



## The Unique Identity of Humans and Mujahadah an-Nafs in Developing the Potential of Children from the Perspective of the Qur'an

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### Abstract

This study analyzes the concept of developing child potential through the integration of unique human identity and *mujahadah an-nafs* from the perspective of the Qur'an. In this study, unique human identity is understood as individual characteristics that include biological aspects, character, and potential that distinguish each human being. This study uses a qualitative approach with a type of library research *through* the *maudhu'i* (thematic) interpretation method. The study results indicate that the Qur'an views every human being as having individual characteristics that form the basis for developing their potential, while *the mujahadah an-nafs* functions as an internal control mechanism to direct and optimize that potential. The research findings confirm that the development of children's potential will be more effective if parents' external supervision is integrated with the formation of self-control based on Qur'anic values. The novelty of this study lies in the integration of the concept of unique human identity and *mujahadah an-nafs* as a conceptual model for developing children's potential from a Qur'anic perspective. These findings have implications for strengthening family education models that respect the individual characteristics of children while building self-control as a foundation for developing their potential.

**Keywords** : Development of Children's Potential, Unique Human Identity, Maudhu'i Interpretation, Mujahadah an-Nafs

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini menganalisis konsep pengembangan potensi anak melalui integrasi identitas manusia yang unik dan *mujahadah an-nafs* dari perspektif Al-Qur'an. Dalam penelitian ini, identitas manusia yang unik dipahami sebagai karakteristik individu yang mencakup aspek biologis, karakter, dan potensi yang membedakan setiap manusia. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan jenis penelitian pustaka melalui metode tafsir *maudhu'i* (tematik). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Al-Qur'an memandang setiap manusia memiliki karakteristik individual yang menjadi dasar untuk mengembangkan potensinya, sedangkan *mujahadah an-nafs* berfungsi sebagai mekanisme pengendalian internal untuk mengarahkan dan mengoptimalkan potensi tersebut. Hasil penelitian ini menegaskan bahwa pengembangan potensi anak akan lebih efektif jika pengawasan eksternal dari orang tua dipadukan dengan pembentukan pengendalian diri berdasarkan nilai-nilai Al-Qur'an. Keunikan penelitian ini terletak pada integrasi konsep identitas manusia yang unik dan *mujahadah an-nafs* sebagai model konseptual untuk mengembangkan potensi anak dari perspektif Al-Qur'an. Temuan ini memiliki implikasi bagi penguatan model pendidikan keluarga yang menghormati karakteristik individu anak-anak sekaligus membangun pengendalian diri sebagai landasan untuk mengembangkan potensi mereka.

**Kata kunci**: Pengembangan Potensi Anak, Identitas Manusia yang Unik, Tafsir Maudhu'i, Mujahadah an-Nafs



## A. INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology over the past five years has brought significant changes to the lifestyles of children (Nasution, 2024) . While technology provides easy access to information and learning, it also raises various new issues in children and adolescents, such as identity crises, decreased self-control, increased gadget addiction, and character degradation. Various studies have shown that uncontrolled use of digital media leads to poor emotional regulation, decreased concentration, and even stunted development of individual potential (Malelak, 2023).

In this study, the unique identity of a human being is understood as an individual characteristic that distinguishes each human being from biological aspects, character, behavioral tendencies , and potential. This concept departs from the view of the Qur'an that humans are created with different characteristics, requiring a non-uniform educational approach. As explained in the QS. Al-Isrā' [17]: 84 emphasizes that every human being acts based on *syākilatih* , namely, the conditions, character, tendencies, and personality patterns inherent in him. According to the commentators, the term *syākilah* includes character, nature, habits, and behavioral tendencies that distinguish one individual from another. This verse shows that human behavior is individual and unique, not uniform, and is influenced by the inner conditions and habits formed within a person (Shihab, 2002) . This verse suggests that every child has a unique identity that cannot be standardized .

Mujahadah *an-nafs* is understood as the process of self-control through the struggle against the urges of passions so that behavior remains within the guidance of divine values. These two concepts are interrelated because developing a child's potential requires establishing internal control to ensure optimal development.

Practices within families still tend to standardize potential development patterns without considering the unique characteristics of each child. Some parents focus more on academic achievement and certain social standards than on understanding their child's talents, character, and psychological state. As a result, many children experience psychological stress, loss of self-confidence, and even difficulty developing their full potential. (Zaki Nur Fahmawati et al., 2021) . Excessive pressure and neglect of individual uniqueness can lead to low self-confidence, identity conflict, and even emotional disorders .

These issues highlight the gap between modern technological developments and the development of children's character and potential. External parental supervision often focuses solely on limiting technology use but is not balanced by developing internal self-control in children. Consequently, the supervision provided is temporary and fails to sustainably develop a child's self-awareness. In this context, the Quran offers an educational concept that emphasizes not only external supervision but also internal control development through *mujahadah an-nafs*, or the struggle to control desires.

In this context, developing a child's potential requires not only educational support but also a deep understanding of each individual's unique characteristics, tendencies, and potential. These differences in character require parents to tailor parenting and development strategies to each child's individual needs.

From the perspective of the Qur'an, this responsibility is emphasized in the Qur'an. At-Taḥrīm [66]: 6 commands every believer to protect themselves and their families from hell's fires. This command shows that the role of parents is not limited to fulfil physical needs but also includes the moral, spiritual, and character development of children. Ibn Kathir explains that protecting the family is realized by teaching obedience to Allah, virtue education, and getting used to good deeds so that each family member has a strong foundation of faith and morals (al-khalidi, 2017b). Thus, parents not only function as external supervisors but also as educators who play a role in guiding, directing, and developing children's potential according to their individual characteristics so that they grow into individuals who are faithful, moral, and able to control themselves.

Several studies have examined the concept of *mujahadah an-nafs* and self-control from both the Quranic and psychological perspectives. (Dinana et al., 2025) explain that *mujahadah an-nafs* is an effort to control oneself based on Quranic verses that have implications for moral development. Although this research emphasizes the importance of spiritual struggle in shaping individual character, the discussion still focuses on general moral aspects and does not relate them to the development of children's potential within the family environment.

Similarly, Sepriana and Kholifah (2025) examined the relevance of *mujahadah an-nafs* to moral development, but their study was still limited to the individual ethical dimension without connecting it to individual characteristics as a basis for potential development. Meanwhile, Hundra and Septiana (2020) position self-control as a crucial

factor in adolescent development from a psychological perspective, but have not integrated this concept with a thematic interpretation approach to the Qur'an.

Based on these studies, previous research has clearly focused more on *mujahadah an-nafs* as a concept of moral development or self-control as an individual psychological aspect. There has been no research that integrates the concept of unique human identity as individual characteristics in the form of tendencies, characters, and potentials that distinguish each human being with *mujahadah an-nafs* as an internal control mechanism in developing children's potential through the *maudhu'i* interpretation approach. Thus, this study fills this gap by offering an analysis that connects unique human identity as the basis for recognizing children's potential and *mujahadah an-nafs* as the basis for developing self-control from the perspective of the Qur'an.

The novelty of this research lies in the integration of two concepts that have previously been studied separately: unique human identity and *mujahadah an-nafs* (self-directed self-control) as a conceptual model for developing children's potential from a Qur'anic perspective. This research not only explains individual human characteristics but also links them to the formation of internal control through *mujahadah an-nafs* as the basis for family education in the digital era.

Based on the description, this research is directed to answer two main questions: (1) How can the concept of unique human identity in the perspective of the Qur'an be the basis for developing children's potential? (2) How does the concept of *mujahadah an-nafs* function as an internal control in supporting the development of this potential? Thus, this research aims to develop a conceptual model for developing children's potential that integrates external parental supervision and internal control based on the values of the Qur'an.

## **B. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a qualitative research design with a focus on library research. The research was conducted through the exploration, collection, and analysis of various relevant literature sources to examine the concept of unique human identity and *mujahadah an-nafs* (*self-directed self-direction*) in developing children's potential from a Qur'anic perspective (Mahanum, 2021).

The *maudhu'i* (thematic) interpretation is used to collect verses that have a thematic relationship and then analyze them in an integrated manner to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the research object (Taufik Rakhmat & Abdussalam, 2022). This study examines the development of children's potential through an analysis of the unique identity of humans and *mujadah an-nafs* in the Qur'an.

The research data sources consisted of primary and secondary data. The primary data were in the form of verses of the Qur'an related to human identity and *mujadah an-nafs*, namely QS. Al-Isrā' [17]: 84, QS. Al-Infithār [82]: 7-8, QS. Yāsīn [36]: 65, QS. Āli 'Imrān [3]: 134, QS. Al-'Ankabūt [29]: 69, and QS. Asy-Syams [91]: 9-10. Secondary data were obtained from interpretation books, such as Tafsir Al-Mishbah, Tafsir Al-Munir, and Tafsir Ibnu Katsir, as well as journal articles, scientific books, theses, and other academic sources relevant to the research focus (Nurul Melani Haifa et al., 2025).

The research instrument in this study is the researcher himself (human instrument), namely the researcher plays a direct role in collecting, classifying, analyzing, and interpreting research data based on the sources used (Alaslan, 2024). Data collection is conducted through documentation techniques. The researcher identifies, inventories, and classifies verses of the Qur'an according to the research theme. Then, the researcher collects various supporting literature that discusses human identity, *mujadah an-nafs*, child potential development, and family education. All obtained documents are then selected based on their relevance to the research focus (Abdurrohman Akbar, 2024).

Data analysis was conducted through several stages using content analysis techniques. First, the verses of the Qur'an are grouped and analyzed based on the themes of unique human identity and *mujadah an-nafs*. Second, the interrelationships between verses were analyzed using the *maudhu'i kafir* approach by referring to the interpretations of the commentators. Third, the interpretation results were integrated with theories of child potential development, family education, and self-control to obtain a conceptual synthesis that answers the research focus. The final stage is drawing conclusions based on the systematic interpretation and data synthesis results (Firman, 2018).

This study employed source triangulation by comparing interpretations from several *kafir* books, scientific journal articles, and relevant academic literature to ensure data credibility. Furthermore, consistency checks were conducted between verse themes,

interpretations, and the theoretical framework used to ensure that the research findings were valid and scientifically accountable (Malik et al., 2025) .

## C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Results

Analysis of the verses of the Qur'an using the *maudhu'i* interpretation approach produces three main findings that are interrelated in the development of children's potential: (1) unique human identity as the basis for recognizing individual potential, (2) *mujahadah an-nafs* as a mechanism for forming internal control, and (3) integration between external parental supervision and internal control as a model for developing children's potential from the perspective of the Qur'an. These three findings were obtained through the identification, classification, and synthesis of verses with thematic relationships.

The verses that were the object of the study were classified into two large groups based on the analysis. The first group contains verses that explain the identity and unique characteristics of humans, while the second group contains verses that explain the formation of self-control through *mujahadah an-nafs (self-control)* . This classification is based on the focus of meaning that emerges from the commentators' interpretations, thus demonstrating the conceptual relationships between the verses.

**Table 1.** Demonstrating the conceptual relationships between the verses.

| No. | Verses of the Quran        | Findings Category     | Focusing on Meaning                       | Research Findings                                                                                        |
|-----|----------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.  | QS. Al-Isrā' [17]: 84      | Unique human identity | Individual Characteristics and Tendencies | Every human being has a different characteristic and tendency as a basis for developing their potential. |
| 2.  | QS. Al-Infithār [82]: 7–8. | Unique human identity | Uniqueness of human creation              | Differences in the structure of creation indicate individual identities that cannot be standardized.     |
| 3.  | QS. Yasin [36]: 65         | Unique human identity | Recording human behavior                  | Human behavior becomes a part of the identity that will be accounted for.                                |

|    |                          |                   |                          |                                                                           |
|----|--------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4. | QS. Āli 'Imrān [3]: 134  | Mujahadah an-nafs | Emotional control        | Self-control is the basis of character formation.                         |
| 5. | QS. Al-'Ankabūt [29]: 69 | Mujahadah an-nafs | Seriousness against lust | Developing potential requires continuous spiritual struggle.              |
| 6. | QS. Asy-Syams [91]: 9-10 | Mujahadah an-nafs | Purification of the Soul | Human success is determined by the ability to purify and control oneself. |

Based on the thematic analysis of six verses that became the primary data of the research, two main themes were found that are interrelated in the development of children's potential. This classification is arranged based on the focus of meaning ( *thematic meaning* ) that emerged from commentators' interpretations, namely, (1) the unique identity of humans as the basis for recognizing individual character and potential, and (2) mujahadah an-nafs as a mechanism for forming internal control. This grouping is based on the principle of *maudhu'i* interpretation, which collects verses with the same theme to find conceptual relationships between verses. Thus, this categorization is not merely a grouping of verses but is the result of a synthesis of the main themes that emerged from the interpretation analysis.

This classification demonstrates a complementary relationship. The verses about unique human identity provide the basis that each child has a distinct character, tendencies, and potential, thus requiring an educational approach tailored to their individual characteristics. Meanwhile, the verses concerning *mujahadah an-nafs* (*self-control*) demonstrate that this potential will not develop optimally without the ability to control desires, manage emotions, and develop spiritual awareness.

The research findings also show that the relationship between the two groups of verses is integrative. The unique human identity serves as the foundation for recognizing each child's potential, while *mujahadah an-nafs* serves as a mechanism that directs this potential to its optimal development through character formation and self-control.

The first group consists of verses that indicate that every human being has an individual identity and characteristics. In this study, the concept of unique human identity is understood not only as physical differences but also as character, behavioral

tendencies, potential, and abilities that distinguish each individual. This is reflected in the QS. Al-Isrā' [17]: 84 explains that every human being acts according to his *syākilah* , namely character, tendencies, and self-conditions that influence behavior and how a person responds to his environment. Thus, this verse suggests that every child has different characteristics and potential, thus requiring a standardized educational approach.

This finding is reinforced by the QS. Al-Infithār [82]: 7–8 explains that Allah created humans in the desired form and structure. The interpretation of this verse not only shows the uniqueness of the biological or physical aspects of humans but also implies the diversity of potential, character, and psychological tendencies inherent in each individual as part of the wisdom of Allah's creation. This uniqueness is based on the fact that each child has a different developmental capacity, so the educational process must be directed at recognizing, fostering, and developing potential according to their individual characteristics.

Another finding regarding human identity is observed in QS. Yasin [36]: 65 explains that on the Day of Judgment, Allah will seal the mouths of humans, while the hands and feet will bear witness to all the deeds that have been done. This verse shows that every human behavior leaves traces that cannot be hidden and becomes part of the moral identity that will be accounted for before Allah. Thus, from the perspective of the Quran, human identity is reflected not only in the character and potential that is possessed but also from the record of behavior formed through choices and actions throughout life.

These findings are closely related to the concept of *mujahadah an-nafs* (*self-control*) . The awareness that every action will be accounted for encourages individuals to constantly control their desires, maintain good behavior, and practice good deeds. In the context of developing children's potential, family education is not enough to simply introduce the child's potential and individual characteristics; it also needs to instill an awareness of moral responsibility so that children can develop their potential responsibly.

The second group contains verses explaining the development of internal control through *self-control* . This concept is reflected in three main dimensions: emotional control, the struggle against desires, and purification of the soul. These three dimensions



complement each other as stages of character formation that support a child's potential development.

The first dimension is reflected in the QS. Āli 'Imrān [3]: 134, which describes the character of a pious individual who can control his anger and forgive others' mistakes. This verse shows that the ability to control emotions is the foundation of self-control that influences the development of a child's character and personality maturity.

The second dimension is found in the QS. Al-'Ankabūt [29]: 69 explains that Allah provides guidance to those who strive earnestly in His path. In the context of this research, this earnestness is understood as a form of *mujadah an-nafs*, namely, a continuous effort to control negative impulses, improve oneself, and direct behavior in accordance with the values of the Qur'an. This process becomes an internal mechanism that allows children's potential to develop optimally through the habituation of positive behavior.

The third dimension is shown in the QS. Asy-Syams [91]: 9–10 emphasizes that human success depends on one's ability to purify the soul ( *tazkiyat an-nafs* ), whereas failure begins with allowing the soul to be controlled by negative impulses. This finding demonstrates that the development of a child's potential depends not only on intellectual abilities or talents but also on the self-control quality built through the purification of the soul. Thus, these three verses form a unified concept of *mujadah an-nafs* as an internal control that supports the optimal development of children's potential in family education.

An analysis of the entire verse reveals a complementary conceptual relationship. The verses discussing unique human identity emphasize that each individual possesses distinct character, tendencies, and potential as part of God's decree. Meanwhile, the verses concerning *mujadah an-nafs* ( *self-control* ) demonstrate that this potential requires a process of development through emotional control, struggle against lust, and soul purification for optimal development. The interconnectedness of these two groups of verses demonstrates that developing a child's potential, from a Qur'anic perspective, relies not only on recognizing individual characteristics but also on establishing internal controls that support positive character and behavior development within the family environment.

## Discussion

Terminologically, human identification refers to the process of recognizing or determining a person's identity based on characteristics that distinguish them from other individuals. In the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), identification is the process of establishing a person's or something's identity (Pembinaan, 1988). Thus, identification is a process, while identity is the recognition process's characteristic.

From a developmental psychology perspective, self-identity is not only related to administrative aspects but also encompasses an individual's awareness of their character, value system, and social roles (Saryuti & Nur, 2025). Desi (2021) explained that identity is a dynamic organization of an individual's psychophysical aspects that shape how a person adapts to their environment. This demonstrates that human identity is multidimensional because it is shaped by the interaction between biological, psychological, and social aspects. This definition demonstrates that human identification can be conducted through physical (physiological), psychological (personality), and social (roles and interactions) aspects.

This view aligns with developments in forensic science and biometric technology, which utilize biological characteristics such as fingerprints, DNA, and dental structure as a means of individual identification (Novamizanti et al., 2022). This uniqueness principle is the basis of modern biometric systems in various security and population administration systems.

The development of modern biometrics, particularly behavioral biometrics, has transformed the understanding of human identity in the digital realm. Behavioral biometrics encompasses user interaction patterns with devices, such as typing, movement patterns, or navigation habits, which represent an individual's personal characteristics in a unique and difficult-to-fake way (Miftahul Jannah et al., 2024). This technology goes beyond recognizing physical characteristics to continuously and dynamically map human behavior (Faisal Tamimi & Siti Munawaroh, 2024).

In the context of developing children's potential, the analogy of behavioral biometrics illustrates that a person's identity is not uniform and static but rather a personal track record that continues to develop based on internal characteristics and the environment. Just as a biometric system identifies each individual's behavioral patterns differently, each child possesses a unique psychological, emotional, and moral structure

(Sukatin, 2021) . This aligns with developmental psychology studies that emphasize that a child's identity is the result of the interaction between innate (nature) and environmental (nurture) factors and cannot be generalized by a single educational model (Nelly & Mamun Hanif, 2024) .

Magfiroh et al. (2025) showed that a personalized child development model is more effective in optimizing talent than a uniform or generic approach (Siti Magfiroh & Hilman, 2025) . Parents seeking to optimally develop their children's potential must be able to recognize their child's basic character, including behavioral tendencies, learning styles, and emotional responses, just as a biometric system "recognizes" a user's unique patterns. When parents implement a uniform teaching model, children who fall outside that pattern are at greater risk of experiencing frustration, low self-esteem, or even negative behavioral changes (Pandia et al., 2022) .

The Qur'an places identity as part of the unique physical, psychological, and moral-spiritual structure of human creation ( *insān* ). *The Qur'anic orientation toward humans* integrates biological creation with God's will, which shapes patterns of behavior, values, and responsibilities. This multidimensional understanding differs from exclusively biological or sociological views because the Qur'an views identity as an integration of physical form, inner tendencies ( *syākilah* ), and moral responsibility as accountable beings.

In the physical (physiological) aspect, the Qur'an emphasizes that humans were created in a balanced form and different from one another, as explained in the Qur'an. Al-Infithār [82]: 7-8

﴿الَّذِي خَلَقَكَ فَسَوَّبَكَ فَعَدَلَكَ ۖ فِي أَيِّ صُورَةٍ مَّا شَاءَ رَكَّبَكَ﴾

Who created you and then perfected your existence and balanced your (body composition)? In whatever form He desired, He arranged your body.

This verse emphasizes that humans were created, perfected, and arranged in the willed form. According to M. Quraish Shihab in Tafsir Al-Mishbah, the word *rakkabaka* indicates a complex and harmonious arrangement, such that each individual has a different physical composition according to Allah's will (Shihab, 2002) . In Tafsir Al-Munir, Wahbah az-Zuhaili also explains that the variation in human form is evidence of Allah's power and shows differentiation between individuals (az-Zuhaili, 2013b) .

Classical commentators, such as Al-Qurtubi, explain that Allah created humans in a form that is not identical to one another, whether in terms of appearance, nature, or inherent characteristics. This interpretation shows that human diversity is part of the *sunnatullah*, which contains wisdom, so that each individual has a uniqueness that distinguishes them from other individuals. This uniqueness is reflected not only in physical aspects but also in each person's character tendencies, abilities, and potential. In the context of children's education, understanding this diversity is an important foundation for parents to recognize their children's individual characteristics and develop their potential through appropriate parenting patterns (al-Qurtubi, nd-b) .

In a modern context, biological uniqueness can be understood as a marker of individual identity that distinguishes each individual from other individuals. Although biological aspects, such as fingerprints, DNA, or body structure, do not directly determine a person's interests, talents, or abilities, these characteristics indicate that each individual is unique and cannot be compared. From a developmental psychology perspective, personal identity is formed through the interaction between biological factors ( *nature* ) and the environment ( *nurture* ). Thus, a child's character, interests, and potential develop according to the experiences and educational processes they receive ( Child and adolescent psychology in the context of education, 2025 ) . Therefore, biological uniqueness is the starting point for understanding that each child has an individual identity that needs to be respected through an educational pattern that enables them to recognize and develop potential according to their characteristics. This physical uniqueness is in line with the concept of personal identity, which is the basis for developing potential. Children with certain physical conditions may have tendencies toward certain interests or abilities that need to be recognized and directed.

Psychologically, human identity is understood not only as an outward characteristic but also encompasses personality, behavioral tendencies, ways of thinking, and the ability to respond to various life situations. From a developmental psychology perspective, each individual has a distinct personality structure resulting from the interaction between innate factors and life experiences. These differences result in each person having a diverse character, interests, and potential that develop differently, thus preventing a uniform approach.

In line with this view, the Qur'an describes humans as creatures created with a balance between physical and spiritual aspects, such that human behavior is influenced not only by physical conditions but also by the inner condition and character inherent in the individual. This concept is reflected in QS. Al-Isrā' [17]: 84 explains that every human being acts according to his *syākilah* or characteristics. In QS. Al-Isrā' [17]: 84 it is stated:

﴿قُلْ كُلٌّ يَعْمَلُ عَلَىٰ شَاكِلَتِهِ ۖ فَرَبُّكُمْ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ هُوَ أَهْدَىٰ سَبِيلًا ۚ﴾

Say (Prophet Muhammad), "Everyone acts according to his own inclination." So your Lord knows best who is most right in the way."

This verse emphasizes that every human being acts based on *syākilah*, which indicates the structure of personality, character, nature, habits, and a system of tendencies that influence a person's behavior. According to M. Quraish Shihab, this term refers to a combination of character, experience, and innate potential that shape an individual's action patterns (Shihab, 2002). Thus, this verse becomes the theological basis that children's differences in talents and interests are part of the *sunnatullah* in human creation.

Interpretation of QS. Al-Isrā' [17]: 84 shows that every individual has *syākilah*, namely, character, tendencies, and personality patterns that determine how they think and behave. This concept emphasizes that differences in character are not a weakness but rather a part of Allah's decree, which is the basis of human diversity that influences it. Therefore, these differences must be understood as potential that must be recognized and developed according to the characteristics of each individual, not standardized through the same development pattern.

The implications of this concept for developing children's potential indicate that family education must be oriented toward recognizing the child's basic character before determining appropriate development strategies. As primary educators, parents play a crucial role in observing the child's tendencies, interests, and abilities so that the educational process can be tailored to each individual's developmental needs. This approach also aligns with the goal of *mujahadah an-nafs (self-control)*, which is to establish internal control that can guide a child's potential to develop optimally without neglecting the unique character that God has bestowed upon each individual. Therefore, developing a child's potential from a Qur'anic perspective is not only oriented toward

achieving results but also toward a development process that values unique identity and ongoing character development.

In Islam, the inner dimension ( *qalb* ) plays a central role in shaping behavior. When the heart is pure and trained through self-control, the behavior tends to be positive. Conversely, if desires dominate the heart, behavior tends to be deviant. This demonstrates that repeated habits ultimately shape a person's moral identity (Kamaluddin, 2022) . Thus, the uniqueness of human behavior is not only psychological but also spiritual.

The Qur'an emphasizes that every human behavior will become part of a track record that cannot be denied. Allah says in the QS. Yasin [36]:65

﴿الْيَوْمَ نَخْتِمُ عَلَىٰ أَفْوَاهِهِمْ وَتُكَلِّمُنَا أَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَكْسِبُونَ ۖ﴾

This day, we have silenced their mouths. It is their hands that speak to Us, and their feet will testify to what they used to do.

Al-Qurṭubī explains that QS. Yāsīn [36]: 65 shows that Allah's justice is absolute, so that humans cannot hide their deeds because their body parts will be witnesses to every action they take (al-Qurtubi, nd-a) . This interpretation is in line with M. Quraish Shihab's (2002) emphasis that the hands, feet, and other body parts are objective witnesses to all human behavior as a manifestation of the perfection of the Divine accountability system (Shihab, 2002) . Meanwhile, Ibn Kathir emphasized the relationship between the testimony of body parts and the habits and actions that humans continuously perform throughout their lives (al-khalidi, 2017a) .

Despite their differing emphases, the three commentators agree that all human actions will be recorded and fairly accounted for before God. The difference lies in the interpretation focus. Al-Qurṭubī emphasizes the aspect of God's justice, M. Quraish Shihab emphasizes the objectivity of the testimony of bodily parts as a form of Divine justice, and Ibn Kathir links it to the habitual behavior that shapes human character. The synthesis of these three views shows that human identity is not only understood as physical identity or innate character from the perspective of the Qur'an but also includes a moral identity built through the accumulation of one's behavior and life choices.

This verse implicitly affirms that human behavior is personal and uniquely recorded. No two individuals have identical records of good deeds, just as no two

fingerprints are alike. Every habit, inner inclination, and repeated action forms a moral identity for which one is held accountable. Therefore, developing habits from an early age through parental guidance and practicing mujahadah an-nafs (self-control) is crucial to ensuring that a child's behavioral record is formed within the framework of sound values.

Thus, QS. Yasin [36]: 65 not only describes the eschatological event in the form of the testimony of body parts on the Day of Judgment but also contains an educational principle that emphasizes the importance of forming habits from an early age. The testimony of body parts shows that every action taken by humans will become part of their inherent moral identity and will be accounted for before God. In this perspective, the unique identity of humans is formed not only by the character and potential possessed from birth but also by the accumulation of habitual behavior in everyday life.

These findings are closely related to the concept of *mujahadah an-nafs* as a self-control process through the habituation of positive behavior and control of lust. For children, the ability to control emotions, choose good behavior, and build habits in accordance with the values of the Qur'an is part of the process of forming internal control that will influence the development of their character and potential. Therefore, the family has a strategic role as the first educational environment in instilling good habits, guiding children to perform *mujahadah an-nafs*, and developing their potential according to their unique identities. Thus, QS. Yaseen [36]: 65 provides a conceptual basis that the development of children's potential from the perspective of the Qur'an must be built through an integration of the recognition of individual identity, the formation of self-control, and the habituation of character that takes place continuously.

### **1. Mujahadah An-Nafs As Internal Control**

Etymologically, mujahadah comes from the word *canada*, meaning earnestness or struggle, while *nafs* refers to the human self or soul, which has both good and bad tendencies. In the terminology of Sufism and Islamic education, mujahadah an-nafs is defined as a sincere effort to combat deviant desires and direct the soul toward goodness and obedience to Allah (Azizah & Subaidi, 2022).

This concept plays a crucial role in shaping human character within the treasury of Islamic thought. Al-Ghazali explained that humanity's greatest struggle lies not in fighting external enemies but rather in controlling the impulses of desire that can lead to deviant behavior (Astuti et al., 2025). This concept demonstrates that true control

originates from within ( *internal control* ) and not solely from external oversight systems. Therefore, self-control is the primary foundation for developing a personality that balances spiritual, moral, and social dimensions.

In the context of children's education, *mujahadah an-nafs* can be understood as the process of developing self-control from within. Children who are accustomed to restraining excessive desires, managing their emotions, and directing themselves toward positive activities will have better self-regulation skills. This is crucial because without strong internal control, children's potential is often hampered by various distractions, such as excessive use of gadgets, lack of discipline in learning, and weak mental resilience in facing challenges (Harahap et al., 2024) .

The concept of *mujahadah an-nafs* has a strong foundation in the Qur'an. One verse that emphasizes the importance of this spiritual struggle is the word of Allah SWT in QS. Al-'Ankabūt [29]:69

﴿وَالَّذِينَ جَاهَدُوا فِينَا لَنَهْدِيَنَّهُمْ سُبُلَنَا وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ لَمَعَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ۝﴾

Those who earnestly strive to (seek Our approval) We will truly show them our ways. Indeed, Allah is truly with those who do good.

This verse demonstrates that sincere efforts to control oneself and improve one's spiritual qualities will receive guidance from God. According to M. Quraish Shihab, the word *jāhadū fīnā* in the verse refers not only to physical struggle but also to the internal struggle to subdue lusts and improve the quality of faith and good deeds (Shihab, 2002) . Thus, *mujahadah an-nafs* is a path to Divine guidance and a continuous process of character formation.

The Qur'an also explains the main goal of *mujahadah an-nafs* , namely, the purification of the human soul. This is emphasized in the QS. Asy-Syams [91]: 9–10

﴿قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا وَقَدْ خَابَ مَنْ دَسَّاهَا ۝﴾

It is truly fortunate for the person who purifies it (the soul) and truly a loss for the person who pollutes it.

This verse shows that human success in life is determined not only by material achievements but also by the soul's ability to cleanse itself of negative traits such as arrogance, laziness, and the tendency to follow lust. In his interpretation, Ibn Kathir explains that the good fortune referred to in this verse is a person's success in guiding his



soul toward obedience to Allah, while loss occurs when evil impulses control their souls (al-khalidi, 2017b) .

The Qur'an also provides concrete examples of self-control in social life, which is reflected in the Qur'an's Qur'an. Āli 'Imrān [3]: 134

﴿الَّذِينَ يُنْفِقُونَ فِي السَّرَّاءِ وَالضَّرَّاءِ وَالْكُظُمِينَ وَالْعَفَيفِينَ عَنِ النَّاسِ وَاللَّهُ يُحِبُّ الْمُحْسِنِينَ﴾

(namely, people who always give infaq, both in free and narrow times, people who control their anger, and people who forgive (mistakes) other people. Allah loves those who do good.

This verse shows that one form of mujahadah an-nafs is the ability to control one's emotions, not just the ability to control oneself passively, but a manifestation of moral and spiritual maturity.

The Qur'an describes *mujahadah An-nafs* as a gradual process of developing self-control. As explained in QS, the first stage begins with a person's sincerity in fighting against the urges of lust and various negative tendencies within themselves. Al-'Ankabūt [29]: 69. This verse shows that self-control does not happen instantly but requires sincerity, consistency, and spiritual commitment so that a person can obtain guidance from Allah in living his life.

This struggle then leads to the process of purifying the soul ( *tazkiyat an-nafs* ), as emphasized in QS. Asy-Syams [91]: 9–10. This verse emphasizes that one's ability to cleanse the soul of various despicable traits and build a character that is in accordance with the values of piety determines human success. Thus, *mujahadah an-nafs* is not only interpreted to restrain lust but also as a process of developing sustainable personality qualities.

The results of this process are reflected in real behavior, as explained in the QS. Āli 'Imrān [3]: 134, namely, the ability to control anger, forgive others' mistakes, and continue to do good. Wahbah az-Zuhaili explains that the ability to control anger is an indicator of a person's spiritual strength because a person can subdue spontaneous emotional impulses (az-Zuhaili, 2013a) .

In the context of this research, these three verses form a unified concept of *mujahadah an-nafs* , which is a process that begins with the struggle against negative impulses, continues with the soul's purification, and is then manifested in self-control.

This process is the foundation for character formation and supports the development of children's potential within a family environment based on the Quran's values.

From an Islamic spiritual perspective, modern technological systems recognize the concept of external surveillance, such as biometric recording, which records a person's identity and activities. However, there is a more fundamental control mechanism: internal control through *mujahadah an-nafs* (self-control). This control operates through moral awareness and the belief that every human action is under God's supervision.

In the context of family education, the role of parents is not limited to providing external supervision for children but also to fostering an internal awareness that encourages children to control themselves. Education that relies solely on external supervision will result in temporary compliance because children tend to behave well only when supervised. Conversely, once internal control is established, children will maintain their behavior even when they are not under direct parental supervision (Ma'guling, 2022).

Therefore, cultivating the habit of *mujahadah an-nafs* from an early age is an important part of developing a child's potential. From an educational psychology perspective, self-control is an indicator of successful self-regulation, i.e., the ability of an individual to direct their thoughts, emotions, and behavior to achieve certain goals. This ability plays a role in forming discipline, increasing learning focus, delaying immediate gratification (delaying *gratification*), and reducing impulsive behavior that can hinder a child's potential development. Thus, *mujahadah an-nafs* can be understood as a Qur'anic concept that is relevant to the formation of internal control through habituation and continuous practice.

In the digital era, internal control has become increasingly important as children are confronted with various distractions, such as excessive use of gadgets, social media, and various forms of digital entertainment that can potentially reduce concentration and discipline. Children who practice *self-control* will be better able to control momentary impulses, manage their emotions, and direct their energy and talents toward productive activities. Conversely, weak self-control can lead to suboptimal intellectual, emotional, and spiritual development due to impulsive behavior and poor self-regulation skills.

The concept of *mujadah an-nafs* in the Qur'an has a sexual dimension and provides a conceptual foundation for family education in shaping children's character. Parents are not enough to simply recognize their children's unique talents and character. They also need to accustom themselves to the values of discipline, responsibility, patience, and emotional control through role models and habits in everyday life. Thus, the integration between recognizing children's unique identities and developing internal control through *mujadah an-nafs* becomes a family education strategy that allows children's intellectual, emotional, and spiritual potential to develop in a balanced manner in accordance with the values of the Qur'an.

## **2. Integration of External Supervision and Internal Control in Developing in the Potential of Children from the Perspective of the Qur'an**

From an Islamic educational perspective, the development of children's potential cannot be separated from two important mechanisms: external control *and* internal control ( *self-control* ). These two mechanisms are not mutually exclusive, but rather complementary in character shaping and guiding children's potential for optimal development. In the family context, external control is carried out through guidance, organizing the learning environment, and monitoring the activities of the children.

External supervision in the family is reflected in the parents' responsibility for their children's education. This can be understood through QS. At-Taḥrīm [66]: 6 is carried out by the parents. Meanwhile, internal control relates to the child's ability to independently regulate his or her behavior based on the moral and spiritual awareness embedded within him or her. (Savitry et al., 2023) .

The principle of supervision in the Quran commands believers to protect themselves and their families from the fires of hell. This verse demonstrates the strategic role of the family as the primary educational environment, shaping a child's values, behavior, and character. Therefore, parents serve not only as biological caregivers but also as primary educators responsible for instilling moral and spiritual values in children from an early age (Pryastanti, 2023) .

The concept of external surveillance can also be understood in the context of modern societal development through the analogy of human identification technologies such as biometric systems. These systems work by recognizing the unique characteristics of each individual, such as fingerprints, retinal patterns, or facial structure, so that no two

individuals have identical biological identities. This analogy demonstrates that each individual possesses a unique identity that cannot be standardized. In the context of children's education, this emphasizes that parents cannot impose the same educational pattern on all children but must instead recognize each child's potential and basic character so that their talents develop in accordance with their personality structure (Marlis, 2021).

While external supervision plays a crucial role in a child's education, it is not sufficient to guarantee consistent behavior. Children who rely solely on external supervision tend to behave well when under parental control, but this behavior can change when such supervision is absent. Therefore, family education must foster strong internal control in children through the formation of moral awareness, self-discipline, and deeply ingrained spiritual values. From an Islamic perspective, this internal control is recognized through the concept of *mujahadah an-nafs*, a sincere effort to control the urges of the passions and direct oneself toward good behavior. (Zubairi, 2025) .

The integration of external supervision and internal control is a crucial principle in family education from a Quranic perspective. Parental supervision is not intended merely to temporarily control children's behavior but rather to foster a sense of responsibility within the child. This process demonstrates that external supervision serves more than simply to limit behavior but also to internalize moral values, enabling children to exercise self-control even when they are no longer under direct parental supervision.

This principle is consistent with QS. Yasin [36]: 65 describes that all parts of the human body will bear witness to every deed ever done on the Day of Judgment. This verse not only explains eschatological events but also provides an educational message that every human action has consequences and will be accounted for personally before God (Akbar, 2024) . This eschatological awareness is the basis for the formation of internal control because a person is motivated to maintain his behavior not solely because of supervision from others but because of the awareness that God always knows all his actions.

In the context of developing children's potential, this sense of responsibility must be instilled through a continuous educational process within the family environment. The parents act as external supervisors, providing role models, guidance, and fostering

positive behavioral habits from an early age. As children grow older and mature, these habits develop into independent self-control ( *mujadah an-nafs* ), enabling them to regulate their behavior, control their emotions, and direct their talents and potential toward positive activities even without direct supervision. Thus, the integration of external supervision and internal control forms a family education pattern that not only produces momentary obedience but also builds character, personal responsibility, and the continuous development of children's potential based on the values of the Quran. This spiritual awareness can be instilled through the cultivation of religious values in the context of children's education. When children understand that every action has moral and spiritual consequences, they will more easily develop self-discipline and personal responsibility for their behavior.

The integration of external supervision and internal control demonstrates that developing a child's potential cannot be achieved solely through parental supervision from a Quranic perspective. External supervision serves as a guiding process that shapes the learning environment, provides role models, and directs children toward behavior consistent with Islamic values (Sopia Aprilia Ningsih et al., 2025) . This process then needs to be internalized through *mujadah an-nafs (self-control)* , fostering the ability to control oneself, make responsible decisions, and develop potential in accordance with one's character. The synergy of these two aspects results in a family education pattern that is not only oriented toward intellectual achievement but also fosters emotional, spiritual, and moral maturity. With this educational pattern, a child's potential can develop optimally because it is supported by parental guidance and personal awareness that serves as the foundation of character throughout life.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

This research shows that the Qur'an views every human being as having a unique identity, both in terms of character, behavior, and the structure of their creation. This concept is reflected in QS. Al-Isrā' [17]: 84 Al-Infithār [82]: 7-8 and QS. Yāsīn [36]: 65, which emphasizes that each individual has unique tendencies, forms, and behavioral records. In addition, the Qur'an emphasizes the importance of *mujadah an-nafs* as a form of internal control through QS. Āli 'Imrān [3]: 134, QS. Al-'Ankabūt [29]: 69, and QS.

Asy-Syams [91]: 9–10, which teach emotional control, struggle against lust, and soul purification.

Based on research findings, developing children's potential from a Quranic perspective cannot be achieved through a uniform educational system for all children; rather, it must be tailored to each individual's unique character and potential. In this context, the role of parents as external supervisors is crucial, helping to identify children's potential while simultaneously fostering internal control through character education and spiritual practices. Therefore, the integration of external supervision and internal control is crucial for optimally developing the potential of children.

The implications of this research suggest that family and educational institutions need to develop a more personalized learning approach based on the individual character of the child. Furthermore, Islamic education should emphasize the development of self-control and spiritual strengthening as part of developing children's potential in the digital age.

This research is still limited to the study of the thematic interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an. Therefore, further research can be developed through empirical approaches, Islamic educational psychology, and field studies related to the implementation of the concept of unique human identity and *mujahadah an-nafs* in family education and educational institutions. This study shows that the results of the analysis of the thematic interpretation of the verses of the Qur'an reveal two main concepts that are interrelated in the development of children's potential: unique human identity and *mujahadah an-nafs*. A unique human identity shows that each individual has different characteristics, potentials, and tendencies; therefore, an educational approach that respects these differences is required. Meanwhile, *mujahadah an-nafs* functions as an internal control that forms the ability to control emotions, regulate behavior, and develop personal responsibility as a foundation for character formation.

The research also shows that developing children's potential cannot be achieved solely through external parental supervision but requires integration with the establishment of *self-control*. This integration results in an educational pattern that is not only oriented toward developing intellectual abilities but also strengthens the emotional, moral, and spiritual aspects of children in accordance with the values of the Quran.

The implications of this research emphasize the importance of implementing a family education pattern oriented toward recognizing each child's unique identity, accompanied by the habituation of self-control values from an early age so that their potential develops optimally. From an academic perspective, this research contributes to the development of *maudhu'i* exegesis studies by integrating the concepts of unique human identity and *mujadah an-nafs* as a conceptual framework for understanding the development of children's potential based on the Qur'an perspective. This research is expected to serve as a reference for the development of thematic exegesis studies as well as further research examining family education and children's character formation in the modern society's context.

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