



Emancipatory Islamic Paradigm: An Humanist Alternative To Build College Student Character in Facing Global Challenges

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ABSTRACT

Keywords

humanism, educational paradigm, character strengthening, humanist path and global challenges.

This article is to explore how to build a liberating educational paradigm as a solution to the humanitarian and religious crisis that is occurring today. This crisis is most significantly triggered by the underdevelopment of intellectuals. The education system has been dominated by a market-based business model, a critique of neoliberalism and the globalisation of education that focuses on economic values above other values. The difference between the West and Islam in understanding humanism, produces a different understanding of the concept of humanism, although humanism can be defined simply as a science that explains and enlivens the human sciences. A deep understanding of humanism is expected to strengthen the character of students in higher education, equipping them to face global challenges with reflective, broad and deep thinking. This character strengthening is important so that students can compete openly and confidently in an ever-evolving world, with their skills and skills and competencies.

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Introduction

This article aims to redefine and reflect on the meaning of humanism in the context of education. Why is it necessary to redefine humanism? In fact, experts in humanities studies have already provided definitions of their thoughts related to humanism. After explaining about humanism, what is the paradigm of humanism in higher education? What is the crisis of humanism that worries the character of students who are equipping them to face global challenges?

This question is designed to find out in depth what humanism is defined by using "our" own language and approach. Because the humanist approach is often used as a social movement in education critical of the problems of education administration, education management or criticism of the impact of globalization on today's education system.

Looking back at the pre-independence of the Indonesian Republic, Ki Hajar Dewantara explained that in order to get a teaching system that is useful for the common life, the education

system must be adapted to the life and livelihood of the people. Therefore, it is obligatory for us to investigate all the shortcomings and disappointments in our lives related to the nature of humane society (Ki Hajar Dewantara, 1977).

This statement is important because it influences the teaching of how to liberate people from their physical life. Meanwhile, the liberation of the spiritual life is obtained from spirituality education. In essence, according to Ki Hajar Dewantara, an independent human being is a human being who lives physically or mentally independent of others, but relies on his own strength. The purpose of teaching and education that is useful for common livelihood is to liberate humans as a people. This is the humanism stated by Ki Hajar Dewantara.

Today, humanism needs to be explained. In social science theory, the question can be asked something like this: how do we become human, how do we relate to other humans (human interaction), how do humans act towards other humans and how do humans establish and maintain their relationships with other humans (human action). The intricacies of human action and interaction and performance are the causes and effects of human interaction that shape the nature of society with all its diversity of dimensions that are studied through humanities studies. This is what encourages the author to redefine humanism with the simple aim of being able to understand humans, society and human values as a way of shaping civilized human character and being able to solve social problems that occur in the midst of society, such as poverty, inequality, oppression, discrimination and conflicts between people with various causes. (Harry. B. Priyono, 2022). This research is aiming to investigate Islamic concepts and practices that can equip students with the skills and values needed to face global challenges by involving an understanding of how the Islamic paradigm can empower students socially, economically and culturally. So as to provide new insights into the role of the Islamic paradigm in shaping student character.

Method

This paper will use a research method using a phenomenological approach taken from some of the life experiences of students involved in Islamic religion and Muhammadiyah courses.

Result and Discussion

A. Redefine Humanism

According to the author, there are four reasons why humanism needs to be redefined:

Lack of intellectual interior. The shortage of intellectual depth is caused by the lack of knowledge production in learning spaces. For example, students in law faculties learn about justice, democracy, law enforcement and so on. However, the daily reality that they find is that justice, democracy, and the defense of the oppressed, equality are carried out halfway or not in accordance with what they have obtained in school and lectures. They understand these conditions but they

cannot reflect. The inability of students to reflect in their teaching and learning process at university is one of the reasons why the learning process becomes frozen. Another reason for the low level of reflection in students is because they are too focused on getting grades so that the reflective learning process is neglected. (Engenie. A. Samier, 2021).

Furthermore, the mastery of teaching materials focuses on the design so that teaching becomes rigid and lecturers measure ability based on test results. Meanwhile, the real measure of learning is understanding, which is seen by how much they are able to build reflective arguments based on their own understanding. In addition, the lack of intellectual depth is caused by the dependence of learning on standardized learning methods so that students lose the learning process and the goal is only to be able to complete the learning. So they learn only to get grades and successfully complete the courses given, not questioning what the courses learnt are for.

The subjects learnt do not make an impact on each of them. The measure of human ability is judged by the number they get according to the graduation standard. Grades are considered the result of learning. In fact, grades are just a measuring tool for learning success. Finally, the goal of adult learning is to build free human beings. Free to think, free to express arguments and build character and give birth to a knowledge paradigm is neglected. The five main character traits in learning that are derived from Pancasila such as: religion, nationalism, integrity, independence and mutual cooperation, are nothing more than stand-alone and seem like lip-service to make them sweet. In fact, the five character values must support each other in life. Religious values, for example, reflect how a person can believe in Allah swt which is manifested in daily actions not only in the process of carrying out Islamic law, but to live in harmony and peace with people and the surrounding environment and be able to reduce problems arising from the friction of daily life so that the end of cultivating religious values is spirituality.

Religious people need exercise, and are exercised to consider and relate religious issues to economic, socio-cultural, human psychology, art, philosophy and so on. This is what is called interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary according to Amin Abdullah's explanation. (Amin Abdullah, 2021).

The education system has been dominated by a market-based business model. This system is actually one of the challenges in education. On the one hand, if the education system is dominated by the market, there is nothing wrong, because today any activity to support activities in the world of education clearly requires money. Developing student skills, improving the quality of teachers will of course attract students to encourage themselves to improve their skills and deepen their competence. But the other side of the market is one of the causes of commodification of education by considering that the world of education is the same as merchandise by providing various brands offered in the form of campus vision and mission. The better the vision and mission of the campus,

the more interested prospective students will be. So that the campus will focus on pursuing profits and minimizing losses.

It is no doubt no surprise that education has come to be seen as an economic investment, with an emphasis on the economic returns that accrue after an individual successfully completes a certain level of education. The campus world can already be called an industry (the education industry is not an educational institution).

Criticism against neoliberalism and globalization of education that focuses on economic values above other values. The emergence of criticism of neoliberalism and globalization of education is because education is more focused on facing global competition and the needs of the workforce. So that the campus curriculum is more directed towards the needs of the industry. There are other needs that are very important and must be owned by humans. Humans are required to maintain human values for the purpose of education. But today, talking about humanism today is considered a bedtime story, beautiful when talked about, hard to do as a daily human work practice. (Engenie. A. Samier, 2021)

The difference between the West and Islam in understanding humanism is because Islam itself does not have a specific name for the massive phenomenon of human glorification and the cultivation of knowledge. The term humanism emerged in the modern era. Luthfi Assyaukanie explains that humanism has a double meaning. On the one hand, it is a movement to revive the human sciences or commonly called "humanities". On the other hand, it is understood as a philosophical movement that emphasizes the centrality of humans. So humanism is an attempt to revive classical works, especially Greek works. Humanism in this first sense, according to Luthfi, experienced its peak expression in the mid-15th century, when schools and universities in Europe required *studia humanitatis* courses consisting of grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history, and moral philosophy. (Luthfi Assyaukanie, 2022)

On the other side of the western world, humanism became a rebellion of thought against various forms of absolutism, especially with regard to religious and political issues. Humanism became a means of fighting for human centrality, that humans are free beings who can organize, control and determine their own destiny. In contrast to what happened in the Middle Ages, which emphasized the role of god, humanists rejected all forms of the supernatural and considered it a myth. In this view, they believe that humans are capable of solving humanity's problems because humans have reason and mind and have the potential to overcome their own problems and are free to choose what they like. Humans decide their own destiny. This is the background to the emergence of the "Humanist Manifesto" in 1933. The manifesto was initiated by a number of American intellectuals, scholars and activists.

This 15-point manifesto was later published in the journal *The New Humanist*, (Vol.VI, No. 3. 1933). In the Islamic world, the humanist movement was a consequence and expansion of the institutions of religious propagation, while in the West (Europe), humanism was a resistance to these institutions. Human beings at that time did not have freedom, because they were restrained by political rulers, including the rulers of theocentrism through the power of religion and church agents. This condition made them live in the dark ages. Faith and dogma state that humans are servants of God. Therefore, the task in the world is to do good and do good deeds for the sake of a happy and happy afterlife. (Luthfi Assyaukanie, 2022)

The destiny and future of man has already been determined by God or by God's destiny before the man was born into the world. So humanism for them is an attempt to fight against all human conditions that must become servants of God. This movement is an attempt to push the position of humans to the center of attention while marginalizing the role of God and pushing the position of humans to the center of attention while marginalizing the role of God and metaphysics which were previously very dominant. This is not the case with Islam. The experience does not depart from this. Muslim humanists did not feel the marginalization of the status and role of human beings that humanists in Europe experienced. Muslims have no problem with the position of man when dealing with his God or with power. (Luthfi Assyaukanie, 2022)

God and power were two entities with which they were always familiar. Atheism was a foreign idea to Muslim philosophers and scholars. Developing knowledge is not about being hostile to religion and power or even against government, but the opposite: approaching and empowering them. It is perhaps because of this difference in perception of the position of God and man that humanism in Islam developed. In the twelfth century, the movement to cultivate knowledge in Islam gradually declined. Some of the main reasons for this were the political crises and divisions in the Islamic world, the lack of resources (economy, education for the continuation of knowledge), the crusades and social and economic changes.

It should be noted that in that condition, Islamic Humanism gave birth to philosophers, intellectuals / academics, such as; Ibn Sina (Avicenna-980-1037) Persian scientist in the field of medicine with the book *Al-Qanun fi al-Tibb*. Al-Razi (Rhazes) (865-925) Persian scientist with the work of *Kitab al-Hawi* which contains medical and pharmaceutical knowledge. Al-Farabi (872-950). Political philosopher and musician. Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) a historian and sociologist with his famous work *Muqaddimah*. While the humanism movement in Europe gave birth to the enlightenment and industrial revolution based on the paradigm of liberation of human thought. (Makdisi, 1989)

B. Application of the humanism paradigm in higher education

If a college is an institution in which scholars are in charge of teaching and educating students. Then there will definitely be an exchange of ideas between students and students, lecturers with lecturers or students with lecturers in the form of discussions, criticism of scientific discourse deconstruction. Thus, universities can be said to be a meeting place for ideas from the academic community which then contributes to human intelligence, social change and social welfare.

Colleges are also places to test scientific findings that are in the nature of support, criticism or refutation or included in input for rumors in a policy. That way, of course, the college must prepare everything needed for the test, namely strengthening in science that is continuously carried out. By seeing that humans are individual beings who are considered to have responsibility for their individuals, society and nation and state, they need to be given a strong foundation for the formation of strong character. So that the knowledge he has becomes something useful for himself, society and the country of course. (Taufiq Abdullah, 2006)

If that is the case, it is only reasonable to create humanist education. The essence of humanist education is learning that emphasizes the development of human aspects and individual potential as a whole. The characteristics of humanist education described by Paulo Freire:

Focus on the human aspect. No matter how small the project is, students' work is appreciated with joy and grace. Although in learning there will be revisions to ideas or ideas that need to be revised, this is normal in the learning process. But what has been done by college students must be rewarded. Reward is part of the motivation to continue to develop themselves in the learning process. Besides that, appreciation is a sign of respect. (Daniel Lapsley and Paul C. Stey, 2014)

One example of the effect of the absence of rewards. I had a bad experience with a lecturer. This lecturer threw away my paper while berating what I had written in the paper. the paper I wrote was said to be much worse than a junior high school student's paper, even though I was studying for a master's degree. This incident made me realize not to repeat this incident to students. Although sometimes if they do their assignments carelessly, I feel disappointed. But being graceful for a lecturer is very important. I'm sure the college students have tried to give their best. To be in line with the ideas and thoughts of the lecturer, of course, they need guidance and direction. This direction and guidance is one aspect of humanity. Taking care of their emotions is for character strengthening because character emphasis starts from how to treat others. Moreover, adult learning is more directed at learning experiences and then reflecting on them.

Another example of how a lecturer is impatient to listen to a college student's explanation because it is considered convoluted by cutting off the student's conversation by responding to the

question, "what's the point?" If a lecturer is like that, of course, it will make the student panic and get worse, adding to the loss of what he wants to say. The effect of all that is that he is not confident to convey his concern, finally not daring to try to argue. Even though building arguments is important as a college student. The spaciousness of the heart and flexibility of the soul for a lecturer is to be ready to listen to complaints from students in class or anywhere.

Harmonizing the relationship between lecturers and students through dialogue and communication. Gluing the relationship between lecturers and college students is one way of knowing the personal background of students. One of the methods to get closer to college students is the "sharing is caring" learning method. Sharing is caring is a key factor in finding out students' personalities. Sharing is caring will open direct interaction between lecturers and students. Comfortable sharing will lead to caring. Learning can begin in a way that instill a sense and responsibility for oneself and one's life experiences. This is useful to foster the realization that people have different paths in life. This learning can serve as a mirror for themselves. They will understand that the problems in life are not a disgrace. The problem-solving process is the ability to manage and find solutions to conflicts that occur and then resolve them properly. This is included in the process of "becoming" which leads to changes in consciousness both personal and collective. Collective learning activities will influence how to build relationships and respect other people's opinions that are different from other individuals. Differences in collective learning must be taken into consideration. consideration of who is worthy and leads to a truth. That is mutually agreed upon. The purpose of collective learning is to gain collective or personal awareness and to be able to keep solidarity to protect the disgrace of friends. The basis of collective learning is 'caring'. The author believes that if caring has been built, of course it will create a safe and comfortable learning space. Creating a safe learning space is not easy on campus. A 2 credit course only meets once a week for 100 minutes. But inserting a self-evaluation chat and guiding students to find the irfani path is one means of reflection. Reflection aims to make them understand themselves, so they can find aspects of spirituality.

Emphasize ethics and virtue. In Islam, ethics and virtue are referred to as adab. Adab means morality, values. In Islamic colleges there is a faculty called the faculty of Adab. There students learn about ethics and culture, analyzing culture and the ethical values found in a culture. Therefore in the faculty of adab they study literature to be able to understand other people's cultures, and to be able to study other people's cultures and of course will be able to build relationships and communication with other nations.

In the context of education, the emphasis on faculty specialization often overlooks the importance of integrating human philosophy in the curriculum. A primary focus on professionalism without considering academic ethics can lead to losing the essence of intellectual honor, especially

when there is a gap between the words and actions of a teacher or lecturer. College students can be confused when they see such inconsistencies. The humanitarian crisis arises not because of a lack of classical or ushuluddin studies, but rather a lack of independent methodological studies of human beings themselves. The importance of subjective and objective understanding of oneself, which involves understanding human existence and its essence in the world, is often overlooked. Therefore, humans need to make an independent effort to reflect on themselves. The crisis of humanity is also caused by the enclosure of human existence by language, ideology and the rule of law. Ethics and goodness are measured based on things that are hidden behind the veil. The theory relevant to this thought can be found in the phenomenological approach of existentialism emphasizing the importance of understanding human existence and its relationship with the world, as well as overcoming barriers such as language and ideology to achieve a deeper understanding of self and humanity.

What is the crisis of humanism that worries the erosion of a college student's character, how to build student character as a provision to face global challenges?

C. Facing global challenges in Islamic college education.

In facing global challenges in university education, the phenomenon of anxiety emerges as a complex emotional response involving feelings of worry, anxiety, and discomfort. The causes of anxiety in university students can be identified from several aspects. Firstly, life changes that include academic life transitions that demand the development of professionalism, the addition of skills, and the exploitation of interests. The function of the guardian lecturer is crucial in helping students manage these changes. Secondly, freedoms that require responsibility, such as the selection of majors, courses, and time arrangements, can cause concern and anxiety. In addition, students sometimes get caught up in lifestyle changes and have difficulty managing finances, which impacts their physical health and financial concerns. Mismanagement of finances can cause additional stress, especially when working while studying.

Dealing with social pressures, unrealised expectations or perhaps family demands to finish college quickly and comparing oneself with classmates who have already completed college, is also a source of anxiety. These challenges are reinforced by the need to be competitive in the global marketplace, skills, and professionalism that match the demands of the global workforce. In this context, the author's theory using the phenomenological approach of existentialism can be used to understand students' subjective experiences in dealing with changing pressures, while stress management theory can provide insight into anxiety management strategies. These challenges not only impact academic life, but also affect students' psychological and social well-being. (Yu Sing Ong, 2018)

D. The Humanistic Approach as an Effort For The Formation of Students' Character

In facing the dynamics of college education and the challenges of the global environment, the formation of students' characters becomes a necessity. The development of character demands a strong argument to determine what kind of character students should possess.

The process of character development in adults, especially students, requires a complex learning, adaptation. This effort involves self-recognition (self-existence) through reflection and introspective questioning, such as who I am, how do I know myself, and what are my life goals. Difficulties in answering these questions arise due to a lack of understanding of oneself.

This process of knowing yourself is important because life's difficulties often arise from lack of activity, lack of self-confidence, and fear for no apparent reason. Awareness of one's character develops through life experiences and reflection on the collisions he experiences. Human traits, such as compassion, patience, justice and solidarity, become the core of expected character. But in everyday life, conflicts often lead to feuds and hatred, causing humans to lose their human nature. Awareness of humanity must be emphasized, reminding that one's worth and self-worth are not only determined by social standing. Character education should be more than just discourses and ideas; It must be reflected in real actions and the test is practice in real life. (Necati Aydin, 2019)

The occurrence of humanitarian and religious crises, global capitalism and neoliberal managerial administration in education is one of the causes of the destruction of humanistic foundations. Education that focuses on economic and business values has clearly had a negative impact, as a result of which humans become individualistic, narcissistic and more self-centered. In this context, academics and scholars of Islamic studies and humanities are expected to remove the veil of subjectiveness and particularity, and bring awareness of authentic humanity rooted in universal values.

In order to overcome the complexity of global challenges in the world of college education, the formation of student character is a crucial foundation. The process is not just a theoretical discourse, but a long journey that requires new civilization and deep self-knowledge. Awareness of human values, such as compassion, justice and solidarity is the main foundation of student character. (Paulo Freire, 2021)

Character education is not only focused on academic knowledge, but teaches students to know themselves, understand their existence, and face life's clashes as a turning point towards growth and wisdom. In the face of social change and the negative effects of global capitalism, the cultivation of awareness of authentic humanity through daily practice is the key to forming a generation of students who are not only academically competent, but also have the moral integrity to overcome the humanitarian and religious crises faced by some circles today, including students. (Robert Evant, 1996)

Conclusion

This paper highlights the importance of building college students' character in facing global challenges in the world of college education. In responding to global challenges in the world of higher education, student character building is essential. This process involves dealing with complex changes in academic and social life, which require self-knowledge and personal reflection. College students need to know their existence in facing the clash of life as an opportunity for growth and character building. The importance of awareness of human values, such as compassion, justice, and solidarity, is the main foundation for the formation of desired character. However, the real challenge lies in the implementation of these values in daily actions, to make character education not just a theoretical discourse, but a long journey that will shape students into individuals who are not only academically competent, but also have the moral integrity to overcome humanitarian crises and diversity in society.

Criticism of the negative impact of global capitalism on education reinforces the urgency to restore humanistic foundations and spirituality. Awareness of humanity is the key to creating students who are not only academically qualified, but also have moral integrity. Thus, student character building is not only an academic goal, but also a deep effort to form individuals who can answer global challenges with authentic wisdom and human values.

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