BECOMING AN IDEAL PERSON TODAY
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF ABDUL KARIM AL-JILI'S AND JEAN PIAGET'S THOUGHT ON PERFECT HUMAN

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Abstract
Research on Islamic studies always continue and will continue to grow. This paper compares Abdul Karim al-Jili's and Jean Piaget's thoughts on the perfect human, especially in the *tasawwuf*. Al-Jili divides the levels of *insan kamil* into three stages: *al-bidayah, at-tawasuth,* and *al-khitam*. From each step of becoming an ideal person, there is a part of the stage that humans must go through *mujahadah, riyadoh, ma'rifat, mawl', musyafah,* and *musahadah*. Meanwhile, to achieve Piaget's theory emphasizes the learning process according to the pattern of individual cognitive development stages. According to Piaget, the learning process consists of three steps: assimilation, accommodation, and equilibration. In practice, there are at least six methods applied in shaping human behavior: right ways (*uswah hashanah*), training and habituation, taking lessons (*ibrah*), advice (*mau'idzah*), discipline, and independence.

Keywords: *Insan Kamil, Perfect Human, Abdul Karim al-Jili, Jean Piaget, Tasawwuf.*

Introduction
According to Abdul Karim al-Jili, being of *insan kamil* is a perfect person. Much research has been conducted on Muslim models, one of which is *insan kamil*, as a concept of Sufism due to al-Jili's contemplation. *Insan kamil* is a perfect human level after going through certain stages in *taraqqi*, so he is the ideal form of God's creation as his crea-

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tion because God always sees Himself in perfect human beings.²

Observing the process of emergence and development of al-Jili’s tasawwuf thought related to the theory of human beings, which researchers mainly carry out. Hasi carried out the first theory of human tasawwuf.³ The second is the second writing, namely Hasnawati’s writing about the idea of human beings according to the thoughts of Abdul Karim al-Jili.⁴ Third, an article written by Ummi Kulsum explores the view of the perfect human from two great Muslim Sufis.⁵ The fourth is written by Daharum, which examines the idea of human beings from the perspective of al-Jili and its relevance in the modern era.⁶ Fifth is a journal written by Rahmat et al. about a comparative study of the thoughts of al-Jili and Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche.⁷

The process of intellectual or cognitive formation was also highlighted by Western scientist Piaget, where when individuals develop towards maturity, they will experience biological adaptation to their environment, which will cause qualitative changes in their cognitive structure.⁸ Many writings about Piaget are found in research. The first is about Piaget’s learning theory, written by Hidayati.⁹ The second is writing about the application of Piaget’s theory.¹⁰

³ Hasi, “Konsep Insan Kamil.”
⁴ Hasnawati, “Konsep Insan Kamil.”
As well as comparative studies of Piaget's approach with other figures, such as Choi Chi Hyun's writings on comparative studies of Piaget and Vygotsky.\(^{11}\)

This study aims to describe and compare Abdul Karim al-Jili's and Piaget's thoughts, especially in practice and learning. Researchers assume that al-Jili and Piaget have relevant contributions to education and learning. Researchers will also look for similarities and differences from various sides, such as thinking, learning, processes, and others.

The object of this research is al-Jili's and Piaget's thoughts on the perfect human (insan kamil). This is library research, in which data sources are examined through the literature—such as books, scientific articles, etc.\(^{12}\) The data in this study consisted of primary data and secondary data. The preliminary data of this research is a book that discusses the thoughts of Piaget and al-Jili about humans. At the same time, the secondary data sources in this study are the writings of other people related to the subject matter. This study uses primary data sources as the main reference and secondary data sources as supporting data.

From the acquisition of data then carried out a comparative analysis.\(^{13}\) This technique compares the theories of each character. Look for the advantages and disadvantages of each view from the characters, which are also necessary research materials,\(^{14}\) so that it can be more easily applied in life, especially in education.

**Al-Jili and the Perfect Human**

Abdul Karim al-Jili has the full name Abdul Karim Qutub ad-Din ibn Ibrahim al-Jili. His name is attributed to al-Jili because he comes from an area called Jilan, a district in Baghdad. Al-Jili died in Zabidah, Yemen, in 832/1430 AD.\(^{15}\) Abdul Karim al-Jili is a very popu-

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\(^{12}\) Da'i et al., "Konsep Manusia Ideal."


lar Sufi in Baghdad; he was given the title of Sheikh and Qutbu al-Din, the highest title in the Sufi maqam. After spending much of his time in Yemen, he wandered across Iraq. Also, al-Jili continued his wanderings to India and Persia (Iran), Cairo (Egypt), Gaza (Palestine), Mecca, and Medina (Saudi Arabia). In every country he visited, al-Jili stayed long to carry out teaching and learning activities and ritual processions.\(^{16}\)

For al-Jili, Nur Muhammad (man) is the image of God which is eternal in nature and is found in all forms of the prophets, from Adam to Jesus, who finally appeared in the form of Muhammad al-Rasul. The appearance of Nur Muhammad did not stop at the Prophet Muhammad himself but continued to every human being, especially to Sufis and other saints. This is because humans have seven potentials or powers, which are aspects of Muhammad’s nur. These potentials or abilities are spiritual in nature, including the heart (qalb), reason (‘aql), estimation (wahm), meditation (himmah), thoughts (fikr), fantasy (imagines), and soul (nafs). This means that with these seven powers, humans will still exist and be sustainable on the earth’s surface. The explanation above hints that God’s most perfect tajalli container is found in Muhammad’s light. Therefore, Muhammad’s nur is new because he is a container for God’s tajalli, created from God’s knowledge. However, to reach this level of perfect human beings, they must undergo the stages according to the riyyadhah of the Sufis.\(^{17}\) We as ordinary human beings, can only encourage our fellow human beings to try to emulate and reach the perfect human being by emulating and practicing to be perfect. Islamic education is an effort to preserve and grow human nature and all human abilities that exist in it towards the formation of perfect human beings following Allah’s instructions and Islamic teachings. Insan kamil is a human being who has: intelligent and physically strong, fears Allah, is skilled, able to solve problems scientifically and philosophically, owns and develops science, owns and develops a philosophy, and has a heart capable of dealing with the supernatural.\(^{18}\) With the theory of insan

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\(^{17}\) Hasnawati, “Konsep Insan Kamil.”

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Kamil must be able to potentialize everything Allah has given humans to prosper on Allah’s earth.

Two religious styles influence al-Jili: the philosophical *tasawwuf* and Sunni types. This condition affected al-Jili’s system of thought, especially his theory of human beings. Methodologically, al-Jili’s description of human beings is philosophical, while the results or conclusions obtained are theological (Sunni). Some think a perfect human has advantages that ordinary people do not have, usually called secret knowledge (*ilmu al-ashar*).¹⁹

Humans, according to Abdul Karim al-Jili, have spiritual potential (*ruhiyyah rabbaniyyah*), and can fight lust, so the last terminal visited by humans is in the form of an encounter with God, and this degree can only be achieved by perfect humans (*insan kamil*). According to al-Jili, the body/physical combination is created in the best and most spiritual form, which has the potential of *ruhiyyah* to place man as a miniature of God. In this case, al-Jili exemplifies the figure of the Prophet Muhammad, the Prophets, and the Beloved of Allah (*wali*) as a figure who can most live up to the meaning of *ruhiyyah* at the highest level. Still, the level of *ruhiyyah* does not reduce the sanctity of the Essence of Allah.²⁰ Al-Jili divides human beings into three levels: first, *al-bidayah*, or initial level. At this level, human beings begin to realize their attributes and divine attributes. Second, *al-tawassuth* or the middle grade, at this level, human beings are the subtle orbits of human nature related to the reality of God’s love. At this level, God can open supernatural things to him. Third, *al-khitam*, or the last group, at this level, human beings have fully realized God’s image; at this level, human beings can know the secrets of destiny.²¹

According to al-Jili, before the Prophet Muhammad, the prophets and waliyullah reached the highest level (*wusul, hulul, and ittihad*), and they started their journey with various processes and several stages. According to al-Jili, everyone can reach the level of *ruhiyyah* at the level of the highest level if it also goes through the following steps: 1) *mujahadah*, a continuous effort to fight against the desires and win over them; 2) *riyadah*, continuous mental exercise so that the spirit is alive and sensitive. From these two stages, humans will arrive at the following levels, 3) *ma’rifat*

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¹⁹ Hası, “Konsep Insan Kamil.”
(knowing the essence of something, even that which is invisible to the senses); 4) fana’ (feeling the union of the soul with the ubiquitous presence, God); 5) mukasyafah (the opening of the partition of the unseen realm); 6) musyahadah (the testimony of the entire unseen realm).

Regarding the division of the levels of the kamil insan, who can reach the highest level is only the Prophet Muhammad. Even though there are indeed many of God’s creatures whose position comes with the status of a perfect human. However, unlike the Prophet Muhammad. He has arrived at the ideal level (al-kamil).

Starting from the mind, heart, spirit, soul, and nafs, humans should be able to use them so that humans do not become humans who deny and disbelieve in the commands and favors that God has given to humans. To achieve human beings, there are at least six methods that are applied in shaping human behavior: exemplary methods (uswah hashanah), training and habituation, taking lessons (ibrah), advice (mau’idzah), discipline, and independence; the following is a description of the above:

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22 Baharuddin, “Manusia Sejati dalam Fal-safah.”
23 Yunasril Ali, Manusia Citra Ilahi (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1997); Al-Jili, Al-Insan al-Kamil fi Ma’rifat al-Awakhir wa al-Awa’il (Beirut: Dar al-Fikr, 1975).

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a. The Exemplary Method

From a spiritual and psychological point of view, humans need exemplary behavior in manifesting their qualities and abilities. Tarbiyah khal with uswah is by providing role models to the students. Kiai, or caretaker of an Islamic boarding school, must be able to provide uswah in matters relating to worship, daily behavior, and others because that attitude is determined by his practice of what is said.

b. Methods of Exercise and Habituation

Educating behavior, of course, with slow practice and habituation at all times is educating by providing training on norms and then getting students used to it. In education at Islamic boarding schools, this chart is usually applied to religious services, such as sunnah prayers in congregation, morals towards kiai and ustadz, and with the Islamic boarding school community. So that the old students or those who easily love and respect each other as the basis for their later life in society.

c. Educate through Ibrah

Ibrah is understood as taking lessons and thinking deeply in the sense of taking classes from every event. Ibrah with the soul that conveys humans to know the nature of things that are seen, cared for, induced, weighed, measured,
and decided rationally so that the conclusions can influence the heart to submit to it, then push it to behavior that is following the existing rules, this, in the end, can be attitude and behavior.24 As for taking ibrah, it can be done through good stories, natural phenomena, or events that have occurred, both in the past and present, all of which we can learn from so that what has happened can be prevented from bad things.25

**d. Educating through Mau'idzah**

*Mau'idzah* is advice, a sermon warning about goodness and truth in what way can touch the soul and awaken it to practice. In terms of advice, it must at least contain three elements: 1) description of the goodness and truth that a person must do by the student (*santri*), for example, regarding manners, must be in a congregation or diligent in charity; 2) motivation to do good; 3) warnings about sins or dangers arising from prohibitions for oneself and others.26

**e. Educating through Discipline**

The field is essential to success in many ways, so cultivating this attitude is expected to help human success. This method is synonymous with punishment.27 With the intention that human awareness arises that what is being done is not right so that he does not repeat it. Practicing discipline must be balanced with other attitudes, such as gentle advice, so that it can touch the heart. Otherwise, it will only be disciplined externally and not enter his heart’s deep recesses.

**f. Educating through Self-Reliance**

Educating the independence of the *santri* is an act that must be carried out continuously because this attitude begins with instilling an optimistic attitude towards the *santri*. Because many successful people start with an upbeat attitude. With this attitude, they will develop an attitude of independence and not depend on other people; eventually, they get used to being independent.28 With autonomy, students are expected to think innovatively and creatively and find solutions to all problems faced by themselves, family, and friends, which in the end, can bring value to the broader community.

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26 Mugiarto, Sulastini, and Handayani, “Implementasi Manajemen Kurikulum.”
27 Mugiarto, Sulastini, and Handayani.
28 Mugiarto, Sulastini, and Handayani.
As a graduate of the University and an admirer of psychoanalysis, Piaget’s theory emphasizes that the learning process occurs according to the pattern of the child’s cognitive development stages (adjusted to the child's age). According to Piaget, the learning process consists of three steps: assimilation, accommodation, and equilibration. It is an assimilation process if new information is integrated into existing cognitive structures in students’ minds. Accommodation is the adjustment of cognitive systems into new situations, while equilibration is the continuous adjustment between assimilation and accommodation. For example, for a student who already understands multiplication, if the teacher introduces division, then the process of integrating proliferation obtained with division as new information is called assimilation.

This situation is considered an accommodation process if students are given a division-related problem. So that students can continue to develop and add to their knowledge while maintaining mental stability in these students, a balancing process (equilibration) is needed. The process of balancing the outside world and the inner world. With this process, students' cognitive development will continue.

The primary key of Piaget’s theory that must be known is that human cognition depends on how far humans can manipulate and actively interact with their environment. Piaget carries three ideas in learning development: structure, content, and cognitive function. The primary key of Piaget’s theory that must be known is that a person’s mental depends on how far he can manipulate and actively interact with his environment.

Piaget’s theory emphasizes that the learning process occurs according to the pattern of a person’s cognitive development stages. According to Piaget, the learning process consists of three steps: assimilation, accommodation, and equilibration. Assimilation is responding to the environment under one's cognitive structure. In other words, assimilation is the matching or adjustment between cognitive systems and the physical environment. Assimilation is the absorption of new information into the mind. The organism will assimilate the cognitive structure that exists at a particular moment. For example, if the schemata of reaching and holding are already available to the child, then everything the child experiences will be assimilated.

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29 Rohaendi and Laelasari, “Penerapan Teori Piaget.”
30 DeRobertis, "Piaget and Husserl.”
31 Rohaendi and Laelasari, “Penerapan Teori Piaget.”
32 Ruseffendi, Pengantar kepada Membantu Guru Mengembangkan Kompetensinya dalam Pengajaran Matematika untuk Meningkatkan CBSA (Bandung: Tarsito, 2006).
into the schemata. Furthermore, accommodation is a second vital process to generate mechanisms for intellectual development.

The accommodation process is rearranging the structure of the mind because of new information so that the information has a place. Every experience a person experiences will involve assimilation and accommodation. We respond to the world based on our previous experiences (assimilation), but each experience contains aspects that are different from the experiences we experienced before. This unique aspect of the experience causes a change in cognitive structure (accommodation).

According to Piaget, all organisms have an innate tendency to create a harmonious relationship between themselves and their environment. Equilibration (balancing) is an inherent tendency to organize experience to obtain maximum adaptation. Equilibration is also interpreted as a push towards balance continuously. Finally, Piaget’s theory can be simplified into an assimilation process if new information is integrated into human cognitive structures. Accommodation is the adjustment of cognitive systems into new situations, while equilibration is the continuous adjustment between assimilation and accommodation. For example, for a student who already understands multiplication, if the teacher introduces division, then the process of integrating multiplication obtained with division is new information. This is called assimilation.

In general, the application of Piaget’s theory is as follows: 1) determine learning objectives; 2) choose a subject matter; 3) determine topics that students are likely to learn actively; 4) determine and design appropriate learning activities for the issues to be studied, for example, learning activities in the form of forming groups, role plays, experiments, and problem-solving; 5) prepare a variety of questions that can stimulate student creativity to discuss or ask questions; and 6) evaluate the process and learning outcomes.

**Examining the al-Jili’s and Piaget’s the Perfect Human Concept**

After observing Piaget and al-Jili’s theory, it was found that there are similarities between these theories. To explain the comparison between al-Jili and Piaget, we will first briefly describe the ideal human according to the two figures from the point of view of understanding, the process of achievement, and level. This can be seen in the following table:

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33 Estini, “Aktualisasi Pemikiran Jean Piaget.”

34 Rohaendi and Laelasari, “Penerapan Teori Piaget.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Piaget</th>
<th>Abdul Karim al-Jili</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Assimilation (integrating new information into existing cognitive structures within humans)</td>
<td><em>Al-bidayah</em>. At this level, an ideal human can realize their own <em>asthma</em> and Divine (spiritual) nature through <em>mujahadah</em> and <em>riyadah</em> by fighting their desires and consistently exercising their feelings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Accommodation (adjustment of cognitive structures into new situations)</td>
<td><em>At-tawasuth</em>. At this level, humans reflect God’s love (<em>al-haqaiq ar-rahmaniyah</em>). Meanwhile, the knowledge possessed by a perfect person at this level has also increased from common knowledge because God has opened some of the unseen things to him. This is included in the <em>ma’rifat</em> and <em>fana</em> stages because they already know the essence of something.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Equilibration (continuous adjustment)</td>
<td><em>Al-khitam</em>. At this level, <em>insan kamil</em> can realize the image of God as a whole, where they have made <em>musyafah</em> and <em>musyahadah</em>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The authors found several similarities and differences after looking at the comparison above. First, in receiving information or cognition, Piaget has a strategy of assimilation and accommodation, namely the process of integrating new and previous data already in memory and adjusting to new situations. Meanwhile, al-Jili describes that to become a perfect human being, the first process is to realize one’s attributes and Divine attributes, called *al-bidayah*. This is a point of similarity of how a person gets new information and internalizes his life.

In the second and final stage, *al-khitam*, humans fully realize the character of God by internalizing the attributes and names of Allah (*asmaul khusna*) in everyday life. This is also a similarity with the last learning process, namely equilibration, which is a process of adjustment and balancing between new and old information already in memory.

A striking difference between these two theories is that al-Jili focuses on the human process of becoming perfect. At the same time, Piaget carries the learning process to achieve proper knowledge. However, in becoming the *insan kamil*, a correct learning process is needed to get the truth about this knowledge, so these two theories are interconnected and complementary because the proper learning process will lead to perfect humans.

After observing Piaget’s and al-Jili’s view, they were similar. *The first* is the process of receiving information or knowledge, in which Piaget uses the term assimilation while al-Jili uses the term Advice. *Second*, in the sense of ac-
commodation, Piaget has interpreted it as a process of deepening knowledge, while al-Jili uses the term training; and third, in terms of more complex utilization of expertise, he uses the time Equilibration, while he uses the term independence.

The superiority of al-Jili’s concept of the insan kamil is the theory of discipline and exemplary. Discipline can be interpreted as constancy in seeking and acquiring knowledge, whereas this theory does not exist in Piaget's learning theory. Ideal in the idea of human beings is also a point of excellence, where with this theory, individuals can imitate and innovate obtained from the example of someone they admire.

Conclusion

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the concept of insan kamil is a place for God’s tajalli which has the position of the caliph and as the highest guardian (qutb) who can penetrate all nature, namely understanding God in everything. Al-Jili refers to the Prophet Muhammad as an example of an ideal human. Such an identity of Muhammad is understood in the sense that Muhammad is the messenger of God and the divine light, which is the mirror of life in the world. Nur of Prophet Divine was later known as Nur Muhammad by Sufi circles. Besides being contained in Muhammad, Allah also emitted it into Prophet Adam. To achieve human beings, there are at least six methods that are applied in shaping human behavior: the correct model (uswah hasnah), training and habituation, taking lessons (ibrah), advice (mau’idzah), discipline, and independence.

Meanwhile, Piaget's concept emphasizes that the learning process occurs according to the pattern of a person's cognitive development stages. According to Piaget, the learning process consists of three steps: assimilation, accommodation, and equilibration. Piaget's concept is a complement to six methods undergoing the process of becoming an ideal human.

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