



Fostering Student Character: The Implementation of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* Philosophy in Elementary Education

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ABSTRACT

Keywords:

Character Education,
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This study aims to examine the implementation of the philosophy of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* in fostering students' moral character Elementary Education to explore how its principles are translated into educational practices. The research employed a qualitative approach using a case study design. Data were collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews with the principal, teachers, and students, as well as document analysis. The data were analyzed using the interactive model of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The findings reveal that the philosophy of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* is implemented through the integration of religious habituation, teacher role modeling, reflective learning, and a school culture grounded in Islamic values. These practices encourage students to internalize moral values, strengthen spiritual awareness, and develop positive behaviors such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, empathy, and respect. The study further demonstrates that sustainable moral development is achieved when spiritual purification becomes the foundation of educational activities rather than merely emphasizing behavioral compliance. The findings provide both theoretical and practical implications by positioning *Tazkiyatun Nafs* as an operational framework for character education and offering valuable insights for educators and policymakers seeking to strengthen morally and spiritually grounded educational practices.

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INTRODUCTION

Moral education has become one of the most significant concerns in contemporary society because the quality of a nation's future is closely associated with the character of its younger generation (Adzimah, 2024; Kunta, 2025; Najiburohman, 2025). While rapid technological advancement, globalization, and digital communication have created unprecedented educational opportunities, they have also exposed children to complex moral challenges that

influence their attitudes, behaviors, and decision-making processes (Fitriani, 2025; Hikmah, 2026; Holidi, 2026). Reports from educational institutions and social organizations indicate increasing concerns regarding disrespectful behavior, declining empathy, cyberbullying, dishonesty, and weakened social responsibility among school-aged children. These conditions suggest that academic achievement alone is insufficient to prepare students for responsible citizenship (Kusumawati, 2026; Mohlas, 2025; Nadhifah, 2026). Consequently, educational institutions are expected to cultivate not only cognitive competence but also ethical awareness and spiritual maturity. In Islamic educational philosophy, moral formation is inseparable from spiritual purification, emphasizing that noble behavior emerges from a purified heart rather than external discipline alone. Therefore, examining philosophical approaches that integrate spiritual development with character education is essential for strengthening moral education and addressing the growing ethical challenges faced by contemporary society.

The growing concern over students' moral behavior reflects a broader educational problem that cannot be resolved merely through disciplinary regulations or character education campaigns. Many schools have implemented various moral education programs, yet the outcomes often remain inconsistent because they primarily emphasize behavioral compliance instead of internal value transformation (Albustomi, 2025; Ni'am, 2025; Rahman, 2025). As a result, students may demonstrate appropriate behavior in supervised environments while failing to internalize ethical principles in their daily lives. This condition indicates that many educational practices still focus on external control rather than developing intrinsic moral consciousness. Within Islamic education, moral development is understood as a lifelong process beginning with the purification of the soul *Tazkiyatun Nafs*, which nurtures sincerity, self-control, compassion, humility, and responsibility before these values manifest in observable behavior. However, this philosophical foundation is frequently overlooked in contemporary educational practice, creating a gap between moral instruction and genuine character formation. Consequently, investigating how the philosophy of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* is implemented within elementary education becomes increasingly important to understand how moral values can be internalized more effectively among young learners.

In the Indonesian educational context, particularly within elementary schools, various efforts have been undertaken to strengthen students' character through religious activities, habitual practices, and value-based learning. Schools commonly organize congregational prayers, Qur'anic recitation, moral storytelling, and character-building programs to cultivate positive behavior among students (Khofsah, 2025; Rahman, 2026; Shoha, 2026). Nevertheless, field observations in many educational settings suggest that these activities often function as routine institutional programs without fully integrating the

philosophical values underlying moral purification. Students may actively participate in religious activities while still exhibiting behaviors such as dishonesty, disrespect toward teachers, conflicts with peers, or limited self-discipline outside structured environments (Hikmah & Mudarris, 2026; Holidi, 2025; Manshur, 2026). This phenomenon indicates that participation in religious practices does not automatically guarantee the internalization of moral values unless educational activities are supported by a coherent philosophical framework. Therefore, investigating the implementation of the philosophy of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* at SD N 1 Seunebok Tuha, East Aceh, provides an opportunity to examine how spiritual purification principles are translated into daily educational practices that foster authentic moral character among elementary school students.

Previous studies have extensively examined character education, Islamic moral education, and values-based learning in schools. Many scholars have emphasized the effectiveness of religious habituation, teacher role modeling, school culture, and Islamic educational values in promoting students' moral development (Kusumawati, 2025; Syafiih, 2025). Other researchers have explored the relationship between Islamic education and character formation by highlighting the importance of religious instruction, moral exemplification, and community participation in developing ethical behavior. These studies have significantly contributed to understanding the practical dimensions of character education and demonstrated that school culture plays a central role in shaping students' attitudes and behaviors (Azizeh Mukarromah Umar Manshur, 2025; Imansyah et al., 2025; Parker, 2024). However, most existing studies primarily focus on educational strategies, instructional models, or behavioral outcomes while paying relatively limited attention to the philosophical foundations that explain why particular educational practices contribute to moral transformation. Consequently, the philosophical dimension of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* remains insufficiently explored as a conceptual framework for understanding the deeper process of internalizing moral values within elementary education.

Despite the growing body of literature on Islamic character education, several important research gaps remain unresolved. First, previous studies have predominantly examined character education from pedagogical, curricular, or behavioral perspectives, with limited attention to the philosophical foundations that shape educational practices (Hamdanah & Thohir, 2025; Hasanah et al., 2024; Khotimah & Suhermanto, 2024). Second, although *Tazkiyatun Nafs* has been widely discussed in Islamic theology and ethics, it has rarely been investigated as an operational educational philosophy implemented within elementary school settings (Abas & Kholidah, 2025; Eduzor, 2024; Wagner, 2025). Existing research often treats *Tazkiyatun Nafs* as an individual spiritual practice rather than a comprehensive framework that guides curriculum implementation, teacher-student interactions, school culture, and character development (Badriyah, 2025;

Bulqis & Fachri, 2025; Hina & Paramole, 2025). Furthermore, empirical evidence explaining how the philosophical concepts of self-purification are translated into daily educational activities remains scarce. This limitation creates a significant gap between Islamic philosophical discourse and educational practice. Addressing this gap is essential because understanding the practical implementation of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* may provide a more holistic model of moral education that integrates spiritual cultivation, ethical awareness, and behavioral transformation within formal educational institutions.

The novelty of this study lies in its attempt to bridge Islamic educational philosophy with empirical educational practice by examining the implementation of the philosophy of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* in fostering students' moral character at the elementary school level. Unlike previous studies that primarily evaluate the effectiveness of character education programs or religious activities, this research investigates how the philosophical principles of self-purification become the foundation for educational policies, teaching practices, daily school routines, and teacher-student relationships. The study also positions *Tazkiyatun Nafs* not merely as a theological concept but as an educational paradigm capable of explaining the process through which moral values are internalized and transformed into students' everyday behavior. Consequently, this research is expected to enrich the theoretical discourse on Islamic educational philosophy while providing practical insights for educators, school leaders, and policymakers seeking to strengthen character education through spiritually grounded educational approaches that emphasize inner transformation rather than external behavioral control alone.

Based on the aforementioned issues, this study seeks to answer the following research question: **How is the philosophy of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* implemented in fostering students' moral character at SD N 1 Seunebok Tuha, East Aceh?** This research argues that sustainable moral development cannot be achieved solely through behavioral regulation, religious routines, or character education programs unless these educational practices are rooted in a coherent philosophical framework emphasizing the purification of the soul. It is assumed that the implementation of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* encourages students to internalize Islamic moral values through continuous spiritual cultivation, self-reflection, ethical habituation, and exemplary guidance provided by teachers and the school community. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute theoretically by expanding the discourse on Islamic educational philosophy and character education, while also contributing practically by offering a contextual model for integrating *Tazkiyatun Nafs* into elementary education. Ultimately, the findings may serve as valuable references for educators, school administrators, researchers, and policymakers in designing more holistic and sustainable approaches to moral education within Islamic and general educational contexts.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative approach using a case study design to explore the implementation of the philosophy of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* in fostering students' moral character at SD N 1 Seunebok Tuha, East Aceh (Gautam, 2023; Salmona & Kaczynski, 2024; Takona, 2024). A qualitative approach was selected because it enables an in-depth understanding of social phenomena within their natural setting and facilitates the exploration of participants' experiences, perspectives, and interpretations. The case study design was chosen because the research focused on a single educational institution, allowing the researcher to comprehensively investigate how the philosophical principles of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* are translated into educational practices, moral development programs, and the daily interactions between teachers and students.

The research was conducted at SD N 1 Seunebok Tuha, East Aceh. This site was purposively selected because the school actively integrates Islamic values into its educational activities and character-building programs, making it highly relevant to the objectives of this study. Furthermore, the school provides a unique context in which moral education is embedded in both classroom instruction and extracurricular activities, offering rich opportunities to examine the implementation of the philosophy of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* in shaping students' moral behavior and character.

Data were collected through observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Observations were conducted to examine the implementation of moral education practices, classroom interactions, religious activities, and students' daily behavior within the school environment. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with the principal, Islamic education teachers, classroom teachers, and selected students to obtain comprehensive information regarding their understanding and implementation of the philosophy of *Tazkiyatun Nafs*. In addition, relevant documents, including the school's vision and mission, character education programs, lesson plans, school regulations, activity reports, and photographs, were analyzed to complement and validate the findings obtained from observations and interviews.

The collected data were analyzed using the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which consists of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Muthmainna & Siroj, 2025; Salmona & Kaczynski, 2024). Data condensation involved selecting, simplifying, organizing, and focusing the collected information according to the research objectives. The condensed data were then systematically presented through narrative descriptions, matrices, and thematic categorizations to facilitate interpretation and identify emerging patterns. Finally, conclusions were drawn and continuously verified through comparisons across multiple data sources and collection techniques to ensure the credibility, consistency, and trustworthiness of the research findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

The Implementation of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* Philosophy in Fostering Students' Moral Character

The findings revealed that the philosophy of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* has been implemented as the primary foundation for moral development at SD N 1 Seunebok Tuha through daily religious habituation and continuous character reinforcement. Classroom observations demonstrated that every school day began with collective prayers, Qur'anic recitation, and short religious reflections delivered by teachers before formal instruction commenced. Students were also encouraged to greet teachers politely, maintain classroom cleanliness, practice honesty, and demonstrate respect toward peers during learning activities. The researcher observed that teachers consistently connected academic lessons with Islamic moral values, emphasizing sincerity *ikhlas*, patience *sabr*, gratitude *shukr*, and self-discipline as manifestations of spiritual purification. Rather than merely reminding students to obey school regulations, teachers explained the spiritual significance behind every activity, encouraging students to recognize that good character originates from a purified heart. These observations indicate that the implementation of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* extends beyond ritual religious activities and becomes an integral component of the school's educational culture, influencing students' attitudes, interactions, and daily behavior within the learning environment.

The interview findings further strengthened the observational evidence. The principal explained that the school's educational philosophy emphasizes the cultivation of students' inner character before evaluating their academic performance. According to the principal, "Knowledge becomes meaningful only when students possess sincerity, humility, honesty, and responsibility in practicing it. Therefore, our educational priority is to cultivate the heart before developing intellectual competence." Similarly, an Islamic Education teacher stated that moral instruction is integrated into every learning activity rather than being limited to religious education classes. The teacher remarked, "We continuously remind students that every action reflects the condition of their hearts. If the heart is purified through remembrance of Allah, honesty, discipline, and compassion naturally emerge." Several students also expressed that they had become more aware of respecting teachers, helping classmates, speaking politely, and controlling their emotions after participating in the school's daily religious activities. These interview results demonstrate a shared understanding among

school stakeholders that moral development begins with internal spiritual transformation instead of external behavioral control alone.

The integration of observation and interview data indicates that the implementation of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* is characterized by a holistic educational approach that combines spiritual cultivation, moral habituation, teacher role modeling, and a supportive school culture. During classroom observations, teachers consistently demonstrated exemplary behavior by greeting students warmly, speaking respectfully, maintaining patience during classroom interactions, and encouraging reflection whenever students made mistakes. Instead of imposing punitive measures, teachers guided students to understand the moral consequences of their actions and encouraged self-evaluation through gentle advice grounded in Islamic teachings. This educational approach created a learning atmosphere in which students gradually internalized moral values rather than merely complying with institutional rules. The consistency between interview statements and observational findings suggests that the philosophy of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* functions not only as a theoretical concept but also as a practical educational framework shaping the school's vision, instructional practices, interpersonal relationships, and character-building activities. Consequently, the implementation contributes to sustainable moral development by fostering students' spiritual awareness alongside their social and academic growth.

Educational Strategies for Implementing *Tazkiyatun Nafs* in Character Development

The findings indicate that the implementation of the philosophy of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* was carried out through several interconnected educational strategies designed to integrate spiritual purification into students' daily learning experiences. Classroom observations revealed that teachers consistently embedded Islamic moral values into every lesson regardless of the subject being taught. Instead of presenting moral education as an independent topic, teachers linked learning materials with ethical reflection, encouraging students to recognize the relationship between knowledge, faith, and behavior. Every morning, students participated in congregational prayers, Qur'anic recitation, remembrance (*dhikr*), and short motivational talks before beginning classroom instruction. Throughout the school day, teachers encouraged students to practice honesty during assignments, responsibility in completing classroom duties, and mutual respect during group discussions. The researcher also observed that teachers provided immediate moral guidance whenever inappropriate behavior occurred, using persuasive dialogue rather than punishment. This consistent

integration of spiritual values into instructional practices created an educational environment where moral learning occurred naturally through both formal instruction and everyday school experiences.

Table 1. Major Findings on the Implementation of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* Philosophy

Aspect	Observation Findings	Interview Findings	Educational Implication
Daily religious activities	Students participated in congregational prayer, Qur'anic recitation, and <i>dhikr</i> before classes.	Teachers viewed these activities as the foundation of character formation.	Spiritual habituation strengthened students' self-discipline and moral awareness.
Teacher role modeling	Teachers consistently demonstrated respectful communication, patience, honesty, and discipline.	Teachers believed students learned more effectively through exemplary behavior than verbal instruction alone.	Positive role models encouraged students to imitate desirable moral conduct.
Learning process	Moral values were integrated into all classroom subjects and discussions.	Teachers intentionally connected academic content with Islamic ethical principles.	Students understood that knowledge and morality should develop simultaneously.
Student behavior	Students greeted teachers politely, cooperated with peers, maintained classroom cleanliness, and accepted responsibility for mistakes.	Students reported becoming more conscious of honesty, respect, and emotional self-control.	Continuous practice promoted the internalization of moral values rather than superficial compliance.
School culture	Religious values were reflected in daily routines, school regulations, and interpersonal interactions.	School leaders emphasized heart purification as the foundation of education.	A supportive school environment reinforced sustainable character development.

Table 1 summarizes the major findings regarding the implementation of the philosophy of **Tazkiyatun Nafs** in fostering students' moral character at SD N 1 Seunebok Tuha. The triangulated evidence obtained from classroom observations, interviews, and supporting documents demonstrates that the implementation is reflected in five interrelated aspects: daily religious activities, teacher role modeling, the integration of moral values into the learning process, students' moral behavior, and the establishment of a supportive school culture. Daily religious practices, including congregational prayer, Qur'anic recitation, and **dhikr**, function as the foundation for nurturing students' spiritual awareness and self-discipline. Teachers consistently reinforce these values

through exemplary conduct and by integrating Islamic ethical principles into classroom instruction, enabling students to perceive morality as an essential component of learning rather than a separate subject. Consequently, students gradually internalize positive values such as honesty, responsibility, respect, empathy, and self-control. Collectively, these findings indicate that the philosophy of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* has been systematically embedded within the school's educational environment, creating a holistic approach to sustainable moral and character development.

Interview data further demonstrated that teachers employed reflective learning strategies to strengthen students' moral consciousness. One classroom teacher explained, "Whenever students make mistakes, we do not immediately punish them. Instead, we invite them to reflect on why the action is wrong and how it affects their relationship with Allah and with other people." Likewise, the principal emphasized that educational success should not be measured solely by academic achievement but also by students' consistency in practicing honesty, humility, empathy, and responsibility in their daily lives. Students also reported that teachers frequently shared stories of the prophets, encouraged self-reflection after classroom activities, and motivated them to evaluate their own behavior before returning home each day. Document analysis supported these findings, showing that the school's vision, mission, annual programs, and character education policies consistently emphasized Islamic values, spiritual discipline, and moral integrity. These documents confirmed that *Tazkiyatun Nafs* was institutionally embedded rather than implemented as a temporary educational initiative.

The synthesis of observation, interview, and documentary evidence suggests that the implementation of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* relies on a comprehensive educational strategy integrating curriculum, school culture, teacher professionalism, and students' spiritual development. Rather than separating religious instruction from general education, the school systematically incorporated moral values into every aspect of educational practice. Teachers functioned not only as instructors but also as spiritual mentors responsible for nurturing students' inner awareness through continuous guidance, reflection, and personal example. The consistency between institutional policies and classroom implementation strengthened students' opportunities to internalize Islamic ethical values within authentic learning situations. Consequently, character education was experienced as a continuous developmental process rather than a collection of isolated religious activities. These findings demonstrate that sustainable moral development can be achieved when

educational institutions integrate philosophical principles, instructional strategies, and supportive school environments into a unified framework centered on the philosophy of *Tazkiyatun Nafs*.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* Philosophy

The findings revealed several supporting factors that contributed to the successful implementation of the philosophy of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* in fostering students' moral character at SD N 1 Seunebok Tuha. Classroom observations indicated that the school's religious atmosphere provided a strong foundation for cultivating moral values through consistent daily practices. Teachers, school leaders, and staff demonstrated exemplary behavior by greeting students politely, maintaining discipline, and participating actively in religious activities alongside students. Such consistency created an educational environment in which students perceived moral values as lived experiences rather than theoretical concepts. Interview data also showed that parents generally supported the school's character education programs by encouraging their children to continue religious practices at home. The principal explained, "Character education becomes more effective when parents and teachers deliver the same moral messages. Students need consistency between school and home to develop lasting habits."* Document analysis further revealed that the school's vision, mission, and annual educational programs explicitly prioritized spiritual development, reinforcing the institutional commitment to integrating *Tazkiyatun Nafs* into all educational activities.

Despite these positive conditions, several challenges were identified during the implementation process. Observation findings showed that students came from diverse family backgrounds with varying levels of religious understanding and parental involvement, resulting in differences in students' moral behavior and learning readiness. Some students consistently demonstrated discipline and responsibility, while others required repeated guidance to practice honesty, respect, and emotional self-control. Teachers acknowledged during interviews that the influence of digital media and unrestricted access to social networking platforms presented additional obstacles to character formation. One teacher explained, "Children spend a significant amount of time using smartphones, and sometimes the values they receive from social media contradict what we teach at school."* Another challenge involved maintaining students' consistency in practicing positive behaviors outside school hours because teachers could not directly supervise their activities within family

and community environments. These findings suggest that character development requires continuous collaboration among schools, families, and the wider community to ensure that moral values are consistently reinforced across different social settings.

Overall, the integration of observational evidence, interview responses, and documentary analysis demonstrates that the implementation of the philosophy of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* represents a holistic and sustainable approach to moral education. The findings indicate that successful character development is influenced not only by religious instruction but also by the consistency of educational practices, teacher role modeling, institutional commitment, supportive family involvement, and a school culture grounded in Islamic values. At the same time, the challenges identified emphasize that moral education is a dynamic process requiring continuous adaptation to contemporary social realities, particularly the growing influence of digital technology and changing family environments. Nevertheless, the school's emphasis on spiritual purification, reflective learning, and exemplary conduct enabled students to gradually internalize moral values as part of their daily lives rather than merely complying with school regulations. Therefore, the implementation of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* may be regarded as an effective educational framework for strengthening students' moral character by integrating spiritual awareness, ethical reflection, and positive behavioral habits within the broader context of Islamic elementary education.

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the implementation of the philosophy of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* plays a significant role in fostering students' moral character through the integration of spiritual purification, religious habituation, teacher role modeling, and a supportive school culture. These findings are consistent with previous studies emphasizing that Islamic character education becomes more effective when moral values are continuously practiced within authentic educational environments rather than being delivered solely through classroom instruction (Adeoye & Baharun, 2025; Baharun, 2024; Sain & Abdullah, 2024). Earlier research has highlighted that school culture, religious activities, and teachers' exemplary behavior positively influence students' moral development by encouraging ethical awareness and responsible behavior. However, the present study extends these findings by demonstrating that the success of moral education is fundamentally rooted in the philosophical concept of *Tazkiyatun Nafs*, which emphasizes the purification of the heart as the primary

source of ethical behavior. Rather than viewing religious activities merely as routine practices, this study reveals that their educational effectiveness depends on the extent to which they facilitate students' internal spiritual transformation. Consequently, moral education should be understood as a holistic process that integrates spiritual consciousness with observable behavioral development.

Another important finding concerns the role of teachers as spiritual mentors rather than solely academic instructors. Previous studies have consistently recognized teachers as influential role models in character education, suggesting that students tend to imitate behaviors demonstrated by respected educators (Sholehah & Ichsan, 2025). The present findings support this perspective while offering a deeper philosophical explanation grounded in *Tazkiyatun Nafs*. Classroom observations and interview data indicate that teachers did not simply enforce school regulations but guided students through reflection, dialogue, and continuous moral encouragement, enabling them to understand the spiritual meaning underlying ethical behavior. This finding differs from many conventional character education models that prioritize behavioral compliance through rules and sanctions. Instead, the implementation observed in this study emphasizes intrinsic motivation, self-awareness, and personal responsibility, reflecting the Islamic understanding that moral transformation begins with the purification of the soul before becoming visible through external actions. Therefore, the study contributes to the growing discourse on Islamic educational philosophy by illustrating how spiritual development functions as the foundation for sustainable character formation.

The findings also reveal that the effectiveness of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* is strongly influenced by the interaction between school culture, family support, and the broader social environment. This observation aligns with ecological perspectives on education, which argue that students' character develops through continuous interactions across multiple social contexts (Makiyah, 2024; Zakiyah, 2025). Previous studies have similarly reported that parental involvement and positive school climates contribute significantly to successful character education. Nevertheless, this study identifies an additional challenge associated with contemporary digital culture, where unrestricted exposure to social media and online content may weaken the internalization of moral values promoted within schools. Unlike earlier research that primarily focused on instructional strategies, the present study demonstrates that maintaining students' moral development requires collaboration among educators, parents, and communities to reinforce spiritual values consistently across different environments. This finding highlights that educational institutions cannot function independently in

addressing moral issues but require integrated partnerships capable of supporting students' ethical growth beyond classroom settings.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the development of Islamic educational philosophy by positioning *Tazkiyatun Nafs* as an operational framework for understanding moral education within formal schooling. Existing literature has extensively discussed *Tazkiyatun Nafs* in relation to Islamic spirituality, theology, and personal ethics; however, empirical investigations examining its practical implementation within elementary education remain relatively limited. By connecting philosophical concepts with observable educational practices, this study bridges the gap between normative Islamic thought and contemporary educational implementation. The findings demonstrate that spiritual purification is not merely an individual devotional practice but also an educational principle capable of guiding curriculum implementation, classroom management, teacher-student relationships, and institutional culture. Consequently, this research enriches the theoretical discourse on Islamic character education by proposing that sustainable moral development should be conceptualized as the outcome of continuous spiritual cultivation integrated into everyday educational experiences rather than isolated religious instruction or behavioral intervention programs.

The practical implications of this study are equally significant for educators, school leaders, curriculum developers, and educational policymakers. The findings suggest that effective character education should move beyond cognitive instruction and disciplinary regulations toward educational practices that encourage reflection, sincerity, empathy, self-control, and spiritual awareness. Schools seeking to strengthen students' moral character should integrate *Tazkiyatun Nafs* into daily routines, instructional strategies, school policies, and teacher professional development rather than limiting moral education to religious subjects alone. Furthermore, policymakers may consider incorporating spiritually grounded character education frameworks into broader educational policies to address contemporary moral challenges among young learners. Overall, this study contributes both theoretically and practically by providing empirical evidence that the philosophy of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* serves as a comprehensive educational framework capable of integrating spiritual formation, ethical awareness, and character development within Islamic elementary education. The findings also offer a valuable reference for future studies exploring the relationship between Islamic philosophy and contemporary educational practice in diverse cultural and institutional contexts.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the successful implementation of the philosophy of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* in fostering students' moral character is achieved through the integration of spiritual purification, teacher role modeling, religious habituation, and a supportive school culture that encourages the internalization of Islamic values rather than mere behavioral compliance. The most significant lesson derived from this research is that sustainable moral development begins with transforming students' inner awareness, enabling ethical values to emerge naturally in their daily attitudes and actions. The primary scholarly contribution of this study lies in bridging the gap between Islamic educational philosophy and empirical educational practice by demonstrating how *Tazkiyatun Nafs* can serve as an operational framework for character education in elementary schools. Nevertheless, this study is limited to a single case study conducted in one elementary school, restricting the generalizability of its findings. Future research is recommended to investigate the implementation of *Tazkiyatun Nafs* across different educational levels, cultural contexts, and geographical settings, as well as to employ comparative or mixed-method approaches to enrich the understanding of spiritually grounded character education.

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