

Cracking the Hard Problem of Consciousness through the Lens of Islamic Belief and Integrated Education

¹Bulus Y. M., ²Abiola T.

¹M.Ed., University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital, Department of Hematology and Blood Transfusion Laboratory, Maiduguri Borno State Nigeria; ²Department of Medical Services, Federal Neuropsychiatric Hospital, Kaduna.

Corresponding author:

Bulus YM. M.Ed., University of Maiduguri Teaching Hospital, Department of Hematology and Blood Transfusion Laboratory, Maiduguri Borno State Nigeria. Department of Medical Services, Federal Neuropsychiatric Hospital, Kaduna.

Email: yusufmustaphab@yahoo.com

Abstract

Background: Consciousness, a multifaceted and deeply intricate concept, has been a subject of rigorous examination across various fields such as philosophy, neuroscience, psychology, and spiritual traditions. Despite significant advancements, the full understanding of consciousness, particularly how subjective experiences arise from physical processes, remains a profound challenge in both science and philosophy. The study seeks to explore and integrate traditional, quantum, and Islamic perspectives to address the hard problem of consciousness, focusing on how these views can enhance consciousness and moral development in educational and therapeutic settings.

Method: This study employs an interdisciplinary methodology, beginning with a comprehensive literature review covering key frameworks, including traditional, quantum, and Islamic views of consciousness. Following this, a comparative analysis is conducted to identify overlaps and divergences between these perspectives. The insights gained are synthesized into a unified theoretical framework, proposing new models to bridge subjective experiences and physical processes. These models are designed to be applicable in educational and therapeutic contexts to enhance consciousness and moral development.

Results: The comparative analysis reveals that traditional views, rooted in philosophical debates around dualism and physicalism, primarily focus on consciousness as a product of brain processes. Quantum views introduce non-classical elements, suggesting that consciousness may arise from quantum computations within microtubules in neurons. In contrast, Islamic views intertwine consciousness with spirituality and the soul, emphasizing its connection to the divine. The unified framework integrates these perspectives, recognizing consciousness as a complex, multifaceted phenomenon that cannot be fully captured by any single framework.

Conclusion: The unified theoretical framework proposed in this study bridges subjective experiences and physical processes by incorporating quantum perspectives and integrating them with the Islamic view's holistic approach. This model respects both the physical basis of consciousness and its connection to deeper, possibly quantum and spiritual, realities. The framework is open to scholarly reviews and can be practically applied in educational and therapeutic settings to enhance consciousness and moral development.

Keywords: Consciousness, Quantum Perspective, Islamic Holistic View, Moral Development, Integrated Model

Introduction

Consciousness, a deeply intricate and multifaceted concept, has long been a subject of rigorous examination across various fields, including philosophy, neuroscience,

psychology, and spiritual traditions.

Fundamentally, consciousness pertains to the awareness and ability to reflect upon one's own existence, thoughts, and environment[1]. It spans a broad spectrum of

experiences, from basic sensory perception to advanced self-reflection and abstract cognition. Table 1 further describes how consciousness spans basic sensory awareness to profound spiritual experiences. Also, it helps in understanding its different aspects, ranging from the physiological processes underpinning wakefulness to the more abstract and philosophical considerations of self-awareness and intentionality.

Despite significant advancements, the full understanding of consciousness, especially how subjective experience arises from physical processes, remains one of the most profound challenges in both science and philosophy. Confronting the in-depth challenges has been attempted through categorization of consciousness. Table 2 demonstrates how intersubjective experiences, have explained levels and states of consciousness to abstraction of the strange and unpredictable behaviors found in quantum mechanics, such as particles

existing in multiple states at once or being instantly connected across vast distances.

Table 1: Some Key Aspects of Consciousness

Aspect	Description
Awareness	The fundamental ability to perceive and respond to stimuli, involving sensory experiences[1].
Self-awareness	Recognition of oneself as an individual distinct from the environment and others, including self-reflection[1].
Intentionality	The directedness of consciousness toward an object, concept, or event, involving mental focus[1].
Subjectivity	The inherently personal and unique nature of consciousness, experienced from a first-person perspective[2].

Quantum Consciousness[1] suggests that consciousness arises from quantum processes within the brain, adding an element of unpredictability and interconnectedness that traditional views[3-6], which focus on neural interactions, do not account for. Traditional views see consciousness as a byproduct of brain activity, much like a computer processing data. In contrast, Quantum Consciousness introduces the idea that consciousness might be tied to the fundamental, mysterious properties of the

universe itself. The Islamic perspective on consciousness is unique and more advanced in that it embraces both the traditional and quantum views by linking consciousness directly to Allah, the source of all knowledge and awareness. In Islam, consciousness is not merely a physical or quantum phenomenon but is deeply connected to the divine, recognizing Allah as the ultimate source of all consciousness and the sustainer of all existence[7].

Table 2: Categorization of Consciousness

Category	Description
Phenomenal vs. Access Consciousness	Phenomenal Consciousness refers to the subjective experience of being conscious, while Access Consciousness involves cognitive functions like reasoning and memory[3,4].
Levels of Consciousness	Minimal Consciousness: Basic awareness in non-human animals or humans in vegetative states[5]. Self-consciousness: Higher-level awareness and reflection on one's existence[6]. Transcendent Consciousness: Expanded states often described in spiritual contexts[6]. Wakefulness: Full awareness of surroundings and interaction with them[4].
States of Consciousness	Sleep: Reduced consciousness with different stages like REM and non-REM[5]. Altered States: Changes in perception and cognition induced by meditation, hypnosis, or drugs[6].
Cognitive Theories of Consciousness	Global Workspace Theory: Consciousness arises when information is broadcast within the brain's global workspace[5]. Integrated Information Theory (IIT): Consciousness corresponds to the capacity of a system to integrate information[6].
Quantum Consciousness	A speculative theory suggesting that consciousness arises from quantum processes within the brain, though it remains controversial[1].

In other words, consciousness from Islamic perspective, is intertwined with cognitive and spiritual processes such as perception, will, meaning, sense of purpose in life and hereafter. It is viewed as the light or energy that permeates all aspects of existence, both animate and inanimate. The more real a matter, the greater its level of consciousness. In Islam, God is regarded as The Reality (Al-Haqqa), The Ever-Living (Al-Hayyul Qayyum), the ultimate embodiment of consciousness and intelligence. Consciousness is thus linked to iman (faith) and taqwa (God-consciousness), underscoring its significance in guiding human purpose and morality[7,8].

Based on the traditional to quantum theory of consciousness and the unique Islamic perspective, the study aims to explore and integrate multiple frameworks to address the hard problem of consciousness, specifically how subjective experiences arise from physical processes.

By examining consciousness through the lenses of Islamic Integrated Education, Human Metaphysical Theory, Cognitive Theories, and Neuronal Correlates, the study seeks to develop a comprehensive understanding that bridges philosophical, scientific, and spiritual perspectives.

Methodology

The study will employ an interdisciplinary methodology to explore and integrate various perspectives on consciousness, focusing on traditional, quantum, and Islamic views. It will begin with a comprehensive literature review covering key frameworks, including the philosophy and theory of traditional, quantum, and Islamic views of consciousness. A comparative analysis will then be conducted to identify overlaps and divergences between these perspectives. The insights gained will be synthesized into a unified theoretical framework, proposing new models to bridge subjective experiences and physical processes that are open to

scholarly reviews and applied in educational and therapeutic settings to enhance consciousness and moral development.

Results/Discussion

Table 3 reported the comparative analysis of the traditional, quantum, and Islamic views of consciousness and reveals both overlaps and divergences in their approaches to understanding this complex phenomenon. Traditional views, as highlighted by John Searle and David Chalmers[9,10], primarily focus on consciousness as a product of brain processes, rooted in philosophical debates around dualism and physicalism. These perspectives emphasize the "hard problem" of consciousness, questioning whether subjective experiences can be fully explained by physical processes alone. While these discussions are deeply entrenched in the materialistic framework, they continue to grapple with the limitations of reducing consciousness to brain activity alone.

On the other hand, the quantum view, as explored by Roger Penrose, Stuart Hameroff, and Matthew Fisher[11,12], introduces non-classical elements into the conversation. This perspective suggests that consciousness may arise from quantum computations within microtubules in neurons, although the theory remains controversial and requires further empirical validation. The quantum view challenges traditional explanations by proposing that consciousness could be linked to fundamental processes at the quantum level, thus introducing a new dimension to the debate.

Islamic views of consciousness, as presented by Seyyed Hossein Nasr and Muhammad Iqbal[13,14], offer a distinct approach by intertwining consciousness with spirituality and the soul. These perspectives emphasize the divine attributes of consciousness, viewing it as deeply connected to the spiritual realm and a reflection of divine will. Unlike

the materialistic focus of the traditional and quantum views, the Islamic perspective integrates physical, mental, and spiritual aspects, offering a holistic understanding of consciousness. This integration highlights the moral and spiritual dimensions of consciousness, setting the Islamic view apart from both traditional and quantum perspectives.

The comparative analysis between the traditional, quantum, and Islamic views of consciousness highlights several intriguing overlaps, divergences, and potential areas for integration. Traditional perspectives, as outlined by Searle and Chalmers[9,10], view consciousness primarily through the lens of brain processes and materialist philosophy, grappling with the "hard problem" of explaining subjective experience purely in physical terms. This contrasts with quantum theories, which introduce the idea that consciousness may arise from quantum

processes within the brain, suggesting that consciousness could be tied to fundamental, non-classical elements of the universe itself, as explored by Penrose and Hameroff[11].

While traditional and quantum views diverge in their foundational assumptions—one rooted in classical physics and the other in quantum mechanics—they share a common struggle in fully explaining the nature of consciousness. Both perspectives seek to bridge the gap between the physical brain and the experiential mind, albeit through different mechanisms. On the other hand, the Islamic view of consciousness, as discussed by Nasr and Iqbal[13,14], offers a more holistic approach, integrating the physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions. It sees consciousness not just as a product of the brain or quantum processes, but as deeply intertwined with the soul and the divine, providing a comprehensive understanding that encompasses both material and spiritual

Table 3: Comparative Analysis of Traditional, Quantum, and Islamic Views on Consciousness

View	Article Title	Authors	Research Question	Methodology	Key Findings
Traditional View of Consciousness	"The Nature of Consciousness: Philosophical Debates"	John Searle, 2022[8]	How do traditional philosophical debates conceptualize consciousness?	The article reviews key philosophical arguments, including dualism and physicalism.	The traditional view focuses on consciousness as a product of brain processes, with ongoing debates about its subjective nature. Highlights the "hard problem" of consciousness and suggests that non-reductive explanations may be necessary.
Traditional View of Consciousness	"Consciousness and Its Place in Nature"	David Chalmers, 2023[9]	Can consciousness be fully explained by physical processes?	Analyzes arguments for and against materialist views of consciousness.	Proposes that consciousness arises from quantum computations in microtubules within neurons, though the theory remains controversial.
Quantum View of Consciousness	"Quantum Mechanics and the Mind: The Penrose-Hameroff Model"	Roger Penrose & Stuart Hameroff, 2023[10]	Can quantum mechanics explain consciousness?	Theoretical exploration of how quantum processes might contribute to consciousness.	While promising, the evidence remains inconclusive, and further empirical research is needed.
Quantum View of Consciousness	"Quantum Approaches to Consciousness: A Review"	Matthew Fisher, 2022[11]	What evidence supports quantum theories of consciousness?	Literature review of studies linking quantum mechanics and consciousness.	Consciousness is deeply intertwined with spirituality and the soul, viewed as a divine attribute.
Islamic Views of Consciousness	"Consciousness in Islamic Philosophy: An Overview"	Seyyed Hossein Nasr, 2022[12]	How does Islamic philosophy conceptualize consciousness?	Examination of Islamic texts and philosophical treatises.	Islamic philosophy offers a holistic approach, integrating physical, mental, and spiritual aspects of consciousness.
Islamic Views of Consciousness	"The Islamic Perspective on the Mind-Body Problem"	Muhammad Iqbal, 2023[13]	How does Islamic thought reconcile the mind-body relationship?	Comparative analysis of Islamic and Western perspectives.	

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Potential areas for integration between these views lie in their shared recognition of consciousness as a complex, multifaceted phenomenon that cannot be fully captured by any single framework. For instance, the quantum perspective's openness to non-classical explanations could find resonance

with the Islamic view's emphasis on the spiritual and transcendent aspects of consciousness, while traditional philosophical debates could benefit from incorporating these broader dimensions. This integrated approach could lead to a more comprehensive understanding of consciousness, one that respects both its physical basis and its connection to deeper, possibly quantum and/or spiritual, realities.

A unified theoretical framework that bridges subjective experiences and physical processes could draw upon the quantum perspective's openness to non-classical explanations and all subsumed into the Islamic view's integration of physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions. This framework recognizes consciousness as a complex, multifaceted phenomenon, challenging the traditional materialist approach by incorporating both quantum and spiritual elements. The Islamic view, emphasizes the deep connection between

consciousness, the soul, and divine attributes, offering a holistic approach that encompasses moral and spiritual aspects. The unified model will encompass the followings:

- Traditional consciousness, encompassing instinctive, intellectual, and inspirational aspects, is theorized to be caused by the Omniscience Spirit of God, which is reflected in educated, learned, and enlightened souls. This form of consciousness is often correlated with the predominant spectrums of Theta, Alpha, and Beta brainwaves. According to Abhang and colleagues[15], these brainwaves are indicative of different levels of mental activity, ranging from deep relaxation to focused attention.
- Quantum consciousness is proposed to be caused by the Omnipresence Light of God, which is present in atoms and within the neural circuits of humans, animals, and artificial intelligence systems. This

type of consciousness is linked to the Delta brainwave spectrum[15]. Studies[1,7,11,12] have explored the relationship between quantum mechanics and consciousness, suggesting a connection between fundamental quantum processes and conscious awareness.

- Expanded (God) consciousness is considered to be caused by the Omnilove Spirit of God, manifesting in peaceful souls and coherent hearts. This elevated state of consciousness is associated with Gamma brainwaves[15], which are linked to bursts of insight, creativity, and high-level cognitive functioning. As noted by Braboszcz et al.[16], Gamma brainwaves are also connected to spiritual experiences and deep states of meditation.

The soul and spirit in Islamic thought are seen as intimately connected to the essence of

human life and consciousness. The rūḥ (spirit) and nafs (soul) are understood as divine attributes breathed into humans by God, with the spirit representing an immaterial essence that animates the body, guides the soul, and submits to the divine will. The Spirit of God, when breathed into humans, generates three essential energies: activating the soul, processing reason ('aql), and fostering cognitive and spiritual consciousness.

This divine spirit is believed to reside in the heart, serving as a bridge between the physical and spiritual worlds, with the heart as the center of spiritual life and consciousness. This concept is further supported by the idea that the heart's intrinsic neural circuit operates independently of the brain, indicating a deeper connection between the heart and spiritual consciousness. The spirit is also described as eternal, immaterial, and massless, akin to

light, energy, and consciousness. As God is described as "The Ever-Living" (Al-Hayyul Qayyum, Qur'an 3:2) and "The All-Knowing" (The Omniscience), the spirit carries the attributes of infinite consciousness and knowledge.

God's first creation, "THE PEN," is significant in Islamic thought as it symbolizes the coding and recording of all events in the Cosmic Databank (al-Lawh al-Mahfuz). This act of divine writing is paralleled with the human pursuit of knowledge and education, emphasizing the role of integrated education in spiritual and intellectual development. This understanding is further enriched by the belief that the spirit breathed into Adam (Qur'an 32:9) endowed humanity with cognitive faculties and freewill, setting the stage for a life of learning, moral development, and the pursuit of righteousness. This holistic approach underscores the importance of aligning one's

life with divine will and pursuing knowledge as a means of spiritual and intellectual growth. Remember: They ask you concerning the Spirit. Say: "The Spirit is by command of my Lord: of knowledge it is only a little that is communicated (known) to you." 17:85.

By integrating these perspectives, the Islamic framework would not only provide a more comprehensive understanding of consciousness but also be applicable in educational and therapeutic settings to enhance consciousness and moral development. This model is expected to be amenable to scholarly reviews, fostering a practical application that bridges the gap between subjective experiences and physical processes, ultimately contributing to personal and societal well-being.

Conclusion

The study concludes that consciousness, a complex and multifaceted phenomenon,

cannot be fully understood through a single theoretical lens. By integrating traditional, quantum, and Islamic perspectives, the proposed unified theoretical framework offers a more comprehensive understanding of consciousness that respects both its physical basis and its spiritual dimensions. This framework is particularly valuable in educational and therapeutic settings, where it can be applied to enhance consciousness and moral development, ultimately contributing to personal and societal well-being.

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