

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

Editor

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IIUM Press

Published by:
IIUM Press
International Islamic University Malaysia

First Edition, 2009
Second Printing, 2010
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Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia

Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Psychology from an Islamic Perspective: a guide to teaching and learning / edited by Noraini M. Noor
ISBN 978-983-3855-85-8

1. Psychology--Religious aspects--Islam. 2. Psychology--Study and teaching. I. Noraini M. Noor
297.261

ISBN: 978-983-3855-85-8

Member of Majlis Penerbitan Ilmiah Malaysia – MAPIM
(Malaysian Scholarly Publishing Council)

TEACHING AND LEARNING PSYCHOLOGY FROM THE ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

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The Muslims' world view about the nature of man, a central concept in psychology, is very different from the West. As such, there is an urgent and pressing need to have some sort of a framework for both teachers and students to understand psychology, and, it is precisely due to this need that the present guide was written. As in the West, early Muslim writings on psychological issues are subsumed within philosophy and these writings are mostly on the nature of man and personality development (Haque, 2004). Inherent in these early Muslim writings is the blending of Islamic philosophy (*tawhīd* or the Oneness of God) and religious ideas (based on the Qur'ān and *Sunnah*). However, as pointed out by Haque, the literature on these scholars' contributions to psychology is sparse and scattered.

The word "psychology" originally means the "study of the soul" (from the Greek terms *psyche* meaning "soul," and *logos* meaning "the study of a subject") which reflected the early interest of the philosophers. This is most interesting because it seems that psychology started out with theological underpinnings. However, with secularisation, theology took a back seat to science and empiricism, and this is reflected in the subject matter of psychology during the Renaissance right up to the present time. Currently, the spiritual aspect of man is no longer a part of Western psychology and it is up to the individual to practice religion. Consequently, psychological theories of man are seen to be deterministic leaving little or no room for human volition, which is contrary to the Islamic theory of human nature. As