

Depression in Ibn Miskawaih's Perspective A Review of Islamic Psychology

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to study the importance of a sick and healthy mental condition and its healing methods, through the thoughts of Ibn Miskawaih by referring to one of his works, namely, Tahdzib Al-Akhlaq. This research found that Ibn Miskawaih's Islamic psychology was studied through the discourse of al-quwwah al-ghadabiyah, which influenced the suffering of sadness or even depression, which had an impact on the human mind, using the discourse of philosophy of the soul, through philosophical studies, Ibn Miskawaih observes that the human soul's nervousness in processing and stimulating all aspects of reality has its roots in Suffering, depression, and sadness, mental illnesses often experienced by modern man.

Keywords: *Depression, Psychology, Ibn Miskawaih.*

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INTRODUCTION

The majority of people experience various life problems, such as feeling meaningless and empty. This situation points to one of the most important problems in modern life. A German psychologist named Erich From said that people in the modern era not only do not feel calm, but they feel even more confused. (Yusufian, 2014) All activities that are usually carried out by humans, feel empty and meaningless.

As an example of the problems that occur in Indonesia today, the high mortality rate in Indonesia is a very serious problem. Apart from economic and health factors, suicide is the leading cause of death. This main cause of death is due to the number of suicide cases that show pain, depression and loss of meaning in the reality of life, this mental health problem is always discussed and discussed in psychology discussions, both in the West and Islam (Fatmawati & Khair, 2022) In 2017, approximately 200 million people (3.6%) experienced depression and loss of life value, according to WHO. (Juliana Hindrajat, 2021) According to the basic notes on Health research from the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, in 2018 emotional disorders with an average age of 15 years and over increased by 9.8%, a higher number of suicides were caused by an increase in the level of depression and emotional disorders (Juliana Hindrajat, 2021) As for a study showing as many as 40% of

people who experience depression have suicidal ideas, WHO predicts that by 2020, the most common mental disorder is depression. And will be the second leading cause of death. (Dirgayunita, 2016) Depression and psychological distress are psychiatric disorders characterized by feelings of irritability, depression, fear, lack of enthusiasm, sadness, conflict with family, (Linda Mandasari, 2020) mood disorders, long-lasting emotional conditions that affect behavior, thinking and feelings. Another definition of depression is a painful experience that causes psychological symptoms and physical symptoms. Such as anger, loss of self-confidence, to the concentration of hopelessness, feelings of guilt and meaninglessness. (Lumanggo., 2009) So the discussion of this problem by looking at it from an Islamic point of view is very important.

In medical circles, psychiatrists and psychologists, one of them H.I Kaplan stated that the factors that cause depression are biological factors, genetic factors, and psychosocial factors. (Meilanny Budiarti Susanto, 2017) According to WHO, depression is an implication of mental disorders. (Widowati, 2023) In the narrative of the Qur'an, the problem focuses more on spiritual problems. In addition, philosophers argue about various perspectives on the factors that cause mental disorders. The first is physicalism, eliminative materialism, emergentist materialism, which says that mental disorders actually come from biophysical disorders, so the causes are biophysical. The second is the view of idealism, phenomenism, claiming that psychic factors cause mental disorders in humans. Third, the animist school claims that the body and soul are different worlds, but the cause of mental disorders comes from psychic/soul factors. While the fourth, the flow of critical schools, deconstructionism,

feminism, marxism, post-structuralism and postmodernism, which claim that the soul, body and mental disorders are only language which is socially constructed and born in history, so the cause of the disorder is a social construction factor. (Gama., 2019)

According to Edward Bibring, depression is a condition that occurs when a person realizes that they cannot meet their high standards. In the case of children who are helpless against their parents' abuse, Edih Jacobson sees depression as a loss of strength. In addition, Heins Kohut defines depression from the theory of self psychology, which argues that parents should fulfill their children's mental developmental needs, such as providing a sense of positivity, confidence and independence. Loss of self-confidence leads to depression if the expected person does not fulfill these needs. Losing something as a child and losing something as an adult increases the likelihood of having a depressive episode as an adult. (Saputri, 2017)

In the context of Western Psychology, Psychoanalysis has begun to consider the problem of mental illness as an important and serious problem (Fatmawati & Khair, 2022). Sigmund Freud defined psychoanalysis as the view that mental disorders are caused by the loss of objects in human life, which indicates a loss of balance in the human outlook on life. According to some accounts of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud viewed religion as the main way to disturb the balance in human life with various doctrines that are considered as fantasy or delusion. Psychoanalysis argues that efforts should be made to eliminate the ills faced by people today to overcome various mental problems. Id, ego and superego are considered as the structure of human personality by Sigmund Freud as the three main concepts in the treatment of mental disorders (Puspitasari., 2006)

In Freud's Psychoanalysis, the id is the individual that always drives people to achieve happiness, pleasure, and physical satisfaction in real life. However, psychoanalysts argue that identity cannot solve human mental problems, so the ego needs to regulate and control the way identity functions to meet human needs and reduce tension through various actions and actual will. In other words, there are actions that fulfill identity to prevent tension in the human personality. Through his discourse on the structure of a person's personality, Sigmund Freud pointed out the difference between the id, ego and superego. He pointed out that humans experience three stages of consciousness: preconscious, unconscious and conscious. These phases attempt to read the condition of a person's psyche and its relation to their behavior or mindset in the real world. (Fatmawati & Khair, 2022) To address various mental problems, psychoanalysis sees the need for efforts to address the disorders faced by individuals in modern society.

In the discourse on mental illness, Ibn Miskawaih says that the adornment of the soul must exist in every human being, starting with moral knowledge such as patience, self-confidence, and humility through reason. Part of the soul, reason is responsible for analyzing every human behavior to avoid mistakes and guilt in managing life, and also serves as a medium for the actualization of the soul towards perfection in the real world. (Miskawaih, n.d.)

RESEARCH METHOD

The type of research used in this research is literature (Library research), which is a series of activities with data collection methods Library, reading and understanding by exploring all information written in all books and other literature, such as journals, internet research and other data related to this research. (Subagyo, 1991) In addition, the

main support for the research used is derived from the work of Ibn Miskawaih, one of whose thoughts tends to the philosophy of the soul. entitled *Tahdzibul Al-Akhlak* "which is translated by Hilmi Hidayat (Towards the Perfection of Morals)". Ibn Miskawaih describes how the philosophy of the soul views the problem of suffering, depression and sadness based on the restlessness of the human soul in thinking and stimulating everything in reality. (Miskawaih, 1999)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Ibn Miskawaih in his discussion of the soul was influenced by thoughts from Greek philosophy. (Safi, 2014) Miskawaih's thoughts about the soul are poured in his book entitled *Tahdzibul al-Akhlaq wa Tathiru al-A'raaq*. Regarding the soul, he argues that in humans there are two elements, namely the elements of the body and soul. However, although the body and soul are contained in the same container, there are essential and substantial differences between the body and soul. (Sasmita., 2023) The body is a material existence that will be destroyed over time and time, but the soul is an immaterial existence that has no time and space that shows its existence after earthly life. However, both influence each other in human life, such as when people feel happy, sad, and perfect. (Fatmawati & Khair, 2022) Ibn Miskawaih says that the soul comes from the overflow of active reason (*aqlfa'al*) and it is a spiritual *Jauhar* that is not destroyed by the death of the body. It is a unity that cannot be broken. It will last forever. Since it is not *jism*, but only a part of *jism*, the five senses cannot perceive it. The soul has the ability to understand the existence of its substance and identify its activities and knowability. The soul has three different powers. First, animalistic lust (*Al-nafs al-Bahimiyah*), second lust (*Al-Nafs al-Sabu'iah*), and third, wise lust (*Al-Nafs-al-Nathiqah*). (Sasmita., 2023)

More clearly, Ibn Miskawaih states that the actuality of the soul or the perfection of the soul depends on humans. Therefore, the perfection of the soul consists of two things, knowledge and its existence based on reason. In *Falsaf-e Islami Sayyid Abidin Bozorgi* says that the soul, though immaterial, needs a body or matter to know and understand what exists in the real world. This means that the soul cannot achieve perfection in reality without bodily experience and reflection. (Fatmawati & Khair, 2022) Based on the above explanation, it can be understood that the human body and soul strive to improve themselves through the use of correct knowledge. Conversely, people who experience sadness, depression and meaninglessness of life are caused by sick bodies and souls. However, according to Ibn Miskawaih, the feelings of the soul derived from human physical experience are the basis of all mental illness.

When the soul is depressed, the health of the human body is compromised, as the soul and body have a relationship. According to Ibn Miskawaih, a mind that is unable to think positively is the basis of a soul that experiences various types of suffering. One of the faculties of the soul is unable to work wisely to punish human actions and thoughts, which causes humans to be in a phase of depression, disappointment and sadness when facing the realities of life. Ibn Miskawaih viewed that in order to overcome these problems, one must understand the powers of the soul (thinking, daring and desire), which is considered as a way to understand the relationship between body and soul, which is used to build a positive perspective in life, including

Wisdom, or hikmah, has the characteristics of sharp thinking, clear comprehension, speed of thought, sufficient ability, strong memory, and the ability to re-express what has been said. Contentment has

eleven characteristics: compassion, togetherness, rigor, desire, firmness, calmness, hardness, patience, humility, and enthusiasm.

Modesty has 11 characteristics: shyness, kindness, righteousness, peace, calmness and self-control. Justice has 19 characteristics: friendship, unity of trust, compassion, brotherhood, teaching, harmony, hospitality, obedience and submission.

The human soul is better than the animal soul, according to Ibn Miskawaih, because the power of thinking allows humans to consider behaviors that always lead to goodness. Although the three are one entity, according to Ibn Miskawaih, their powers are different, as one is turbulent while the other is calm. Therefore, one group argues that the soul is single in substance but has many symptoms and topics, while another group argues that the soul is single in substance but has many symptoms and topics, but Ibn Miskawaih does not give further explanation on this issue because it is off topic. This is an explanation of the power or three souls (Sasmita., 2023)

- Rational power or rational soul which is the soul that functions as the basis for thinking, distinguishing and understanding the nature of things.
- Emotional power or emotional soul, this is called an-Nafs as-Sabu'iyah by Miskawaih. It is the soul that gives rise to anger, distress, and hatred as well as a fearful desire for power, elevation and various perfections. The heart is the center of day aini.
- The Power of Desire Ibn Miskawaih also refers to as an-Nafs al-Buhimiyah, which means animalistic soul. It is this soul that gives rise to lust, the pursuit of food, and the desire to enjoy sensory pleasures such as

food, drink, and marriage. The center of the day *aini* is located in the heart.

In the book *Tahdzib al-Akhlaq*, Ibn Miskawaih discusses the level of the soul's powers to understand the structure of the soul's existence as a whole, among other things, that the function of the soul as a whole, among other things, that the highest soul function (*al-quwwah an-nathiqah*) the power of thinking and seeing facts used from within oneself, with the brain as a tool. If this power of the soul is stable and does not change from its nature, then knowledge and *al-Hikmah* will appear. American psychologist Aaron Beck argues that mental illnesses such as depression, sadness and stress stem from a depressed subjective state of thinking badly about oneself, the environment, and the future. Realism Aron Beck believes that mental illness comes from the mind, which always causes a pessimistic, gloomy and disappointed attitude towards life. Therefore, to treat mental illness, he believes that one must perform cognitive restructuring by changing abnormal thought patterns, also known as negative thoughts, towards normal thought patterns. Individuals' emotions are always affected by abnormal thought patterns, which make them see things in the wrong way, causing them disappointment, sadness, and guilt in the future. (Fatmawati & Khair, 2022) Ibn Miskawaih views reason as the highest power in the structure of the soul. therefore if we want to see the world with positive eyes, we must understand that maintaining body stability also has an impact on mental health. This means that Ibn Miskawaih is trying to encourage people to see various types of shortcomings as beneficial, in contrast to cognitive psychologists who see problems as negative values for their existence (Miskawaih, 1999).

Second (*al-quwwah*) which means courage in the face of challenges and determination for power, position, and honor. Strength is also known as *quwwah sabu'iyah* or power. If the power of the soul is balanced with the power of the *aqliyah*, it will result in the virtue of *al-Hilm* (politeness) and the *fadilah al-Saja'ah* (courage). However, Ibn Miskawaih said that courage must be based on thinking power, which means that every action must be analyzed to find out whether it is good or bad. Third (*al-quwwah as-syahwiyyah*). The power of desire, potentially has the power of lust. The tendency of this potential is the desire to always get worldly pleasure and the urge to approach something. (Sasmita., 2023) This third force is similar to the *id* described by Sigmund Freud in his psychoanalytic theory.

However, Freud did not specifically explain how the *id* originated and how it appears in the structure of human existence. Therefore, it is clear that the three mental forces play an important role in human behavior and thoughts to determine one's actual health and illness. Everyone should train themselves to actualize the highest thinking power, because if they do not do so, people experience depression, sadness and gloom stemming from disappointment over the life of the world. (Al-walid., 2012)

Based on the above explanation of the three basic potentials possessed by humans, it results in the potential for universal knowledge. The urge away from something and the urge to approach something.

Mental Illness According to Ibn Miskawaih.

Dalam diskursus psikologi Barat, penyakit Mental illness or mental disorder is seen as a condition of Health that affects thoughts, feelings, behaviors and moods over a considerable period of time (chronic). However, as mentioned earlier, Ibn Miskawaih considers mental illness as a condition of the soul that affects human thoughts, feelings, behaviors and moods. (Miskawaih, 1999) The state of the soul that responds to external experiences determines the variety of problems a person faces. In order to know more clearly, the author will examine the meaning of mental illness and sick and healthy souls in Ibn Miskawaih's view.

The author will straighten the definition of mental illness before discussing further about the core of the theme of mental illness. the word "illness" and "disorder" usually have the same meaning. In KBBI online, the word "disease" is termed as something that disturbs living beings, health problems or bad habits. However, the word "Murad" in Arabic also means physical or mental illness. In addition, Ibn Faris interprets the word as a human condition that exceeds the normal healthy limit. Therefore, based on this explanation, the word "disease" is defined as a condition that attacks physical and psychological conditions, causing unstable conditions in human behavior and emotions. (Fatmawati, 2020) The word "Murad" is different from "marid" which means "physical illness." In his book *Mufradat fi Garib al qur'an*, Al Asfahani says that murad is a mental disorder that affects human actions and will (Syarif, 2014) Meanwhile, Quraish Shihab states that the word "murad" is mentioned in the Qur'an thirteen times to describe spiritual diseases that attack people. Thus, it can be understood that in the discourse of Islamic studies, "mental illness" is defined as "marad" to describe disorders that are not physical in nature. In *Tahdzib al-*

Akhlaak, Ibn Miskawaih also uses the word murad to describe a sick soul. (Miskawaih, n.d.)

The Condition of the Sick Soul and its Healer.

After providing an explanation of the theme of mental illness from various perspectives, the author will explain the definition of mental illness. According to Ibn Miskawaih, this explanation is very important to determine the meaning of sickness.

There are several conditions that can cause this body to become sick, such as thought disorder and mood swings. When a person's mindset is unstable, it will also have an impact on the condition of his soul, which can lead to mental illness. a person in the phase of anger, passion or lust is sick. In addition, this sick condition can have an impact on a person's physical condition, which can lead to disorders such as feeling frightened, feeling empty, weight gain, or weight loss. A sick person has a body that experiences these conditions. (Miskawaih, n.d.) As stated by Ibn Miskawaih, the power of the soul cannot be separated from its owner (human body) except with the encouragement of God. it should be noted that the sick soul is related to its owner, and will change following the change in the owner's condition. What is meant is that the suffering of the owner of the soul affects the soul. thus, the condition of a person's body can be assessed based on its symptoms, because the initial symptoms of the disease can be identified. (Miskawaih, n.d.)

The author will then explain the characteristics of depression described by Ibn Miskawaih in Ibn Miskawaih's book which has been translated into Indonesian entitled "Towards the Perfection of Morals".

a. Anger

The soul of anger is the cause of recklessness and cowardice.

Hence, the characters of reckless daring and cowardice are each associated with anger. Anger is actually an emotion that makes the blood boil in the heart due to the desire for revenge. In certain cases, this turmoil will trigger a red fire, as a result of which dense smoke spreads throughout the nerves and brain, causing the boiling blood of the heart to become stronger, and the state of mind to become worse and the activity of the mind to decrease. In such a situation, a person is similar to a cave filled with suffocating fire. As a result, the sound of the flames and hisses that we recognize as the sound of this fire gets stronger and more difficult to extinguish. (Miskawaih, 1999)

Amarah means anger or rage, and Madzumah means a despicable trait that can make someone wretched to perish, such as anger, and deceit. (KBBI, 2023)

In line with the thoughts of Muhammad Nuh, who in his book *Afatun 'Alath- Thariq'*, explains that the word "anger" (*Al-Ghadab*) has several meanings, such as, first, anger which means unwillingness and envy towards something, (*ghadiba 'alaihi ghadaban wamagdhabatan*) second, (*imra'atun ghadub*), depression in terms of behavior. (Purwanto & Mulyono, 2006)

An angry person tends to be difficult to pacify or influence.

As a result, one is reluctant to accept advice or counsel, even if it is given, it will only exacerbate anger, when a person is in a high emotional state, his rational mind tends to be marginalized making it

difficult to reach a deeper understanding or constructive solution. (Miskawaih, 1999)

Many things make a person angry, arrogant, quarreling, joking, making fun, mocking, betraying, looking for something that makes them compete and envy each other. All these causes lead to the lust for revenge, which is the culmination of this lust. And one of the results is anger, regret. The change of temper as well as the pain caused by anger. Is a momentary madness. It can even cause death. Anger can cause diseases that lead to death.

According to Ibn Miskawaih, each cause of the sick condition of the soul has a cure, so that the cause can be cured. Starting from developing praiseworthy traits such as compassion, humility, and patience, consider the various actions that will be taken to eliminate despicable traits. The point is that people are directed to self-introspection. For their actions, such as anger, lying and violence that are carried out during every day. If humans do and actualize self-introspection in their daily lives, then they can create a peaceful and tranquil life without commotion and arguments. And furthermore, if humans use their minds to think logically then every action that will be taken will be very careful, because mindset is the basis of all human actions, meaning that the inability of the mind to distinguish between good and bad actions is the basis. As well as being able to prioritize the nature of courage and self-glory. (Miskawaih, 1999).

b. Fear

Excessive fear is one of the mental illnesses, excessive fear of the future is often unfounded and only causes suffering. People are often anxious about bad possibilities that are not necessarily happening, whether serious or trivial, and this can happen continuously or occasionally. One should not be overly confident that such fears will come true, as this will only reinforce the fear and cause unnecessary suffering. (Miskawaih, 1999) A pleasant life can only be achieved with strong faith and hope, and by eliminating worries about things that have not yet happened. In the case of fearful things caused by our own bad deeds and sins, we must force ourselves to avoid committing any more bad deeds by renouncing all the vile deeds that worry us with all the consequences associated with them. As stated by Ibn Miskawaih, fear comes from the reflection of the soul, which impacts the thoughts, feelings and actions of man. Ibn Miskawaih's aim is to encourage positive thinking rather than being afraid to do something because of worrying about things that will happen in the future. (Miskawaih, 1999)

c. Sad

Sadness is simply the mental anguish that arises due to the loss of something we love, or because we fail to get what we are looking for. The reason is because we are greedy for material things and, thirsty for lust, then will feel lost if one of them is lost or failed to be obtained. that is why anxiety or heart discomfort causes

crying as a form of regret experienced by humans.

In the book "Tahdzibul Akhlak translated by Hilmi Hidayat entitled "Towards the Perfection of Morals" as explained by Ibn Miskawaih, the cure of sadness can only be achieved through increasing the individual's awareness of himself. People have two parts, material and immaterial existence, so the variety of perfection and happiness is based on bodily satisfaction. However, the immaterial existence is also related to the immortal soul which depends on the understanding of the intellect. Ibn Miskawaih argues that humans only understand material existence, so the types of happiness and perfection depend on bodily satisfaction. As a result humans compete to gain limited wealth, position, and self-esteem. This means that a person will experience sadness, which will weaken their physical condition if everything cannot be achieved.

To overcome the problem of sadness, Ibn Miskawaih offers the discourse of philosophy of the soul to explain how important the soul is for humans to achieve perfection and happiness. Ibn Miskawaih says that humans must understand the powers of the soul so that they can avoid and treat their own and others' mental illnesses.

The following is an explanation of power or soul according to Ibn Miskawaih, first: (al-quwwah an-nathiqah) Rational Power or Rational Soul is the soul that is the basis for thinking, distinguishing, and reasoning the nature of things. The center is in the brain, if the power of this soul is normal and does not shift

from its essence, the virtues of knowledge and soul policy will be born, analytical critical thinking to know everything that exists. (Herdriani & Samputra, 2021) Second: (al-quwwah as-ghadhabyah) Emotional Power or Emotional Soul, Miskawaih calls it an-Nafs as-Sabu'iyah (savage soul). This soul is the basis of anger, challenge, courage, for things that are frightening, the desire for power, the desire for rank and various perfections. The center of this power is in the heart. Third: The Power of Desire or Lust Miskawaih also calls it an-Nafs al-Buhimiyah (animalistic soul). This is the soul that lusts, seeks food, longs to enjoy food, drink and marriage, as well as various other sensory pleasures. The power center of this soul is in the heart.

The capacity for universal knowledge results from the three basic potentials mentioned above. This urge to approach or avoid something is the first step for humans to understand their own souls. (Miskawaih, 1999) In addition, as explained by H.A Mustofa in his book, Ibn Miskawaih divides these three forces because basically they are in different positions. This is due to the fact that when one of these three forces is agitated, the others will remain calm. So, in this situation, humans must be able to control their soul potential.

CONCLUSION

Regarding the above discussion about Depression or mental illness in Islamic psychology which was responded by Ibn Miskawaih because of the mistakes of Western Psychology, Ibn Miskawaih said that the soul is the core of human life and affects a person's behavior, feelings, actions, which can

cause various types of mental illness. Through the thought of Ibn Miskawaih's philosophy of soul, Ibn Miskawaih explains that the soul is perfection for humans which consists of 3 main forces, namely: Rasinal Power or Rasona Soul, Emotional Power or Emotional Soul, and Syahwat Power. Of the three forces Ibn Miskawai provides solutions to solve various mental problems.

As the substance of human existence, the soul needs reflection on the problems that occur in the world. Ibn Miskawaih tried to do mental therapy through the approach of philosophy of the soul or mental science. Miskawaih tried to use the approach of mental science to apply it comprehensively to human life. With the thoughts offered by Ibn Miskawaih, it can be understood that Ibn Miskawaih's thoughts about the soul are a new perspective to treat and prevent various problems faced by people in the West who study mentality exclusively or only materially.

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