

Empowering Thinking and Moral Formation in Muslim Women Through the Philosophical Inquiry (PI) Approach

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ABSTRACT

Philosophical inquiry (PI) is one of the approaches educators employ to help develop thinking skills and moral education among students so that they can understand their goals and the purpose of life in this world. Meanwhile, much has been said about the social problems involving Muslim women in Malaysia which are due to the lack of thinking skills and religious understanding. For this reason, this study attempts to highlight the PI method which integrates the Socratic questioning approach to help address the issue and lead to moral formation. This would allow women to explore their thoughts and generate rational ideas and choices to achieve understanding and sound judgments (hikmah) and finally empower them in executing their roles and tasks as Muslimah who hold the responsibility as daughters and sisters who will be future wives and mothers in the society, and carry out their Amanah as the Khalifah of Allah in this world.

Keywords: Philosophical Inquiry, Socratic Questioning, Moral Formation, Thinking Skills, Women Empowerment

INTRODUCTION

Younger generations are often considered an important asset to a country as they are expected to become future leaders. Nonetheless, they will not realise this aspiration amid the increasing number of social problems in the country. In this paper, social problems refer to, among others, premarital sex (*zina*), drug abuse, abortion, abandoning babies, and sexual abuse. Meanwhile, the increasing number of social problems in a country has always been connected to the level of development in the country. The more developed the country, the higher social problems tend to be. While social problems and moral degradation deter the development of a country, life quality can be enhanced if these problems can be curbed and reduced.

According to a study by Absha and Mohd (2019), peer influence and self-negligence, which include curiosity or the desire to try new things, lead to the highest percentage of social problems among the younger generations. The study also suggests that the younger generations are not able to apply thinking skills to control themselves from getting involved in detrimental actions and making unwise decisions. Let alone from learning to weigh the magnitude of their actions and decisions, as they would blindly, out of curiosity and eagerness to try something new, imitate the actions of their peers.¹ Furthermore, disciplinary problems, according to Nurul and Norhaslinda (2020), have been recorded significantly in schools including daily secondary, boarding, and

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¹ Absha Atiah Abu Bakar & Mohd Isa Hamzah. "Factors Influencing Teens with Social Problems". *Jurnal Hadhari* 11, no.1 (2019) 1-17. ISSN 1985-6830 e-ISSN 2550-2271

religious schools. This indicates that social problems and moral degradation exist among the younger generations regardless of their condition and background.²

In a modern society, social problems generally occur due to the issue of low self-esteem which is caused by internal and external factors. Individuals with low self-esteem tend to be extremely critical of themselves and ignore the positive values and qualities that they possess. Women particularly, tend to value themselves lowly when faced with challenges posed by the opposite sex (Sadia & Pell, 2015).³ In addition to that, the patriarchal system that has been engraved in society since a long time ago has become the belief system that leads women to believe that they are not fit to be treated similarly to men. As an example, in Pakistan and India, it is a general belief that women are incapable of learning and leading the country and therefore are not allowed to further their education like men. Furthermore, gender discrimination against women in Pakistan has resulted from the prevailing socio-cultural environment.⁴ Some examples that caused the stereotype is that some companies refused to hire women or female workers as they think women are unproductive and will not contribute much to the company compared to men. Apart from that, women are also expected to stay at home to do the chores despite the qualifications that they have. This is because women tend to be seen as a housewife and tied to the traditional mindset that has been engraved by the old generations which has become the practice nowadays. Therefore, women are seen as a weak feature that does not fit to work in an organisation or be involved in any social event.

Meanwhile, social issues that relate to violence against women are prevalent worldwide. As stated in the report by the UN Women's Organization, the COVID-19 pandemic has intensified violence against women and girls, and since then cases of violence against women and girls have increased due to various factors including communication deprivation, mistrust, lack of money or food, sexual dissatisfaction, and redundancy at home.⁵ As reported by the New Straits Times, domestic violence against women has rapidly increased since the pandemic and turned worse during the extended lockdown during which over 9000 cases involving violence were reported. In 2022, the Malaysian Women, Family, and Community Development Ministry reported 7468 cases, a solid 40 percent increase from 5260 cases in 2020.⁶ Apart from that, cases of sexual violence against women including rape, molestation, incest, and sexual harassment have also increased and caused fear among women.

Although 80% of the victims in all of the cases mentioned above were women, there have also been reports of women who voluntarily got themselves involved in social problems.⁷ One of the ways to help decrease the involvement of female youths in social problems is to ameliorate their ability to think and at the same time strengthen their moral formation so that they would be able to make better and wiser decisions in life. Does philosophical inquiry fit as a medium to address this issue and lead to the development of thinking skills and moral formation? How does philosophical inquiry lead to an increased religious understanding, self-esteem, and self-worth among women?

² Nurul Atiqah Ab. Halim & Norhaslinda Jamaiudin. "Hotspot Schools: Teachers' Perceptions of School Disciplinary Problems in Malaysia." *International Journal of Social Policy and Society* vol. 16 (2020): 61-74

³ Sadia, S. & Pell, A. W. "Personal and social problems faced by women in higher education." *FWU Journal of Social Sciences* 9, no. 2 (2015): 101.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ UN Women (2021). Measuring the shadow pandemic: Violence against women during COVID-19. <https://data.unwomen.org/> Accessed October, 2023

⁶ Curb gender-based violence | New Straits Times. Accessed October 2, 2023. <https://www.nst.com.my/opinion/letters/2023/02/879177/curb-gender-based-violence>.

⁷ IPSOS. Malaysia: Top Issues Faced by Women & Misperceptions of Women Empowerment. Accessed October 25, 2023. <https://www.ipsos.com/en-my/malaysia-top-issues-faced-women-misperceptions-women-empowerment>

PURPOSE AND IMPORTANCE OF THIS STUDY

This study looks into the role and potential of philosophical inquiry as an approach to help boost morale among women in this country by introducing the method to women in educational settings and the community. Through the philosophical inquiry approach, women, in general, and particularly those who have been involved in existing social problems will be able to visualize how they can empower themselves and refrain from making unwise decisions that are detrimental not only to themselves but also to their loved ones and the people around them. This paper also aims to create awareness and understanding of Islam among women in this country of their role as the Khalifah of Allah to execute their tasks in the communities as mothers, wives, daughters, and sisters.

As philosophical inquiry can develop critical thinking and self-reflection among individuals it will also enhance and encourage women to think out of the box with logical reasoning. This allows individuals to go through a process of self-reflection to have a better understanding of themselves and think critically about their beliefs, values, and assumptions. From this, women can gain clarity about their perspectives and reasoning without being easily influenced by other people's opinions and perspectives. Hence, a more positive self-image and a deeper sense of self-awareness which are crucial components of self-esteem can be obtained by individuals.

Apart from that, philosophical inquiry may also enhance problem-solving skills because philosophy equips individuals with problem-solving skills that are not limited to philosophical questions but can be applied to real-life challenges and situations. As individuals successfully tackle complex philosophical problems, they may gain confidence in their ability to approach difficult issues, leading to increased self-esteem. For example, an issue of the gender pay gap in the workplace when women notice that there is a significant gender pay gap compared to their male counterparts in similar roles, and due to the frustration, women in the workplace believe that this inequality affects their self-esteem. Hence, women in the organisation can utilise philosophical inquiry to critically analyse the ethical dimensions of the issue of the gender pay gap. This deeper analysis may help them to gain a deeper understanding of the issue and will eventually speak up for themselves, at once breaking up the stereotypes that have been engraved towards women in society.

Ethical reasoning can be utilized to engage the participants in a philosophical inquiry by exploring questions like "What is a fair distribution of resources in the workplace?" and "Does gender-based pay inequality violate principles of equality and fairness?". This process of ethical reasoning tends to empower women to articulate their concerns and values more confidently as they ask logical questions to seek clarification and explanation. Besides, it allows them to determine and differentiate between right thinking, decisions, and actions, and those that are wrong or can cause damage to others. In this scenario, it causes damage to women as the organisation is unequal towards the female workers in that organisation.

In addition, while utilising philosophical inquiry, communication skills also can be honed as it often involves an engagement in discussions and debates where women can use these skills to communicate effectively about their perspectives, concerns, opinions, and arguments regarding the arising issue at the moment to their superiors. Communication skills may also boost their self-confidence since they are openly expressing their views and concerns. Therefore, above all strengths, it can be said that philosophy inquiry prepares and provides women with problem-solving skills, ethical reasoning, and the ability to communicate effectively, at once engaging in a discussion and allowing them to experience a phase in increasing their self-esteem by advocating for justice and fairness in the workplace.

Philosophical Inquiry (PI)

Philosophical inquiry is an educational approach that originates from philosophical pragmatism. According to Leng (2020), philosophical inquiry is the practice of “thinking together” and “thinking about thinking

together.”⁸ Leng also explains that philosophical inquiry upholds that knowing is not merely an acquisition of knowledge that is external to the knower but arises from a community of inquiry that students engage with and construct together. This pedagogical approach, according to Millett and Tapper (2011), involves logical questioning and broad discussions among students and their teachers. The teacher is the students’ co-participant. In the process of constructive dialog, students and their teacher clarify thinking, raise questions, record discussions, explore meanings, listen carefully, and respond to the ideas of others respectfully and non-judgmentally⁹

Philosophical inquiry can also be described as a process of being curious and asking focused questions about how to live a rich, good, and fulfilling life of wisdom. To make a question fit in the philosophical inquiry method, the questions inquired must be open-minded, genuine, deep, and philosophical. Open-ended means that the questions are not easily answered based on facts, instead it is subjective, and logical answers. This will not allow anyone to simply answer ‘yes’ or ‘no’ based on the answers given, but it may have different kinds of answers, with different perspectives, and reasoning, depending on one’s perspective (Zulkifli et al. 2020).¹⁰ On the other hand, genuine questions are a question that someone needs to know about and that person does not have the answers. Hence, to ask genuine questions, a correlation between reading and reality can be made.

The value of critical thinking among individuals is significant to enhance one’s thinking skills and improve their thinking as well as behaviour. Honing critical thinking skills to individuals since they are kids may allow them to solve problems, make decisions, learn independently, communicate effectively, and be more creative, confident, and independent.¹¹ These traits are not commonly found among children, even adults since they are not exposed to the ways of having critical thinking and its benefits. Hence, it can be said that critical thinking skill plays a vital role in one’s growth, especially in daily activities and social interactions. Mentioning critical thinking skills is linked with the philosophical inquiry developed by the Greek philosopher, Socrates. Philosopher inquiry is usually used in teaching and learning and is a popular method to hone one’s thinking skills. This is because philosophical inquiry involves questioning and answering, and it is not solely based on facts, instead, it may come from elsewhere. Therefore, philosophy's question-oriented is concerned with determining what the case is, how to do things, how to achieve our aims, and what to aim for (Rescher, 2010).¹²

Furthermore, it should be noted that rational inquiry, a cognitive enterprise, and a venture in question-resolution have been linked with the matter of philosophy as humans have evolved with the nature of seeking knowledge, hence, utilising the philosophical inquiry method is one of the best methods to use in learning.¹³ Since humans receive information every day, with different kinds of topics, there is the need to be critical in every bit of information that they receive to distinguish between what is right and wrong, fake and genuine which involves the process of rationalising.

Studies have been conducted to determine the potential and effectiveness of philosophical inquiry in promoting learning among students. One of the many studies was a study that aims to examine the effect of the Philosophy for Children (P4C) curriculum on 5-6-year-old children's critical thinking through philosophical inquiry and their problem-solving skills. In this study, Işıklar and Abalı-Öztürk (2022) included a total of 40

⁸ Leng L. “The Role of Philosophical Inquiry in Helping Students Engage in Learning.” *Frontiers in Psychology*. Vol. 11 (2020): 11:449. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00449. PMID: 32265782; PMCID: PMC7105876.

⁹ Millett, S., and Tapper, A. (2011). Benefits of collaborative philosophical inquiry in schools. *Educ. Philos. Theory* 44, 546–567. doi: 10.1111/j.1469-5812.2010.00727.x

¹⁰ Zulkifli, Hafizhah, Mohd Reduan Mahmood, Rosnani Hashim, K. A. Razak, and MA Che Noh. "Hikmah (Wisdom) Pedagogy of Philosophical Inquiry: A Review." *International Journal of Advanced Sciences and Technology* 29, no. 7 (2020): 3492-3506

¹¹ Ibid

¹² Rescher, N. *Philosophical inquiries: An introduction to problems of philosophy*. University of Pittsburgh Pre, 2010: 3-4

¹³ Ibid

children learning in kindergartens at an elementary school in Çanakkale, Turkey.¹⁴ The study deployed the "Critical Thinking Scale through Philosophical Inquiry for Children 5-6 Years Old" and "Problem-Solving Skills Scale for Children (PSSS)" as data collection tools. The children were asked questions about such topics as beauty, good-evil, forgetting, knowing-learning, thinking, tolerance, freedom, happiness, favor, and growing-maturing. This study found a significant difference between the pretest and postscores of both groups in terms of the experimental groups' critical thinking skills through philosophical inquiry within-group comparisons. This indicates that the Philosophy for Children curriculum promotes critical thinking skills through philosophical inquiry and contributes to the development of critical thinking skills. Işıklar and Abalı-Öztürk conclude that philosophical inquiry has a positive effect on the critical thinking skills of preschoolers and it encourages asking questions and making comments.

A group of students and teachers in Hawaii participated in a personal inquiry (PI) course through which they were able to understand and gain knowledge by transforming what they learned into daily practice and problem-solving (Leng, 2020).¹⁵ This PI course provided students and students with an intellectually safe environment where the students and teachers used dialogue, gentle Socratic inquiry, responsible thinking, and empathy to examine questions and issues that arise from their genuine wonderings about the study of history, psychology, contemporary society, economics, political science, geography, and social interaction. The Good Thinker's Tool Kit which consists of seven indicators for critical thinking¹⁶ (see below), was employed during the inquiry.

- W – What do you mean by that?
- R – What are the reasons?
- A – What is being assumed? Or what can I assume?
- I – Can I infer ___ from ___? Or where are there inferences made?
- T – Is what is being said true and what does it imply if it is true?
- E – Are there any examples to prove what is being said?
- C – Are there any counter-examples to disprove what is being said?

This study echoes that maintaining a safe and positive classroom environment is a fundamental condition for learning. Besides, asking questions, sharing ideas, listening attentively, thinking deeply, and making connections are the manifestations of an engaging classroom. More importantly, students excelled in their learning experiences by living a new philosophy acquired in the process of inquiry. Leng concludes that PI enhances social inclusion and active participation of the participants in the learning process.

¹⁴ Işıklar, S., & Abalı-Öztürk, Y. (2022). The effect of philosophy for children (P4C) curriculum on critical thinking through philosophical inquiry and problem-solving skills. *International Journal of Contemporary Educational Research*, 9(1), 130-142. <https://doi.org/10.33200/ijcer.942575>

¹⁵ Leng L. "The Role of Philosophical Inquiry in Helping Students Engage in Learning." *Frontiers in Psychology*. Vol. 11 (2020): 11:449. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2020.00449. PMID: 32265782; PMCID: PMC7105876.

¹⁶ Lipman M. (1993). "Philosophy for children," in *Thinking Children and Education*, ed. Lipman M. (Dubuque, IA: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Company), 373–384.

Meanwhile, Johnson et al. (2023) used three case studies of philosophical inquiry in environmental education and environmental decision-making from the USA and Japan to explore how such dialogues contribute to advancing biocultural conservation by enhancing the voices of multi-stakeholders.¹⁷ The goal was to examine ecological issues from different perspectives and create biocultural awareness. “Tension” arose during the inquiry, which according to Johnson et al., was due to differing senses of place and life habits, or assumptions regarding gender, race, ethnicity, class, age, political identities, and experiences. This study illustrates how philosophical inquiry can be designed to transform negative tension into constructive, creative, and caring relationships. These are possible in light of the basic principles of such philosophical inquiry including building intellectual safety, appreciating the diversity of viewpoints, and connecting dialogues to empowerment and self-transformation. Based on their findings, Johnson et al. conclude that philosophical inquiry complements field environmental philosophy by fostering ecological agency in biocultural conservation. This is yet another evidence of the potential of philosophical inquiry in promoting knowledge acquisition.

MORAL EDUCATION

According to Oser (2001),¹⁸ moral education encompasses a structured approach aimed at cultivating essential moral qualities in individuals, namely, fairness, a heightened sense of justice, and a deep-seated concern for the needs and rights of others. This educational process relies on the presentation of moral dilemmas to stimulate the development of more mature and conscientious moral decision-making. Moral education serves as a guiding framework that seeks to nurture qualities that contribute to an individual’s ethical development which fosters an understanding of fairness, encouraging individuals to treat others equitably. Furthermore, it instills a profound appreciation for justice, compelling individuals to advocate for what is right and just in various situations.¹⁹ For example, like the social problems mentioned above, instead of women being silent while receiving that kind of treatment, they will know how to handle, cope, and get out of the situation that they are involved in which damages their image, mental as well as physical.

On the other hand, Weinstein (1988)²⁰ noted that moral education is a broad spectrum of concerns and draws upon various psychological, philosophical, and pedagogical models. One prevailing perspective, which is quite prevalent, views moral education as an integral part of the mechanism responsible for passing down culturally endorsed norms to the younger generation. This approach often involves explicit instruction in moral principles and the development of moral reasoning, typically integrated into traditional subjects like literature and social studies. However, it is important to recognize that the transmission of values extends beyond these formal lessons as they pass through the entire educational purpose.²¹ This can be linked with the broader concept of women’s empowerment as this can equip them with the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed to assert their rights, make informed decisions, and participate actively in various aspects of society. One of the significant elements is it helps to cultivate gender equality since moral education plays a crucial role in promoting gender equality by challenging and changing deeply ingrained gender stereotypes and biases. By imparting moral values that emphasize fairness, justice, and respect for all individuals, including women, it

¹⁷ Johnson, B., Tsuji, R., Lukey, B., & Toyoda, M. (2023). “Communities of Philosophical Inquiry for the Empowerment of Ecological Agency.” In: Rozzi, R., Tauro, A., Avriel-Avni, N., Wright, T., May Jr., R.H. (eds) *Field Environmental Philosophy. Ecology and Ethics*, vol 5: pp 359–378 Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-23368-5_22

¹⁸ Oser, Fritz K. "Negative morality and the goals of moral education." In *Conflict, contradiction, and contrarian elements in moral development and education*, pp. 129-154. Psychology Press, 2005.

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ Weinstein, Mark. "Critical thinking and moral education." *Thinking: The Journal of Philosophy for Children* 7, no. 3 (1988): 42-49.

²¹ Ibid

encourages the dismantling of discriminatory norms. This, in turn, fosters an environment where women are seen as equals and empowered to pursue their aspirations free from gender-based constraints.

In addition, moral education also fosters inclusivity as it promotes diversity as an essential moral value. When applied to women’s empowerment, this means recognizing the unique challenges women often face and addressing them within the educational framework. It can instill empathy and encourage individuals, regardless of their gender, to stand up against gender-biased discrimination and violence which leads to a more inclusive society without holding solely on the patriarchal system that mostly promotes gender-biased. Fostering inclusivity also will allow women to enhance their critical thinking skills and decision-making, developing more confidence in their character in presenting themselves to society. This helps women to equip the ability to critically assess societal norms and expectations that may limit their informed choices about their lives, careers, and relationships.

Therefore, the advantages of moral education can be seen from various aspects and elements covering the women empowerment scope. Moral education not only allows women to change the society’s mindsets and views towards women, but it also leads to their character development since it enhances women’s self-esteem, by instilling a sense of dignity and self-respect, it will more likely to challenge stereotypes and discrimination, advocating their rights and the rights of others. Hence, with the focus values of moral education, it significantly intersects with the goal of women’s empowerment. By imparting moral principles that promote gender equality, inclusivity, critical thinking, and self-esteem, moral education provides women with the tools that they need to challenge societal norms and contribute to a more empowered and equitable world for women and girls.

MORAL FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Kohlberg’s theory of moral development highlights that each individual will go through six stages of moral development and each stage is characterized by different levels of moral reasoning.²² The stages presented in Table 1 below depict how women are capable of empowering themselves when they are lured into committing an immoral act or behaviour.

Table 1: Stages of Moral Development

Pre-Conventional Level

- Stage 1 Obedience and Punishment Orientations - obey rules to avoid punishment. They have a very simplistic understanding of right and wrong based on consequences.
- Stage 2 Individualism & Exchange - consider one’s interests and understand the different views on what is right. Moral decisions are guided by self-interest and reciprocity

Conventional Level

- Stage 3 Maintain good interpersonal relationships and meet social expectations. Seek approval and conform to societal institutions. Constantly asks for validation.
- Stage 4 Maintain social order - obey the law, follow rules, and uphold the authority and

²² Lapsley D. “Moral agency, identity, and narrative in moral development.” *Human Development*, 53 (2), 2010: 87-97. doi:10.1159/000288210.

social institutions.

Post-Conventional Level

Stage 5 Social Contract and Individual Rights

Stage 6 Universal Principles

The importance of this theory lies in the fact that it provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how individuals develop their moral reasoning and ethical decision-making abilities over time. It also offers practical comprehension for educators and parents and promotes moral growth in individuals which leads to the cultivation of ethical values and behavior.²³ This theory also acknowledges that everyone has different views and perspectives that lead to more empathetic and effective resolution strategies. Therefore, each person will likely challenge unjust laws and practices and this will eventually lead to a deeper understanding of morality and justice.²⁴

Re-establishing the stages of moral development with special reference to psychological needs, altruism and human relationships, and justice reasoning, in his work, Hing (2013) recharacterizes moral development into three stages. As depicted in Table 2 below, at the first stage, a person establishes the elements that contribute to physical survival throughout the stage including a profound attachment to parents, empathy toward significant others, and obedience to authorities. Meanwhile, in the second stage, a person becomes self-protective, dominant, exploitative, and opportunistic as there is a need to love and be loved. Finally, in the third stage, a person begins to possess a strong desire to gratify the need to feel belonging to a primary group. Upon reaching this stage, a person is willing to sacrifice for the benefit of the group they identify with. Hing, however, stresses that the sequence of the three stages is culturally independent.²⁵

Table 2: Stages of moral development according to Hing (2013)

Stage 1	Physical Survival, Selfishness, Obedience	Affective
Stage 2	Love Needs, Reciprocal Altruism, Instrumental Purpose	
Stage 3	Belongingness Needs, Primary Group Altruism, Mutual Interpersonal Expectations	Cognitive

²³ Elorrieta-Grimalt M. “A critical analysis of moral education according to Lawrence Kohlberg.” *Educación y Educadores*,15 (3), 2012:497-512. doi:10.5294/edu.2012.15.3.9

²⁴ Govrin A. “From ethics of care to psychology of care: Reconnecting ethics of care to contemporary moral psychology.” *Frontiers in Psychology*. 2014, 5:1135. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2014.01135

²⁵ Hing, K. M. “The moral development of the child: an integrated model.” *Frontiers in Public Health*, Volume 1 (2013). <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2013.00057>

Over the last three decades, although much effort has been put into developing and applying a moral education curriculum in Malaysia, there is still a dearth of assessment about its success as, according to Mukherjee (1988), there is a huge divide between the moral education curriculum and the real world. One of the main reasons is that success in life is equated with monetary achievements and status, and this notion remains valid till the present time, judging by the presence of deplorable evidence on the increasing fraud cases in the corporate world that has eaten its way into many homes and schools, and how efforts towards moral education are welcomed with sheer cynicism. As proven by the lack of literature, there is also a research gap on how success in academics would reflect success in *akhlaq* and life after school, and that high performance in school examinations positively correlates with conformation and respect towards social order, social contract, individual rights, and universal principles. As advocated by Mukherjee, while schooling is only one of the agents in the moral education and socialization process, moral action beyond the purview of the school is the only authentic criterion of the success of socialization in the moral domain, and its arena stretches beyond.²⁶

Kuznetsov (2021), in his study which involves a group of teachers and students in Russia, found that carefully guided pedagogical interactions between teachers of moral education and students provide an effective influence on the formation of spirituality and morality of students. This study, which aims at identifying the pedagogical conditions for the formation of spiritual and moral culture of students, also established that these guided pedagogical interactions call for a careful revision of priority areas in moral education and emphasis that is placed on the moral sphere, spirituality, and ethics, mercy, decency of students, attitude to the spiritual and moral culture. In the Islamic context, such interaction, revision, and emphasis should therefore be guided and centered by and toward the prevalence of Quranic and Prophetic tradition principles and teachings.²⁷

Aiming to explore the efforts of teachers to internalize Islamic values in developing students' actual morals in a *Madrasah* in Indonesia, Syahraini et al., (2021) discover the method of internalizing Islamic values used by teachers in developing moral characters of students in a madrasah environment.²⁸ Tabulated below (Table 3) are the methods employed by the teachers in the *Madrasah* that focus on types of activities that lead toward moral development at individual and group levels beginning with the inculcation of respect and control of *syahwah* (lust) to the ability to think and conform to social rules.

Table 3: Moral Education in an Indonesian Madrasah (Syahraini, et al., 2021)

Level	Activities	Objective	Outcome (Character/ Quality)
Individual & Group	<i>Dhuha</i> & <i>Fardhu</i> prayers (congregational)	Respect, Manage <i>Syahwiya</i> (Lust)	<i>Iffah</i> (Virtue), <i>Jud</i> (Generosity), <i>Syakha'</i> (Liberality), <i>Qana'ah</i> (Contentment), <i>Amanah</i> (Trustworthy), <i>Zuhud</i> (Self-Discipline), <i>Rahmah</i> (Mercy), <i>Hilm</i>

²⁶ Mukherjee H. "Chapter 9: Moral Education in a Developing Society: The Malaysian Case." In *Comparative and International Education Series*, edited by William K. Cummings, S. Gopinathan, & Tomoda, Y., 147-162, Oxford, UK: Pergamon, 1988. ISBN 9780080358536, <https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-035853-6.50014-X>.

²⁷ Kuznetsov, V. V. "Formation of the Spiritual and Moral Culture of Students." *Современные наукоемкие технологии (Modern High Technologies)* 1, no. 6 2021 (2021): 160–64. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17513/snt.38715>.

²⁸ Syahraini Tambak, Hamzah, Desi Sukenti, & Mashitah Sabdin. "Internalization of Islamic Values in Developing Students' Actual Morals." *Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia*, 10 no. 4 (2021): 697-708 p-ISSN: 2303-288X, e-ISSN: 2541-7207 DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.23887/jpi-undiksha.v10i4.30328>

(Forbearance), *'Afwu* (Forgiving)

Individual	<i>Dzikrullah</i> (Chanting), <i>Siyam</i> (Fasting)	Control of <i>Hammiya</i> (Exaggeration)	<i>Syaja'ah</i> (Courage), (Justice), <i>Ihsan</i> (Excellent), (Equity), <i>Rahmah</i> (Mercy), <i>Hilm</i> (Forbearance)
Group	<i>Muhadharah</i> (Lecture), Integrative Learning	<i>Mufakkara</i> (Thinking skills), Teamwork,	<i>Fatonah</i> (Wisdom)

Philosophical Inquiry Method

Adapted from Sutton (2020)²⁹, the following dialogue is an example of philosophical inquiry to examine a social issue that leads toward moral formation.

Teacher: My daughter told me there's a news going viral in TikTok last night. What was it?

Student 1: Celebrity divorce.

Teacher: Really? Who was it? What happened?

Student 2: Miss X. Her husband caught her cheating. Hit her so hard and left. But I won't blame her. Her husband was always traveling. She must have been so lonely. Big house. No kid yet.

Teacher: Seriously? How do you know all this?

Student 3: We follow her IG stories. She hinted a few times about how lonely she had been. Last night she shared a photo of her bruised eye.

Teacher: Oh my. But do you think it's okay for her to cheat on her husband? I know she must have been lonely, but cheating?

Student 4: I feel sorry for her. Can't imagine living a lonely life like that myself. Her husband is hardly around and when he's around he'll be busy entertaining his business partners.

Teacher: Have you ever wondered why her husband is always traveling? And why he is always surrounded by his business partners?

Student 5: He travels for business purposes, I guess. Business must be going so well. Big mansion and sports car.

Teacher: Why do you think her husband is working so hard? Don't you think he's working so hard to make his wife happy? Do you think it's okay for her to cheat on her husband just because she's lonely?

Student 2: Yeah, he must be working so hard to provide her wife with everything she has now.

²⁹ Sutton, J. (2020). Socratic Questioning in Psychology: Examples and Techniques. Accessed July, 29, 2022. Retrieved at: <https://positivepsychology.com/socratic-questioning/>.

Student 4: No. She shouldn't have cheated on her husband just because she's lonely. It's not right. She should be grateful for what her husband has given her.

Teacher: That's true. After all, Islam forbids a wife from committing zina. I do understand that she's lonely but she shouldn't have resorted to cheating on her husband.

In light of three basic principles of such philosophical inquiry: building intellectual safety, appreciating the diversity of viewpoints, and connecting dialogues to empowerment and self-transformation,³⁰ the dialogue above demonstrates how philosophical inquiry makes the students feel safe to throw their thoughts about the issue being discussed. The teacher, on the other hand, welcomes the students' opinions although she seems to disagree with them. However, toward the end, she makes the students rethink what they have said and leads them to differentiate between right and wrong.

According to Abdullah et al., (2022), the philosophical inquiry approach to questioning is based on the practice of disciplined and thoughtful dialogue. This will enable students to examine ideas logically and determine the validity of those ideas. In this approach, the teacher professes that she is unaware and curious about the topic to engage in the dialogue with the students. With this 'acting puzzled,' the students develop the fullest possible knowledge about the topic. The philosophical inquiry approach is an effective way to explore ideas in depth. It can be used at all levels and is a helpful tool for all teachers. It can be used at different points within a unit or project.³¹

CONCLUSION

Social problems in society will either place women as victims or the persons who commit deplorable actions and make unwise decisions. These phenomena will always prevail. Women should not resort to making decisions that will place them on the guilty side as it will have a serious impact on the social growth of the country. Meanwhile, in Islam, it is one of the fundamental principles and duties of Muslims to land their hands and ears and take action to rectify this problem by enlightening and educating them to have a better understanding of Islam as a way of life. For this reason, their way of thinking needs to be improved and corrected so that they will be able to make good decisions and wise judgments. The philosophical inquiry approach is developed upon several features that will encourage social interactions between members during the inquiry. It also consists of the application of cognitive and metacognitive tools such as creative and critical thinking. The intellectual contents involved during the discussion are both personal and relevant, and they involve moral, intellectual, and scientific issues. The success of a philosophical inquiry depends on the formation of interpersonal skills such as empathy, the ability to paraphrase other members' ideas, learn from other's views, the ability to reason, build on other's ideas, and learn to respect different views. Moral formation can be encouraged through the philosophical inquiry approach. This will empower women to stand strong with moral understanding, sound judgments (*hikmah*), and immaculate *akhlaq* for them to fulfill their role as *Muslimah* who bear enormous responsibilities to the 'Ummah.

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