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**SUSTAINABILITY OF HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT:  
TEXTUAL STUDY OF *HIDAYAH AL-SALIKIN***

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***Abstract***

Hidayah al-Salikin is a scholarly work by Syeikh Abdul Samad al-Falimbani and it has been proven to be the scholarly Malay-Islam corpus that has remained in place in the Malay World for almost three centuries. This paper aims to present the result of a textual study of the book Hidayah al-Salikin on the principle of sustainability through the concept of Islamic-based development of human capital. The textual study found six concepts of development of the self that has become the basis for achieving sustainability through the development of the Islamic-based human capital. The paradigm of the six concepts consists of development of knowledge, faith, worship, seven body parts, spirituality and morality, and the development of social etiquette. The sustainability approach to human capital with the Malay-Islamic world view setting is hoped to be applicable in the effort to achieve the sustainable base and sustainable action plan for the development of the Islamic-based human capital.

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**Keywords:** Sustainability, development of Islamic-based human capital, Malay-Islamic world view.



## 1. Introduction

Sustainability is the basic objective principle in the concept of Islamic-based human capital development (IBHCD). In the context of Islamic-based human development, sustainability in the sense of *al-falah* is second to efforts to achieve the pleasure of Allah (*mardhatillah*). The importance of IBHCD has motivated this paper to examine the principles of sustainability based on the concept of IHBCD as discussed in the text of *Hidayah al-Salikin* (HS). This *kitab* (book) proved to be the scholarly Malay-Islam corpus that has remained in place in the Malay World for almost three centuries.

### 1.1. Kitab Hidayah al-Salikin (HS)

*Hidayah al-Salikin* (HS) is a scholarly work by Syeikh Abdul Samad al-Falimbani (SASF). It has been categorised as a *Jawi* manuscript in the field of Islamic religion. SASF finished his writing in Mecca, and the book was printed in Mecca in 1287H/1870AD. It was written in the Malay language, containing deliberations on Islamic *tasawwuf*, *aqidah* and *fiqh*. The book was the first *jawi* book verified by Sheikh Ahmad bin Muhammad Zain *al-Fatani* (d. 1908) at the *Matba'at al-Miriyyah*, Mecca. The subsequent versions were then printed in Bombay (1311H/1895AD) and in Cairo (1341H/11922AD). It was then reprinted in Singapore (undated) and in Surabaya (1352H/1933AD) (Drewes, 1992). Until today, this book is still printed to meet the demands of Muslims in Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia, and Singapore. This indicates that this book has long been adopted and used as the education medium in the field of Islamic religion. Thus, it has been proven to be effective, especially in shaping Malay human capital, which holds on strongly to the sustainability principles in the appreciation of knowledge and practice.

## 2. Problem Statement

Various modern methods and approaches have been employed in efforts to develop a sustainable nation state and in developing a Malay-Islam race in Malaysia. Hence, there is a need to study the historical context of the available corpus of the Malay-Islam traditional scholarship, especially that has managed to function sustainably in shaping the character of the Malay race and its personality until today. Thus, the book *Hidayah al-Salikin* that has been proven to have sustained for more than 300 years as the main reference in the traditional Islamic education system in the Malay world deserves to be analysed as the relevant text in developing a sustainable human capital.

## 3. Research Questions

Has the book *Hidayah al Salikin* that become one of the treasures of the traditional Malay Islam scholarship able to present a method of developing a sustainable human capital? What is the approach presented in the book *Hidayah al Salikin*? In case that it can be used as a sustainable method, to what extent is it relevant to be applied at all levels of society?

These research questions have captured the attention of the researcher to study in depth the sustainable thinking of the development of human capital contained in the text of *Hidayah al-Salikin*.

## 4. Purpose of the Study

- 4.1. To identify and analyse the text of *Hidayah al-Salikin* with regard to the method of developing sustainable human capital.
- 4.2. To formulate a sustainable approach for human capital development based on the Malay-Islamic worldview.

## 5. Research Methods

The study employed the textual analysis method as a systematic procedure for explaining the contents of a document. Through this content analysis, documents can be studied, analysed and an in depth interpretation made (Marshall & Rossman, 2016)

## 6. Findings

### 6.1. Sustainability in the Concept of IBHCD According to *Hidayah al-Salikin* (HS)

The discussion of sustainability principle in *HS* exposed the concept of sustainability that fits the requirements of the Islamic religion. The contents of *HS* are presented to elaborate on how a person can be developed to achieve the absolute sustainability in life. The *HS* exposed six concepts of human capital development for achieving sustainability and human well-being. The six concepts are (a) Development of Knowledge, (b) Development of *Aqidah* (belief), (c) Development of *Ibadah* (worship), (d) Development of The Seven Body Parts, (e) Development of Spirituality and Morality, and (f) Development of Social Conduct.

#### 6.1.1. Development of Knowledge

In its introduction, the book stresses on the development of knowledge as a basis and precondition that leads to piety. Knowledge in *Fard 'ain* is classified into three categories, *usuluddin*, *fiqh*, and *tasawuf*. The categories of knowledge in *Fard 'ain* need to be mastered at two stages, and should surpass the level of *Fard 'ain* to reach, at best, the level of *Fard kifayah*. By understanding the divisions and stages of knowledge humans are guided and led to live in this world and in the hereafter.

The development of knowledge in Islam focuses on *tasawuf* (*sufism*). This knowledge is termed as “knowledge of denial”; knowledge that benefits mankind. It purifies the soul and protect mankind from practising things that are futile. Its role is to perfect a Muslim’s practice in religion. Therefore, Islam requires mankind to practise at least the minimum level of *tasawuf* (i.e., the *fard 'ain*) and learning it consistently till death (Al-Falimbani, 1935). Hence, *tasawuf* becomes the basis of moral education because knowledge should be assessed based on its benefits to life in this world as well as in the hereafter. Beneficial knowledge is knowledge that calls towards a prosperous and peaceful life; and towards creating a relationship with Allah SWT while strengthening the humanitarian and harmonious feelings among fellow humans.

The text in *HS* emphasised on giving priority to the in depth learning of *fard 'ain* over knowledge of *fard kifayah*. The development of *fard 'ain* knowledge is the basic subject and the anchor to scholarship,

and it has to precede knowledge of *fard kifayah*. This approach creates human capital that relates all knowledge to its real source, Allah SWT.

*Fard 'ain* comprises *tawhid*, *fiqh* and *tasawuf*, and explains how people should manage their relationship with Allah SWT, while *fard kifayah* explains how people should manage their living in this world whether individually or collectively. It should be given priority because it contains the principles of belief, guidance and regulations (*sharia* and morals) of human life and acts as a guiding light to the development of other knowledge of *fard kifayah* (Wan Suhaimi, 2016).

To be prosperous and successful in this world and in the hereafter, we must be clear about which knowledge and practice should be given priority. Basic knowledge must be learnt before other forms of knowledge. Students, teachers and decision makers in education need to understand this concept to ensure the objective of an integrated education is achieved. The two forms of knowledge should be well integrated to realise the importance of sustaining the relationship between human beings and Allah SWT, and the relationship and responsibility between fellow humans and nature as a whole (Al-Jayyousi, 2017).

*HS* also listed the importance of knowledge and its advantages to people with knowledge. Al-Falimbani (1935) mentioned the position of knowledge and scholars through his Qur'anic citations, the authentic hadiths of the prophet, and words of authoritative scholars on the importance to increase this knowledge in everyone. The author, visualised that a person with knowledge is dignified as a person of highest piety and as a person close to the prophet (Qur'an, 58:11, 35:28). The prophet was quoted as saying in a hadith which means, "That which places people closer in rank to *nubuawah* is knowledge."

The development of knowledge is then elaborated by stressing on education with two basic aspects, the aspect of teaching and the aspect of learning. *HS* promotes a code of ethics and morals encompassing the personality of the teacher, student and a two-way communication in the process of teaching and learning. The teacher plays an important role in bringing success to whatever form of "capital" possessed by the student. Specifically, a teacher needs to be patient, pious, caring, guiding, sincere and be a good example. On the other hand, the student should be humble, respectful, and decent and has no ill perception towards the teacher.

These qualities fit well with the demands of modern education. These priorities are stressed to enable the process of education to succeed based on the characteristics of the knowledge itself that cannot be taught in an ad hoc manner into the soul of a student, not until all the preconditional codes of conduct have been fulfilled. Educational curriculum involves the educator to develop piety, belief and sincerity that are integrated with *ihsan* (*empathy*). (Yousef, 2016).

The formation of values or *adab* (manners) in education is important to live successfully in this world and in the hereafter (*al-falah*). This system of education will create people with increased knowledge, intellect, and personal qualities, and able to sustain student-teacher relationship. Sustainability of relationship here covers good relationship among students, among teachers, among teachers and parents, and among students and the community that flows into the wider social relationship. Meanwhile, the form of eternal sustainability is achieving the pleasures of Allah SWT (*mardhatillah*).

### 6.1.2. Development of Aqidah

The first stage in the development of belief is to understand the basic *Articles of Faith* such as divine attributes, prophet hood and “the unseen.” The responsibility to believe in Allah SWT is presented through responsibility to learn in-depth the divine attributes of Allah SWT; the compulsory (*wajib*) attributes, the impossible (*mustahil*) attributes, and the “possible” (*harus*) attributes. Understanding the divine attributes is the gist of belief, the anchor to all aspects of human life. Understanding the attributes of Allah SWT is also a sequence from the demand for prioritising the spiritual attributes in every form of self-development. Then, God’s morals is manifested in the body and spirit of a person at a level achievable by mankind. (Othman, 2014).

By using this *tawhid* paradigm as the basis of development, mankind gains the confidence to believe in the power of Allah SWT as the Creator of everything, and to believe that the power of humans is limited and all of us have to submit to His rules. This will encourage mankind to appreciate everything based on the guidance that has been outlined in the al-Qur’an and al-*Sunnah*. (Ushama, 2015)

*HS* discusses the belief in the unseen such as angels, revelations (*kitab*), life (punishment) in the grave and the hereafter (*mizan*, *siratulmustakim*, mediation by the prophet) to relate *iman* as a main source of true *ikhtiqad*. In fact, belief in Allah SWT automatically fulfils the demand towards belief in the prophets, angels, afterlife, and predestination (*qada* and *qadar*), that is, the components of the six *Articles of Faith*. Therefore, the real responsibility of Muslims is to study the *tawhid* to safeguard their *aqidah* from being deviated from the straight path. The development of Islamic-based human capital will not achieve its objectives if the *tawhidic* knowledge is not strong because the challenges of thinking in the current decade are very complex with the emergence of various “isms” such as Islamic liberalism, and pluralism in religion. Meanwhile, the human rights movements are also confusing the Muslims. Therefore, strong knowledge in *tawhid* will confirm the Unity of God. The implication is that *tawhid* rejects any forms of slavery and worship, towards anything other than Allah SWT. Clearly, the human development proposed in the *HS* is a *tawhidic* development, which places belief (*iman*) in Allah SWT as the starting point and the basis of all other aspects of human development.

Freeing the soul is the core of the Islamic manifesto to the world. In the context of the Malay community, the *tawhidic* dynamics has terminated the traditional serving soul in the Malay-Hindu system of feudalism and has transformed the concept of “government” towards the concept of the “sultanate” which means trustee (stakeholder) and the upholder of Allah’s justice (Azmul, Aidil, & Roziah, 2016). Therefore, the *tawhidic* thinking that has been proposed by *HS* to the Malay community at that period was a contribution to the effort of removing the enslaved soul which was very strongly embedded in the worldview and the value system of the Malay community.

In fact, in reviewing this mind change, a truth has to be accepted, that development of *aqidah* has successfully developed the archaeological Malay mind to view far ahead, to think critically, rationally, and scientifically. The elements of mind strength and improvement in *adab* (manners) could be seen clearly in the study of *aqidah*, which has spread widely in the Malay world through *jawi* books. The advance of this basic thinking has encouraged by Al-Falimbani to instil the spirit of dissidence or jihad towards Western colonisation in Muslim regions, especially the Dutch colonialism in Indonesia, through his writing entitled *Nasihah al-Muslimin wa tadhkirah al-Mu’minin fi fada’il jihad wa karamah al-mujtahidin fi sabil Allah*

(Drewes, 1992). The use of logic in the effort to understand God and civil restoration expressed through the appreciation of the attributes and names of Allah SWT became the elements of strength in the development of Malay-Islam civilisation. This is in line with the level of success in the principles of *al-falah* as a landmark of success in the principle of Islamic-based development (Badawi, 2017).

From the perspective of human development, belief in *ghaibiyyat* (unseen) highlighted in this *kitab*, *HS*, played an important role in developing concepts, viewpoints, attitudes, ways of thinking, and actions of the individual. It will prevent a person from doing evil deeds and freely committing crimes against Allah SWT. On the other hand, allegiance and piety will make a person follow the Islamic *sharia* and guide for human life towards increased safety and well-being. People will be continuously encouraged to do good (*beneficence*) and avoid evil, to get better rewards in the hereafter. This makes the manifestation of *iman* towards Allah SWT to be loaded with spiritual values, which can develop humans, capable of achieving success and sustainability in life. In this context, the concept of happiness is not limited to worldly temporary happiness. Happiness also includes eternal happiness in the hereafter. This is in line with the level of success that makes the concept of *al-falah* as the peak of success in the Islamic-based principles of development (IBPD).

### 6.1.3. Development of *Ibadah* (Worship)

The concept of *aqidah* in *HS* is not limited to the meaning of *tawhid* (the unity of God) alone; in fact, *tawhid* needs to be implemented with a programme of religious worships and rituals, which serves to develop positive attitudes to personal life and community life. In the al-Quran, more than 50 verses were mentioned about the relationship between *aqidah* (belief) and virtuous practices aimed at individuals and society collectively. The *ibadah* (worship) is a form of religious manifestation of the strength of *iman* (belief) and piety towards Allah SWT. In fact, *HS* suggested that religious worship develops human spiritual values and to enhance the spiritual sustainability of human beings.

The *HS* divided the discussion on *ibadah* (worship) into two parts, the obligatory worship and the recommended additional (or encouraged) worships. The development of rituals discussed in *HS* covers 13 forms of rituals comprising various *adabs*, from *adab* of answering nature's calls to *adab* in performing the *zikr* (remembrance of Allah SWT).

A *fard ibadah* will be able to build the spiritual sustainability of the soul in a person. The text in *HS* suggests that those in the process of redeveloping their good morals after having been entangled in sins and vice be taught to read the Qur'an, perform *wirid*, *zikr*, *taharah* (methods in self-cleansing), *solat* (praying) and performing other extra worships to change, purify their souls and instil morality in their selves. This fits well into the programmes in institutions responsible for moral and drugs rehabilitation.

The procedures for the development of rituals commence with the basic beginning of rituals such as *taharah* (self-cleansing), followed by *solat* (praying), fasting, and going up to its peak, *zikrullah* (remembering Allah). It is clear that the kinds of rituals suggested in *HS* are main practices that can affect *tazkiyah al-nafs* or the purification and the growth of *the self* directly. It is a methodology in the context of knowledge in Islamic development in Malaysia.

*Tazkiyah al-nafs* here refers to the practice of rituals that could provide a positive direct effect on the *nafs* or the self at the stage where it can cure the self from diseases of the *nafs* and capable of realising

virtuous moral values in them (Che Zarrina, 2014). The paradigm of development of *ibadah* suggested is in line with those proposed by famous sufis before this, who said that virtuous morality is a result of efforts (*muktasabah*) achieved through serious education and training through performing *ibadah*. Piety creates the ability to protect the self not only while performing an individual ritual towards Allah (*habl min Allah*), but also to stay consistent in piety in social life (*habl min al-nas*). Thus, performing a personal *ibadah* is not merely to produce a righteous individual, but also to produce an individual capable of relating his or her righteousness with the society called *rahmatan li al-`alamin*.

#### **6.1.4. The Development of the Seven Physical Parts of the Body**

According to the Islamic view, Godly obligations (*taklif*) on every human being, in general, can be divided into two dimensions, namely *taklif* in the form of a command and *taklif* in the form of prohibition. *Taklif* in the form of a command is stated in terms of demand on compulsory special *ibadah* in the form of *fard ibadah* and righteous practices. Meanwhile, the second obligation is related to prohibition and avoidance in the use of the seven physical parts of the human body. Two verses in *the Qur'an*, (36:65) and (24:24) mentioned that the human body parts will be questioned during the Day of Judgement for all the sins and vices performed in this world because sins performed by the body parts importantly affect the sustainability, the peace and the success of development from a different perspective. The physical body parts are Godly bounties that should be appreciated with *shukr* (being thankful to Allah) and they will be questioned in the hereafter. Therefore, they are not to be used for committing vice, for doing so is equivalent to booking the road to the seven gates of hell. This view is in line with the view of Imam al-Ghazali (Quasem, 1975) A method of prevention is necessary to ensure the success of Islamic-based spiritual development. The prohibitions specified in the *sharia* for the seven body parts, will not only prevent an individual from sins, but also will avoid inflicting bodily and spiritual harms that can endanger the person. These preventive measures can protect a person's self-dignity through avoiding religious crimes that threaten sustainability of life, initiated by the physical body parts and allowing the person to gain respect from friends and the community.

*HS* proposed that the prevention of the crimes originating from the seven bodily parts should be entered as the core of development in IBHCD. This is because the preventive *taklif* for the seven bodily parts not only complements the physical obedience to Allah SWT, but also reflects the protection of sustainability principles of relationship among fellow humans. Analysis on the development of the seven bodily parts in the context of prevention thus far has shown that the concept of human capital development (HCD) fulfils the requirements of the teachings of Islam. In short, it is combined into a phrase *al-amr bi al-ma'ruf wa al-nahy `an al-munkar*. Zakaria (2016) commented that nowadays, Muslims have neglected, the aspects of practising the commands and avoiding the prohibitions of Allah SWT. This can be seen in the increase of misconducts involving transgression of *sharia* rulings among Muslims. Therefore, the emphasis on the development of the seven bodily parts in the text of *HS* may be used as a guideline to uphold the principles *al-nahy `an al-munkar* and *al-amr bi alma'ruf* simultaneously.

### 6.1.5. Development of Spirituality and Morality

The discussion on the spiritual development of human beings in this text was classified into two forms of development, the development of morality among fellow humans and the development of morality towards Allah SWT. The development of human spirituality and morality was discussed in the context of internal (spiritual) vice under 10 deplorable characteristics, which are the obstructions to the attainment of sustainability. The 10 characteristics were the love of eating, the love of talking, anger, malignancy, stingy, the love of richness, love of glory, love of the world, boasting or self-pride, *ujub* (self-obsession), and *riya'* (show-offs). Praiseworthy characteristics, which help excel sustainability are repentance (*taubah*), fear (*khauf*), asceticism (*zuhud*), patience, thankfulness (*shukr*), sincere and truthful, (submission to the will of Allah (*tawakal*), loving Allah (*mahabbah*), contentment (*redha*) and thinking of death (Al-Falimbani, 1935). The focus on the human capital development based on the principles of sustainability was based on the thinking that human spirit and soul are the sources and causes of either virtuous or deplorable morality. Therefore, to develop sustainability through virtuous morality should start with cleansing the inner self from abysmal characteristics. Internal vice is more dangerous than external vice because it cannot be seen and normally less realised and harder to remove; it is also the generator of external vice. Both these vices only contaminate the human soul and create a *hijab* that restricts the self from Allah.

According to Al-Falimbani (1935), the sustainability of human spirit and soul can be restored and upgraded depending on the extent of the purification (*mujahadah al-nafs*) and the rejuvenating (*riyadah al-nafs*) efforts taken on the characteristics of the soul and actions. Achieving the spiritual development through *tazkiyah al-nafs* is performed through two-stage purification (*tazkiyah*). The first stage is termed *takhalli*, vacating the self from all deplorable, blemishes and vicious characteristics. External purification is related to *najs*, *hadas*, and vice, while internal purification involves purifying the heart from deplorable characteristics such as anger, malevolence (*hasad*), miserly (*bakhil*), love of glamour, love of worldly pleasures (*hubbu al-dunia*), boastful (*takabbur*), *ujub* (self-obsessed), and *riya'* (show-offs). The second stage is the *tahilli*, loading the self with righteous qualities and remaining consistent with them. The *tahilli* focuses on the development of laudable qualities, suggested through ascending stations of repentance, *khauf* (fear), *zuhud* (asceticism), *sabr* (patience), *shukr* (thankful), sincerity (*ikhlas*), caring (*mahabbah*), contentment (*redha*), and thinking of death.

Hence, *tazkiyah al-nafs* was suggested with two stages of purification and fertilization. The spiritual method has gained its status as the best mechanism to ensure the success of sustainability in the Islamic-based development of human capital (Che Zarrina, 2014).

### 6.1.6. The Development of Social Adab (Manners)

Basically, *adab* is the reflection of the human soul and the result from internal cleansing. Hence, the purity of personality will be manifested in the person's etiquette and actual behaviour. The last concept discussed in *HS* is the development of social *adab*. The discussion of social *adab* clearly emphasised the sustainability principle in the context of retaining *habl min Allah* and *habl min al-nas*. The first is the vertical relationship between humans (the servants and the Creator, Allah SWT). The second is the horizontal relationship among fellow human beings. Both these relationships were expounded directly



through interactions, through social relationship, *Adab* in relationship with Allah SWT, *Adab* in family interactions, *Adab* in education, *Adab* with friends, and *Adab* towards general Islamic community.

*Adab* towards Allah outlined in the text of *HS* covers internal (spiritual) obediences, which was specifically mentioned as piously devoted (*khusuk*), humbleness (*khudu*), meditative (*tafakur*), consistent (*istiqamah*), fearsome (*haybah*), bashful, and submission to the will of Allah (*tawakal*). Muslims must prioritise Allah SWT in everything, and should not expect from other than Allah to fulfil their needs. The development of *adab* with friends, who could be siblings, family, colleagues, friends and neighbours, is important for creating social relations among them. According to Islam, the group identified as friends has certain rights in the social context. *Adab* towards this group is based on the value of love, *ukhuwah* (brotherhood), trustworthiness and mutual respect. Human capital as a social creature which interacts with society collectively also became the focus of *HS*. Even though this group does not have a close relationship with any special individuals, *adab* in socialising with them is emphasised because this group has a function in the process of creating situations and environment. The procedure of *adab* with this group becomes the general principles for virtuousness in socialisation such as mutual respect, mutual help, thankfulness, open mindedness and accommodative. These principles are translated through good socialization manners (*muamalah*) such as caring, not insulting others, or not scolding and reproaching their mistakes in a nice way.

It is clear that the development of social *adabs* contained in *HS* further strengthens the basis of Islamic-based human development which places *adab* of morality as its main basis for its development. The reintroduction of the arrangement and priorities of human *adabs* as well as the loading of holistic and systematic values become a precious contributing idea. The *adabs* created through these universal principles are naturally relevant to all cultures, races, religions and societies.

## 7. Conclusion

The impact from the implementation of the six concepts of the development of human capital following the steps and the stages suggested by *HS* will enable mankind to achieve perfect piety, in terms of *iman*, intellect, *ibadah*, physical, emotional, morals and social aspects. These six concepts can be said to contain the principle that confidence is achieved with stability of *aqidah*; the mind increases with knowledge; spirituality is enhanced with *ibadah*; morality can be enhanced by laudable characteristics (internal self-obedience); the seven body parts are protected with external physical obedience and righteous deeds and social manners are upgraded with brotherhood and caring characteristics. Therefore, sustainability in all aspects of development of the self, the family, the society, the race, and finally, the nation will be achieved.

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