Integrating Spirituality In Philosophy Courses For Cultivating Civilizational Values

Mengintegrasikan Spiritualiti Dalam Kursus Falsafah Bagi Memupuk Nilai-Nilai Tamadun

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Abstract: This study explores the integration of spirituality into philosophy courses, particularly the compulsory "*Falsafah dan Isu Semasa*" (Philosophy and Current Issues) course to all Malaysian higher education institutions in cultivating civilizational values. The research aims to evaluate how spirituality - defined as the meaning, purpose, and values derived from connections with a higher power, oneself, others, and nature, accessed through the heart (*qalb*) - can enrich the teaching and learning experience of philosophy. Employing a qualitative research approach with content analysis as the primary method, the study examined course materials, syllabi, and relevant literature. The 3A's model (Awareness, Awakening, and Action) was used as a framework to understand how the integration of spirituality into philosophy courses can foster the development of civilizational values. The analysis suggests that integrating spirituality may enhance students' cognitive and social engagement, leading to a deeper understanding of philosophical concepts in cultivating the civilizational values, namely, ethical foundations, personal growth, and cultural understanding.This integration addresses gaps in traditional education by nurturing students' spiritual dimensions alongside intellectual growth, aligning with Malaysia's National Education Philosophy. The study emphasizes the critical role of spirituality in education and provides a framework for enhancing teaching practices in Malaysian higher education institutions. By incorporating spirituality into the course, the research fosters a more holistic and meaningful educational experience for students. This approach not only enhances their understanding of philosophical concepts but also prepares them to be thoughtful, ethical, and engaged members of society.

Keywords: Spirituality, Philosophy course, Teaching and learning experiences, Meaning, purpose and values, Intellectual Growth

Abstrak: Kajian ini meneroka pengintegrasian spiritualiti ke dalam kursus falsafah, khususnya kursus wajib "Falsafah dan Isu Semasa" di semua institusi pendidikan tinggi Malaysia dalam membentuk nilai-nilai peradaban. Penyelidikan ini bertujuan untuk menilai bagaimana spiritualiti - yang ditakrifkan sebagai makna, tujuan, dan nilai yang diperoleh daripada hubungan dengan kuasa yang lebih tinggi, diri sendiri, orang lain, dan alam semula jadi, yang diakses melalui hati (qalb) - dapat memperkayakan pengalaman pengajaran dan pembelajaran falsafah. Menggunakan pendekatan penyelidikan kualitatif dengan analisis kandungan sebagai kaedah utama, kajian ini memeriksa bahan kursus, silibus, dan literatur yang berkaitan. Model 3A (Kesedaran, Kebangkitan, dan Tindakan) digunakan sebagai kerangka untuk memahami bagaimana pengintegrasian spiritualiti ke dalam kursus falsafah dapat memupuk pembangunan nilai-nilai peradaban.

Analisis menunjukkan bahawa pengintegrasian spiritualiti mungkin meningkatkan penglibatan kognitif dan sosial pelajar, yang membawa kepada pemahaman yang lebih mendalam tentang konsep-konsep falsafah dalam membentuk nilai-nilai peradaban, iaitu asas etika, pertumbuhan peribadi, dan pemahaman budaya. Pengintegrasian ini menangani kekurangan dalam pendidikan tradisional dengan memupuk dimensi spiritual pelajar seiring dengan pertumbuhan intelektual, selaras dengan Falsafah Pendidikan Kebangsaan Malaysia. Kajian ini menekankan peranan penting spiritualiti dalam pendidikan dan menyediakan kerangka untuk meningkatkan amalan pengajaran di institusi pendidikan tinggi Malaysia. Dengan menggabungkan spiritualiti ke dalam kursus, penyelidikan ini memupuk pengalaman pendidikan yang lebih holistik dan bermakna bagi pelajar. Pendekatan ini bukan sahaja meningkatkan pemahaman mereka tentang konsep-konsep falsafah tetapi juga mempersiapkan mereka untuk menjadi anggota masyarakat yang berfikir, beretika, dan terlibat.

Kata kunci: Spiritualiti, Kursus Falsafah, Pengalaman Pengajaran dan Pembelajaran, Makna, tujuan dan nilai, Pertumbuhan Intelektual.

Introduction

In an increasingly complex world, the integration of spirituality into philosophy courses offers a promising approach to cultivating civilizational values. This innovative educational strategy focuses on incorporating spirituality, defined as meaning, purpose, and values gained from establishing four basic human relationships: God, oneself, other humans, and nature, using the concept of the organ heart (*qalb*), into the teaching of philosophy courses in higher education institution in Malaysia, aims to increase the interest in philosophy and to cultivate the civilizational values (Ab Razak 2023). The integration of spirituality into academic disciplines has gained increasing attention in recent years (Palmer 2003a). This study explores how incorporating spirituality into philosophy courses can lead to a more comprehensive and impactful educational experience, one that not only deepens students' understanding of philosophical concepts but also contributes to the evolution of civilizational values. Civilizational values are intrinsic values that are fundamental to the construction and maintenance of civilizations (Gulen 2006). These values, when externalized through human actions, social institutions, and cultural practices, form the bedrock of civilization itself. The process of externalizing these intrinsic values is what builds and shapes a civilization over time.

Objective

The primary objective of this study is to evaluate the integration of spirituality into philosophy courses, particularly the compulsory course in all higher education institutions in Malaysia, "*Falsafah dan Isu Semasa*" (Philosophy and Current Issues). Specifically, the research aims to explore how spirituality - defined as the meaning, purpose, and values derived from connections with a higher power, oneself, others, and nature, accessed through the heart (*qalb*) - can enrich the teaching and learning experience of philosophy. According to Miner Williams (2006), spirituality is a subjective construct shaped by an individual's worldview, constantly evolving and dependent on the lens through which it is explored. Worldview functions as a foundational framework that colors beliefs, values, and interactions, influencing how spirituality is understood and practiced. In this study, using Islam as the guiding worldview, spirituality is defined as the meaning, purpose, and values derived from connections with a higher power (God), oneself, others, and nature—connections accessed through the heart (*qalb*). This perspective is rooted in the Islamic understanding that true meaning requires transcendence beyond the self, and that as spiritual and social beings, humans find purpose and value through relationships with God, other people, and the natural world.

The heart *(qalb)* is emphasized as the central organ for spiritual experience, as it is considered the locus of the soul (*ruh*) in Islamic tradition. The soul, originating from Allah as referenced in the Quran Surah Al-Hijr, 15: 29, "And when I have proportioned him and breathed into him of My spirit, then fall down to him in prostration, signifies a divine connection that grounds human spirituality in something greater than the material self. This aligns with broader definitions of spirituality as a focus on the human soul and as a capacity for religious belief or meaning-making. The term "spirit" itself is derived from the Latin spiritus, meaning breath, vigour, and life, highlighting the universal and life-giving nature of spirituality (Marra 2000). Thus, spirituality, when viewed through an Islamic lens, is a dynamic process of seeking

meaning and purpose through the heart's connection to the Divine, oneself, others, and the world, forming the core of a person's worldview and subjective well-being

This approach seeks to foster a more holistic educational framework that nurtures students' spiritual dimensions alongside their intellectual growth, aligning with Malaysia's National Education Philosophy. This study also aims to explore how integrating spirituality into philosophy courses can help students internalize civilizational values and understand how to externalize these values in their personal and professional lives, thus contributing to the ongoing development of civilization.

By addressing the gaps in modern education that often neglect spiritual aspects, the study aims to demonstrate how this integration can enhance students' understanding of ethical foundations, promote personal and social development, and deepen cultural understanding. Ultimately, the research seeks to provide insights into how the incorporation of spirituality into philosophy courses can contribute to the development of well-rounded individuals capable of addressing complex societal challenges and upholding civilizational values. This approach aims to foster a more holistic educational experience and address educational gaps by nurturing students' spiritual dimensions alongside intellectual growth, aligning with Malaysia's National Education Philosophy, which states:

"Pendidikan di Malaysia adalah suatu usaha berterusan ke arah lebih memperkembangkan potensi individu secara menyeluruh dan bersepadu untuk melahirkan insan yang seimbang dan harmonis dari segi intelek, rohani, emosi dan jasmani berdasarkan kepercayaan dan kepatuhan kepada Tuhan. Usaha ini bertujuan untuk melahirkan warganegara Malaysia yang berilmu pengetahuan, berketerampilan, berakhlak mulia, bertanggungjawab dan berkeupayaan mencapai kesejahteraan diri serta memberikan sumbangan terhadap keharmonian dan kemakmuran keluarga, masyarakat dan negara." (MOE)

By nurturing students' spiritual dimensions, the study aims to fill gaps modern education that often neglect the spiritual aspect, which is crucial for a holistic approach and enriching the educational experience by going beyond intellectual growth to include spiritual development. Modern education here refers to several issue, such as, tend to focus primarily on cognitive skills and knowledge acquisition, often at the expense of other dimensions of human development, including the spiritual. Palmer (2003) posits that many educational approaches treat subjects in isolation, failing to integrate spiritual or philosophical concepts across the curriculum. As highlighted in one of the topics in Philosophy and Currents Issues, under the topic The Concept of Human" (Psychology and Sociology), traditional education often fails to address the multidimensional nature of human beings, including physical, intellectual, and spiritual aspects (Amran 2022). Traditional curricula also may not provide sufficient opportunities for students to explore questions of meaning, purpose, and values, which are central to spiritual development (Palmer 1993). Many modern educational settings do not incorporate practices like mindfulness, which can enhance self-awareness and connection to others and nature and traditional education also often focuses on academic and career success, potentially neglecting the development of ethical foundations and personal growth that spiritual aspects can provide (Palmer 1999).

Many civilizational values are indeed rooted in spiritual or religious traditions, yet these are often not adequately explored in modern educational settings. For example, Islamic principles of environmental stewardship shape ecological ethics, as highlighted by Azizan (2019), while the Hindu concept of ahimsa (non-violence) has influenced global civil rights movements (Gokhale, 2009). Similarly, Buddhist mindfulness and Christian teachings on love and service are foundational to ethical and social values. Research supports the observation that spiritual and moral education plays a fundamental role in fostering ethical decision-making, social responsibility, emotional well-being, and community cohesion. However, traditional education systems frequently prioritize intellectual and technical skills, often sidelining the spiritual and moral dimensions that underpin many civilizational values. Studies show that integrating spiritual and moral education helps develop personal qualities such as empathy, respect, and a sense of belonging, which are essential for responsible citizenship and social harmony.

Furthermore, the socio-cultural heritage of religion is recognized as a multidimensional resource for education, offering a foundation for dialogue, value formation, and the holistic development of individuals. By actualizing the educational potential of these spiritual traditions, education can move beyond mere knowledge transmission to cultivate the values and virtues that have historically shaped civilizations. In summary, the integration of spirituality and religious values into education is crucial for nurturing the civilizational values that contribute to ethical, cohesive, and resilient societies—a dimension often underrepresented in current educational models.

Thus, by integrating spirituality into philosophy courses, we aim to address these gaps and provide a more comprehensive educational experience that nurtures all aspects of human development, aligning with the holistic approach outlined in Malaysia's National Education Philosophy.

Significance of the Study

The integration of spirituality in philosophy course as an approach can lead to a more holistic development of students, touching on ethics, personal growth, social awareness, and cultural understanding, especially by fostering these values through a more enriched educational framework (Moore 1992). Civilizational values play a crucial role in shaping and sustaining societies, providing a moral and ethical framework that guides individual and collective behavior (Said 1993). These values are essential for fostering social cohesion, promoting human dignity, and contributing to the progress and sustainability of societies (Harris 2010). They serve as a foundation for resolving conflicts, maintaining peace, and upholding human rights (Sen 2006). All these aspects, such as ethics, personal growth, and cultural understanding stand out as key civilizational values. Ethics forms the moral bedrock of society, guiding decision-making at both individual and societal levels, promoting justice, fairness, and equality, while helping to maintain social order (Berger 1967). It also enhances emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills, crucial for navigating complex social environments. Peters (2006), examines various theoretical perspectives on education, including the role of spirituality in fostering ethical values and personal growth. It encourages continuous self-improvement and reflection, fostering innovation, creativity, and adaptability, which in turn contributes to the overall development of society (Frankl 2006).

Cultural understanding promotes tolerance and respect for diversity, facilitating peaceful coexistence in multicultural societies, enhancing global cooperation, and preserving cultural heritage (Thomas 2008). Palmer (1993), discusses the importance of integrating spirituality into education to foster a deeper understanding of self and others, contributing to civilizational values. The integration of spirituality into philosophy courses could offers a powerful means to cultivate these civilizational values. By providing a deeper, more holistic perspective on ethical issues, encouraging self-reflection and personal development, and fostering empathy towards diverse cultural and spiritual traditions, this approach addresses the existential and metaphysical questions that underpin many civilizational values. In an increasingly complex world, this integration can help students develop a more nuanced understanding of these values and their application in real-world situations, bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical wisdom.

Ethical foundations, personal and social development, and cultural heritage are considered as the main civilizational values because they collectively contribute to the holistic development of individuals and societies. Ethical foundations provide a moral compass that guides individual and collective behaviour (Gulen 2006). They are crucial for maintaining social order and justice. Both philosophy and spirituality address ethics and morality, offering a comprehensive understanding of ethical principles that underpin civilizational values.

A strong ethical foundation is vital for societal progress as it fosters love, compassion, cooperation, and harmony among individuals. Integrating spirituality- the meaning, purpose, and values derived from connections with a higher power or God, oneself, others, and nature, accessed through the heart (*qalb*) with philosophical inquiry encourages critical thinking about personal growth and social responsibilities. This development goes beyond the status quo, promoting continuous improvement for the betterment of society. It involves nurturing intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of human nature. Personal development is linked to social transformation, as individuals who grow personally are more likely to contribute positively to their communities (Palmer 2009).

Cultural understanding encompasses the original sources and contexts of our values. It includes traditions, languages, arts, and beliefs that define a society's identity. Exploring cultural heritage in a philosophical context helps students appreciate the historical foundations of various cultures and societies. This understanding is crucial for fostering respect and tolerance in diverse communities. Noddings (2004), emphasizes the importance of relationships and caring in education, which aligns with cultivating civilizational values through spirituality. Thus, understanding cultural roots allows societies to evolve while maintaining continuity with their past.

In summary, these civilizational values are interconnected and essential for creating a balanced society. Ethical foundations ensure moral integrity; personal and social development drive progress; and cultural heritage maintains identity while allowing for growth. Thus, by integrating spirituality into philosophy courses enriches these values by providing deeper insights and fostering a more comprehensive educational experience.

Methodology

This study employed a qualitative research approach, utilizing content analysis as the primary method, particularly the Philosophy and Current Issue Module (Amran 2020), to examine the integration of spirituality and philosophy in educational contexts. The content analysis also focused on identifying how the course materials facilitate the process of internalizing civilizational values and provide opportunities for students to consider how these values can be externalized in real-world contexts. For ethical considerations, we develop clear guidelines for addressing diverse spiritual beliefs in

an academic setting and ensure respect for different cultural and religious backgrounds.

The Study Framework

A key framework used in this study is the 3A's model: Awareness, Awaken, and Action (Ab Razak 2024). This model provides a structure for understanding how the integration of spirituality into philosophy courses can foster the development of civilizational values. At the Awareness level, it is a level for recognizing, knowing or understanding the moral principles, cultural heritage, and the multidimensional nature of human existence. At the Awakening level, it is developing values by having a deeper understanding of ethical values, cultural significance, and human potential and lastly at the Action level, it is applying ethical principles, participating in cultural practices, and nurturing comprehensive personal growth.

The 3A's Model: Awareness, Awaken, and Action serves as a comprehensive guiding framework for this study on integrating spirituality in philosophy courses to cultivate civilizational values. It is a structured approach to understanding and implementing the integration of spirituality in philosophy courses. At the Awareness stage, knowledge about philosophy is imparted to students, emphasizing the cognitive process involved in understanding the material. By focusing on cognitive processes, it acknowledges that comprehension is essential before students can engage with philosophical concepts meaningfully. Specific teaching methods and strategies such as interactive lectures or discussions that encourage critical thinking have been used to enhance this awareness,

At the Awakening stage, students develop values from the philosophical knowledge they have gained, the transition from knowledge to personal value formation well. It emphasizes the importance of internalizing philosophical concepts, to develop values that are crucial for the next stage, which is vital for personal development. These values derived from philosophical discussions provide essential guidance in navigating real-life applications and ethical dilemmas. By internalizing these values, individuals can approach complex situations with a moral compass that prioritizes the well-being of others and adheres to ethical standards. This philosophical grounding not only shapes personal character but also contributes positively to society.

At the Action stage, the final stage, the knowledge and values acquired during the awareness and awaken stages are not just academic achievements; they are essential tools for navigating life beyond university. By applying critical thinking, value-based living, relationship-building skills, community engagement, a commitment to lifelong learning, ethical leadership, and resilience, graduates can lead fulfilling lives that positively impact themselves and those around them. The progression through these stages is logical and coherent, demonstrating a clear pathway from knowledge acquisition to value development and practical application. Each stage builds upon the previous one, creating a comprehensive approach to education that emphasizes both cognitive understanding and moral development.
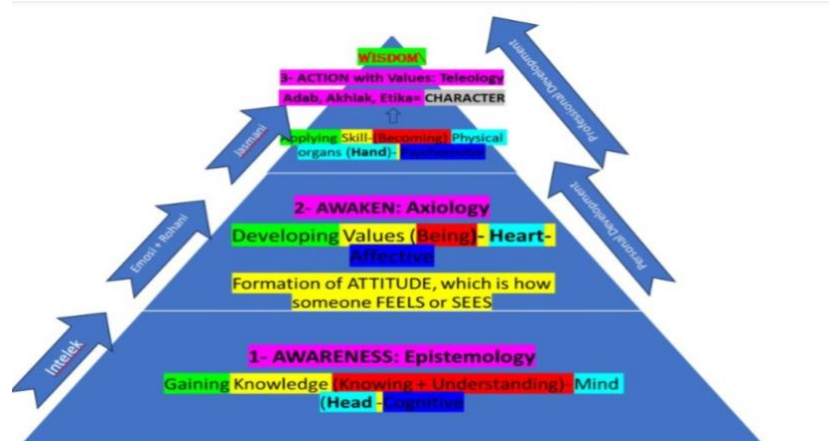
(3As Model, Ab Razak 2024)

The Intersection of Spirituality and Philosophy

To understand the integration process, it is crucial to define both spirituality and philosophy in the context of this study. Spirituality is a complex and often ambiguous concept, and a clear, comprehensive definition is rarely achieved (Hodge & Derezotes 2008). Numerous scholars in higher education have sought to define spirituality (Astin 2004; Jones 2005; Palmer 2003; Shahjahan 2010; Tolliver & Tisdell 2006). While there are common themes across their definitions, there

remains a lack of consensus among them. The recurring themes include viewing spirituality as a transcendent experience that encompasses meaning making and the quest for life's purpose; as an inner longing and subjective awareness of being connected to something greater than oneself; and as the capacity to experience interconnectedness with oneself, others, and the universe, ultimately achieving a sense of wholeness (Palmer 2003).

For this study, spirituality is conceptualized as the pursuit of meaning, purpose, and values gained through establishing four basic human relationships: with God, oneself, fellow human beings, and nature, using the heart (*qalb*) as the primary organ of perception (Ab Razak 2023). This definition emphasizes the holistic nature of spiritual experience and its relevance to personal and social development. Philosophy, on the other hand, is defined as the pursuit of truth, encompassing meaning, purpose, and values, through deep thinking based on chosen worldviews in all aspects of life. It involves asking meaningful questions, employing logical reasoning, and examining fundamental concepts (Amran 2022). The integration of these two domains offers a unique opportunity to enhance the educational experience and cultivate civilizational values.

While philosophy emphasizes logical reasoning and questioning assumptions, spirituality adds depth by incorporating ethical frameworks and contemplative practices (Gulen 2006). The integration of spirituality in philosophy courses can enhance philosophical awareness, in which spirituality focuses on meaning, purpose, and values derived from four basic relationships: with God, self, other humans, and nature and this aligns with philosophy's love of wisdom and search for truth through deep thinking (Gulen 2006). Both seek to uncover meaning, purpose, and value in life, using the heart (*qalb*) as a central organ of understanding. The integration of spirituality in philosophy courses also broadened the understanding of diverse philosophical traditions.

Cultivating Civilizational Values

The integration of spirituality into philosophy courses cultivates three key civilizational values: ethical foundations, personal and social transformation, and cultural heritage. These themes emerged organically from our analysis of course materials, reflecting the core values that this integration aims to promote. The process involved iterative analysis, constantly comparing and contrasting different elements of the syllabus and course materials to identify patterns and commonalities that led to these overarching themes, which are, ethical foundations, personal dan social development and cultural understanding.

Both philosophy and spirituality engage deeply with ethics and morality. Philosophy seeks the truth about how we should live, and spirituality helps us embody that truth in our lives. This synergy enriches our moral compass and guides us toward a meaningful, ethical life. Their integration fosters a nuanced understanding of moral principles and their application in society. By exploring philosophical texts alongside spiritual teachings, students gain insights that enhance their ethical reasoning (Tolliver 2006).

Examining spiritual concepts in conjunction with philosophical ones encourages critical thinking about self-awareness and social responsibility—essential elements for maintaining civilizational values. This combination nurtures personal growth and fosters active social engagement (Gulen 2006). Many civilizational values are rooted in spiritual or religious traditions. Exploring these traditions within a philosophical context helps students appreciate the cultural foundations of diverse societies. By engaging with various worldviews—Western, Indian, Chinese, Islamic—students develop empathy and respect for different belief systems (Harisson 2023).

Finding And Discussion

This analysis focused on how the integration of spirituality, the meaning, purpose, and values derived from connections with a higher power, oneself, others, and nature, accessed through the heart (*qalb*) in the philosophy course contributes to civilizational values. Through careful examination of the syllabus and course materials used in teaching philosophy, three main themes emerged to determine the meaning of civilizational values.

The ethical foundation's theme encompasses content and approaches that foster moral reasoning and ethical decision-making. The analysis revealed how spiritual concepts are incorporated to enhance students' understanding of ethical principles and their application in contemporary contexts. The incorporation of spirituality—defined as meaning, purpose, and value through relationships with God, oneself, fellow human beings, and nature—enhances students' understanding of ethical principles and their application in contemporary contexts in several ways, such as:

Engaging with spirituality often enhances emotional intelligence—an essential component of ethical behavior. When students learn to connect spiritually with themselves and others, they cultivate love, compassion and empathy. This emotional awareness helps them understand the perspectives of others, leading to more ethical decision-making that

considers the well-being of all individuals involved (Zohar 2000).

The integration of spirituality into educational settings provides a foundational framework for understanding ethical principles. By fostering a relationship with God and encouraging self-reflection, students can explore their values and beliefs. This process enables them to develop a personal ethical framework aligned with spiritual teachings, allowing them to navigate moral dilemmas in contemporary society with clarity and conviction (Gulen 2006). For instance, when discussing the topic on metaphysics, we can encourage students to examine metaphysical questions regarding existence, purpose, and the nature of reality, they are prompted to reflect on their beliefs about a higher power and their place in the world. This reflective practice not only enhances their cognitive engagement but also nurtures their spiritual growth, fostering a more profound understanding of ethical principles rooted in their spiritual experiences. This integration is particularly effective when lecturers incorporate spirituality into discussions about metaphysics—the study of reality. Engaging with metaphysical concepts can strengthen students' beliefs in the unseen, including the existence of God. By exploring these ideas, students can deepen their understanding of spiritual dimensions and how they relate to ethical considerations (Harisson 2023).

Ultimately, integrating spirituality into philosophy courses encourages students to recognize the interconnectedness of their beliefs, values, and ethical frameworks. This holistic approach prepares them to become thoughtful and engaged members of society who can address complex moral issues while upholding civilizational values (Checkering 2000). This approach nurtures a deeper understanding of ethical principles by allowing students to reflect on their experiences and the implications of their actions within a broader spiritual context. For instance, discussions around environmental ethics can be enriched by considering humanity's relationship with nature as part of their spiritual beliefs. Discussions around environmental ethics can be significantly enriched by examining humanity's relationship with nature through various spiritual beliefs. One such belief system is Taoism, which emphasizes harmony between humans and the natural world.

In Taoist philosophy, nature is not just a backdrop for human activity; it is a vital force that sustains life and should be respected and preserved. Taoism teaches that humans are an integral part of the natural world. This perspective encourages individuals to live in harmony with their environment, promoting sustainable practices that protect ecological balance. The Taoist belief in the interconnectedness of all things underscores the importance of recognizing our impact on the environment. Understanding that actions taken by individuals can affect the broader ecosystem fosters a sense of responsibility towards environmental stewardship (Lou Tzu 2006).

Spirituality encourages students to apply ethical principles in real-world contexts. By understanding their moral responsibilities toward God, themselves, and society, students are more likely to engage in community service, advocacy for social justice, and other actions that reflect their ethical beliefs (Chickering 2000). This application reinforces the relevance of ethical principles in addressing contemporary issues such as inequality, environmental degradation, and human rights.

Spirituality instils a sense of purpose and meaning in students' lives. When students recognize that their actions have significance beyond themselves—rooted in their spiritual beliefs—they are more motivated to act ethically. This intrinsic motivation drives them to uphold ethical standards in various aspects of life, from personal interactions to professional conduct (Palmer 1993).

By integrating spirituality into education, students gain a richer understanding of ethical principles that are applicable in contemporary contexts. This integration not only fosters personal growth but also equips students with the tools necessary to navigate complex moral landscapes in today's world. (Palmer 2003b). The emphasis on relationships—with God, oneself, others, and nature—enables them to develop a comprehensive approach to ethics that is both meaningful and impactful.

Ethical foundations form a crucial aspect of the philosophy course, drawing from various topics and subtopics that are included in the module on Philosophy and Current Issues (Amran 2022). It begins with the Introduction to Philosophy, that lays the groundwork by presenting fundamental ethical concepts. The existing 3 philosophies such as the National Education Philosophy contributes by providing the ethical framework specific to Malaysian education. Rukun Negara, the national ideology, outlines 5 principles that include important ethical guidelines as citizen of Malaysia to live peacefully in multi-cultural ethnic. The Sejahtera Philosophy emphasizes holistic well-being in a balance way, inherently includes ethical living. For the topic of Logic, it plays a vital role in developing ethical reasoning skills, enabling students to construct and evaluate moral arguments. Lastly, for the topic of Epistemology, it explores the nature of knowledge, including how we come to know what it means by knowledge and how to justify the truth, empirically and rationally, thus providing a deeper understanding of the foundations of ethical judgments. The Philosophy and Current

Issues course not only introduces the main philosophical principles, but also encourages students to consider how these ethical principles can be applied in their daily lives and future professions, thus externalizing these intrinsic values in practical ways. This is because, as promote by UNESCO, knowledge is not just about knowing, but being and becoming, means that knowledge is not simply about acquiring facts, but about internalizing and embodying values, leading to personal growth and character formation to be a responsible citizenship. Thus, by integrating spirituality into the curriculum, it enhances the process by providing students with a deeper understanding of ethical principles through personal reflection and connection to their beliefs. By fostering a relationship with God or Superpower, themselves, and others, students can explore their values more profoundly, allowing them to develop a personal ethical framework that aligns with spiritual teachings (Lovat 2009). This alignment enables them to navigate moral dilemmas in contemporary society with clarity and conviction.

Moreover, when lecturers incorporate discussions on metaphysics—the study of reality—into the course, it strengthens students' beliefs in the unseen, including the existence of God. Engaging with metaphysical concepts encourages students to reflect on their understanding of reality and their place within it, further enriching their spiritual and ethical development (Harisson 2023). This holistic approach not only prepares them for their future professions but also nurtures their character, enabling them to embody the civilizational values essential for contributing positively to society (Palmer 2003). In this way, the integration of spirituality within philosophy courses fosters a comprehensive educational experience that transcends mere academic knowledge, promoting personal growth and ethical engagement in real-world contexts.

For the personal growth theme, it relates to elements in the course that promote self-reflection, critical thinking, and personal development. The analysis highlighted how spiritual perspectives are used to encourage students to explore their own beliefs, values, and worldviews. Personal Growth is a key theme explored through various components of the philosophy course. From the topic of Human Concept, rooted in psychology, it delves into understanding human nature from various tradition such as Western, Indian, Chinese and Islam. Through the processes of personal development, it could provide students with insights into their own psychological makeup and potential for growth (Palmer 2003). Furthermore, the topic of Logic plays a crucial role in developing critical thinking skills, which are essential for personal growth as they enable students to analyse situations, make informed decisions, and solve problems effectively. The study of Decolonization and Ideologies promotes self-awareness and encourages a critical examination of inherited beliefs, challenging students to question societal norms and develop their own well-reasoned perspectives. It also helps students to disentangle their epistemology from colonial influences that may have shaped their thinking. Together, these elements of the course foster a comprehensive approach to personal growth as authentic local citizens, empowering students to develop intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually.

As for cultural understanding, this theme focuses on content that promotes awareness and appreciation of diverse cultural traditions, particularly regarding the concept of Human, where each culture has its own narrative about what it means to be human (Amran 2020). The integration of spirituality in educational courses fosters cross-cultural dialogue and understanding in several impactful ways.

Spirituality often emphasizes core values such as compassion, empathy, and respect for others, which are essential for fostering understanding across different cultures. By incorporating these values into the curriculum, students learn to appreciate diverse perspectives and develop a sense of shared humanity. This foundational understanding encourages open-mindedness and reduces prejudice (Palmer 1993).

Courses that integrate spirituality often include experiential learning opportunities, such as community service. These experiences allow students to interact with individuals from different backgrounds, fostering direct engagement and personal connections (Chickering 2009). Such interactions enable students to apply their philosophical learnings in real-world contexts, enhancing their appreciation for diversity.

Incorporating spirituality into education often involves reflective practices such as journaling, or group discussions about personal beliefs and values (Shahjahan 2010). These practices encourage students to explore their own identities while considering the beliefs of others. This self-reflection can lead to greater empathy and understanding of cultural differences, as students recognize the complexity of their own views in relation to those of others.

Courses that emphasize spirituality create an environment conducive to dialogue about complex issues. Students are encouraged to discuss not only their beliefs but also the beliefs of others in a respectful manner. This dialogue helps to break down barriers and fosters a culture of mutual respect and learning.

By integrating religious teachings from various traditions—such as Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism,

etc.in the teaching and learning process,—students gain insights into how different cultures approach ethical principles and moral questions. This exposure broadens their worldview and prepares them to engage thoughtfully with global challenges that require collaborative solutions. By valuing and teaching the common ethical and moral foundations found in all major religions, Malaysia can nurture future generations who are well-equipped to treasure diversity, foster unity, and contribute positively to a cohesive and resilient society

Through these mechanisms, the integration of spirituality in educational courses enhances students' understanding of ethical principles while promoting cross-cultural dialogue and understanding. Chickering (2009), posits that a holistic approach not only enriches their academic experience but also prepares them to navigate an increasingly interconnected world with sensitivity and insight.

Cultural understanding is a vital component of the philosophy course, woven through several key topics. The National Education Philosophy emphasizes the importance of comprehending the Malaysian cultural context, providing students with a foundation for appreciating their national heritage. Rukun Negara, the national ideology, promotes unity and respect for the diverse cultures within Malaysia, fostering a sense of national cohesion. The Sejahtera Philosophy encourages harmony and balance in society, contributing to a holistic understanding of cultural well-being. Epistemology, by exploring different ways of knowing across cultures, broadens students' perspectives on how knowledge is acquired and validated in various cultural contexts. The study of Decolonization and Ideology examines cultural influences on thought patterns and promotes understanding of diverse perspectives, challenging students to critically evaluate their own cultural assumptions. Together, these elements cultivate a deep appreciation for cultural diversity and equip students with the tools to navigate and contribute positively to Malaysia's multicultural society.

As Pestalozzi's view, there is some interrelationship among the aspects of cognitive, moral, and physical education, it is said that one aspect can be developed through other aspects. In line with Pestalozzi, Citing Kessler, Schiller believes as quoted in Miller (2005) who says that ... "learning cannot be separated into cognitive, psychological, physiological, or spiritual." Therefore, cognitive, affective (psychological), motor (physiological), or religious (spiritual) aspect is a unity in a learning. Indeed, this view supports our 3As Model (Awareness, Awaken, Action) by emphasizing the interconnectedness of cognitive, moral, spiritual and physical aspects of education. The quotation highlights Pestalozzi's view that there is an interrelationship among cognitive, moral, and physical education. This aligns with the Awareness phase of your model, where students are encouraged to engage in critical thinking and self-reflection. By recognizing that knowledge is not isolated but interconnected with moral and physical dimensions, students can develop a more holistic understanding of their learning experiences.

The statement that "learning cannot be separated into cognitive, psychological, physiological, or spiritual" resonates with the Awaken phase of your model. This phase emphasizes personal growth and the development of values. By integrating spirituality into education, students can awaken to deeper meanings and connections in their lives. This holistic approach ensures that learners consider ethical implications and personal values alongside cognitive development.

The notion that one aspect can be developed through others supports the Action phase of our model. In this phase, students are encouraged to apply their knowledge and values in real-world situations. The integration of various aspects—cognitive, moral, physical, and spiritual—enables students to take informed actions that reflect a comprehensive understanding of the complexities they face in life. (Steven, 1999) By acknowledging the unity of these aspects in learning, the quotation reinforces the idea that cultivating civilizational values requires an integrated approach. This model promotes awareness of societal changes (cognitive), awakening to personal values (ethical and moral), and taking action based on this understanding (physical and spiritual). This alignment emphasizes the importance of developing well-rounded individuals who can navigate challenges with empathy and ethical consideration.

Integration of Spirituality in the 3As Model

At the Awareness stage, students gain knowledge and understanding about civilizational values, and philosophical concepts. However, without integrating spirituality, students may only remain at this cognitive level, where they accumulate information without deeper personal engagement or reflection on their values.

At this Awaken level, this is where the integration of spirituality becomes crucial. During the Awaken phase, students are encouraged to explore their values, beliefs, and emotional connections to the material. This exploration fosters personal growth and ethical understanding, allowing students to internalize civilizational values more profoundly.

By incorporating spiritual perspectives into discussions about civilizational values, students can reflect on their purpose and the significance of their role in society (Chickering 2009). This process of awakening helps them connect

philosophical concepts with their own spiritual journeys, leading to a richer understanding of ethical living.

Once students have awakened to their values through spiritual integration, they are better equipped to move into the Action phase, where they apply these insights in real-life situations, demonstrating responsible citizenship and ethical behavior. Integrating spirituality into education fosters a holistic development by connecting intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions, which deepens wisdom and enables students to translate knowledge into meaningful action (Palmer 2009).

In summary, integrating spirituality is essential for fostering a holistic educational experience that prepares students not only to understand philosophical principles but also to embody them in their actions. Without this integration, students may miss out on a critical aspect of personal development, remaining limited to cognitive awareness without fully engaging with the ethical and spiritual dimensions of their learning (Palmer 2010). By recognizing the importance of spirituality in this context, we can highlight its role in cultivating well-rounded individuals who can navigate complex societal challenges while upholding civilizational values. Since this study is based on content analysis, these findings open avenues for further empirical research.

Conclusion

The integration of spirituality into philosophy courses provides a unique opportunity for students to internalize civilizational values deeply and understand how to externalize these values in their lives. This dual process—internalization and externalization—is crucial for the ongoing development and renewal of civilization.

By incorporating this perspective, we strengthen the argument for integrating spirituality into philosophy courses as a means not only to teach civilizational values but also to actively contribute to civilization-building through these processes. This study underscores the critical role of spirituality in education, particularly in philosophy, offering a framework for enhancing teaching practices in Malaysian public universities.

Furthermore, this integration fosters a more holistic and meaningful educational experience for students. It cultivates civilizational values by enhancing students' understanding of ethical foundations, promoting personal and social development, and deepening cultural understanding. This approach aligns closely with Malaysia's National Education Philosophy by addressing gaps in traditional education through nurturing students' spiritual dimensions alongside their intellectual growth. Ultimately, integrating spirituality into philosophy courses offers a holistic educational approach that equips students to become thoughtful, ethical, and engaged members of society. In conclusion, incorporating spirituality into philosophy education not only enriches students' understanding but also supports their holistic development as engaged citizens. By emphasizing the interconnectedness of knowledge, values, and actions through the 3As Model, we can cultivate individuals who are equipped to contribute positively to society while upholding essential civilizational values.

Appreciation

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