

# Study of Ibn Sina's Educational Thought and Its Contextualization in the Contemporary Era

Made Saihu,<sup>1\*</sup> Supriyadi Ahmad<sup>2</sup>, Darwis Hude<sup>3</sup>, Muhammad Hariyadi<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,3,4</sup>Institute of PTIQ Jakarta, Indonesia,

<sup>2</sup>State Islamic University Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, Indonesia

## ABSTRACT

This study discusses the structure of Ibn Sina's thought and its contextualization in the contemporary era from a subjective point of view referring to aspects of soul purification. Ibn Sina divides the human soul into three parts, they are: *nabatiyyah*, *hayawāniyyah*, and *insāniyyah* souls. According to Ibnu Sina, human morals are in the *nabatiyyah*, so the education that must be taught is education related to morals, cleanliness, and the arts, this education is carried out at the Early Childhood Education level. When the child is in the *hayawāniyyah*, that is when the child can respond and move through sensing, then the student is in a state of stimulation through understanding the Qur'an, especially reading, and interpreting it, followed by lessons to be able to study, analyze and be critical of the meaning from every verse of Allah SWT, both *kauliyyah* (the Qur'an) and *kauniyyah* (the universe). In the *insāniyyah* soul, the child is endeavored to be educated so that they can integrate intellectual, emotional, and spiritual intelligence, to create an integrative education, they are education that can unite the dimensions of service (*al-'Amilah*) and spiritual (*al-'Alimah*). This literature review confirms that to achieve the goals of Islamic education, the educational model that is applied wherever possible leads to purification of the soul, because with a pure soul the process of entering knowledge into students' souls will be easy. An educational perspective that places purification of the soul as an offer of Islamic education in the contemporary era.

**Keywords:** Education, Ibn Sina, Purification of the Soul, Contemporary.

## INTRODUCTION

Ibn Sina, known as the father of medicine in the world especially in Islam, turned out to be also a thinker in education world (Alwizar, 2015). Education in Ibn Sina's perspective, is not only philosophical, but also structured starting from the objectives, curriculum, learning methods and competencies of educators (Rasyid, 2019). The structuration of his educational thought begins with the reason education (Handayani & Suyadi, 2019), character education (Hambali, 2020), to the relevance of his educational thought in the modern era (Uni, 2020). This structurization cannot be separated from the purpose of education itself which seeks to form *al-Insān al-kamil* (perfect human being) is able to develop all the potential that exists in students through fulfilling a set of requirements needed in the education world.

The study of Ibn Sina's educational thought has evolved from an early study of the foundations of educational philosophy (Salleh & Embong, 2017), On the relationship of education with the development of the learners character (Shuhari, Mohd Hasrul; Zin, Engku Ibrahim Engku Wok; al-Shafi'i, Mohammed Muneer'deen Olodo; Musa, Razali; Zin, 2019), to the study of the actualization of his educational thought in the contemporary era (Saparovich, 2021). The foundation of Ibn Sina's educational thought focuses on the functionality of mind. Ibn Sina said that mind is the source of all events and must be developed to achieve educational goals (Azimah, 2016). Recent studies have seen

his educational thought as having a relationship with the growth of the learner's character. In the contemporary era, Ibn Sina's educational thought has become a solution to the complexity of education in Indonesia (Rahman & Shofiyah, 2019). From (third) the tendency of the study appears that Ibn Sina's educational thought has been positioned as an objective force that has the power of appeal in educational studies. The subjective perspective of contextualization of his thinking has not been well mapped out.

This paper is based on the argument that Ibn Sina's educational thought is not only philosophical, but also practical and contextual (Turdieva, 2021) As a process, it's requires

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**Corresponding Author e-mail:** madesaihu@ptiq.ac.id

**https://orcid.org//0000-0003-0617-248X**

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complete requirements and facilities to be operationalized optimally. At the same time the contextualization of Ibn Sina's educational thought had the power to force a new system in the educational process. Education that bases its process on the Ibn Sina thought changed the tradition of education from conventional (teacher-centered) to student-potential-based. Thus, Ibn Sina's educational thought demanded an adaptation and presented a new discourse for educators and educational institutions.

The paper aims specifically to discuss the philosophical foundations of Ibn Sina's educational thought and its contextualization in the contemporary era. In addition to identifying and presenting the main ideas of his thoughts, this paper also shows the strategies that must be taken in optimizing the potential of students. The contextualization of Ibn Sina's thought in the educational process provided a new discourse on the development of education, especially Islamic education. This educational thought creates to a new tradition in education that required an adaptation. In other words, this paper describes that Ibn Sina's educational thought provides knowledge as well as strategies for developing the potential of students that can be contextualized in the contemporary era.

## METHODS

Ibn Sina's type of research on contextualizes educational thought is qualitative-descriptive based on related books, journals, and articles. All these data sources are randomly selected based on the themes of the study that meets the criteria for the research focus, this paper concerns the contextualization of Ibn Sina's educational thought in the contemporary era. The obstacle of the lack of understanding of the structurization of Ibn Sina's thought is caused by the lack of understanding of all the requirements for its implementation. In addition to being grouped based on relevant themes, all data sources were selected to include the foundation of education, its relationship with character education, and the contextualization of Ibn Sina's educational thought in

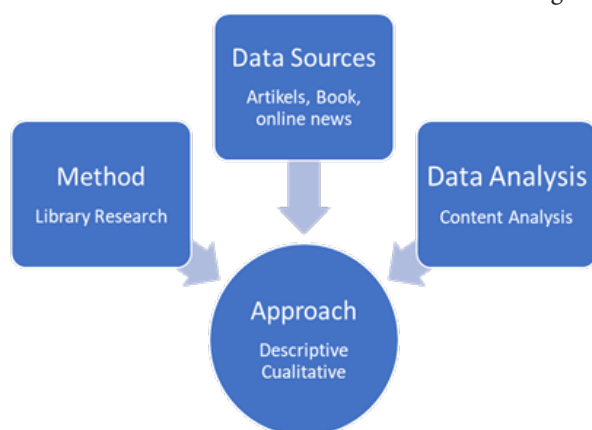
educational practice in Indonesia. Thus, the contextualization of Ibn Sina's educational thought as a discussion covered in this study includes personal and structural skills.

## Research Methods

The data collection process refers to the literature study guidelines as a discussion in the formulation of questions. Open-ended research questions cover three areas of data. First, data related to structure of Ibn Sina education thought is an important factor in the learning process. Second, related to the functions and concepts of Ibn Sina education thought or the relationship between the sense and psychology. Third, the description and the contextualization of Ibn Sina education thought that always connects in the world of contemporary education.

This research took place during the month of October until November 2021 which was carried out at the PTIQ Jakarta Institute Library and the UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta Postgraduate School Library. Nowadays, the need for a humanism-theocentric approach to education is needed in the world of education. That is why the author tries to untangle the contextualization of Ibn Sina's Education as a part of the distorted education that has the ideology of Humanism-Theocentric and becomes a necessity of contemporary society. Reference sources are studied and studied by looking at social conditions based on information from books, journals, and online media.

Data related to the contextualization of Ibn Sina's Education are classified thematically to emphasize its relevance to contemporary education model. Data collected from various scientific journal articles, books, analyzed using content analysis techniques, they are scientific analysis of the content of a communication message in three stages: data reduction, data presentation, drawing conclusions (Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, 2013). Data classification is carried out in addition to the theme also by considering the aspects covered. The context of the differences in the situation when and where educational thought was initiated, is analyzed its significance based on the prevailing parameters, such as: social conditions, culture, and tendencies of contemporary society. Data is analyzed through three stages: data restatement, data description, and data interpretation. Restatement is done with reference to the contextualization of Ibn Sina education thought and its description. The description of the data is carried out to show the pattern or tendency of the data regarding the typology of human soul concepts and functions. The interpretation process is carried out by paying attention to the individual context of educators, social, and institutional which is the basis for the difficulty of implementing Ibn Sina education thought as an approach in contemporary education.



## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Ibn Sina's perspective education is an educational thought that is relevant to the condition of Islamic education in Indonesia. Discussing education for Ibn Sina cannot be separated from the study of human, because a person's view of human influences the concepts of education put forward. In relation to the human soul, Ibn Sina divided the soul over 3 (three) parts: 1) The plant soul (*nabâtiyyah*); 2) The soul of animal (*hayawâniyyah*); 3) The human soul (*insâniyyah*). Ibn Sina believed that if these three human souls were well educated, they could create human beings who were not only cognitively intelligent, but also effective and psychomotor, so that this concept of educational thought was relevant to every development of the times.

### The Human Soul in the Educational Space

The main substance of man according to Ibn Sina is the soul (Pajević et al., 2021). Soul will not be physically destroyed except by inner factors, while the body can be damaged and die by physical touch. The soul which means the same as the spirit is blown by God (Munirah, 2020). It is based on the Word of God, "Then when I have perfected (genesis) it, and I have blown my spirit (creation) into it, then submit you to it by prostration." The soul is a *jauhâr* (substance) that is not matter and does not attach to other matter. The soul is in the form of *ruhâniyyah* (immaterial) which resides in the body and controls the body directly to carry out movement, growth, and development of something, one of which is education (Makmudi, 2022). Discussing education is certainly inseparable from the study of the human soul or the nature of human being (Qomar, 2005), So to understand the potential and what educational material must be given to humans, it is necessary to first examine the structure of the soul contained in humans. Here Ibn Sina divided the human soul into 3 (three) souls, they are such as in picture below:

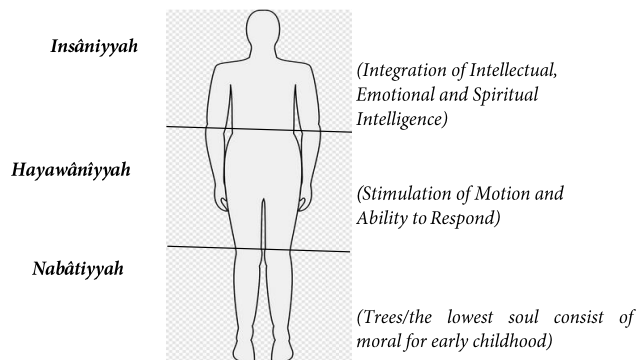


Fig. 1 The Division of Human Soul

The knowledge of these 3 (three) according to Ibn Sina makes it easier for educators to know about what a person has then as well as making it easier for educators to give what material is right to each other's souls.

### *Nabâtiyyah*: Morals and Early Childhood Education.

This body in the soul needs nutrients. Although not all those who need nutrients must grow and reproduce, but this nutrient power is the basis for the beginning of reproductive power which can be likened to a peak or goal and growth power is an intermediary that connects reproductive power and nutritional power (Salleh & Embong, 2017) as illustrated below:

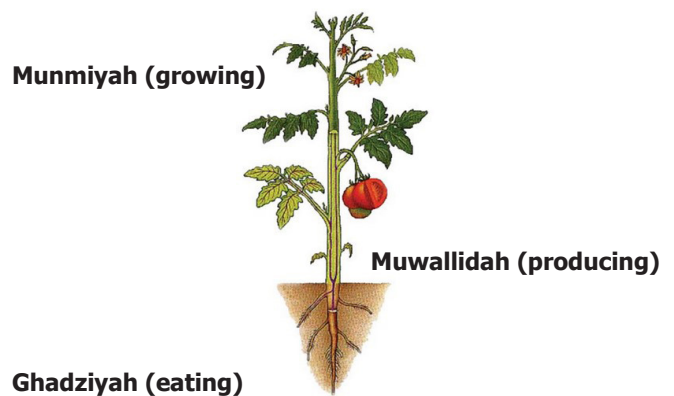


Fig. 2: The Division of *Nabâtiyyah* Soul

This soul is the lowest soul that human beings have. Human beings at this level need guidance, mentoring, and an outpouring of love and compassion. This is because the *nabâtiyyah* soul is the beginning of something that lives, grows, and develops (Abba & Onyemachi, 2020) socio-political and cultural implications of eco-degradation in the oil-rich Niger Delta region of the South-South in Nigeria, but falls short of addressing the trope of eco-alienation, the sense of separation between people and nature, which seems to be a significant idea in Niger Delta ecopoetics. For sure, literary studies in particular and the Humanities at large have shown considerable interest in the concept of the Anthropocene and the resultant eco-alienation which has dominated contemporary global ecopoetics since the 18th century. In the age of the Anthropocene, human beings deploy their exceptional capabilities to alter nature and its essence, including the ecosystem, which invariably leads to eco-alienation, a sense of breach in the relationship between people and nature. For the Humanities, if this Anthropocentric positioning of humans has brought socio-economic

advancement to humans, it has equally eroded human values. This paper thus attempts to show that the anthropocentric positioning of humans at the center of the universe, with its resultant hyper-capitalist greed, is the premise in the discussion of eco-alienation in Tanure Ojaide's Delta Blues and Home Songs (1998). Through the intake of nutrients without parents realizing it, the child is exploring what he digests. After understanding what he digests, the child can grow through games that will then produce a certain creation. That is why early childhood education must be emphasized on efforts to develop interests and talents, one of which is through good nutritional intake (Gopnik, 2020).

The *nabâtiyyah* (plant) soul which in Ibn Sina's perspective is said to be the lowest soul, is divided into *ghadzîyyah* (eating), *munmîyyah* (growing), and *muwallidâh* (reproducing) (Iqbal, 2015). Its contextualization to education in the contemporary era can be applied in early childhood education, they are children between 3-5 years old. In accordance with its division and function, the educational child in this soul needs to be given lessons in sports, ethics, sound arts, and the arts. Each of these lessons must be adapted to the level of development of the child as well as the talents and interests he has. Thus, it will be known which children should be given sports materials only and which ones should be trained with more weight (Ansari & Qomarudin, 2021). In accordance with the condition of the *nabâtiyyah* soul, must eat (nourish nutrients), grow, and reproduce-produce something new-the growth will produce maximum physical and organ growth.

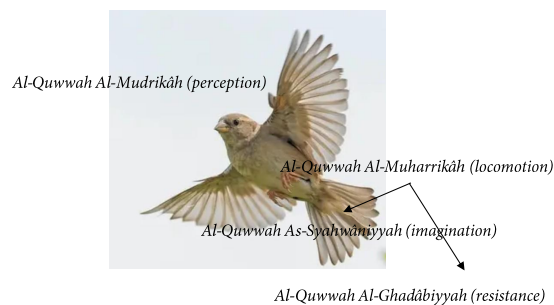
In addition to being given sports lessons, this soul must be given moral or ethical lessons, aiming to instill and cultivate the child's personality, so that his soul becomes holy and avoids bad deeds (Ansari, 2021). Even the morals in article 33 of the National Education Law No. 20 of 2003, become one of the important indicators in the formulation of national education goals. Unlike moral lessons, hygiene lessons are also something that must be taught in early childhood. This aims to accustom children to love cleanliness so that as early as possible this becomes a habit (Rasyid, 2019). While the lessons of sound art and art, aim to train emotional acuity, instinct, and empathy in loving living beings while also being useful for increasing their imaginative power (Hambali, 2020).

The importance of these lessons in early childhood, so that they get used to doing positive things as early as possible while training their mental sensitivity. Especially for the cultivation of moral lessons, wherever possible it should be a lesson that must be given to early childhood whose souls still fall into the category of *nabâtiyyah* souls. The early childhood curriculum must also be morally based, because the task of

instilling morals is not only the task of religious teachers, but the duty of all teachers. As the word "khalaqa" comes from, morals not only speak of morals but also speak of creations produced from human beings with good nutritional intake as well as compassionate coaching (Dere, 2019). At least this understanding of the soul gives educators enough knowledge that they must adjust the teaching materials and learning methods accordingly.

### **Hayawâniyyah: Excitatory Motion and Ability to Respond**

The animal soul (*hayawâniyyah*) has 2 (two) kinds of power, that is *al-Quwwah al-Muharrrikâh* which is the driving soul, that is, the ability to move according to demands and desires and *al-Quwwah al-Mudrikâh*, perceptual power which means the ability to respond, capture from sensing to stimuli that come not only from outside the self but also from within the self (Sina, 2009). Illustration of the soul of the animal (*hayawâniyyah*), is illustrated in the image below:



**Fig. 3:** The Division of Hayawâniyyah Soul

*Al-Quwwah al-Muharrrikâh* consists of two kinds, they are driving force as a motive and driving force as a subject. It is said to be the driving force as a motive because this power leads to a tendency and desire towards something, such as wanting to do something like what is imagined at the same time this soul can resist something if imagined it can damage the soul itself. While what is meant by driving force as a subject is the power that comes out of the muscles and nerves that function systemically related to the movement and growth of organs such as resigning or tightening (Sina, 2009). Generally, this soul is owned by children aged 6 (six) years and over (Sultoni et al., 2018).

In contrast to driving power, perceptual power is divided into two types, they are internal perception and external perception. External perception is further divided into 5 (five) senses. Meanwhile, internal perceptual power perceives sensing objects and some give meaning to the sensed objects. Some perceive and act at once, some perceive but not act, some perceive with primary perception and some perceive secondary (Zahran, 2019). The difference between the

perception of form and the perception of meaning is if the perception of form perceives using the internal soul and the external senses at the same time with the process of working the senses perceive first and then send it to the soul, like a goat perceives the shape of a tiger (its figure, nature, color) to cause fear in its soul. While the perception of meaning is something that is perceived by the soul among sensing objects without being perceived by the external senses first, such as the emergence of fear in goats without knowing how the tiger looks. The perception of the first will produce a form with a certain nature that has existed in the something by itself, while the perception of the second produces something from something else (Furqon & Hannah, 2020).

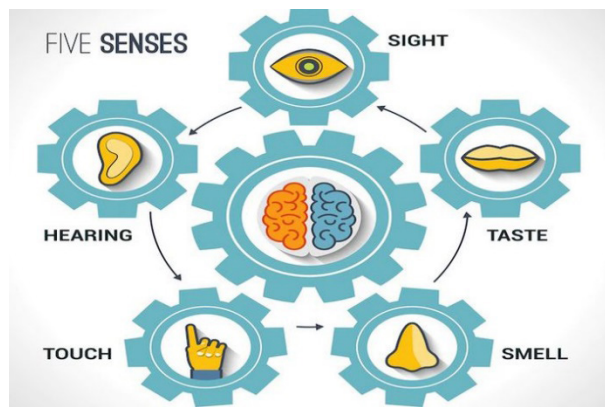


Fig. 4: The Five Senses of Human

According to Ibn Sina, in addition to the lessons of morals and art that are also covered in this soul, another important lesson that must be given is the study of the Qur'an. Through studying the Qur'an, children will be moved to not only learn the reading of the Qur'an, but more than that the teacher must also guide the child to study the content of the verses read. Thus, his reasoning will be stimulated in such a way as to think a high level. From here the child is moved to understand the intent of each verse and try to relevance it in the real world. Even according to Ibn Sina, understanding the content of the Qur'an verses must begin from the time the child is 6-14 years old.

The age of 6-14 years or even up to high school age (High School) is the right time for the child to receive stimuli that will subsequently give birth to a response (Aryanti et al., 2007) The response will be positive, if the basis of the stimulation is based on the Qur'an. Of course, this requires hard work not only for educators but also for the entire educational community. Education must be trained in such an understanding of the Qur'an that he is ready and has a strong provision in educating the lessons of the Qur'an in educational institutions. Through this effort, it can give birth

to generations close to the Qur'an to give birth to a generation with the title of "scholars who are scientists" as well as "scientists who are scholars".

**Insaniyyah: Integration of Intellectual, Emotional and Spiritual intelligence**

This soul has two important potentials, namely the practical power (*al-'Amilah*) related to the body or it can also be called *al-'Aql al-'Amali* (reason or practical intelligence) which means that it is a source of movement in the human body to perform various actions according to the heart. This soul has an interest relating to the faculty of imaginative and estimative animal as well as an interest relating to itself to generates special conditions for the human being so that he is ready to accelerate actions and reactions, such as fear, shame, laughter and crying (Akib & Muhsin, 2019). Its associated importance with the faculty of animal estimation imagination is to deduce the rescans in the matter of generation and degeneration (*al-Kā'inah wa al-Fāsidadah*), and to deduce human actions. As for its interests relating to itself will appear popular ideas, such as that "lies are bad", "tyranny is bad", as well as definitive premises separate from rational premises (Prasetia & Najiyah, 2021) such as the qadīriyah, syadhiliyah, naqshabandiyah, shattariyah and so on. Lā ma'būda in the tarekat was defined as the activity of self-purification (*tazkiyah al-nafs*).

While theoretical power is the power that serves to print a universal, immaterial form, sometimes it receives something potentially and sometimes actually. Theoretical Power (*al-'Alimah*) relates to something abstract. Power, also referred to as *'aql al-Nazari* (theoretical intelligentsia), serves to discover general concepts arising from matter. This theoretical power also has several levels, namely: 1) *Al-'Aql bi al-Qawwāb*, meaning the intelligentsia that develops as a result of human interaction with its environment (either through learning or from everyday experience) in it there are *al-'Aql al-Hayulani* (material reason), *al-'Aql al-Malaqut* (truth of axioms), and *al-'Aql bi al-Fi'l* (actual reason); 2) *Al-'Aql al-Mustafād*

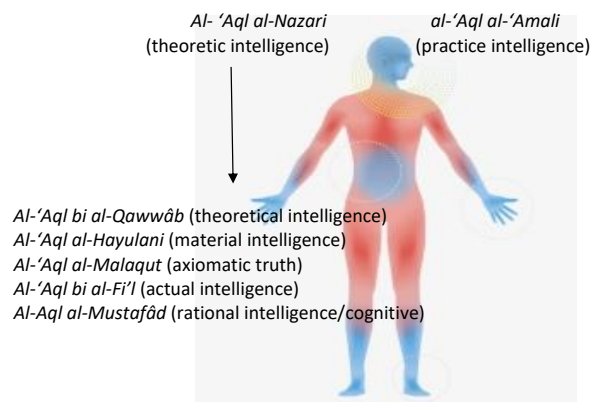


Fig. 5: The Separate of Rational Premises

, meaning a rational concept that can accept the overflow of science from active reason (Iqbal, 2015).

### ***Insâniyyah and the Integration of Intellectual, Emotional and Spiritual intelligence***

According to Ibn Sina, the human soul (*insâniyyah*) has two important potentials, they are: 1) Practical Power (*al-'Amilah*) related to the body or can also be called *al-'Aql al-'Amali* (reason or practical intelligence) which means that the human soul has power over the human soul so that it can form attitudes and have considerations and thoughts that distinguish from animals; 2) Theoretical (*al-'Alimah*) which relates to something abstract. This power can also be called *'aql al-Nazari* (theoretical intelligentsia), this power serves to discover the general concepts that arise from matter. This theoretical power also has several levels, namely: 1) *Al-'Aql bi al-Qawwâb*, meaning the intelligentsia that develops as a result of human interaction with its environment (either through learning or from everyday experience) in it there are *al-'Aql al-Hayulani* (material reason), *al-'Aql al-Malaqut* (truth of axioms), and *al-'Aql bi al-Fi'l* (actual reason); 2) *Al-'Aql al-Mustafâd*, meaning a rational concept that can accept the overflow of science from active reason (Iqbal, 2015).

Soul and reason will improve through exercises and education. The potential of human beings who are trained and educated includes intellectual, emotional, and spiritual aspects. If the intellectual and emotional are categorized on *al-'Aql al-'Amali*, the spiritual aspect is categorized on *'aql al-Nazari*, all three of which if properly trained and educated will lead to *tazkiah al-Nasiyyah* (purification of the soul). With a holy soul, students will easily accept various sciences and will become easy to cultivate their personality. Strictly speaking, education oriented towards purifying the soul through the optimization of intellectual, emotional, and spiritual aspects is what contemporary educational models need today.

In addition to this, the optimization of these three human potentials will build a non-dichotomous (integralist) educational paradigm. This can be seen from the thought of Ibn Sina which brings together the dimensions of the body (*al-'Amilah*) and the spiritual (*al-'Alimah*), general and religious, theoretical, and practical. Efforts to bring these dimensions together made Ibn Sina known as a theoretician who paradigm integralist non-dichotomy by making the Qur'an the main source in his educational thinking. In the context of education in Indonesia, such a paradigm should have been well established and restructured. The existence of general education and religious education in this country often gives rise to a paradigm of dichotomy by contradicting one science with another (Kurniyat, 2018). This pattern of

education has many problems, such as in many situations a person who has high knowledge but does not bring him close to Allah Swt (Tatang Hidayat, 2018). They think that religious affairs are only matters of privacy and moral education is the duty of religious teachers. Pragmatic-materialistic tendencies as a result of the existence of a scientific dichotomy, further opened the way for the entry of secular values in the body of the nation's generation.

Ibn Sina's educational thinking focuses on optimizing the potentials of students while still paying attention to aspects of their readiness to receive lessons. This educational thinking can also be one of the offers that can be actualized to achieve the goal of education in Indonesia, namely so that humans not only have the ability in science and technology but at the same time have deep religious knowledge.

### **CONCLUSION**

This study shows that the contextualization of Ibn Sina's educational thinking can be used as an offer of an educational model that focuses on purifying the soul. Purification is carried out through the provision of lessons by looking at the potential of students as well as seeing how much they are prepared to receive lessons. In the condition of the *nabâtiyyah* soul, the lessons that must be given are morals, hygiene, and art lessons that must be implemented at the Early Childhood Education level, aimed at providing knowledge as early as possible. Art lessons, for example, are useful for early childhood to exercise emotional sensitivity. While in the state of the soul *hayawâniyyah*, which means responding and moving through sensing, the child in this state of the soul must be stimulated through an understanding of the Qur'an not only related to how to read or interpret it, but more importantly the child is stimulated to study, analyze and be critical of the meanings of each word of Allah Swt, so that one day gives birth to a scientist who is a scholar and a scholar as well as a scientist. Another with the two conditions as mentioned earlier, the human being who is in the soul *insâniyyah*, requires the integration of intellectual, emotional, and spiritual intelligence. The optimization of these three human potentials will build a non-dichotomous (integralist) educational paradigm that brings together the dimensions of merit (*al-'Amilah*) and spiritual (*al-'Alimah*), general and religious, theoretical, and practical. Although this aspect of the integration of the three human intelligences is a demand in Ibn Sina's thinking, but in fact the optimization of the integrated three intelligences boils down to the purification of the soul. For with a holy soul the protégé will readily accept all knowledge and by himself will be formed superior persons. An educational perspective that sits the purification of the soul as an educational offer in the contemporary era.

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