning making, and reinterpretation of experience. Linguistic constructs refer to symbolic communication, exhortation, metaphorical expression, persuasive language, and language mediated framing associated with cognitive and behavioral influence. Behavioral constructs refer to self-regulation, repetition, moral action, habit formation, and behavioral reinforcement associated with ethical and spiritual development.

Coding Procedure and Interdisciplinary Reliability

Coding was conducted using a combination of inductive and deductive qualitative content analysis. Inductive coding allowed thematic patterns to emerge from the Qur'anic text itself, while deductive coding guided the classification of verses according to predefined psychological domains derived from cognitive psychology and NLP related constructs. Coding categories included cognitive dimensions such as self-awareness, appraisal, reflection, and attentional focus; linguistic dimensions such as metaphor, exhortation, symbolic framing, and persuasive language; and behavioral dimensions such as habit formation, emotional regulation, self-control, and moral action.

To enhance analytical rigor and interdisciplinary consistency, the coding process involved two independent coders with academic backgrounds in psychology and Islamic studies. Inter-coder reliability was assessed using Cohen's kappa coefficient, with a threshold of 0.80 or higher considered acceptable for analytical reliability. Coding discrepancies were resolved through dialogical review and conceptual discussion in order to strengthen interpretive coherence and interdisciplinary alignment.

The use of interdisciplinary coding was intended to reduce interpretive subjectivity and ensure that psychological interpretations remained connected to established Islamic exegetical understandings. Nevertheless, the study acknowledges that interpretive variation cannot be fully eliminated, particularly in interdisciplinary analyses involving theological interpretation and contemporary psychological terminology.

Thematic Mapping to NLP Constructs

Following the coding stage, a deductive thematic mapping procedure was employed to align identified Qur'anic themes with selected NLP related constructs. NLP concepts were treated analytically rather than prescriptively and were interpreted through their cognitive and linguistic functions instead of as procedural intervention techniques. Mapping focused on domains such as reframing, cognitive appraisal, representational systems, attentional focus, emotional regulation, and behavioral conditioning.

For the purposes of this study, reframing refers to reinterpretive cognitive processes that alter emotional or behavioral responses through shifts in meaning construction. Representational systems refer to internal modes of cognitive and linguistic processing associated with perception, symbolic understanding, and meaning

formation. Behavioral conditioning refers to repetitive cognitive and behavioral reinforcement associated with habit formation, emotional regulation, and self-control.

For example, verses emphasizing internal self-change, moral reflection, and reinterpretation of hardship were mapped to reframing and cognitive restructuring processes. Linguistic exhortation, symbolic narratives, and metaphoric expressions were mapped to language mediated cognitive influence, while repeated moral injunctions and ritualized practices were associated with behavioral reinforcement and habit formation. Themes associated with *qalb*, *nafs*, *tadabbur*, and *tazkiyat al-nafs* were interpreted within broader domains of self-awareness, emotional regulation, moral cognition, reflective consciousness, and spiritually grounded behavioral transformation.

This mapping strategy was intended to preserve conceptual alignment with cognitive psychology while maintaining fidelity to Qur'anic meanings and classical exegetical interpretations. Accordingly, thematic mapping in this study should be understood as interpretive and exploratory rather than as evidence of direct theoretical equivalence between NLP and Qur'anic teachings.

Triangulation with Classical Tafsīr

To preserve theological integrity and minimize anachronistic interpretation, all thematic mappings were triangulated with classical Qur'anic exegesis. *Tafsīr* sources were consulted to contextualize verses within their linguistic, historical, and theological dimensions, including consideration of *asbāb al-nuzūl* and intertextual relationships across the Qur'anic corpus.

Classical exegetical perspectives from *al-Ṭabarī*, *Ibn Kathīr*, *al-Rāzī*, and *al-Qushayrī* were employed to provide interpretive depth concerning cognition, emotional states, moral intentionality, spiritual reflection, and behavioral transformation. *Al-Ṭabarī* and *Ibn Kathīr* were particularly consulted to preserve linguistic and contextual meanings, while *al-Rāzī* and *al-Qushayrī* contributed reflective and spiritual dimensions relevant to cognition, consciousness, and ethical self-development.

This triangulation process ensured that psychological interpretations remained grounded in established exegetical traditions while permitting contemporary cognitive analysis. The inclusion of multiple *tafsīr* traditions additionally enhanced interpretive inclusivity by acknowledging the diversity of classical Islamic intellectual perspectives rather than relying upon a single exegetical framework.

Preliminary Perception Survey

To complement the conceptual analysis, the study incorporated a preliminary exploratory perception survey examining Muslim university students' perceptions toward the proposed NLQP framework. The survey aimed to assess perceived relevance related to spiritual integration, emotional regulation, cognitive reflection, educational applicability, and culturally grounded psychological interventions.

Data were collected using a structured Likert scale questionnaire consisting of 20 items distributed across four dimensions: (1) spiritual relevance, (2) cognitive-emotional benefits, (3) cultural-educational relevance, and (4) practical applicability. Responses were measured using a five-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

The survey employed convenience sampling involving Muslim university students within an educational setting. Descriptive statistical analysis was conducted to identify general perceptual tendencies, including mean scores and response distributions across thematic dimensions. Preliminary findings indicated generally positive perceptions toward the integration of Qur'anic reflection, emotional regulation, cognitive reframing, and spiritually grounded psychological approaches within educational and psychological contexts.

Because the survey was exploratory and non-clinical in nature, the findings are interpreted as preliminary empirical observations reflecting cultural perceptions and perceived relevance rather than evidence of therapeutic efficacy or psychological effectiveness.

Ethical Considerations

Given the sacred status of the Qur'anic text, ethical considerations were central throughout the research process. The study adhered to principles of interpretive responsibility by avoiding speculative projection of contemporary psychological constructs onto the Qur'an without sufficient textual and exegetical justification. NLP related constructs were therefore used as analytical lenses rather than imposed explanatory systems, and all interpretations were constrained by theological coherence, interpretive caution, and scholarly precedent.

The study additionally recognizes the methodological limitations inherent in interdisciplinary interpretation. Thematic mappings between Qur'anic concepts and psychological constructs inevitably involve interpretive subjectivity and should therefore be understood as conceptual approximations rather than definitive doctrinal claims. Accordingly, this study does not claim that Qur'anic teachings directly contain NLP theory, but instead explores possible conceptual intersections between language, cognition, spirituality, and behavior within culturally meaningful interpretive frameworks.

Furthermore, the exploratory survey component was limited to perceptual responses and did not evaluate behavioral outcomes, psychological effectiveness, or clinical implementation associated with NLQP based interventions. These limitations should be considered when interpreting the scope and applicability of the study's findings.

Validity and Methodological Trustworthiness

The validity and trustworthiness of the study were strengthened through methodological triangulation involving thematic Qur'anic exegesis, qualitative content analysis, cognitive psychological theory, classical *tafsīr* literature, and preliminary survey findings. The combination of inductive and deductive analytical approaches enhanced interpretive depth while reducing dependence upon a single theoretical perspective.

Inter-coder reliability procedures further strengthened methodological rigor by ensuring that thematic interpretations were not solely dependent upon individual disciplinary assumptions. The inclusion of multiple exegetical traditions, explicit operational definitions, and preliminary empirical observations additionally contributed to conceptual transparency and interdisciplinary consistency.

Nevertheless, the present study remains primarily conceptual and exploratory in orientation. Future research employing experimental designs, longitudinal approaches, psychometric validation, or clinical implementation is necessary to evaluate the psychological effectiveness, practical applicability, and empirical validity of the proposed Neuro-Linguistic Qur'anic Programming (NLQP) framework within counseling, educational, and mental health settings.

RESULTS

This section presents the principal findings derived from thematic Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsīr mawḍū'ī*), interdisciplinary qualitative coding, deductive thematic mapping, and a preliminary perception survey involving Muslim university students. The findings describe patterns of conceptual correspondence between Qur'anic themes and selected cognitive, linguistic, and behavioral constructs associated with Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) and cognitive psychology. Interpretive evaluation and theoretical implications of these findings are further discussed in the subsequent Discussion section.

The results are organized into four thematic domains: (1) cognition and self-awareness, (2) linguistic strategies and persuasion, (3) behavioral regulation and habit formation, and (4) preliminary perception survey findings.

Cognition and Self-Awareness

Thematic analysis of the selected verse corpus identified recurring emphasis on internal cognitive transformation, reflective awareness, moral accountability, evaluative self-consciousness, and emotional

regulation. Several Qur’anic verses explicitly associate external behavioral change with prior transformation of internal psychological states. These themes were mapped to NLP related constructs associated with reframing, cognitive appraisal, reflective awareness, self-monitoring, representational change, and emotional regulation.

The analysis further revealed that Qur’anic discourse frequently employs metaphorical, symbolic, and analogical language to shape mental representation and evaluative interpretation. Symbolic imagery, exhortative reasoning, and reflective communication were consistently associated with cognitive restructuring, meaning construction, and emotionally grounded self-awareness. Triangulation with Islamic psychological perspectives additionally linked these themes with *qalb*, *nafs*, moral intentionality, *tadabbur*, and spiritually grounded reflective cognition.

Qur’anic Verse	NLP Related Construct	Thematic Mapping	Practical Implications
QS Ar-Ra’d 13:11	Internal change; reflective awareness	Reframing; cognitive appraisal	Restructuring internal cognitive frameworks and enhancing emotional self-awareness
QS Al-Hashr 59:18	Self-awareness; <i>qalb</i> and cognition	Cognitive appraisal; emotional regulation	Promoting reflective evaluation, moral accountability, and emotional regulation
QS Ibrahim 14:24–25	Mental representation; symbolic cognition	Reframing	Shifting cognitive perspectives through symbolic reflection
QS An-Nahl 16:125	Meaning construction; exhortation and wisdom	Cognitive restructuring; rapport-oriented communication	Encouraging reflective reinterpretation, constructive dialogue, and evaluative reasoning

Table 1. Qur’anic Themes Related to Cognition, Self-Awareness, and Emotional Regulation

The identification of cognitive appraisal, reframing, and emotional regulation processes is consistent with findings linking self-referential cognition, emotional language patterns, and affective regulation with identity construction and psychological well-being (Behdarvandirad & Karami, 2022). These findings also align with Islamic psychological perspectives conceptualizing *qalb* as central to cognition, emotion, moral reasoning, and self-regulation (Rassool, 2023a; Rassool & Keskin, 2025).

Linguistic Strategies and Persuasion

The analysis identified systematic use of rhetorical devices such as metaphor, exhortation, symbolic imagery, contrast, and persuasive dialogue throughout the selected verse corpus. These linguistic structures were mapped to language patterns associated with persuasive communication, symbolic cognition, communicative alignment, and cognitive influence.

Thematic analysis further demonstrated that Qur’anic communication patterns consistently emphasize ethical persuasion, emotional sensitivity, respectful interaction, reflective engagement, and constructive dialogue rather than coercive communication. Familiar imagery, culturally recognizable analogies, and accessible symbolic language additionally function pedagogically by facilitating comprehension, emotional resonance, and interpretive accessibility across diverse audiences.

Qur’anic Verse	NLP Related Construct	Thematic Mapping	Practical Implications
QS Ibrahim 14:24–25	Metaphorical language; symbolic imagery	Language patterns; linguistic alignment	Modifying cognitive interpretation and enhancing communicative accessibility
QS An-Nahl 16:125	Rhetorical exhortation; persuasive communication	Rapport-oriented communication	Facilitating reflective engagement and constructive dialogue

Table 2. Qur’anic Linguistic Strategies and NLP Related Communication Functions

These findings correspond with applied linguistic perspectives examining persuasion as a cognitively mediated process operating through discourse patterns, symbolic framing, and communicative meaning systems (Keshavarzi et al., 2025; Pun, 2019). Triangulation with classical *tafsir* traditions further indicated that symbolic

language within the Qur’anic discourse serves ethical, pedagogical, reflective, and spiritually meaningful communicative functions.

Behavioral Regulation and Habit Formation

Thematic analysis identified strong emphasis on behavioral repetition, self-regulation, consistency, disciplined moral conduct, and resistance toward destructive behavioral tendencies. Repeated ethical and ritualized practices within the Qur’anic framework were conceptually associated with reinforcement mechanisms contributing to sustained self-regulation, moral consistency, and behavioral development.

The findings additionally demonstrated that behavioral repetition within the Qur’anic context is strongly associated with ethical intentionality, spiritual refinement, and long-term character formation rather than mechanistic conditioning alone. Verses related to purification of the self and moral struggle were mapped to processes associated with behavioral reinforcement, cognitive restructuring, and maladaptive pattern disruption.

Qur’anic Verse	NLP Related Construct	Thematic Mapping	Practical Implications
QS Al-Mu’minūn 23:1–11	Habit formation; moral transformation	Behavioral conditioning; reinforcement	Reinforcing moral consistency, self-discipline, and virtuous behavioral development
QS Ash-Shams 91:7–10	Pattern disruption	Cognitive restructuring	Reducing maladaptive cognitive and behavioral tendencies

Table 3. Behavioral Regulation and Habit Formation in Qur’anic Themes

These findings align with Islamic psychological frameworks linking moral cognition, *tazkiyat al-nafs*, self-regulation, and behavioral refinement with long-term psychological and spiritual development (Rassool, 2023a; Rassool & Keskin, 2025).

Preliminary Perception Survey Findings

To complement the conceptual analysis, a preliminary exploratory perception survey was conducted involving Muslim university students examining perceptions toward Qur’anic based cognitive approaches and the proposed NLQP framework.

Descriptive analysis indicated generally positive perceptions across four principal dimensions: (1) spiritual relevance, (2) cognitive-emotional benefit, (3) cultural-educational relevance, and (4) practical applicability. Respondents predominantly agreed that Qur’anic reflection, moral guidance, and spiritually grounded cognitive approaches were relevant to emotional regulation, self-awareness, behavioral improvement, and psychological well-being.

The strongest response tendencies were identified within items related to spiritual relevance and emotional regulation, suggesting that respondents perceived integration between Qur’anic values and psychological development as both culturally meaningful and personally relevant. Positive perceptions were additionally observed regarding the applicability of Qur’anic based cognitive approaches within counseling, education, and mental health contexts.

Although exploratory and non-clinical in nature, these findings provide preliminary empirical support for the perceived plausibility, acceptability, and cultural relevance of integrating Qur’anic cognitive frameworks with psychologically oriented approaches among Muslim university students. Nevertheless, the findings should be interpreted cautiously because the survey measured perceptual responses rather than therapeutic outcomes or clinical effectiveness.

Descriptive statistical analysis further supported these positive response tendencies across all survey dimensions. The dimension of cognitive-emotional relevance obtained the highest mean score ($M = 4.41$, $SD = 0.96$), followed by spiritual relevance ($M = 4.31$, $SD = 1.02$), cultural-educational relevance ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.97$),

and practical applicability ($M = 4.05$, $SD = 1.01$). Overall, the majority of respondents selected “agree” or “strongly agree” across most survey items, with agreement percentages ranging from 74.4% to 90.0%, indicating favorable perceptions toward integrating Qur’anic reflection, emotional regulation, self-awareness, and spiritually grounded cognitive approaches within psychological and educational contexts.

Survey Dimension	Mean	SD	Agreement (%)
Spiritual relevance	4.31	1.02	87.6%
Cognitive-emotional relevance	4.41	0.96	90.0%
Cultural-educational relevance	4.20	0.97	82.8%
Practical applicability	4.05	1.01	74.4%

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Preliminary Perception Survey

Summary of Results

Theme	Number of Verses / Items	Identified Constructs	Identified Functions
Cognition and self-awareness	6 verses	Reframing, cognitive appraisal, emotional regulation	Reflective cognition and emotional self-regulation
Language and persuasion	6 verses	Language patterns, persuasion, linguistic alignment	Cognitive influence through discourse and symbolic communication
Behavioral regulation	7 verses	Behavioral conditioning, habit formation, reinforcement	Sustained moral regulation and behavioral consistency
Preliminary perception survey	20 survey items	Spiritual relevance, cognitive-emotional relevance, practical applicability	Perceived cultural and psychological acceptability

Table 5. Summary of Identified Themes and Psychological Functions

Overall, the findings demonstrate systematic conceptual correspondences between selected Qur’anic themes and cognitive, linguistic, and behavioral constructs associated with NLP and cognitive psychology. The results further indicate preliminary positive perceptions toward culturally grounded Qur’anic cognitive approaches among Muslim university students. Together, these findings provide the conceptual and preliminary empirical foundation for the interpretive and theoretical analysis developed in the subsequent Discussion section.

DISCUSSION

This study examines the conceptual intersection between Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) and Qur’anic teachings by focusing on cognition, language, emotional regulation, and behavior as interrelated psychological domains. The findings reveal both convergences and important distinctions between selected NLP related mechanisms and Qur’anic epistemology. While several NLP related constructs demonstrate conceptual correspondence with established cognitive and behavioral processes, their integration within Islamic contexts requires ethical, theological, and epistemological recalibration. This section interprets the findings within the broader literature of cognitive psychology, Islamic psychology, culture adapted therapeutic approaches, and classical Qur’anic exegesis while articulating the theoretical contribution of Neuro-Linguistic Qur’anic Programming (NLQP).

Cognitive and Behavioral Frameworks: Parallels between NLP and Qur’anic Teachings

Cognitive and Behavioral Emphases in Relation to CBT-Derived Approaches

Both NLP related cognitive mechanisms and Qur’anic teachings emphasize internal cognitive change as a prerequisite for behavioral transformation. NLP related approaches associated with reframing, representational change, and cognitive appraisal operate on the assumption that modifications in internal interpretation influence emotional and behavioral outcomes. This orientation parallels Qur’anic emphasis on self-reflection, moral

accountability, evaluative awareness, and internal transformation, particularly as reflected in QS Ar-Ra'd 13:11 and QS Al-Hashr 59:18.

Within cognitive psychology, these processes correspond closely with cognitive restructuring, which functions as a central mechanism within Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) (Clark, 2014; Purdon, 2021). The present findings therefore support the interpretation that selected NLP related mechanisms may be more appropriately understood as cognitive and linguistic techniques operating within broader cognitive psychological processes rather than as autonomous psychological theories.

The findings additionally align with scholarship on religion adapted CBT demonstrating that cognitive interventions become more meaningful, acceptable, and psychologically sustainable when aligned with clients' spiritual commitments, ethical frameworks, and cultural worldviews (Costa & Moreira-Almeida, 2022; Naeem et al., 2019). In this regard, the Qur'anic themes identified in the present study function not merely as theological concepts but also as culturally embedded cognitive schemas associated with self-awareness, emotional regulation, moral intentionality, and behavioral development.

From an Islamic psychological perspective, concepts such as *qalb*, *nafs*, *fitrah*, *tadabbur*, and *tazkiyat al-nafs* provide integrated cognitive-moral frameworks through which individuals interpret experience, regulate emotion, construct meaning, and develop self-awareness (Al-Karam, 2018; Rassool, 2023a). Classical exegetical traditions similarly conceptualize reflective cognition and moral awareness as interconnected processes involving ethical intentionality and spiritual accountability. Consequently, the findings support the possibility of culturally grounded cognitive approaches capable of preserving both psychological relevance and theological coherence within Muslim contexts.

Linguistic Frameworks: Ethical Framing versus Instrumental Language Use

One of the most significant distinctions between conventional NLP and Qur'anic epistemology concerns the ethical orientation of language. NLP commonly conceptualizes language as an instrumental mechanism capable of influencing cognition, emotion, and behavior through persuasive communication, reframing, and representational modification (Rothman & Coyle, 2020). In contrast, Qur'anic discourse conceptualizes language as an ethically accountable process grounded in truthfulness, wisdom, sincerity, compassion, and moral responsibility, as reflected in QS Ibrahim 14:24–25 and QS An-Nahl 16:125.

The findings demonstrate that Qur'anic linguistic strategies frequently employ metaphor, exhortation, symbolic imagery, and dialogical persuasion not merely to alter cognition but to cultivate reflective awareness, moral consciousness, emotional balance, and ethical transformation (Rothman & Coyle, 2023). This distinction is theoretically significant because it shifts the purpose of language mediated influence from instrumental behavioral modification toward spiritually grounded moral development.

Contemporary Islamic psychology similarly emphasizes that communication and cognition cannot be separated from ethical intentionality and spiritual accountability (Rassool, 2023c; Rassool & Keskin, 2025). From this perspective, NLP related language patterns may become acceptable within Islamic psychological contexts only when constrained by ethical principles prioritizing truthfulness, compassion, reflective guidance, and psychological well-being.

The findings therefore suggest that Qur'anic epistemology provides an important ethical corrective to mechanistic or manipulative interpretations of language influence. Rather than rejecting cognitive-linguistic techniques altogether, the present study supports their ethical reframing within culturally and spiritually grounded frameworks.

Human Agency and Divine Reliance: A Theological Corrective

Another important distinction concerns the concept of human agency. Conventional NLP frequently emphasizes self-mastery, personal control, and individual regulation of internal states and behavior. In contrast, Qur'anic anthropology situates human agency within a relational framework balancing personal responsibility with reliance upon divine guidance and divine will.

Thematic analysis identified repeated emphasis on moral accountability, intentional action, reflective awareness, and self-regulation while simultaneously recognizing human limitation, humility, and spiritual dependence. Concepts such as *tawakkul*, patience, gratitude, and spiritual reflection function as moderating principles that prevent excessively individualistic or mechanistic understandings of psychological transformation.

Within Islamic psychology, psychological well-being is therefore not interpreted solely as mastery over cognition and behavior but as balanced self-regulation integrated with ethical consciousness, spiritual orientation, and relational accountability (Rassool, 2023a). This orientation differs from highly individualistic models of psychological change by embedding cognition and behavior within broader moral and spiritual frameworks.

The findings consequently suggest that NLP related mechanisms require theological recalibration when adapted into Islamic contexts. Cognitive and behavioral transformation cannot be framed solely as techniques of self-optimization but must remain connected to humility, ethical intentionality, and spiritual accountability.

Enhancing NLP through Qur'anic Principles

Meaning, Acceptance, and Moral Framing

Integrating Qur'anic principles into cognitive and behavioral approaches may enhance the cultural relevance, ethical coherence, and psychological acceptability of interventions within Muslim populations. Research on religion adapted CBT consistently demonstrates that spiritually integrated interventions improve therapeutic engagement, emotional regulation, and psychological acceptability among religious communities (Costa & Moreira-Almeida, 2022; Fekih-Romdhane & Cheour, 2021). Practices such as *dhikr*, prayer, patience, and gratitude have been shown to improve adherence and emotional regulation when incorporated into therapeutic settings (Latif et al., 2024).

The preliminary perception survey conducted in this study further supports this possibility. Muslim university students generally expressed positive perceptions toward integrating Qur'anic reflection, emotional regulation, cognitive self-awareness, and spiritually grounded psychological approaches within educational and counseling contexts. The strongest response tendencies emerged within dimensions associated with spiritual relevance and emotional regulation, suggesting that respondents perceived Qur'anic based cognitive approaches as personally meaningful and culturally appropriate.

These findings support broader Islamic psychological literature emphasizing that cognitive and emotional interventions become more sustainable when integrated with spiritually meaningful frameworks of self-understanding and moral development. Within this context, Qur'anic integration does not fundamentally alter cognitive mechanisms themselves but rather provides ethical orientation, motivational meaning, and culturally grounded interpretive structures supporting emotional regulation and behavioral consistency.

Ethical Critiques of Neutral and Mechanistic Approaches

Despite its practical appeal, NLP has frequently been criticized for insufficient empirical grounding, conceptual ambiguity, and the tendency to frame cognition and language as value neutral instruments. The present study does not attempt to validate NLP as a unified therapeutic system. Rather, it selectively examines conceptual correspondences between certain NLP related mechanisms and cognitive-linguistic themes identified within the Qur'anic corpus.

Accordingly, the study adopts a critical integration approach rather than unconditional acceptance of NLP theory. Selected NLP related constructs are analytically retained only insofar as they correspond with established cognitive psychological mechanisms such as cognitive appraisal, reframing, attentional regulation, emotional regulation, and meaning construction.

Islamic psychology introduces an additional ethical corrective by emphasizing sincerity, moral intentionality, self-regulation, accountability, and spiritual consciousness as central dimensions of psychological well-being (Rassool & Keskin, 2025). Consequently, behavioral influence cannot be ethically justified solely on the basis

of effectiveness or persuasive capacity. Cognitive and linguistic interventions must remain directed toward authentic moral development, emotional balance, reflective awareness, and spiritual well-being rather than manipulative behavioral compliance.

The findings therefore reinforce the importance of ethically grounded cognitive frameworks capable of integrating psychological mechanisms with culturally meaningful systems of value and moral responsibility.

Comparison with Islamically Integrated CBT Models

The present study shares important similarities with Islamically integrated CBT approaches, particularly in its emphasis on cognitive restructuring, self-regulation, reflective awareness, and spiritually grounded behavioral change. Both frameworks recognize the importance of aligning psychological interventions with clients' religious beliefs, ethical commitments, and cultural worldviews.

Nevertheless, several important distinctions also emerge. Conventional Islamically integrated CBT models primarily focus on modifying maladaptive cognitions through structured therapeutic techniques derived from mainstream CBT. In contrast, the proposed NLQP framework places stronger emphasis on Qur'anic linguistic framing, symbolic cognition, reflective discourse, metaphorical meaning systems, and language mediated interpretation as mechanisms influencing cognition and behavior.

Furthermore, NLQP conceptualizes Qur'anic language not merely as supportive spiritual content but as an active cognitive-linguistic framework influencing perception, emotional interpretation, self-awareness, moral orientation, and reflective consciousness. This distinction expands the analytical focus beyond cognitive restructuring alone toward broader processes of spiritually grounded meaning making and ethical communication.

The comparison therefore suggests that NLQP should not be understood as a replacement for Islamically integrated CBT but rather as a complementary interdisciplinary framework situated at the intersection of cognitive psychology, language studies, and Qur'anic epistemology.

To clarify the conceptual positioning of NLQP relative to conventional NLP and Islamically integrated CBT, *Table 2* summarizes the principal distinctions and areas of overlap among the three approaches.

Dimension	Conventional NLP	Islamically Integrated CBT	NLQP
Primary orientation	Cognitive-behavioral influence	Therapeutic cognitive restructuring	Ethical-spiritual cognitive integration
Cognitive focus	Reframing and representational change	Cognitive restructuring	Reflective Qur'anic cognition
Language function	Persuasive communication	Therapeutic dialogue	Ethical and spiritually grounded communication
Behavioral objective	Behavioral effectiveness	Symptom reduction and adaptive behavior	Moral and spiritual behavioral development
Ethical framework	Relatively technique-oriented	Religiously adapted therapeutic ethics	Qur'anically grounded ethical accountability
Concept of agency	Strong individual self-regulation	Balanced cognitive self-regulation	Human agency integrated with divine reliance
Spiritual dimension	Limited or optional	Integrated into therapy	Foundational epistemological component
Primary application	Coaching, communication, self-development	Clinical psychotherapy	Counseling, education, and culturally grounded psychological reflection

Table 6. Comparison between Conventional NLP, Islamically Integrated CBT, and NLQP.

Theoretical Contribution: Neuro-Linguistic Qur'anic Programming (NLQP)

This study introduces Neuro-Linguistic Qur’anic Programming (NLQP) as a secondary conceptual extension of selected NLP related cognitive and linguistic mechanisms situated within a Qur’anic ethical and epistemological framework. NLQP does not propose a new clinical therapy model, nor does it attempt to Islamize NLP as a complete psychological system. Rather, it functions as a culturally grounded conceptual framework for understanding cognition, language, emotional regulation, and behavior within Muslim contexts.

Three principal Qur’anic recalibrations of conventional NLP emerged from the findings. First, language is ethically grounded and truth oriented rather than merely instrumental or persuasive. Second, behavioral regulation operates within a balance between human agency and divine reliance rather than emphasizing absolute self-mastery. Third, habit formation and cognitive restructuring are directed toward moral and spiritual refinement rather than toward behavioral optimization or functional efficiency alone.

Operationally, NLQP conceptualizes: (1) reframing as ethically guided reinterpretation of experience, (2) cognitive appraisal as reflective moral self-awareness, (3) language patterns as spiritually accountable communication, and (4) behavioral reinforcement as processes connected to self-regulation, ethical intentionality, and moral development.

This positioning aligns with contemporary Islamic psychological scholarship emphasizing conceptual clarity, terminological precision, and epistemological integration between Islamic intellectual traditions and modern psychological theory (Al-Karam, 2018; Elzamzamy et al., 2024).

At the same time, the study acknowledges that these conceptual correspondences remain interpretive and heuristic rather than definitive ontological equivalences between Qur’anic teachings and NLP theory. Interpretations may vary across *tafsīr* traditions, cultural contexts, and psychological paradigms. Consequently, NLQP should be understood as an exploratory interdisciplinary framework requiring further empirical investigation, methodological refinement, and theoretical development.

The conceptual schema below illustrates the integrative structure of NLQP as a framework bringing together Qur’anic ethical foundations with selected NLP related cognitive, linguistic, and behavioral mechanisms for culturally and spiritually grounded psychological application.

Conceptual Schema of NLQP

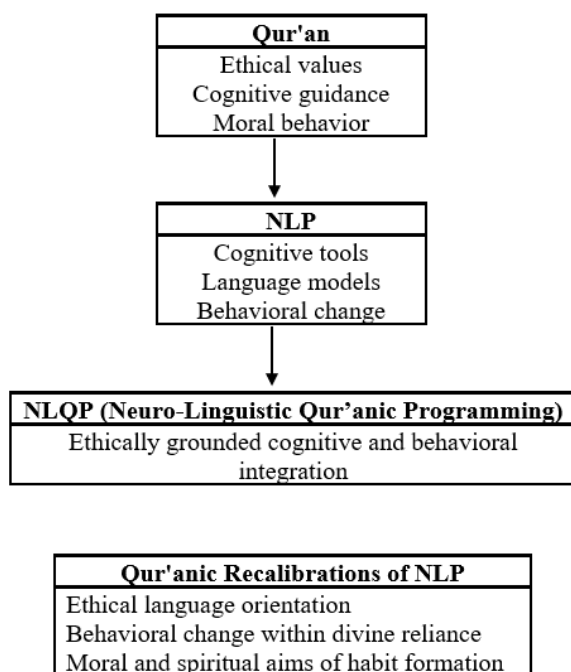


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of Neuro-Linguistic Qur’anic Programming NLQP.

Practical Implications

The findings of this study carry several practical implications for counseling, education, and culturally grounded mental health interventions within Muslim contexts.

Within counseling and psychotherapy, the findings suggest that Qur'anic reflection, ethical communication, self-awareness practices, and spiritually grounded cognitive reframing may support culturally meaningful approaches to emotional regulation and behavioral self-management. Such approaches may be particularly relevant within contexts where religious belief strongly shapes meaning making, coping strategies, and psychological interpretation.

Within educational settings, NLQP related concepts may contribute to character education, reflective learning, moral development, emotionally supportive pedagogy, and spiritually informed communication practices emphasizing self-regulation and ethical awareness.

The findings may additionally contribute to broader discussions within Islamic psychology regarding the integration of spiritual epistemologies with cognitive and behavioral sciences while maintaining both methodological rigor and cultural sensitivity.

Nevertheless, the present study does not claim therapeutic efficacy for NLQP based interventions. Accordingly, practical applications should remain exploratory, ethically supervised, and theoretically cautious until further empirical validation becomes available.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study remains primarily conceptual and interpretive in orientation. Although supported by a preliminary perception survey, the findings do not establish clinical effectiveness, causal psychological outcomes, or therapeutic efficacy associated with NLQP based interventions.

Second, thematic Qur'anic exegesis inherently involves interpretive subjectivity. Despite triangulation with classical *tafsīr* traditions and interdisciplinary coding procedures, alternative interpretations remain possible across theological, linguistic, and psychological perspectives.

Third, the exploratory survey component relied upon convenience sampling among Muslim university students and therefore cannot be generalized beyond similar educational contexts. The survey measured perceptual responses and cultural acceptability rather than long-term behavioral outcomes or clinical effectiveness.

Future research should therefore examine NLQP through experimental, longitudinal, clinical, and cross-cultural designs. Additional studies may investigate the role of Qur'anic linguistic framing in emotional regulation, the effectiveness of spiritually integrated cognitive interventions, and the applicability of NLQP related concepts across counseling, educational, and mental health settings.

Further engagement with diverse *tafsīr* traditions and contemporary Islamic psychological scholarship may additionally strengthen the theoretical refinement, intercultural applicability, and methodological sophistication of the proposed framework.

CONCLUSION

This study systematically examined the conceptual correspondence between selected Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) related mechanisms and Qur'anic teachings through thematic Qur'anic exegesis (*tafsīr mawḍū'ī*). By integrating qualitative thematic analysis, cognitive psychology, Islamic psychology, and classical as well as contemporary *tafsīr* perspectives, the study demonstrated that several cognitive, linguistic, and behavioral processes associated with reframing, cognitive appraisal, emotional regulation, and habit formation show meaningful conceptual alignment with Qur'anic teachings concerning self-awareness, ethical communication, moral accountability, and behavioral refinement.

The findings indicate that Qur'anic discourse consistently emphasizes internal cognitive transformation as a foundation for emotional regulation and behavioral change, paralleling several mechanisms identified within

cognitive psychology and culture-adapted cognitive therapeutic approaches. Qur'anic teachings related to reflection, evaluative awareness, moral intentionality, and self-regulation correspond conceptually with processes associated with cognitive restructuring, meaning making, emotional regulation, and behavioral reinforcement. Likewise, Qur'anic linguistic patterns involving metaphor, exhortation, symbolic framing, and dialogical communication illustrate how language functions not merely as an instrument of persuasion but as an ethically grounded mechanism for reflective cognition, moral development, and spiritually informed behavioral regulation.

A central contribution of this study is the formulation of Neuro-Linguistic Qur'anic Programming (NLQP) as a culturally grounded conceptual framework situated at the intersection of cognitive psychology, language studies, and Islamic epistemology. NLQP does not propose a replacement for established psychological therapies, nor does it present NLP as a fully validated clinical model. Rather, it selectively reinterprets NLP related cognitive and linguistic mechanisms within Qur'anic ethical, theological, and epistemological principles. In particular, the study identified three major Qur'anic recalibrations of conventional NLP: (1) the ethical grounding of language and communication, (2) the balance between human agency and divine reliance in processes of behavioral change, and (3) the orientation of habit formation toward moral and spiritual refinement rather than instrumental optimization alone.

The exploratory perception survey involving Muslim university students further provided preliminary empirical support regarding the perceived cultural relevance and psychological acceptability of spiritually grounded cognitive approaches within Muslim educational contexts. Respondents generally perceived integration between Qur'anic values, emotional regulation, self-awareness, and psychological development as meaningful and applicable within counseling, educational, and personal development settings. Although exploratory and non-clinical in nature, these findings strengthen the cultural plausibility and perceived applicability of the proposed framework while providing an initial empirical complement to the conceptual analysis.

The study additionally contributes to broader discussions within Islamic psychology and culturally adapted psychotherapy by demonstrating that psychological models may be critically integrated with religious epistemologies without abandoning methodological rigor, conceptual transparency, or interdisciplinary caution. Through the incorporation of operational definitions, interdisciplinary coding procedures, triangulation with diverse *tafsīr* traditions, comparison with Islamically integrated CBT models, and explicit acknowledgment of interpretive limitations, the study addresses contemporary calls for greater conceptual clarity in interdisciplinary psychological research involving Islamic intellectual traditions.

Nevertheless, several limitations remain. The study is primarily conceptual and interpretive in orientation, and thematic mapping between Qur'anic concepts and psychological constructs necessarily involves interpretive subjectivity. Although triangulation procedures and interdisciplinary coding were employed to reduce interpretive bias, alternative interpretations remain possible across theological, linguistic, cultural, and psychological perspectives. Furthermore, the exploratory survey component assessed perceptions and cultural acceptability rather than clinical outcomes, behavioral change, or therapeutic effectiveness, thereby limiting generalizability and causal inference. Consequently, the findings should be understood as heuristic and exploratory rather than definitive evidence of therapeutic efficacy.

Future research should therefore examine NLQP through experimental, longitudinal, mixed-method, and cross-cultural research designs to evaluate its psychological effectiveness, educational applicability, and clinical relevance. Additional studies may investigate the role of Qur'anic linguistic framing in emotional regulation, spiritually integrated cognitive interventions, and culturally grounded behavioral development within counseling, educational, and mental health settings. Further engagement with diverse *tafsīr* traditions and contemporary Islamic psychological scholarship may also strengthen the intercultural applicability, theoretical refinement, and methodological sophistication of the proposed framework.

Overall, this study advances interdisciplinary scholarship by demonstrating how cognition, language, emotional regulation, and behavior may be interpreted through an ethically and culturally grounded Qur'anic framework. Neuro-Linguistic Qur'anic Programming (NLQP) offers a theoretically informed and critically reflective

pathway for integrating cognitive and behavioral processes with Islamic moral and spiritual meaning making while maintaining constructive engagement with contemporary psychological science.

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