



## The Concept of Development in Ibnu Khaldun's Thought

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### Article Info

#### Article history:

Received 25 October 2023

Received in revised form 23

November 2023

Accepted 17 December 2023

#### Keywords:

Development

Ibn Khaldun

Islam

### Abstract

*Development is a complex and multidimensional process involving social, economic, political and environmental aspects in a society or country. Initially, development was interpreted as a process that only involved economic aspects. However, along with the development of empirical thinking and experience, the concept of development is developing and involving other aspects such as social, political and environmental aspects. Ibnu Khaldun as a philosopher also had special thoughts regarding the concept of development by using Islamic religious values as the basis of his thinking. This article was written using a qualitative method with descriptive presentation and using secondary data in the form of literature study. The results of writing this article illustrate that the concept of development in Ibn Khaldun's thinking is a social process related to the progress of society from one level of civilization to a higher level. This process occurs through three phases: formation, growth, and decline. Ibnu Khaldun also offered solutions for building the nation and state with three approaches, namely: First, starting development with a focus on the quality of human resources, Second, strengthening government solidly and Third, prioritizing human development over physical development. Ibnu Khaldun also offered the concept of development, especially in the economic sector, which consists of four important roles, namely: First, the role of humans or Ar-Rijal, Second, the link between development or Al-Imarah and justice or Al-Adl, Third, the role of institutions and government, and Fourth, the role of wealth or Al-Mal. Ibn Khaldun's views are still relevant today and can provide inspiration for sustainable development in the future.*

## Introduction

Development is a complex and multidimensional process involving social, economic, political and environmental aspects in a society or country. Since the 19th century, the concept of development has become an increasingly important concern for many countries in the world that want to achieve progress and prosperity for their people. Initially, development was interpreted as a process that only involved economic aspects, namely increasing production, income and economic growth. The aim is to realize community prosperity through economic development whose success can be seen from economic growth, economic structure and the level of inequality between populations, between regions and between sectors (Marini, 2016). However, along with the development of thought and empirical experience, the concept of development is developing and involving other aspects such as social, political and environmental aspects.

The concept of development began to become the focus of attention in the international arena after World War II. At that time, many countries in the world experienced infrastructure damage and economic chaos due to war. In an effort to restore this condition, international organizations such as the United Nations (UN) and the World Bank were formed which provide

support in the form of loans and assistance to countries experiencing difficulties. In other words, the focus of development at that time was only on economic aspects and often ignored social and environmental aspects.

In recent years, the concept of development has begun to shift and pay attention to social and environmental aspects, which has become known as sustainable development. Sustainable development is a development concept that includes three main dimensions, namely economic, social and environmental. Sustainable Development Goals or what is known as Sustainable Development Programs or SDGs have broader goals which include social, economic, environmental and institutional dimensions which are detailed in 17 goals and 169 targets. Furthermore, this target is combined into various indicators to measure the extent of its achievement (Setianingtyas et al., 2019). This development concept has evolved and includes many other dimensions, such as gender equality, human rights, health and education.

However, apart from all that, the concept of development has been studied long before by many thinkers, both western and Islamic thinkers. These concepts are still widely adopted and applied to this day. One of them is the development concept initiated by Ibnu Khaldun by using Islamic religious values as the basis of his thinking. This concept is still applied because it is always relevant to current problems. This is because Islamic values are very flexible and open to application in different era contexts, including in development aspects. This article aims to describe the concept of development in Ibn Khaldun's thinking, starting from the phases in the social process of society, approaches to building the nation and state, to the important role of development.

## Methods

This article was written using a qualitative method that reveals descriptive data as an approach to a general understanding of the focus and topic of writing. This article was written using secondary data sources obtained through literature study and using data collection techniques by collecting various references related to the topic discussed. This literature is in the form of books, scientific journals and electronic publications which are prepared based on the results of studies from the information obtained.

## Results and Discussion

Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406), a Muslim scientist and philosopher of history, developed an innovative view of development from an Islamic perspective. This view is expounded in his famous work, "Muqaddimah", which discusses about history, science, and civilization. Ibnu Khaldun explained that to build a region or country, it requires the existence of power or government that is able to control other groups in society. This power is obtained through consolidation or shared awareness in building the country. Currently, leaders elected by the majority of society have the right to become head of state and rule. According to Ibnu Khaldun, this power is achieved because of pleasant interests, such as material and non-material pleasures, spiritual satisfaction, as well as things that are visible and invisible. However, to achieve this, complex and tight competition is needed because only a few leaders are willing to give up their power voluntarily. Ibnu Khaldun defines development as a social process related to the progress of society from one level of civilization to a higher level. This process occurs through three phases: formation, growth, and decline.

In the formation phase, society was still primitive and simply organized. They live in small groups and depend on natural resources for their life. At this stage, society builds relationships between groups and introduces social and cultural values that are important in shaping their identity. In the growth phase, society experiences rapid developments in science and technology. They introduced more complex social and political systems and adapted to their

environment. At this stage, communities have the ability to generate wealth and expand their territory. However, this growth phase can also be the end of society's progress. If society loses the spirit of innovation and development, then they can experience setbacks. In the decline phase, societies lose their ability to create and maintain wealth, and their environment declines. According to Karim & Suhaini (2020), the main factor for avoiding this setback is to return to the true teachings of Islam which are oriented towards *falah* orientation, namely towards prosperity in the world and happiness in the afterlife. In Ibnu Khaldun's view, development does not only talk about economic development, but also about the social and cultural development of society. He believes that a balance between economic, social and cultural aspects is very important in ensuring sustainable development. Ibn Khaldun also stated that factors such as climate, geography and military strength were very influential development of society. Apart from that, cultural factors, such as customs, religion and traditions also play an important role in forming people's identities and behavior patterns.

Ibnu Khaldun in Kadir (2014) also offers a solution for building a nation and state with three approaches, namely: First, starting development with a focus on the quality of human resources, by providing a correct understanding to the people that mutual awareness and solidarity are the keys to competing as a nation. Others who have the potential to carry out physical or mental colonization. In this case, Ibnu Khaldun proposed the concept of "Ashabiyyah" or social solidarity as an important factor in development. Strong social solidarity can encourage people to work together and innovate to achieve progress. However, if social solidarity weakens, society can become divided and it will be difficult to achieve common goals. Ibnu Khaldun made the analogy that if in general social ties, strong ties are needed to build mutual relations, then in a political leadership where submission is one of the clearest forms of legitimacy, it certainly requires a stronger bond. For this reason, ethnicity based on closer kinship ties is more needed in nation building through a bond of leadership (Rolis & Harnadi, 2021).

Second, strengthening solid government between state leaders and managers so that the nation will be strong. Ibnu Khaldun also emphasized the importance of good leaders in community development. According to him, a quality leader must have the ability to build social solidarity, lead with just policies, and make decisions based on a balance between individual interests and the interests of society. Third, prioritize human development over physical development, because the quality of physical development is very dependent on human resources. Ibnu Khaldun also suggested an education system based on the *aqli* and *naqli* curriculum, namely educational material based on philosophy and science as a driving force for national development from a physical perspective and sciences originating from Allah's revelation as the basis for building the nation's mental and psychological state, referred to as *fardhu 'ain* science, which will bring blessings to its claimants in this world and the hereafter. Hasibuan & Rahmawati (2022) added that formal and informal institutions in the Islamic education system help build a healthy community environment from a moral and spiritual perspective. If implemented well, it will serve as an effective means of building a stable society. Apart from that, Ibnu Khaldun in Arifqi (2019) also offers a development concept, especially in the economic sector, which consists of four important roles, namely: First, the role of humans or *Ar-Rijal*, where humans have distinctive characteristics such as having knowledge and skills obtained from thinking, require influence that can control community organizations, are able to carry out various efforts to create a livelihood, and want an advanced civilization. Second, the link between development or *Al-Imarah* and justice or *Al-Adl*, where development and justice are important relationships in the chain of cause and effect in the rise and fall of a country. Third, the role of institutions and government, where regulations will be meaningless if they are not implemented fairly and impartially, and an authority is needed that can

implement all rules, instructions and guidelines. Fourth, the role of wealth or Al-Mal, where wealth is important in life, because wealth can provide the main ingredients needed to ensure justice and development run well, as well as creating social welfare. Ibnu Khaldun also emphasized the importance of division of labor and specifications for building a nation and state. Overall, Ibn Khaldun's view of development places humans and society at the center of attention. He considers that the success of development is not only determined by economic factors, but also by social, cultural and political factors which are interconnected with each other. This view is still relevant today and can provide inspiration for sustainable development in the future.

## Conclusion

The concept of development in Ibn Khaldun's thinking is a social process related to the progress of society from one level of civilization to a higher level. This process occurs through three phases: formation, growth, and decline. Ibnu Khaldun also offers solutions for building the nation and state with three approaches, namely: First, starting development with a focus on the quality of human resources, Second, strengthening government solidly and Third, prioritizing human development rather than physical development. Ibnu Khaldun also offered the concept of development, especially in the economic sector, which consists of four important roles, namely: First, the role of humans or Ar-Rijal, Second, the link between development or Al-Imarah and justice or Al-Adl, Third, the role of institutions and government, and Fourth, the role of wealth or Al-Mal. Ibn Khaldun's views are still relevant today and can provide inspiration for sustainable development in the future.

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