

## Methods of Nurturing Children's Thinking Based On the Teachings of the Qur'an

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to study the methods of developing the children's thinking based on the teachings of the Qur'an. The research method in this study is proportional to the subject of the study; namely, descriptive-deductive method. The statistical population includes all related documents, including books, theses, especially the Holy Quran. The method of data collection is to study documents. The results of the research showed that no book in the history of human life has encouraged humans to think as much as the Holy Qur'an. Also, childhood is of particular importance and is the best time to cultivate thinking and ultimately, the best way to foster childhood, sensuality, writing and questioning.

**Keywords:** *Thinking, Childhood, Developing Thinking, Writing, Questioning.*

Today's schools do not pay much attention to contemporary textbooks. The textbooks only accumulate the facts together and ignore the underlying issues, especially thinking. Thinking is a godly blessing that has been introduced since the beginning of creation in human nature. Through the power of the thought, god has dominated mankind on space and the earth. Nevertheless, although thinking is part of human fate and all human beings have the power of thought, but all people properly think. Therefore, the correct use of thought and thinking needs to be developed, and the development of thinking is included in the field of education and is definitely linked to it, and this is education that can be more and more grounded for objective realization and practicing the development of thinking. (Shariatmadari, 1993, p. 18). Of course, when it comes to thinking, it seems that its concept and nature are clear. But if we try to define and analyze it, we notice the difficulty of such definition in terms of precise and explicit terms. (Shabani, 1382, p. 43) Educational scholars have interpreted it in different ways: terminologically, thinking means meditation, contemplation, deliberation, and capturing the heart (Dehkhoda, 1343, p. 821). Shariatmadari considers thinking as "a process in which one tries to identify the problem that he encounters and to use his previous experiences to solve it" (Shariatmadari, 2003, p. 279). In the book, *How We Think about*

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Thought, John Dewey says: Practical thinking is where reality is confirmed or produced by other realities, or the way in which future beliefs are based on past beliefs. (Dubno, 1384, p. 15).

On the other hand, childhood plays a crucial role in human life. First of all, that's because psychologists and educators has often recognized childhood as the most prominent stage in the development of human personality. Secondly, the existence of conflicts, disorders and mental disorders in this age group are among the most important factors in the occurrence of problems throughout life (Sharfi, Adib, 2009, p. 15). Considering studies in the field of education, it becomes clear that there are many perspectives on childhood philosophy. Sometimes a child, an incomplete person, was thought to be in need of help and guidance of an adult to get to work, and the childhood is the transition to adulthood. Dewey says the children, as a member of the community, do not have full authority and they will remain as adolescent candidates on the waiting list. According to Dewey, this view points out that society is naturally predisposed to determining the activities of the children's behavior and their orientation, because sooner or later these children will be in society. (Shariatmadari, 2003, p. 50).

Today's children need to be thoughtful adults because they are exposed to changing rapidly and they need to learn how to deal with the problems with correct thinking. Mahmudi Meymand (1392) in a study entitled the role of playing in developing child thinking from the perspective of childhood philosophy, has concluded that: Childhood play has a special feature that can best shape children's thinking. RabieiGurensarab (2008), in an article entitled "Developing children's thinking in the teachings of Islam," concluded that methods such as good observation, good listening, playing, debating, storytelling, and problem solving are some of the methods which are useful in fostering children's thinking.

The development of thinking is now regarded as one of the major issues in philosophical and educational domains. But every conception of this concept, in time and space, is different from that of the others at different times. great philosophers and thinkers such as Descartes, Hegel, Dewey, etc. have a great influence on contemporary thinking and our attitude to thinking, but the source of scholar' attachment regarding thinking in the past decades can be traced back to the views of cognitive theorists such as Piaget, Bruner, and others.

But given the fact that in different societies the philosophy of education is compatible with the way and type of society's prevailing view towards the world and the human being, in this regard, the duty of the scholars of education in our country to refer to the original Islamic-Iranian teachings and deduce methods compatible with these instructions in order to teach thinking, it is necessary to use the methods recommended in order to teach thinking and to strengthen its skills with regard to the perceptual coordinates and abilities of each age group. Now, given the necessity of the subject, the researcher in this article is trying to answer these questions:

1. What is the position of the Qur'an?

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2. What is the period of childhood in Islam?
3. According to Quran, what are the methods for developing thinking in children?

### RESEARCH METHOD

The research method is proportional to the research subject, the descriptive-deductive method. The statistical community includes all relevant documents, including books, theses, especially the Holy Quran. The method of collecting information is to study documents, reference to the sources.

### RESEARCH FINDINGS

#### *Question 1: What is the position of thinking in the Qur'an?*

Islam pays attention to thinking and invites people to think in many cases. Compared to other heavenly religions, Islam has the greatest attention towards thinking and in the period of human history no book has encouraged people to think as much as the Holy Qur'an.

The Qur'an invites people to think in creation in various forms, sometimes gives directions to think. For example, in Sura al-Saba Ayyah 46 says: " Say, "I only advise you of one [thing] - that you stand for Allah, [seeking truth] in pairs and individually, and then give thought." There is not in your companion any madness. He is only a warner to you before a severe punishment."

Sometimes he blames the lack of thinking: "Then do they not give thought? There is in their companion [Muhammad] no madness. He is not but a clear warner.."(Arah, 184).

Among the basic principles that the Qur'an encourages to think about them are: 1. thinking in the creation world. "Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth and the alternation of the night and the day are signs for those of understanding." (Al-Imran, 190) 2. Thinking in the divine verses: "..... Thus Allah makes clear to you the verses [of revelation] that you might give thought." (Baqarah, 219). 3. Thinking in Historical transformation. Conscious of the transformations of the past nations and the motivations and factors that make them progress or lag behind, they cultivate human thought. Therefore, the Qur'an orders: "Say, "Travel through the land; then observe how the end of the deniers was."(Anam, 11).

The Holy Qur'an continuously invites people to think with emphasis. Qur'anic verses praise and endorse thinking with various words such as "Thinking, Lying, Forbidding, Jurisprudent, Intelligence, Insight, Truth, Thought, and the like," and invite them to think throughout the Quran. In the words of AllamahTabatabai, the Qur'an may have invited more than three hundred things to think, to remind and to reason (example commentary, vol. 13, p. 400). On the one hand, he praises the owners of thought and thinkers, and on the other hand, the person who is of wise and thoughtful does not use himself to degrade the animal.(Anfal, 22). Moreover, in many verses, people are blamed for not thinking. ... Then will you not give thought?? (Anam50). Therefore, according to the Qur'an, the first step is introduced to be thinking (Saba, 46), and the human being has been invited to think in himself and in the

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world around him. "We will show them our signs in the horizons and within themselves until it becomes clear to them that it is the truth." (Fosselat, 53). Therefore, without thinking of humans' religious growth may not be realized, and thinking is an instrument that saves mankind from the darkness of ignorance to the light of knowledge, giving him insight and notional breadth.

### ***Question 2: What is the status of a childhood in Islam?***

In the verses of the Quran and Islamic narrations, the child is referred to with special terms. For example: 1. The light of the eye " And those who say, "Our Lord, grant us from among our wives and offspring comfort to our eyes and make us an example for the righteous." (Forghan, 74). 2. The Ornament of Life: "Wealth and children are [but] adornment of the worldly life. But the enduring good deeds are better to your Lord for reward and better for [one's] hope."(Kahf, 46). 3. Enunciation:" [He was told], "O Zechariah, indeed we give you good tidings of a boy whose name will be John. We have not assigned to any before [this] name."(Maryam, 7).

The infallibles have referred to the status and dignity of children in the family under various titles In their statements:

1. Loved ones of the faithful: The Prophet (pbuh) praised the good offspring of the believers as dears and loved ones (Noori,1382: p. 112).
2. A flower of paradise flowers: The prophet Mohammad (pbuh) says: "Good offspring is a flower of paradise flowers". (Motgi Hindi, 1372, 112/15)
3. God's Inheritance: Imam Sadiq (AS) states: "The Inheritance of God from the believer's servant is a good child who asks forgiveness for him ". (Baharalanvar, Vol. 6, p. 28)

Today, scientists have realized that childhood is the basis of human life and an important part of happiness or misery of adolescence, youth and adulthood is in relation to continuing and adopting the right training method in childhood.

The sensitive soul of the child at the beginning of life is similar, from many aspects, to a particular matter which is ready for any breeding and upbringing. Imam Ali (AS) says: "Verily, the heart and soul of the child is like the uncultivated and special land which accepts all the seeds and grains that are thrown into it". (Wasael,vol 21, p 478).

The training stages are divided into three major ones in the words of religious leaders who have brought the best training program to humankind and drawn the most beautiful life for them. Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) divides these steps in the following order and says: "The child is a master during first seven years and the second seven years is the era of obedience, and finally the third seven years is the ministry and assistance time". (Same p. 193).

The first and most important reason for recognizing childhood is that the child's heart is empty in this period, and it has not been ruined by the darkness of sins. In these years, the

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thought of a child is like a land that has not yet been seeded, so any kind of moral and social traits can be developed in the child. The second reason is that, in childhood, the child's mind is still not filled with useless training and can easily receive the necessary training and education, regardless of useless thoughts. Therefore, Imam Ali (AS) says to his child: "I started your education at this time so that you do not have to re-experience and endure the pain and suffering of rehearsal." On the other hand, the importance of this course for training is given. The importance and necessity of human education is clear. All schools, religions consider the education of human beings in childhood as particularly important for many reasons. Islam has also emphasized the importance of childhood education.

Children need to be educated for intellectual development. In Islamic instructions, learning has been highly emphasized and child-based education has been taught. The prophet of Islam (PBUH) regards the literacy of a child as one of the child's rights to parents. Rights of the child to the father and mother include three factors: to choose a beautiful name for him, to teach him writing, and at the time of his maturity, provide the necessary conditions to choose his wife (Baharalanvar, Volume 6, p. 24). In another hadith, Imam Ali (AS) asked his fathers to force their children to study and acquire knowledge. (Sufficient Principles, Volume 6, p. 46).

The position of the child is so important in the Islamic perspective that it has included one of the most important roles and responsibilities of the parents in helping the children to grow and educate the children, and has given specific plans and instructions for this.

Our religious leaders have shown the best ways and methods of child-rearing for centuries with beautiful commands and guidance.

And if scientists, psychologists note the beginning of educational programs after the child's birth, Islam launches broad and real educational programs for the happiness of the child, rather before birth. (Ghasemi, 1380, p. 5).

The prophet (PBUH) considers the child literacy as the first step within the basic duties of the father, because his child must overcome life problems and be armed for fighting in the realm of life. No weapon is stronger than science weapon. Therefore, the basic teachings as Prophet (PBUH) has noted (as a teaching of reading and writing) are almost mandatory in most of the world, which indicates the importance of the child in the religion of Islam.

### ***Q3: what ways does Quran introduce to foster children's thinking?***

The power of childhood thinking becomes evident during the first years and gradually evolves, so their thinking is constantly changing.

Thinking methods include a set of measures that are organized regularly for the development of thinking.

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The Holy Qur'an did not teach people how to think the right way in a classic way because humans are capable of thinking, but the Qur'an's method of activating thought rests on two basic factors of observing phenomena and concrete experiences for understanding the truth and utilizing rational reasoning. And the abstract thinking and its application in regulating the life in this world and the Hereafter and the combination of these two can be effective in deep understanding of man and raising his level of thinking.

According to these descriptions, for teaching their thinking and skills with regard to the coordinates and perceptual abilities, these methods are as follows: 1. development of the senses, 2. Writing, 3. Questioning.

### ***1. Development of the senses:***

The purpose of nurturing the senses is to have good observation, good listening and good speaking. If coaches are able to plan for this, they will be provided with the necessary grounds for enhancing accuracy and curiosity, which will be a step to the development of thinking in them.

#### **1-1 developing vision (good seeing)**

Children are confronted with phenomena of creation, scenes, movements and behaviors. By watching, many concepts in the child's mind play a role in teaching well and observing what is being seen.

In this regard, God states in verse 20-17(Gashiya) : "Do they not look at camels how they are created?" Does not look at the sky how they are raised?! And to the mountains how they are fitted in place? And to the land that is wide-spreaded "

#### **1-2 listening development (good listening)**

Listening sensation is also an adventure that is effective in the growth of thoughts. The child is listening to the sounds through the auditory sense and becomes curious about them, and in answering their questions this way. If the children get good listening skills, their ears become sharper to get the surrounding sounds, and this precision and attention will have a direct impact on their thinking.

Allah says in verse 18 of Surah al-Zumar: "Those who hear the words and follow the best of them are those whom Allah guides and they are wise."

#### **1-3 developing Speaking (Good Thoughts)**

The expression of what the child is touching and seeing is the basis of her thinking because he can tell his thoughts and feelings as an independent person and communicate with others through this. Coaches can ask children to provide a platform for speaking.

In the first verse of "Surah Tohid", Allah says: "Say, "He is Allah, [who is] One." Or in the surah Ahzabverse 70, god declares: "O you who have believed! fear Allah and speak words of appropriate justice."

### **2. Writing**

When it comes to the position of thinking in the essay, in fact it should be said that writing is the product of thought. In this matter, the question is how the teacher can arrange children for thinking. The easiest way is to justify seeing, speaking and writing.

Writing means ordering ideas. That is, creating the words and speaking and writing them. In literature, writing is the production of sentences and phrases that express the author's thoughts in a clear and beautiful way so that the reader can easily understand them and are pleasing to them (Ali Pasazadeh, 2006, p. 2).

To write, one needs to use all the senses of the children, especially his eyes, and to use pictorial instruction appropriately, using a phrase that helps to illustrate and sensate content. God's example in Sura Baqarah, verse 17, states: "Their example is that of one who kindled a fire, but when it illuminated what was around him, Allah took away their light and left them in darkness [so] they could not see.."

Writing is valuable in Islamic and religious texts. To the extent that it has been sworn, God states in the first verse of Surah al-Qalam: " Nun". By the pen and what they inscribe".

Writing is a great blessing that is not comparable with any of the others. God has considered two basic blessings of reading and writing in Sura al-Alaq. It can be used to induce the fact that reading well is essential for good writing and one requires to understand what he reads well enough to be able to write. This is the logic that everyone who can best understand what they read can also write it very well (HosseiniAlaei, 1381, p. 49).

Undoubtedly, one can learn to think, namely; to a large extent the writing teacher can teach how to think. In simple terms, a writing teacher teaches the students how to think and thinking qualities. Teachers teach how students can analyze a combination of critique and innovation (Bagheri, 2002, p. 33).

When a student tries to divide an object into its components or divide an incident into its main events, he has a chance to think, and Plato essentially did it when analyzing the thought. The next step is writing, the thing Plato did but these students don't (Haman., P. 35).

In 1318 In the Supreme Council of Culture has pointed out that students should be mindful of their ideas in writing that students should be able to intellectually use their reasoning powers. In 1319 the purpose of the writing course was to consider the elements of writing. In the year 1345, the scenario improved, and the experts considered writing as a link between thought and dialogue. That is, dialogue and writing (ShahrAry 2002 p. 121).

### **3-Questioning**

As the most important social institution, school plays an important role in the discovery, growth and prosperity of children's talents. In this context, the role of teachers is more

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decisive. Children are very curious and searching before entering school. The parents and associates will target their inquiries on various topics.

Thinking means asking questions and trying to find answers. The process of producing science begins with questioning. The first step in any research is the problem statement and research questions, and the hypothesis follows the statement of the problem and questions. Islam has praised questions, research and thought more than any other religions. Islam is a religion founded upon wisdom and invites people to think.

The repeated use of the word associated with questioning in Qur'an indicates its importance. Reporting the angel's question to God about the succession of man on earth as well as the reporting of hundreds of questions and answers in the Qur'an is the best reason for the importance and legitimacy of questioning in the Qur'anic logic and culture. Below there are some examples:" And [mention, O Muhammad], when your Lord said to the angels, "Indeed, I will make upon the earth a successive authority." They said, "Will you place upon it one that causes corruption therein and sheds blood, while we declare Your praise and sanctify You?" Allah said, "Indeed, I know that which you do not know." (bagare 30) Noah's message to God about the failure of his son's salvation and God's response to them:"And Noah called to his Lord and said, "My Lord, indeed my son is of my family; and indeed, your promise is true; and you are the most just of judges! He said, "O Noah, indeed he is not of your family; indeed, he is [one whose] work was other than righteous, so ask me not for that about which you have no knowledge. Indeed, I advise you, lest you be among the ignorant." (hood 45)And the question Abraham asked God about how to save the dead and the answer to that "And [mention] when Abraham said, "My Lord, show me how you give life to the dead." [Allah] said, "Have you not believed?" He said, "Yes, but [I ask] only that my heart may be satisfied." [Allah] said, "Take four birds and commit them to you. Then [after slaughtering them] put on each hill a portion of them; then call them - they will come [flying] to you in haste. And know that Allah is exalted in Might and Wise."(Bagareh 260).

Therefore, Islam does not escape away from the questions and doubts, but rather blends with them and turns doubts into certainty.

Questioning has been beautifully stated in Quran in different forms. " Have you not considered how your Lord dealt with 'Aad –" (Fajr, 6). Have you not considered, [O Muhammad], how your Lord dealt with the companions of the elephant? (Phil, 1) Do you order righteousness of the people and forget yourselves while you recite the Scripture? Then will you not reason? (Bagare 44) Then do they not look at the camels - how they are created? (Khashashiyya, 17) Their messengers said, "Can there be doubt about Allah, Creator of the heavens and earth? He invites you that He may forgive you of your sins, and He delays your death for a specified term." They said, "You are not but men like us who wish to avert us from what our fathers were worshipping. So bring us a clear authority." (Ebrahim 10) Say, [O Muhammad], "I do not tell you that I have the depositories [containing the provision] of Allah or that I know the unseen, nor do I tell you that I am an angel. I only follow what is



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revealed to me." Say, "Is the blind equivalent to the seeing? Then will you not give thought? (Anam 50) The story of breaking idols by Prophet Ibrahim (AS) is a beautiful effect of Quranic questions. Prophet Abraham breaks down the idols and places the ax on the shoulders of great idol and when asked about it, he replies them to ask the great idol defeated the others. Then they reversed themselves, [saying], "They said, "And then bring him before the eyes of the people that they may testify." They said, "Have you done this to our gods, O Abraham?" He said, "Rather, this - the largest of them - did it, so ask them, if they should [be able to] speak." So they returned to [blaming] themselves and said [to each other], "Indeed, you are the wrongdoers." You have already known that these do not speak!" Abraham's question caused unbelievers to be guided revealing the monotheistic nature of their monotheism behind the curtains of prejudice and ignorance and pride "(Tafsir Nemuneh, vol. 13, p. 439).

The religious leaders created the open-mindedness and respect for the cultural questioners who came to them from different places, from various groups, even enemies, and, with the freedom, security and tranquility, questioned them on various issues. Security and freedom are two pillars of inquiry. The seedlings of questioning are developed in a society in which the well-balanced, emotional, social and cultural context for the curiosity and hesitancy is provided. Question and questioning cannot be promoted and institutionalized by instruction. The questioning of a safe and free environment requires that the peer to be able to express his or her own thoughts and ask questions without any concern.

### CONCLUSIONS

Considering the development of thought as the best practice of reasoning in all human life in many societies, this issue acquires special interest. The Holy Qur'an continuously invites people to think with emphasis. The Qur'anic verses have praised and endorsed thinking by various terms such as "Thinking, Lying, Forbidding, Jurisdiction, Intelligence, Insight, Truth, Thought, and so on." On the one hand, the Qur'an praises the thinkers and intellectuals, and on the other hand, the person who does not use his wisdom and thought is downgraded to the animal's level.

In addition to examining the condition of the child in Islam, it was revealed that the child has a special status in Islam.

The first and most important reason for recognizing childhood is that the heart of the child is empty in this period, and that the child's thoughts are like a land that has not yet been seeded, so any kind of moral and social traits can be developed in the child. The second reason is that in the childhood, the child's mind is still not filled with useless training and, without the thought of the vain, can easily receive the necessary education and training. Children need to be educated for intellectual development. In Islamic teachings, learning has been highly emphasized and child-based education has been taught. The prophet of Islam (PBUH) considers child literacy as one of the child's rights to parents. The Holy Qur'an did not instruct people how to teach the right thinking in a classical way because humans are capable

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of thinking thoroughly, but the Quran's method of activating thought rests on two basic axis of observing phenomena and concrete experiences for understanding the truth and using arguments. The rational and abstract thinking and its application in regulating the life of the world and the Hereafter and the combination of these two can be effective in deep understanding of man and raising his level of thinking. According to these descriptions, for teaching their thinking and skills with regard to the coordinates and perceptual abilities, these methods are as follows: 1. development of senses 2. writing 3. Questioning. 1. The senses include planning for good observation, good listening and expression. If children are taught to be educated about what is seen and the question is posed, the power of thinking will unblock their way. And if the children get good hearing skills, their ears will be sharper than the sounds that surround them and this accuracy and attention will have a direct impact on their thinking. Coaches can ask children to provide a platform for speaking. When talking about the position of thinking in the essay, in fact, it should be said that writing is a product of thought. According to this, the question is how the mentor can arrange children for thinking. The easiest way is to justify seeing, speaking and writing. For the sake of all the children's senses, especially his eyes should be well used, and in the teaching of the creation of the image, the words can be used properly and help with the use of a phrase that helps to illustrate and sensate the content. Writing is valuable in Islamic and religious texts. To the extent that it is sworn, God states in the first verse of Surah al-Qalam: "swear by the pen and what he writes." As the most important social institution, school plays an important role in the discovery, growth and prosperity of children's talents. In this context, the role of teachers is more decisive. Children are very curious before entering school. The parents and associates will target their inquiries on various topics. Islam is a religion whose foundation is based on wisdom and invites people to think. The repeated use of the word associated with the subject in Qur'an indicates the importance of questioning. Reporting hundreds of questions and answers in Qur'an is the reason for the importance and legitimacy of questioning in the Qur'anic logic and culture. In the religious view, the question is not a necessity, but a right of human beings. Security and freedom are two pillars of inquiry. The seedlings of questioning are developed in a society in which the well-balanced, emotional, social and cultural context for the curiosity and hesitancy is provided. Questioning cannot be promoted and institutionalized by instruction rather questioning in a safe and free environment requires that the peer be able to express his or her own thoughts and ask questions without any concern. What can be considered in the analysis of the above issues is why, despite all these emphases and religious doctrines based on the importance of fostering the development, there have not been any major steps in education? The answer to the question is, unfortunately, focused on training and acquisition of instrumental and cognitive skills (literacy) than other dimensions of mental development. Also, in our country, non-Islamic Western and non-indigenous Western patterns have been imposed to education and training. Without knowing if these ideas have the achievements that make us perfect, we will not even think where our executive decisions conflict with our religious and cultural foundations. This is clearly seen in recent years in education.

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