

## The concept of happiness according to Ibn Hazm and Martin Seligman

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this article is to describe the happiness of Ibn Hazm and Martin Seligman. Ibn Hazm was a Muslim philosopher, while Seligman was a modern psychologist and secularist. These different concepts of happiness are interesting to study because they represent two major paradigms: Islamic ethical spiritualism and modern positive psychology, which are rarely directly compared. This comparison offers novelty by opening up a more holistic perspective on happiness. The method used is qualitative research with a comparative approach and narrative review. The primary sources used are "*Risala h fi Mudawah an-Nufus wa Tadzhib al-Akhlaq*" by Ibnu Hazm and the book "*Authentic Happiness*" by Martin Seligman. The results show that: (1) Happiness according to Ibn Hazm can only be achieved through worship and getting closer to God. (2) Meanwhile, Seligman believes that complete happiness is the result of a combination of a pleasant life, a good life and a meaningful life. (3) Seligman's conception of happiness only focuses on world orientation. (4) On the other hand, both agree that maximizing positive potential is an important point in the route to achieving happiness. However, Ibn Hazm emphasized that awareness of weaknesses also needs to be done so that humans are free from the nature of '*ujub* (arrogance).

**Keywords:** Happiness; Ibn Hazm; Seligman



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### Introduction

Happiness is considered as the purpose of life for everyone (Krasko et al., 2022) . People who have a purpose in life to be happier are considered to have more well-being and resilience in facing difficult times (Fang et al., 2024; Sharma & Yukhymenko-Lescroart, 2022) . Psychological research on happiness is important because the theme is not only associated with improved physical health and longevity, happiness is also a priority for everyone around the world (Hallberg & Kullenberg, 2019) . These reasons are enough to consider happiness as important. Although it is impossible to measure objectively, experts agree that happiness has different levels (Jr & Caballo, 2023). Humans want themselves to be more than just gloomy to be happy, they want to increase happiness to true peace (Seligman, 2018) . In-depth studies on the topic of happiness have actually been carried out since ancient Greek times, as well as in

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the Middle Ages. This has attracted several researchers to explore the topic of happiness in the views of Muslim philosophers. As done by Soleh (2022) and Jalili & Ulfa (2023) which discusses the concept of happiness in al-Ghazali's view, as well as Awaludin's (2017) writings regarding happiness from Ibn Sina's perspective.

Ibn Hazm (994-1064) was one of the Muslim scholars of the medieval era. Ibn Hazm is better known as a scholar of fiqh. Therefore, previous research on Ibn Hazm's thoughts focused more on the fields of fiqh and ushul fiqh (Jamilah and Isa, 2019; Mawardi, 2020; Thahir, 2022; Yusram et al., 2020). In fact, more than that, Ibn Hazm was a multidisciplinary scholar, a philosopher and had writings on psychology (Congress, 2015; Mawaddah & Soleh, 2024). Through his work entitled "Risalah fi Mudawah an-Nufus wa Tadzhib al-Akhlaq" <sup>2</sup>, Ibn Hazm presents a solution to the depravity of social behavior at that time by reminding people that the true goal of humans is to achieve happiness which can only be achieved by improving behavior and soul (Ibn Hazm, 1980). Several authors have conducted studies on the book with the theme of ethics (Zakariya, 2020). As far as the author has traced, there has been no writing that discusses the theme of happiness in Ibn Hazm's view.

Over the past few decades, exploration of happiness has increased. (Folk & Dunn, 2023). One of the popular theories in this theme is the concept of "The Authentic of Happiness" introduced by Martin Seligman. Seligman's theory of happiness has been widely quoted and has played a major role in the development of positive psychology studies. This concept proposes a level of true happiness that can be obtained by utilizing the positive potential within the individual. Seligman opposes the hedonic view and claims that happiness achieved only to pursue pleasure without involving positive potential is only temporary and illusory. Seligman has similarities with Ibn Hazm. Both argue that there are levels of happiness. However, as mentioned by Arroisi and Asep, western psychologists do not involve the existence of God in the concept of individual happiness (Arroisi et al., 2023; Awaludin, 2017).

This study aims to explore more deeply the comparison between the levels of happiness of Ibn Hazm and Seligman. This study is important to do for several reasons. (1) There has been no study that discusses happiness from Ibn Hazm's perspective (2) Ibn Hazm's concept of happiness is closely related to practical ethics and morals that are very much needed considering the chaos in today's era (Layla, 2005). (3) Comparing the views of Ibn Hazm and Seligman can enrich knowledge about happiness from the perspective of Muslim philosophers and Western psychologists.

## Method

The object of this research is the concept of happiness of Ibn Hazm and Martin Seligman. The method used in this study is qualitative using literature review techniques. The sources used can be mapped into two parts, namely primary and secondary. The primary source in this paper uses "Risalah fi Mudawah al-Nufus wa Tadzhib al-Akhlaq" by Ibnu Hazm and the book "Authentic Happiness" by Martin Seligman. Secondary sources are taken from various previous studies that discuss the description of the concept of happiness.

The results obtained from several sources will then be studied using narrative review analysis techniques. The narrative review method is a step to obtain meaning towards an object in depth and breadth towards an object in depth and breadth towards the object of research (Baker, 2016). After that,

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<sup>2</sup> In another version it is also called " *Al-Akhlaq wa al-Sair* "

the concept of happiness of Ibn Hazm and Seligman was analyzed using descriptive comparative techniques. The comparative method or comparison is a study that uses the technique of comparing one object with another object. The objects being compared can be in the form of figures or scholars, schools of thought, institutions, management or development of learning applications (Suryabata, 2004).

## Result

### The Concept of Happiness from Ibn Hazm's Perspective

Ibn Hazm defines happiness as a state where a person is free from anxiety (al-hammu). (Ibn Hazm, 1980). In fact, Ibn Hazm uses the term al-hamm (anxiety) as an expression that has a broad meaning, covering several negative emotional images of the soul. Ustman Najati concluded that (al-hamm) in Ibn Hazm's view includes all conditions of pressure and pain of the soul that arise from several difficult circumstances, namely sadness (hazn), regret (hasarah), anger (ghoidz), difficulty (ta'āsah), loneliness (wahdah), alienation (uzlah), low self-esteem (mudzillah), feelings of humiliation (mahānah), helplessness (qillatul hīlah) and anxiety (inshighālul bāl) (Najati, 1993). However, in this article, the author interprets the diction al-hamm as "feeling anxious" because it is considered easier and more inclusive of these negative emotions.

Ibn Hazm paid great attention to the problem of anxiety (al-hamm) (Najati, 1993). In Ibn Hazm's view, there is only one goal in life that is considered good and worthy of being achieved by everyone with their different goals and views, namely being free from anxiety. People who want to be rich, the real goal is to avoid feeling anxious if they are in a poor condition. People who want to enrich their network, increase their socializing with other people, the real goal is to avoid feeling anxious when they feel lonely, even people who are gossiping about their friends, the real goal is to avoid feeling anxious when they feel that other people are higher than them. (Ibn Hazm, 1980).

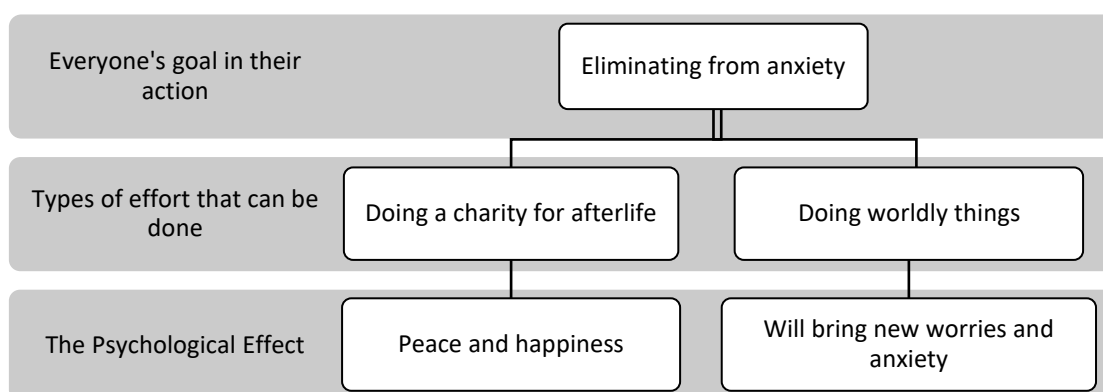
According to Ibn Hazm, there is only one way for someone to avoid anxiety and thus achieve happiness, namely "getting closer to Allah through good deeds that are oriented towards the afterlife". In this way, a person will be able to achieve two happinesses, namely (1) Direct happiness in the form of peace of mind (Surūr); and (2) Eternal happiness in the form of heaven (Ibn Hazm, 1980). According to him, when an individual wants to eliminate his anxiety but through a way other than getting closer to Allah, then the anxiety will only disappear temporarily and bring about a new anxiety (hamm). Namely by not achieving something, or new anxiety that arises from the success he has achieved. For example, a person who wants to be free from the anxiety of poverty, then struggles to collect as much wealth as possible. In fact, that person will get new anxiety when his efforts are unsuccessful or when he succeeds in becoming rich, he will encounter other anxieties such as fear of being slaughtered, attacks of envy, the shackles of greed and so on. (Ibn Hazm, 1980).

There are at least 3 terms mentioned by Ibn Hazm in explaining the concept of levels of happiness, (1) Ladzat (pleasure), (2) Surūr and (3) Sa'ādah. Each person has different levels of pleasure (ladzat). However, those who choose to do good deeds in the way of Allah, their pleasure is greater, with evidence that they could actually enjoy following their lusts, but chose not to do so. Surūr and Sa'ādah both mean happy in Indonesian, but have different meanings in Ibn Hazm's view (Ibn Hazm, 1980). As explained previously, all actions that are not oriented towards the afterlife will ultimately leave a new sense of anxiety. The only solution is to do good deeds in the afterlife. Happiness in this definition is Surūr, a condition where people are free from anxiety (hamm). However, Ibn Hazm is of the view that something

can be considered good if it is guided by the Shari'a and in accordance with the behavior of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. This statement means negating the goodness that is only obtained by reason without associating it with the Quran and Hadith (Ibn Hazm, 1980).

**Figure 1**

*Happiness Route Orientation According to Ibn Hazm*



According to Ibn Hazm, a person who feels happy (ladzat) does not necessarily mean that he feels happy (surūr) , just as a person who feels Surūr does not necessarily mean that he feels happy (ladzat). A person who struggles on the path of the hereafter, getting closer to Allah, is happy and peaceful because he is free from anxiety, but it is not necessarily true that he feels happy (Ibn Hazm, 1980)

“I saw a person who was struggling because of the afterlife being tested by something he did not like, but he ignored it and remained happy (Surūr). Because the test actually raised his hope to achieve his true goal.”

Therefore, Sa'adah is the peak of happiness, where someone feels pleasure in obeying. So , it can be understood that there are three levels of happiness, (1) A state where a person feels happy ( ladzat ), but not surūr (avoided from anxiety), (2) A state where a person feels surūr but does not yet feel happy. And (3) people who are sur ū r and ladzat (sa'adah, peak happiness). However, the level of sa'adah according to Ibn Hazm is purely a gift from God. Individuals whose souls can feel willing to obey are a gift given by God alone. Vice versa, for people whose souls are still inclined towards disobedience so that there is an element of coercion when obeying, this situation is a test from Allah (Ibn Hazm, 1980) .

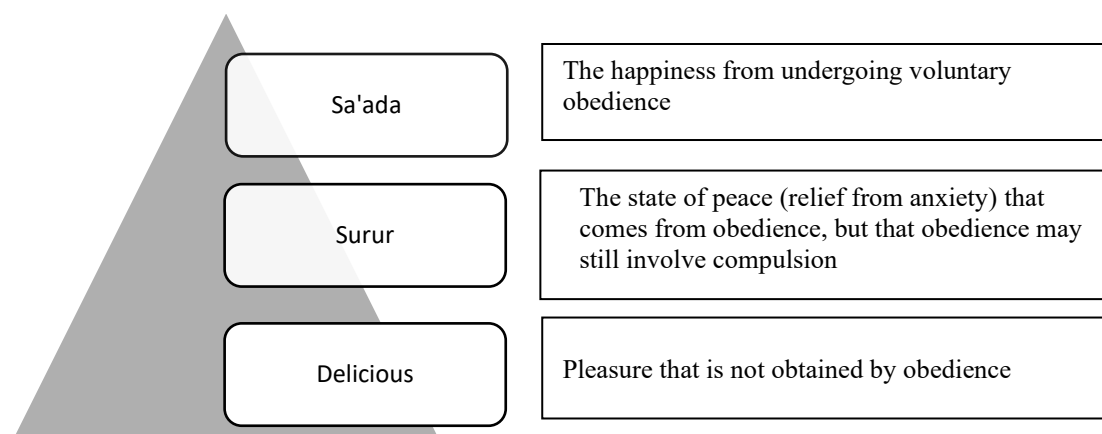
## Levels of Happiness from Ibn Hazm's Perspective

Furthermore, Ibn Hazm views that humans have two potentials, positive and negative. The negative potential innate to humans comes from lust while the positive comes from reason. Obedience and praiseworthy traits come from reason, while the opposite comes from lust. Lust has two powers, aggressiveness (al-ghadhabiyah) and ambition/greed (al-syahwatiyyah). These two powers of lust must be controlled by the nature of justice that comes from the rationality of reason. Reason guides a person to be able to use something according to need. But once again, because reason is limited, it must be supported by religion. Therefore, Ibn Hazm emphasizes the importance of learning in an effort to behave well and achieve happiness (Ibn Hazm, 1980).

" People who understand the beauty of goodness will definitely practice it even though it is rare. People who understand the evil of evil will definitely stay away from it even though it is rare.

**Figure 2**

*Levels of Happiness from Ibn Hazm's Perspective*



According to Ibn Hazm, Goodness or obedience boils down to four qualities: justice (al-A'dl), knowledge (al-Fahm), courage (al-Najdzah) and generosity (al-Jud). Conversely, sinful acts and greed boil down to four opposing qualities: arbitrariness (al-Jur), ignorance (al-Jahl), cowardice (al-Jubn), stinginess (al-Syuh). Justice is the willingness to give and take rights according to what is due, justice also means placing a moderate portion, no more and no less. Courage is an attitude of daring to die in order to uphold religion, truth and help the weak. Generosity is the willingness to provide excess needs, both material and non-material, for the sake of goodness. Knowledge is the capacity of how a person can use his mind to carry out obedience and avoid evil. The main source of anxiety (al-hamm) is greed or excessive hope in things that are not oriented towards the afterlife. The opposite of greed is generosity. Generosity arises from the combination of the four core qualities of virtue mentioned (Ibn Hazm, 1980).

Therefore, as a step towards happiness by practicing obedience, one must constantly train oneself to hone these four core traits and improve the opposite traits. Goodness can be increased in several ways. One of them is to associate with pious people and study and imitate the morals of the Prophet Muhammad (Ibn Hazm, 1980).

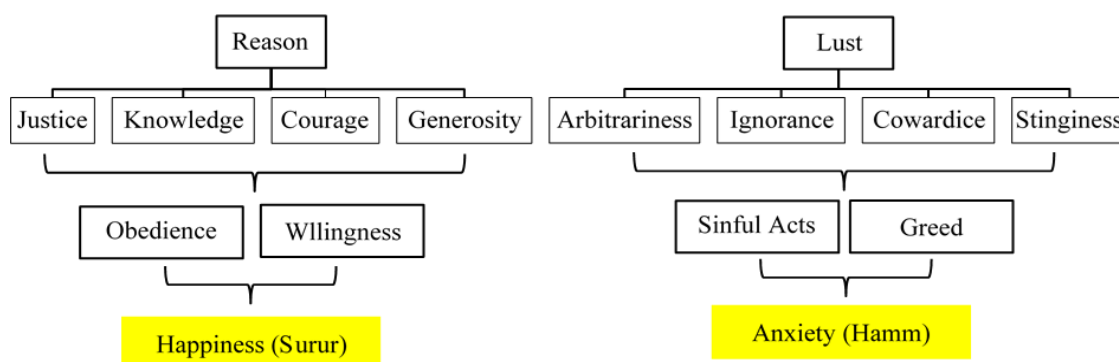
According to Ibn Hazm, there are several ways to weaken the negative effects of greed. The first is to only rely on and hope for Allah, not to hope for and listen to human chatter. The second is to imagine the opposite of what is expected. For example, a person who hopes that his true friend will always be good to him will feel surprised and sad when he suddenly betrays him. But that feeling of sadness will weaken when we have trained our minds that it might happen. The third is to make time to be alone. Often anxiety comes from interacting with other people, therefore solitude will create peace because it is easier to think about God (Ibn Hazm, 1980).

Although happiness can be obtained when having commendable traits. Awareness of weaknesses and the manifestation of bad traits in oneself also needs to be instilled. The basic reason is to avoid arrogance. Because no human is free from mistakes. Ibn Hazm reminds us that goodness is a gift from God so that there is actually nothing to be proud of. Arrogance can be a source of corruption, it can be in

the form of a sense of satisfaction with self-improvement or even being good at blaming others (Ibn Hazm, 1980).

**Figure 3**

*Elements of Happiness and Anxiety from Ibn Hazm's Perspective*



## The Concept of Happiness from Martin Seligman's Perspective

Seligman developed a theory of happiness based on his concerns in the study of psychology. According to him, previous researchers tended to focus on the negative side of humans and ignored the positive side. In fact, what humans need is not only to recover from mental illness, they want to live happily and prosperously until death comes (Seligman, 2002).

Seligman believes that authentic happiness can be achieved by recognizing and using strengths and virtues in work and everyday life. To understand how this statement was created, the first route that needs to be understood is that Seligman divides the orientation of life towards happiness into three levels: a pleasant life, good life and meaningful life. A pleasant life is achieved by bringing positive emotions and increasing them as much as possible. Because the way of increasing them is different, there are 3 categories of positive emotions that must be distinguished: past, future and present. Positive emotions of the past are such as relief, satisfaction and contentment, these can be increased through gratitude and forgiveness. Positive emotions of the future are such as hope, confidence and faith, these can be increased by learning to recognize and dispute automatic pessimistic thoughts (M. E. P. Seligman, 2002).

While for the present it is divided into two very different things, pleasures and gratifications. Pleasure is achieved by feeling positive emotions that come from basic pleasures such as interpersonal relationships, the natural environment and physical needs. This route is consistent with the level of a pleasant life. According to Seligman, pleasure is only temporary, but can be prolonged by means of mindfulness and increasing the accuracy of enjoying (savoring) which can weaken the effects of habituation. Pleasant life is happiness obtained from a life that seeks as many positive emotions as possible (past, future and present) and manages them effectively (Seligman, 2002).

The second route is achieved through gratification. Gratification is a satisfaction characterized by total absorption and immersion (flow) in an activity. Unlike pleasure, gratification is not obtained by involving the presence of positive emotions or even not feeling anything. The satisfaction of gratification

is more abundant and lasts longer than pleasure (M. E. P. Seligman, 2002). Gratification is the path to the second level of happiness that Seligman calls the good life . Gratification arises from the use of virtues and strengths . Seligman has conducted extensive research and found that there are 6 virtues recognized by all cultures and religions in various regions; Wisdom and Knowledge, Courage , Love and Humanity , Justice , Temperance , Spirituality and Transcendence. Each of these virtues has sub-strengths totaling 24. According to him, every goodness of a person must come from these six pillars (M. E. P. Seligman, 2002).

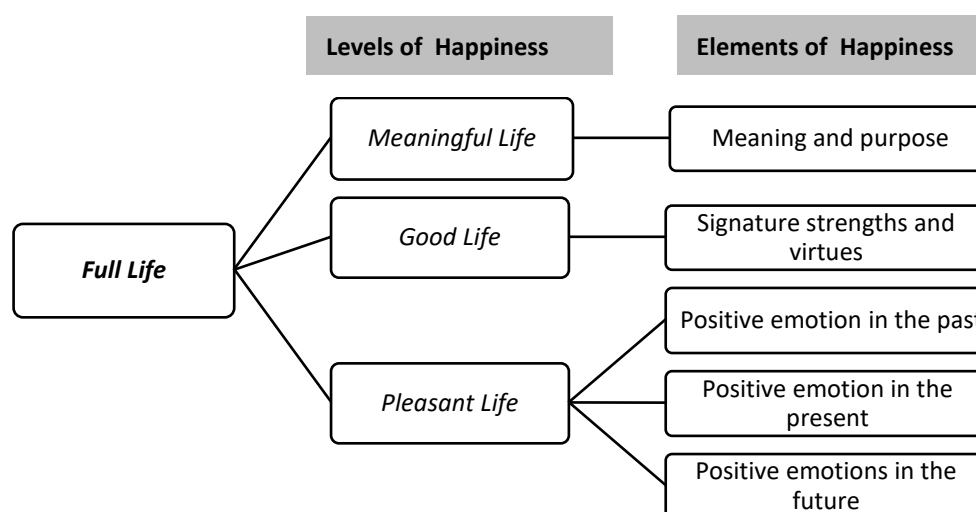
Because it involves virtue, gratification satisfaction is more difficult to achieve than pleasure fulfillment. In fact, each person has their own unique strengths. Therefore, in order to obtain gratification more easily, Seligman recommends that a person discover their unique virtues and strengths and apply them creatively in three important life posts (work, love and parenting). These strengths and virtues serve to counteract adversity and psychological disorders, and may be the key to building resilience. Seligman believes that a good life, a life in which a person uses their unique strengths every day, will be able to provide true happiness. As he quotes:

Positive emotions alienated from the application of character will lead to emptiness, inauthenticity, depression and, as we age, the gnawing awareness that we are constantly on edge until we die.” (M. E. P. Seligman, 2002)

However, people with good engagement experiences will still feel empty at the end of their lives, this is based on the fact that humans are creatures who seek meaning. Seligman studied that happy workers are divided into two types. The first, he works because he feels happy with his work. The second, he works because of a sense of calling, he feels there and needs to help others in need. The second type of worker is happier even throughout his life. This explains that there is a third level of happiness, meaningful life. Therefore, Seligman formulated the key to achieving peak happiness, "find your unique strengths and use them to serve something bigger than you" (M. E. P. Seligman, 2002).

**Figure 4**

*Levels and Elements of Happiness from Martin Seligman's Perspective*



Finally, Although Seligman divides the orientation of happiness into three levels based on the route to achieve it, according to him a complete life is someone who succeeds in combining these three orientations. A person will get complete happiness when he succeeds in experiencing positive emotions about the past and the future, enjoying positive feelings of pleasure, getting abundant gratification from your unique strengths, and using these strengths to serve something greater to gain meaning. (M. E. P. Seligman, 2002). The combination of these three life orientations was then perfected by Seligman in his latest work. Seligman promotes the concept of the highest level of well-being which he calls flourishing . Flourishing is defined as a condition in which an individual experiences an accumulation of several well - being variables such as emotional well-being, subjective well-being, psychological well-being and social well-being (M. E. P. Seligman, 2011).

### **Comparison of Happiness from the Perspective of Ibn Hazm and Seligman**

There are similarities and differences between the conception of happiness from Ibn Hazm and Seligman's perspectives. The similarity is that both agree that there are levels of happiness. They also agree that the goal of humans is to pursue happiness, not just to improve the negative side. Happiness according to Ibn Hazm is a state where someone is free from anxiety (peaceful) and obedience is the only way to achieve it. Pleasure according to him is not happiness because it will bring new anxiety. While Seligman argues that happiness is about pleasure , satisfaction (gratification) and the meaning of life. The three orientations are claimed to be hierarchical, but according to him complete happiness is a combination of the three types.

On the other hand, the second difference is regarding the concerns underlying the proposed concept of happiness. Ibn Hazm was driven by social facts regarding moral decay in society at that time. Ibn Hazm then came to present a solution to the problem by realizing that there is only one way to achieve happiness, namely by doing good deeds that are oriented towards the afterlife. Meanwhile, Seligman departed from his concerns about the focus of psychological studies over the past few decades. According to him, researchers tend to be strongly influenced by Freudian doctrine which emphasizes the negative side of humans. As a result, the concept of happiness that is carried is related to the fulfillment of id drives in the form of sexuality and aggressiveness. Seligman tries to come by opening up the blindness of psychology to the positive potential that humans have. According to him, authentic happiness can actually be achieved by optimizing these positive potentials.

The third difference is about the guidelines for virtue. Ibn Hazm believes that goodness must be in accordance with the guidelines of Islamic law (the Quran and Hadith). This statement negates goodness that is only created through reasoning alone. Meanwhile, Seligman has the view that virtue is centered on six sub-elements ( Wisdom and Knowledge , Courage , Love and Humanity , Justice , Temperance , Transcendence ). The fourth difference is about the elements of happiness. Ibn Hazm believes that happiness comes from reason which produces four core characteristics: understanding, courage, generosity and justice, while Seligman divides the elements of happiness based on three different life orientations. A pleasant life involves the element of the presence of positive emotions, a good life involves the elements of 6 strengths and virtues and a meaningful life involves the element of the meaning of life.

The last difference is that Ibn Hazm believes that peak happiness, -where individuals have felt happy in carrying out obedience- is purely a gift from God. This means that humans can only try while asking to



get it, but the results are purely God's business. While Seligman believes that complete happiness can be obtained by combining three orientations of happiness levels: a pleasant life, a good life and a meaningful life.

**Table 1**  
*Comparison of Happiness Perspectives of Ibn Hazm and Seligman*

	Ibn Hazm	Martin Seligman
Definition	According to Ibn Hazm, happiness is a state where a person is free from anxiety ( <i>peaceful</i> )	Happiness is about pleasure , gratification <i>and</i> the meaning of life
Basic Assumptions	Eliminate anxiety with rely on everything to Allah SWT with obedience	Focusing on efforts to maximize the positive potential for engaging in an activity and serving a larger entity
Guide to Virtue	Sourced from the Quran and Hadith	It boils down to 6 virtues and strengths
Background	It was motivated by the corruption of society at that time	Strongly influenced by positive psychology theory
Elements of happiness	understanding, courage, generosity and justice, which originate from reason	A pleasant life involves elements of the presence of positive emotions, a good life involves elements of the 6 strengths and virtues and a meaningful life involves elements of the meaning of life.

## Discussion

The first result is about Ibn Hazm's concept of happiness. Ibn Hazm defines happiness as a condition where the soul does not feel anxious (*peaceful*). Happiness is different from pleasure, pleasure is a false happiness because it will lead to other anxieties. This concept is almost similar to Ibn Sina's view which connects three levels of happiness to three types of hierarchical pleasures: physical pleasure (such as eating and sex), intellectual pleasure and spiritual pleasure (Zakaria, 2010). It seems that Ibn Hazm, Ibn Sina and Al-Farabi all place spiritual pleasure as the highest level of happiness (Zamzami et al., 2021). At least, there are two key assumptions regarding the framework of happiness that is carried out. The first is that everyone, regardless of whether what is done is good or bad, actually has the same goal, namely to eliminate anxiety (*al-hamm*). Second, there is no way to eliminate anxiety except by getting closer to Allah through the implementation of virtues that are oriented towards the afterlife. See how Ibn Hazm tries to intervene in immoral actors by focusing on their goals. This statement strengthens the opinion that intrinsic motivation has a stronger influence on happiness (Denny & Steiner, 2009). In short, the source of happiness according to Ibn Hazm is when we are close to God. This is in line with the findings of Muliadi & Hidayat (2022) which show that feeling close to God plays an important role in a person's happiness.

Ibn Hazm's approach regarding *al-hamm* (anxiety/worry) can be compared to the Cognitive Appraisal Theory, which posits that emotions arise from how an individual evaluates a situation (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Ibn Hazm also viewed that anxiety emerges from excessive worldly expectations and weak self-control, which aligns with the ideas of primary appraisal (threat assessment) and secondary appraisal (evaluation of coping ability). Ibn Hazm's practices, such as habituating oneself to accepting the worst-case scenario and controlling expectations, constitute a form of cognitive reappraisal, which has proven effective in emotion regulation for reducing anxiety (Gross, 1998). Thus, although Ibn Hazm's concept is spiritual in nature, the psychological mechanisms he emphasizes strongly intersect with

modern emotion theory. Ibn Hazm did not explicitly provide an analogy for why a person who obeys Allah would be free from anxiety. However, the views of some other Muslim philosophers may explain it. Al-Ghazali put forth a similar concept, originating from the view that Allah is the source of happiness, and thus, to achieve true happiness, one must draw closer to Him (Soleh, 2022). Recent empirical research has demonstrated that dhikr (remembrance of God) relaxation therapy can reduce anxiety and increase happiness among dormitory students (Pihasnawati, Setiyani Subardjo, Apriliyani, & Kurniadewi, 2024).

Ibn Hazm also explained that happiness is achieved through obedience because the person strives to maximize the potential of reason to control desires. Ibn Sina also focused his concept of happiness on reason, which is described as the gateway to knowledge. When a person does not optimize their intellect to understand the reality behind everything in their life, they will experience steps of misery. Ignorance of various things can lead a person's life to complaints. A person who lacks knowledge will always be a victim of their own conditions and circumstances. Therefore, if someone does not sincerely use their intellectual potential, they will serve misery (Awaludin, 2017). A study has discussed the importance of developing the potential of reason as part of Islamic education. Reason is considered a critical thinking tool that, if developed through appropriate education and training, can improve the quality of life and individual happiness (Huda, Hidayat, & Baidi, 2024). Recent studies combining philosophy, neuroscience, and Asian contemplative traditions show that training reason through awareness, wisdom, and virtue can change brain structure (neuroplasticity) and increase happiness. Activities such as meditation and deep reflection help reshape mindsets, reduce stress, and create emotional stability (Wattimena, 2022). Ibn Hazm's version of happiness can be explained by Plato's views. Plato argued that ultimate happiness is impossible to obtain in this world, ultimate happiness (eudaimonia) can only be obtained when the soul is separated from the body. Plato believed that ultimate happiness lies only in the soul, not the body, so when the body and soul are still attached to a dirty body with its various interests, it means the soul is not truly happy (Weiler, 2025). For Plato, true happiness can only be felt by humans in the afterlife. This concept is in line with Ibn Hazm's view that believes in the existence of heaven as eternal happiness (Ibn Hazm, 1980).

The second result is about Martin Seligman's conception of happiness. True happiness according to him is a combination of a pleasant life, a good life and a meaningful life. This concept combines hedonic and eudaimonic views. Hedonic happiness is realized by doing things that are fun, while eudaimonia is realized by feeling that life has been lived well and morally (Chen & Zeng, 2021). Seligman's formulation is strongly dominated by modern science. This makes his conception of happiness systematic and easy to practice (Chenar et al., 2024). Seligman compiled a measuring instrument to recognize distinctive strengths so that it is easier for someone to do good according to their character. This also strengthens Al-Ghazali's opinion that recognizing one's potential is an important aspect in the route to achieving happiness (Soleh, 2022). The fact is that people have their own characters, so goodness will be easier to do if the goodness is in line with the individual's unique character. This statement has also been proven by several researchers who found a positive influence between self-awareness and happiness (Kumari & Nandal, 2023; Primaheni et al., 2021; Shoshana, 2020).

Seligman's emphasis on positive emotions aligns with the hedonic well-being tradition, which views happiness as the result of pleasurable affective experiences and life satisfaction. Meanwhile, the engagement and meaning components of his model are closely related to the concept of eudaimonic well-

being in humanistic psychology, particularly Maslow's (1971) notion of self-actualization as the pinnacle of human development. Furthermore, Seligman's theory also demonstrates theoretical coherence with Self-Determination Theory (SDT) developed by Ryan, R. M., & Deci (2000). SDT asserts that psychological well-being is shaped by the fulfillment of three basic needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. This is reflected in the elements of engagement and accomplishment, which presuppose competence, as well as meaning and positive relationships, which reinforce the importance of relatedness. The aspect of autonomy is also present in Seligman's view that authentic happiness arises from conscious choices to utilize individual character strengths. The character strengths dimension in Seligman's theory is directly related to Trait Theory and character psychology. Peterson and Seligman's classification of 24 Character Strengths bridges classical virtue ethics with modern personality psychology, viewing character as a capacity that can be developed to enhance well-being. Furthermore, Seligman's theory's roots in research on learned helplessness and its transformation into learned optimism demonstrate close connections with cognitive theory and emotion regulation, particularly the notions of attributional style, cognitive appraisal, and the formation of adaptive thought patterns (Biggs, Brough, & Drummond, 2017).

Although Seligman believes that God as a greater entity can be a source of meaning in life when served, he does not believe that God has the nature of the Creator. This makes the happiness promoted by Seligman only worldly and does not involve the afterlife as a route to achieving happiness. In practice, Seligman does not assume that happiness is a gift from God, but is purely a human achievement. Ibn Hazm has the opposite view. Because he believes in the nature of the Creator of Allah, true happiness (sa'adah) is purely a gift from God. This view also makes Ibn Hazm believe that goodness should not only come from reason, but must be in sync with the Qur'an and Hadith. Ibn Hazm's view on ethics rejects the use of analogical reasoning as a source of religious truth and the denial of inspiration (ilham) as a legitimate means of ethical science. Ibn Hazm strongly believes in the autonomy of God as the only source of value judgment, contrary to the rationalist approach of the Mu'tazilah (Zakariya, 2020).

The perspective of Humanistic Psychology helps further compare the two. Self-actualization is the highest form of human development (Maslow, 1971). This aligns with Seligman's good life orientation. However, Ibn Hazm emphasized that the pinnacle of happiness lies not merely in self-actualization, but also in sa'adah state in which a person attains spiritual happiness, a divine gift. Thus, although Maslow and Seligman both emphasize human potential as the foundation of happiness, Ibn Hazm limits the point that human reason is insufficient without divine guidance. The integration of all the modern psychological theories mentioned above with Ibn Hazm's classical concept demonstrates that these two models of happiness are both complementary and fundamentally different. Ibn Hazm emphasizes spiritual-transcendental happiness rooted in soul purification and self-control, while Seligman emphasizes empirical-psychological happiness through the optimization of human potential. This comparison demonstrates that happiness is a multidimensional construct encompassing cognitive, emotional, moral, social, and spiritual aspects.

Finally, Seligman believes that true happiness arises from the use of individual virtues and strengths (strengths & virtues). This statement has consequences for the understanding that the more a person involves his positive potential in daily activities, the happier he can be. In this case, Ibn Hazm starts from the same assumption, happiness comes from goodness. However, according to him, the use of positive potential that is not controlled by self-awareness of shortcomings and weaknesses can give birth to arrogance or haughtiness (al-'ujb) which can lead to immoral behavior. This supports research stating that

arrogance (self-conceit) is related to immoral behavior (Smith, 2021) and is related to envy (Rahman et al., 2019). Studies have shown that realizing that one has great potential can make a person feel that they must always be successful and must not fail. This condition is labeled “maladaptive perfectionism” which is closely related to increased symptoms of anxiety, depression, and obsessive-compulsive disorder in young adults (Koutra, Mouatsou, & Psoma, 2023).

## Conclusions

This study discusses the concept of happiness according to Ibn Hazm and Martin Seligman. Both agree that the goal of an individual is to pursue happiness and happiness has levels. According to Ibn Hazm there are 3 related levels; *ladzat*, *surur* and *sa'adah*. As a Muslim philosopher who is thick with Islamic views, he believes that the only way to achieve happiness is to do good and get closer to God. Happiness in this context is *surur* (peaceful). Pleasure ( *ladzat* ) according to him is not true happiness because it produces new anxiety. Virtue can be obtained through reason and controlling lust. However, reason must be guided by the teachings contained in the Quran and Hadith. Peak happiness ( *sa'adah* ) where someone can voluntarily do obedience is purely a gift from God ( *wahbi* ).

Meanwhile, Seligman as a modern psychology figure and a secularist believes that happiness can be obtained in three ways, namely living a pleasant life , a good life and a meaningful life . A pleasant life involves a positive presence and managing it effectively. A good life is obtained through the use of strength and virtue. To make it easier to do so, Seligman designed a measuring instrument to find the unique strengths of each individual. A meaningful life can be obtained when we serve a greater entity, which for religious people is God. Complete happiness is obtained from the combination of these three orientations of happiness. As a secularist, Seligman only talks about worldly happiness. While Ibn Hazm is more advanced and conceptualizes the happiness of the afterlife. According to him, eternal happiness is heaven.

Finally, unlike Seligman who emphasizes on individual efforts to maximize their positive potentials. Ibn Hazm enriches his views. Because his teachings on happiness are closely related to morals. Ibn Hazm warns that in addition to individuals maximizing the positive side, they must also understand their weaknesses and shortcomings. According to him, someone who only focuses on the positive side will be able to give rise to the nature of *ujub* (arrogance) which will lead to immoral actions.

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