

# SPIRITUAL EDUCATION FOR BUILDING RESILIENCE: INSIGHTS FROM AL-GHAZALI AND IBN ATAILLAH

**Humanidades  
& Inovação**

**EDUCAÇÃO ESPIRITUAL PARA CONSTRUIR RESILIÊNCIA:  
PERCEPÇÕES DE AL-GHAZALI E IBN ATAILLAH**

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**Abstract:** The issue of Non-Suicidal Self-Injury has garnered global attention, including within the educational context. This challenge calls for a more comprehensive intervention approach, particularly within an education system increasingly emphasizing students' holistic well-being. Traditional psychological approaches often focus on behavior modification and coping mechanisms as intervention strategies. However, these approaches sometimes overlook the spiritual dimension, which plays a critical role in helping individuals manage inner conflicts more holistically. In Malaysia, the integration of spiritual and moral values has been a key component of the national curriculum through subjects such as Islamic Education, Moral Education, and co-curricular programs, including spiritual activities such as motivational talks and spiritual camps. This study aims to explore the spiritual approaches introduced by Al-Ghazali and Ibn Ataillah in fostering individual resilience, particularly in addressing self-injury behaviors. Through a systematic methodology encompassing contemporary research and references to classical texts, this study integrates Islamic spiritual approaches within the context of mental health. The findings reveal that spiritual approaches anchored in ten core elements: repentance, fear of God, asceticism, patience, gratitude, sincerity and truthfulness, reliance on God, compassion, acceptance of God's decree, and remembrance of death. All these elements can significantly contribute to the development of strong resilience and provide a holistic framework for addressing self-injury conflicts. In the context of Malaysian education, the findings suggest the integration of these elements into student development programs, teacher training, and mental well-being modules in schools and higher education institutions. This approach has the potential to significantly strengthen emotional regulation and individual resilience, thereby extending the concept of holistic education toward achieving a balance between psychological and spiritual development. This study contributes to the advancement of holistic mental health interventions aligned with the objectives of Malaysia's education system, which aspires to produce individuals who are intellectually, emotionally, spiritually, and physically balanced.

**Keywords:** Non-Suicidal Self-Injury. Spiritual. Education. Resillience

**Resumo:** A questão da automutilação não suicida tem atraído atenção global, inclusive no contexto educacional. Esse desafio exige uma abordagem de intervenção mais abrangente, particularmente em um sistema educacional que enfatiza cada vez mais o bem-estar holístico dos alunos. As abordagens psicológicas tradicionais frequentemente se concentram na modificação de comportamento e em mecanismos de enfrentamento como estratégias de intervenção. No entanto, essas abordagens às vezes negligenciam a dimensão espiritual, que desempenha um papel fundamental em ajudar os indivíduos a gerenciar conflitos internos de forma mais holística. Na Malásia, a integração de valores espirituais e morais tem sido um componente essencial do currículo nacional por meio de disciplinas como Educação Islâmica, Educação Moral e programas extracurriculares, incluindo atividades espirituais como palestras motivacionais e acampamentos espirituais. Este estudo visa explorar as abordagens espirituais introduzidas por Al-Ghazali e Ibn Ataillah no fomento da resiliência individual, particularmente no tratamento de comportamentos de automutilação.

*Por meio de uma metodologia sistemática que abrange pesquisas contemporâneas e referências a textos clássicos, este estudo integra abordagens espirituais islâmicas no contexto da saúde mental. Os resultados revelam que as abordagens espirituais se ancoram em dez elementos centrais: arrependimento, temor a Deus, ascetismo, paciência, gratidão, sinceridade e veracidade, confiança em Deus, compaixão, aceitação do decreto divino e lembrança da morte. Todos esses elementos podem contribuir significativamente para o desenvolvimento de uma forte resiliência e fornecer uma estrutura holística para lidar com conflitos autolesivos. No contexto da educação malaia, os resultados sugerem a integração desses elementos em programas de desenvolvimento estudantil, formação de professores e módulos de bem-estar mental em escolas e instituições de ensino superior. Essa abordagem tem o potencial de fortalecer significativamente a regulação emocional e a resiliência individual, ampliando assim o conceito de educação holística em direção ao equilíbrio entre o desenvolvimento psicológico e espiritual. Este estudo contribui para o avanço de intervenções holísticas em saúde mental alinhadas aos objetivos do sistema educacional da Malásia, que aspira a produzir indivíduos intelectual, emocional, espiritual e fisicamente equilibrados.*

**Palavras-chave:** Automutilação Não Suicida. Espiritual. Educação. Resiliência.

## Introduction

The Ministry of Education Malaysia places significant emphasis on developing a generation that is knowledgeable, virtuous, and resilient (PPPM, 2013–2025) as part of efforts to build a productive society. This commitment is reflected in the integration of holistic education strategies within the national curriculum, such as the incorporation of moral and spiritual values through subjects like Islamic Education and Moral Education, alongside co-curricular programs aimed at enhancing emotional and spiritual well-being. However, questions remain as to whether this aspiration can be fully achieved, given the increasing number of cases involving young people, such as self-harm, which raises concerns about its potential escalation into suicide (Mohamad et al., 2018). Why does such a situation persist? To date, most resilience models discussed by researchers are derived from Western perspectives (Russell & Russell, 2003; Tian et al., 2019; Yusoff et al., 2019). In the context of Malaysia, where the majority of the population practices Islam, the aspect of spiritual health has begun to gain attention alongside physical and mental health (WHO, 2011). This highlights the need for greater emphasis on integrating spiritual dimensions within educational frameworks to foster comprehensive individual resilience.

Non-Suicidal Self-Injury (NSSI) refers to the deliberate act of self-inflicted harm on the body without suicidal intent. This issue is increasingly recognized as a serious global mental health concern, affecting individuals from diverse backgrounds, including students in educational institutions. In the educational context, this behavior is often associated with extreme academic pressure, the inability to manage emotions in competitive environments, or the lack of systematic support for students' mental and emotional well-being. It is also linked to profound emotional distress, unresolved trauma, or an inability to effectively cope with life challenges and stress (Hasking et al., 2021; Klonsky et al., 2020). While traditional psychological therapies, such as cognitive and behavioral interventions, aim to help individuals manage NSSI, these approaches often fail to address the deep spiritual and existential crises that frequently contribute to self-harming behaviors (Victor et al., 2022). Within the education system, the shortcomings of these approaches are evident in the lack of programs that explicitly integrate spiritual elements into curricula or student mental health support modules. This highlights the need for more integrative approaches, particularly in educational ecosystems where students are frequently exposed to high levels of mental stress.

The spiritual approaches introduced by Al-Ghazali (1982) and Ibn Ataillah (2004), two influential Islamic scholars, offer a comprehensive framework for understanding and addressing self-harming behaviors. Their teachings emphasize the importance of developing inner resilience, spiritual growth, and self-awareness, equipping individuals with tools to confront the emotional and spiritual struggles that often lead to self-harming behaviors (Ibrahim & Khalid, 2022). In an educational context, these concepts can be translated into student development programs that prioritize spiritual values and emotional well-being practices, such as spiritual camps, reflection sessions, and regular motivational talks. Through spiritual practices, individuals have the potential to develop a sense of peace, purpose in life, and profound connections, which can serve as effective

remedies for feelings of alienation, hopelessness, and helplessness often associated with NSSI. In educational systems, such programs can help build students' resilience against the pressures of academic and social life.

Despite advancements in psychological therapies, a significant gap remains in addressing the spiritual dimension that influences self-harming behaviors. Conventional therapeutic models, while effective in certain aspects, often neglect the critical role of spiritual practices in building emotional resilience and facilitating deep, transformative healing (Smith et al., 2021). In schools and higher education institutions, this underscores the need for educational modules that holistically integrate psychological and spiritual elements.

This study aims to address this gap by exploring the spiritual approaches of Al-Ghazali and Ibn Ataillah and evaluating their potential in providing effective strategies for building resilience and addressing self-harming behaviors. In the context of education, these elements can be integrated into curricula through the incorporation of values-based learning and spiritual development as part of holistic education initiatives. Furthermore, student well-being modules can include guided practices such as reflection sessions, spiritual mentoring, and emotional resilience workshops grounded in the teachings of Al-Ghazali and Ibn Ataillah. Teacher training programs can also be enriched with frameworks that enable educators to facilitate discussions on spiritual growth and emotional well-being, equipping them with tools to support students facing mental health challenges. By highlighting the spiritual dimension in healing, this study underscores the need for a more integrative approach to mental health care, which intelligently combines the wisdom and spiritual practices of Islam with contemporary educational strategies. This integrative approach can enhance the existing mental health support systems within schools and higher education institutions, offering a balanced model that addresses intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and physical aspects of student development. Moreover, by embedding these practices into education systems, this approach strengthens their role as platforms for shaping individuals who are not only resilient but also grounded in ethical and spiritual values, aligning with the objectives of holistic education.

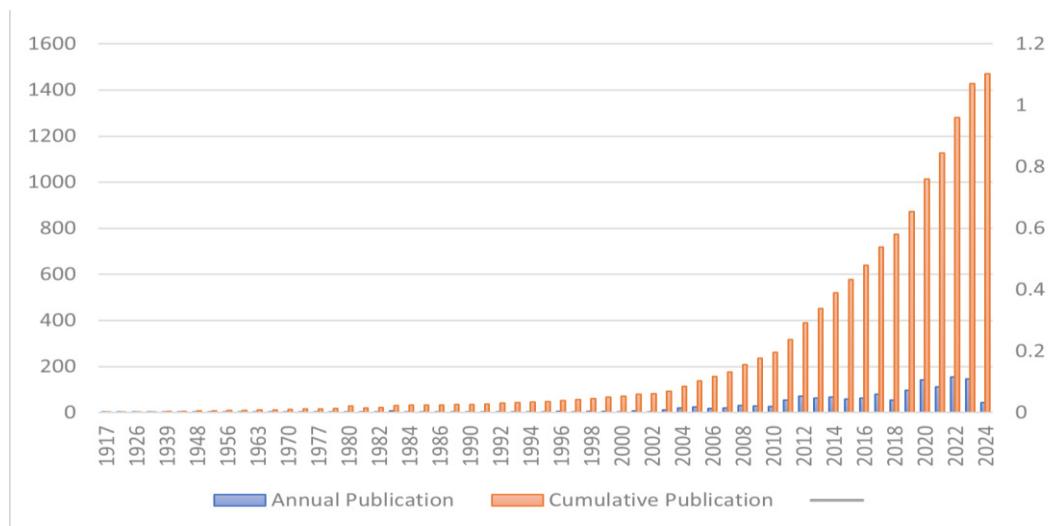
## **Evolving Trends in Sufi Literature and Its Relevance to Educational Resilience**

Figure 1 illustrates the annual and cumulative growth of academic publications related to Sufism from 1917 to 2023. Over a duration of 106 years, scholarly publications concerning Sufism have experienced a notable upward trajectory, as illustrated in the data spanning 1917 to 2023. This long-term trend showcases both annual and cumulative publication rates, with a remarkable surge observed in recent decades, suggesting deepening academic attention towards spirituality and its implications for psychological well-being, particularly among youth. Between 1917 and 1968, publications were sparse, with most years seeing no more than a single contribution. A slight rise occurred in 1970, bringing the cumulative total to 14 articles. Despite this, annual output remained modest, with only occasional increases, such as three articles in 1982, resulting in a cumulative 30 by 1983. A gradual upward movement began thereafter, marked by incremental spikes for instance, seven publications in 1983 and six in 1999 culminating in a cumulative figure of 67 by the end of the 1990s. The early 2000s marked a pivotal point in the scholarly exploration of Sufism, aligning with a broader discourse on spiritual and emotional resilience. From 2000 to 2009, research activity increased steadily, with notable publication years such as 2005 (24 articles) and 2008 (31 articles), raising the cumulative total to 236 by 2009. This was followed by a sharp rise from 2010 onwards. In 2011 alone, 55 new works were published, lifting the cumulative figure to 317. By 2015, an additional 58 articles brought the total to 577.

The momentum intensified in subsequent years, particularly in 2020, when annual publications reached 142, and the cumulative count surpassed 1,000 for the first time. The year 2023 saw another significant increase, recording 146 articles and raising the overall total to 1,427. The annual growth rate (AGR) illustrates this surge in interest, with a dramatic increase in both 2012 and again in 2022–2023, when the publication rate doubled. This pattern reflects sustained scholarly investment in spiritual themes, especially those linked to human resilience, inner development, and

mental health. For the field of spiritual education, this data underscores an emerging paradigm: educators and researchers alike are increasingly turning to spiritual frameworks, such as those embedded in Sufi thought, to cultivate resilience in students confronting psychological stressors and existential crises.

**Figure 1.** Trends of sufism research relevant to spiritual resilience from 1917 until 2023



**Source:** Authors finding

## The Approaches of Al-Ghazali and Ibn Ataillah in Education: A Framework for Building Resilience

The spiritual principles introduced by Al-Ghazali (1982) and Ibn Ataillah (2004) provide a rich foundation for addressing emotional challenges and self-harming behaviors. These teachings are not only applicable in individual and therapeutic contexts but also hold significant potential for integration into educational frameworks to foster resilience and emotional well-being among students. By embedding these principles into curricula, student programs, and teacher training, schools and institutions can holistically support the development of individuals who are intellectually, emotionally, spiritually, and physically balanced. Below is an exploration of these principles in an educational context:

1. Repentance (*Taubah*): Al-Ghazali (1982) defines repentance as a sincere return to Allah, accompanied by deep remorse for past sins and a commitment to change. Studies show that repentance plays a vital role in psychological healing, allowing individuals to release feelings of guilt and embrace positive transformation (Isgandarova, 2021; Özkan & Altay, 2020). For educational integration, teachers and school counselors can guide students to reflect on their actions through structured self-assessment and spiritual discussions. Programs encouraging self-awareness and forgiveness, such as reflective journals or group discussions, can help students manage guilt and foster emotional resilience.
2. Fear of Allah (*Taqwa*): Ibn Ataillah (2004) describes *taqwa* as consciousness of Allah, prompting individuals to avoid sinful actions. Modern research highlights the importance of *taqwa* in enhancing self-control and reducing destructive behaviors (Yousef & Al-Mahdi, 2019). For educational integration, spiritual consciousness can be cultivated through lessons in Islamic Education, focusing on the consequences of actions and the importance of moral decision-making. Role-play and case studies can be used to engage students in understanding the long-term impact of their choices.
3. Asceticism (*Zuhud*): Al-Ghazali (1982) portrays *zuhud* as detachment from worldly desires and a focus on spiritual growth and the afterlife. Research indicates that practicing *zuhud*

promotes emotional stability by reducing anxiety and fostering emotional regulation (Nasir & Yusoff, 2022; Aziz & Rahman, 2023). For educational integration, activities such as mindfulness sessions, charity drives, or simplified living initiatives can teach students the value of focusing on inner contentment over material pursuits.

4. Patience (*Sabr*): Ibn Ataillah (2004) emphasizes patience as essential for enduring challenges with resilience. Studies affirm that patience boosts emotional strength and helps individuals manage stress effectively, reducing tendencies toward self-harm (Zada et al., 2020). For educational integration, schools can integrate *sabr* into life skills training, encouraging students to view challenges as opportunities for growth. Meditation and breathing exercises can further enhance their ability to remain composed under stress.
5. Gratitude (*Syukur*): Al-Ghazali (1982) defines *syukur* as recognizing and appreciating Allah's blessings. Research shows that gratitude improves mood and reduces symptoms of depression often linked to self-harm (Fadli et al., 2019; Ibrahim & Khalid, 2024). For educational integration, gratitude can be fostered through daily gratitude journaling, class discussions on blessings, and community service projects that encourage appreciation for one's circumstances.
6. Sincerity and Truthfulness (*Ikhlas and Sidq*): Al-Ghazali (1982) underscores the importance of *ikhlas*—acting solely for Allah without hidden motives—and *sidq*—truthfulness. Studies suggest that these qualities help resolve inner conflicts and reduce emotional distress (Ahmed, 2019). For educational integration, educators can incorporate lessons on sincerity and truthfulness into moral education, using storytelling or reflective exercises to highlight their relevance in personal and social interactions.
7. Reliance on Allah (*Tawakal*): Ibn Ataillah (2004) defines *tawakal* as complete trust in Allah while continuing to strive. Research shows that *tawakal* alleviates anxiety and provides calmness in uncertainty, reducing self-harming behaviors (Farahani & Khorshidi, 2021). For educational integration, lessons and counseling sessions can emphasize the balance between effort and trust in Allah, helping students navigate academic pressures and life uncertainties with a sense of calm and purpose.
8. Compassion (*Rahmah*): Al-Ghazali (1982) highlights *rahmah* as a foundation for empathy and kindness toward oneself and others. Practicing compassion reduces self-criticism, a major contributor to self-harming behaviors (Hassan & Saeed, 2020; Ali et al., 2023). For educational integration, compassion can be cultivated through peer support programs, conflict resolution training, and initiatives that encourage kindness within the school community.
9. Acceptance of Allah's Decree (*Reda*): Ibn Ataillah (2004) describes *reda* as willingly accepting Allah's will with an open heart. This practice helps individuals overcome life's uncertainties and reduce self-harming behaviors (Yusuf, 2018; Bakar & Musa, 2024). For educational integration, *reda* can be incorporated into student counseling programs, helping students navigate setbacks or disappointments through spiritual acceptance and perseverance.
10. Remembering Death (*Dhikr al-Mawt*): Al-Ghazali (1982) emphasizes *dhikr al-mawt* as a means to detach from worldly attachments and prepare for the hereafter. Remembering death helps individuals view life's challenges within a broader spiritual context, reducing emotional stress (Abdullah & Mahmud, 2021). For educational integration, reflective practices, such as guided discussions on the temporary nature of life and the importance of meaningful contributions, can help students contextualize their struggles and foster resilience.

Integrating the spiritual teachings of Al-Ghazali and Ibn Ataillah into educational systems offers a transformative approach to student development. By embedding principles such as repentance, gratitude, patience, and compassion into curricula and co-curricular programs, schools and institutions can empower students to build resilience and navigate challenges with a balanced perspective. These initiatives not only enhance emotional and spiritual well-being but also align with the broader goals of holistic education, producing individuals who are intellectually, emotionally, spiritually, and physically well-rounded.

The spiritual practices advocated by Al-Ghazali (1982) and Ibn Ataillah (2004) offer a sustainable framework for addressing self-harming behaviors and fostering emotional resilience. These practices, rooted in principles such as *taubah* (repentance), *sabr* (patience), and *tawakal* (reliance on Allah), address the root causes of emotional distress while empowering individuals to build inner strength to face future challenges (Isgandarova, 2021; Farahani & Khorshidi, 2021). In the educational context, these principles can be incorporated into curricula and student development programs to support emotional well-being. For instance, reflective activities and discussions on *taubah* can help students process guilt and foster accountability, while lessons on *sabr* and *tawakal* can teach strategies for managing stress and uncertainty (Özkan & Altay, 2020; Zada et al., 2020). Such approaches encourage students to contextualize personal struggles within a broader spiritual framework, reducing impulsive behaviors such as self-harm (Abdullah & Mahmud, 2021). Educational institutions can further nurture inner resilience through structured initiatives like mindfulness sessions, spiritual camps, and emotional regulation workshops, all grounded in spiritual principles (Nasir & Yusoff, 2022). By integrating these elements, schools and universities not only promote emotional stability but also equip students with practical tools to navigate life's challenges with clarity and composure. This holistic approach aligns with the broader goals of education in shaping individuals who are intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually balanced, capable of managing adversity with wisdom and resilience (Ibrahim & Khalid, 2024).

## Methodology

This study employs a qualitative approach to examine the spiritual principles of Al-Ghazali (1982) and Ibn Ataillah (2004) and their application in fostering emotional resilience and addressing self-harming behaviors among students. Qualitative methods are particularly suited for exploring complex, context-dependent phenomena such as spirituality and education, as they allow for in-depth interpretation and contextualization of key concepts (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The research focuses on integrating these principles into educational frameworks to evaluate their potential impact on holistic student development. An exploratory research design is adopted to analyze primary sources, including *Ihya' Ulum al-Din* by Al-Ghazali and *Al-Hikam* by Ibn Ataillah. These texts are examined using thematic analysis, a method commonly employed in qualitative research to identify and categorize patterns or themes within textual data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Key spiritual principles such as *taubah* (repentance), *sabr* (patience), and *tawakal* (reliance on Allah) are extracted and analyzed for their relevance to fostering emotional resilience and reducing self-harming behaviors. Secondary sources, including scholarly articles and contemporary studies, are reviewed to contextualize these principles within modern educational and mental health settings (Ibrahim & Khalid, 2022; Farahani & Khorshidi, 2021).

The findings are mapped to practical applications in educational settings, including curriculum development, co-curricular activities, and teacher training programs. Reflective practices, such as guided journaling and group discussions, are proposed as tools to integrate *taubah* into student learning experiences. Similarly, lessons on *sabr* and *tawakal* are incorporated into emotional regulation modules to equip students with strategies for managing stress and uncertainty. To validate the practicality of the proposed framework, focus group discussions are conducted with educators and counselors. Focus groups are a well-established method for gathering rich, context-specific feedback on practical implementations and ensuring alignment with educational objectives (Krueger & Casey, 2015). These discussions provide valuable insights into the feasibility of integrating spiritual principles within school and university environments, addressing potential challenges and refining the proposed applications (Özkan & Altay, 2020). The study adheres to ethical guidelines, ensuring that interpretations of classical texts are accurate and that diverse perspectives on spirituality and mental health are respected. This methodology aims to produce a practical and holistic model for integrating the spiritual teachings of Al-Ghazali and Ibn Ataillah into education, with the goal of promoting emotional resilience and addressing self-harming behaviors among students (Abdullah & Mahmud, 2021; Ibrahim & Khalid, 2024).

## Results and Discussion

A comprehensive review of classical spiritual texts and contemporary literature highlights the significant contributions of Al-Ghazali's (1982) and Ibn Ataillah's (2004) spiritual approaches in enhancing resilience and addressing self-harming behaviors. These strategies, deeply embedded in Islamic teachings, present holistic methodologies for managing psychological and emotional challenges by bridging spiritual and psychological dimensions. Their integration into educational systems aligns seamlessly with the Malaysian Education Development Plan (*PPPM*) 2013–2025's vision to cultivate intellectually, emotionally, spiritually, and physically balanced individuals (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013). By embedding these principles into existing school and higher education curricula, the potential to foster resilience and emotional well-being among students can be effectively realized.

### Integration of Repentance (*Taubah*) into Education

The concept of *taubah* (repentance) is transformative, fostering self-awareness, ethical accountability, and personal transformation. At its core, *taubah* encourages individuals to reflect on their actions, recognize their mistakes, seek forgiveness, and commit to meaningful self-improvement. This introspective process not only alleviates guilt and shame (emotions that often hinder personal growth) but also instills a deep sense of responsibility for one's actions and decisions. Research indicates that *taubah* plays a critical role in psychological healing by facilitating emotional release and promoting positive behavioral change, making it a valuable tool for resilience-building (Isgandarova, 2021; Özkan & Altay, 2020).

### Educational integration of *taubah*

In the context of secondary and tertiary education, *taubah* can serve as a vital framework for character development and ethical education. It can be effectively integrated into existing curricula through courses such as Moral Education (Pendidikan Moral), Islamic Studies (Pendidikan Islam), and Ethics and Civilization (Etika dan Peradaban). These courses provide natural platforms for exploring the principles of self-reflection and ethical responsibility inherent in *taubah*.

### Reflective activities for *taubah*

Incorporating reflective activities into these courses enhances students' ability to internalize the lessons of *taubah*. Activities such as journaling, case studies, and guided discussions on ethical dilemmas encourage students to explore their inner conflicts and confront the emotional consequences of their actions. Journaling, for instance, allows students to document their thought processes, identify patterns of behavior, and outline actionable steps for improvement. Case studies on ethical dilemmas provide opportunities for students to critically analyze situations, evaluate consequences, and apply principles of *taubah* to real-world scenarios. Guided group discussions further enable students to learn from their peers' perspectives, fostering a collaborative environment for moral and emotional growth.

### Relevance to personal development and leadership

Beyond traditional courses, *taubah* can also be integrated into personal development programs and leadership training modules. Courses like *Personal Development* and *Leadership and Character Building* offer opportunities to emphasize the role of introspection and ethical accountability in effective leadership. In these contexts, *taubah* can be presented as a practical tool for fostering humility, resilience, and moral integrity in future leaders. By engaging in reflective

exercises and role-playing scenarios, students can develop the self-awareness and accountability needed to navigate complex social and professional landscapes.

### **Psychological and emotional benefits of *taubah***

The psychological benefits of *taubah* are well-documented. Studies suggest that acknowledging one's mistakes and seeking forgiveness not only alleviates emotional distress but also strengthens emotional resilience by promoting a sense of closure and renewed purpose (Ahmed, 2019; Fadli et al., 2019). For students, these emotional benefits are particularly significant, as they navigate academic pressures, interpersonal conflicts, and the complexities of adolescence and early adulthood. Integrating *taubah* into education helps students develop constructive coping mechanisms, equipping them to manage stress and build healthier relationships.

### **Cultural and spiritual context in education**

The incorporation of *taubah* also respects the cultural and spiritual diversity of students. In predominantly Muslim contexts, such as Malaysia, *taubah* aligns seamlessly with students' religious values, reinforcing the relevance of spirituality in personal development. However, its universal principles of self-reflection, accountability, and transformation make it adaptable to non-Muslim students as well, promoting inclusivity in educational settings. For instance, *taubah* can be reframed as "reflective repentance" in multicultural or secular courses, ensuring that its lessons resonate with students from various backgrounds.

A study by Ibrahim and Khalid (2022) found that incorporating reflective spiritual practices into school curricula improved students' emotional regulation and ethical decision-making. Similarly, a program integrating journaling and self-reflection in character education courses at a tertiary institution reported increased student resilience and a decline in impulsive behaviors (Özkan & Altay, 2020). These findings highlight the practical benefits of *taubah*-based activities in fostering both academic and personal growth. By integrating the principles of *taubah* into educational systems, institutions can create a transformative learning environment that not only addresses students' moral and ethical development but also enhances their emotional resilience. Through reflective activities and introspective practices, students gain valuable tools for navigating life's challenges with accountability, humility, and purpose. This alignment with both psychological research and spiritual teachings underscores *taubah*'s potential as a foundational element of holistic education. Future studies could further explore its long-term impact on student development and its applicability across diverse educational and cultural contexts.

### **Fear of Allah (Taqwa) in Education**

The concept of *taqwa* (consciousness of Allah) is foundational in Islamic teachings, encouraging individuals to remain mindful of Allah's presence and avoid sinful actions. Ibn Ataillah (2004) emphasizes that *taqwa* serves as a moral compass, guiding behavior and ensuring that decisions align with divine principles. Contemporary research supports the significance of *taqwa*, suggesting that heightened spiritual consciousness enhances self-control, reduces impulsivity, and mitigates destructive behaviors (Yousef & Al-Mahdi, 2019). In an educational context, integrating *taqwa* into curricula can play a transformative role in fostering ethical decision-making and emotional resilience among students.

### **Educational integration of *taqwa***

Integrating *taqwa* (consciousness of Allah) into education involves incorporating the principles of self-awareness, moral accountability, and ethical decision-making into teaching and learning frameworks. This integration seeks to nurture students' spiritual and emotional

development, equipping them with tools to manage life's challenges responsibly and ethically. *Taqwa* emphasizes a balanced approach to life, encouraging individuals to align their actions with divine principles while maintaining accountability for their choices. Islamic Education serves as a natural platform for cultivating *taqwa* among students. Lessons can focus on the consequences of actions, the significance of moral accountability, and the long-term spiritual and social implications of choices. For example, discussions on Qur'anic verses and Hadith related to *taqwa* can help students internalize the value of self-discipline and align their behavior with Islamic principles. Emphasizing themes such as personal accountability, ethical responsibility, and the pursuit of righteousness reinforces the concept of *taqwa* as a guiding principle in life (Ibrahim & Khalid, 2022).

### **Role-play and case studies**

Interactive teaching methods such as role-play and case studies can effectively engage students in understanding *taqwa* and its application in real-world scenarios. Role-play allows students to navigate ethical dilemmas, encouraging them to reflect on their actions and make morally sound decisions. For instance, students can be tasked with resolving conflicts or addressing challenges where their choices must align with Islamic teachings on integrity and justice. Similarly, case studies featuring historical or contemporary examples of individuals who exemplified *taqwa* can inspire students to adopt similar behaviors in their own lives (Ahmed, 2023; Fadli et al., 2023).

### **Fostering spiritual consciousness across disciplines**

While *taqwa* is deeply rooted in Islamic teachings, its principles of self-awareness and moral discipline are universally relevant and can be incorporated into interdisciplinary courses such as Moral Education, Ethics and Civilization, and Personal Development. These subjects provide opportunities to explore the broader implications of ethical decision-making, emphasizing the role of spiritual consciousness in promoting self-regulation and long-term well-being (Farahani & Khorshidi, 2021). For example, in a Leadership and Character Building course, students could examine the relationship between *taqwa* and leadership qualities such as accountability, humility, and fairness. Discussions could highlight how spiritual consciousness fosters ethical leadership, helping students navigate complex social and professional environments with integrity.

### **Experiential learning opportunities**

Experiential learning activities can deepen students' understanding of *taqwa* and its practical implications:

- **Reflective journaling:** Students document their thoughts and actions, reflecting on how their decisions align with principles of *taqwa*. This practice enhances self-awareness and encourages students to evaluate the moral and spiritual dimensions of their behavior (Yahya et al., 2021).
- **Service-learning projects:** Engaging in community service initiatives allows students to practice *taqwa* by prioritizing the needs of others over personal gains, fostering empathy and ethical responsibility (Fadli et al., 2023).
- **Peer mentorship programs:** Senior students can mentor their juniors, sharing personal experiences of how *taqwa* has guided their academic and personal decisions. This peer-to-peer engagement reinforces the importance of spiritual consciousness in everyday life (Ibrahim & Khalid, 2022).

### **Psychological and emotional benefits of *taqwa***

Research highlights that *taqwa* contributes significantly to emotional regulation and psychological resilience. By fostering a heightened awareness of accountability to Allah, *taqwa*

equips individuals to manage temptations and impulsive behaviors effectively. Studies have found that individuals with strong spiritual consciousness exhibit lower levels of stress and anxiety, as they are better able to cope with challenges and uncertainties (Farahani & Khorshidi, 2021; Ahmed, 2023). For students, these benefits translate into improved emotional stability, greater focus on academic and personal goals, and stronger interpersonal relationships.

### **Alignment with educational goals**

Integrating *taqwa* into educational systems aligns with the objectives of the Malaysian Education Development Plan (PPPM) 2013–2025, which emphasizes the holistic development of students. By fostering spiritual consciousness, educational institutions can nurture individuals who are intellectually, emotionally, and morally balanced. Through structured lessons, interactive activities, and experiential learning, students gain the tools to navigate life's challenges with resilience, ethical clarity, and a sense of accountability to a higher purpose. While the integration of *taqwa* into education has theoretical and practical merit, future empirical research is needed to evaluate its impact on students' moral development, academic success, and emotional resilience. Studies could explore the long-term effects of spiritual consciousness on reducing destructive behaviors and promoting ethical decision-making across diverse educational and cultural settings.

### **Building Self-Control through Patience (Sabr) and Moderation (Zuhud)**

The principles of *sabr* (patience) and *zuhud* (moderation) are essential components of self-regulation and reflective awareness, forming the foundation for emotional resilience and balanced decision-making. *Sabr* teaches individuals to endure challenges with composure and perseverance, while *zuhud* emphasizes detachment from excessive material desires, fostering spiritual contentment. These principles are particularly relevant in the context of modern educational challenges, where students face increasing academic pressures and societal expectations.

### **Educational applications in schools and universities**

In educational settings, *sabr* and *zuhud* can be integrated into various curricular and co-curricular activities to enhance students' self-control and emotional stability. For instance, in *Stress Management* courses or Emotional Intelligence modules at universities, students can practice *sabr* through mindfulness exercises, role-playing scenarios, and guided breathing techniques. These activities not only help students regulate their emotions during stressful situations but also foster a habit of thoughtful response rather than impulsive reaction (Nasir & Yusoff, 2022). Similarly, *zuhud* can be incorporated into subjects such as Consumer Behavior or Economics, where students critically examine the psychological and societal impact of materialism. By exploring real-world examples, such as the adverse effects of consumerism on mental health and well-being, students are encouraged to cultivate a balanced approach to material wealth, understanding the importance of prioritizing long-term contentment over short-term gratification (Aziz & Rahman, 2023). These lessons equip students with the tools to manage their financial and emotional priorities effectively, fostering a sense of moderation in both thought and behavior. At the school level, co-curricular activities such as Leadership Camps or spiritual retreats can incorporate exercises that teach *sabr* and *zuhud*. For example, leadership camps could include activities that simulate challenging scenarios, requiring students to apply patience and collaborative problem-solving to achieve success. Spiritual retreats, on the other hand, could encourage simplified living experiences, such as digital detoxes or mindfulness walks, allowing students to experience the tranquility of detachment from distractions. These programs not only promote emotional resilience but also create a reflective space for students to align their values with their actions.

## Psychological and emotional benefits

Research supports the role of *sabr* and *zuhud* in promoting psychological well-being and emotional resilience. Practicing patience helps individuals delay gratification, manage frustration, and navigate challenges with clarity and composure (Zada et al., 2020). For students, these benefits translate into improved academic performance, healthier relationships, and enhanced ability to cope with stress. *Zuhud*, by contrast, encourages students to focus on intrinsic goals, such as personal growth and meaningful relationships, rather than external rewards. This shift in focus reduces anxiety and fosters a sense of purpose, counteracting the pressures of consumer-driven cultures (Hassan et al., 2021).

## Applications beyond the classroom

The principles of *sabr* (patience) and *zuhud* (moderation) extend beyond traditional classroom settings, offering valuable lessons in extracurricular and community engagement programs. In sports or performance-based clubs, such as debate teams or athletics, *sabr* can be cultivated as a critical skill for managing setbacks and sustaining motivation. For example, athletes can develop *sabr* through visualization techniques and resilience training, which enhance focus and composure during competitions. Studies have shown that resilience training combined with emotional regulation improves both performance and psychological well-being in high-pressure environments (Zada et al., 2020; Hassan & Noor, 2024). Similarly, *zuhud* can be promoted in environmental or sustainability clubs, where students adopt minimalist and eco-friendly lifestyles. Workshops on reducing waste, sharing resources, and living sustainably provide practical examples of moderation, reinforcing the spiritual and psychological benefits of detachment from material excess. Research in experiential learning confirms that engaging students in hands-on, community-based sustainability projects fosters practical understanding and enhances a sense of responsibility (Rahman et al., 2024). These initiatives not only encourage students to adopt sustainable behaviors but also cultivate a deeper appreciation for balance and simplicity.

## Global and cultural contexts

The universal applicability of *sabr* and *zuhud* makes them suitable for integration into diverse educational settings. While rooted in Islamic teachings, their emphasis on patience, self-control, and moderation resonates with universally accepted values of resilience and mindfulness. For instance, *sabr* aligns with modern psychological principles of emotional regulation, emphasizing delayed gratification and thoughtful decision-making as predictors of personal and professional success (Zada et al., 2020; Ahmed, 2023). Similarly, *zuhud* complements contemporary movements advocating for minimalism and sustainable living, such as the growing global interest in “intentional living” and reducing overconsumption. Incorporating these principles into multicultural classrooms fosters inclusivity, encouraging students from diverse backgrounds to reflect on their values and priorities. By promoting reflective discussions and culturally diverse case studies, educators can bridge traditional spiritual teachings with modern ethical concerns, preparing students to engage meaningfully in an interconnected world (Hassan & Noor, 2024).

Empirical studies highlight the effectiveness of *sabr* and *zuhud* in enhancing resilience and reducing impulsive behaviors. A study by Zada et al. (2020) found that individuals who practiced patience demonstrated higher levels of emotional stability and problem-solving ability, even under significant stress. Similarly, Hassan et al. (2021) reported that the practice of moderation led to decreased anxiety and increased life satisfaction among participants. These findings suggest that incorporating these principles into educational frameworks can yield significant benefits for students’ emotional and psychological well-being. The principles of *sabr* and *zuhud* offer transformative potential for developing self-control and resilience among students. By embedding these values into academic curricula and co-curricular programs, educational institutions can provide students with practical tools for managing stress, fostering emotional stability, and cultivating purposeful living.

Whether through mindfulness exercises, leadership camps, or critical discussions on consumerism, these lessons prepare students to navigate life's challenges with patience and balance. Future research should explore innovative methods for integrating these principles into diverse educational contexts, ensuring their relevance and effectiveness in meeting the needs of modern learners.

## Promoting Gratitude (Syukur) and Compassion (Rahmah)

The principles of gratitude (*syukur*) and compassion (*rahmah*) play a pivotal role in cultivating emotional balance and fostering meaningful, supportive relationships. *Syukur* encourages individuals to focus on life's blessings, shifting their perspective away from feelings of inadequacy or dissatisfaction, while *rahmah* nurtures empathy and a sense of connection with others. These principles align with contemporary psychological research, which highlights the positive impact of gratitude and compassion on mental health, emotional regulation, and social well-being (Ahmed & Khalid, 2023; Rahman et al., 2024).

## Applications in civic education and community engagement

In educational settings, *syukur* and *rahmah* can be effectively incorporated into Civic Education (Pendidikan Sivik) and Community Engagement courses. Service-learning projects, such as volunteering in underprivileged communities, offer students opportunities to experience firsthand the challenges faced by others. These activities encourage gratitude by helping students reflect on their privileges and foster empathy through direct interaction with marginalized groups (Yahya et al., 2021; Mohamad Yusoff et al., 2019). For instance, students participating in food bank initiatives or elder care programs often report a heightened appreciation for their circumstances and a deeper understanding of compassion as a transformative value. Such programs also emphasize reflective components, such as journaling or guided discussions, to allow students to process their experiences. Writing gratitude journals or engaging in group reflections encourages students to articulate their thoughts and emotions, reinforcing positive behavioral change (Hassan et al., 2023). These reflective activities align with the principles of *syukur*, enabling students to cultivate a consistent practice of thankfulness and mindfulness in their daily lives.

## Mentoring programs and guidance and counseling classes

Mentoring programs integrated into Guidance and Counseling modules further promote *rahmah* by training students to offer empathetic support to their peers. These programs encourage a sense of shared responsibility, where students develop active listening skills and learn to provide constructive feedback in emotionally supportive ways. Research shows that peer mentoring not only improves interpersonal relationships but also enhances the emotional resilience of both mentors and mentees (Fadli & Hassan, 2023). Compassion-driven mentoring helps create an inclusive school culture, reducing incidents of bullying and fostering a sense of belonging among students.

## University-level applications

At the tertiary level, *syukur* and *rahmah* can be embedded into courses such as Positive Psychology and Ethics in Counseling. These courses provide theoretical and practical frameworks for exploring the psychological and ethical dimensions of gratitude and compassion. For example, students can participate in exercises such as writing letters of gratitude to individuals who have positively impacted their lives. This practice has been shown to improve emotional well-being and enhance interpersonal bonds (Isgandarova, 2021; Ahmed & Khalid, 2023). Additionally, group discussions on altruism and kindness in Ethics in Counseling can foster an understanding of compassion as an ethical responsibility, encouraging students to approach their professional and personal interactions with greater empathy.

## Psychological and emotional benefits

Empirical evidence underscores the psychological benefits of practicing gratitude and compassion. Studies reveal that gratitude interventions significantly reduce symptoms of depression and anxiety by shifting focus from negative emotions to positive experiences (Hassan et al., 2023). Similarly, cultivating compassion has been linked to improved emotional regulation and enhanced social connectedness. Compassion-based interventions, such as mindfulness training, have been found to lower stress levels and promote mental clarity, making them particularly effective for students facing academic pressures (Rahman et al., 2024).

## Cultural and multicultural contexts

The universal appeal of gratitude and compassion makes these principles highly adaptable to multicultural classrooms. While their roots in Islamic teachings resonate deeply in Muslim-majority contexts, their emphasis on positive psychology and altruism ensures relevance across diverse cultural settings. For instance, *syukur* can be reframed as “appreciation” in secular or interfaith courses, while *rahmah* can be introduced as “kindness” or “empathy.” These adaptations allow students from different backgrounds to connect with the values on a personal level, fostering inclusivity and shared understanding in the classroom (Fadli & Hassan, 2023). So, Future research should focus on the longitudinal impact of integrating *syukur* and *rahmah* into educational curricula. Studies could explore how these practices influence long-term emotional resilience, academic performance, and interpersonal skills among students. Additionally, interdisciplinary collaborations between educators, psychologists, and sociologists could further refine these interventions, ensuring their relevance and efficacy in diverse educational contexts. Such efforts would contribute to creating holistic educational environments that prioritize both academic success and emotional well-being.

## Sincerity and Truthfulness (*Ikhlas* and *Sidq*) in Education

The principles of *ikhlas* (sincerity) and *sidq* (truthfulness) hold significant importance in the teachings of Al-Ghazali (1982), who emphasizes that *ikhlas* involves performing actions solely for the sake of Allah, free from ulterior motives, while *sidq* represents adherence to truth in words and deeds. Together, these qualities serve as foundational elements of moral and spiritual integrity, fostering inner peace and emotional resilience. Modern studies affirm their psychological benefits, highlighting that sincerity and truthfulness help resolve inner conflicts, reduce emotional distress, and promote a harmonious alignment between values and behaviors (Ahmed, 2019; Ibrahim & Khalid, 2022). The integration of *ikhlas* (sincerity) and *sidq* (truthfulness) into educational frameworks provides a unique opportunity to foster moral integrity, emotional resilience, and ethical accountability among students. These principles, rooted in Islamic teachings, emphasize the alignment of actions with genuine intentions and adherence to truth in all aspects of life. By embedding *ikhlas* and *sidq* into curricula, educators can nurture individuals who are not only academically proficient but also emotionally balanced and socially responsible.

## Storytelling as a pedagogical tool

Storytelling is a powerful method for teaching *ikhlas* and *sidq*, as it engages students emotionally and intellectually. Educators can use narratives from religious texts, historical figures, or contemporary examples to illustrate the transformative impact of sincerity and truthfulness. Stories from the lives of prophets or exemplary leaders, such as Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), known as *Al-Amin* (the trustworthy), can inspire students to internalize these values and apply them in their daily lives (Al-Ghazali, 1982; Ahmed, 2019).

## Reflective exercises and self-assessment

Reflective activities such as journaling and guided discussions can encourage students to examine their intentions and behaviors critically. For instance, educators can ask questions like, “What motivates your actions?” or “How do you handle situations where telling the truth is challenging?” These exercises help students develop self-awareness and emotional resilience by reducing cognitive dissonance and aligning their actions with their values (Fadli et al., 2023; Ibrahim & Khalid, 2022). Reflection also enhances students’ ability to evaluate their moral decision-making, which is essential for their development into responsible individuals.

## Role-playing and collaborative activities

Role-playing scenarios that simulate ethical dilemmas provide students with opportunities to practice sincerity and truthfulness in a safe environment. For example, students can participate in role-plays where they navigate conflicts requiring honesty or scenarios testing their commitment to genuine collaboration. These activities build emotional intelligence and reinforce *ikhlas* by promoting team-oriented values and the importance of ethical decision-making (Farahani & Khorshidi, 2021). Collaborative activities, such as group projects, encourage students to focus on collective goals, fostering sincerity in teamwork without individualistic motivations.

## Psychological and Emotional Benefits

The psychological benefits of *ikhlas* and *sidq* are supported by research indicating that these qualities enhance emotional well-being and interpersonal relationships. Acting with sincerity reduces internal conflicts and provides a sense of purpose, while truthfulness fosters trust and diminishes the stress associated with deceit (Ahmed, 2019). These values help students develop emotional resilience, which is particularly valuable in managing academic pressures and social challenges (Fadli et al., 2023). Additionally, students who practice *ikhlas* and *sidq* often experience greater personal satisfaction and stronger connections with their peers and mentors (Ibrahim & Khalid, 2022).

## Alignment with Educational Goals

Integrating *ikhlas* and *sidq* into education aligns with the objectives of the Malaysian Education Development Plan (PPPM) 2013–2025, which emphasizes the holistic development of students across intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and physical dimensions. By embedding these principles into educational curricula, institutions can cultivate students who are not only academically capable but also morally grounded. For example, lessons on *ikhlas* and *sidq* can be incorporated into Moral Education (Pendidikan Moral) and Islamic Studies (Pendidikan Islam) to foster integrity and accountability among students (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013).

## Experiential Learning Opportunities

Experiential learning approaches provide practical avenues for reinforcing *ikhlas* and *sidq*. These include:

- i. Service-learning projects:** Engaging students in community service activities promotes *ikhlas* by encouraging them to contribute selflessly to the well-being of others without expecting rewards. Such projects also allow students to practice sincerity and truthfulness in real-world scenarios (Fadli et al., 2023).
- ii. Ethical debates and discussions:** Facilitating debates on real-world ethical issues, such as academic dishonesty or workplace ethics, encourages students to evaluate the importance of truthfulness in decision-making. These activities help students connect classroom lessons

to societal challenges (Farahani & Khorshidi, 2021).

**iii. Personal development portfolios:** assignments that require students to document their values, goals, and reflections on ethical challenges provide opportunities to internalize *ikhlas* and *sidq*. Such practices encourage accountability and support students in aligning their actions with their long-term aspirations (Ahmed, 2019).

## Future directions and research

While theoretical frameworks support the integration of *ikhlas* and *sidq* into education, further empirical studies are needed to evaluate their impact on students' moral development and emotional resilience. Research should explore the long-term effects of these principles on academic success, ethical behavior, and interpersonal relationships across diverse cultural and educational settings. Collaborative efforts between educators, psychologists, and spiritual scholars can refine these interventions, ensuring their effectiveness in promoting holistic student development (Ibrahim & Khalid, 2022).

## Managing Uncertainty with Trust (Tawakal) and Acceptance (Reda)

The concepts of *tawakal* (trust in Allah) and *reda* (acceptance of destiny) provide profound frameworks for navigating uncertainty and coping with life's challenges. Rooted in Islamic teachings, these principles encourage a balance between proactive effort and spiritual reliance, offering individuals a sense of calm and resilience even in the face of adversity. By integrating these values into educational programs, students can develop a more grounded and holistic approach to decision-making, stress management, and emotional well-being.

### Tawakal as a framework for decision-making

*Tawakal* emphasizes the importance of trusting divine wisdom while simultaneously taking calculated and responsible actions. It teaches individuals to prepare diligently and exert effort while relying on a higher power for outcomes beyond their control. This dual emphasis on effort and reliance is particularly relevant in leadership and entrepreneurial contexts. In tertiary education, *tawakal* can be introduced in courses like Leadership Studies, Entrepreneurship, or Strategic Management. For example, students in an entrepreneurial program could be guided to apply *tawakal* when managing the uncertainties of business ventures, such as market fluctuations or investment risks. This framework allows students to approach challenges with a calm and rational mindset, reducing stress and fostering confidence (Farahani & Khorshidi, 2021; Bakar & Musa, 2024). At the secondary education level, *tawakal* can be woven into Life Skills Development and Moral Education curricula to help students navigate academic pressures and personal dilemmas. Role-playing exercises or reflective journaling could encourage students to think critically about balancing their efforts with spiritual reliance, cultivating a mindset of perseverance and adaptability.

### Reda as a tool for emotional stability

*Reda* (acceptance of destiny) complements *tawakal* (trust in Allah) by encouraging individuals to accept outcomes with contentment, regardless of whether they align with personal expectations. This principle helps individuals find peace in circumstances beyond their control, reducing anxiety and promoting emotional stability. Research has demonstrated that practices fostering acceptance can significantly improve emotional well-being by reducing rumination and enhancing resilience in the face of adversity (Bakar & Musa, 2024; Ibrahim & Khalid, 2022). For students, *reda* is particularly valuable in managing setbacks, such as academic failures or social challenges. In secondary schools, *reda* could be introduced through counseling programs to support students struggling with stress or self-esteem issues. For instance, guided discussions facilitated by counselors can help students

reframe failures as opportunities for growth, fostering a sense of acceptance and resilience. These discussions can be enriched with examples of historical or contemporary figures who embraced challenges with contentment and perseverance (Ahmed, 2019). Similarly, modules on Mental Health and Well-Being can incorporate *reda* by teaching mindfulness techniques and strategies for embracing uncertainty.

At the university level, Career Counseling programs could explore *reda* in the context of career planning and decision-making. Students often face overwhelming uncertainty when choosing career paths or dealing with unpredictable job markets. Introducing *reda* in these sessions can help students approach their futures with confidence, striving for excellence while remaining open to life's unpredictability. Studies have highlighted that acceptance-based approaches significantly reduce career-related anxiety, enabling students to view challenges as part of a broader, purposeful journey (Farahani & Khorshidi, 2021).

## Educational applications

In addition to standalone counseling programs, *tawakal* and *reda* can be integrated into broader educational subjects like Philosophy and Religion or interdisciplinary courses on Ethics and Personal Development. Discussions on *tawakal* can explore its relevance across different faiths and cultural contexts, emphasizing universal lessons on trust, effort, and acceptance. Similarly, *reda* can be reframed as a mindfulness practice, encouraging students to cultivate gratitude and contentment in their daily lives (Bakar & Musa, 2024; Isgandarova, 2021). Experiential learning opportunities can also reinforce these principles. For example:

- i. Case studies:** Students analyze real-life scenarios where individuals applied *tawakal* and *reda* to navigate challenges, such as successful entrepreneurs or leaders who attribute their resilience to spiritual grounding. Case studies help contextualize these principles, demonstrating their practical applications in diverse settings (Farahani & Khorshidi, 2021).
- ii. Peer mentorship programs:** Senior students can mentor juniors, sharing personal experiences of applying these principles to overcome academic and personal hurdles. These programs promote a culture of mutual support and resilience within educational institutions (Ibrahim & Khalid, 2022).
- iii. Reflective journaling:** Students document their efforts, uncertainties, and reflections on outcomes, aligning their experiences with the teachings of *tawakal* and *reda*. Journaling has been shown to enhance emotional regulation and foster a deeper sense of self-awareness (Ahmed, 2019).

These applications not only support the holistic development of students but also align with the goals of the Malaysian Education Development Plan (PPPM) 2013–2025 to nurture individuals who are balanced intellectually, emotionally, spiritually, and physically (Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia, 2013).

## Psychological and emotional benefits

Research supports the psychological benefits of integrating *tawakal* and *reda* into daily life. These practices have been shown to reduce anxiety, enhance coping mechanisms, and improve overall emotional resilience. For instance, Farahani and Khorshidi (2021) demonstrated that *tawakal* significantly improved decision-making confidence and reduced stress among university students. Similarly, Bakar and Musa (2024) found that *reda* promoted greater emotional stability and reduced the impact of chronic stress in individuals facing long-term uncertainties. Beyond stress management, these principles also foster optimism and a positive outlook on life. By encouraging students to accept outcomes with gratitude and trust, *tawakal* and *reda* empower them to view challenges as part of a larger, purposeful journey, enhancing their overall well-being.

## Broader implications for resilience

When applied in education, *tawakal* and *reda* serve as powerful tools for fostering resilience among students. They encourage individuals to take responsibility for their actions while maintaining a healthy detachment from outcomes beyond their control. This mindset is particularly valuable in today's fast-paced and uncertain world, where students face mounting academic pressures and societal expectations. Aligning with the goals of the Malaysian Education Development Plan (PPPM) 2013–2025, these principles not only support students' emotional and psychological growth but also contribute to their spiritual development. By fostering a balanced approach to effort, trust, and acceptance, educational institutions can help students build the resilience needed to thrive in all aspects of life. Integrating *tawakal* and *reda* into educational curricula offers students essential tools for navigating uncertainty and building emotional resilience. These principles encourage a proactive yet spiritually grounded approach to challenges, aligning effort with acceptance and fostering long-term well-being. Future research could explore the implementation of these concepts across various educational levels and cultural settings, providing deeper insights into their transformative potential.

## Broader Perspectives through Reflection on Mortality (Dhikr al-Mawt)

The practice of *dhikr al-mawt* (reflection on mortality) offers profound insights into life's impermanence, encouraging individuals to place personal struggles within a larger spiritual and existential framework. By contemplating the transient nature of worldly challenges, students are better equipped to manage emotional distress, foster gratitude, and realign their goals with meaningful and purposeful aspirations. Research has shown that reflecting on mortality reduces emotional impulsivity and fosters resilience by helping individuals adopt a balanced perspective on life's challenges (Abdullah & Mahmud, 2021; Ibrahim & Khalid, 2022).

## Educational applications of dhikr al-mawt

The integration of *dhikr al-mawt* into educational settings provides an opportunity to help students develop emotional resilience and spiritual grounding. Courses such as Islamic Civilization or World Religions provide natural platforms for discussing life's impermanence, encouraging students to reflect on broader existential questions such as purpose, priorities, and the transient nature of material success. Through these discussions, students can gain a deeper understanding of their role within a larger spiritual context, reducing anxiety and fostering inner peace.

In secondary schools, *dhikr al-mawt* can be incorporated into Moral Education (Pendidikan Moral) or Islamic Studies (Pendidikan Islam) curricula. Teachers can encourage students to engage in reflective practices, such as writing letters to their future selves or participating in guided meditations on life's impermanence. These activities not only promote self-reflection but also encourage students to align their actions with long-term goals and spiritual values (Abdullah & Mahmud, 2021). For example, students could reflect on how temporary challenges, such as academic pressure or social conflicts, fit into the broader context of their personal growth and spiritual journey. At the tertiary level, *dhikr al-mawt* can be integrated into motivational programs, student seminars, and even co-curricular activities organized by Student Affairs departments. These programs could explore themes such as goal setting, personal fulfillment, and the importance of maintaining perspective during challenging times. For instance, workshops on Life Priorities or Spiritual Resilience could incorporate discussions on *dhikr al-mawt*, helping students reframe their struggles and focus on cultivating meaningful aspirations (Ahmed, 2023).

## Experiential learning opportunities

Experiential learning activities can further reinforce the principles of *dhikr al-mawt*. These activities include:

- i. Reflective Journaling:** Students document their thoughts on impermanence, identifying

lessons learned from past challenges and setting future goals aligned with spiritual growth.

**ii. Guided Meditations:** Facilitated meditations focusing on the temporality of life can help students cultivate mindfulness and reduce anxiety. Research shows that mindfulness practices rooted in spiritual reflection improve emotional regulation and decrease feelings of helplessness (Farahani & Khorshidi, 2021).

**iii. Life Planning Exercises:** Activities such as envisioning a legacy or creating a personal “life map” encourage students to reflect on their values, aspirations, and the impact they wish to leave behind.

For example, in a university course on Philosophy and Ethics, students could explore the works of classical philosophers and theologians who discussed the impermanence of life, such as Al-Ghazali (1982), alongside contemporary theories on existentialism. This interdisciplinary approach fosters critical thinking and deepens students’ appreciation of the interconnectedness between spiritual reflection and personal growth.

### **Psychological benefits of *dhikr al-mawt***

The psychological benefits of *dhikr al-mawt* are significant, particularly for students grappling with stress or feelings of inadequacy. Reflecting on mortality encourages individuals to reframe temporary setbacks as part of a larger journey, reducing the intensity of emotional distress. Studies have shown that spiritual practices emphasizing life’s impermanence increase resilience, gratitude, and acceptance (Ibrahim & Khalid, 2022; Ahmed, 2023). In addition to emotional benefits, *dhikr al-mawt* fosters a sense of humility and interconnectedness, helping students appreciate the importance of relationships and ethical responsibilities. By contextualizing their struggles within a larger spiritual narrative, students develop a deeper understanding of their strengths and limitations, equipping them to navigate life’s uncertainties with confidence and purpose.

### **Alignment with educational goals**

Integrating *dhikr al-mawt* into education aligns with the objectives of the Malaysian Education Development Plan (PPPM) 2013–2025, which emphasizes the holistic development of students across intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and physical dimensions. The practice of reflecting on mortality encourages students to engage with their emotions constructively, develop a stronger sense of purpose, and build resilience in the face of challenges. In higher education, interdisciplinary courses such as Ethics and Personal Development or Religious Philosophy could embed *dhikr al-mawt* as a key theme, promoting intellectual exploration alongside spiritual reflection. Furthermore, programs focusing on student well-being, such as Mindfulness Training or Emotional Resilience Workshops, can incorporate this practice to foster a supportive and growth-oriented learning environment. The integration of *dhikr al-mawt* into educational frameworks provides students with a transformative tool for navigating personal and academic challenges. By encouraging reflection on life’s impermanence, students are better equipped to manage emotional stress, develop resilience, and align their goals with meaningful aspirations. Future research could explore the long-term impact of *dhikr al-mawt* on student well-being, academic success, and spiritual growth, offering valuable insights into its applicability across diverse cultural and educational contexts.

### **Holistic Impact and Educational Implications**

Integrating spiritual principles into education, particularly the teachings of Al-Ghazali (1982) and Ibn Ataillah (2004), provides a robust framework for enhancing resilience and fostering emotional well-being among students. The principles of *taqwa* (consciousness of Allah), *ikhlas* (sincerity), and *sidq* (truthfulness) are instrumental in fostering self-regulation, accountability, and ethical behavior. *Taqwa* nurtures a sense of moral responsibility, enabling students to navigate emotional and academic pressures with clarity and composure. *Ikhlas* and *sidq* provide a foundation

for genuine actions and interpersonal trust, reducing internal conflicts and fostering emotional stability. Research supports the role of spiritual consciousness in enhancing resilience and mitigating destructive behaviors such as self-harm (Ahmed, 2023; Ibrahim & Khalid, 2022).

At the secondary level, subjects such as Islamic Studies and Moral Education can incorporate lessons on *taqwa*, *ikhlas*, and *sidq* through reflective practices, storytelling, and role-playing activities. These methods help students internalize key values, such as sincerity and truthfulness, while equipping them to make ethical decisions in challenging situations. For tertiary institutions, programs like Leadership and Character Building and Student Development Modules offer opportunities to incorporate *zuhud* (moderation), *tawakal* (trust in Allah), and *reda* (acceptance of destiny) into workshops and seminars. These practices foster emotional balance, ethical leadership, and resilience in managing uncertainties, such as academic or career challenges. This holistic integration addresses both individual and communal well-being, creating environments that prioritize emotional and spiritual health.

Aligned with the goals of the Malaysian Education Development Plan (PPPM) 2013–2025, this approach complements conventional psychological interventions by addressing the root causes of emotional distress, including behaviors like non-suicidal self-injury (NSSI). By teaching students emotional regulation through *taqwa*, patience through *sabr*, and gratitude through *syukur*, educational institutions empower students to overcome stress and cultivate long-term resilience. These principles help students navigate life's challenges with a strong sense of purpose and spiritual grounding, reducing impulsive or destructive responses to adversity.

## Conclusion

The spiritual approaches introduced by Al-Ghazali (1982) and Ibn Ataillah (2004) provide a comprehensive and holistic framework for addressing internal challenges, including Non-Suicidal Self-Injury (NSSI), and fostering resilience. These approaches emphasize not only spiritual growth but also practical guidance for strengthening emotional stability and mental resilience. By integrating practices such as *taubah* (repentance), individuals are encouraged to reflect on their actions, seek forgiveness, and commit to personal transformation. This reduces feelings of guilt and shame, which are often drivers of NSSI, while fostering self-awareness and emotional stability (Isgandarova, 2021). Values such as *sabr* (patience) and *tawakal* (trust in Allah) empower individuals to manage emotional distress with composure, balancing proactive efforts with reliance on divine wisdom. For instance, *sabr* equips individuals with the strength to endure emotional pain without resorting to harmful coping mechanisms like NSSI, while *tawakal* provides spiritual grounding during uncertainty (Farahani & Khorshidi, 2021). Similarly, *zuhud* (moderation) fosters detachment from materialistic pressures and distractions, allowing individuals to refocus on inner peace, an essential factor in reducing impulsive behaviors linked to NSSI (Nasir & Yusoff, 2022). Gratitude (*syukur*) and compassion (*rahmah*) play significant roles in fostering emotional positivity and self-acceptance, both of which act as protective factors against NSSI. Gratitude shifts attention from feelings of despair to the blessings in life, while *rahmah* encourages empathy toward oneself and others, reducing self-criticism and nurturing supportive connections (Yahya et al., 2021; Mohamad Yusoff et al., 2019). Acceptance (*reda*) complements these practices by encouraging a mindset of contentment and reducing anxiety when faced with life's challenges. The practice of *dhikr al-mawt* (reflection on mortality) provides a broader spiritual perspective, allowing individuals to contextualize personal struggles within the impermanence of life. This perspective diminishes the intensity of emotional distress and impulsive behaviors often associated with NSSI, helping individuals to realign their priorities toward long-term resilience (Abdullah & Mahmud, 2021). Furthermore, *sidq* (truthfulness) and *ikhlas* (sincerity) serve as essential foundations for meaningful emotional and spiritual transformation, encouraging individuals to approach their struggles with honesty and pure intent, thereby fostering deeper self-reflection and growth. These spiritual approaches not only address psychological symptoms but also contribute to developing holistic resilience across multiple dimensions, including spiritual, emotional, and mental well-being. For individuals engaging in NSSI, this framework offers practical strategies to manage the underlying

causes of their behaviors while promoting a renewed sense of purpose. By focusing on the integration of spiritual principles, individuals are guided toward acknowledging and addressing their pain constructively, ultimately developing a stronger capacity to endure future challenges.

In educational settings, these principles hold transformative potential in fostering resilience among students prone to NSSI or other emotional struggles. Schools and universities can implement these practices through reflective journaling, group discussions, and values-based learning. For example, *sabr* and *tawakal* can be embedded into stress management modules, equipping students with tools to manage academic and personal pressures effectively. Reflective sessions on *dhikr al-mawt* can also help students contextualize their struggles within a broader spiritual perspective, reducing impulsive reactions. Aligned with the objectives of the Malaysian Education Development Plan (PPPM) 2013–2025, this integrative approach not only complements existing psychological therapies but also tackles the root causes of emotional distress, such as NSSI. By combining psychological, emotional, and spiritual dimensions, these practices support holistic healing and personal development. Future research should explore the efficacy of these practices in clinical and educational settings, focusing on their long-term impact on mental health and resilience.

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