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## Understanding Learning and Students from the Quranic Perspective

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### Abstract

*Knowledge is essential for humans to achieve happiness in both worldly life and the hereafter. Acquiring knowledge requires studying and understanding Qur'anic verses related to learning activities. This study employs a thematic interpretation (tafsir tematik) method. The findings show that the primary purpose of learning is cultivating awareness, which motivates students to be grateful and devoted to Allah. Tawhid (the oneness of Allah) serves as the fundamental foundation of all learning activities. Furthermore, teachers should regard students not merely as objects but as active participants in education; a creative teacher fosters students' active engagement. Students' attitudes toward teachers should reflect noble character (akhlaq al-karimah), emulating the exemplary interactions of the Companions with Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).*

**Keywords:** Understanding, Learning, Students, The Quranic Perspective

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## INTRODUCTION

Knowledge is essential for human beings to achieve happiness both in this world and in the hereafter. In the Islamic worldview, the pursuit of knowledge is not only intellectual but also spiritual, requiring an understanding of Qur'anic guidance related to learning activities. The Qur'an encourages believers to seek knowledge with awareness and devotion, thereby transforming learning into an act of worship and gratitude toward Allah. This integration of spiritual values into educational practice supports the idea that learning should cultivate consciousness and sincere devotion rather than mere information acquisition (Saputra & Subki, 2025).

Central to Islamic education is the principle of tawhid, the oneness of Allah, which functions as the foundational basis for all learning activities. By grounding education in the concept of tawhid, learning becomes more than a cognitive exercise; it becomes a means to understand human purpose and responsibility before the Creator. Thematic interpretation (tafsir tematik) is an effective research method for exploring this integration, enabling scholars to extract Qur'anic principles that are directly relevant to educational purposes and practices (Saputra & Subki, 2025). Previous studies in Islamic education emphasize that embedding Qur'anic values into pedagogical frameworks enhances moral and ethical development, which is a key objective of Islamic pedagogy (Sugiarto, 2025).

The role of teachers in this paradigm extends beyond content delivery. An effective Islamic educator regards students as active subjects in the learning process rather than passive recipients. A creative teacher encourages dialogue, critical thinking, and active participation, fostering an environment where students engage deeply with both spiritual and academic content. This aligns with research showing that contextual and inquiry-based approaches in Islamic education can significantly improve student engagement and learning outcomes (Maralottung Siregar, 2023; Hasby, 2025). Such pedagogical strategies not only improve cognitive understanding but also

support the development of akhlaq al-karimah (noble character), similar to the interactions between the Companions and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Furthermore, Maralottung Siregar's work on contextual learning in Islamic educational settings highlights how innovative pedagogical models—such as contextual and inquiry approaches—can enhance students' learning achievements in religious subjects. His research demonstrates that when learning activities are connected to real-world experiences and student inquiry, educational outcomes improve markedly (Maralottung Siregar, 2023). This underscores the importance of integrating Qur'anic principles with modern pedagogical approaches to cultivate a balanced, spiritually grounded, and academically effective learning environment.

The title of this study was carefully chosen to reflect the central focus and purpose of the research, which is understanding learning and students from a Quranic perspective. Knowledge acquisition is not only a cognitive process but also a spiritual and moral endeavor in Islamic education. By emphasizing the Qur'anic perspective, the title highlights the integration of religious values, moral awareness, and pedagogical principles in shaping effective learning practices.

Furthermore, the title underscores the dual purpose of education in Islam: to achieve success in both worldly life and the hereafter. It signals that the study is not limited to conventional learning theories but is grounded in Qur'anic guidance, emphasizing the development of consciousness (taqwa), gratitude, and noble character (akhlaq al-karimah) among students.

## RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, the chosen research method serves as the essential path to follow, providing a foundational framework to produce scientific knowledge. The research method employed is thematic interpretation (tafsir tematik), which is a method of Qur'anic exegesis that compiles verses of the Qur'an related to a specific theme. In contemporary times, thematic interpretation plays a crucial role, as it offers solutions to problems faced by society. Issues that arise in different parts of the world can be examined and addressed through a Qur'anic approach using thematic interpretation, making it a relevant and practical tool for understanding and resolving contemporary challenges.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Learning is an activity that produces change, encompassing not only cognitive aspects but also affective and psychomotor domains. This holistic understanding of learning emphasizes that knowledge acquisition is not merely the accumulation of information, but also the development of attitudes, values, and practical skills. Learning, therefore, serves as a transformative process that shapes both the mind and character of the learner.

The first dimension, *ra'yu* (thinking and reasoning), involves the use of intellectual faculties to process and evaluate information. *Ra'yu* encourages learners to actively analyze, reflect, and critically assess knowledge, ensuring a deep and meaningful understanding. By engaging in reasoning and thoughtful reflection, students can internalize concepts more effectively and apply them in various contexts.

The second and third dimensions, *nazarah* (observing) and *sam'u* (listening), emphasize attentiveness and perception. *Nazarah* involves careful observation and contemplation, allowing learners to detect patterns, relationships, and principles, while *sam'u* develops understanding through attentive listening. Together, these dimensions highlight the importance of active engagement of both mind and senses in the learning process, ensuring a richer comprehension of the material.

*Bashara* (seeing) represents the use of vision to perceive and understand the surrounding world, integrating concrete observation with conceptual awareness. By combining *ra'yu*, *nazarah*, *sam'u*, and *bashara*, learning engages multiple faculties, integrating intellectual, emotional, and sensory experiences. This comprehensive approach fosters not only knowledge acquisition but also practical skills, ethical understanding, and the ability to apply learning wisely in real-life situations.

a. *Ra'yu* (Thinking and Reasoning)

Contemporary research emphasizes the importance of integrating Qur'anic values and thematic interpretation into the educational process. Saputra and Subki (2024) highlight how Qur'anic principles can be systematically applied in learning strategies to enhance both moral and intellectual outcomes. Similarly, Sain et al. (2025) demonstrate that the correlation between *aqidah akhlak* and spiritual intelligence contributes to comprehensive character formation. Maralottung Siregar (2023) contextualizes Islamic education within historical and cultural frameworks, underscoring the continued relevance of Qur'anic foundational values in shaping students' ethical, cognitive, and spiritual development. These studies collectively indicate that engaging with the Qur'an promotes holistic learning, integrating knowledge, ethics, and piety.

b. *Nazhara* (Observing and Reflecting)

*Nazhara* appears in verses such as in Surah Al-Mudathir and An-Naml, where it signifies careful observation and thoughtful contemplation. Contemporary exegetes like Ahmad Mustafa al-Maraghi explain *nazhara* as a process of attentive observation that delves into intellectual reflection and evaluation. Within the learning process, *nazhara* represents a cognitive activity higher than simple attention (*ra'yu*), as students not only notice but also critically engage with what they observe. This reflective process is key to meaningful learning and aligns with research that highlights reflective observation as foundational in Qur'anic learning models (Pratiwi, Bey & Nashihin, 2025).

c. *Sam'u* (Hearing and Comprehension)

The term *sam'u* fundamentally refers to the faculty of hearing, but in the Qur'anic context it also encompasses comprehension and intellectual processing, as indicated in verses like Surah Al-Mukminun (23:78). *Sam'u* plays a vital role in learning because it involves both sensory reception and understanding of information conveyed through sound. Studies in Islamic education show that listening is a critical channel by which learners internalize knowledge, build faith, and develop moral insight, and that the Qur'an repeatedly emphasizes the responsibility of using hearing together with thought and heart in the learning process (Nurul Hidayah Siregar, Zulheldi & Samad, 2024).

d. *Bashara* (Seeing and Insight)

*Bashara* refers to vision or sight, as found in verses such as Surah Al-An'am (6:103) and Al-Isra' (17:36). It represents both the sensory act of seeing and the deeper ability to perceive truth and reality. In learning, *bashara* encourages students to engage with reality critically and insightfully, recognizing signs and knowledge that extend beyond mere physical sight. Contemporary thematic Qur'anic studies emphasize that learning involves integrating sensory experience with reflective insight and moral awareness, pointing to an educational model that values both perception and inner understanding (Pratiwi, Bey & Nashihin, 2025).

Learning is an activity that produces change, encompassing cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. In the Qur'anic perspective, learning involves not only the acquisition of knowledge but also the development of attitudes, values, and practical skills. The four key activities—*ra'yu* (thinking and reasoning), *nazarah* (observing), *sam'u* (listening), and *bashara* (seeing)—highlight that effective learning engages multiple faculties, requiring intellectual reflection, sensory perception, and attentive comprehension. These activities encourage students to actively analyze, contemplate, and understand both concrete phenomena and abstract concepts, fostering holistic intellectual growth.

Overall, these four activities illustrate a comprehensive framework of learning in the Qur'anic perspective, integrating multiple cognitive faculties and emphasizing reflection, insight, and moral awareness alongside sensory engagement. Such a framework supports the development of well-rounded knowledge, ethical understanding, and spiritual depth, aligning with modern educational goals that value cognitive, affective, and psychomotor dimensions of learning. By combining thought, observation, listening, and seeing, learners are encouraged to internalize knowledge meaningfully and apply it wisely in their daily lives. (Wibawati, Asroriah & Shodiq, 2025).

### **Principles of Learning**

Learning, as an activity in the pursuit of knowledge, must be grounded in certain fundamental principles, including tawhid (the oneness of Allah), sincerity (ikhlas), truth, and having clear objectives. The expected influence of learning on students cannot be separated from these four principles.

Tawhid serves as the primary and fundamental foundation, upon which all learning activities should be built. Numerous Qur'anic verses emphasize this principle, showing that the study of knowledge and natural phenomena as objects of learning ultimately guides humans toward recognizing the oneness of Allah. In other words, learning should begin with tawhid and be oriented toward strengthening it.

Studying natural phenomena must stem from faith and aim to reinforce that faith. Through the careful study and reflection on the natural world, learners are guided toward greater understanding and insight, which ultimately leads them to spiritual and intellectual enlightenment. This integration of religious belief with the study of nature ensures that knowledge acquisition is not only cognitive but also ethical and spiritual in its impact on the learner (Maralottung Siregar, 2023; Saputra & Subki, 2025).

### **Students in the Learning Process**

Learning is a process of interaction between teachers and students within a learning environment. In this context, the teacher acts as the provider of knowledge, while the student is the seeker and receiver of knowledge. This implies that students are required to be actively engaged in discovering and acquiring knowledge on their own during the learning process. Therefore, students are not merely objects of education but also subjects of education, actively participating in their own learning.

The concept of students as both objects and subjects of education is illustrated in the Qur'an in Surah Al-Baqarah (2:30-31). In this verse, two figures are discussed: the angels and Prophet Adam. Allah serves as the teacher for both the angels and Adam. The angels were given the right to discuss what Allah intended to do, namely the creation of humans as vicegerents on earth. Prophet Adam, as the student, did not passively receive knowledge; Allah endowed him with faculties such as the senses, intellect, and heart, enabling him to actively acquire knowledge and surpass the angels, who did not possess the knowledge Adam acquired (Qur'an 2:30-31; Maralottung Siregar, 2023).

This explanation emphasizes that teachers should not treat students merely as objects of education but as active subjects. Students must engage in learning, while teachers must create a conducive and stimulating learning environment, encouraging students to express their thoughts freely. Teachers may sometimes need to adopt the dual role of instructor and facilitator or friend, depending on the situation. When students feel comfortable in the learning environment, their creative potential naturally emerges.

Surah Al-Hujurat (49:1-5) also provides guidance on respectful interaction. It emphasizes proper etiquette in addressing the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and leaders, highlighting that interactions should be conducted with respect, politeness, and humility. Sayyid Qutb explains that a servant of Allah must observe special ethics when speaking to the Prophet,

based on piety (*taqwa*) and obedience, ensuring not to precede the Prophet's guidance or offer unsolicited advice (Qutb, 2001).

In conclusion, Surah Al-Hujurat (49:1-5) underscores the importance of respectful and ethical interaction, not only with the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) but also with leaders and others in positions of authority. This guidance highlights that proper conduct, rooted in politeness, humility, and awareness of divine accountability, is essential in all forms of communication. As Sayyid Qutb (2001) emphasizes, observing such ethics requires piety (*taqwa*) and obedience, ensuring that individuals do not act presumptuously or offer unsolicited guidance. Therefore, the principles illustrated in these verses serve as a timeless foundation for cultivating moral integrity, respectful behavior, and social harmony in both educational and broader societal contexts.

## CONCLUSION

Learning, from the Qur'anic perspective, is a holistic activity that integrates cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. The principles of learning, including tawhid (the oneness of Allah), sincerity (*ikhlas*), truth, and clear objectives, serve as the foundation upon which knowledge acquisition is built. These principles ensure that learning is not merely an intellectual exercise but also a moral and spiritual journey, guiding students to understand the universe and themselves in the light of faith.

Furthermore, students are positioned as both objects and subjects of education. The Qur'an illustrates this dual role through the example of Prophet Adam and the angels, emphasizing that knowledge must be actively sought and internalized. Teachers, therefore, have a responsibility to foster a learning environment that encourages student participation, creativity, and critical thinking, while also providing guidance grounded in ethical and spiritual values. This interaction between teacher and student ensures that learning is dynamic, engaging, and transformative.

Finally, the integration of Qur'anic principles into the learning process highlights the inseparable connection between knowledge, faith, and ethical conduct. Activities such as *ra'yu*, *nazhara*, *sam'u*, and *bashara* demonstrate how attention, reflection, hearing, and insight work together to develop comprehensive understanding and spiritual awareness. By applying these principles, educators can cultivate learners who are intellectually capable, morally responsible, and spiritually conscious, ultimately producing individuals who excel both in worldly knowledge and in faith.

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