

Understanding the concept of acceptance in the context of psychology: Western and Islamic perspectives

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Abstract: Recent research has increasingly focused on factors that can enhance mental well-being, such as acceptance. To improve happiness and mental health, acceptance is essential. This study analyzes the concept of happiness from two psychological perspectives: Western psychology and Islamic psychology. Western psychology uses the term self-acceptance, which refers to the ability to view oneself positively in accordance with reality through a human lens. In contrast, Islamic psychology views acceptance differently, with *ridha* meaning acceptance of everything determined by Allah Swt. These perspectives also differ in terms of goals, aspects, and factors. This article aims to serve as a reference for Muslims in understanding the concept of acceptance in a manner more aligned with Islamic teachings.

Keywords:

Acceptance, Islamic teaching, mental health, *ridha*, self acceptance

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Psychology, a scientific study of behavior and mental processes, has recently begun to focus more on factors that can enhance mental well-being based on 'normality' rather than topics related to mental disorders and illnesses. According to Synder & Lopez (2002), the positive potential of humans needs to be prioritized so that individuals can adapt and self-actualize effectively. Various psychological variables are linked to positive impacts on a person's mental health, such as self-acceptance.

Self-acceptance is one of the concepts that has numerous impacts in the field of psychology. It involves individuals' perceptions of themselves, both positive and negative, and their ability to accept various aspects of themselves, such as weaknesses, strengths, and emotional experiences. Research in psychology has also focused on the importance of self-acceptance in shaping one's identity, interpersonal relationships, and mental stability. According to Aderson (in Sugiarti, 2008), self-acceptance means that we have successfully embraced our strengths and weaknesses as they are. Embracing oneself signifies finding one's character and foundation, fostering humility and integrity.

Self-acceptance is crucial because the inability to accept aspects different from oneself makes individuals vulnerable to experiencing psychological disorders and behavioral problems. Those who can accept their circumstances are able to appreciate and reflect on themselves and seek ways to reconcile their shortcomings. Furthermore, individuals who accept themselves tend to have healthy and energetic personalities. Conversely, those struggling with self-acceptance often dislike their own qualities, feel inadequate, and lack confidence.

In contemporary times, numerous psychologists have been studying the concept of self-acceptance with its various dimensions, contrasting with Islamic psychology, which emerges from the foundational teachings of religion and offers a more comprehensive approach. Grounded in the Qur'an and the Hadith of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), Islamic psychology arises as a result of Muslim scholars' efforts to transform Western thought and create knowledge based on Islamic teachings (Nashori, 1997; Marliany & Asiyah, 2015). According to Ancok and Suroso (2004), Islamic psychology emerges as an alternative to mainstream psychology, presenting a more integrated perspective on human life.

Self-acceptance in Islamic psychology is often associated with the concept of *Ridha*, which can be understood as accepting what Allah has given. Acceptance and satisfaction in life are interconnected (Poppe et al., 2013). *Ridha*, as the trait of accepting everything as given by Allah, is an effective way to overcome various life difficulties. Moreover, individuals who believe in their Lord must also be actively engaged in overcoming life challenges to achieve the best outcomes (Pargament et al., 2000).

The author is interested in studying the theme of acceptance from the perspectives of both fields of psychology due to their differing academic viewpoints. The author discusses the Western psychology and Islamic perspectives on acceptance. This research is conducted through a review of literature on Western and Islamic psychology regarding the concept of acceptance.

According to Berger (in Islam & Hidayat, 2023), self acceptance is defined as the condition where an individual is able to accept both their strengths and weaknesses. Additionally, self acceptance is characterized as a state where the individual does not experience inner conflict and is not burdened by themselves (Ibrahim & Toyyibah, 2019). This is supported by Diana's (2019) definition of self acceptance, stating that someone who applies the concept of self acceptance is free from issues with themselves and unaffected by negative

affect, thereby enabling them to adapt well to their environment. Based on these various definitions of self acceptance, it can be concluded that self acceptance is an individual's capability to perceive themselves positively and accept their entirety, including their strengths and weaknesses.

Self acceptance encompasses several aspects, and one researcher who has explored aspects of self acceptance is Bernard (in Septiana and Muhid, 2022). The researcher revealed that there are two aspects of self acceptance in individuals: 1) self-awareness (appreciation of positive personality traits and development of one's abilities) and 2) pride in oneself (fully accepting all negative events experienced while maintaining a positive self-evaluation). In addition, there are several factors that can influence self acceptance or self-perception in individuals. According to Hurlock (in Fauziah, 2018), there are several factors that can affect a person's self acceptance, namely understanding of oneself; rational and realistic expectations; absence of internal and external barriers within the social environment; pressures and stresses experienced; intensity of individual achievements; adaptive identification of the individual; perspective on oneself; childhood practices; and relatively consistent personality patterns.

Ridha originates from Arabic, – رضى يرضى (*radhiya-yardho*), which means to consent, like, and be pleased (Yunus, 1989). Besides being recorded in the Quran, *ridha* has also been studied by various muslim scholars. According to Abu Abdullah bin Khafif (in Faruq, 2007), *ridha* is the tranquility of the heart in accepting the laws of Allah SWT., agreeing with what Allah Swt. wants, and choosing it as a support. According to Rusdi (2017), *ridha* means accepting whatever is given by Allah, whether it be hardship, blessings, past, future, or pain from others. Meanwhile, according to Sayid (in K. A. Harahap & Lubis, 2005), *ridha* is to ease the heart when faced with Allah's bitter decrees. From these explanations, we can conclude that *ridha* is the attitude of accepting whatever Allah gives.

According to Yudha, (2023), the understanding of *ridha* advocated by Ibn Asyur is differentiated into 2 contexts, namely *ridha* among humans and *ridha* of God towards His servants. *Ridha* related to humans refers to honor, virtue, love, or acceptance. Meanwhile, *ridha* related to God is translated as the pleasure of paradise bestowed upon those who are obedient. The fundamental aspect here is that *ridha* related to God is not influenced by external factors. On the other hand, according to Agustina (2023), there are 4 types of *ridha*, namely *ridha* to Allah, *ridha* towards fellow human beings, *ridha* towards the fate of calamities, and *ridha* towards parents. Based on the measurement tool developed by Rusdi (2017), *ridha*

is formed from 5 dimensions, including *ridha* towards the fate of calamities; *ridha* towards the blessings of Allah; *ridha* towards the past; *ridha* towards the future; and *ridha* towards the mistakes of others.

Generally, *ridha* is a variable that can be measured scientifically. According to Isa (2005), if *ridha* can be realized, then one will be able to accept all events in the world, especially feeling happiness and pleasure amidst the bitterness of fate. Consistent with the opinion of Al Qarni, who states that the benefits of *ridha* include creating a calm and good heart, steadfastness in facing doubt, steadfastness in facing many problems, and the rapid emergence of tranquility. Conversely, lack of *ridha* leads to anxiety, sadness, heartache, melancholy, and negative assumptions about Allah (Rahman, 2005). According to Sholichatun (2023), *ridha* can benefit individuals in 4 aspects, namely cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and spiritual sides.

Ibnu Al Qoyyim Al Jauziyah stated that *ridha* is one of the heart practices taught in Islam. Just as *jihad* is one of the actions of the body, *ridha* as a heart practice is the pinnacle of the summit of faith as *jihad*. The Prophet Muhammad (SAW) said, *"Whoever tastes the sweetness of faith, then let them be content with Allah as their Lord, Islam as their religion, and Muhammad as their Messenger."* The Prophet (SAW) also said, *"Every time he hears the call to prayer saying 'I am content with Allah as my Lord, Islam as my religion, and Muhammad as the Messenger,' his sins are forgiven."*

The concept of *ridha* teaches Muslims to accept all of Allah's decrees with sincerity and an open heart. *Ridha* is not just about accepting pleasant situations, but also about facing trials and hardships in life. With *ridha*, a Muslim demonstrates strong faith and dependence on Allah in all circumstances. Thus, *ridha* is not merely a passive attitude, but a spiritual strength that provides tranquility and inner strength in daily life.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the fruit of *ridha* is a sense of well-being or spiritual well-being from a psychological perspective, albeit in a deeper sense. This is demonstrated by the many positive impacts described by both Al Qarni and Al Jauziyah as the fruits of *ridha*. Words such as calm, peace, satisfaction, surrender, and resilience represent some of the mental qualities of health. Conditions like these superficially resemble the effects of acceptance possessed by individuals, as shown in research on acceptance.

METHOD

This research employs a qualitative approach with data collection techniques using literature studies, accommodating relevant books and research articles. The data collection method in this study involves analyzing works relevant to the research problem. Data analysis is conducted using content analysis. Connaway et al. (2016) explain that content analysis is an approach that uses several procedures to draw valid conclusions based on text.

This research utilizes the data analysis steps outlined by Krippendorff (2018). Content analysis in this study is performed on messages written by experts who have developed concepts of self-acceptance and *ridha* (contentment). The type of content analysis design used in this research is what Krippendorff refers to as comparing similar phenomena inferred from various collections of texts. This means comparing similar phenomena concluded from different texts.

RESULT

The Concept of Acceptance According to Western Psychology

When referring to Western Psychology regarding the concept of self-acceptance, there is a theory proposed by an American psychologist named Carol Ryff. Ryff suggests that self-acceptance in individuals is reflected through their ability to evaluate themselves positively, both in the present and the past. In addition to Carol Ryff who proposed the theory of self-acceptance, there is also Carl Rogers, a famous psychologist who addressed self-acceptance. According to Rogers (in Harahap, 2020), there are characteristics of a healthy personality. First, the ability to appreciate everything and everyone. Second, accepting all uncertainties that occur in life with an open heart. Third, willingness to accept oneself as is. Fourth, acting spontaneously and engaging in creative activities. Fifth, needing time for solitude. Sixth, having the ability to form deep personal relationships. Seventh, showing genuine care for others. Eighth, having a sense of humor. Ninth, being self-oriented. Eleventh, having an open attitude in living life. Furthermore, self-acceptance is closely related to the ability to maintain

positive attitudes and emotions, as well as being aware of one's own limitations. According to Germer (in Waney et al., 2020), self-acceptance is an individual's ability to view themselves positively in accordance with existing reality, where this ability is the result of efforts built by the individual, not something that develops naturally. Additionally, self-acceptance can occur in individuals when they allow themselves to accept all conditions related to themselves, without trying to evade, change, or improve themselves (Kaiser, in Waney et al., 2020).

Every individual has certainly experienced both pleasant and unpleasant events in their life. These events undoubtedly offer benefits that can be gleaned for the betterment of themselves or their environment. One example of applying this to oneself is learning from experiences to achieve self-acceptance. According to Febriana and Rahmasari (2021), there are several phases or stages in which a person undergoes self-acceptance: the first phase is the resisting phase, commonly known as the stage where individuals reject and deny their feelings, and they feel upset about the events that have occurred in their lives. The second phase is the exploring phase, in which individuals feel confused, worried, afraid, and begin to seek understanding about what has happened in their lives so far. The third phase of self-acceptance is the tolerating phase. In this phase, individuals start to make peace with themselves, begin to accept their feelings, and find ways to endure the situation. Positive support from the surrounding environment is crucial during this phase. The final phase is the allowing phase, where individuals have fully accepted all aspects related to their feelings and the events that have occurred in their lives.

Self-acceptance is strongly correlated with several factors, one of which is an individual's self-concept. According to Calhoun & Acocella (in Handayani et al., 1998), individuals with a positive self-concept have the ability to understand and accept the differences around them. These individuals are able to adjust to all the experiences they encounter, leading to a consistently positive evaluation of self-acceptance. Therefore, if a person's self-concept is good, it is highly likely that their self-acceptance will also be good. Additionally, self-acceptance is related to an individual's physiological condition. Individuals with good self-acceptance tend to have a healthy appetite, good sleep patterns, and enjoy their sexual life. Along with this, individuals with good self-acceptance are able to accept basic biological processes, such as pregnancy, menstruation, and aging, as natural parts of life's development with a relatively happy feeling (Sari & Nuryoto, 2002).

The Concept of Acceptance According to Islamic Psychology

In contrast to the Western psychological perspective on the concept of acceptance, known as self-acceptance, Islamic psychology presents the concept of *Ridha*. *Ridha* means feeling content, willing, accepting, approving, and satisfied. According to Rusdi (2017), *ridha* means accepting whatever is given by Allah, whether it is difficulties, blessings, the past, the future, or pain from others. Unlike the concept of self-acceptance, which is limited to accepting oneself and is centered within the individual, the concept of *ridha* offers a much more comprehensive acceptance.

In Islamic psychology, *ridha* (contentment or acceptance) is recognized as a vital spiritual and psychological quality that reflects a believer's trust and submission to the will of Allah. It is not merely passive acceptance, but an active inner state of tranquility achieved through deep faith and reliance on divine wisdom. According to Saputra et al. (2024), *ridha* is emphasized in classical Islamic teachings, particularly by scholars like Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyya, as a key indicator of spiritual maturity and a means to attain inner peace amid life's

adversities. Similarly, Darojat and Soleh (2023) argue that *ridha* closely parallels the concept of psychological well-being in modern psychology, especially in how it enhances emotional stability, reduces anxiety, and fosters gratitude. Moreover, Sholichatun (2023) compares *ridha* with the psychological concept of acceptance, highlighting that while both promote resilience, *ridha* includes a profound spiritual dimension rooted in the believer's relationship with God.

To maintain the originality of *ridha* as a concept in Islamic Psychology, in addition to conducting literature reviews, the author also approaches the concept as explained in the Quran and Hadith. In the Quran, there are approximately 73 words derived from the word *ridha* (رضا) in various forms, including the words *radhuu* (رضوا) and *radhiya* (رضي). *Radhuu* (رضوا) is a verb with a pronoun meaning a servant who is content with their Lord, while *radhiya* (رضي) is a verb where the subject is Allah, meaning "Allah is pleased." Scholars interpret this as describing the state of a servant in the place or condition desired by Allah and accepting His good deeds and the rewards He has promised. It is important to understand that the word *ridha* (رضا) in its various forms is usually connected with the words before or after it. The use of the word *ridha* (رضا) also has varied meanings depending on the context of the verse.

In the concept of self-acceptance, the emphasis is on the ability to view oneself positively in accordance with reality from a human perspective. In contrast, the concept of *ridha* in Islamic psychology offers more than just viewing oneself positively. According to Yudha (2023), Ibn Asyur's perspective in the tafsir *Tahrir wa Tanwir* divides *ridha* into two aspects, namely *ridha* of Allah and *ridha* of humans. However, these two aspects cannot be equated between the contentment of the Creator and His creations. *Ridha* related to humans refers to honor, virtue, love, or acceptance, while *ridha* related to God is translated as the pleasure of paradise granted to the obedient.

According to Rusdi (2017), Ibn Abi al-Dunya states that the greatest door to Allah is *ridha*. In this world, *ridha* is paradise and tranquility for His servants. Additionally, peace and serenity can also be felt as a result of this contentment. Therefore, *ridha* becomes a necessity for individuals, enabling them to see acceptance not only from a human perspective but also from a divine aspect. Furthermore Rusdi (2017) stated that *ridha* is positively related to several other positive variables. His research shows that *ridha* is central to other variables such as patience, trust in Allah (*tawakkal*), gratitude, contentment (*kanaah*), and forgiveness. Additionally, *ridha* and its related variables must have a vertical relationship with Allah. This indicates that the scope of *ridha* is very broad and not only dependent on a positive view of oneself.

Ibn 'Abd Allah (in Rusdi, 2017) explains that there is several characteristics of a happy person, including following, happy, patient, patient, confident, forgiving or tolerant, *kanaah*, and *zuhud*. According to Hamka (1987), an individual with a contented nature will give rise to a feeling of joy and joy and eliminate reproach and disgrace. That way, a Muslim is highly recommended to have a happy attitude.

Rusdi (2017) explains that *ridha* is formed from five forms, including *ridha* towards the fate of disaster, *ridha* towards Allah's blessings, *ridha* towards the past, *ridha* towards the future, and *ridha* towards mistakes others. Apart from that, according to Zuhri (2020), pleasure is divided into four types, including *ridha* to Allah Swt, *ridha* to fellow human beings, *ridha* to the fate of disaster, and *ridha* to parents.

Abu Nasr as-Sarraj stated that there are three characteristics of people who have a

contented attitude. First, people who try to eliminate the anxiety of their soul so that their heart remains firm and adapts to Allah Swt and in accordance with the rules of His law. Second, people who no longer see God's pleasure because they only see His pleasure in them. As a result, they do not establish that they are more used to be pleased with Him, even though their spiritual condition remained stable in the face of difficulties and disasters, as well as other things. Third, humans are creatures who have the ability to exceed these limits. He no longer sees Allah's blessing on him or vice versa. Because Allah has given His blessing to His creatures from the beginning.

Based on the explanation above, Islam calls another name for acceptance, namely pleased. Islam views acceptance as centered on the pleasure of Allah and the pleasure of humans. This pleasure includes accepting whatever is given by Allah, be it difficulties, blessings, past, future, and pain from other people.

From the review of the concept of acceptance that has been explained, the following is a comparison of the concept of happiness from a western psychological perspective and an Islamic perspective. The author found several differences regarding the concept of acceptance from these two perspectives, including paradigm, definition, objectives, aspects, factors and benefits.

Table 1

Comparison of the concept of happiness between Western and Islamic Psychology

Self Acceptance Component	Western Psychology	Islamic Psychology
Paradigm basic science	Secular, science and Religion is separated. Sourced from humans	Tauhid, science and religions unite. Sourced from Allah
Concept of Definition	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a person's ability to see and perceive himself alone with things which is positive and accepting his whole self own shortcomings as well as the advantages owned. 2. emphasize on seeing ability himself positive according to reality that exists with viewing glasses man 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An attitude of acceptance of what that God gave. 2. Everything happens is willed by Allah, then humans must be pleased over everything. 3. This pleasure becomes a needs for individuals so that not only can see reception just from a point of view only humans, but can looking at it from aspect deity
Purpose	Accept all conditions anything related to himself, without trying to circumvent, change, or improve himself Alone.	Accept whatever is given by Allah, be it difficulties, favors, past, future, as well as the pain of others.
Aspect	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self-awareness 2. a feeling of pride self 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pleasure to Allah 2. Human Pleasure

Self Acceptance Component	Western Psychology	Islamic Psychology
Factor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Self-understanding 2. Rational and realistic expectations. 3. Absence of barriers originating or existing within the surrounding environment, social environment's attitude. 4. Pressures or stresses experienced. 5. Intensity of individual success. 6. Adaptive identification of the individual. 7. Self-perspective. 8. Exercises performed during childhood. 9. Relatively consistent personality patterns. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Individuals strive to dispel their inner anxieties to keep their hearts steadfast and align themselves with Allah SWT and His laws. 2. Seeing the presence of Allah's pleasure towards him/her. 3. Allah has granted His pleasure to His creatures since the beginning.
Benefit	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Their ability to accept various aspects of themselves, such as weaknesses, strengths, and emotional experiences. 2. Successfully embracing their strengths and weaknesses as they are. Accepting oneself means we have found our character and the foundation that forms humility and integrity. 10. Capability in seeing and perceiving oneself with positive attributes and accepting one's entirety, including both the weaknesses and strengths possessed. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capable of accepting all events in the world, especially experiencing happiness and pleasure despite the bitterness of fate. 2. Creating a calm and kind heart, 3. Firmness in facing doubts, 4. Resilience in facing numerous problems, 5. Quickly finding peace, Effective ways to overcome various life difficulties.

DISCUSSION

To achieve balance and inner peace, practice self-acceptance by fully accepting yourself and working on personal development. At the same time, cultivate *ridha* by surrendering to God's will and finding peace in the destiny that has been decreed. The combination of these two will help you attain emotional and spiritual well-being. Both concepts are essential for achieving balance and inner peace.

The concept of *ridha* is an important concept in Islamic psychology. This concept is different from Western psychology when viewed from several aspects. Table 1 shows the differences between Islamic and Western psychology when viewed from aspects such as self-acceptance, paradigm, definition, and so on. In the Islamic concept, *ridha* is an important

concept. By tracing various opinions from experts regarding *ridha*, this study shows how this concept contributes to happiness. In this context, *ridha* is distinguished in various forms (Rusdi, 2017; Zuhri, 2020).

CONCLUSIONS

Self-acceptance and *ridha* are two different but complementary concepts. Self-acceptance refers to fully accepting oneself, including personal strengths and weaknesses, and is often discussed in the context of psychology and mental health. The process involves self-reflection to achieve healthy self-esteem and emotional well-being. On the other hand, *ridha* refers to the willingness and satisfaction of the heart with the destiny determined by Allah, and it is more related to spirituality and religion. The process of *ridha* involves submitting to the will of Allah to achieve inner peace and spiritual tranquility. While self-acceptance encourages personal development and self-acceptance, *ridha* encourages submission to the will of God. Both concepts are important for achieving balance and inner peace.

SUGGESTION

For future research, it is recommended to conduct a comparative empirical study between self-acceptance in Western psychology and the concept of *ridha* in Islamic psychology. This research can measure the impact of both concepts on mental well-being and happiness using quantitative methods such as surveys and questionnaires, as well as qualitative methods like in-depth interviews. This study will provide a deeper understanding of the effectiveness of each approach and how they can be applied to enhance individual mental health within different cultural and religious contexts.

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