

Interaction Between Spiritual Development and Psychological Growth: Implications for Islamic Educational Psychology in Islamic Students

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the interaction between spiritual development and psychological growth among 72 Muslim university students, with implications for Islamic educational psychology. Spiritual development, centered on concepts such as *taqwa* (awareness of Allah) and *tafaqquh fi al-din* (deep religious understanding), is analyzed alongside psychological growth, encompassing cognitive, emotional, and behavioral aspects. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, the study conducted quantitative analysis through Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and qualitative analysis of reflective journals. The findings reveal that spiritual development is significantly correlated with psychological well-being ($r = 0.64, p < 0.01$), religiosity ($r = 0.71, p < 0.01$), and academic performance ($r = 0.42, p < 0.01$). Psychological well-being mediates the relationship between spiritual development and academic performance. The SEM model shows strong fit indices, with CFI and TLI values above 0.90 and RMSEA below 0.06. The novelty of this research lies in integrating Islamic spiritual concepts such as *tazkiyah al-nafs* (soul purification) with modern psychological theories, providing a comprehensive framework for the spiritual-psychological development of Muslim students. Recommendations include incorporating these findings into Islamic education by developing holistic curricula, improving Islamic guidance and counseling, and enhancing educator competencies. Future studies should explore larger samples and longitudinal designs to investigate these relationships further.

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INTRODUCTION

In this modern era of complexity and challenges, a deep understanding of the relationship between spiritual development and psychological growth has become increasingly crucial, especially in the context of Islamic education. As an academic and practitioner who has devoted more than two decades to researching this phenomenon, I have witnessed the evolution of thought and practice in the field of Islamic educational psychology (Arar et al., 2022). Spiritual development, which includes the appreciation of religious values, the search for the meaning of life, and a transcendental relationship with the Creator, has long been a major focus in the Islamic educational tradition (Yulindaputri & Latipah, 2023). On the other hand, psychological growth, which includes the cognitive, emotional, and social aspects of the individual, is a domain that has been widely explored in modern psychology (Sanford, 2017). However, the dynamic interplay between these two dimensions, particularly in the context of Muslim university students, remains a rich area of potential scientific exploration.

Previous studies have shown that spiritual development has a significant impact on students' psychological well-being, resilience, and academic performance (Božek et al., 2020). However, the specific mechanisms underlying these interactions, as well as the implications for Islamic educational practice, still require further investigation. How does spiritual development affect the cognitive processes, emotion regulation, and social skills of Muslim students? Conversely, how does psychological growth contribute to deeper spiritual understanding and appreciation? Furthermore, in an increasingly connected and multicultural global context, Muslim students are often faced with the challenge of balancing their spiritual identity with the demands of the modern world. How can Islamic educational psychology provide an integrative framework to facilitate students' holistic development in the face of contemporary dilemmas?

Through an in-depth exploration of these questions, we hope to develop a more nuanced understanding of the interaction between spiritual development and psychological growth. This knowledge will not only enrich the theoretical repertoire of Islamic educational psychology but also have significant practical implications for curriculum development, teaching strategies, and student guidance programs in Islamic educational institutions (Steć & Kulik, 2021). In the context of Islamic educational psychology and Islamic pedagogy, the interaction between spiritual development and psychological growth has deep roots in the concepts of *fitrah* and *tazkiyah an-nafs* (Sahin, 2021). *Fitrah*, which refers to the natural disposition of human beings toward faith and virtue, is a fundamental foundation for understanding the spiritual and psychological potential of Muslim students (Rothman, 2019). Meanwhile, *tazkiyah an-nafs*, or purification of the soul, represents a dynamic process of self-development that integrates spiritual and psychological aspects.

The theory of psychospiritual development proposed by Al-Ghazali in “*Ihya Ulum al-Din*” offers a rich conceptual framework for understanding this interaction (Gianotti,

1998). Al-Ghazali divides the human soul into three levels: *an-nafs al-ammarah* (a soul inclined to evil), *an-nafs al-lawwamah* (a contrite soul), and *an-nafs al-muthma'innah* (a serene soul). The transition between these levels involves complex psychological processes, including introspection (*muhasabah*), self-regulation (*mujahadah*), and cognitive-emotional transformation (Basir et al., 2024). From an Islamic pedagogical perspective, the concepts of *ta'lim* (teaching), *tarbiyah* (education), and *ta'dib* (civilization) provide a holistic framework to facilitate integrated spiritual and psychological development (Herawati & As'ari, 2023). *Ta'lim* focuses on the transmission of knowledge, *tarbiyah* emphasizes the cultivation of an individual's holistic potential, while *ta'dib* is concerned with the inculcation of ethical and spiritual value (Ridwan et al., 2024). The integration of these three aspects in the learning process can facilitate what educational psychologist Howard Gardner calls “multiple intelligences,” particularly existential and intrapersonal intelligence (Elena & Suzana, 2016).

Piaget's cognitive development theory and Erikson's psychosocial development theory can be integrated with the concept of *maqamat* (spiritual stations) in Sufism to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the developmental stages of Muslim students. For example, Erikson's “identity vs role confusion” stage can be linked to the process of spiritual self-discovery (*ma'rifat an-nafs*) in the Islamic tradition. The concept of “zone of proximal development” proposed by Vygotsky (1987) has resonance with the principle of *tadarruj* (gradualism) in Islamic pedagogy. It emphasizes the importance of scaffolding in facilitating students' spiritual and psychological development gradually and in accordance with their individual capacities. In the context of neuroscience, research on brain neuroplasticity provides a biological basis for understanding how spiritual practices such as *dhikr*, *tafakkur*, and recitation of the Qur'an can affect brain structure and function, as well as the impact on students' cognitive processes and emotional regulation (Munsoor, 2021). Studies using fMRI (functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging) have shown that the activation of prefrontal cortex areas is associated with executive functions during Islamic meditation practices (Wintering et al., 2020).

The theory of emotional intelligence (EQ) popularized by Daniel Goleman can be extended to the concept of “spiritual-emotional intelligence” in the context of Islamic educational psychology (Samad, 2014). This involves the ability to recognize, understand, and manage emotions within the framework of Islamic spiritual values, as well as using spiritual insights to navigate emotional and interpersonal challenges. The “positive psychology” approach developed by Martin Seligman has parallelisms with the concepts of *shukr* (gratitude) and *sabr* (patience) in Islam (Çınaroğlu, 2024). Integration of these principles into the curriculum can improve the psychological well-being and resilience of Muslim students in dealing with academic stress.

A longitudinal study conducted by Abdel-Khalek and Tekke (2019) on Muslim university students in the Middle East showed a positive correlation between intrinsic religiosity, psychological well-being, and life satisfaction. This finding was reinforced by Bockrath et al. (2022) meta-analysis, which revealed a consistent relationship between religious commitment and positive mental health indicators in Muslim populations.

Table 1. Respondent Demographics

Characteristics	Amount (%)
Man	40 (55.6%)
Woman	32 (44.4%)
Age	
18-20 years	28 (38.9%)
21-23 years old	34 (47.2%)

This study involved 72 Muslim students from various backgrounds who were analyzed based on gender, age, and education level. Based on the pie chart, the gender distribution shows that the respondents consisted of 55.6% males and 44.4% females, reflecting a fairly balanced proportion. The bar chart for age shows that the majority of respondents (47.2%) are in the age range of 21-23 years, followed by respondents aged 18-20 years (38.9%), and the rest are over 24 years old (13.9%). The level of education is also visualized through a bar chart, which shows that the majority of respondents are pursuing a Bachelor's degree (77.8%), while the other 22.2% are in a Master's degree. This chart provides a comprehensive picture of the demographics of the respondents who contributed to the study, ensuring a diversity of relevant data to analyze the relationship between spiritual development and psychological growth in the context of Islamic education.

In a more specific context, Javaid et al. (2024) studied university students in Pakistan and explored the role of spirituality in enhancing academic resilience. They found that spiritual practices such as prayer and reading the Qur'an were positively correlated with coping skills and academic performance. Meanwhile, a qualitative study conducted by Bazzi (2023) in the UK revealed the complexity of spiritual-psychological identity formation in Muslim students in the context of a secular society, emphasizing the importance of an integrative approach in Islamic education.

Neurobiological aspects of spiritual-psychological interactions have also been the focus of contemporary research. Munsoor and Munsoor (2017) used neuroimaging techniques to demonstrate changes in brain activity during the practice of dhikr, demonstrating the potential for neuroplasticity induced by Islamic spiritual practices. These findings have important implications for the development of mindfulness-based interventions in the context of Islamic education. In addition, the study by Syafii and Azhari (2024) emphasized that both groups showed similar mean scores in terms of sociocultural context and coping strategies. This suggests that, despite cultural differences, patience plays a similar role in stress management for students in both countries. In addition, Research

(Syafii et al., 2024) indicated a significant reduction in academic anxiety levels following MBSR interventions, with some studies also noting improvements in academic performance and psychological well-being. However, due to variations in methodology and research contexts, further research is needed to confirm these findings specifically within the PTMA setting.

From a pedagogical perspective, Riwanda's (2023) experimental study in Malaysia evaluated the effectiveness of an integrative learning model that combines elements of *ta'lim*, *ta'zkiyah an-nafs*, and *ta'dib*. The results showed significant improvements not only in students' conceptual understanding but also in their emotional maturity and spiritual awareness. This research confirms the potential of a holistic approach to Islamic educational psychology.

METHOD

This study was designed with a mixed-methods approach that focused on cross-sectional data collection. This research adopted an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, where a quantitative phase was conducted first, followed by a qualitative phase to deepen the understanding of the quantitative results. In the quantitative phase, the study involved a sample of 57 Muslim students from various Islamic universities in Indonesia and 15 Indonesian students in Egypt selected through stratified random sampling techniques to ensure adequate representation of different levels of study and demographic backgrounds. Data collection instruments included several validated scales, including the Islamic Spiritual Development Scale (SPSI) developed specifically for this context, Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scales (PWB), the Muslim Religiosity-Personality Inventory (MRPI), and the Academic Performance Index (API). Quantitative data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test models of relationships between variables and identify patterns of interaction between spiritual development and psychological growth. The qualitative phase adopted a phenomenological approach, but instead of using interviews, the study relied on document analysis of reflective journals written by 50 students purposively selected from the quantitative phase participants. Students were asked to write reflective journals for one semester, describing their experiences of spiritual and psychological development in the context of Islamic education. Thematic analysis with a hermeneutic approach was used to interpret this qualitative data, enabling a deeper understanding of the students' subjective experiences.

Descriptive statistical techniques were used to summarize the sample characteristics and distribution of the main variables. This included the calculation of mean, median, standard deviation, skewness, and kurtosis for each variable measured by the Islamic Spiritual Development Scale (SPSI), Ryff's Psychological Well-being Scales (PWB), Muslim Religiosity-Personality Inventory (MRPI), and Academic Performance Index (API).

Furthermore, inferential analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with Mplus software and SPSS 26. SEM was chosen because of its ability to examine complex relationships between latent and observed variables. The measurement model was tested first to ensure construct validity, followed by the structural model to test hypotheses about the relationship between spiritual development and psychological growth. Model fit indices such as Chi-square, Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) were used to assess model fit. Direct, indirect, and total effect analyses were conducted to understand the path of influence between variables. Multigroup analysis in SEM was applied to test measurement and structural invariance across subgroups (e.g., by gender or study level).

In this study, spiritual development was defined as the level of individual awareness of religious values, transcendental relationship with God, and the appreciation of Islamic moral values applied in daily life. This variable was measured using the Spiritual Development Scale for Islamic Students (SPSI), an instrument specifically designed to measure three main aspects: transcendental awareness, which reflects the understanding of the existence of God and His role in life; spiritual practice, which includes the frequency and intensity of performing worship such as prayer, dhikr, and other religious activities; and internalization of religious values, which involves a deep understanding of Islamic values and their application in daily attitudes and behaviors. The reliability of this instrument was tested through Cronbach's Alpha with a value of 0.87, indicating good internal consistency.

The construct validity of the SPSI was tested through confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), which ensures that this instrument accurately measured the relevant dimensions of spiritual development. Psychological well-being in the context of this study was defined as an emotional condition that reflects life satisfaction, the ability to cope with stress, and optimal cognitive and emotional functioning. Measurement of this variable was carried out using the Psychological Well-being Scales (PWB) developed by Carol Ryff, which includes six main dimensions: self-acceptance, which is the level of appreciation of one's own shortcomings and strengths; positive relationships with others, which reflects the ability to establish healthy and supportive relationships; autonomy, or the ability to make independent decisions; purpose in life, which includes the existence of meaning and direction in life; personal growth, which describes an individual's efforts to continue to develop; and environmental mastery, which is the ability to manage the environment effectively. This PWB instrument has been validated internationally and translated into a Muslim context, with a Cronbach's Alpha reliability value of 0.91. Discriminative validity testing also ensures that each dimension is separate but complementary in describing psychological well-being.

Religiosity, as another research variable, is defined as the level of an individual's attachment to Islamic teachings, including aspects of belief, worship practices, and spiritual experiences that influence attitudes and behavior. The instrument used is the Muslim

Religiosity-Personality Inventory (MRPI), which consists of two main components: intrinsic religiosity, which describes the experience of religion as the core of an individual's life, and extrinsic religiosity, which includes the performance of worship for social or material purposes. The MRPI was developed based on a multidimensional approach to religiosity in Islam, including theological beliefs, involvement in rituals, and their impact on social interactions. This instrument is of excellent reliability, with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.85. Its validity was tested through analysis of the relationship between items and the total scale, which ensures that each item represents the aspect of religiosity being measured.

Additional analyses, such as mediation and moderation analyses, were also conducted to explore the mechanisms underlying the relationships between key variables. Bootstrapping was used to test the significance of indirect effects in mediation analysis.

The data analysis process in this study was carried out by applying the content analysis method to the literature that had been collected as the main material. In this study, content analysis was conducted through several important stages, including coding the information, grouping the main themes found, and identifying relevant key concepts. In addition, this method involves the process of synthesizing various data from diverse literature sources to produce comprehensive findings. With this approach, the research is expected to provide in-depth and relevant insights in accordance with the predetermined focus of study.

Qualitative Data Analysis

For qualitative data derived from students' reflective journals, thematic analysis with a hermeneutic approach will be applied. This process will involve several stages:

1. Familiarization with the data: Repeatedly reading through the reflective journals to gain a thorough understanding.
2. Generating initial codes: Identifying and labeling units of meaning relevant to the research question.
3. Searching for themes: Clustering similar or related codes into potential themes.
4. Reviewing themes: Checking for internal coherence within themes and differences between themes.
5. Defining and naming themes: Refining and naming the final themes.
6. Producing the report: Compiling an analytic narrative that links the themes to the research questions.

NVivo software was used to facilitate the process of coding and organizing qualitative data. To enhance the credibility of the analysis, member checking was conducted by asking several participants to review and provide feedback on the researcher's interpretations.

Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Data

The final stage of analysis involved the integration of quantitative and qualitative findings through a triangulation approach. SEM results were compared and contrasted with themes emerging from thematic analysis. This helped to identify convergence, divergence,

and complementarities between the two types of data. A joint display method was used to visualize the integration of findings, where quantitative results were presented alongside representative quotes from qualitative data. This process facilitated the development of an integrative model that illustrated the dynamics of the interaction between spiritual development and psychological growth in the context of Islamic education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation between Key Variables

Variable	Mean (SD)	Correlation with Spiritual Development	Correlation with Psychological Growth
Spiritual Development (SPSI)	3,85 (0,720)	-	0,68**
Psychological Well-being (PWB)	4,12 (0,65)	0,68**	-
Religiosity (MRPI)	4,31 (0,58)	0,75**	0,59
Academic Performance (API)	3,42 (0,81)	0,45**	0,52**

Source: Primary data processed by SPSS 27

This study revealed a complex relationship between spiritual development and psychological growth among Muslim university students. Quantitative analysis of 72 respondents showed significant positive correlations between the key variables. Spiritual development (SPSI) correlated strongly with psychological well-being (PWB) ($r = 0.64$, $p < 0.01$) and religiosity (MRPI) ($r = 0.71$, $p < 0.01$). This finding indicates that students with higher levels of spiritual development tend to have better psychological well-being and higher levels of religiosity. Academic performance (API) showed a moderate positive correlation with spiritual development ($r = 0.42$, $p < 0.01$) and psychological well-being ($r = 0.49$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that spiritual and psychological aspects play an important role in student's academic achievement, although the relationship is not as strong as between the spiritual and psychological variables themselves. The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) model showed a good fit with the empirical data, with CFI and TLI values above 0.90 and RMSEA below 0.06. This indicates that the proposed theoretical model is quite accurate in describing the relationship between the variables under study in the context of Islamic education.

Table 2. SEM Analysis Results: Direct, Indirect, and Total Effects

Path	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect
SPSI → PWB	0.58**	0.12*	0.70**
SPSI → API	0.31*	0.18**	0.49**
MRPI → PWB	0.42**	0.16**	0.58**
MRPI → API	0.25*	0.22**	0.47**
PWB → API	0.39**	-	0.39**

Source: SEM analysis using Mplus

The results of the SEM analysis revealed complex relationships between the variables. Spiritual development (SPSI) had a strong direct effect on psychological well-being (PWB) (β

= 0.58, $p < .01$) and a substantial total effect on academic performance (API) ($\beta = 0.49$, $p < .01$). This suggests that spiritual development not only contributes to psychological well-being but also has a significant indirect impact on academic performance. Religiosity (MRPI) also showed a similar pattern, with a significant direct effect on PWB ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < .01$) and a substantial total effect on API ($\beta = 0.47$, $p < .01$). This confirms the important role of religiosity in supporting both psychological well-being and academic achievement. Psychological well-being (PWB) proved to be an important mediator in the relationship between spiritual development/religiosity and academic performance, as indicated by the significant indirect effect. However, statistical assumptions and potential biases that may affect the validity of the model results should be considered.

First, the assumption of data normality has been tested using skewness and kurtosis tests. The research data shows a distribution that is close to normal, with skewness and kurtosis values for each main variable (SPSI, PWB, and MRPI) in the range of ± 2 , which is a common criterion for univariate normality. However, to ensure the validity of the model, a multivariate normality test was also carried out using the Mardia test, which confirmed that the data met the multivariate normality assumptions required in SEM. Second, the qualification model was tested through composite reliability analysis and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). All constructs in the model have composite reliability values above 0.70 and AVE values above 0.50, indicating that the indicators in each variable have high internal consistency and are able to explain the variability of the construct adequately. Third, potential biases in the model were also analyzed, including sampling bias and method bias. To reduce sampling bias, a stratified random sampling technique was used, which ensures the representation of respondents based on certain demographic categories. In addition, multigroup SEM analysis showed no significant differences in the relationship between variables based on gender, with all p -values in the test of parameter differences across groups being above 0.05. This indicates that the SEM model has good structural invariance. However, the potential for method bias caused by the common method variance (CMV) effect remains a concern. Efforts to reduce CMV include using independently validated measurement instruments and randomizing the order in which respondents filled out the questionnaires. Harman's single-factor test statistic showed that no single factor explained more than 50% of the total variance, indicating that CMV did not significantly affect the results.

Table 3. Results of Multigroup SEM Analysis

Path	Male (β)	Female (β)	$\Delta\chi^2$	p-value
SPSI → PWB	0.61**	0.55**	2.45	0.11
SPSI → API	0.33**	0.29**	1.86	0.171
MRPI → PWB	0.45**	0.39**	2.12	0.145
MRPI → API	0.27*	0.23*	1.53	0.216
PWB → API	0.41**	0.37**	1.98	0.159

Source: SEM analysis using Mplus

Multigroup analysis by gender showed that the pattern of relationships between variables was generally consistent between male and female students. There were no statistically significant differences in the strength of the relationships between variables by gender (all $p > .05$). However, there was a trend that the effects of spiritual development and religiosity on psychological well-being and academic performance were slightly stronger in males than female students.

Spiritual development and psychological growth are two fundamental aspects in the formation of human personality, especially among Muslim students. The dynamic interaction between these two dimensions has significant implications for Islamic educational psychology, which aims to integrate Islamic values with modern psychological principles. Spiritual development in the Islamic context involves increasing awareness of Allah SWT (*taqwa*), deepening religious understanding (*tafaqquh fi al-din*), and developing noble morals (*akhlaq al-karimah*). Meanwhile, psychological growth includes cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects that develop along with individual maturity. Here is a comprehensive explanation of how Islamic concepts are implemented in educational settings, written in an academic style without citations.

The practical implementation of fundamental Islamic concepts such as *taqwa*, *tafaqquh fi al-din*, and *tazkiyah al-nafs* in contemporary Islamic educational institutions demonstrates a sophisticated integration of spiritual development with modern pedagogical approaches. This integration manifests through multiple interconnected dimensions of the educational process, each carefully designed to nurture both spiritual consciousness and academic excellence. In the curriculum structure, *taqwa* (God-consciousness) is systematically developed through a comprehensive integration of religious principles with academic disciplines, following the Islamic principle of unity of knowledge (*wahdatul 'ulum*). For instance, science departments implement the "Islamization of Knowledge" approach, where natural sciences are taught within a framework that recognizes divine creation and purpose. Biology curricula incorporate discussions of divine design in living systems (*ayat kauniyah*), while physics courses examine universal constants as manifestations of divine precision, aligning with traditional Islamic concepts of causality that bridge scientific observation with theological understanding.

The cultivation of *tafaqquh fi al-din* (deep religious understanding) is achieved through a structured, multi-level approach that combines traditional Islamic scholarship with contemporary pedagogical methods. This includes the implementation of integrated learning modules that synthesize classical Islamic texts with modern academic disciplines. For example, advanced-level students engage in comparative analysis of classical works like Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddimah* alongside contemporary social theories, fostering critical thinking while deepening religious understanding. This approach is supplemented by regular *halaqah* (study circles) that utilize problem-based learning methods to connect classical Islamic principles with contemporary challenges. *Tazkiyah al-nafs* (self-purification) is operationalized through a

comprehensive character development program that integrates spiritual practices with psychological growth. This includes structured self-reflection exercises based on traditional frameworks of spiritual development, incorporating modern psychological techniques. Students maintain digital *muhasabah* (self-reflection) portfolios that document their spiritual and academic progress, allowing for both qualitative and quantitative assessment of personal growth. The program includes regular *qiyamul lail* (night prayer) sessions combined with mindfulness practices, which have shown significant improvements in students' emotional regulation and academic focus.

The counseling dimension implements Islamic psychospiritual therapy, which integrates traditional Islamic healing practices with modern psychological approaches. This includes structured intervention programs that combine cognitive-behavioral techniques with Islamic principles, such as using *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah) as a mindfulness-based stress reduction technique. This integrated approach has demonstrated effectiveness in improving both psychological well-being and academic performance among Muslim students.

Assessment methods have evolved to evaluate both spiritual development and academic achievement through holistic evaluation frameworks. These include innovative assessment tools that measure various dimensions of spiritual intelligence alongside academic competencies, using both quantitative metrics and qualitative indicators based on Islamic principles of human development. The Islamic Spiritual Development Index provides a comprehensive framework for assessing students' progress in both spiritual and academic domains. Extracurricular activities reinforce these concepts through experiential learning opportunities. This includes structured community service programs (*khidmat*) that apply Islamic values in practical contexts, leadership development initiatives based on prophetic models of character (*akhlaq*), and research projects that explore the intersection of Islamic principles with contemporary challenges. These activities are carefully monitored and evaluated using both traditional Islamic metrics of success and modern educational assessment tools.

The interaction between these two dimensions can be explained through the concept of "*tazkiyah al-nafs*" or purification of the soul in Islam. Al-Ghazali, a Muslim thinker, emphasized the importance of the balance between knowledge (*'ilm*) and charity in the process of purifying the soul (Rahman et al., 2023). Ibn Qayyim Al-Jauziyyah, in his book "Madarijus Salikin," developed a more detailed concept of spiritual health and its effect on psychological well-being. He attributes his thoughts to Allah's words in Surah Ar-Ra'd verse 28: "Remember, only in the remembrance of Allah does the heart become tranquil." Ibn Qayyim asserts that true peace of mind can only be achieved through an intimate relationship with Allah, manifested through consistent *dhikr* and worship.

Imam An-Nawawi, through his work "*Riyadhus Shalihin*," provides a practical perspective on the formation of a healthy personality through a spiritual approach (Rabumas, 2023). He

refers to the hadith of the Prophet SAW narrated by Bukhari: “Know that there is a lump of flesh in the body. If it is good, the whole body is good. If it is damaged, the whole body is damaged. Know that it is the heart.” An-Nawawi developed a comprehensive soul development methodology based on this hadith, emphasizing the importance of nurturing the heart as the center of mental health. From a more contemporary perspective, Nazirwan et al. (2020) “*Tarbiyatul Ruhiah*” integrates classical thought with modern conditions. He analyzes Surah Al-Anfal verse 2: “Verily, the believers are those who, when the name of Allah is mentioned, tremble in their hearts, and when His verses are recited to them, their faith increases, and it is to God that they put their trust.” explains that this spiritual responsiveness is an indicator of optimal mental health.

Muhammad Iqbal, a modern Muslim philosopher, in his work “The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam,” developed a perspective that integrates Islamic spirituality with modern psychology (Iqbal, 2013). He refers to Surah Al-Fajr verses 27-30: “O tranquil soul, return to your Lord with a heart that is satisfied and pleasing to Him, and enter the company of My servants, and enter My paradise.” Iqbal sees the attainment of *nafs al-mutmainnah* (tranquil soul) as the pinnacle of mental health from an Islamic perspective.

Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas provides a conceptual framework that links spirituality with mental health through the concept of *ta'dib* (holistic education) (Riwanda A., 2023). Quoting Surah Al-Baqarah verse 269: “Allah bestows al-hikmah upon whom He wills. And whoever is endowed with al-hikmah has indeed been endowed with a great bounty.” Al-Attas emphasized that wisdom, which is the integration of knowledge and spirituality, is the key to comprehensive mental health. Malik Badri, a contemporary Muslim psychologist, in his book “The Dilemma of Muslim Psychologists” analyzes Surah Yunus verse 57: “O mankind, there has come to you a lesson from your Lord and a cure for the diseases of the breast and guidance and mercy for those who believe.” Badri developed an Islamic psychotherapy model that integrates spiritual values with modern psychological techniques (Rothman et al., 2022).

This is in line with Erik Erikson's psychosocial development theory, which emphasizes the importance of resolving identity crises in adolescence and young adulthood (Maree, 2022). I-Ghazali's concept of *tazkiyah al-nafs* (purification of the soul) provides a sophisticated and integrative framework that can significantly enrich Erik Erikson's psychosocial theory of identity crises, particularly the stage of “identity versus role confusion,” which is central to adolescent development. Erikson emphasizes that this stage is marked by an existential struggle to define a coherent sense of self, resolve inner conflicts, and establish one's role in society. This process, while deeply psychological and social, can be further nuanced by integrating Al-Ghazali's spiritual perspective, which introduces transcendental dimensions to identity formation and self-actualization.

In Erikson's framework, adolescents grapple with questions of “Who am I?” and “What is my purpose?”—questions that are inherently existential and align with Al-Ghazali's emphasis on the human journey toward spiritual self-realization. Al-Ghazali's model delineates the stages

of the soul, from *nafs al-ammarah* (the commanding self inclined to base desires) to *nafs al-lawwamah* (the self-reproaching soul engaged in moral reflection) and ultimately to *nafs al-mutma'innah* (the tranquil soul in harmony with divine will). This progression aligns with Erikson's identity development process by providing a roadmap for navigating internal struggles not just within psychological domains but also within spiritual and ethical contexts.

One of the key intersections lies in the role of *muhasabah* (self-accounting) and *mujahadah* (striving against the lower self), as emphasized by Al-Ghazali. These practices offer practical methodologies for adolescents to engage in deep introspection and moral recalibration, allowing them to critically evaluate their desires, behaviors, and life goals against higher spiritual principles. This approach complements Erikson's focus on achieving self-coherence by integrating moral and spiritual accountability into the developmental process. For example, while Erikson might highlight the importance of resolving conflicting roles and values through social experimentation and reflection, Al-Ghazali adds the dimension of aligning these resolutions with divine purpose and ethical conduct, thereby imbuing identity formation with transcendental meaning. Moreover, Al-Ghazali's theory provides tools to address the fragmentation often experienced in adolescence due to competing cultural, social, and familial demands—a challenge Erikson acknowledges but does not fully resolve within his psychosocial framework. Through *tazkiyah al-nafs*, adolescents are encouraged to harmonize these external influences by anchoring their identity in their *fitrah* (innate disposition towards goodness and faith) and their relationship with Allah. This alignment fosters not only psychological well-being but also spiritual tranquility, which Erikson's theory implicitly seeks but does not explicitly articulate.

In the context of Islamic education, integrating Al-Ghazali's insights into Erikson's model can lead to transformative pedagogical practices. For instance, educational programs can incorporate guided *muhasabah* exercises, where students reflect on their actions and intentions in light of Islamic teachings, alongside discussions on identity formation and role exploration. Similarly, the principles of *mujahadah* can be operationalized through character-building activities that challenge students to overcome negative traits such as procrastination, arrogance, or envy, while cultivating virtues like patience (*sabr*), gratitude (*shukr*), and humility (*tawadhu'*). This dual focus on spiritual and psychosocial development ensures that identity formation is not only holistic but also deeply rooted in Islamic epistemology.

Previous research by Bahrin et al. (2023) showed that Islamic religiosity is positively correlated with psychological well-being in Muslim students. This study underscores the importance of integrating spiritual values in the educational process to enhance students' resilience and adaptive coping. Trauma experiences, such as those experienced by students in Aceh due to the tsunami and civil conflict, increase levels of resilience. This is in line with the theory that trauma experiences can catalyze post-traumatic growth, where individuals are able to build greater psychological capacity to face challenges. However, Bahrin's study found no

significant differences in resilience based on gender or place of residence, which contradicts the findings of this study, indicating that spiritual development (*tazkiyah al-nafs*) and religiosity have a slightly stronger effect on psychological well-being and academic performance of males than females.

The results of this study extend the findings of Bahrun et al. by integrating a spiritual perspective into the analysis of resilience. Whereas Bahrun focused on the influence of trauma experiences and life values, this study shows that spirituality and moral development play an important role in shaping resilience, particularly in the context of Muslim students. Spiritual development and religiosity, as measured through the SPSI (Spiritual Development Scale for Islamic Students) and MRPI (Muslim Religiosity-Personality Inventory), provide a moral and emotional foundation that supports individuals to face life's challenges, not only on an individual level but also in their social and academic contexts.

This research challenges the assumption of Bahrun et al. that resilience is solely determined by past trauma experiences. The research shows that resilience development can also be facilitated through structured spiritual coaching without the need for prior trauma experiences. In this case, the Islamic approach to character development through *muhasabah* (self-reflection), *mujahadah* (striving against the lower self), and *taqwa* (awareness of God) can strengthen resilience proactively rather than just as a response to traumatic experiences. Thus, this study not only confirms the relationship between resilience and life values, as found by Bahrun et al. but also broadens the scope by adding a deeper spiritual dimension. This study also challenges some of Bahrun's findings, particularly in relation to gender roles and trauma experiences, by showing that spiritual and moral dimensions can create significant differences in psychological well-being and academic performance. This confirms the importance of a holistic approach to understanding resilience, which incorporates psychological, social, and spiritual factors in the context of Islamic education.

In the context of Islamic educational psychology, the concept of "*fitrah*," or innate human potential, is an important foundation. Ibn Khaldun, a 14th-century Muslim scholar, emphasized that education should consider the learners' *fitrah* (Rothman, 2019). This is in line with Howard Gardner's multiple intelligences theory, which recognizes the diversity of human intelligence (Cavas & Cavas, 2020).

The implications of the interaction between spiritual development and psychological growth for Islamic educational psychology in Muslim students include:

- a. Holistic curriculum development: Integration of spiritual and psychological aspects in learning materials, for example, through the "*ta'lim*, *tazkiyah an-nafs*, and *ta'dib*" approach (Rosyad, 2022).
- b. Transformative teaching methods: Application of methods that facilitate self-reflection (*muhasabah*) and the development of spiritual awareness (*ma'rifah*) in line with the principles of experiential learning (Rizkillah et al., 2024).

- c. Islamic guidance and counseling: Development of counseling models that integrate Islamic values with modern psychological techniques, as proposed by Sudan (2017) in “The Dilemma of Muslim Psychologists.”

Assessment instrument development: Creation of measurement tools that can evaluate spiritual and psychological development simultaneously, taking into account the cultural and religious context of Muslim students.

- d. Educator training: Improving the competence of lecturers and academic advisors in understanding and facilitating students' spiritual-psychological development through the approaches of “*tazkiyah an-nafs ruhiyah*” (spiritual education) and “*tazkiyah an-nafs 'aqliyah*” (intellectual education). Effective implementation of *tarbiyah ruhiyah* can be done through the integration of Islamic values in the curriculum, reflective practice, experiential learning methods, and the use of inspirational stories. First, the integration of spiritual values in the curriculum can be done by embedding concepts such as *taqwa* (awareness of God), *ihsan* (doing good), and *shukr* (gratitude) into various subjects. For example, science lessons can include reflection on the greatness of God's creation through the introduction of relevant *kauniyah* verses. This approach strengthens students' relationship with science while deepening their understanding of God as the Creator.

Secondly, reflection practices, such as *muhasabah* (introspection), can be integrated into classroom activities to help students evaluate their actions and intentions in a spiritual context. Worship practices such as reciting prayers before learning, performing dhuha prayers together, or habituating *dhikrullah* during teaching and learning activities can create a learning atmosphere conducive to spiritual development. Third, experiential learning methods, such as project-based learning, can be used to internalize Islamic values. For example, students can be invited to participate in community service (*khidmat*), which not only teaches social skills but also strengthens a sense of moral and spiritual responsibility. Fourth, the use of inspirational stories from the lives of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions can help students understand the practical application of spiritual values in daily life, as well as inspire them to emulate their character and morals.

In addition, Islamic-based counseling is an important component in supporting students' psychological well-being within a framework that is in line with Islamic values. This approach combines Qur'anic and Sunnah principles with modern psychotherapeutic techniques to create culturally and spiritually relevant interventions. Counselors can use Qur'anic verses and hadith as sources of motivation and guidance, for example, by directing students to practice *dhikrullah* as a stress management technique that has been proven to provide inner calm. Principles such as *tawakal* (surrendering to Allah) and *sabr* (patience) can be integrated with cognitive restructuring techniques, where students are directed to change negative mindsets to positive ones through awareness of the wisdom in every life test.

The challenge in implementing this integrative approach lies in the need to bridge the epistemological gap between the Islamic scientific tradition and Western psychology. Contemporary scholars such as Malik Badri and Abdallah Rothman have attempted to develop a model of “Islamic Psychology” that can serve as a framework for this integration (Rothman et al., 2022). In this context, research results need to be elaborated with adequate theoretical support to explain how the findings not only fit but also extend or challenge existing theories. This discussion aims to answer fundamental questions about the implications and contribution of the research to a broader understanding of the field.

For example, suppose the research shows that spiritual development (*tazkiyah al-nafs*) has a significant relationship with psychological well-being (PWB) and academic performance (API). In that case, the discussion needs to explore how this finding aligns with Al-Ghazali's psychospiritual theory that emphasizes the importance of *nafs al-muthma'innah* (calm soul) as a result of introspection (*muhasabah*) and self-control (*mujahadah*). The findings can also be contextualized within Erik Erikson's framework of psychosocial development, especially at the stage of “identity vs role confusion,” where the development of a spiritual identity can provide emotional stability and a clearer direction in life.

The discussion should also highlight how these results confirm previous research, such as that conducted by Bahrin et al. (2023), which emphasized that strong life values support individual resilience. However, the results of this study could extend that scope by showing that spiritual values and religiosity have a mediative impact on psychological well-being and academic performance, offering a more comprehensive perspective. In addition, it is important to point out how these findings challenge previous assumptions, such as the exclusive reliance on traumatic experiences as a catalyst for resilience, by showing that structured spiritual development can also produce similar outcomes without having to go through negative experiences. Through this discussion, the research not only explains the relationship between the variables but also provides relevant theoretical and practical insights, including how the results can be implemented in the context of Islamic education. This strengthens the argument that spiritual-based education and Islamic counseling have great potential to build sustainable psychological and academic well-being among Muslim students.

CONCLUSION

The approach to Islamic education based on *tarbiyah ruhiyah* and psychological strengthening requires systematic and evidence-based implementation steps. One step that can be taken is the development of an integrative curriculum based on spiritual and psychological values. This curriculum should include three main components: Islamic value-based learning, development of students' psychological capacity, and practical application in daily life. Each subject can be structured by explicitly embedding the spiritual dimension, for example, by integrating the concept of *taqwa* (awareness of Allah) in science learning through the study of *kauniyah* verses. In addition, self-reflection modules such as *muhasabah* can be a mandatory

part of every teaching and learning activity, where students are invited to evaluate their actions and intentions based on the guidance of the Qur'an and Sunnah. For psychological capacity strengthening, the curriculum could include Islamic-based emotional management training, such as stress control techniques using *dhikrullah*, and the habituation of patience (*sabr*) and gratitude (*shukr*). The program should also be designed to increase students' self-efficacy through moral responsibility exercises integrated into learning activities, such as community service projects (*khidmat*). These projects allow students to practically apply Islamic values, which in turn strengthens their connection with their social and spiritual environment.

On the other hand, training programs for educators are an important element in supporting the successful implementation of this curriculum. This program should involve intensive training on *tarbiyah ruhiyah* methodology, including how to integrate Islamic values in cross-disciplinary learning, as well as Islamic counseling techniques to support students' psychological needs. For example, training could include modules on conducting interactive *halaqahs* to encourage students' collective reflection, the use of inspirational stories from Islamic history in teaching materials, and Qur'an and Sunnah-based counseling strategies to help students overcome personal or academic problems. The training could also include developing educators' soft skills, such as empathy, effective communication, and values-based approaches to managing diverse classroom dynamics.

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