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# The Nature of Humans and the Purpose of Islamic Education: The Perspective of the Qur'an and the Prophet's Hadith

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**Abstract:** Human nature constitutes a fundamental foundation for formulating the aims of Islamic education, as it determines the direction of human potential development, character formation, and life orientation. This article aims to examine human nature and the aims of Islamic education from the perspectives of the Qur'an and the Prophet's Hadith. This study employs a qualitative approach using a library research design, involving a critical examination of Qur'anic verses, Prophetic Hadith, and relevant literature on the philosophy and thought of Islamic education. Data were analyzed through data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings reveal that, according to the Qur'an and Hadith, human beings are multidimensional creatures encompassing physical, spiritual, intellectual, and psychological dimensions. Islam views human beings as both 'abdullah (servants of Allah) and khalifah (stewards on earth); therefore, the development of human potential must integrate spiritual, intellectual, and moral dimensions. Accordingly, Islamic education is not merely oriented toward the acquisition of knowledge but also toward the cultivation of faith, noble character, and social responsibility. The integration of these dimensions provides the foundation for developing insan kamil (the complete human being), who is capable of fulfilling both servitude to Allah and the responsibility of stewardship on earth while contributing to the common good and the advancement of civilization based on divine values.

Keywords: *Human Nature, Qur'an, Hadith, Aims of Islamic Education.*

**Abstrak:** Hakikat manusia merupakan landasan fundamental dalam merumuskan tujuan pendidikan Islam karena menentukan arah pengembangan potensi, pembentukan kepribadian, dan orientasi kehidupan manusia. Artikel ini bertujuan menganalisis hakikat manusia dan tujuan pendidikan Islam berdasarkan perspektif Al-Qur'an dan hadis Nabi. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian kepustakaan (*library research*), melalui penelaahan kritis terhadap ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an, hadis Nabi, serta literatur yang relevan dengan filsafat dan pemikiran pendidikan Islam. Analisis data dilakukan dengan kondensasi data, display data dan menarik Kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa hakikat manusia dalam perspektif Al-Qur'an dan hadis menegaskan bahwa manusia merupakan makhluk multidimensional yang mencakup aspek jasmani, rohani, akal, dan jiwa. Islam memandang manusia sebagai 'abdullah sekaligus khalifah di muka bumi, sehingga pengembangan potensinya harus mengintegrasikan dimensi spiritual, intelektual, dan moral. Oleh karena itu, pendidikan Islam tidak hanya berorientasi pada penguasaan pengetahuan, tetapi juga pembentukan keimanan, akhlak, dan tanggung jawab sosial. Integrasi seluruh dimensi tersebut menjadi landasan pembentukan insan kamil yang mampu menjalankan fungsi kehambaan dan kekhalifahan serta berkontribusi bagi kemaslahatan dan kemajuan peradaban berdasarkan nilai-nilai ketuhanan.

Kata kunci: *Hakikat Manusia, Al-Qur'an, Hadis, Tujuan Pendidikan Islam*

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## Introduction

In general, the Qur'an uses several terms to describe the essence of humans, namely al-basyar, al-insān, and al-nās. According to Quraish Shihab, there are three groups of terms used by the Qur'an to refer to humans. First, terms derived from the series of letters alif, nun, and sin, such as insān, insān, and unās. Second, the term basyar. Third, the terms Banī Ādam and żurriyyat Ādam which refer to the descendants of Prophet Adam (Tafiati, 2023). Etymologically, the word basyar comes from a root word that initially indicates the clear, good, and beautiful appearance of something. From this root word also formed, the word basyarah means skin. Humans are called basyar because their skin surface is clearly visible, making it one of the physical characteristics that distinguishes them from other living beings (Salsabila Salsabila et al., 2026).

Humans were created by Allah SWT through a process that takes place gradually. This creation process includes four stages: body, hayat (life), soul, and nafs (soul). Besides having a spiritual dimension, humans also have biological characteristics that distinguish them from other creatures, especially animals (Azarah et al., 2025). These characteristics include the ability to walk upright, the presence of thumbs supporting various activities, complex brain development, and vocal organs that enable humans to communicate through language.

Humans also have flexible potential and the ability to adapt to various environmental conditions. According to Fakhruddin Ar-Razi, as quoted by Adnin Atmas, humans have special characteristics that distinguish them from other creatures, including angels, devils, and animals (Zahroh et al., 2023). The uniqueness of humans lies in their ability to reason and wisdom, as well as the nature and desires that influence their behavior and life.

Meanwhile, Ibn al-Jauzi views that humans are composed of two main elements, namely the body and the spirit (Hernawan, 2017). The development of spiritual aspects holds an important position because humans are not only understood as beings who have physical bodies but also as beings with souls and spiritual dimensions. This view aligns with the hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah in Sahih Muslim, which explains that Allah SWT does not judge humans based on their appearance and body, but rather on the heart and their deeds (Nawawi, 2024). Thus, the quality of humans from the Islamic perspective is not only determined by physical appearance but also by the purity of heart, faith, and behavior reflected in their life.

The Qur'an explains in depth the process of creation, the journey of life, and the existence of humans as creatures created by Allah SWT. Humans are endowed with various potentials, abilities, and intelligences that distinguish them from other creatures. Moreover, humans are multidimensional beings who have physical, intellectual, spiritual, and social aspects (Fauziah et al., 2025). Therefore, understanding humans cannot be limited to just one perspective, because a limited approach will result in a less comprehensive understanding of the nature and complexity of humans (M. Sukeriyadi, M. Barni, 2023). The nature of humans is a complex issue that is not easy to fully understand through a single approach. The understanding of humans can always evolve along with the emergence of new perspectives and interpretations.

Therefore, every effort to understand humans needs to be carried out continuously and comprehensively so that various dimensions of their existence can be studied more deeply (M. Sukeriyadi, M. Barni, 2023). Education is a process closely related to human existence, because its implementation involves humans as both actors and subjects who interact with one another. Education is organized by humans, takes place through interpersonal relationships, and aims to develop the potential and quality of human life.

Therefore, the discussion about education cannot be separated from the study of the nature and status of humans. Humans are composed of two main elements, namely material and non-material elements. Based on this view, it can be understood that the essence of humans encompasses both physical and spiritual dimensions that complement each other (Nawangsih & Achmad, 2022). Therefore, Islamic education is a process of balanced development of these two dimensions, so it is not only oriented towards physical aspects but also pays attention to spiritual development and human personality (Salsabila Salsabila et al., 2026).

Studies on the nature of humans from an Islamic perspective generally discuss the terminology of creation, physical and spiritual dimensions, as well as the potential of human intellect and spirituality. However, the relationship between the concepts of al-basyar, al-insān, and al-nās with the goals of Islamic education still requires more comprehensive study. Therefore, this study seeks to integrate the understanding of human nature based on the Qur'an and hadith as a philosophical foundation in formulating the goals of Islamic education.

This research is important because understanding the essence of humans forms the basis for determining the direction and goals of Islamic education. Humans have physical, intellectual, spiritual, and social dimensions that need to be developed in a balanced manner. Through the study of the Qur'an and hadith, this research is expected to strengthen the conceptual foundation of Islamic education, which is not only oriented towards knowledge development but also the formation of faith, morals, and human responsibility as servants of Allah SWT as well as caliphs on earth.

## Research Methodology

This research uses a qualitative methodology with the type of library research. Qualitative research methodology is a research approach used to understand and examine a phenomenon in depth based on realities occurring in the context of social life (S.Pettalongi et al., 2025). This approach emphasizes meaning, experience, perspectives, as well as the actions of individuals or groups in facing and responding to an event. Meanwhile, library research is a type of research conducted by reviewing, reviewing, and analyzing various written sources related to the focus of the research problem (Rashid, 2022). The data sources for this study were obtained from library materials, such as scientific books, journal articles, previous research results, documents, regulations, and other relevant literature (Indra, 2024). The data collection process was carried out by identifying relevant sources, reading and understanding the literature content, recording important information, and

grouping findings based on the theme or main topic of the research.

Data analysis techniques were carried out through data condensation, data display, and drawing conclusions. Data condensation is the process of selecting, simplifying, and grouping data according to the research focus (Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, 2014). Data presentation is carried out by systematically arranging information in the form of narrative descriptions, themes, matrices, or tables to make it easier to understand (Almanshur, 2020). Meanwhile, drawing conclusions is the process of interpreting data to find patterns, meanings, and answers to the research focus (Nazar, 2022), which is subsequently verified based on empirical evidence.

## Results and Discussion

### A. Basyar

According to M. Quraish Shihab, the term basyar in the Qur'an refers to humans as beings who have general physical and psychological characteristics. From a physical perspective, this term describes the physical condition of humans, such as skin, hair, body shape, as well as biological needs that are basically possessed by all humans (Juariah & Alim, 2026). Besides showing physical aspects, the word basyar also includes the psychological dimension of humans, such as life needs, sensory limitations in understanding the unseen, the process of acquiring knowledge, as well as the stages of human development until reaching maturity (Busrizal & Jalwis, 2023). Thus, the term basyar emphasizes the similarity of human characteristics as biological and psychological beings, without distinguishing their background or position.

According to Raghib al-Ashfahani in the book Mufradāt fī Gharīb al-Qur'ān, the term basyarun refers to the part of the human body that is the place where hair grows (Chandra, 2024). This definition describes humans as beings who have both physical and physical existence. Therefore, the word basyar emphasizes the biological side of humans that can be observed and recognized through their physical existence. This aligns with the content of the Qur'an, Surah Ar-Rum verse 20, which explains that the creation of humans from earth is one of the tangible proofs of Allah SWT's greatness. This verse affirms that humans are creatures created by Allah who have physical elements and realize their limitations as creatures before the Creator (Latief et al., 2025). The use of reason needs to be guided by the guidance of revelation, namely the Qur'an and the hadiths of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

From the perspective of Islamic thought, Fahruddin ar-Razi, as quoted by Adnin Atmas, explains that humans have special characteristics that distinguish them from other creatures, including angels, devils, and animals. These special qualities lie in the ability of reason and wisdom, as well as the existence of nature and desires that influence human behavior (Zulfa et al., 2026). (Meanwhile, Ibnul Jauzi views that humans are composed of two main elements, namely the body and the spirit.

According to Ibnul Jauzi, spiritual development holds an important position because humans are not only understood as physical beings but also as beings with souls (Makmudi et al., 2018). This view aligns with a hadith narrated by Muslim from Abu Hurairah explaining that Allah does not judge humans based on their appearance and body, but rather on their heart and

deeds. Thus, the quality of humans from the Islamic perspective is not solely determined by physical appearance but also by the purity of the heart, spiritual quality, and the behavior they manifest in daily life.

QS. Al-Mu'minun verse 12 explains that human creation began from sulālah min ṭīn, which means the essence derived from the soil. According to Ibn Kathir (1999), the term sulālah contains the meaning of essence or part taken from an element (Sumarsono et al., 2025). This shows that soil is the origin of human creation, which then goes through certain stages until it forms into living beings. From a biological science perspective, this explanation can be linked to the presence of various chemical elements in the human body, such as carbon, calcium, phosphorus, and other minerals, which are also found in soil and the earth's crust (Habibie et al., 2026). These elements enter the human body through natural processes, especially through the food consumed.

## B. Western Scholars' and Qur'anic Views on the Nature of Humans

The term hakikat basically refers to something that is fundamental, essential, substantial, and becomes the core of the existence of something. Thus, hakikat can be understood as the main element that fundamentally describes the characteristics and existence of something (Herman et al., 2025). In the study of philosophy and science, Western scientists have diverse views on the nature of humans (Anggreini et al., 2023). Some thoughts view humans as beings composed solely of material or physical elements, without recognizing the existence of spirits as separate elements. Meanwhile, other views understand humans as beings who have two main elements, namely the physical and spiritual (Alim, 2020). In certain thoughts, the relationship between spirit and God is even understood very closely, leading to views that unite the dimension of divinity with human existence. These various ideas have also influenced the development of social sciences in the Western world. In explaining the characteristics and position of humans, scientists use several conceptual terms, including:

1. Homo Sapiens, that is, humans as beings who possess wisdom and the ability to think rationally.
2. Animal Rational, meaning humans are seen as living beings who have the ability to think and use reason to understand various problems.
3. Homo Loquens, which refers to humans as beings who have language skills and express their thoughts and feelings through verbal communication.
4. Homo Faber, meaning humans as beings who have the skills and abilities to create and use various tools to meet their life needs.
5. Zoon Politicon, which refers to humans as social beings who need interaction, cooperation, and coexistence with others to fulfill their life needs.
6. Homo Economicus, that is, humans as economic beings who consider economic interests, needs, and economic principles in their life activities.
7. Homo Religiosus, that is, humans as beings who have the tendency and awareness to know, believe, and practice religious teachings (Aryati, 2018).

These various concepts show that the essence of humans can be studied

through several dimensions, including aspects of rationality, language ability, creativity, social life, economic activity, and religiosity. Thus, humans are understood not only as biological beings but also as individuals who have the ability to think, interact, create, and develop their spiritual life (Syafri, 2012).(Alim, 2020)

**C. The Nature of Humans Viewed from the Perspective of Hadith**

The essence of humans from the perspective of hadith is not only understood based on the elements that shape themselves but also through self-awareness, ego control, and the ability to actualize their potential in real actions. Humans can be understood through the dynamics of the psyche and their continuously developing self-awareness, which are then manifested in daily behavior and deeds (M. Sukeriyadi, M. Barni, 2023) . Thus, human existence is not only determined by physical or inner aspects but also by how they live their lives and realize moral values in their actions. Basically, humans have the potential to realize goodness, truth, and beauty in their lives. This potential is one of the foundations that places humans as beings with noble status. Nevertheless, this nobility is not realized automatically but requires continuous processes of development, struggle, and self-control. Humans are always faced with moral choices between good and evil as well as between right and wrong actions (M. Sukeriyadi, M. Barni, 2023). Therefore, human quality is reflected in their ability to choose actions that align with the values of truth and Islamic teachings, so that the potential for goodness they possess can be realized through righteous deeds and commendable behavior.

**D. The Purpose of Islamic Education from the Qur'anic Perspective**

In Arabic terminology, purpose is known through several terms, including ghāyah, gharḍ, and qaṣd. In English, terms referring to the concept of purpose include goal, purpose, objective, and aim. Although using different terms, they all have similar substantive meanings, namely as orientation or goals to be realized through a certain process and effort (Uluwiyah et al., 2026). Thus, goals not only serve as standards to assess the success of an effort but also serve as guidelines that direct actions to proceed in a planned and directed manner, as well as the basis for realizing other broader goals. The term education or tarbiyah is related in meaning to several other terms that describe the educational process in Islam. These terms have meanings that are close to each other and complement each other in explaining the essence of Islamic education. Ta'lim is an educational process that emphasizes the delivery and development of knowledge as a guide for humans in understanding the truth and living life.

This concept is explained in QS. Al-Baqarah verses 31–32, which describe the process of Allah SWT teaching Prophet Adam about the names of objects and the angels' acknowledgment of the vastness of Allah's knowledge (Arif, 2022). In the field of education, educational goals can be understood as targets to be realized through a series of educational processes and activities. In formal education, these goals need to be clearly formulated and realized in the curriculum as a guideline for learning implementation. Formal education is an educational process organized in a structured, systematic, and planned manner

based on predetermined goals, and carried out at certain times and places by referring to the curriculum. This education aligns with the national education goals, which are to shape individuals with the spirit of Pancasila and possess faith and devotion to God Almighty (Nurhadi, 2023). The goal of education is essentially not something fixed or only oriented towards certain achievements, but rather includes the comprehensive development of human personality, especially in building harmonious relationships between individuals and their life and environment (Panjaitan, 2023).

**E. Implications of Understanding the Nature of Humans on the Development of Islamic Education**

Islamic education scholars generally believe that the development of theory and the application of Islamic educational practices must be based on a deep understanding of the nature of humans. The study of humans is a very important foundation in the implementation of education because it is directly related to the direction and goals of the educational process itself. Without a clear understanding of the concept of humans, the implementation of education has the potential to lose direction and a strong foundation. (Syarif, 2017). Therefore, Islamic education cannot be comprehensively understood without first examining the Islamic view of humans, especially those related to efforts to develop the full potential of the individual.

As humans, they can be carried out harmoniously and balanced. This includes their roles as Allah's creatures, educators and students, servants of Allah ('abd), and caliphs on earth, including the various potentials bestowed upon them. All these aspects need to be developed integrally to shape a perfect individual (Syarif, 2017). If human development focuses only on one aspect and ignores the others, then the formation of personality as a kamil or comprehensive Muslim will not be optimally achieved. Based on studies of the Qur'an, Hadith, and various relevant literature, the essence of humans and the goals of Islamic education are closely and inseparably linked. Understanding the essence of humans becomes the foundation for formulating educational goals that align with human potential, position, and responsibilities according to Islamic teachings. When facing educational challenges in the modern era, Islamic education needs to maintain a balance between academic achievement, character building, and strengthening spirituality.

Therefore, educational principles derived from the Qur'an and Hadith need to be integrated into the planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning. These efforts are expected to support the realization of an Islamic education system that is relevant to the development of the times without losing the foundation of Islamic values. Obedience in worship, the ability to serve Allah SWT, and behavior that reflect noble character, without considering the development of science and technology, tend to produce individual piety. Such conditions can lead to a lack of attention to mastery of knowledge and technological advancement (Syarif, 2017). As a result, Muslims have the potential to lag behind in the development of science and technology, so mastery of these fields is more dominated by other religious groups.

There are two forms of implications for

understanding the nature of humans for Islamic education. One of them is (1) the integration between qalbiyyah and aqliyyah education. Islamic education needs to combine the development of heart, spiritual, and emotional aspects with the development of intellectual abilities and academic knowledge. The educational process is not only directed at mastering religious teachings and performing worship, but must also encourage the development of thinking ability, critical analysis skills, and broaden students' scientific horizons (Afiva et al., 2023). The combination of these two aspects is expected to shape humans with strong faith, intellectual intelligence, and a comprehensive understanding of religious teachings and worldly life.

(2) Carrying out the functions and purposes of human creation: Islamic education should be oriented towards forming an individual's understanding of the essence, role, and purpose of human creation based on the values of Islamic teachings. Humans have the position of caliphs on earth responsible for maintaining, managing, and utilizing the universe fairly and wisely. Therefore, Islamic education needs to guide students to realize and be able to carry out these responsibilities well. Through the educational process, individuals are expected to develop social awareness, make beneficial contributions to society, and preserve the environment as a form of fulfilling Allah SWT's mandate (Afiva et al., 2023). Through the implementation of Islamic education that combines qalbiyyah development and the development of 'aqliyyah, as well as instilling an understanding of the role and purpose of human creation, the educational process can be carried out comprehensively and integrally. This approach is expected to shape individuals with strong faith, good thinking skills, responsible attitudes, and awareness to make positive contributions to community life (Afiva et al., 2023). Thus, Islamic education is not only oriented towards individual development but also plays a role in realizing a better social order based on the values of Islamic teachings.

**Conclusion**

The essence of humans from the perspective of the Qur'an and hadith shows that humans are multidimensional beings consisting of physical, spiritual, intellectual, and soul elements. The term *basyar* represents the biological dimension of humans, while the spiritual and moral perspectives emphasize the importance of the heart, intellect, and deeds in determining the quality of their life. Various views of Western scholars enrich the understanding of humans as rational, social, creative, and religious beings. However, Islam provides a more comprehensive foundation by placing humans as servants of Allah (*'abdullah*) as well as caliphs on earth. This understanding emphasizes that the goal of Islamic education is not merely to develop intellectual abilities, but to integrate spiritual (*qalbiyyah*), intellectual (*'aqliyyah*), and moral development in a balanced way. Therefore, Islamic education needs to be directed towards the development of all human potential to form individuals who are faithful, knowledgeable, have noble character, and are responsible in carrying out the functions of servitude and caliphate. This integration of dimensions forms the foundation for forming *insan kamil* who are able to make positive contributions to social life and the

development of civilization without losing the orientation of divine values.

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