Domain of Objectivity in Islamic Research Methodology according to the Quran

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Abstract
The discussion of objectivity in the context of Islamic research methodology has been partial up until the present time. Objectivity is recognizably a requirement in research, however, the core of objectivity in the context of the common research methodology is not suitable for Islamic research according to Islamic philosophy and epistemology. The question is to what extent the concept of objectivity used in common research is in line with Islamic research methodology. How is objectivity in Islamic research methodology based on Islamic mysticism and epistemology? What are the domains? This paper will discuss the domains for objectivity in Islamic research methodology according to the Quran. Studies on objectivity in Islamic research methodology are using contextual analysis. The analysis finds that there are three elements of truth mentioned in the Quran. The element of truth is then made the domain for the objectivity of Islamic research methodology, namely the domain of truth through the heart, truth through words, and truth through deeds.
Keywords*: Objectivity, Islamic Research Methodology, Al-Quran, Islamic Studies*

Introduction
Every research related to Islam should always emphasize Islamic mysticism, whether the description of concepts, hypotheses, theories, or models from the level of definition of terms or concepts, hypotheses, inferences, theories or conclusions of the study. Each stage of the Islamic studies and Muslims must always be consistent with the mold of Islam itself, not according to molds other than Islam and must meet the requirements from the point of view of Islam. As mentioned by Allah s.w.t. in the Qur'an:

> "(And say, ours is) the religion of Allah. And who is better than Allah in (ordaining) religion? And we are worshippers of Him" (Al-Baqarah, 2: 138).

The Islamic point of view in question is based on Islamic epistemology, namely al-Qur'an, al-Sunnah, ijma, and qiyas. One of the ways to assess consistency in Islamic mysticism and epistemology is to look at objectivity in research on Islam and Muslims. The question is, to what extent the concept of objectivity used in common research is in line with Islamic research methodology. How is objectivity in Islamic research methodology based on Islamic

mysticism and epistemology? What are the domains? The concept of objectivity in research methodology prevalently negates the element of subjectivity in research. Yet in reality, the concept of the idea itself results from perception and the soul (Jones, 1961). It is this perception and soul that creates the image and leads to thought and the proliferation of ideas. Therefore, in Islamic research, this element of subjectivity must not be separated because the ultimate goal of research itself is to find the truth or achieve *mardhatillah*.

Objectivity in Islamic Research
Discussions of objectivity in the social sciences are often discussed in the philosophy of positivism. This positivism pioneered by Augustus Comte and Stuart Mill rejected metaphysics as neither natural reality nor social reality. Both only emphasize the observational methods necessary for accurate analysis and prediction to explain the cause and effect of a situation in which something occurs (Feichtinger et al., 2018).

This metaphysical rejection has been raised by Salleh (2008) by stating that prevalent research is anti-dogmatic. This is seen as endangering the beliefs of Muslims. If a person turns away from Islam, even for a while, his shahadah, that is, his Islamic beliefs and status will be nullified. As mentioned by Allah s.w.t. in the Qur'an:

> "Thus, (O Muḥammad), We relate to you from the news of what has preceded. And We have certainly given you from Us a message (i.e., the Qur'ān). Whoever turns away from it - then indeed, he will bear on the Day of Resurrection a burden (i.e., great sin), (abiding) eternally therein, and evil it is for them on the Day of Resurrection as a load" (Taha, 20: 99-101).

Yet at the same time, it is undeniable that objectivity in research is necessary. It is essential to provide a research process that is acceptable to others who have different opinions from what is to be said. Moreover, in Islam, it can be considered to be under the concept of fairness. As mentioned in the Qur'an:

> "O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is (fully) aware of what you do" (al-Maidah, 5: 8)

The objectivity that does not require a Muslim to be absolutely neutral and free of values will lead to a different law. If the objectivity in question is merely a social aspect of research, i.e. to ensure that a researcher listens and pays attention to the opinions of others (Kelley, 1998), it can be considered. This is because the concept does exist in the Qur'an which encourages fair and conducive discussions and without prejudice. As mentioned by Allah s.w.t:

> "Ask them, O Prophet, "Who provides for you from the heavens and the earth?" Say, "Allah! Now, certainly one of our two groups is rightly guided; the other is clearly astray" (Saba', 34: 24).

Alias (2018) presents a conceptual comparison between objectivity from the perspective of positivism and objectivity from an Islamic perspective. The differences highlighted are in terms of the core of the concept, the goal of the concept, the relationship of the concept with religion, the epistemology of the concept, and the processes that are important in the concept of objectivity. The goal of objectivity, stated in the paradigm of positivism, is to meet the needs of scientific research.

Scientific research is established through the thinking of scientific realism which is very concerned with the attainment of truth in information and makes it the first principle for this thinking which is to achieve the goal of truth. The interest in the accessibility of this truth becomes competitive in the world of research (Reiss & Sprenger, 2014). This competition allows the concept of objectivity and scientific theory to move in tandem because the concept of objectivity plays a role in obtaining truth while scientific theory pushes towards competition to achieve absolute truth (Mutchler, 2003). Although there are similarities between the goal of objectivity for research in Western philosophy with Islamic philosophy that is to achieve truth, the truth for Western research allows infinite freedom in obtaining information that is said to be true. In contrast to the truth in Islamic philosophy which is based on the source of Muslim belief, which is the Quran.

Elements of Truth in Islam
The goal of the concept of objectivity by Western philosophy focuses only on the truth of a fact. This concept of truth allows for infinite freedom and disregard for values and norms in conducting research. Involvement of value in research is not accepted, on the pretext of obtaining information that is true and considered to be reliable and to achieve a high level of validity. To achieve this goal, various methods are used even if they are against the values and norms of researchers. In contrast to research in Islam which also aims to obtain the truth (Thoha, 2009; Bakar, 2008), yet the approach to truth in Islamic research is not the same as research in Western philosophy.

> "O believers! Be mindful of Allah and be with the truthful" (At-Tawbah 9: 119)

Tafsir Ibn-Kathir explains that this verse is related to a person named Ka'ab bin Malik and two other friends who did not take part in the battle of Badr. Ibn-Kathir stated that due to the honesty of Ka'ab bin Malik in stating the truth to Rasulullah SAW, Allah SWT had given forgiveness to him and his two friends after being sentenced to be isolated by the Muslims for 50 days.

> "Indeed, the Muslim men and Muslim women, the believing men and believing women, the obedient men and obedient women, the truthful men and truthful women, the patient men and patient women, the humble men and humble women, the charitable men and charitable women, the fasting men and fasting women, the men who guard their private parts and the women who do so, and the men who remember Allah often and the women who do so - for them Allah has prepared forgiveness and a great reward" (Surah al-Ahzab, 33: 35)

This refers to spoken verbal truth. Ibn-Kathir in this verse states that truth in utterance will lead to acts of virtue. Truth is also connected with the element of faith. It has been mentioned in the Qur'an:

> Righteousness is not that you turn your faces toward the east or the west, but (true) righteousness is (in) one who believes in Allah, the Last Day, the angels, the Book, and the prophets and gives wealth, in spite of love for it, to relatives, orphans, the needy, the traveler, those who ask (for help), and for freeing slaves; (and who) establishes prayer and gives zakāh; (those who) fulfill their promise when they promise; and (those who) are patient in poverty and hardship and during battle. Those are the ones who have been true, and it is those who are the righteous" (Surah al-Baqarah, 2: 177)

Amrullah states "righteous and pious people" in this verse refers to people who believe and do deeds such as charity, zakat, prayer, keeping promises, and patience in hardship and suffering (Amrullah, 1999). Ibn-Kathir (2013) states that the righteous person in this verse is the person who manifests faith in his heart through his words and deeds.

These three verses show that truth should include words and deeds. Imam an-Nawawi stated that the heart has a great influence in determining the verbal truth and deeds of a person because, through the heart, a person's personality can be depicted on the outside. Permission also refers to the appropriateness of reporting to a statement. A statement is considered true if it is in line with the statement that occurred (al-'Uthaymeen, 2013).

These verses also make it clear that the believer is connected with the righteous. The faith is interpreted in two situations, namely the meaning of *tasdiq* and the meaning of practice (Awang, 2013). The meaning of *tasdiq*; allowing supernatural things or beliefs. This meaning is explained by believing in Allah SWT and having faith in the Prophet by allowing news or notification by Rasulullah SAW in the form of revelation and command of Allah SWT. The meaning of charity or deed is an attachment in doing deeds. Faith is justifying and believing with the heart, expressing faith with the tongue (words), and doing deeds with the limbs (Billah, 1999). Saying faith with the tongue such as *dhikr*, *tasbih*, *istighfar*, and so on. It can be concluded that faith must include three elements namely the heart, words, and deeds or practices.

These three important elements further strengthen the argument that the elements of truth explained in the Qur'an are the elements of the heart, words, and deeds. These three elements reinforce that the elements of the heart, words, and deeds are suitable to be used as elements to obtain truth in research and subsequently become the main domain in the formation of objectivity in Islamic research.

Truth through the Heart
The objectivity of prevalent research needs to break free from the norms and values that exist in the researcher. These norms and values include the beliefs and dogmas or religious beliefs of a researcher. Religious beliefs belong to the metaphysical ideology. Metaphysics is not considered true in the objectivity of research despite the fact that it is true (Ritchie, 1923).

This is very contrary to Islam. If this terminology is adopted by Muslim researchers, the faith and belief of a Muslim will be affected. This is acknowledged by Salleh (2008) in emphasizing the inappropriate use of conventional research methodology to research on Muslims and about Islam because it can affect the faith of a Muslim. It is feared that one's faith will be effected through the use of the term objectivity which denies dogma by advocating the separation of dogma between the researcher and the research done. Dogma is a belief in one's heart and in turn, will justify whatever is born of the heart. Truth through the heart of a Muslim proves the symbol of true faith. This truth is also used as a measure of piety and is a branch of worship (Thoha, 2009).

Unfortunately, the nature of science and knowledge is only said to be objective by taking into account the truth of knowledge alone and considering that the truth of knowledge as absolute truth. However, Islam demands the truth through the heart, that is, having faith and conviction in order to believe in the absolute truth. Absolute truth will not be achieved through scientific study because absolute truth is only in the knowledge of Allah SWT. Therefore, the knowledge that has absolute truth is the knowledge found in the Qur'an and hadith (Harris & Muhkhtar, 2008). Yet it does not mean that knowledge gained from human thought is untrue, only that it cannot be categorized as absolute truth. This is because the concept of truth in the scope of human thought is infinite (Arif, 1998). Thus, truth in this paradigm of human thought cannot be measured, calculated, and described as a whole.

Truth through the Words (Verbal)
Scientific research usually focuses on knowledge or information that can be perceived by the senses as well as under the rational mind. In research, information obtained orally will not be accepted and is not considered scientific if the knowledge or information obtained is not proven to be true through observations and experimental studies. However, in Islam, the knowledge and information gained through the words of the Prophet SAW are also considered the truth which is also referred to as hadith. The truth through the words of Rasulullah SAW is mentioned in Surah an-Najm (53: 2-6) which explains the testimony of Allah SWT by stating that Rasulullah SAW is a truthful person and says what is commanded to him and conveys to mankind perfectly without making any reduction or addition (Ibn-Kathir, 2013).

This shows that the words of Rasulullah SAW were guided by Allah SWT to convey the truth, that is Islam. Through the words of Rasulullah SAW, the Qur'an was also received through the Angel Jibrail. Although Rasulullah SAW is an ummi who does not know how to read and write, but the truth of the Qur'an through the words of Rasulullah SAW is one of his main miracles. The expansion of the world of Islamic scholars is also the result of the oral truth of the Prophet SAW, namely hadith; in addition to the absolute truth of the Qur'an. Observations of the Qur'an and hadith will lead to critical thinking because the mold for education in Islam emphasizes the concept of contemplation, the use of reason and mind, the rejection of superstition and falsehood as well as the encouragement of research and analysis. This framework has formed great Islamic scholars such as Ibn-al-Haytham, Ibn-Sina, al-Khawarizmi, al-Razi, al-Biruni, and many others (Abidin, 2006). This makes the truth in Islam, as well as research related to Islam, also need to take into account the truth through oral as a domain to obtain objectivity in Islamic research.

Truth through Deeds (Actions)
According to al-Attas, objectivity in the context of Islamic research is related to the efforts of the researcher's justice in research. Justice in research does not mean in favor of any party, but justice in favor of the truth (Harris & Mukhtar, 2008). Being fair basically puts something in its place (Din, 2007). It means to put something in the right and proper place. In research, fairness can be positioned in the research methodology conducted. For example, being fair in using the right methods in doing research. Setting fairness in research will have an impact on unbiased results. Justice demands truth in research even if the results of the study are not as desired. Justice in Islam is a branch in achieving piety and is also an act of worship (Thoha, 2009). Justice leads to giving birth to a pious person as explained in the Qur'an, Surah al-Ma'idah (6: 8). One should be fair and not biased towards everyone, no matter for good people or enemies because justice means piety to Allah SWT (Ibn-Kathir, 2013). The same is true in research. Although there are differences between researchers and study subjects, researchers need to conduct research fairly. The emotions and personal passions of the researcher play a role in determining justice in order to achieve truth.

The prevalent research rejecting the religious element is due to the emotions and passions of some researchers towards religion. Religion in research is not wrong, but emotions and passions that do not concern about justice to achieve the truth are faulty (Hasan, 2011). Therefore, the separation of the religious aspects in the heart and soul of the researcher is not acceptable in Islam and it is not the cause of the non-objectivity of a researcher. The cause to non-objective researchers is uncontrollable emotions and desires and influenced by damaged passions. Thus, the religious segregation within the researcher that makes the researcher anti-dogmatic is unsuitable. Therefore, it is necessary to ground the uncontrolled desires and emotions of researchers (Hasan, 2011).

Domain of Objectivity through the Truth Element
The element of truth can be seen through interaction in research. There are three interactions in research namely the interaction between the researcher and the Creator, the interaction between the study subject and the Creator, and the interaction between the researcher and the study subject. This interaction can be illustrated in Figure 1:
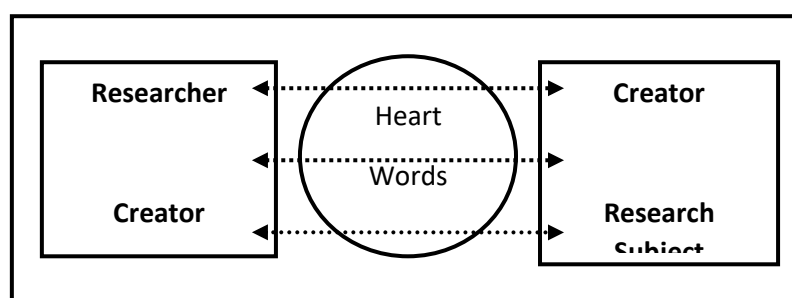

Figure 1: The Relationship between Interactions in Research and the Elements of Truth

Based on Figure 1 it can be seen that there are three interactions in the research. Interaction is an action or an active relationship with each other (Nash & Calonico, 1996). The domain of objectivity can be seen in the first interaction that is the interaction between the researcher and the Creator through the heart element that is the researcher's faith and obedience to the Creator as well as the verbal element as a tool to ensure actions in line with what is believed in the heart of a researcher. These three elements of truth lead to the formation of the morals or personality of the researcher in achieving the objectivity of Islamic research.

The second interaction is the interaction between the study subject and the Creator. The heart and verbal elements will shape the researcher's critical thinking in choosing his or her study subject. Therefore, the need to select an appropriate study subject is not only seen from the external aspect, that is, the act but also needs to take into account the heart element of the study subject. The selection of the right study subject will determine the objectivity of Islamic research.

The third interaction involves verbal and action elements that drive the researcher's thinking process to conduct research. The research process meant is in data collection and data analysis process. Both of these processes are also determinants of objectivity in Islamic research.

The need for these three elements of the heart, words, and deeds affects one's beliefs and morals. According to HAMKA, faith is the integration between belief and surrender, confession of the heart and deeds. Al-Qaradawi, on the other hand, stated that a person's faith in Allah SWT will permeate into the heart, control the mind which will produce a sense of responsibility to carry out the commands of Allah SWT (Salleh et al., 2013). Thus, in the formation of the domain of objectivity, Islamic research methodology need to emphasize the heart element and not just the verbal element and the action or deed element as in conventional research.

Conclusion
Based on the three elements of truth discussed, it can be concluded that an understanding of truth based only empirically under the Western paradigm will make researchers deny the existence of God as Creator and God as the administrator of the universe (Bakar, 2008). Priority to empirical and observational alone is actually not enough to analyze Islam and Muslims. Therefore, the objectivity used now does not actually coincide with the norms of a Muslim researcher and requires a new form of objectivity that is compatible with Islamic research. The formation of new objectivity requires a scope or domain to explain the state of objectivity in Islamic research methodology. The results of the analysis found that there are three main domains in the formation of the objectivity of Islamic research methodology, namely truth through the heart, truth through words, and truth through deeds. These three domains are obtained through the results of research on the truth found in the Qur'an. The domain of objectivity in this study will determine the goals of research whether it leads to a general conclusion or an essential conclusion. General conclusions are the result of research whether Islamic research or non-Islamic research. While the essential conclusion leads to the fact of truth and the original purpose of research which is *mardhatillah*.

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