

**ANALYSIS OF CONCEPT OF HAPPINESS BETWEEN RYUHO  
OKAWA, AL-GHAZALI AND IBN MISKAWAYH  
[ANALISIS KONSEP KEBAHAGIAAN ANTARA RYUHO OKAWA,  
AL-GHAZALI DAN IBN MISKAWAYH]**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Among the active and widely spread New Religious Movement (NRM) that are receiving attention all around the globe is Happy Science Religious Organization. Having its origin in Japan, Ryuho Okawa, the founder of Happy Science, plays an influential role in order to spread the teaching of happiness to the people all over the world. Malaysia, without exception also have been exposed by the teaching of this new religious movement. Thus, this research seeks to explore the concept of happiness that has been introduced by Okawa and the concept of happiness in Islam based on the two Islamic philosophers which is Al-Ghazali and Ibn Miskawayh. Hence, the main gist discussed in this research is the analysis of concept of happiness between Okawa, Al-Ghazali and Ibn Miskawayh. This research is theoretical and descriptive in nature; therefore, it is qualitative and depends much on the textual analysis. The resources of this research include printed and online materials. To analyze the data, the researcher has used analytical and comparative methods. The findings show that there is a difference between Okawa's concept of happiness and the concept of happiness discussed by Al-Ghazali and Ibn Miskawayh. The concept of happiness by Okawa is simple yet organized in structure whereas, the concept of happiness by Al-Ghazali and Ibn Miskawayh are more systematic and comprehensive. In addition, the way of understanding about the*

*definition of happiness also different among Okawa and these two Islamic philosophers.*

**Keywords:** *Happy Science, Ryuho Okawa, Al-Ghazali, Ibn Miskawayh, Happiness, Concept of Happiness, Concept of Sa'adah*

## INTRODUCTION

The Happy Science organization or movement is referred to as a spiritual movement which appeared in Japan in 1985 under the name “The Institute for Research in Human Happiness”. The founder of this organization is a Japanese man named Ryuho Okawa. He was born on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1956, in Tokushima Prefecture, Japan. He started his academic journey at one of the eminent universities in Japan, The University of Tokyo. On 6th October 1986, Happy Science was founded and later, on 7th March 1991, it was officially certified as a religious organization in Japan (Happy Science Group, 2014). The main purpose of this religious organization is to bring happiness to the world through the teaching of happiness, which is based on Okawa’s concept of happiness as illuminated by God El-Cantare through his personality (T. Astley, 1995, p347).

Depression, which finally led to many people committing suicide in Japanese society, has perhaps inspired Okawa to initiate an organization to teach and bring happiness to the world at large and the Japanese society in particular. In Japan, the rate on suicides shows a high percentage of occurrence and it becomes a major national issue. The main reason for suicides is due to the unhappiness felt by individuals. Among the factors that cause unhappiness in an individual are unemployment, stress, financial problems and depression (S. Storm, 2018). Today, Okawa’s message of happiness has reached many places around the world including Malaysia and it has gained a significant number of followers. Therefore, it is assumed that this kind of issue has motivated Okawa to bring happiness in the society. According to Okawa, this kind of unhappiness can be curbed by following the right teaching to achieve happiness.

Sutherland and Clarke state that most of the new religious movements aim to enable people to cope with a normal lifestyle and to bring a solution to every problem in society, especially those religious organizations of Japanese origin (S. Sutherland & P. Clarke, 1991). Sutherland and Clarke also add that, the objective of the religious organizations is to make people live easier and provide solutions which are compatible with the contemporary times which suits the teaching of happiness by Okawa. Okawa’s teaching of happiness has attracted a significant number of followers in many places around the world. It is, therefore, very

important for the researcher of Usuluddin and Comparative Religion to study and analyze his teachings so as to be well-versed on the beliefs and nature of certain societies and communities as well as the reality on the ground.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

There is a variety of literature that have been reviewed on the emergence of new religious movements today and one of it is Happy Science. Happy Science began its journey as an Institute of Research for Human Happiness before it became one of the most influential religious organizations today. It began its step from an ordinary religious movement and slowly grew to become one of the most significant religious movement globally. Thus, this is in line with Beckford, who states that, “NRM (New Religious Movement) refers principally to the groups which have attracted the most publicity or notoriety” (J. A. Beckford, 1985, p23).

Happy Science is expanding rapidly all over the world (The official website of Happy Science, 2021). It has gained more followers from time to time and penetrates both Muslim and Non-Muslim countries. Now, it has 12 million followers in 100 countries (Happy Science Group, 2014). In Japan, Happy Science has already become the biggest growing religion while in Malaysia, for now, it still maintains as a religious organization due to the strict procedures in application process in order to be certified as a religion in Malaysia (K. Noguchi, 2018). There are two local temples in Malaysia which are in Petaling Jaya and Penang, and one main temple located in Bukit Jalil.

Like other religions and religious movements, Happy Science also has its own principle of ethics to achieve happiness. Runzo and Martin wrote that ethics is an attempt to determine what is right and wrong, good and bad (N. Martin & J. Runzo, 2001, p20). Basically, it is a way on how to differentiate what is right or wrong for an individual to do and it is closely related to morality.

On the contrary, ethics in religion is different. It has its own meaning and it is called “religious ethics”. Different religions have different religious ethics. For instance, Buddhism has its own religious ethics which are apart from Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Sikhism. Each religion is different in term of religious ethics. What is good in Buddhis might not be good in other religions.

In 1987, Chidester wrote that, “Religious ethics is that aspect of religion concerned with normative patterns of action in the ordinary situations and circumstances of the human life cycle and social relations.” (D. Chidester, 1987, p12). To put it simply, religious ethics is a set of rules which guides people to do right actions and good deeds. It acts as a framework and

guideline to lead people in a religion to differentiate between good and bad, right and wrong in daily life and become a good human being in a religion. In Happy Science, the only way to achieve happiness is by following Okawa's concept of happiness.

This is different from Islam. Islam has its own definition of happiness. Happiness in Islam is conceived as transcendence beyond the physical or the sensual to achieve long-lasting eternal happiness which is with the mercy of God and His heavens (Tiliouine, Habib, 2014). To achieve eternal happiness, which is life in the Hereafter, an individual must go through a path and journey in the earthly life. So, real and eternal happiness is closely related to an individual's life on this earth. If the individual performs all of God's commandments and carry out his or her duty as the khalifa in the world, then he or she will achieve eternal happiness in the Hereafter with the mercy of God.

There are many ways and channels to achieve happiness in Islam. Several Islamic philosophers have their own views on how to achieve eternal happiness. One of these philosophers is Al Farabi (d. 950). According to him, there are four paths to achieve happiness which are through theoretical virtues, deliberated virtues, moral virtues, and practical arts. Ibn Miskawayh (d. 1050), however, has his own views and opinion on how to achieve happiness. According to him, who is deeply influenced by Aristotle and Neo-Platonism, happiness is the main aim and common vision of all human beings. Nevertheless, true happiness could not be achieved easily. A human being should face all the challenges and triumphs to succeed the test in their earthly life and seek God's blessing for happiness in the worldly life and the Hereafter.

On the contrary, Ibn Arabi (d. 1270) has his own views on how to achieve happiness. Based on Ibn Arabi, the only way to achieve happiness is through the soul. "Happiness can solely be found in the process of aspiring for truth, reality, rightness, and the haqq" (Tiliouine, Habib, 2014). In short, in order to achieve ultimate happiness, an individual must know about the truth and reality of the cosmos, the soul, and human affairs based on Islamic teachings.

The definitions and ways to achieve happiness in Islam are different among the Islamic philosophers but their aim is the same which is solely to get the ultimate blessings from God.

There are various literatures that focus on new religious movements, ethics, religious ethics and the concept of happiness in Islam, but very little research has been conducted on the difference in the concept of happiness between new religious movements and the Islamic concept of happiness, as for instance, Happy Science and its concept of happiness. Through reviewing related researches and studies on this topic, it is clear that no studies have been carried out, and thus the focus of the present study will be Analysis Concept Of Happiness Between Ryuho Okawa, Al-Ghazali And Ibn Miskawayh.

## METHODOLOGY

The Happy Science organization or movement is referred to as a spiritual movement which appeared in Japan in 1985 under the name “The Institute for Research in Human Happiness”. The founder of this organization is a Japanese man named Ryuho Okawa. He was born on 7<sup>th</sup> July 1956, in Tokushima Prefecture, Japan. He started his academic journey at one of the eminent universities in Japan, The University of Tokyo. On 6th October 1986, Happy Science was founded and later, on 7th March 1991, it was officially certified as a religious organization in Japan (Happy Science Group, 2014). The main purpose of this religious organization is to bring happiness to the world through the teaching of happiness, which is based on Okawa’s concept of happiness as illuminated by God El-Cantare through his personality (T. Astley, 1995, p347).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### CONCEPT OF HAPPINESS (THE FOURFOLD PATH) BY OKAWA

Okawa’s teachings to achieve happiness is based on the four basic principles, and it is known as “The Fourfold Path”. (Masaki Fukui, 2004). It starts with The Principle of Love. Secondly is The Principle of Wisdom. Thirdly, is The Principle of Reflection. Finally, The Principle of Progress.

#### *The Principle of Love*

“The Principle of Love” is designed to be the most essential principle in the Fourfold Path (Masaki Fukui, 2004). The first stage is fundamental love, secondly is spiritually nurturing love, thirdly is forgiving love and lastly, is love incarnate (Ryuho Okawa, 2011, p112).

Fundamental love according to Okawa is the basic type of love to achieve the next stages of love which are, spiritually nurturing love, forgiving love and love incarnate. Fundamental love is also the love that is practiced by people every single day for instance, the love that exists among neighbours, the love among family members, the love in friendship or the love that exists between individuals who are close to one another (Ryuho Okawa, 2011, p112). This kind of love seems easy and simple to be practiced and, if an individual can master this love, he or she will enter heaven. In summary, fundamental love acts as the door to achieve the next stages of love.

The next stage of love is spiritually nurturing love. This stage of love requires practice when an individual in the right state of mind. In other words, to step into this stage of love, an

individual should be in the right state of mind at the time he or she practices it (Ryuho Okawa, 2011, p112). In addition, this kind of love shows the strict side of love and needs the element of wisdom to practice it. This is due to the conditions that must be fulfilled by someone in order to practice it which are the right state of mind and a sense of wisdom.

The third stage is forgiving love which is “a spiritual state that is a much deeper form of love” (Ryuho Okawa, 2011, p112). One could not achieve this stage of love if there is the element of ego in the self. This is because the element of ego can segregate oneself from others (Ryuho Okawa, 2013). This means that those who are in this stage of love should stay away from the negative vibes in one self in order to feel the real feeling of forgiving love. Along with this, those who are in this stage of love will be closer to the sacred mission in life. Apart from that, this stage of love indirectly encourages people to stay away from evil things and practice good habits with a merciful heart and pure intention.

Finally, is the highest state of love which is love incarnate. “Love incarnate is the love of great angels.” (Ryuho Okawa, 2013) For this reason, love incarnate illustrates that this stage of love can enlighten an individual to be a better person. Besides, those who are in this stage of love can help others to be more positive about life, light up the world and bring the element of hope to all humankind (Ryuho Okawa, 2013). On the whole, love incarnate can bring a positive vibe in life, a hope, a guidance to the right path of life.

### ***The Principle of Wisdom***

The Principle of Wisdom is the second principle in Okawa’s teaching of happiness. It is also known as the principle of “knowledge”. Owing to that, in order to have a better understanding of this principle, an individual should practice the knowledge he or she has, and transform it into wisdom. Basically, this type of principle is about the knowledge of God’s Truth (Astley, 1995, p366). This means that, this principle naturally starts from the study about God’s Truth and is practiced in every single action in daily life and through this, indirectly people can share this knowledge with others by transforming the knowledge of God’s Truth into action as for example, the usage of God’s Truth in education, missionary activities and in the workplace (Ryuho Okawa, 2013). It all starts with the knowledge of God’s Truth and then, from the knowledge, people transform and apply the knowledge into their daily life activities.

In addition, this principle is very essential in solving daily life problems. According to Okawa, this kind of principle is very important because it is about the knowledge of the Truth (Ryuho Okawa, 2013). It acts as a foundation to solve all the problems exist in the life of humankind.

### ***The Principle of Self-Reflection***

The third principle in achieving happiness according to Okawa is The Principle of Self Reflection. This principle is merely related to the act of reflecting and examining an individual's life and deeds. Besides, the act of self-reflecting is the most important and fundamental part of Happy Science's practice through which love and wisdom can be realized (Astley, 1995, p367). This is because, in order for an individual to perform the perfect form of self-reflection, he or she requires both the elements of love and wisdom to achieve effective self-reflection.

Apart from this, the act of self-reflection is a key for humans to feel the real element of happiness as it can refresh the soul and reset a new mindset in the self. For instance, if an individual breaks a vase, there is no way for he or she to undo what has been done, but to regret and reflect the deed (Ryuho Okawa, 2013). According to Okawa, "if he or she regrets and reflects on what has been done, the sin will be wiped from the past". So, through the act of self-reflection, people can undo past deeds.

### ***The Principle of Progress***

The last principle in Okawa's teaching of happiness is The Principle of Progress. It is described as a mindset of hope for the achievement of happiness for every person on Earth (Masaki Fukui, 2004). The term "progress" itself symbolizes that happiness should expand from oneself to others. Therefore, happiness should be shared with others in the sense that, if one individual achieves happiness by practicing the truth, then, it should be shared with others too in order for others to feel and achieve the happiness (Masaki Fukui, 2004). Moreover, the feeling of happiness is greater if the teaching of the Truth is expanded and practiced by others. In addition, people are encouraged to study the Truth and be successful in this worldly life due to the fact that the more successful an individual is, the bigger his or her influence is in the society.

Other than that, the principle of progress also can be defined as the eternal self-improvement and it is the result of the other three principle previously mentioned which are, the principle of love, the principle of wisdom and the principle of self-reflection (Astley, 1995, p367). Thus, the principle of progress is the total and result of practicing love and wisdom through self-reflection.

In sum, the principle of progress is a sturdy principle because it is a combination of the principle of love, wisdom and self-reflection and acts as a medium to prepare an ideal world

which is the Utopia. Due to the fact that it is a solid and sturdy principle, it is the most apt to be the last principle and acts as the closure principle in The Fourfold Path to achieve happiness.

## **AL-GHAZALI'S THEORY OF HAPPINESS**

### ***The Knowledge of Self***

The first step to achieve happiness based on al-Ghazali's theory is, to know the knowledge of self. The knowledge of self is the key to the next step to achieve happiness which is the knowledge of God (Al-Ghazali, 2008, p218). This is undoubtedly true based on these two proofs. The first one is based on the statement "He who knows himself knows God". In some references, some says that this is supposed to be a hadith and some says not. Some of the scholars use this saying to refer to the relationship between knowledge of self and the knowledge of God. And secondly is, the Quranic verse "We will show them Our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth" Quran, 41:53. Based on this saying and quranic verse, it shows that when an individual knows himself, he supposedly knows his Creator or to be specific his God and knows clearly about the greatness of his Creator through his self-existence.

According to al-Ghazali, the real knowledge of oneself is not merely to know about the existence of the body parts in the human body such as the hands, eyes, legs, ears, and others but, it is deeper. The word deeper here means, it is beyond the surface. It is not just about the things that an individual can see through the eyes, but the heart. The real knowledge of oneself is the knowledge about the root of the existence of an individual. As an example, an individual should ask himself a few questions such as, the origin of the existence of an individual, the creator of an individual, the purpose of human creation and many more (Al-Ghazali, 1991, p6). In short, knowledge of self is not something that can be understands on the surface, but it needs another level style of thinking to have a real knowledge of self.

### ***The Knowledge of God***

Then, the second step to achieve happiness based on al-Ghazali's theory is, the knowledge of God. Basically, this second step is closely related to the previous one which is the knowledge of self. In a simple interpretation, to know the self, an individual need to know his God and vice versa, that is, to know God, an individual needs to know the real self.

Generally, according to al-Ghazali, there are two basic ways to know the knowledge of God. The first one is so complex and complicated for it cannot be understand and not fitted to the ordinary intelligence of people. Therefore, according to him, it is better left unexplained.



Secondly, is through contemplation (Al-Ghazali, 1991, p15). As for example, man should know that he comes from nothing, as the Quranic verse stated, “Has there [not] come upon man a period of time when he was not a thing [even] mentioned?” (Quran, 76:1). This Quranic verse shows variety knowledge of God if an individual contemplates it through the clear state of mind. It explains that man is nothing at the beginning and there would be no man on the Earth without the great creator. Therefore, as a summary, knowledge of God can be achieved and understood through its creation of human and all other existence in this world, through the contemplation of the mind.

### ***The Knowledge of This World***

The third step to achieve happiness according to al-Ghazali is to know the knowledge of this world. According to al-Ghazali, this worldly life is very important to achieve ultimate happiness. This is because, this world is like an important transit place for an individual before he or she arrives at the final destination which is, real happiness. What is more, this world is a place for an individual to get an abundance of preparation throughout the journey to the real destination. Needless to say, an individual should prepare himself with a sufficient amount of provisions to ensure that he will arrive at the destination safely. In addition to this, al-Ghazali states that, there are two essentials things for man to be aware of while living the life in this world. Firstly, the protection and nurture of his soul, and secondly, the care and nurture of his body (Al-Ghazali, 1991, p27). These two are very important for man to ensure he achieves the goal which is, real happiness.

### ***The Knowledge of The Next World***

Lastly, the final step in achieving happiness according to al-Ghazali is to know the knowledge of the next world. Al-Ghazali starts his explanation about the knowledge of the next world based on a hadith which is “The gift to a believer is death” (Al-Tirmidhi – Hadith 1609). This hadith brings a deep meaning about the knowledge of the next world. The term “next world” here means the life after death which is the place that gives an individual an ultimate happiness throughout his journey as a Muslim. The reason why death is considered as a gift for a believer is because, for a believer, real life and happiness will begin right after the death phase which is the last phase as a human in this worldly life. Besides, for a believer, the worldly life is like a test for them before they arrive at the real destination which is the life in next world.

In sum, there are four basics steps to achieve real happiness for an individual based on al-Ghazali’s theory of happiness and the root for all of them is knowledge.

## IBN MISKAWAYH'S CONCEPT OF *SA'ĀDAH*

According to Haque Ansari, there is no specific term in English that can be described as the true definition of *Sa'ādah*. In English, *Sa'ādah* is defined generally as happiness, but according to Miskawayh, that is not the real meaning of *Sa'ādah*. The definition of *Sa'ādah* is beyond that, as it has a more profound and deeper meaning (Haque Ansari, 1963, p69). Therefore, the term happiness is not compatible to be defined as the meaning of *Sa'ādah*. *Sa'ādah* is beyond that, as it has a more profound and deeper meaning.

The term happiness simply means “a state of feeling, differing from pleasure by its suggestion, performance, depth and serenity”. On the other hand, the term *sa'ādah* is a huge word that symbolizes a comprehensive concept, consisting of happiness, prosperity, success, perfection, blessedness, and beatitude (Haque Ansari, 1963, p70). In short, there is a big gap between the definition of happiness and *sa'ādah*, as the term *sa'ādah* brings a more profound and deeper meaning and concept compared to happiness.

The concept of *sa'ādah* according to Miskawayh, is closely related to the element of ethics whereas ethics is closely related to moral teaching. All of these are interrelated to one another. Therefore, in order to achieve *sa'ādah* in life, ethics and the right way of moral teaching are very important. This is because the element of ethics and moral teaching can prevent an individual from doing any bad deeds and motivate him to do the right deeds in life and finally achieving the real *sa'ādah* in life (Reza Alavi, 2009). Achieving the real *sa'ādah* in life is very important for an individual as *sa'ādah* is the supreme aim for a human in his life according to Miskawayh (Nasir Omar, 2016, p123).

Other than that, Miskawayh also emphasizes on the role of the character in the journey to achieving *sa'ādah*. Character has its own role in order to determine someone's action. The role of the character and the action is different but, at the same time, both of them are closely related and rely on one another. Character is the innate and hidden state of the soul, whereas action is its outward manifestation and reflection (Nasir Omar, 2016, p164). Thus, character is the leader and the inward cause, while, action is the follower and the outward outcome.

In a simple explanation, good character produces good action and deed, but on the other hand, bad character produces bad action and deed. In addition, Miskawayh also states that character is not natural and permanent. It is changeable due to the man's original nature. Miskawayh accepts Aristotle's theory which is, “every disposition is changeable”. This explains the nature of man that is changeable, depending on the environment he lives in at the moment.

As for example, a man with a bad behavior can change himself through education. In addition to this, Miskawayh added that, all man can change his nature through proper education but, the process of changing is different from one another (Reza Alavi, 2009). Some take a long time to change, and some just need a short time to change due to the difference in the pace of changing.

## **ANALYSIS OF CONCEPT OF HAPPINESS BETWEEN RYUHO OKAWA, AL-GHAZALI AND IBN MISKAWAYH**

The method used for analyzing Okawa's Concept of Happiness, Al-Ghazali's Theory of Happiness and Ibn Miskawayh's Concept of Sa'ādah is through the comparative method. Therefore, in order to get the gist of this paper, the comparison will be divided into four parts which are:

1. The way to achieve happiness.
2. The root to achieve happiness.
3. The medium to achieve happiness.
4. The meaning of ultimate happiness.

### ***The Way to Achieve Happiness***

The ways to achieve happiness according to Okawa, al-Ghazali and Ibn Miskawayh are different. Each of them has their own views, ways and thoughts. According to Okawa, there are four ways to achieve happiness and it is known as The Fourfold Path. This Fourfold Path, is very important for an individual to understand and follow in order to achieve happiness. In a simple explanation, an individual must understand and follow these four principles to ensure them to get the real meaning of happiness and achieve it eventually. These principles are the principle of love, principle of wisdom, principle of self-reflection and principle of progress. All of these principles are interrelated to one another.

While al-Ghazali has his own views on how to achieve happiness, there are four ways to achieve real happiness according to him. All of them are closely related to one another and it is developed from one stage to another. He starts his explanation clearly by explaining the basic stage at the beginning and clarifies the explanation one by one. Thus, those four ways to achieve happiness according to al-Ghazali is, firstly, is to know the knowledge of self. Secondly, is to know the knowledge of God. Thirdly, is to know the knowledge of this world. Finally, is to know the knowledge of the next world.

On the other hand, Ibn Miskawayh has his own ways and views on how to achieve happiness which are contrary from Okawa and al-Ghazali. According to him, there are two main elements to achieve sa'ādah which are through ethics and moral teaching. Both of these elements are essential for an individual to achieve happiness because they act as a guideline and personal compass for an individual to behave good in each of his actions. Thus, based on Ibn Miskawayh views, ethics and moral teaching are the influential elements and only through these two elements people can achieve happiness.

### ***The Root to Achieve Happiness***

There is a difference in the root to achieving happiness among Okawa, al-Ghazali and Ibn Miskawayh. Each of them relies on one key element to achieve happiness. From the the root will guide an individual to understand the way to achieve happiness.

As for Okawa, the root to achieve happiness is the love. For him, love is the fundamental element in achieving happiness. This is because the importance of happiness in the self, starts from the feeling of love itself. Besides, love acts as the door to achieve another stage of happiness. Thus, that is the main reason why love is the main root in achieving happiness. There are a few categories of love according to Okawa, and it starts from the love that instinct, love that loves, love that nurtures, love that forgives, love as existence, and lastly, love of God or love from God which is beyond human's scope of mind and thought. All of these categories of love fall under four stages of love which are fundamental love, spiritually nurturing love, forgiving love and love incarnate. In sum, from the principle of love, only then can an individual understand the next stage of achieving happiness which are the principle of wisdom, principle of self-reflection and principle of progress. For this reason, that is why love acts as the main root for people to achieve happiness according to Okawa.

While, according to al-Ghazali, the root to achieve happiness is through knowledge. Knowledge obviously acts as a core basis in the way of achieving happiness according to his thoughts and it can be seen clearly from his formula. This is due to the reason that, all of the stages of achieving happiness based on his views involved the element of knowledge. Based on his formula, there are four stages to achieve happiness and it starts with the knowledge of the self, the knowledge of God, the knowledge of the world, and finally, the knowledge of the next world. Hence, the only way for an individual achieves and feels real happiness is through knowledge likewise, it plays an important role in all aspects in life.

However, Ibn Miskawayh has his own views regarding the root to achieving happiness. For him, character is the main basis to achieve happiness. This is due to the fact that character

has its own role in determining someone's action. In addition, character itself brings its own meaning as an innate and hidden state of the soul. Thus, Ibn Miskawayh concludes that, character is the most vital root to achieving happiness.

### ***The Mean to Achieve Happiness***

There is a distinction in terms of the mean to achieving happiness among Okawa, Al-Ghazali and Ibn Miskawayh.

For Okawa, there is no specific mean in order to achieve happiness, but the main focus is on the Fourfold Path. It is different with the views of al-Ghazali and Ibn Miskawayh. Both of these Islamic philosophers have their own views on the mean to achieve happiness.

As for al-Ghazali, the mean to achieve happiness is through the soul and body. Both of these parts play an important role for an individual to achieve happiness. In fact, the soul and body are known as two sets of armies and both of them are interrelated. Each set has its own purpose to ensure an individual achieve all goals in life. The soul which is the internal army plays the important role to filtering all the actions that makes man's life good or bad. On the contrary, man's physical parts which is the external army, like the eyes, ears, hand, and others are the parts that helps man to achieve his goals (Rania, 2015). For this reason, al-Ghazali said that human body is more and less like the riding animal (Al-Ghazali, 1991). Therefore, the soul and the body are very important as a mean for an individual to achieve happiness and to clarify this clearly, a good soul will produce good action and good action will continuously guide an individual to achieve happiness.

Ibn Miskawayh has his own thoughts on the mean to achieve happiness. For him, an individual can only achieve happiness through the character. This is because the character has a close relation with action. The character is an innate element of the soul, and action is the manifestation and result from the soul (Nasir Omar, 2016, p164). In a simple explanation, a good character will produce good action. That is why character is very vital in order to determine the action of an individual. In addition, Ibn Miskawayh emphasizes that the ultimate happiness is achievable by having good character in oneself (Nasir Omar, 2016, p172). Thus, undoubtedly, character is the most important element and mean to achieve happiness.

### ***Ultimate Happiness and The Attainment of Ultimate Happiness***

Okawa, al-Ghazali and Ibn Miskawayh have different perceptions and views regarding the meaning of ultimate happiness.

According to Okawa, ultimate happiness can only be achieved by an individual by practicing all of the principles in The Fourfold Path. In short, if all individuals in this worldly life practice the principle of love, principle of wisdom, principle of self-reflection and principle of progress, an ideal world which known as Utopia can be created. And when the moment of Utopia (an ideal world) is created, the hell will be diminished. Then, the ultimate happiness will be achieved and realized by all individuals. However, the belief of creating an ideal world might be difficult to be achieved according to Okawa, but it is not impossible (Ryuho Okawa, 2013). Therefore, in order to fulfil the objective of creating an ideal world, people should increase happiness and spread it to others. In sum, ultimate happiness can be achieved by all individuals if all of them practice the Fourfold Path, which will then lead to the creation of the Utopia (an ideal world).

Meanwhile, al-Ghazali has his own perception on acquiring ultimate happiness. He calls it as *as-sa'ādah al-haqīqīya* or in English term, it is known as the real blessedness (M. Umaruddin, 1962, p102). The real blessedness or ultimate happiness according to him is the realization of the vision of God in the next world and it consists of seven elements which are life without death, pleasure without pain, wealth without poverty, perfection without defect, joy without sorrow, honor without disrespect, and finally, knowledge without ignorance (M. Umaruddin, 1962, p103). In fact, all of these elements will be eternal and will never diminish and can only be achieved by an individual in the life of the next world which is the life after death. In order to achieve it, an individual should give his best in all his actions and deeds in this world and prepare himself adequately for the life in the next world, as this world is a transit place for him to go to the next world. Hence, an individual must ensure that he carries out his responsibilities well as a Muslim in this worldly life to achieve and obtain ultimate happiness in the next world.

On the other hand, Ibn Miskawayh has his own term on the concept of ultimate happiness. As stated by Haque Ansari in his writing “The Ethical Philosophy of Miskawayh”, there is no term in English that can described the real meaning of *sa'ādah*. Even the term happiness could not give the real definition of *sa'ādah*. This is due to the fact that *sa'ādah* has its own meaning which is deeper and huger. Thus, the term ultimate happiness according to Ibn Miskawayh is described as “the perfect *sa'ādah*”. The perfect *sa'ādah* is achievable and realizable by having good character in oneself (Nasir Omar, 2016, p172). This means that the only way for an individual to achieve the perfect *sa'ādah* is by having a good character in himself. This is because, only by having good character can produce good action in oneself. In

addition, he also explained that the perfect sa'ādah is the combination of the highest level of intellectual, moral, activity and the purest pleasure. As a conclusion of his discussion, Ibn Miskawayh concluded that, the perfect sa'ādah can only be achieved in the next level of life which is the life in the hereafter (Haque Ansari, 1963, p79).

## CONCLUSION

In sum, Okawa's Teaching of Happiness, Al-Ghazali's Theory of Happiness and Ibn Miskawayh's Concept of Sa'ādah can be seen clearly with the comparative method based on four angle which are, the way to achieve happiness, the root to achieve happiness, the medium to achieve happiness and finally the meaning of ultimate happiness.

Through the analytical and comparative method used, the researcher has concluded a few points. Firstly, Okawa's concept of happiness (The Fourfold Path) is mainly consists of four main principles which is love, wisdom, progress and self-reflection and it is the outcome of the principle that has been extracted from the teaching of the Eightfold Path in Buddhism. Thus, undoubtedly, the scope and elements in the concept of happiness proposed by Okawa is quite simple. It is like the modern way of achieving happiness because it only focuses on the way to achieve happiness rather than bringing the real concept and definition of happiness. Furthermore, The Fourfold Path mainly focuses on the way of achieving happiness in the worldly life rather than in the next life. Despite of the simple concept, Okawa managed to produce his concept of happiness in a systematic form and eventually attract a lot of followers around the globe.

However, from the Islamic perspectives, Al-Ghazali and Ibn Miskawayh have different views about the concept of happiness and the way of achieving it. Both of these philosophers explain the concept of happiness in a deep explanation and describe the way of achieving it accordingly, step by step. For al-Ghazali, the only way to achieve happiness is mainly based on the main root which is knowledge. In sum, an individual should master and understand the knowledge of self, knowledge of God, knowledge of this world, and the knowledge of the next world in order to achieve ultimate happiness. On the contrary, for Ibn Miskawayh, the character plays the most important role in achieving happiness. This is because, according to him, character is the key element to determine someone's action. This is due to the fact that, character act as an innate element of the soul, and the result of it, will manifest through action. Thus, good character will manifest into good action in the individual. In summary, both of these philosophers managed to explain and deliver the concept of happiness in a

comprehensive way. Even though their way of understanding and achieving happiness is different, but the objective and the result are the same, which is to pursue the ultimate happiness in the next life. Nevertheless, both philosophers have a solid opinion that ultimate happiness only can be achieved in the hereafter. All in all, every religion, culture or even each of individual has their own way of understanding the concept of happiness. It is different due to the various backgrounds, teachings, mindsets and sources. It is hoped that, this dissertation will give new views, information and knowledge on the difference of understanding about the concept of happiness in Okawa's teaching, al-Ghazali and Ibn Miskawayh.

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