

Exploratory Analysis of the Comprehensive application of the Islamic Concept of Zuhd in the Contemporary world

ISMAIL ABDUL FATAI OLOHUNFUNMI

PSYCHOLOGY INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION IIUM

Abstract

The main aim of the present study is to present a clear frame work of how to practically apply the concept *zuhd* to individual Muslim life. It is an empirical research on the Islamic concept of *zuhd*. The method that is employed in the study is qualitative approach, whereby interviews were staged, recorded and transcribed. Thereafter themes were extracted. The samples for the present study were five Muslim scholars from different universities in Malaysia as well as a university in Nigeria. The researchers found that the two basic goals of the Islamic concept of *Zuhd* is the realization of khalifatullah (the vice-gerent of Allah) on the earth and earning the pleasure of Allah in the hereafter, not necessarily, abandoning the beneficial and pleasurable things of this world. It urges Muslim to positively contribute to the development of the society.

Keywords: *Zuhd*, Asceticism, Khalifah, Ascetic person, Self discipline

Introduction

The Islamic concept of *zuhd* (asceticism) is elusive and complex to explain in the contemporary world. There are lots of interpretations given to the concept, by different scholars. Some people perceive the concept to mean the total separation from this worldly affair, and whoever involves in the worldly affairs in not regarded as a *Zahid* (ascetic person). While some belief that the meaning is all about having good relationship with Allah, obey Him, and fulfilling His will on the earth surface. Therefore the unclear understanding of the concept of *zuhd* in Islam has made its application to individual life remains mostly unattainable. Meanwhile this concept is very important to every Muslim who is striving to secure the pleasure of his lord. As a result, the present study is carrying out an empirical explorative investigation on the concept, through a qualitative study. The main aim of the present study is to present a clear frame work of how to practically apply the concept to individual Muslim life.

Meaning of *Zuhd*

The word *zuhd* is an Arabic term which does not have direct meaning from other languages, but literally it connotes renunciation, austerity, self discipline, self denial etc. But most importantly *zuhd* is a religious concept which involves a practice that will lead the practitioner to secure the pleasure of Allah. The problem lies from the fact that, the religious right and rituals such as *salat*, *zakat*, and *saum* are always uniform in the way they are being practiced, because they were ordained by only one supreme God. The concept of *zuhd* in Islam should also not be different in concept and practice, since it is directed towards only one God. As a result of this fact, it shows that, from different interpretations and practices of the concept of *zuhd* there must be one that is right, which is practiced according to the dictate of the Allah from the Qur'Ēn, so what does Allah says from the Qur'Ēn concerning the concept of *zuhd*.

Allah's injunction on the concept of *Zuhd*

At this junction we want to know what Allah says concerning the concept of *zuhd*, it is known that one of the prominent meanings of this concept is renunciation of the world or abstinence from the pleasures of this world. What does Qur'Ēn say about this world. From Qur'Ēn, *Al-An-Ēm*: 32 Allah says:

“And the life of this world is nothing but play and amusement. But far better is the house in the hereafter for those who are pious”.

From the above verse Allah describes the world as an abode of play and amusement, which shows that one should not attach great importance to the world, that there is place we should prefer over this world which is the hereafter. In another portion of the holy Qur'Ēn Allah also describes this world as an abode of deceit, Qur'Ēn, *Al-An-Ēm*: 130.

O you assembly of jinn and mankind! Did not there came to you messengers among yourselves, reciting to you my verses and warning you of the meeting of this day of yours? They will say we bear witness against ourselves. It was the life of this world that deceived them. And they will bear witness against themselves that they were disbelievers

Qur'Ēn also describe this world as an abode of very little enjoyment. This can be found in Qur'Ēn, *At-Taobah*: 38 where Allah says:

“O you who believe what is the matter with you that when you are asked to march forth in the course of Allah you cling heavily to the earth? Are you pleased with this world rather than the hereafter? But little is the enjoyment of this world as compared to the hereafter” In another portion of the holy Qur'Ēn Allah admonish human kind that whoever desires the life of this world and its pleasures will lose the hereafter.

This verse below also justifies the above statement, mentioned in Qur'Ēn, *Al-Hud*: 15 and 16:

“Whoever desires the life of the world and its glitters, to them we shall pay in full wages of their deeds therein and they will have no diminution therein. They are those for whom there is nothing in the hereafter but fire, and vain are the deeds they did therein. And of no effect is that which they use to do”

From the above-mentioned verses Allah encourages the Muslim to strive for the pleasures in the hereafter but not to forget our own portion in this world. Also in the prayer during hajj Allah commanded us to pray for the bounties of both worlds. This means, man should be balance in their desires for this world and the hereafter, we should not forget the hereafter at the expense of this world neither must we forget this world at the expense of the hereafter. But there are some basic principles in Islam pertaining interpretation and implementation of religious acts, one of these principles says that the best authority in interpreting the religious concept is the author of the religion, who is Allah. He (Allah) does not just mention the religious concept in vague, He thereafter sent messenger to implement these religious practices. Therefore the second principle of interpretation and implementation of religious acts is to find out how the messenger that Allah sent explains and implement the religious act. As a result of this we need to find out how the messenger of Allah Muhammad explains and implement the concept of *zuhd*.

How does Prophet Muhammad explain and practice the concept of *zuhd*?

It has been previously said, that the person in best position in explaining the concept of *zuhd* is the prophet of Islam, because Allah sent him to relay the message to the mankind which he did through his speech and action. What does he say concerning the concept? The hadith that mention the world *Zuhd* directly can be found in the 40 hadĒth of *Imam Nawawi* which is the *hadith* number 31 which goes thus:

On the authority of Abu al-'Abbaas Sahl bin Sa'ad as-Saa'idee (radiAllaahu anhu who said : A man came to the Prophet (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam) and said : O Messenger of ALLAH, direct me to an act which, if I do it, [will cause] ALLAH to love me and the people to love me. So he (sallAllaahu alayhi wa sallam) said : Renounce the world and ALLAH will love you, and renounce what the people possess and the people will love you (A Hasan hadeeth related by Ibn Maajah and others with good chains of authorities).

Prophet Muhammad made clear statement and mentioned the word *zuhd* directly in the *hadĒth* he commanded the man to renounce the world, so that Allah could love him and also renounce what is in the hand of men they will love him. This is a statement concerning the word *zuhd* from the prophet. How does he describe this world? From *Sahih Muslim* (*hadĒth* collated by Imam Muslim) Prophet Muhammad describes this world thus:

Jabir b. Abdullah reported that Allah's Apostle (may p (-ace be upon him) happened to walk through the bazar coming from the side of 'Aliya and the people were on both his sides. There he found a dead lamb with very short ears. He took hold of his ear and said: Who amongst you would like to have this for a dirham? They said: We do not like to have it even for less than that as it is of no use to us. He said: Do you wish to have it (free of any cost)? They said: By Allah, even if it were alive (we would not have liked to possess that), for there is defect in it as its ear is very short; now it is dead also. Thereupon Allah's Messenger (may peace be upon him) said: By Allah, this world is more insignificant in the eye of Allah as it (this dead lamb) is in your eye (*Sahih Muslim* Book 042, Hadith 7059).

The prophet in another tradition also described this world as a resting place and we human being in it as a traveler from *sahih hadith Bukhari*: “The worldly comforts are not for me. I am like a traveler, who takes a rest under a tree in the shade and then goes on his way.” (*Sahih Bukhari*, Book #23, Hadith #365).

All these tradition are explaining the insignificance of this world. The question now is that should one abandon this world and has nothing to do with this world based on the above quoted traditions. This tradition is

not absolute until we see how prophet Muhammad demonstrate the concept of *zuhd*, that is when one can make his conclusion, because prophet Muhammad is the model for everybody that claim to be a Muslim. Therefore, how does he practice the concept of *zuhd* in his life time does he went to the wilderness alone without having any contact with human being? Or is this world and its pleasures are unlawful for us the answer will be gotten from the following Hadith:

Three persons came to the Prophet's home (sal Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam) and asked about how he (sal Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam) worships Allah (Subhanahu wa Ta'ala). When they got the answer, they thought since he is a Prophet, Allah Ta'ala has forgiven him, and that they are just ordinary people and need to step beyond what the Prophet (sal Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam) said they wanted to fast without breaking it, pray all night without sleeping, and refrain from marriage for their whole lives. The Prophet (sal Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam) explained, however, that what they described was not his path. The Prophet (sal Allahu 'alayhi wa sallam) is the best of examples and the best of us, yet he fasted but also broke his fast, he prayed night prayer but also slept, and he did marry; we should stick to his Sunnah, the Straight Path" (Muslim and Bukhari).

This hadith explains that prophet condemn extremism and excessiveness in everything, it encourages the Muslim to take the middle course on everything he does. It also points to the fact that total renunciation of the world and clinging to spirituality is not his practice. There is another hadith in which prophet was advising one of his companions to live his children wealthy against giving it out as charity. The hadith is when Sa'd Bin Abee Waqqaas asked the Prophet whether he can will all of his property in charity, the Prophet told him to give only one third of it and said: "One third is too much. It is better for you to leave your inheritors wealthy that to leave them poor, begging from others.('Agreed upon hadeeth. See Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree, V. 4, Hadeeth #5.).

Another hadith was narrated by:

Anas My mother said, "O Allah's messenger! Please invoke Allaah on behalf of your servant (i.e. Anas). "He said: "O Allaah! Increase his wealth and children, and bestow your blessings on whatever you give him. (An agreed upon hadeeth. [See Saheeh Al-Bukhaaree, V. 8, Hadeeth #355].

From the above tradition we discerned how Prophet Muhammad explains and practice the concept of *zuhd*. He pronounced and demonstrated that, the concept of *zuhd*, is not only striving for the hereafter but also work to achieve our portion in this world.

Methodology

The method used in the present study is qualitative research approach in which induction are used to derive possible explanation based on the phenomena (Gorman & Clayton, 2005). It was further explained that qualitative approaches uses inquiry strategies like narratives, phenomenologies, ethnographies, grounded theory studies or case studies (Creswell, 2003). This form of research is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, judgments, and behaviors of a particular population (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

DATA COLLECTION

The collection of data in qualitative designs allows one to learn from the informants or respondents in such study and it also allows the recording of data as the study proceeds. This kind of sampling can allow one to select people who can best help to understand the phenomenon in focus (Creswell, 2005). The ultimate goal here, according to Gorman and Clayton (2005: 3), is to understand those being studied from their perspective and from their point of view. Therefore, in this study, data was collected using the interview method, whereby some practitioners and professional Islamic studies personnel were interviewed. The conversations from the interviews was recorded using a MP3 recorder which was later listened to repeatedly, transcribed and read as well, to obtain an overall understanding of the respondents' view. In fact, in the words of David Lodge, cited in Gorman & Clayton (2005: 5), "the aim is to identify with the subjects, to experience the milieu as they experience it..." Thus the data collection was achieved through staging of interview, after appropriate permission has been sought from the respondents who are specialist in Arabic and Islamic studies most of which are Associate professors. The respondents were selected as a result of their wealth of experience in the field of Islamic studies. This was done due to the intricacy of the subject of concern.

Table 1
 Summary of the Respondents Demographic Information

S/N	NAME	QUALIFICATIONS	STATUS	SCHOOL	COUNTRY
1	Abdul Kabir Hussain Salihu	B.A, M.A, PHD. Arabic Islamic studies	Associate professor	International Islamic University	Malaysia
2	Kabuye Uthman Sulaiman	B.A, M.A, PHD, Islamic studies	Assistant Professor	International Islamic University	Malaysia
3	Ibrahim Bakar	B.A M.A PHD. Islamic studies	Associate Professor	University Kebangsa	Malaysia
4	Rushdi Ramli	B.A, M.A, PHD. Usul Fiqh	Associate Professor	University Malaya	Malaysia
5	Sheikh Isa Siddiq	B.A, M.A, Arabic And Islamic studies	Proprietor	Mahdu Salam institute	Nigeria
6	Muritala Busayri	B.A, M.A, PHD. Siasatul Shariah	Associate professor	Lagos State University	Nigeria

CONDUCTING THE INTERVIEW

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the aim of gaining insight into and unraveling answers to the questions which the research is raising. The questions were first drafted and presented to a senior colleague who suggested the input of the respondents. Interestingly, this was sent to them prior to the given dates of interview for input to be added.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data (Rice-Lively, 2004). It may involve coding, content analysis or ethnographic analysis following a nonlinear process. Though, it may look messy, ambiguous and time consuming, but it is indeed a creative and fascinating process after all. The themes in these particular interviews were extracted and analyzed according to the research questions and issues identifiable from literatures as well as on the field revelations (thereby inculcating the participants' view).

Table 2
 The Coding Table

THEMES	SUB-THEMES	REMERKS
MEANING OF ZUHD	Contentment	Ascetic person is satisfied with the little he has.
	Humility	A <i>zahid</i> is humble and not proud, because pride brings about show off which lead to materialism.
	Self discipline	He is able to control his desires, which prevent him from falling into sins.
	To Abandon frivolities	He occupies himself with what will enable him to see the pleasure of Allah
PRACTICES OF AN ASCETIC PERSON	Self Meditation	A <i>zahid</i> engages in constant self introspection and evaluation for the purpose of self reformation.
	Magnanimity and benevolence	He is good to others and show mercy to the needy even kind to his enemy.
	Family management and planning	An ascetic person, establish an Islamic home by marrying righteous lady and serves as model to the family by practicing what he preaches.
	Seeks knowledge about lawful and unlawful	He seeks knowledge, continuously in order not to pass the boundaries of Allah.
	Service for the community development	He is interested in the development of his community and strives to serve them, because he believes that it is one of the greatest acts of worship.
	Gratitude to Allah	He shows gratitude to Allah through his limbs, mouth and wealth for making him one of the servant servants of Allah.

Discussion of Result

In this section the themes is outlined in heading and sub-heading form in order to foster proper discussion and analysis. Therefore, the themes generated from the interviews are as follows. (a) Meaning of the concept of *zuhd*, (b) practices of *Zahid* (ascetic person),.

MEANING OF THE CONCEPT OF ZUHD

From the analysis of the interviews conducted with the practitioners there are four sub-topics derived from this aspect. They explained the concept of *zuhd* from their own perspectives by giving different meaning to the concept. They gave the concept of *zuhd* the following meanings:

1. Contentment
2. Humility
3. Self discipline
4. Ability to abandon frivolities

Contentment

The first respondent, from his own view explain *zuhd* to mean contentment, when he said in column 6(P) that:
zuhd is Arabic term as you know it is an Islamic sufi moral term which refers to contentment and satisfaction, it refers to Al-kannaan in Arabic term, that is contentment, that you satisfy or when one is satisfied with what one has that is general meaning of Zuhd meaning that you are satisfied with a little you have the one can subsist with that is the basic meaning of zuhd.

In order to get clearer picture of the term contentment, there is need to know how Allah and His messenger use the term. Allah the almighty say: Qur'Ēn, Al-Baqarah: 273:

“It is for the poor who are held back in the Way of Allah, unable to travel in the land. The ignorant consider them rich because of their reticence. You will know them by their mark. They do not ask people importunately”

Imam Nawawi cited a hadĒth from the prophet that:

Abu Hurayra reported that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "Wealth is not from a lot of money. Wealth is the independence of the self.

Prophet Muhammad (saws) said: “Riches do not mean having a great amount of property; real wealth is self-contentment.” Sahih Bukhari (Book 81, Chapter 15).

The most important texts in Islam have mentioned the term contentment, it is necessary to hear from religious on the same issue. Akramullah, (2010), defines the term thus:

“Contentment is the psycho-physiological experience of satisfaction and being at ease in one's situation. It is said that a man complained about his old shoes until he saw a man who had no feet”

It could be understood from the general meaning of the concept of *zuhd* which is renunciation of the world, that a closer look at the word contentment will reveal that both words are related. A man that is contented with what he has will not run after the worldly pleasures and will be pleased with whatever he has.

Humility

Second respondent from department of general studies of IIUM explains the term *zuhd* to mean humility he said in his statement, 42 (P) that:

... as you have said off course there many meaning of this concept but my understanding on the meaning of this concept is the opposite of the arrogance and Allah swt condemns the act of arrogance in many verses of the Qur'Ēn which serves as the basis of the dismissal of Iblees from paradise who consider himself as better than all the mankind and zuhd simply means being humble and being humble means different meaning....

There is a verse from the holy Qur'Ēn on humility in Qur'Ēn chapter 25 verse 63 where Allah says: “And the servants of the Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth *Hawna* (in humility), and when the foolish address them they say; *Salama*”.

Imam Ibnu Kethir from his commentary (pg. 81) commented on this verse that:

Allah tells here the attributes of the believing servants of Him, those who walk on the earth *Hawna*, meaning that they walk with dignity and humility, not with arrogance and pride

According to Huda, (2011), “Humility, or being humble, means that one is modest, submissive and respectful, not proud and arrogant. You lower yourself to the ground, not elevate yourself above others.”

But the public notion of humility connote inferiority complex, and also attached with backwardness, behaving sickly. The true notion of humility explained by Dr. Yusuf Qardahwi (2005), as cited by, Ahmad, (2011):

...”Umar was famous for his saying “O Allah! I seek refuge in You from fake submissiveness.” People said, “What is fake submissiveness?” `Umar replied, “To have a humble body, but not a humble heart.” Ash-Shifa’ bint `Abdullah saw some youth walking listlessly, so she asked, “Who are those people?” “They are ascetics,” was the answer. She commented, “Umar, though a real ascetic, used to walk quickly, speak loudly, and hit severely,” indicating that he was strong ...

The message of the above statement is the humility is an internal quality; this is between man and his lord not a sign of weakness, passivity and inferiority complex.

Self Discipline

From the statement of the third respondent, a lecturer from UKM asserts that *zuhd* means the ability to control one’s desires, he stated his point from column 84(P) thus:

... what is zuhd as discussed by the Muslim scholars in their work so means a person capability not to become obsessed in physical pleasure not to become obsessed in worldly pleasures despite the fact that he is able to enjoy it so we should be able to understand zuhd means we are able to forsake physical pleasures even though we can enjoy it this is the meaning of zuhd ...

In the holy Qur’Én Allah mentioned that those that do not have self discipline will not see His pleasure in Qur’Én 19 verse 59: “Then, there has succeeded them a posterity who have lost the Salah and have followed lusts. So they will meet Ghaiy”.

To support this from the tradition, cited from Islamweb.com (2010), the Messenger of Allah said: Should I inform you of the [true] believer? [He is] the one who people trust with their wealth and lives. As for the [true] Muslim, it is he who avoids harming Muslims with his tongue and hands. Whoever strives against the desires of his self in order to obey Allaah is a [real] Mujaahid; and the Muhaajir (emigrant) is he who abandons all what Allaah has forbidden." [As-Silsilah As-Saheehah, Albaani: 549]

After the first two primary sources of knowledge in Islam, there is need to hear what the scholar will say on the concept of discipline on this Steve, (2005), explains that: “Self-discipline is the ability to get yourself to take action regardless of your emotional state.”

All what is mentioned above, from the holy Qur’Én, Hadith, and the sayings of scholar are correspond to the statement of the respondent. How does this relate to the concept of *zuhd*? According to him *zuhd* involves avoiding and abandoning what you can rightfully enjoy, while self discipline involves ability to control oneself against desires, therefore without self discipline one cannot practice the concept of *zuhd*.

Abandoning Frivolities

The fifth respondent from Mahdu Salam Lagos Nigeria explained the concept of *zuhd* to mean an act of abandoning what is not useful for us to gain the pleasure of Allah. He said in as much we are doing what pleases Allah we are still under the confine of *zuhd*. He explained thus from column, 112(P).

... meaning of zuhd is to keep away from anything that is not useful for you on the day of judgement with hope of receiving reward from allah that is the meaning of zuhd

Allah mentioned in the holy Qur’Én that among those that be successful are those that always abandon what will not benefit them this is cited in in the Qur’Én 23verse 3 that: ... And those who turn away from Al-Laghw ...

Sheikh Ibnu Kethir in his commentary of the holy Qur’Én, commented on the above verse that: Al-Laghw ... refers to falsehood, which includes Shirk and sin, and any words or deeds that are of no benefit ...

Ability to abandon frivolities will prevent one from committing excesses in one’s activities in life, one will be concerned with what is necessary and important to one’s life. This will prevent one from committing sins against God, by doing this one is practicing the concept of *zuhd* because the main aim of the practicing of *zuhd* is the avoidance of sinful act in order to seek the pleasure of Allah.

THE PRACTICES OF ZAHID (ASCETIC PERSON)

The second theme that emanates from the interviews was the practices of a *zahid*: this word is the subject in terms of Arabic grammar, while the word *zuhd* is noun. The word *Zahid* means the person that practices or engages in act of *zuhd* in his life. At this juncture the respondents state and explain the practices, features and characteristics of an ascetic person. Although they were not unanimous on this aspect also but their explanation are somehow related, from the interviews we came out with the following as the practices of an ascetic person.

1. Self Meditation
2. Magnanimity and benevolence

3. Family management and planning
4. Seeking knowledge about lawful and unlawful
5. Service for the community development
6. Gratitude to Allah

Self Meditation

The first respondent explains that, one of the greatest acts of an ascetic person is meditation, prophet engages in it encourages Muslim to engage in it and they emulate the prophet by practicing it, he explains thus from column 12(P) that:

... on that prophet hadith as you know before revelation was sent to prophet Muhammad he was going and doing this type of exercises in the Ghar- hirai before jubril came with revelation so there off course he use to go there alone and mentioning the name of God, engaging in self meditation doing this and that from this exercise cotemporary people that follow the zuhd....

Contemplating and thinking about the creation of Allah is very important in Islam that is why Allah in Qur'Ēn, Al-Imran: 191: Allah praises those who engage in act of contemplation for spiritual purpose, thus: Those who remember Allah standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and think deeply about the creation of the heavens and the earth, (saying): "Our Lord! You have not created this without purpose, glory to You! Give us salvation from the torment of the Fire

Imam Ibn Kethir from his commentary of the holy Qur'Ēn commented on the above verse, (P, 320) thus:

Contemplating about signs in the sky and earth that testify to the might, ability, knowledge, wisdom, will and mercy of the Creator. Allah criticizes those who do not contemplate about His Creation, which testifies to His existence, Attributes, Shariah, His decree and Ayat.

Magnanimity and Benevolence

Another attribute mentioned by one of the respondents is magnanimity and benevolence, an act of being kind and generous then, desire good for others in the society. He mentioned this from the interview in column 26(P) that:

... one considers is better to do it within the society than to do it alone when you solve Islamic problems and generous to people within the society you are not doing it alone but you are taking as many members of the society along with you ...

Allah also mentions this in Qur'Ēn chapter 4 verse 114 that:

"There is no good in most of their secret talks save (in) him who orders Sadaqah, or goodness, or conciliation between mankind; and he who does this, seeking the good pleasure of Allah, We shall give him a great reward

There is also hadith of the prophet on the same issue from the book of Imam Nawawi, (P, 61) that: *Abu Hurayra reported that the Messenger of Allah, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "There is sadaqa owed by every joint people have every day on which the sun rises. Putting things right between two people is sadaqa. Helping a man with his mount and helping him up onto it or lifting up his baggage onto it is sadaqa. A good word is sadaqa. Every step you take to the prayer is sadaqa. Removing an obstruction from the road is sadaqa". [Bukhari and Muslim].*

Family planning and Management

The issue of family planning and management, as one of the practices of a Zahid was mentioned by almost all the respondents in different forms. Some of the respondents assert that the basic responsibilities of an ascetic father are to be a good model and always give good advice to the member of the family. One of them asserts from column 34 (P), that:

... how to inculcate this concept in the children, one of challenges is that the media Internet or TV they need to tell the children the truth the anything is not necessary what they watch online am that we are living that media is not our ideal some of the media teaching may be in line with Islamic teaching and some are not in line with Islamic teaching so the parent should let the children know those teaching of the internet that are not in line with Islamic teaching a parent

need to live by example what zuhd means to let the children see the true way of life in practice not only to say it out ...

Allah also commanded the Muslim to be model and good example and follow whatever they say with action for people to emulate, in Qur'Ēn chapter 2 verse 44 that:

Enjoin you Al-Birr (piety and righteousness and every act of obedience to Allah) on the people and you forget (to practice it) yourselves, while you recite the Scripture (Tawrah)! Have you then no sense!

While commenting on this verse Ibnu KethĒr from his book of commentary (p, 148) cited a hadith related by Abu Hurairah that:

A man will be brought on the Day of Resurrection and thrown in the Fire. His intestines will fall out and he will continue circling pulling them behind him, just as the donkey goes around the pole. The people of the Fire will go to that man and ask him, 'What happened to you? Did you not used to command us to do righteous acts and forbid us from committing evil?' He will say, 'Yes. I used to enjoin righteousness, but refrained from performing righteousness, and I used to forbid from (Bukhari and Muslim)

Another respondent also states the stages and commandments of Allah and His messenger on proper child upbringing in Islam. This was stated from column 142(P) that:

... my brother, one cannot be a complete pious without taking himself and his house hold along

Allah also commanded the believers on proper child up-bringing in Qur'Ēn 66 verse 6 that:
O you who believe! Protect yourselves and your families against a Fire (Hell) whose fuel is men and stones, over which are (appointed angels stern (and) severe, who disobey not the commands they receive from Allah, but do that which they are commanded.

Ibn kethir while commenting on this verse cited Qatada who said:
He commands obedience to Allah, to not disobey Allah; he orders his family to obey His orders and helps them to act upon His orders. When one sees disobedience, he stops them and forbids them from doing it.

He also cited a *hadĒth* of the prophet from:
Ar-Rabi` bin Sabrah , said that his father said that the Messenger of Allah said, Order the children to pray when they reach the age of seven and when they reach the age of ten, discipline them for (not performing) it.

Seeking knowledge about Lawful and unlawful

Another respondent stated that *Zahid* preoccupied himself with seeking knowledge about lawful and unlawful in order not to go beyond the boundaries of Allah he proclaimed this in column 72(P) that:

... okay by seeking knowledge surely he is able to know the reality of the things because knowledge if we define it is to know things according to their reality and according to their natures

Allah also encourages the Muslim to continuously seek knowledge this is mentioned in Qur'Ēn, Al-Taha: 114 that:

Then High above all be Allah, the True King. And be not in haste with the Qur'an before its revelation is completed to you, and say: "My Lord! Increase me in knowledge

In another chapter of the holy Qur'Ēn Allah states that those that fear Him most are those that have knowledge this is mentioned in Qur'Ēn 35 verse 28, that:

And likewise, men and moving creature and cattle are of various colors. It is only those among His servants who have knowledge that fear Allah. Verily, Allah is Almighty, Oft-Forgiving.

Abu Daud also cited from his Sunan the excellence of seeking knowledge from the hadith of the holy prophet which was:

He said: I heard the Apostle of Allah (peace_be_upon_him) say: If anyone travels on a road in search of knowledge, Allah will cause him to travel on one of the roads of Paradise. The angels

will lower their wings in their great pleasure with one who seeks knowledge, the inhabitants of the heavens and the Earth and the fish in the deep waters will ask forgiveness for the learned man. The superiority of the learned man over the devout is like that of the moon, on the night when it is full, over the rest of the stars.

Service for the community development

Another respondent also pointed out that part of the practices of Zahid is their constant contribution to the development of their community their impact is felt in the community. He explained this from the interview done with him which is column 94 (P) that goes thus:

...So I mean if we can purify ourselves from loving for example money status position and worldly pleasure at that time we can only sincerely or truly serve the community for the sake of Allah that is the point I think you can understand that very important.....

Allah commanded the Muslim to do well to the relatives and people within their community in Qur'Ēn An-Nisai: 36 that:

Worship Allah and join none with Him in worship, and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphan the poor, the neighbor who is near of kin ,the neighbor who is a stranger, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet), and those (slaves), whom your right hands possess

Prophet also enjoins Muslim to contribute to community development by assisting people it is mentioned in the book compiled by Imam Muslim thus:

Abu Huraira reported that the prophet(s) said," Whosoever removes some difficulty of a believer in this world, Allah shall remove some difficulty from him on the Day of Judgment. Whosoever provides some comfort to the sufferer, Allah shall provide him comfort here and in the hereafter. Who so ever covers someone's faults here, Allah shall cover his faults here and in the hereafter. As long as a person is busy helping his brother, Allah keeps helping him

Gratitude to Allah

One of the respondents also asserts that one of the regular practices of an ascetic person is their gratitude to Allah. He explains this in column 136 (P) that:

... one companion came to him one day when he always saw him to always in nafilah and say oh prophet were you not been forgiven your sins why are you always punishing yourself again why are you engage in all these extra prayers what was his response he said awalam akun abudan shakuran meaning that should I not be a grateful servant ...

The blessings of Allah are too many on human being that is why He said in the glorious Qur'Ēn, Ibrahim: 34 that: ... And If you would count the blessings of Allah you would not be able to count them..." As result of this He ordered the Muslim in Qur'Ēn Al-Baqarah: 152 that:

Therefore remember Me (by praying, glorifying), I will remember you, and be grateful to Me (for My countless Favors on you) and never be ungrateful to Me

Prophet Muhammad also describes the character of a Muslim in his life from the following hadith: Suhaib (R.A) reported that Allah's Messenger (Peace be upon Him) said: "Strange are the ways of a believer for there is good in every affair of his and this is not the case with anyone else except in the case of a believer for if he has an occasion to feel delight, he thanks (Allah), thus there is a good for him in it, and if he gets into trouble and shows resignation (and endures it patiently), there is a good for him in it." [Muslim Chapter 14, Book 042, Number 7138].

FINDINGS FROM THE STUDY

This work is based on analyzing the true Islamic concept of zuhd , and to get the true meaning of Islamic concept of *zuhd* and how it can be practically applied to our individual life. Therefore, from the above analysis and discussion we come up with the following findings

1. That the two basic goals of the Islamic concept of *Zuhd* is the realization of khalifatullah (the vice-gent of Allah) on the earth and earning the pleasure of Allah in the hereafter

2. That to achieve the two goals man must engage in such activities as prescribed by Allah in His book (Qur'Ēn) and as was demonstrated and explained by the messenger of Allah in his tradition
3. That the cores of the activities are constant self evaluation, self consciousness, self discipline, and soul purification.
4. That the outcome of the above activities in human behavior are contentment, humility, moderation, magnanimity, good family management, beneficial to the family and community at large and constant and steadfast in righteous deeds.

Conclusion

The Islamic concept of *zuhd* is a wide concept in Islam as it is shown from the analysis and discussion that it has many meanings that are interrelated, and the main goal of the concept of *zuhd* in Islam is to seek the pleasure of Allah. By practicing the concept of *Zuhd* man will experience, spiritual development, intellectual development and moral development, if we consider the sources and the content of the interviews thoroughly. One will also discover that that the concept does not restrict human being to seek only the hereafter, but man should use this world to strive and earn the pleasure of Allah. It could be discovered that the concept of *zuhd* encompasses the whole life of human being. It is the only avenue that one can use to prepare for the hereafter. Therefore any developing adult who want to prepare for the hereafter should try and acquaint him or herself with practices and qualities of the concept of *zuhd* and make it as a system of his life. Equally any nation who wants to experience development in all aspects should carefully study the concept of *zuhd* and entrenches in their national curriculum that nation or country will experience rapid development.

References

- Abu SulaimĒn, *Islam: Source and Purpose of Knowledge*. Virginia, USA International Institute of Islamic thought. (1982).
- Ahmad El-Shafei', *Is Dunya Haram for us? Here's how to Balance Deen and life*. SA: Sage Publication, Inc. (2011).
- Ahmad, A., *Moderation a virtue of Islam*. Star Publication Bhd Malaysia, (2010).
- Akramullah, S. Contentment in Islam: Secret of true Happiness, Unpublished Article. <http://www.islamicocassion.com>. (2010).
- Al-Attas, S. M. N. *The concept of Education in Islam*: ISTAC Kuala Lumpur, (1991).
- Al-Boriqi, (2005). Islamic thought in the Modern Era of the Islamic Awakening: Dissemination of Islamic research and studies; Addressing conventional understanding; Deciphering Antagonist Jargon and Heterodox Doctrines al-Mustaqeem, Publications. New World Encyclopedia, (2007). Asceticism Retrieved from <http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Asceticism>
- Anderson, K., Mid-Life Transition. Probe Ministries 2001 W. Plano Parkway, Suite 2000 Plano, TX 75075 (972) 941-4565, (2002).
- Anita, W., Malcolm, H., & Vivienne, W. *Psychology in Education*. Pearson Education Limited. Edinburgh Gate Harlow Essex CM 20 2 JE England, (2008).
- An-Nawawi, *Riyadh-us-Saliheen (Gardens of the righteous) Idara Isha'at-E Diniyat* (P) 168/2, Jha House, Hazrat Nizamuddin New Delhi – 110 013 (India), (2003).
- Ashraf, A. S., *New Horizons in Muslim Education*: Cambridge: Hodder and Stoughton. Islamic Academy London, (1985).
- Badri, M. B., *The Dilemma of Muslim Psychologists*. Redwood Burn Limited Trowbridge and Esher Great Britain, (1979).
- Cresswell, J. W. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed method approaches*. Thousands Oaks: Sage Publications, (2003).

Dada, I. Az-Zuhd. Mybodymysoul.org Sumpingmoro, (2007). The concept of Az-zuhd (Asceticism) in Islam.
<http://www.fortyhadith.com> Dunya. Productive Muslim Productivemuslim.com.

English by Al-Islaah Publications. Reality of Zuhd (Asceticism) upload by at-Tazkirah التنكرة.htm, (2007).

Erikson, E. H. *Identity: Youth and crisis*. New York: Norton, (1968).

Gorman & Clayton, *Qualitative research for the information professional A practical handbook* Facet Publishing, 7 Ridgmount Street London WC1E 7AE, (2005).

Hadhrat Maulana Masehullah Khan Sahab (nd). (Rahimullah Ta'ala) translated into.

Imam Feisal, A. R. Asceticism in Islam. International Islamic University Malaysia, (2008).

Islamization of Knowledge Series 1, *General principles and work plan. International Institute of Islamic thought: Virginia USA. (1989).*

Jafar, H. Zuhd, Asceticism, and Worldliness. www.islamicinsights.com/contact-us.html Levinson, Daniel J. 'The Mid- Life Transition: A Period in Adult Psychosocial Development.' *Psychiatry*, vol. 40 May 1977, 99-112, (2011).

Jamal A. B. *The concept of Al-Zuhd (asceticism) in Islam; Shizuoka Muslim, (2011).*

Khan, D. M. Summarized Sahih Al-Bukhari. In M. A.-B. Ismail, *Sahih Al-Bukhari*. Riyadh: Mataba Dar-us-Salam, (1994).

Leedy, P.D. & Ormrod, J.E. *Practical Research Planning and Design* (9th Edition ed.). (J. Johnston, Ed.) Upper Saddle River, New Jersey, USA: Pearson Education Inc. (2010).

Levinson, D., (1986). A Conception of Adult Development. *American Psychologists* 41(1): 3-33.

Nimrod, H., *Biographies and Mild Asceticism: A Study of Islamic Moral Imagination.* Maisonneuve & Larose <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1595871>, (1997).

Patton, M. Q. *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods* (2nd edn), Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. (1990).

Pavlina, S., Self Discipline www.stevepavlina.com

Productive Muslim, (2010). Zuhd: An Anti-dote to Consumerism Culture, (2005).
<http://www.productivemuslim.com/about/>

Quine and Ullian, W.V. Quine and J.S. Ullian, Hypothesis, E.D. Klempe, R. Hollinger, A. David Kline, Editors, *Introductory Readings in the Philosophy of Science*, Prometheus Books, Buffalo, New York, (1980).

Rice-Lively, M. L., *A Qualitative Research for Information Professional: A practical Hand book* by G. E. Gorman Book, (2004).

Santrock, J. W., *Child Development: MC Graw Hill Higher Education. Companies, Inc. 1221 Avenue of the Americas, New York NY 10020, (2004).*


SSAli, *The concept of Al-Zuhd (asceticism) in Islam, (2011).*
Islamicpathwaysec.ed.com

Steve, P., *Self Discipline, (2005).* <http://www.stevepavlina.com/>

Tafsir Ibn Kethir.; <http://www.quran4u.com/Tafsir%20Ibn%20Kathir/PDF>.

TaqÊ-ud-DÊn, H., & Muhsin, K. (1426, AH). The Noble Qur'Ên: English translation of the Meanings and Commentary. King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur'Ên Madinah K. S.A.

Tega, D., Havighurst's Theory of Personality. Associated content from yahoo, (2007).

Wacker, J. G., A definition of theory: research guidelines for different theory- building research methods in operations management. *Journal of Operations Management*, **16** (1998), pp. 361–385. Article |  PDF (147 K) || View Record in Scopus || Cited By in Scopus (85).

Yedullah, A Critical Analysis of the Influence of the Market on Education, Educational Awakening: *Journal of the educational Sciences* Volume 6 pp35, , (2009).

Yin, R. K. *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Thousand Oaks, California 91320: Sage Publications, Inc. (2003).

The IISTE is a pioneer in the Open-Access hosting service and academic event management. The aim of the firm is Accelerating Global Knowledge Sharing.

More information about the firm can be found on the homepage:

<http://www.iiste.org>

CALL FOR JOURNAL PAPERS

There are more than 30 peer-reviewed academic journals hosted under the hosting platform.

Prospective authors of journals can find the submission instruction on the following page: <http://www.iiste.org/journals/> All the journals articles are available online to the readers all over the world without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. Paper version of the journals is also available upon request of readers and authors.

MORE RESOURCES

Book publication information: <http://www.iiste.org/book/>

Academic conference: <http://www.iiste.org/conference/upcoming-conferences-call-for-paper/>

IISTE Knowledge Sharing Partners

EBSCO, Index Copernicus, Ulrich's Periodicals Directory, JournalTOCS, PKP Open Archives Harvester, Bielefeld Academic Search Engine, Elektronische Zeitschriftenbibliothek EZB, Open J-Gate, OCLC WorldCat, Universe Digital Library, NewJour, Google Scholar

