Human Nature – “FITRAH”

**Human nature:**
- An innate natural predisposition which cannot change – exist at birth in all human beings.
- Natural/innate characteristics; BORN with us
- Examples: talent, physical ability, cognition & emotion
- Bestowed by the CREATOR - for the benefit of mankind
- Every human beings born into this world has natural characteristics that are “pure” & “perfect”

**Literal meaning – creation, cause a thing to exist for the first time, and the natural constitution with which a child is created in mother’s womb.**

- Fitrah is not a dormant potential.

- **Fitrah (religious) – faculty (ability, power) created in mankind.**

**Negative influences by the nurturing processes & low quality environment may disturb the purity**

**2 types of human’s natural characteristics:**
- Physical
- Spiritual

**PHYSICAL**

- Human beings need 3 basic elements to survive:
  - Food
  - Clothing
  - Shelter
- Without all these / insufficiency of any may limit chances for human beings to live comfortably

**SPIRITUAL**

- It is part of human nature to seek for the truth & belief in God
- In accord with the nature: men are created by God
- Spiritual nature = human’s instinct about believing in God, the Creator
- The instinct to find faiths / religion is born within every mankind;
- Men need to fulfil this need in order to live accordingly

**HIERARCHY OF NEEDS**

- To ensure the growth of human’s natural characteristic; there are several basic needs that need to be fulfilled
- Abraham Maslow identified 5 basic needs of human beings
- The needs are arranged in a hierarchical order showing the existence of levels/stages
- Starts with first level, most basic = physiological needs; highest level is the self-actualization needs

- Each human beings must fulfil the most basic needs before proceeding to the next level.

- The needs are not necessarily fulfilled in any particular order; some needs may be fulfilled simultaneously

- The ability or inability of individuals to fulfil all 5 level of needs will influence his / her perceptions about life & the environments

- Potentials are part of Fitrah; at a lower stage than fitrah
- Fitrah continues to grow even without stimulation; but potentials will be hindered / limited or never made known unless stimulated

- Quality development is an outcome of quality stimulation
- Eg. a normal child will know how to talk eventually even without proper training, which is Fitrah.

- However, if the child is trained in other language than his / her own, he or she may master that language eventually
- Stimulation through proper training / exposure to communication with others, reading materials, computers or other media

- Potentials can also be viewed from the physical & spiritual perspectives
- Physically, men have potentials to be involved in physical activities like sports, farming, recreation, exercise etc.

- Spiritually, men have potentials to understand concepts, thinking creatively & critically; innovative; debate etc in accord with his or her fitrah

HUMAN POTENTIALS

- Human potentials = latent ability / capability
- Also known as possibilities in oneself
- Potentials need to be stimulated in order for it to be tapped / made known and grow
- Like Fitrah, potentials are also bestowed by God, the Creator.

- Fitrah = i.e men do not fly
- Potential = men design means & ways to enable them to fly (aircraft)
- Men have ability & capability to work on the means & ways to achieve their ambitions
- It’s fitrah for human being that potentials can be molded / honed to grow
The importance of understanding fitrah & potentials

Drive & regulate efforts towards excellence

According to human's fitrah, men are born to make good deeds; therefore no one is born to destroy or involved in bad things.

Men are born “pure” in all aspects — physical, mental, social & emotional.

Dysfunctional environment may disrupt the purity.

- Eg: Fitrah: to get married & generate; “pure” means ways to generate the future generations; failing to do so in accord with the religious perspective / socio-cultural guidelines may produce bad generations, uncivilized (as a product of incest / rape & adultery).
- Or marrying someone of the same sex…

Potentials may differ from person to person; some may be highly potential in certain area and not in others.

Proper planning, quality training may stimulate development of potentials to the maximum level; in accord with the God's rules.

Other than quality stimulations; genetic, age, & other environmental actors may also influence human's potentials.

Various factors in the environment may influence the growth & development of both fitrah & potentials.

Good planning of stimulations are needed to balance up the growth of both fitrah & potentials.

Conclusions

- Men are born into this world w=equipped with fitrah & potentials.
- Fitrah is the natural characteristics; potentials refer to latent ability in human beings — must be made know.
- Fitrah is related with the fulfilment of human needs; as suggested in Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs.