

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PHILOSOPHY OF SEJAHTERA AND MAQASID SHARIAH

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ABSTRACT

Sejahtera, as a concept of living among Malaysians that is based on local wisdom, needs to be constantly strengthened to become a guide to ensure true happiness in life. This paper aims to explore the philosophy of Sejahtera, which is a concept of living among Malaysians that is derived from the wisdom of Islamic beliefs and how it is closely related to Maqasid Shariah. This effort is important to make the philosophy of Sejahtera applicable in various aspects of Malaysian life, such as education, as outlined in the National Education Philosophy. The philosophy of Sejahtera can be considered as spiritual health that results from a balance based on the three main components of human existence. These three components are also elements in the five objectives of Shariah or Islamic law, which are to safeguard religion, intellect, life, progeny, and property. Sejahtera, in this context, is the application of Malaysian societal values that are seen as an act of becoming a human being who loves oneself, God, others, and also the environment. This study uses a content analysis approach involving secondary data from literature reviews. The qualitative data collected were analysed descriptively. The study found that the philosophy of Sejahtera is a philosophy of life that is closely related to the objectives of Shariah or Islamic law through an emphasis on balance in all aspects of life.

KEYWORDS: Philosophy of Sejahtera, Maqasid Shariah, Spiritual, Intellectual, Physical.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sejahtera is a concept that emphasizes balance in all aspects of life, starting with oneself, through the three main components of human existence. With this balance, feelings of calmness, peace, and happiness will arise. Therefore, the well-being of an individual refers to a good condition for all three components of their existence, namely intellectual or mind, physical or body, and spiritual or soul.

Sejahtera, etymologically, according to the Kamus Dewan 4th edition, means well-being, peaceful, prosperous, happy, and peaceful. From an individual's perspective, Sejahtera means being healthy, encompassing goodness, calmness, peace, and happiness. Naturally, if the balance of these three components is not maintained, it will invite confusion and an unhealthy state in a real context.

This is in line with Allah's reminder to maintain balance, as mentioned in Surah Ar-Rahman: 7-9 which means: "And the heaven He raised and imposed the balance. That you do not transgress within the balance. And establish weight in justice and do not make deficient the balance." Although the balance referred to here is more focused on the balance that exists in the universe and its contents, as individuals we are also like a small country that needs to maintain its balance through these three components of existence.

These three components are also elements in the five objectives of Shariah in Islam, which are to preserve religion, intellect, life, progeny, and wealth. In this context, Sejahtera is the application of Malaysian societal values that are seen as an act of becoming a human who loves oneself, God, others, and the environment.

The focus of this discussion is on well-being, which is primarily centered on the individual level, as it is the primary level before entering the family institution and subsequently the larger society. If well-being is compromised at the individual level, this situation will affect the position of values, goodness, and manners, as these will also be compromised. This is because the value of something, whether it is an action or a material

aspect, is no longer seen from a spiritual perspective, but rather from the perspective of desire, which is often promoted in the name of modernity.

2. METHODOLOGY

The methodology used in this paper is descriptive analysis, which involves explaining and analyzing the situation and focus of the study from the author's perspective based on the literature review that supports the study. Descriptive analysis is a research methodology used to describe and analyze a situation or condition from the researcher's perspective based on data obtained from various sources. This methodology is usually used to study complex phenomena that require detailed and careful description.

In this study, descriptive analysis is used to describe the concept of well-being in Islam, especially in the context of the three components of human existence, namely intellectual, physical, and spiritual. The author also uses data from various literature sources that support the views and analysis made.

By using descriptive analysis, the author can clearly describe the concept of well-being and the importance of maintaining a balance between the three components of human existence in achieving balanced and holistic well-being. This also helps to highlight the importance of spiritual values in achieving well-being, especially in the modern era where desire and modernity often override spiritual values.

The data sources used in this study are secondary data such as the book *Hidayah al-Salakin* by Sheikh Abdul Samad al-Falembani, as obtained from the paper by Shohana Hussein (2010), as well as journals and other sources, particularly books by Dzulkifli Razak (2020). The process of analyzing the data is done by reading, studying, and comparing the literature sources and interpreting the results of the analysis so that they can answer all the problems. The final step is to draw conclusions from the problems that have been answered.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Meaning of Sejahtera

Shohana (2010) in her paper entitled "Well-being and peace through the development of human capital: A study of the text *Hidayah al-Salakin* has discussed the importance of well-being in producing human resources or human capital. However, she did not fully explain the meaning of well-being.

In this paper, the book *Hidayah al-Salakin* was selected to examine how the concept of prosperity was explored by its author, Sheikh Abdul Samad al-Falembani, to discuss the concept of prosperity. The book was chosen because it is a source of Malay-Islamic knowledge that has survived in the Malay world for almost three decades. It has long been used, especially in shaping the human capital of the Malay people, who still strongly adhere to the principle of prosperity in all aspects of their lives, especially in education (Shohana, 2010).

The concept of prosperity discussed in the text of *Hidayah al-Salakin* written by Sheikh Abdul Samad al-Falembani revolves around aspects that fill the development of human capital, including the development of knowledge, faith, worship, the seven limbs, spirituality, morals, and social etiquette. Although the description of the meaning of prosperity is not clearly stated, it has actually been included in the discussion of the need for emphasis on aspects by Sheikh Abdul Samad al-Falembani. He also emphasizes the balance between the three main components of human existence, namely physical, intellectual, and spiritual, as well as the relationship between oneself, God, others, and the inhabited world.

The essay on Sejahtera: Concept, Principles and Practices, by Dzulkifli Razak (2020), and *The Malay Concept of Sejahtera from an Islamic Perspective*, written by Mohd Kamal Hassan (2020), are among the books that attempt to explore this concept in depth. However, both of these books are written in English and do not provide a platform to add to the corpus of prosperity written in Malay.

The concept of sejahtera or well-being encompasses three main components that are essential for the development of individuals: knowledge, faith, and worship. Knowledge development is crucial at the intellectual level and involves the function of the mind. Faith is a spiritual need that is fulfilled through the seven elements of the soul. Worship refers to the relationship an individual has with their Creator and other beings, which fulfills the physical component of well-being. Ethics and social development are the outcomes of the three main components and involve the individual's relationship with themselves and others.

The term sejahtera is commonly used, particularly as a translation of the Islamic greeting Assalamualaikum which means "Peace be upon you." However, its deeper meaning has not been fully explored, and most Malaysians, particularly the Malay people, understand it to mean being healthy and free from pain. The word sejahtera can be traced back to Sanskrit words such as Sadhya (celestial beings), Sudatra (gift), and Sucitra (differentiated). Although these words only imply well-being as understood today, they all carry positive connotations and values that enrich collective human life, particularly in relation to the physical, intellectual, and spiritual components of well-being.

True well-being should not be limited to good physical quality of life, which is largely confined to materialistic needs, particularly economic aspects. (Dzulkifli, 2020)

The focus of analysis and discussion is on how to better understand the concept of well-being through the paradigm of Maqasid Shariah, so that the essence, goals and values inherent in the concept can be understood and manifested in the daily actions of Muslims, especially the Malays. Well-being involves a balance between the three main components of human existence, namely physical, intellectual and spiritual. It is important to understand how "well-being" affects the life of every individual at all levels.

Well-being and balance are two synonymous concepts. This also has a very close relationship with the concept of al-Mizan, which is the balance. Balance begins with the balance of the relationships that need to be established, starting with the relationship with oneself through the three existing components, namely physical, intellectual and spiritual. Then the relationship is extended to the relationship involving God, relationships among human beings and the environment and homeland, the place where life is carried out.

To better understand the meaning of well-being, the nature of human existence needs to be deeply understood first. Humans are created from three main components, namely physical, intellectual and spiritual components. According to Islamic views, the spiritual component is located in the heart, which is called qalb in Arabic. The soul, which originates from the Latin word spiritus, means the breath of life. The soul is a power that cannot be seen but functions to give life meaning, purpose and value, as well as energy to a person through the heart, which must always collaborate with the intellect. The heart and intellect will examine and ponder the teachings and lessons in any matter. A good (saleem) heart and perfect intellect are very important to feel the beauty in any situation. The role of the heart, which always collaborates with the intellect, can be seen through the production of goodness or pure values that are manifested through adab, which is courtesy and morality that demonstrate high human values, namely virtues. The process of manifesting and translating these pure values is through the implementation of any practice in life that is adorned with noble ethics or morals, which is called adab. This adab is a reflection of the spiritual component that is based on the value of well-being.

If the meaning of well-being is explored, it has a very close connection with the meaning of spirituality itself, namely as the ability to have a clear sense of meaning, purpose, and values in life. (Danah Zohar, 2000). This is because well-being, which can be translated into the Arabic word Afiah, has the meaning of a healthy and prosperous state that includes all three components of human existence, namely physical, intellectual, and spiritual. Therefore, well-being is a state when a person restores their life force based on giving meaning, purpose, and values to life guided by their worldview, philosophy of life, or belief system. (Frankl, 1959)

In connection with this, the meaning of well-being needs to be looked at more deeply because of the current situation which heavily focuses on the quantitative aspect, i.e. something that can be measured or quantified, thus neglecting the qualitative aspect, i.e. aspects that are not easy to measure with numbers, such as health. An individual's health is not only limited to physical health, but also needs to include intellectual and spiritual aspects. Mental health, which is closely related to the spiritual aspect, is universally recognized as an unhealthy condition, even though a person may appear physically healthy and "well". This is because an unwell state such as depression or stress does not show symptoms from a physical perspective.

It is true that the meaning of well-being is closely related to the spiritual and qualitative aspects of one's life. Many people often focus too much on quantitative achievements such as wealth, power, or social status, thus neglecting the importance of happiness, meaning in life, and spiritual well-being. Mental health, which is related to the spiritual aspect, is crucial in achieving holistic well-being, which encompasses all aspects of a person's life.

Therefore, it is important for every individual to understand their values and life goals, and to practice their spirituality and religion. By doing so, a person can achieve a balance and holistic well-being in terms of physical,

intellectual, and spiritual aspects. This will help a person to better face various life challenges, as well as increase overall satisfaction and happiness in life.

Islam, a religion that is closely associated with Malay people, is a religion that is centered around Allah and the afterlife. Islam also places two main responsibilities on humans, which are to serve Allah and to administer for the welfare of the world. The ownership of meaning, purpose, and values in life can only be translated in the true context when there is a symbiotic relationship established. The process of establishing this relationship requires adab or akhlak (manners or ethics) because without it, it is difficult to establish and sustain relationships. In establishing this relationship, a state of well-being encompassing all three main dimensions of human existence is highly necessary.

In explaining the concept of well-being, the view of Za'ba, a Malay scholar, is worth mentioning. Although he did not explicitly state it, the meaning of well-being can be defined as the ownership of a clear meaning, purpose, and values in life, or in short, this is spiritual or religious meaning. In defining well-being which is closely related to spirituality or religiosity, some scholars interpret spirituality as an inner power, which is the real power that governs a person's life. (Frankl, 1959) This power is characterized by reflection, expression of meaning, purpose, and values.

An individual's well-being refers to a state that is good for all three components of their existence, which are intellectual or mind, physical or body, and spiritual or soul, also known as the psyche. Naturally, if the balance of all three components is not maintained, it will lead to confusion that will affect a person's own values, goodness, and manners. This is because the value of something, whether it be an action or an object, is no longer viewed from the perspective of meaning, purpose, and values, but more towards the desire for material things that are often touted as modernity.

According to Dzulkifli (2020), well-being builds harmony through four main relationships: with oneself, with God, with fellow creatures, and with the environment that includes the homeland. The term "building harmony" can be interpreted as seeking balance in all aspects of life, beginning with a balance of human elements, namely physical, spiritual, and intellectual, as well as balance in terms of relationships with oneself, God, others, and the environment, the homeland. Therefore, the key word for balance is the essence of well-being. This is explained in the Quran, Surah Ar-Rahman: 7-9, which means: "And the sky He raised high and established the balance, so that you would not transgress within the balance, and maintain the balance with justice and do not disrupt the balance." This concept of balance is the essence of well-being.

Hamka uses a simple term, which means middle or balanced, as explained in his book *Pandangan Hidup Muslim* (p.185). Well-being for him also emphasizes the values of "qanaah" (contentment with what is given) and "kejernihan muka" (clarity of conscience).

The well-being possessed by a person is able to give high value to life. The value or worth of this life is too high because life is not only in this world, but also a journey towards the hereafter. The understanding of the meaning and purpose of life is very clear in the Islamic view. This also proves that life has value, and one needs to make an effort, or in other words, there is work to be done while living on this earth.

The need to have well-being value in life has also been highlighted by the philosopher Aristotle when he introduced a method of thinking about a supreme power that we can refer to as God, to achieve true well-being in life. The well-being defined by Aristotle also emphasizes the need to return to a strong source that roots a person's life. If Aristotle's focus on well-being or happiness is examined, mental aspects are not his sole focus, but also include physical needs that encompass biological needs such as food and drink, as well as clothing and comfortable housing. Spiritual aspects are also included because this is closely related to the spiritual component as described above, which includes the need for humans to think rationally.

If we delve into the cultural practices of other societies, it turns out that they also have a concept of well-being. For example, in Japanese society, they have the concept of "ikigai," which means the purpose of life. Each person must have a purpose in life that motivates them every morning, knowing their life goals and purpose that drives them to continue their day. In African society, they have the concept of "ubuntu," which emphasizes the importance of living together, meaning "I am because you are." For the people of Sweden, the term "lagom" represents the values of their culture and acts as a compass to guide them toward a balanced life. Lagom means "the right amount" - adequate or enough as a guiding principle for sustainable living. Ikigai represents values,

well-being, and a simple life with a sense of purpose. Ubuntu refers to "humanity" and translates to "I am because we are."

Sheikh Abdul Samad al-Falembani, in explaining the need to achieve well-being, begins with development in six main aspects: knowledge, faith, worship, body, spirit, and morality and social manners. The well-being discussed in the text *Hidayah al-Salakin*, produced by Sheikh Abdul Samad al-Falembani, revolves around the aspects that fill human capital development, which includes the development of knowledge, faith, worship, body, spirit, morality, and the development of manners and social behavior. The meaning of well-being has been included with an explanation of the need for the aspects emphasized by Sheikh Abdul Samad al-Falembani, which indeed emphasizes a balance between the three main components of human existence, namely physical, intellectual, and spiritual, as well as the relationship between oneself, God, others, and the environment in which we live.

Starting with the relationship with oneself, which has three main components, the aspect of knowledge development is a requirement at the level of the intellectual component. Knowledge development means the need to master knowledge for the development of the individual. Among the emphasized knowledge is the knowledge of tasawwuf. For Sheikh Abdul Samad al-Falembani, the need to master this knowledge is because this knowledge is a tool to purify the soul and preserve human deeds from being in vain. The tasawwuf knowledge referred to here includes knowledge that improves an individual's relationship with his or her God. With this knowledge, the spiritual organs that include the soul, which contains the heart and spirit that have a very close relationship with the intellect, produce good deeds, which are called akhlak mahmudah, or commendable morality, such as patience, humility, compassion, sincerity, and others. These commendable morals are also a manifestation of the well-being element present in the soul and become basic values in every action. These commendable morals are not only involved in a relationship with God but also involve relationships with oneself, relationships or dealings with others, and with the environment in which one resides.

The aspect of faith is a requirement for the spiritual component, which will continue to exist and return to God, leaving behind the body, when the time comes. The strength of this component is essential, especially in ensuring that the well-being possessed is successfully preserved and becomes the main basis for human development, based on the worldview contained within it. This is where the relationship between the individual and God takes place, a very significant relationship that will shape the relationship with oneself, with others, and with the environment in which one resides.

In other words, the "heart" or epicenter or spirit for well-being is located in the spiritual component, which has a very close relationship with God or the Creator. As explained earlier, this happens because the spiritual organ, which includes the soul, the heart contained within it, and the spirit that has a very close relationship with the mind, finally produces good deeds, known as akhlak mahmudah. An intimate relationship with God also provides clear meaning, purpose, and values in life, indirectly making an individual's life focused and full of divine values. Although facing the trials and obstacles of life, a sejahtera individual remains steadfast in continuing their life and does not lose to the challenges and temptations that are just a spice in life.

For the seven spiritual components, this is a fulfillment of the physical level. The aspect of worship referred to here is the relationship that every individual needs for a connection with the Creator and also the relationship with fellow creatures. Meanwhile, akhlak and the development of manners and social skills are the results or fruits obtained from the three main components of the individual, which at the same time involve relationships with oneself and others.

For Sheikh Abdul Samad al-Falembani, knowledge of fardhu ain (obligatory personal knowledge) also needs to be emphasized compared to knowledge of fardh kifayah (collective obligatory knowledge). In this context, it is also important to emphasize the importance of fardhu ain knowledge as it shows that every individual needs to first maintain a relationship with themselves, which includes physical, intellectual and spiritual aspects. The components found in fardhu ain knowledge include tauhid (Islamic monotheism), which becomes the spiritual component involving the main organ, the heart, fiqh to maintain the physical component, and tasawwuf to maintain all components. Tasawwuf, as described by Hamka, is "to depart from bad morals and enter into good morals": purifying the soul, educating and elevating the degree of morals, rejecting all greed and lust, and fighting desires that are beyond the need for self-peace." The importance of strengthening the intellectual component is emphasized by Sheikh Abdul Samad al-Falembani by bringing in verses from the Quran to support the effort to seek knowledge and to demonstrate the position of those who possess knowledge in the sight of Allah. Based on the above discussion, the meaning of well-being is when there is balance in the three main components of human existence: physical, intellectual and spiritual, which are moved by their relationships with themselves, God, others,

and the environment. Balance as the core of well-being involves 7 main human needs: spiritual (S), physical (P), intellectual (I), cultural (C), environmental (E), economic (E), and social (S).

Meaning of Maqasid Shariah

Maqasid Shariah refers to the goals or objectives that Shariah aims to achieve in every law. The essence of this Shariah objective is to realize the benefits, goodness, well-being, and to eliminate harm or evil for humanity. Imam al-Ghazali divides maqasid into three levels, as he expressed in his book *Al-Mustasfa*, namely the level of *ad-Daruriyyat* (essential needs) and *al-Hajjiyyat* (needs) or *at-Tahsiniyyat* (needs for improvement). Imam al-Ghazali defines *ad-Daruriyyat* as "something that must be preserved in order to maintain the benefits of religion and the world. When these benefits are lost, the benefits of the world also become unstable and will experience damage, difficulties, and the loss of well-being in life, and ultimately will lose enjoyment and incur real losses." (al-Ghazali, 1997: 174)

From the above definition, it can be understood that *ad-daruriyyat* (essential needs) is a maqasid that must be maintained in order to preserve the benefits and well-being of human life both in this world and in the hereafter. If this Maqasid is not well-preserved, then human life in the view of Shariah will become unstable and unwell, even experiencing damage. Imam al-Ghazali divided maqasid *ad-Daruriyyat* into five things, namely preserving religion, such as the obligation to fight and wage jihad against misguided infidels, because if this is allowed, religion will disappear. The second Maqasid is to preserve life, such as the obligation of *qisas* law, because with such a law, human life will be preserved, while the third Maqasid is to preserve the mind, such as forbidding all intoxicating or hallucinogenic substances, such as narcotics and the like. The fourth is to preserve lineage, such as the obligation to implement *hudud* on adultery, the need to marry, is important to ensure the continuity of the inherited lineage that can maintain the honor, lineage, or ancestry of humans. The fifth Maqasid is to preserve wealth, which is a manifestation of Islam in valuing the results obtained from someone's hard work and toil.

Prosperity Through the Paradigm of Maqasid Shariah

The first element, which is spiritual, "S" through the concept of prosperity can be related to the Maqasid Shariah element of preserving religion because this is where the spirit of a person's life lies. Islam often warns a Muslim through the verses of the Quran and the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) to prioritize the importance of religion above all aspects of life. The application of religious values needs to start from childhood through the manifestation of the pillars of Islam based on the pillars of faith.

The second element, prosperity, "P" or physical, can be related to the second maqasid element, which is to preserve life. Islam emphasizes the importance of its people to maintain their lives through good health practices. Allah has created His servants with physical members such as the face, hands, and feet that are the best. A Muslim should be grateful if born with sufficient physical attributes. Thus, this gratitude can be translated into a healthy lifestyle to reduce the risk of acquiring dangerous diseases that will damage the physical attributes bestowed by Allah. Physical neglect will invite various problems such as heart-related diseases, kidney-related diseases, and so on.

The element of preserving the mind can be related to the third element of prosperity, "I" or intellectual. The mind is an organ related to the intellectual component, namely the brain. To ensure that the brain functions well, knowledge is undoubtedly required. Islam encourages a Muslim to maintain their mind by constantly seeking knowledge regardless of age. Therefore, the process of seeking knowledge is a continuous process, as the Arabic saying goes, "Seek knowledge from the cradle to the grave."

Furthermore, the element of environment, "E" or surroundings, which is needed to ensure balance and prosperity, can also be related to the maqasid of preserving life. This is because a prosperous life can only be achieved in a good condition and environment. A good environment is also a platform that helps a continuous life. The aspect of the ecosystem is very important because it is a habitat for living species such as flora and fauna.

The aspect of preserving one's lineage, especially through marriage, is also important in maintaining the identity and selfhood of an individual, as well as their nation or ethnicity. This is crucial in fulfilling the well-being component related to the cultural and societal elements, "C" and "S".

The fifth Maqasid, which is to protect one's wealth, is in line with the economic element, "E" in the concept of well-being. This concept emphasizes the importance of safeguarding personal and public wealth and economic resources, whether they are personal or belonging to the people or the state. Any form of oppression, such as corruption, fraud, monopoly, counterfeiting, and market manipulation, must be combated in Islam. The value of

justice in managing wealth is highly emphasized in Islam. This is why Islam imposes punishments such as amputation for thieves so that with such strict laws, property can be preserved.

4. CONCLUSION

Sejahtera, as a concept of Malay way of life based on local wisdom, needs to be understood deeply so that it can become a pillar in the lives of Malaysians, especially in ensuring the sustainability of the nation's identity. Its holistic meaning encompasses both individual and societal relationships. This concept needs to be strengthened and promoted, especially in today's world, in order to serve as a guide for achieving true happiness and, most importantly, for individuals to be able to live in a balanced and healthy state.

Sejahtera represents the ability to attain happiness, peace and tranquility in Malay society. Failure to apply the concept of sejahtera at both the individual and societal level can lead to issues related to ethics, manners or morals. Balancing the three main components of human existence - physical, intellectual and spiritual - is crucial to achieving personal well-being, as this affects every aspect of one's life, including the environment, economy, social and cultural aspects.

In building development, starting from personal development, all three components mentioned above need to be taken seriously. The spiritual component, which is the origin of the sense of well-being, is difficult to measure and can easily be overlooked. However, it has a significant impact on human life.

To ensure well-being in all aspects of life, balance in the form of relationships is also crucial. Starting from the relationship with oneself, the relationship with fellow human beings and the relationship with the inhabited environment. Failure to ensure that these relationships are always in good and balanced condition will contribute to a lack of well-being.

Therefore, the Malay way of life philosophy has a close relationship with the goal of Islamic law or Maqasid Shariah and it is appropriate to be emphasized. Efforts to practice the concept of well-being need to involve all parties, especially every individual citizen of Malaysia. Well-being achieved through balance should be a model in any development aspect, especially in the post-COVID-19 era. With the balance of the 7 elements which is the integration of the basic components of physical, intellectual, and spiritual, supported by natural, societal and cultural elements, it is hoped that well-being in life can be achieved. The COVID-19 pandemic clearly teaches us that no matter how great the infrastructure development is, if there is no balance in giving rights to the inhabited environment, ultimately humans will have to bear the consequences. In short, our well-being depends on the balance we have, and this balance will preserve our lives, as found in the five goals of Islamic law.

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