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# ISLAMIC PSYCHOLOGY FROM THE PERSPECTIVES OF AL-KINDI

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### ABSTRACT

Islamic psychology was originally a study of humans which should have been a study of human behaviour based on a self-approach to God. After the Islamic world faded, it was replaced by western domination, to which the study of psychology implicitly regressed. This study aims to analyse Islamic psychology from the perspective of Al-kindī, which comes from psychological science. The method used in this study is library research or a review study to obtain theoretical data basis on scientific theory and further select and analyse the literature appropriate to the addressed topics. The investigation showed that, since 1978, Islamic psychology had been an international public discourse. *Secondly*, according to Al-Kindi, the human soul is divided into three parts: lust, emotion, and rationale. On the other hand, the human soul has three powers: mind, anger, and desire.

### ABSTRAK

Psikologi Islam pada awalnya studi tentang manusia yang seharusnya kajian perilaku manusia yang didasarkan pada pendekatan diri kepada Tuhan. Setelah dunia Islam meredup maka tergantikan oleh dominasi barat sehingga kajian mengenai psikologi secara implisit mengalami kemunduran. Tujuan penelitian ini untuk menganalisis tentang psikologi Islam dalam perspektif al-kindī yang berangkat dari lahirnya ilmu psikologi. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah *library research* atau studi kepustakaan untuk mendapatkan data yang bersifat teoritis sebagai landasan teori ilmiah lalu memilih dan menganalisa sumber *literatur-literatur* yang sesuai dengan judul yang akan diteliti. Hasil dari penelitian ini ialah pertama mengenai Psikologi Islam sendiri mulai menjadi perbincangan publik internasional sejak tahun 1978. Lalu, kedua Menurut al-Kindi, jiwa manusia terbagi menjadi tiga bagian, yaitu jiwa syahwat, jiwa emosional, dan jiwa rasional. Selain itu menurut Al-Kindi bahwa jiwa manusia itu mempunyai tiga daya, yaitu daya berpikir, daya marah, dan daya syahwat.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Around the 6<sup>th</sup> century, it was known that a nation excelled in various fields of science. China is the nation where the foremost civilisation existed and formerly made it one of the centres of world civilisation. (Humaidah, 2016) Therefore, the prophet of Muhammad SAW said in his narration, “*Utlubul ‘Ilma Walau Bi Shini*”, which explicitly encouraged Muslims to study even though they came to China (Nasruddin, 2016).

Currently, as we see and know, science's direction and orientation are western. (Sihol, 2003) As the prophet of Muhammad said, it is a command for Muslims to search for knowledge and study in a land where civilisations are advanced and sophisticated. Therefore, Muslims nowadays must seek knowledge in a land where the centres of civilisation are, known as the western nation. Whether like or unlike, the Muslims must availablely study and seek knowledge so as not to remain backwards or loose for the competitions of the world that are increasingly competing to move forward.

Psychology is one of the disciplines of science developing in the West. It is known that the disciplines of science were born in the west and well-known as independent disciplines in the late 19th century or the 1800s and have developed rapidly. (Ari et al., 2021) It was originally known that psychology's benefit is developing human resources. Furthermore, seeing from its benefit, the contribution of psychology is crucial, and Muslims need to master this science.

From various sources, psychology has existed since classic Arabic, whose figures encompass Al-Ghazali, Ibn Sina, and Al-Kindi. (Yandi, 2019) The author of this article chooses Al Ash’ath bin Qais Al Kindi since he is considered the first Muslim philosopher of the Middle Ages. He wrote 270 books in 12 disciplines, including psychology, entitled “About Sleeping and Dream” and “the First Philosophy”, in which Al-Kindi discussed the function of the soul in humans’ intellect. In this regard, he was influenced by the Aristotelian theory of the soul.

In seven centuries, studies related to psychology have been discussed, although they are still implicitly discussed with Sufistic and philosophical studies. After the Islamic world dimmed, it was replaced by western domination, and the study of psychology implicitly went down as well. (Erna, 2013) However, it is undeniable that psychology is indispensably known by the Western and is developing there. Therefore, psychology, as this discipline of science, should also be studied by Muslims. When they want to check it, the initial steps are by reviewing psychological concepts from the perspective of an Islamic basis. On the other hand, it can also make the science of psychology the point of view to analyse Muslim issues; otherwise, Islam is a basis for studying psychology. In

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this discussion, the most important is how to build the new psychological concept coming from Islamic lenses.

From the previous studies under the same themes, the article by Yusuf has been written in the form of a thesis entitled “a Therapy on Coping with Sadness based on the View of Al-Kindi” included in the scope of psychological studies. His writing discusses the benefits of psychological concepts toward the discussed objects offered by Al-Kindi. (Muhammad Yusuf, Skripsi 2007) This article differentiates his article with more discussion of psychological science from the perspective of Al-Kindi, especially the concepts in Al-Kindi’s view. Furthermore, this study can be a basis for advancing the psychology of Islamic Education.

Based on the afore-discussed background, this science must be developing due to plenty of its advantages and particularly its contribution that can be said to be a spearhead for improving the quality of human resources to be better. It also comes from the author’s solicitude, which Muslims are less attention to and less exploration of this discipline of psychological science. Therefore, an author examines Islamic psychology by looking at the history and the appointed figures by Al-Kindi due to his influence on Islamic psychology to help the development of Islamic psychology. In addition, this is to awaken and interest Muslims to learn Islamic psychology to take advantage of the Islamic world.

## **2. Method**

In writing this article, the author uses library research, known as a literature review. The researcher uses this research design to compile the theoretical data as a scientific theory by selecting and analysing the literature sources, which are appropriate to the topics to be studied (Hadi 2014). Library research, according to Sarwono, is a study that discusses books as references and the previous similar research results that is beneficial to obtain the theoretical basis suitably with the topics to be discussed. (Sari and Asmendri, 2020) According to Nazir, library research is the data collection technique of studying books, literature, notes, and reports related to solved issues (Sari and Asmendri, 2020). Based on the afore-discussed definition, it can be concluded that the method of a literature review or library research is a study conducted by the researcher followed by the method of selecting, reviewing, and analysing books, literature, references, notes, and the report of the previous similar research regarding the considered issues to be processed, analysed and used as data sources for the research.

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### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1. The History of Islamic Psychology Development

A study of humans supposedly develops the psychology based on self-approach to God, Allah SWT., which has been answered by the existing Islamic psychology (Nunzairina, 2018). The emergence of Islamic psychology is considered a critique of western psychology because modern civilisation has been dominated by western psychology that fails to improve the well-being of human moral-spiritual aspects. Marx Karl's perspective stated that modern people encounter irony (dehumanisation), in which they face materials-related remarkable triumphant (Nana, 2008). However, they suffered from stress, depression, and mental disorders, and some decided to suicide. In addition, Muslims tend to imitate western culture, which separates Muslims from their culture and ideology. Currently, Muslims imitate the western culture and scientific system as the basis of their thought and attitude, even though they should rely on the truth of Islam itself (Nasron, 2017).

Since 1978, the discussion of Islamic psychology has started to be international public discourse 1978. That year, the university of Riyadh in Arab Saudi held an international symposium to discuss Islamic psychology. (Nunzairina, 2018) In 1979, the book entitled "The Dilemma of Muslim Psychologists" written by M. Badri had published in England. The international symposium and this book publication are like stepping stone for Islamic psychology that gives many inspirations; the reaction emerges over the world otherwise.

Determining when exactly religious psychology started to be studied is slightly difficult. Holy books and the history of religion do not clearly mention when it is. Though it is incomplete, the issues in the scope of religious psychology studies are found in the Holy books and the history of religion (Sudirman, 2020). At least, the concern of psychology toward religion grows in human life, as people have thought about the meaning of life since the growth of people's awareness. Human behaviour related to divinity seems to have attracted the attention of many experts, while in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, this attention led to scientific aspects through religious psychology (Sudirman, 2020).

#### 3.2. Al-Kindi's Perspective on Islamic Psychology

According to Al-Kindi, a soul is simple and not arranged or *Bashitah*, noble, perfect and important. The substance (*Jauhar*) comes from the substance of God like the light comes from the sun. However, based on Al-Kindi, it is not explained whether *Al-nafs* (humans) come from thought as Plato said that *Al-nafs* come from the idea, which proves that *Jauhar* of "spiritual" is different from the body. Al-Kindi sees the soul as the essence of humans. A soul manifests itself and differs

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from the body (Amirudin, 2021). As proof of this, Al-Kindi argues that the reality of the soul opposes the lustful desires that are oriented towards the body's interests. If anger pushes people to do something, the soul will forbid and control it, like a horse rider who wants to crash. If lust comes to the surface, the invitation of the lust remains unacceptable and leads to humility, and then the soul will oppose and forbid it. This shows that the soul is another term for lust over the body (Kamaluddin, 2021).

The soul of the plant goes for eating, growing, and proliferating. The soul of the animal goes for sensing, imagining, and moving alongside eating, growing and proliferating. Meanwhile, the soul of the rationale aims to think. These souls are also included in humans. Consequently, humans are defined as the thinking creature (*Al-hayawān Al-nāthiq*). Hence, the soul of the rationale, known as a mind, is divided into always active minds (Zuhara, 2018).

According to Al-Kindi, humans cover by three powers, the power of thinking (*Al-Quwwah Al-'Aqliyah*), the power of anger (*Al-Quwwah Alghadhabiyah*), dan the power of lust (*Al-Quwwah Al-Syahwātiyah*). In which the power of thinking is called with a mind. Additionally, a mind contains three levels; 1) the potential mind (*Al-quwwah*); 2) a mind out of the actual potential (*Al-fi'il*); and 3) a mind in the intermediate level over the actuality (*Al-'ql Al-tsāny*), or called the second mind. (Amirudin, 2021)

According to Al-Kindi, the human soul is divided into three parts; lust, emotion, and rationale. The soul is eternal and does not disintegrate with the body's dissolution. The soul is not destroyed because the substance is from God. When the soul is in the body, it does not get true pleasure, and its knowledge is imperfect. After it separates from the body, it will find true pleasure in the form of perfect knowledge. After separating from the body, the soul goes to the Realm of Truth or the Realm of Intellect (*Al-'Alam Ahāq, Al-'Alam Al-Aql*) in the sphere of God's light, is close to God and can see God. This is the eternal happiness for the holy soul. After separating from the body, the unholy soul will not directly enter the eternal realm, but it will wander for some periods purging himself. The soul firstly resides on the moon, then on Mercury and on to the higher *Falak* for its gradual purification. After the soul is completely clean, the soul enters the realm of truth or the eternal realm (Amirudin, 2021).

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Al-Kindi was the first Muslim philosopher and the driving force of Arabic philosophy and is often referred to as the Father of Arab Philosophy. He is also recognised as one of the most

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influential Arab philosophers because of his many creations. Al-Kindi was born in 801 BC in Kufa, Iraqi, from a noble family of the Kinda Tribe, descended from the tribal chief *Al-Ash'ath Ibn Qays*. Al-Kindi passed away in 873 BC in Baghdad under the power of Al-Mu'tamid. According to Al-Kindi, the human soul is divided into three parts; lust, emotion, and rationale. Al-Kindi divides the human soul into three powers; mind, anger, and lust. The emergence of Islamic psychology is considered a critique of western psychological views, leading to the civilisation dominated by western psychological perspectives failing to improve the well-being of human spiritual-moral aspects. Islamic psychology itself has been an international public discourse since 1978.

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