



## The Formation of a Balanced and Holistic Individual: an Analysis of The National Education Philosophy (NEP)

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### Abstract:

*This study aims to examine the extent to which the concepts of balance and integration are applied within the National Philosophy of Education (FPK) in Malaysia. Essentially, the formulation of FPK reflects the government's aspiration to empower human capital. The government introduced FPK to outline the goals and direction of the national education system. This philosophy has implications for the national education system through an integrated approach that emphasizes the holistic and balanced development of human potential. The elements of integration and balance that FPK seeks to achieve and incorporate are faith, intellect, spirituality, emotions, and physical well-being. The concept of faith, or belief in God, serves as the foundation of FPK. In other words, intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and physical aspects must align with faith and religious teachings. Nowadays, the country faces various social issues, such as baby abandonment, murder, robbery, rape, adultery, corruption, and alcohol consumption. All parties are responsible for addressing these issues, including the education sector. The FPK introduced by the government is expected to help resolve these challenges. This study employs a library research methodology, analyzing several journal articles and other scholarly materials. The findings show that FPK aligns with the core principles of Islamic educational philosophy and, if fully applied, can shape students who are intellectually competent, morally upright, and faithful, ensuring success in both worldly life and the hereafter.*

**Keywords:** *Balanced And Integrated Individuals, National Education Philosophy (FPK), Physical Well-Being (JERI)*

### Abstrak :

*Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji sejauh mana konsep keseimbangan dan integrasi diterapkan dalam National Philosophy of Education (FPK) di Malaysia. Intinya, rumusan FPK mencerminkan aspirasi pemerintah untuk memberdayakan sumber daya manusia. Pemerintah memperkenalkan FPK untuk menguraikan tujuan dan arah sistem pendidikan nasional. Filosofi ini berimplikasi pada sistem pendidikan nasional melalui pendekatan terpadu yang mengedepankan pengembangan potensi manusia secara holistik dan seimbang. Unsur-unsur integrasi dan keseimbangan yang ingin dicapai dan digabungkan oleh FPK adalah keyakinan, intelek, kerobanian, emosi, dan kesejahteraan jasmani. Konsep iman, atau keyakinan kepada Tuhan, menjadi landasan FPK. Dengan kata lain, aspek intelektual, spiritual, emosional, dan jasmani harus selaras dengan keyakinan dan ajaran agama. Saat ini, negara menghadapi berbagai masalah sosial, seperti penelantaran bayi, pembunuhan, perampokan, pemerkosaan, perzinahan, korupsi, dan konsumsi alkohol. Semua pihak bertanggung jawab untuk menangani masalah ini, termasuk sektor pendidikan. FPK yang diperkenalkan oleh pemerintah diharapkan dapat membantu mengatasi tantangan tersebut. Penelitian ini menggunakan metodologi penelitian perpustakaan, menganalisis beberapa artikel jurnal dan materi ilmiah lainnya. Temuan tersebut menunjukkan bahwa FPK sejalan dengan prinsip-prinsip inti falsafah pendidikan Islam dan, jika diterapkan secara utuh, dapat membentuk mahasiswa yang kompeten secara intelektual, bermoral lurus, dan setia, menjamin keberhasilan baik dalam kehidupan duniawi maupun akhirat.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Individu Yang Seimbang Dan Terintegrasi, Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan (FPK), Kesejahteraan Jasmani (JERI)*

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## INTRODUCTION

Education plays a vital role in enhancing the quality of life in line with current global development (de Matos Pedro, Leitão, and Alves 2020). It serves not only as a medium for knowledge transmission but also as a mechanism to shape individuals who are capable of logical (Spender 2023), independent, and wise thinking, and who can solve problems effectively. A sustainable education system is expected to develop individuals who are not only intellectually competent but also spiritually grounded, obeying and practicing the teachings of Allah SWT. In this regard, the Malaysian government has invested substantially in educational infrastructure and resources across all levels of schooling (Matchonova, O. N., Ismoilova, G. O., & Abdullayeva 2019).

To ensure that national education goals are systematically achieved, a comprehensive framework known as the National Education Philosophy (NEP), later renamed the National Philosophy of Education (NPE), was introduced (Kisirkoi 2020). The NPE serves as the foundation for educational planning and policy, emphasizing holistic and integrated human development that balances intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and physical aspects based on belief in and obedience to (Assistant Professor 2020). This philosophical foundation aims to produce knowledgeable, ethical, and responsible citizens capable of contributing to national harmony and prosperity.

While previous studies have explored the theoretical framework and implementation of the NPE, limited research has specifically examined how the core principles of balance and integration within the NPE are applied and aligned with Islamic educational philosophy (Lewandowski 2016). Most existing literature tends to focus on general outcomes of education or policy-level analysis, often overlooking the deeper philosophical congruence between national education goals and Islamic metaphysics, epistemology, and axiology (Viennet and Pont 2017). This study seeks to fill that gap by analyzing how the NPE embodies the elements of balance intellect, spirit, emotion, and physique while grounding them in divine faith as its ultimate foundation (Fischer and Henkel 2012).

The distinction of this study lies in its integration of philosophical analysis with educational policy discourse, particularly by comparing the NPE's foundational values with the Islamic Philosophy of Education (IPE) (Buang and Chew 2014). Meanwhile, the novelty of this research is the critical synthesis that highlights the compatibility between NPE and Islamic educational philosophy, especially in terms of its holistic human development model (*insan seimbang*). This approach not only contributes to the discourse on educational philosophy in Malaysia but also offers a framework for future educational models grounded in spiritual-ethical foundations.

*“Pendidikan di Malaysia adalah suatu usaha berterusan ke arah memperkembangkan lagi potensi individu secara menyeluruh dan bersepadu untuk mewujudkan insan yang seimbang dan harmonis dari segi intelek, rohani, emosi dan jasmani berdasarkan kepercayaan dan kepatuhan kepada Tuhan. Usaha ini adalah bagi melahirkan rakyat Malaysia yang berilmu pengetahuan, berketerampilan, berakhlak mulia, bertanggungjawab dan berkeupayaan mencapai kesejahteraan diri, serta memberi sumbangan terhadap keharmonian dan kemakmuran keluarga, masyarakat dan Negara”.* Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (2001)

According to the view of Rozaini Ahmad et al. (2023), the goals of national education, which are based on the National Philosophy of Education (NPE), are aimed at producing individuals who are good, well-rounded, and of high quality. In addition, Mohamad Johdi Salleh (2022) states that the vision and mission of the NPE aim to produce intelligent individuals, endowed with great talents and a critical and progressive mindset, who can contribute to the development of excellent human beings. Philosophy plays a crucial role in shaping holistic and balanced individuals based on belief, conviction, and obedience to God. To achieve inner balance and integration, the physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual (PESI) aspects must be

developed comprehensively (Rozaini Ahmad et al., 2023). These four elements contribute to the formation of individuals capable of living harmoniously with themselves and their surroundings. Moreover, individuals with balance in these aspects are more resilient in facing life's challenges and are better prepared to overcome various problems (Mohd Fathi et al., 2010).

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach with the method of library research (library research). This approach was chosen because the research focuses on conceptual and philosophical studies related to the application of the concept of balance and integration in the philosophy of National Education (FPK) Malaysia. Literature study allows researchers to explore, understand, and analyze ideas contained in official documents, scientific journal articles, academic books, as well as other scientific papers relevant to the topic. Sources of data in this study are secondary, including: Official Malaysian government document on FPK, Journal articles discussing the philosophy of National Education, Academic books that examine value-based education and holistic human development, Research reports related to the implementation of FPK in educational institutions.

The collected Data are analyzed descriptively-analytically. The analysis is conducted by examining the meaning content of relevant texts to trace the extent to which the principles of balance (between intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and physical aspects) and integration (between religious values and worldly life) are applied in FPK. In addition, the study also examines the implications of the application of FPK in the social and educational context, especially in responding to various moral and social challenges faced by Malaysian society today.

With this approach, it is expected that the research can provide a deep understanding of how FPK as a national education philosophy is able to become a value framework in printing balanced, integrated, and highly moral human resources.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### The Integration Of Theological Elements In The National Philosophy Of Education

In Islam, *'aqidah* (faith) is the fundamental foundation for every Muslim. Therefore, strengthening *'aqidah* within individuals is essential to ensure firm belief in Allah SWT. *'aqidah* is defined as unwavering belief in the pillars of faith, guided by the divine revelations of Allah, namely the Qur'an and Sunnah, without any doubt. *Aqidah* as the rejection of all forms of worship other than Allah and full-hearted acceptance of acts of worship directed solely to Him. In philosophy, *'aqidah* and faith fall under the branch of metaphysics. Metaphysical discussions in Islam are explored through the knowledge of *Tawhid* and *Ilm al-Kalam*. According to Naquib al-Attas, Islamic metaphysics is a system that explains the reality of existence and true being. Therefore, *'aqidah* is the heartfelt belief and conviction in Allah. It is the foundation and cornerstone of Islam. Without it, one's religious stance would collapse. For this reason, Allah SWT sent the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) to establish and strengthen true Islamic *'aqidah*.

The National Philosophy of Education (NPE) was introduced with the main goal of developing and strengthening human capital among Malaysians. It outlines the objectives and direction of the national education system in producing competitive and excellent individuals. Internalizing the NPE among educators is essential to ensure balance and integration in education. A lack of understanding and appreciation of the NPE among teachers may result in less effective teaching, where the educational content cannot be delivered in a comprehensive and integrated manner to develop balanced and harmonious individuals.

The key strength of the NPE lies in its emphasis on producing human capital that is intellectually, spiritually, emotionally, physically, and faithfully balanced and integrated. This emphasis is reflected in the NPE, which states:

*“Pendidikan di Malaysia adalah satu usaha berterusan ke arah lebih memperkembangkan lagi potensi individu secara menyeluruh dan bersepadu untuk melahirkan insan yang seimbang dan harmonis dari segi intelek, rohani, emosi dan jasmani berdasarkan kepercayaan dan kepatuhan kepada Tuhan”.*

Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia. (2001)

As a Muslim, the interpretation of the above text, which emphasizes belief and obedience to God, refers more specifically to the aspect of *‘aqidah* or faith in Allah SWT. Therefore, the National Philosophy of Education (NPE) places great importance on *‘aqidah* in producing quality human capital within Malaysia’s education system. *Aqidah* education is the most fundamental element in shaping the identity of a true Muslim, compared to other forms of education. The integration and reinforcement of *‘aqidah* within individuals play a crucial role in producing outstanding individuals with noble character. The government’s efforts to strengthen *‘aqidah* elements in the education system are reflected through the enhancement of Islamic education at various levels, including primary and secondary schools, as well as institutions of higher learning.

*Aqidah* and ethics (*akhlak*) are two closely interrelated aspects. This means that noble character is a reflection of strong faith. The perfection of *‘aqidah* must be accompanied by virtuous conduct. *Aqidah* is not merely verbal expression but must be internalized and practiced to give rise to noble character, as faith and conduct are interconnected and inseparable. In the context of education, the integration of *‘aqidah* values is hoped to strengthen the spiritual foundation of Muslim individuals with good morals. The aim is to produce individuals with a solid foundation of faith and outstanding personality in everyday life. *Tawhid* is capable of shaping a faithful and righteous generation that is also capable of handling personal and life crises.

In truth, every segment of society has a role to play in nurturing and internalizing *‘aqidah*. Efforts to ensure the appreciation of *‘aqidah* among Muslims must be continuously implemented with wisdom and thoughtful approaches. This responsibility does not lie solely on scholars (*ulama*), but also requires the active participation of the entire Muslim community across all levels of life with a high sense of commitment and responsibility. The appreciation of Islamic *‘aqidah* is not only aimed at strengthening the relationship between a servant and the Creator but also serves as a foundation for building relationships among human beings based on Islamic values. In the educational context, the teaching delivered by educators in the classroom should always be connected to the greatness and power of Allah SWT. Knowledge dissemination should be supported by evidence from the Qur’an and Hadith to strengthen students’ understanding. Moreover, educators should practice Islamic values in their daily lives and instill awareness among students regarding their responsibilities as servants and vicegerents (*khelifah*) of Allah on earth.

The role of teachers in conveying correct *‘aqidah* understanding is of utmost importance. Teachers shape students’ understanding and internalization of faith. Explain that matters of *‘aqidah* should be addressed through the *talaqqi* (teacher-guided) approach. This method ensures that students receive sources, facts, and accurate information directly from qualified teachers. The impact of authentic faith will produce students with sound knowledge. If a person has faith in Allah, it indirectly reflects that the person also possesses intellect and true religious knowledge.

Therefore, strong understanding and appreciation of *‘aqidah* is one of the most essential elements in producing balanced students in accordance with the demands of the National Philosophy of Education (NPE). The internalization of *‘aqidah* in education is seen as the most fundamental and effective element in developing credible, high-quality, and excellent human capital, particularly in Malaysia.

### **Integration Of Spiritual Elements In The National Philosophy Of Education**

The human soul is an aspect of life that cannot be seen with the naked eye, making it immeasurable by mere physical life or death. The soul is defined as the inner element related to a

person's spirit. The Qur'an contains several verses that are closely related to the soul, such as Surah al-Fajr (89:27) and Surah al-Isra' (17:85).

If the education system focuses solely on academics without giving due attention to moral and spiritual development, it will produce a generation that may be intellectually excellent but lacks religious values and noble character in both their professions and daily lives. Therefore, we must rely only on authentic sources of education to develop quality human beings. A balanced and holistic individual emerges from the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah, which are capable of enhancing one's spiritual potential. When a person's soul is pure, their entire life will be good and peaceful.

Moreover, through the process of intellectual learning, humans can develop an awareness of the existence of God by reflecting on the signs of His greatness. Acknowledging the Creator can soften the heart, eliminate arrogance, and strengthen faith in His power. This awareness also leads to the development of sincere servitude to Allah SWT, making individuals more obedient in fulfilling their duties as His servants. A deep understanding of the concept of servitude enables every Muslim to fulfill their role as *khalifah* (vicegerent) on earth with full responsibility. Such awareness not only shapes individuals who are more God-conscious (*muttaqin*) but also produces a Muslim society capable of establishing a harmonious and prosperous life in this world and the Hereafter.

Upon closer observation, the integration of spiritual elements has long existed in Malaysia's education system. This is because spirituality is one of the key aspects emphasized in the National Philosophy of Education (NPE) to develop balanced and holistic individuals. Spirituality is one of the core foundations of a religious life, with abundant guidance found in the Qur'an and Sunnah. Furthermore, the goals of the NPE are said to align with those of Islamic moral education, which aim to produce righteous individuals. A righteous person is one who is fully conscious of God and fulfills responsibilities as entrusted by Allah SWT.

Hence, it cannot be denied that the introduction of the NPE has shifted the dimension of education from a liberal secular system toward strengthening faith. However, the crisis among youth, especially students, remains unresolved. The main problems faced by students in schools involve character, discipline, and religion. The challenge of declining morality and discipline among students is a major concern in today's educational landscape. Thus, the issue of moral decay among students as adolescents is closely linked to the internalization of spiritual elements within themselves. Although they have undergone the teaching and learning process from primary to secondary levels, it seems to have had little impact on their inner selves. Where did things go wrong?

While we continue searching for answers to this question, all parties schools, parents, and other stakeholders must work together to ensure that students nurtured through the national education system are excellent and balanced in both worldly and spiritual aspects. For example, schools should increase the number of spiritual activities, such as religious talks, public speaking competitions on religious topics, Islamic quizzes, and more. As for parents, they should not relinquish their responsibilities to teachers alone, since parents have greater authority and spend more time with their children at home. Parents are the first agents of education, starting from the prenatal stage until their children begin formal schooling, and this early foundation will shape the children's future lives.

### **Integration Of Emotional Elements In The National Philosophy Of Education**

Emotions refer to the expression of intense inner feelings such as affection, joy, shame, sadness, and fear. Emotions can also be defined as sensitive reactions arising from a person's inner feelings, often manifested through certain behaviours or ways of expressing those feelings. From a psychological perspective, emotions are regarded as an internal language of the individual, closely related to physical responses to the environment and social interactions. Emotions also

represent a form of mental movement influenced by external stimuli. The human mind is passive in nature, receiving and being affected by what crosses its thoughts. When a person responds to the feelings they experience, that reaction is known as emotion.

From an Islamic perspective, emotions play a significant role in shaping a well-rounded and stable personality. Islam has a mission to transform the thoughts and behaviour of society so that individuals attain high emotional intelligence. This emotional intelligence must be rooted in the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah, with the concept of *tawhid* (oneness of God) as its core foundation. Muslim's failure to use the Qur'an and Sunnah as a guide in daily life will result in the failure to develop true Islamic character and commitment to religion.

In addition, emotional and psychological aspects have long been emphasized in Islamic psychology education. Emotions in Islamic psychology are closely aligned with human natural potential (*fitriah*) that develops through growth and character formation. The ability of an individual to recognize and develop emotional maturity has a positive impact on personal well-being. This is affirmed in the Qur'an, particularly in Surah Adh-Dhariyat, verses 20 and 21, which stress the importance of self-awareness as part of God's creation. Furthermore, the significance of managing and controlling emotions is reinforced by the Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), as narrated by al-Bukhari and Muslim:

*"Among you, the one who knows his Lord the most is the one who knows himself the most."*  
(Narrated by Bukhari & Muslim)

This hadith highlights that self-awareness is the foundation for building a strong relationship with Allah SWT and reflects a balance in emotional and spiritual aspects of a person.

Therefore, the integration of emotional elements emphasized in the National Philosophy of Education (NPE) must not be taken lightly. When managed effectively, emotions can produce individuals and students with excellent moral character. If an individual is able to manage and control their emotions and anchors their relationship with Allah, their soul will remain calm, and they will be able to control every action they intend to take.

### **Integration Of Physical Elements In The National Philosophy Of Education**

The term *jasmani* (physical) is derived from Arabic and refers to the human body. *Jasmani* is defined as the body or the physical aspect of a person. Meanwhile, physical education refers to a school subject aimed at improving students' health, fitness, and endurance by instilling values, attitudes, and healthy practices in daily life. Physical education is also a field that emphasizes physical fitness and has evolved alongside the progress of modern society.

Physical education plays an important role in providing opportunities for students to develop their interest and inclination toward sports and physical activities. Learning in this field aims to enhance students' performance through various physical activities to achieve optimal health and fitness. Physical education involves a teaching process that encompasses psychomotor, cognitive, affective, social, and emotional aspects, all of which contribute to the holistic development of the student.

In the context of physical education, Learning process intended to develop knowledge, skills, and understanding among students while promoting physical fitness and efficiency. Generally, physical education encompasses three main domains: psychomotor, cognitive, and affective. The psychomotor domain relates to the skills taught in physical activities, while the cognitive domain involves the transmission of knowledge about sports and health. The affective domain concerns the formation of attitudes, emotions, and values instilled by teachers. Thus, physical education is not merely about physical activity but also emphasizes the holistic development of students across these three domains to produce healthy, active, and disciplined individuals.

Additionally, physical education offers educational, physiological, psychological, and disciplinary experiences. It can be concluded that physical education helps shape students'

personalities into more charismatic and competent individuals. The aspirations of national education as expressed in the National Philosophy of Education (NPE) encompass four core aspects: physical, emotional, spiritual, and intellectual. The integration of these elements fosters the creation of balanced individuals and contributes to building human capital capable of advancing the nation in both material development and noble values.

One of the emphasized components in the NPE is the physical aspect. At the school level, this is formally introduced through the Physical Education subject, which is mandatory in both primary and secondary schools. According to the Education Act 1996 (Act 550) and the 1997 National Curriculum Regulations, core subjects are defined as subjects that must be taken by all students in government and non-government schools. In the Primary School Standard Curriculum (KSSR), Physical Education is classified as a core subject, mandatory for all students from Level 1 and Level 2, with an allocation of two periods per week.

To produce students who are healthy, active, and intellectually capable, the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) has outlined several objectives for Physical Education. Among the key goals are to improve and maintain health-based fitness and motor skills, to master basic movement and games according to individual abilities, and to make exercise and physical activity a part of daily routine. Furthermore, Physical Education also aims to provide knowledge about health and safety in every physical activity, to instill character and self-discipline, and to help students make wise decisions in daily life.

The Physical Education curriculum is designed to realize the government's aspirations to produce well-rounded students, in line with the National Philosophy of Education. Therefore, the syllabus is structured around three main pillars: fitness, skills, and sports. The fitness component emphasizes students' ability to engage in sustained physical activity without excessive fatigue, focusing on health-based physical fitness and motor skill enhancement. The skills component focuses on movements involving gross and fine motor skills, emphasizing mastery of basic skills in areas such as games, athletics, gymnastics, creative movement, and recreation. Meanwhile, the sports component covers students' understanding and knowledge that strengthen the practice of Physical Education and sports. This includes emphasis on safety, management, career development in sports, ethics in physical activities, and related issues in Physical Education and sports. Overall, the Physical Education curriculum aims not only to improve students' fitness levels but also to develop skilled and knowledgeable individuals in physical activity and sports, aligning with the holistic human development model in the national education system.

In addition, co-curricular activities serve as a complement to the formal curriculum at both primary and secondary school levels and are part of the National Curriculum, as stated in Subregulation 3(1) of the 1997 National Curriculum Regulations. The main objective of co-curricular activities is to support the goals of the National Philosophy of Education, including fostering awareness of religion and belief in God, balancing spiritual, physical, intellectual, and emotional development, and strengthening social relationships among students. Co-curricular activities also play a role in building and nurturing student talents and interests, enhancing discipline, creating a positive school environment, encouraging teamwork, and shaping a school identity and character.

The government places serious emphasis on implementing co-curricular activities in schools, as demonstrated by legal provisions enforcing strict action against individuals who fail or refuse to conduct these activities. Under Section 18 of the Education Act 1996 (Act 550), such offenses may incur fines up to RM5,000 or imprisonment not exceeding three months, or both. Additionally, Subsection 135(1) of the same act allows the court to impose a daily fine not exceeding RM500 for continuous offenses. These provisions clearly reflect the importance of co-curricular activities in the education system and their role in developing balanced and competitive students (Odhiambo, Ngota, and Okoti 2020).

Co-curricular activities also contribute directly to physical health and fitness. Every student is required to participate in at least one uniformed body, club/society, and sports club, as outlined in Circular Letter No. 1/1985. The Ministry of Education Malaysia has also allocated specific time requirements for co-curricular activities: Transition Classes and Forms 1, 2, 3 & 6 – 180 minutes per week; Arts, Commerce, and Home Science Streams – 180 minutes per week; Science and Agriculture Streams – 140 minutes per week; and Technical Streams – 100 minutes per week. For primary schools, Years 3 and 4 have 60 minutes per week, while Years 5 and 6 have 120 minutes per week (Government Gazette No. 5652 Vol. 11/No. 27 dated 28 December 1967).

All teachers are required to be involved in ensuring the effective implementation of co-curricular activities in schools, as stated in Subsection 5.2 of Circular Letter No. 1/1985 KP(BS)8591/Jld. 11(29) dated 2 January 1985. Furthermore, student participation in co-curricular activities is mandatory, and attendance must be recorded for monitoring and evaluation purposes, as outlined in Circular Letter No. 1/1986 KP(BS)8591/Jld. 11/(41) dated 15 January 1986. For example, the School Youth Cadet Corps (*Tunas Kadet Remaja Sekolah*, TKRS) includes curriculum modules such as marching drills, first aid, spirituality, community service, knotting, and survival skills (School Division, 2005). These modules directly shape students' attitudes, character, and behavior, many of which involve the physical development of students themselves.

Additionally, the “One Student One Sport” policy, part of the Government's National Key Result Areas (NKRA), emphasizes the goal of ensuring all students actively participate in at least one sport (Sports Division, 2010). This policy directly relates to the physical development of students. A healthy student is more likely to develop a strong and noble identity and can focus better on academic learning.

### **The Physical Aspect from an Islamic Perspective**

Islam is a comprehensive religion that encompasses all aspects of life. Physical strength is also highly emphasized in Islam (Murshidi et al. 2024). This is why the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) encouraged parents to teach their children archery, swimming, and horseback riding (Ahmad, 2012). These elements reflect key aspects found within the domain of physical education.

The Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) also said:

*"Whoever begins their morning with a healthy body, a calm and sincere heart, and sufficient food for the day, it is as if they have possessed the entire world."* (Hadith narrated by Tirmidhi and Ibn Majah)

This hadith highlights the vital importance of physical strength and health. There is a close connection between good health and physical well-being. In the Islamic worldview, knowledge is categorized into two major types: *fardhu 'ain* and *fardhu kifayah*. *Fardhu 'ain* refers to obligatory knowledge that every Muslim individual who has reached maturity must learn and practice. This includes the knowledge of faith (*aqidah*), Islamic law (*shari'ah*), and ethics (*akhlak*), which serve to strengthen belief, shape outward behavior, and purify the heart from negative and reprehensible traits.

In contrast, *fardhu kifayah* refers to knowledge that is a communal obligation—essential for the collective welfare of the Muslim community, although not individually mandatory. This knowledge is vital for ensuring societal well-being, stability, and development, fulfilling life's needs in pursuit of comfort and peace within society. Therefore, physical education can be categorized under *fardhu kifayah*—a complementary component to a Muslim's holistic life.

The Integration of Intellectual Elements in the National Philosophy of Education To create a harmonious and integrated society, the intellectual element plays a critical role within the education system. Intellect refers to the ability to think and understand wisely, and it aids human beings in reaching the highest level of consciousness in their pursuit of knowledge.

Abdullah (1982) stated that intellect can uncover ultimate truth, guiding humans towards their Creator.

Human beings possess a noble intellectual capacity, with reason (*'aql*) being the source, base, and repository of knowledge. He divided the function of intellect into four parts:

1. The capacity to think, which differentiates humans from animals.
2. The ability to understand, which begins to develop in children at a certain age.
3. Knowledge gained through continuous training and experience.
4. Instinctive understanding—the ability to recognize cause-and-effect relationships in problem-solving.

Intellectual intelligence plays a crucial role in helping individuals resolve various life challenges. In the context of educational philosophy, the intellectual component emphasizes thinking skills, including:

1. Mastery of basic literacy and numeracy skills (3Rs: reading, writing, arithmetic).
2. Acquisition, refinement, and dissemination of knowledge across disciplines.
3. The ability to think critically and creatively in analyzing and solving problems.
4. The application of knowledge for personal and societal benefit.

The 3Rs are fundamental to early childhood education. These skills are introduced at the primary level (ages 6–11) to build a strong foundation in literacy and numeracy. This stage of education also introduces basic science, pre-vocational skills, generic competencies, and noble values. To ensure universal access, all Malaysian citizens are required to register their children in primary school at the age of six. In support of this, the Ministry of Education (MOE) has introduced effective strategies, such as enhancing educational infrastructure and facilities, to ensure no student is left behind. This initiative is aligned with the Compulsory Education Policy, aimed at providing quality foundational education for all

The intellectual component in education also focuses on acquiring, improving, and disseminating knowledge. Students must strive to gain and expand knowledge based on truth. Thus, MOE emphasizes lifelong learning through the development of learning and generic skills. This approach ensures that students can learn effectively during school years and continue to develop their knowledge and abilities afterward.

To realize the National Philosophy of Education (NPE), the MOE has implemented policies emphasizing intellectual development. A key objective is to produce students with critical, creative, and innovative thinking skills, strong national identity, and proficiency in at least two major languages Malay and English. Strategies include strengthening student-centered learning and introducing innovative teaching methods to enhance student achievement.

In student-centered learning, students are encouraged to use their thinking skills to the fullest, with teachers serving as guides. Various innovation programs, including Smart School initiatives, have also been implemented to develop students' ICT skills, professionalism, and competitiveness.

The final intellectual component is the application of knowledge for oneself and others. This includes a willingness to share and disseminate knowledge within one's environment. Once students enter the workforce, their education enables them to contribute to society and the nation in their respective fields.

From Years 7–9 (Forms 1–3), students receive general education across various disciplines. In Years 10–11 (Forms 4–5), students are introduced to specialized streams such as arts, science, religion, technical, vocational, or skills-based education, depending on their interests. For Years 12–13 (Lower and Upper Sixth Form), students are prepared for tertiary education or entry into the workforce. This pathway ensures that secondary school graduates have clear opportunities to continue learning or contribute to national development, aligning with the goals of Vision 2020.

## CONCLUSION

The National Philosophy of Education (NPE) provides the foundational framework for Malaysia's education system. Its purpose is to ensure that education evolves meaningfully, producing students who are balanced across all aspects emotional, physical, spiritual, intellectual, and faith-based. According to the NPE, belief in and obedience to God (faith) form the core from which all other aspects of human development should be aligned.

Thus, intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and physical development must all be rooted in belief in Allah SWT. This study finds that the aims of the NPE are aligned with the core components of the Islamic Philosophy of Education (IPE), which includes elements of metaphysics (*tawhid*), epistemology (knowledge), and axiology (values).

Both the NPE and IPE aim to produce individuals with firm faith (*aqidah*), broad knowledge, and noble character. Teachers and educators play a crucial role in developing and nurturing this balance among students. To ensure such balance, collaboration is needed at all levels from primary and secondary schools to higher education institutions and public universities.

Achieving this equilibrium will produce students who succeed in both this world and the hereafter. The National Philosophy of Education should not remain a written aspiration—it must be applied, embodied, and translated into every student's life.

## DAFTAR PUSTAKA

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