

Islamic Psychospiritual Approach in Forming University Students' Ethics: A Narrative Review

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ABSTRACT

Ethics is an important foundation in the formation of university students' personalities, but the increasingly worrying issue of ethical violations has affected the reputation of higher education institutions and has a negative impact on the development of the country's human capital. In facing this challenge, the Islamic psychospiritual approach is considered to have the potential to strengthen the intellectual, emotional and spiritual balance of students, thus increasing ethical awareness. However, previous studies have not thoroughly examined the application of the Islamic psychospiritual approach in Malaysian universities. Therefore, this study aims to identify the issue of ethical violations among university students and examine the Islamic psychospiritual approach as an alternative basis in the formation of ethics. This study uses a qualitative approach and a narrative review method to examine the latest literature from the Web of Science, Scopus, and Google Scholar databases. The data was analysed inductively to formulate the main themes related to concepts of ethics, forms of ethical violation, and relevant Islamic psychospiritual principles. The study's findings show that student ethical violations include deviant behaviour and academic fraud, which stem from weak student involvement in campus activities and a lack of integration of spiritual values in education. Furthermore, the Islamic psychospiritual approach provides an alternative framework by strengthening religious practices, developing a university environment based on spirituality, and integrating spiritual values into educational modules. This study stresses the importance of mainstreaming the Islamic psychospiritual approach as a holistic framework for the formation of student ethics and as a basis for higher education policies that emphasise intellectual, emotional, and spiritual balance.

Keywords: Islamic Psychospiritual, Ethics, Student, University, Narrative Review

INTRODUCTION

Ethics is the foundation for the formation of students' personalities, especially as future leaders and agents of change in national development. Institutions of higher learning not only function as centres for the delivery of knowledge but also as fields for the formation of values, morals and ethics. However, ethical violations among university students in Malaysia are increasingly worrying because they affect the reputation of the institution, the effectiveness of learning, and the quality of the country's human capital. According to Anand et al. (2024) and Othman et al. (2022), ethical violations not only reduce academic quality but also reduce graduation rates. Such behaviour also increases the risk of losing public trust, makes it difficult to attract quality students and academic staff, and affects the university's position internationally (Olesen et al., 2019). This chain reaction ultimately reflects the decline in moral values in society and affects national development (Jamil et al., 2019).

External enforcement mechanisms alone have proven to be inadequate, so an internal approach based on character building needs to be prioritised. Previous studies have emphasised that spiritual intelligence plays an important role in shaping students' ethical behaviour, as well as helping to prevent ethical violations (Kazemzadeh et al., 2022; Daliman, 2021 & Rakhshanderou et al., 2021). Spiritual intelligence is also closely related to emotional and intellectual intelligence, thus supporting the development of students' values and morals (Lolang et al., 2023 & Nugroho et al., 2023). In this case, a deep appreciation of religious values is seen as a bulwark against student ethical violations (Daliman, 2021 & Pong, 2021). This spiritual dimension is seen as

capable of educating the soul and forming a sound internal system in order to produce students who are ethical and have noble character. However, this approach is still not systematically integrated into higher education in Malaysia.

In this regard, the Islamic psychospiritual approach has emerged as an alternative paradigm that emphasises the balance of intellectual, emotional and spiritual development of students. Recent studies have shown that the integration of the psychological and spiritual dimensions of Islam in education not only improves mental and spiritual health but also contributes to the formation of ethical awareness among students (Agustin & Hidayah, 2024; Rahman et al., 2024 & Wajar et al., 2022). In this context, the Islamic psychospiritual approach is seen as a potentially important foundation in strengthening the formation of student ethics. However, studies on the application of this approach in the context of higher education institutions in Malaysia are still limited, thus creating a need for further research.

Based on the research gap, the main questions arise: (i) what are the forms of ethical violation issues that occur among university students? and (ii) what is the ability of the psychospiritual approach as a basis for the formation of university student ethics? Therefore, this study aims to first identify the issue of ethical violation among university students and second, examine the potential of the Islamic psychospiritual approach as an alternative basis for the formation of university student ethics in Malaysia. It is hoped that the findings of this study can contribute to the development of a framework for the formation of university student ethics that is more comprehensive, sustainable and based on deep spiritual values.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach with a narrative survey method as the main strategy in identifying issues of ethical violations by university students and evaluating the potential of the Islamic psychospiritual approach as an alternative basis for the formation of ethics. The qualitative approach was chosen because it allows a phenomenon to be studied and understood in depth through analysis of the implicit meanings contained in the data obtained. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), the qualitative approach has high value in research because the use of concrete and descriptive data is able to provide a more comprehensive and contextual understanding of the issue being studied.

The narrative survey method is seen as one of the qualitative approaches that is suitable for exploring the development of knowledge in a field holistically, especially in the context of the formation of ethics among students. According to Jones (2004) and Siddaway et al. (2019), the narrative survey method plays an important role in connecting findings, theories, and contexts from various studies, thus enabling the production of a more comprehensive understanding, as well as generating new knowledge through the synthesis of diverse meanings and experiences. Furthermore, this approach is very suitable for exploring issues that are complex and require a profound understanding of the social and cultural context (Dainty, 2024), including ethical issues related to the social dimension of students in higher education institutions.

To obtain information and data for this study, library sources were used as the main basis. These sources include academic journal articles indexed in databases such as Web of Science (WOS), Scopus, and Google Scholar. These data sources focused on documents related to aspects of ethics, Islamic psychospirituality, and university students. The utilized keywords are "Islamic and psychospiritual", "student ethics", and "higher education". Next, the data obtained was analysed inductively to formulate the study findings based on the identified themes, especially those involving the concept of ethics, Islamic psychospirituality, issues of ethical violations, and Islamic psychospiritual principles that are relevant in the context of the formation of student ethics in institutions of higher learning. This method is in line with the view of Jones (2004), who stated that data from various library sources can be analysed inductively to build themes and narratives that are able to integrate various perspectives and findings in an integrated manner.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

To explain the findings of the study, five important themes related to the research questions will be discussed in this section. The first is the concept of ethics, the second is the concept of Islamic psychospirituality, the third

is the issue of ethical violations among university students, the fourth is Islamic psychospirituality as an alternative basis for the formation of university student ethics, and the fifth is the strategy for strengthening university student ethics through an Islamic psychospiritual approach in Malaysia. The findings and discussions can be understood as follows:

First, the Concept of Ethics

Etymologically, the term 'ethics' comes from the Greek word 'ethos', which means 'morality'. From a conceptual perspective, ethics is defined as a systematic reflection on the values of goodness and truth in society, covering views, decisions, and actions (Zwitter, 2019). It includes the study of ethical and undesirable values and individual moral responsibilities and obligations, in addition to the principles and rules that govern behaviour in a particular community or profession (Handy & Russell, 2018). Discussions of ethics began at the time of Plato and Aristotle, who emphasised virtue as the basis for moral guidance (Ravo, 2023). In modern developments, codes of ethics are more prescriptive, indicating the need for clear guidance to address contemporary moral challenges (Jackson, 2019).

In the context of Islam, ethics is based on the Quran and Hadith as the main sources, with the support of *ijma* and *qiyas* as additional references (Nasir & Marudin, 2022 & Sachedina, 2022). Islam emphasises moral values and noble character as the core in the formation of individual personality and the development of society as a whole (Nasrat, 2021 & Rahim, 2013). According to Khalid et al. (2022), there are eleven main dimensions of Islamic ethics, including responsibility, trust, keeping promises, being punctual, honesty, confidence, courage, commitment, telling the truth, sincerity, and integrity. These dimensions become the basic framework in determining human behaviour that is based on revelation.

It is understood that ethics serves as an important foundation in building a moral and integrity-based society. The integration between Western and Islamic ethical perspectives presents a balance between human rationality and the guidance of divine revelation in establishing moral values. These ethical principles and dimensions are believed to be able to form individuals who are responsible, honest, trustworthy and sincere, thus contributing to the development of a harmonious, prosperous civilisation based on universal spiritual and humanitarian values.

Second, the Concept of Islamic Psychospirituality

The Islamic psychospiritual concept is a combination of psychological and spiritual aspects based on Islamic principles and teachings. This concept emphasises the purification of the soul, the formation of morals, and the achievement of well-being in this world and the hereafter. According to Sa'ari and Borhan (2005), Islamic psychospirituality refers to the combination of human psychological and spiritual knowledge concepts based on the sources of the Quran and Hadith, the practices of the righteous predecessors, and knowledge based on Islamic law. This approach is closely related to the issues of the soul, behaviour, and human happiness, with the main goal of achieving true happiness (Sa'ari, 2019). This approach also involves the integration of Sufism knowledge within the Islamic psychospiritual framework, as formulated in al-Ghazali's thought, which discusses psychological and spiritual aspects (Mansor et al., 2024). In line with this, the Islamic psychospiritual approach emphasises the aspects of forming, strengthening, and prospering the four main elements in the human spiritual structure, namely *al-nafs* (desire), *al-qalb* (heart), *al-ruh* (spirit), and *al-'aql* (intellect), all of which play an important role in shaping the spiritual balance, personality, morals, and ethics of the individual according to the Islamic perspective.

The Islamic psychospiritual approach includes several elements and methods, such as first *tazkiyah al-nafs* (self-purification), which is the purification of the soul through the practice of worship, prayer, *dhikr*, *muhasabah* (self-reflection), and strengthening faith to form noble morals and self-resilience. Second, applications in Islamic therapy and counselling which involve the use of *ruqyah syar'iyah* (Qur'anic-based healing), *riyadah al-nafs* (spiritual training), *muraqabah* (spiritual mindfulness), and moral guidance and motivation based on Islamic values. While the third is the practice of Sufism, such as patience, *reda* (contentment and acceptance of God's will), repentance, and asceticism as a mechanism for achieving peace of mind and clarity of life's purpose (Razak et al., 2023; Rozikan et al., 2023; Ferdaus et al., 2023; Abidin et al., 2022; Paad et al., 2021; Amin et

al., 2020 & Wazir et al., 2020). In this context, the integration of these three elements not only functions as an intervention mechanism against emotional and moral disorders but also has the potential to strengthen the internal personality structure of students in facing the challenges of modern life in a holistic and balanced manner.

Islamic psychospirituality can be applied in various contexts that contribute to individual well-being holistically. First, according to Wazir et al. (2020), Amin et al. (2020), Nurjannah (2019), and Mansor (2019), in the prevention and treatment of social problems such as drug addiction, deviant behaviour, and emotional stress, this approach emphasises strengthening faith, hope, and the meaning of life's purpose. Second, in self-development and morals, which emphasises the formation of morals, spiritual potential, and the construction of sincere intentions as an important foundation in the development of adolescent and adult personalities (Paad et al., 2021). Third, as an integration model, which is applied in the fields of therapy, education, and healthcare to help individuals achieve life balance, inner healing, and comprehensive self-growth (Verrier, 2021; Alton, 2020 & Kang, 2003). Based on this description, Islamic psychospirituality is seen as an alternative basis for the formation of human morality and ethics, especially among university students.

Third, the Issue of Ethical Violations Among University Students

The issue of ethical violations among university students is increasingly receiving attention in the higher education discourse because it has the potential to affect the learning environment, student well-being, and tarnish the reputation of the educational institution. This issue of ethical violations can be understood as follows:

Deviant and Undisciplined Behaviour

Ethical violations among university students are increasingly concerning when manifestations of deviant behaviour and indiscipline occur in various forms, affecting the effectiveness of learning, tarnishing the image of the institution, and hindering the formation of student personalities. Ahmad et al. (2017) emphasised that the increase in practices that are contrary to ethical and moral values among students is a critical issue that requires immediate attention. Often identified forms of ethical violations include cheating in exams, using social media during lectures, and tardiness to class. Gaski's study (2023) also highlighted symptoms of truancy, violations of institutional rules and disruptions in the classroom as a reflection of weaknesses in student discipline. In parallel, Al-Aidaros et al. and Ahmad and Owoyemi emphasised that student discipline issues continue to increase from time to time without effective intervention to resolve them (Al-Aidaros et al., 2013; Ahmad & Owoyemi, 2012). This situation shows that some students still fail to appreciate the value of responsibility and integrity, thus showing weaknesses in forming an internal awareness of the importance of ethics.

Apart from disciplinary issues involving learning aspects, university students also show a lack of interest in lecture sessions, absenteeism without reasonable excuse, and rude and uncivilised behaviour towards peers and lecturers (Kondrat'ev, 2023 & Yadav et al., 2019). In the context of daily life on campus, ethical violations are also manifested through acts such as littering, violating traffic rules on campus, and failure to comply with established dress codes and communication procedures (Mustafa, 2019). Such behaviours can be classified as manifestations of deviant behaviour in the context of higher education because they clearly deviate from the norms, values, and rules outlined by the institution. This fact reflects the failure of some students in the process of living the ethical values that should underlie individual behaviour in the academic environment.

Plagiarism and Academic Fraud

Furthermore, plagiarism and academic fraud are increasingly causing concern among university students because they not only affect academic integrity but also erode the quality of graduates and the reputation of the institution. According to Mohan et al. (2020), Osman et al. (2019) and Mustapha et al. (2017), plagiarism is the most common form of academic fraud, with study findings showing that more than half of students admit to having been involved at least once during their studies. This phenomenon violates the principles of academic ethics, whether through cheating in assignments or research (Othman et al., 2022; Yadav et al., 2019; Rodzalan & Saat, 2016). The issue of plagiarism also involves more complex forms, such as copying without attribution, using shadow writers, purchasing assignments online, and copying digital content without acknowledging the

source (Singh & Remenyi, 2016; Scanlon & Neumann, 2002). This behaviour shows the weakness of students in understanding and appreciating ethical dimensions such as honesty, trust, and responsibility, as well as the value of integrity in academia, which should be the foundation of the culture of knowledge in institutions of higher learning.

Lack of understanding and awareness of plagiarism by students has been identified as a major cause of academic ethics violations in higher education institutions. In Mohan et al. (2020), Osman et al. (2019), and Singh (2015), a large number of students do not realise that copying without giving due credit is a serious offence, and some even think that the punishment imposed is less strict and less effective. The perception that plagiarism is a common practice is also influenced by peer pressure and the perception that the implications of punishment are light (Yavich & Davidovitch, 2024; Kalicharan & Butler, 2024; Fajt & Schiller, 2025). In addition, factors such as the pressure to obtain high marks, time constraints and unclear criteria for academic assignments also contribute to the occurrence of this violation (Kalicharan & Butler, 2024; Morán, 2022; Comas-Forgas & Sureda-Negre, 2010). This situation shows that there is a gap in the implementation of academic ethics education, especially regarding the understanding of intellectual property rights and students' moral responsibility towards ethical scientific writing.

Causes of Ethics Violations Among University Students

The issue of ethical violations among university students stems from various factors that include personal, social, and religious dimensions, as well as weaknesses in effective ethics education. According to Hanapi et al. (2021), the low level of student involvement in college and university activities contributes to this phenomenon. Mohd Noor (2013) also found that students who are not active in associations or co-curricular activities tend to spend time on unproductive activities compared to those who are actively involved. This view is in line with Had and Garijih (2020) and Ali et al. (2010), who explain that the campus environment and socialisation process play an important role in shaping students' moral and ethical values, which in turn determine their behaviour patterns in higher education institutions (Had and Garijih, 2020 & Ali et al., 2010). This phenomenon shows that a lack of student involvement in campus activities can weaken the process of forming identity, self-esteem, and positive social values. As a result, students are more exposed to negative influences, value distortions, and a tendency to violate ethics, especially when the available social support mechanisms are not optimally utilised by students.

Furthermore, cultural and religious (spiritual) values play a crucial role in shaping students' ethical orientation. However, the ethics education model practised today often ignores the local dimension, which is rooted in community beliefs and practices (Balakrishnan et al., 2021; Kamarudin et al., 2021; Had & Garijih, 2020). The lack of exposure and continuous training in ethics education, coupled with the unclear definition and consequences of ethical violations, has caused students to pay less attention to ethical issues (Yadav et al., 2019 & Olesen et al., 2019). This situation can be seen when several students make decisions that conflict with the moral principles and norms of local society because they fail to evaluate actions based on cultural and religious awareness. The absence of strong integration of spiritual values in ethics education ultimately exposes them to the risk of neglecting moral responsibility and a tendency to violate institutional norms.

Clearly, the issue of ethical violations among university students is multidimensional, involving deviant behaviour, academic cheating, weak participation in personality development activities, environmental influences, and the inconsistency of ethical education with local values. This situation requires a comprehensive and grassroots approach for effective solutions. Therefore, this discussion will explore the Islamic psychospiritual approach, which is based on spiritual and religious values, as an alternative method for shaping the ethics of university students.

Fourth, Islamic Psychospirituality as an Alternative Basis in the Formation of University Student Ethics

The Islamic psychospiritual approach offers an alternative framework that is comprehensive and rooted in religious and spiritual values in dealing with the issue of ethical violations by university students. Its main focus is on in-depth self-development that can strengthen integrity and refine the formation of character. This discussion will outline three main aspects:

Strengthening Ethical Values Based on Religious Practices

To strengthen the formation of university students' ethics, a spiritual and religious-based approach is increasingly significant as an effective internal support mechanism. Emphasis on spiritual development is the basis for building a balanced and ethical personality, as proven by various studies. Ramlie (2021) and Suwardi et al. (2020) found that spiritual training through religious practices is able to produce students who are balanced in terms of intellect, emotion, spirituality and body, thus strengthening moral values. Religious practices also function as a spiritual discipline that controls emotions, builds self-esteem, and encourages positive behaviour in addition to protecting individuals from social pressures that may lead to ethical violations. This finding is supported by a study by Rozikan et al. (2023), which emphasises that psychospiritual practices such as repentance, patience, and moderation can strengthen peace of mind, clarify life goals, and support the holistic growth of students.

In addition, students who consistently practise religious worship usually have a high level of spiritual intelligence, which is an important factor in their ability to make ethical decisions and keep themselves from getting caught up in negative behaviour (Khasanah & Zamzami, 2024; Suwardi et al., 2020). In this context, religious values and practices play a significant role in influencing the formation of ethical decisions for university students. As stated by Balakrishnan et al. (2021), appreciation of religious values and involvement in religious rituals increases the tendency of students to make decisions that are in line with ethical principles and avoid violating norms.

Research demonstrates that students who deeply appreciate Islamic values enhance their psychospiritual well-being, thereby fortifying their ethical behaviour. Daliman (2021) explains that students who truly appreciate Islamic teachings are more likely to exhibit commendable morals and achieve holistic well-being. When students appreciate religious values comprehensively, not just through external rituals, the positive relationship between ethical practice and student well-being becomes more significant. This finding is reinforced by Balagem et al. (2023), who found that commitment to the teachings of the Quran and the implementation of its commands and prohibitions have a major impact on the formation and evaluation of student ethics. However, university students' ethical violations are largely due to their failure to follow the Quran's principles.

Based on the discussion above, the phenomenon of strengthening ethics through religious practices among university students occurs due to the ability of spiritual values to form a solid self-structure, which is able to control the tendency to moral violations. This arises when the appreciation of religious values provides an internal foundation for students in facing social pressures and ethical dilemmas. Failure to express these values in depth usually results in weaknesses in ethical decision-making. The implication is that neglecting the spiritual aspect not only weakens the integrity of the student's personality but also increases the risk of ethical deviations that have a negative impact on the integrity of the institution and society as a whole.

Developing a University Environment Based on Spiritual Support

In the context of higher education, spiritually based interventions are increasingly receiving attention as an effective strategy in strengthening the formation of university students' ethics through environmental development. According to Effendi and Ismail (2025), Balagem et al. (2023), Amriani et al. (2023), and Balakrishnan et al. (2021), spiritual support elements, such as religious programmes, religious education, character development, and spiritual guidance, are able to strengthen moral foundations, thus increasing students' awareness of social responsibility and the importance of ethical values. This intervention also functions as a mechanism for purifying the soul through in-depth religious appreciation. In line with the studies of Ushama (2023), Solihin, and Faizuddin (2021), *halaqah* programs (Islamic study circles) and worship camps at universities are able to instill the values of *tazkiyat al-nafs* (purification of the soul), trust, shura (mutual consultation), and *istiqamah* (consistency) as the core of character formation. These values not only form ethical students but also increase their resilience in facing social and academic challenges. This finding is in line with the study of Siagian et al. (2023), who showed that spiritual norms and values are important mediators in strengthening the relationship between civic awareness and student behaviour and thus encouraging students to behave positively and avoid ethical violations.

As a continuation of the implementation of spiritual interventions through educational programmes and activities, institutional environmental factors also play a significant role in instilling and strengthening ethical values among university students. According to Rathakrishnan et al. (2025), Moganadas et al. (2022), and Azhar et al. (2022), a university environment that emphasises the value of social responsibility, has clear rules, and encourages a positive, supportive culture is able to provide a comfortable learning space for students to practise ethical principles in their daily lives. In this case, spiritual values cultivated at the institutional level function as an internal guiding framework and help students refrain from falling into ethical violations even when faced with challenging social and academic pressures (Monica et al., 2024).

In this context, the existence of a university ecosystem that supports the spiritual development of students through the implementation of institutional policies, involvement in co-curricular activities, and the creation of an inclusive campus culture based on noble values is seen as being able to strengthen students' sensitivity to social and ethical responsibility (Monica et al., 2024; Richardson & Healy, 2019). This situation is rooted in self-awareness that encompasses the dimensions of knowledge, values, and internal motivation, which are fundamental components in shaping students' ability to make ethical and responsible decisions (Rathakrishnan et al., 2025 & Mohamad et al., 2021). Therefore, a university ecosystem and environment that consistently instills spiritual and psychospiritual values can create a student community that is more sensitive to ethical issues and motivated to practice positive behaviour (Daliman, 2021; Iyoha, 2011; Kennedy & Lawton, 1998).

Based on the discussion above, the development of a university environment that emphasises spiritual support occurs due to awareness of the need for a holistic approach to building ethical student personalities. The conventional approach's weakness in addressing the internal dimensions of students, particularly spiritual aspects and values, drives this development. An environment that supports spiritual practices is able to instil values such as *tazkiyat al-nafs* (purification of the soul), trust, and shura, which function as systems of student self-control. This suggests that students are more resilient to social and academic pressures and more likely to make ethical and responsible choices.

Integration of Islamic Psychospiritual Values in the Education Module

Next, we should view the integration of Islamic psychospiritual values in educational modules at higher education institutions as a holistic alternative approach to forming student ethics. This approach does not focus solely on academic excellence but instead emphasises personal, moral, and spiritual development based on Islamic values. Several studies have shown the effectiveness of modules centred on Islamic psychospiritual values in strengthening students' ethical dimensions. For example, Solihin and Faizuddin (2021) found that students who follow such modules have higher levels of spiritual, emotional, and leadership intelligence, which are important components of building ethics and personal integrity. These findings are supported by Utami and Sofa (2025) and Haron et al. (2022), who emphasise that the implementation of modules based on sources of revelation, such as the Quran and Sunnah, has the potential to produce students who are ethical, responsible, and have integrity through balanced and integrated moral, intellectual, and spiritual development.

In addition, strengthening students' understanding of the purpose of religion, especially related to the concepts of monotheism and morality, is an important basis in connecting ethical values with the philosophy of human creation and the role of caliph on earth (Zabidi et al., 2017). In this context, academic modules based on Islamic values support the existing integrity policy and have the potential to form a more ethical and spiritually centred academic culture (Khairuldin et al., 2024). This study shows that the integration of Islamic psychospiritual values in the higher education system is not merely normative but rather acts as a self-development mechanism that goes beyond the cognitive aspect alone. This approach has also proven effective in forming students who are holistic and competitive and adhere to ethical principles in various dimensions of life. In line with Rohana's (2010) view, the development of a balanced person begins with self-awareness strengthened by the spiritual dimension. When this element is strong, students are encouraged to manage their lives responsibly and with noble character.

An educational approach that integrates Islamic psychospiritual values is not only relevant but also urgent to be implemented to form a balanced identity of students in terms of intellectual, emotional and spiritual aspects.

The ability of this module in improving students' spiritual and moral intelligence proves that education based on Islamic values can be a solid foundation in the formation of personal ethics. In addition to strengthening individual integrity, this approach also contributes to forming an ethical and civilised academic culture. In this regard, the application of Islamic psychospiritual values should be given priority in the higher education policy framework to produce graduates who are authoritative and have high resilience.

Fifth, Strategies for Strengthening University Student Ethics Through an Islamic Psychospiritual Approach in Malaysia

To strengthen student ethics formation in Malaysian higher education institutions, the Islamic psychospiritual approach provides a framework that emphasises a balance between internal dimensions and environmental support. Ethical awareness based on spiritual values requires a university ecosystem that supports students' spiritual development. In this context, the study outlines three primary strategies:

Development of Spiritual Support Systems in the University Environment

Based on the findings of the study and discussion presented, it is recommended that universities in Malaysia design a planned and sustainable spiritual support system in the learning ecosystem in higher education institutions. This system should be driven through an Islamic psychospiritual approach that is not limited to ritual practices alone but also emphasises the appreciation of values, the meaning of life, and emotional management based on Islamic spiritual principles.

Among the practical suggestions that can be implemented are:

1. Establishment of the Islamic Psychospiritual Centre, which functions as a centre for intervention and guidance on spiritual values for students by offering programmes such as spiritual therapy and counselling based on the Quran and Sunnah, as well as personality-strengthening workshops.
2. Strengthening the role of residential colleges and faculties as spaces for the formation of spiritual values through discussion activities, knowledge gatherings, and periodic personal guidance.
3. Integration of the spiritual dimension into the academic support system and mental well-being of students, including in new student orientation sessions, self-development courses, and psychological intervention programmes.

In addition, strengthening cooperation between the university Islamic centre, counselling unit, and student management (Student Affairs) is also essential to ensuring that the spiritual support system can be implemented comprehensively and structured. In the long term, this initiative has the potential to increase students' spiritual intelligence, thus strengthening their ability to make ethical decisions and reducing their tendency towards disciplinary violations and value deviations. Western studies such as those conducted by Vitorino et al. (2024) and Jalili et al. (2020) also found that through spiritual training sessions such as workshops and discussions, it is possible to increase students' ethical awareness and competence. In fact, students who receive spiritual and social support tend to have a high level of spiritual well-being, thus forming ethical behaviours (Alorani & Alradaydeh, 2018). Therefore, an approach that includes spiritual aspects in the student support ecosystem is a significant strategy in producing students who are self-aware and ethical.

Psychospiritual-Based Therapy Guidance by Counsellors and Lecturers

Based on the findings of previous studies and analyses of the environment in higher education institutions, it is suggested that universities in Malaysia strengthen the role of counsellors and lecturers as the main agents in the implementation of Islamic psychospiritual therapy guidance. This guidance needs to go beyond conventional approaches that are purely cognitive by integrating spiritual elements, the value of *tazkiyah al-nafs* (purification of the soul), and Islamic moral principles into intervention and education sessions.

To effectively realise this role, it is recommended that universities:

1. Develop a structured training module for counsellors and lecturers in aspects of psychospiritual therapy based on Islam, faith, and *ihsan*.
2. Integrate a psychospiritual guidance framework into the student support system, including individual and group counselling sessions, as well as co-curricular personality development courses.
3. Establish collaboration between faculties, university Islamic centres, and counselling units so that there is consistency in the approach and evaluation of the effectiveness of the spiritual guidance provided.

Counsellors and lecturers, especially those under the Student Counselling and Development Unit (Student Affairs), can be given special training in Islamic psychospiritual interventions, such as self-reflection therapy, *istighfar* (repentance), appreciation of *dhikr*, and application of the concept of monotheism in *Ahl Al-Sunnah wa Al-Jama'ah*. This suggestion is in line with the view of Sa'ari et al. (2024), who said that there is a need to develop a specific Islamic psychospiritual training module for counsellors and lecturers so that they are more prepared to guide students holistically. In addition, emphasising emotional support, faith in God, and spiritual guidance in counselling modules or sessions can also strengthen students' resilience to moral and social challenges (Ali et al., 2022 & Zahari et al., 2020). Counsellors and lecturers who practise a psychospiritual approach serve as role models in guiding students towards the formation of ethics and morals. Therefore, psychospiritual therapy guidance should be integrated as a systematic approach to the development of holistic, integral and resilient university students.

Integration of Islamic Psychospiritual Modules

As a strategic step towards strengthening ethics among university students, it is recommended that higher education institutions in Malaysia integrate modules based on Islamic psychospiritual values in a systematic and planned manner into the academic curriculum. This approach not only focuses on intellectual achievement but also emphasises the development of students' character, spirituality, and morality in a comprehensive manner based on the Quran and Hadith, especially the values of worship (Islam), monotheism (faith), and morality (*ihsan*). These values should be incorporated into self-development and professional ethics courses, either through compulsory university courses (MPU), a structured co-curriculum, or by integrating them into existing courses, depending on the specific context of each faculty and discipline.

The proposed module implementation includes the following steps:

1. The development of a syllabus based on Islamic psychospiritual values that is transdisciplinary, taking into account the current challenges facing students in social, emotional, and spiritual aspects.
2. Professional development training for lecturers to be able to deliver module content with an appropriate and effective approach.
3. Continuous research and monitoring of the effectiveness of the module in improving the ethical behaviour and psychospiritual well-being of students.

The implementation of this module is expected to form a more civilized and ethical academic culture, in addition to building a strong student identity internally in the face of social pressure, moral dilemmas, and workplace challenges. This proposal is in line with the findings of previous studies by Fitria et al. (2023), Alwadai et al. (2023), Solehuddin et al. (2023), Ahmed and Haroun (2022), and Nurlela et al. (2022), which indicate that the integration of Islamic ethical and moral values in the curriculum through specific courses, interdisciplinary approaches, and life values education is effective in improving character and ethics formation among students. The suggested strengthening strategy framework can be systematically formulated by referencing Figure 2, which serves as a conceptual illustration to enhance comprehension and critical assessment of the proposed initiatives.

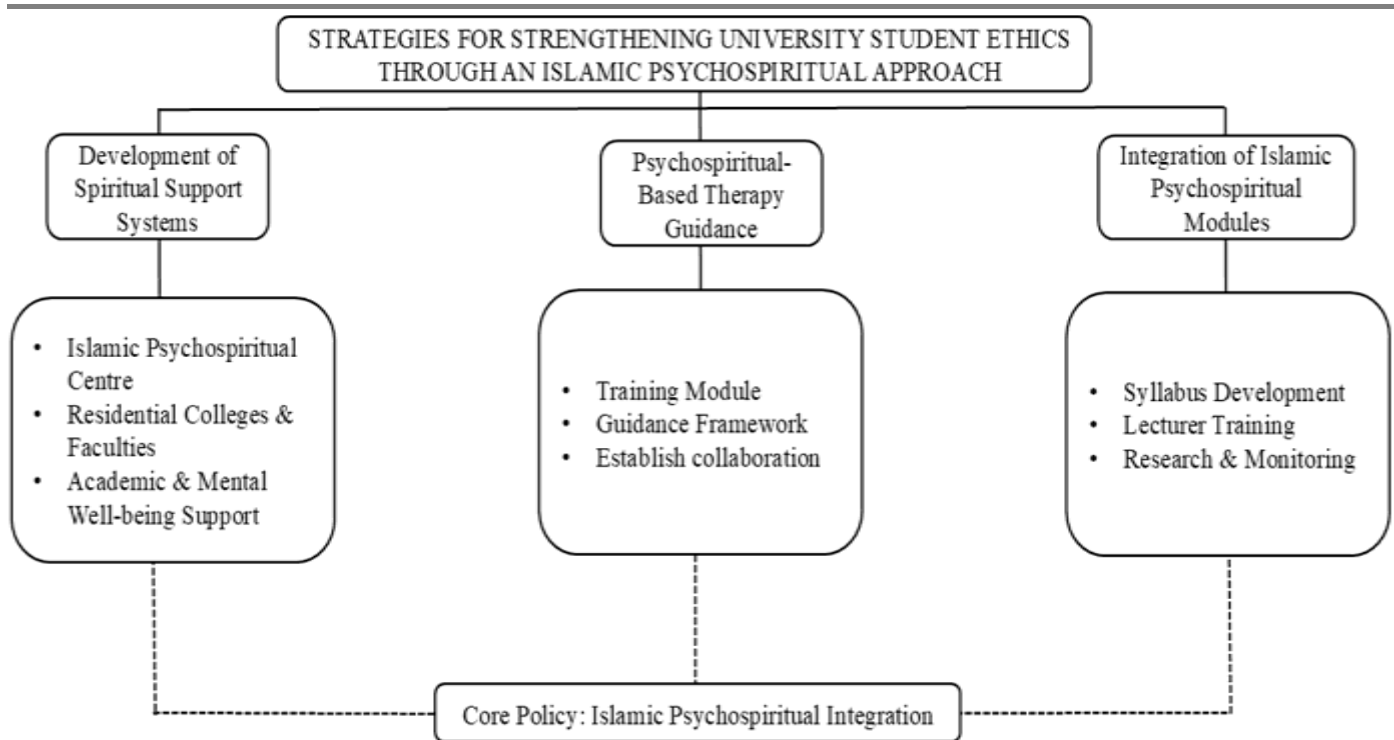


Figure 2: Framework of Strategies for Strengthening University Student Ethics Through an Islamic Psychospiritual Approach (Source: Research Analysis)

In this regard, the integration of Islamic psychospiritual modules in the higher education system should be one of the core policies for student development, especially in producing graduates who are not only academically excellent but also have high values of integrity, ethics and noble character. This approach is also in line with the aspirations of higher education, which emphasises the formation of balanced individuals as outlined in the National Education Philosophy: *“Education in Malaysia is a continuous effort towards further developing individual potential in a comprehensive and integrated manner to produce individuals who are balanced and harmonious in terms of intellect, spirituality, emotion and body based on faith and obedience to God”* (www.moe.gov.my).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings of the study show that the issue of ethical violations among university students, especially deviant behaviour and academic fraud, is a serious challenge stemming from the weaknesses of student involvement in campus activities and the lack of integration of the spiritual dimension in education. This study also emphasises that the Islamic psychospiritual approach has the potential to be an alternative framework for strengthening student ethics through three main mechanisms: strengthening religious practices, developing a university environment based on spiritual support, and integrating Islamic psychospiritual values in educational modules. This approach can strengthen student ethics comprehensively, sustainably, and on the basis of intellectual, emotional, and spiritual balance.

In terms of scholarly contribution, this study expands the discussion on student ethics by highlighting the Islamic psychospiritual perspective as a new dimension in the higher education framework. In terms of practical implications, these findings suggest that Malaysian universities mainstream the Islamic psychospiritual approach through the development of spiritual support systems, structured personality modules, and the involvement of lecturers and counsellors as spiritual guides.

Ultimately, this study points to the need to build a higher education ecosystem that is not only orientated towards academic excellence but also emphasises the formation of holistic and ethical student personalities. This study suggests that Malaysian higher education should incorporate the Islamic psychospiritual approach as a fundamental policy for student development.

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