

**PSYCHOLOGY FROM AN ISLAMIC  
PERSPECTIVE:  
A GUIDE TO TEACHING  
AND LEARNING**

*Editor*

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# ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY

*Mimi Iznita Mohd Iqbal*

## INTRODUCTION

Abnormal Psychology is the branch of psychology that studies abnormal behaviour and ways of helping people who are affected by psychological disorders (Nevid, Rathus & Greene, 2006). Abnormal Psychology can be compared to a kaleidoscope. As the pieces of coloured glass in a kaleidoscope are moved, they provide an extensive array of patterns. So too are the elements that contribute to the study of abnormal psychology. This discipline consists of an almost limitless variety of influential factors, perceptions, points of view, and an ever-changing search for answers to complex questions. The human mind presents a challenging mix of pieces that we struggle to understand. By working with the pieces and seeing how they interact with each other, we are able to come to conclusions as we strive to gain an understanding of how and why we act the way we do.

A complete understanding of how humans behave would not be possible without acknowledging the existence of a higher power and looking into the revealed sources, the Qur'an and *Hadīth*. This is where the weaknesses are in the Western approach to understanding psychological disorders. As indicated by recent research, the importance of the spiritual component is undeniable. While acquiring insight into what we consider normal, expected behaviour is difficult; understanding human behaviour that is beyond normal range is even more so. This is the challenge we undertake in abnormal psychology.