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THE INFLUENCE OF HABITS ON IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF INDIVIDUALS FROM AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore the conceptual relationship between psychological theories of habit formation and the Islamic concept of consistency in righteous behavior (istiqamah) in the context of improving individual quality of life. The study is grounded in the argument that sustainable behavioral change is not primarily driven by motivation or intention, but by repeated actions that become automatic through stable contextual cues. By integrating scientific and religious perspectives, this research seeks to provide a holistic understanding of how consistent behavior contributes to long-term well-being.

A qualitative research design employing a library research approach was used. Data were collected from primary Islamic sources, including the Qur'an and Hadith, as well as secondary sources consisting of peer-reviewed international journals and academic books on habit formation, behavior change, and quality of life. The data were analyzed using descriptive and comparative qualitative analysis to identify conceptual parallels between psychological habit theory and Islamic ethical teachings.

The findings indicate a strong convergence between the two perspectives. Psychological research emphasizes repetition, contextual stability, and automaticity as core mechanisms of habit formation, while Islamic teachings highlight consistency, moderation, and routine practice as foundations of moral and spiritual development. Both frameworks suggest that small, repeated behaviors performed consistently are more effective for sustaining long-term change than sporadic, high-effort actions.

This study is limited by its reliance on secondary sources and conceptual analysis, which restricts empirical generalization. However, its value lies in offering an interdisciplinary framework that bridges behavioral psychology and Islamic ethics. The integration of these perspectives provides practical insights for designing culturally meaningful and scientifically grounded behavior change strategies aimed at enhancing holistic quality of life.

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Introduction

Individual quality of life is strongly influenced by patterns of behavior that are performed repeatedly in everyday contexts. In psychological science, these recurring behavioral patterns are referred to as habits. Habits are defined as learned behaviors that are automatically triggered by stable contextual cues rather than deliberate decision-making processes (Wood & Rünger, 2016). Because habits operate with minimal cognitive effort, they play a crucial role in shaping daily functioning, affecting health behaviors, emotional well-being, productivity, and overall life balance. Consequently, understanding how habits are formed, maintained, and changed has become a central concern in behavioral psychology and intervention research.

Habit formation theory emphasizes that long-term behavioral change does not rely solely on intention, motivation, or conscious self-control. While intentions may initiate behavior, they are often insufficient to sustain it over time (Verplanken & Wood, 2006, as cited in Wood & Rünger, 2016). Instead, habits emerge through consistent repetition of the same behavior in a stable context, gradually strengthening the association between contextual cues and behavioral responses. Over time, this process leads to automaticity, a state in which behavior is executed with little conscious awareness or effort (Lally et al., 2010). Once automaticity is achieved, behavior becomes more resistant to disruption and less dependent on fluctuating motivational states.

Empirical research supports this perspective by demonstrating that the repetition of behaviors in consistent contexts is a stronger predictor of long-term behavior maintenance than motivational strength alone. Lally et al. (2010), for instance, found that habit formation follows a nonlinear trajectory, with automaticity increasing gradually through repeated practice rather than occurring at a fixed time point. This finding challenges popular assumptions that habits form within a short, uniform timeframe and instead highlights the importance of persistence and environmental stability. Such evidence reinforces the idea that sustainable behavioral change is fundamentally a learning process rooted in repetition rather than willpower.

The relevance of habit formation becomes especially evident in the context of behavioral interventions, such as those targeting dietary change, physical activity, or stress management. Although many interventions successfully produce short-term improvements, their long-term effectiveness is often limited by the re-emergence of old habits once external support is withdrawn (Gardner et al., 2012). This phenomenon occurs because pre-existing habits, which are strongly embedded in daily routines and environmental cues, tend to regain control over behavior when conscious self-regulation weakens. As Gardner et al. (2020) argue, interventions that fail to address habit disruption and reformation risk producing only temporary change.

Therefore, contemporary behavior change research increasingly emphasizes the need to design interventions that support habit formation rather than relying solely on informational or motivational strategies. Techniques such as cue restructuring, behavioral repetition, and context stability are now recognized as essential components of effective intervention design (Wood & Rünger, 2016). By aligning desired behaviors with consistent environmental cues, individuals can reduce cognitive burden and increase the likelihood that positive behaviors will persist over time. In this sense, habits serve as psychological infrastructure that supports sustainable well-being.

Interestingly, the importance of behavioral repetition and consistency is not unique to modern psychology. Within the Islamic perspective, the concept of istiqamah—steadfastness and consistency in righteous deeds—occupies a central position in moral and spiritual development. Islamic teachings emphasize the regular performance of good deeds, such as praying on time (shalat tepat waktu), engaging in remembrance (istighfar), and reading the Qur'an, as pathways to strengthening faith and inner stability. These practices are not framed as isolated actions but as routines that shape character and spiritual resilience through continuous repetition.

From an epistemological standpoint, the Islamic concept of istiqamah closely aligns with psychological principles of habit formation. Both perspectives recognize that repeated actions shape internal states, whether they are described as automatic behavioral responses or as strengthened spiritual dispositions. Regular worship practices, for example, can be understood as structured routines embedded within daily temporal cues, such as prayer times, which facilitate behavioral automaticity. Over time, these practices may reduce reliance on fluctuating motivation and instead become integral components of daily life, mirroring the psychological process by which habits are formed and sustained.

Moreover, Islamic teachings emphasize moderation and continuity, as reflected in the prophetic tradition that the most beloved deeds are those performed consistently, even if they are small. This principle resonates with empirical findings suggesting that small, repeated behaviors are more effective for habit formation than sporadic, high-effort actions (Lally et al., 2010). Thus, the convergence between Islamic ethical guidance and psychological science highlights a shared understanding of human behavior: that lasting transformation emerges through sustained practice rather than momentary intensity.

In conclusion, habits play a foundational role in shaping individual quality of life by structuring daily behavior in ways that influence physical, psychological, and spiritual well-being. Psychological theories of habit formation underscore the importance of repetition, contextual stability, and automaticity in achieving long-term behavioral change. At the same time, the Islamic concept of istiqamah offers a complementary framework that emphasizes consistency in virtuous actions as a means of cultivating inner balance and spiritual growth. Integrating these perspectives provides a holistic understanding of habit formation, demonstrating that consistent practice—whether viewed through scientific or religious lenses—is central to sustaining meaningful and enduring improvements in quality of life.

Methods

This study employs a qualitative research design using a library research approach to explore the conceptual relationship between habit formation theories in psychology and the Islamic concept of consistent righteous behavior. Qualitative methods are particularly appropriate for research that seeks to understand meanings, concepts, and theoretical connections rather than to measure variables numerically (Creswell, 2014). Through an interpretive and analytical process, this study aims to synthesize scientific findings on habit formation with normative Islamic teachings to provide a comprehensive understanding of behavior consistency and quality of life.

Library research, also referred to as documentary or literature-based research, involves the systematic collection and analysis of existing texts and scholarly works relevant to the research topic (Zed, 2008). This approach was chosen because the study focuses on theoretical exploration rather than empirical experimentation. The method allows for critical engagement with authoritative sources across disciplines, particularly psychology and Islamic studies, to identify convergences and complementarities between scientific knowledge and religious concepts.

The qualitative nature of this research emphasizes depth of understanding, contextual interpretation, and conceptual comparison. Rather than testing hypotheses, the study seeks to interpret patterns, themes, and principles emerging from the literature (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). This approach is suitable for examining abstract constructs such as habits, automaticity, consistency, and spiritual discipline, which are embedded within cultural, cognitive, and religious frameworks.

Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources to ensure conceptual richness and scholarly rigor.

Primary sources consisted of Islamic textual materials, namely the Al-Qur'an and Hadith, which serve as foundational references for understanding Islamic perspectives on behavior, consistency, and moral discipline. These sources were selected because they provide normative guidance on daily practices, repetition of good deeds, and the principle of istiqamah (steadfastness). The use of primary religious texts is consistent with qualitative research traditions in religious and philosophical studies, where authoritative texts are treated as central data sources (Flick, 2018).

Secondary sources included peer-reviewed international journal articles, academic books, and theoretical reviews related to habit formation, behavior change, quality of life, and behavioral psychology. Key psychological literature on habits, automaticity, and behavioral repetition—such as works by Wood and Rünger (2016), Lally et al. (2010), and Gardner et al. (2012; 2020)—were prioritized due to their empirical and theoretical relevance. These sources were selected based on criteria of academic credibility, relevance to the research focus, and contribution to contemporary discussions on behavior sustainability.

The data collection process involved several systematic steps. First, relevant keywords were identified, including habit formation, automaticity, behavior change, quality of life, istiqamah, and Islamic behavioral ethics. These keywords guided the selection of academic articles and theoretical texts. Scholarly databases such as Google Scholar and major academic publishers were used to identify peer-reviewed materials.

For Islamic sources, authoritative translations and classical interpretations were consulted to ensure conceptual accuracy and contextual understanding. The selection process emphasized texts that explicitly address repetition, consistency, and routine behavior, as these elements are central to the concept of habit formation in psychology (Wood & Rünger, 2016).

All selected materials were read closely and repeatedly to identify key themes, arguments, and conceptual frameworks. This iterative reading process is a standard practice in qualitative research, allowing researchers to develop familiarity with the data and to refine analytical categories over time (Creswell, 2014).

Data analysis was conducted using a descriptive-comparative qualitative analysis. Descriptive analysis was employed to summarize and explain key concepts from psychological theories of habit formation and Islamic teachings on consistent behavior. This stage focused on clarifying definitions, mechanisms, and outcomes related to habits and istiqamah without imposing evaluative judgments (Miles et al., 2014).

Subsequently, a comparative analysis was applied to examine conceptual parallels and points of convergence between the two perspectives. Comparative qualitative analysis allows researchers to identify similarities and differences across frameworks, enhancing theoretical integration and interdisciplinary understanding (Flick, 2018). In this study, psychological constructs such as repetition, contextual cues, and automaticity were compared with Islamic notions of routine worship, moral discipline, and consistency in good deeds.

The analytical process was inductive, meaning that interpretations emerged from the data rather than being imposed a priori. This approach supports theoretical openness and reduces the risk of confirmation bias (Patton, 2015). Through this process, themes such as behavioral stability, internalization of actions, and long-term well-being were identified as shared outcomes across both domains.

To ensure the rigor and credibility of the study, several qualitative trustworthiness criteria were applied. Source triangulation was achieved by integrating religious texts with contemporary psychological research, thereby strengthening conceptual validity. Additionally, the use of peer-reviewed journals enhanced the reliability of the scientific data, while reliance on authoritative Islamic sources ensured theological accuracy.

Reflexivity was also maintained throughout the research process by acknowledging the interpretive nature of qualitative analysis and by grounding interpretations in established scholarly literature. Such practices align with best standards in qualitative research methodology (Creswell, 2014).

As a library-based qualitative study, this research did not involve human participants and therefore posed no direct ethical risks. Nevertheless, ethical academic practices were upheld by accurately citing all sources, respecting intellectual property, and presenting interpretations responsibly. The integration of Islamic teachings was conducted with scholarly sensitivity, aiming to reflect their meanings faithfully without distortion.

In summary, the qualitative library research method adopted in this study provides a systematic and rigorous framework for exploring the relationship between psychological habit formation theories and Islamic concepts of consistent behavior. Through descriptive and comparative analysis, the method enables a nuanced understanding of how repetition and consistency function as foundational mechanisms for improving quality of life across scientific and religious perspectives.

Result

Empirical research on habits and behavior change consistently demonstrates that habits play a central role in shaping long-term behavioral outcomes. Across multiple methodological approaches—including longitudinal studies, systematic reviews, scoping reviews, and experimental interventions—scholars converge on the conclusion that habits are not merely repeated actions but learned behavioral responses that become increasingly automatic through consistent repetition in stable contexts. This body of evidence provides a strong empirical foundation for understanding why behavior change is often difficult to sustain and why habit-focused strategies are essential for improving quality of life.

One of the most influential empirical contributions to habit research is the longitudinal study conducted by Lally et al. (2010), which examined how new habits are formed in everyday life. Their findings demonstrate that habit formation is a gradual process driven by repeated behavior rather than by intention alone. Automaticity increased incrementally as individuals consistently performed the same behavior in the same context, supporting the theoretical claim that habits emerge through learning mechanisms rather than conscious decision-making. Importantly, the study also revealed substantial individual differences in the time required for habits to form, challenging simplistic assumptions that habits develop within a fixed period. This evidence underscores the importance of persistence and repetition as key determinants of sustainable behavior change.

Complementing this longitudinal perspective, Wood and Rünger (2016) provided a comprehensive theoretical review of the psychological mechanisms underlying habit formation and maintenance. Their analysis emphasizes that habits are fundamentally cue-driven, meaning that environmental contexts play a decisive role in triggering behavior automatically. Once a habit is established, behavior is initiated with minimal conscious deliberation, allowing individuals to conserve cognitive resources. This automatic nature explains why habits are Empirical research on habits and behavior change consistently demonstrates that habits play a central role in shaping long-term behavioral outcomes. Across multiple methodological approaches—including longitudinal studies, systematic reviews, scoping Empirical research on habits and behavior change consistently demonstrates that habits play a central role in shaping long-term behavioral outcomes. Across multiple methodological approaches—including longitudinal studies, systematic reviews, scoping reviews, and experimental interventions—scholars converge on the conclusion that habits are not merely repeated actions but learned behavioral responses that become increasingly automatic through consistent repetition in stable contexts. This body of evidence provides a strong empirical foundation for understanding why behavior change is often difficult to sustain and why habit-focused strategies are essential for improving quality of life.

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Further empirical insight is offered by Rebar and Gardner (2019), who conducted a scoping review focusing on the role of habits in behavior change interventions. Their findings indicate that while habits are powerful drivers of behavior, they cannot be altered through generic interventions alone. Instead, habit change requires targeted strategies that address both the disruption of existing habits and the formation of new ones. The authors highlight techniques such as context restructuring, action planning, and repetition in stable environments as critical components of successful interventions. This work contributes to a growing consensus that behavior change initiatives must move beyond intention-based models and explicitly incorporate habit-focused mechanisms to achieve lasting effects.

Experimental evidence further supports the effectiveness of habit-based interventions. A study published in the *International Journal of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity* (2014) demonstrated that habit strength can be significantly increased through structured interventions that emphasize repeated behavior in consistent contexts. Participants who engaged in regular, contextually cued behaviors showed measurable increases in habit strength over time, even after the intervention period ended. These findings are particularly important because they suggest that well-designed interventions can lead to enduring behavioral change by fostering automaticity, thereby reducing reliance on conscious self-control. Such evidence reinforces the practical value of habit theory in applied health and behavioral settings.

More recent empirical work by Hawlader et al. (2022) extends these findings by emphasizing the role of simplicity and accessibility in habit formation. Their study indicates that habits are more likely to form when behaviors are simple, manageable, and easily repeated within daily routines. Complex or demanding behaviors, by contrast, are less likely to become habitual because they require sustained cognitive effort. This insight aligns with earlier findings by Lally et al. (2010), suggesting that small, consistent actions are more effective for habit formation than ambitious but irregular efforts. The emphasis on simplicity has important implications for intervention design, particularly in promoting sustainable lifestyle changes.

Taken together, these empirical studies reveal several consistent patterns. First, habits are formed through repetition rather than intention, highlighting the limits of motivation-based approaches to behavior change (Lally et al., 2010). Second, environmental contexts play a decisive role in triggering habitual behavior, underscoring the importance of situational cues and routine structures (Wood & Rünger, 2016). Third, changing habits requires targeted and deliberate strategies that address both old and new behavioral patterns (Rebar & Gardner, 2019). Finally, interventions that prioritize simplicity and consistency are more likely to succeed in fostering durable habits (Hawlader et al., 2022).

From a broader perspective, this empirical literature helps explain why many behavior change efforts fail to produce long-term results. When interventions focus solely on education, awareness, or motivation, they often neglect the automatic processes that govern daily behavior. As a result, individuals may revert to established habits once external support is removed or when cognitive resources are strained. By contrast, habit-based approaches recognize that sustainable change occurs when desired behaviors become integrated into daily routines and are triggered automatically by contextual cues.

In conclusion, empirical studies on habit formation and behavior change provide compelling evidence that habits function as a foundational mechanism for long-term behavioral stability. The convergence of findings across diverse methodologies strengthens the validity of habit theory and highlights its relevance for improving health, well-being, and quality of life. By demonstrating that consistent repetition, contextual stability, and behavioral simplicity are central to habit formation, this body of research offers a robust scientific framework for understanding how enduring behavioral change can be achieved.

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Scientific Strategies for Changing Habits in a Positive Direction

Based on the theoretical and empirical literature on habit formation and behavior change, several evidence-based strategies can be applied to modify existing habits and replace them with more adaptive and sustainable behaviors. These strategies acknowledge that habits are not simply a matter of choice but are embedded in contextual, emotional, and cognitive systems that must be addressed systematically.

1. Identifying and Analyzing Existing Habits

The first critical step in changing a habit is developing awareness of the behavior that needs to be modified and understanding the conditions under which it occurs. Habits are typically triggered by stable contextual cues, such as time of day, location, emotional state, or social environment, and are maintained by perceived rewards that may be emotional, psychological, or social in nature (Wood & Rünger, 2016). Without identifying these underlying cues and rewards, attempts at behavior change often remain superficial and ineffective. By analyzing when, where, and why a habit occurs, individuals can uncover the automatic processes that sustain it. This analysis allows for targeted interventions that focus not only on suppressing unwanted behaviors but also on modifying the contextual and emotional factors that reinforce them. Research in habit psychology

emphasizes that disrupting or redesigning these cues is often more effective than relying on self-control alone (Wood & Rünger, 2016). Using Implementation Intentions

Once a habit and its triggers have been identified, the use of implementation intentions becomes a powerful strategy for behavior change. Implementation intentions involve creating specific "if–then" plans that link a situational cue to a desired behavior, such as "If I feel stressed after work, then I will take a ten-minute walk" (Gollwitzer, 1999). This approach strengthens the mental association between a context and a new behavioral response, increasing the likelihood that the desired action will be performed automatically when the cue arises. Empirical research demonstrates that implementation intentions are particularly effective because they reduce the cognitive effort required at the moment of action, shifting behavior control from conscious deliberation to automatic execution (Gollwitzer & Sheeran, 2006). In the context of habit change, implementation intentions function as a bridge between intention and action, helping new behaviors compete with and gradually replace established habits.

2. Maintaining Consistency Within the Same Context

Consistency is a central principle in habit formation and change. New behaviors are more likely to become habitual when they are performed repeatedly in the same context, allowing the association between the cue and the behavior to strengthen over time (Lally et al., 2010). Research on automaticity shows that repetition in stable environments leads to gradual increases in behavioral automaticity, making the behavior less dependent on motivation or conscious effort. In contrast, performing a behavior inconsistently across varying contexts weakens the cue–behavior link and slows habit formation. Therefore, individuals seeking to change a habit should aim to practice the new behavior in a predictable setting, such as at the same time or place each day. Lally et al. (2010) emphasize that while habit formation requires time, consistent repetition is the most reliable mechanism for achieving long-term behavioral stability.

3. Starting with Specific and Realistic Targets

Another crucial strategy in habit change is beginning with specific, manageable goals rather than ambitious or abstract resolutions. Research in the habit change literature indicates that small, achievable behaviors are more likely to be repeated consistently and eventually become habitual (Gardner et al., 2012). Large or overly demanding goals can increase cognitive and emotional burden, leading to early failure and reduced self-efficacy. By contrast, realistic and clearly defined targets—such as engaging in five minutes of daily physical activity rather than committing to an intense exercise regimen—lower the barrier to action and increase the likelihood of sustained repetition. Over time, these small habits can be gradually expanded as automaticity develops. This incremental approach aligns with empirical findings suggesting that sustainable behavior change emerges through steady accumulation of repeated actions rather than through sudden, dramatic transformation (Lally et al., 2010).

In summary, scientific evidence highlights that effective habit change requires a structured and strategic approach that addresses automatic processes, contextual cues, and cognitive limitations. By identifying existing habits, employing implementation intentions, maintaining consistency within stable contexts, and setting realistic targets, individuals can systematically replace maladaptive habits with behaviors that support long-term well-being. These strategies demonstrate that meaningful habit change is not driven by motivation alone but by deliberate design of behavior and environment grounded in psychological science.

Monitoring and evaluating

Monitoring and evaluating progress is a critical component of successful habit change, as it allows individuals to assess whether newly adopted behaviors are being performed consistently and effectively over time. In the context of habit formation, monitoring serves not only as a measurement tool but also as a mechanism for enhancing self-awareness and strengthening motivation. Research in self-regulation and behavior change consistently shows that individuals who track their behaviors are more likely to sustain positive change compared to those who rely on intention alone (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007).

Regularly measuring progress helps individuals transform abstract goals into concrete, observable outcomes. When behavior is recorded—whether through written logs, digital applications, or reflective journaling—it becomes more salient and cognitively accessible, which supports behavioral persistence (Michie et al., 2009). This process also provides immediate feedback, allowing individuals to recognize patterns of success and identify moments of difficulty. Feedback is a key driver of learning, as it reinforces behaviors that lead to desired outcomes while signaling the need for adjustment when progress slows (Carver & Scheier, 1998).

From a habit formation perspective, monitoring plays an important role during the early stages of behavior change, when automaticity has not yet been established. During this phase, behavior remains effortful and highly dependent on conscious control (Lally et al., 2010). By tracking progress, individuals can maintain engagement during this vulnerable period and prevent relapse into old habits. Visible evidence of progress—such as streaks or incremental improvements—acts as a form of positive reinforcement, strengthening commitment and increasing the likelihood of repetition (Wood & Rünger, 2016).

Evaluation also enables individuals to adjust contextual factors that may hinder habit formation. As habits are strongly influenced by environmental cues, monitoring outcomes can reveal whether the current context effectively supports the desired behavior (Wood & Neal, 2007). For example, if progress data show inconsistent performance, this may indicate that contextual cues are unstable or competing with established habits. In such cases, modifying the environment—such as changing timing, location, or social conditions—can help strengthen the cue–behavior association. This adaptive process aligns with evidence suggesting that successful habit change often requires iterative refinement rather than rigid adherence to an initial plan (Gardner et al., 2012).

Moreover, monitoring and evaluation contribute to emotional regulation during the habit change process. Behavioral change is often accompanied by fluctuations in motivation and self-efficacy, particularly when progress is slower than expected. Systematic evaluation helps normalize these fluctuations by framing setbacks as data

rather than failures, thereby reducing self-criticism and disengagement (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007). This perspective encourages a growth-oriented mindset, where challenges are viewed as opportunities for learning and adjustment.

In addition, monitoring supports long-term maintenance by signaling the transition from effortful behavior to habitual action. As automaticity increases, individuals may rely less on tracking; however, periodic evaluation remains valuable for preventing habit decay and ensuring alignment with broader life goals (Lally et al., 2010). This balance between active monitoring and gradual autonomy reflects the dynamic nature of habit formation, where control shifts from conscious regulation to automatic processes over time

Discussion

The findings of this study, derived from a qualitative library-based analysis, demonstrate a strong conceptual convergence between psychological theories of habit formation and Islamic teachings on consistent righteous behavior. Both perspectives emphasize that sustainable improvement in quality of life is not achieved through temporary motivation or isolated actions, but through repeated behaviors that gradually become stable, internalized patterns. This alignment provides a meaningful interdisciplinary framework for understanding how human behavior can be shaped in ways that support long-term well-being.

From a psychological standpoint, habit theory explains that behavior is largely governed by automatic processes triggered by environmental cues rather than by conscious intention alone (Wood & Rünger, 2016). Once behaviors are repeatedly performed in consistent contexts, they develop automaticity, allowing individuals to act with minimal cognitive effort (Lally et al., 2010). This mechanism helps explain why many behavior change interventions fail to produce lasting outcomes: when new behaviors are not converted into habits, individuals tend to revert to old routines once motivation declines or external support is removed (Gardner et al., 2012). The empirical studies reviewed in this research reinforce the argument that habit formation is a key determinant of behavioral sustainability and, by extension, quality of life.

These psychological insights resonate strongly with Islamic teachings on *istiqamah*, which emphasize steadfastness and continuity in good deeds. In Islam, repeated acts of worship such as performing prayers on time, engaging in remembrance (*dhikr*), and reading the Qur'an are not viewed merely as religious obligations but as practices that cultivate inner discipline, emotional balance, and spiritual resilience. The emphasis on regularity mirrors the psychological principle that repeated behaviors, when embedded in stable temporal and situational contexts, are more likely to become enduring habits (Wood & Neal, 2007). Thus, Islamic practice can be understood as an applied behavioral system that naturally facilitates habit formation through structured routines.

The discussion also highlights the importance of repetition over intensity. Psychological research indicates that small, simple behaviors repeated consistently are more effective for habit formation than complex or demanding actions performed irregularly (Lally et al., 2010; Hawlader et al., 2022). This finding aligns with Islamic ethical guidance that values consistency, even in small deeds, over sporadic acts of great effort. Such convergence suggests that both scientific and religious frameworks recognize human cognitive limitations and advocate gradual, manageable pathways to behavioral change.

Furthermore, the role of context emerges as a critical factor in both domains. Habit research underscores that environmental cues—such as time, place, and social setting—

play a decisive role in triggering automatic behavior (Wood & Rünger, 2016). Similarly, Islamic practices are embedded within clearly defined contexts, such as fixed prayer times and ritual conditions, which function as powerful behavioral cues. These structured contexts reduce reliance on fluctuating motivation and strengthen behavioral consistency, thereby supporting both spiritual commitment and psychological stability.

Another important discussion point concerns monitoring and evaluation. Psychological literature emphasizes that self-monitoring and feedback enhance motivation and facilitate adjustment during the habit formation process (Michie et al., 2009; Baumeister & Vohs, 2007). In Islamic tradition, self-reflection (*muhasabah*) serves a similar function, encouraging individuals to regularly evaluate their actions and intentions. This parallel further illustrates how reflective practices support sustained behavior change by reinforcing accountability and continuous improvement.

The integration of these perspectives also has implications for behavior change interventions. Rather than framing religious practices and psychological strategies as separate or competing systems, this study suggests that they can be mutually reinforcing. Habit-based psychological strategies such as implementation intentions, context stability, and gradual goal setting (Gollwitzer & Sheeran, 2006; Gardner et al., 2012) can enhance the effectiveness of religious routines, while Islamic principles of consistency and discipline provide a meaningful motivational and ethical foundation for habit formation.

In terms of quality of life, the discussion reveals that habits function as a stabilizing force across physical, psychological, and spiritual domains. When positive behaviors become habitual, individuals experience reduced cognitive load, greater emotional regulation, and increased behavioral coherence (Wood & Rünger, 2016). In Islamic understanding, consistent righteous behavior is associated with inner peace (*sakinah*) and psychological balance, suggesting that habit formation contributes not only to functional efficiency but also to subjective well-being.

In conclusion, the discussion of this research demonstrates that habit formation is a central mechanism linking psychological science and Islamic behavioral ethics. Both perspectives converge on the idea that sustainable change arises from repetition, contextual stability, and gradual internalization of behavior. By integrating empirical findings from psychology with Islamic concepts such as istiqamah and muhasabah, this study offers a holistic framework for understanding how consistent behavior can enhance quality of life. This interdisciplinary synthesis not only enriches theoretical understanding but also provides practical insights for designing behavior change strategies that are culturally meaningful, scientifically grounded, and sustainable over time.

Conclusion

Habits are the result of psychological adaptation arising from repeated behaviors that are triggered by specific contexts and gradually become automatic once firmly established. Scientific research demonstrates that improving quality of life requires not only the intention to change, but also the deliberate disruption of negative habits and their replacement with positive ones through systematic and consistent strategies. Sustainable behavior change emerges when new behaviors are practiced repeatedly within stable contexts until they become an integral part of daily life.

From an Islamic perspective, the principle of consistency in good deeds (*istiqamah*) reflects the same fundamental understanding of human behavior emphasized in modern psychology. Both perspectives recognize that lasting transformation is achieved through

continuity, discipline, and gradual internalization rather than through sporadic or impulsive efforts. Consistent righteous actions shape character, strengthen self-regulation, and contribute to long-term psychological and spiritual well-being.

The integration of psychological habit theory and Islamic ethical principles offers a comprehensive and practical framework for habit change. This synthesis enables individuals to approach behavioral improvement in a way that is both scientifically grounded and spiritually meaningful. By applying consistent, context-aware strategies to replace maladaptive habits with positive routines, individuals can enhance their quality of life in a holistic manner, encompassing physical, psychological, and spiritual dimensions.

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