

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, IMPLICATION AND RECOMMENDATION

The instability of Malaysian family institutions and the accompanying increase in social problems may impede Malaysia's human resource development. Thus, this research attempts to propose a Curriculum Content for Children's Character Development designed to address the crises of character among the Malay-Muslims youth in Malaysia. This alternative module based on an Islamic framework has been developed based on a textual analysis of selected Discourses on Ethics extracted from two authoritative classical Arabic texts:

1. *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq wa Tathīr al-A'rāq* written by Ibn Miskawayh (d.1030)
2. *Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* written by al-Ghazali (d.1111).

Based on content analysis of the above texts, a Curriculum Content for Children's Character Development has been developed. The curriculum content was further evaluated to identify its strength and deficiencies. In conclusion, this research met its objectives to:

1. Identify objectives and curriculum content of character education that focuses on children's character development outlined by Ibn Miskawayh and al-Ghazali.
2. Propose a curriculum content for children's character development as one of the components in Malay-Muslim parent education program in Malaysia (since they are statistically the most affected ethnic group).
3. Evaluate the proposed curriculum content for children's character development.

In order to achieve the above objectives, the research and data analysis procedure was divided into two phases (as illustrated in the following Figure):

Phase One: Content Analysis Research

Phase Two: Curriculum Evaluation

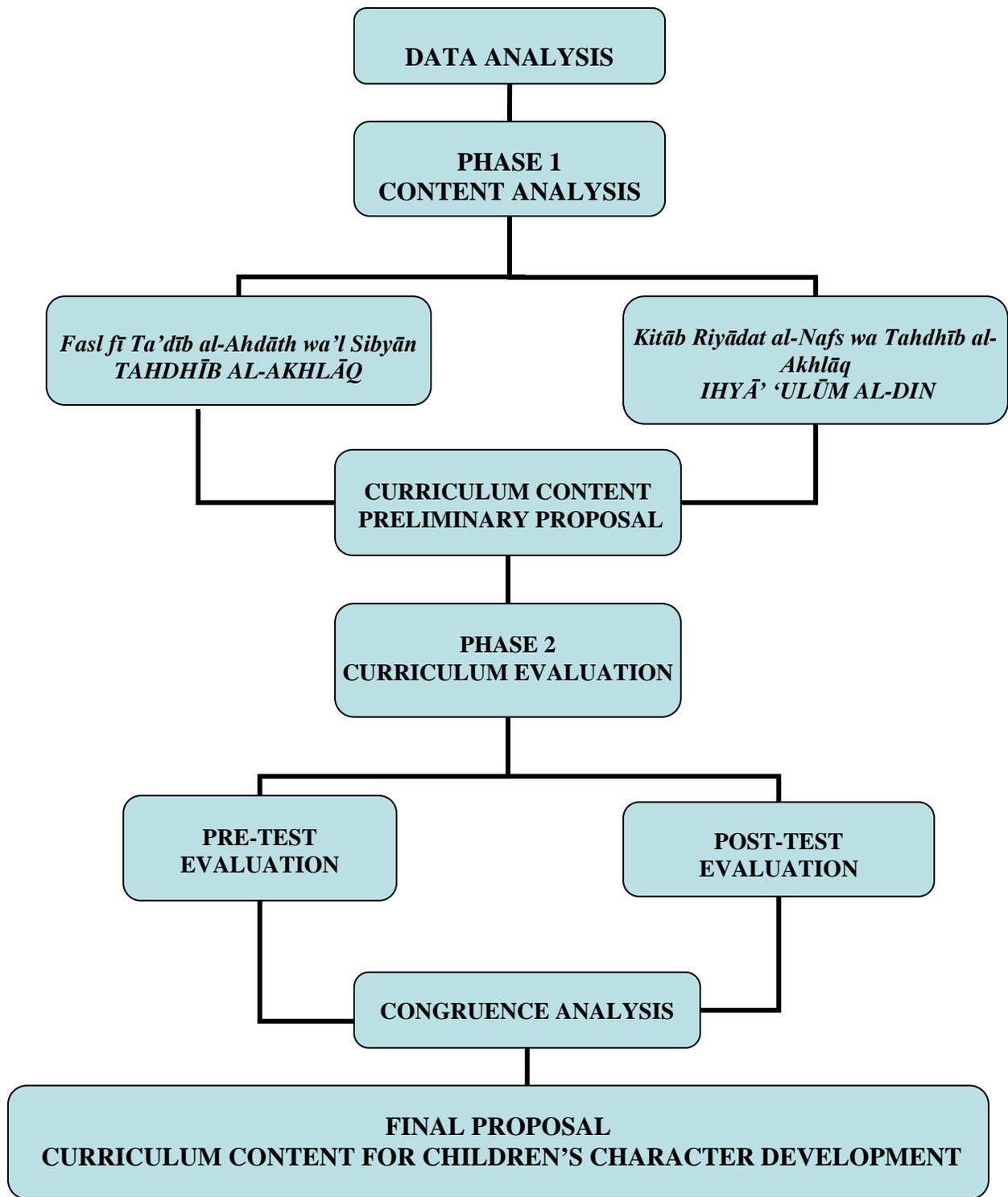


Figure 23. Data Analysis Procedure: A Curriculum Content for Children's Character Development

SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

Phase 1: Content Analysis

Phase 1 refers to textual Content Analysis of two selected Discourse of Ethics. It is an attempt to answer the first Research Question:

What is curriculum content for children's character development proposed by Ibn Miskawayh and al-Ghazali?

Based on the Content Analysis of the two texts, the researcher established the coding categories and terminologies for Curriculum Content of Children's Character Development module. There are two focused components in developing the Curriculum Content:

- A. Objectives of Character Education
- B. Curriculum Content for Children's Character Development

Curriculum Content for Children's Character Development was developed based on the coding categories analyzed in both texts: *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq wa Tathīr al-A'raq* and *Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*. Ibn Miskawayh and al-Ghazali both discussed the fundamental conceptual issues before discussing the methods for character development.

Objectives of Character Education

1. Attainment of Happiness (*al-Sa'āda*)
2. Attainment of Cardinal Virtues (*Ummahāt al-Fadā'il*):
 - i. Temperance (*'Iffa*)
 - ii. Courage (*al-Shajā'a*)
 - iii. Wisdom (*al-Hikma*)
 - iv. Justice (*al-'Adāla*)

Curriculum Content for Children’s Character Development

1. Concept of Character (*al-Khuluq*)
2. Development of Human Soul:
 - i. Faculty of Desire (*al-Shahwa*);
 - ii. Faculty of Intellect (*al-‘Aql*); and
 - iii. Faculty of Anger (*al-Ghadab*).
3. Educational Methods in the Formation and Development of Good Character
 - i. Socialization and Association;
 - ii. Discipline and Habituation;
 - iii. Education and Learning; and
 - iv. Prevention from Negative Elements.

The above components were then arranged into a lesson plan (see Figure 2) which was then implemented and evaluated in the second phase of this research.

Phase 2: Curriculum Evaluation

In the second phase of this research, a Curriculum Evaluation was conducted to answer the second Research Question:

What is the participants’ evaluation of the proposed curriculum content for children’s character development?

For this purpose, the proposed lesson plan was implemented in *Family Management and Parenting* (CCL: 2052) course. The lesson plan (Appendix 2) was distributed among the respondents during the two-stage Curriculum Evaluation exercise :

First Stage: Pre-Evaluation (before curriculum implementation)

Second Stage: Post-Evaluation (after curriculum implementation)

First Stage: Pre-Evaluation

Initially, the lesson plan (Figure 24) was distributed among twenty participants before the implementation of the course. They were interviewed on three major aspects of the proposed curriculum content:

1. Intended (expected) Objectives of Curriculum
2. Intended (expected) Content of Curriculum
3. Intended (expected) Outcome of Curriculum

Second Stage: Post-Evaluation

Similarly, respondents were interviewed for their feedback after implementation of curriculum content. The three major aspects were re-evaluated:

1. Observed Objectives of Curriculum
2. Observed Content of Curriculum
3. Observed Outcome of Curriculum

Congruence Analysis

After the pre and post Curriculum Evaluation exercises, the Congruence between the findings of both pre-evaluation and post-evaluation interviews were thoroughly analyzed. Strengths and deficiencies of the proposed curriculum were analyzed before developing the final draft of the proposed Curriculum Content for Children's Character Development.

Suggestions

Various suggestions were taken into account before developing the final findings of this research. However, only relevant suggestions related to the scope of this research were incorporated into the Final Proposal of the Curriculum Content for Children's Character Development (Figure 24).

FINAL PROPOSAL

CURRICULUM CONTENT FOR CHILDREN’S CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

CURRICULUM CONTENT		
Sessions	Topics	Notes
Topic 1	<p>Introduction to Family and Parenting in Islam:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage 1: Family Formation Stage 2: Family Development <p>Introduction to Child Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Physiological Development b. Psycho-Spiritual (Character) Development 	Appendix 3
Topic 2	<p>Introduction to Psycho-Spiritual (Character) Development</p> <p>A. Objectives of Character Education:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attainment of Happiness 2. Attainment of Cardinal Virtues <p>B. Theoretical Framework of Character Development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Concept and Definition of Character (<i>al-Khuluq</i>) 2. Influential Factors on Character Formation and Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Heredity ii. Socialization iii. Habituation iv. Education 	Appendix 3

Topic 3	<p>A. Developmental Stages of Character:</p> <p>Phase 1: Birth until Age of Discernment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Faculty of Desire ii. Faculty of Intellect <p>Phase 2: Age of Discernment until Puberty</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iii. Faculty of Anger iv. Faculty of Intellect (Reasoning) <p>Phase 3: Age of Puberty (<i>Bāligh</i>) onwards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> iv. Maturity v. Accountability (<i>Taklīf</i>) 	Appendix 3
Topic 4	<p>D. Educational Methods in Formation and Development of Good Character</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Socialization and Association ii. Discipline and Habituation iii. Education and Learning iv. Prevention from Negative Elements 	Appendix 3
Topic 5	<p>Case Studies: Analysis of Current Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Influential Factors on Character Formation 2. Crises of Character 3. Behavioral Management Issues 	Appendix 3

Figure 24. Final Proposal: Curriculum Content for Children’s Character Development

RESEARCH IMPLICATIONS

Developing a New Dimension of Research

This research achieves a very important milestone in the field of curriculum development. The process of developing a curriculum in this research is substantially based on a textual content analysis of Arabic texts. It bridges the language and conceptual boundaries between the Western and Islamic intellectual legacy. In modern Western literature, the subject of parenting and child education are commonly discussed in the field of education and psychology. However, in Islamic literature, these subjects are commonly discussed in the field of ethics and moral philosophy. Hence, this research offers a new dimension for an ‘inter-civilizational’ forum of discussion. In this analysis, the researcher attempts to revive the discussion on ‘moral character’ which has been ‘missing’ from modern psychological literature since the middle of 20th century. Since then, psychologists prefer the social psychological explanations of behavior rather than the individual stable moral traits (Emler, 2005). One of the factors is the influence of ethical relativism that regards the issue of character and morality as private matters (Williams, 2000).

In addition, the discussion of ‘character development’ is somehow missing from child education and parenting. In the Malaysian context, the process of modernization and urbanization has led to the erosion of ‘character development’. Malaysian youths are currently influenced by the notion of ‘ethics as personal matters’ and ‘freedom of ‘choice’. It is ironically surprising since Malaysians should uphold RUKUNEGARA which respects belief in God; as well as ethics and morality. Thus, it is the researcher’s effort to revive the discourse of character development particularly in relation to Malay-Muslims parent education in Malaysia.

An Alternative Solution to Address Current Social Crises

Therefore, these research findings offer an alternative solution to address the overwhelming social and identity crises among the Malay-Muslims youth in Malaysia. The researcher proposes an alternative framework for Children's Character Development module to be implemented through various government and private machineries such as the Institute of Integrity; National Population and Family Development Board (NPFDB); Yayasan Penyayang; Departments of Religious Affairs; etc. It is proposed to be implemented through parenting programs and pre-marriage courses organized by these agencies. In addition, it will be proposed to the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) as one of the components for *Family Management and Parenting Course* (CCL 2052), a compulsory subject for undergraduate students of IIUM.

Significant Findings and Proposal for Children's Character Development

The most significant contribution of this research refers to the 'framework of happiness' underlying character education. In this research, there are two focused components of character education: the Objectives and the Curriculum Content for children's character development. In relation to the Objectives of character education, there are two main objectives: (1) the attainment of happiness and (2) the attainment of cardinal virtues. Therefore, the framework of 'happiness' becomes the essence of character education based on the texts analysis. According to Ibn Miskawayh and al-Ghazali, the main purpose of character education is to achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter. In fact, happiness in this world is the means for happiness in the hereafter. It is clearly mentioned in the Qur'an that the reward of happiness in the hereafter is paradise (*al-jannah*) and the punishment of misery is hellfire (*al-nār*) (*Al-Qur'an* 11:105-108).

The day it arrives, no soul shall speak except by His leave: of those (gathered) some will be wretched and some will be blessed (*shaqiyy wa sa'id*). Those who are wretched (*shaqū*) shall be in the Fire: There will be for them therein (nothing but) the heaving of sighs and sobs. They will dwell therein for all the time that the heavens and the earth endure, except as thy Lord willeth: for thy Lord is the (sure) accomplisher of what He planneth. And those who are blessed (*su'idū*) shall be in the Garden: They will dwell therein for all the time that the heavens and the earth endure, except as thy Lord willeth: a gift without break. (*Al-Qur'an*: 11:105-108)

In relation to happiness in this world, there are several forms of happiness:

- (1) external forms of happiness including wealth, noble family, etc.
- (2) physical happiness which refers to good health, strength, beauty, etc.
- (3) spiritual happiness which refers to knowledge (*'ilm*) and action (*'amal*). The best *'amal* refers to good character (*husn al-khuluq*). (Quasem, 1978, 59-60)

The highest form of happiness in this world refers to the Love of God which is the 'means' to attain happiness in the hereafter. There are two levels of happiness in the hereafter: the first level refers to happiness in heaven (*jannah*) and the higher level of happiness refers to the Countenance or the Vision of God Himself (*al-ru'yah*) in the heaven. (al-Ghazali, 3:220)

Similarly, Ibn Miskawayh believes that the attainment of happiness is the ultimate aim of life. Happiness in this world could be achieved through the adherence of *Syari'a* and the accomplishment of human perfection (*kamāl al-insān*) (Ibn Miskawayh, 1924, 49). Human perfection refers to both: theoretical perfection and practical perfection. Theoretical perfection refers to perfection in knowledge and sciences; and practical perfection refers to perfection in action and governance including the perfection of character (*al-kamāl al-khuluqiyy*). The combination of both aspects of perfection leads towards the accomplishment of a perfect man (*al-insān al-kāmil*) who possesses virtuous character that will lead towards the Ultimate Happiness (Ibn Miskawayh, 1924, 50, 81-83).

A virtuous person is a person who possesses virtuous character where the faculty of anger and desire are controlled under the command of Revelation and Reason. It is the state of the soul which is described as the golden mean (*al-wast*) or equilibrium (*i'tidāl*) of the three faculties: reason (*al-'aql*), desire (*al-shahwa*) and anger (*al-ghadab*). At this stage, the soul attains the virtue of justice (*'adālah*). A person attains justice when the animal soul submit to the angelic soul that inclines to Revelation and Reason. When justice prevails in the soul, it will emerge in a person's internal character which will gradually materialize in his physical actions and outward behavior. A person who possesses the highest virtue of justice (*'adālah*) will always submit to Truth. As a result, a person of justice will always place things at its proper places that finally will lead towards the prevalence of justice in a society.

Besides, the researcher attempts to revive Ibn Miskawayh's and al-Ghazali's conception of human soul and stages of character development through the content analysis of their classical texts. Based on the research findings, the researcher formulated a Curriculum Content for Children's Character Development which was then implemented and evaluated. The findings about character development significantly enriched the common existing modules of character building which usually focused on 'the how' aspects rather than 'the what.' In the proposed curriculum content, the researcher suggested a theoretical framework of character development which begins with the understanding of 'character' itself and structure of human soul including three faculties: faculty of desire (*al-shahwa*), anger (*al-ghadab*) and intellect (*al-'aql*). It also explains how 'character' is formed and developed. In relation to its developmental stages, two scholars unanimously agreed on the importance of childhood (until puberty) as it marks the 'character formation' period. The formation of character is a critical stage whereby a child is habituated and accustomed with

values and virtues for the accountability (*taklīf*) during puberty. Through a sound process of character development, a child will rationally understand his status as a servant (*'abd*) and Vicegerent (*Khalīfa*) of God and well-prepared to shoulder the trust (*amāna*) and responsibilities to peacefully govern this world.

In relation to current parenting programs, the theoretical foundation of children's character development is obviously inadequate. Many of the existing programs highlight methods of children's character development (the how aspects) without any clear deliberation on its theoretical understanding (the what aspects). They tend to answer question of "how to develop good character?" before answering the more fundamental question of "what is the meaning of character?" This is because children's character development is simply assumed and classified as similar to the socio-emotional, behavioral or psychological development. It is the researcher's view that these classifications are inaccurate due to several reasons:

- a. Character is an internal quality of human beings which are expressed in external action and behavior. Accordingly, good internal character will result good external behavior; as well as bad internal character will result bad external behavior. For instance, a man who is generous (by character) will easily contribute some amount of his money to the needy; whereas a stingy man (by character) will hardly donate even a penny.
- b. Thus, character is more stable and permanent by nature whereas socio-emotion is unstable as it is dependant on temporary psychological factors. For instance, a child is sad (socio-emotion) when she is frustrated (psychological) with her bad examination results. Whereas a child who is patient (by character) will decide to work harder to get good results in the next trial in spite of her bad examination results this semester.

In Table 16, the researcher highlights a brief comparison between curriculum content of three parenting programs – a government agency, National Population and Family Development (NPFDB) or Lembaga Penduduk dan Pembangunan Keluarga Negara (LPPKN); and private agency: (Nury Institute and Khalifah Institute). The LPPKN's module generally approaches the issue of parenting from the Multiple Intelligence point of view. This program lacks the Character Development module (Appendix 4). Similarly, it also lacks in parenting programs that was run by Nury Institute since its focus is on brain development (Appendix 7). In parenting programs run by Khalifah Institute, Character Development is clearly mentioned (Appendix 8). However, Laws of Learning approach is inclined towards behaviorist school of thought. Though Khalifah's method has its own contribution in parenting but it lacks a theoretical foundation of 'character' as proposed in this research.

In Table 17, the curriculum content for CCL 2052: *Family Management and Parenting* is attached. CCL 2052 is a credited co-curricular course organized by IIUM for undergraduate students. It is the researcher's proposal that the research findings of this dissertation to be incorporated in the abovementioned course - CCL 2052: *Family Management and Parenting*. In Table 17, the proposed findings of the Curriculum Content for Children's Character Development (CCD) is outlined. Six topics of CCD are proposed to be slotted in the existing 10 sessions of CCL 2052: *Family Management and Parenting* course.

Table 16
Curriculum Content for Parent Education Programs: A Brief Summary

ORGANIZERS	NPFDB/LPPKN	NURY INSTITUTE	KHALIFAH
MODULES	Parenting (Appendix 6)	Parenting (Appendix 7)	Parenting (Appendix 8)
FOCUS	Multiple Intelligence	Brain Development	Character Development
MODULE 1	Parental Responsibilities	Concept of 'Excellent Child'	Laws of Learning
MODULE 2	Knowing Children	Brain-Physical and Socio-Emotional Development	Islamic Worldview and Concept of <i>Khalīfa</i>
MODULE 3	Family Interaction	Profile of Human Development	Rewards and Punishment
MODULE 4	Managing Children	Specific Development Programs: Speech & Language – Intellectual & Knowledge – Organization & Leadership – Human Development	Parenting Guide
MODULE 5	Guidance for Children to be Responsible		
MODULE 6	Children with Special Needs	Evaluation and Implementation of Nury Programs	

Table 17

A Proposal for the Curriculum Content of CCL 2052: Family Management and Parenting

**Curriculum Content for Parent Education Program
Organized by International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM): A Proposal**

Family Management and Parenting (CCL:2052)		
Sessions	Current Modules (Appendix 6d)	Proposed Module
Session 1	<p>Introduction to family management and parenting: Family: importance, role, function in building a balanced personality</p> <p><i>Tarbiyya:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conducive environment - Dedicated parents - Systematic and gradual process - Knowledge and virtue - Between ideal and reality 	<p>Introduction to Family and Parenting in Islam</p> <p>Stage 1: Family Formation</p> <p>Stage 2: Family Development</p>
Session 2	<p>The concept of marriage from Islamic perspective:</p> <p>2.1 Objective and purpose of marriage</p> <p>2.2 Meaning of <i>mawadda wa rahma wa sakan</i></p> <p>2.3 Criteria in choosing a spouse</p>	

	<p>2.4 Preparation and procedure of marriage</p> <p>2.4.1 Engagement (<i>khattba</i>) Legal documentations</p> <p>2.4.2 Marriage sermon (<i>khitba</i>)- content; <i>amāna</i></p>	
Session 3	<p>Rights and responsibilities of spouses:</p> <p>3.1 The rights of parties in a marriage as in the Qur'an and <i>Sunna</i>.</p> <p>3.2 Responsibilities and Obligations of spouses</p> <p>3.3 Rights during the marriage</p> <p>3.3.1 <i>Mahr</i></p> <p>3.3.2 <i>Nafaqa</i> (shelter, food, clothing & domestic helper)</p> <p>3.3.3 Mutual love & affection</p> <p>3.3.4 <i>Tā'at</i> –Respect and Obedience towards husband</p> <p>3.3.5 Mutual respect of spouses</p>	
Session 4	<p>Resolution of conflicts in marriage:</p> <p>4.1. General overview of problems that may occur</p> <p>4.2 Problem solving</p> <p>4.2.1 Within the four walls</p> <p>4.2.2 Refer to close trusted and close family members or friends</p> <p>4.2.3 Refer to professional counselor</p>	

	<p>4.2.4 Refer to religious department</p> <p>4.2.5 Last resort is to court of law</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Mediation ii. Reconciliation <p>4.3. Consequences or implications of marital conflicts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.3.1. Implications on personal development 4.3.2. Implications on career or professional development 4.3.3. Implications upon family development <p>4.4. Dissolution of Marriage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.4.1. Types of Dissolution of Marriage 4.4.2. Rights after Dissolution of Marriage <p>4.2.1 <i>Nafaqa</i> during <i>'Idda</i></p> <p>4.2.2. Maintenance of Children (education, food, shelter)</p> <p>4.2.3. Consolatory Gift upon divorce (<i>Muta'ah</i>)</p> <p>4.2.4. Jointly acquired property</p> <p>4.2.5. Custody of children (<i>Hadāna</i>), duty to care and visitation rights.</p>	
Session 5	<p>Communication skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1. General overview on effective communication in marriage 5.2. Effective communication technique for family 	

	<p>5.3. Effective communication technique between spouses</p> <p>5.3.1.Examples from Prophets life</p> <p>5.4. Effective communication technique between parents & children</p> <p>5.4.1.Examples from Prophets life</p> <p>5.5.Tips for effective communication skills</p>	
Session 6	<p>Parenting:</p> <p>6.1 General overview of importance of parenting in Islam</p> <p>6.2 Starting a Family</p> <p>6.2.1 Preparation:</p> <p>6.2.1.1 Emotional</p> <p>6.2.1.2 Physical</p> <p>6.2.1.3 Mental</p> <p>6.2.1.4 Spiritual</p> <p>6.2.1.5 Financial</p> <p>6.3. Responsibilities of Parents towards children</p> <p>6.4. Children’s rights upon parents</p> <p>6.5. Nurturing relationship between parents and children</p> <p>6.5.1. Parents as role model</p>	<p>Introduction to Child Development:</p> <p>a. Physiological</p> <p>b. Psycho-Spiritual (Character) Development</p>

	6.5.2. Managing children behavior (Reward & Punishment)	
Session 7	<p>Understanding child development:</p> <p>7.1 General overview of importance of child development</p> <p>7.2 Characteristics and needs of children</p> <p>7.3 Stages in child development early childhood</p> <p>7.3.1 Middle childhood</p> <p>7.3.2 Adolescent</p> <p>7.4 Aspects of children development</p> <p>7.4.1 Neurological and sensory development</p> <p>7.4.2 Physical growth and motor development emotional and social development</p> <p>7.4.4 Intellectual development (language, literacy, numeracy, thinking)</p> <p>7.4.5 Moral, character (<i>akhlāq</i>) and spiritual development</p> <p>Responding to children’s needs & demands</p>	<p>Introduction to Human Nature and Psycho-Spiritual (Character) Development</p> <p>A. Objectives of Character Education:</p> <p>1. Attainment of Happiness</p> <p>2. Attainment of Cardinal Virtues</p> <p>B. Theoretical Framework of Character Development:</p> <p>1. Concept of ‘Character’ (<i>al-Khuluq</i>)</p> <p>2. Influential Factors on Character Formation and Development:</p> <p>i. Heredity</p> <p>ii. Socialization</p> <p>iii. Habituation</p> <p>iv. Education</p> <p>C. Developmental Stages of Character :</p> <p>1. Formative Period of Character (Character Formation)</p> <p>Phase1: Birth until Age of Discernment</p> <p>i. Faculty of Desire (<i>al-Shahwa</i>)</p>

		<p>ii. Faculty of Intellect (<i>al-‘Aql</i>) Phase 2: Age of Discernment until Puberty iii. The faculty of Anger (<i>al-Ghadab</i>) iv. The faculty of Intellect [Reasoning]</p> <p>2. Character Development Phase 3: Age of Puberty (<i>Bāligh</i>) onwards v. Maturity (<i>al-Bulūgh</i>) vi. Accountability (<i>al-Taklīf</i>)</p>
Session 8	<p>Issues in family management :</p> <p>8.1.General overview of family management</p> <p>8.2.Problems & Challenges in Family Management</p> <p>8.2.1. Adjustment with Changing Needs of Family</p> <p>8.2.2. Working Parents</p> <p>8.2.3. Single Parent</p> <p>8.2.4. Social Ills</p> <p>8.2.5. Parents with catering to children with special needs</p> <p>8.2.6. Financial constraints</p> <p>8.2.7 Effect of globalization- Internet; media; 3 F’s: food, fashion, fun; technology</p> <p>8.2.8 Issues of foreign maids</p>	<p>Educational Methods in Formation and Development of Good Character:</p> <p>i. Socialization and Association ii. Discipline and Habituation iii. Education and Learning vii. Prevention from Negative Elements</p>

<p>Session 9</p>	<p>Maintaining healthy family lifestyle:</p> <p>9.1 General overview of need to maintain healthy lifestyle</p> <p>9.2 Cooking healthy to stay healthy</p> <p>9.3 Permitted & Forbidden Food</p> <p>9.4 Recreation, Leisure & Entertainment</p> <p>9.5 Avoidance of Prohibited Lifestyle</p> <p>9.6 Sexually Transmitted Infections & Management</p> <p>9.7 Anger & Stress Management</p> <p>9.7.1 ASK: Attitude, Skill (referring back to <i>Sunna</i>), and Knowledge.</p>	<p>Case Studies: Analysis of Current Issues</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Influential Factors on Character Formation 2. Crises of Character 3. Behavioral Management Issues
<p>Session 10</p>	<p>Evaluation and Assessment</p>	

RECOMMENDATIONS

A New Character-Building Approach

As far as future research is concerned, it is hoped that this subject will further enrich Character-Building theories, especially from Spiritual Quotient (SQ) point of view. In fact, scientific findings about the existence of *God-Spot* as a spiritual centre in human brain has been discussed by Zohar (2000 in Ginanjar, 2005) and Marshall (2000 in Ginanjar, 2005). Since the year 2005, Ginanjar (2005) has been developing an Emotional Spiritual Quotient: ESQ-model of human development based on almost a similar fact – the existence of a natural deepest inclination of human beings in the search of God or what is called as *fitra*. In this research, curriculum content for Children's Character Development module is thus based on the concept of *fitra* itself – (the innate knowledge that recognizes Allah as the Creator). It is a genuine inclination of human being to search and submit to his Lord. Therefore he will choose the best path to please his Lord that is mentioned in the Qur'an:

The Religion before Allah is Islam (submission to His Will): Nor did the People of the Book dissent there from except through envy of each other, after knowledge had come to them. But if any deny the Signs of Allah, Allah is swift in calling to account.
(*Al-Qur'an* 3:19)

It is clearly highlighted in the above verse that Islam is the true form of submission approved by Allah, the Lord Himself. It was further portrayed by Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.), the Messenger who represent the true form of submission through his character and conduct. His life in its totality is in fact, the representation of Islam as the true path of his Lord. Thus, good character is the result of submission on the right path.

In this case therefore, the proposed curriculum is a God-Centered curriculum for character development. The focus is during childhood period since it is the most critical period for character formation and development.

Parent Education Programs for Malaysian Higher Institutions

In the next decade, the content for parent education or parenting intervention programs should be more comprehensive owing to mounting challenges in children's upbringing. However, the emergence of new findings of *Spiritual Quotient* (SQ) is a great blessing for mankind. It is recommended that future researchers would develop a more comprehensive and wholistic content in the area of human development which encompasses both: the physical and spiritual needs i.e. a blend of Intellectual Quotient (IQ), Emotional Quotient (EQ) and Spiritual Quotient (SQ).

Mohd. Sapawi Mohd. Isa (2003), in his study on the 'Curriculum of Family Education in Malaysian Higher Institutions' established the fact that parent education curricula in Malaysia are still too general and lack conceptual and theoretical applications. He recommends the need to establish a curriculum which aims to develop good quality of future generation. As mentioned earlier, the researcher believes that Malaysians, especially the Malay-Muslims need an alternative God-centered theoretical framework as a guideline and foundation for parent education programs. It is the researcher's view that the curriculum content of *CCL 2052: Family Management and Parenting* (IIUM) should be offered as an alternative framework and guideline for the Family or Parent Education Programs in Malaysian Higher Educational Institutions. It is due to the fact that participants of these institutions will become future parents, teachers and leaders. However, since it lacks the Spiritual Quotient (SQ) element, the researcher attempts to discover the SQ-Character Development models from authoritative sources such as *Tahdhīb al-Akhlāq* and *Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*. The findings were then incorporated into a Curriculum Content for Children's Character Development (CCD).

Content Analysis Research

Future researchers are also recommended to extend the application of qualitative content analysis method to other scientific disciplines. The researcher discovered that textual or content analysis is one of the most feasible method to trace the origin or the underlying concept of certain theoretical frameworks. In fact, this research is an attempt to revive the concept of 'character' i.e. the formula of success underpinning previous golden Muslims civilization. Since this formula of success is documented in Arabic texts, it is important for present generation to rediscover, revive and revitalize the ideas and synthesize them into modern scientific disciplines. Thus far, content analysis method generally confined to social studies, especially Religious Studies since it used to deal with the sacred texts. In Islamic Studies, it usually deals with the analysis of *al-Qur'an* and *Hadiths*; similarly in Biblical Studies, it deals with the analysis of Bible itself.

In this case, it is recommended for content analysis to be the tool to study any historical documents particularly the historical accounts of great saviors or events of the past. For instance, the analysis of propaganda in newspapers during the World War II was done through the content analysis method. During this time, the value of content analysis as a research tool was recognized beyond the field of communication. It was extended to various disciplines of social sciences.

Another important area to be studied through content analysis method is biographical studies of the great leaders, scholars, figures etc. It is important to study their life history to extract some important historical aspects that influence their thought, leadership and decision-making. For instance, the biography of great historical figures such as Prophet Muhammad s.a.w. himself, Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Abraham Lincoln, etc.

Future Research

It is also recommended for policy makers to analyze these research findings as a basis to develop a standard curriculum content for children's character development, especially for the government nurseries and kindergartens. It is also recommended for National Population and Family Development Board (NPFDB) to adopt some of the research findings for its parenting education modules. In fact, these findings serve as basic parenting knowledge in relation to children's character development. It also serves as an early parenting intervention program to prevent juvenile delinquencies and social epidemic among the youngsters. Therefore, it is the researcher's view that future research should be focusing on the details or the methodological aspects of the curriculum content. For instance, studies on specific method of how to develop cardinal virtues like wisdom, courage, temperance and justice. Besides, study on the contributing factors that influence the development of good character. It is believed that the proposed curriculum would be a successful project with a continuous evaluation and improvement.

Last but not least, it is hoped that this humble contribution would finally contribute towards the development of resilient Muslim generations in the future.

