

## Selected Views on Human Nature and their Implications on Education

**Mohd Abbas Abdul Razak**

*Department of Fundamental & Inter-Disciplinary Studies, KIRKHS, IIUM  
e-mail: [maarji@iium.edu.my](mailto:maarji@iium.edu.my)*

**Sayed Sikandar Shah Haneef**

*Department of Fiqh and Usul Fiqh, KIRKHS, IIUM*

**Maziah Bte Mustapha**

*Department of Usul al-Din & Comparative Religion, KIRKHS, IIUM*

### Abstract

Even though the evolution of time and scientific knowledge have provided humanity with the latest understanding on the concept of man, nevertheless man is too complicated to be comprehended in his entirety through any single study carried out on him. As for this reason, the study on man has become perennial in nature. Human nature as a topic more popularly discussed in psychology has caught the attention of many concerned parties from other fields of research. Perhaps some of the most interested people in the study of man will be theologians, philosophers, sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists, biologists, etc. It is highly improbable for parents, psychologists, counselors and teachers to render their best help and services to their subjects without having the proper understanding on the concept of man. Due to this fact, this qualitative study was conducted to analyze some selected views on human nature. Ideas provided by psychoanalysis, radical behaviorism, humanistic and Islamic psychologies were analyzed. Upon analyzing the different concepts on human nature, the researchers examined the implications and possible outcomes when such concepts are applied in the field of education. The researchers employed the textual-analysis method in interpreting the pertinent data related to this study.

**Keywords:** Psychoanalysis, Radical Behaviorism, Humanistic Psychology, Islamic Psychology, Education

## **A. Introduction**

Man with his God given power of speech and creative intelligence dominates life on this planet. Interestingly, man is the only creation who has the potential to explore and investigate the marvels of God's creations in the universe as well as in the flora and fauna. This privileged position of man makes him a center of investigation in many varied fields of study. Despite having the capacity to explore stars that are millions of miles away from his own planet and other living organism and creations, man is yet unable to understand comprehensively of his own nature. His failure to fully understand his nature has caused some serious problems to his social and psychological well-being. Not knowing who he is, his destiny and purpose of life have pushed man into endless wars and other destructive behaviour that will eventually put an end to his existence on this planet (Nasr, 1975). In realizing what is happening to human lives in today's world, this study is a sincere attempt to analyze some selected views on human nature and to scrutinize as to the sort of individuals that can be produced when such views are applied in the field of education. For this purpose the researchers have chosen three concepts of human nature from Western mainstream psychology; namely psychoanalysis, radical behaviorism and humanistic psychology and compare them with ideas on man provided by Islamic psychology. Besides analyzing concepts of human nature and their impact on education, this study will put forward some recommendations to learning institutions on how to produce students with a truly integrated personality.

## **B. Literature Review**

The book written by the prominent Jordanian scholar, Abdullah (1982), entitled '*Educational Theory: A Qur'anic Outlook*' is a book that systematically discusses the principles of education found in the Holy Qur'an. Very exclusively in chapter two, the author discusses the concept of human nature from the Islamic point of view. His sound criticism raised against the Western schools of psychology and also on the Christian concept of man are interesting and well backed up with references derived from the Qur'an and Hadith (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad pbuh) which states that man is born with the *fiḷrah* (in the primordial nature). He also suggests that man's *fiḷrah* needs to be nurtured and developed with the help of a healthy and conducive environment alongside with a good system of education.

Moreover, Abdullah (1982) appeals to all educators and educational institutions to have a profound and true knowledge on the concept of human nature applied in education and educational process at all levels. He also believes that wrong and incomprehensive concepts of human nature applied in education can be a catastrophe or fiasco in education that can give way to many undesirable results achieved through education; like mental confusion and loss of direction in life, low self-esteem, individualistic and egocentric lifestyle in man, etc. Abdullah metaphorically explains that the job of an educator is that of a blacksmith or carpenter who needs to know the material with which he is working on in order to produce a good masterpiece. Likewise an educator in his capacity needs to equip himself with the correct perspective on human nature. With such knowledge, he or she would be able to produce students who are physically, emotionally, intellectually, psychologically and spiritually balanced. All

these qualities achieve through the process of education can give rise to an integrated personality.

Besides the above, the works and contributions made by philosopher Syed Mohammed Naquib Al-Attas on human nature are worth mentioning here. Although many of his ideas pertaining to the study of man are written on the philosophical and mystical levels, without fail they elucidate the psychological, ontological and many other dimensions of human nature (Al-Attas, 1978, 1989, 1990, 1991). Very specifically in his much celebrated literature '*Islam and Secularism*' (Al-Attas, 1978) and '*The Concept of Education in Islam*' (Al-Attas, 1991), Al-Attas discusses the concept of human nature in Islam and its close relationship and positive impact on education. In these books, he also critically analyses the historical events in Western civilization that led the West to construct a secularized concept on man and education. After identifying the misconceptions and confused ideas on man that have been applied in education in the West and in some Muslim countries which were former colonies of the West, Al-Attas advocates the call for the 'dewesternization' of contemporary knowledge and education by Islamizing them. According to him, Islamization of knowledge means: "... the deliverance of knowledge from its interpretations based on secular ideology; and from meanings and expressions of the secular (Al-Attas, 1991). He further reiterated that the process of Islamization of knowledge should eliminate all foreign terms and terminologies which are alien to Islam. In Al-Attas' view, true knowledge should help to actualize what is latent in the human *fi'rah* (primordial nature) which is embedded in the human soul (Al-Attas, 1978). Turning to the question on human nature, Al-Attas (1978) believes that man has a dual nature; soul and body. The physical body in man functions in a way pretty much similar like all that in the animal kingdom, while the human soul is the 'divine spark' of God in man. The presence of soul in man makes him cherish many of God's attributes, though he is not definitely God. Supplementary to the information on human nature, Al-Attas (1990) very exclusively in '*The Nature of The Man and The Psychology of the Human Soul*' elucidates the existence of the human soul and its varied manifestation and functions in the human body that forms an integral part of human nature in Islam.

The book written by Omar Muhammad Al-Toumi Al-Syaibany (1991), '*Falsafah Pendidikan Islam*' (*Falsafat al-Tarbiyah al- IslÉmiyyah*/Philosophy of Islamic Education) is an in-depth study on man and his nature or rather on his state of humanness related to the philosophy of education. In chapter three of his book, Al-Syaibany (1991) as a scholar who specializes in the field of philosophy of education ventures through many avenues in the study of man to enlighten his readers on the many positive sides of human nature and education. It is noteworthy to mention that Al-Syaibany (1991) in his book provides a thorough and clear understanding of the ideal and true Islamic philosophy of education. In addition to this, he also elaborates at length concerning the Islamic concept on the belief of God, as well as the God-man relationship, theories of education according to Islamic thinkers, the Islamic ideal society that caters for education, the role of education in inculcating moral values, the purpose and aims of Islamic education, the curriculum and methodologies applied in teaching Islamic education. Although much of what Al-Syaibany (1991) has written is on a philosophical level, it can also be viewed and interpreted from the psychological point of view on man, as psychology is very much related to philosophy.

Furthermore, the correlation between human nature and education has also drawn the attention of Hasan Langgulung (1934-2008), a scholar and psychologist to put forward his understanding and criticism of the Western views on human nature. As a step towards 'Islamization of psychology', Langgulung (1989) very particularly in his papers '*The Ummatic Paradigm of Psychology*' and '*Paradigm Shift: The Landmark of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Education*' (Langgulung, 1995) offers Islamic psychology as a solution to the many contradictory views conceptualized by Western psychologists pertaining to the subject on human nature. He criticizes that the Western schools of psychology, particularly Psychoanalysis, Radical Behaviorism and Humanistic psychology, have been influenced by their materialistic, atheistic and secularist ideas in formulating their concepts on human nature. The dominance of these three major schools of psychology in the West with their fragmented and partial views on human nature has not led the Western society to a better understanding on the homo sapiens (Langgulung, 1995).

As an alternative to Western psychological view points on human nature, Langgulung (1991) advocates the Islamic ideas on human nature present in Islamic psychology. Compared to Western psychology, Islamic psychology restores or fosters the spiritual element *al-RĒĪ* (the human soul) in understanding the true concept of human nature. To him, the spiritual dimension of man should be the first and foremost aspect in understanding the true concept of human nature. Besides his criticism towards Western schools of psychology, his advocacy and promotion of Islamic psychology which is based on the most comprehensive concept of human nature is a message found in almost all of his writings.

### **C. What Education is All About?**

From a Western perspective, knowledge and education are meant for the expansion of one's horizon of thinking. The act of educating or teaching is filling the mind of the learner with varied subject-matters. Some say the act of educating is preparing the child/learner to face his or her future challenges. To the behaviorists, education means conditioning or teaching the child on how to respond to the challenges that come from the external world (the environment). Moreover, radical behaviorists explain learning only involves the human mind and the environment. Ever since, the time of Renaissance the source of knowledge is only limited to the human mind, environment, all that can be perceived by the human sense perceptions and scientific exploration and investigation. Education should refer to things that are tangible. As such, revelation is not considered as a source of knowledge. Simply put, education is only focused on the development of the human mind and not on the human soul. Ancient Western philosophers like Plato believed that the purpose of education is to produce a good citizen. In modern times, education is seen as a passport to having a good life and success in this world; riches and fame in the society. In the West, people believe that education should cater for the human physical, emotional, psychological, social and intellectual developments. In the mainstream educational system, spiritual development is not given its due consideration. To the masses in the West, religion and spirituality are things left to the family and religious institutions to deal with. In most instances, religion and spirituality are considered as a private matter and never to be the responsibility of the government or state. With the dawn of the Renaissance and the era of Enlightenment in the West, it is deemed unpopular and

unprofessional to talk about education in relation to religion. As such, education is not seen as an act of in recognition of God's greatness or an effort of awakening God consciousness in man and as a preparation for the hereafter (Hashim, 1996).

Conversely, from the Islamic perspective, education is seen in a broader perspective. Education is viewed holistically, taking into account of its philosophy, objective, the ideal developments it should cater for and its ultimate purpose. There exists a wealth of information in the Qur'an and *Sunnah* with regard to the themes on man and education. Education in the Arabic language refers to *tarbiyah*, *ta'dÉb*, *taÑIÉm*, etc. The first revelation (Al-Qur'an 96:1-5) that was sent to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) emphasized on reading, teaching and use of the pen. In other places of the Qur'an one would also find the mention of the book, tablet, learning, thinking and contemplation that relate directly or indirectly to the tools and process of education. Supplementary to the Qur'anic emphasis, there exist numerous *ÁadÉth* that give glad tidings of a great reward and honour that await Muslims who endeavor to learn all that is valuable for the betterment of this life and for the hereafter. In Islam, the act of seeking knowledge is a form of *'ibÉdab* (worship). A philosophical understanding of the Qur'an explains that reading or learning is just not from the revealed Book of Allah (the Qur'anic text alone) but also from the 'Open Book' of Allah that is the universe. As such, besides the Qur'an, Muslims have been commanded to learn from the signs and wonders of what Allah has created in the heavens and earth (flora and fauna), which explain His Might, Majesty and Greatness (Al-Attas, 1978, Nasr, 1975).

The Islamic philosophy of education emphasizes on the total development of an individual; body, mind and spirit. In line with this principle, parents and teachers should provide education that caters for an individual's intellectual, physical, moral, social, emotional, psychological, personality and spiritual developments. Muslims believe that a mere intellectual development most aptly can cause an imbalance in the personality of an individual. Parents and educators should provide students with a holistic concept of education without neglecting any one of the aforementioned developments. The ideal Muslim education should aim at the transfer of knowledge, skills, values, culture, heritage, language, beliefs, etc. from one generation of people to the other. A well educated person in Islam should enjoy a good relationship with Allah, with his Self, with his fellow human-beings and the environment (flora and fauna).

What is expected of an individual at the end of his educational endeavors from a Western perspective is the formation of a good citizen, while in the Islamic perspective it is the birth of a good individual or good man, popular understanding of this concept refers to *al-InsÉn al-ØÉlíÍ* (good man) or *al-insÉn al-kÉmil* (perfect man). Muslim scholars are of the opinion that what is embedded to the concept of *insÉn al- ØÉlíÍ* is the concept of man being the *khalÉfab* of Allah (the vicegerent of God). Man's position as the good *khalÉfab* of Allah not only refers to man being a good servant to God, Who is his Lord and Cherisher of the universe, and by bowing down to His Will and recognizing His Supremacy, but also as one who fulfills the *AmÉnab* (Trust) given to him. As the recipient of Allah's Trust, man is duty bound in making this world a better place for him and for others. In order for the *khalÉfab* of Allah to effectively carryout his appointed duties, he needs knowledge and education. While Western philosophy of education very much emphasizes in the creation of a good citizen who limits his love and loyalty to the boundaries of his own country, the Islamic outlook on education

stresses on the birth of a universal man who is not only having a loving, caring and sharing attitude towards others and nature, but also works for peace and harmony on the planet. For such a good individual, his philosophy of life will not be an ego-centric one. He does not say that “My home is my world”, but rather says that “The world is my home” (Abdullah, 1982).

All the aforesaid lofty ideas and ideals on education have somehow been marginalized in our present condition due to the effect of colonization in the past and globalization at the present. In addition to that, our mechanical lifestyle in the modern world does not allow the opportunity for us to pause and view things critically. Driven by market forces, at present education all over the world, regardless in the East or West, is mainly seen as a passport for success that guarantees good income and other material gains. As such, education during this era of information technology has more or less become a commodity, rather than anything that deals with values. Since values do not get the centre stage in modern educational settings, the world is experiencing an erosion of values. Modern education with its concept on commodification of education is somehow failing in its effort to bring out the good part of man that is innate and latent. As a consequence of this, the world suffers from all sorts of mischief and corruption done by man; white-collar criminals, war fought for unjust reasons, fraudulent banking system, pollution of all kinds caused on land and in the ocean, drug abuse, juvenile delinquency, and a whole lot of other social problems. To remedy this chaotic situation, the educational system all over the world should give due consideration on the creation of a good individual before an intelligent man can be created. Knowledge and education sought for material gain, good life and social status though not contrary to Islamic teachings should not be placed high above the paramount aim of the creation of a good man, righteous servant and the *khalîfah* of God (Abu Sulayman, 1997, Ismail & Amin, 2012).

#### **D. Psychoanalysis**

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) the founding father of psychoanalysis has given an ugly and distorted image of man. According to him, man is an intellectual animal who is doomed to destruction. According to him, man is no more than an animal enslaved to his sexual impulses. He further thought that man being controlled by his libidinal impulses is therefore un-socialized and irrational in his behaviour. Since man is shackled to his sexual impulses, he is deprived of his freedom of choice (Freud, 1948). As such, man’s behavior is determined by the warring parties of his psyche, namely the [id], ego and superego. Freud further explained in his theory of personality that man as a living creature undergoes endless tension, stress, conflict, crisis, dilemma, chaos and all sorts of other psychopathological illness due to the turmoil caused by the unconscious of the human psyche (Rafi-ud-din, 1990, Ismail & Amin, 2012).

In Freud’s opinion, there exist two types of instincts in man. One is the life instinct (Eros) and the other is the death instinct (Thanatos). The life instinct represents all that is essential for man’s survival on earth, like hunger, thirst and sex. This instinct functions by using a form of energy called libido. The term libido basically means sexual energy but later used extensively by Freud to refer to all life instincts. On the other hand, the death instinct according to him is related to aggression and destruction.

Most psychologists agree that the death instinct is something which Freud did not fully explain (George & Cristiani, 1990).

In addition to that, the Freudian theory of personality development reveals the fact that the inner self of man is more dominant than his social environment. According to Freud, man's personality development is pretty much attached to his childhood experiences known as the 'psychosexual development'. By over-emphasizing the role of the id, ego and superego of the human psyche, Freud over-looked the significant impact of the environment, peer group and the society on the personality development of man. Freud has also given the understanding for one who analyses his ideas on human nature that each and every individual person is devoid of the freedom to choose his or her own destiny in life rather than to be submissive to the psychosexual development in life (Corey, 1986). One among the many ideas that influenced Freud to stigmatize man as an intellectual beast is the Darwinian theory of evolution. Having read extensively on Darwin's (1809-1882) concept on the human evolution Freud came to the conclusion that man as a materialistic being is overwhelmingly occupied with his material needs, the history of mankind goes back to Adam is not real and the animal instinct in man is something that he has inherited from his forefathers who belonged to the ape family (Hollitscher, 1946; Qutb, 1985, Ismail & Amin, 2012).

Besides the Darwinian theory of evolution, Freud in a way was also influenced by the philosophical ideas of the German philosopher, Nietzsche (1844-1900). By going back to history, one will come to realize that it was Nietzsche who spoke about the development of the human ego long before Freud articulated his idea. Hence, there is a great possibility that Freud who came much later than Nietzsche might have taken considerable interest in the concept of 'ego philosophy'. Freud as a great admirer of Nietzsche, must have accommodated the latter's ideas into the theory of personality he was developing. Like Nietzsche, Freud too over-emphasized the pivotal role played by the ego in the human psyche which mediates between the id, superego and the external world (Jacobs, 1991).

In a way, Freud was also influenced by ideas of Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832) who advocated the philosophy of utilitarianism which is based on the hedonistic concept of life. The principle of hedonism like epicureanism provides the explanation that man by his nature loves pleasure and happiness, and at the same time would by all means like to avoid pain and suffering in his life. Bentham's ideas can be clearly seen in the nature and characteristics of the id impulses explained by Freud in his theory of personality development. The id driven by the pleasure principle is always blind, irrational and demands instant gratification without taking into account of the moral and social environment (Singh, 1985).

### **E. Radical Behaviorism**

A thorough examination of the behaviorists' concept of human nature highlights the fact that they have been immensely influenced by John Locke's (1632-1704) *tabula rasa* theory. With this theory as their foundation the radical behaviorists built the edifice of their concept on human nature. Similar to Locke the behaviorists believed that man is neither intrinsically good nor bad. By taking this neutral position on the concept of man, they believed that all human behaviour either good or bad is learned by man from

the social environment in which he lives. By putting great emphasis on the social environment, they contradicted the ideas given by Freud which explained that all of man's behaviour is related to the psychic activities that go on in the human psyche. In their views on human nature, particularly on man's actions, they are against the idea that man is solely driven by his internal motivations, i.e. instincts, needs drive and trait. The behaviorists also rejected strongly the division of the human psyche into three mental construct; mainly the conscious, preconscious and unconscious (Watson, 1928, 1970, Othman,2014)).

Based on the 'learning theory' that explained all human actions are learned, the behaviorists gave an over simplified view of human nature by just explaining that man's actions are nothing more than the way he responds to the stimuli that come from the environment. As such, they do not speak about human actions in relation to the innate knowledge and hidden potentials that lay within the human psyche. Also, they negate the idea that explains all human actions are a form of expression of the inner psychic state of man that strives for self-actualization. A perusal of radical behaviorists' concept of human nature will provide one with the view that they have given to the world a mechanistic view on man. Furthermore, by being scientific in their study on man, they have taken man to the laboratories for analysis. More aggressively, they have generalized research conducted on animals like dogs, rats, pigeons, etc. on human being without taking into account the fact that there exists a vast difference between man and animals. By being too scientific and mechanical in their research on man, the behaviorists have failed to consider that human behavior and actions are pretty much related to human temperament, emotional feelings, innate knowledge, norms and values of the society, etc. All these factors in no way affect the animal in their behavior and actions (Badri, 1979, 2000,Othman, 2014, Skeffington, 2016).

One among the many reasons why radical behaviorism gave a mechanistic view on human nature can be well understood by looking into the biography of B.F. Skinner (1904-1990). From early childhood, Skinner was fascinated with on how mechanical objects work. Not only that, in the process of growing up, he used to invent mechanical objects like roller skates scooter, steering mechanisms for wagons and carts, a steam-powered blow gun, kites, model airplane, etc. (Wallace, 1986). Skinner's childhood experiences alongside with his innovative, creative and mechanistic mind have influenced him to a large extent during his professional years as a psychologist to conceptualize all human actions in a mechanical manner popularly known as the S-R (stimulus-response) theory. Finally, it can be concluded that scientific and laboratory-minded behaviorists' attitude and approach towards the study and understanding of human nature in a way depicts that radical behaviorism is an extension of the nineteenth century spirit of 'science worshipping or glorifying'. This spirit of over adoring science and scientific research influenced the minds of the Western scholars to think that science is the only option available to the understanding and salvation of mankind on this planet (Skeffington, 2016).

## **F. Humanistic Psychology**

As the third force in Western psychology, humanistic psychology emerged as an alternative to both psychoanalysis and behaviorism. The two great influential figures of humanistic psychology; Abraham Maslow (1908-1970) and Carl Rogers (1902-1987)



gave a paradoxically different version on the concept of human nature compared to what had been portrayed by Freud and Skinner. Both Maslow and Rogers influenced by the existentialism and phenomenology philosophies provided a psychology that painted a positive image of man who has the tendency of actualizing himself and of being more in charge of his fate and less determined by his libidinal forces and the environment (Misiak & Sexton, 1973).

One possible reason among many others that can be attributed to the emergence of the humanistic views on man advocated by humanistic psychologists could be due to the catastrophe brought by the two World Wars to the millions of human lives. Roughly sixty million people died in these wars. Since earlier concepts on human nature failed to prevent the Western nations from going into war against each other, the humanistic psychologists called the attention to the Western nations to focus on the positive aspects of human nature and to actualize and develop them. By doing so, they hope man can be good to himself and to other fellow human beings by living in peace and harmony without war and destruction caused towards human lives and to nature (Corey, 1986).

Being more philosophical in their approach towards the concept of human nature, and less scientific and empirical, Maslow and Rogers believed that man is good by his nature and he only becomes bad and evil when he is under pressure, stress and in an adverse environment that cripples his self-actualization process and tendency. Humanistic psychologists who are unhappy with the animalistic (enslaved to sexual instincts) and mechanical (robot like nature) views given by Freud and Skinner on human nature, argue and drive home the point that man is different from animal and machine for the reason he has the natural tendency to consciously think, plan and execute his plan according to his freedom of choice. Therefore, man is neither enslaved to his libidinal forces nor controlled by the stimuli that come from the social environment (Maslow, 1968, Jarrett, 2018). In addition to the above, they also believe that man has many characteristics and potentials that are absolutely unique which are not present in animals. According to them, man being different from animals in many dimensions of his life, has the tendency to grow and progress in life from one stage to the other (from the lowest to the highest) and eventually can attain self-actualization. By being less inclined towards the scientific and empirical approaches in their study of man, and more towards a philosophical approach in their concept of human nature, humanistic psychologists believed that man has many innate potential and tendencies that will eventually actualize when provided with a good education that caters for the total development of man in all his dimensions. Besides that, the society should create a conducive environment that can help and cater for the self-actualization process (Fadimen & Frager, 1994).

The concluding remarks on the concept of human nature put forward by humanistic psychology will explain that this school is the first of its kind in Western mainstream psychology that believes and pays much attention to the subject of man's freedom of choice. Man's freedom of choice highlighted by the humanists is one of the key concepts that draw out the demarcation line between them and the earlier schools of psychology. Compared to humanistic psychology, Freudian psychoanalysis painted man as one who is full of animal nature, while radical behaviorism simplified man to be a mechanical being.

## **G. Islamic Psychology**

It is a psychology based on religious ideas. Islamic psychology's reference to human nature goes back to the Qur'an, Sunnah and ideas given by early Muslim scholars. Ideas on human nature provided by Islamic psychology is different from the mainstream Western psychology discussed earlier on in this paper. Islamic psychology presents a concept of man which is comprehensive and all-encompassing. In other words, it provides information on man from all dimensions; physical, social, emotional, intellectual, psychological and spiritual. The last mentioned dimension is something not dealt with by most Western schools of psychology. It can be safely stated here the type of human nature conceptualized by Islamic psychology is a dynamic one.

According to Islamic psychology, man's origin goes back to the spiritual world known as *Ālam al-arwāḥ* (the realm of spirits). The time when the spirit comes in contact with the mortal body, man has been granted the honour as the *Ḳalīf Allāh fī al-āraḍ* (Allah's vicegerent on earth). During the time when the spirit is blown into the foetus in the mother's womb, together with it the *fiṭrah* (primordial nature of being good, pious and God-consciousness), the *asmāʾ* (the names and attributes of Allah), the *mīthāq* (the Covenant), the *amānah* (the Trust) and the freedom of choice and intellect (*ʿaql*) are all bestowed upon man. Being born with the *fiṭrah*, man is good by his nature. There is a great possibility that the human *fiṭrah* which is pure at birth can be hindered of its full bloom during puberty and in later years of man's life due to wrong education and negative social environment which are adverse to the nature of the *fiṭrah* itself. When the qualities or potentials of the *fiṭrah* and the *asmāʾ* are blocked from being actualized in man's life, man becomes a perverted transgressor in his nature and sometimes he also can become rebellious against God's commandments (Langgulang, 1983, Othman, 2014).

Man being the best and honored creation on earth has been provided with God's divine spark in the form of the soul or spirit and some of the attributes found in angels. In an ideal situation, man has to actualize all these strength, potentials, qualities, innate knowledge and fulfill his *mīthāq* (Covenant) and *amānah* (Trust) and duties of being God's *Ḳalīf* (Vicegerent) on earth. Man in his attempt and struggle to actualize all the innate and hidden potentials which lay dormant within his inner self, has to subdue and overcome the base element of his psyche known as *nafs ammārah* (Rahman, 1988). Interesting to note, Islamic psychology states that man who originated from the spiritual world of God goes through a spiritual journey in order to reenter into his initial abode in the spiritual world. As such, this earthly life in the true sense is a transitory period where man has to do his best while waiting to reenter into the spiritual world. In relation to man's spiritual journey, all difficulties, be they physical, social or psychological faced by man in this life can be interpreted as nothing more than trials and tribulation which man has to pass through in order to be victorious in the sight of God (Ismail & Amin, 2012).

Islamic psychology explains that man shares some of his basic characteristics with animals and he also inherits some attributes found in angels and also some of God's attributes. In his desire for food, sex, etc. man resembles the animals. While in his piety, meditation and devotion to God, man resembles very much the angels. Finally, in showing love, care, grace, kindness, sympathy, mercy, etc. man imitates the many

attributes of God. It has been emphasized by many Muslim scholars, that the negligence of man in developing and actualizing the angelic and godly attributes makes him go steep in the path of entertaining his animal nature. Such a condition will lead him away from achieving the nearness of God. On the other hand, when man develops and actualizes the angelic and godly attributes he becomes an angelic and godly person in his character and behavior. This in turn will win him the good pleasure of God and a state of everlasting happiness in this world and felicity in the hereafter (Badri, 1979, Othman, 2014)).

In contrast to Western psychology, Islam psychology has a wealth of information to contribute to the understanding of man and his spiritual dimension. The primary sources of Islam; Qur'an and Hadith provide sufficient information for one to explore on man's spiritual dimension. This aspect of man forms the central core of the Qur'anic discourse. Discussion on the spiritual dimension of man is a thing ignored by mainstream Western psychology. Most Western psychologists deem the investigation on the spiritual dimension of man is not a great concern due to the reason that the human spirit or soul is a matter unseen and it is intangible for any empirical study (Ansari, 1992). On the other hand, for the Muslim scholars this unseen dimension of human nature forms part and parcel of their fundamental belief principles. One among the many verses that states about the belief in the unseen is this verse: "Who believe in the Unseen, are steadfast in prayer, and spend out of what We have provided for them" [Surah al-Baqarah 2:3]. From the Islamic perspective, man has a dual nature; body (physical) and spirit/soul (spiritual). In the Qur'an, the spiritual dimension of man has been described with several different terminologies; like *al-rËl*, *al-qalb*, *al-nafs* and *al-'aql* (Al-Attas, 1989, Ismail & Amin, 2012).

#### **H. The Implication of the Findings in Education**

The concept of human nature is an essential and inseparable part of education and philosophy of education. No effective philosophy of education can be conceptualized and operationalized in any country or educational institution without a clear concept on human nature. This is an undeniable fact and that is why education is exclusively meant for human beings. Moreover the national philosophy of education of a nation is based on a certain concept of human nature which in turn will produce the type of human being according to the desired concept of human nature of the nation, i.e. an atheist, communist, secularist, humanist, Muslim, Christian, etc. As philosophy of education and educational processes of a nation are pivoted on the concept of human nature, therefore the concept of human nature forms the bedrock on which educational philosophy of a nation is built upon. As such, a sound concept of human nature adopted by any nation or educational institution can bear fruits by producing human beings who are physically, morally and spiritually strong, and socially responsible individuals towards themselves, nature, society, country and humanity at large. On the other hand, an incomplete or wrong concept of human nature applied in education and philosophy of education can produce adverse effect on the progress and development of human potentials. Hence, wrong concept of human nature in education can create undesirable conditions like confusion, disharmony, chaos, etc. in the minds of individuals. Ultimately this condition can lead mankind into loss of direction in life, decadence of moral values, an increase in social crimes and injustices, pollution and

destruction done towards nature, extinction and annihilation of human lives through wars fought for the sake of power and dominance (Abdullah, 1982).

Upon realizing the importance or central role of the concept of human nature in education, schools, colleges, universities and other institutions of higher learning should have the correct concept of human nature applied in their philosophy of education and educational processes. A true concept of human nature in education, without fail will aim at the total and balanced development of man in terms of mind, body and spirit, otherwise explained as the cognitive, affective and psychomotor developments.

In the light of the above description of a sound concept of human nature in education which focuses on the total development of human personality and potentials, the following discussion is aimed at finding the impact and implications of the concepts of human nature given by psychoanalysis, radical behaviorism, humanistic and Islamic psychologies employed in education.

By applying the Freudian concept of human nature, education and educational processes could mean nothing more than changing and training the animalistic nature of man towards a socially accepted human being. The same can also be said on the concept of man given by Konrad Zacharias Lorenz (1903-1989)- the Austrian ethologist- who said man has a similar nature like animals for the reason, instincts of aggression and fighting found in animals are also found in man.

On the other hand, by applying the radical behaviorist concept of human nature, education and educational processes will only become as an instrument in producing man of a mechanical nature equivalent to a robot who responds to the stimuli that come from the environment. Hence, educational philosophy and education based on the behaviorist concept of human nature will most probably fail to produce men who are emotionally, spiritually and morally strong for the reason that these human qualities are not emphasized in the radical behaviorist concept of man. Furthermore, it can also be said without doubt that man educated based on the behaviorist concept of human nature will lack the many qualities which are exclusively human, like true love, empathy, sympathy, kindness, generosity, feeling of fraternity, etc. Therefore the application of the radical behaviorist concept of human nature will only produce man who is not morally and socially responsible towards the environment and humanity at large due to the reason that his spiritual and emotional parts are not well developed.

By introducing the concept of human nature conceptualized by humanistic psychology in education, governments and institutions of learning can hope to produce man who has the freedom of choice (free will) to respond to the many challenges that come from the environment without being controlled by the environment. Besides that, man will have the chance to develop and actualize the innate and hidden potential which are uniquely present in human beings only. Moreover, with the humanistic concept of man in education, governments and institutions of learning can hope to produce man who is emotionally well developed and humanist in his attitude and behavior. Despite the emotional development, the humanistic concept in education still lacks the very essential development in man that is the spiritual development. The humanistic concept of human nature does not stress on the spiritual development for the reason it does not speak on man's relationship with God, and this worldly life in relation with the hereafter. On the contrary, it only places much attention on the human inter-relationship only and on the 'here and now' of man's life.

In comparison with the three schools of Western psychology, Islamic psychology provides the most encompassing and comprehensive concept of human nature. Therefore, the Islamic concept of human nature will be the most appropriate concept that can be applied in education. Through the application of the Islamic concept of human nature, governments and educational institutions can hope to attain significant results in education. It is important to state here that the results of this research have indicated that the Islamic concept of human nature is the most relevant and befitting to the concept of education and to the philosophy of education due to the reason it focuses on the total and balanced development of man in every aspect and dimension of life, without neglecting any one of his dimensions. This unique concept on man and his total and balanced development becomes the core of the Muslim education. The Islamic concept on human development in terms of body, mind and spirit has been well elucidated and defined in the aims of education during the First World Conference on Muslim Education held in Mecca in the year 1977. The gist of the Mecca Declaration states that education should be holistic and directed towards producing an integrated personality. One who is emotionally, physically, psychologically, socially and spiritually well-developed and balanced through the process of education. Moreover, such an individual will be one who is God-conscious and ready to serve one's community, nation and humanity at large (Ashraf, 1985).

By applying the Islamic concept of human nature in education, governments and educational institutions will have the chance to witness the fact that it produces men of the highest quality who maintain a good relationship with themselves, God, nature and the whole of humanity. In other words, it produces the type of universal man who cherishes peace, harmony and tranquility within and outside his self. Most importantly, he will be a man who is God-conscious, one who loves and cares for the well-being of others and acts in the most just ways for he is the *khalīfat Allāh fī al-arrī* (God's vicegerent) who will be accountable for all his actions. Moreover, by applying the Islamic concept of human nature in education, parents, teachers, educators, society as well as governments are made to understand that a child who is born in the primordial nature has the innate potentials as well as the God-consciousness lying dormant within the self of the child. As such, education as a dynamic process and a human endeavor should be directed towards actualizing and materializing these potentials.

The psycho-spiritual development of man explained by Islamic psychology also makes it crystal-clear that education should not only focus much on the cognitive domain alone, but equal emphasis should be given to the affective and psychomotor domains. Hence, the Islamic concept of human nature in education not only demands education as a need for the development of the body and mind only, but also for the human soul. A holistic education should be able to awaken in man a greater level of consciousness of God. Supplementary to that, it should be able to bring forth the hidden or innate potentials of the human soul that will take an individual in his forward march in life of becoming the perfect/good man (*al-Insān al-Ōlī*) of God on this planet (Al-Attas, 1978).

At this point, it can be said without doubt that education based on the Islamic concept of human nature means more meaningful education to man that enlightens him of his true origin, goals and responsibilities in this world and eventually of his final destiny in life. On the contrary, the concepts of human nature given by the three

Western schools of psychology when applied in education will only provide man with some fragmented views of his nature which emphasized a great deal on the 'here and now' of his existence without explaining his true origin and what will happen to him after this earthly life. Such fragmented views not only give incomplete ideas to man of his nature but also yield confusion and disharmony in the mind of man.

### **I. Conclusion**

This research has indicated that human nature is not only a topic important to psychology but to all other disciplines of knowledge. The proper understanding on the concept of man in the Western world can help remedy the many issues related to mental illness, like depression, substance usage, suicide, etc. In the Muslim world, it is expected that it can raise the level of consciousness of the Muslims as the *KhalÉfab* of Allah and help solve issue related to suicide bombers, terrorism and other aggressive acts. The reality today, explains that this beautiful concept of human nature from the Islamic perspective is a thing not well understood by the West but also by many in the Muslim world. It is the hoped that a proper understanding of the Islamic concept of human nature can be of a great help in creating a loving, caring and sharing society in today's world. Finally, the correct understanding of human nature can rid the world of all enmity, hatred, racism, prejudice etc. and transform this world to be a better place for humanity.

### **J. Recommendations**

Upon realizing the comprehensiveness of the Islamic concept of human nature, the researchers would like to recommend the following so that education at all levels will be a fruitful and meaningful endeavor that will be able to produce the universal man of the highest quality who is totally and equally developed in all spheres and dimensions of his life:

1. The ministry of education, schools, colleges and all institutions of higher learning should pay greater emphasis and attention to the inculcation of the correct and true concept of human nature in education. By doing so they can achieve the desired result in education that is to produce a good man who has a universal outlook in life. A man of such a nature will be good to God, to himself, others in the society and also towards nature.
2. Curriculum and learning activities in schools, colleges and in other institutions of higher learning should be designed and based on the comprehensive concept of human nature as this will cater for the total and balanced personality development which will be the prerequisite to produce a good and universal individual.
3. Teachers and educators at all levels should create conducive environment that can help and guide students towards the manifestation and materialization of their hidden potentials (*al-asmÉÒ*) and *al-fiÉrah* (the primordial nature) in which mankind has been created.
4. Based on the concept of *al-fiÉrah*, *al-asmÉÒ* and *al-amÉnah* that have been bestowed upon man by God, education should be an endeavor through which man should be brought to the consciousness of his duties and responsibilities towards himself, God, society and nature.

5. Education provided in schools, colleges and in other institutions of higher learning should equally emphasize education for the mind, body and spirit. There is a great possibility that educational institutions will fail in their mission to transmit knowledge, to inculcate moral and cultural values as well as to develop individuals who are spiritually strong if the system and educational process is devoid of education for the human soul.
6. Besides teachers and educators at all levels, the correct concept of human nature can also be very useful to social workers, counselors, psychologists, etc. who deal and interact with people for the betterment of solving problems faced by their clients. A comprehensive knowledge of the true concept of human nature can be a great asset to them in their effort to improve and modify the behaviour, attitude and philosophy of life of the people who seek their help.

### **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Abdullah, A. R. S. (1982). *Educational Theory: A Quranic Outlook*. Umm Al-Qura University.
- Abu Sulayman, A. H. (1997). *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan* (2nd ed.). Herndon, Virginia: International of Islamic Thought.
- Al-Attas, S. M. N. (1978). *Islam and Secularism*. Kuala Lumpur: Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia.
- Al-Attas, S. M. N. (1989). *Islam and the Philosophy of Science*. Kuala Lumpur: The International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization.
- Al-Attas, S. M. N. (1990). *The Nature of Man and the Psychology of the Human Soul*. Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization.
- Al-Attas, S. M. N. (1991). *The Concept of Education in Islam*. Kuala Lumpur: International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization.
- Al-Syaibany, O. Al-Toumi, M. (1991). *Falsafah Pendidikan Islam*. Shah Alam, Selangor: Hizbi Sdn. Bhd.
- Ansari, Z. A. (1992). *Qur'anic Concepts of Human Psyche*. Islamabad: International Institute of Islamic Thought.
- Ashraf, S. A. (1985). *New Horizons in Muslim Education*. Cambridge: Hodder & Stroughton.
- Badri, M. B. (1979). *The Dilemma of Muslim Psychologists*. London: MWH London Publishers.
- Badri, M. B. (2000). *Contemplation: An Islamic Psychospiritual Study*. Kuala Lumpur: Medeena Books.
- Corey, G. (1986). *Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychothera* (3rd ed.). California: Cole Publishing Company.
- Fadimen, J., & Frager, R. (1994). *Personality and Personal Growth* (3rd ed.). New York: Harper Collins College Publishers.
- Freud, S. (1948). *An Autobiographical Study*. London: The Hogarth Press & The Institute of Psycho-Analysis.
- George, R. L., & Cristiani, T. S. (1990). *Counseling: Theory and Practice* (3rd ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

*Selected Views on Human Nature and their Implications on Education*

- Hashim, R. (1996). *Educational Dualism in Malaysia: Implications for Theory and Practice*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press.
- Hollitscher, W. (1946). *Sigmund Freud*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd.
- Ismail, A. M., & Amin, L. (2012). *Islamic and western perspectives on exploring human nature in shaping new insights on human and humanity*. *Journal of Applied Sciences Research*, 8(9), 4788-4794.
- Jacobs, M. (1991). *Sigmund Freud*. London: SAGE publications.
- Jarett, C. (2018). *What are We Like? 10 Psychology Findings that Reveal the Worst of Human Nature*, In <https://digest.bps.org.uk/2018/10/12/what-are-we-like-10-psychology-findings-that-reveal-the-worst-of-human-nature/>, Retrieved on 12/12/2018.
- Langgulong, H. (1983). *Teori-Teori Kesihatan Mental: Perbandingan Psikologi Moden dan Pakar-Pakar Pendidikan Islam*. Selangor: Pustaka Huda.
- Langgulong, H. (1989). The Ummatic Paradigm of Psychology. In *The International Seminar on Islamic Philosophy and Science*. Penang: University Sains Malaysia.
- Langgulong, H. (1991). *Kreativiti dan Pendidikan: Suatu Kajian Psikologi dan Falsafah*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Langgulong, H. (1995). Paradigm Shift: The Landmark of 21st Century Education. In *The International Islamic University Malaysia*. Selangor: The International Islamic University Malaysia.
- Maslow, A. (1968). *Toward a Psychology of Being* (2nd ed.). New York: D. Van Nostrand.
- Misiak, H., & Sexton, V. S. (1973). *Phenomenological, Existential and Humanistic Psychologies*. New York: Grune & Stratton.
- Nasr, S. H. (1975). *Islam and the Plight of Modern Man*. London: Longman.
- Othman, N. (2014). *A Comparative Study between Western and Islamic Perspectives on Human Development and Life-Friendly Environment*. Online Journal of Research in Islamic Studies, Vol.1, No.1 (Jan-April 2014).
- Qutb, M. (1985). *Islam and the Modern Materialistic Thought*. New Delhi: Hindustan Publications.
- Rafi-ud-din, M. (1990). *Ideology of the Future*. Islamabad: Da'wah Academy, International Institute of Islamic Thought.
- Rahman, A. (1988). *Muhammad: Encyclopedia of Seerah*. London: Seerah Foundation.
- Skeffington, J.S. (2016). *Human Nature*. Summer 2016. British Academy Review (Emerging Perspective).
- Singh, S. (1985). *Limitations of Freud's Psychology*. New Delhi: Munahiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
- Wallace, W. A. (1986). *Theories of Personality*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Watson, J. B. (1928). *The Ways of Behaviorism*. New York: Harper & Brothers.
- Watson, J. B. (1970). *Behaviorism*. New York: W.W. Norton.