

Aqil Baligh Education: Understanding the Transition from Childhood to Adulthood in Islam

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ABSTRACT

The article discusses about the transition from childhood to adulthood is one of the important phases in the life of every individual. In the context of Islamic teachings, this transition is known as aqil baligh, which refers to when a person reaches maturity both physically and spiritually. Data collection using the literature review method analyzes various information from various written sources, both books, modules, journal articles and other research results. The period of aqil baligh is a very crucial period for a Muslim. This period is the boundary between mumayyiz and mukallaf. Children who have reached aqil baligh are said to be "mukallaf" or people who are required to carry out Islamic law, so it is very important to be considered by educators both in the school environment and the family environment (parents). By equipping them with the right knowledge and understanding of aqil baligh, children can have a positive outlook and be prepared to carry out their religious obligations and social responsibilities well.

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1. Introduction

The transition from childhood to adulthood is a crucial phase in the life of every individual. In the context of Islamic teachings, this transition is known as *aqil baligh*, which refers to the time when a person reaches maturity both physically and spiritually. This process involves not only biological changes, but also great demands in terms of religious and social responsibilities. Understanding and exploring this phase is crucial to ensure that Muslim adolescents can face the challenges of life with adequate readiness and understanding. In Islam, *Aqil baligh* is the period in which a child is expected to begin fulfilling his or her religious and social obligations. This includes performing prayers, fasting, and following the deeper teachings and values of Islam. At this stage, the child is expected to begin to understand and practice his or her responsibilities as an adult Muslim. *Aqil baligh* education serves to equip adolescents with the knowledge and skills needed to live life as responsible adults. However, this process often faces various challenges, both in terms of children's understanding and support provided by family and society. Awareness of the importance of *aqil baligh* education is needed so that this transition process runs smoothly, by focusing attention on aspects of religious, moral, and social education.

Various factors, such as social and cultural changes, as well as modern challenges, can influence the understanding and implementation of *aqil baligh* education. Therefore, it is important for parents, educators, and the community to work together in providing effective and relevant guidance. This article aims to explore the concept of *aqil baligh*, understand the role of education in this transitional period, and offer practical insights to support adolescents in achieving maturity in line with Islamic teachings.

This research is categorized as a literature study. The approach used in this study is descriptive-qualitative. The descriptive-qualitative approach used to study the Reinforcement of the importance of *Aqil Baligh* Education and understanding the Transition from Children to Adults in Islam. This study uses the library research method, namely research that utilizes library materials as a source of data to answer the formulation of research problems (Mahmud 2011: 3). The data collection method is carried out by collecting and analyzing data sourced from various literature, books and journal articles discussing *Aqil Baligh* Education and how to understand the transition from children to adults. The data collected is then read, understood, analyzed, recorded using the descriptive analysis method. The data that has been analyzed is then poured into a deductive method that departs from general theory to reach the conclusion of the findings from the research results. That way, the concept of *Aqil Baligh* education can be explained and presented.

2. Literature Review

Aqil means mature in mind and *baligh* means mature physically. Mature in mind is when someone is able to take on the role and responsibility as an adult. While mature physically is when all body functions can be functioned as usual for adults, so it is very important to equalize *aqil* and *baligh* so that every action and body function is balanced and can be accounted for. The real childhood is in the age range of 0 to 10 years. Age 0 to 6 years is the stage of strengthening and caring for conception. This stage is the golden age of the nature of faith. Children must be brought to life their passion for truth and religion. At this age there should be no burden that will cause trauma or damage nature.

aqil baligh is in the age range of 7 to 10 years. At this age all conceptions must be completed towards awareness and growth of all potentials. This stage is the golden age for the natural ability to learn and reason, children are very critical in reasoning, their criticality must lead to the awareness that Allah is the greatest regulator and protector. Children begin to realize the order of Allah's Creation in the universe including themselves and their society. This is the time towards the pre- *aqil baligh* training stage. Prayer is ordered to begin at the age of 7 as a sign that all manners have been properly commanded in daily activities. At the age of 10, they may be hit (not hurting or insulting). Being hit is a warning, try not to let it happen. The age of 10 is a critical point for knowing Allah and knowing oneself (talents), and starting to have social responsibilities (Santosa 2018:261).

At the age of 10, the potential is ready to be strengthened and tested, so this is the hardest phase because children must enter the pre-*aqil baligh* training stage from the age of 10-14 years, which is the preparation stage to be able to bear the burden of sharia when puberty arrives, including independence in livelihood and the ability to pay zakat, jihad and other social responsibilities. Things that are allowed to be done to children aged 10 years, including; 1) May be "beaten" if they leave prayer, this is an indicator of knowing Allah or the nature of faith must be complete. 2) Bedrooms must be separated between men and women as well as with their father and mother. This is done in order to focus on undergoing the pre-*aqil baligh* training period. 3) Talents begin to be recognized and explored and developed as an effort to achieve the role of civilization (civilization mission). At the age of 10 to 14 is the golden age for the nature of talent. Generally children have reached puberty (menstruation or *ihtilam*) at the age of 10 to 12 years, therefore at the age of 10 to 14 years is the stage

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when children become aware or mature mentally, spiritually, emotionally and even financially when they reach the age of 14 to 15 years. At this stage children must be busy with productive and solution-oriented activities or projects according to their nature. So that there is not too much of a gap between baligh and aqil as the social and educational system today which has been confusing for a long time since the age of 12 to 24 years. Various delinquencies and deviations of the younger generation are due to the gap between the period of baligh (biological adulthood) and aqil (mental adulthood) caused by social systems and school systems that slow down maturity through long infantization (Santosa 2018:262).

Aqil baligh is a term in Islam that links puberty with a person's obligation to the Creator for the changes that occur in him (Indonesian Ulema Council 2016:7). Aqil baligh for elementary school age begins at the age of 10, precisely around grade 5 of elementary school. At this stage, children need a serious training stage to immediately be able to carry out the sharia (mukallaf) and be independent or mature mentally, spiritually, emotionally and even financially when they reach the age of 14-15 years (Santosa 2018:262). Meanwhile, the meaning of baligh which is usually associated with the word aqil comes from Arabic, namely 'aqala which means to be rational, to know, and to understand. Namely, someone who is healthy, has a perfect mind, can differentiate between good and bad, right and wrong, knows and understands obligations, knows which rules are allowed and which are prohibited and understands what is beneficial and what is harmful, in a conscious state without pressure, is not a child, nor is he an elderly person who experiences memory weakness, is not sleeping, is not drunk or crazy (Aynun 2018:42).

Aqil is a condition of achieving psychological, social, financial maturity, and the ability to bear sharia responsibilities. Baligh means to arrive, which is a condition of achieving biological maturity with reproductive maturity, while the meaning of aqil can also be interpreted as a person who is old enough (Santosa 2018:320). In the science of fiqh, the age of baligh is used as a requirement to become a mukallaf, namely someone who knows or understands the law and has reached a certain age to be burdened with sharia law (taklif). The indications regarding the terms mukallaf and taklif are as explained in the Qur'an, Surah al-Baqarah verse 286. In this verse, there is the term yukallifu which means burden. Mukallaf is someone who is able to carry out legal actions so that Allah gives responsibility (burden) with the obligation to carry out all commands and avoid all prohibitions of Allah. A person who has fulfilled the criteria of Aqil baligh has the ability to act and has reached maturity (Indonesian Ulema Council 2016:10).

The concept of Islamic education, children should be adults at the age of 15, and can be fully responsible (taklif) in matters of worship, muamalat, munakahah and jinayat (justice) no later than the age of 17 for women and 18 for men. At the age of 21, boys should be completely free from their parents, but must foster closeness and maintain obedience to their parents (Adzim 2005:7). Aqil baligh is a religious term that links puberty with a person's obligations to the Creator. Aqil baligh are two words with different meanings but both are characteristics used to indicate that someone is bound by the obligation to obey the law or in other words is called mukallaf (Indonesian Ulema Council 2016:9).

Baligh is fully mature, not just a 'teenager', we call them 'youth' which is syabab in Arabic, or fata because it contains passion that leads to dynamics. Youth are also a group of adults, only they are called youth specifically because they have dynamics and passion for life. Youth meet the requirements of physical maturity and at the same time mental maturity. Physical and mental should be together (Adriano Rusfi 2023:25).

Islamic legal theory explains that the span of human life is divided into two stages. The first stage of Ahliyah al-wujub (people who have no responsibilities and only have rights); and the second stage is Ahliyat al-ada' (the person responsible for implementing the taklif). Each stage is divided into two development cycles. The first stage is divided into two developmental cycles, namely the alijtinani cycle (child in the womb) and the al-thufulah cycle (early childhood). Meanwhile, the second stage is divided into the al-tamyiz cycle (school age, 7-14 years) and the bulugh 'aqil-an cycle (puberty age, or maturity) (Fadlullah 2017).

A person who has fulfilled the criteria for aqil baligh is called a mukallaf or someone who is able to carry the burden of the law or is able to carry out all of Allah's commands and abandon His prohibitions. A person's ability to accept legal burdens or responsibilities is measured by the perfection of reason and the perfection of reason is determined in two ways, namely; first with the typical characteristics of maturity such as menstruation for women or ihtilam (sperm discharge) for both men and women. Second, by reaching a certain age. If a person does not have the characteristics of maturity due to a physical disorder, then the age of maturity is set at 15 years for both men and women (Yahya and Rahman 1986:168). Since this period of maturity, a human being has assumed all responsibility for himself for various words and actions that contain rewards or sins from the perspective of the Islamic religion. So in education it is necessary to provide understanding and readiness to assume responsibility when they reach adulthood. He should no longer be seen as a teenager but as an adult in the view of Islam.

3. Results and Discussion

The Aqil Baligh period is a very crucial period for a Muslim. This period became the boundary between *mumayyiz* and *mukallaf*. Children who have attained Aqil Balig are said to be "*mukallaf*" or people who are required to observe Islamic law, so it is very important for educators to pay attention both in the school environment and in the family environment (parents) (Zain, 2015).

Pre- Aqil Baligh education is a preventive step to prepare children to face the physical and mental changes they will experience when they enter the aqil puberty period. By equipping them with the correct knowledge and understanding of aqil puberty, children can have a positive outlook and be prepared to carry out their religious obligations and social responsibilities well (Nur Aynun, 2018).

In the Aqil Baligh phase, children should have been instilled with awareness as human beings who have roles and responsibilities. The logical consequence of ignoring the awareness of roles and responsibilities of children who have reached Aqil Baligh is that many teenagers have not carried out their obligations properly. Nowadays, many children are still allowed to do any activity without them knowing the good and bad or whether the actions they do are right or wrong, a child is considered normal when he experiences shock, ignorance and uncertainty, resulting in excessive behavior which is often called juvenile delinquency. This is due to ignorance or the absence of direction that provides enlightenment about what and how should be done by people who have reached puberty (Wahidah, 2018).

Development is the process of increasing maturity and psychological function of humans. The developmental maturity experienced by humans will increase their abilities in the scope of that development (Talango 2020). In the Qur'an and hadith, the post-natal period (ages 0-4 years) is grouped based on the nature of its development, namely: 1) Age 0 - 7 years is called the pre-training stage, this is the golden age for the nature of faith. This phase consists of 2 phases, namely: the breastfeeding phase (0 - 2 years) and the post-breastfeeding phase (ages 2-7 years). 2) Age 7 - 10 years is called early pre-aqil baligh, this is the golden age for the nature of learning. 3) Age 10 - 14 years is called late pre-aqil baligh, this is the golden age for the nature of talent (Hajar Munawaroh 2021).

At each stage of age, all the potential of the child will grow or develop depending on how the educator's ability to develop it. At the age of 0 to 2 years, religion teaches that boys and girls should be close to their mothers during the breastfeeding period or process. At the age of 3 to 6 years, boys and girls should be close to their fathers and mothers in order to have rational and emotional balance. At the age of 7 to 10 years, boys should be brought closer to their fathers. This is because their egocentrism begins to subside and shifts to their sociocentrism. Boys must be taught to have moral responsibility. Boys must be guided to understand their social role by inviting them to pray in congregation, playing with their fathers as an effort to learn to live the role of men, how to behave and socialize later, by imitating the role of their fathers in the community. Likewise with girls, at this age, they must be brought close to their mothers so that their female and maternal roles grow. The mother must be able to be the first female figure to be remembered in the role of female sexuality. If the father and mother figures are not present at this stage, the potential for homosexuality or other sexual deviations will increase (Santosa 2018).

The next phase is the age phase of 10 to 14 years. Harry Santosa in (Suraiya 2022) emphasized that to educate children's sexual nature, boys must be brought closer to the mother figure and boys must be brought closer to the father figure. This is intended because at this phase, boys usually begin to be interested in the opposite sex. By bringing the boy closer to the mother figure, he will empathize directly from the closest female figure. From this closeness, it is hoped that boys will pay attention, understand and treat the opposite sex from a woman's perspective, not a man's perspective. Boys who do not have a close relationship with their mother figure will never understand how the thoughts, feelings and attitudes of the woman who will later become their life partner are and it is feared that the boy will be selfish and rude. Girls at the age phase of 10-14 years must be brought closer to the father figure. This is intended so that when they reach puberty and are attracted to the opposite sex, the child will be able to empathize directly from the closest male figure, namely his father. She will understand and treat men from a male perspective, not a female perspective. Harry Santosa said that at this stage, the father figure must be able to be a place to confide in for his daughter. A daughter who is not close to her father figure will most

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likely easily surrender her honor to a man who is considered capable of replacing her father figure. This stage is a critical stage because the peak of sexual nature is at its peak. At this age, students begin to seriously move towards their adult roles. Biologically, the reproductive role begins to emerge naturally, marked by wet dreams for boys and menstruation for girls and begins to be interested in the opposite sex. Islam teaches to separate the beds between boys and girls and there is a warning not to leave prayers anymore. This is a form of strengthening their nature towards aqil baligh, including how to act as adult men and women and the role of fatherhood.

4. Conclusion

Aqil is a condition of achieving psychological, social, financial maturity, and the ability to bear sharia responsibilities. Baligh means to reach, which is a condition of achieving biological maturity with reproductive maturity while the meaning of aqil can also be interpreted as a person who is old enough. Baligh is fully mature, not just a 'teenager', we call them 'youth' which is syabab in Arabic, or fata because it contains passion that leads to dynamics. Youth fulfills the requirements of physical maturity and at the same time mental maturity. Physical and mental should be together. A person who has fulfilled the criteria of aqil baligh is called mukallaf or someone who is able to bear the burden of law or is able to carry out all of Allah's commands and leave His prohibitions. A person's ability to accept the burden of law or responsibility is measured by the perfection of reason and the perfection of reason is determined in two ways, namely; first with the characteristics of maturity such as menstruation for women or ihtilam (ejaculation of sperm) for both men and women. Second by reaching a certain age. If the characteristics of maturity are not found in a person due to physical disorders, then the age of maturity is set at 15 years for both men and women.

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