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**IBN SINA'S THEORY OF THE SOUL AND ITS RELEVANCE TO ISLAMIC EDUCATION**

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**Abstract.** *A person who is known as a very influential figure in the East and West is Ibn Sina or better known as Avicenna in the Western world. The real contribution of Ibn Sina which has now developed is in terms of logic, metaphysics, physics, politics, ethics and the human spirit or psychology. In this research, he tries to explain his theory regarding the human soul or personality which can also be interpreted as psychological. The system is built on the foundation, first, by briefly describing the biography of Ibn Sina and the works and themes that are his main focus. Second, interpreting Ibn Sina's ideas regarding the human soul or psychology. Third, explore the correlation between Ibn Sina's ideas and Islamic education today. In the end, I hope that this brief description of this great figure can be an explanation and his views become a science that can be used.*

**Keywords:** Ibnu Sina, Soul Theory, Islamic Education

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Islamic philosophy is a discussion of various problems of the universe and various kinds of humanitarian problems on the basis of religious teachings that came down with the birth of Islam (Al-Ahwani, 2008). This Islamic philosophy is of course very distinctively influenced by the Islamic view of life so that it is different from Western philosophy and Eastern philosophy (Arif, 2010). Ibn Sina is one of the philosophers who have brought Islam to the pinnacle of civilization with such extraordinary views.

Ibn Sina is always present in the minds of today's society because his name is known even in the West as Avicenna (Heriyanto, 2011). However, this does not necessarily make him known as well as the West used to know him, both in terms of life and his teachings. Even though the thoughts he has rolled out are so broad, from problems of logic, metaphysics, physics, politics, and ethics (Nasr, 2020). Among the problems that are less than maximized from him are problems of the human soul or psychology. The relevance of his ideas to Islamic education which will be presented in this study. The system is built on the foundation, *First*, by briefly describing the biography of Ibn Sina and the works and themes that are his main focus. *Second*, interpreting Ibn Sina's ideas regarding the human soul or psychology. *Third*, explore the correlation between Ibn Sina's ideas and Islamic education today.

Basically, Islamic education is an effort to create and shape good and more meaningful human beings in the life of the world and prepare them for the afterlife. Conceptually, Islamic education begins with ideological - philosophical foundations for its implementation in socio-cultural backgrounds. Renewing Islamic philosophy in the world of education today is very important to do in order to create quality education as directed by the holy book (Abdullah, 2009).

To give birth to a quality education, one must start on a strong methodology of thought and a reliable philosophical-epistemological foundation. Based on the humanist-religious paradigm, we must consider common sense, individualism towards independence, pluralist education, anti-

dichotomy, a sincere spirit of exploring knowledge, functionalism, defeating symbolism, as well as rewards and sanctions. Islamic education as a goal, a means of change and social transformation should be directed to accommodate local and impermanent cultures, namely those that are religious and modern (Mas'ud, 2007).

## 2. METHOD

This research is a type of library research and uses qualitative research. Library research is a study used in collecting information and data with various kinds of materials that are in libraries such as documents, books, magazines, and historical stories (Arikunto, 2005). Sarwono said that library research can also study various reference books as well as the results of previous studies which are of the type useful for get a theoretical basis about the problem to be studied (Sarwono, 2006). So, this research is known as qualitative research literature. Kuhlthau mentioned the steps in library research as follows: (1) Selection of topics, (2) Exploration of information, (3) Determine the focus of research, (4) Collecting data sources, (5) Preparation of presenting data, (6) Preparation of reports (Kuhlthau, 2002).

The data sources in this research are books, journals and internet sites related to the topics that have been selected. The data collection technique in this research is documentation, which is looking for data about things or variables in the form of notes, books, papers or articles, and journals.

In this paper, the data analysis technique used is content analysis method. This analysis is used for get valid inference and can be re-examined based on context (Krippendorff, 1993). The process of analysis are selecting, comparing, combining and sorting various definitions until the relevant ones are found.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### 1. Ibn Sina's Life

Ibn Sina's full name is Ali al-Husein Bin Abdullah al-Hasan Bin Ali Bin Sina. He was precisely born in the village of Afsyanah, near Bukhara, in the Central Asia region in 370 H / 980 AD to coincide with the month of Shafar and died at the age of 58 years, to be precise in 980 H / 1037 AD in Hamadan, Iran, due to chronic gastritis. He died while teaching at a school, and in Western countries his name is better known as Avicenna (Hitti, 1974).

Ibn Sina was gifted with extraordinary intelligence. At the age of 10 he had finished memorizing the Quran perfectly 30 juz. After completing the Qur'an, he studied and was able to master other disciplines, from logic, physics, mathematics, jurisprudence, to medicine. He had studied with Abu 'Abdullah al-Natili and Isma'il al-Zahid (Zar, 2004).

Ibn Sina is a very productive figure in producing works. He is known as an expert in medicine, pharmacy, and astronomy. One of the famous books is *Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb*. This book is a book that contains medical science which is still being studied in Western countries, and they call this book the **Canon of Medicine** (Hitti, 1974).

Meanwhile, in relation to the concept of education, Ibn Sina provides more or less the formulation of concepts and objectives of Islamic education, the Islamic education curriculum, the concept of educators written in a book of ***al-Siyasah fi al-Tarbiyah***, or in Indonesian it is a policy in education or politics in education. And several other works of Ibn Sina such as ***al-Syifa'*** (on four main themes of philosophy, including metaphysics, mathematics, physics and logic), ***al-Najat*** (a summary of *al-Syifa'*), ***al-Qanun fi al-Thibb*** (about medicine), ***Al-Isyarat wa al-Tanbihat*** (about philosophy which specifically discusses intuitive logic and is more Sufism in nature), ***al-Hikmah al-Masyriqiyah*** (about eastern philosophy which emphasizes more on the use of intuition in achieving knowledge) (Zar, 2004).

### 2. Definition of The Soul

Ibn Sina's theory of the soul is a part of physics (*al-'ilm al-thabi'i*), as Aristotle's view (Khalif, 1974). The discussion of the soul takes a sizable portion in Ibn Sina's physics. Moreover, the human soul has a complex level from the lowest to the highest.

Ibn Sina interpreted that perfection (*kamal*) is a separate substance from matter (*maddah*). And he explained that indeed form is perfection for the body but that does not mean that all perfection is form. He analogized that the king was the perfection or completeness of the state, but clearly not a form of the state (Sina, 1975). So the soul as the perfection of the body according to Ibn Sina is different from the soul as a form according to Aristotle. Thus, the soul is not like a body, but it is an independent substance (*Jauhar qaimun bi dzatih*) which has no form. As a result, the soul remains as a natural organic object, even though it is perfect, which is materialistic and will perish when it does not exist (Sina, 1982). In the words of *ash-Shifa'*: The soul is not impressed in the body nor does it subsist in it, but its special relationship (*ikhtisās*) with it is after the manner of individual configuration (*hay'a*), which attracts the soul to look after an individual body, with an essential and special providence for it (Marmura, 1959).

In addition Ibn Sina defined a soul is a spiritual substance or a divine illumination, whose source comes from Allah the Exalted. (Sina, 2009). Fathullah Khalif mentioned three definitions of Ibn Sina's theory of the soul which include; First, the image of a living body (Khalif, 1974). Second, the center of the living actions of all living things. Third, as a name which contains the equivalent meaning between humans, animals and plants on the one hand, and between humans and celestial angels on the other.

On the basis of the definitions, it can be inferred that Ibn Sina considered soul to be a unitary substance. Ibn Sina had proved that the substance of the soul is different from the substance of the body. However, the relevance of soul is not exhausted by the functions and activities (of the species) as apart from being differentiating principle amongst species, Soul also is a source of perfection. This implies that Soul for Ibn Sina not only has a phenomenal aspect but also has a transcendent aspect.

### 3. Hierarchy of The Soul and Their Faculties

There is a hierarchy that runs through different types of soul according to Ibn Sina. Various faculties are associated with the different types of souls. First, the vegetative/ nutritive soul, which is the ultimate perfection for natural physical needs from the aspects of reproduction, growth and eating. Food is a physical thing that resembles the physical properties that are said to be food. There it increases according to the degree decomposing from it, it may be more or less. Second, the animal/ sensitive soul, which is the main perfection for the physical-natural mechanic from the aspect of perception of particularities and moves of its own accord. Third, the rational (human) soul, which is the main perfection for the physical natural mechanic from the aspect of carrying out existing activities based on choices according to the considerations and conclusions of the mind, as well as from the aspect of perception of universal things (Najjati, 1993).

Mulyadhi Kartanegara argued that humans as the final product of natural evolution contain all the elements of the universe, ranging from minerals, plants, animals, including spiritual ones. The richness of the elements of the universe that make up the entire identity of the human soul and self, whether consciously or not, has provided humans with various powers and powers contained in the cosmos or this universe. That also seems to be the reason why in the Koran it introduces humans as *ahsan taqwim*. (Kartanegara, 2002).

The vegetative/ nutritive soul (*al-nafs al-nabatiyah*) is related to the plants and humans will be able to live like plants. Ibn Sina has defined the vegetative soul as the initial perfection of the body which is both natural and mechanistic, both from the aspect of giving birth, growing and eating. While the power possessed by the vegetative soul includes nutritional power (*al-taghdziiyah*), growth power (*al-namiyah*), and reproductive power (*al-taulid*) (Khalif, 1974).

There is also an animal soul (*al-nafs al-hayawaniyah*). Humans not only have the qualities of plants, but also the qualities of animals which are covered in sensation or sensory power (*al-idrak*) and locomotion (*al-harakah*) (Khalif, 1974). With the power of sensation, humans can recognize the world around them by perceiving various particular stimuli from outside themselves as a basis for consideration and understanding of various universal things (Fakhry, 2002). Meanwhile, human movement can lead to or avoid various things that are wanted or needed.

Humans are equipped with various tools needed for sensation and sensing power which are known as the internal and external senses (*al-hawaz al-zhahirah wa al-hawaz al-bathinah*) (Khalif, 1974). Regarding the external senses, it is known as the five senses which include the eyes, ears, nose, tongue and skin as instruments of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. As for internal sense (*al hawas al-bathinah*) it seems that the majority of people do not know it.

Ibn Sina described that the internal senses are consist of five senses. (Kartanegara, 2002). The five internal senses include: First, common sense (*al-hiss al-musytarak*). Function of common senses as a gathering place for various sensations from the outside to recognize and identify it (Inati, 2003). For example, when someone recognizes an external object that is white, smells good, tastes sweet, is slightly rough in the hands, and sounds like sand when poured, the shared senses immediately recognize it as white sugar. Second, representation or retentive (*al-khayaliyah*). The function is to store data that has reached the common sense. a man can recognize an external object that is not in front of them, simply by imagining it (Inati, 2003). Third, estimation (*al-wahmiyah*) it is able to assess an object at a glance, especially regarding its benefits or harm to oneself (Kartanegara, 2002). Fourth, imagination (*al-mutakhayyilah*). If it is used by the human intellect, it functions as a means of thinking (Inati, 2003). Fifth, memory or recollection (*al-dzâkirah al-hâfidhah*). The function is to store non-empirical abstract data (Kartanegara, 2002).

Meanwhile, Ibn Sina has an interesting explanation about motion (locomotion). Superficially, move means to go to any place or direction that humans want. But it doesn't seem that simple. Movements carried out by humans are highly influenced by human estimation or cognition, which assesses whether something is beneficial or even harmful to him. The tendency to something that is considered beneficial departs from the mental power called lust (*al-quwwah al-syahwâniyah*), for example towards food or the opposite sex. Meanwhile, the tendency to something that is considered dangerous starts from a mental power called anger (*al-quwwah al-ghadhabiyah*), for example towards wild animals and other dangers (Inati, 2003).

According to Ibn Sina, the highest hierarchy of the soul possessed by humans is the human soul or rational soul (*al-nafs al-insaniyah*). Physically, humans are like animals. However, due to his rational potential, humans then become a separate species and are defined as rational animals (*al-hayawan al-nathiq*) (Kartanegara, 2002). The rational power possessed by humans comes from the human soul. This rational power can then be divided into two skills, namely practical managerial intellect or intellect, and theoretical cognitive intellect.

Moral is called practical reason related to the human body, and the functions is to control the impulses in humans, and to distinguish what is good and bad for him. In life, this intellect is strengthened through habits and experiences. As a control function, this skill is very much needed by humans, which may be more important than their theoretical reason. When humans manage themselves, practical reason is intervened by lust or anger (*al-syahwaniyah wa al-ghadhabiyah*). When humans act to manage themselves and anything based on one or both of these interventions, then get used to it, it will cause mental disorder (mental disorder) and bad morals (*al-akhlaq al-madzmumah*). Conversely, if humans use their practical reason without intervention and are more dominated by rational theoretical reasoning considerations, then of course this will end up as the right action (*al-akhlaq al-karimah*) (Inati, 2003).

If practical reason is related to the human body, then theoretical reason leads to a divine world which enables it to receive intelligence (Inati, 2003) and organize knowledge as a result of the processing of various meanings. The processing of these various meanings begins with two things, through the grouping of sensory data which is then abstracted into universal concepts, or through abstract mental concepts created and conveyed by the interlocutor (Kartanegara, 2002). All concepts accepted by humans are then compiled, researched, analyzed and systematized so that they become what is known as science.

Ibn Sina explained that theoretical reason moves in four stages. It was included from material-potential reason, habitual-accustomed reason, actual reason, and acquired sense. Material intellect (*al-'aql al-hayulani*) is called that not because it is material, but because it has the potential to receive various intelligences as well as material which is ready to accept material forms. Material intellect is still potential because it has not been trained in thinking. Furthermore,

when material reason begins to be accustomed to accepting various primary intelligences, that is familiarized (*al-'aql bi al-malakah*) and when the reason has the power to think at an abstract level, it is called actual reason (*al-'aql bi al-fi'l*) (Inati, 2003). The next stage is a variety of universal things without the need to go through a syllogistic process, it is enough to be overwhelmed by Active Intellect directly into its intuition (*al-Hads*) (Fakhry, 2002). when it reaches this level, humans can know everything intuitively, represent audiovisually, hold the future, and influence physical events miraculously, that is the stage known as sacred reasoning and only applies to philosophers and prophets (Fakhry, 2002).

#### **4. The relevance of Ibn Sina's theory of the soul towards Islamic education**

Deductively, it can be concluded as follows that first, as explained in his biography, Ibn Sina memorized the Qur'an perfectly at the age of 10. This is certainly an important foundation for the development of his soul and intellectuality. So, education would begin at young age with study of Quran Al-Qur'an. It can be viewed from two sides, that the Qur'an is food, nutrition, guidance, light and all virtues for the human soul that come from God and the side of Avicenna's recommendation that the first lesson that must be taught to children is Al-Qur'an.

Second, food and nutrition education becomes very important. Because it is the main human force. Especially when seen in the Al-Qur'an, Allah commands his servants to eat halal and good food. So, food and nutrition education includes lessons about the obligation to eat halal and good food and lessons related to manners.

Third, growth power. Growth is essential for everyone's future. Therefore he should be taught. For example, forcing vigorous exercise to interfere with growth. Or let the child get used to sleeping too long.

Fourth, reproductive power. Educate the children on moral values in accordance with Islamic morals and manners and teaching good viewing in the midst of the spread of pornography is very important. Especially in the era of globalization, the typical Western model of modern adolescent socialization is very destructive and influences the morale of today's youth. They were so loose that pubic problems were spread in such a way.

Fifth, sensation power. It has been explained that the human senses include the internal and external senses. Therefore, as an educator, educating all sensory abilities to develop rapidly is very important for the competence and skills of children. There are so many sensory abilities, from the acuity of hearing and sight, the sensitivity of the senses, the sensitivity of touch, and the ability to smell, which will be very beneficial for humans. The internal sense includes the ability to store memory, remember it, imagine, and estimate. If we can developed all competence and skills it's will be very good for humans.

Sixth, the power to movement, as an educator, the power of lust and anger must be managed and trained to be directed appropriately. Because, it will be great benefit to humans.

Seventh, practical reason and theoretical reason. In simple terms, we are familiar with the terms IQ, EQ and SQ of children. Education not only trains analytical skills, but also the ability to reflect and practice moral judgment. This is very important for the progress and happiness of children and all of this needs to be developed optimally. So striving for a balanced education in all these aspects is very important to strive for.

#### **3. CONCLUSION**

After the discussion, it can be concluded that Ibn Sina's theory of soul occupies an important place in the history of thought. Soul, for Ibn Sina is not material, rather it is the order of form as has been taught by Religion and is the differentiating principle between the animate and the inanimate. Not only this, soul is also a source of perfection for entities, implying that perfection is spiritual and not material. Even though soul is not material, it is closely related to matter not only for the manifestation of life but also for its association with a particular body as it is dependent upon the elemental mix. This in turn necessarily implies that not all souls are the same. But, there is a hierarchy amongst them which Ibn Sina outlines as Vegetative, Animal and Rational based upon the elemental mix and then the capacity to perform various activities after

getting associated with the body. This hierarchy of soul helps in explaining various levels of perfection (amongst existents including humans) as well as the stations on earth.

The concept of the soul offered by Ibn Sina is quite sophisticated. He advised that education would begin at young age with study of Quran. Its because rich nutritional value for the human soul. And In his explanation, humans consist of three levels of soul, and each of them has different powers. It can be learned from it that each of these forces must be developed through education. From the power of eating, the power to grow, the power of modern, the power of movement, sense power, practical and theoretical reason, if all of these are developed to the maximum, it will produce a perfect human being.

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