Scrutinizing the Effect of Spirituality on Huffaz students Mental Health In Itqan Institute

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Abstract

Islamic spiritual intelligence develops alongside spiritual knowledge and spiritual action, which is guided, supported, regulated, and made with belief, morality and excellence. In Islam, spirituality is defined as the linking of actions to the purpose of life. The objective of this study is to explore the significant relationship between spiritual intelligence and mental health. A qualitative research design was used in this study. The data collection was done through semi interview techniques. As a result, there is a positive impact between spiritual intelligence and spirituality (praying, memorizing Qur’an) and mental health. It is recommended for future researchers to identify the benefits of being a Huffaz in broader aspect such as psychological illnesses and disorders. With such research, it is hoped that it will encourage more people outside to read, understand and memorize the Holy Qur’an.

Keywords: Islamic spiritual, Spiritual intelligence, psychology, mental health.

1. Introduction

Spiritual intelligence gives us the ability to discriminate, and temper rigid rules with understanding and compassion while understanding when compassion and understanding have their limits. It is also helps develop our moral sense and guides us to our direction in life. According to Zohar (2010), “If we know how to rely on our SQ, we shall become less fearful, more accustomed to relying on ourselves, more willing to face the difficulties and the uncomfortable, and more ready to live at the edge. As a matter of fact, among Harward Gardner’s proposed multiple intelligence, intrapersonal intelligence has the similarities with the concept of spiritual intelligence. Intrapersonal intelligence is the self-knowledge and ability to act adaptively on the basis of that knowledge. This intelligence includes having an accurate picture of oneself (one’s strengths and limitations); awareness of inner moods, intentions, motivations, temperaments, and desires; and the capacity for self-discipline, self-understanding and self-esteem (Zohar, 2010).

Islamic spiritual intelligence develops alongside spiritual knowledge (i’lm) and spiritual action (a’mal), which is guided, supported, regulated, and made with belief (iman-taqwa), morality (akhlaq) and excellence (ihsan). In Islam, spirituality is defined as the linking of actions to the purpose of life. For instance, a Muslim's purpose of life is to worship Allah, hence spirituality in this sense is linking the actions of an individual to worship Allah. Amram (2007) believed that to have spiritual intelligence means to have a sense of meaning, mission and sacredness in life, as well as a balanced understanding of the value and believe in a better world.

Islamic spiritual intelligence is grounded firmly in the teaching of the Revelation and has been demonstrated practically throughout the life and example of Prophet Muhammad, nourished through the contribution of people of wisdom, scholars, and those grounded in knowledge and action (Qur’an 4:164), who are able to integrate in themselves spiritual awareness, knowledge and experience while maintaining an active presence in society. Islamic spiritual intelligence, however, is distinct from some courses of thinking or acting such as philosophy, witchcraft or black magic. Spiritual intelligence necessitates an awareness of the boundaries and horizons of spiritual actions or experience. Four key
terms have been used in reference to spirituality, the soul or spirit (ruh) (Qur'an 32:9), the self (nafs) (Qur’an 91:7), body (jism) (Qur’an 2:247; 21:8), and heart (qalb) (Qur’an 13:28)

It is believed that spiritual intelligence has an impact towards our self-awareness in founding a good relationship with God the Almighty, with each other, to the earth that we living in as well as all human beings. A good relationship with God and human beings can be molded by practice (Ghazali, Md. Sawari, Yusuf, 2015). Spiritual intelligence can also be expressed through wisdom, love and service. This is similar to emotional intelligence that allows us to judge the situation we are in and behave appropriately.

Zohar and Berman (2001) suggested that spiritual intelligence (SQ) is about creative, insightful, rule-making, rule-breaking and transformative thinking which often manifests in a spiritual pathway that involves duty, nurturing, understanding, personal transformation, brotherhood, servant-leadership and the center. This illustrates the importance of SQ in influencing an individual’s actions and decision.

2. Literature Review

Spirituality has a significant influence on the quality of life and it goes without saying that adolescence is a sensitive period which requires careful guidance so that the youngsters will have a brighter future and be ready to face difficulties. This includes helping adolescents understand their purpose in life. However, this is often the neglected part of our intelligence. Islam establishes a constant awareness, mindfulness and consciousness of God in everything that a Muslim says or does (Ghazali, Sawari& Yusuf, 2015). The Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) emphasised on developing a good character by engaging a constant practice of prayer, meditation, remembrance of God and other activities, as these actions change the heart and thereby bring one closer to God. Islam has a unique view on spirituality as it encompasses all aspects of a Muslim’s life. All actions that are carried out in the remembrance of God are spiritual, and these actions include the supplications we utter before we go to bed to the type of bank account that we hold which that does not have riba. God has prescribed certain actions that develop positive characters as well as bring a Muslim closer to God and thereby help him/her attain God consciousness. This state achieves many things including God’s love, closeness and divine assistance. Spirituality in Islam is attached in every aspects of human life. Islam acts as a religion as well as a way of life which basically spiritual and religion is considered as one.

One of the institutes in Malaysia that embrace the memorizing of the Qur’an is Itqan Institute which produces professional Huffazs-students and emphasizes more on the understanding of the meaning of Qur’an. However, it is not clear to what extent that the Huffaz students in this institute acquired the high level of spirituality. Instead of practicing, reciting, and fasting students are obligated to memorize with understanding the meaning of the Qur’an. Not all of the local institutes implement this practical way of life. Even they understand that as a Muslim, it is an obligation for them to understand the Qur’an. It is important to practice a good Islamic way of life in order to avoid having a negative akhlaq. Siraj (2008) suggested that students should be exposed to the concept and stage of spirituality, the stages and get trained on how they can get close to Allah S.W.T. If they want to get close to Allah, students should know themselves from the beginning. By having high spirituality, it is believed that students should be able to successfully solve their lives’ problems. They should be aware about the impact of Qur’an on their body and mind as well.

3. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

A qualitative research design was used in this study. The data collection was done through semi interview techniques. By semi interview approach its help researcher to gain an insight on the Huffaz-students' perception of spiritual intelligence and their perceived impact of spirituality towards their own mental health. Denscombe (2010) suggested that the qualitative method is easier for participants to answer; a more accurate analysis by means of a quantitative method of analysis would not be as
scientifically objective as it might seem on the surface. This shows that qualitative data is more reliable to use in this study in order to get further information about own personal views regarding to this topic. However, there are disadvantages in using qualitative method, as the data might be less representative, and it becomes more difficult to establish how far the finding from the details (Denscombe, 2010).

2.2 Procedures of Data Analysis

The data produced was based on the interviewee’s point of view on the questions asked. Questions asked were about Huffaz-students’ perceptions of spiritual intelligence, the effect of spirituality on their mental health and their contributing factors. Then, the data obtained from the interview was organized and analysed, and categorized, themes and patterns were generated.

4. Finding and Discussions

The finding of this study shows that spirituality has a significant effect on the Huffaz student’s mental health. It is clear that the Huffaz students are aware of the existence of spiritual intelligence and apply it in their daily life. This might be due to the spiritual activities that they practice in their life. In addition, as a Muslim, it is obligatory to perform the deeds commanded by God without being asked by other people. This shows the sincerity of the respondents themselves in seeking guidance and blessings from Allah.

This study also highlights the positive impact spirituality has on Huffaz students’ mental health. As the Huffaz students stated spirituality has personal impacts as well as social influences in their lives. They emphasise that the connection they have with Allah through memorizing the Qur’an helps them to reduce the depression, stress and anxiety as well. Furthermore, they mentioned many verses that contain guidelines for achieving mental health and reducing human suffering and stress. For instance, “Be aware that remembrance of Allah calms the hearts” (Quran 13:28).

Furthermore, this study found that reinforcing Huffaz students’ spirituality through memorizing the Qur’an can help them to increase self-esteem as well as self-control. Students believe that self-confidence can be gained by making yourself comfortable in your life, which can be found by keeping a connection with Allah. Muslims believe that by having a pure heart it will affect their actions, physical, mental, and emotions to function well. A hadith reported by SahihBukhari, narrated by An-Nu’man bin Bashir, told about the condition of the heart that will affect the whole body of a human being: “There is a piece of flesh in the body. If it becomes good (reformed) the whole body becomes good but if it gets spoilt the whole body gets spoilt and that is the heart”.

Spirituality has also shown a positive effect on social aspects of Huffaz. Whereby Huffaz students treat and help their friends willingly in a good way. As Allah revealed in surah Al-Hujurat verse 10: “The believers are nothing else than brothers. So make reconciliation between your brothers and fear Allah, that you may receive mercy.” We also believe that the good believer is the one who love their brothers and sisters as Prophet Muhammad said: “None of you truly believes until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself.” (Bukhari& Muslim).

Knowing the purpose of life from the aspect of spirituality is vital in order to have a better life, to be a better person as well as to be a good vicegerent of Allah in this world and the hereafter. It can be seen that the Huffaz students’ perceptions about spirituality is in accordance with the general view that has been done by other researchers in this field. Spirituality is an important aspect in Islamic teachings and the enhancement of spiritual belief in our life is very crucial.

By having higher spiritual intelligence, one could achieve happiness, tranquillity, good relationships with God, human beings as well as the universe. This shows that high spirituality indicates higher spiritual intelligence in which there are terms used to clarify one’s soul including one’s thinking and reasoning capacity (Siraj, 2008). She also stated that there are three main ways of attaining high spirituality:

1) Piousness (Taqwa)
2) To cure the soul from the heart diseases of hypocrites (Qur’an 2:8-13)
3) To place the foundations of lives in accordance to justice and equality as emphasized in the Qur’an (Quran 16:92, and 57:25).

To apply the spiritual intelligence, a person needs to make an effort to be a murabbi. A murabbi defined by Kazmi (1999) as one who is not only knowledgeable and wise but also pious, kind and
considerate. In other words, a *murabbi* is a person who combines a life of learning with a life of virtue, and hence a perfect and ideal person to learn from (Kazmi, 1999).

As a human being, we should worship Allah alone and believe that Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is His messenger, and that Allah sent the messenger with guidance on how to lead our lives. *Murabbi* itself is defined as a counsellor, teacher and guider as well as an educator. Indeed, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is an ideal role model and his role is the most comprehensive one that involves guiding thoughts and actions. He was guided by revelation in his personal life, character and social interaction and sets prime examples of moral conduct for Muslims until the end of the world.

Allah commands us to follow His guidance as mentioned in the Qur’an “You have indeed, in the life of Rasul-Allah, the 'Best Model' for him whose hope is in Allah and the Day of the Hereafter, and who engages himself much in the remembrance of Allah” (Qur’an, 33:21). Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is the universal *murabbi* who brought the comprehensive universal message of Allah that suits all classes and professions. Thus, we require a practical example to regulate our behaviour in each of these various conditions by looking at our model Prophet Muhammad (PBUH). Prophet Muhammad is the greatest teacher, *murabbi* to mankind and he displays that the best example of spiritual intelligence like him.

5. Conclusions

In conclusion, we have to make continuous efforts to live our lives based on the Holy Qur’an and we must do it whole heartedly. It is clear that when we act and speak from our heart, we will touch others’ hearts. We should always seek Allah’s blessings and guidance so that we will not go astray. This was mentioned in the first surah in the Holy Qur’an “Oh Allah, guide us to the right path” (Qur’an, 1:6). It is an obligation on us to seek for Allah’s help to have a higher spiritual belief. The Qur’an is a Miracle book which has been sent down to mankind. Memorizing, reading, and understanding Qur’an will keep our life peaceful and indirectly create a healthy environment for the society. Therefore we should encourage Muslims to memorize it.

References

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