The Concept of the Learner in the Perspective of Islamic Education: An In-depth Analysis of Children's Emotional and Spiritual Development

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Abstract: This research explores children's emotional and spiritual development in the context of Islamic education, with a focus on the role of family, school, and society. The concept of the student subject in Islam is explained as the process of forming natural potential, especially in the spiritual and emotional aspects, which is the basis for mature life. The family, as an initial educational institution, has the main responsibility in directing children's development in accordance with religious values. Islamic education is identified as a key factor in shaping the moral, social, and religious dimensions of students. This research uses a descriptive approach by collecting data through library research, analyzing human development theory, and examining the concept of Islamic education. The research results highlight the importance of education in aqidah, worship and morals as the main components in forming a child's personality. The integration of emotional and spiritual development theories in the three educational centers creates individuals who are competent in science, faith, charity, and morality, and can make positive contributions to society.

Keywords: Islamic Education; Emotional Development; Spiritual Development; Family.

1. Introduction

Human beings, considered the highest creatures of Allah, are endowed with the utmost dignity and status among all creations [1][2]. This elevated status brings forth fundamental abilities, commonly known as "Al-Fitrah," representing innate potential that gradually evolve toward perfection. Comprising both physical (corporeal) and psychic (spiritual) elements, the psycho-physical structure of humans undergoes continuous and interdependent changes [3][4][5]. This integral development, referred to as psycho-physical, underscores the harmonious balance between biological and psychological aspects [8]. In the trajectory of human psycho-physical growth, the environment plays a pivotal role, encompassing all educational activities and experiences. Education, viewed as an absolute necessity throughout one's life, is perceived as vital for human survival, allowing individuals to progress in line with their aspirations. The holistic approach of Islamic education integrates these principles, aligning academic knowledge with spiritual and emotional development [6][7]. Islam envisions individuals as dynamic beings aspiring to lead prosperous and happy lives in both worldly and spiritual dimensions. Achieving these aspirations necessitates continuous efforts to enhance one's capabilities through education. Islamic education, guided by the Quran, Hadith, and the wisdom of Muslim pedagogical experts, serves as the cornerstone for shaping individuals into comprehensive beings or "al-insan al-kamil" [10]. The educational process, guided by divine principles, becomes a means for individuals to achieve happiness and fulfillment. For Muslims, this process must align with Islamic concepts, ensuring that learning experiences are infused with Islamic values rather than Western ideologies [11].

Success in the educational process hinges on both internal factors (biological and psychological) and external factors (environment). To ensure precise targeting of educational objectives, guidance from educational and developmental psychologists is indispensable. Considering this backdrop, this thesis addresses three key questions: How to develop the spiritual and emotional aspects of the subject of education in Islam? How relevant are the theories of spiritual and emotional development of the subject of education in the three centers of education? What is the format of Islamic education in the development of the spiritual and emotional intelligence of children?. To avoid misinterpretations, it's crucial to clarify terms such as the subject of education, Islamic education, emotional, and spiritual. The subject of education refers to individuals undergoing an educational process, closely tied to learners requiring consistent guidance. Islamic education is an effort to guide individuals towards understanding and embodying Islamic teachings. Emotional refers to the tendencies and conditions of feelings, while spiritual denotes direct knowledge within oneself that influences emotional control. The objectives of this discussion are threefold: To examine the emotional and spiritual development of the subject of education in Islam, explore the relevance of theories in three centers of education, and understand the

format of Islamic education in developing the spiritual and emotional intelligence of children. The chosen method for this discussion is descriptive, focusing on solving problems and collecting data relevant to the topic. Library research, involving the reading and analysis of books related to the subject, serves as the primary technique.

2. Background

The exploration of emotional and spiritual development in children is a pivotal journey towards maturity, and this chapter is structured to delve into various sub-topics, including Diversity of Development Theories, Human Development Structure, and Developmental Psychology. Firstly, the discussion centers around humans as Allah's most perfect creation, endowed with emotional and spiritual potential. Emotional capacity serves as a means to acquire knowledge, while spirituality acts as the regulator of emotions. These two facets are intricately connected and inseparable, forming the psycho-physical structure of humans, consisting of continuous developments in physical and psychological elements. Developmental psychology becomes instrumental in comprehending how humans evolve from conception to adulthood. The theories put forth by developmental psychologists serve as guiding principles for parents and educators in imparting knowledge to children. This chapter also introduces three Western development theories before delving into Islamic concepts. The theories of Nativism, Empiricism, and Convergence are explained to provide insights into the factors influencing human development.

The concept of fitrah nafsani in Islamic psychology asserts that humans possess unique potential, disposition, and character bestowed by Allah from the beginning [12]. Human personality is not deterministically programmed, and individuals have the freedom to actualize their potential [8][13]. In the Islamic context, heredity factors can influence personality formation, but the emphasis is also on choosing a suitable life partner to support positive child development [14][15]. Empiricism theory, which posits that human development is significantly influenced by the environment and experiences, presents an optimistic view of human ability to regulate their surroundings. The Convergence theory attempts to unite Empiricism and Nativism, acknowledging the importance of both factors in human development. A comparison with the concept of fitrah nafsani in Islam is also provided [16].

Next, the physical and psychological development of humans introduces three essential dimensions: body, soul, and self. Body and soul are inseparable, with the self acting as the mediator that unites the two. This chapter also highlights fitrah nafsani as three parts: physical fitrah, psychological fitrah, and psycho-physical fitrah. Each dimension possesses characteristics and roles in shaping human personality. The focus then shifts to the emotional and spiritual development of children. The learning process plays a crucial role in developing the social potential of children. The quality of a child's social interaction depends on their perception of teachers, peers, and parents. Social and religious development in children emphasizes the importance of education, both within the family and in schools, in shaping diversity and morals in children [17][18]. Early social interactions with the environment play a key role in their social development.

Child development involves physical, psychological, emotional, spiritual, and social aspects. Internal and external factors, along with interactions with the environment, play a crucial role in shaping a child's personality. From the perspective of Islamic Psychology, human development involves three major realms that every individual must traverse: the realm of covenant, the worldly realm, and the afterlife realm. Each realm presents specific developmental tasks and responsibilities. The covenant realm, or al-ard al-awwal, encompasses the pre-world life period and serves as the blueprint and motivation for human life. Developmental tasks during this period, such as finding a righteous life partner, marrying at an appropriate age, building a harmonious family, and praying for righteous offspring, become the responsibilities of parents.

The worldly realm (al-'alam al-dunyawiy) is the execution of God's plan predetermined in the primordial realm. Individuals in this period undergo changes and development in their physiological and psychological aspects. The tasks during the pre-birth period, including fetal formation, and the post-birth period focus on biological growth and the development of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. The adolescence period marks the phase where individuals have achieved physical and intellectual maturity [19]. Religious and social responsibilities become crucial during this period. Meanwhile, old age is characterized by physical decline, and developmental tasks involve internalizing noble qualities, increasing social awareness, and strengthening religious practices. The afterlife realm is the phase of death, initiated by the extraction of the soul by angels. The Quran emphasizes the interconnectedness between emotional and spiritual development. Spiritual abilities, such as faith, ma'rifah, and tawhid, are interlinked with components such as qalb, fu'ad, and lubb. Emotional development, on the other hand, manifests from spiritual growth, reflected in attitudes such as ihsan, ilham, rahmah, and hidayah. Dominant factors in human development include hereditary (fitrah) and environmental (bi'ah) factors. The interaction between these two factors occurs throughout human life, but the dominance of these factors can change with individual development. Hereditary factors exert a greater influence during the embryo and infant phases, while environmental factors become more dominant with age and experience in social interaction.

3. Method

In addressing the complexities of emotional and spiritual development in the context of Islamic education, a meticulous methodology has been adopted. The research employs a "descriptive" method, strategically chosen to navigate problem-solving intricacies and collect contemporary data pertinent to the research topic [20]. This method aims to offer a nuanced exploration of the emotional and spiritual development of children within the realm of Islamic education, emphasizing both challenges and opportunities. The Descriptive Method selected for this research ensures a systematic analysis, facilitating a comprehensive overview of the subject matter. By utilizing this method, the researcher seeks to not only identify but also understand the emotional and spiritual development of children in the context of Islamic education, with the ultimate goal of proposing meaningful enhancements or solutions. For Data Collection Techniques, the researcher relies on two key approaches: The primary data collection technique involves an in-depth exploration of relevant literature through library research [21]. This includes an extensive review of books, academic journals, and scholarly articles associated with the research topic. The focus is on extracting theoretical frameworks, conceptual foundations, and empirical findings that contribute to a holistic understanding of emotional and spiritual development within Islamic education. Subsequently, the gathered data undergoes meticulous analysis by critically assessing various literary sources [22]. This step involves evaluating content, methodologies, and conclusions presented in selected literature. The objective is to identify key themes, patterns, and gaps in existing knowledge, enriching the depth and quality of the research.

The rationale for this methodology is rooted in the need for a robust theoretical foundation. By delving into established literature, the research aims to build upon existing theories, compare perspectives, and construct a comprehensive framework tailored to the unique context of Islamic education. This approach ensures that the findings are grounded in scholarly discourse, contributing substantively to the academic community. In conclusion, the chosen methodology of descriptive analysis, coupled with library research and theoretical data collection, aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the emotional and spiritual development of children within the framework of Islamic education. This approach enables the researcher to navigate complexities, propose informed recommendations, and contribute meaningfully to the scholarly discourse in the field.

4. Results

The research into the intricate realm of emotional and spiritual development within the context of Islamic education offers profound insights into the fundamental aspects that shape the younger generation. Education, as a dynamic process of transmitting knowledge, experiences, and values, assumes paramount importance within the Islamic framework. Children, deemed as the subjects of education, enter the world in a state of vulnerability yet carry within them innate potentials that necessitate careful cultivation through education. In this context, the family emerges as a pivotal institution, serving as the cornerstone in the upbringing of these young minds. The family's centrality in Islamic education becomes especially pronounced, acting as the foundational institution entrusted with the responsibility of instilling moral, social, and religious dimensions within children. Notably, parental roles, with a particular emphasis on mothers, play a crucial part in aligning educational practices with the rich tapestry of religious teachings, thereby underscoring the family's pivotal role in shaping the personality of a developing child. Furthermore, the research underscores the necessity of a multifaceted approach for nurturing emotional and spiritual development. Islamic education, with its encompassing view of responsibility, developmental phases, and societal roles, assumes a fundamental role in providing a robust foundation for the growth of children. This educational process unfolds through three core components: the nurturing of faith education (aqidah), worship education, and moral education, which collectively serve as pillars in achieving the broader objectives of education.

The study accentuates the convergence of theories and practical applications within the triad of educational centers – family, school, and community. The integration of emotional and spiritual development within these centers proves indispensable in the creation of well-rounded individuals proficient in knowledge, faith, deeds, and morality. The internalization of Islamic values within these educational spheres shapes individuals capable of making positive contributions to society. The investigation further illuminates the profound impact of spirituality and emotional intelligence on the quality of learners. It underscores the significance of nurturing a holistic approach to education, one that harmoniously combines faith education, worship, and moral teachings. Through this comprehensive approach, Islamic education aspires to foster individuals endowed with heightened spiritual awareness and emotional intelligence, thereby equipping them to contribute positively to the collective well-being of society. The comprehensive findings underscore the pivotal role of Islamic education in molding the emotional and spiritual dimensions of children. The research sheds light on the intricate interplay between theories, practical implementations, and institutional settings, culminating in the shaping of individuals endowed with profound spiritual consciousness and emotional intelligence. These attributes are deemed crucial for thriving in the intricate and diverse societal landscape, marking the enduring impact of Islamic education on the holistic development of individuals.

5. Conclusion

The conclusion from the discussion of subject concepts taught in Islamic education produces several important points. First, Islam has philosophically laid the foundation for the concept of education by referring to teachings about the importance of education for humans. Humans are born weak, and therefore, education is considered to develop existing potential. This potential includes the development of spiritual and emotional abilities, which is reflected in the emergence of al-sam'u, al-absar, and al-af'idah as stages of gradual refinement towards maturity in life. Second, to create quality students, Islam offers an educational concept that focuses on developing awareness, both emotionally and spiritually. This shows that the educational process is not only related to factual knowledge, but also involves the psychological and spiritual aspects of the student subject. Third, in the world of education there are three main centers, namely the household, school and community. These centers are not only a means of education but also a barometer of the success of education itself. This underlines the important role of the environment in shaping and measuring educational outcomes. The suggestion that can be drawn from this conclusion is that education for students should be based on Islamic philosophy, so that the values of the Shari'ah can be internalized in the next generation of the religion. Educational material also needs to be delivered in accordance with the level of spiritual and emotional development of students' subjects, so that education can have maximum impact in shaping their personality and character.

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