Fitrah Based Education: A Qur'anic Perspective in Developing Children's Natural Potential at Al-Fikri Islamic Fitrah School (SIF)

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Abstract

The modern education system has tended to focus on academic achievement. The result is a generation that is intellectually intelligent but lacks empathy and spiritual awareness. The purpose of this study is to identify the concept of fitrah education at the Al-Fikri Islamic School, the implementation of the fitrah education concept at the school, and the ideal holistic concept of fitrah-based education. This research uses a qualitative descriptive method with a case study approach, focusing on examining the background, interactions, and conditions of the Al-Fikri Islamic School. Data collection techniques included interviews with the principal and one Islamic Education teacher. The results of this study are as follows: First, Al-Fikri School demonstrates that the ideal educational process should be oriented toward developing children's natural potential, not merely pursuing academic achievement. Second, the learning process is conducted through a dialogical approach, hands-on practice, activities such as reciting the Qur'an, and the integration of general knowledge with religious knowledge. Third, holistic education aims to shape individuals who reflect the character of the Prophet Muhammad, who are creative, independent, adaptive, and capable of facing the challenges of the times.

Keywords: *Fitrah Education; Potential; Natural*

Abstrak

Selama ini, sistem pendidikan modern cenderung berorientasi pada pencapaian akademik. Hasilnya generasi yang cerdas secara intelektual namun kurang memiliki empati dan kesadaran spiritual. Tujuan penelitian ini adalah mengidentifikasi konsep Pendidikan fitrah di Sekolah Islam Fitrah Al-Fikri, implementasi konsep pendidikan fitrah di sekolah Al-Fikri, dan konsep pendidikan berbasis fitrah yang ideal secara holistik. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus, focus dalam meneliti latar belakang, interaksi dan kondisi Sekolah Islam Fitrah Al-Fikri. Teknik pengumpulan data penelitian menggunakan teknik wawancara Kepala Sekolah, 1 Guru PAI. Hasil dari penelitian ini adalah sebagai berikut: Pertama, Sekolah Al-Fikri menunjukkan proses pendidikan ideal harus berorientasi pada pengembangan potensi alami anak, bukan sekadar mengejar capaian akademik. Kedua, proses belajar dilakukan melalui pendekatan dialogis, praktik langsung, kegiatan seperti tasmi' Al-Qur'an, dan integrasi ilmu umum dengan ilmu agama. Ketiga,

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pendidikan holistik bertujuan membentuk pribadi yang mencerminkan karakter Rasulullah, kreatif, mandiri, adaptif, serta mampu menghadapi tantangan zaman.

Kata kunci : Pendidikan Fitrah; Potensi; Alami

I. Introduction

Education is a fundamental process in shaping the whole person, encompassing not only intellectual aspects but also spiritual, emotional, social, and moral aspects. In the Islamic context, education has a broader goal: to cultivate and develop the full potential of human nature so that they can fulfill their role as caliphs on earth. To date, the modern education system has tended to focus solely on academic achievement, often neglecting spiritual, emotional, and moral aspects. This has resulted in the birth of a generation that is intellectually intelligent but lacks social sensitivity, empathy, and spiritual awareness (Khoiruddin, 2018). With the increasing phenomenon of juvenile delinquency, an aspect that must be improved is the educational model used (Puniman & Kadarisman, 2018).

There are four types of educational models: conventional education, traditional Islamic education, the modern holistic model, and the nature-based model (Jalaludin, 2020). All four have different characteristics, resulting in different expected outcomes. First, conventional education is oriented towards competency standards and academic achievement. The curriculum is uniform and focuses on cognitive abilities, academic achievement, values, and competency standards such as opinions (Saerozi, 2003). Furthermore, conventional education is also based on modern educational theories (behaviorism, constructivism, and humanism) (Maulana et al., 2019). Second, the traditional Islamic education model emphasizes Quran memorization, worship, and morals through the lecture method (Saparina & Iswantir, 2024). It focuses on religious rituals and religious cognition, namely behavior that accommodates Islamic values (BS & Fitriani, 2022).

Third, the modern holistic model emphasizes four aspects of educational goals: freedom and exploration (Montessori); creativity and the learning environment (Reggio Emilia); organic development appropriate to age levels (Waldor); and science, technology, arts, and engineering (STEAM). In terms of its goals, modern holistic education is rooted in Western philosophy, not revelation. Modern holistic education also focuses on human development as a socio-psychological being.

Fitrah, the basic potential that Allah has instilled in every human being from birth (Subhi, 2021), explains that a child is born with a basic ability called fitrah, a sign that a child is not a blank slate, to be filled with inappropriate things. This is explained in the Qur'an, Surah Ar-Rum, verse 30:

وَلَٰكِنَّ ٱلْقَيِّمُ ٱلدِّينُ ذَٰلِكَ ۚ ٱللَّهِ لِخَلْقِ تَبْدِيلَ لَا ۚ عَلَيْهَا فَطَرَ ٱلنَّاسَ فَطَرَ ٱلَّتِى ٱللَّهِ فِطْرَتَ ۚ حَنِيفًا لِلدِّينِ وَجْهَكَ فَأَقِمْ يَعْلَمُونَ لَا ٱلنَّاسِ أَكْثَرَ

So set your faces straight towards the religion of Allah; (remain on) the natural disposition of Allah, according to which He created mankind. There is no change in the natural disposition of Allah. (That is) the correct religion; but most people do not know.

Therefore, natural disposition-based education emphasizes the importance of developing all aspects of humanity naturally and in balance, in accordance with the basic character inherent from birth. Natural disposition-based education presents itself as an alternative that seeks to return the goal of education to its essence, namely to cultivate individuals who are intellectually intelligent, emotionally mature, and spiritually strong (Ilma et al., 2023).

Natural disposition-based education views children as beings with natural potential according to ("The Concept of Natural Disposition in an Islamic Perspective," 2017), while conventional educational models view children as "blank slates" to be filled. Furthermore, Western holistic education lacks a divine dimension, whereas fitrah (natural divinity) makes a child's relationship with God the foundation for developing each student's potential (Sapitri et al., 2022). Thus, fitrah-based education can be considered a uniquely Islamic holistic model, possessing a monotheistic dimension not found in Western models. Therefore, what distinguishes this research is fitrah-based education, which is oriented towards the Quran in developing children's natural potential (Wahidah, 2019).

The purpose of this research is to identify the concept of fitrah education developed at Al-Fikri School, how the concept of fitrah education is implemented at Al-Fikri School, and the ideal concept of fitrah-based education for holistically developing students. Scientifically, the results of this research on the Fitrah-Based Childhood Education Model are expected to provide scientific information on the fitrah-based childhood education model as an educational concept that can be used as a basis for reflection. This will contribute to the body of knowledge regarding learning in elementary schools and also motivate further research on the fitrah-based childhood education model. In practical terms, the results of this study can be used as a basis for formulating a better education system in Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia, so that educational products in this country can produce people who are qualified in faith, knowledge, and good deeds, and have complete competence both physically and mentally.

II.   Research Method

This research is a qualitative descriptive study. This qualitative research uses a case study approach. The case study method focuses on examining the background, interactions, and conditions of the Al-Fikri Islamic School. This type of case study is used to examine an event, activity, or program at the school. In this case study, the author

attempted to follow Linlon and Cuba (Fadli, 2021). The structure of the case study includes the problem, context, issues, and lessons learned. The procedures (Haryono, 2023) in a case study are as follows:

The researcher identified and defined the problem boundaries (Pahkeviannur, 2022). The identification of this research problem is based on observations that the reality of education in this country has not yet achieved optimal education in accordance with national education goals. The researcher identified several problems related to the process, objectives, curriculum, materials, methods, planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning, particularly regarding educational tools related to the natural characteristics of students.

This research was conducted at the Al-Fikri Islamic School, located at Jl. Raden Saleh, Jl. TVRI Alam Studio No. 2A, RT.001/RW.007, Sukmajaya, Sukmajaya District, Depok City, West Java 16412. The location was selected purposively, considering that the institution's vision, mission, and learning practices are based on the concept of children's natural instincts. The research subjects consisted of the principal or institution manager, and one Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teacher.

The data sources for this study were primary sources, obtained through primary sources from the principal, Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teacher, and fifth and sixth grade students as a sample of beneficiaries. Secondary sources included the Quran, Hadith, and various literature such as books, national and international journals related to natural instinct-based education within the programs at the Al-Fikri Islamic School. The data collection technique used was interviews with the principal and one Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teacher.

III.   Result and Discussion

Research findings indicate that Al-Fikri School has developed a natural education model aligned with the values of the Quran and aligned with children's developmental needs. The implementation of this concept is evident in the flexible curriculum, the role of teachers as natural guides, and a natural and supportive learning environment. Therefore, the natural-based education concept implemented by Al-Fikri School (SIF) is ideal for developing students' intelligence. Holistically, this learning model emphasizes personalized learning, character building, the integration of spiritual and academic values, and the creation of an environment that unleashes children's potential from an early age. The data for this research finding was obtained through interviews with the Principal as resource person 1 and the Islamic Religious Education teacher as resource person 2, which will be explained below.

A. The Concept of Fitrah Eduction Developed at Al-Fikri School

According to Munif Chatib (in Makrufi, 2017), the learning process can be seen through intelligence-based education, and Islam has a concept of fitrah that focuses on the development of human potential. He argues that evaluation in learning can use a multiple intelligence approach, including portfolios, assessments during learning, and written tests.

Meanwhile, fitrah is based on monotheism, rooted in the Quran, and makes the spiritual aspect the center of development. Fitrah-based education fosters children's innate potential, emphasizing the development of natural potential over mere instruction and memorization. It encompasses all aspects of human development (spiritual, mental, social, and physical), thus requiring exploratory and differentiated methods. To see the differences between conventional education, traditional Islamic education, modern holistic education, and fitrah-based education, see Table 1 below.

Table. 1. Comparison of Islamic Education Models

Aspek	Conventional Education	Traditional Islamic Education	Modern Holistic Education	Nature-Based (Qur'anic) Education
Philosophical Foundations	Modern (Western) educational science	Traditions and religious texts	Humanities/anthropology	Revelation (the Qur'an, the Sunnah)
Views on Children	Learning objectives	Subject of worship	Creative and unique individuals	Individuals with innate potential (fitrah)
Key Focus	Academic	Memorisation & worship	Creativity & experience	Development of natural potential (fitrah)
Approach	Teacher-centered	Lectures & memorisation	Experiential learning	Nurturing innate potential, differentiation
The Role of Teachers	Teacher	Worship leader	Observer & facilitator	Nurturer of innate nature and role model
Assessment	Grades & exams	Worship & memorisation	Portfolio & observations	Holistic (spiritual–emotional–social–physical–cognitive)
Ultimate Goal	Academic competence	Religious observance	A creative and independent child	A child of faith, upholding monotheism, excelling in accordance with their natural disposition

As seen in the table above, each educational model has distinct characteristics, ranging from its philosophical foundation, perspective on children, primary focus, approach, teacher role, assessment, and ultimate goal.

1) The philosophical foundation of the fitrah education

Concept at Al-Fikri School is rooted in the Quran's understanding of the nature of humans as creatures endowed with innate potential (fitrah) from birth. Fitrah, within this school's framework, is understood as a combination of spiritual, moral, and intellectual tendencies, as well as individual talents that must be cultivated, not forced (Sholichah, 2019). This understanding refers to verses such as Surah Ar-Rum, verse 30, which emphasizes that the fitrah in children is a divine design that cannot be changed. This verse indicates the urgency of stimulating the development of human learning potential and making every activity an act of worship. This sentiment was also conveyed by resource person 2:

> The fitrah-based education implemented at Al-Fikri Elementary School aligns with its vision and mission, which is to make all school activities an act of worship. (Speaker 2)

The primary foundation of the Fitrah philosophy at Al Fikri is Islam. Al Fikri educates students to return to human nature as taught by Allah and His Messenger in the Quran and Sunnah. Al Fikri recognizes that fitrah is more important and fundamental than creativity. Creativity is a result of our return to our true human nature, namely as servants of Allah SWT. Al-Fikri Fitrah Islamic School's vision is to be a leading Islamic school with excellent quality in IMTAK (Faith and Knowledge) and IPTEK (Science and Technology), with a global perspective, independence, and adhering firmly to the Quran and Sunnah. Its mission is to make all daily activities at the school a form of worship. It applies the qualities of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in daily life, namely: Shiddiq (Siddiq), Amanah (Trustworthy), Fathanah (Faithful), and Tabligh (Prophetic) (Kholifah, 2021). It develops the potential of each individual through PAIKEM (Active, Innovative, Creative, Effective, and Enjoyable Learning) activities according to their developmental stage and based on conscience. As can be seen in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1. Vision and Mission of SIF AL-Fikri Elementary School

2) Perspective on Children

From the school's perspective, natural education not only means strengthening spiritual character but also building children's readiness to recognize and develop their natural potential (Nurhakimah et al., 2022). Al-Fikri's internal curriculum is designed with a natural growth approach, providing space for children to explore, experience, and discover. Therefore, natural education at Al-Fikri rejects an overly academic approach at an early age and emphasizes social-emotional development, independence, creativity, and God-consciousness as the primary foundation, as conveyed by the following resource person.

> Every child has abilities. Basic abilities, whether it's the ability to believe or other abilities. Within the school environment, the teacher's task is to foster and stimulate the various intelligences and potentials of students so that they grow as intended by their Creator. (Informant 1).

3) Al-Fikri School's primary Focus

focus is developing natural potential, unlike conventional education, which emphasizes academic outcomes. As explained by informant 1,

> Classroom learning utilizes a differentiated learning system. This is similar to how it handles children transitioning from kindergarten to elementary school. Kindergarten typically focuses on play, while elementary school students are exposed to reading sentences. Therefore, Al-Fikri School differs; there is no academic selection system. Therefore, the school provides facilities tailored to the diverse nature of children. (Informant 1).

4) Al-Fikri School prioritizes the development

Development of natural potential (fitrah) as the primary focus of its educational process (Fitri et al., 2024). This fitrah encompasses spiritual, moral, emotional, social, physical, and intellectual tendencies. Based on this foundation, all educational practices at Al-Fikri are geared toward discovering, nurturing, and maximizing each child's unique potential through a more humanistic, personal, and natural approach.

This learning model differs fundamentally from conventional education, which relies on standardized academic achievement, test-based learning, and standardized learning outcomes (Widiatmaka, 2021). At Al-Fikri, children's development is not assessed based on how quickly they can read, calculate, or master specific academic material, but rather on how well they develop at their own pace, strengthen their character, and demonstrate progress in their innate qualities (Mashar & Pudji Astuti, 2022). Al-Fikri School emphasizes that each child has a different learning rhythm, interests, and strengths, so education should not be forced to follow the same pattern for all children.

5) Approaching and facilitating

Approaching and Facilitating children's innate qualities through differentiated learning. Although adopting the concept of multiple intelligences, the school does not require students to achieve academic results that have a target achievement value. Abdul Majid (2012) in (Abdul Ghani et al., 2023) argues that a differentiated approach to learning emphasizes recognizing individual student differences and providing responsive teaching strategies. In agreement with this, resource person 1 also explained the differentiated learning approach for Al-Fikri students:

> Yes, multiple intelligences don't require children to have specific academic achievements, such as all being in math or getting A's, all being in science, and so on. Therefore, potential development occurs in many kinesthetic fields. Some are into art, music, and some simply enjoy science. It also fosters communication skills, such as self-understanding and communication. Based on the concepts I've outlined, classroom learning also uses a system called differentiated learning. (Resource person 1)

The independent curriculum, also used by Al-Fikri, is aimed at providing schools and madrasas with flexibility in designing curricula tailored to the needs and characteristics of students (Cecep Abdul Muhlis Suja'i, 2023). Furthermore, the combination of the natural instinct concept and the independent curriculum is expected to create more inclusive learning that is oriented toward student learning experiences (Mansyur et al., 2023). Therefore, the learning differentiation paradigm is a relevant concept to explore in the context of implementing the Independent Curriculum, such as in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning.

6) The role of teachers

Role of teacher is to foster the innate nature and serve as good role models (uswatun hasanah) for students (Isti & Sasono, 2021). All teachers at Al-Fikri School play a very strategic role as fosterers of the innate nature and as uswatun hasanah (good role models) for each student. This role stems from the understanding that innate education cannot develop through verbal instruction alone but must be instilled through concrete examples, personal mentoring, and compassionate interactions (Jalil, 2016). Therefore, Al-Fikri teachers not only fulfill their teaching function but also act as murabbi (educators) who foster the holistic spiritual, emotional, social, and intellectual development of children (Triningtyas, 2016). Furthermore, in fulfilling their role as uswatun hasanah, Al-Fikri teachers understand that real-life examples have far greater power than mere instruction. As stated by resource person 1,

> the school assesses children's emotional maturity. From the outset, this school has been committed to being welcoming to all children. We don't administer academic tests like reading, writing, and arithmetic. From the outset, we decided to implement the concept of reading, writing, and

> arithmetic because, for us, what we want to see in elementary school children is their emotional maturity. (Speaker 1)

Therefore, teachers demonstrate attitudes, speech, and behavior that reflect Islamic moral values such as honesty, patience, responsibility, and compassion (Bafadhol, 2017). Teachers build a warm emotional bond with students, so that daily interactions become the primary medium for instilling manners and character. The values of worship, social concern, and courtesy toward others are instilled through hands-on practice presented in classroom routines and school activities. Furthermore, teachers also serve as spiritual companions, providing wise guidance, guiding children in prayer, meditation, and learning about God through the experiences they gain at school. The humility, empathy, and integrity demonstrated by teachers daily serve as role models that naturally shape children's character, as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in his exemplary education: sidiq (intelligence), amanah (trustworthiness), fathonah (faithfulness), and tabligh (preaching) (Habibah, 2015).

7) Assesment at Al-Fikri School

Assessment at Al-Fikri School utilizes a holistic approach, encompassing spiritual, emotional, social, physical, and cognitive aspects. Spiritual assessment encompasses children's spiritual development, such as closeness to God, understanding of the values of worship, etiquette, and gratitude. Teachers observe and record how children demonstrate tendencies toward goodness, peace of mind, and behavior that reflects Qur'anic values in every school activity. This approach is not an exam, but a reflection of spiritual development evident in students' daily lives. The following is the opinion of resource person 2 regarding the assessment aspects at Al-Fikri Islamic Fitrah School:

> Not from an academic perspective. From its inception, with this "Fitr" concept, we have made it an inclusive school. Long before the government encouraged the acceptance of children with special needs, this school was conceived to accept inclusive children. The founders then emphasized the importance of encouraging all teachers to recognize the potential of all children. That's why we don't focus solely on academic results, because for us, children are born with a pure, natural nature. It is the adults around them who, through their parents and the school, must be able to develop these potentials. (Speaker 2)

The implementation of this model in Islamic Religious Education (PAI) lessons has provided several benefits, including improved student attitudes. The following are responses from students who have received education using the fitrah-based model, particularly in Islamic Religious Education (PAI), including:

Table 2. Spiritual and Moral Awareness

Aspects Assessed	Category	Number of Students
Spiritual and Moral Awareness	Significantly Improved	30 Students
	Moderately Improved	2 Students

The data analysis in Table 2 shows that, in general, the fitrah-based Islamic Religious Education (PAI) learning is very effective in increasing students' spiritual and moral awareness. This is evident in the dominant high scores of 30 students, indicating the success of this learning approach, which fosters faith values in accordance with human nature. However, two students reported a significant increase in their spiritual and moral awareness.

To assess the benefits of implementing the fitrah-based model, researchers conducted a measurable test. Based on the measurement results, the spiritual and moral awareness aspects were assessed. The data analysis revealed that, of the 32 students, 30, or 93.75%, were categorized as having greatly improved their spiritual and moral awareness, while two students (6.25%) were categorized as having moderate improvement. Furthermore, no students were found to have low or very low scores.

In the emotional dimension, teachers assess children's ability to recognize, manage, and express their feelings in a healthy manner. Emotional stability, such as independence, empathy, and the ability to face challenges, is assessed (Triningtyas, 2016). Social assessments, meanwhile, include children's skills in interacting with peers, teachers, and the environment. Furthermore, demonstrating cooperation, communication skills, respect for others, and conflict resolution are key aspects (Zuhdi, 2012). This approach aligns with the school's belief that social intelligence is.

Furthermore, from the physical assessment dimension, teachers also evaluate students' gross and fine motor development, as well as positive habits related to physical activity (Sawaluddin, 2018). This observation ensures that children's physical development aligns with their natural potential, without pressure or standards that could impact their growth and development. Equally important, cognitive assessment is conducted not in terms of academic results, but through the child's thinking process, curiosity, problem-solving skills, creativity, and how they understand the world (Harto & Tastin, 2019). The focus is on the learning process, not on final scores or grades.

B. Implementation of The Fitrah Education Concept at Al-Fikri School

1) Observation Show

Observations show that learning at Al-Fikri is not limited by a rigid curriculum structure. It utilizes experiential learning methods, guided play, thematic projects, and life skills tailored to children's developmental stages (Muniroh, 2019). Teachers provide students with the freedom to choose activities based on their preferences, particularly in

the arts, nature exploration, and technology. This approach is believed to facilitate the growth of children's natural talents and curiosity. (Nuramini, 2022)

> So, what specific curriculum or program is designed to develop children's natural potential at Al-Fikri School? The curriculum here follows the government curriculum. When the government curriculum was introduced in 2013, the Merdeka curriculum, we naturally followed the government curriculum, but within that curriculum, several elements of interpretation were incorporated. For example, we also learned about the Quran, and there were lessons like Quranic teachings, and there were also lessons about life skills, and so on. So, everything is interspersed with the concept of "sonship and daughtership." The curriculum follows the government curriculum, with a few additions. (Informant 1)

Thus, although Al-Fikri School uses the government curriculum, the school places additional emphasis on elements of natural education through a consciously designed and directed program. The national curriculum provides the structure, while elements of Quranic interpretation, tasnik (religious teachings), life skills, sonship and daughtership, and habits serve as important tools for developing each child's natural potential (Hendriani et al., 2023). This approach ensures that the educational process not only produces children who are able to meet academic standards but also grow as individuals with character, independence, noble morals, and develop according to their natural disposition (Juniarti et al., 2020). The curriculum at Al-Fikri, therefore, is not simply a series of subjects, but an educational ecosystem that nurtures children as whole human beings.

2) The School Learning

The school learning environment will create a warm, emotionally safe, and non-competitive learning atmosphere. The school environment is designed to allow children to freely move, interact, and explore. Classroom layout is flexible, placing the teacher not at the center but as a facilitator. The social environment is also built with an emphasis on empathy, independence, and Islamic morals based on example, not merely verbal instruction (Ramadlan et al., 2022).

Source: Personal Document

Figure 2. Quran Recitation Activity

Figure 2 shows the Quran recitation activity. This activity at Al-Fikri School is a program designed to foster students' love of the Quran while simultaneously cultivating courage, self-confidence, and exemplary behavior in front of their peers and the school community. The recitation is conducted openly, with students reciting their memorized Quran in front of teachers, peers, and other school members. This activity takes place on the school grounds, creating a more spacious, comfortable environment that does not put pressure on students' psychological well-being, as psychological well-being also plays a crucial role in student learning outcomes (Education, 2011). The choice of the field as the location for this activity was well-reasoned. The open environment provides a more relaxed space and atmosphere for children, while also emphasizing that interaction with the Quran is a lively, joyful, and celebratory activity, not something formal or stressful.

Therefore, an effective learning environment will motivate students' understanding at Al-Fikri (Nurhidayah, 2021). This was further supported by the opinion of resource person 2 regarding the learning program built within a focused school environment. The school provides a dedicated space called the "Worship Center." This room accommodates student activities, assisted by Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, Quranic recitation teachers, and Arabic language teachers.

> In our Islamic Religious Education (PAI) school, we have a team called the Worship Center, so we have a dedicated room called the Worship Center. The Worship Center consists of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) teachers, Quranic recitation teachers, and Arabic language teachers. (Resource person 2)

C. Discussion

Research findings indicate that ideal fitrah-based education must develop students holistically, encompassing spiritual, moral, emotional, social, physical, and intellectual dimensions. This ideal model has several key characteristics:

Based on the Quran and Developmental Psychology. The ideal educational concept places the Qur'an as the foundation for understanding children's potential, while also referencing contemporary scientific findings in child development psychology. Thus, the development of a child's natural disposition (fitrah) is balanced between revelation and modern science. Etymologically, fitrah comes from the Arabic word fithrah (فطرة), which means al-khilqah (instinct, innateness, original creation, purity, nature, or original state) and ṭabīʿah (nature, disposition, character, temperament) created by God in humans from birth (Muhtadi, 2016). According to Quraish Shihab, this word derives from the root word al-fithr, meaning "cleavage." From this meaning, other meanings related to creation arise, namely the initial creative process or event. Al-Fikri School focuses on developing students' unique potential and character, enhancing their faith, morals, and jurisprudence (fiqh), and providing a safe and beautiful learning environment

(https://alfikri.sch.id/). Since birth, humans have held to monotheism or Islam as stated in Surah Al-Araf verse 172:

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۞ شَهِدْنَآ ۞ بَلَىٰ قَالُوا۟ ۗ بِرَبِّكُمْ أَلَسْتُ أَنفُسِهِمْ عَلَىٰ وَأَشْهَدَهُمْ ذُرِّيَّتَهُمْ ظُهُورِهِمْ مِن ءَادَمَ بَنِىٰٓ مِنۢ رَبُّكَ أَخَذَ وَإِذْ

غَٰفِلِينَ هَٰذَا عَنْ كُنَّا إِنَّا ٱلْقِيَٰمَةِ يَوْمَ تَقُولُوا۟ أَن

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> And (remember) when your Lord brought forth the offspring of the children of Adam from their loins, and He took witness against their souls (saying), "Am I not your Lord?" They said, "Yes (You are our Lord), we bear witness." (We did this) lest you say on the Day of Resurrection: "Indeed, we (the children of Adam) were heedless of this (the oneness of God)."

Therefore, parents are not encouraged to deviate from it. This means that raising children to be pious Muslims or monotheists should be easier than raising children to be non-pious non-Muslims or non-monotheists (Muhrin, 2021). Because educating based on fitrah automatically means educating children based on Islamic creed or monotheism. Many scholars define fitrah as Islam or monotheism, or also as readiness to accept the Deen of Islam. A free and meaningful learning environment must facilitate exploration, creativity, collaboration, problem-solving, and the natural cultivation of Islamic worship and etiquette.

A non-competitive and loving atmosphere is key to avoiding pressure that can hinder the development of natural instincts. As stated by resource person 1, the learning process can take place anywhere, not just in the classroom, but it does require sufficient coordination between teachers. In this regard, teachers have provided examples of the importance of developing communication (Kustiawan, Khaira, et al., 2022).

> Learning here is actually free, whether it's in or outside the classroom. However, when we learn outside the classroom, it must be scheduled in advance because we worry, for example, if we're using a pavilion, it might turn out to be occupied by another activity. So, it's usually planned beforehand, but here, learning, such as project-based learning, usually takes place outside, such as searching for treasure, or, for example, learning math, where the teacher is directly involved. So, it's not confined to the classroom. (Resource person 1)

The ideal model positions the teacher as an inspirational figure who combines the roles of educator, coach, and spiritual mentor. Pedagogical competence, the ability to understand students' character, and emotional closeness are key assets for developing a child's natural instincts (Kustiawan, Fadillah, et al., 2022).

Ideal education does not separate academic intelligence from non-academic intelligence. Science, art, language, religion, sports, and manners are treated as a mutually reinforcing unity (Firdaus, 2017). The goal is to produce individuals with strong character, creativity, independence, and the ability to face the challenges of the times.

Just as when worshiping, being a servant is primarily for worship. That's the primary purpose, and secondly, the primary purpose is worship. So, everything a student does leads to that. For example, when they learn math and general subjects, they are convinced that these are all lessons related to Islamic religious studies, knowledge of God. That's why they're sometimes surprised: "Why is Islamic religious education like social studies, like math, counting, and zakat?" That's what Islamic religious education is all about. From the perspective of natural education applied at Al-Fikri School, the ideal educational process does not separate academic intelligence from non-academic intelligence. All aspects of learning, such as science, art, language, religion, sports, and manners, are viewed as a mutually reinforcing unity. This view aligns with Firdaus (2017), who emphasized that holistic education must foster a child's full potential in an integrated manner, thus developing individuals with strong, creative, independent character, and prepared to face the challenges of the times.

This integration is clearly evident in how various subjects and non-academic activities are directed toward strengthening students' values of worship and spiritual awareness. Education is not merely understood as the transfer of knowledge, but also as the process of becoming a complete servant of God. Therefore, the primary goal of all student learning activities, including general subjects like mathematics, science, and social studies, is to develop spiritual character and strengthen faith (At-Tamimi, 2004). Furthermore, teachers have assured students that all fields of knowledge are part of God's knowledge, so studying mathematics, geography, economics, and art is a form of worship if done with the right intention. The process of learning Islamic religion does not stand alone as a separate subject from other disciplines. In many cases, Islamic education (PAI) learning is presented through an interdisciplinary approach. In this way, children will understand that Islam governs all aspects of life and that all disciplines are harmoniously connected.

This integrative approach allows children to see education more holistically Understanding nature, processing numbers, creating through art, and interacting socially are all part of fulfilling one's role as a servant of God. When every knowledge is linked to the values of worship and morality, the learning process is no longer merely a cognitive activity but becomes a spiritual journey that fosters holistic intelligence (Sapitri et al., 2022). Thus, Al-Fikri School has successfully presented an educational model that does not compartmentalize knowledge but instead fosters awareness that all knowledge originates from God and shares the same goal: to cultivate people who are faithful, knowledgeable, civilized, and beneficial to life

IV.   Conclusion

The conclusion of this study is: The natural education developed at Al-Fikri School demonstrates that the ideal educational process should be oriented toward developing children's natural potential as a divine gift, rather than merely pursuing academic

achievement. The concept of natural education at this school is based on the understanding that every child carries fundamental tendencies, strengths, and character traits that need to be nurtured through an appropriate environment, wise guidance, and meaningful learning experiences. Thus, education serves not only to transfer knowledge but also to nurture children's identities so they develop according to their nature as servants and caliphs of God. The implementation of the natural education concept at Al-Fikri School is reflected in various learning practices integrated with religious values, strengthening morals, and consistent spiritual habits. Teachers serve as nurturers of natural education, guides, and role models (uswatun hasanah), influencing students' character development. The learning process is conducted humanistically through a dialogical approach, hands-on practice, open-ended activities such as reciting the Quran, and integrating general knowledge with religious knowledge. Students are guided to understand that all fields of knowledge are part of "God's knowledge," so that learning mathematics, science, art, and language remains oriented toward strengthening faith, worship, and spiritual awareness.

The concept of fitrah-based education, which aims to develop students' holistic intelligence, is one that does not separate academic intelligence from non-academic intelligence. The various dimensions of a child's development—spiritual, intellectual, emotional, social, physical, and moral—are viewed as a mutually reinforcing unity. This holistic education aims to develop a well-rounded individual with a strong character, creativity, independence, and adaptability, capable of facing the challenges of the times. Therefore, the educational model implemented at Al-Fikri Fitrah Islamic School is ideal for addressing the challenges of the modern era.For further researchers, it is recommended to conduct a more in-depth study on the effectiveness of the PAI learning model based on nature on the development of character, spirituality, and social competence of students, and to develop it in the context of different schools and levels of education.

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