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 being born into this world has natural characteristics that are “pure” & “perfect”

Human Nature – “FITRAH”

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 being must fulfill 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 fulfill all 5 level of needs will influence his/her perceptions about life & the environments.

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.
• Potentials are part of Fitrah; at a lower stage than fitrah
• Fitrah will continue 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

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

• 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
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.
Men are born into this world equipped with fitrah & potentials

Fitrah is the natural characteristics; potentials refer to latent ability in human beings must be made known

Fitrah is related with the fulfilment of human needs; as suggested in Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs

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