

Integrating Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr In Individual Integrity Education: A Model For Corruption Eradication Through Heart Purification.

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Abstract

Agenda pembanteras rasuah telah menjadi keutamaan negara dalam usaha menuju status negara maju dan berpendapatan tinggi. Justeru, beberapa inisiatif utama di peringkat nasional telah diperkenalkan bermula dengan Pelan Integriti Nasional (PIN), Program Transformasi Kerajaan (GTP) dan Pelan Antirasuah Nasional (NACP) 2019–2023. Namun demikian, prestasi dan integriti penjawat awam di Malaysia masih berada pada tahap yang membimbangkan. Oleh itu, bagi menangani masalah ini, kajian yang lebih mendalam perlu dilaksanakan. Kajian ini bertujuan membangunkan sebuah model pembanteras rasuah melalui penyucian hati berasaskan kerangka konseptual integrasi Tafsīr Sufi Ishārī dan pendidikan integriti individu. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif melalui kaedah analisis teks secara induktif. Kitab-kitab yang dirujuk ialah *Al-Ta'wīlāt al-Najmīyah fī al-Tafsīr al-Ishārī al-Ṣūfī* karya Aḥmad bin 'Umar Najm al-Dīn Dāyah, *Tafsīr Ruḥ al-Bayān* karya Isma'īl Haqqī al-Burusawī, *Gharā'ib al-Qur'ān wa Raghā'ib al-Qur'ān* karya al-Ḥasan bin Muḥammad al-Naysbūrī dan *Al-Baḥr al-Madīd fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Majīd* karya Aḥmad Ibn 'Ajibah. Aspek penyucian hati merupakan teras utama dalam pembentukan akhlak mulia. Oleh itu, elemen penyucian hati perlu diintegrasikan ke dalam pendidikan integriti individu sebagai salah satu pendekatan untuk membanteras rasuah. Hati yang sakit merupakan akibat daripada penguasaan hawa nafsu dan pengaruh hawa nafsu tersebut boleh mengundang pelbagai ujian serta kerosakan kepada hati. Justeru, hati yang diibaratkan sebagai 'Kaabah Rohani' perlu dipelihara daripada pengaruh hawa nafsu. Pendekatan Tafsīr Isyārī Sufi dalam pendidikan integriti individu menekankan usaha melawan dorongan hawa nafsu melalui disiplin kerohanian, melakukan muhasabah diri terhadap kebenaran dan kebatilan serta memperoleh santapan rohani melalui ilmu dan amal soleh yang kesemuanya perlu diberi perhatian yang serius....

Keywords: Tafsīr Ṣūfī Ishārī, pendidikan integriti individu, pembanteras rasuah, penyucian hati.

INTRODUCTION

The agenda of corruption eradication has become the country's priority in moving towards the status of a developed and high-income country. To that end, several key initiatives at the national level have been developed starting with the National Integrity Plan (Pelan Integriti Nasional, PIN), the Government Transformation

Programme (GTP), the National Anti-Corruption Plan (NACP) 2019–2023, and the National Anti-Corruption Strategy (NACS) 2024–2028.¹

However, a study by Nik Hairi Omar, Azmi Awang dan Azmi Abdul Manaf states that the performance and integrity of civil servants in Malaysia is still at a problematic level.² The Ministry of Economic Affairs (2019) when introducing the Shared Prosperity Vision 2030, stated that corruption and abuse of power have affected economic growth and distribution.³

In 2023, findings from a comprehensive nationwide survey revealed that 41% of respondents strongly agreed that corruption in Malaysia remains highly concerning, while 1 in 4 Malaysians agreed that corruption had worsened over the past year. Overall, and more surprisingly, more than two-thirds (67%) of Malaysians believe that corruption has increased compared to the previous year.⁴ International studies such as the Global Corruption Barometer and Corruption Perceptions Index still show that a large number of citizens do not believe that the problem of corruption has improved in the country. The results of the survey indicate that the transformation process needs to be improved, and more needs to be done to raise public awareness of this issue at all levels, especially at the formative level.⁵

The perception of corruption during the National Anti-Corruption Plan (NACP) period from 2019 to 2023 still shows a worrying trend. According to the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), Malaysia's score dropped from 53 out of 100 in 2019 to 50 out of 100 in 2023. Simultaneously, Malaysia's global ranking declined from 51 out of 180 countries to 57 in the same period, falling short of the government's target to reach the 30th position by 2025 and 25th by 2030.⁶ At the macroeconomic level, the negative impact of corruption in Malaysia is significant. Malaysia lost a total of RM277 billion in economic output between 2019 and 2023.⁷

The literature reviewed indicates that although Malaysia has implemented various anti-corruption initiatives through the National Integrity Plan (PIN), Government Transformation Programme (GTP), and National Anti-Corruption Plan (NACP), corruption remains a persistent challenge. Public perception surveys, the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), and reports on economic losses consistently demonstrate that existing institutional and governance reforms have not fully achieved their intended outcomes. While these initiatives have strengthened legal frameworks, administrative procedures, and governance mechanisms, the continuing prevalence of corruption suggests that structural reforms alone may be insufficient to address the underlying moral and behavioral dimensions of the problem.

To support the government's mission to combat corruption through a comprehensive education system, it is crucial to emphasize the role of individual integrity education based on *Ṣūfī Ishārī Taḥṣīn*, focusing on heart purification. The justification for selecting *Ṣūfī Ishārī Taḥṣīn* based on the above-mentioned texts as the foundation of this education is that it contains aspects of al-Quran, which serves as a divine reference for purifying the heart and fostering human well-being. Additionally, it incorporates aspects of Sufism, which emphasize spiritual education and heart purification that contribute to the development of individual integrity, in contrast to other interpretive methods. Both aspects have consistently produced noble character and excellent qualities in the formation of individual integrity throughout history, aligning with the purpose for which Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) was sent.⁸

¹ Jabatan Perdana Menteri, *Pelan Antirasuah Nasional 2019-2023* (Putrajaya: Pusat Governans, Integriti dan Antirasuah Nasional, 2019), 2.

² Nik Hairi Omar et al., "Integriti dari Perspektif Pengaduan Awam: Kajian Kes di Jabatan Pengangkutan Jalan (JPJ) Malaysia" *Jurnal E-Bangi* 7 (1) (2012), 141-155.

³ Kementerian Hal Ehwal Ekonomi, *Ringkasan Wawasan Kemakmuran Bersama 2030* (Putrajaya: Kementerian Hal Ehwal Ekonomi, 2019), 14.

⁴ Jabatan Perdana Menteri, *Strategi Pembanterasan Rasuah Nasional 2024-2028* (Putrajaya: Jabatan Perdana Menteri, 2024), 4

⁵ Jabatan Perdana Menteri, *Pelan Antirasuah Nasional 2019-2023*, 2.

⁶ Jabatan Perdana Menteri, *Strategi Pembanterasan Rasuah Nasional 2024-2028*, 5

⁷ Jabatan Perdana Menteri, *Strategi Pembanterasan Rasuah Nasional 2024-2028*, 18

⁸ Mahyuddin Hashim, *al-Fikr al-Ṣūfī bayn al-Shāṭibī wa Ibn Khaldūn* (Bandar Baru Nilai: Penerbit USIM, 2012), 70.

Undeniably, there are existing theories or models to regulate honesty.⁹ Among them are also the Theory of Planned Behaviour¹⁰ and Theory of Reason Action.¹¹ Nevertheless, they do not focus on spiritual formation –the essence of Sufism. This is not to imply that our study denies the academic, physical, emotional, and social parts of individual integrity education. Rather, we argue that the spiritual emphasis of al-Quran should be imparted in addition to other aspects.

This is in line with the suggestion made by Ballentine, Larres and Mulgrew that the element of religiosity (religious appreciation) should be included as a dependent variable.¹² They observed that religiosity (religious appreciation) plays a role as a determining factor in the study of dishonesty, despite the exclusion of this element in many studies.¹³

Furthermore, the study of Laurin, Kay and Fitzsimon suggests that matters related to the divine element in the human self and mind can lead to wholeness and purity of behaviour based on the divine aspect.¹⁴ In the same vein, Randolph, Seng, and Nielsen discovered that the aspect of divinity (religiosity) can lead to more ethical (honest) individual behaviour.¹⁵

Previous studies have highlighted the importance of integrity education in shaping ethical behaviour and reducing dishonest conduct. However, dominant approaches in integrity research, including the Theory of Planned Behaviour and the Theory of Reasoned Action, primarily emphasise cognitive, behavioural, and social determinants of decision-making. Although valuable, these approaches provide limited attention to the spiritual dimension of human development, particularly the role of inner moral transformation in regulating behaviour. This gap is significant because corruption is not merely an administrative or legal issue but also a manifestation of weaknesses in personal character, self-control, and moral consciousness.

Furthermore, empirical studies have increasingly demonstrated that religiosity and spiritual awareness contribute positively to ethical conduct and integrity. Scholars such as Ballentine, Larres and Mulgrew, as well as Laurin, Kay and Fitzsimons, and Randolph, Seng and Nielsen, argue that religious appreciation and awareness of divine accountability can influence individual behaviour towards greater honesty and ethical responsibility. These findings suggest that integrity formation should not be confined to external regulation and behavioural control but should also incorporate internal spiritual development.

In this regard, *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* offers a potentially valuable framework for integrity education because it emphasises purification of the heart (*tazkiyat al-qalb*), self-discipline, sincerity, accountability before God, and moral refinement. Unlike conventional integrity models that focus predominantly on external behaviour, *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* addresses the internal roots of unethical conduct by cultivating spiritual awareness and moral excellence. The integration of heart purification principles derived from *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* with contemporary integrity education therefore provides a more holistic approach to corruption prevention, combining spiritual, moral, cognitive, and behavioural dimensions. Consequently, this study proposes the development of a corruption eradication model through the purification of the heart, grounded in a conceptual framework that integrates *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* and individual integrity education.

Individual Integrity Education

Integrity comes from the Latin word: ‘integer’ which means comprehensive, perfect and firm unity.¹⁶ According to Megat Ayop Megat Arifin and Abd. Halim Ahmad, integrity is divided into two main categories. First, individual integrity and second, organisational integrity. However, in general, integrity refers to the set of superior qualities that exist among individuals and these qualities are based on the principle of adhering to honesty and

⁹ Ballentine, J.A, Larres, P.M, Mulgrew, M., “Determinants of Academic Cheating behaviour: The Future for Accountancy in Ireland,” *Accounting Forum* 38 (1) (2014), 55-66.

¹⁰ Icek Ajzen, “The theory of planned behavior,” *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* 50 (2) (1991), 179-211.

¹¹ Fishbein, M. & Ajzen, I., *Understanding Attitudes and Predicting Social Behavior* (NJ: Prentice Hall, 1980), 148-172.

¹² Ballentine, J.A, Larres, P.M, Mulgrew, M., “Determinants of Academic Cheating behaviour: The Future for Accountancy in Ireland,” *Accounting Forum* 38 (1) (2014), 55-66.

¹³ Ballentine, J.A, Larres, P.M, Mulgrew, M., “Determinants of Academic Cheating behaviour: The Future for Accountancy in Ireland,” *Accounting Forum* 38 (1) (2014), 55-66.

¹⁴ Laurin, K. et al., “Divergent effects of activating thoughts of God on self-regulation,” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 102 (1) (2012), 4-21.

¹⁵ Randolph-Seng, B., & Nielsen, M. E., “Honesty: One effect of primed religious representations,” *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 17 (4) (2007), 303-315.

¹⁶ Widang I, Fridlund B, “Self-respect, Dignity and Confidence: Conceptions of Integrity Among Male Patients,” *Journal of Advance d Nursing* 42 (1), 47-56.

high moral practices. At the individual level, integrity reflects the alignment between one's actions and moral, ethical, and legal principles, as well as the balance between personal and public interests. While at the organisational level, it has been enshrined in the implementation of the code of ethics, client charter or systems and work processes as well as adherence to best practices. The code of ethics is affirmed, repeated and appreciated by the members of the organisation until it becomes a habit and eventually becomes the culture of the organisation (corporate culture). Ideally, integrity at both the individual and organisational level means a code of behaviour.¹⁷ Previous studies have shown that integrity is positively associated with individual, community, and organisational well-being.¹⁸ Integrity cultivates employees who demonstrate positive behaviour and are free from negative actions such as theft, vandalism, taking extended breaks without permission, and absenteeism. A decline in integrity can lead to the erosion of moral values and harm the professional standards of a workplace. Table 1 highlights the factors contributing to the deterioration of integrity and their corresponding effects.

Table 1: Examples of factors and effects of integrity degradation

Factor of Integrity Degradation	Effects
Individual Weaknesses	Lack of appreciation Poor work ethic Greedy Life pressure
System and Procedure	Lack of transparency Weakness in the system and procedure Poor law enforcement
Structure and Institution	Disorganised and disoriented structure Lack of coordination
Culture	Afraid to come forward to report Nonchalance Servile
Leadership	Poor leadership Directives that contradict procedures and rules

Source: Study by Megat Ayop Megat Arifin and Abd. Halim Ahmad (2016)

Everyone is responsible for shaping their own personal integrity. An individual is moral, according to Aristotle, when he commits the proper action because he understands that the action is consistent and in accordance with himself. Therefore, it is very important to cultivate good moral values through habit and consistent practice.¹⁹ Individuals must also have the courage to establish boundaries and protect themselves from influences or actions that undermine their integrity and the values they uphold.²⁰ Koonce states individuals need to highlight creativity, not be too serious to lose their sense of humour, do the right thing, not be obsessed with a particular person and listen to the opinions of others to generate their personal integrity.²¹

Integrity education must begin with individual education. According to Syed M. Naquib al-Attas, knowledge in the world of education not only serves as a means of achieving socio-economic goals, but specifically also plays a role in achieving human spiritual goals. The purpose of education is to prepare individuals to actively contribute and adapt in their respective societies. Therefore, the aim of education is to draw from and reinforce the beliefs, attitudes, knowledge, and skills that are valuable and beneficial to the community.²²

¹⁷ Megat Ayop Megat Arifin dan Abd. Halim Ahmad, "Kepentingan budaya integriti dan etika kerja dalam organisasi di Malaysia: Suatu tinjauan umum," *Malaysian Journal of Society and Space* 12 (9) (2016), 138 – 149.

¹⁸ Widang I, Fridlund B, "Self-respect, Dignity and Confidence: Conceptions of Integrity Among Male Patients," *Journal of Advance d Nursing* 42 (1), 47-56; Megat Ayop Megat Arifin dan Abd. Halim Ahmad, "Kepentingan budaya integriti dan etika kerja dalam organisasi di Malaysia: Suatu tinjauan umum," *Malaysian Journal of Society and Space* 12 (9) (2016), 138 – 149.

¹⁹ Wakin MW, "Professional Integrity," *Airpower Journal* 10 (2) (1996), 23-29.

²⁰ Widang I, Fridlund B, "Self-respect, Dignity and Confidence: Conceptions of Integrity Among Male Patients," *Journal of Advance d Nursing* 42 (1), 47-56.

²¹ Koonce R, "Practice Your Own Successful Habits," *Training & Development* 52 (3) (1998), 19.

²² Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud, *Falsafah dan Amalan Pendidikan Islam Syed M. Naquib Al-Attas: Satu Huraian Konsep Asli Islamisasi* (Kuala Lumpur: Penerbit Universiti Malaya, 2018), 110.

According to him, the purpose of education in Islam extends beyond merely producing good citizens and workers; it also aims to foster the development of morally upright individuals. What needs to be emphasized is the value of man as a true human being as something spiritual. Individuals who are well educated are good individuals. The meaning of "good" is manners in a comprehensive sense, covering the spiritual and material life of a person, striving to instil in him the qualities of good that he receives. In other words, the person who is truly educated is the one who is civilized. The instilling and cultivation of manners in a person is called *ta'dīb* (education). The arrangement of education and science in the Islamic educational system must reflect the perfect human being (Muhammad SAW). *Insān adabī* (man with manners) are individuals who are fully aware of themselves and their proper relationship with others, God, society and the visible and the unseen.²³

Sufis' Perspectives on the Truth of the Heart

Linguistic definition of *qalb*

The heart in Arabic is *al-qalb* (القلب). *Al-qalb* from the linguistic point of view is derived from the word *qalaba* (قَلَبَ). If it is called 'قلب الشيء', it implies turning anything around, to make what is above become below, or to flip. It also means to change something. The plural of *qalb* is *qulūb* (قلوب). It is an organ that pumps the blood in the body.²⁴

Biological definition

Al-Ghazālī explains one of the meanings of the heart (*qalb*) as “a pine-cone-shaped piece of flesh situated on the left side of the chest. It is a distinctive organ containing an internal cavity, within which is dark blood that serves as the source and repository of the spirit (*rūḥ*).”²⁵

A similar view is expressed by al-Burusawī, who cites several scholarly definitions of the heart, including the description that it is “a piece of flesh shaped like a pine cone, suspended upside down from the *al-watīn*, a major vessel of the heart; when this vessel is severed, a person dies, and it is known as the aorta (*al-abhar*).”²⁶

Spiritual definition according to Sufism

Sufis assert, when it comes to the term *qalb*, it does not refer merely to a piece of flesh. Rather, as conceptualized by Al-Ghazālī, it embodies a subtle, divine, and spiritual essence that connects with the human heart. *Qalb* is the essence of humanity. It is susceptible to knowledge, a place for the revelation of orders, punishment, torment and demands.²⁷

It should be noted that scholars are mistaken in determining the relationship between spiritual heart (*qalb rūḥānī*) and the physical heart. Similarly, scholars can be mistaken to describe the relationship between the human will and the limbs of the human body; just like the relationship between the nature and the matter that characterizes it; or the relationship between the function of the tool and the tool itself. Despite their interrelationship, the spiritual heart (*qalb rūḥānī*) and the physical heart represent two distinct concepts²⁸

Allah SWT has made the hearts the place for *‘ubūdiyyah*. It is the place where feelings and emotions gather in a human being such as love, hate, fear, hope, joy, sadness, desire, awe, panic, calm and many others.²⁹

Therefore, from the Islamic perspective, the *qalb* should be understood not merely as a physical organ but as the spiritual and emotional centre of human existence. It serves as the locus of faith, consciousness, moral discernment, and devotion to Allah SWT, while simultaneously functioning as the repository of human emotions and inner experiences. The condition of the *qalb* ultimately shapes an individual's thoughts, attitudes, decisions and actions. For this reason, the purification and cultivation of the *qalb* occupy a central position in Islamic spiritual education, as a sound heart is regarded as the foundation of righteous character, ethical conduct and holistic human well-being.

²³ Wan Mohd Nor Wan Daud, *Falsafah dan Amalan Pendidikan Islam Syed M. Naquib Al-Attas: Satu Huraian Konsep Asli Islamisasi*, 117

²⁴ Aḥmad al-‘Ābid, *al-Mu’jam al-‘Arabī al-Asāsī* (Tunisia: al-Munazzamat al-‘Arabīyah li al-Tarbīyah wa al-Thaqafah, n.d.), 1003.

²⁵ Al-Ghazālī, Muḥammad bin Muḥammad, *Iḥya’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn* (Beirut: Dār al-Ma’rifah, n.d.), 2:6.

²⁶ Al-Burusawī, Isma‘īl Ḥaqqī, *Tafsīr Ruḥ al-Bayān* (Beirut: Dar Iḥya’ al-Turāth, 2001), 1/76

²⁷ Al-Ghazālī, *Iḥya’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*, 2:6.

²⁸ Al-Ghazālī, *Iḥya’ ‘Ulūm al-Dīn*, 2:6.

²⁹ Al-Hilālī, Majdī, *Al-Imān Awwalan; Fakayfa Nabda’ bihi* (Cairo: Dār al-Tawzī’ wa al-Nashru Islāmīyah, 2000), 22.

***Şūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* and its conditions:**

Şūfī Ishārī Tafsīr is a type of interpretation that explains the meaning of al-Quran. Different from the common *tafsīr*, *Şūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* does not stop at the literal meaning or the dictionary meaning alone. It interprets the obscure signals behind the explicit utterance of the Quran because it perceives that the Quranic utterance is unique. Only the Sufis are gifted by Allah SWT to unveil the hidden meaning of the Quran.³⁰

The human reasoning is not the only source that the Sufi rely upon to interpret the Quran. The use of human reason in *Şūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* is limited to ensure that the interpretation made does not transgress the explicit utterance that is aligned with the Arabic styles of expression in terms of its linguistics, grammar, etymology or literature. The human reason is also employed in this *tafsīr*, albeit minimally, in order not to lose the desired guidance behind causes of revelation, the reliable information, the sciences of hadith, the *uṣul* (principles) and *fiqh* (jurisprudence).³¹

The Sufis believe that the *Şūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* is one of the manifestations of *ma'rifah* (knowledge) and *natijah* (outcome) of sufism. They claim that it is a divine gift by which the meanings of al-Quran are interpreted and known. Only those whose hearts are illuminated by divine lights are those who have attained knowledge. Members of the *ma'rifah* look at the concealed meanings that are hidden from the general public without borders. They believe in the speciality that Allah SWT has gifted them in recognising the interpretation and explanation of *bāṭinī* (interior).³²

Sheikh al-Tustari said about the privilege of the *walīyullah* (the close person to Allah SWT) in knowing the inner meanings of al-Quran, "Indeed, Allah does not make a person a saint of the people of Muhammad SAW except to teach him about al-Quran either externally or internally." Someone asked him, we know about the literal meanings but what are the inner meanings?" He said, "The understanding. Indeed, the understanding is what is meant."³³

Al-Qushayrī also said, "The noblest of His chosen servants are those who understand the subtlety of His secrets and His light to see the accuracy of His signs and the secrecy of His symbols."³⁴

It should be noted that the *Şūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* is very different from the *tafsīr* on the side of the *Bāṭinīyah* by the *Shī'ah*. This is because the Sufis affirm that al-Quran has exterior and interior notions. The *Shī'ah Bāṭinīyah*, on the other hand, only recognise the interior meaning of al-Quran while rejecting its explicit meanings. They deliberately interpret interior notions based on their evil intentions. The Sufis acknowledge the explicit meanings of al-Quran, do not disobey it, and they also acknowledge its interior meanings.

Al-Taftāzānī said, "It is called *Bāṭinīyah* because they claim that the verses are not in their external nature, but they have inner meanings that are not known except for *al-Mu'allim*. Their goal is to deny the *Shar'ī* as a whole."³⁵

The form which *Şūfī Ishārī* takes is partly acceptable while others are not. The scholars have established the conditions that must be met in the interpretation of *Ishārī* so that it can be accepted. The first and foremost is that it does not deny the literal verse of al-Quran. Secondly, it has evidence in the aspect of *Shari'a* that strengthens it. Thirdly, it does not contradict *Shari'a* or reason. Fourth, it recognizes the meaning of the literal verse, that is, he does not want to reach the inner state of the verse before it is rooted with the literal aspect of the verse.³⁶

The terms of when *Şūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* is acceptable are based on two criteria which are:

Şūfī Ishārī Tafsīr is included in the broadly interpreted utterance.³⁷

³⁰ Al-Qushayrī, 'Abd al-Karīm, *Laṭā'if al-Ishārāt* (Cairo: Hay'ah al-Maṣrīyah al-Āmmah li al-Kitāb, 1981), 22.

³¹ Al-Qushayrī, *Laṭā'if al-Ishārāt*, 22 & Mahyuddin Hashim et al., "Al-Tafsīr al-Şūfī al-Ishārī fī Bidāyat al-Sālikīn: Dirāsāt al-Naqdīyah fī Rūh al-Bayān li al-Burusawī," *Ma'alim Al-Qur'an wa Al-Sunnah* 11 (12) (2016), 36-62.

³² Ibn 'Arabī, Muḥammad, *al-Futūḥat al-Makkīyah* (Cairo: Hay'ah al-Miṣrīyah al-Āmmah li al-Kitāb, 1985), 8/73-74.

³³ Al-Taftāzānī, Sa'd al-Dīn Mas'ūd, *Sharḥ al-'Aqā'id al-Nasafīyah* (Cairo: Maktabah al-Azhar li al-Turāth, 2000), 82.

³⁴ Al-Qushayrī, *Laṭā'if al-Ishārāt*, 23.

³⁵ Al-Taftāzānī, *Sharḥ al-'Aqā'id al-Nasafīyah*, 149.

³⁶ Al-Dhahabī, Muḥammad Ḥasan, *Al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn* (Cairo: Dār al-Kutub al-Ḥadīthah, 1976), 2:388.

³⁷ Al-Shāṭibī, Ibrāhīm, *Al-Muwāfaqāt fī Uṣūl al-Sharī'ah* (Cairo: Maktabah al-Taūfiqīyah, 2003), 3:338-339.

The relationship of *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* with interpreted utterance must align with the concept of cause and effect/*natījah* (*al-‘illah wa al-ma‘lūl*).³⁸

Moreover, *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* is not acceptable to stand on two foundations, namely:

Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr is equalised with the interpreted verse in terms of meaning even if it does not fall under the general notion of the verse or not having the relationship of effects/ *natījah* (*al-‘illah wa al-ma‘lūl*). The meaning of the recitation of the verses of al-Quran must be known to the Arabs because al-Quran was revealed in Arabic.³⁹

If the interpretation of the utterance is specific to a particular person or thing, but the *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* makes it general to other people or things then the interpretation is wrong. This is because the method of *uṣūl* affirm, "If the revealed verse specifically coincides with a specific reason, then it should be devoted to that specialization." As for the other people, they have nothing to do with that. However, this can be done in another way, through *qiyās* but it is not the meaning and notion of the verse.⁴⁰

It differs in a specific cause of revelation but its utterance is general. *Uṣūlīyūn* scholars have different views on this. Most of them see that the lesson can be taken from a general utterance rather than a specific cause. Some also view that a lesson is taken from a specific cause, not from a general utterance.⁴¹

Imam Al-Shāṭibī said that if *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* desires to contradict the conditions in the meaning of the utterance, so it is the same as what the *Bāṭinīyah* group is doing.⁴²

However, Dr. Al-Dhahabī argues favourably with *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* scholars by stating that the meanings that they bring are not the interpretation of Quranic verses but rather just a par with those verses. This is because they have a high level of knowledge and faith. They also recognize the interpreted literal meaning of the utterance. They deny those who only discuss the internal meanings of al-Quran, not its outward element.⁴³

This is also mentioned by al-Shāṭibī, "the impunity that can be given to them is that the interpretation does not indicate that it is an interpretation of a verse but only a signal meaning of al-Quran. Then all the doubt about it is gone."⁴⁴

Abundant of studies are made on *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr*, which includes one of our team members, namely 'Uzlah and Dhikr in the *Ṣūfī Ishārī Al-Baḥr Al-Madīd Tafsīr* by Ibn 'Ajibah; *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* in the benefits of Mysticism: Criticism Approach in *Rūḥ al-Bayān* by al-Burusawī; *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* and Its Comparison with *al-Bāṭinīyah Tafsīr*, *Ṣūfī Tafsīr* of Philosophy and Scientific *Ishārī Tafsīr*; *Al-Tafsīr al-Ṣūfī al-Ishārī fī al-Manhaj al-'Amalī 'inda al-Ṣūfīyah: Dirāsāt Naqdīyah fī al-Baḥr al-Madīd li Ibn 'Ajibah*; *Al-Tafsīr al-Ṣūfī al-Ishārī fī Bidāyat al-Sālikīn: Dirāsāt al-Naqdīyah fī Rūḥ al-Bayān li al-Burusawī*; *Al-Tafsīr Al-Ṣūfī Al-Ishārī fī A'māl al-Qulūb: Dirāsāt Naqdīyah fī Tafsīr Rūḥ al-Bayān li al-Burusawī*; *Al-Tafsīr Al-Ṣūfī Al-Isyari fī A'māl al-Qulūb*; *Dirāsāt Naqdīyah Fī Al-Baḥr al-Madīd li Ibn 'Ajibah and Mawqif al-Shāṭibī min Al-Tafsīr Al-Ishārī*.⁴⁵

Research Methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach through the method of inductive text analysis. It is a research method for the subjective interpretation of textual data content through a systematic classification process of coding and

³⁸ Al-Shāṭibī, *Al-Muwāfaqāt fī Uṣūl al- Sharā'ah*, 3/339-340

³⁹ Al-Shāṭibī, *Al-Muwāfaqāt fī Uṣūl al- Sharā'ah*, 3/341

⁴⁰ Sha'bān Muḥammad Ismā'īl, *Dirāsāt Hawl al-Qur'ān wa al-Sunnah* (Cairo: Maktabah al-Nahḍah al-Miṣrīyah, 1987), 351.

⁴¹ Mannā' al-Qaṭṭān, *Mabāḥith fī 'Ulūm al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Mu'assasah al-Risālah, 1998), 83.

⁴² Al-Shāṭibī, *Al-Muwāfaqāt fī Uṣūl al- Sharā'ah*, 3/341.

⁴³ Al-Dhahabī, *Al-Tafsīr wa al-Mufasssīrūn*, 2/396.

⁴⁴ Al-Shāṭibī, *Al-Muwāfaqāt fī Uṣūl al- Sharā'ah*, 3/340.

⁴⁵ Mahyuddin Hashim & Asman Taeali, "Uzlah dan Dhikr dalam Tafsīr Ṣūfī Ishārī al-Baḥr al-Madīd," *Afkar: Jurnal Akidah & Pemikiran Islam* 24 (1) (2022): 33-64; Mahyuddin Hashim et al., Tafsīr Ṣūfī Ishārī in The Profits of Mysticism: Criticism Approach in Tafsīr Rūḥ al-Bayān by al-Burusawī, *Ulum Islamiyyah* 18 (2016), 235-252; Mahyuddin Hashim, "Tafsīr Ṣūfī Ishārī and its Comparison with Tafsīr al-Bāṭinīyah, Tafsīr Ṣūfī of Philosophy and Tafsīr Scientific Ishārī," *Ulum Islamiyyah* 27 (2019), 53-65; Mahyuddin Hashim et al., "Al-Tafsīr al-Ṣūfī al-Ishārī fī al-Manhaj al-'Amalī 'inda al-Ṣūfīyah: Dirāsāt Naqdīyah fī al-Baḥr al-Madīd li Ibn 'Ajibah," *Jurnal al-Abqori* 11 (2017), 211-228; Mahyuddin Hashim et al., "Al-Tafsīr al-Ṣūfī al-Ishārī fī Bidāyat al-Sālikīn: Dirāsāt al-Naqdīyah fī Rūḥ al-Bayān li al-Burusawī," *Ma'ālim Al-Qur'an wa Al-Sunnah* 11 (12) (2016), 36-62; Mahyuddin Hashim et al., "Al-Tafsīr Al-Ṣūfī Al-Ishārī fī A'māl al-Qulūb: Dirāsāt Naqdīyah fī Tafsīr Rūḥ al-Bayān li al-Burusawī," *Jurnal At-Turath* 1 (2016), 94-101; Mahyuddin Hashim, "Al-Tafsīr Al-Ṣūfī Al-Ishārī fī A'māl al-Qulūb: Dirāsāt Naqdīyah Fī Al-Baḥr al-Madīd li Ibn 'Ajibah," *Ma'ālim Al-Quran wa As-Sunnah* 9 (2013), 125-156; Mahyuddin Hashim, "Mawqif Al-Shāṭibī min Al-Tafsīr Al-Ishārī," *Ma'ālim al-Qur'ān wa al-Sunnah* 6 (2010), 45-82.

identifying themes or patterns.⁴⁶ The book of *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* is the main material to be used in the study using this method to identify the views of Sufis on heart purification. The books are *Al-Ta'wīlāt al-Najmīyah fī al-Tafsīr al-Ishārī al-Ṣūfī* by Aḥmad bin 'Umar Najm al-Dīn Dāyah, *Tafsīr Ruḥ al-Bayān* by Isma'īl Ḥaqqī al-Burusawī, *Gharā'ib al-Qur'ān wa Raghā'ib al-Qur'ān* by al-Ḥasan bin Muḥammad al-Naysbūrī and *Al-Baḥr al-Madīd fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Majīd* by Aḥmad Ibn 'Ajibah.

The collected data will be analyzed using inductive approach. This approach involves reading the raw data to produce a detailed assessment according to the interpretation of the researcher's theme.⁴⁷

The procedure of this study involves analyzing texts in *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* to identify aspects of purification of the heart related to individual integrity education. Subsequently, the data collected from the textual analysis are categorized according to themes. The themes obtained are then used to develop a model for eradicating corruption through the purification of the heart within the framework of integrating *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* and individual integrity education.

Results and Discussion

Based on the research done, there are many interpretations of *Ishārī* regarding heart purification. The researchers only addressed part of it based on the verses of al-Quran that were studied. The findings and discussion are as follows:

The disease of the heart caused by the domination of carnal desires

Allah SWT says:

وَمَثَلُ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا كَمَثَلِ الْإِذْيِ يُنْعَقُ بِمَا لَا يَسْمَعُ إِلَّا دُعَاءً وَنِدَاءً صُمُّ بَعْضُهُمْ لِعَمَىٰ فَهْمٍ لَا يَفْقَهُونَ (١٧١)

Meaning: The analogy of unbelievers, when the da'wah comes to them, is like a herd of cattle called by its shepherd. The herd of cattle only recognised the shepherd's cry as a summons and a cry. Those who refuse to believe are in fact deaf, dumb and blind, hence they cannot understand the call of da'wah.⁴⁸

The *Ishārī Tafsīr* scholars upon explaining this verse, emphasize hearts that have been dominated by carnal desires and are difficult to heal. Apparently, a heart that is dominated by carnal desires is a diseased heart that will destroy its integrity.

Najm al-Dīn Dāyah when interpreting in *Ishārī* manner, states that: "When their souls are attached to the body, and they are possessed by the senses and the power of carnal desires, darkened by the darkness of animalistic nature and their hearts are not satisfied with animalistic pleasures, morals are demonic and physical pleasures, then Allah makes them deaf and their eyes blind. They are now deaf to hear the preaching of the prophets with receptive hearing. They are mute to say the right thing and acknowledge tawhid. They are blind to see signs of miracles. They do not use reason indefinitely because they lose the purity of their spiritual reason and are barred from the *rabbānī* light."⁴⁹

Ibn 'Ajibah also said: "If carnal desires dominate the heart, the medicine must be very strong, treating it is difficult and the burden is great for the doctor. A reminder will not benefit those who sink into oblivion. Threats and warnings will not work as well. The one who preaches to them is like a crow to an animal that only hears their cries. Carnal desires have blinded their eyes and deafened their ears from listening to the guidance."⁵⁰

A person with a diseased heart is unaware of it, even if their heart is dead, they do not recognize its death. Signs of a diseased heart include not feeling the pain of committing sins, ignorance of the truth, and holding onto erroneous beliefs.⁵¹

⁴⁶ Hsieh dan Shannon, "Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis," *Qualitative Health Research* vol. 15(9) (2005), 1277-1288; Y. Zhang dan B. M. Wildermuth, "Qualitative Analysis of Content", In B. Wildermuth ed., *Applications of Social Research Methods to Question in Information and Library Science* (Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited, 2009), 308-319.

⁴⁷ D. R. Thomas, "General Inductive Approach for Analyzing Qualitative Evaluation Data," *American Journal of Evaluation* vol. 27(2) (2006), 237-246.

⁴⁸ Pejabat Menteri di Jabatan Perdana Menteri (Hal Ehwal Agama). *Terjemahan al-Quran versi al-Bayan* (Putrajaya: Pejabat Menteri di Jabatan Perdana Menteri (Hal Ehwal Agama), 2021). 26. Surah al-Baqarah: 171.

⁴⁹ Aḥmad bin 'Umar Najm al-Dīn Dāyah, *Al-Ta'wīlāt al-Najmīyah fī al-Tafsīr al-Ishārī al-Ṣūfī* (Beirut: Dār al-Kutub al-'Ilmīyah, 2009), 1:246.

⁵⁰ Aḥmad Ibn 'Ajibah, *Al-Baḥr al-Madīd fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Majīd* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmīyah, 2005), 1:175.

⁵¹ Aḥmad Farīd, *Tazkiyyah al-Nufus* (Iskandariah: Dar al-Aqidah li al-Turath, 1993), 21.

This situation shows that diseases of the heart are a major factor that damage a person's integrity. Among the signs of a diseased heart are not feeling guilty when committing sins, being insensitive to the truth and holding on to false beliefs. These spiritual diseases stem from negligence toward Allah SWT, neglect of His commands and forgetfulness of the life of the Hereafter. When such negligence continues, a person will begin to prioritize worldly matters, follow their desires and commit injustice, which gradually erodes their personal integrity.⁵²

In the context of integrity education, the purification of the heart must be carried out by resisting the impulses of base desires through spiritual training, such as practicing *qanā'ah* (contentment) to restrain excessive desires that may lead to corruption. This process requires serious effort, patience, and steadfastness (*istiqāmah*) so that the heart becomes purified again and is able to guide individuals toward ethical conduct and integrity.⁵³

The influence of carnal desires as a trial upon the heart

Allah SWT says:

وَاتَّقُوا فِتْنَةً لَا تُصِيبَنَّ الَّذِينَ ظَلَمُوا مِنْكُمْ خَاصَّةً وَلَا تُلَاقُوا اللَّهَ شَرِيدٌ الْعِقَابِ (٢٥)

Meaning: Beware of the punishment that will not only befall those among you who do wrong, but it will befall you all. And know that Allah is severe in retribution.⁵⁴

The *Ishārī* scholars opine that through this verse, it signifies that the test from Allah SWT will not only fall upon the wicked carnal desires but also on the pure hearts. The wicked carnal desires will spoil the pure hearts. Thus, a pure heart can also be corrupted by carnal desires which will cause a person to carry a bad personality and lose their integrity.

Al-Burusawī and al-Naysbūrī said: "(Take care of yourself) O you who have come to Allah (from torment) which is a test of the desires on something that is theirs in this world and the Hereafter (that not only for those who have wronged among you specifically) which the test not only befall on wicked carnal desires, but its wickedness falls on the lighted spirit and the guided heart."⁵⁵

Desires will lead a person to pursue what aligns with their inclinations. The presence of desires in humans is essential for meeting their needs and sustaining life. For example, if a person had no desire for food, they would not eat. Similarly, if they had no desire for drink, they would not drink. This principle applies to other necessities of life as well.

Therefore, desires also have their benefits. They should not be condemned absolutely because they have their advantages. They should only be condemned when they exceed the established limits. However, most people tend to follow their desires in ways that do not benefit them. Consequently, the condemnation of desires is often absolute due to the greater harm they can cause.⁵⁶

Sufi scholars view carnal desires as a harmful and corrupting element within humans. They are seen as the root cause of the emergence of bad morals and traits. Al-Ghazālī said: "Sufis understand that the desires are the source of all negative traits within a person. They believe that it is necessary to fight and overcome these desires."⁵⁷

Al-Hujwayrī said: "In reality, desires are the source of evil and the foundation of wrongdoing... They agree that desires are the cause of bad morals and improper actions."⁵⁸

When carnal desires dominate the heart, they undermine a person's ability to discern the truth. An individual no longer sees truth as something true and may even regard falsehood as something good. This condition leads to the loss of integrity because decisions and actions are no longer based on the values of truth but are instead guided by personal desires.⁵⁹

Therefore, within the framework of integrity education, the *Ishārī Tafsīr* approach emphasises self-reflection in adhering to the truth and rejecting falsehood. It serves as an important mechanism for preserving the purity of the heart from base desires and for shaping an ethical character that resists corruption.

The heart as a 'Spiritual Kaaba' that must be preserved

⁵² Al-Tuwayjirī, Muḥammad bin Ibrāhīm, *Mawsū'ah fiqh al-Qulūb*, (Bayt al-Afkār al-Dawliyah. n.d.), 2:1352.

⁵³ Muhammad Jamaluddin al-Qasimi, *Mau'izotul Mukmin min Ihyā' 'Ulum al-Din* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyyah, 1995), 181.

⁵⁴ Pejabat Menteri di Jabatan Perdana Menteri (Hal Ehwal Agama), *Terjemahan al-Quran versi al-Bayan*, 179. Surah al-Anfal: 25.

⁵⁵ Al-Burusawī, *Ruḥ al-Bayān*, 3:426; Al-Ḥasan bin Muḥammad al-Naysbūrī, *Gharā'ib al-Qur'ān wa Raghā'ib al-Qur'ān* (Beirut: Darul Kutub al-Ilmiyyah. 1416H) 3:393.

⁵⁶ Ibn al-Jauzi, Jamaluddin Abu al-Faraj Abdul Rahman bin Ali, *Zammu al-Hawa* (Beirut: Darul Jil, 1999), 12.

⁵⁷ Al-Ghazālī, Muḥammad bin Muḥammad, *Ihyā' Ulum al-Din* (Beirut: Dar al-Maa'rifah, n.d), 4/3.

⁵⁸ Al-Hujwayrī, *Kasyfu al-Mahjub* (N.P: Al-Majlis al-Aa'la di al-Syuun al-Islamiyyah, 1975), 427.

⁵⁹ Al-Tuwayjirī, *Mawsū'ah fiqh al-Qulūb*, 2:1351.

Allah SWT says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ ءَامَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْمُشْرِكُونَ نَجَسٌ فَلَا يَقْرَبُوا الْمَسْجِدَ الْحَرَامَ بَعْدَ عَامِهِمْ هَذَا وَإِنْ خِفْتُمْ عَيْلَةً فَسَوْفَ يُغْنِيكُمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ إِن شَاءَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ (٢٨)

Meaning: O you who believe! Indeed, the idolaters are unclean. Therefore, do not let them approach the Holy Mosque after this year. If you are concerned about the implications of the sanctions placed on them, Allah will provide you with resources from His bounty if He so desires. Indeed, Allah is all-knowing, all-wise.⁶⁰

When analyzing this verse, the *Ishārī Tafsīr* scholars explain that the Kaaba is comparable to the heart or the *ḥaḍrah* house which should not be entered by carnal desires and negative traits. They explained, a pure heart must always be kept away from carnal desires that can stain it so that integrity continues to flourish in it.

Al-Burusawī said: "The verse signifies that Allah SWT has lifted the pen of *taklīf* upon man until he reaches the perfection of his reference. During that period, its passions and attributes of tawaf in the Kaaba of the heart emanated from the strength of mind and spirituality. The carnal desires obtain what it wants from the world and its enjoyment so that worshipping the world becomes its habit and associating Allah with His creatures is its habit. The human mould has then been perfected and the qualities of humanity and animalistic become the same when carnal desires appear after puberty. Thus, Allah obligated them the pen of *taklīf* and forbade the heart from following the carnal desires, commanding it to fight it and forbidding it to tawaf at the side of the Kaaba so that the Kaaba of the heart would not be tainted by the filth of the *shirk* of carnal desires and reprehensible attributes."⁶¹

Ibn 'Ajībāh said "The houses of *ḥaḍrah* - that is, a pure heart should not be entered by something that is the cause of *shirk*, along with something like it or inclined to the world. Those houses can only be entered by something that only depends on The Ever-Living and The Everlasting Who governeth His creatures. It also cannot be entered by the unclean of the senses of the world, its filthiness and worldliness. As a result, the master should flee the dirt and remain away from it, so that nothing from his unclean enters the house of his heart and he dies after his life. If you fear poverty and avoid its contamination, Allah will enrich you with his unseen wealth if and when he pleases. Nothing is hidden from Him on earth or in the sky."⁶²

The heart is originally pure and free from sickness, and the five human senses convey information to the heart to be recorded. Therefore, the heart should be safeguarded and preserved to avoid paths that lead to temptation and corruption.⁶³

From the perspective of integrity education, this concept emphasises that the human heart is originally pure and serves as the centre for the formation of moral character. Therefore, it must be preserved by strengthening faith, increasing acts of obedience, avoiding sins, and constantly repenting for mistakes. In addition, the heart should be nurtured with beneficial knowledge, righteous deeds, and efforts to promote goodness, as all these practices serve as spiritual nourishment that strengthens an individual's integrity.⁶⁴

Model for Eradicating Corruption through Purification of the Heart

Based on the discussion above, the model for eradicating corruption through the purification of the heart within the framework of integrating *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* and individual integrity education is illustrated in the figure below:

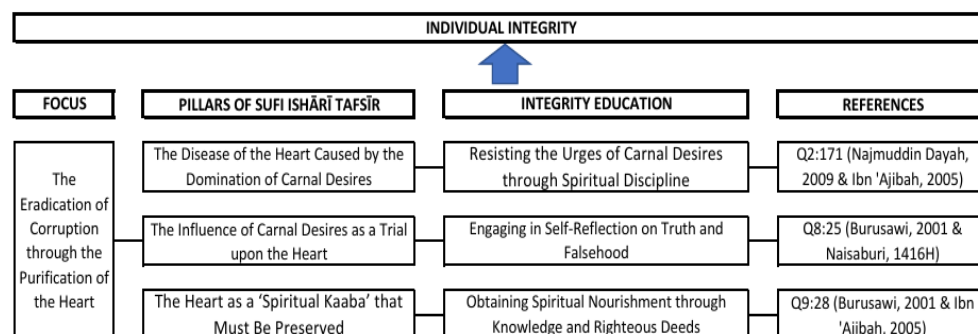


Figure 1: Model for Corruption Eradication through the Purification of the Heart within the Framework of Integrating *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* and Individual Integrity Education

⁶⁰ Pejabat Menteri di Jabatan Perdana Menteri (Hal Ehwal Agama), *Terjemahan al-Quran versi al-Bayan*, 191. Surah al-Tawbah: 28.

⁶¹ Al-Burusawī, *Ruḥ al-Bayān*, 3/426.

⁶² Ibn 'Ajibah, *Al-Baḥr al-Madīd fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-Majīd*, 3/67.

⁶³ Ibn al-Jauzi, Jamaluddin Abu al-Faraj Abdul Rahman bin Ali, *Zammu al-Hawa*, 63.

⁶⁴ Al-Tuwayjirī, *Mawsū'ah fiqh al-Qulūb*, 2/1322.

Based on the figure above, the purpose of this model is to develop individual integrity. Its focus is corruption eradication through the purification of the heart. The first *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* pillar in this model is the disease of the heart caused by the domination of carnal desires. The approach of *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* in integrity education for this pillar is resisting the urges of carnal desires through spiritual discipline. The reference for this pillar is verse 177 of Surah al-Baqarah, according to the interpretations of Najm al-Dīn Dāyah and Ibn ‘Ajibah.

The second *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* pillar is the influence of carnal desires as a trial upon the heart. The approach of *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* in integrity education for this pillar is engaging in self-reflection on truth and falsehood. The reference for this pillar is verse 25 of Surah al-Anfal, based on the interpretations of Burusawī and Naisaburi.

The third *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* pillar is the heart as a ‘Spiritual Kaaba’ must be preserved. The approach of *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* in integrity education for this pillar is obtaining spiritual nourishment through knowledge and righteous deeds. The reference for this pillar is verse 28 of Surah al-Taubah, according to the interpretations of Burusawī and Ibn ‘Ajibah.

Conclusion

This study aims to develop a model for eradicating corruption through the purification of the heart within the framework of integrating *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* and individual integrity education. The aspect of heart purification is central to the formation of noble character. Therefore, this element of heart purification must be incorporated into individual integrity education as a means of combating corruption.

Individual integrity education, which seeks to cultivate a set of superior qualities in personal character, must begin with the purification of the heart because every action and movement of the body is guided by the heart’s commands. If the heart is dominated by carnal desires, it becomes a corrupted heart that is very difficult to heal. This results in the development of poor character and the loss of integrity. A diseased heart is the consequence of the domination of carnal desires, and the influence of such desires can lead to trials and tribulations upon the heart. Therefore, the heart, as a “Spiritual Kaaba,” must be preserved from the influence of carnal desires.

The approach of *Ṣūfī Ishārī Tafsīr* in individual integrity education involves resisting the urges of carnal desires through spiritual discipline, engaging in self-reflection on truth and falsehood, and obtaining spiritual nourishment through knowledge and righteous deeds—practices that must be given serious attention.

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