

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

*Editor*

Noraini M. Noor



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# **TEACHING HUMAN NATURE IN PSYCHOLOGY COURSES**

*Alizi Alias*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Laypersons and students alike sometimes turn to psychology to get a straightforward simple answer about human nature and behaviour. The problem is psychology cannot agree on a lot of issues concerning human nature. The debates on the issue are still ongoing and have led to various theoretical perspectives in modern psychology such as psychodynamic, behaviourism, humanistic, physiological, and cognitive. Using the issues of human nature outlined by Feldman (2007), this chapter explores how Islamic scholars have interpreted these issues in relation to the existence of the soul (*nafs*) which is absent in contemporary psychology. However, this chapter will first consider when instructors of psychology courses should discuss issues of human nature, and examine contemporary psychology's varied perspectives on human nature.

## **WHEN DO WE TEACH HUMAN NATURE IN PSYCHOLOGY?**

Usually, the different theoretical perspectives of human nature are taught in courses such as personality psychology, history and philosophy of psychology, and seminar in general psychology. At the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), they are also covered in courses such as Islam and psychology, and an undergraduate seminar on the Islamic perspective of psychology.