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Reconstruction of Educator Responsibilities in Contemporary Education: Abd Al-Karim Bakkar's Perspective in the Digital Era

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*This study examines the responsibilities of educators in contemporary education from the perspective of Abd Al-Karim Bakkar amidst the digital era. This research seeks to answer two main questions: 1) What are the core responsibilities of educators according to Abd Al-Karim Bakkar's framework? and 2) How relevant are these responsibilities in addressing the challenges of the digital era? The method employed is a qualitative literature review (Library Research), utilizing content analysis to systematically identify and categorize themes within the text, combined with context analysis to understand the historical and intellectual environment of Bakkar's views on education. Primary data are sourced from Bakkar's book *Haul Al-Tarbiyyah Wa Al-Ta'lim*, and secondary data are gathered from related journal articles, books, and other resources. The findings reveal that Abd Al-Karim Bakkar outlines seven responsibilities of educators, which include: (1) developing moral orientation; (2) educators as intergenerational connectors; (3) liberating the mind from its shackles; (4) facilitating students' goal-setting; (5) cultivating exploratory motivation and curiosity among students; (6) aligning teaching with students' cognitive development; and (7) curriculum and subject refinement. Additionally, the relevance of these responsibilities in the digital era encompasses the evolution of moral values, the educator's role in addressing the digital divide, fostering critical thinking, preparing youth for the workforce, and integrating digital skills into the curriculum to address future technological challenges. This study provides an overview of how educators' responsibilities must be reconstructed to align with the advancements of an era increasingly influenced by digital technology.*

Keywords: Educator Responsibility; Abd Al-Karim Bakkar; Digital Era; Contemporary Education

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INTRODUCTION

Educators are significant figures in the world of education. Therefore, they are required to be professional educators, possessing reliable expertise. Schleicher (Schleicher 2018) believes that educators must have a deep understanding of the subject matter and the students' learning process, as their knowledge and concern significantly impact student learning. They must be enthusiastic, compassionate, and wise, encouraging student engagement, tolerance, and social cohesion. Educators must also collaborate with other schools and parents, set common goals, and monitor progress. Ultimately, educators, as academics, can contribute to the world of education, as their expertise has the potential to benefit the research community by contributing important information about what they have learned while teaching (Wladis et al. 2017).

Government intervention and seriousness are needed to cultivate professional educators, as they are the main pillars that create a brilliant generation in the nation. For instance, in Finland, the government fully funds the preparation of prospective educators, and candidates receive living allowances or salaries while undergoing training. This ensures uniform, high-quality training. Teaching is the most desired profession among young Finns, with fierce competition for places (Darling-Hammond 2017). Additionally, teaching is highly respected, and Finnish educators are trained in research, actively encourage play, and uphold standards of personal conduct (Sahlberg 2021). In conclusion, if the government provides educators with adequate attention by creating regulations and benchmarks, it will lead to quality education.

Discussing professional and responsible educators, a Syrian intellectual figure named Abd al-Karim Bakkar (born 1951) has profound ideas in his book *"Haul Al-Tarbiyyah wa Al-Ta'lim."* His thoughts

on education are contained in the 364-page book published by Dār al-Qalam for the third time in Damascus in 2011. He is one of the leading writers who has produced many works in the fields of Islamic civilization, Renaissance issues, thought, education, and advocacy.

Several studies have explored different facets of Abd al-Karim Bakkar's educational philosophy, highlighting its broad relevance and application: Muhammad Abdul Rozak (H.S 2018) found that Bakkar's concept of educator personality competency in the book Bina' al-Ajyaal encompasses 18 competencies, 11 of which align with the educator competency standards set forth in Indonesian Law Number 14 of 2005. Furthermore, research by Siti Khaulah (Mohd Hamzah et al. 2023) demonstrated that the al-Ḥiwār (dialogue) approach advocated by Bakkar in al-Tarbiyyah al-Rashīdah is effective in strengthening family relationships, requiring key elements like a chairperson, a calm atmosphere, psychological readiness, and freedom of expression. In addition, Rahendra Maya et al. (Maya et al. 2024) concluded that Bakkar's concept of lifelong learning is highly relevant for application in higher education in the digital era, recommending its implementation through three main strategies: fostering high motivation in teaching and learning, strengthening digital literacy, and employing pedagogical, heutagogical, and cybergogical learning models.

However, a review of these studies reveals no research that specifically discusses the reconstruction of educator responsibilities in contemporary education from Abdul Karim Bakkar's perspective in the digital era. This indicates a research gap that must be addressed to examine the relevance and applicability of Bakkar's concept of educator responsibility in addressing contemporary educational challenges.

Based on the explanation above, the researcher aims to investigate Abd al-Karim Bakkar's thoughts on the responsibilities of educators in contemporary education within the digital era.

Literature Review

Moral and Spiritual Responsibilities of Educators

An educator's primary responsibility is to develop individuals' intellectual and moral capacities, shape them into intelligent and ethical persons, and instill social sensitivity and solidarity. This responsibility encompasses the existential accountability of an educator as a moral being towards oneself and the cherished values of humanity (Yuwono 2013). To fulfill this role, educators must master holistic pedagogical, personal, social, and professional competencies based on National Education Standards. In the era of disruption, educators must enhance their essential competencies to meet the challenges of digital transformation (Rugaiyah et al. 2022).

Scholars and scientists agree that educators must possess high religious integrity, in-depth competence in their field, and serve as role models. Educators must treat students with respect, understand their individual needs, and maintain professionalism. Gentleness, patience, and compassion are essential in guiding students, with criticism delivered implicitly and wisely. The delivery of material should be tailored to students' intellectual capacity, and fairness should be the main principle in treating all students. Effective communication, dedication, patience, high ethics, and a cooperative nature are also expected of educators. Educators are prohibited from exploiting students for personal gain, belittling other fields of knowledge, or neglecting teaching duties. Instead, educators must maintain

objectivity, think carefully before answering questions, and ensure that the teaching and learning process proceeds with integrity and complete focus (Mursi 1987). Thus, educators become central figures who support students' holistic moral, intellectual, and social development.

Teachers as Agents of Change

Teachers act as agents of change who transfer knowledge and shape students' character to become responsible individuals ready to face the challenges of the Industry 5.0 era (Herwani 2022). The role of educators is irreplaceable by technology, as humanistic dimensions such as attitude and exemplary conduct can only be realized through direct interaction (Izzan and Saehudin 2015). Teachers also serve as executors, maintaining harmony and order in learning and representing authority (Mursi 2009:228). Educators are also moral role models whose behavior influences students with ideal characteristics such as friendliness, patience, and dedication (Khair al-Din 1925). In a social context, educators act as catalysts for social transformation by spreading constructive values and becoming role models for commendable behavior (Yasin et al. 2024).

The Role of Educators in the Digital Age

In the digital age, educators serve as learning facilitators who help students access and evaluate information, utilize technology for independent learning, and develop digital literacy. Educators promote collaborative learning through digital tools, monitor student progress in real-time, and foster the development of critical thinking skills. Critical thinking skills are crucial for the 21st-century generation, and teachers act as facilitators in their development, utilizing multimedia tools such as online forums and Google Docs. Evolving

technology requires teachers to master new skills, such as digital training, to effectively teach critical thinking skills (Geng 2021).

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is constructed to provide a strong theoretical foundation for analyzing data regarding the responsibilities of educators in the digital era, according to Abd Al-Karim Bakkar. Given the nature of this research, which uses a literature review, the conceptual framework serves as a lens through which data from the book "*Haul Al-Tarbiyyah Wa Al-Ta'lim*" and other relevant secondary sources are interpreted.

Firstly, social constructivism theory is selected due to its relevance to Bakkar's emphasis on the educator's role as a facilitator. This theory helps to understand how interactions and collaborations in the digital environment can shape students' learning processes. Next, humanism theory becomes essential due to Bakkar's focus on developing individual morals and character. This theory enables the analysis of how human values are maintained amidst technological advancements.

Cognitive development theory is also included to analyze how teaching can be tailored to students' developmental levels, particularly by utilizing digital technology. Lastly, the concept of character education in Islam complements this framework, given Bakkar's background as a Muslim scholar. This concept helps to integrate Islamic moral and ethical values into digital education.

This conceptual framework will be applied in thematic analysis, contextual interpretation, and the synthesis of findings, ensuring that this research produces an in-depth and structured understanding of educators' responsibilities in the digital era.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research is designed to explore Abd al-Karim Bakkar's thoughts on the responsibilities of educators, particularly within the context of the rapidly evolving digital age. To achieve this goal, the research employs a comprehensive approach, combining contextual analysis and content analysis to dissect and gain a deep understanding of the ideas expressed in his work, "*Haul Al-Tarbiyyah wa Al-Ta'lim*". This approach is chosen for its relevance in revealing the layers of meaning contained within the text and in understanding the social context that underlies the thinker's ideas.

The type of research employed is qualitative, utilizing a literature review method. This method enables researchers to conduct an in-depth study of the book by Abd al-Karim Bakkar and other relevant literature. This literature review serves as the primary foundation for collecting the data and information necessary to answer the research questions.

Content analysis, as one of the main methods in this research, plays a crucial role in deciphering the meaning of the text. As Klaus Krippendorff explains, content analysis is a research method used to draw valid and reliable conclusions from texts (or other meaningful objects) within the context of their use. This method allows researchers to delve deeper into the meaning of various texts or materials, thereby understanding how information is communicated and understood in a particular context (Krippendorff 2004). Robert Philip Weber also emphasizes that content analysis uses a series of procedures to conclude texts and to identify specific patterns or themes that enable researchers to make systematic data-based interpretations (Weber 1990). Additionally, Vrendenbreght notes that communication content analysis comprises three primary elements: the message sender, the message

conveyed, and the effects resulting from the message. Communication content is considered very important, and communication methods can include verbal and nonverbal forms, including oral, written, works of art, literature, architecture, and mass media (Ratna 2010).

In this research, data is collected and classified into two categories: primary data and secondary data. Primary data are derived directly from Abd al-Karim Bakkar's writings, specifically "Haul Al-Tarbiyyah wa Al-Ta'lim," which serves as the primary source of research. Meanwhile, secondary data is obtained from various other textual sources, such as articles, books, journals, and research papers relevant to the topic, accessed via the Internet.

The data analysis technique used in this research involves several steps. First, researchers determine the type of data to be analyzed. Second, researchers apply appropriate methods and methodologies to conduct a thorough analysis of the data from the reference sources. The sociological approach is employed to examine the educational background and career trajectory in education, as well as the context that shapes Abd al-Karim Bakkar's thinking and influences his views. The content analysis approach is used as a research strategy to explore the meaning of the text through various techniques. The text is analyzed using data from other book sources and then interpreted according to the research context. Conclusions in this research are drawn through the process of induction and deduction. The induction method begins with specific problems and then draws conclusions that are more general. Conversely, the deduction method moves from general concepts to a more exact analysis.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Biography of Abd Al-Karim Bakkar

Abdul Karim Bakkar (born in Homs, Syria, 1951) is a prominent Syrian author and intellectual figure in Islamic education and thought, striving to present profound and innovative views on issues related to Islamic civilization, intellectual revival, education, and da'wah activities (Anon n.d.). He earned his bachelor's degree (1973), master's degree (1975), and doctoral degree (1979) in Arabic Language from Al-Azhar University, with his dissertation focusing on *Al-Aswat wa Al-Lahajat fi Qiraat Al-Kisai*. Bakkar has 26 years of academic experience, starting in 1976 at Imam Muhammad bin Saud University before moving to King Khalid University in 1989, where he obtained the title of professor in 1992 and specialized in linguistics, teaching courses like semantics, phonology, and Quranic readings, until his resignation in 2002 to concentrate on writing ('Abd al-Karīm Bakkār 2011:114). He is currently based in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, and actively conveys educational ideas through regular articles in magazines like *Al-Bayan* and *Islam Today*, and by hosting weekly and monthly programs on Islamic channels such as *Dalil* and *Al-Majd*, while also serving as a founding member of several media commissions and advisory boards ('Abd al-Karīm Bakkār 2011).

Abdul Karim Bakkar is a prolific author with 34 published works spanning diverse topics, with a particular focus on Islamic thought, education, methodology, and self-development. His notable titles include: *Fuṣūl fī at-Taḥkīm al-Mawḍū'ī* (Chapters on Objective Thinking) (1994), *Naḥwa Fahm A'maq li al-Wāqī' al-Islāmī* (Towards a Deeper Understanding of the Islamic Reality) (1995), and *Min Ajli Inṭilāqah Ḥaḍāriyyah Syāmilah* (For a Comprehensive Civilizational Launch) (1995). His works on education and youth cover *Min Ajli Syabāb Jadīd* (For a New

Youth) (1998), *Hawla at-Tarbiyah wa at-Ta'lim* (On Education and Teaching) (1999), and *Dalil at-Tarbiyah al-Usariyyah* (Guide to Family Education). He also addresses contemporary issues and intellectual renewal, exemplified by *al-'Awlamah* (Globalization) (1999), *Tajdid al-Wa'i* (Renewal of Awareness), *Tajdid al-Khiṭāb al-Islāmī* (Renewal of Islamic Discourse) (Parts One and Two), and *Tasykīl 'Aqliyyah Islāmiyyah Mu'āṣirah* (Forming a Contemporary Islamic Mentality). Other key themes involve personal growth and methodology, such as *al-Qirā'ah al-Muṣmirah* (Fruitful Reading) (2000), *Iktisyāf adz-Dzāt* (Discovering the Self), *Jaddid 'Aqlak* (Renew Your Mind), and *Hawla al-Manhaj* (On Methodology: Foundations and Concepts for Upright Thinking). The collection also includes specific guidance, such as *Ilā Abnā'i wa Banātī: 50 Syam'ah li Idā'ah Durūbikum* (To My Sons and Daughters: 50 Candles to Illuminate Your Paths), as well as studies on social action, including *Tsaqāfah al-'Amal al-Khayrī* (The Culture of Charitable Work).

An Overview of the Book *Ḥaul Al-Tarbiyyah Wa Al-Ta'lim*

In the introduction to the book *Ḥaul Al-Tarbiyyah Wa al-Ta'lim*, written by 'Abd al-Karīm Bakkār, the background of his intellectual anxiety regarding Islamic education is explained. In that introduction, he mentions that the challenges of education and teaching from a contemporary Islamic perspective underscore the need for solutions that encompass system reform, social relations, and behavior to address the crises plaguing the Muslim community. Education is seen not merely as a technical process but also as an effort to build unlimited mental, spiritual, and moral progress, unlike material progress that depends on limited resources. 'Abd al-Karīm Bakkār

emphasizes that although many plans and proposals have been put forward, educational problems continue to escalate, partly due to the long lag between efforts made and their results, which diminishes public interest, especially in an era of instant gratification. In this context, educational institutions require full support from all levels of society and adequate investment to effectively shape human quality. With a deepening understanding of human psychological nature and growing experience, there is an opportunity to formulate more rational and relevant educational approaches. 'Abd al-Karīm Bakkār also highlights the importance of simplifying educational concepts to make them accessible to the general public, arouse their interest, and encourage participation in supporting education as the foundation of comprehensive community progress ('Abd Al-Karīm Bakkār 2011).

The book *Ḥaul Al-Tarbiyyah Wa al-Ta'lim* has been published by Dār al-Qalam, Damascus, several times. This indicates that the book attracts readers to explore his work. This 398-page book comprises 28 chapters that explore the essence and importance of education. It begins with the nature of education, focusing on a philosophy of life based on the afterlife and the importance of family education as the primary foundation. Then, education objectives are discussed, including the development of faith, character, and scientific personality. Science is also discussed in depth, emphasizing its role in enhancing the quality of life and the economy, as well as the importance of lifelong learning. The role of educators is also strongly emphasized, with discussions on how educators guide and shape students' personalities. Furthermore, religious education and higher education are discussed, and these need to be continuously improved to enhance quality. Scientific research is also highlighted, with a focus on the importance of funding and

information support for scientific progress. Vocational and technical education are discussed to prepare skilled workers capable of facing challenges in the workforce. Ultimately, this book underscores the challenges of education, advocating for solutions through innovation and community engagement to enhance future educational development.

Abd Al-Karim Bakkar's Thoughts on the Responsibilities of Educators

According to Abd Al-Karim Bakkar, there are seven responsibilities of educators in the context of contemporary education, including:

Developing Moral Orientation

In Islamic discourse, both classical and contemporary Islamic thinkers frequently emphasize the importance of moral education. Figures such as Al-Farabi (1468-1544 CE), Ibn Sina (980-1037 CE), and Al-Ghazali (1057-1111 CE) are prime examples. Mattila even suggests that Miskawaih (932-1030 CE) significantly impacted subsequent generations of Muslim writers, primarily due to his eclecticism and ability to formulate classical virtue ethics within an Islamic context. His success in synthesizing classical ideas with Islamic thought substantially contributed to the development of Islamic philosophical and theological thought. Further research on Miskawaih's influence is expected to shed light on why he became a prominent figure among Muslim philosophers, despite his ideas not being entirely novel (Mattila, 2023). The terminology '*akhlak*,' which has historical roots in the Greek tradition, is a transliteration of the Greek word 'Ethic.' This term was later adopted into Latin as 'Moral.' Etymologically, both terms refer to the same concept: the norms of behavior prevalent in a society. This indicates a significant correspondence between the lexical meaning of '*akhlak*' in Arabic and the

concepts of ethics and morality in the Greco-Latin tradition (Al-Jābirī, 2001, p. 52). Abd Al-Karim Bakkar's thoughts on moral education may be influenced by Muslim intellectual legacies, such as those of Miskawaih and others.

In Abd Al-Karim Bakkar's view, the foremost responsibility that educators must fulfill is to develop a moral orientation for students during the first seven years of their lives. Educators must be able to complement the family's role in strengthening this moral education so that the foundation becomes more vigorous ('Abd Al-Karīm Bakkār 2011).

Educators are the most influential people in shaping the character and morals of students. Because the progress or decline of future generations depends on the morals formed by these educators (Aneja 2014). Lickona outlines 11 principles of character education that focus on (a) ethics-based personality development, (b) a holistic approach, (c) a planned and comprehensive approach, (d) a caring school community, (e) opportunities for moral action, (f) a meaningful curriculum; (g) intrinsic motivation; (h) shared responsibility of staff; (i) moral leadership; (j) parental/community involvement; and (k) comprehensive evaluation (Lickona 1996).

Furthermore, Abd Al-Karim Bakkar emphasizes that moral education is not the sole responsibility of educators; instead, parents must be able to collaborate in realizing this moral education. Many cases show that parents fully delegate this responsibility to the school. According to research conducted by Birhan et al., parents and educators must synergize and cooperate in the moral education of children (Birhan et al. 2021). Additionally, according to Hermino, there are three main focuses in contemporary character or moral education: *firstly*, the internalization of local wisdom values within the academic context and their implementation in daily

life for oneself, others, the environment, and the broader community; *secondly*, value clarification through educators' explanations of aspects that are worthy and unworthy in social life; and *thirdly*, character development that involves collaboration between educators and parents, where effective communication between the two is crucial to forming awareness and fostering a dignified life in children, both at home and at school (Hermiono and Arifin 2020).

Abd Al-Karim Bakkar also explains that the purpose of education should transcend career preparation, encompassing the formation of moral individuals who lead meaningful lives. This is achieved by integrating all aspects of personality—intellectual, cognitive, psychological, and spiritual—rather than mere accumulation of knowledge (‘Abd Al-Karīm Bakkār 2011). This is relevant to research conducted by Zhou, which indicates that there is a positive and significant relationship between spiritual intelligence, emotional intelligence, and student achievement at the secondary school and university levels (Zhou et al. 2024).

Furthermore, according to Abd Al-Karim Bakkar, achieving character education goals is not merely a temporal endeavor. It is highly effective when carried out continuously so that character education is firmly ingrained within students. This is relevant to Balraj Singh's view that character education must become an integral part of daily school life, involving parents, educators, and other stakeholders in creating concrete action plans to develop students' moral values (Singh 2019).

Furthermore, in Abd Al-Karim Bakkar's view, people are more inclined to be individualistic and antisocial in today's society, which is characterized by hedonistic and materialistic tendencies. The following adverse impact will be spiritual aridity and

moral decadence (‘Abd Al-Karīm Bakkār 2011). This is in line with the research conducted by Ghosh, who concluded that the erosion of social, ethical, and spiritual values in today's society causes various social problems and a value crisis, thus requiring efforts to promote moral and spiritual values again to create a peaceful and balanced society (Ghosh 2015).

Educators as intergenerational connectors

Educators have a great responsibility. Among them is being a bridge to pass on from one generation to the next, without leaving behind the intellectual legacy of their predecessors. Abd Al-Karim Bakkar explains that the Arab cultural heritage is threatened by a gap in understanding among the modern generation. Educators act as connectors, transmitting this heritage to students in contemporary language so that the past remains relevant in the present.” (‘Abd Al-Karīm Bakkār 2011)

It is undeniable that Islam once experienced a golden age and possesses an extraordinary legacy of civilization. Therefore, an educator must be wise by drawing on Islamic values, which have been present since ancient times, and integrating them with contemporary science. This is not without reason, as Islamic philosophy's historical and intellectual heritage becomes an essential element, not only as material for modern scholars' interpretation but also as the main foundation of various contemporary schools of thought (Seitakhmetova et al. 2022).

It should be emphasized that educators must also be able to package the learning with relevant packaging for the current generation. The challenge in educating Generation Z is overcoming traditional teaching strategies' limitations and finding effective approaches to engage,

stimulate their imagination, and enhance their understanding in a highly digitally connected world (Urban and Regional Planning, Unit for Environmental Sciences and Management, North-West University, Potchefstroom, South Africa and Cilliers 2017). The importance of education for future generations in achieving ecological sustainability cannot be overstated. Today's children are increasingly connected to the global world and are strongly influenced by decisions and events outside their immediate environment (Bradbery 2013).

Furthermore, Abd Al-Karim Bakkar also sees the importance of educators teaching students about the legacy of Islamic civilization so that Islamic identity is not eroded within students due to globalization and providing relevant insights so that they can live effectively in this era ('Abd Al-Karīm Bakkār 2011). Abd Al-Karim Bakkar's views respond to phenomena occurring in Arab countries. Two views arise when they are faced with modernity and technology. According to Alkilidar, the Arab Renaissance gave rise to two main views regarding adopting Western technology and cultural identity. Some choose to embrace technology practically without including the underlying philosophical values, while others emphasize the importance of linking technology with the intellectual values that gave rise to it. This debate reflects the dilemma between modernization and the preservation of local traditions, which maintains local cultural values as part of national identity (Alkilidar and Alkhafaji 2020). The discourse of modernity is indeed hotly debated to this day, like a figure from Morocco who criticized the conservative views of Arab thinkers who still adhere to orthodox doctrines. Thus, they find it difficult to break free from the shackles of previous thinkers and find it challenging to adapt to the needs of Arabs today. Therefore, Muhammad Abid Al-Jabiri argues that modernity does not mean the

rejection of heritage or severance of ties with the past, but rather an intensification of the way we interact with heritage to a higher level. Modernity, also referred to as 'contemporary,' reflects the progress that occurs at the global level (Al-Jābirī 1991).

Liberating the mind from its shackles

Liberating the mind from its shackles here refers to liberating thought from myths and servitude. Abd Al-Karim Bakkar's thinking was influenced to some extent by reformers from Egypt, such as Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905) and Rashid Rida (1865-1935); he studied at Al-Azhar in Egypt for 10 years. His educational background influenced his attitude of upholding equality and adopting modern things. Additionally, Abd Al-Karim Bakkar also adopted ideas from Western philosophers. This is evident from his quoting statements about the liberation of reason from shackles, as expressed by the American philosopher John Dewey (1859-1952).

In Abd Al-Karim Bakkar's view, an educator must be able to liberate students' minds from their shackles. Mental habits limit a person's thinking; if these habits become rigid, they can hinder critical thinking and creativity. He quotes John Dewey's thoughts, stating that mental habits, although initially helpful in confining the mind to objective reality, have the potential to hinder critical thinking and creativity if they develop into rigid patterns, making intellectual engagement impossible ('Abd Al-Karīm Bakkār 2011). Abd Al-Karim Bakkar's statement suggests that educators often prioritize dogmatism and limit knowledge when teaching, causing students to accept information passively without critical thinking. Critical thinking plays a crucial role in the learning process. To effectively implement critical thinking, we must cultivate it in the classroom through various activities, such as presentations,

and by establishing clear intellectual standards. Exposing students to philosophical ideas will encourage them to think creatively, which will enhance the quality and outcomes of their learning process (Shamboul 2022).

Furthermore, Abd Al-Karim Bakkar explains that culture and cognitive structures that shape a person's mindset influence how they absorb, analyze, and use knowledge. If this culture is not continuously researched and updated, it can become a mental obstacle that hinders critical thinking, leading to persistent errors and impeding progress ('Abd Al-Karim Bakkār 2011).

Education is an effort to enlighten the nation from dogmatic shackles that result in a lack of critical thinking. A study reveals a significant difference in the level of belief in superstitions between the general public and tribal groups, with the latter showing a higher tendency to believe in superstitions. Furthermore, findings indicate that education is crucial in moderating these beliefs. Individuals with higher levels of education tend to have lower beliefs in superstitions, both among the general public and within tribal groups. Therefore, education can be considered an effective strategy to reduce the prevalence of belief in superstitions, especially among more vulnerable tribal groups (Vincent n.d.).

Facilitating students' goal-setting

It can be seen that Abd Al-Karim Bakkar's opinion on the importance of early childhood education to foster critical thinking, aspirations, and the realization of contextual learning is a reaction to phenomena occurring in Arab countries. In 2018, Ilham Nasser wrote that education in the Arab world faces significant challenges despite efforts to improve enrollment and access to basic education. International

reports indicate deficits in educational achievement, such as low basic skills among students and high dropout rates. Key issues include underqualified educators, lack of investment in school infrastructure, and weak school-family relationships. Some countries, such as Jordan and Lebanon, have initiated reforms. Still, much remains to be done, including improving educational quality, introducing critical thinking, and adapting curricula more relevant to local needs (Nasser, 2018).

Abd Al-Karim Bakkar believes that the crucial role of educators is to help students set educational and professional goals that align with their potential, even though these choices may change over time ('Abd Al-Karīm Bakkār 2011:179). According to research by Chawla, educators should pay more attention to students with aspirations for higher education and good academic achievement, as this can help improve their performance. Additionally, educators need to understand the characteristics of students, especially regarding their aspirations, to make the learning process more engaging and effective. Research indicates that students with low educational aspirations tend to achieve less satisfactory academic outcomes. Therefore, educators need to focus on increasing students' educational aspirations, especially those with low aspirations, by using appropriate strategies (Chawla 2018).

In addition, Abd Al-Karim Bakkar emphasizes the importance of fostering a sense of responsibility towards oneself and society in students, as well as the need to understand society's future needs in order to achieve goals without causing egoism or social tension. Learning should be focused on areas relevant to the needs of society, considering the social, cultural, and historical context ('Abd Al-Karīm Bakkār 2011). In this regard, educators need to tailor their teaching to the needs of society

and its social context. This aims to raise students' awareness of their responsibilities as they enter society. However, according to Kandemir, designing a curriculum oriented towards social reconstruction and adaptation is complex. There is no definite answer regarding implementing the social reconstructionism approach in the school curriculum (Kandemir 2021).

In addition, according to Abd Al-Karim Bakkar, educators' roles include guiding students to understand the dynamics of society, including conflicts, so that they can contribute to a balanced society with individual goals aligned with collective needs ('Abd Al-Karīm Bakkār 2011).

A comprehensive approach within the school environment supports the development of a positive culture and the creation of an inclusive and equitable school climate, contributing to improved student learning outcomes. Furthermore, this approach provides opportunities for students to develop socio-emotional capacities, active listening skills, and the ability to resolve conflicts constructively (González, Sattler, and Buth 2019).

Cultivating exploratory motivation and curiosity among students

It is understood that education in the Middle East still maintains a traditional system that prioritizes memorization in the learning system. Consequently, the critical thinking and curiosity of students are hindered. This is what makes these countries less effective in learning. On one hand, there is a distance between educators and students. As explained by Sarah Bousquet, the main challenge Arab students face in transitioning from the education system in the MENA region (Middle East and North Africa) lies in the teaching methods used. The Global Corporate Council, which includes countries such as

the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Oman, and Bahrain, aims to transform its education system from an approach that emphasizes memorization to a process that is more focused on students as the center of learning(Bousquet, n.d.). The author suspects that this is what influences Abd Al-Karim Bakkar's thinking.

Abd Al-Karim Bakkar argues that the lack of interaction between educators and students, such as a lack of interest in asking questions or engaging in discussions, is a significant problem in education. Although curiosity is a natural potential essential for knowledge development, the current education system tends not to support its maximum development. This creates difficulties for educators in measuring the effectiveness of learning, as minimal interaction and responses from students hinder a more profound learning process ('Abd Al-Karīm Bakkār 2011).

Passive attitudes among students are often found in many schools where the majority of students are Muslim, and where a teacher-centered approach still dominates. Therefore, a student-centered approach is needed to address this issue. Educators must pay attention to several key factors to encourage students to become more active and confident. Among them: 1) First, it is essential to encourage students to engage in various activities by providing the necessary support; 2) Furthermore, ensuring that students have adequate access to information about activities and available resources is crucial to overcoming barriers to participation; 3) Additionally, providing flexibility in activity schedules allows students with diverse commitments to participate; 4) Creating an inclusive classroom environment where every student feels valued and encouraged to participate is also a key step to increasing engagement; 5) Finally, recognizing student involvement through awards and praise will

motivate them to continue contributing actively to learning (Batistis et al. 2024).

Educators are also required to increase students' curiosity. This cannot happen without a close relationship between educators and students. Abd Al-Karim Bakkar explains that students' disinterest reflects a culture of silence due to uncertainty, not just the failure of educators. Cultural change is needed, even though some educators are less than optimal in facilitating interaction ('Abd Al-Karīm Bakkār 2011).

According to Renninger's analysis, there is a difference between curiosity and interest. She argues that curiosity can be categorized as a "state" or a "trait." As a state, curiosity refers to a temporary drive that arises due to specific stimuli, triggering a desire to know more about something in a particular context. This state is often equated with situational interest, as both appear similar in terms of the level of engagement shown by an individual. However, the main difference lies in the temporary nature of curiosity, which is more often triggered by external conditions or stimuli, whereas situational interest tends to be more sustained and can develop into a more profound attraction (Renninger and Hidi 2019).

In the learning process, questioning techniques are essential in helping students master knowledge. As educators, we must pay attention to and develop questioning techniques to increase students' interest and motivation in learning. These techniques can also foster critical and creative thinking skills, helping individuals engage more actively in learning activities. In this way, students can develop higher-order thinking skills (HOTS). Through the questions asked, educators can explain the material more effectively, facilitating students' understanding and deepening their thinking process. Therefore, educators need to utilize questioning techniques to

produce students who are ready to compete at a global level (Shanmugavelu et al. 2020).

Aligning teaching with students' cognitive development

The educational conditions have a profound influence on Abd Al-Karim Bakkar's thinking in Saudi Arabia. Educators are lagging in terms of innovation. Ghaleb Hamad Alnahdi concludes that Saudi Arabian officials must study three global educational change approaches proposed by Hargreaves and Shirley (2009) to create a more effective education system. The focus is to gradually combine ideas from each approach to improve educational outcomes. Implementing the new system takes time, especially with standardized tests for high schools that ensure fairness and allow for better evaluation. Enhancing the perception of the teaching profession and strengthening the economic aspects are important to attract qualified educators. Furthermore, technology must be integrated into educational reform to improve teaching performance (Alnahdi 2013).

According to Abd Al-Karim Bakkar, an educator should be able to deliver teaching materials in a manner appropriate to students' cognitive level. This aims to ensure that students acquire a solid foundation of knowledge rather than a vague or fragmented understanding. Clear and structured delivery of material will help students understand concepts more deeply, without confusion or gaps in understanding that can hinder their knowledge development ('Abd Al-Karīm Bakkār 2011).

Educator clarity behavior plays a crucial role in learning success. Firstly, clarity in instruction can increase student motivation, as students feel more confident and assured knowing what is expected of them and how to achieve it. Clear

instructions provide a sense of control and direction in the learning process. Secondly, clarity in teaching helps students build a deeper and more meaningful understanding. When educators explain material easily, students can connect new knowledge with information they already possess, deepening their understanding of the concepts taught. Lastly, clarity provides students with the opportunity to achieve desired learning outcomes. With structured and clear instructions, students can more easily identify the steps they need to take to reach their learning goals, ultimately enhancing their achievement in learning (Benton and Li n.d.).

Furthermore, according to Abd Al-Karim Bakkar, to convey precise meaning to students, educators must employ a dialogical approach to learning, which involves listening to questions and engaging in discussions, as well as addressing students' misconceptions. Educators also need to use relevant examples and in-depth data to explain complex ideas, as well as encourage students to discuss issues through analysis and synthesis ('Abd Al-Karīm Bakkār 2011).

The current conception of learning and teaching considers interaction in the educational space a key element in the learning process. The primary focus is on increasing the quantity, diversity, and quality of these interactions, which are considered a key condition for enhancing learning effectiveness. Enhancements in these various aspects of interaction are believed to foster the achievement of more optimal and profound learning outcomes (Jiménez and Gallardo 2020).

Curriculum and subject refinement

Abd Al-Karim Bakkar's thinking is not without reason, considering that the education curriculum in many Arab countries is outdated, lagging, and partly

irrelevant to the world of work. As reported by <https://www.muslimaid.org/>, the education system in the Middle East faces a problem of mismatch with labor market needs. A 2017 survey revealed that two-thirds of participants believed their education did not adequately prepare them for working life or equip them with the necessary skills to secure meaningful employment. Curricula that tend to be outdated and focus on traditional methods often overlook the development of critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity skills that employers require. Consequently, although many students in the MENA region complete their education, they often lack the practical skills needed to enter the workforce. This is reflected in the high unemployment rate among young people, with approximately 25% unemployment among young people aged 15 to 24 in 2019, one of the highest in the world (Anon 2021b).

Abd Al-Karim Bakkar argues that although curricula are designed to meet students' knowledge needs, the limited perspectives and resources of curriculum developers can pose challenges. Therefore, the role of competent educators is crucial to adapt teaching to students' needs, address existing shortcomings, and ensure effective learning ('Abd Al-Karīm Bakkār 2011).

Curriculum development is a complex and time-consuming process that faces various challenges. Some of the main challenges affecting curriculum development in schools include political interventions, competing educational theories, conflicts among stakeholders, and determining who is involved or excluded in the process (University of Sydney, 2018).

Educators involved in curriculum development have various important roles and responsibilities. They develop and implement lesson plans and syllabi that align with the established curriculum. The primary task of educators is to implement

the curriculum in a way that meets the needs of students. Educator involvement in curriculum development has proven effective in educational reform, as it enables collaboration with the development team to create relevant and appropriate materials tailored to classroom needs. Thus, the active involvement of educators in curriculum development is crucial to ensure the alignment of curriculum content with the needs and development of students (Anon 2021a).

Furthermore, Abd Al-Karim Bakkar opines that educators are crucial in updating and delivering current information to students, especially when textbooks contain outdated or irrelevant data, and in providing additional guidance to students with more complex intellectual needs ('Abd Al-Karīm Bakkār 2011:183). Textbooks significantly influence classroom learning practices, although educators often supplement them with innovative materials. Teaching materials developed independently by educators are highly valued because they promote more meaningful learning and contribute to the professional development of educators. However, creating these materials often faces various challenges, including time constraints, limited resources, and the need to ensure alignment with the existing curriculum (Travé González, Pozuelos Estrada, and Trave Gonzalez 2017).

Relevance of Educator's Responsibility Abd Al-Karim Bakkar's Thoughts in the Midst of the Digital Era

With the rapid pace of digital transformation, educators are required to be able to adapt to the learning system. Similarly, in Abd Al-Karim Bakkar's thinking, there are several points of relevance regarding the responsibilities of educators in the midst of the digital era, including:

Evolution and transformation of moral values in the context of the digital era

In an era dominated by technology, moral values are often marginalized by digital hedonism. Educators must integrate moral education into technology, teaching digital ethics such as privacy, data security, and social responsibility. Olcott argues that the ethical problems associated with technology will remain complex as global access to knowledge expands through digital technology. Ethical, safe, and inclusive training is essential for society, particularly for vulnerable groups, and values-based education is crucial for building a morally mature society. The use of technology must be wise and sustainable, and human rights must be respected, with a collective commitment to ensuring a positive impact on individuals and society. Recommendations include integrating global practices, adopting ethical guidelines, promoting responsible digital literacy, developing codes of ethics, and involving educators and professionals in technological innovation (Olcott et al. 2015) and implementing moral training through e-learning platforms, teaching digital ethics, and collaborating with families to reinforce moral values.

The role of educators in bridging the digital divide

Technology often creates a gap between digitally savvy younger generations and their predecessors. The role of educators as a bridge becomes more critical in integrating traditional values with modern learning. As explained by Sonia Val, in an increasingly digital society, educators' digital competence is crucial to facing future challenges. Research indicates a gap between current skills and those required to address emerging changes, such as the implementation of artificial intelligence and new technologies in education. Educator training must include more than technical

skills; it must emphasize intercultural competence, digital ethics, and online safety. The development of flexible digital literacy is needed to ensure educators can utilize technology effectively and responsibly (Val and Bueno 2024). In this regard, educators can use technologies such as virtual reality or history apps to introduce cultural heritage in a way that is engaging for the digital generation.

Optimizing critical thinking and problem-solving in the digital age

Traditional learning systems are often hindered by rote memorization methods, thus limiting creativity. In the digital age, learning should focus on critical thinking and problem-solving. 21st-century learning has shifted significantly from traditional approaches that emphasize memorization and standardized tests towards a more personalized and adaptive model. Learning now focuses on real-world projects, technology integration, flexible classrooms, and the role of educators as facilitators, not just sources of information. This approach tailors education to students' needs, creating relevant and engaging learning experiences and preparing them for the challenges of an increasingly dynamic world (Kharbach 2024). The use of technologies such as simulations, gamification, and project-based learning platforms to stimulate critical thinking.

Preparing the young generation for the evolving world of work amidst technological changes

In a constantly changing work environment driven by technological disruption, students must understand their potential to meet dynamic market demands. To thrive in the digital economy, students must master technical skills (e.g., programming, data analysis, and AI), digital literacy (e.g., using digital tools and

awareness of cybersecurity), and soft skills (e.g., critical thinking and adaptability). Educators can integrate these competencies into the curriculum, offer specialized courses, and create technology-based learning environments. This approach prepares students for future job opportunities and ensures they remain adaptable in an ever-evolving world, guaranteeing their success in the dynamic digital workforce (Anon 2024). Data-driven career counseling, using tools like AI to provide career recommendations based on students' interests and skills.

Enhancing curiosity as a response to the information explosion in the digital age

The abundance of information access in the digital age must be balanced with the development of healthy curiosity. In the digital age, it is essential to leverage technology to foster the pursuit of new experiences and broaden perception, while being mindful of potential risks. This requires ongoing research to understand its impact and develop optimal digital engagement strategies. Digital technology should be used as a tool to enhance cognition, enrich curiosity, and perceptual experiences, without adding cognitive pressure. Thus, we can harness the power of technology for well-being and cognitive development in an increasingly digital world (Shanmugasundaram and Tamilarasu 2023).

Enhancing the effectiveness of digital learning through appropriate cognitive approaches

In the digital era, teaching strategies that align with students' cognitive development are increasingly essential to maximize learning. Utilizing interactive methods, multimedia, and e-learning platforms that enable students to interact with content digitally can help educators

deliver material in a manner more suited to students' cognitive levels, facilitating better comprehension and enhancing learning outcomes in the continuously evolving digital environment.

Integrating digital skills into the education curriculum to face future technological challenges

Integrating digital skills into the education curriculum is a strategic step to face future technological challenges. Education can become more relevant and adaptive by increasing access to technology, enhancing educator competency, and promoting curriculum flexibility. Collaboration among the government, schools, and the industrial sector is crucial to creating a generation prepared to navigate the digital era.

Educators are at a pivotal point in educational reform, where they must find ways to implement the necessary changes. Fortunately, they are not alone in this process. Educators now receive support from various parties, including business leaders, professional organizations, and global educators. As 'digital immigrants,' educators must collaborate with 'digital natives' to create engaging learning opportunities that prepare students and educators for success in the 21st century. As lifelong learners, educators must also be willing to take risks and adapt to technological changes (Gut 2011).

Abd Al-Karim Bakkar's thinking provides a strong foundation for education systems in the digital age, especially in integrating moral values, traditional knowledge, and modern technology. Educators must adapt by using technology to support learning while ensuring students maintain a clear moral and intellectual orientation. Collaboration among parents, educators, and the community is crucial to

the successful implementation of this initiative.

CONCLUSION

The decline in the quality of educators in Islamic education, often characterized by a focus on rote memorization and a disconnect between cultural heritage and digital reality—can be addressed by implementing Abd Al-Karim Bakkar's framework of seven educator responsibilities. Practically, the primary responsibility of developing Moral Orientation must be met by training educators to integrate digital ethics (as highlighted by Olcott) to counter digital hedonism. Furthermore, educators must act as Intergenerational Connectors (as explained by Bakkar in the context of countering the cultural gap in the Arab world), which necessitates digital competence and innovative pedagogy to present the rich Islamic intellectual heritage (such as the works of Miskawaih and Al-Ghazali) in a way that is relevant to Generation Z. Educators must also fulfill the duty of Liberating the Mind by moving away from dogmatism (as criticized by Muhammad Abid Al-Jabiri) and focusing on developing critical thinking skills through higher-order questioning techniques and dialogical learning, while actively participating in Curriculum Refinement to ensure its relevance to contemporary needs and the job market.

Theoretically, efforts to improve quality should adopt Bakkar's holistic approach, which emphasizes the integration of spiritual, intellectual, and psychological aspects, rather than merely focusing on technical skill training. The implementation of responsibilities that align teaching with Cognitive Development and facilitate students' goal-setting requires educators to understand students' social context and avoid vague content delivery, which is a major cause of learning decline. Thus,

Bakkar's perspective serves as a blueprint for transforming the professional identity of the educator: from passive knowledge transmitter to heir of civilization and a moral change agent who is prepared to lead students toward a meaningful life in the digital age while maintaining a strong moral foundation.

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