

Effective Approaches Of The Education Of Children In Forming A Sustainable Family According To Islamic References

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Abstract

Humans and education are two important issues in planning the growth, development and advancement of a country. The basic education for an individual starts with the teaching at home, school and the environment. Children's education is important in Islam. The importance of emphasising the development of children is a practice pioneered by Islamic scholars since ancient times based on the teaching of Islam that used Qur'an and Sunnah as their references. Parents today face with challenges in educating their children. They are required to ensure that their children are raised and given the education that covers the development of intellect, physical, spiritual, morals and social. Education can nurture the current and future generations to grow and be responsible to God, themselves, other people and the country. The aim of the present research was to examine about the effective approaches of children's education in shaping a sustainable family according to Islamic references. The research method is based on reading of articles, journals, newspapers, books and others as primary data. The learning process involves mental, physical, emotional and social aspects. This article in general discusses about teaching in the aspects of education, which is classified into four types namely Formal Teaching, Informal Teaching, Non-Formal Teaching and Rasulullah pbuh Teaching Method. Generally, the aspects of children's education are divided into aspects of faith, morals, physical, mental, spiritual social, emotional and sexology. Therefore, there are three main things that need to be emphasised in shaping children and their souls in forming a sustainable family which include strengthening of spiritual and worship activities, knowledge and noble values.

Keywords: Effective approaches, education of children, sustainable family

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Ibnu Sina stated that education should begin after the child stops breastfeeding (*al-rada'ah*) and the early stage of education shall begin with morals (Idris, 2000). Good and perfect morals will be a strong fortress for an individual to ensure that they are not easily influenced when dealing with bad behaviours. According to Atiyah (2005), baby child is born of the sexual encounter between a man and a woman. The general pronouncement of a child is stated in the Qur'an in Surah an-Nisa, verse 11 which means:

“Allah commands you concerning your children: for the male, what is equal to the share of two females.”

Education is a necessity for every human being. Humans need education as much as they need food, clothing, safety and health. The education process is important in either developed or developing countries. There has been an increase in social misconducts among youngsters which is also in line with the country's development and today's technological advancement from various angles. These misconducts include criminal acts, stealing, robbery, gangsterism, prostitution, adultery, baby dumping, drug addicts and drug dealers, pills addicts, running away from home and so on.

Azyyati et. al (2013) stated that teenagers that have the tendency to be involved in social misconducts are among those who have a non-functioning family, have a low socio-economic status (SES), and receive no support from other individuals. The environment acts as a protective factor which is the primary basis in determining the mindset and behaviour amongst youngster to avoid harm. The protective factor could be their parents, family members, members of community, school and religion. Nasarudin (2018) stated that family institution plays a vital role in helping teenagers to avoid social problems that could ruin their future. Therefore, it is a responsibility of all parties that are involved directly and indirectly in the education of adolescent including parents, teachers, community partnerships and families, to ensure the objectives of education are achieved in accordance with the Islamic guidelines.

2.0 HISTORY, DEVELOPMENT AND EVOLUTION OF THEORY

The process of shaping human morality can be influenced by the environmental factors such as parents, teachers, peers and society (Munawar & Kamarul, 2016). Ibnu Khaldun (2002) stated that a good environment is necessary to produce good morals. al Nawawi (2003) explained every child is naturally inclined to the will of Islam or Tauhid. From the perspective of Western scholars, Berne (1964) stated that human behaviour, thoughts and feelings are influenced by external factors such as peers, parents and people that are close to them. Freud (1974) in his Psychodynamics theory explains that there are three systems that exist in human's mind which are urgent or forceful, ego and superego. Bandura (1997) also emphasised about the role of external factors in shaping someone's behaviour. Therefore, most of the teenagers' behaviours are driven by the needs of those around them.

Bandura (1997) also emphasised the way in which human behavior is influenced by the environment, which is through reinforcement and observational learning and the way we think about information and vice versa. The process of observing and replicating the behaviour and attitudes of others as a model is a process of learning. For example, if a person is brought up in a gambling background, then he will tend to do the same thing. Through observational learning,

individuals will imitate the action of the model, like what they observe. The first external factor that influences an individual is their parents (Ahmad Munawar & Kamarul, 2016).

2.1 Developments of Children According to Al-Ghazali Perspectives

Children’s development according to al-Ghazali is a process of education for human beings that persists throughout life. The process begins since birth where the baby begins to experience growth and development vertically, heading towards perfection and happiness. However, the development of life occurs in stages. Allah S.W.T illustrate in Surah Ghafir, this verse 67 comprises:

“It is He who created you from dust, then from a sperm-drop, then from a clinging clot; then He brings you out as a child; then [He develops you] that you reach your [time of] maturity, then [further] that you become elders. And among you is he who is taken in death before [that], so that you reach a specified term; and perhaps you will use reason”.

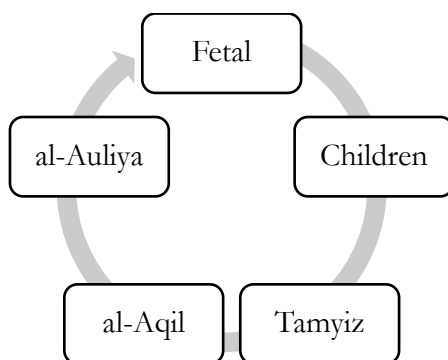


Figure 1 Development Stages According to Al-Ghazali

According to Baqiyatus (2018), al-Ghazali emphasised the need for early education and the role for further development and education. There are five stages of child development according to al-Ghazali as shown in Figure 1, namely fetal, children, *tamyiz*, *al-aqil* and *al-auliya*. The fetus stage is when the child is still in the womb of the mother. The first education for the child is in terms of spiritual. At this stage, parents are encouraged to worship God and pray in addition to consuming halal food because the fetus in the womb will inherit the traits of the mother after being born. However, Faziyah (2001) stated that a smart child is shaped through his natural talent, not merely inheriting the genetic characteristics of his parents. In fact, they could be very effective in providing a good starting point for the next generation.

From the birth of the children to the age of five, parents should specifically focus on spiritual and physical education, breastfeed them and guide their behaviour. The children should be taken care by someone with good morals. According to Nur Madiah (2018), the process of developing religious values in shaping the children’s personality begins since birth until adulthood. In general, when a child is neglected since his development stage, the child will tend to have bad habits such as lying. The third stage, which is *mumayiz* stage, is when the children can distinguish a good and a bad thing and the development of his thinking reaches to things related to basic knowledge. Mardziyah (2018) explained that the education system shall be in line with religious and moral

values. Therefore, teachers need to deliver knowledge related to the basic knowledge of *fardhu ain*.

The following stage namely the stage of adolescence, is when the child has the perfect mind and he can master the knowledge of *fardhu ain* and *fardhu kifayah* and is culpable to bear the trusts given by Allah S.W.T. The peak stage in human life is during *al-anbiya* and *al-auliya* stages. The prophets were granted the ability from Allah S.W.T directly or through the angels which is knowledge of revelation. The custodians (*wali*) acquired the knowledge of inspiration and *laduni* from unidentified sources and ways (Abdul Salam, 2010). Based on the theory mentioned above, the effective approaches of children's education are to begin before they are born, by applying spiritual, physical, behavioural, and the ability to differentiate between the haq and batil as well as be a responsible caliph on Earth.

3.0 ELEMENTS AND TEACHING METHODS

3.1 Formal Teaching Methods

Education is one of the important ways to develop human resources and the application of human values that aims to shape life's discipline to create a peaceful, harmonious and peaceful society. Islam places a high importance on knowledge to an extent where it is compulsory for every individual to acquire it (Mohd Radhi, 2006). Therefore, the method of gaining knowledge is through education, whether formally, informally or non-formally. The teaching process is a process involving mental, physical, affecting and social aspects of an entity. Education system in our country, the education policy is to perform good, comprehensive and integrated individual in terms of visceral, emotional, spiritual and intellectual. This is apparently declared in the National Education Philosophy (2011);

'Education in Malaysia is an on-going effort towards further developing the potential of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner, so as to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced and harmonious, based on a firm belief in and devotion to God. Such an effort is designed to produce Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable and competent, who possess high moral standards, and who are responsible and capable of achieving high level of personal well-being as well as being able to contribute to the harmony and betterment of the family, the society and the nation at large.'

Based on the statement above, the goal of education in this country is to make Malaysian citizens obey with the religion's commands, be equipped with good values, have noble and open minds. Formal education in Malaysia is by phase which has been stated by the Ministry of Education Malaysia and has been adjusted according to the level, interests, skills and age of the students (Ministry of Education, 2012). The National Education System at school level under the Government Education Institution category consist of four levels which are pre-school for children under 6 years old, primary school for those aged between 7 and 12, secondary school for those aged between 13 and 15 and the higher level for those who are 18 years old and above.

Pre-school education is a program aimed at providing learning experiences to children aged 4 to 6 years old within 1 or 2 years, before entering the school life. According to Ivan Hoe et al (2014), education at this stage aims to nurture the potentials of children comprehensively in all aspects of development; guide the children in mastering basic skills; and impose positive attitudes upon the children in preparing for the formal education. This point of view is in line with Gamal (2005) where the simplest objective of education was the existence of positive changes to be achieved by the process or efforts of education, where there is a positive change in attitude,

personal and community life or in the activities of education and the learning practical as a fundamental activity and as a main profession in a community.

Education at this stage aims to develop three important aspects of children namely cognitive efficiency, affective efficiency and psychomotor efficiency (Nik Rosila. 2007). Cognitive efficiency is all the tendencies associated with learning activities and learning strategies. It emphasises on the intellectual aspect such as knowledge, understanding and thinking skills. The learning process becomes easier and the tendency to master something is very high for children with a balanced and good affective preparation aspect. Lastly, psychomotor efficiency emphasises on the skills aspect and the ability to act. This is a result of cognitive aspects (understanding something) and affective aspect (tendency). Psychomotor efficiency can be measured through students' behaviour during the process of learning.

The second stage of education is at primary school level, which starts when the children reach 6 years old and above and it takes them 5 to 7 years to finish this level. As a multi-racial country, elementary schools are divided into two categories of schools namely National Schools that use Malay language and National Type Schools (*Sekolah Jenis Kebangsaan*) that use Mandarin or Tamil language as a medium of communication. Education at this stage is a comprehensive and integrated education in terms of structure, contents, approaches and teaching and learning materials teaching and learning (Ministry of Education, 2012). Teachers are encouraged to be more creative to diversify their strategies, approaches, methods and appropriate techniques for the students (Kamarul Azmi & Ab Halim, 2007).

Rasulullah pbuh used various techniques when he was preaching. This matter was discussed by Abdullah Nasih 'Ulwan (2000) when explaining the role of Rasulullah pbuh as a great educator. He identified and elaborated 40 effective learning techniques and methods by Rasulullah pbuh. These techniques include using himself and his morals as a model, teaching by phase, celebrating simplicity and avoiding boredom, using two-way interaction, jokes approaches, as well as giving advices and reminders. On the other hand, Rashidi and Abdul Razak (1995) divided the teaching method into several divisions namely speaking methods, reading-writing methods, observing and doing methods. To pique the children's interest, teachers should diversify their appropriate techniques and methods within the allocated time and the level of students available. The teaching locations should also be suitable and it is not necessarily to be in the learning space.

The effective teaching and learning are aimed at producing effective training in the classroom (al-Syaibani 1991; Atan 1993; Ahmad 1997; Mohd Yusof 2000). Other than that, according to Asy-Syaikh Ahmad (1998), Islam began to order the parents to tell their children to start praying at the age of 7 (*mumayyiz*) and order the parents to beat/hit them if they miss their prayers at the age of 10. It is also an obligation of the parents to separate their place to sleep (no longer with the parents). These orders are in line with the hadith by Rasulullah where he demanded his followers to teach their children to start worshipping God ever since they are young. Rasulullah pbuh said:

صَلُّوا كَمَا رَأَيْتُمُونِي أُصَلِّي

“Pray as you have seen me pray”

(HR. Al-Bukhari)

This is a good and effective Islamic way of teaching and it harmonises the Western ideology such as scaring the children off with inappropriate things, normalising children with a luxury lifestyle, being too harsh towards the children and hitting the children excessively (Abu, 2004). The third stage of education for children is secondary education, which is between the age of 13 and

17 while the fourth stage is higher education, which is for those who are 18 years old and above. There are two categories of secondary education, which are daily secondary schools and boarding schools. The application of values is not limited to Islamic Studies, Moral Studies and Civic and Citizenship Studies. It is applied through all the subjects taught in school, through the daily activities and co-curricular activities (Mohamad Khairi & Asmawati, 2010).

The adolescent stage is one of the most important and risky stages in an individual's life where there will be a drastic change to his body and soul (Asy-Syaikh Ahmad, 1998). At this age, individuals usually feel like they are entitled to give opinions and views. Besides that, these individuals are usually rebellious, dislike to be insulted and pressured by others and their own parents and they want to be distinguished from children who are not of their age. According to psychologists, the adolescent stage is an important stage, where the educators are encouraged to use modern education. However, modern education neglects the religious education (Asy-Syaikh Ahmad, 1998).

According to Ibnu Khaldun in Gamal (2005), human acquire knowledge, moral values and good qualities through learning and education. Consequently, children should be presented with good examples, good values and good behaviours from adults. Human acquire knowledge, moral values and commendable qualities through learning and education as well as daily practical interaction. To overcome teenagers' negative attitude at this stage, educators shall use the approaches that suit with their nature and needs. For example, the prayer room at schools should be a spiritual laboratory that could educate and develop themselves. The usage of the prayer room shall be maximised in learning and teaching, not only as a place to perform their prayers. A study by Norliza and Syuhaida (2019) found that a good prayer room infrastructures can encourage a maximum usage of the room by the teachers in implementing Islamic Studies subject. This finding has shown an increase in the usage of prayer room amongst teachers as compared to the usage of prayer room amongst students (Ab Halim et. Al, 2003; Jasmi Amin 2011).

Schools in general and teachers in particular play an important role and have a great influence in the application of good values. Students are taught to have good morals and practice a good living culture (Mohamad Khairi & Asmawati, 2010). There are four fundamental principles for human moral according to al-Ghazali. These principles are wisdom (*al-bikmah*), justice (*al-adl*), courage (*as-syaja'ah*) and preventing the acts of evil (Abdul Salam, 2003). *Al-bikmah* is a situation where children could explore the truth from the mistakes committed, while *al-adl* is the soul of the children that could control and prevent anger and lust to guide humankind towards peace, well-being and happiness. The moral foundation for children, which is courage (*as-syaja'ah*), is to train their determination to uphold their rights, not forget their roots and prevent themselves from the acts of immorality and avoid negative things. The combination of all four principles forms a perfect and balanced moral for children.

3.2 Informal Teaching Methods

Informal education is an educational process of learning that takes place indirectly or unknowingly whether at the places of worship, through observation and conversation, experience of others, the environment and others. This kind of teaching happens throughout life without any structure. The community and family members play an effective role in the inculcation of values and positive personality informally (Mohamad Khairi & Asmawati, 2010). This method occurs as a result of one's interaction with an individual. One of the advantages of informal teaching method is that children will experience life changes by getting a job, good health, good self-esteem and income increment as a result of indirect learning. This is due to the fact that they do not repeat the

mistakes committed by people from the past and think and make a wise and accurate decision. In addition, the positive impact of this learning is that they will make people around them to receive the same benefit and their involvement in the society will be greatly appreciated.

3.3 Non-Formal Teaching Methods

Education is not only derived from formal education, in the same way the presence of non-formal method has also impacted the education system in Malaysia. Philip H. Coombs (1984) defined out-of-school education (non-formal education) as an organised and systematic activity, not a mere process and is designed to achieve certain educational goals. This is supported by Depdiknas RI (2003), where it was explained that non-formal education is an educational path outside the formal education that can be carry out in a structured and tiered manner. According to Zahara Idris (1992), non-formal education is divided into two; non-formal education that is deliberately held outside the school and non-formal education that is acquired by someone from their daily activities. Non-formal education is defined as any form of learning experience in which individuals or groups are actively involved in a healthy and balanced spiritual, social, economy, cultural and political growth.

Based on those definitions, non-formal education is not only implemented in school, but it can also grow outside of schools. Non-formal education covers all learning activities that operate outside the formal education system and receive learning based on experience. The transfer of knowledge within the children's souls can be done in various ways. They could use their eyes to read, watch and hear. According to Nasiruddin (1976), children's senses that are trained by the accurate method will usually produce knowledge. This is supported by Atiyah (2005) where it was stated that Allah created man by giving senses for them to gain knowledge. Humans can accept knowledge by listening, seeing and reading from an educator, broadcasting, demonstration and others. Amongst the non-formal education methods are through mass media, current technology, radio, newspapers and others.

3.4 Rasulullah PBUH Teaching Methods

According to Abdullah Nasir Ulwan (1998), Rasulullah had a main method in delivering advices and teaching. The method depends on the situation of the society or individual and the environment. Among the important aspects in the methods practiced by Rasulullah in delivering his teaching is to include the way of telling stories, answering questions, starting his advice with reminders, and showing prohibited things (after explanation is given). In the Quran, Allah tells the story of Luqman regarding his teaching for his children. Similarly, in the hadiths of Rasulullah, there are various forms of teaching for children, whether in terms of commands or actions in education of the children. Educators should realise their responsibilities towards Allah in Islamic Studies. Despite the presence of latest technology and teaching methods, Rasulullah pbuh teaching method is important to ensure the teaching delivery is effective. The example of method used by Rasulullah was to use a language that was easy to be understood by the students. This clearly shows that the way the teacher delivers the knowledge, speaks, corrects a situation is important because not all students can use the same method (Zety et al, 2017).

4.0 FORMATION OF A SUSTAINABLE FAMILY

Sustainability means something that is desirable to maintain the existing quality. To ensure the sustainability of the world, nature shall continue to be in a good condition and the behaviour of the inhabitants of the Earth is close related. A family is a very important social institution in an

individual's life because it is considered as a shelter for all the family members to share their love, attention, safety and the need to continue living. According to Sandra (2007) parents are an important pillar in the family system and have a great role in shaping the individual and the prosperous community. Families as Islamic educational institutions that have an important role in shaping the younger generation in Islam. According to Sariwandi (2017), family is an informal education institution. Although it acts an informal education institution, family is the main institution for students. All things that happen in a family is an educational process that affects the life of the children. Attitude, religion, moral, intellect, social behaviour and culture of the children are shaped by education within a family. Therefore, it is clear that behaviours can be shaped through family institution.

Sudarsana (2018) stated that the stimulation given by the mother to the stillborn fetus, when the child is born and when the child grows up will make the child live and fulfill his time according to Islam. The success or future of the child relies on how the child is taught and guided by his parents. Every child has different potentials and he can produce something good if he is trained by good environment. If the family fails to conduct moral education for their children, then other institutions including schools will have difficulty fixing them. Family's failure in shaping the children's characteristics will result in the increase in number of people who have no character. Therefore, each family needs to be aware that a character of a person depends on the characters at home. This is related to the theory that explains that children's education starts since they are born and good morals should be applied to the children according to their level of development to shape and build a sustainable family.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The process of developing the characters of children or students requires collective responsibility from parents, family and school. Good guidance and leadership of the Muslim family should be based on the fundamental of moral teaching, and most importantly principle of trust in spiritual values as high-quality values. These include co-operation values and the cohesion between strong and weak. To produce strong-minded children towards Islam and balanced and humble (*rabbani*) personalities, they should receive a comprehensive and balanced education. As a Muslim educator, we should give encouragement to ensure they carry out practices for Islam especially for children who have reached puberty. The educators (*murabbi*) and parents are the models for the children.

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