

## The Concept of *Insan Khalifah* in the Formation of Teacher Professionalism

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### Abstract

The development of students is not solely focused on classroom learning, and this remains a primary agenda of the Ministry of Education Malaysia. Holistic education is key to ensuring the comprehensive development of students, encompassing both academic aspects and character building. In an increasingly complex world, integrity, manners, and moral conduct are becoming more significant values, and character education programs in schools have a positive impact on student development. However, the role of teachers as educators is extremely critical. Teachers are not only responsible for imparting knowledge, but also play a role as mentors and role models for students and society. Teachers act as *murabbi* (educators), *mu'allim* (instructors), and *mursyid* (spiritual guides), all of which highlight their significant responsibility in shaping morally sound individuals. Hence, teachers need to internalize their role in cultivating a knowledgeable and ethical society, instilling the value of *tauhid* (the oneness of God) within themselves, which can then be translated into their daily lives, especially in teaching. This article aims to discuss the concept of *Guru Insan Khalifah*, which is expected to address all raised issues and subsequently become a primary indicator that can sustain all government policies and initiatives in addressing the pressures and challenges faced by teachers, as well as student disciplinary issues, in striving to achieve the aspirations outlined in the National Education Philosophy and the Malaysian Teacher Standards. This study is a descriptive analysis that will elucidate the concept of *Insan Khalifah* in developing resilient teacher leadership to face the challenges of a contemporary education system that has undergone many changes. The research is a basic study through documentation analysis, thematically analyzed according to predetermined thematic concepts. The study results focus on three key elements in building the identity of a teacher as *Insan Khalifah*: *tauhid ihsan* (theology and servitude), noble character, and the development of a civilization that brings well-being, peace, happiness, and mercy. The *Guru Insan Khalifah* is crucial in shaping positive values in teachers, fundamentally based on sound faith and correct thinking. This solid faith and correct thinking are believed to form a firm understanding of the concept of divinity and servitude, which in turn will drive the formation

of integrated noble character and cultivate a love for goodness, well-being, and holistic excellence.

**Keywords:** Insan Khalifah, Tawhid Ihsan, Noble Character, Building Civilization

### **Introduction**

The development of students does not only focus on classroom learning, and this continues to be a key agenda for the Ministry of Education Malaysia (KPM). According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2023), holistic education is the key to ensuring the comprehensive development of students, encompassing both academic aspects and character development. A study by Zulkifli and Ahmad (2023) indicates that in an increasingly complex world, integrity, manners, and morals are becoming more significant values, and character education programs in schools have a positive impact on student development.

However, the role of teachers as educators is highly critical. Teachers are not only responsible for delivering knowledge but also serve as mentors and role models for students and society. According to Sahrin and Ghani (2022), teachers act as *murabbi* (educator), *mu'allim* (instructor), and *mursyid* (spiritual guide), all of which highlight their significant responsibility in shaping morally upright individuals. Thus, teachers need to internalize their role in shaping a knowledgeable and ethical society by instilling ethical values within themselves, which can then be translated into their daily lives, particularly in the context of educating.

Emphasis on holistic development has led to a paradigm shift in education, focusing not only on academic excellence but also on shaping individuals who are of integrity and good character. This approach aligns with the National Education Philosophy (Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan, FPK), which underscores the importance of student development (*kemenjadian murid*) in nurturing individuals capable of contributing positively to family, religion, society, and the nation. Thus, the concept of 'Insan Khalifah' in Islamic education cannot be overlooked. 'Insan Khalifah' refers to a person who bears the responsibility of nurturing the earth and leading with justice and wisdom toward comprehensive well-being.

In the context of education, each individual teacher and, specifically, educational leaders hold a significant responsibility in guiding students not only in academic matters but also in spiritual and moral aspects. According to Nurcahyani et al. (2024), Islamic education aims to produce a complete person ('*al-insan al-kamil*'), who is knowledgeable, virtuous, and faithful. Therefore, an educational leader who embodies the qualities of 'Insan Khalifah' is crucial in instilling positive values in teachers, with a foundation rooted in correct faith and sound thinking. This accurate faith and thinking are believed to cultivate a solid understanding of divinity and servitude, the formation of integrated noble character, and ultimately nurture a love for goodness, well-being, and holistic excellence.

### **Problem Statement**

Disciplinary issues among students have become a hot topic of discussion and a subject of concern for many parties. Student misconduct, such as smoking, defying teachers, threatening teachers, truancy, and bullying, often poses challenges for educators. The discipline problem appears to be increasingly worrying, as data from the *Sistem Sahsiah Diri Murid* (SSDM) shows a decline in discipline performance. These records indicate that a

deterioration in student discipline is taking place. This concern is further substantiated by the Ministry of Education Malaysia (2022), which highlighted that cases of misconduct, such as truancy, smoking, and bullying, increased by the year 2022. SSDM data shows a 15% rise in disciplinary offenses in 2022 compared to the previous year. This clearly illustrates an urgent need for more effective preventive measures to be developed by schools and the Ministry of Education.

In response, the "Gagasan Anak Yang Baik Lagi Cerdik" (ABC) is a significant initiative implemented by the Ministry of Education in ensuring the development of students' character (Ministry of Education, 2022). The concept of Gagasan ABC aligns with the seven main pillars that form the core of the Ministry, including the aspect of 'Karamah Insaniah'. The Ministry believes that through initiatives like Gagasan ABC, which aim to integrate discipline, manners, and propriety as fundamental elements in student development, students will be equipped with the inner strength needed to face various challenges with strong principles and values (Ministry of Education, 2022). This initiative supports the view of Bakar and Ramli (2021), who stated that education plays a crucial role in the formation of manners, morals, and integrity. A holistic educational approach will ensure that students are not only educated academically but also possess high moral values. This view is endorsed by Lickona (2022), who emphasized the importance of character education, as well as Berkowitz and Bier's (2022) assertion on the significance of moral-based character education in achieving student success and social harmony.

Zulkifli and Ahmad (2023), emphasized that the rise in disciplinary misconduct among students is influenced by factors such as peer pressure, family stress, and social media. This study shows that the lack of effective supervision and guidance at home also contributes to the increase in disciplinary problems. Therefore, a more holistic approach is needed to address student discipline issues in an increasingly challenging era. This statement supports the views of Yusof and Ibrahim (2022), who highlighted the importance of integrating moral and ethical values into the school curriculum. They suggest that education focusing on character building and noble values can help reduce incidents of disciplinary misconduct, as effective moral education is not limited to the classroom but should also be practiced through good examples from teachers, school management, and parents.

Thus, the implications for the development of teacher quality are significant. Teachers need to be equipped with knowledge and skills not only in academic, cognitive, and educational psychology but also in the foundations of a divinely-centered and humble mindset, which directly fosters positive motivation and psychology, noble character, as well as a love for holistic well-being and excellence. Teachers must serve as good role models, guiding students through the integration of Islamic values in teaching and learning activities, and a variety of support programs throughout the school session. Consequently, in line with the formulation of various policies and initiatives aimed at developing student outcomes and enhancing teacher professionalism, educational leaders need to be nurtured with the spirit of the 'Insan Khalifah' contemporary educator, so that they can serve as role models both outwardly and inwardly, possessing skills that are intellectually accepted and capable of touching the hearts of teachers and students.

The relevance of globalization and the evolution of civilization has significantly transformed the education system. Additionally, interventions by certain parties have limited the authority of teachers, making it so that they can no longer punish students or use words that might offend, as these actions could lead to family involvement and, ultimately, teachers being 'attacked' at school. It is undeniable that there are issues related to teachers, such as incidents where teachers have slapped or kicked students during events attended by parents (Berita Harian, 2023). This clearly demonstrates that teachers are facing emotionally challenging situations. Given the various educational policies that have been established, we must consider: if the authority of teachers to discipline through corporal punishment has been removed, what is the best approach for a teacher to shape student development? If teachers are constantly positioned as role models for students, what are the traits of a teacher that embody the ideal characteristics to be emulated? If teachers are fundamentally viewed as agents of socialization and societal change, what are the primary indicators and concepts of a teacher who can be respected with love and manners?

Observing the decline in respect from students, parents, and society towards the noble role and identity of teachers, this article aims to discuss the "Guru Insan Khalifah" (GIK) concept, which is anticipated to address all the raised questions. This concept is expected to serve as a key indicator capable of sustaining all government policies and initiatives in addressing teacher stress as well as issues of discipline and problematic students, aligning with the aspirations outlined in the National Education Philosophy (FPK) and the Malaysian Teacher Standards (SGM).

Without in-depth research on how educational leaders can effectively play their roles, efforts to improve student discipline and teacher development may not be achieved holistically. Educators need to be imbued with the 'Insan Khalifah' concept, which is believed to be the best and most holistic concept as a foundation for teacher service training, especially for educational leaders. This concept aims to shape teacher professionalism that impacts school management, teachers, students, the community, the ummah, and the nation comprehensively.

### **Methodology**

This study employs a descriptive approach, aiming to elaborate on the concept of *Insan Khalifah* in developing resilient teacher leadership to face the challenges of a rapidly changing contemporary education system. It is a basic research study with the goal of acquiring advanced knowledge through document analysis, which is thematically analyzed according to pre-established thematic concepts.

### *Insan Khalifah Concept*

The concept of *Insan Khalifah* refers to the role of humans as responsible stewards in managing and preserving nature, as well as in upholding justice and universal well-being. According to al-Attas (2018), this concept carries a profound meaning, where humans are not only seen as leaders but also as caretakers of the universe, bearing responsibility for the balance of the ecosystem and the welfare of all creatures. The term *Insan Khalifah* originates from the Arabic word "khalifah," meaning leader or representative. According to the Quran, humans are entrusted as *khalifah* on earth to fulfill the duties of caring for nature and executing Allah's commands. Allah states in Surah Al-Baqarah (2:30), "Indeed, I will make

upon the earth a successive authority." Rahman (2023), interprets this verse as an acknowledgment of the great responsibility borne by humans to manage the earth wisely and justly, reflecting Allah's sovereignty and greatness, rooted in a sound understanding of *tawhid*.

In the context of education, applying the concept of *Insan Khalifah* aims to shape individuals with a correct creed, emphasizing the unity of Islamic worldview that insists all human actions and the preservation of His creation must be grounded in the majesty and perfection of Allah. Hassan (2021), stresses that education based on the principles of *Insan Khalifah* aims to produce individuals who excel not only academically but also possess high leadership qualities, integrity, resilience, and a vision grounded in divine principles and a servant's heart. A strong foundation of true *tawhid* cultivates comprehensive awareness of humanity's position as servants of Allah, leading them to embody traits such as contentment, confidence, humility, reliance on God, patience, and gratitude in every situation and action. The awareness of being Allah's servant shapes a person to exhibit noble character, rejecting negative traits and embracing virtuous ones. This includes the development of positive values that foster goodness and well-being, such as honesty, justice, patience, compassion, love, and tolerance, ultimately leading to the excellence of the ummah and nation through unity in harmony, happiness, success, power, wealth, and strength, all in a visionary and synergistic manner across all aspects of daily life.

In educational practice, the concept of *Insan Khalifah* requires the integration of spiritual and moral elements, emphasizing the importance of leadership character rooted in Islamic values. Al-Ghazali (2020), asserts that a good leader is one who carries out duties justly, faithfully, and adheres firmly to Islamic principles. In the educational context, school leaders and educational institutions must be exemplary role models for their organizations, support staff, and students, demonstrating leadership styles and principles that are visionary, inspiring, and oriented towards guiding their members to take an active role in personal, family, organizational, and community development in a holistic manner. Thus, the concept of *Insan Khalifah* not only shapes outstanding individuals but also fosters love and well-being as a way of life, encouraging society to achieve success, prosperity, security, harmony, and well-being.

#### *The Development of Teachers as "Insan Khalifah"*

The development of teachers refers to the process of growth and maturation of a teacher in carrying out their role effectively and holistically. Various factors influence teacher development in the context of contemporary education. Hassan (2021) emphasizes that support from educational leaders, opportunities for professional development, and a conducive working environment play significant roles in a teacher's growth. Besides providing teachers with access to excellent teaching and learning practices and relevant learning resources to enhance their teaching skills, psychological aspects and teacher well-being are equally important. Teachers who possess emotional and mental stability tend to be more effective in achieving the aspirations of the National Education Philosophy (Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan - FPK) and fulfilling the responsibilities as outlined in the Malaysian Teacher Standards (Standard Guru Malaysia - SGM).

According to al-Ghazali (2020), the development of teachers encompasses not only mastery of knowledge and pedagogical skills but also involves the development of character, moral



values, and spirituality. Key aspects of teacher development include integrity, commitment to continuous learning, the ability to guide and inspire students, and the capacity to adapt to changes and challenges in the educational world. The concept of 'Insan Khalifah' is highly relevant to teacher development as it provides strong moral and ethical guidance in carrying out the educator's duties. As khalifah on earth, teachers have a significant responsibility to guide students not only in academics but also in the formation of sound beliefs and thoughts, noble character, and contributions to human values. Rahman (2023) emphasizes that teachers, as insan khalifah, must set a good example, perform their duties with justice and trust, and strive to build an ethical and responsible generation. This aligns with the principles of Islamic education that emphasize the balance between knowledge and the development of character.

To ensure that teachers can fulfill their role as insan khalifah, training and professional development should include aspects of Islamic values and ethics. Zakaria and Yusuf (2022) suggest that teacher training programs should include modules that emphasize the importance of spiritual development, ethics, integrity, and social responsibility. Teachers should also be encouraged to participate in community service activities and character development programs that can enhance their awareness of their role as spiritual guides for students. al-Attas (2018) emphasizes that teachers, as insan khalifah, not only convey knowledge but also serve as examples of noble character. Thus, teachers are not only responsible for academic excellence but also for shaping students' personalities in a balanced way, including physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual development. This is essential to ensure that students can embody Islamic values in their daily lives and become responsible individuals towards society and the environment.

#### *The Impact of the Concept of Insan Khalifah on Education*

Education is a core foundation in shaping a knowledgeable and morally upright generation, and education leaders play a crucial role as agents of change in the education system. When applied to the teaching profession, this concept requires teachers to not only impart knowledge but also guide students in developing a strong identity based on Islamic values. The impact of the teacher as a "insan khalifah" on an integrated education system can be seen through the goals of Islamic education, which aim to produce righteous individuals and achieve universal humanity (*Al-Insan Al-Kamil*).

According to this concept, a perfect human being is characterized by a balanced personality, uniting two important dimensions: first, the isoteric-vertical dimension, which focuses on submission and obedience to God, and second, the exoteric-horizontal dimension, which focuses on fulfilling the mission of salvation and improvement within the social and natural environment. Al-Attas (2018) in his work *The Concept of Education in Islam: A Framework for an Islamic Philosophy of Education* asserts that holistic education not only encompasses academic aspects but also includes the formation of noble character and ethics. Therefore, producing a balanced individual with these characteristics requires maximum effort within the preconditions of an integrated education paradigm. By integrating both dimensions in the teaching and learning approach, the teacher as "insan khalifah" plays an important role in shaping students with noble character and vision, thus contributing to the development of a holistic and integrated education system.

Thus, the role of the teacher as an "insan khalifah" is to integrate the firmness of tawhid (oneness of God) in education, a spirit of servitude in viewing every perspective with reliance on the greatness of God, and noble conduct motivated by a desire for well-being in every aspect of teaching, interaction, and life. Contemporary Islamic literature on integration, such as Hasan (2020), states that the integration of knowledge in Islamic education must be based on Tawhid (the oneness of Allah), ensuring that all knowledge acquired is related to divine principles and ethical values in the worldview. This perspective aligns with Al-Attas' assertion in Badhrulhisham and Isa (2017), about the need to Islamize knowledge before disseminating it to ensure it contributes positively to the holistic development of individuals and society. Anas et al. (2016) also emphasize that the true objective of knowledge integration in Islam is not merely academic excellence but also the formation of noble character and ethical leadership with a vision for the well-being of the ummah and the nation.

By applying this principle, the Islamic education system can produce a generation that upholds the values of Tawhid, humility, noble character, and commitment to societal welfare, reflecting the core foundations of the approach to knowledge and education. According to Idris et al. (2024) and Hasan (2020), education based on the concept of the *insan khalifah* can produce individuals who excel academically and possess noble character, thereby strengthening the foundations of a balanced and ethical civilization. It is crucial for building a society that is not only competitive on a global scale but also visionary and possesses integrity, contributing to universal welfare and justice. Therefore, the recognition and implementation of the *Insan Khalifah* concept in the training and professional development of educational leaders and teachers are key to achieving a holistic and effective education system in Malaysia. As such, the impact of the *Insan Khalifah* concept on education is highly significant in efforts to create a balanced and visionary generation, thereby contributing to the formation of a harmonious and ethically strong society that can offer contributions and benefits to the welfare and strength of the ummah and the nation. When teachers succeed in their development as *insan khalifah*, the impact on education is highly positive. Teachers with a strong identity and firm Islamic values will be more effective in guiding and inspiring students.

Al-Attas (2018), emphasizes that education based on the *insan khalifah* concept can produce students who not only excel academically but also possess noble character and high leadership qualities. Therefore, educational leaders who embody the qualities of *insan khalifah* are essential in building a knowledgeable, ethical, and globally competitive society. Teachers who serve as *insan khalifah* can also instill moral values and ethics in students more effectively. Zakaria and Yusuf (2022), state that teachers who are noble in character and integrity become role models for students, who will emulate these positive traits in their daily lives. This will produce a generation that excels not only academically but also possesses a noble personality and can make positive contributions to society.

Furthermore, teachers, as human khalifah, are also capable of promoting holistic learning. Rahman (2023), suggests that education emphasizing spiritual, moral, and intellectual aspects will shape individuals who are balanced and harmonious. Teachers who understand and practice the concept of 'Insan Khalifah' will give balanced attention to both the intellectual and spiritual development of students, ensuring they grow into versatile and competitive individuals, as well as improving the quality of student leadership. Al-Ghazali (2020) emphasizes that teachers who function as educators will encourage students to develop their

own leadership skills, such as resilience, courage, perseverance, and the ability to make wise and fair decisions without arrogance or pride. Thus, students educated by teachers who practice the principles of *Insan Khalifah* will be more resilient in facing challenges and will have a clear vision in taking on leadership roles in the community and nation.

*The Foundation of the Formation of the Concept of Teacher as Insan Khalifah*

The concept of the Teacher as *Insan Khalifah* (GIK) is formed based on the IMS Vision, which encompasses the deep integration of knowledge and benevolence (*tauhid makrifat*), love (*mahabbah*), adherence to the law (*bersyariat*), ethics (*berakhlak*), compassion (*berkasih sayang*), as well as prosperity and excellence in building a civilization that possesses knowledge, power, and wealth (Al-Malik, 2020). The deep integration of knowledge and benevolence refers to a profound understanding of the concepts of divinity and servitude, which leads to a strong awareness of Allah's grandeur and perfection. Love, adherence to the law, ethics, and compassion refer to noble character that promotes harmony and unity. Meanwhile, prosperity and excellence in building civilization are linked to contributions to society and the nation in the form of social worship. These three foundations aim to rebuild a human being with the values of *khalifah* to manage the world in contemporary times, because modern progress cannot be called civilization if it is not based on the values of divinity and humanity. The *Insan Khalifah* must demonstrate high morals and ethics, encompassing praiseworthy qualities and avoiding blameworthy traits, thus cultivating love for goodness and contributing to the *ummah* and the nation. These three elements directly align with the goals of SDG and the aspirations of the National Education Philosophy (FPK), which are supported by teachers as agents of educational socialization.

In the foundation of the Teacher as *Insan Khalifah* concept, there are three main domains that are understood as core principles in line with the elements of FPK: *tauhid* and *ihsan* (belief and obedience to God), love, adherence to the law, ethics, and compassion (the ability to achieve personal well-being), as well as prosperity and excellence (contributing to the harmony and prosperity of family, society, and the nation). This discussion can be summarized as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

*The Comparison of the Terms IMS Concept, National Education Philosophy (FPK), and the Teacher as Insan Khalifah*

<b>IMS Vission</b>	<b>Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan</b>	<b>The Concept of Teacher as Insan Khalifah</b>
The firm belief in the oneness of knowledge and excellence,	Belief and obedience to God	Tawhid Ihsan
Love, adherence to Sharia, good character, and compassion	Capability to achieve personal well-being	Noble Character
Well-being and the excellence of civilization."	Contributing to the harmony and prosperity of family, society, and the nation	Building Civilization

In the concept of the teacher as a *khalifah* (vicegerent), the first element is *tauhid makrifat*, which refers to living as a human or *khalifah* with a firm belief in Allah SWT, akin to the *tauhid*



of Prophet Ibrahim a.s. This level of *tauhid makrifat* reaches the stage of certainty in Allah, at the level of *ihsan* (muraqabah and musyahadah), not just through knowledge and intellect alone. The second element is noble character based on ethics that align with the sharia and the sunnah of Prophet Muhammad S.A.W., which emphasizes love and compassion. This character development involves the building of identity and personality, focusing on empathy, living in love and compassion, helping one another, and showing humility, becoming a role model for others by demonstrating praiseworthy traits and avoiding blameworthy characteristics. The third element is the construction of civilization by prioritizing well-being and knowledge or skills in various worldly fields. This aims to create a civilization that brings peace, stability, and prosperity to all segments of society, races, and nations, while also flourishing the earth by carrying out *amar makruf* and *nahi mungkar* (enjoining good and forbidding evil).

Al-Attas (2018) emphasizes that a firm belief in tawhid is the foundation of the concept of human khalifah. According to al-Attas, humans who are designated as khalifah must have a deep and true understanding of the concept of tawhid and the oneness of Allah, which will guide every aspect of their lives. A strong faith is not only about belief but also influences thoughts, feelings, decisions, and actions. This understanding teaches that as khalifah, humans are obliged to carry out their responsibilities with full obedience and acceptance of Allah's will. Surah Al-Baqarah (Quran 2:30) reminds us that humans are entrusted as khalifah on earth to maintain ecological balance and social justice.

Al-Attas (2018) stresses that education should involve the development of a critical and analytical mind, capable of understanding and solving problems based on true knowledge, with its foundation rooted in the principles of divinity. Tawhid ma'rifat, or steadfastness in recognizing the greatness and perfection of Allah, encompasses a worldview that integrates faith with daily life, ensuring that every action is aligned with divine principles (Al-Attas, 2018). This is also consistent with the concept of authentic thinking, which involves the ability to distinguish between right and wrong and to avoid flawed or unfounded thinking. According to al-Attas (2018), human khalifah must have a mindset based on true knowledge, acquired through an educational process aimed at deep understanding of reality and truth. This process is rooted in the soul of servitude, or the spirit of being a servant, recognizing that true knowledge is a gift from Allah and should be sought with humility and dedication.

Al-Attas (2018) also emphasizes that the cultivation of noble character is integral to the concept of human khalifah. Noble character involves the development of high morals and ethics, where individuals display qualities based on servitude through internal values such as contentment (*redha*), trust (*tawakkal*), faith (*yakin*), and sincerity (*ikhlas*), which are reflected in external behaviors such as honesty, patience, justice, and compassion. Al-Attas (2018) believes that education should focus on character development through daily behaviors and practices that can be modeled. Noble character is a manifestation of a true understanding of faith and a strong commitment to divine principles and servitude, which ultimately forms individuals with integrity and noble character. This aligns with the model of Muhammad's character, the example set by Prophet Muhammad, who is the primary role model in exhibiting both internal and external ethics and virtues.

According to al-Attas (2018), the concept of the human khalifah refers to a work ethic grounded in Islamic principles. This includes honesty, efficiency, justice, and responsibility. A human khalifah must carry out duties and responsibilities with dedication and integrity, ensuring that every task is performed excellently and effectively. Building civilization also involves a commitment to serve society, ensuring that every action and decision is made based on high ethical standards. A professional human khalifah will continually strive to improve the quality of their work and make meaningful contributions to society. This action is in line with the principle of loving the well-being of others, which emphasizes a love for peace and welfare, ensuring that one's professional efforts contribute positively to the welfare of society.

### **The Concept of Teacher as Insan Khalifah**

The concept of Insan Khalifah in Islamic education refers to the role of humans on Earth, leading and prospering the world with justice and wisdom. In the context of education, this role requires the application of values that enable individuals to be knowledgeable, virtuous, responsible, and contribute to their family, community, and nation. Each of these elements has specific indicators aimed at shaping individuals who function as khalifah on Earth in an exemplary manner.

#### *Tawhid ihsan*

The concept of Tauhid Ihsan is a fundamental foundation in the formation of teachers as Khalifah figures. Teachers who possess a deep understanding of divine faith will have inner peace in carrying out their responsibilities as educators and moral leaders, especially in an increasingly challenging educational world. According to Hassan and Nor (2022), teachers with strong faith can achieve emotional and spiritual stability in their roles as guides and role models for their students. This inner peace is attained through awareness of Allah's grandeur and perfection in establishing the lives of His creations, which brings a sense of tranquility, peace, and confidence in facing the challenges of education. This foundation aligns with the Tauhid of Prophet Ibrahim (A.S.), who exemplified a firm belief in all of Allah's commands without any doubt in his heart or mind.

A teacher who understands the translation of creation in Allah's actions can integrate the teaching of signs of Allah's greatness in every act and occurrence to the students. They will view every event in this world as a manifestation of Allah's power and wisdom, and this can be conveyed in the learning process. Appreciation for the interpretation of Allah's names and attributes allows teachers to witness and teach the beauty of His names and qualities in daily life. A study by Al-Makhlouf and Abdallah (2023), shows that teachers who embody the qualities of Allah can become strong role models in shaping their students' morals and ethics. Teachers also play a crucial role in raising students' awareness of the creator's translation in His existence in themselves and the world around them. With this awareness, teachers will value life and their environment more, teaching students about responsibility. This awareness not only strengthens the teacher's identity as a responsible and virtuous individual but also helps in shaping students who share the same awareness. According to Zulkifli and Ahmad (2023), this awareness encourages teachers to cultivate noble values and a sense of responsibility in their students.

Berkowitz and Bier (2022), emphasize that character education based on moral and spiritual values is crucial in the formation of effective teachers. Teachers who are shaped by sound beliefs will possess inner peace, positive thinking, and noble character. This is essential in carrying out their roles as educators and moral leaders, enabling them to provide effective guidance to students. Overall, Tawhid Ihsan serves as a strong foundation in the development of teachers as khalifah figures. By feeling close to Allah, witnessing His greatness in every aspect of life, and recognizing His presence within themselves and the surrounding environment, teachers will be able to guide their students more effectively. This ensures that they not only impart knowledge but also shape the character and morals of their students, turning them into balanced and responsible individuals, in line with the concept of insan khalifah. The element of sound belief provides a strong spiritual foundation for teachers. By experiencing closeness and unity with the Creator, teachers will possess the inner peace essential for character and moral development. An appreciation of Allah's tajalli in every aspect of life strengthens faith and enhances students' awareness of their responsibilities as khalifah on earth.

A sound mindset as servants of God reflects purity and perfection in both spiritual and moral aspects, serving as the basis for the teacher's thoughts, actions, and positive attitude in facing educational challenges. In this context, Hassan and Nor (2022) emphasize that teachers with a servant's soul, free from negative traits such as envy and grudges, will set a good example for students. They are more likely to act justly and wisely in carrying out their duties as educators. Moreover, Al-Makhlouf and Abdallah (2023) state that awareness and love for Allah, as well as for the Prophet Muhammad and his followers, foster a strong sense of servitude within the teacher. Therefore, emphasizing sound thinking in the training and development of teachers with a servant's heart is crucial for achieving holistic and effective educational goals.

#### *Noble Character*

Noble character is formed through a sense of servitude that involves acknowledging one's own shortcomings and weaknesses, accompanied by self-reflection (al-Attas, 2018). According to Yusof and Ibrahim (2022), teachers who are capable of self-reflection will become more sensitive to the needs of students and be able to provide more effective guidance with patience and responsibility. Additionally, a mindset that balances the fear and love of Allah strengthens the teacher's sense of servitude, which is an important element in fostering humility and responsibility in educating (Razak et al., 2022). Thus, noble character is a crucial aspect in shaping teachers as khalifah figures. Teachers who practice this value will become good role models for students, influencing their attitudes and actions in learning, as well as creating a conducive educational environment for the holistic development of students.

In the context of shaping teachers as khalifah figures, the development of noble character is important for the overall personal development of the teacher and their influence on the school community and society. Noble character is the embodiment of servitude, encompassing aspects such as sincerity, confidence, tawakkul (trust in Allah), acceptance of destiny, gratitude, patience, love for the hereafter, and love for worship. According to Hassan and Nor (2022), teachers who demonstrate sincerity and confidence in their duties will serve as strong role models for students. This sincerity helps in shaping the integrity of the teacher

in their actions and decision-making, making them agents of positive change within the school community. Furthermore, literature also indicates that tawakkul and acceptance of fate are essential traits for teachers in facing challenges and obstacles in the field of education (Al-Makhlouf & Abdallah, 2023).

Understanding and practicing gratitude and patience are also important traits in the development of a noble character for teachers. According to Yusof and Ibrahim (2022), teachers who practice gratitude and patience are able to handle pressure and imperfections in the teaching and learning process calmly and positively. These attitudes also help in creating a conducive learning environment and encourage students to emulate these positive traits.

Furthermore, the literature highlights the importance of love for the hereafter and worship in shaping a teacher's noble character. Razak et al. (2022) state that teachers who focus on higher life goals, such as seeking Allah's pleasure and the happiness of the afterlife, are more enthusiastic in carrying out their duties as educators. A love for worship and the willingness to improve oneself also help teachers to continuously develop and inspire students and the school community.

Thus, the development of noble character for teachers as khalifah (stewards) is crucial for building a quality educational environment and fostering a civilized school community. Teachers with noble character not only serve as good role models for students but also have a positive impact on shaping a morally upright and cultured school community. Therefore, teacher education and development should place serious emphasis on the formation of noble character to achieve holistic and integrated educational goals.

### *Building Civilization*

The formation of teachers as individuals who embody the concept of *insan khalifah* not only involves intellectual development but also the cultivation of character and a wholesome way of life. One of the key aspects in shaping teachers as *insan khalifah* is understanding and practicing a wholesome lifestyle that reflects Islamic values. This lifestyle involves several important indicators such as concern, compassion, sincerity in helping others, as well as attitudes of tolerance and justice in social relationships.

In this context, recent literature highlights the importance of teachers as role models in practicing the values of a wholesome lifestyle. According to Hassan and Nor (2022), teachers who demonstrate concern and compassion for their students not only contribute to the emotional and psychological development of the students but also strengthen the bond between teacher and student. Furthermore, Al-Makhlouf and Abdallah (2023) emphasize that teachers' active involvement in promoting community welfare through volunteer programs and charitable work creates an inclusive and responsible learning environment. A wholesome lifestyle also involves attitudes of forgiveness and concealing the faults of others, which are essential in fostering strong bonds of brotherhood among teachers and school staff. According to Yusof and Ibrahim (2022), teachers' tolerance and forgiveness towards each other's mistakes help create a harmonious and productive work environment in schools. Meanwhile, the emphasis on detesting deceit, oppression, arrogance, and evil encourages

teachers to avoid behaviors and actions that contradict Islamic values in their interactions with students and the surrounding community.

Therefore, the formation of teachers as *insan khalifah* requires awareness and the practice of a wholesome lifestyle that reflects Islamic values in every aspect of life, not only within schools but also in the development of a prosperous community. This aligns with the teacher's role as an agent of socialization who will shape the civilization of society and the nation. Teachers who are able to practice these values will serve as good role models for students and society, thereby creating a harmonious and inclusive educational environment and playing a key role in the development of a civil society, ummah, and nation. Thus, emphasizing the development of a wholesome lifestyle in contributing to social worship through community service during teacher training and development is crucial for achieving the goals of a holistic and effective education.

### **Conclusion**

The teacher functions as a mentor and role model in the aspects of faith, morals, and personality, as well as a catalyst and social agent that imparts a positive impact on the development of the nation's civilization. This is significant for the formation and development of students' morals and academics, who will become the pioneers of future civilization development. Scholarly discussions support the view that teachers need to be equipped with comprehensive knowledge and skills, including aspects of spirituality, morality, and ethics. Emphasis on the oneness of God, noble character, and the development of a prosperous civilization shapes the teacher into a leader and an influential agent of socialization in society. These implications require deeper empirical studies to understand and examine the indicators of the concept of the teacher as a khalifah (steward) to ensure that the teacher's role as a khalifah can be fully realized in the context of contemporary education.

In conclusion, research on the concept of the khalifah human being in the context of education highlights the importance of the teacher's role as a moral and spiritual leader. A teacher who understands and practices these values can provide holistic guidance to students, shaping them into individuals with noble character and responsibility. Therefore, there is a need for in-depth empirical research to strengthen and improve this approach, ensuring that the teacher's role as a khalifah can be fully realized in the modern educational context. This discussion is presented as a conceptual paper focusing on three essential elements in building the identity of the teacher as a khalifah: the oneness of God (the divine and servitude), noble character, and the development of a civilization that brings welfare, peace, happiness, and mercy.



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