

*Gunawan, Muhammad Adyan, Amroeni Drajat, &
Salminawati*

INTERPRETATION OF IBN SINA'S METAPHYSICS ON ISLAMIC THEOLOGY AND ISLAMIC EDUCATION AXIOLOGY FOR POLITEKNIK NEGERI MEDIA KREATIF STUDIES IN MEDAN

Politeknik Negeri Media Kreatif, Medan

Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara, Medan

Email: igunkc@blog-guru.web.id, gunawan@polimedia.ac.id, salminawati@uinsu.ac.id

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Abstract: *This paper will elaborate on the use of Ibn Sina's (Avicenna) metaphysics perspective in helping Politeknik Negeri Media Kreatif Medan students to understand Islamic theology and Islamic education axiology. The qualitative (library research) method will further analyze and dissect Avicenna's metaphysics concept's relevance to Islamic education. The writer argues that every idea or science that impacts society would have its methodology and objective to ensure its promulgation throughout the years. To achieve an apprehensible understanding, the writer will aim to explain basic knowledge of the idea of "being" and "intellect". Furthermore, Avicenna's "being" and "active intellect" notion has been famous among philosophers and linked to many philosophical and mystical discussions. Therefore, it can be utilized as an essential foundation in understanding Islamic education. His metaphysics concept can explain complex exposition, as religious knowledge has been socially constructed for centuries. Scrutinizing constructed knowledge would require a concept that has the methodology to illustrate the possibilities of higher thinking—making Avicenna's metaphysics a suitable concept to give profound comprehensive religious study for the student.*

Keywords: *Avicenna's Metaphysics, Axiology, Islamic Education*

INTRODUCTION

Before enrolling in the university, Indonesian students have received Islamic education throughout their primary and secondary education. Additionally, due to Indonesia's diverse parochial schools and their teaching approaches, it is crucial to align sophomore freshman' knowledge once they become college students. Generally, in public universities and non-Islamic-based universities, students learn fundamental theology in the first semester. The writer believes that incorporating Avicenna's metaphysics during this teaching period would help the students to have a deeper understanding of Islamic knowledge.

In metaphysics researchers, there is not much discussion about the relationship between metaphysics and the learning process, but there are some who try to discuss metaphysics from an assessment point of view as follows:

1. The first is that Dewantara reflects on God in a metaphysical perspective whose relevance is to aspects of an ideology that recognizes and glorifies differences in Indonesia, namely multiculturalism in the scope of the archipelago (Dewantara, 2016). The object of the study is religion which views differences as Indonesia's wealth, so that differences do not result in divorce in Indonesia.
2. In addition to Dewantara, the second article is Khoirudin, who reconstructs Seyyed Hossein Nasr's metaphysical understanding of spiritual education, so that the metaphysical understanding that he describes seems to be only intended for the study of religious understanding that is specifically for the spiritual (Khoirudin, 2014).

The two discussions above do not represent the understanding of metaphysics conveyed by Ibn Sina, especially in the understanding of divinity which must be given first to students who will explore the understanding of

divinity in Islamic religious lessons. The author believes that this paper will answer some of the problems of understanding divinity conveyed by Ibn Sina in his Emanation theory.

RESEARCH METHOD

The qualitative methods will be executed to compile the documents and extract the necessary data. According to Creswell, public documents (newspaper, journals, papers, and reports) and private documents (diaries, letters, and emails) can be used as data sources (Creswell, 2017). This research was conducted using a phenomenological approach known as the phenomenological experience approach (Muljaningsih, 2019). This phenomenological approach assumes that the student experience is mediated by the interpretation of the truth and the lecturer's understanding of Ibn Sina's understanding of metaphysics in the understanding of divinity, this understanding is also supported by supporting documents needed by researchers, namely the number of students who come from the Study Program (Prodi) or come from the academic section. Polimedia PSDKU Medan. This research was conducted in the 2021-2022 academic year in the first three months of the semester. Additionally to have a thorough data, a survey was released to identify students' basic knowledge before they even receive any formal Islamic education. The descriptive qualitative data method implemented in the questionnaire survey was expected to strengthen the data results.

Table 1. Survey's Result: Students understanding of primary Islamic Education

No	Topics	Fully understand	Understand	Not Entirely Understand	Fail to Understand
1	Reading Quran	5	12	10	5

2	Steps of Ablution	12	10	7	3
3	Islamic law	2	5	15	10
4	Steps of Praying	10	15	6	1

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Following the survey, the students were taught Avicenna's metaphysics views on Islamic theology. The learning session was repeated twice. After that, the writer ran a validation process by giving another set of questionnaires to measure Graphic Designer Muslim students' understanding. The answer in the set was divided into five categories: Fully Understand, Understand, Enough, Not Entirely Understand, and Fail to Understand. Then, to get better insights into the questionnaire results, the writer also conducted interviews with the correspondent. Here are the results, see table 2:

1. The majority of the correspondents (75.00%) were able to fully understand the discussion.
2. Some of the correspondents (18.75%) understand most of the discussion
3. Few correspondents had enough understanding (3.125 %) and did not entirely understand (3.125 %) the discussion.
4. The correspondents were primarily able to grasp the discussion, but some still have issues digesting it, resulting in 0 correspondents in Fail to Understand categories.

Table. 2 Students Comprehension on Avicenna's

No	Understanding	Amount	%
1	Fully Understand	24	75.00
2	Understand	6	18.75

3	Enough	1	3.125
4	Not Entirely Understand	1	3.125
5	Fail to Understand	0	0.00
		32	100

ANALYSIS

A. Meaning of Metaphysics

Initially, the word metaphysics derived from the Greek word *Metaphysica* that later transformed into *Metaphysics*. *Meta* means beyond or after, and *physics* means nature (Bagus, 1996). That being said, metaphysics is understood as a concept or doctrine of reality beyond human sense perception. If it is translated to Arabic, it will be *ma ba'da al-thabi'ah* (beyond physics).

Given these descriptions, Metaphysics cannot be categorized as exact science that could provide clear and precise justification. Without considering logical conformity, it can only be comprehended through intellectual thinking and intuition or ideas impetus by human instinct. Accordingly, understanding or interpretation of metaphysics can be varied if the readers are not familiar with philosophy. Furthermore, metaphysics is also considered as part of reality theory. Because by learning it, the readers could further learn the essence of holiness and ultimate spirituality. Ergo, metaphysics can only be easily understood if studied paralleled with learning the primary (Quran) and secondary (Sunnah) sources. This is vital because the concept of metaphysics appears in many disciplines, discussions, and holy books, including the Quran. In the Quran, metaphysics is interpreted as “Spirit” that could penetrate space and time per God’s establishment. Also, since the Quran contains many symbols and rules, associating metaphysics with it will enlighten the readers better if its execution is done with certain traditions written there (Nasr, 1984).

Many philosophers in the medieval ages were concurrently agreed on the notion above. Therefore metaphysics discipline was rapidly advancing. They see that the word *ba'da* or beyond is not “a being” entering a temporary phase, but it is more into “a being” exceeding or passing into the third element. Meanwhile, in Islamic theology, metaphysics does not refer to the sense of surpassing material objective but i spirit or an element that holds the highest position.

B. Who is Ibn Sina/Avicenna?

This paper reference A for Sina's (commonly known as Avicenna in western countries) life and legacy mostly from Ahmad Hanafi's book in 1969, *Pengantar Filsafat Islam* (Introduction to Islamic Philosophy). The book mainly covers the story of many popular Muslim philosophers, including Avicenna. It was told that he was born in 340 AH (980 AD) on Afsjana, a region in Buchara city, during Khalifah Abbasiyah's tenure. His early life was depicted as a problematic situation (especially in Baghdad, the capital city inhabited mainly by the Buyids), where many social upheavals and political disintegration occurred. The reigns of the Buyids from between 334 - 447 AH had caused intellectual setbacks. Nevertheless, Avicenna was raised in a constructive environment where he could still receive a proper education. When he was ten years old, he studied the Quran, Islamic studies, and astronomy. As he grew older, he began learning physics, mathematic, metaphysics, and medicine (under Isa Bin Yahya) (Hanafi, 1969).

According Sirajuddin Zar, Avicenna has a brilliant mind (as quoted by Ismunanto in *Teori Jiwa Ibnu Sina dan Relevansinya Bagi Pendidikan Islam* journal). At age 10, he could memorize Quran excellently. He began to master other disciplines. He was taught by Abu 'Abdullah Annatiti and Isma'il al-Zahidi. But soon, his teacher began to overwhelm by his intelligence (Ismunanto, 2019).

He was preoccupied with political affairs throughout his short life and did not release his writings diligently. Nonetheless, he managed to leave behind dozens of writings and here are his notable works:

1. **Al-Shifa (The Book of Healing)**, is arguably one of Avicenna's best-release books with most series. It was divided into four sections that cover logic, physics, mathematics, and metaphysics. Each writing has its part to being spread out in many libraries around the world (Deuraseh, 2004).
2. **Al-Qanun (Canon of Medicine)**, most translated copies of among Avicenna's books. They were released in India in 1323 and Rome in 1593. It was set to be the mandatory textbook for medical school in Europe until the 17th century (Hanafi, 1969).
3. **Al-Najat (The Book of Deliverance)**, a book that summarizes its predecessors (Al-Shifa and Al-Qanun) (Yucel, 2019).
4. **Al-Hikmah al-Masyriqiyah**, is well known for its content ambiguity. It contains many discussions on logic, but many people can identify its genre or main topic. Even so, Carles Nallino believed that the book is about the interpretation and comparison of eastern philosophical thoughts to western thoughts (Masudi, 2015).
5. **Al-Isjarat was-Tanbihat (The Book of Directives and Remarks)**, the last and most exquisite book to be released in Leiden 1892 and again in Kairo 1947 (Katni, 2016).

Avicenna's intelligence played a big part in the amelioration of Islamic society and that time. Not only he managed to learn difficult and complex disciplines, but he was also able to put his knowledge into practice competently. There was even a story when he cured the king of Buchara of his illness. He receives ownership of a library as a reward. It marked the beginning of his thirst for knowledge.

C. Understanding the idea of “Being” in Metaphysics

What do you do when you want to know the origin of something? we would ask or study deeper about it. For example, there was a time when the writer were curious of the class condition that he was about to teach. He then ask the student who was still outside the class, “Are there the students in the class?”. “Yes there are,” they replied. Then the writer ask again “How many of them? What are they doing? and How are their conditions?. The answer to these questions already cover all the necessary preliminary information for the writer before entering the class. Similarly, the students need to ponder questions related to the “(location) existence”, the “quantity”, the “condition” and the “merit”.

Gutas Dimitri once said (as quoted by Lizzini),

“For Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā) metaphysics is a *science* (*ilm*), i.e., a perfectly rationally established discipline that allows human reason to achieve an authentic understanding of the inner structure of the world. Metaphysics is the science of *being qua being* and therefore the science that explains *every being*. In his interpretation, Avicenna fuses the Aristotelian tradition, which he intends to renew, with the Neoplatonic idea of emanation, on which he builds his system: metaphysics this includes theology, cosmology and angelology, and provides a foundation for physics, psychology, prophetology and eschatology (Lizzini, 2021).”

من الفلاسفة من ذهب إلى أن واجب الوجود ليس عقلاً ، وإنما هو فوق العقل ، وهذا قول أفلاطون وأفلوطين ⁽¹⁾ ، ومنهم من ذهب إلى أنه لا يعلم شيئاً كآرسطو الذي يقول : « معقوله ذاته لا شيء آخر ، فإنه فعل محض ، لا يتأثر عن غيره ، فإذا عقل غيره ، فقد عقل أقل من ذاته ، وانحطت قيمة فعله ، فالعقل فيه والمعقول واله (Madhi, 1997)

Avicenna didn't intentionally distinguish between God's being and the universe being. One reason is that some (including himself) believe that the universe is the new “being” that comes after God. Which was claimed to be

true by metaphysics philosophers. It was believed that God lived for Himself therefore when he developed His “being” the universe was created (also known as the active intellect II, refer to table 4). In this regard, Plato and Al-Farabi conclude that God’s being can also be known as the active intellect I.

Taking the argument above into account, it signifies the relation of Avicenna’s metaphysics to ontology, other related research on “being”. On top of that, he was referring to another philosopher, Al-Farabi, when talking about the idea of “being” and emanation. Al-Farabi once argues, “God is a form of active intellect that doesn't have formal form or being. Then, what is the relation between the universe and God? Scientifically, everything that exists in the universe comes from God because He knows what’s best for his creation and those that follow. Hence, God is the epitome of Oneness. The debate of emanation exists because active intellect exists. And God is the one that creates the active intellect objective.” (as quoted from A.Hanafī)

D. Understanding Emanation of Avicenna’s metaphysics

After learning Al-Farabi’s emanation, it can be seen that Avicenna’s version still mirrors its predecessors with more extensive rationale. Refer to table 4 to see Avicenna’s notion of “being” and “active intellect.”

Table 3. Avicenna’s Emanation

(Subjek) Akal yang ke	BERFIKIR TENTANG			Dirinya sebagai mungkin wujud menghasilkan	Ket
	SIFAT	Allah sebagai wajib al-wujud menghasilkan	Dirinya sebagai wajib wujud lighairih menghasilkan		
I	Wajib al-wujud/ mungkin al-wujud	Second Sense	Jiwa I yang menggerakkan	Langit pertama	
II	Wajib al-wujud/ mungkin al-wujud	Third Sense	Jiwa II yang menggerakkan	Bintang-bintang	
III	Wajib al-wujud/ mungkin al-wujud	Fourth Sense	Jiwa III yang menggerakkan	Saturnus	
IV	Wajib al-wujud/ mungkin al-wujud	Fifth Intellect	Jiwa IV yang menggerakkan	Yupiter	
V	Wajib al-wujud/ mungkin al-wujud	The Sixth Sense	Jiwa V yang menggerakkan	Mars	

VI	Wajib alwujud/ mumkin al-wujud	The Seventh Sense	Jiwa VI yang menggerakkan	Matahari	
VII	Wajib alwujud/ mumkin al-wujud	Eighth Sense	Jiwa VII yang menggerakkan	Venus	
VIII	Wajib alwujud/ mumkin al-wujud	Ninth Sense	Jiwa VIII yang menggerakkan	Merkurius	
IX	Wajib alwujud/ mumkin al-wujud	Tenth Sense	Jiwa IX yang menggerakkan	Bulan	
X	Wajib alwujud/ mumkin al-wujud	-	Jiwa IX yang menggerakkan	Earth, spirit, the first matter which is the basis for the four elements (air, fire, water, and earth)	The Tenth Intellect is no longer emitting the next reason because its power is already weak

Allah created active intellect and the planets of the emanations above in sequence. All these could happen because Allah *ta'qqul* (meaning: Allah thinks) on His elements or active intellect and it has the power (*al-Qudrah*) to create something or even everything. Which, it is also perceived as the process of *ta'qqul*. Avicenna's emanation believes that there are ten active intellects and nine planets that were created. The nine active intellects will move the nine planets while the tenth active intellect will move Earth. For Avicenna, these nine active intellects were perceived as nine souls that could move the planets (here, planets are considered objective material or "passive intellects"). Moreover, here is the breakdown of the ten active intellects evolutions.

1. First being was engendered by Allah and it was named as Active Intellect I. Each phase has three parts:
 - a. God as *Wajibul wujud*, He created the **Active Intellect II**.
 - b. God as *wajib wujud lighairih*, He creates the Soul I that moves the universe.
 - c. God as *mumkin wujud*, He creates the Star I with its souls.
2. Active Intellect II:
 - a. God as *Wajibul wujud*, He created the **Active Intellect III**.
 - b. God as *wajib wujud lighairih*, He creates the Soul II that moves the universe.

- c. God as *mumkin wujud*, He creates the Stars with its souls.
3. Active Intellect III:
 - a. God as *Wajibul wujud*, He created the **Active Intellect IV**.
 - b. God as *wajib wujud lighairih*, He creates the Soul III that moves the universe.
 - c. God as *mumkin wujud*, He creates Saturn with its souls.
4. Active Intellect IV:
 - a. God as *Wajibul wujud*, He created the **Active Intellect V**.
 - b. God as *wajib wujud lighairih*, He creates the Soul IV that moves the universe.
 - c. God as *mumkin wujud*, He creates Jupiter with its souls.
5. Active Intellect V:
 - a. God as *Wajibul wujud*, created the **Active Intellect VI**.
 - b. God as *wajib wujud lighairih*, He creates the Soul V that moves the universe.
 - c. God as *mumkin wujud*, He creates Mars with its souls.
6. Active Intellect VI:
 - a. God as *Wajibul wujud*, He created the **Active Intellect VII**.
 - b. God as *wajib wujud lighairih*, He creates the Soul VI that moves the universe.
 - c. God as *mumkin wujud*, He creates Sun with its souls.
7. Active Intellect VII:
 - a. God as *Wajibul wujud*, He created the **Active Intellect VIII**.
 - b. God as *wajib wujud lighairih*, He creates the Soul VII that moves the universe.
 - c. God as *mumkin wujud*, He creates Venus with its souls.
8. Active Intellect VIII:
 - a. God as *Wajibul wujud*, He created the **Active Intellect IX**.

- b. God as *wajib wujud lighairih*, He creates the Soul VIII that moves the universe.
 - c. God as *mumkin wujud*, He creates Mercurius with its souls.
9. Active Intellect IX:
- a. God as *Wajibul wujud*, He created the **Active Intellect X**.
 - b. God as *wajib wujud lighairih*, He creates the Soul IX that moves the universe.
 - c. God as *mumkin wujud*, He creates the Moon with its souls.
10. Active Intellect X:
- a. God as *Wajibul wujud*,
 - b. God as *wajib wujud lighairih* creates the Soul X that moves the Earth and creates the first passive intellect (four elements: Air, Earth, Fire, Water).
 - c. God as *mumkin wujud*, He stopped creating more active intellect due to weakening power.

Here is Avicenna's metaphysics viewpoint on Islamic theology taught to the student for teaching and research purposes. The highlighted points were the pattern of God's *Wajibul wujud* and *ta'aqqul*, along with all the ten souls created collectively throughout the process. God's Being has only one objective, which is to think of Himself. However, when it started to create something, it had three objective intellects: God as *Wajibul wujud*, God as *wajib wujud lighairih*, and God as *mumkinun wujud*.

Through this teaching session, it was expected that the debate on God's Being was expected to picture the knowledge of the universe's origin that would eventually help the students contemplate God's origin to strengthen their faith. Everything that comes from Allah will always return to Allah, as demonstrated in *ta'aqqul* of the first and the tenth phase.

E. The current Islamic education method taught in Politeknik Negeri Media Kreatif Medan

Islamic education at the university level is the last formal religious education that will be given to the students. In this fashion, Politeknik Negeri Media Kreatif (hereafter: Polimedia) Medan is eager to provide comprehensive education and expects its graduates to have profound Islamic knowledge also guidance and religiously practice its teaching in their daily life (Gunawan, 2018).

The current Islamic doctrine that the student brought to the class was varied, considering the diversity of their previous educational background. Although some of them were enrolled in parochial schools, it did not guarantee their proficiency in Islamic knowledge. This concept applies to those who enrolled in public school as well. The lesson frequency is also relatively minimum as it is only scheduled for less than two hours twice a week. It is not sufficient for the student to understand the subject thoroughly. On the other hand, if we see from the population of the student. Out of three majors (Graphic Design, Graphics Engineer, and Publishing), 32 of 54 students are Muslim.

Table 4. Categorizing Muslim students based on their school origin

No	People	%	School of Origin
1	5	15%	From Parochial High school (MAN 1 Medan)
2	3	10%	From Public High school
3	24	75%	From Specialist High school Majors

From the table above, it can be seen that the population are quite diverse among the student. Meaning the lectures has to put extra effort to align their

Islamic doctrine. The new normal further prevents them from receiving proper and direct teaching in the mosque or other religious forums.

In delivering the subject to the class, the writer initiated the discussion by focusing on giving preface metaphysics knowledge from mainstream philosophers, including Avicenna's. This was enforced in the hope for the student to identify the distinct approach of the figure on how he differentiates philosophy and religion (from Quran and Hadith) debate. It will help them to only learn Avicenna's Islamic metaphysics as it is and as he intended how it should be interpreted.

Then, the writer began by elaborating on the fact that metaphysics material objectives already exist. Metaphysics was exhibited as an exciting discipline as it can be the foundation of much philosophical debate and its development. Furthermore, when we talk about "being," it is also necessary to discuss "who" causes the "being" to exist and define its function as new material.

To exemplify the bigger picture and compliment Avicenna's argument, the writer went way back to metaphysics philosophers, Aristotle, Plato, and Alfarabi's discussion. According to them, God is the "First Cause" of the world's existence. Appropriately, Avicenna complements the argument by saying that "not everything that doesn't have "being" can become the source of those that have "being". Therefore, emanation is a debate on God's "being" that is usually implicated to its being or element (*wajibul wujud*) and name or characteristic (*'asmā' u llāhi l-ḥusnā*).

Considering the argument's broad explanation, the writer will limit and simplify the discussion by focusing on metaphysics' formal objective, the "being" and "soul" (Madkhour, 1119H). The word "active intellect" was transformed to "soul" because the writer believes that there will be a soul

formed from that thinking by having intelligence. This elaboration will be further discussed below under the emanation topic in point b.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results and analysis, it can be concluded that:

1. For the student to have a thorough understanding of Islamic theology and axiology, the “God’s Being” notion of metaphysics should be taught prior to any basic understanding of Islamic knowledge. Consequently, once they begin learning the knowledge, they wouldn’t be too confused in deciding between the truth and the lies of the knowledge that might be circulated within the society.
2. From this research, now we get more precise ideas on the importance of giving introductory discussion such as profound philosophical knowledge. This discussion would provide students with a new perspective. Providing such an exciting discussion could also pique students' interest in learning more on the topic. If it’s done in the long run, it will help them build new good habits and mindset to stay curious even after graduating.
3. As a suggestion, it is expected that this research becomes a recommendation for secular educational institutions (other than religion-based educational institutions) and in particularly, for state Politeknik Negeri Media Kreatif major. In studying religious education, it is expected that the major branch of knowledge, philosophy, is learned especially the philosophy of emanation of Ibn Sina. Every student understanding the metaphysics concept of Ibn Sina will better understand the sciences in religious learning, especially Islam.

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