

Education Transformation in Malaysia through Spiritual Intelligence: Perspective of Imam Al

Ghazzali

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Abstract

Education in Malaysia is going through a transformation period from knowledge based education to value based (holistic) education which is being clearly objectified in the National Education Philosophy. But somehow rather the implementation of this holistic education seems to be vague across many stages of education in Malaysia especially the implementation of spiritual intelligence. There is a gap between the current practices in our education industry with the National Education Philosophy. Many social problems among students and adolescents are being reported that are very alarming and could be the hindrance factor for Malaysia to achieve its Vision 2020. To achieve human excellence as the vicegerent of God (*khalifah of Allah*), it is very crucial for human beings to balance his/her duniawi and ukhrawi. The aim of this research is to provide a platform in transforming Malaysian education system through spiritual intelligence. The spiritual intelligence components were derived from the content analysis done on Al Ghazzali's *Ihya Ulumuddin* (Book 3).

Keywords: education, spiritual intelligence

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Abstrak

Pendidikan di Malaysia kini sedang melalui tempoh transformasi pendidikan berasaskan pengetahuan kepada pendidikan berasaskan nilai (holistic) yang jelas termaktub dalam Falsafah Pendidikan Negara. Namun demikian pelaksanaan pendidikan holistik yang merangkumi kecerdasan spiritual agak samar merentasi kebanyakan peringkat pendidikan di Malaysia. Terdapat jurang yang jelas antara amalan semasa dalam sistem pendidikan berbanding dengan Falsafah Pendidikan Negara. Ini jelas terbukti dengan pelbagai permasalahan sosial yang berlaku dan yang dilaporkan dalam media massa di kalangan remaja di Malaysia. Senario ini amat membimbangkan dan bakal menjadi penghalang kepada pencapaian Wawasan 2020. Untuk mencapai kecemerlangan manusia sebagai khalifah Allah, adalah sangat penting bagi manusia untuk mengimbangi duniawi / dan ukhrawi. Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk menyediakan landasan dalam mentransformasikan sistem pendidikan Malaysia melalui kecerdasan spiritual. Komponen kecerdasan spiritual diperoleh dari analisis kandungan terhadap Kitab Ihya Ulumuddin (Buku 3) oleh Imam Al Ghazzali.

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Education is a dynamic mantra that has the ability to transform a normal human being into a purposeful one whom able to be thought to be a better person, able to teach others to be better and able to make the world a better place to live. And as a 'khalifah' of Allah (vicegerent), education will be the back bone of his/her purpose of living. According to Al-Attas (1980, 22) education can be defined as "Recognition and acknowledgement, progressively instilled into man, of the proper places of things in the order of creation, such that it leads to the recognition and acknowledgement of the proper place of God in the order of being and existence"

In Islam, education has been given a great priority even when Prophet Muhammad SAW (Peace be Upon Him) received his first wahyu and prophet-hood from Allah swt through angel Jibrail (Gabriel), the first ayah from Al Quran said by the angel is 'Iqra' (from Surah Al-Alaq: 96) which mean read.

"Read! In the Name of your Lord Who has created (all that exists). He has created man from a clot (a piece of thick coagulated blood). Read! And your Lord is the Most Generous. Who has taught (the writing) by the pen. He has taught man that which he knew not" [Quran, Al Alaq,96: 1-5]

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According to Imam Al-Ghazali, education without focusing on the core values (spiritual values) of human development process will produce mankind who is imprisoned within the material world and will not achieve the true happiness. (Mohd Johari, 2007 in Rohana, Kamaruddin and Roziah, 2010) Furthermore, Korthagen (2004) stated that the core values of human being are the sources of man's stability, through which they maintain a sense of purpose in their life. Author strongly believed that the core values of a human being here is the Spiritual Intelligence.

Even though multiple dimensions of intelligences (intellectual quotient, emotional intelligence, and social intelligence) are believed to be able to contribute to the betterment of a human being and building human nature but spiritual intelligence could contribute significantly in guiding individuals to achieve excellence in their life as a human being and especially as a Khalifah of Allah swt.

Spiritual intelligence is concerned with the inner life of mind and spirit and its relationship to being in the world. Spiritual intelligence implies a capacity for a deep understanding of existential questions and insight into multiple levels of consciousness. Spiritual intelligence also implies awareness of spirit as the ground of being or as the creative life force of evolution. If the evolution of life from stardust to mineral, vegetable, animal, and human existence implies some form of intelligence rather than being a purely random process, it might

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be called spiritual. Spiritual intelligence emerges as consciousness evolves into an ever-deepening awareness of matter, life, body, mind, soul, and spirit. (Vaughan, 2002)

As being said in Al Quran:

“On the Day you see the believing men and believing women, their light proceeding before them and on their right. (It will be said): Your good tidings today are (of) gardens beneath which rivers flow, wherein you will abide eternally. That is what the great attainment is” [Al Quran Al-Hadid, 57:12]

Abu Hurairah narrated that the Prophet SAW said, “Religion is very easy and whoever overburdens himself in his religion will not be able to continue in that way. So you should not be extremists, but try to be near to perfection and receive the good tidings that you will be rewarded; and gain strength by worshipping in the mornings, the nights.”

(Bukhari 1/38)

The surah and the hadith clearly indicate that only those who are the believers will gain success and be rewarded by Allah swt. Gaining success and rewards are not bounded to worldly matters but more towards gaining success and rewards in hereafter, and one of the way is in gaining high spiritual intelligence is through authentic Islamic vision of education. Thomas

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(2005) stated that an authentic Islamic vision of education has the power to re-animate a truly holistic conception of education which encompasses not only the higher intellectual faculties, but also the realization that human excellence is inseparable from beauty and virtue and should never be limited to an individualistic concept of personal achievement, mastery and success. This is a vision of *tauhid*, in which cognitive, moral and spiritual functions are all intertwined and interdependent, and necessarily actualized in right action

Problem Statement

It is undeniable Malaysian educational system has gone through tremendous changes in transforming Malaysia into creating a better human capital that fulfilled the criteria as stated in the National Educational Philosophy (1997):

“Education in Malaysia is on-going efforts 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 harmonic, 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”.

It has been 17 years since the National Educational Philosophy (NEP) being established but the implementation of holistic education seems to be vague and there is a clear gap with the

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current practice in the education industry especially in the scope of spiritual intelligence. Author is firm with her stand as many issues especially social problems among school students and adolescents are very alarming. One of the breaking news was highlighted in the New Strait Times (2005) in which school children constituted almost half of all under 18 who were arrested for crimes since 2003 and were involved in almost one per-cent of all criminal cases in 2002 and 2003 (Azizi Yahya et.al, 2009)

According to Malaysia Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA), juvenile cases increased dramatically more than 100% from 3399 cases in 2012 to 8704 cases in 2013 (Utusan Online, 2014). From the study done by Malaysia Economic Planning Unit in year 2013 through the Malaysia Well-being Report, it is stated that the overall crime rate decreased from 6.5 to 6 (for every 000' population) but the juvenile cases increased from 0.07% to 0.16% (Yogeesvaran, 2013)

Most of the social problems started as disciplinary problems in school such as fighting, truancy, avoidable absenteeism, verbal abuse, sexual and other form of harassment, threat / intimidation of students and teachers, using illegal drugs and others. Much of what happening at the school level is actually shows the actual context of a larger society in action. It can bring a greater impact to the society either positive or negative. Undoubtedly in today's society not only social problems are in great concern but also unethical and immoral issues which involved educated individuals for instance bribery and breach of trust among workers or executives.

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All these clearly show that the paradigm of traditional education as 'schooling' is essentially ineffective because it is ultimately based on the intrinsic mistrust of the 'human personality' or 'human nature'. Human nature is a moral, spiritual or social nature with instincts ('social instincts') for effective adaptation to changing social conditions. (Future Schools for Humanity: Education as the Practice of Freedom for Growth through Learning - Holistic Education, n.d)

It is undeniable that many approaches are being taken by the Ministry of Education to move towards educational transformation including “Pelan Strategik Interim Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (2011-2020)” and “Kajian Semula Pendidikan – Dialog Nasional Pendidikan Negara - 2012” and with the latest outcome ‘Malaysia Educational Blueprint 2013-2025’ but not much being achieved from spiritual intelligence perspective.

The latest development in Malaysian educational system could be seen with the final report of ‘Malaysia Educational Blueprint 2013-2025’. There are two main aspirations that being outlined; firstly those for education system as a whole and secondly, those for individual students which will set the stage for the transformation of the Malaysian education system. For the second part, one of the six key attributes needed by every student to be globally competitive is ‘Ethics and Spirituality’. In which the education system will inculcate strong ethics and spirituality in every child to prepare them to rise to the challenges they will inevitably face in adult life, to employ sound judgement and principles during critical moments, and to have the courage to do

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what is right. The education system also seeks to nurture caring individuals who gainfully contribute to the betterment of the community and nation. (Malaysian Educational Blueprint 2012-2025)

The big question is how this attribute will be achieved and implemented? Hence this study will focus on exploring a spiritual intelligence components from the perspective of Imam Al Ghazzali in transforming our educational system and achieved our educational vision as being stated in our NEP.

Spiritual Intelligence in General

Spiritual Intelligence (SI) in general:

- Facilitates dialog between mind and body, between reason and emotion. (Selman V et al, 2005)
- The ability to use a multi-sensory approach to problem solving while learning to listen to inner voice. (Selman V et al, 2005)
- Intelligence by which we build spiritual capital (wealth, power and influence that we gain by acting from a deep sense of meaning, our deepest values, and sense of higher purpose through a life devoted to service) (Zohar. D, 2010)
- A set of mental capacities which contribute to the awareness, integration, and adaptive application of the nonmaterial and transcendent aspects of one's existence, leading to

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such outcomes as deep existential reflection, enhancement of meaning, recognition of a transcendent self, mastery of spiritual states. (King, 2008)

- Intelligence with which we access our deepest meanings, values, purposes, and highest motivations.” (Zohar & Marshall, 2004, p.3)

Spiritual Intelligence from the Perspective of Imam Al Ghazzali

Even though Al Ghazzali never used the term spiritual intelligence directly, but many aspects of his writing in Ihya Ulumuddin is related to spirituality and intelligence. Based on the content analysis done for Ihya Ulumuddin (Book 3) seven themes of SI were identified:

1. Meaning/ purpose of life
2. Consciousness
3. Transcendence
4. Spiritual resources
5. Self-determination
6. Reflection-soul purification
7. Coping with obstacles

Meaning/ purpose of life

An individual with high spiritual intelligence should have the ability to contemplate the reason for him/ her to be in this world and understand the connection of his/ her soul to the God the Almighty. As being said by God in Quran:

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“I did not create jinn and mankind except to worship me”

(Adh-Dhāriyāt, surah 51: verse 56)

The main purpose a mankind is being created is to worship God. When a man declares his faith, every single deed and action is done for the sake of God and to gain reward from Him. Anything that happen to a human being whether it is good or bad there is a reason for it to happen and there is good in everything (even in a bad situation). As God said in Quran:

“... For indeed, with hardship (will be) ease. Indeed, with hardship (will be) ease. So when you have finished (your duties) then stand up (for worship). And to your Lord direct (your) longing”

(Surah Insyirah, 94: verse 5 – 8)

Accepting oneself as a servant of God and worshipping Him is a sign of appreciation from humankind to God the Almighty. An individual with high spiritual intelligence will understand that this world is the seed ground for the next world (hereafter) and a station of guidance (Fazlul Karim, 1991, p. 3). Besides worshipping God, the purpose of a human being to be created is to be the vicegerent of God. As God said in Quran:

“And (mention, O Muhammad), when your Lord said to Angels, ‘Indeed I will make upon the earth a successive authority’”

(Al Baqarah, 2: verse 30)

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A successive authority is referring to mankind as the vicegerent of God who has the responsibility not just towards God but also towards other creations. Mankind is chosen as the vicegerent of God since the human soul got a unique attribute of knowing the truth in which other creations did not possess. This trust that God has given to mankind is called Divine knowledge and this is a basic and natural form of spiritual intelligence. Having a high spiritual intelligence will allow human being to receive *tawfiq*. According to online English Arabic Dictionary, *tawfiq* is a success or good fortune (that originally received from God). When man understands the purpose and the meaning why he/ she is created, and act accordance to the responsibility bestow upon him by God, he or she has a high tendency to do good. According to Al Ghazzali (Fazlul Karim, 1991, p.51-53) good conduct is half of a religion. God gives strength through good conduct and benevolence and the best of good conduct among human beings is Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Cultivating the element of meaning/ purpose in life in all the levels of education in Malaysia would able the students/ adolescents to achieve high realization of why they are being created by Allah The Almighty and will work towards practicing good conducts in their life and avoid any negative behaviors that could lead to social problems.

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Consciousness

An individual with high spiritual intelligence should have a greater level of consciousness in which he/ she know their real self and lives consciously with a clear mind and refined awareness. Zohar and Marshall clearly proved in their book; *Spiritual Intelligence, The Ultimate Intelligence* (2000), which according to Neuroscientist Rodolfo Llinas, consciousness is connected with the presence of 40 HZ oscillations in the human brain and described it as a spiritual state of 'high consciousness' within the realm of quantum physics. These frequencies are evidence of SI (intelligence of the soul).

According to Al Ghazzali (Fazlul Karim, 1991, p.3-7) knowledge of soul is the root of the knowledge of God. A person with high spiritual intelligence will have a high level of consciousness about his/ her own creation in which possess a high ability to understand and gain knowledge of a soul. When man has the knowledge of the soul, he can gain the knowledge of God and His attributes. This knowledge will lead to a meaningful worshipping (not merely a matter of body movement, i.e. prayers).

Al Ghazzali (ibid) outlined four basic aspects of soul; *qalb, ruh, nafs and aql*. Looking into the one of the definition, the *qalb* or heart play an important role as one of the spiritual entity to discover the ultimate reality (knowledge of God and spiritual world). According to the Sufi theory of the soul, the *qalb* which is the third stratum, is the threshold of the divine dimension of beings, it is essentially of a luminous nature, and the world which is disclosed by the activity of

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the *qalb* constitutes ontologically the middle domain between the world of pure light of God, and the world of material darkness under the dominion of Satan (Hassan Amer, n.d)

Ruh itself is a material within the heart which vibrates the whole body like the current electricity and runs through the veins of the body; called life. It has the power of five senses; touch, hear, sight, smell and taste. The other definition is it is an immaterial substance called a soul. Al Ghazzali defined 'ruh' as part of human body in the form of *lathifah* (abstract and cannot be seen by external eyes) which has the power to know and to absorb. (Fazlul Karim, 1991, p.4)

The third term used by Imam Al Ghazali is *nafs*. According to Al Ghazzali (p.5) *nafs* is a passion or lower self; greed, anger and other evil attributes. There are three types of *nafs* discussed by Al Ghazzali; *Nafs Ammarah* that "exhorts one to freely indulge in gratifying passions and instigates to do evil", *Nafs Lawammah* that is "the conscience that directs man towards right or wrong", and *Nafs Mutmainnah* that is "a self that reaches the ultimate peace and will assume calmness by removing all the evil attributes.

The fourth and the last term that being associated to soul is *aql*. According to Al Gazzali (Fazlul Karim, 1991, p.5) *aql* can be defined as *intellect or power to understand the secrets of different learning, which is called knowledge*. The *aql*/intellect is referred to approximately fifty

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times in the Noble Quran. Most of these verses are pertaining to the physical universe, which point to God's knowledge, will, wisdom, and compassion.

In order to gain a high level of spiritual intelligence, this basic knowledge of soul is very crucial as soul itself is a container of knowledge (ibid, p.14). A man soul with high SI is like a closed tent (ibid, p.32) because with high consciousness he will be able to control his mind as what source of thought entering his mind whether it is an angelic thought or devil thought (ibid, p.36 -37).

Having the knowledge of soul by understanding the concept of *qalb*, *ruh*, *nafs* and *aqal* able the students and adolescents to reach a high level of consciousness in understanding the knowledge of God. With this knowledge they able to control their mind and action that every single deeds are being watched by God and will avoid deeds that could harm themselves and others, indirectly building a better social environment and avoid involvement in negative social activities.

Transcendence

According to Le and Levenson (2005) self-transcendence is the *ability to move beyond self-centered consciousness, and to see things with a considerable measure of freedom from biological and social conditioning*. In this study, transcendence is being discussed from the spiritual perspective and being related to God-consciousness; how mankind is related to God. In

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this study transcendence is also considered as an ability that exist outside the ordinary consciousness, for example like holism, inter-connectedness, non-materialism and others (King & DeCicco, 2009).

As one of the important component in spiritual intelligence, transcendence ability is reflected in a person ability to gain Divine knowledge that consists of knowledge about God's being, attributes and actions. According to Al Ghazzali, for a soul (mankind) to gain more Divine knowledge, the soul must be free from things other than God (for example worldly things) (Fazlul Karim, 1991, 10). In further explaining the Divine knowledge, Al Ghazzali in 'The Alchemy of Happiness' (Field, 1910, p.13) stated that man attributes is the reflection of God attributes thus from the creation of man, he came to know the existence of God. A man with high spiritual intelligence aware that God is the Ruler of the universe, beyond space and time, quantity and quality (ibid, p.14) The man also understand how God works as a Ruler and delegate power to angelic forces and understand God providence (ibid). As God said in Quran:

“And when I have proportioned him and breathed into him of my (created) soul.....”

(Al Hijr 15:29)

The above verse clearly shows that human creation is from the sparkle of God in which God gives man a few potential or ability in accordance with God's natures not only for his own use but also for the use of other human beings and other beings (Langgulung, 1986, p.5, 92)

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God's nature given to mankind should be considered as a trust and a great responsibility (Langgulung, p.5) so any action made by human being should be related to God. As God said in Quran:

Say, "Indeed, my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allah,

Lord of the worlds"

(Al An'am: 162)

From the Islamic perspective, human attributes/ potentials are summarized base on the natures of Allah that are the 99 names of Allah known as *Al Asma Al Husna*. The ability to develop God's attributes (natures of Allah) within the self of a man will lead to high level of spiritual intelligence. For example one of Allah's name is *Al Quddus* that derived from the word *Quds* means pure and blessed. This name refers to God as who is free and perfect from any deficiency and holy in all aspects. To develop this nature within a mankind, God commands men to practice the five pillar of Islam; *syahada* is to purify one's intention and thought from *syirik* (shirk), to perform prayers after cleansed one-self and heart through ablution, *zakat* is given to cleanse once wealth from unlawful wealth, fasting to cleanse and detoxified one's body and finally performing hajj that shows during the pilgrimage no one is superior than one another. So to reach a high level of spiritual intelligence through the aspects of transcendence, mankind should strive to develop 99 God's nature within him/herself.

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The transcendence element involved both conscious and sub conscious or even at the higher level unconscious mind. But looking into the general practice among normal individuals including students and adolescents that should be guided by educators, at the basic level this element could be nurtured through understanding that as a human being, they are the reflection of God and His attributes, understand and learn the 99 attributes of God and practice them in their daily life. This is not just for the sake of this worldly life but more important towards basic understanding of non-material aspects (*perkara ghaib*) for instance understanding the 6 Pillars of *Iman*. This action will lead the students and adolescents to practice good deeds and avoid any involvement in activities that negatively contribute to their life.

Spiritual resources

According to Emmons (2000, p.63), one of the important aspects of spiritual intelligence is the ability of an individual to utilize spiritual resources to solve problems. Spiritual resources can be considered as ethics and values (from any sources such as book, text, video and human being) but in Islamic perspectives it is beyond these. Resources are considered as inputs needed to produce outputs. From the Islamic perspective of spiritual intelligence, resources are considered as inputs either external and internal factors within or surrounding a man.

Al Ghazzali in his text, *Ihya Ulumuddin* (Fazlul Karim, 1991, p.5) explained about external human body which are related to the five senses and these five senses are considered as armies of soul. For example how an individual can purify oneself? In Islam, a man should safeguard his five senses against unlawful things and see, hear and say good things like reciting Al

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Quran and understand the meaning of it and applied the contents of Al Quran in his daily life. Then he will be able to be in a state of high level of spiritual intelligence that is considered as an output. For a human being using just the five senses are insufficient, the sixth sense will imply as to how one's of spiritual intelligence will be different from others. This sixth sense is the intuition or can be said as *Ilham* in Islam; the internal army of soul (ibid, p.23).

A person with high spiritual intelligence should have beyond the normal sufficiency level of knowledge. According to Al Ghazzali an individual should possess two types of knowledge; intellect (natural and acquired) and religion knowledge. Natural knowledge is gain through *Ilham*. Acquired knowledge consists of worldly knowledge and next worldly knowledge (ibid, 19-26). Whatever the types of knowledge, in Islam the main two resources are Quran and *As-Sunnah* (words and actions of Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him), Students and adolescents who possess a high level of spiritual intelligence will live his/ her life in accordance with Al Quran and *As-Sunnah* because he/she understand the content of Al Quran and the reason to practice the *As-Sunnah* and move towards a positive way of life as being encouraged in Islam.

Self-determination

The ultimate concern of a human being as a servant and vicegerent of God is determined to achieve the best in the eyes of God not just physically but the most importantly through spirituality. According to Tillich (1963) in Emmons (2000, p.4) religion is *a state of being grasped by an ultimate concern, a concern which qualifies all other concerns as preliminary*

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and which itself contains the answer to the question of the meaning of our life. Individual should have a high determination which involved cognitive personality ability. He/she is motivated to achieve the ultimate goal in gaining the Divine knowledge.

Determination can be in the form of will. According to Al Ghazzali (Fazlul Karim, 1991, p.8), will is one of the important attributes for men's soul to become fit to approach God and honored. When a man can understand by his intellect the result of any action and know what will bring good, will grow in his mind will to obtain that good and to do that action (ibid, p.9). A person with high spiritual intelligence will be able to keep himself under control and have a high will power to control passion, anger and pride (ibid, p.56). He/ she also will have high determination to gain Divine knowledge that is the ultimate knowledge. High spiritual intelligence person will able to make a choice in his or her life that can bring benefit to them and others in their lives. As stated in Quran:

And say, "The truth is from your Lord, so whoever wills, let him believe, and whoever wills, let him disbelieve. Indeed, We have prepared for the wrongdoers a fire whose walls will surround them. And if they call for relief, they will be relieved with water like murky oil, which scalds (their) faces. Wretched is the drink, and evil is the resting place"

(Al-Kahf, 18:29)

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Students and adolescents have the freedom to make choices; the freedom to choose his or her own behavior, choice to be a believer or not. As God said in the above verse, the wrong choice will be punished and obviously the good choice will be rewarded (worldly reward and hereafter) As worshipping Allah is the highest level of *fitrah* (nature) development, it is a form of self-actualization and it will be done by individuals who have high determination (will to achieve ultimate concern) (ibid, p.59).

Reflection-soul purification

For a person to have a high spiritual intelligence, he or she will reflect upon his/ her own self and their deepest motivation to search for meaning in life (Zohar & Marshall, 2000, p. 263). In Islam, reflecting one-self means to think deeply and systematically or *tafakkur* in Arabic language. According to Fethullah Gulen (2007) reflection is the light in the heart that allows a believer to differentiate what is good and evil, beneficial and harmful. It is the golden key to reach God. Reflecting one-self and reaching God the Almighty need the person to purify his/ her soul.

First and foremost a believer should surrender the self to God in the sense that he/ she has the self-acceptance, self-compassion, inner-wholeness and egolessness (Amram, 2007, p.4). According to Al Ghazzali (Fazlul Karim, 1991, p.11) the soul which pure is the soul that is firm in religion, purest in faith, most kind in a treatment to others. Man need to be prepared to remove any impurities to gain brightness of soul and the brightness of soul can be gained through the

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remembrance of God (*zikr*) (ibid, p.14, 26). The objective of purifying the soul is to gain the light of faith; the light of Divine knowledge (ibid, p.8). By remembering God [*zikr, fikr (thought)* and pious actions], an individual is able to tame the devil and control him/herself from worldly passions and temptations (ibid, p.34, 43, 197).

Soul purification and reflection is not just achieved through *zikr* and *fikr* but also through prayer (not just merely body movement but as well pray with the heart by understanding what is being said in the prayer). Students and adolescents with high spiritual intelligence able to reflect upon him/ herself and purified his/ her own soul and will lead to a successful life. As God said in Quran (Al-A'la, 87: 14):

“Indeed, he will prosper who purifies himself”

Coping with obstacles

Ability to cope with obstacles involves cognitive ability. Coping is a process in which an individual tries to control or manage his/her mental pressure (Atkinson et. al., 2003 in Nagas et.al., 2009). Coping not just involved rational thinking but emotional and spiritual thinking, not the act of the human body and mind but the internal-self as well. Religious/ spiritual coping is *a search for significance in times of stress in ways related to the sacred* (Pargament 1997 in Pendleton, Kristine, Pargament & Nasr, 2002). According to Al Ghazzali, there are many obstacles in gaining Divine knowledge for example impurities of sin and worldly attention.

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(Fazlul Karim, 1991, p.14-16). Purifying one's soul will able an individual to cleanse the soul from sin and to empty the soul from worldly passion (ahead of God). With a clear mind and soul coping with obstacles/ problems/ crisis will be easy.

In Al Ghazzali's *Ihya Ulumuddin* (Fazlul Karim, 1991, p.39-42) outlined many obstacles/ barriers that should be controlled and possibly be avoided such as anger, sexual passion, greed, hatred and love for fine things. Ability to cope is not just a matter related to one own self but also involving with other human beings, other beings, life events and the environment. Religious/ spiritual coping is unique from standard measures of secular coping. When religion is entered into the coping equation, it increases the ability to predict outcomes beyond the effects of secular coping (Pargament 1997 in Pendleton, et. al., 2002). This should be practice by students and adolescents which significantly assist them in avoiding negative deeds as they able to be rational at the time of stress and move towards building a better nation.

Conclusion

These seven components of spiritual intelligence are essential to be nurtured in the life of our students and adolescents. At every stage of educational levels, especially at the lower lever (school) academicians and educators play an important role in assisting them. Students, adolescents, educators, parents and government, together should hand in hand move towards transforming our educational system in accordance to our NEP through cultivating spiritual intelligence in achieving human excellence.

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