Chapter 12
The Life of PII: Developing a Positive Islamic Identity

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Abstract Identity development has been studied from a variety of perspectives within social and developmental psychology, with positive psychology most recently adding to this literature. Finding and moving forward with a unified sense of self has been the primary focus. This search embodies the different social contexts to which we belong—in other words, our group affiliations. Although religion is one factor that provides a sense of belonging and purpose to many people, the development of a religious identity has not been explored as much as other social identities. In this chapter, we begin by providing an overview of Islam and wellbeing, including a mapping of the VIA Classification of Strengths and Virtues to verses from the Quran that form the basis of a framework of Islamic virtues. We review frameworks of identity development, including stages of the development of faith. We also look at the link between religious identity and wellbeing and provide a proposed model of religious identity development for what we term, a "Positive Islamic Identity".

12.1 Introduction

The conceptualization of the "self" has undergone numerous iterations, from focusing on the personal to the social and encompassing a variety of constructs and measures to define its features. In fact, the self-concept is one of the most studied areas in psychology and linked to research in identity development through its focus on questions such as "Who am I?" and "Where do I belong?" (Oyserman, 2001). The earliest studies of identity stemmed from social psychology with Tajfel and Turner's (1979) classic Social Identity Theory, which looks at the ways the self-concept is affected by social groups, and how one's sense of belonging to those groups can be a source of pride and self-esteem. Social identities, however, are also tied to a myriad

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of belief systems that come with each group. Sometimes belief systems overlap, other times, individuals face cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957), or psychological discomfort when cross-group belief systems are incongruent. In response, individuals may limit the discomfort by joining groups that support their existing beliefs. Group affiliations offer social support and a sense of belonging (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Haslam, Jetten, Postmes, & Haslam, 2009); they also help people accomplish goals not done otherwise.

More recently, positive psychology research has also begun investigating the question of identity and its relationship to wellbeing (Ajibade, Hook, Utsey, Davis, & Van Tongeren, 2016; Baron, 2013; Giuliani, Tagliabue, & Regalia, 2018; Ibrahim, 2016; Sumner, Borrow, & Hill, 2015; Wong, 2014). In connecting the domains of positive psychology with social identity, the emphasis is on the ways in which individuals develop a *healthy* identity (Rodrigues, Stobäus, & Mosquera, 2016) and how these negotiated social identities contribute to flourishing. For instance, Ajibade et al. (2016) found that ethnic/racial identity of African Americans is positively associated with meaning and life satisfaction and that these associations are partially mediated by religious commitment. In terms of religious identity, Ysseldyk, Matheson and Anisman (2010) noted that "the uniqueness of a positive social group, grounded in a belief system that offers epistemological and ontological certainty, lends religious identity a twofold advantage for the promotion of wellbeing" (p. 60). As identity can be a major contributor to wellbeing, it is of increasing interest to researchers who may be looking for another route to developing interventions that improve health and wellbeing. Indeed, interventions that strengthen religious and/or cultural identity, especially among minority populations, have shown promise (Bierman, 2006; Rivas-Drake, Umaña-Taylor, Schaefer, & Medina, 2017; Tewari, Khan, Hopkins, Srinivasan, & Reicher, 2012; Zamora, 2017). Yet, less is known about the identity development of majority populations and how this may be linked to different facets of wellbeing.

Of interest to our chapter is the religious identity of Muslims not only in the Middle East/North Africa (MENA) region, but worldwide, given that Islam is practiced in both Muslim-majority and Muslim-minority countries. The study of Islamic identity is of particular relevance in the face of growing discrimination and prejudice against Muslims, as well as the increasing fear among Western populations of the spread of Islamic communities into non-Muslim majority areas as a result of sociopolitical strife, war, and the displacement of Muslims out of the Middle East (Wike, Stokes, & Simmons, 2016). Further, at a time when young Muslims in particular need guidance to become fully functioning adults, the answer is not to remove Islam from the equation, but rather to focus on Islamic values, virtues, and character strengths to help Muslims better identify with their religious group, thus helping them develop what we propose is a *Positive Islamic Identity*.

Topic Box: Identity … A Composite of Images?

Who are you?

If we asked you to describe yourself, what would you say? Are you a doctor? A teacher? A male? A female? A Muslim? Consider your description of a doctor. Words like "hospital", "white coat", "patients", and "stethoscope", are likely to appear and you will probably use male pronouns. If we ask you to describe a teacher, words like "tests", "classroom", and "marks" may be present. Here you may use female pronouns. What about a professor? Are you imagining a male or a female? Does the subject of the course make a difference? Now, if we ask you to describe a Muslim, what would you say? Will you find yourself thinking of a man with an untidy beard? Perhaps carrying a machine gun? Or will you think of a woman wearing a headscarf? Or even a face cover? Or will you think of Ahmad, the person you work with?

In this age of mass media, images are everywhere; in newspapers, billboards, TV shows, online advertisements, You Tube, Instagram posts, and even in shopping mall elevators. Where there is media, there is an overflow of images. Thus, your description of a doctor, a teacher or a Muslim will depend not only on the people you may have met, but the accumulation of images you have seen in the media. Here a question arises; do the images residing within each of us solely influence our perception of others? Or can our perception of *ourselves* also be influenced by the images to which we are exposed? In essence, can the images around us inform our own identity?

As media platforms become increasingly accessible to a wider array of people, these are just a few of the questions that arise from the growing power of the visual element. When reflecting on these questions, it is important to note that images constitute a component, albeit a central one, of today's media culture, which consists of radio and other forms of sound, film (including its different distribution channels), print media, television, and lastly the internet. This culture does not merely fill our leisure time; it goes beyond that to provide us with models for what gender, success, or power mean. It even defines our values as it tells us what is good and bad, and what holds greater prestige, all of which is conveyed through images that we, the audience, can often identify with. Thus, media culture plays an essential role in shaping our identities by influencing our thoughts and behaviors, and as such, it is similar to the myths and rituals of the past. However, it is different in its aims, as media culture is an industrial culture; mass produced for a mass audience. And similar to other industries, its products are aimed at generating profit (Kellner, 2003).

If indeed the media is key in shaping our identities, how is that played out when religion is a core element of how we perceive ourselves? Based on the idea of mediatization, the institution of religion, just like other institutions, has to adapt to the logic of the media so that it can communicate with other institutions and society in general (Hjavard, 2008). In other words, media affects how religion is conveyed, and that in turn shapes how it is perceived and then

internalized. However, considering that our identities reflect the social groups to which we belong, it is important to remember that there are a number of identities to which we will adhere over the course of our lives, and media serves as a potent tool for the development of these identities. Globalization, which is one of the products of the proliferation of media around the world, has been criticized as a tool of Western imperialism (Sen, 2002), wherein individualistic norms have begun to change the culture and values of collectivist nations (Zhang, 2009), especially among young people, possibly creating identity crises that were not historically part of non-Western regions. On the other hand, Nisbet and Myers (2010) note that transnational Arab and Muslim identities have strengthened in the MENA region due to a growth in regional media. In fact, Ghoshal (2010) contends that in many parts of Southeast Asia, a "global" Islamic identity is developing that shares many characteristics with the Arab Gulf region.

While we should not overemphasize media's role in identity development, especially when there are regions with limited access to literacy and technology, both of which are important for social media, regional polls indicate that digital media and social networks do contribute to the identity development of the young (Dalacoura, Colombo & Dark, 2017). Thus, the concept of mediatization emphasizes the dominating role of the media in shaping our perceptions, including our faith.

12.2 Islam and Wellbeing

In order to explore the connection between Islam and wellbeing, it is imperative to consider the source of Islamic knowledge, namely the Quran and Sunnah, the Prophetic tradition based on the words and deeds of the Prophet (PBUH), and then investigate how these frameworks impact wellbeing as defined by a variety of positive psychology constructs such as character strengths and virtues. Character strengths are the enduring individual traits that are expressed through thinking, feeling, motivation, and behaviors that are also morally valued across all cultures and beneficial to the self and others (Niemec, 2013). When the Values in Action (VIA) classification system (Peterson & Seligman, 2004) was formally proposed, the strengths were considered universal as they were sourced from broad historical, religious, and literary traditions around the world (Dahlsgaard, Peterson, & Seligman, 2005). Given their varied sources, they are congruent with Islamic notions of good character and supported by examples of religious precepts.

The main difference between a secular and Islamic understanding of virtue is the integration of the divine with the human experience. According to Islamic tradition, human beings are composed of two distinct parts—the body and the soul. The

soul resides in the physical body and provides us with consciousness. Briki and Amara (2018) define the Islamic self as a "structured, self-regulated, and evolving phenomenon…driven by a mental tension to develop Islamic virtues" (p. 2). Human nature, or *fitrah* from an Islamic point of view, is inherently connected to God. Our development across the lifespan helps us to either get closer or farther away from the purity of the *fitrah* with which we are born (Rothman & Coyle, 2018). Human beings have free will and a desire to move towards a fulfilling and purposeful life. This is similar to Maslow's (1970) perspective which posits that human beings move up a hierarchy of needs towards self-actualization. In an Islamic framework, positive development is the result of choices that lead one closer to God. Thus, Islamic strengths are those that help us align with our *fitrah*.

Although a comprehensive mapping of positive psychology constructs with Islamic values and beliefs is beyond the scope of this chapter, Table 12.1 proposes a list of 25 Islamic strengths and virtues overlapping with the VIA categories. The bolded Islamic strengths also appear in the VIA Classification Handbook (Peterson & Seligman, 2004). The list below was derived through an online search of the term "Islamic virtues" which were then aligned with the VIA strengths model. Only those virtues that directly appear in the Quran, the primary source of Islamic knowledge, were considered. Thus, the Islamic strengths identified below should not be considered an exhaustive list, but a starting point for further discussion on the ways in which positive psychology constructs may fit with Islamic thought.

Research conducted with Muslim populations worldwide shows that Islam influences wellbeing. In conceptualizing their understanding of happiness, a Muslim sample of Arab students in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) noted morality and religion as major themes (Lambert D'raven & Pasha-Zaidi, 2015). Studies conducted with Muslim populations in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Egypt and Algeria (Abdel-Khalek, 2002, 2007, 2008, 2010, 2011; Abdel-Khalek & Lester, 2006; Abdel-Khalek & Naceur, 2007; Al-Kandari, 2003; Baroun, 2006; Sahraian, Gholami, Javadpour, & Omidvar, 2013) found positive associations between religiosity and self-ratings of happiness, life satisfaction, physical and mental health, and self-esteem and a negative association with psychopathology (anxiety and depression). Of note, Vasegh and Mohammadi (2007) also found a negative correlation between religiosity and anxiety and depression in Iranian Muslim medical students and recently, Thomas, Mutawa, Furber and Grey (2016) found the same among Muslim women in the UAE. In South Asia, religiosity was one factor associated with subjective wellbeing in a group of Pakistani Muslims, although income, marital status, and social class were stronger predictors (Suhail & Chaudhry, 2004). Further positive relationships were found between religiosity and resilience among Muslim adolescents in Kerala (India) (Annalakshmi & Abeer, 2011) and Islamic behaviors and positive affect, emotional ties, and life satisfaction (Parveen, Sandilya, & Shafiq, 2014). The relationship between religion and wellbeing extends to other areas of the world: Lavric and Flere (2008) conducted a study of religiosity and wellbeing across five cultural contexts, Slovenia (Catholic), Serbia (Serbian Orthodox), US (Protestant), Japan (Buddhist), and Bosnia (Muslim), finding a positive correlation between intrinsic religiosity and positive affect.

Table 12.1 Classification of strengths from an Islamic perspective

VIA virtue category	Islamic strength	Select Quranic references
Wisdom & Knowledge: Cognitive strengths that involve getting/using knowledge	1. Tolerance	• "Say: 'O People of the Book! come to common terms as between us and you: That we worship none but Allah; that we associate no partners with Him; that we erect not, from among ourselves, lords and patrons other than Allah.' If then they turn back, say ye: 'Bear witness that we (at least) are Muslims (bowing to Allah's Will)'" (3:64) • "If it had been thy Lord's Will, they would all have believed, all who are on earth! Wilt thou then compel mankind, against their will, to believe!" (10:99)
	2. Love of learning	• "Read. Read in the name of thy Lord who created; [He] created the human being from blood clot. Read in the name of thy Lord who taught by the pen: [He] taught the human being what he did not know" (96: 1–5) • "Are those who have knowledge equal to those who do not have knowledge?!" (39:9)
	3. Moderation, balance	• "Fight in the cause of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress limits; for Allah loveth not transgressors" (2:190) • "Commit no excess: for Allah loveth not those given to excess" (5:87) • "Seek, with the (wealth) which Allah has bestowed on thee, the Home of the Hereafter, nor forget thy portion in this world: but do thou good, as Allah has been good to thee" (28:77)
Courage: Emotional strengths that involve the will to accomplish goals in the face of difficulties	4. Bravery, dignity	• "(It is) for those who believe… when an oppressive wrong is inflicted on them, (are not cowed but) help and defend themselves" (42:36–39) • "If any do help and defend themselves after a wrong (done) to them, against such there is no cause of blame" (42:41)
	5. Persistence, discipline, patience	• "Ye shall certainly be tried and tested in your possessions and in your personal selves; and ye shall certainly hear much that will grieve you, from those who received the Book before you and from those who worship partners besides Allah. But if ye persevere patiently, and guard against evil, then that will be of great resolution" (3:186) • "Be sure we shall test you with something of fear and hunger, some loss in goods or lives or the fruits (of your toil), but give glad tidings to those who patiently persevere, who say, when afflicted with calamity: 'To Allah We belong, and to Him is our return'. They are those on whom (Descend) blessings from their Lord, and Mercy" (2:155–157)

(continued)

Table 12.1 (continued)

VIA virtue category	Islamic strength	Select Quranic references
	6. Integrity, honesty	• "Fear Allah and make your utterance straight forward: That He may make your conduct whole and sound" (33:70–71) • "Cover not Truth with falsehood, nor conceal the Truth when ye know (what it is)" (2:42) • "Take not your oaths, to practice deception between yourselves" (16:94)
Humanity: Relational strengths that involve tending/befriending others	7. Love	• "We have enjoined on man (to be good) to his parents: in travail upon travail did his mother bear him, and in years twain was his weaning" (31:14) • "It may be that Allah will grant love (and friendship) between you and those whom ye (now) hold as enemies. For Allah has power (over all things); and Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful" (60:7) • "And one of His signs is that He has created for you, spouses from amongst yourselves so that you might take comfort in them and He has placed between you, love and mercy. In this there is surely evidence (of the truth) for the people who carefully think" (30:21)
	8. Generosity	• "By no means shall ye attain righteousness unless ye give (freely) of that which ye love" (3:92) • "Those who spend their wealth (for the sake of Allah) night and day, both privately and publicly, will get their reward from their Lord, they shall have no cause to fear nor shall they grieve" (2:274)
	9. Charity	• "Be steadfast in prayer and regular in charity: And whatever good ye send forth for your souls before you, ye shall find it with Allah…" (2:110)
	10. Kindness, courtesy, sincerity	• "Allah loveth those who are kind" (5:13) • "When a (courteous) greeting is offered you, meet it with a greeting still more courteous, or (at least) of equal courtesy. Allah takes careful account of all things" (4:86) • "And (show) kindness to (your) parents and to near relatives, orphans, and the needy and to the neighbour who is your relative and the neighbour who is not your relative…" (4: 36)
	11. Diversity	• "O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted" (49:13)
	12. Unity	• "Hold fast, all together, by the Rope which Allah (stretches out for you), and be not divided among yourselves; and remember with gratitude Allah's favor on you; for ye were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His Grace, ye became brethren" (3:103)

(continued)

Table 12.1 (continued)

VIA virtue category	Islamic strength	Select Quranic references
	13. Respect	• "Enter not houses other than your own, until ye have asked permission and saluted those in them: that is best for you, in order that ye may heed (what is seemly). If ye find no one in the house, enter not until permission is given to you: if ye are asked to go back, go back: that makes for greater purity for yourselves" (24:27–28) • "Avoid suspicion as much (as possible): for suspicion in some cases is a sin: and spy not on each other, nor speak ill of each other behind their backs. Would any of you like to eat the flesh of his dead brother?" (49:12)
Justice: Civic strengths that underlie a healthy community life	14. Citizenship, social responsibility and loyalty	• "Do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, those in need, neighbors who are of kin, neighbors who are strangers, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (ye meet), and what your right hands possess" (4:36) • "O' you who believe! Always be upright for Allah, bearing witness in justice, and do not let hatred of a people incite you to be unfair to them. Be fair! That is the nearest to Taqwa (piety). Fear Allah! Indeed, Allah is aware of what you do" (5:8)
	15. Fairness, honesty, trust-worthiness	• "Cover not Truth with falsehood, nor conceal the Truth when ye know (what it is)" (2:42) • "Woe to those that deal in fraud, – Those who, when they have to receive by measure from men, exact full measure, but when they have to give by measure or weight to men, give less than due" (83:1–3) • "Allah loveth those who judge in equity" (5:42)
Temperance: Self-regulation strengths that protect against excess	16. Forgiveness and mercy	• "If the debtor is in a difficulty, grant him time till it is easy for him to repay. But if ye remit it by way of charity, that is best for you if ye only knew" (2:280) • "We ordained therein for them: 'Life for life, eye for eye, nose or nose, ear for ear, tooth for tooth, and wounds equal for equal.' But if any one remits the retaliation by way of charity, it is an act of atonement for himself" (5:45) • "Overlook (any human faults) with gracious forgiveness" (15:85) • "(It is) for those who believe and put their trust in their Lord… when they are angry even then forgive" (42:36-37)
	17. Humility, modesty, frugality	• "Waste not by excess: for Allah loveth not the wasters" (6:141) • "Exult not, for Allah loveth not those who exult (in riches)" (28:76) • "Swell not thy cheek (for pride) at men, nor walk in insolence through the earth; for Allah loveth not any arrogant boaster" (31:18)

(continued)

Table 12.1 (continued)

VIA virtue category	Islamic strength	Select Quranic references
	18. Purity and cleanliness	• "Eat of what is on earth, lawful and good; and do not follow the footsteps of the Satan, for he is to you an avowed enemy" (2:168) • "(Allah) loves those who keep themselves pure and clean" (2:222) • "When ye prepare for prayer, wash your faces, and your hands (and arms) to the elbows; Rub your heads (with water); and (wash) your feet to the ankles. If ye are in a state of ceremonial impurity, bathe your whole body… Allah doth not wish to place you in a difficulty, but to make you clean" (5:6)
	19. Prudence	• "Woe to every (kind of) scandal-monger and backbiter" (104:1) • "When ye deal with each other, in transactions involving future obligations in a fixed period of time reduce them to writing… whether it be small or big; it is just in the sight of Allah, more suitable as evidence, and more convenient to prevent doubts among yourselves" (2:282) • "If a wicked person comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth, lest ye harm people unwittingly and afterwards become full of repentance for what ye have done" (49:6)
	20. Self-regulation, Self-control	• "In no wise covet those things in which Allah hath bestowed His gifts more freely on some of you than on others: to men is allotted what they earn, and to women what they earn: but ask Allah of His bounty" (4:32) • "Fasting is prescribed to you as it was prescribed to those before you, that ye may (learn) self-restraint" (2:183) "(Do not follow) the lust (of thy heart), for it will mislead thee from the Path of Allah" (38:26)
Transcendence: These strengths allow for connections to the universe and offer meaning	21. Appreciation of beauty	• "And the Earth, We spread it out, and cast therein firmly set mountains and We have made to grow therein of all beautiful kinds; to give sight and as a reminder to every servant who turns to Allah" (50:7–8) • "Eat of all the fruits and walk in the ways of your lord submissively. There comes forth from within it a beverage of many colours, in which there is healing for men; most surely there is a sign in this (life of bees) for a people who reflect" (16:69) • "It is Allah Who has made for you the earth as a resting place, and the sky as a canopy, and has given you shape and made your shapes beautiful and has provided for you sustenance" (40:64)
	22. Gratitude	• "Eat of the good things that We have provided for you, and be grateful to Allah, if it is Him ye worship" (2:172) • "And it is He Who made the Night and the Day to follow each other: for such as have the will to celebrate His praises or to show their gratitude" (25:62)

(continued)

Table 12.1 (continued)

VIA virtue category	Islamic strength	Select Quranic references
	23. Hope	• "Here is a plain statement to men, a guidance and instruction to those who fear Allah. So lose not heart, nor fall into despair: For ye must gain mastery if ye are true in Faith" (3:138–139) • "What is with you must vanish: what is with Allah will endure. And We will certainly bestow, on those who patiently persevere, their reward according to the best of their actions" (16:96)
	24. Repentance	• "Seek ye the forgiveness of your Lord, and turn to Him in repentance; that He may grant you enjoyment, good (and true), for a term appointed" (11:3) "Your Lord knoweth best what is in your hearts: If ye do deeds of righteousness, verily He is Most Forgiving to those who turn to Him again and again (in true penitence)" (17:25)
	25. Spirituality, piety	• "Celebrate the praises of thy Lord, and be of those who prostrate themselves in adoration" (15:98) • "Behold! In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, – there are indeed Signs for men of understanding, Men who celebrate the praises of Allah, standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and contemplate the (wonders of) creation in the heavens and the earth, (with the thought): 'Our Lord! Not for naught hast Thou created (all) this! Glory to Thee!" (3:190–191) • "Establish regular prayer: for prayer restrains from shameful and evil deeds; and remembrance of Allah is the greatest (thing in life) without doubt" (29:45)

Adapted from "Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification Manual" (Peterson & Seligman, 2004)

Other areas of interest within the realm of religiosity have to do with visible markers of religious identity and belonging. For instance, Jasperse, Ward, and Jose (2012) conducted a study of perceived religious discrimination and Muslim identity in New Zealand that considered three aspects of Muslim identity (psychological, visible, and behavioral). Visible identity in the form of wearing hijab was associated with higher levels of perceived discrimination, but also provided greater psychological benefits for Muslim women. Interestingly, they also found that a strong affiliation with the Islamic faith was associated with increased susceptibility to psychological distress in response to perceived discrimination. Religious affiliation, which is mere identification with a religious group and thus constitutes the lowest level of involvement, may not be enough to develop a positive Islamic identity. Studies show that being involved in the social practices of a religion is strongly correlated with subjective wellbeing. In fact, social participation is stronger than private participation in religion. While this research suggests there is a link between religiosity and wellbeing, it nonetheless does not explore religious identity itself. How is it formed and based on what? Does it look different for Muslims in majority or minority status cultures?

12.3 Frameworks of Identity Development

Identity development is a process through which personal identity evolves over time as a result of social interactions (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995). Erikson's (1963) influential theory of psychosocial development paved the way for numerous studies on the topic. According to Erikson, the search for identity begins in adolescence through the exploration of social roles. Identity is developed from a lifetime of choices and opportunities that are afforded throughout adolescence and into early adulthood. Those who are able to successfully resolve the crisis of adolescence forge a sense of identity, while others may continue to experience role confusion. Consider Amina graduating from secondary school. For perhaps the first time in her life, she will have greater influence over the choices she makes. Deciding which college to attend or with which groups to socialize may be the beginning of her search for identity. If she is able to make decisions that help define her self-concept, she may succeed in forging an identity. On the other hand, if she is unable to come to terms with such issues, she may remain in a state of role confusion wherein she experiences doubt about who she is and where she wants to go in life.

Marcia (1966, 1976, 1980) later expanded Erikson's theory by identifying four identity statuses. Each was determined by the presence or absence of active exploration and commitment to a particular identity. The first status is *diffusion*, where no identity is formed and no identity exploration has occurred. The next, according to Marcia, is *foreclosure*. Here, an identity is chosen, but without exploration, often as a result of taking on an identity prescribed by one's family or society. If Amina accepts a path decided upon by her parents, like getting married instead of going to college, she is in foreclosure. Next, *moratorium* occurs when exploration has taken place, but no identity has formed. Individuals in this stage may be in a continuing

state of psychosocial conflict as they look at different options, but do not commit. If Amina is torn between following her parent's wishes, contemplating her dreams of becoming an engineer and the financial constraints her family faces, she may not be able to come to a decision and remain in a state of moratorium. The final stage is *identity achievement* where an identity is chosen after exploration. If Amina realizes she wants to go to college to study engineering and convinces her parents she will marry after her degree, she has consciously decided on her future and reached this stage.

It is evident from Amina's example that in collectivist cultures, the notion of choice and who one can or will become is different than in individualistic cultures. In fact, most of the theories explored in this chapter are based on individualistic cultural norms, which may not fit with identity development in non-Western cultures. The lack of identity frameworks for collectivist and non-Western populations is a concern given that Western industrialized nations only account for about 12% of the global population (Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010), yet they put forward the majority of psychological models used around the world. To illustrate, Table 12.2 provides an overview of some of the influential models of cultural identity development in Western, particularly American, majority contexts. It is worthy to note that the White Racial Identity framework may be applicable to other cultural models where power, privilege, or social class form the basis for one's identity development, a notion that was espoused by the famed French social theorist, Michel Foucault (1977, translated 1995).

12.3.1 Ethnic Identity Development

Whereas personal identity development answers the question, "Who am I?" from an individualistic perspective, ethnic or cultural identity development reflects both an internal sense of self as well as the integration of cultural norms and values derived from a collective group into a cohesive self-concept (Jensen, 2003). This notion underlies the relative importance or priority given to an individual versus the group. Many models (Berry, 1997; Cross, 1991; Helms, 1990; Nadal, 2011; Poston, 1990) explore identity from racial and ethnic perspectives and many consider identity development as a reflection of one's place in the minority or majority culture, with the underlying assumption that those who are a part of a minority group are likely to deal with forms of oppression that may be invisible to those in a majority group. As a result, experiences of oppression are integral to the identity development of minority groups whereas the notion of privilege is more reflective of majority cultures (Berry, 1997; Helms, 1990).

Phinney (1993) applied Marcia's identity statuses to the development of an ethnic identity that focuses on the process of acculturation; that is, the cultural and psychological changes that occur following contact between cultures (Berry, 2003). To Phinney (1993), ethnic minority adolescents go through three stages. In Stage 1, ethnic identity is unexplored and the values and customs of the majority are accepted.

Table 12.2 Additional identity development frameworks

Framework	Levels of Identity development
Berry's Ethnic Minority Model (1984)	**Assimilation**: choosing to belong to the majority culture other than one's own **Separation**: withdrawing from the majority culture in order to focus on the preservation of one's own culture **Marginalization**: withdrawing from both the majority culture and one's own; loss of identification with both cultures **Integration**: valuing and identifying with majority culture and one's own
Nadal's Filipino American Identity Development (2004)	**Ethnic Awareness**: positive or neutral feelings towards all ethnic groups, little exposure to racism **Assimilation to Dominant Culture**: valuing White culture while holding negative views of other ethnic groups **Social Political Awakening**: anger towards White culture and positive attitudes towards other ethnic groups triggered by event(s) **Pan-Ethnic Asian American Consciousness**: taking ownership of Asian identity and developing a preference towards Asian Americans **Ethnocentric Realization**: feeling empowered as a person of color with a quest to empower others; develops identity as a Filipino and may develop a negative view towards other Asian Americans **Incorporation**: pride and appreciation of one's own culture and other cultures, including White culture
Cross' Black American Racial Identity (1971)	**Pre-Encounter**: lacking knowledge of racial differences, reflecting beliefs of the dominant White culture, de-emphasizing racial group membership **Encounter**: forced to deal with racial inequities in one's life as a result of event(s) **Immersion/Emersion**: actively seeking out ways of exploring one's history and culture while simultaneously rejecting symbols of White culture **Internalization**: being secure in one's Black identity, resulting in less defensiveness towards White culture **Internalization-Commitment**: having comfort with one's own race and development of action plans to address community needs
Helms' White Racial Identity Model (1990)	**Contact**: a belief in "colorblindness" where race is not considered salient; instead racism is believed to result from discussion and acknowledgment of race **Disintegration**: experiences promote an awakening of the disparities associated with racial categories resulting in feelings of shame and guilt **Reintegration**: intense "blame the victim" attitudes develop where whatever White privilege is considered a reflection of the higher aptitude or superiority of Whites in society **Pseudo-independence**: first stage of positive White identity where White privilege is no longer considered automatically deserved; the onus for changing racial inequities is still thought to be on the shoulders of minorities. Emotional support is provided to minorities in an effort to validate one's desire to be non-racist **Immersion/Emersion**: effort is taken to actively connect with one's racial group and be non-racist, including a deep concern for other Whites who have been dealing with racism **Autonomy**: positive connection with White identity has been established and an active role in pursuing social justice has developed

Consider Amir, an Indian student in a secondary school in Dubai that is largely European. He may act and think more like a European because that is his majority peer group. When his parents want him to participate in Indian activities outside of school, he is embarrassed and refuses. He may even hold negative views about his heritage. In Stage 2, ethnic identity exploration is triggered by a situation. In the case of Amir, while playing football, one of his friends makes fun of his Indian accent, which makes the rest of the team howl with laughter. Now, he may decide that he does not fit with his European peers and begins to explore his own ethnicity. This may trigger the identity crisis theorized by Erikson (1963), prompting Amir to engage in exploratory activities such as reading about alternative perspectives, speaking with different people, and experimenting with new lifestyles (Waterman, 1985). In Stage 3, ethnic identity is achieved when one's ethnicity is accepted and internalized. After taking time to understand his cultural heritage, Amir can be proud and feel a sense of belonging to it. In doing so, he also learns to appreciate other ethnicities and belong to several groups without relinquishing his own. In terms of wellbeing, adolescents who have gone through the exploration process and reached an understanding of their ethnic identities are likely to show better adjustment than those who have not or who are uncertain about the role it plays in their lives (Phinney, 1993).

12.3.2 Religious Identity Development

One of the most common ways of exploring religion and identity has been through the concept of intrinsic and extrinsic religiosity (Allport & Ross, 1967), the former of which has been shown to be correlated with Marcia's identity achievement status (Markstrom-Adams & Smith, 1996). People with an extrinsic orientation toward religion tend to use religion to achieve a purpose such as social status, belonging or self-justification (Allport & Ross, 1967). Religious values are utilitarian and perhaps even superficial. People with an intrinsic religious orientation, on the other hand, internalize the values of their faith and *live* it so their practices embody a harmonious unification of the self. These concepts have typically been defined as opposite ends of a continuum with an intrinsic orientation considered a positive religious identity.

Fowler's (1981) stages of faith are an important theoretical framework to consider in regards to the development of a religious identity. According to Fowler (1981), the *Intuitive-Projective Stage (Stage 1)* occurs in early childhood, where faith is a reflection of the impressions that children make based on what they see their parents and other adults do. The *Mythic-Literal stage (Stage 2)* develops in middle childhood, but may be representative of adults as well, and is characterized by concrete, literal thinking. In this stage, children appropriate beliefs and moral guidelines, accepting the stores told to them by their faith communities but generally understanding them in literal ways. Later, children begin to understand that not everyone shares the same beliefs. The *Synthetic-Conventional Stage (Stage 3)* emerges in adolescence and is initiated by the clash of narratives that leads individuals to reflect on meaning. During this process, literalism comes to an end and one's world extends beyond

family. Faith becomes more of an ideology that organizes values, but conforms to the expectations of significant others. Beliefs may be deeply felt, but not subjected to explicit examination.

The fourth stage, *Individuative-Reflective,* is associated with questioning the assumptions of faith, as well as its associated authority figures. In this stage, people may leave their religion if their concerns are not adequately addressed. In either case, Stage 4 represents an active commitment and personal responsibility for the chosen faith. The *Conjunctive-Postformal (Stage 5)* stage is generally not reached until middle age. Here, the struggles and questions of Stage 4 give way to a greater comfort in the answers that have been received as well as a greater understanding that not all questions have an answer. Individual reflection is replaced with a greater commitment to community development and characterized by a commitment to justice that surpasses social constraints such as tribe or religious community (Fowler, 1996). Finally, *Universalizing, which* is difficult to achieve for most, describes those who see faith as a common feature of all religions and can integrate many teachings. They can look beyond the norms of any specific religion and find harmony across faith systems, as well as look for ways to put it into action (Fowler, 1981).

12.3.3 Islamic Identity Development

Although many of the models presented here appear to be linear and are often interpreted as such, identity development is a flexible, spiraling process that occurs over the lifespan through interactions between contexts and individual experience. As self-concepts differ based on participation and identification with varied groups, it is critical to look at the multiplicity of identities to which one ascribes and how these interact within social spaces that come with their own sets of norms and challenges. This may be particularly relevant for Muslims living in non-Muslim contexts as their religious identity is not supported within the mainstream culture. In fact, given the increasing Islamophobia in non-Muslim majority countries, an Islamic identity may be created in opposition to mainstream cultural norms.

Peek's (2005) qualitative study of 127 Muslim students in the United States provides an identity framework that is applicable to Muslims living in non-Muslim majority contexts. She notes three categories of Islamic identity development following a model based on identity as a social and developmental process: (1) ascribed, (2) chosen, and (3) declared identity. In the first (*Religion as Ascribed Identity*), being Muslim is a part of everyday life as a child and is not consciously considered. In Stage 2 (*Religion as Chosen Identity*), reflection on one's religious identity begins to occur as a part of entering adolescence and young adulthood. Entering college was mentioned as the most important time for reflection and peer groups such as Muslim Student Associations on college campuses played a major role in this reflection as associations offered a space to learn common narratives about beliefs. For second-generation immigrants, the awareness of belonging to a minority also played a role in reinforcing an Islamic identity. Another factor contributing to an

Islamic identity was the rejection of other identities as holding other cultural, ethnic or national identities was viewed as un-Islamic. Finally, Stage 3 (*Religion as a Declared Identity*) develops as a result of a crisis. In Peek's (2005) study, this was 9/11; individuals reported how their Islamic identities were reinforced due to the need for stronger spiritual safety or the desire to change the negative perception of Islam by engaging in further study to answer others' questions, which served to strengthen their own Islamic identities. It appeared that as Muslims became increasingly associated with terrorism and violence in a non-Muslim majority environment, the impetus for presenting a positive public identity may have become more salient.

Peek's (2005) model suggests that the social context of adolescent Muslims can offer more or less support for the development of a religious identity. For example, if an Islamic identity is chosen in Stage 2 as a result of the exploration of religious conceptualizations that are supported by a strong peer group, what does this mean for young Muslims who do not have access to other Muslims during adolescence and young adulthood? Conversely, if one is living in a Muslim majority country where Islam is integrated into the mainstream culture, what does that imply for the notion of choice in Islamic identity development? It is possible that in the latter case, the norms of society may provide a context where Islamic identity formation remains in the ascribed state as adherents may not perceive a need to actively choose an Islamic identity. In fact, the notion of choosing identity is more in line with adolescent development in individualistic countries and may not fit with adolescent development in Muslim majority countries.

While not specifically addressing the development of an Islamic identity, Rothman and Coyle (2018) emphasize the cosmology of an Islamic worldview and thus provide an alternative model that incorporates the metaphysical aspects of Islamic thought with lifespan development. In defining self-concept, they join others within the Islamic psychology movement in discussing the structure of the soul according to the four aspects (the *nafs* or ego, the *aql* or intellect, the *qalb* or heart and the *ruh* or spirit) as described by the 12th century scholar Al-Ghazali (Haque, 2018). In brief, the *nafs* is the part of the self that leans towards worldly desires and thus may lead a person away from God; the *aql* is the intellect and works together with the heart (*qalb*) to develop knowledge, which encompasses both rational thought and a deeper spiritual intelligence. Finally, the *ruh* is the spirit, or the part of the soul that is directly connected to God and through which a person can find divine guidance and healing (Rothman & Coyle, 2018). Within this framework, the main stages in the development of the self are focused on the changes to the *nafs* with the goal of purifying oneself and thus returning to the natural state of *fitrah* in which human beings are believed to be born.

As religious identity is also influenced by historical and cultural elements founded upon shared rituals, symbols, and faith-based spaces, the interplay of non-religious factors in the development of a religious identity must also be explored. Thus, in considering the development of an Islamic identity, the diversity of the *Ummah,* or Muslim nation, which consists of approximately 1.8 billion Muslims and constitutes 24% of the global population, only 20% of whom live in the Middle East, must also be considered (Pew Research Center, 2015). Although the MENA region has the

highest concentration of Muslims in one region, Muslims make up a majority of the population in 49 countries around the world. The diversity of cultures that make up the global Islamic community is broad, yet, as noted by Peek's (2005) study, for many Muslims, culture is secondary to religion in terms of group affiliation. As most of the work on psychological processes has been conducted in Western industrial countries, a fact that is being increasingly given consideration as a limitation in the general psychology literature, studies of Muslim identity have generally focused on the intersection of ethnic identity and religious identity as well as on the politics of identity for Muslims living in non-Muslim (often Western) contexts (Ajrouch, 2004; Bartowski & Read, 2003; Bozorgmehr, 2000; Khan & Uneke, 2000; Naber 2000). Abu Rayya and Abu Rayya (2009), for example, found that both the ethnic identity and religious identity of indigenous Muslim and Christian Palestinians in Israel contributed to wellbeing. Yet, when ethnic identity was parceled out of the model, religious identity showed a greater relationship to wellbeing than ethnic identity.

12.4 A "Positive Islamic Identity"

Intrinsic religiosity and participation in faith-based activities have a relationship with wellbeing in different countries around the world; an achieved identity that entails pride in one's ethnic practices and a commitment to one's cultural group is also related (Mossakowski, 2003; Phinney & Ong, 2007). Similarly, studies of Muslims suggest that an Islamic identity may be linked to subjective wellbeing if it is accompanied by active participation in positive faith-based activities. Given that an Islamic model of the self joins the physical and metaphysical realms through the connection of body and soul, we offer the following definition as a starting point for discussion:

> **A Positive Islamic Identity (PII)** is the alignment of the *nafs* with the innate purity of the *fitrah*, which results in an integrated self-concept that reflects the salience of an Islamic group affiliation such that identifying as a Muslim would be positively associated with measures of wellbeing. Achievement of a PII would reflect both private religious activities and public or social engagement, resulting in greater pride and commitment to the group and realization of Islamic virtues.

The following proposed model of Islamic Identity development is based on existing models of faith and identity development discussed in this chapter and may be worth exploring empirically within Islamic contexts, both in Muslim majority and Muslim minority regions (Table 12.3).

Although the model is presented in a linear fashion, the trajectory of identity development may be different depending on the context within which one becomes, or exists as a Muslim. For example, a person born into a Muslim family in a Muslim majority culture may only experience Emergent and Accepted Identities and be able to find wellbeing within homogenous cultural groups that define one's identity as a Muslim. Participation in public forms of worship would reflect cultural norms, particularly for women. There would be little incentive to change such cultural norms as they are accepted and viewed through the lens of one's social norms. On the other

Table 12.3 Proposed model of Islamic identity development

Identity level	Description
Emergent identity	Religion is taught by parents and/or other authority figures. There is little discussion or reflection on the information provided by authority figures as these shape a child's worldview of what is right and wrong
Accepted identity	Islamic values, as taught during childhood, are accepted. There is a reliance on authority figures and historical, generally patriarchal, interpretations of text. Islam and culture are integrally connected and questioning of norms may be discouraged
Threatened identity	Accepted Identity is threatened by repeated exposure to opposing, dominant ideas. A retreat to religious authority figures, a strict, literal, and dogmatic approach, and increased attachment to historical anecdotes follows. In this stage, a constant feeling of being targeted by a hostile environment is present, resulting in an increased sense of isolation. Differentiation of "us" versus "others" is salient, and negative feelings toward "others" are encouraged
Quest identity	Reflection on Islamic teachings is triggered by significant experiences or cognitive dissonance due to many factors, including disillusionment with traditionally religious figures who do not appear to live up to Islamic norms or lack of coherence between Islamic concepts of justice and the reality of injustices committed in the name of Islam or in Muslim communities. This stage represents an identity crisis, and the inability to resolve the conflicting ideas means that the individual remains in a state of constant uncertainty. Leaving Islam and/or Islamic communities may be seriously considered
Consolidated identity	A coherent and inclusive identity develops as a result of critical analysis and personal reflection of historical, cultural, and sociopolitical factors involved in the ideology of Islam. People at this stage are cognizant of the ways in which Islam is used and misused in different contexts. This is the stage where activism may be seen as a way to improve the state of affairs within Muslim communities as well as between Muslims and non-Muslims around the world

hand, converts to Islam may begin their journey through Quest Identity and move towards either an Accepted Identity or Consolidated Identity depending on their level of social activism and comfort with Islamic cultural traditions in their area of residence. Additionally, many Muslims may go through a period of Threatened Identity, especially in contexts where affiliation with any religion (but Islam in particular) is not supported by the mainstream (Pew Research, 2015).

This model does not imply that all Muslims who experience a Threatened Identity become a danger to the societies in which they live! We believe it is important to reiterate this point as the model should not be used to further Islamophobic rhetoric. In fact, despite the increase in Islamophobia in many Muslim minority countries, such as the United States, statistics show that the majority of terrorism in such contexts is committed by nationalist extremists. For example, the FBI reported that most terrorist attacks in the US from 1980 to 2005 were carried out by non-Muslims (US Department of Justice, 2005), and The Center for Investigative Reporting noted

that from 2008 to 2016, right-wing extremists in the US (often White supremacists) accounted for twice as many terrorist plots than those identified as domestic Islamist terrorists (Neiwert, Ankrom, Kaplan, & Pham, 2017). It is also important to note that a Threatened Identity does not only categorize non-Muslims as "others", but also Muslims who follow approaches that are deemed incorrect. In fact, the number of terrorism-related deaths has affected more people in the MENA region, with 75% of terror-related activities occurring there (Roser, Nagdy, & Ritchie, 2018). As terrorism has political causes, whose discussion goes beyond the scope of this chapter, a Threatened Identity may only be one factor in the larger scheme. Finally, the proposed model should not be viewed as hierarchical with the Consolidated Identity most applicable to positive identity development. Instead, it should serve as a model for future empirical work to investigate Islamic identity in Muslim majority and Muslim minority contexts with the aim of developing a religious identity that correlates with wellbeing. Consideration of this framework with the structure and stages of the soul in Islamic tradition would provide another avenue of discussion for Islamic identity development.

12.5 Challenges to a Positive Islamic Identity

The relationship between wellbeing and religiosity is not straightforward. Individuals who are involved in social participation for extrinsic religious purposes (seeing religion as a means to an end—for social recognition or advancement) do not reap the benefits of subjective wellbeing (Dezutter, Soenens, & Hutsebaut, 2006). Additionally, people who have a quest religious orientation, or one in which they are searching for answers to existential questions may have both positive and negative psychological characteristics. For instance, they may show traits like flexibility and self-acceptance, but also experience worry, guilt, and have higher rates of mental distress (Kojetin, McIntosh, Bridges, & Spilka, 1987). Interestingly, Green and Elliot (2010) found that people with a liberal religious affiliation were healthier but less happy than people with a fundamentalist religious affiliation.

Although religious affiliation and practice brings a host of wellbeing factors, it is imperative to consider that extremist versions of religious ideology have taken a central role in international relations. "Despite several theoretical and empirical advances, the struggle to understand how or why religious identification become extreme in nature continues" (Ysseldyk, Matheson, & Anisman, 2010, p. 64). The interaction of socio-political factors with religious identity as well as religious group discrimination may be perceived as greater threats for highly religious individuals given the sacred ideals of religion and its place as a revered system of belief within their social group. Religious zeal may also provide a psychological buffer to personal uncertainty and the salience of one's own mortality (McGregor, Haji, Nash, & Teper, 2008). Additionally, the diversity of thought and experiences reflected in the ways in which different cultures approach Islamic practices could lead to intragroup conflict. In situations where groups feel they are being persecuted, there is a tendency for

highly identified individuals to be intolerant of intragroup differences as these may be seen as lending support to the out-group (Matheson, Cole, & Majka, 2003). The current international climate of Islamophobia provides fodder for both intergroup and intragroup tensions, which may promote conditions where fundamentalist versions of Islam can take root.

Although fundamentalism is not limited to Islamic ideology, nor is terrorism a new form of violent resistance to power structures that are deemed oppressive to certain segments of the population (Oberschall, 2004), Islam has unfortunately become the face of terrorism in Western media. Based on qualitative responses from a pilot study conducted in the UAE and Turkey (Pasha-Zaidi, in progress), Western media coverage of Islam can have both a negative and positive effect on being Muslim. It may be particularly harmful for the disenfranchised who are unable to find a sense of belonging in existing social groups as well as those who are looking for simple answers to complex questions (Lynch, 2013; McDonald, 2011). Further, the Al-Yaqeen Institute (Chouhoud, 2018) noted the following areas that cause Muslims to doubt Islam: intolerance of some Muslims towards other people and other faiths, the nonreligious behavior of religious individuals, the insistence by some that there is only one "right" way to practice Islam, teachings about the role of women, the nature of suffering in the world, and questionable and indeed, terrible things done in the name of religion. Thus, the ideology of Islam versus the reality of Muslim behaviors may become areas of contention in the development of a PII. However, initiatives that focus on training new Islamic scholars to reach out to the disenfranchised youth to counter the messages and interpretations of the Quran used by extremist groups are making a positive impact in countries such as Morocco. Interestingly, it is the female graduates of that particular program that are leading the way (Temple-Raston, 2018).

12.6 Recommendations

Islamic identity development programs and policies need to be put in place to link religious identity development with positive behaviors and internal states of contentment. As Muslims consider this world to be a temporary place where happiness is neither guaranteed nor necessary for having a fulfilled life, it is important to remember that positive states of being for Muslims are the result of good works in this life that allow one to have the opportunity for everlasting peace and wellbeing in the hereafter. Of necessity, a PII requires one to follow the pillars of Islam, engage in positive social activities as well as remember that God is the provider of all experiences, both positive and negative. The present life is considered a trial, and one must remember that "with every hardship comes ease" (Al-Quran, 94:5). Keeping these ideas in mind, the following suggestions are offered to forge a stronger link between Islamic identity development and wellbeing.

12.6.1 Positive Youth Development

Positive Youth Development (PYD) is a framework that views young people as resources to be developed (Lerner, von Eye, Lerner, & Lewin-Bizan, 2009). PYD focuses on five traits (the Five C's)—competence, confidence, connection, character, and caring—that, when taken together, indicate the presence of PYD. Competence includes a positive view of one's abilities and actions across social, academic, health, and vocational development. Confidence involves positive self-worth and self-efficacy. Connection refers to positive bonds with peers, family and community, while character focuses on morality and positive standards of conduct based on social and cultural norms. Finally, caring is having a sense of compassion for others. Lerner, Almerigi, Theokas, and Lerner (2005) note that adolescents who develop along the Five C's tend to make positive contributions (the sixth C) to themselves, their families, communities and society.

Research on PYD has shown a relationship between religiosity and positive behaviors and attitudes among adolescents (Crystal & DeBell, 2002; King & Furrow, 2004). Interestingly, King and Furrow (2004) found that religious practices in themselves did not lead to prosocial behavior. Instead, the social interactions in which these were performed, like the religious community, is what mattered. Developing a PII would likely emerge from positive interactions with other Muslims. Community programs and spaces that focus on positive interactions and the exercise of character may be best suited for this purpose. Focusing on the positive traits that embody an Islamic identity, such as those reflected in the five pillars of faith (belief, prayer, charity, fasting, and pilgrimage) as well as the Islamic virtues and character strengths listed in Table 12.1, would provide young Muslims the opportunity to integrate a religious identity into a personal one.

12.6.2 Positive Islamic Psychology Interventions

Positive psychology interventions (PPIs) may provide another route to developing a PII. PPIs are intentional activities that aim to improve wellbeing and can include gratitude activities such as counting one's blessings and writing letters of thanks (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005), savoring interventions such as revisiting positive memories, noticing positive aspects of one's present, and anticipating positive future events (Bryant & Veroff, 2007; Bryant, Chadwick, & Kluwe, 2011; Bryant, Ericksen, & DeHoek, 2008), creative activities like expressive writing and art (Wilkinson & Chilton, 2013), or mindfulness and meditation (Sedlmeier et al., 2012) as examples. As PPIs improve wellbeing (Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009), they may be useful in the development of a PII, especially when "other-oriented" interventions are used (Shin & Lyubomirsky, 2017). A qualitative study of young Muslim adults in the UAE (Lambert D'raven & Pasha-Zaidi, 2014) noted that many of the factors associated with happiness reflected the collectivist

nature of the culture. Yet, not all Muslims are part of a collectivist culture. Some may not have access to a welcoming family or community, whereas others may be introverted and less inclined to participate in other-oriented activities. Thus, self-oriented PPIs such as personal prayer (salat) are valuable. In fact, EEG studies have shown that performing the four stages of salat increases mental concentration (especially during prostration) and improves focused attention and relaxation (Doufesh, Faisal, Lim, & Ibrahim, 2012; Doufesh, Ibrahim, Ismail, & Wan Ahmad, 2014). Further, engaging in behaviors that reflect the five pillars of Islam may be considered Islamic PPIs as they reflect the same types of activities that positive psychology researchers have linked to wellbeing. Integrating Islamic practices into one's personal routine may help Muslims develop a stronger sense of identity and belonging to the larger Muslim community, thus promoting a PII.

12.6.3 Eudaimonic Wellbeing

In designing programs to increase wellbeing among Muslims, it is also important to keep in mind the understandings Muslims have towards "happiness". Islamic cultures in general are wary of excessive displays of happiness as these are subject to the evil eye, a concept reflecting the Quranic reference to the dangers of envy, whereby it is believed that an emphasis on overt or superficial exhibition of happiness can invite jealousy or negative energy, which can lead to personal loss or harm. Joshanloo (2013) notes that this fear of happiness may be associated with lower life satisfaction, a key indicator of wellbeing, among Muslims. Yet, how can Muslims develop a PII if they fear being (too) happy? Focusing on eudaimonic wellbeing (Waterman, 1990), which is based on activity, meaning and purpose rather than on hedonic wellbeing, which is a reflection of one's personal state of happiness and maximization of pleasurable states (Ryan & Deci, 2001), may be an approach. As Islam emphasizes improving oneself and society, focusing on prosocial behaviors may minimize an emphasis on the sole pursuit of positive emotions.

12.6.4 A Moderate Life

Finally, another way to promote a PII would be to seek wellbeing in moderation. Moderation is an important concept in Islam and has been discussed within the positive psychology literature. Grant and Schwartz (2011) note the inverted-U relationship between positive and negative states and behaviors. "Indeed, in disparate domains of research, psychologists have increasingly discovered that at high levels, positive effects begin to turn negative" (Grant & Schwartz, 2011, p. 62). A number of studies confirm the notion that it is possible to have too much of a good thing, whether it is too much happiness (Martin et al., 2002; Oishi, Diener, & Lucas, 2007), too much self-efficacy or self-esteem (Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger, &

Vohs, 2003; Vancouver & Kendall, 2006), too much empathy (Galinsky, Maddux, Gilin, & White, 2008; Gino & Pierce, 2009) or too much of a justice virtue (Bolino & Turnley, 2005). In developing a PII, it would therefore be important to consider moderation as a key component in whatever one does.

12.7 Conclusion

This chapter looked at the relationship between identity development, religion, and wellbeing and how these may play a role in promoting what we have put forward as a PII. Given the increase in Islamophobia around the world and the need for young adults to be guided in navigating this landscape, it is imperative to investigate how Islam can provide a positive influence on the development of a Muslim identity. Just as Islamic virtues fit well within and add to the VIA Classification of Character Strengths and Virtues (Peterson & Seligman, 2004), other ways of connecting positive psychology with Islamic beliefs and practices can help to create a uniquely indigenous Islamic positive psychology wherein the proposed model of PII development can be further explored and refined. As much of the research on wellbeing fits with Islamic notions of community, compassion, gratitude, prosocial behavior, and moderation, integrating these ideas is an important step in helping Muslims gain the benefits that a PII may be able to provide.

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