

A Methodological Analysis of Interdisciplinary Studies on the Qur'an and Psychology in Iranian Scholarly Articles

Sayed Mostafa Ahmadzadeh ¹ 

Associate Professor, Department of the Qur'an and Social Studies, Civilizational Islam Research Center, Islamic Sciences and Culture Academy, Mashhad, Iran

Azam Naiebnia ; Kobra Hussein ; Farzane Ghanbari ; Gol Chaman Ahmadi ; Masoome Yeganeh 

PhD Student in Qur'an and Sciences, Specialization in Psychology, Jurisprudence and Qur'an Academy, Al-Mustafa International University, Mashhad, Iran

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ABSTRACT:

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This study aims to analyze the research methodologies employed in interdisciplinary studies of the Qur'an and psychology published in Iranian scholarly journals from 2011 to 2024. Initially, 346 articles were selected, and after closer examination, 136 articles that specifically addressed interdisciplinary studies between the Qur'an and psychology were chosen as the main corpus of analysis. A total of 157 instances of research methods were identified across the corpus. These methods were analyzed based on an expert-approved classification of research methodologies into quantitative, qualitative, and mixed categories. The findings revealed that descriptive-analytical methods and qualitative content analysis were the most frequently employed approaches, whereas mixed methods, survey methods, and the Qur'an-by-Qur'an method were the least common. The analyses indicate that attention to paradigmatic coherence and innovation in methodological development were among the strengths, while the use of low-yield methods, methodological chaos, and insufficient attention to interdisciplinary requirements were among the key methodological weaknesses observed in these studies.

KEYWORDS: The Qur'an and psychology, Research methods; Methodology of interdisciplinary studies; Qur'an-psychological studies.

1. Corresponding Author. Email Address: m.ahmadzadeh@isca.ac.ir
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1. Introduction

One of the principal pathways for theoretical advancement in Qur'anic studies is the adoption and refinement of methodological approaches that enable the development of new research methods. Within this academic field, the scholarly article holds a distinctive position, as it embodies innovation, problem-orientation, and methodological precision. As the primary medium for intellectual exchange among experts, scholarly articles serve both as instruments of scientific production and as channels of academic communication (Alibeik et al. 2015). Consequently, the methodological framework of an article constitutes the foundation of its scientific credibility, defining how the research is structured, executed, and evaluated. A rigorous methodological design ensures replicability, facilitates peer review, and fosters reader confidence—making it the core of any credible scientific contribution.

Given this, the examination of research methods used in Qur'anic scholarship is essential for evaluating the validity, reliability, and generalizability of findings. The importance of methodological analysis becomes even more pronounced in interdisciplinary studies that connect the Qur'an with other human sciences. In such contexts, methodology serves as the central link bridging distinct epistemological traditions. The human sciences, with their well-established and diverse research methods, offer a fertile ground for methodological innovation in Qur'anic studies. Indeed, the very rationale for pursuing interdisciplinary research lies in expanding the methodological capacity of Qur'anic scholarship through the adaptation of humanistic and social-scientific approaches. However, the increasing breadth and diversity of interdisciplinary Qur'anic studies have created a fragmented research landscape, lacking a unified methodological framework. Therefore, a systematic review and methodological evaluation of existing interdisciplinary research are crucial for synthesizing a coherent understanding of the field and charting future directions.

Among the various human sciences that have intersected with Qur'anic research, psychology occupies a prominent place, particularly after the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran. The methodological pluralism inherent in psychology has naturally influenced Qur'anic-psychological studies, leading to the application of diverse approaches and research designs. Analyzing these methodological trends offers critical insights into both the strengths and deficiencies of current research, while also revealing how effectively the two disciplines interact at the epistemological and theoretical levels.

The significance of the present research rests on four main pillars. First, methodological rigor forms the basis of scientific credibility, enabling accurate evaluation and replication. Thus, assessing the quality of methods in published Qur'an–psychology articles directly enhances the scholarly reliability of the field. Second, by systematically mapping the methodological landscape, this study aims to construct an integrated overview of existing research, identify knowledge gaps, and highlight promising approaches for future inquiry. Third, the essence of interdisciplinary work lies in fostering reciprocal enrichment between fields; hence, it is necessary to determine whether the methodologies used in Qur'anic–psychological research have indeed facilitated productive dialogue and theoretical innovation.

Finally, the findings of this investigation will serve as a methodological guide for future scholars, promoting the use of valid, innovative, and impactful research methods while avoiding weak or inappropriate designs. In summary, this study seeks to evaluate the methodological strengths and weaknesses of interdisciplinary scholarly articles on the Qur'an and psychology, thereby contributing to the establishment of a coherent, rigorous, and forward-looking methodological foundation for future research in this field.

2. Literature Review

Given that this study is an interdisciplinary methodological investigation of the Qur'an and psychology, it is necessary that the literature review include studies whose primary focus is the research methods used in Qur'anic and psychological articles. For example, Lotfabadi (2007) examined the epistemological and methodological foundations of psychological research in Iran, focusing on works published before 2007. Mahram and Tavanaei Shahrudi (2009) conducted a content analysis of seven Iranian psychological research journals for the period 2005–2007, identifying the most frequent topics and research methods.

Alipour et al. (2018) provided statistical information on articles in the *Journal of Educational Psychology*, including authors' academic rank and degrees, institutional affiliations, the most commonly used research methods, and sampling approaches. Ostadzadeh et al. (2019) performed a quantitative content analysis of 19 issues of the journal *Studies in Islam and Psychology* for 2007–2016. Rahimzadeh et al. (2018) reviewed the structure of Iranian psychological research articles—especially their methodological aspects—over 2007–2010 and concluded that some research methods are widely used while others are rarely or never employed.

Therefore, the present study differs from earlier work in at least three respects. First, temporally: the most recent review in the field of Qur'an and psychology (Ostadzadeh et al. 2019) covered articles up to 2016; the current study includes articles through 2024, thus encompassing at least eight more years of publications. Second, in content: prior studies in psychology (e.g., Lotfabadi 2007; Rahimzadeh et al. 2018) critiqued methodological issues but did not address interdisciplinary studies that bridge the Qur'an and psychology. By contrast, the present research treats both disciplines and is explicitly interdisciplinary. Third, in research method: whereas most previous studies relied solely on quantitative approaches and reported frequencies of research methods, this study employs a primarily qualitative design—aimed at explicating the strengths and weaknesses of the methods used in the articles—and is supported by quantitative analysis.

3. Research Methodology

The study population comprised all interdisciplinary Persian-language articles on the Qur'an and psychology published in Iranian journals between 2011 and 2024. These articles appeared in peer-reviewed academic journals with recognized scientific status—either in Qur'anic studies, psychology, or both. The journals were identified based on the latest edition (October 2024) of the list of accredited scientific journals issued by the Deputy of Research and Technology of the Ministry of Science, Research, and Technology.

From the total corpus of Qur'anic and psychological journals published nationwide, 31 accredited journals that fell within the specified timeframe were selected as the research base. Access to their articles was obtained through major Iranian academic databases, including Magiran, the Scientific Information Database (SID), Noormags, the Comprehensive Humanities Portal (Ensani), and the Regional Information Center for Science and Technology (RiCeST), as well as through the official websites of the respective journals.

During the initial screening phase, 346 articles were identified. After detailed examination, 248 articles were excluded because they did not meet the criterion of being interdisciplinary studies between the Qur'an and psychology. Consequently, the final analysis was conducted on 138 articles. Among these, two articles did not specify their research method, while 136 articles explicitly reported the methodological approach adopted. The titles and bibliographic characteristics of the journals included in this study are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Journals Included in the Study

	Journal Title	Publication Type	Affiliation	Date of Establishment
1	Studies in Islam and Psychology	Biannual	Research Institute for Hawzah and University	December 2011
2	Cultural Psychology	Biannual	Institute for Research and Development in the Humanities	June 2017
3	Counseling Culture and Psychotherapy	Quarterly	Allameh Tabataba'i University	Spring 2010
4	Research in Religion and Health	Quarterly	Shahid Beheshti University of Medical Sciences	February 2016
5	Qur'an and Social Sciences	Quarterly	University of Qur'anic Sciences and Teachings	Spring 2021
6	Qur'anic Teachings	Biannual	Razavi University of Islamic Sciences	Autumn 2011
7	Psychology and Religion	Quarterly	Imam Khomeini Educational and Research Institute	June 2011
8	Applied Family Therapy	Quarterly	Iranian Association for Women's Studies	Spring 2020
9	Culture in the Islamic University	Quarterly	Research Institute for Islamic Culture and Thought	January 2012
10	Strategic Studies on Women	Quarterly	Cultural and Social Council for Women and Family	August 2008
11	Revelatory Ethics	Quarterly	Maarej Research Institute of Revelation Sciences	March 2015
12	Applied Issues in Islamic Education and Training	Quarterly	Institute for Educational Studies, Ministry of Education	August 2017
13	The Knowledge Studies in the Islamic University	Quarterly	Research Institute of Culture and Islamic Thought	December 2012
14	Journal of Researches of Qur'an and Hadith Sciences	Quarterly	AlZahra University	Summer 2003
15	Women and Society	Quarterly	Islamic Azad University, Marvdasht Branch	June 2011
16	Islamic Studies in Health	Quarterly	Tehran University of Medical Sciences	2017
17	Islamic Studies on Women and Family	Biannual	Jāmi' at al-Zahrā	June 2018
18	Journal of Social Psychology Research	Quarterly	Iranian Association of Social Psychology	April 2011
19	Islamic Lifestyle with a Focus on Health	Quarterly	Ministry of Health and Medical Education	May 2013
20	Religion and Health	Biannual	Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences	May 2017
21	Journal of Positive Psychology	Quarterly	University of Isfahan	August 2014
22	Cultural-Educational Journal of Women and Family	Quarterly	Imam Husayn University	September 2012
23	Gender and Family Studies	Quarterly	Institute for Women and Family Studies	February 2016
24	Psychological Studies	Quarterly	AlZahra University	February 2014
25	Qur'anic Researches	Quarterly	Research Institute for Islamic Culture and Thought	January 2015
26	Islamic Education	Quarterly	Research Institute for Hawzah and University	2005
27	Qur'an and Medicine	Quarterly	Ministry of Health and Medical Education	November 2012
28	Islam and Psychological Research	Quarterly	Institute of Higher Education for Ethics and Training	March 2020
29	Islamic Journal of Women and Family Studies	Quarterly	Al-Mustafa International University	June 2017
30	Qur'an and Science	Biannual	Al-Mustafa International University	April 2019
31	Behavioral Sciences Research	Quarterly	Isfahan University of Medical Sciences	August 2008

As shown in the table 1, some of the journals under review were not initially categorized as scientific–research journals at the beginning of 2011, but obtained their official research accreditation during the studied period. The inclusion criterion for this study was therefore based on the date of their acquisition of scientific–research status.

This study employed a mixed-method approach: quantitative content analysis in the first phase and qualitative analytical examination in the second. In the quantitative content analysis phase, the context unit was the article, and the recording unit for methodological identification was the word. The context unit refers to the broadest textual boundary within which a recording unit can be identified, while the recording unit denotes a specific segment of content that can be classified under a distinct analytical category (Holsti 1969). Quantitative content analysis was used to identify, categorize, and measure the frequency distribution of research methods. In contrast, qualitative analytical analysis was applied to interpret the nature and quality of methodological applications, assess the strengths and weaknesses of the most frequently used methods, and provide evaluative insight.

The primary research instrument was a researcher-developed data collection form, designed to capture various types and categories of research methods. This instrument was reviewed and validated by experts in methodology, Qur'anic studies, and psychology, and the final version was implemented after incorporating their revisions and feedback. The coding process involved classifying all articles that explicitly stated their research methodology into predefined categories based on the methodological typology table. Articles that used more than one method were assigned multiple methodological codes accordingly. The frequency of each explicitly mentioned research method in interdisciplinary studies of the Qur'an and psychology published between 2011 and 2024 was subsequently recorded and analyzed.

In the next stage, the strengths and weaknesses of these methods were critically examined. The rationale for selecting this time frame (2011–2024) was twofold: first, it reflects the growing trend of applying modern research methodologies and the increasing expansion of Qur'anic and psychological scholarly journals, particularly in interdisciplinary domains; second, it provides a more realistic representation and precise analysis of the current status, thereby enabling more effective policy formulation and strategic planning for future methodological advancement.

Data were collected through library-based research. The researcher carefully examined various sections of each article—including the abstract, introduction, statement of the problem, literature review, conceptual and

theoretical framework, main body, and conclusion—to identify the research method explicitly stated or implied by the authors.

4. Classification of Research Methods

Various classifications of research methods have been proposed in methodological and epistemological literature. Hafeznia (2007) categorizes scientific research according to its purpose into fundamental, applied, and practical, and based on its nature and method into historical, descriptive, correlational, experimental, and causal types. Iman (2007) identifies three overarching approaches—quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods—and lists major qualitative approaches such as phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory, action research, historical–comparative, and feminist research. Similarly, Mohammadpour (2011) considers ethnography, phenomenology, feminist studies, grounded theory, historical–comparative, and participatory action research as the main qualitative methodologies.

Pakatchi (2012) divides all research into two primary types, explanatory and exploratory, and further subdivides explanatory research into historical, comparative, and analytical categories, each with several subtypes. Faramarz Qaramaleki (2016) classifies religious studies approaches into intra-religious, extra-religious, and integrative categories. The intra-religious methods include tradition-based, Qur'an-by-Qur'an, and Qur'an-by-hadith approaches, as well as semantic and hermeneutical paradigms. The extra-religious methods encompass empirical, analytical, historical, phenomenological, and existential approaches, while the integrative category covers comparative and interdisciplinary methods.

Within the quantitative paradigm, Babbie (2013) identifies experimental and survey research as the two most prominent methods. Goodwin and Goodwin (1996) classify quantitative research into descriptive, correlational, causal-comparative, and experimental, while Krippendorff (2004) also recognizes quantitative content analysis as part of the quantitative domain. In qualitative research, Marshall and Rossman (2014) identify narrative analysis, phenomenology, ethnography, case study, grounded theory, action research, cultural studies, and feminist research as key approaches. Denzin and Lincoln (2018) propose case study, ethnography, interpretive inquiry, grounded theory, action research, and clinical research as major qualitative designs. Merriam (2009) offers a sixfold classification: basic qualitative research, phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory, narrative analysis, and critical inquiry.

Creswell (2013) categorizes qualitative designs into five principal types: narrative, phenomenological, ethnographic, case study, and grounded theory. As in other paradigms, the mixed-method approach also presents multiple classification schemes within the research methodology literature.

The classification of research methods was developed through a process of revision and synthesis based on major methodological typologies presented in specialized research methodology literature as well as Qur'anic and psychological methodological works. The aim was to establish a typology that, while avoiding excessive fragmentation, would maintain comprehensiveness and inclusiveness of diverse methodological traditions. The principal sources consulted included: Hafeznia (2007); Sarmad et al. (2005); Ary et al. (2010); Krippendorff (2004); Delavar (2006); Hsieh & Shannon (2005); Strauss & Corbin (1998); Shabani Varki (2006); Stringer (1999); Hooman (2006); Mahoney & Rueschemeyer (2003); Pakatchi (2012); Faramarz Qaramaleki (2016); Malekian (2005); Rafipour (2003); Saroukhani (2003); Iman (2007); and Mohammadpour (2011). The initial classification draft was reviewed by five subject-matter experts, and the final version was determined based on expert consensus. Table 2 presents the resulting typology of research methods employed in Qur'an and Psychology articles.

Table 2. Classification of Research Methods in Qur'an and Psychology Articles (Ahmadzadeh & Bakhshi 2020)

Approach	Method	Definition
Based on Purpose	Fundamental	Seeks to discover truths and realities, and to understand phenomena and objects (Hafeznia 2007).
	Applied	Aims to address practical needs and improve tools, patterns, and systems to enhance human welfare and quality of life (Hafeznia 2007).
	Practical	Focused on solving specific problems without high generalizability (Hafeznia 2007).
Quantitative Approach	Survey	Includes field studies, attitude measurements, and epidemiological investigations (Sarmad et al. 2005).
	Correlational	Examines relationships among two or more variables using correlation coefficients, regression models, or causal multivariate designs such as structural equation modeling (Mahram & Tavanaei 2009).
	Causal-Comparative	Investigates causes through observed effects using retrospective comparison (Mahram & Tavanaei 2009).
	Experimental	Studies conducted under controlled conditions involving manipulation of independent variables (Ary 2010, as cited in Mahram & Tavanaei 2009).
	Quantitative Content Analysis	An objective, systematic, and quantitative analysis of communication content for interpretive purposes (Krippendorff 2004).
	Meta-Analysis	Statistical integration of multiple quantitative studies addressing a common topic to derive a new cumulative finding (Delavar 2006).

	Descriptive	Systematic portrayal and organized description of existing conditions, phenomena, or variables, sometimes exploring their interrelationships (Hafeznia 2007).
Qualitative Approach	Ethnography	Investigates a specific cultural or social group through field immersion and first-hand observation (Mahram & Tavaneai 2009).
	Historical	Explains shared and general characteristics of historical phenomena and their underlying causes (Hafeznia 2007).
	Qualitative Content Analysis	The subjective interpretation of textual data through systematic coding and theme identification (Hsieh & Shannon 2005).
	Phenomenological	Provides a rigorous and critical description of lived experience to reveal the essence and structure of a phenomenon (Mohammadpour 2011).
	Grounded Theory	Generates or discovers theory through inductive abstraction from data obtained in a specific context (Strauss & Corbin 1998).
	Narrative Research	Collects and reinterprets stories or narratives to construct a coherent and meaningful account of a phenomenon (Shabani Varki 2006).
	Action Research	A participatory, reflective, and systematic inquiry designed to address practical issues and promote improvement (Stringer 1999 as cited in Iman 2007).
	Case Study	Provides an in-depth analysis of an individual, group, or social institution (Hooman 2006).
	Historical–Comparative	Compares social processes across cultural or historical contexts to facilitate conceptualization and theory development (Mahoney & Rueschemeyer 2003, as cited in Mohammadpour 2011).
	Participatory Action Research	A democratic and collaborative process aimed at developing practical knowledge rooted in shared human values and a participatory worldview (Mohammadpour 2011).
	Analytical	Explores the function of smaller components within a larger unit of analysis (Pakatchi 2012).
	Comparative	Examines a phenomenon or viewpoint through identifying similarities and differences to achieve deeper understanding (Faramarz Qaramaleki 2016).
	Semantic Analysis	Investigates the meaning of linguistic units at both lexical and syntactic levels (Malekian 2005).
Mixed-Method Approach	Descriptive–Analytical	Depicts the current state of affairs and analytically explains causal or structural relationships through logical reasoning (Hafeznia 2007).
	Explanatory	Seeks to identify causal mechanisms and logically infer occurrences from general principles (Rafipour 2003).
	Integrative (Combined)	Employs both quantitative and qualitative methodologies in a complementary fashion (Saroukhani 2003).
	Interdisciplinary	Represents methodological pluralism grounded in dialogical engagement between disciplinary perspectives to address a shared research problem (Faramarz Qaramaleki 2016).

5. Findings

The findings indicate that among the 136 analyzed articles, the authors employed a total of 157 research methods. The number of methods exceeds the number of articles because several authors utilized two or more methods in their studies. Notably, a few researchers incorrectly labeled their methodology as “analytical–descriptive,” whereas the correct term should

be “descriptive–analytical.” The frequency distribution of research methods used in Qur'an and Psychology articles is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Frequency of Research Methods Used in Qur'an and Psychology Articles

	Methods	Frequency
1	Mixed Method (Grounded Theory & Delphi)	1
2	Traditional-Scriptural Method	1
3	Conceptual and Theoretical Analysis	1
4	Documentary Study	1
5	Ex Post Facto	1
6	Descriptive–Comparative Analysis	1
7	Intertextual Qur'anic Analysis (Qur'an-by-Qur'an)	1
8	Rational/Ijtihadi Paradigm of religious study	1
9	Case Study	1
10	Exploratory Analysis	1
11	Analytical and Rational Approaches to Religious and Psychological Literature	2
12	Psychological and religious reasoning/ijtihad	2
13	Descriptive	2
14	Exploratory Study	2
15	Causal–Comparative	2
16	Survey Research	3
17	Quantitative Content Analysis	3
18	Delphi	3
19	Experimental	3
20	Grounded Theory	3
21	Semi-Experimental	4
22	Quasi-Experimental	4
23	Thematic Analysis	5
24	Qualitative Content Analysis of Religious Texts	5
25	Analytical Study	5
26	Correlational	7
27	Linguistic/Semantic Analysis	8
28	Qualitative Content Analysis	36
29	Descriptive–Analytical Study	41
30	Total	157

The descriptive–analytical method was the most frequently employed

approach, appearing in 41 instances. This method is commonly used in the humanities across academic disciplines in Iran and has become a default choice, often included merely to avoid manuscript rejection for lacking an explicitly stated research method. Its widespread use reflects a general weakness among students and some faculty members in applying contemporary and rigorous methodological approaches in interdisciplinary Qur'anic studies. The qualitative content analysis method, used in 36 cases, ranked second in frequency. Although some of these studies lacked methodological rigor or failed to follow a systematic and step-by-step process, most authors applied this method with reasonable adequacy. The popularity of this method can be attributed to several factors: Its conceptual compatibility with the interpretive foundations of the Qur'an; The availability of numerous methodological sources, especially in Persian, explaining the implementation steps of qualitative content analysis; the relative familiarity of instructors and researchers in both Qur'anic studies and psychology with its conceptual and procedural framework.

After these two methods, other approaches were used far less frequently. Linguistic/semantic (8), correlational analysis (7), analytical method (5), qualitative content analysis of religious texts (5), thematic analysis (5), quasi-experimental (4), and semi-experimental (4) methods followed in descending order of frequency. Other methods were used three times or fewer. Only one author employed a mixed-method design, indicating that most researchers were not familiar with or did not apply mixed methodological frameworks.

Quantitative and qualitative methods were employed in roughly equal proportions. Quantitative methods included semi-experimental (4), quasi-experimental (4), survey (3), experimental (3), and causal-comparative (2) designs, while qualitative methods included thematic analysis (5), analytical (5), grounded theory (3), Delphi (3), and comparative (1) approaches.

However, specialized Qur'anic methodologies, such as analytical and rational method (2), Intertextual Qur'anic Analysis (Qur'an-by-Qur'an) (1), and traditional-scriptural method (1), were rarely used. Similarly, innovative and generative methods, such as qualitative content analysis of religious texts (5) and rational/ijtihadi Paradigm of religious study (1), were not often applied, reflecting a limited awareness among Qur'an and Psychology researchers regarding newer methodological developments. Moreover, researchers in this field have not utilized a range of diverse methods—including meta-analysis, meta-synthesis, phenomenological, narrative, action research, integrative, historical, or semiotic approaches—which further indicates a lack of familiarity with the broad spectrum of available

methodologies and their potential applications in interdisciplinary Qur'anic-psychological studies.

5. *Methodological Analysis of the Articles*

Following the quantitative examination of research methodologies, this section presents a qualitative and analytical evaluation of the methodological strengths and weaknesses observed in Qur'an–Psychology interdisciplinary studies.

5.1. *Paradigmatic Compatibility*

Interdisciplinary scholars consistently emphasize the necessity of paradigmatic congruence between disciplines engaged in an interdisciplinary study. Such congruence is particularly crucial in the integration of Qur'anic exegesis and psychology, where paradigmatic divergence can significantly undermine methodological validity. Some authors have shown an awareness of the dual-paradigm tension between the epistemological, ontological, and methodological foundations of Qur'anic interpretation and psychology, and have deliberately sought to avoid collapsing into those contradictions. However, others—either due to limited understanding of paradigmatic distinctions or neglect of their methodological implications—have failed to maintain such coherence. Consequently, the findings of their studies lack robustness or, in some cases, become invalid altogether.

A clear indicator of paradigmatic awareness lies in the contrast between the use of quantitative and qualitative content analysis methods. Quantitative content analysis, which arises from the positivist paradigm, was used only three times, whereas qualitative content analysis, rooted in the interpretivist paradigm, appeared 36 times—approximately twelve times more frequently. This pattern reveals an interesting inversion: while the field of psychology in Iran traditionally operates within a positivist framework, heavily reliant on quantitative methods, Qur'an–Psychology studies demonstrate a distinct methodological shift toward interpretivism. From a paradigmatic perspective, this reflects the greater compatibility of the interpretivist paradigm with the epistemological and hermeneutical foundations of the Qur'an.

Accordingly, researchers versed in both Qur'anic studies and psychology have tended to favor interpretive methodologies—such as qualitative content analysis—over positivist ones. The latter, including quantitative content analysis, are often deemed epistemologically misaligned with the

theological and teleological objectives of the Qur'an. In other words, positivist methods—given their ontological and epistemological assumptions—are largely incompatible with the Qur'an's interpretive worldview. Nevertheless, in limited cases, quantitative approaches can be employed under strict methodological conditions—provided that interpretive principles are meticulously observed. In such cases, however, the validity of findings remains contextually bound to those specific applications and cannot be generalized across the broader field of Qur'anic research.

5.2. Innovation in the Development of Scientific Methods

The methodological analysis further reveals a growing enthusiasm among scholars, faculty members, and seminary students for interdisciplinary research in the fields of the Qur'an and psychology. The increasing number of such studies indicates both intellectual curiosity and a rising inclination toward employing novel research methods in this domain. A diachronic review of published Qur'an–Psychology articles shows that qualitative content analysis has been rapidly adopted, especially in recent years, suggesting a strong adaptive capacity among researchers. This methodological expansion indicates that when research methods are effectively and systematically taught, their adoption accelerates naturally across academic and seminary settings.

In other words, the potential for methodological growth, diversification, and innovation in Qur'an–Psychology interdisciplinary research is remarkably high. Encouragingly, the recent scholarly endeavors of university and seminary scholars toward developing Islamic and Qur'anic paradigms have begun to bear fruit, resulting in the formulation of novel theoretical and methodological frameworks (Iman & Kalateh Sadati 2013). Similarly, significant contributions have been made to the field of Qur'anic methodology (Kafi 2016), and a number of new methods for interdisciplinary Qur'anic studies have been proposed (Rezahosseini & Alipour 2011; Shojaei 2020), which can serve as valuable foundations for further Qur'an–Psychology integration.

The application of these newly developed methods in the reviewed articles is noteworthy from several perspectives. First, the very act of producing innovative methods—particularly in the humanities and Islamic studies—is a vital national necessity and should be pursued with greater urgency. Second, the adoption of these methods by both their originators and other scholars signals their academic legitimacy and growing acceptance, marking the beginning of their potential transfer to international

scholarly discourse. Third, the practical implementation of these methods in actual studies exposes both their strengths and weaknesses, thereby facilitating critical reflection, refinement, and contextual adaptation. This process fosters the localization and institutionalization of these methods within the academic and research infrastructures of the Islamic world.

5.3. Utilization of Low-efficient Research Methods

Approximately one in every three reviewed articles employed the descriptive–analytical method, a simplistic and overly generalized approach that has become a default refuge for authors seeking to avoid critical scrutiny from reviewers regarding methodological rigor. As previous methodological surveys in Qur'anic studies have also confirmed (Ahmadzadeh & Bakhshi 2020), this method has been excessively overused by Qur'an scholars. Although psychology as a discipline is comparatively methodologically rich, offering a wide array of research designs and boasting extensive literature on methodology—with students typically acquiring solid methodological training at undergraduate, master's, and doctoral levels—this diversity is not reflected in Qur'an–Psychology interdisciplinary articles.

A plausible explanation is that many contributors to such studies come primarily from Qur'anic scholarship backgrounds, and thus possess limited familiarity with the diverse methodological frameworks prevalent in psychology. However, this limitation also reflects a failure of academic gatekeeping on the part of editors, reviewers, and editorial boards of the journals in which these studies were published, as they appear to have accepted submissions without adequate attention to methodological validity.

In interdisciplinary research, the connection between different sciences, whether through method, theory, or concept, is vital. Yet, as the Qur'an does not prescribe empirical or data-collection techniques, the integration of psychological research methods becomes doubly significant: first, because the Qur'an provides no procedural method of its own, and second, because psychology offers a rich, diverse, and evolving methodological repertoire. Consequently, although Qur'an–Psychology interdisciplinary studies have expanded considerably in recent years, a strategic shift is now required from low-efficient and generic methods toward high-efficient and theory-generative methodologies. Such a transformation would substantially enhance the productivity and problem-solving capacity of interdisciplinary research in addressing the psychological challenges faced by contemporary societies.

5.4. Methodological Chaos

At one extreme of the methodological spectrum, some authors failed even to specify the research method employed in their studies. At the opposite extreme, others used multiple unrelated methods within a single study—an instance of what may be termed methodological chaos.

It is well established that using multiple methods can, under appropriate conditions, yield more comprehensive and nuanced insights, as it allows different facets of a problem to be examined from multiple perspectives (Darzi & Faramarz Qaramaleki 2020). However, this principle does not justify the indiscriminate combination of several incongruent methods under one research design. There are clear methodological principles that must be observed. Each research question requires a specific methodological fit; not all methods are universally applicable. Methods are paradigm-bound, rooted in distinct ontological and epistemological assumptions, which in many cases are incompatible with one another. Even when methods are compatible, their integration (as in mixed-methods research) must follow explicit methodological rules and frameworks (Tashakkori & Teddlie 2009).

Some reviewed articles claimed to employ multiple heterogeneous methods, for example, fundamental, descriptive-analytical, interdisciplinary, Delphi, and survey methods, without providing any clear rationale for their joint use. Such inconsistency reveals a lack of methodological coherence both paradigmatically and procedurally. From the reader's perspective, this manifests as a visible disorder of method, where the conceptual and procedural dissonance among the chosen methods undermines the internal validity and interpretive reliability of the study's findings. This methodological incoherence ultimately diminishes scholarly credibility and restricts the impact of Qur'an–Psychology research within the broader academic community.

5.5. Neglect of Interdisciplinary Prerequisites

The issues addressed in these articles inherently required an interdisciplinary framework that integrates insights from the Qur'an and psychology. However, interdisciplinary research carries its own epistemological, methodological, and linguistic requirements, which must be observed consistently throughout a study. Almost all the reviewed articles failed to meet these interdisciplinary prerequisites. One key methodological requirement is the interdisciplinary research process, which, according to Darzi and Faramarz Qaramaleki (2020), involves two main

stages (mapping disciplinary insights and integrating them) and proceeds through seven systematic steps. Yet, none of the examined studies provided a methodologically explicit account of how their interdisciplinary research process was conducted. Similarly, none of the authors referred to the techniques for creating common ground among disciplines, as identified by Repko (2020), nor did any article define the type of interdisciplinarity it pursued, whether unidirectional or bidirectional, or whether methodological or theoretical in nature. Moreover, there was little to no serious engagement with the epistemological challenges that arise from the interaction between the language of religion and the language of science, particularly between the language of the Qur'an and that of psychology, and the philosophical implications of this interplay.

Taken together, these findings indicate that although the authors of these articles undertook interdisciplinary research, their awareness of the methodology of interdisciplinarity remains limited and superficial. Consequently, due to the lack of attention to interdisciplinary methodological requirements, many of these studies lack the credibility and academic rigor expected by both psychologists and Qur'an scholars. Despite the considerable number of published studies on Qur'an and psychology in Iran, their practical impact on social and psychological issues remains minimal. One of the major reasons for this ineffectiveness appears to be the neglect of methodological standards specific to interdisciplinary research, which ultimately undermines the validity and societal usefulness of these studies.

6. Conclusion

In Qur'an–Psychology interdisciplinary studies, the research method plays a crucial role in ensuring methodological soundness, the credibility of findings, and the acceptance of research outcomes within both academic communities. Encouragingly, in recent years, authors have shown an increasing awareness of methodological issues in their publications. Across the 136 articles reviewed, a total of 157 methodological approaches were identified, encompassing quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods designs. The descriptive–analytical method (41 cases) and qualitative content analysis (36 cases) were the most frequently employed approaches. The methodological analysis revealed several strengths, including: growing attention to paradigmatic alignment between the Qur'anic worldview and the paradigms of psychology, and methodological innovation in developing contextually relevant research designs. However, several weaknesses were also evident: overreliance on low-efficient and generic methods,

methodological chaos due to the unprincipled mixing of methods, and insufficient attention to the epistemological and methodological prerequisites of interdisciplinary research.

7. Recommendations

To enhance the methodological rigor and practical impact of interdisciplinary Qur'an–Psychology research, the following measures are recommended:

- Organize methodological workshops on interdisciplinary research for university professors, seminary scholars, and postgraduate students.
- Establish academic forums and debate sessions (including written critiques within the same journals) to promote critical reflection on published works.
- Develop formal guidelines and policies for editors, editorial boards, and reviewers of academic journals regarding interdisciplinary methodological standards.
- Host national and international conferences dedicated to interdisciplinary research, particularly in the field of Qur'an and psychology.
- Found a specialized academic association or research center for Qur'an and Psychology studies.
- Produce educational resources and textbooks on the methodology of Qur'an–Psychology research, tailored for undergraduate, graduate, and advanced seminary curricula.
- Recognize and reward outstanding interdisciplinary works, providing both moral and material support to their authors.
- Conduct televised and media-based expert panels featuring senior scholars to discuss current trends and future directions in Qur'an–Psychology research.
- Implement forward-looking policy frameworks, especially through the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution, to align interdisciplinary research with societal needs and ensure effective oversight of its execution.

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