Behaviorism Psychology Approach in Quranic Studies

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Article Info	Abstract

The main purpose of the Qur'an is to improve human morals. The appropriate scientific discipline to study human behavior in psychology. Unfortunately, the psychological approach in Qur'anic studies is still rarely used. This paper aims to provide a building method of researching the Qur'an with a psychological approach, especially behaviorism which is the earliest approach of psychology. This research method uses a qualitative method with the type of library research. In the process of collecting data, researchers use the documentation method, which is the search for data related to variables or things in the form of books, journals, etc. The result of this study shows that In the behaviorist psychological approach, it is necessary to determine the dependent variable (which is affected) and the independent variable (which affects). In the context of Qur'anic studies, human interaction with the Qur'an can be the independent variable, while certain behaviors can be the dependent variable. Vice versa, human behavior can be an independent variable that affects human interaction with the Qur'an as the dependent variable. Research can also be conducted by observing objects as they are (natural) or observing objects in an artificial environment (experimental). The recommendation for further research is to promote Quranic research with a behaviorist approach. Other research models that try to make the Qur'an practical need to be encouraged, so that the ideals of the Qur'an to be able to influence human ethics can be achieved.

Keywords	Psychology; Behavioral; Al-Qur'an

Abstrak

Tujuan utama Al-Qur'an adalah memperbaiki akhlak manusia. Disiplin ilmu sains yang tepat untuk mengkaji perilaku manusia adalah psikologi. Sayangnya, metode pendekatan psikologi dalam kajian Al-Qur'an masih jarang dipakai. Tulisan ini bertujuan untuk memberikan bangunan metode penelitian Al-Qur'an dengan pendekatan psikologi, khususnya aliran behavioral yang merupakan aliran psikologi paling awal. Metode penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian kepustakaan (library research). Dalam proses pengumpulan data, peneliti menggunakan metode dokumentasi, yaitu mencari data-data yang berhubungan dengan variabel atau hal-hal yang berupa buku, jurnal, dan lain-lain. Hasil dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa dalam pendekatan psikologi behavioral, perlu ditentukan variabel dependan (yang dipengaruhi) dan variabel independen (yang memengaruhi). Dalam konteks kajian Al-Qur'an, interaksi manusia dengan Al-Qur'an dapat menjadi variabel independen, sedangkan perilaku tertentu dapat menjadi variabel dependen. Begitupun sebaliknya, perilaku manusia dapat menjadi variabel independen yang mempengaruhi interaksi manusia terhadap Al-Qur'an sebagai variabel dependen. Penelitian juga dapat dilakukan dengan mengamati objek apa adanya (natural) atau mengamati objek dalam lingkungan buatan (eksperimen). Rekomendasi untuk penelitian selanjutnya adalah mendorong penelitian Qur'an dengan pendekatan behaviorisme. Model-model penelitian lain yang mencoba menjadikan Al-Qur'an praktis perlu digalakkan, sehingga cita-cita Al-Qur'an untuk dapat mempengaruhi etika manusia dapat tercapai.

Kata Kunci: Psikologi; Behavioral; Al-Qur'an

INTRODUCTION

The only function of Muhammad's apostolate was to perfect *akhlāq* (al-Baihāqī, 2003). *Akhlāq* here cannot be defined merely as physical behavior, but also. With this definition, *akhlāq* have a broader meaning than just morals which are only in the form of behavior towards fellow humans. With the broad meaning of morals, it is not excessive if the meaning of *akhlāq* is equal with religion it self (Shihab, 2019). Imam al-Gazalī gives an understanding that *akhlāq* are internal activities that are implemented in physical actions without going through the thinking process (al-Gazālī, n.d.). The definition offered by al-Gazālī emphasizes the soul (*nafs*) as a source for every human physical activity without him realizing it (unconscious). Islam, with the Qur'an as its main source, should be able to improve the condition of the human soul and have implications for good observable behavior. Hence, it becomes important to seek the relationship between the Qur'ān and human behavior.

An appropriate approach to researching behavior is psychology. The trend of Qur'anic psychology research can be seen in some recent studies. For example, research conducted by Husna examined the effectiveness of Al-Qur'an memorization activities with increasing student morale (Husna et al., 2021). Similar research was conducted by Aini with differences in variables, namely between reading the Qur'an and student moral (Aini, 2022). Likewise, Ilham who tried to examine the educational implications of several Qur'anic verses, namely An-Nur 30-31 on moral education (Ilham et al., 2022). Research with a similar model was also applied by Cahyadien who sought a correlation between learning the story of the Qur'an, namely Ashabul Kahfi on the effectiveness of planting faith (Cahyadien & Saepudin, 2022). Another study was conducted by Albi who sought a relationship between one of the methods of memorizing the Qur'an and increasing students' self-esteem (Albi et al., 2020). Based on these 5 studies, all psychological research models are applied, that is, using a particular approach in case studies. There is no basic research that discusses psychological methods in Qur'anic studies specifically (Kaldewey, 2018).

The void of basic research on the psychological approach to Qur'anic studies is a problem that this paper seeks to answer. This paper seeks to lay the basic assumptions of the necessity of psychological research on the Qur'an. Then, it will specifically explain the brief steps of using behaviorism as one of the branches of psychology in Qur'anic research. This study aims to be a basic research that discusses psychological research methods in Qur'anic studies. With the established psychological approach in the Qur'an, the study of the Qur'an is not limited to the theoretical, but can be more practical. This is in accordance with the spirit of the Qur'an itself which seeks to provide guidance for humans to follow (practical), rather than just knowledge to be debated (theoretical).

The existing research gap can be formulated as the research question as follow: what is psychology? What is behaviorism? And how is behaviorism applied in Qur'anic research. To answer them systematically, this paper will begin with a brief explanation of psychology and its branches, as well as arguments for the necessity of psychology in Qur'anic studies. Next, it will discuss more broadly about the behaviorism approach in general as a very simple school of psychology. After that, this approach is tried to be adapted to Qur'anic research.

METHOD

This is a qualitative research with a library research type. The data is obtained from written materials related to the problem to be discussed. This research is more based on written materials, manuscript reviews, or documents (Zed, 2014). This writing will focus on the discussion of literature, which is studied by searching and reviewing some library materials that will be used by the author (Moleong, 2004).

Therefore, the author divides the literature sources in this study into two data sources: Primary data sources are book *Introduction to psychology: Gateways to mind and behavior* by Dennis Coon & John O. Mitterer as psychology reference and *Metode Penelitian Al-Qur'an dan Tafsir* by Abdul Mustaqim as quranic studi reference. Secondary data sources are journals and other complementary data related to the discussion in course psychology and quranic studies

The data collection technique in this writing will use the documentation method (Arikunto, 1998), This is done by reading and reviewing several writings related to psychology and Qur'an studies. The data analysis method uses a descriptive-analytical approach that aims to provide an overview related to the behaviorism psychology. First, the basic assumptions of behaviorism psychology will be explained. Then, it will look for correlations with Qur'anic research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Introduction of Psychology and Its Branches

Psychology by etymology is a combination of two words that come from the Greek language. *Psyche* means soul and logos means science. From the combination of these two words, psychology can simply be interpreted as the science of the soul (Saleh, 2018). The word *psyche* itself has many connotations. In the Oxford dictionary, Psyche is defined as to breath. Later, this meaning expanded to life, because one of the signs of life is breathing. Psyche also means soul and spirit, which is the source of all human life activities. Finally, this word is also interpreted as something that is still eternal even though the human body has experienced death (Murray et al., 1933).

This definition from the Oxford dictionary has many similarities with the word *rūh* in Arabic. Psyche is paired with the word *rūh* (روح) which means spirit as the source of human life. Psyche itself is often equated with the word *nafs* (نفس) which means breath, lust, and soul (Saleh, 2018). Psychologists agree that it is impossible to examine the soul directly. Because, the soul is something that cannot be captured clearly by the senses. The difficulty in analyzing the soul has been established by the Qur'an in surah Al-Isra' verse 85 below:

$$ \text{وَيَسْـَٔلُونَكَ عَنِ الرُّوحِ ۖ قُلِ الرُّوحُ مِنْ اَمْرِ رَبِّي وَمَآ اُوتِيْتُمْ مِّنَ الْعِلْمِ اِلَّا قَلِيْلٌ (٨٥)} $$

Translation: "*And they ask you about the Spirit. Say, "The Spirit belongs to the domain of my Lord; and you were given only little knowledge.*"

This verse says that the knowledge about the spirit given by Allah SWT to humans is only a little. However, this verse does not speak of prohibiting Muslims from learning about the spirit itself. This means that it is not impossible for humans to learn some knowledge about the spirit.

This is evidenced by the Islamic Encyclopaedist and exegete, Jalāl al-Dīn al-Suyūṭī, who authored a book dedicated to the study of the spirit (al-Suyūṭī, 1996).

It would be inaccurate to define psychology in terms of etymology alone, as the spirit is impossible to analyze. Therefore, Psychologists define psychology as the study of behavior and mental processes. This is because behavior and mental processes are symptoms of the soul that can be analyzed empirically. It may appear that history, anthropology, and sociology also study human behavior as well as psychology. The special difference in psychology lies in the use of scientific observation to systematically address human behavior (Coon & Mitterer, 2010).

Psychological research is not simply based on empirical observation, but must be systematic-empirical. Empirical only relies on the senses and simple observations. Meanwhile, psychology requires specific theories and testing of certain variables so as to reveal something that underlies behavior (Stanovich, 2013). Psychology has developed into several branches. The following will describe some of the major branches in psychology.

1. Behaviorsm

    Behaviorism was first introduced by John B. Watson in 1913. The researchers of this branch see psychology as a branch of science that is natural and based on experimentation and objectivity. Researchers only try to observe behavior and do not try to intervene in the behavior. Researchers also do not try to explain how the object's consciousness is, but only physical behavior. Behavior that occurs in humans is also considered the same as behavior that occurs in animals (Schneider & Morris, 1987).

2. Cognitive

    This branch emerged in 1988, initiated by Newell and Simon. The underlying assumption of this branch is that there is a cognitive process that underlies every human behavior. Behavior is not only influenced by the external environment, but also by the thoughts of the actor himself. Only then is this thought implemented in physical action. This is certainly different from the behavioral school which only sees the environment as a single factor that influences human behavior (Glenberg et al., 2013).

3. Psychoanalysis

    This branch was initiated by Freud in 1895. This school seeks to uncover any hidden causes that underlie every action (Freud, 2009). The underlying assumption of this school is that many subconscious thoughts are suppressed, so that only a small part is visible through behavior. Sometimes, these thoughts surface through dreams or involuntary speech (Coon & Mitterer, 2010).

4. Humanistic

    This branch was initiated by Maslow in 1943. Humanistic psychology focuses its study on human potential, ideality, and the problems that prevent humans from being themselves (Coon & Mitterer, 2010). Humans are seen as individuals who have basic needs in the form of love, expression, self-esteem, and their role for other humans. The effort to achieve these needs is called self-actualization (Maslow, 1943). Different from other branches that tend to only research natural phenomena, this branch actually wants to break away from social and

surrounding influences, so that humans can optimize all their potential and become themselves (Bland & DeRobertis, 2019).

Of the four major branches in psychology, this research will focus on the behaviorism as an approach in quranic studies.

Behaviorism Key Terms and Its Steps

Behaviorism is a pure science that seeks to study human behavior. This discipline has no direct connection to Qur'anic studies. In order to make the connection between psychology and Qur'anic studies, some adjustments are needed. Before that, it is necessary to first present an explanation of behaviorism based on the psychologists' explanations.

The foundation of this approach is the assumption that human behavior is controlled by the environment (Krapfl, 2016). Therefore, this approach will try to target two major things, namely the stimulus (cause) and response (effect) of the object under study. Stimulus is something in the form of physical energy received by the organism. Response is all aspects that can be observed from behavior (Coon & Mitterer, 2010). Stimulus and response are key terms in this approach.

Furthermore, the assumptions of this approach are as follows: 1) Behavior should be studied scientifically using experiments. 2) The main focus lies on behavior that can be observed sensually. 3) The main factor influencing human behavior is the environment. 4) Human and animal studies have only minor differences. Therefore, the results of animal studies can be applied to humans, and vice versa. 5) Behavior is the result of stimulus. No matter how complex behavior is, it can be simplified to a response related to a stimulus (Mcleod, 2024).

Simple research steps with this approach is as follows: 1) Determine the particular situation (stimulus) that is suspected to affect behavior. 2) Divide the subjects into two or more groups. Each of these groups should be treated equally, except for the predetermined stimulus. 3) Document whether the stimulant has an effect that affects the behavior (response) (Coon & Mitterer, 2010). The group that gets the predetermined stimulant is referred to as the experimental group. The group that does not receive the stimulant is referred to as the control group.

Researchers also need to determine variables. Variables are conditions that can change or can affect the results of research. Variables are divided into three. First, independent variables, which are variables that are considered to have an influence on behavior. Second, the dependent variable, which is the state/behavior that is influenced by the independent variable. Third, extraneous variables, which are conditions that are considered to have no influence on the results of the study. When the two groups are treated exactly the same, except for the independent variable, then when there is a difference in behavior towards the subject, it can be concluded for sure that one particular variable has an influence on one particular behavior (Coon & Mitterer, 2010).

An example of using this step can be applied if you want to find out whether fasting affects students' learning ability. First, the researcher divides the subjects into 2 groups of 20 people each. Both groups have the same circumstances, except for the first group that practices fasting. The independent variable that is considered to have an influence is the practice of fasting. The

dependent variable that was influenced was the students' learning ability. Extraneous variables that did not need to be considered were the distance between residence and university, gender, amount of pocket money, and so on. The study ran for a week. So at the end of the session, each student's learning scores were looked at. When the performance of students in the experimental group is better or worse than the control group, the effect of fasting on student performance can be concluded.

Behaviorism Psychology as an Approach in Qur'anic Studies

Behaviorism approach to religion studies focuses on the religious experience of its adherents (Taves, 2020). Religious experiences are then linked with emotions, thoughts, behaviors, relationships, and the like that are explicitly related to religious experiences (Paloutzian & Park, 2005). Religion can be seen as a stimulant that affects (independent variable) and can also be seen as a response that gets influenced (dependent variable). Religion as an independent variable is to see how religion affects individuals and their social functions. Religion is seen as an instrument that improves the quality of life. If this were not the case, then of course religion would have been abandoned. From this assumption, it is only natural that researchers are curious about religion and its impact (Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997).

Religion as a dependent variable departs from the assumption that religious practices are influenced by other factors. These factors include age, gender and so on. The answer to be revealed is how age and religious observance are influenced (Beit-Hallahmi & Argyle, 1997). The psychology of religion narrows its study to religious experience from the many factors that may influence human behavior. Later, the study was narrowed down to the experience of Islam alone among the various religions and beliefs that exist, thus becoming Islamic psychology. From the many aspects of the Islamic religion, this approach will be narrowed down again, so that the object of study is the Qur'an.

The object of Qur'anic research also varies. Mustaqim divides it into 5 models. First, thematic research, which is research that focuses on issues contained in the Qur'an. Second, character research, which is research that focuses on the thoughts of interpretative figures, either individually or collectively. Third, philological research, which focuses on manuscripts and unpublished manuscripts. Fourth, comparative research, which is research that focuses on the comparison between one figure with another figure, one region with another region, and so on. Fifth, living quran research, which focuses on the practice of the Qur'an in society and the relationship between the two (Mustaqim, 2019).

Of these various research models, the behavioral psychology approach can only be used in the living Quran research model. This is because the behavioral psychology approach requires empirical practices that exist in the present. Another requirement is the existence of variables in the form of human behavior. Only the living Quran model meets this requirement. This approach cannot be used to analyze the psyches of figures in the past or analyze the text of the Qur'an without trying to find its relationship with human behavior.

The practice of the Qur'an is a behavior that can already be the object of behavioral psychology studies. Researchers need to add other variables to see the cause-and-effect relationship between the two. The practice of the Qur'an can be the independent variable or the

dependent variable of the study. Researching the Qur'an with a behavioral psychology approach can use two research models as follows.

1. Experimental

By taking this model, researchers create an artificial environment to test certain variables. The above example of research between fasting and student achievement is a form of this research model. The researcher needs to gather several subjects, divide them into 2 or more groups. Then treat them equally except for stimulants that are suspected of having an influence on certain behaviors (responses). An example of Qur'anic research with this model could seek to answer the question of how the intensity of reading the Qur'an affects student achievement. The researcher needs to create a group that has an obligation to read some Qur'anic verses and a group that has an obligation not to read or only read a few Qur'anic verses.

2. Natural

Natural is a research model that analyzes subjects from their natural environment without any intervention or control from other parties, including researchers. In this model, researchers do not need to form groups, but only examine the situation as it is. With the natural model, researchers only describe behavior. For further explanation, researchers can use other models. This model is very helpful in forming certain hypotheses and then doing experimental models afterwards (Bhandari, 2023). An example of using the model in Qur'anic research is answering the question of how the recitation of surah Al-Waqiah affects work diligence. The researcher can conduct his research by observing traders in the market and categorizing traders who practice the recitation of Al-Waqiah and who does not. Then, the practice is compared with the number of working hours spent in the market. This study only yields the level of correlation between two variables. To find a causal relationship, an experimental model needs to be conducted.

Examples of Qur'anic Research with Behaviorism Approach

Although there is still no writing that establishes the method of behaviorism approach in the study of the Qur'an, but research with this approach has been done several times. This shows that human behavior influenced by the Qur'ān is important to researchers. It is often found that Qur'ānic practices are set as independent variables, both in experimental and natural models. The following will present 2 examples of Qur'ānic research using the behaviorism approach that can serve as examples for further research using the behaviorism approach.

The first example is research conducted by Andi Rafiqah Bachri P. In her thesis entitled The Effect of Al-Qur'an Reading Intensity on the Religious Behavior of Students of SMP IT Al-Fikri Makassar. The researcher placed the intensity of students' recitation of the Qur'an as the independent variable (stimulant) and students' religious behavior as the dependent variable (response). The research model used is natural observation, in which researchers only collect data from the field situation as it is. In collecting the data, researchers used survey techniques. The result of this study is a positive correlation between the intensity of Al-Qur'an recitation and the religious behavior of IT-Al-Fikri Junior High School students (Bachri, 2018).

The second example is research conducted by Rela Mar'ati and Moh. Thoriqul Chaer in their journal entitled The Effect of Reading and Interpreting Qur'anic Verses on Reducing Anxiety

in Female Students. Researchers used experimental methods in their research with a sample of 80 female santri. This study puts the practice of reading and interpreting Qur'anic verses as an independent variable. The behavior suspected by this practice is the decrease in anxiety of santriwati (dependent variable). The result of this study is positive evidence that the practice of recitation and understanding its meaning can reduce anxiety (Mar'ati & Chaer, 2017).

CONCLUSION

The implication of this research is to strengthen psychological approach, specifically behaviorism in quranic studies. The psychological approach aims to human behavior as the implementation of a person's soul. The psychological approach has various branches, one of which is the behaviorism. The behaviorism approach views every human behavior as a response to its environment. Therefore, this approach seeks a relationship between the environment (stimulant) and its influence on human behavior (response).

In the study of the Qur'an, the behavioral psychology approach can be applied by changing the key terms of this approach. The practice of the Qur'an can be a stimulant to human behavior or vice versa. Experimental models and natural models can be used according to research needs. This approach can only study the empirical practice of the Qur'ān (living Qur'an) and cannot be used for other models of quranic research.

The limitation of this research is that it only focuses on behaviorism. To complement this limitation, it is recommended to conduct research on other branches of psychology and adapted in the study of the Qur'an. Another recommendation for further research is to promote quranic research with behaviorism approach. Other research models that try to make the Qur'an practical need to be encouraged, so that the ideals of the Qur'an to be able to influence human ethics can be achieved.

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