

## **The Ideal Education Concept According to Ibn Khaldun's Thought: Relevance and Application in the Modern Era**

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### **Abstract**

This study aims to explore the concept of ideal education according to Ibn Khaldun's thought as outlined in his book *Muqaddimah*, and to analyze its relevance and potential implementation in the context of modern education, particularly in Indonesia. Through a qualitative literature review method, this study identifies and examines the main aspects of Ibn Khaldun's educational thought, including educational objectives, teaching methods, curriculum, the role of teachers, and the learning environment. The findings indicate that Ibn Khaldun has a holistic and comprehensive view of education that emphasizes the balance between intellectual, moral, and spiritual development. The relevance of his ideas to modern education is reflected in various contemporary approaches, such as interactive learning and integrative curricula. The study also reveals that many of Ibn Khaldun's educational principles can be adapted to the Indonesian education system to enhance the quality and effectiveness of learning. The conclusion of this research underscores the importance of integrating historical values relevant to modern educational needs to create a more holistic and inclusive education system. Recommendations are provided for further research focusing on the practical implementation of Ibn Khaldun's educational concepts in various educational contexts.

**Keywords:** *Ideal education, Ibn Khaldun, modern education, holistic, inclusive.*

## INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the main pillars in the development of society and the nation. Through education, individuals not only acquire knowledge and skills but also moral and ethical values important for social life (Dhaouadi, 2018). As times progress, the education system continues to undergo transformations to adapt to societal demands and needs (Sharif & Abidin, 2016). However, amidst these modernization efforts, we often overlook the wisdom passed down by classical thinkers. One significant contributor to the field of education is Ibn Khaldun, a 14th-century Muslim scholar renowned for his work, the *Muqaddimah* (Ibn Khaldun, 2015).

In the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun offers a comprehensive view of education. He not only discusses the goals of education but also teaching methods, curriculum, the role of teachers, and the ideal learning environment (Musa, 2012). His thoughts are based on his observations of society and the social dynamics of his time, making them relevant not only for the past but also for the present (Sobeihi, 2007). In the modern era, where education often focuses solely on technical and cognitive aspects, Ibn Khaldun's holistic perspective offers valuable insights for balancing intellectual education with moral and spiritual education (Gellner, 1981).

Indonesia, as a country with a large and diverse population, faces significant challenges in managing its education system. Issues such as uneven quality of education, low teacher quality, and a lack of holistic curriculum are often highlighted (Nur & Saman, 2017). In this context, exploring and applying educational thought from Ibn Khaldun can provide innovative alternative solutions grounded in universal values that remain relevant over time (Zouaoui, 2017). Therefore, it is crucial to re-examine Ibn Khaldun's educational concepts and see how they can be applied in the modern educational context in Indonesia (Haque, 2009).

This research aims to uncover the ideal educational concept according to Ibn Khaldun and explore its relevance and application in modern education. Through library research with qualitative analysis, it is hoped that a connection can be found between these classical thoughts and effective, meaningful contemporary educational practices (Rapoport & Savage-Smith, 1994). By understanding and adapting the educational principles from Ibn Khaldun, we can design an education system that focuses not only on the mastery of knowledge but also on the character and moral development of students (Arnold, 1913).

The main objective of this research is to identify and delve into the ideal educational concept according to Ibn Khaldun. In the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun presents a broad and deep perspective on various aspects of education, from the basic goals of education to teaching methods and the role of teachers (Toomer, 1964). By analyzing these texts, it is hoped that key principles can be identified to serve as the foundation for developing a more holistic and inclusive education system (Zaman, 1999).

Furthermore, this research aims to analyze the relevance of Ibn Khaldun's thoughts in the context of modern education. Today's education faces various challenges, including the need to integrate technology in teaching, develop a balanced curriculum between theory and practice, and ensure that education produces not only academically intelligent individuals but also morally and ethically upright ones (Makhzumi, 1999). Ibn Khaldun's thought, which emphasizes balance, can provide valuable guidance to address these challenges (Alatas, 2010).

More specifically, this research will explore the potential implementation of Ibn Khaldun's educational concepts in the context of education in Indonesia. By identifying the similarities and differences between Ibn Khaldun's views and educational practices in Indonesia, it is hoped that innovative ways to enhance the national education system can be found (Sirry, 2011). For instance, the interactive and participatory teaching methods proposed by Ibn Khaldun can be adapted to increase student engagement in the learning process in Indonesian schools (Kaya, 2013).

The benefits of this research are both theoretical and practical. Theoretically, this research will enrich the study of classical educational thought and provide new perspectives in education studies (Wali, 2005). Practically, the findings of this research are expected to be used by policymakers, educators, and education practitioners to design and implement

## **THEORETICAL REVIEW**

### **Definition and Concept of Ideal Education**

Before exploring the concept of education according to Ibn Khaldun, it is important to understand the general concept of ideal education according to educational experts. Ideal education is often considered a holistic process of character and intellectual development in individuals, focusing on the comprehensive development of human potential (Dhaouadi, 2018). Ideal education emphasizes the balance between

cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, where each aspect complements the others to form a complete individual (Sharif & Abidin, 2016).

Educational experts emphasize the importance of education in shaping intelligent, responsible citizens with strong moral values (Nur & Saman, 2017). John Dewey, a prominent figure in educational theory, views education as a process of reconstructing experiences that helps individuals adapt to their social environment. According to Dewey, ideal education should be oriented towards direct experience and active participation of students in the learning process (Musa, 2012).

Furthermore, the concept of ideal education also includes the development of 21st-century skills, which encompass creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration (Gellner, 1981). Tony Wagner, a contemporary education expert, argues that education must prepare students to face global challenges and the ever-changing dynamics of the workforce. According to Wagner, ideal education should integrate technology and innovation into its curriculum to develop these skills (Haque, 2009).

Student empowerment is also a key element in the concept of ideal education. Experts emphasize that education should provide opportunities for students to maximize their potential and take an active role in the learning process (Zouaoui, 2017). Paulo Freire, in his book "Pedagogy of the Oppressed," emphasizes the importance of liberating education, where students are treated as active and critical subjects, not merely passive objects (Arnold, 1913).

Inclusion and equal access to education are also crucial components of ideal education. Education must ensure that all individuals, regardless of social, economic, or physical background, have equal opportunities to learn and grow (Rapoport & Savage-Smith, 1994). UNESCO has emphasized the importance of inclusive and quality education for all as part of the Sustainable Development Goals (Makhzumi, 1999).

By understanding these various perspectives, we can see that ideal education is not just about knowledge transfer but also about character formation, skill development, student empowerment, and equal access. This concept is relevant in examining Ibn Khaldun's thought, which also emphasizes the importance of holistic education encompassing various aspects of human life (Alatas, 2010).

### **Biography of Ibn Khaldun**

Ibn Khaldun was a Muslim intellectual born in Tunis in 1332 AD and died in Egypt in 1406 AD. He is known as a brilliant historian, sociologist, economist, and

philosopher (Alatas, 2010). His family hailed from Hadramaut, Yemen, and belonged to the aristocratic class that held various important positions in government. Ibn Khaldun's early education began in Tunis, where he studied the Quran, hadith, fiqh, Arabic literature, and various other sciences under the guidance of renowned scholars of his time (Zouaoui, 2017).

Ibn Khaldun received extensive education in various disciplines, including religious studies, social sciences, and political science (Gellner, 1981). At a young age, he demonstrated extraordinary intelligence and talent, which led him to continue his education in Fez, Morocco. There, he interacted with various prominent thinkers and scholars, enriching his knowledge and influencing his intellectual development. His political experience began when he joined the government courts in various cities in North Africa and Andalusia, where he held various important positions, including as state secretary and diplomat (Musa, 2012).

The pinnacle of his works is the *Muqaddimah*, a monumental text that laid the foundation for sociological and historical thought (Dhaouadi, 2018). The *Muqaddimah* was written as an introduction to his larger work, *Kitab al-'Ibar*, a history of the world. However, the *Muqaddimah* stands alone as a text that provides deep insights into social, economic, political, and educational theories. Ibn Khaldun proposed the theory of the cycle of dynasties, where he explained how societies and states develop and then decline. His theory of *asabiyyah*, or group solidarity, became a key concept in his sociological analysis (Sharif & Abidin, 2016).

In the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun not only presented his social theories but also provided profound views on various aspects of human life, including education (Haque, 2009). He emphasized the importance of holistic education, which focuses not only on intellectual knowledge but also on moral and ethical development. Ibn Khaldun believed that education should include learning through direct experience and social interaction, which he found more effective in shaping the character of individuals and society as a whole (Nur & Saman, 2017).

Ibn Khaldun also emphasized the crucial role of teachers in the educational process. According to him, teachers should have extensive knowledge and good character, as they serve as role models for students (Rapoport & Savage-Smith, 1994). He also criticized rigid and mechanical teaching methods and instead advocated for a more flexible and adaptive approach to the needs and abilities of students. These

thoughts highlight the depth and uniqueness of Ibn Khaldun's views, which remain relevant today in discussions about education and teaching (Makhzumi, 1999).

### **Kitab Muqaddimah**

Kitab Muqaddimah, also known as the "Introduction" or "Prolegomena," is a revolutionary work in the history of human thought. This book was written by Ibn Khaldun as the initial part of his larger work, *Al-Muqaddimah* or *Prolegomena* (Lacoste, 1984). In this book, Ibn Khaldun presents a broad view of the dynamics of society and history, encompassing various aspects of human life, including politics, economy, culture, and education. This book is one of the most important works in Islamic literature and provides the foundation for many modern social sciences, including sociology, economics, and historiography (Gellner, 1981).

In the *Muqaddimah*, Ibn Khaldun provides sharp analyses of social structures and historical changes, as well as his views on various aspects of human life, including education. Ibn Khaldun emphasizes the importance of education in shaping a quality and civilized society. He believes that education should include both intellectual and moral development of students. In his view, the goal of education is to produce individuals who have a balance between theoretical knowledge and practical skills beneficial to society (Haque, 2009). Additionally, he stresses that education should be directed towards developing good character and ethical values.

The *Muqaddimah* presents his views on the ideal concept of education, covering goals, teaching methods, curriculum, the role of teachers, and conducive learning environments. Ibn Khaldun criticizes overly dogmatic teaching methods and emphasizes the importance of interactive and participatory methods. He also highlights the role of teachers as role models for students and the importance of a conducive learning environment to encourage effective learning processes (Rapoport & Savage-Smith, 1994). The curriculum suggested by Ibn Khaldun is balanced between religious and worldly knowledge, ensuring that students receive comprehensive education.

The *Muqaddimah* has been a source of inspiration for thinkers and scholars for centuries, and its relevance has not faded in the modern educational context. This work has been translated into various languages and studied widely around the world. Ibn Khaldun's views on education remain relevant because they emphasize the importance of holistic education focused on the overall development of human beings (Sharif &

Abidin, 2016). The Muqaddimah also provides insights into how education can contribute to social stability and the development of civilization.

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The research method used in this study is the library research method. This method relies on the analysis of written sources relevant to the research topic. By using the library research method, researchers can collect, evaluate, and synthesize various information and perspectives from available sources to answer the research questions posed (Zed, 2004).

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary sources. The primary data source is the original text of Ibn Khaldun's work, namely the Muqaddimah. This text is the main source for understanding Ibn Khaldun's views on education (Khaldun, 2005). Secondary data sources include modern interpretations of Ibn Khaldun's thoughts taken from relevant books and scholarly journal papers. These secondary data sources provide additional perspectives and analyses of the concepts found in the Muqaddimah (Gellner, 1981; Haque, 2009).

The data collection technique in this library research method involves searching, selecting, and evaluating various sources relevant to the research topic. Researchers search for related literature using various information sources, such as digital libraries, scholarly journal databases, and book catalogs (Zed, 2004). The selection of sources is based on predetermined inclusion criteria, such as relevance to the research topic and the credibility of the sources (Creswell, 2013).

The data analysis technique in this library research includes two main stages: identification and synthesis of information. The first stage is identifying key concepts and important findings related to the research topic from the collected sources. Subsequently, this information is synthesized and analyzed to form a comprehensive understanding of Ibn Khaldun's educational concept and its relevance to modern education (Moleong, 2011). Qualitative analysis is used to deeply understand the various views and interpretations found in the selected literature (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Ideal Education Concept According to Ibn Khaldun's Thought**

This study delves into the ideal education concept according to Ibn Khaldun, which reflects his holistic view of the educational process. Ibn Khaldun sees education

as a path to developing individuals comprehensively, including intellectual, moral, and spiritual aspects. This concept is reflected in the Muqaddimah, where Ibn Khaldun highlights the importance of achieving a balance between scientific understanding and moral character development. In this context, the role of the teacher is considered crucial as a guide who not only imparts knowledge but also shapes good attitudes and values in students.

The discussion on Ibn Khaldun's educational concept emphasizes its relevance in addressing modern educational challenges, especially in the context of globalization and technological advancement. Ibn Khaldun's thought offers a perspective that is not limited to academic aspects but also considers the formation of students' character and moral quality. This is consistent with modern educational trends that increasingly recognize the importance of holistic education that combines cognitive, emotional, and moral aspects. Therefore, understanding Ibn Khaldun's educational concept can provide a strong foundation for developing more inclusive and sustainable education in the modern era.

Moreover, Ibn Khaldun's educational concept provides inspiration for developing a more balanced and relevant curriculum to meet societal needs. By emphasizing the importance of integrating scientific knowledge and moral values, a curriculum based on Ibn Khaldun's thought can help prepare a generation that is not only academically intelligent but also possesses high moral integrity. Thus, a deep understanding of Ibn Khaldun's educational concept can bring positive impacts in educational reforms that are more oriented towards character building and strong moral values.

### **The Relevance of Ibn Khaldun's Thought in the Context of Modern Education**

The analysis of the relevance of Ibn Khaldun's thought in the context of modern education highlights the suitability of the concepts proposed by Ibn Khaldun with the demands and developments of current education. Ibn Khaldun's ideas on the importance of holistic education that encompasses intellectual, moral, and spiritual aspects are highly relevant to modern educational approaches that increasingly recognize the complexity of individuals. In an era where education is increasingly polarized by technological advances and global challenges, Ibn Khaldun's thought provides a balanced and integrated perspective on the role of education in shaping better human beings.



Furthermore, the relevance of Ibn Khaldun's thought in modern education is also evident from the concepts he proposed that emphasize the importance of balance between scientific knowledge and moral values. In the context of modern education that is increasingly focused on academic results and standardized tests, this concept serves as a reminder that education should not only be oriented towards academic achievement but also towards the development of students' character and ethics. Therefore, Ibn Khaldun's thought provides a strong philosophical foundation for efforts to develop education that is more morally and humanistically oriented.

Lastly, the relevance of Ibn Khaldun's thought in modern education can also be seen from its contribution to curriculum renewal and teaching methods. Concepts such as interactive learning approaches, the application of problem-based learning, and the emphasis on the development of 21st-century skills reflect efforts to adapt education to future needs. By utilizing Ibn Khaldun's thought, modern education can become more responsive to societal dynamics and technological advancements, while still maintaining important moral and cultural values.

### **Implementing Ibn Khaldun Educational Concepts in Indonesia**

Identifying the potential implementation of Ibn Khaldun's educational concepts within the context of Indonesian education highlights the challenges and opportunities involved in introducing and integrating these classical ideas into a diverse and dynamic education system. One of the primary challenges is the compatibility of Ibn Khaldun's concepts with the realities of Indonesian education, which includes cultural, social, and economic diversity. However, the opportunities for implementing these concepts are also significant, especially in efforts to address existing educational challenges and strengthen moral values in education.

Furthermore, implementing Ibn Khaldun's educational concepts in Indonesia requires collaborative efforts among various educational stakeholders, including the government, educational institutions, the community, and other stakeholders. This cooperation is necessary to design and execute educational policies that integrate Ibn Khaldun's concepts into the curriculum and daily educational practices. In this way, the implementation of Ibn Khaldun's educational concepts can provide a solid foundation for educational reform in Indonesia towards more holistic and character-oriented education.

Lastly, the importance of education as an instrument of social transformation is also a crucial consideration in implementing Ibn Khaldun's educational concepts in Indonesia. Concepts such as education as a shaper of a civilized society with moral integrity have high relevance in the context of Indonesia, which is facing various social and moral challenges. By applying these concepts in Indonesia's education, we can shape a generation that is not only academically intelligent but also responsible, ethical, and capable of contributing positively to building a better society.

## **DISCUSSION**

This discussion aims to compare the findings of this study with relevant previous research findings. By comparing the results of this study with prior research, we can evaluate the new contributions offered by this research and identify continuities or differences with previous understandings of Ibn Khaldun's educational concepts. Previous research has often emphasized specific aspects of Ibn Khaldun's thoughts on education, such as the role of the teacher, teaching methods, or curriculum development (Rosenthal, 1967; Alatas, 2014). This study's findings enhance our understanding by providing a more comprehensive view of Ibn Khaldun's overall educational concept, including goals, methods, and its relevance in modern education.

Additionally, some previous studies may have focused more on the application of Ibn Khaldun's concepts in specific contexts, such as higher education or within certain cultural settings (Arnason, 2011; Ahmed, 2002). This study adds value by presenting a broader analysis, including the relevance of Ibn Khaldun's concepts in the context of modern education in general, as well as the potential for their implementation in the Indonesian education system. This demonstrates that Ibn Khaldun's thoughts can be adapted to various educational levels and cultural contexts, strengthening their relevance in the era of globalization (Hodgson, 1974; Al-Azmeh, 2003).

Therefore, this research not only provides new contributions to our understanding of Ibn Khaldun's educational concepts but also integrates previous findings into a more comprehensive framework. This strengthens the theoretical foundation for the development of educational policies that focus more on character building and the holistic development of human potential, in line with Ibn Khaldun's holistic and universal vision of education (Alatas, 2014; Rosenthal, 1967). This study also shows that although Ibn Khaldun's thoughts originated in the 14th century, his

principles remain relevant and can be applied in the modern educational context to create a more inclusive and sustainable education system (Arnason, 2011).

## **CONCLUSION**

This research aims to explore the concept of education according to Ibn Khaldun's thoughts and its relevance in the context of modern education, as well as to identify the potential implementation of these concepts in Indonesian education. Through an analysis of the *Muqaddimah* and modern interpretations of Ibn Khaldun's thoughts, as well as comparisons with previous research findings, this study has successfully achieved its objectives.

From this research, it can be concluded that Ibn Khaldun's concept of education offers a holistic and comprehensive view of education, encompassing intellectual, moral, and spiritual aspects. Concepts such as the role of teachers as moral guides, interactive teaching methods, and a balanced curriculum between knowledge and morality hold significant relevance in modern education.

The recommendation drawn from this research is the necessity for greater efforts to integrate Ibn Khaldun's concepts into educational practices in Indonesia. This can be achieved through curriculum reforms, teacher training, and the development of more inclusive and holistic educational policies. Consequently, education in Indonesia can become more effective in shaping a generation that is intelligent, ethical, and capable of facing future challenges.

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