

**RESEARCH**

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# Sufistic Habituation and the Formation of Teachers' Spiritual Pedagogy

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## Abstract

This study investigates how teachers experience Sufistic habituation and how these experiences are transformed into spiritual pedagogy in everyday educational practice. The study addresses a persistent limitation in teacher-development discourse, in which professional quality is frequently framed through pedagogical competence, administrative performance, and measurable outcomes while the inner formation that sustains moral integrity, emotional self-regulation, compassion, and transcendent responsibility receives less empirical attention. A qualitative phenomenological design was employed at Pondok Pesantren Mihrobul Muhibbin, Jakarta, within the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah Sufi community. Ten participants were purposively selected, comprising six teachers as primary informants and four supporting informants (two ustaz and two community administrators). Data were generated through 30–45-minute semi-structured in-depth interviews and interpreted through repeated transcript reading, identification of significant statements, clustering of meaning units, cross-participant comparison, and phenomenological synthesis. Five interconnected themes emerged: teaching as a trust (amanah), moral honesty, self-control and ethics of speech, pedagogical compassion, and transcendent accountability. Dhikr, khushushiyah, khalwat, manakib, pilgrimage, khidmah, adab toward the murshid, and self-examination were experienced not merely as rituals but as repeated formative practices that reoriented teachers' intentions, emotions, language, relationships, and professional responsibility. The study contributes the concept of teachers' spiritual pedagogy as an interpretive bridge between Sufi formation, prophetic education, and professional identity. Its practical implication is that Islamic teacher development should complement technical training with structured reflective-spiritual formation that strengthens ethical judgment, relational care, and responsible professional conduct.

**Keywords:** Islamic Education; Phenomenology; Spiritual Pedagogy; Sufism; Teacher Professional Identity

## Introduction

Teachers occupy a central position in educational quality because their influence extends beyond curriculum delivery to the moral, relational, emotional, and meaning-making dimensions of classroom life. Contemporary scholarship increasingly conceptualizes teacher professionalism as an identity-based and context-sensitive process rather than a fixed collection of technical competencies. Professional identity is shaped through experience, reflection, agency, relationships, institutional expectations, and the values through which teachers

interpret their work (Arvaja, 2024; Rushton et al., 2023; Zen et al., 2022). Studies of teacher identity further show that professional self-understanding develops through reflective practice and purposeful dialogue and is continually reconstructed when teachers encounter new social, institutional, and pedagogical demands (Graus et al., 2022; Renwick, 2023; Trevisan, 2024). This literature suggests that evaluating teachers only through visible performance indicators risks overlooking the inner dispositions through which professional knowledge is translated into ethical and relational action.

The moral and affective dimensions of teaching are particularly important because classroom interactions are shaped by teachers' emotional regulation, relational interpretations, and capacity for empathy. Teacher emotions influence instructional decision making and students' learning experiences, while emotional self-regulation can help teachers respond to demanding classroom situations with greater deliberation rather than impulsivity (Frenzel et al., 2021; Heydarnejad et al., 2021; Lauermann & Butler, 2021). Relational research likewise demonstrates that teachers' interpretations of classroom relationships influence their behavior toward students, and that empathy is associated with higher-quality teacher-student interaction and positive student outcomes (Aldrup et al., 2022; Koenen et al., 2022; Wang & Ye, 2021). These findings make the teacher's inner life educationally consequential: how teachers manage anger, interpret student difficulty, use language, and exercise authority can either support or undermine the dignity and psychological safety of learners.

Recent research also highlights the connection between professional identity, well-being, purpose, and spirituality. Teachers' professional identity is related to resilience and well-being, while moral purpose and reflective meaning-making can strengthen commitment to the profession (McKay, 2021; Nawab, 2023; Zhao, 2022). Spirituality has been associated with teachers' professional beliefs, occupational well-being, job satisfaction, and resistance to burnout, although its effects vary across contexts and cannot be reduced to religiosity alone (Paul & Jena, 2022; Penthin et al., 2023; Pong, 2022). Workplace studies similarly indicate that spiritual meaning and leadership can shape how educators experience purpose and well-being in their institutions (Binu Raj et al., 2023; Dwiyanti et al., 2025; Toledo, 2025). Such evidence supports a broader understanding of teacher development in which competence and inner orientation are complementary rather than competing domains.

This broader perspective is highly relevant to Islamic education, where teaching has historically been understood as both a professional responsibility and a moral-spiritual vocation. Empirical work on Islamic religious education shows that teachers' professional learning is influenced by religious commitments, lifelong learning orientations, institutional recognition, and the challenge of integrating faith with contemporary pedagogy (Alhashmi & Moussa-Inaty, 2021; Arif et al., 2025; Tuna, 2022). In plural societies, religious education teachers also negotiate religious diversity, professional identity, intercultural sensitivity, and expectations for dialogical citizenship (Dilek, 2024; Filipović & Jurišić, 2024; Putkonen & Poulter, 2023). Islamic religious education therefore requires educators who can preserve the depth of religious commitment while engaging students humanely, reflectively, and responsibly within diverse and rapidly changing social settings (Sijamhodžić-Nadarević, 2023; Sijamhodžić-Nadarević & Čolić, 2023; Ulfat, 2023).

The increasing social complexity of contemporary education further reinforces this requirement. Studies of Muslim teachers in European settings demonstrate that professional identity may be negotiated under institutional, political, and social pressures, making value-based identity work central to professional practice (Dilek, 2024, 2026; Tuna, 2022). Research

on shared and intercultural religious education similarly emphasizes humility, dialogue, sensitivity, and the ability to create a learning environment in which religious difference is handled without reducing religious conviction to private sentiment (Filipović & Jurišić, 2024; Gmoser et al., 2024; Putkonen & Poulter, 2023). Spirituality in education, therefore, becomes pedagogically meaningful not when it remains an individual feeling, but when it informs ethical judgment, relational conduct, and teachers' ways of being with students (Holmes, 2025; Montelongo & Lenzy, 2023; Toledo, 2025).

Within Sufi traditions, inner formation is cultivated through repeated practices directed toward purification of the self, remembrance of God, disciplined conduct, service, and moral vigilance. The educational significance of such practice lies in habituation: repeated spiritual exercises may shape dispositions that subsequently influence communication, emotional regulation, humility, service, and responsibility. This logic resonates with broader teacher-identity research showing that professional selves are formed through repeated experience, reflection, interaction, and self-positioning rather than through knowledge acquisition alone (Bowen et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2023; Kabilan et al., 2025). It also aligns with phenomenological research that treats lived experience as a legitimate route for understanding how people assign meaning to practices that reorganize their sense of self and action (Neubauer et al., 2019).

Despite growing scholarship on teacher identity, teacher spirituality, professional well-being, and Islamic religious education, an empirical gap remains. First, much teacher-professionalism research emphasizes competence, identity trajectories, or institutional professionalization, while fewer studies examine how sustained spiritual disciplines are experienced as formative processes that reshape teachers' everyday pedagogical conduct (Liang et al., 2024; Rushton et al., 2023; Tuna, 2022). Second, studies of spirituality often examine beliefs, well-being, or organizational outcomes rather than the concrete movement from ritual practice to ethical-pedagogical disposition (Paul & Jena, 2022; Penthin et al., 2023; Pong, 2022). Third, research on Islamic religious education increasingly addresses pluralism, professional learning, and teacher identity, but the lived mechanism through which Sufi habituation becomes pedagogical practice remains underexplored (Alhashmi & Moussa-Inaty, 2021; Gmoser et al., 2024; Ulfat, 2023). This study addresses these gaps by examining teachers involved in the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah tradition at Pondok Pesantren Mihrobul Muhibbin in urban Jakarta. It aims to understand (1) how teachers experience and interpret Sufistic habituation and (2) how those experiences are manifested in what this study conceptualizes as teachers' spiritual pedagogy.

## Method

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological design to investigate the lived meanings teachers attributed to Sufistic habituation and to understand how these experiences were carried into their pedagogical practice. Phenomenology was selected because the study did not seek statistical generalization or causal estimation; rather, it sought to describe and interpret how participants experienced spiritual practices, changes in self-understanding, and the relationship between those changes and their work as educators. Such an approach is appropriate when the research object concerns lived experience, meaning, and the structures through which experience becomes intelligible to participants (Neubauer et al., 2019). The study was conducted at Pondok Pesantren Mihrobul Muhibbin, Jakarta, an urban pesantren and Sufi community that maintains the practices of the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah order. The field context included dhikr, khushushiyah, khalwat, manakib, pilgrimage, khidmah, religious study,

adab toward the murshid, spiritual advice, and practices of self-control. Participants were selected purposively on the basis of their involvement in the Sufi community, educational experience, and capacity to articulate and reflect on their spiritual experiences. Ten informants participated: six teachers (SNT, DSR, NLA, RNA, ROJ, and SUS) as primary informants, two ustaz, and two community administrators as supporting informants. The teachers were prioritized because their narratives directly connected Sufi habituation with classroom attitudes and professional conduct, whereas the ustaz and administrators provided contextual information regarding spiritual guidance, communal practices, and institutional routines. Data were generated through semi-structured in-depth interviews lasting approximately 30–45 minutes. Interview prompts explored motives for joining the Sufi community, experiences of recurring spiritual practices, relationships with the murshid, perceived changes in the self, meanings attached to the teaching profession, management of speech and emotion, treatment of students, and experiences related to humanization, liberation from egoic reactions, and transcendental responsibility. Participants were encouraged to describe concrete experiences, feelings, changes in perception, and the meanings they assigned to these experiences as educators. Analysis proceeded iteratively through repeated reading of transcripts, identification of significant statements, condensation of meaning units, clustering of related meanings, comparison across participants, and the construction of textural and interpretive descriptions. Particular attention was given to recurrent meanings concerning teaching for God, students as a trust, moral honesty, restraint of speech, emotional regulation, compassion, remembrance of God, guidance by the murshid, and accountability before God. Cross-participant comparison was used to identify shared experiential structures while preserving differences in individual accounts. This process generated five essential themes: teaching as amanah, moral honesty, self-control and ethics of speech, pedagogical compassion, and transcendent accountability. Trustworthiness was strengthened through source triangulation across teachers, ustaz, and administrators; repeated transcript reading; consistency checking across narratives; and field-note use to retain contextual meaning. Ethical procedures included explaining the purpose and use of the data, obtaining voluntary participation, anonymizing participants through codes, and approaching spiritual narratives non-judgmentally. Interpretation was kept close to participants' accounts, and no verbatim quotations have been added in this revision because the source manuscript does not provide auditable quotation excerpts; this decision avoids fabricating qualitative evidence while preserving the original findings.

**Table 1** Composition of Research Informants

| Participant component    | Number | Interview focus                                       | Role                                              |
|--------------------------|--------|-------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| Teachers                 | 6      | Spiritual practices and changes in teaching attitudes | Primary informants                                |
| Ustaz                    | 2      | Spiritual guidance and Sufi practices                 | Supporting informants                             |
| Community administrators | 2      | Institutional activities and community management     | Supporting informants                             |
| Total                    | 10     | Teachers' spiritual pedagogy and Sufistic habituation | All interviews lasted approximately 30–45 minutes |

## Results and Discussion

### Result

The phenomenological analysis showed that teachers interpreted Sufistic habituation as a gradual process of inner formation that changed how they understood themselves, their profession, and their students. The findings did not indicate five isolated competencies; rather, they revealed an

interconnected experiential structure in which ritual repetition, guidance, reflection, and service reorganized professional intention and everyday pedagogical conduct. Dhikr was associated with the reorientation of awareness, adab toward the murshid with humility, khidmah with service, khalwat with heightened inward awareness, manakib with moral exemplarity, and muhasabah with self-correction. Across accounts, teaching shifted from being understood primarily as institutional work toward being experienced as a field of worship, moral responsibility, and character formation.

### ***Moral Honesty***

The second theme was moral honesty. Participants' accounts framed honesty not only as truthfulness toward others but also as the willingness to acknowledge one's own motives, mistakes, and limitations. Dhikr and self-examination were experienced as practices that increased sensitivity to intention and reduced the tendency to justify personal errors. In pedagogical terms, this was manifested in a stronger effort to align intention, speech, and action. When instruction did not proceed as expected, the reflective response was not limited to blaming students; teachers also reconsidered their methods, classroom atmosphere, communication, and inner state. Moral honesty therefore functioned as a form of professional self-correction.

### ***Pedagogical Compassion***

The fourth theme was pedagogical compassion. Participants described an increased willingness to care for students who were difficult, underperforming, or behaviorally challenging. Rather than immediately defining such students as lazy, disobedient, or unsuccessful, teachers reported a stronger tendency to view them as persons in development who might require explanation, listening, patience, or another opportunity. This compassion appeared in practices such as hearing students' reasons, considering family conditions, correcting without public humiliation, and sustaining guidance rather than quickly giving up. In the participants' interpretation, compassion did not mean lowering educational expectations; it meant preserving human dignity while pursuing educational improvement.

### ***Transcendent Accountability***

The fifth theme was transcendent accountability. Teachers described a heightened awareness that educational actions would ultimately be answerable before God. This awareness extended beyond formal compliance with institutional standards to questions of sincerity, the usefulness of speech, fairness in judgment, and the ethical use of classroom authority. Participants also connected this orientation with endurance under administrative demands, curricular change, conflict, and emotional fatigue. Dhikr and reflection were described as means of restoring intention and inner steadiness, thereby enabling professional obligations to be interpreted as meaningful service rather than merely external pressure.

**Table 2** Essential Dimensions of Teachers' Spiritual Pedagogy

| No. | Dimension                         | Main indicators                                                                | Pedagogical meaning                                         |
|-----|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | Teaching as amanah                | Teaching for God; students as a trust; work as worship                         | Teaching is understood as moral-spiritual responsibility    |
| 2   | Moral honesty                     | Honesty toward self; open communication; refusal to justify error              | Alignment among intention, speech, and action               |
| 3   | Self-control and ethics of speech | Emotion regulation; restraint of speech; reduced impulsive reaction            | A safer, calmer, and more educative classroom climate       |
| 4   | Pedagogical compassion            | Care; patience; sustained concern for difficult students                       | Students are treated as dignified persons in development    |
| 5   | Transcendent accountability       | Awareness of divine oversight; orientation to God's approval; self-examination | Teaching is directed toward trust and divine accountability |

### ***Integrative Pattern Across the Five Themes***

Taken together, the five themes indicate a layered movement from ritual to disposition, from disposition to action, and from repeated action to classroom culture. Recurrent spiritual practice supplied a rhythm of remembrance and self-monitoring; guidance and communal participation provided interpretive reference points; reflection converted advice into personally meaningful standards; and pedagogical encounters became the setting in which these dispositions were enacted. The participants' accounts therefore distinguish private spirituality from spiritual pedagogy. Spirituality remained private when it was experienced only as calmness, devotion, or closeness to God; it became pedagogical when those experiences were translated into honesty, restrained authority, compassion, careful speech, and responsible decision making in educational relationships.

### ***Discussion***

The findings of this study reveal that Sufi practices constitute a meaningful process of spiritual formation through which teachers reinterpret their professional identities, ethical responsibilities, and pedagogical relationships. Drawing on the lived experiences of teachers participating in the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah Order at the Mihrobul Muhibbin Islamic Boarding School in Jakarta, the phenomenological analysis identified five interconnected dimensions of spiritual pedagogy: teaching as a divine trust (*amanah*), moral honesty, self-control and verbal ethics, pedagogical compassion, and transcendental responsibility. These dimensions emerged through participants' interpretations of repeated spiritual practices, including *dhikr*, *khalwat*, *khidmah*, *muhasabah*, religious gatherings, and guidance from a *murshid*. Importantly, the findings suggest that spiritual pedagogy is not reducible to religious observance or professional competence. Rather, it reflects a process through which spiritually cultivated dispositions are translated into ethical judgment, emotional restraint, and compassionate interactions with students. This interpretation contributes to understanding how spiritual experience becomes meaningful within teachers' everyday professional practice.

The findings resonate with international scholarship demonstrating the importance of spirituality, meaningful work, and psychological resources in teachers' professional development. Paul and Jena (2022), examining 345 higher education teachers in India, identified a positive relationship between workplace spirituality and professional well-being, partially mediated by positive psychological capital. Similarly, Heidari et al. (2022) reported significant associations between spiritual health, psychological well-being, and organizational commitment among Iranian secondary school teachers. These findings support the proposition that spirituality may constitute a psychological and ethical resource within educational professions. Nevertheless, the present research extends this literature by explaining how spirituality is experienced and interpreted through specific religious practices. Whereas previous quantitative investigations primarily examine relationships among psychological constructs, the present phenomenological findings illuminate the participants' perceived transformation of religious consciousness into professional responsibility, patience, and moral self-monitoring.

This interpretation is reinforced by contemporary research on teachers' well-being and professional identity. Hascher and Waber (2021) identified social relationships as a central component of teacher well-being, while Hascher et al. (2021) emphasized the reciprocal relationships among personal resources, professional resilience, and contextual conditions. Subsequently, Dreer (2023) demonstrated that teacher well-being has important implications for professional functioning and educational relationships. Zhao (2022) similarly highlighted the interrelationship between professional identity, psychological well-being, and teachers'

developmental experiences. Consistent with these perspectives, the present participants described spiritual companionship, moral guidance, and collective religious practices as sources of professional meaning. However, the present study introduces a culturally situated dimension that remains less explicit in mainstream teacher-development research: the perception of divine accountability as an organizing principle of professional identity. This distinction suggests that spirituality may operate not only through psychological adjustment but also through culturally embedded moral interpretations of teaching.

The findings regarding emotional restraint and pedagogical compassion also correspond with international evidence concerning teachers' emotional regulation. Aldrup et al. (2024), through a systematic review, demonstrated the relevance of emotional regulation to effective teaching and teacher-student interactions. García-Rodríguez et al. (2023) similarly established the importance of emotionally supportive teacher-student relationships for students' psychological adjustment and educational development. Furthermore, Hirshberg et al. (2020) found that integrating mindfulness and interpersonal connection practices into preservice teacher education improved observed classroom practices. These studies provide an empirical basis for interpreting the participants' descriptions of guarding their speech, restraining anger, and responding reflectively to students' difficulties. Nevertheless, Sufi practices should not be equated directly with secular mindfulness interventions. Although both may involve attention regulation and reflective awareness, Sufi disciplines are embedded in distinctive theological commitments, devotional intentions, communal obligations, and relationships with spiritual authorities. Consequently, their pedagogical significance must be interpreted within the religious traditions that give these practices meaning.

Further theoretical insight emerges from cross-cultural research on religious identity in teaching. Almayez (2022) found that Islamic identity influenced Muslim teachers' professional self-understanding, relationships with students, and perceptions of educational responsibility in Saudi Arabia. In contrast, Dilek (2026) demonstrated how external sociopolitical pressures could complicate the professional identity formation of Muslim teachers in England. These contrasting perspectives indicate that religious identity does not develop independently of institutional and sociocultural conditions. In the present Indonesian urban context, participants interpreted membership in a Sufi community as a source of ethical continuity amid professional demands. Their narratives therefore suggest that religious identity can function as a constructive professional resource when spiritual commitments are interpreted through service, compassion, and responsibility. However, this interpretation should not obscure the possibility that hierarchical religious relationships or institutional expectations may create tensions that require further investigation.

Within the Indonesian context, the findings correspond closely with emerging research on Islamic spirituality and educational professionalism. Dwiyantri et al. (2025) investigated Islamic workplace spirituality among 200 Indonesian Muslim teachers and identified the mediating role of career commitment in the relationships between particular spiritual dimensions and subjective career success. Notably, their findings indicated that *muraqabah* did not significantly predict the examined career outcomes, suggesting that different dimensions of spirituality do not necessarily produce equivalent professional consequences. This provides an important qualification to the present study: teachers' positive interpretations of spiritual formation should not be treated as proof that all devotional practices automatically improve professional performance. Rather, the present findings identify perceived ethical and relational transformations that require further behavioral examination.

Sajari et al. (2026) similarly emphasized the ethical and spiritual dimensions of Muslim teachers'

professional identities beyond technical competence. Mahrus et al. (2026), investigating Sufism-based spiritual pedagogy in an Indonesian pesantren, demonstrated how spiritual habituation and exemplary guidance were associated with the formation of inclusive and moderate character among students. Although these studies reinforce the educational significance of spiritual formation, the present research differs in its emphasis on teachers as subjects of transformation rather than students as the primary recipients of character education. Accordingly, the findings expand the discussion from spiritual pedagogy as a model for transmitting religious values to spiritual pedagogy as a process through which educators themselves develop moral dispositions and reinterpret professional obligations.

Institutional dimensions are further illustrated by Nurfathina et al. (2025), whose review of transformational leadership in Islamic education associated teacher professionalism with ethical role modeling, prophetic values, and individualized professional support. Such findings suggest that individual spiritual discipline and institutional leadership may operate as complementary resources for ethical teacher development. Likewise, Sufian et al. (2024) identified the relevance of affective support and religious orientation to Arabic language achievement within Indonesian family contexts. Although the latter study addresses family-based learning rather than teacher spirituality, it reinforces the wider importance of emotional and religious environments in educational development. The present study contributes to these perspectives by identifying teachers' interpretations of spiritual practice as a potential foundation for compassionate and responsible educational relationships.

Moreover, recent publications in *Digital Learning, Social Science, and Life-course Studies* provide a relevant comparison concerning the translation of values and professional intentions into educational practice. Hariandini et al. (2026) reported that the meaningful integration of digital technologies depends substantially on teachers' pedagogical beliefs, competencies, and institutional support rather than technological availability alone. Primahadi and Purwasih (2025) likewise demonstrated the integration of character-oriented values into digital learning media. Although these investigations address different instructional contexts, they underscore the importance of connecting pedagogical instruments with educational purposes. Similarly, Febriani et al. (2026) emphasized the complementary significance of value-based educational approaches and institutional frameworks in sustainability education. Taken together, these findings indicate that ethical orientations require appropriate professional and institutional conditions if they are to inform educational practice consistently.

Theoretically, the findings extend prophetic education by providing a phenomenological account of how humanization, liberation, and transcendence may be internalized through sustained spiritual practices. Humanization is reflected in teachers' reported compassion and respect for students' dignity; liberation appears in their efforts to restrain ego, anger, and harmful speech; and transcendence emerges through their understanding of teaching as worship and divine accountability. Drawing on Al-Ghazali's conception of moral habituation and Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*, these findings suggest an interpretive process involving repeated spiritual practice, reflective internalization, ethical disposition, and pedagogical enactment. Pedagogically, Islamic schools, madrasahs, and teacher education institutions could complement competency-based professional development with structured self-reflection, ethical communication training, mentoring, community service, and voluntary spiritual development. Such initiatives may support emotionally responsive classroom relationships and provide ethical foundations for respectful digital communication, responsible online conduct, and media literacy; nevertheless, these digital outcomes were not directly investigated in the present research. At the policy level, teacher development frameworks

should recognize professional integrity, emotional regulation, and relational competence alongside instructional expertise. Spiritual development should remain inclusive, voluntary, and compatible with teachers' diverse convictions, while mental health support must not be replaced by religious activities alone. Institutional support and professional accountability remain essential for translating ethical aspirations into sustainable educational practice (Aldrup et al., 2024; Febriani et al., 2026; Zhou et al., 2024).

The principal novelty of this study lies in its phenomenological interpretation of the relationship between Sufi habituation and the formation of teachers' spiritual pedagogy within an urban Indonesian tarekat community. Unlike studies that primarily investigate spiritual practices as religious rituals, workplace spirituality as a psychological predictor, or character education as an instructional outcome, this research foregrounds teachers' lived interpretations of spirituality as a formative dimension of professional identity. Its contribution is threefold: first, it identifies five interrelated dimensions of spiritual pedagogy grounded in participants' narratives; second, it develops an interpretive account of how repeated devotional practices may become ethical dispositions and pedagogical orientations; and third, it connects Sufi spiritual formation with prophetic education and contemporary discussions of teacher professionalism. This synthesis challenges narrowly instrumental understandings of teacher quality while recognizing that spiritual integrity and professional competence are complementary rather than interchangeable.

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting these findings. First, the study involved ten purposively selected informants within a single urban Sufi community, including six teachers, thereby limiting the transferability of its interpretations to other educational and religious settings. Second, the reliance on retrospective, self-reported spiritual experiences introduces potential social desirability, selective recollection, and interpretive biases, particularly because participants may regard particular devotional practices as morally desirable. Third, although supporting informants and field notes contributed contextual evidence, the study did not systematically evaluate classroom behavior, student perceptions, instructional quality, or longitudinal professional changes. Consequently, the findings should be understood as participants' interpretations of spiritual and pedagogical transformation rather than verified causal effects. Future research should employ comparative phenomenological studies across different tarekat communities, longitudinal investigations of spiritual identity formation, and mixed-methods designs integrating classroom observations, student perspectives, and validated measures of emotional regulation and professional well-being. Further investigation should also examine how gender, institutional leadership, digital educational environments, and religious diversity influence the enactment of spiritual pedagogy, thereby refining its conceptual boundaries and practical applicability.

## Conclusion

Teachers in this study experienced Sufistic habituation as a sustained process of inner formation that reshaped the meaning of their profession and their relationships with students. Recurrent practices of dhikr, khushushiyah, khalwat, manakib, pilgrimage, khidmah, adab toward the murshid, spiritual advice, and self-examination were interpreted as formative experiences that influenced intention, speech, emotional response, honesty, compassion, and accountability. Five interconnected dimensions constituted the emergent form of teachers' spiritual pedagogy: teaching as amanah, moral honesty, self-control and ethics of speech, pedagogical compassion, and transcendent accountability. The study therefore suggests that spirituality becomes pedagogically relevant when it is translated from personal religious experience into observable ethical and relational dispositions

in educational practice. Its principal contribution is the concept of teachers' spiritual pedagogy as a bridge between Sufi formation, prophetic educational values, and contemporary teacher professionalism. For Islamic teacher development, the implication is not to replace pedagogical, curricular, or technological competence with spiritual practice, but to integrate technical competence with reflective-spiritual formation so that professional capability is guided by integrity, emotional restraint, care for students, and responsible use of authority. Because the evidence is phenomenological and context-specific, these conclusions should be tested through comparative, observational, and longitudinal research in other Islamic educational settings.

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