By Mohammad Daud Hamzah and Musa Garba Maitafsir

Abstract

The paradigm shift in psychological studies from the Humanistic, Freudain and Behaviouristic psychotherapies has brought us to yet another psychological paradigm (transpersonal) that is based on spirituality as a process of human guidance and counselling. This paradigm is aimed at handling the psychological problems beyond the physical entities, but going down to the spiritual nature of man. The spiritual nature of man from the Islamic perspective is the consciousness of Allah's will and power in therapy which is lacking in the contemporary transpersonal approach. It is therefore the aim of this paper to discuss the denotational implications, the scope and the shortfalls of the contemporary transpersonal psychotherapy. This is with the view to offering the Islamic process of psychotherapy based on the concept of Tauheed. By way of development, the relic of historical facts would be used to show the effectiveness of Islamic paradigm of psychotherapy so as to guide the Muslims from the aqidah contamination entails by the transpersonal approach. In summation, the paper would provide an Islamic model of transpersonal psychotherapy for the use of Muslims in their psychological practices.

1. Introduction

The concern of psychology is the manipulation of the variables and processes involved in motivation, development and modification of human behaviour. In pursuance of this need modern psychological theories are founded to serve as guide for human psychoses. The formulations of these theories according to Cowley and Derezotes (1994) are based on cultural and geographical limitations as they emerged over time to address the needs of the people of different social contexts1. With the variations in perception, environment, and the passage of time the discipline of psychology undergoes different transformations based on three

well-known paradigmatic forces of Behaviouristic, Freudian and Humanistic psychology. These transformations reveal the psychological concern for soul, psyche (conscious and unconscious state of man), mental processes, feelings and sensations underlying human behaviour2. Maslow (1968) considered the humanistic third force psychology to be a transitional preparation for a still 'higher' fourth paradigmatic force of psychology, ie. transpersonal psychology. This is based on the observation of Maslow (1970) that human beings who are wonderful out of their own human and biological nature necessitate the need for another paradigm for a more complete understanding of psychoses and the effective treatment.

As a result of the variation in human social groups, Cowley and Derezotes (1994) emphasize the need for a psychological approach that will serve the spiritual needs of man (spiritual). Netting, Thibault and Elliot (1990) see the proposed spiritual dimension as a universal aspect of human nature. As such, its need cannot be under-emphasized. According to them, to remain relevant in a postmodern world, psychologists must incorporate the comprehensive perspective of transpersonal theory into education and practice.

From the views of Cowley and Derezotes (1994), Maslow (1968) and (1970) and Netting, Thibault and Elliot (1990) the development of the contemporary psychological theories until the introduction of transpersonal psychology has been centred on either the overt, external and material variables or the internal, covert and hidden variables in man. Although the present efforts being made by transpersonal psychologists have made a small shift, but the shift is only geared towards spirituality that is devoid of religion (Islam) which is unsatisfactory from the Islamic point of view. It is therefore the aim of this paper to discuss and introduce the Islamic framework of psychotherapy which satisfies the Islamic expectations that is based on aqidah.

2. Transpersonal Psychotherapy

Literally the word transpersonal according to Wittine (1987) denotes beyond or through the "mask". While technically Cowley and Derezotes (1994) defined the term as going beyond the personal level. The implication of the their definitions entails the application of the concept as a process of treating human behaviour outside the context of physical entities. To them psychotherapy should be based on the natural energy3 that drives the entire human endeavours (spiritual). This is a psychological treatment that addresses the spiritual dimension of human existence to the psychological process. The paradigm which according to Valle (1989) calls us through and beyond our more familiar level of ego awareness to a critical examination of the very ground from which our behaviors, thoughts, and emotions emerge as forms or manifestations. Cowley and Derezotes (1994) perceive it as an essential aspect of being that is existentially subjective, transrational, non-local and non- temporal. Transpersonal

psychotherapy according to Maslow (1971) evolves in response to the need of broader context for understanding what it means to be fully human and to assess the farther reaches of human nature. This is a spiritual therapy that is an integral part or an essential universal need of human nature (Netting, Thibault and Elliot (1990). Transpersonal psychotherapeutic tradition is perceived by Nasr (1975) as a tradition of treatment which comes from the spirit (confidence in Allah) and not the psyche that can be the source of ethics of aesthetics.

It is an approach that believes in the need for meaning for higher values and for spiritual life which are as real as biological or social needs (Keen, 1974). This task according to Huxley (1968) involved a start from new premises, such as the premise that the most ultimate satisfaction comes from a depth and wholeness of the inner life, and therefore that we must explore and make fully available the techniques of spiritual development. Furthermore, the need for the fourth force according to Cowley and Derezotes (1994) is the desire to remain relevant in the highly sophisticated postmodern world to cater for educational and psychotherapeutic practices. The realization of the need for more comprehensive system that could cover the general need of man in the greatest depth of awareness has led to the development of transpersonal psychology as the fourth force of the psychological paradigm.

Based on the above needs, the transpersonal psychologists have tried to evolve techniques that are quite relevant to the present "illness" in man. This "illness" in man of our time is linked to a deficit of values and these values are spiritual in nature (concern for Allah as the source of cure). Although, Toynbee (1995) sees this approach as human degradation and the sickness of modern society who sought solutions through programmes based on religious practices (faith in Allah). But the essence of spirituality is to guide and influence the behaviour of man so as to establish a spiritually guided community which believes in Allah for cure. Grof (1988) and Hartman (1990) believe that much of the transpersonal ideas focus on the need for a reconnection of the human families to establish a global community or communion. Concurrently, Cowley and Derezotes (1994) observe that, the overall goal for transpersonal ideas is to facilitate the development of the spiritual dimension of higher states of "consciousness" within individuals, organizations, communities and cultures. As such the aim of transpersonal psychology is to shift from the traditional secular western position of self-actualization to the spiritually-based process.

3. Spiritual Limitation of the Transpersonal Psychotherapy

Although transpersonal approach has been able to create a space for spirituality in psychology, it is still questionable on how relevant and how applicable is it to human societies? Have the propounded ideas within the transpersonal approach covers all aspects of spirituality? To

answer these questions, Cowley and Derezotes (1994) note that in aspiring to work with the transpersonal or spiritual dimension, it is crucial that the client system and social worker come to a common understanding or shared meaning about the term spiritual as used in transpersonal theory. Not as contained by the theological walls of any specific ideology system, spirituality in transpersonal theory is not considered as equivalent to religion. In support of this Bloomfield (1980) states that the use of the word "spiritual" is neither a statement nor a belief per se. It is therefore an energy and life force that is innate in all living matter driving to perfect itself.

Houston (1988) uses the term entelechy to describe this essential urge of human nature to realize its inner potential. Thus, according to Cowley and Derezotes (1994) the development of the spiritual and moral dimensions forms the basis for spiritual maturity or higher states of consciousness. The individual manifests this maturity through increased social and self-responsibilities, which will benefit all in a given psychosocial environment. The scope emphasizes by transpersonal psychology has put the Muslims out of the maximum utilization of transpersonal paradigm because to the Muslims human existence must revolve around religion which is divine by origin. The divine nature entails the faith (Iman) as the epitome of psychotherapeutic treatment as implicated by Hanafi (1996) that, those who live in consciousness of Him (Allah) are safe and protected against maradhun (sickness of the mind). In this sense transpersonal psychotherapy from the Muslims, point of view could hardly be separated from religion. This is in line with the assertion of Nasr (1975) that God has placed religion in the world to enable man to overcome his complexes. The human therapeutic complexes could be of any kind ranging from psychological, social and biological to spiritual. For a successful therapy, divine spirituality that is based on the revealed guidance is the answer. Thus, the absence of religion in transpersonal approach seems to only summarize the ideas and practices entail by the earlier paradigms or they are going toward witch-crafting which is totally at variance with aqidah. In other words, the excellence of man and his well-being individually and collectively could only be realized by resorting to divine knowledge and ethical values.

4. The Expected Spiritual Scope of Transpersonal Psychotherapy

There is no doubt that transpersonal approach has created a space for spirituality in the formal conventional psychological theories. Yet the inclusion of the spiritual aspect to the psychological theories as contained in the transpersonal psychology is not enough for the general reference to the Muslims. This is because to them (Muslims) spirituality is an element of religion (Islam) that is directed by the knowledge contained in the Quran which are general guide for human existence. As such it is only the spiritual that is based on divine guidance that is paramount and total, and which precisely because of its totality embraces the psychic and even the corporeal aspects of man. (Nasr, 1975). In other words, the excellence of man and his well-being

individually and collectively are realized by means of divine knowledge and ethical values.

Hence, knowledge and ethics are linked (Hanafi, 1996). On the contrary the transpersonal psychologists see spirituality as an entity devoid of religion (divine guidance). Even to some non-Muslim psychologists this position is baseless as Koltko and Mark (1998) observe that it is a contradiction to think one can develop a psychology by leaping across the person from a point of view which goes beyond religion. In his quest for religious consideration in the transpersonal paradigm, Denton (1990) asserts that, to make it (transpersonal psychology) a complete spiritual approach, religious approach is inevitable because the religious and spiritual concerns provide the prime motive for all social works4. Based on this the development of religious spirituality should be an extension of the present form of transpersonal process of psychotherapy.

Koltko and Mark (1998) note that transpersonal psychology represents an extension of psychology (spiritual) that leads to what it really means to be a human being and marks the beginning of a psychological analysis that recognizes the natural status of man. As such some transpersonal psychologists have surfaced in the direction different from the earlier transpersonal paradigm as observed by Sollod (1992) that, a social work curriculum that deletes or omits the content related to the spiritual dimension may be called "Hollow". For the success of psychotherapeutic practices Weick (1992) so aptly observed that, when artistic practice joins with value commitment (religion), social work can indeed be a force in the society. The idea here is the connection between the psychotherapeutic process and the religiously inclined spiritual value of human nature that makes the therapeutic endeavours more effective.

The confirmation of this could be perceived from the work of Anthony et. al, (1987) that, for the individual with a genuine hunger for truth, reality, spirit, soul, self, God Oneness, freedom, being and meaning, the task of choosing among these offerings is intricate and subtle and not without the element of peril discriminations. Contrary to the concept of "neutral spirituality" maintained by transpersonal perspective, religious spirituality is therefore of paramount importance. Although, it is inevitable to acknowledge the efforts of transpersonal psychologists in evolving theories based on spiritual values, yet these efforts are unsatisfactory to the Muslims because they do not include divine faith in their theories. As such an attempt is made in this paper to provide another transpersonal framework that would be useful to the Muslims.

5. Islamic Approach to Transpersonal Psychotherapy

From the Islamic point of view spiritual approach to psychotherapy is an aspect of behaviour modification that is based on the relationship between man and his Creator (Allah) which entails an operational paradigm in which faith (Iman) in Allah is the focal point. Iman is both a cognitive and ethical constructs that gather all data and facts in the perspective which is proper to and requisite for a true understanding of the therapeutic processes. It is the consciousness of Allah's existence and the conviction in service (Iman) that serve as the beginning of therapy to remove mental sickness (maradhun) in man. This is rightly pointed out by Hanafi (1996) that, those who live in consciousness of Him (Allah) are safe and protected against maradhun as implicated by the verse below; "Thee do we worship, and Thine aid we seek" (Quran, 1:5)

The implication of the above verse is the recognition of Allah as the Creator. Having faith in Him is a matter of conviction which by extension leads a man to realistic services as a created organism in need of His help and bounties. In support of this point, a Professor of Botany5 in his alternative cure for cancer emphasizes ones commitments to his religion and faith in his God as the foundation of treatment. All these could be quantified by the content of the figure below depicting a framework of Islamic psychotherapy with faith as the foundation. The above Islamic framework of psychotherapy maintains man as the object who is influenced by the other components. The divine knowledge in man leads him to realization which is faith. From this conviction then comes the consciousness leading to purification of the body and soul. This is channelled through devotion. The attainment of this level is the therapy in man.

Figure: The Framework of Islamic psychotherapy

The diagram above shows the Islamic framework of psychotherapy that contains different psycho-spiritual processes with faith (Iman) as the central core that initiates the process of therapy in man. For example in the study on the Islamic approach to drug rehabilitation Mohammed, et. al (1996) found that one's total submission to Allah (faith) helps to shed dependence on the substance and replace it with dependence on Allah.

For the success of Islamic psychotherapy, the internal and external components of man must be purified. When this is accomplished the Ruh, the Qalb and Nafs as the fountainhead of vitality could be transformed into sources of psychodynamics explaining the human behaviour (Daud, 1996). The internal purification referred to above entails one's realization of the power of Allah and confidence in Him, while the external purification on the other hand is the appreciation of Allah's Law of observing the Halal (lawful) and Haram (unlawful) conducts. The essence of purification of the Ruh, the Qalb and the Nafs according to Sabeena (1996) is to bring one's Nafs under control and channelling it to the right direction because; "Successful is the one who keeps it pure, and ruined is the one who corrupts it" (Quran, 91:9-10)

When the Nafs is purified one would be in observance of the recommended (halal) acts which is the foundation of spiritual therapy and morality in Islam. The premise of faith is that servanthood and the fulfilment of its obligation is a prerequisite for the well-being of man in his individual and societal lives. One's successful engagement in the worship of Allah paves the way for His assistance (therapy) as contained in the verse quoted earlier from Suratul Fatiha. For the treatment of psychoses the spiritual issues of Allah's power, will and ability, the consequences of the day of judgement, the agony of the hellfire and the joys of paradise are some of the Islamic variables of transpersonal psychotherapy.

6. The Effectiveness of Islamic Psychotherapy

As earlier on discussed, psychotherapy in Islam is the conviction and servitude to Allah the creator that paves the way for His assistance (therapy). Good mental and spiritual health of the individual is a byproduct of a natural balance within the individual and the practice of social and religious obligations that are based on the three aspects of psychotherapy as noted by Shah (1996) that,

(a) Analysis of the Nafs
(b) Reformative process, and
(c) Socio-religious reintegration of the individual.

According to him psychotherapy from the Islamic point of view revolves around these three aspects.

The revelation, application and implication of the chapters of An-Nas (Mankind) and Al-Falaq (Daybreak) in the Quran are some of the clear examples of psychotherapy in Islam that is purely a psycho-spiritual treatment for human psychoses. For the purpose of spiritual guidance and solution to therapeutic problems, Islam prescribes some transpersonal modalities in the conduct of all affairs. For example to prevent the problems arising from the Jinns Muslims are required to recite psychotic antidotes before going into the toilet. Apart from the anti psychotic prescriptions there are many historical episodes in which the Islamic modes of conduct serve to be psychotherapeutic. A clear example could be seen from the following narration found in the address delivered to the King of Abyssinia by Jafar, as narrated by Sheikhulhadith (1978), p.19, that:

"O King! We were ignorant people. We worshipped stones. We used to eat carrion and commit all sort of undesirable and disgraceful acts. We did not make good our obligations to our relatives. The strong among us thrived at the expense of the weak..... (But when faith that is Allah's consciousness was inserted into their hearts) . . . . . We, were exhorted to give up idolatry and stone worship. We were enjoined right conduct and forbidden any act of indecency. We were taught to tell the truth, to make good our trust, to have regard for our Kith and Kin, and to be good to our neighbours.... and to shun everything foul and to avoid bloodshed, adultery, lewdness, telling of lies, misappropriating the orphan's heritage, bringing false accusations against others and all other indecent things of that sort....".

The above statements made by Jafar revealed the psychotic mind and behaviours of the 'Jahiliyyah' period which was the era of the 3W (Wine, Women and War). The time when the consumption of wine was part of the human survival. The era when a woman can have as many husbands as she desires. Likewise a man can have as many wives as he desires. It was also the attitude of the Jahiliyya people that war between tribes and towns was a matter of pride. These undesired behaviours have been changed to noble behaviours through faith which shows that fear of Allah is the foundation of good human behaviour and the most effective therapy. The historical narration below is another evidence of psychotherapeutic process as a result of the fear of Allah as recorded by An-Nawawi (1981), p.123, that:

"This was a man who had a cousin whom he loved more passionately than any man loves a woman. He tried to seduce her but she would have none of him, until a time of great hardship from famine. She approached him and he gave her one hundred and twenty dinars (USD 768.00) on condition that she would yield herself to him. She agreed and when they got together she pleaded. Fear Allah, and do not break the seal unlawfully; where upon he moved away from her despite the fact that he desired her most passionately; and he allowed her to keep the money he had given her."

From the above stated episode one could understand that, fear of Allah is the most important determinant of the Islamic framework for behaviour therapy. Fear of Allah, being the beginning of wisdom and a kin to the love for purification of our Nafs, it is an active assertion of our own will not to offend our Lord and Cherisher (Allah). With the fear of Allah good conducts are bound to flourish. The two episodes stated above indicate that psychoses are easily modified by directly or indirectly referring it to the Creator of man (Allah) because the Creator knows better what is good for man.

Conclusion

In this paper, an attempt was made to discuss the transpersonal paradigm of psychotherapy as prescribed by different transpersonal psychologists. In the process of analysis, it was found that the scope is limited to other ideas that are deficit of religious concern for human survival. As such a good Islamic framework is very necessary for which this paper has attempted to present. This paper shows that Islamic perspective is more comprehensive at best to the Muslims in guiding their aqidah. This is in comparison with the transpersonal psychotherapy that is based on witch doctoring as could be seen in Cowley and Derezotes (1994) who may be able to come up with a systematic spiritual journey to good mental health, but the aqidah may be contaminated.

In summation, even if this paper could not provide a well-accomplished conceptualization, it is hoped that it serves as the foundation for further development because of the need to guide the Muslims, aqidah against unconscious corruption that may be affected by the transpersonal approach.

References

Abdul, M.O. A. (1977) The Prophet of Islam. His Life, Sayings and Deeds. Lagos: Islamic Publication Bureau.Ali, A.Y. (1973) The Holy Qur,an : Text, Translation and Commentary. Lahore: Sh. Muhammad AshrafAmber Haque (1996) Cognitive restructuring of Muslim psychologists towards developing a firm faith. Compiled seminar papers on National seminar on Islamization of psychology organized by the Department of psychology International Islamic University Malaysia and International Institute of Islamic Thought Malaysia.
An-Nawawi, Riyadh as Salihim (Arabic Text) Tunis: Falah
Anthony, D. Ecker, B. and Welber, K. (1987) Spiritual choices: The problem of recognizing authentic paths to inner transformation. New York: paragon House.

Badri, M.B. London: (1979) The Delimma of Muslim Psychologist. London WWH London Publishers.
Bloomfield, H. (1980) Transcendental meditation as an adjunkt to therapy. Science and behaviour books.
Cowley, S. and Derezotes, D. (1994) Transpersonal psychology and social work education. Journal of social work education.
Daud, H, M. (1996) An Islamic theory of arousal and information processing.Compiled Seminar papers on National seminar on Islamization of psychologyorganized by the Department of psychology International Islamic UniversityMalaysia and International Institute of Islamic thought Malaysia.
Denton, R.T. (1990) The religiously fundamentalist family: training for assessment and treatment. Journal of social work education.
Grof, S. (1988). Human survival and consciousness evolution. Albany: state Universityof New york Press.
Hartman, A. (1990) Our global villege. Social Work,
Huxley, J. (1968). Transhumanism. Journal of Humanistic Psychology, New York: Harper & Brothers)
Mark,E.and Koltko, R. (1998) Maslow, Abraham -- Criticism & interpretation;Transpersonal psychology; Journal of Humanistic Psychology.
Maslow, A. H. (1968). Toward a psychology of being (2nd ed.). New York: Van Nostrand Rienhold.
Maslow, A.H. (1970) Motivation and Personality, (2nd Ed.) New York: Harper and Row
Maslow, A. H. (1970). Foreword. In F. G. Goble, The third force. New York:Washington Square/Pocket Books.
Maslow, A. H. (1971). The farther reaches of human nature. New York: Viking.
Mohamed, M.N. Ishak, I. and Che Din, S. (1996) An Islamic approach to to drug rehabilitation. Cognitive restructuring of Muslim psychologists towards developing a firm faith. Compiled Seminar papers on National seminar on Islamization of psychology organized by the Department of psychology International Islamic University Malaysia and International Institute of Islamic thought Malaysia
Netting, A. Thibault and Elliot (1990) Integrating content on organized religion into macropractice courses. Journal of social work education.
Sheikhul Hadith, M. A. (1978) The Teachings of Islam, London: Heinemann.
Sollod, R. (1992) The hollow curriculum: The Chronicle of Higher Education.
Valle, R. S. (1989). The emergence of transpersonal psychology. In R. S. Valle & S.Halling (Eds.), New York: Plenum.
Wittine, B. (1987) Beyond ego. Yoga Journal.

Notes:

1. These theories are based on the perception of the people that postulated them. It is worth knowing that these theories were not postulated by Muslims for that they are not meant to promote aqidah.
2. In the review of modern theoretical constructs made by Maitafsir (1999) he perceives these paradigms as biological and extrinsic in nature.

3. From the Islamic point of view natural energy is the power of Allah. But from the transpersonal approach is something different.
4. The reader should know that Denton aspires for religious concern, but specifically not the religion of Islam.
5. Professor Teo, C. K. H. is a Professor of Botany at University of Science Malaysia. He discussed this issue on T.V. 3 in Malaysia on the 25th of June, 1999.