

# The Teacher as Ulul Azmi: A Prophetic Leadership Framework for Cultivating Adab and Counteracting Educational Violence in Islamic Schools

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**Abstract.** Teacher-directed aggression by students has become a documented, cross-national occupational hazard, yet prevailing institutional responses rely almost exclusively on Western behavior-management and surveillance-based interventions that address only its behavioral symptoms. This study responds to the resulting gap in Islamic educational leadership scholarship by constructing a Prophetic Leadership Framework that hermeneutically re-contextualizes the Ulul Azmi, the five resolute prophets, as a pedagogical archetype for contemporary teachers. Employing a qualitative-philosophical inquiry, the study applies three sequential procedures: textual exegesis of Qur'anic prophetic narratives, thematic synthesis of classical and modern Islamic educational thought, and philosophical construction of an applied model. The analysis derives five interdependent attributes, resolute persistence, critical intellect, righteous advocacy, transformative compassion, and comprehensive integrity, drawn respectively from Nuh, Ibrahim, Musa, Isa, and Muhammad, and maps each attribute onto a specific station of a six-stage self-regulatory cycle adapted from classical Ghazalian spiritual psychology. The study further situates this framework within the decolonial theory of education and the emerging literature on teacher moral injury, arguing that internalized, prophetically modeled authority addresses not only student aggression but the ethical harm that carceral discipline inflicts on teachers themselves. Findings indicate that teacher authority reconstituted through exemplary representation and rightful conduct offers a structurally different mechanism for reducing student aggression than external surveillance, one grounded in internalized moral accountability rather than deterrence. The study concludes that decolonizing teacher leadership in Islamic schools requires reuniting spiritual exemplarity with concrete institutional safeguards, including legal clarification of disciplinary authority and restorative ethics mechanisms, so that spiritual authority remains accountable rather than unchecked. The framework is offered as a testable, indigenous alternative to behaviorist discipline models, with explicit limitations concerning its Naqshbandi-influenced theological grounding and untested empirical status.

**Keywords:** *Adab; Decolonial Education; Moral Injury; Prophetic Leadership; Teacher Victimization; Ulul Azmi*

## INTRODUCTION

Teacher-directed aggression by students has emerged as a well-documented occupational hazard across diverse educational systems, with school climate identified as a robust predictor of the frequency and severity of such incidents [1]. Populations with sustained, close student contact, including paraprofessionals, report disproportionately high rates of physical and verbal victimization [2], while cross-national survey data link pupil aggression directly to elevated teacher burnout [3] and measurable musculoskeletal strain consistent with chronic occupational stress [4]. Despite a growing body of intervention research, a recent scoping review concluded that protective strategies for victimized educators remain fragmented and rarely address the underlying relational and moral dimensions of the problem [5].

In response, many school systems have adopted carceral surveillance infrastructure, including closed-circuit cameras and on-campus law enforcement, transplanted directly from the criminal justice system [6]. Evidence on such measures is nonetheless equivocal: systematic reviews report only a marginal association between surveillance technology and reduced fear of victimization [7], and meta-analyses of school-based behavioral interventions find null or negligible effects on severe externalizing behavior [8]. These technocratic responses treat student aggression as a deficit of external deterrence, leaving unaddressed what Islamic educational philosophy identifies as a moral and metaphysical root of classroom conduct: the erosion of *adab*, the disciplined, hierarchically attentive comportment historically cultivated through the pedagogical relationship itself [9].

This erosion has been theorized because of a semantic and epistemic substitution, the reduction of education from *ta'dib*, the progressive spiritual instillation of *adab*, to *tarbiyah*, a materialist model of behavioral rearing borrowed from secular developmental science [9], [10]. Work situated in the Indonesian context further documents how this substitution interacts with the normalization of student aggression on social media, producing an authority vacuum in which asymmetric child-protection policy leaves educators legally and professionally exposed [11].

This diagnosis gains sharper theoretical purchase when situated within the broader decolonial critique of educational epistemology. Quijano's concept of the colonality of power identifies how colonial-era racial and epistemic hierarchies persisted structurally long after formal decolonization, embedding a Eurocentric standard of rational, secular knowledge as the tacit measure of legitimate pedagogy [12], an argument Grosfoguel extends by showing that epistemic decolonization requires not merely including non-Western content but displacing the Eurocentric categories through which legitimacy itself is judged [13]. Applied specifically to curriculum and teacher authority, Fúnez-Flores argues that the colonality of curriculum operates by structuring the very grammar through which pedagogical legitimacy is recognized, not merely by excluding non-Western content [14], which clarifies why transplanting Western behavior-management technologies into Islamic schools cannot function as a neutral technical borrowing: the transplantation carries with it an implicit ontology in which the moral-spiritual register that Islamic pedagogy treats as causally central is, in Mignolo's terms, epistemically un-delinkable from the modern/colonial framework that produced it [15]. The decolonial claim advanced in this study is accordingly precise rather than general: it is not that Western behavioral science is wrong, but that its underlying epistemology structurally forecloses the causal category, moral-spiritual accountability, on which the present framework depends.

Despite this diagnosis, the literature on school leadership has not produced an indigenous, spiritually grounded model of teacher authority capable of directly countering this vacuum; existing Islamic educational scholarship offers theological description of prophetic virtue without translating it into an operational pedagogical practice. This gap is significant for two reasons. First, it leaves practitioners in Islamic secondary schools without a leadership framework consistent with their institutions' own epistemological commitments, forcing continued reliance on imported behaviorist models shown to underperform in exactly this context. Second, it represents an unresolved theoretical question in the philosophy of education, namely whether a theological archetype can be rigorously operationalized as a pedagogical mechanism rather than remaining a normative ideal. Addressing both requires specifying how prophetic exemplarity intercepts the concrete cognitive and behavioral sequence that produces classroom aggression, rather than restating its normative value.

Accordingly, the objectives of this study are threefold: (1) to hermeneutically reconstruct the theological attributes of the *Ulul Azmi* as a five-part pedagogical matrix; (2) to map this matrix explicitly onto a classical Islamic self-regulatory cycle so that each attribute corresponds to a specific, actionable teaching practice; and (3) to derive the institutional and policy conditions under which this framework can function as an accountable alternative to carceral school discipline.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND RELATED LITERATURE

### Global Patterns of Student-Perpetrated Teacher Victimization

Beyond the intervention-focused literature reviewed above, a growing empirical base has begun to specify how student-perpetrated aggression reshapes teachers' instructional practice rather than merely their subjective wellbeing. Using propensity score matching on a large United States sample, Choi et al. found that teachers who reported student-to-teacher victimization subsequently adopted measurably more avoidant and defensive instructional strategies than matched non-victimized peers, evidence that victimization produces a durable behavioral adaptation in the teacher rather than a transient emotional response [16]. A parallel mixed-methods study of Lebanese private-school educators similarly found that student-initiated bullying was frequently minimized or silenced by school administrations, with teachers reporting that institutional cultures treated the phenomenon as a professional failing to be concealed rather than a safeguarding concern to be addressed [17], a finding the authors situate within Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory to show how macro-level cultural norms about authority and shame constrain meso-level institutional response [18]. This administrative silencing is not incidental to the present study's Indonesian context: ethnographic work on Lebanon's own postcolonial schooling system found that punitive discipline persisted as an inherited colonial-era institutional habit even after being formally banned, precisely because no alternative model of authority had been substituted for it [19], a dynamic this study argues is generalizable to post-colonial Muslim-majority education systems attempting to abandon carceral discipline without a positive replacement framework. A scoping review of teacher wellbeing further indicates that interventions targeting individual coping skills, without addressing the institutional and relational conditions producing distress, show

consistently weaker and less durable effects than interventions that restructure the teacher's relational environment [20], a finding directly relevant to this study's claim that a purely individual-virtue account of prophetic exemplarity is insufficient without institutional safeguards.

### **The Ambivalent Evidence Base for Restorative and Relational Discipline**

The present framework's emphasis on non-punitive, relationally grounded response invites comparison with the restorative justice movement, and that comparison is instructive precisely because the movement's evidence base is more ambivalent than early adoption would suggest. An integrative review found consistent reductions in exclusionary discipline associated with restorative practices but only inconsistent evidence of improvement in the underlying student behavior the practices were intended to address [21], suggesting that restorative interventions may redistribute how misbehavior is processed institutionally without necessarily altering its incidence. A systematic review of teachers' lived experience of restorative practice identified implementation fidelity, specifically inadequate training and insufficient leadership backing, as the primary determinant of whether relational discipline succeeded or was instead experienced by teachers as an unfunded mandate that left them more exposed [22], a concern echoed in policy analysis showing that restorative practices adopted without structural investment in staff capacity produced negligible or adverse effects on school safety indicators [23]. This evidence base yields a specific methodological lesson for the present study: a framework grounded in internalized moral authority is vulnerable to the same implementation-fidelity failure mode as restorative justice unless it is paired with concrete institutional infrastructure rather than left to individual teachers' moral resolve alone, a point this study returns to in its discussion of policy implications.

### **Adab, Character Formation, and the Limits of Existing Islamic Pedagogical Scholarship**

Existing scholarship on adab-based character education in Islamic schools has established that teacher exemplification, habitual practice, and a supportive institutional climate are the three most consistently identified mechanisms of successful adab formation. Integrating adab explicitly into project-based learning has been shown to strengthen value internalization relative to adab taught as separate moral content [24], while a qualitative study of Aqidah Akhlaq instruction similarly finds that teacher modeling outperforms direct instruction as a mechanism of character transmission [25]. Work on habituation through the seven Sunnah practices offers a comparable behavioral mechanism grounded in repeated practice rather than doctrinal explanation [26]. This literature converges with, but has not previously been connected to, secular character-education scholarship's own turn toward integrated models: Lickona's foundational account holds that character education addressing only moral knowledge, without cultivating moral feeling and moral action in an integrated sequence, fails to produce durable behavioral change [27], an argument recently revisited and reaffirmed in light of contemporary classroom pressures [28]. This three-part structure, moral knowing, feeling, and action, maps with notable precision onto the cognitive-to-behavioral sequence, *hatarat* (passing thought), *iradah* (volition/will), *niyyah* (intention), *amal* (behavioral implementation), that this study's Applied Model specifies in Table 2. The contribution of the present study relative to this literature is not the claim that teacher exemplification matters, which is already well established, but the specification of which exemplified virtue intercepts which stage of that sequence and why, a level of mechanistic detail largely absent from the existing adab literature's treatment of exemplification as an undifferentiated whole.

### **Moral Injury as a Theoretical Bridge Between Teacher Suffering and Institutional Reform**

A further theoretical resource this study integrates, and which the existing literature on teacher victimization in Islamic schools has not previously engaged, is the concept of moral injury. Originally developed in military psychology to describe the lasting psychological harm following from perpetrating, failing to prevent, or witnessing acts that transgress one's own deeply held moral values, moral injury has recently been extended to teaching, where a qualitative study of Australian educators identifies betrayal by institutional authority, ethical conflict between professional values and administrative demands, and systemic disempowerment as its central constructs [29]. Related work documents how teachers navigate what are termed moral traps, situations structured such that every available institutional response violates some value the teacher holds, generating cumulative ethical harm distinct from ordinary occupational burnout [30]. Both studies situate moral injury within Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems framework [18], showing that its causes operate simultaneously at the microsystem of the individual classroom interaction and the macrosystem of societal and policy norms about teacher authority. This framing sharpens the stakes of the present study's argument: carceral surveillance and behaviorist discipline do not merely fail to reduce student aggression, they actively risk deepening the moral injury of the teachers subjected to them, since such systems require teachers to enact disciplinary responses that may conflict with the very adab-centered professional identity the Islamic educational tradition asks them to embody. The Prophetic Leadership Framework developed in this study can accordingly be read as a moral-injury-preventive intervention as much as a violence-reduction one, a dual function the Discussion returns to explicitly.

## Sufi Psychological Models of Self-Regulation: Theoretical Precedents and Contemporary Resonance

The six-station murabata cycle this study adopts as its operational apparatus is not a novel construction but a systematized reading of a psychological tradition with an extended and internally contested scholarly history. Orhan's account of muraqabah in the post-Sirhindi Naqshbandiyya traces how the practice evolved from an undifferentiated meditative discipline into a structured sequence of discrete cognitive stations, each associated with a specific object of attention and a specific corrective technique [31], a structuring move this study extends by mapping the resulting stations onto pedagogical rather than purely devotional practice. Beken's analysis of muhasabah and muraqabah in al-Harith al-Muhasibi situates the same conceptual architecture roughly a millennium earlier, arguing that al-Muhasibi's innovation was to treat self-examination not as a single retrospective act but as a continuous psychological discipline operating before, during, and after any morally significant action [32], a three-phase temporal structure that anticipates, in classical vocabulary, the anticipatory, in-the-moment, and retrospective mechanisms that contemporary self-regulation theory treats as analytically distinct. Dincer's reading of al-Ghazali's own treatment of vigilance and self-examination further specifies that the discipline was intended as a general-purpose regulatory technology rather than a response to any single category of transgression, which is part of the theoretical warrant for extending it, in the present study, from personal piety to classroom conduct without requiring a separate theological justification for each new domain of application [33].

Contemporary engagement with this tradition has begun to test its applicability to problems the classical sources did not anticipate. Demirdaş's study of muraqabah's effect on attention-hyperactivity problems is instructive precisely because it applies a classical spiritual-regulatory technique to a modern clinical category, attention dysregulation, using outcome measures external to the tradition itself, and reports measurable improvement in sustained attention among practitioners [34]. This precedent matters for the present study in two respects. First, it demonstrates that the murabata apparatus is not merely a metaphor for self-regulation but has already been treated, in at least one line of contemporary scholarship, as a candidate mechanism for producing measurable behavioral change, lending independent plausibility to this study's own claim that the cycle can function as an applied pedagogical intervention rather than remaining purely devotional. Second, it illustrates a methodological pathway this study's own Limitations section identifies as necessary future work: an outcome-measured, quasi-experimental test of whether murabata-trained teachers exhibit measurably different classroom regulatory behavior than untrained peers, following the same logic Demirdaş applies to attention regulation. The theoretical claim advanced here is accordingly not that Sufi psychology offers an unprecedented account of self-regulation, but that its stations were designed with a level of procedural granularity, distinguishing the moment of pre-commitment from the moment of impulse-recognition from the moment of retrospective correction, that most contemporary classroom-management frameworks collapse into a single undifferentiated construct of self-control, and that this granularity is precisely what allows the Table 2 correspondence to specify mechanism rather than merely assert virtue.

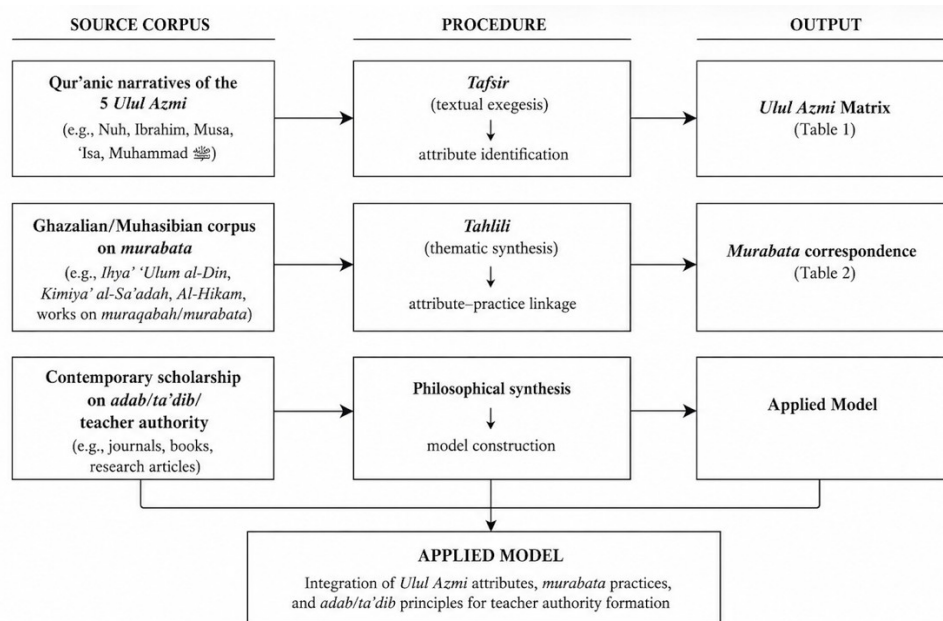
Taken together, these four bodies of literature, global teacher-victimization epidemiology, restorative-justice evaluation research, Islamic character-education scholarship, and moral-injury theory, converge on a single methodological implication for this study: an effective response to teacher-directed aggression in Islamic schools must specify mechanism at the level of individual behavioral stations, must be paired with institutional rather than purely individual accountability, and must be evaluated against teacher ethical wellbeing as well as student behavior. None of the four literatures reviewed above independently supplies all three requirements; the restorative-justice literature supplies institutional caution but not a theologically grounded mechanism, the adab literature supplies theological grounding but not station-level mechanistic specificity, and the moral-injury literature supplies an evaluative criterion but was not developed with Islamic educational contexts in view. The theoretical contribution of the present study is to integrate these three requirements within a single framework, developed in the subsequent Results and Discussion sections, rather than to introduce any one of them for the first time.

## METHODS

### Study area and corpus

This study did not involve a physical field site; its scope is instead a textual and theological corpus circumscribed by three source categories: Qur'anic narratives concerning the five Ulul Azmi (Nuh, Ibrahim, Musa, Isa, and Muhammad); the classical Ghazalian and Muhasibian corpus on spiritual self-regulation, particularly the doctrine of murabata [35]; and contemporary Islamic educational scholarship addressing adab, ta'dib, and teacher authority [9], [10], [31]. The applied dimension of the framework was developed with explicit reference to the empirical context of Indonesian Islamic secondary schools, where documented patterns of student aggression toward teachers and asymmetric child-protection policy motivate its practical relevance [11]. Figure 1 summarizes the corpus and its relation to the three analytic procedures below.

Figure 1. Relationship between the source corpus and the three-stage hermeneutic procedure.



Note: This diagram illustrates the tripartite hermeneutic procedure applied to the source corpus. The arrows indicate the directional flow of synthesis from primary theological texts through thematic extraction, culminating in the operationalized Applied Model. Source: Author's construct.

## Procedures

### Textual exegesis (*tafsir*)

The first procedure consisted of textual exegesis of the Qur'anic narratives associated with each of the five *Ulul Azmi*, undertaken to identify the distinguishing attribute each narrative foregrounds: resolute persistence in Nuh, critical intellect in Ibrahim, righteous advocacy in Musa, transformative compassion in Isa, and comprehensive moral integrity in Muhammad. Attention was given to narrative junctures describing each prophet's response to sustained social rejection or institutional hostility, since these junctures parallel, structurally, the conditions of contemporary teacher victimization.

### Thematic synthesis (*tahlili*)

The second procedure applied thematic synthesis to classical and modern Islamic educational scholarship, cross-referencing the five attributes identified in the first procedure against al-Ghazali's psychology of the self [35], al-Muhasibi's cognitive-behavioral schema as reconstructed in recent scholarship [32], and al-Attas's account of *adab* and *ta'dib* [9], [10]. This procedure sought points of theoretical convergence at which a given attribute could be linked to a discrete, describable teaching practice rather than remaining a general virtue.

### Philosophical synthesis and model construction

The third procedure integrated the outputs of the first two into a single applied model. Each of the five attributes was mapped onto the corresponding station or stations of the six-stage *murabata* self-regulatory cycle, *musharata*, *muraqabah*, *muhasabah*, *mu'aqaba*, *mujahada*, and *mu'ataba* [35], [33], [34], yielding an explicit correspondence between prophetic virtue, cognitive stage, and classroom practice.

This tripartite hermeneutic method was selected over comparable qualitative approaches for reasons specific to the research question. A critical discourse analysis of existing school policy documents, for instance, could identify how carceral logic is currently encoded in Indonesian school regulation, but could not generate a constructive alternative framework, since discourse analysis is oriented toward deconstruction rather than construction. A Foucauldian genealogy of school discipline could historicize the emergence of surveillance-based authority, but would not, by design, engage the theological corpus from which an indigenous alternative must be built. A comparative-philosophy method, weighing Islamic and Western educational philosophy against a neutral third framework, risks reproducing exactly the epistemic symmetry this study's decolonial argument contests [13], namely the assumption that Islamic and secular-positivist epistemologies occupy commensurable positions requiring external adjudication. The tripartite hermeneutic method was judged superior for this specific study because it allows the theological corpus to generate its own operational categories, *tafsir* identifying attributes, *tahlili* connecting attributes to psychological mechanism, philosophical synthesis deriving practice, without importing an external evaluative framework whose categories were not derived from the tradition under study.

## Data analysis

Because this is a qualitative-philosophical inquiry rather than an empirical study, data analysis refers to the hermeneutic procedures used to establish interpretive validity rather than to statistical procedures. Trustworthiness was pursued through three criteria. Coherence required that each proposed correspondence between an attribute and a *murabata* station be checked against the broader theological and psychological literature for internal consistency. Triangulation required that each major construct be cross verified against at least two independent classical or contemporary sources before incorporation into the model. Reflexive delimitation required the study to explicitly identify the Naqshbandiyya-Müceddidiyye provenance of its cosmological apparatus [31] as one specific elaboration within a wider and more heterogeneous Islamic intellectual tradition, rather than presenting it as doctrinally universal. The resulting model was revised across four cycles of construction and internal critique before being finalized for presentation.

These trustworthiness criteria draw specifically on Lincoln and Guba's naturalistic-inquiry framework, in which credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability substitute for the internal validity, external validity, reliability, and objectivity criteria appropriate to positivist inquiry but inapplicable to interpretive, text-based research [36]. Coherence and triangulation, as operationalized above, correspond respectively to dependability and confirmability; transferability was pursued by explicitly bounding the framework's claims to the Naqshbandiyya-Müceddidiyye theological register from which its cosmological apparatus is drawn, rather than presenting findings as unconditionally generalizable across the diversity of Islamic educational traditions. The hermeneutic circle itself, in which the meaning of a given prophetic narrative is established only in relation to the broader theological corpus of which it is part, and the corpus in turn reinterpreted in light of each narrative's particulars, follows the philosophical hermeneutics developed by Gadamer, whose account of understanding as a fusion of horizons between text and interpreter provides the epistemological warrant for treating textual exegesis as a legitimate mode of knowledge production [37]. Where the study departs from strict philosophical hermeneutics is in its adoption of qualitative research's procedural transparency norms, following Patton's argument that even interpretive inquiry benefits from auditable procedures, explicit source-selection criteria, and a documented decision trail, so that the resulting model remains falsifiable in principle even though it was not empirically tested in the present study [38].

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Result 1: The Ulul Azmi Matrix

The exegetical and thematic procedures converged on five interdependent attributes, summarized in Table 1. *Sabr*, modeled on Nuh, denotes an active, spiritually anchored persistence rather than passive endurance. *'Aql*, modeled on Ibrahim, denotes a critical intellectual faculty capable of dismantling performative or illusory sources of authority. *'Adl*, modeled on Musa, denotes righteous advocacy for the moral integrity of the pedagogical space against external encroachment. *Rahmah*, modeled on Isa, denotes a non-reactive, restorative compassion. *Tamsil*, modeled on Muhammad, functions not as a sixth parallel virtue but as the synthesizing condition under which the preceding four become legible to students as a coherent pattern of authority.

**Table 1. The Ulul Azmi pedagogical matrix.**

| Prophet  | Attribute                          | Theological Basis                                                  | Pedagogical Function                                                             |
|----------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Nuh      | Sabr (resolute persistence)        | Centuries of salvific mission sustained despite social rejection   | Active spiritual endurance sustaining pedagogical presence under hostility       |
| Ibrahim  | 'Aql (critical intellect)          | Dialectical dismantling of idolatry through reasoned confrontation | Interception of performative, illusory sources of student defiance               |
| Musa     | 'Adl (righteous advocacy)          | Confrontation of tyranny in defense of the oppressed               | Defense of the moral integrity of the pedagogical space                          |
| Isa      | Rahmah (transformative compassion) | Non-reactive, healing presence toward hostility                    | De-escalation and restorative repair of relational rupture                       |
| Muhammad | Tamsil (comprehensive integrity)   | Synthesis of all prophetic perfections into a single character     | Embodied consistency that renders the other four attributes legible as authority |

*Note. The five attributes (sabr, 'aql, 'adl, Rahmah, tamsil) function as an interdependent pedagogical matrix than isolated virtues. Theological bases are derived from narrative exegesis (tafsir) of Qur'anic accounts concerning the five resolute prophets facing sustained social or institutional hostility.*

### Result 2: The Applied Model

Table 2 presents the study's central analytic contribution, the explicit correspondence between each attribute and a specific station of the *murabata* cycle. Read this way, the matrix is not a typology of admirable qualities the teacher is asked to emulate in general; it is a distributed intervention across a specific cognitive

sequence, *hatarat*, *iradah*, *niyyah*, *amal*, such that no station of the *murabata* cycle depends on the teacher's character alone, and no attribute is invoked without a corresponding operational task.

**Table 2. Correspondence between the Ulul Azmi attributes and the *murabata* self-regulatory cycle.**

| Attribute | Murabata Station(s)     | Classroom Practice                                                             | Hypothesized Mechanism                                                            |
|-----------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Sabr      | Musharata → Mujahada    | Pre-committing to non-punitive response; sustained composure under provocation | Denies the performative payoff that student aggression on social media depends on |
| 'Aql      | Tesebbüt at Hatarat     | Guided dialogic questioning before an impulse crystallizes into action         | Intercepts the impulse-to-action sequence before intention forms                  |
| 'Adl      | Mu'aqaba                | Transparent, consistently enforced, documented boundaries                      | Restores procedural and distributive justice linked to reduced burnout            |
| Rahmah    | Muhasabah, co-regulated | Low-arousal response to outbursts; joint reflection over sanction              | External co-regulation while the student's own self-examination develops          |
| Tamsil    | Spans all stations      | Observable consistency across all the above                                    | Converts five discrete practices into one legible authority pattern               |

*Note. The murabata stations operate as a structured cognitive-behavioral sequence (from pre-commitment to retrospective correction). The hypothesized mechanisms denote the precise intervention points where prophetic exemplarity intercepts the student's cognitive progression from passing thought (hatarat) to behavioral implementation (amal), offering a non-carceral structural alternative to behaviorist discipline.*

## Discussion

The correspondence in Table 2 clarifies why an internalized model of authority can, in principle, achieve what surveillance-based interventions have not. Carceral infrastructure operates on a rational-choice logic, deterring transgression by raising the perceived probability of detection [6], yet systematic evidence indicates this logic yields only a marginal reduction in fear of victimization [7] and negligible effects on severe externalizing behavior in meta-analysis [8]. This is not merely an implementation failure; a deterrence-based mechanism cannot, by its own logic, address an impulse the student believes will go undetected, which is precisely the condition that socially rewarded classroom defiance creates online [11]. The *tesebbüt*-based interception at the Ibrahim/'*aql* station operates on a structurally different mechanism: it intervenes before the impulse crystallizes into intention, at the *hatarat* stage, rather than after the behavior has already occurred, so its efficacy does not depend on the probability of external detection at all.

The Isa/*rahmah* station offers a comparable contrast with punitive response. Where behaviorist discipline treats an aggressive outburst as a violation to be sanctioned, the Isaic model treats it as dysregulation to be co-regulated, a mechanism consistent with evidence that teachers who perceive their institutions as exercising procedural justice, listening, and grounding decisions in fact, report substantially lower occupational stress [39], and with cross-national evidence linking non-punitive institutional responses to reduced emotional distress among victimized teachers [40]. This suggests that the causal pathway from *rahmah* to reduced aggression may run less through the individual episode of compassion and more through its cumulative effect on the classroom's perceived procedural fairness, an empirical claim the present study can motivate but not test.

The Musa/'*adl* station situates this framework within, rather than against, existing competence-based approaches to managing classroom aggression. A validated competence model for novice teachers identifies consistent, transparent boundary-setting as a predictor of successful de-escalation [41]; the present framework specifies a similar behavior but grounds its legitimacy in a different source, moral advocacy for the sanctity of the pedagogical space rather than institutional policy alone. This distinction has practical consequences: an account of juridical capital [42] helps explain why teachers currently lose disputes with litigious parents even when their underlying disciplinary judgment is sound, since the asymmetry is one of capital, not of correctness. A specific statutory clarification distinguishing educational discipline from criminal abuse [43], paired with school-based restorative structures modeled on existing safe-school administrative mechanisms [44], would supply the institutional capital that '*adl* alone cannot generate through moral authority.

The institutional silencing documented among Lebanese educators, where administrations treated student-initiated aggression as a reputational liability to be concealed rather than a safeguarding matter to be addressed [17], illustrates concretely why '*adl* cannot remain a purely individual virtue. A teacher who advocates transparently for boundary enforcement within an institution that structurally punishes such advocacy, through reputational risk to the school or through litigious parental pressure enabled by the very asymmetry of juridical capital noted above [42], is placed in precisely the moral trap that moral-injury scholarship identifies: every available response violates some value the teacher holds [29], [30]. Locating '*adl* within an accountable institutional structure, rather than treating it as a personal disposition, is therefore not

an optional refinement of the framework but a condition for the framework not to function as an additional source of moral injury.

Because the Nuh/*sabr* and Muhammad/*tamsil* stations concern the teacher's own sustained conduct rather than a single classroom interaction, their effects are the most difficult of the five to isolate empirically, and the most dependent on family-school alignment for their durability; evidence on family engagement in managing aggressive behavior indicates that home-school consistency substantially affects whether a given intervention persists beyond the classroom [45]. This underscores a broader point of convergence with criminological literature on informal social control, which similarly finds that external environmental variables alone underspecify the mechanisms of behavioral regulation [46]; the present framework's contribution is to specify an internal mechanism, moral-spiritual accountability, that this literature has largely bracketed out rather than tested.

The Muhammad/*tamsil* station warrants separate theoretical comment because it is the one element of the matrix that resists operationalization as a discrete practice in the way the other four attributes do. This is not an oversight but a structural feature the framework should make explicit rather than obscure. Where *sabr*, *'aql*, *'adl*, and *rahmah* each specify a bounded intervention at a bounded station, *tamsil* names the condition under which the other four become perceptible to students as a single, coherent pattern of authority rather than four disconnected behaviors. This is consistent with the contemporary Sufi-psychological precedent discussed in Sufi Psychological Models of Self-Regulation: Theoretical Precedents and Contemporary Resonance section, in which the granularity of individual stations is what allows their cumulative coherence, rather than any single station, to produce the disciplined self that the tradition aims at [31]. Practically, this implies that teacher-preparation programs adopting this framework should resist the temptation to train the four operational attributes as an unordered checklist; their pedagogical effect depends on consistency across all four being sustained long enough for students to register it as character rather than technique, which is precisely the claim Lickona and Davidson make in arguing that character education fails when moral knowing, feeling, and action are taught as separable competencies rather than an integrated whole [28].

This concern is reinforced by evidence that victimization reshapes teaching practice durably rather than transiently. Propensity-score-matched analysis of a large United States teacher sample found that student-to-teacher victimization was associated with a measurable, lasting shift toward avoidant and defensive instructional strategies [16], meaning that whatever framework is proposed to address classroom aggression must also account for the accumulated behavioral adaptation of teachers who have already been victimized, not only for the prevention of future incidents. The *murabata* cycle's emphasis on sustained self-regulatory practice across *musharata* through *mu'ataba*, rather than a single corrective technique, is consistent with the scale of behavioral re-formation this evidence suggests is required, though the present study cannot establish whether the cycle is sufficient to reverse an already-entrenched avoidant adaptation, a question the Limitations section returns to.

### Theoretical, Practical, and Policy Implications

Theoretically, this study extends the moral injury literature, previously applied to teaching almost exclusively within secular Western educational systems [29], [30], into an Islamic educational context, and in doing so proposes moral injury not merely as a diagnostic category describing teacher suffering but as a criterion against which proposed reforms should themselves be evaluated: a reform succeeds only if it reduces, rather than relocates, the moral traps teachers face. This reframes the theoretical relationship between decolonial educational theory and teacher wellbeing scholarship, two literatures that have to date developed largely independently of one another.

Practically, the framework implies specific, actionable changes to teacher preparation in Islamic secondary schools. Pre-service and in-service training would need to move beyond generic classroom-management content to explicit instruction in the *murabata* cycle's six stations, ideally delivered through the mentorship, or *suhbah*, relationship the framework itself valorizes rather than through conventional lecture-based professional development, given evidence that character-education content transmitted through modeling outperforms content transmitted through direct instruction [25].

At the policy level, the framework's dependence on institutional accountability structures, a *Lex Specialis* distinguishing educational discipline from criminal abuse, and school-based restorative or ethics-review mechanisms, positions this study's recommendations within an emerging but still underdeveloped policy conversation in Indonesia about codifying teacher disciplinary authority. Given that comparable restorative-justice policy initiatives elsewhere have foundered specifically on inconsistent implementation and inadequate structural investment [23], any policy adoption of this framework should be accompanied, from the outset, by dedicated implementation funding and monitoring, rather than treated as a cost-neutral curricular adjustment.

A further implication concerns evaluation design. Because the framework specifies distinct mechanisms at distinct stations rather than a single undifferentiated intervention, its evaluation should not rely on a single aggregate outcome measure, such as overall incident counts, which would obscure which station is functioning and which is not. A more diagnostically useful evaluation design would pair station-specific process measures, for instance, observed frequency of *tesebbüt*-style dialogic questioning at the *hatarat* stage as a proxy for the Ibrahim/'*aql* mechanism, with the same behavioral and wellbeing outcomes used in the propensity-score-matching literature on teacher victimization [16], allowing researchers to identify whether a null overall result reflects the framework's failure or the failure of a single station within it. This granular evaluation logic follows directly from the procedural specificity Sufi Psychological Models of Self-Regulation: Theoretical Precedents and Contemporary Resonance section argues is the *murabata* cycle's principal theoretical advantage over undifferentiated self-control constructs, and its absence from existing school-based intervention evaluations, which typically report aggregate disciplinary outcomes without station-level process data, is itself a methodological gap this study's framework is positioned to help close [8].

### Limitations and Future Research

Three limitations bound the claims advanced in this study. First, and most fundamentally, the framework has not been empirically tested in a classroom setting; every causal mechanism proposed in Table 2, including the claim that *rahmah* functions as external co-regulation for a dysregulated student, is a plausible hypothesis grounded in textual and theoretical warrant rather than an observed effect, and future research should prioritize classroom-based or quasi-experimental designs capable of testing whether teachers trained in the *murabata* cycle produce measurably different student outcomes than matched comparison teachers, following the propensity-score-matching precedent set in a different context [16].

Second, the theological apparatus developed in this study's account of the Ulul Azmi Matrix draws specifically on Naqshbandiyya-Müceddidiyye spiritual psychology; while the resulting pedagogical claims are framed generically as Islamic, readers situated in the Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah orientations that predominate among the Indonesian schools this study addresses should treat the *tariqa*-specific cosmology as one legitimate elaboration among several rather than the sole warrant for the framework's broader claims about *adab* and *suhbah*. Future comparative work extending the same hermeneutic method to other Islamic intellectual traditions would clarify whether the five-attribute matrix and the six-station cycle are artifacts of this theological register or generalizable across the wider tradition.

Third, a framework that grounds teacher authority in prophetic exemplarity carries a foreseeable risk of being misread, or misapplied by practitioners under institutional pressure, as license for an unaccountable, spiritually legitimated authoritarianism the study does not endorse; this risk is precisely what the Lex Specialis and school ethics committee proposals discussed above are designed to guard against, but their durability under real administrative pressure, rather than as a design feature on paper, remains an open empirical question. Relatedly, because moral injury research indicates that individual-level virtue frameworks unsupported by institutional change tend to underperform relative to structurally embedded reforms [29], longitudinal research tracking whether the present framework's institutional safeguards are actually implemented, rather than merely adopted rhetorically, would meaningfully extend this study's practical relevance beyond its current theoretical contribution.

A fourth, cross-cutting limitation concerns generalizability beyond the Indonesian Islamic secondary school context this study addresses. The evidentiary base assembled in Theoretical Framework and Related Literature section draws on teacher-victimization research from Denmark, Portugal, South Korea, the United States, and Lebanon alongside Indonesian-specific sources, and while the convergence of findings across these settings lends the framework's underlying diagnosis some cross-national plausibility, the institutional variables that this study identifies as decisive, the presence or absence of a Lex Specialis, the strength of parental litigiousness, the degree of administrative willingness to acknowledge rather than conceal student aggression, vary considerably across national education systems and were not systematically compared here. Future comparative research explicitly testing the framework's institutional-safeguard components against the differing legal and administrative structures of, for example, Malaysian, Turkish, or Gulf-state Islamic school systems would clarify which elements of the framework are context-specific to Indonesia and which travel across the wider Muslim-majority educational landscape.

### CONCLUSION

This study set out to reconstruct the theological attributes of the *Ulul Azmi* as a pedagogical matrix, to map that matrix explicitly onto a classical self-regulatory cycle, and to specify the institutional conditions under which the resulting framework could function accountably. The five-attribute matrix derived through textual exegesis and thematic synthesis, resolute persistence, critical intellect, righteous advocacy, transformative compassion, and comprehensive integrity, addresses the first objective, while its explicit correspondence with

the six-station *murabata* cycle in Table 2 addresses the second, since each attribute intercepts a specific, identifiable stage in the cognitive sequence from impulse to action rather than remaining a general moral ideal. In answering the third objective, the study finds that this internalized model of authority is not self-sufficient; its durability depends on institutional safeguards, including legal clarification of disciplinary authority and restorative, procedurally fair mediation structures, that prevent spiritual legitimacy from functioning as unaccountable authority.

Taken together, these findings support the study's central claim that decolonizing teacher leadership in Islamic secondary schools requires more than substituting one set of normative ideals for another; it requires an operational model capable of intercepting classroom aggression earlier, and through different causal pathways, than carceral surveillance allows, while remaining answerable to the same institutional scrutiny that any exercise of authority over children should meet.

Framed against the moral injury literature engaged in Moral Injury as a Theoretical Bridge Between Teacher Suffering and Institutional Reform section, the framework's ultimate test is not only whether it reduces student aggression but whether it reduces the ethical harm teachers currently absorb when disciplinary systems force them to act against their own professional and spiritual convictions; future empirical work should treat these two outcomes as jointly, rather than separately, measured. The framework developed here is offered as a testable hypothesis rather than a settled solution, and its dependence on a specific strand of Islamic spiritual psychology, together with its currently untested empirical status, should be treated as a research agenda for subsequent classroom-based studies rather than a limitation to be argued away.

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