

A SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE MODEL IN NATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION: AN ISLAMIC PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract. One of the underlying principles of the Malaysia National Philosophy of Education (NPE) is to produce well-balanced human capital in terms of physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual aspects. However, of all human intelligences, the concept of spiritual intelligence is not widely discussed especially in the educational context. In this diverse world of complex cultural and religious composition, the spiritual elements in NPE are being separated and narrowed down to religious and moral studies. In the wake of all issues regarding morality and ethics pertaining to the Malaysian educational system, the aspect of spiritual intelligence cannot be further neglected. The challenge for Muslims, especially in the era of Industrial Revolution 4.0, is to have further interpretation from a new fresh outlook within the Islamic spiritual intelligence perspective. Thus, the study proposes an Integrated Islamic Spiritual Intelligence model in accordance to the Malaysia National Philosophy of Education with the aim to provide an integrated view on Islamic Spiritual Intelligence (ISI). It is expected that this model becomes a foundation for educators to complement teaching principles and beliefs, subsequently reflecting this in teaching enrichment. In the long run, this integration seeks to produce a more holistic Muslim generation, who not only aims for worldly success, rather ultimate success in the Hereafter.

Introduction

Education is reflected to be an essential and foremost important route in developing individuals to be the key performers in achieving Malaysia's aspirations. The most important route in developing human capital for the nation's aspiration is via education. The Malaysia National Education Philosophy (NEP) serves as a platform for guidance in regards to all activities and processes pertaining to the Malaysian educational system. It upholds the values, beliefs and principles of the Malaysian educational framework.

The problem to be addressed in this research is that the Malaysia NEP does not include the spiritual element in its main principles although it has been implemented over the course of the past 20 years. Its implementation attempted to stabilize the gap between races, in accordance to the New Economy Policy. During the post-independence period, it has even been revamped and rebranded with various names, however the primary objective is the same which is to produce balanced human capital in terms of intellectual, emotional, physical and spiritual for the benefits of the nation.

The main basis of NEP is the notion of submission to God and religion. It constitutes the perspective that NEP should be able to produce responsible individuals which are inculcated with good ethics and moral values. However, over the course of 20 years since NEP was implemented, human capital achievement has only emphasized intellectual capability. The spiritual elements of the individual were being viewed merely within the scope of religious and moral studies. This has resulted into many issues regarding moral and ethics in the Malaysian educational system.

In Islamic perspective, the elements of spiritual intelligence is viewed holistically in education in order to create well-balanced human capital for the benefit of the nation. The gap of spiritual elements is widely discussed, as a majority of schools and educational institutions in Malaysia focus more on the intellectual element and partly the emotional element. As a result, the spiritual element is being narrowed down to only religious and moral studies.

Islamic scholars such as Hasan Langgulung (1986), Naquib Al-Attas (1999) and Sidek Baba (2004), argued that there should not be any separation between spiritual elements and all other elements in holistic education. This is further supported by Covey (2004), who stated that spiritual intelligence should be the core element in guiding other elements in education (Covey 2004). Therefore, this study is initiated to develop an integrated Islamic spiritual intelligence framework in accordance to The Malaysia NEP.

Literature on Spiritual Intelligence

Spiritual Intelligence has well been defined by many researchers (Shamsiah Bahnu Hanefar et al., 2015; Zohar, 2010; King and Decicco, 2009; Emmons, 2000; Amram and Dryer, 2008) in noble endeavours of giving light to the intelligence widely disregarded. The fundamental questions such as how we are created, who created us, where we are heading in this life are vastly sought by human beings. All these questions are answered through one's intelligence known as spiritual intelligence (Shamsiah Bahnu Hanefar et al., 2015). The term spiritual intelligence came to the fore in the past decade, as Zohar and Marshall (2000) proposed the definition of spiritual intelligence as “Intelligence with which we access our deepest meanings, values, purposes, and highest motivations.” Later through his study, Zohar (2010) described the spiritual intelligence as “the influence obtained through deep sense of meaning, deepest values and sense of higher purpose through life devotion”.

King and Decicco (2009) constructed four main elements of spiritual intelligence, namely: (1) critical existential thinking, (2) personal meaning production, (3) transcendental awareness, and (4) conscious state expansion. The model showed the level of acceptance of individual to fit and justify the spiritual intelligence. This leads to the individual's ability to reframe, re-contextualize their thinking towards creating a sense of meaning in life for greater purpose and transcendence awareness.

Emmons (2000) identified 4 domains of spiritual intelligence: (1) the capacity for transcendence, (2) the ability to enter into a heightened spiritual state of consciousness, (3) the ability to invest everyday activities, events, and relationships with a sense of the sacred and (4) the ability to employ spiritual resources to solve problems in living.

Amram and Dryer (2008) defined spiritual intelligence as “the ability to apply and embody spiritual resources and qualities to enrich daily functioning and wellbeing”. Seven major themes emerged which are universal across diverse traditions and cultures: consciousness, grace, meaning, transcendence, truth, peaceful surrender to self and inner directedness.

There are views that everyone possesses spiritual intelligence, however not all have religious consciousness (Troycross, 1998). This leads to the conclusion that one can have high SQ but not necessarily perform religious practices. As a result, the spiritual concept cannot be related with religion concept at all. Pete and Bondi (1992) described the background of cultural diversity is related with religion and spiritual concept. The question is to what extent the complexity of spiritual intelligence can be generalized over the diverse concept of religion and spiritual concept.

This core spiritual intelligence however does not represent the Islamic perspective in general. This view was argued by Elmi (2007), Zainab et al. (2012) and Zainab et al. (2014), which mentioned that there is a relationship between religious knowledge and religious activities among the elderly. In addition, Elmi and Zainab (2013) discovered that knowledge of the elderly is one of indicator that can determine a person's spiritual intelligence. In fact, Elmi (2013) concluded his study by defining Islamic spiritual intelligence as the inner human strength that comes from the soul, the heart, the feeling, deep faith, perseverance practice based on the guidance of Allah and good morality.

The lack of clear definition of spiritual intelligence leads to much critique on how the angle should be viewed across the complexity of diverse religion concepts. For example, the way Muslims view spiritual concepts are different compared to Christians, and vice versa. This will lead to different interpretations of spiritual intelligence across different spiritual concepts.

Thus, further study of spiritual intelligence domain is needed to ensure the importance is well refined. This study discusses the domain of spiritual intelligence according to Islamic perspective.

Islamic Spiritual Intelligence

The term Islamic Spiritual Intelligence is quite new in academia. According to Elmi (2015), the term was derived from Qur'an and Sunnah. He developed 7 domains of Islamic spiritual intelligences namely al-ruh, al-qalb, al-nafs, al-aql, faith, worship and morality. The study was conducted based on primary data of interviews and a review of secondary literature on scientific research data, journal articles, documents related to the domain of spiritual intelligence in Islam. The research concluded 7 domains of spiritual intelligence are important to be practiced by Muslims life as a guidance towards worshipping our Creator, Allah.

Meanwhile, Shamsiah Bahnu Hanefar (2015) developed a framework evaluating spiritual intelligence in the context of education. The study identified the spiritual intelligence context domain from important Islamic educational texts : Ihya Ulumuddin (Book 3) by Imam al-Ghazali and *Manusia dan Pendidikan* by Hasan Langgulung. Based on the content analysis conducted, seven elements of spiritual intelligence were identified towards the development of the Spiritual Intelligence Model for Human Excellence (SIMHE).

Zanariah (2015) developed a framework evaluating Islamic Spiritual Intelligence (ISI) quotient in regards to the concept of Islamic leader's characteristics or nature. The developed a four-way model that included the characteristic of Siddiq (truthfulness), Amanah (responsible), Tabligh (deliver), and Fatanah (Wisdom) to shape the Islamic spiritual intelligence. As a result, Siddiq, Tabligh and Fatanah are acceptable constructs to measure the ISI. This study showed that Islamic spiritual intelligence can lead us to more appreciate the greatness of Allah and help us to fulfill our role as the khalifah (vicegerent of Allah).

From previous research, much has been done to examine the level of Islamic Spiritual Intelligence (ISI) from different contexts, however there are limited studies in the perspective of education in accordance to the National Education Philosophy (NEP). The concept of spiritual intelligence in NEP needs to be defined in accordingly to Islamic perspective, rather than a broad generic framework of spiritual religious concept. Thus the study aims to take a further on Islamic Spiritual Intelligence, with the aim to fill the gap as the core spiritual intelligence however does not represent the Islamic perspective in general.

Al-Zarnūjī's Learning Principles: Realising Islamic Spiritual Intelligence

In realization of Islamic spiritual intelligence in the NEP, this study proposes that the execution of education should inculcate values enlightened by Al-Zarnūjī in his book, *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim*. Al-Zarnūjī's *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim* provides valuable insights into the essential principles of teaching and learning, which could still be useful for both students and teachers and, for that matter, Islamic educational institutions. Scholars have long recognized the great contribution of *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim*, which was written in the 13th century during the reign of the last Abbasid Caliph (Mu'izzuddin, 2014). In al-Zarnūjī's work, the full title is *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim Tariq al-Ta'allum* (guidelines for students in the art of learning), in which he outlined how students and teachers can create a conducive educational atmosphere that illuminates positive characters and reflects values (Hitti, 1948). The text has generally been regarded as a monumental work among Islamic intellectuals, as well as among Western scholars. Its content has been influential, especially in the Indonesian context, where it is intensively studied and practically applied in almost all Islamic educational institutions, particularly in the pesantren—traditional Salafi Islamic boarding schools (Nata, 2000).

Ta'lim al-Muta'allim sets itself apart from other Islamic intellectual sources through its unique theories. The series opens with the principles of the pursuit of knowledge and imparts details of ethical foundations for the teaching–learning process based on religious conservatism (Huda & Kartanegara, 2015). Thus, the content of this work focuses on the inculcation of good morality within students in Islamic educational context. Therefore, it becomes a fundamental reading for every student in pesantren or madrasah (school), during their first year, prior to commencing to the study of other subjects. There are 13 chapters in *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim*, including (a) the nature and merits of knowledge and its systematic comprehension; (b) the intention of studying; (c) the choices of the knowledge types, the teacher, the colleagues and on one's permanent affiliation; (d) the respect toward knowledge and its possessor; (e) the importance of hard work, perseverance, and vigor; (f) the commencement of lessons; (g) the emphasis of tawakkal (trust in God) concept; (h) the time for knowledge acquisition; (i) the value compassion and advice (to others); (j) the achievable benefits of time and chance; (k) the emphasis of Godliness or divine involvement during the time of learning; (l) the process of memorization and what makes (one) forgetful; and (m) elements that affluence and benefit one's livelihood; the agents of life's longevity and its diminishment (al-Zarnūjī, 2008).

Linking SQ with IQ & EQ in the IISI Model

Thus, based on the discussion above, the study proposes the model in Figure 1 as an ideal Integrated Islamic Spiritual Intelligence (IISI) which can greatly be tailored into the model of NEP to give a further dimension of how Islamic spiritual intelligence should be viewed as integrated in holistic education environment.

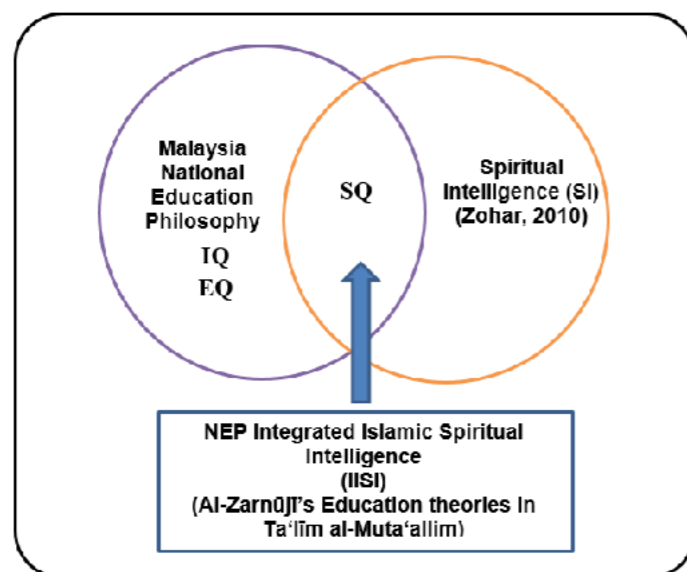


Figure 1: NEP Integrated Islamic Spiritual Intelligence Model (IISI)

Conclusion

This article has examined the importance of revising the NEP in light of considering the spiritual intelligence within its implementation. Hence, the IISI model is proposed to become reference towards realizing this. It is further expected that this model becomes a foundation for educators to complement teaching principles and beliefs, subsequently reflecting this in teaching enrichment. Indeed, the impact expected by the model proposed in terms of how Spiritual Intelligence should be reviewed by stakeholders. In the long run, this integration seeks to produce a more holistic Muslim generation, who not only aims for worldly success, rather ultimate success in the Hereafter.

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