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**Exploring the Impact of Teachers' Silent Prayers on Student Academic Performance: A Qualitative Inquiry through the Lens of Qur'anic Perspective**

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**Abstract**

This qualitative study explores the perceived impact of teachers' silent prayers on students' academic performance, contextualized within a Qur'anic framework. Recognizing that spirituality plays a vital, yet often unexamined, role in educational settings, the research investigates how teachers interpret and practice silent prayers as part of their pedagogical and spiritual responsibilities. The study further examines the Qur'anic motivations that underlie such practices and how they are internalized in contemporary teaching contexts. Drawing upon interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA), data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 10 experienced secondary and higher secondary teachers from religious and public educational institutions in Narowal, Pakistan. Thematic analysis revealed two overarching themes: (1) *Silent Prayer as a Spiritual Catalyst for Student Success* and (2) *Qur'anic Foundations Guiding Teachers' Prayerful Practices*. Sub-themes such as Divine Intention and Reliance on Allah (Tawakkul), Teacher Spiritual Accountability (Taqwa), and the Role of Ikhlas (sincerity) in invoking blessings emerged prominently in participants' reflections. Teachers consistently reported a strong belief in the invisible influence of their silent prayers on their students' academic and moral development. Quotations revealed that these practices are often rooted in Qur'anic injunctions emphasizing du'ā (supplication), the teacher's role as a spiritual guide, and a sense of moral responsibility before God. The discussion situates these findings within existing literature on religious pedagogy, spiritual intelligence, and moral education while also identifying a significant gap in empirical studies focused on prayer as a pedagogical act. The study concludes that silent prayer is not only a deeply personal act but also an influential spiritual tool shaping the classroom environment, student motivation, and teacher ethics. This research contributes a novel perspective by linking Qur'anic principles with contemporary educational experiences,

highlighting the transformative potential of silent prayers in enhancing academic success and teacher-student spiritual connectivity.

**Keywords:** silent prayer, student academic performance, Qur'anic perspective, teacher motivation, spiritual pedagogy, qualitative inquiry, du'ā, Islamic education.

## 1. Introduction

In the modern educational landscape, academic success is often evaluated through metrics such as instructional quality, curriculum design, and student engagement. However, there remains an often-overlooked spiritual dimension that may subtly influence student performance teachers' silent prayers. Within Islamic thought, supplication (*dua*) holds a significant spiritual and emotional value, especially when invoked with sincerity and intention. The Qur'an emphasizes the power of sincere prayer: *"Call upon Me; I will respond to you"* (Qur'an, 40:60). This study seeks to explore the perceived impact of teachers' silent prayers on the academic performance of students through a qualitative and Qur'anic lens, focusing on the spiritual intentions embedded in educational practices. Prior research has addressed the influence of teacher attitudes, expectations, and emotional well-being on student outcomes (Hattie, 2022; Kim & Schallert, 2023), there is a lack of scholarly work on how teachers' spiritual acts particularly private and silent prayers may shape their intentions, pedagogical actions, and student academic achievements. This inquiry aligns with the Qur'anic principle that sincere intentions, accompanied by action and supplication, can bring about transformation and divine support (Qur'an, 2:186).

The intersection of spirituality and education offers a rich field for investigation, especially in Islamic contexts where faith permeates both personal and professional life. Teachers, often seen as moral guides, may direct prayers for their students' well-being and success, which may psychologically enhance their own teaching approach and positively influence student outcomes. Using a qualitative methodology, this research will delve into educators' personal experiences and Qur'anic interpretations to explore how this form of spiritual engagement is integrated into teaching practices and perceived to affect academic success.

### 1.1 Research Objectives

1. To explore how teachers' silent prayers are perceived to influence students' academic performance.
2. To analyze teachers' understanding of silent prayer through Qur'anic teachings and its integration in their professional practice.

### 1.2 Research Questions

1. How do teachers perceive the impact of their silent prayers on students' academic success?
2. What Qur'anic perspectives shape teachers' motivations and practices related to silent prayers in educational contexts?

### 1.3 Problem Statement

Spirituality remains an integral part of many teachers' lives, the potential influence of their silent prayers on student academic performance remains underexplored in educational literature. In

Islamic societies, where spiritual consciousness is deeply rooted, there is a critical need to understand how Qur'an-inspired practices like silent prayers may influence teaching behavior and student outcomes. This study seeks to fill this gap by examining the relationship between teachers' silent supplications and student academic performance from a Qur'anic perspective.

#### **1.4 Rationale of the Study**

Spirituality in education is often neglected in formal research, particularly in Islamic contexts. By investigating the intersection of silent prayer and student achievement, this study offers a culturally grounded exploration of how teachers integrate faith with pedagogy. Drawing from the Qur'anic worldview, this research aims to provide a deeper understanding of how spiritual practices, particularly unspoken prayers, function as a form of inner guidance and support in the classroom, potentially leading to improved educational outcomes.

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study is significant in that it merges spiritual practice with educational research, offering a novel contribution to the field of Islamic pedagogy. For educators in faith-based environments, understanding the impact of silent prayers may provide new insights into spiritual leadership in education. Furthermore, the study has implications for teacher training programs, suggesting that educators' inner spiritual life could be a source of strength that enhances student learning outcomes. It also contributes to broader discourses on value-based education and the integration of faith and practice in teaching.

#### **1.6 Limitations of the Study**

This research is qualitative in nature and thus limited in generalizability. It focuses primarily on Muslim teachers within a specific cultural context, potentially limiting its applicability to non-Islamic or secular educational settings. Furthermore, as the impact of prayer is inherently subjective and spiritual, it may not be directly measurable through conventional academic metrics. The reliance on self-reported perceptions may also introduce bias, although steps will be taken to ensure credibility and trustworthiness through rigorous qualitative methods.

The integration of spirituality within educational research has gained momentum over recent decades, reflecting a growing recognition of the complex interplay between faith, pedagogy, and student outcomes (Palmer, 2017). In the context of Islamic education, spirituality is not merely a personal or psychological dimension but is deeply rooted in Qur'anic teachings and prophetic traditions. This literature review critically examines existing scholarship on the role of teachers' spiritual practices, with a special focus on silent prayers (*du'ā'*) and their potential influence on student academic performance. It identifies relevant works in educational psychology, Islamic pedagogy, and spirituality studies to highlight both contributions and gaps, laying the foundation for a Qur'an-informed exploration of teacher prayer and student success.

#### **Literature Review**

Research into spirituality and education, though increasing, remains largely secular in orientation. Studies by Tisdell (2003) and Palmer (2017) emphasize the importance of educators' inner lives and their impact on student engagement and moral development. In secular contexts, this is framed as "educator presence" or "mindfulness" (Crain, 2016; Jennings et al., 2019), which suggests that emotionally and spiritually grounded teachers foster better learning environments. However, these studies often neglect or overlook explicit religious practices like prayer. Within

Islamic educational literature, the role of *niyyah* (intention), *tawakkul* (reliance on God), and *dua* have been discussed in relation to pedagogical ethics and moral formation (Al-Attas, 1999; Halstead, 2004). Some work, like that of Abdalla and Chou (2020), has begun to explore the effect of Islamic spirituality on educational motivation and teacher-student relationships. However, the specific impact of teachers' silent prayers on students' academic achievement remains largely unstudied. The literature on prayer in education is more developed in Christian contexts, where studies such as those by Hull (2011) and Macdonald et al. (2021) link teacher prayer to moral development, behavioral management, and school culture. These studies suggest that teacher prayer silent or vocal can influence classroom tone, improve teacher empathy, and create a supportive emotional environment, indirectly benefiting students' academic performance. However, this research is not contextually or theologically aligned with the Islamic framework, thus offering limited translatability.

The concept of silent prayer (*dua sirri*) in Islam is profoundly rooted in Qur'anic guidance. For instance, Allah says: "*Call upon your Lord humbly and secretly. Indeed, He does not like transgressors*" (Qur'an, 7:55). Silent supplication is often considered a sincere act of *ikhlas* (purity), and its efficacy is widely emphasized in both the Qur'an and Hadith. From a theoretical lens, this practice is viewed as an act of submission that potentially aligns the teacher's purpose with divine intent, thereby fostering *barakah* (blessing) in the classroom (Al-Ghazali, 2005). Few empirical studies have systematically analyzed how these inner spiritual practices translate into external academic outcomes. Yet, the concept of *spiritual intentionality* is recognized in educational research as a driver of motivation and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Schunk & Pajares, 2005). By connecting these Western psychological theories with Islamic concepts like *niyyah* and *tawakkul*, a more holistic framework emerges for understanding the educator's role as both a guide and a spiritual agent. The existing literature also lacks qualitative data that explore how teachers personally experience this practice and its perceived outcomes on their students. This is a notable gap, especially considering that qualitative inquiry is well-suited to uncover the nuanced and subjective dimensions of faith-based practice in education (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

The growing recognition of spirituality in education, the specific role of teachers' silent prayers remains largely unexamined. There is: A lack of empirical research on how silent prayers influence student performance in Islamic educational contexts. Minimal integration of Qur'anic theology with modern pedagogical research. A shortage of qualitative studies that explore teacher narratives regarding silent supplication. Limited understanding of how faith-informed teaching practices might impact measurable student outcomes, such as motivation, focus, or academic success. This study aims to fill these gaps by offering a qualitative, Qur'an-centered exploration of the phenomenon. This study introduces several novel dimensions:

1. It situates teacher prayer within a Qur'anic epistemology, using verses and concepts as interpretive frameworks.
2. It adds qualitative depth by capturing teachers' lived experiences and spiritual practices in their own voices.
3. It bridges the domains of spiritual theology and educational performance, fostering interdisciplinary dialogue.

4. It proposes that inner teacher prayer may act as a form of *invisible pedagogy* an unspoken but effective part of the teaching process.

## 2.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation of this study is anchored in both Islamic epistemology and elements of **Social Cognitive Theory (SCT)**. Key concepts include:

1. **Dua (Supplication)**: As a sincere spiritual act and Qur'anic prescription (Qur'an 2:186).
2. **Niyyah (Intention)**: The foundational concept in Islamic ethics which governs the spiritual value of all actions (Al-Bukhari, 1987).
3. **Tawakkul (Reliance on God)**: As a form of surrender and trust that guides the educator's professional commitment (Qur'an 3:159).

From SCT, Bandura's (1997) ideas on self-efficacy are employed to understand how spiritual confidence can translate into effective teaching behavior. Teachers who pray for their students may also develop a stronger sense of purpose and confidence, thereby enhancing the teaching-learning process. An alternative approach could have involved a behavioral or purely psychological framework focusing on observable actions. However, such approaches risk missing the invisible, spiritual, and metaphysical dimensions that are central to this inquiry.

## 3. Research Methodology

### 3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore the lived experiences and perceptions of teachers regarding the impact of their silent prayers on student academic performance. A phenomenological approach was considered suitable as it allowed an in-depth understanding of teachers' spiritual experiences, inner motivations, and the Qur'anic beliefs that shaped their actions. This design was effective for capturing nuanced, subjective realities that cannot be quantified but are essential to understanding the spiritual dimension of pedagogy (Moustakas, 1994; Creswell & Poth, 2018).

### 3.2 Sampling Technique and Participants

A purposive sampling technique was employed to select participants who were Muslim teachers with a minimum of five years of teaching experience in faith-based or public secondary schools in Punjab, Pakistan. The sample consisted of 12 teachers (7 male, 5 female) from diverse school private and public. Participants were selected based on their willingness to discuss their spiritual practices openly and their familiarity with Qur'anic teachings related to prayer, intention (*niyyah*), and trust in divine outcomes (*tawakkul*). This sample size was adequate for achieving data saturation in phenomenological studies (Guest, Namey, & Chen, 2020).

### 3.3 Data Collection Methods

Data were collected through semi-structured, in-depth interviews lasting between 45 to 60 minutes. Interviews were conducted in Urdu to ensure participants could express themselves freely and deeply. A flexible interview protocol was designed, covering themes such as: personal prayer practices, perceptions of their impact on students, and Qur'anic motivations behind such practices. Each interview was audio-recorded with consent, transcribed verbatim, and translated into English for thematic analysis. Field notes and reflective memos were also maintained to capture contextual observations and the researcher's reflections during interviews.

### 3.4 Qur'anic Textual Analysis

In addition to interviews, **document analysis** was conducted of selected **Qur'anic verses** related to prayer (*dua*), intention (*niyyah*), trust in God (*tawakkul*), and sincerity (*ikhlaṣ*). Classical tafsir (exegesis) texts and contemporary Islamic educational commentaries were also reviewed. This triangulation allowed the data from participant interviews to be interpreted through an authentic Qur'anic lens, aligning with the study's theological framework.

### 3.5 Data Analysis Procedure

Thematic analysis was employed using the six-phase model of Braun and Clarke (2006): familiarization, coding, generating themes, reviewing themes, defining themes, and producing the report. The themes were developed inductively from the interview data manually thematic analysis and deductively guided by Qur'anic concepts relevant to the research questions. Trustworthiness was ensured through member checking, peer debriefing, and audit trails (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### 3.6 Justification for Methodology

The qualitative phenomenological approach was justified because it allowed participants to express their spiritual and emotional realities, which are not easily measurable. Given the sensitive and personal nature of silent prayers, quantitative tools such as surveys would have been inadequate in capturing the depth and complexity of this phenomenon (van Manen, 1990). The semi-structured interviews gave participants room to reflect deeply, while the Qur'anic textual analysis added theological depth and contextual alignment, enhancing the interpretive richness of the findings. While much has been said about teacher beliefs, mindfulness, and emotional presence, the domain of silent prayer particularly from an Islamic perspective remains underexplored. This study enters uncharted academic territory, aiming to bridge Islamic spirituality with pedagogical outcomes. It argues that teachers' inner supplications, though private, are potentially transformative acts of educational intentionality, deserving of scholarly attention and empirical exploration.

### Data Analysis and Findings

Researcher using the qualitative phenomenological methodology outlined earlier, data from 12 semi-structured interviews with Muslim schoolteachers in Punjab, Pakistan, were transcribed, translated, and analyzed through Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step thematic analysis method. Three major themes and corresponding sub-themes emerged from the data in response to the first research question. Quotations are used to support thematic interpretation and reflect authentic voices of participants.

**Research Question 1: *How do teachers perceive the impact of their silent prayers on students' academic success?***

**Theme 1: Silent Prayer as Spiritual Support for Students**

**Sub-theme 1.1: Emotional and Moral Well-being Precedes Academic Success**

Teachers expressed that silent prayers (*dua*) are not limited to academic performance but also encompass the emotional and moral development of students, which they believe is foundational for academic achievement.

*"I always pray silently before entering the class that Allah may guide my students to become better human beings. I believe this spiritual well-being reflects in their studies too."* (Participant 3)

*"I make dua not just for marks but that students remain confident and calm in exams success follows when hearts are at peace."* (Participant 9)

This suggests that teachers perceive silent prayers as nurturing inner calm and ethical stability, which indirectly boosts academic engagement and concentration.

### **Sub-theme 1.2: Intercession for Divine Facilitation**

Participants shared that they perceive silent prayers as **intercession** (*shafā'ah*) for divine assistance in matters beyond human control such as comprehension, retention, and examination performance.

*"Sometimes I see a child struggling despite hard work, so I quietly pray that Allah make it easy for them. Surprisingly, they improve in the next test."* (Participant 6)

*"As teachers, we try our best, but Allah's help is supreme. I always pray silently before final exams that my students do not forget what they learned."* (Participant 10)

This indicates a firm belief in divine agency acting as a complement to instructional efforts, showing that teachers view *dua* as an unseen pedagogical force.

## **Theme 2: Dua as a Reflection of Pedagogical Intentions**

### **Sub-theme 2.1: Teaching as a Spiritual Responsibility**

Teachers saw their role not only as instructors but also as moral and spiritual guides. Silent prayers were seen as a **means to align their intentions with Qur'anic values**.

*"My intention (niyyah) is always to teach for the sake of Allah. When I silently pray for students' success, it reminds me that I'm doing this as a sacred duty, not just a job."* (Participant 2)

*"Sometimes my heart feels uneasy about a student's failure, and I turn to dua as part of my responsibility as a teacher and a believer."* (Participant 8)

This theme aligns with Qur'anic principles such as *"Indeed, actions are by intentions"* (Hadith - Bukhari, Vol. 1), showing that teachers perceive their prayers as acts of spiritual pedagogy.

### **Sub-theme 2.2: Enhancing Self-Accountability and Compassion**

Teachers reflected that silent prayer reinforced their empathy, patience, and emotional connection with students, which improved classroom relationships and thereby academic performance.

*"When I pray for them, I feel more attached. I try harder in class. I check on their weaknesses more gently."* (Participant 4)

*"It softens my heart. I stop being judgmental and start being more helpful. That helps students become more open to learning."* (Participant 1)

This suggests that prayer practices create internal transformations in teachers, which manifest in more supportive, student-centered behaviors that contribute to learning.

## **Theme 3: Perceived Outcomes and Observed Impacts**

### **Sub-theme 3.1: Improvements in Academic Outcomes**

Many teachers reported perceivable improvements in student focus, grades, and exam performance, attributing these outcomes at least in part to their silent prayers.

*"One of my weakest students once scored highest in the class. I had been making dua for him regularly. It really made me believe in the barakah (blessing) of prayer."* (Participant 5)

*"When I started praying silently for the whole class, I noticed more students were attentive, disciplined, and motivated."* (Participant 12)

While causality cannot be proven, these narratives reflect a consistent perception that prayer affects classroom dynamics and student outcomes.

### **Sub-theme 3.2: Strengthening the Teacher-Student Bond**

Teachers felt that silent prayers deepened their **emotional and spiritual bond** with students, creating a climate of mutual respect and academic growth.

*"They may not know I'm praying for them, but I feel more love for them, and they respond to that love by performing better."* (Participant 7)

*"Prayer brings humility. When students feel respected and supported even spiritually they work harder."* (Participant 11)

This demonstrates how silent supplication, though unseen, contributes to a trust-rich, emotionally safe learning environment, which is crucial for academic flourishing. Teachers in this study perceived their silent prayers as a meaningful and spiritually driven pedagogical tool that contributed positively to student academic success. Thematic analysis revealed that silent *dua* acts as:

1. A form of emotional support and intercession,
2. A reminder of their divine responsibilities,
3. A means of cultivating compassion and accountability,
4. And an unseen but felt factor that enhances academic performance.

While not measurable in empirical terms, these perceptions offer a unique Qur'anic spiritual framework of teaching that blends faith, compassion, and academic intention suggesting that silent prayer can be an important part of Islamic pedagogical identity.

**Research Question 2:** *What Qur'anic perspectives shape teachers' motivations and practices related to silent prayers in educational contexts?*

### **Theme 1: Du'ā' as a Divine Mandate and Means of Connection with Allah**

#### **Sub-theme 1.1: Obedience to Qur'anic Commands on Supplication**

Many teachers viewed silent prayers as an act of obedience to divine guidance, citing specific Qur'anic verses that encourage believers to call upon Allah.

*"Allah says in Surah Ghafir [40:60], 'Call upon Me; I will respond to you.' When I make du'ā' silently, I feel I'm fulfilling this direct order from my Lord."* (Participant 5)

*"It's not just a habit it's a response to the Qur'an's command. I believe that as a teacher, if I pray for my students, Allah will listen because I'm doing it with a pure heart."* (Participant 8)

The act of *dua* is not seen as optional but as a Qur'anic obligation and a divine channel through which teachers connect with God for the betterment of their students.

#### **Sub-theme 1.2: Dua as a Continuous Act of Hope and Humility**

Teachers referenced *dua* as an **expression of human dependence** and a continuous reminder of their limited control over outcomes.



"Allah says in Surah Baqarah [2:186], 'Indeed I am near. I respond to the call of the supplicant when he calls upon Me.' I believe this verse encourages me to turn to dua whenever I feel helpless about a student's progress." (Participant 3)

"Dua teaches me humility. I may prepare lessons, but results are from Allah. The Qur'an teaches us that success comes with His will, so I always ask for that silently." (Participant 10)

This theme reflects that Qur'anic *du'ā'* reinforces a spiritual mindset of humility, submission, and reliance, shaping silent prayers as acts of educational surrender to Allah's will.

## **Theme 2: Tawakkul (Trust in Allah) as a Pedagogical Principle**

### **Sub-theme 2.1: Trust in Allah after Fulfilling One's Duty**

Participants emphasized the Qur'anic principle of *tawakkul* (Surah Aal-e-Imran 3:159–160), which guides them to place their trust in Allah after doing their best.

"When I do my part teaching, guiding and then pray silently, I practice what the Qur'an says: Tie your camel and trust Allah. That prayer shows my *tawakkul*." (Participant 1)

"I don't rely on my efforts alone. I silently ask Allah to complete what I cannot control. It's part of my faith that results come only from Him." (Participant 6)

Teachers saw silent prayer as the final spiritual act after professional commitment, driven by their Qur'anic understanding of *tawakkul* bridging effort and divine outcome.

### **Sub-theme 2.2: Strengthening Spiritual Patience (Ṣabr)**

Teachers connected their practice of silent prayers with cultivating patience and perseverance, deeply rooted in Qur'anic teachings.

"When I keep praying for a student and don't see results immediately, I recall Allah's command to have *sabr*. It keeps me hopeful and consistent." (Participant 12)

"Silent prayer helps me remain patient knowing that Allah works in His own time, not mine." (Participant 7)

Thus, *dua* is motivated not just by trust, but also by spiritual endurance a Qur'anic value that sustains teachers through challenges.

## **Theme 3: Niyyah (Intention) and Ikhlāṣ (Sincerity) as Foundations of Educator Identity**

### **Sub-theme 3.1: Teaching as an Intention-Driven Ibadah (Worship)**

Teachers reported that silent prayers reflect their **pure intentions (niyyah)** and elevate their professional role to a form of worship.

"I teach for the sake of Allah. So, when I silently pray for my students, it reminds me that this job is *ibadah*. My *niyyah* must be clear." (Participant 9)

"The Qur'an doesn't separate life from worship. For me, teaching and praying silently for students are both acts of worship if my intention is pure." (Participant 4)

This reflects the Qur'anic and Prophetic emphasis on purity of intention, making silent *du'ā'* an essential extension of Islamic pedagogy.

### **Sub-theme 3.2: Ikhlāṣ in Prayer Strengthens Ethical Teaching**

Teachers believed that sincere, private prayers (without public display) reflected *ikhhlāṣ* (sincerity) and spiritual ethics, which are valued in the Qur'an.

"I don't tell students that I pray for them. That's between me and Allah. The Qur'an teaches us that Allah knows what is in our hearts." (Participant 2)

*"Silent du'ā' is sincere. It's not to show off. It's out of love and duty. That sincerity affects how I treat students too."* (Participant 11)

This theme shows how Qur'anic perspectives on sincerity shape teachers' inner and outer practices, influencing how they relate to students ethically and spiritually. The analysis shows that teachers' motivations for silent prayers are deeply rooted in Qur'anic principles and worldview. Major Qur'anic concepts such as *dua*, *tawakkul*, *niyyah*, *ikhlaṣ*, and *ṣabir* guide teachers to view prayer as:

1. A spiritual obligation and divine invitation,
2. A mechanism for aligning personal effort with divine will,
3. A form of worship that elevates the act of teaching, and
4. A source of inner peace and moral accountability.

These Qur'anic teachings not only inform prayer practices but also shape the educator's identity as a servant of Allah entrusted with the moral and intellectual development of students.

## 5. Discussion

This qualitative study explored an under-researched but spiritually significant phenomenon the impact of teachers' silent prayers on students' academic performance through a Qur'anic lens. The findings derived from semi-structured interviews with eight teachers from religious and mainstream academic institutions indicate that silent prayers are not merely ritualistic acts, but integral to teachers' moral and pedagogical identity. The discussion builds on two major themes: (1) Teachers' Perception of Silent Prayers and Their Influence on Student Success and (2) Qur'anic Foundations of Spiritual Pedagogical Practice, mapping these against the research objectives and theoretical framework rooted in the Qur'anic worldview, prophetic tradition, and the concept of *niyyah* (intention).

### 5.1 Teachers' Perceptions of Silent Prayers and Student Academic Success

One of the most prominent findings was that teachers perceived their silent prayers as a spiritual investment in the success of their students. Teachers believed that while academic excellence depended on student effort and teacher guidance, spiritual invocation created an invisible shield and a channel of divine blessing that positively influenced students' motivation, concentration, and moral behavior. This perception aligns with the broader Islamic concept of *barakah* divine blessing that multiplies the effects of sincere effort. A key theme that emerged was "Spiritual Intercession as Educational Responsibility." For instance, one teacher shared,

*"Whenever I pray silently for my students before an exam or even during class, I feel a deep peace. I believe Allah listens, and somehow, the students feel more focused even without knowing I prayed for them."* (Participant 4)

This statement illustrates the implicit faith teachers have in the metaphysical power of *du'a* (supplication), especially when made in solitude and sincerity. Teachers considered their prayers an act of *tawakkul* (reliance upon Allah) after they had fulfilled their teaching duties. Another sub-theme was "Faith-Driven Motivation to Pray for Students." Teachers reported being emotionally and morally invested in their students' futures. They prayed silently during morning assemblies, before distributing exam papers, and while observing students struggle with personal or academic challenges.

*"It is my way of saying I care for them beyond the classroom. I ask Allah to guide them, give them confidence and help them understand. Sometimes, students I worried about end up performing better than expected. Coincidence? I don't think so."* (Participant 2)

Such perceptions underscore that prayer is not merely for ritualistic satisfaction but plays a motivational and emotional role in the teacher-student relationship. From a constructivist viewpoint, the act of prayer becomes a cultural and spiritual tool for meaning-making in the teaching process. These findings contribute to spiritual pedagogy literature, such as Palmer (2007), who noted that teaching is a profoundly spiritual act because it arises from one's identity and values. In our study, silent prayers embody this spiritual identity and act as a bridge between ethical intent and pedagogical outcomes. The perception that prayers might "invisibly support" students parallels the theory of Social Cognitive Spirituality, where faith-based reinforcement (like silent prayers) indirectly contributes to academic performance by influencing teachers' emotional tone, their interactions, and their sustained compassion for students. This is supported by recent findings in spiritual education research that emphasize teachers' inner moral compass as a driver of student-centered practices (Noddings, 2022; Hashim & Hussain, 2023).

## **5.2. Qur'anic Perspectives Shaping Teachers' Motivations and Practices**

The second research question investigated the Qur'anic principles and values that inspire teachers to engage in silent prayers for their students. The analysis revealed three key sub-themes under the overarching theme: "Spiritual Pedagogy Rooted in the Qur'anic Ethos."

### **5.2.1 The Concept of *Niyyah* (Sincere Intention)**

All participants mentioned that their prayers were not aimed at selfish benefit or public display but were made with pure intention. The Qur'anic concept of *niyyah*, although not explicitly stated in the Qur'an but emphasized in Hadith, served as a foundational spiritual ethic. As one participant noted,

*"When I pray, I do it only for Allah. I don't tell students or show it off. This is between me and Allah. I believe He helps because He knows our hearts."* (Participant 5)

This attitude highlights a central spiritual tenet in Islamic pedagogy that *niyyah* purifies action and invites divine assistance. Such a framework shifts pedagogical accountability from external rewards to spiritual sincerity.

### **2.2 Trust in Divine Wisdom (*Tawakkul*)**

Another Qur'anic principle that emerged was *tawakkul*. Teachers believed that despite their best efforts, only Allah could open students' hearts to knowledge and understanding.

*"I prepare my lessons and give my best. But I know results come from Allah. So, I pray He opens their minds and keeps them guided."* (Participant 6)

This aligns with the Qur'anic injunction: "And whosoever puts his trust in Allah, then He will suffice him" (Qur'an 65:3). Teachers did not use prayers as substitutes for effort but as spiritual reinforcement, showing a balance between human agency and divine reliance.

### **2.3 Invocation of Mercy and Guidance (*Rahmah* and *Hidayah*)**

Teachers often referred to verses invoking Allah's *rahmah* (mercy) and *hidayah* (guidance), which they hoped would reach their students. For example, one said:

*"I recite the du'a: 'Rabbī zidnī 'ilmā' O my Lord, increase me in knowledge. I ask it not just for myself, but for them too."* (Participant 1)

This practice directly connects to Qur'anic supplications (e.g., Qur'an 20:114) and demonstrates that teachers view learning as both a spiritual and intellectual process, facilitated by divine guidance. These themes highlight a spiritual model of education where teaching is a form of worship, and prayer becomes both a pedagogical and ethical tool. The data thus affirm existing literature that spiritual beliefs influence teaching practices (Nasr, 2018; Al-Attas, 2021), and further extend it by providing qualitative evidence of how Qur'anic values are operationalized in classroom spirituality.

The theoretical framework of this study was rooted in the Qur'anic worldview, emphasizing holistic development physical, cognitive, emotional, and spiritual. The data strongly supports the idea that prayer is a legitimate component of this holistic paradigm. The notion of *tarbiyyah* (nurturing) in Islamic education encompasses not just knowledge transmission but also spiritual elevation. Teachers in the study practiced *tarbiyyah* through silent prayer, reinforcing values of compassion, patience, and service. The Reciprocal Determinism element from Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory can be seen in how teachers' beliefs (personal factors), their prayer practices (behavior), and the classroom setting (environment) interact. While Bandura focused more on secular learning processes, our Qur'anic framework adapted this model to show that spiritual behavior (like prayer) also mediates educational influence. The research also draws upon Palmer's (2007) Spiritual Identity Theory, which argues that good teaching flows from the identity and integrity of the teacher. In this study, teachers' prayers reflect their inner lives and spiritual grounding, which shape their outward teaching conduct and ultimately student outcomes.

This research acknowledges spirituality in education, very little empirical work has addressed the specific phenomenon of teachers' silent prayers in the context of student academic performance. Most studies on spirituality in education focus on moral education, meditation, mindfulness, or overt religious instruction. The silent prayer of teachers, especially in Muslim contexts, has been neglected as an invisible yet powerful pedagogical tool. The present study fills this gap by not only acknowledging these silent prayers but exploring them through qualitative insights rooted in the Qur'an. This research thus opens new avenues in Islamic pedagogy, positioning prayer as both an epistemological and practical component of teaching. It also expands the discourse of teacher agency to include spiritual actions that are non-evaluative, private, yet impactful. It challenges dominant Western paradigms of educational success that focus on measurable input-output models, by proposing that spiritual intentions although unquantifiable play a subtle but critical role in shaping educational outcomes. The findings have several implications. First, they suggest that teacher training programs especially in faith-based settings should consider integrating spiritual reflection and prayer practices as part of teacher identity formation. Secondly, educational policy in Islamic contexts may benefit from recognizing the moral and spiritual dimensions of teacher agency, beyond syllabus and test performance. This study offers a foundational framework to further explore intersections between faith, pedagogy, and outcomes. Longitudinal studies can examine if and how students' academic trajectories are affected by spiritually supportive teacher behavior.

This study has shown that teachers' silent prayers, though unseen and unspoken, form a spiritually embedded practice that reflects deep concern for students' success. These prayers are not isolated acts but are framed within a broader Qur'anic understanding of *niyyah*, *tawakkul*, and *rahmah*. Teachers' belief in the transformative power of divine assistance not only motivates their prayer practices but also enhances their emotional and ethical connection to students. Through qualitative narratives, this research uncovers a sacred dimension of pedagogy that bridges the inner and outer worlds of teaching. It calls for a broader conception of academic success—one that includes the spiritual investments educators silently make in the flourishing of their students.

### 5.3 Conclusion

The present qualitative inquiry, titled *"Exploring the Impact of Teachers' Silent Prayers on Student Academic Performance: A Qualitative Inquiry through the Lens of Qur'anic Perspective,"* has delved into a deeply spiritual yet academically significant area of investigation that connects faith-based practices with student outcomes in educational contexts. Through thematic analysis of the rich narratives shared by participants, this research has attempted to explore how teachers' silent prayers an often invisible, private practice are perceived to influence students' academic success and how Qur'anic perspectives guide these spiritual efforts within the framework of teaching and learning. The findings revealed two major thematic dimensions that framed the study: (1) Teachers' Perceptions of the Impact of Silent Prayers on Students' Academic Success, and (2) Qur'anic Perspectives That Shape Teachers' Motivation and Practices Related to Silent Prayers. The first theme illuminated the inner emotional world of teachers who view silent prayers as a moral, spiritual, and professional duty to seek divine support for their students' holistic development. Sub-themes such as "Spiritual Advocacy," "Personal Accountability Before Allah," and "Faith in Divine Intervention" showed that teachers believe silent prayers enhance students' concentration, motivation, and emotional well-being, thereby fostering improved academic performance. This reinforces a growing recognition in educational research that psychological and emotional climate both visible and invisible can significantly influence learning outcomes (Hattie, 2023; Darling-Hammond, 2022).

The second theme highlighted that teachers are not merely motivated by pedagogical intentions but are deeply inspired by Qur'anic principles and prophetic traditions that emphasize *dua* (supplication), intention (*niyyah*), and trust in Allah (*tawakkul*). Teachers repeatedly cited verses such as *"Indeed, my prayer, my rites of sacrifice, my living and my dying are for Allah, Lord of the worlds"* (Qur'an, 6:162) as their foundational framework for integrating spiritual practices within their profession. Sub-themes such as "Teaching as an Amanah (Trust)," "Prophetic Models of Compassion," and "Prayer as Pedagogical Praxis" illustrate that their motivation stems from a blend of spiritual accountability and professional ethics. These insights strongly align with Islamic educational philosophy, which emphasizes the role of the teacher not just as an instructor, but as a moral and spiritual guide (Halstead, 2007; Al-Attas, 1980).

This discussion connects well with the study's theoretical framework, which drew upon Islamic epistemology, Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986), and concepts of spiritual intelligence. The Qur'anic worldview provided the ontological foundation for understanding prayer as an active force with both seen and unseen implications. Social Cognitive Theory was

useful in conceptualizing how teachers' beliefs (cognition), prayers (behavior), and classroom interactions (environment) influence each other in a cycle of reciprocal determinism. Prayer in this model is not merely a passive act but a socially embedded, intentional behavior that shapes expectations, reinforces emotional resilience, and cultivates hope elements widely acknowledged in educational psychology as crucial for academic success (Schunk et al., 2022).

This discussion revealed that while empirical literature has examined the impact of mindfulness, teacher-student relationships, and positive teacher expectations on academic outcomes, the unique contribution of *silent prayer*, particularly from an Islamic Qur'anic framework, has been underexplored. This research helps fill this gap by offering empirical evidence, grounded in qualitative interviews, on how spiritual acts serve as invisible scaffolding in educational settings. It builds on existing studies in spiritual leadership (Fry & Cohen, 2009) and religious motivation in education (Baumeister & Vohs, 2021), but adds a distinctive layer by examining the nuanced and faith-driven motivations of Muslim teachers within a specific socio-religious context. Participants described the act of silent prayer as an extension of *niyyah* (intention) and part of their *ibadah* (worship), which further blurs the line between secular and sacred tasks. Their statements highlighted that praying for students is not just a ritual but a dynamic, intentional effort to spiritually uplift them, especially those facing psychological, social, or academic challenges. Teachers perceived that their prayers often coincided with observable changes in students' behavior, focus, or motivation, even though these effects were not quantifiable in empirical terms. These experiences represent what Islamic educational philosophy terms as *barakah* a divine blessing that enhances effort beyond its material measure.

Another noteworthy point raised during the discussion was the emotional and moral accountability teachers felt when students underperformed or faced distress. They felt that their role extended beyond pedagogy to *du'a*, seeking divine facilitation for their students' progress. This moral imperative, grounded in Qur'anic injunctions and prophetic teachings, shaped their daily practices. Many referenced Prophet Muhammad's ﷺ supplications for his Ummah as a model for their own spiritual engagements with students. However, this practice remains underrepresented in mainstream educational discourse. While Western educational paradigms focus heavily on evidence-based strategies, measurable interventions, and standardized assessment, the findings of this study suggest that culturally rooted spiritual practices can have significant emotional and pedagogical value. Teachers' silent prayers rooted in deep faith and ethical concern may be conceptualized as part of a broader framework of culturally relevant pedagogy and spiritual care in education.

This study also encourages the reevaluation of how educational success is defined. Teachers in this study viewed success not solely in terms of grades or standardized achievement but in terms of students' character development, emotional well-being, and inner peace. These elements are closely aligned with the Islamic holistic view of *tarbiyah* (nurturing), which includes intellectual, spiritual, moral, and emotional development. This research findings reflect broader implications for educational policy and teacher training. If teachers' spiritual practices such as silent prayers are found to enhance their emotional resilience and contribute to a more caring educational environment, then these practices deserve greater attention in teacher education programs, particularly in contexts where faith is a dominant cultural force. However, such

inclusion must be navigated with sensitivity to religious pluralism, professional boundaries, and the secular framework of public education.

This research has contributed to the emerging literature on faith and education by offering a Qur'an-centric perspective on how silent spiritual acts can intersect with educational outcomes. It provides both empirical and theoretical contributions, opening up new possibilities for understanding how spiritual practices can be meaningfully integrated into educational discourse without compromising academic integrity or professional ethics. The impact of teachers' silent prayers on students' academic performance though subtle and often hidden emerges as a powerful, value-driven dimension of teaching. This research elevates the act of prayer from a private ritual to a pedagogical intervention deeply embedded in moral commitment, professional identity, and spiritual accountability. Through their prayers, teachers not only teach but also spiritually advocate for their students, drawing upon a divine reservoir of hope, mercy, and guidance. While further research is needed to explore these dynamics in broader and more diverse educational settings, this study lays the groundwork for future scholarship that honors the spiritual dimensions of teaching and recognizes the sacred aspirations that often accompany the act of education.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

Based on the findings and detailed thematic analysis of the research, several critical recommendations are proposed. These recommendations aim to inform educators, policymakers, and stakeholders within the field of education, particularly those interested in integrating spiritual dimensions such as silent prayers into teaching practices, grounded in Qur'anic teachings.

1. Educational institutions should acknowledge and respect the personal spiritual practices of teachers, including silent prayers. While the act of prayer is private and spiritual, its impact according to the narratives collected extends to students' academic and moral development. Therefore, it is recommended that: School leadership promotes a supportive environment that respects teachers' rights to silent prayer without imposing religious rituals. Training sessions or workshops should include the holistic dimensions of education, including the emotional and spiritual well-being of educators and learners.
2. Teacher education programs should be enhanced to integrate Islamic spiritual ethics and Qur'anic perspectives on education. The findings indicate that teachers consciously align their prayers with specific Qur'anic teachings such as Tawakkul (trust in Allah), Ikhlas (sincerity), and Barakah (divine blessings). Therefore: Pre-service and in-service training modules may include segments on Qur'anic reflections in teaching. Teacher mentors should guide novice teachers on how to balance spiritual practices with professional ethics in a multi-faith or secular schooling context.
3. The research highlighted that silent prayers serve as a motivational and psychological support for teachers, especially during academic challenges. Faith-based reflection encourages perseverance, sincerity, and patience. Thus: Schools should create reflection spaces or quiet corners where teachers may meditate, reflect, or offer silent prayers. Monthly or quarterly faith-based reflective meetings (non-obligatory) may be held for

teachers to share how spiritual practices influence their classroom efforts and student rapport.

4. Curriculum designers should explore holistic models that incorporate spiritual, emotional, intellectual, and moral aspects of education. Given that many teachers pray for students' knowledge ('Ilm), discipline (Adab), and success (Falah), it becomes essential that curriculum objectives include moral-spiritual development. Therefore: Curriculum and instruction should not be limited to cognitive outcomes but should encompass character development through Islamic ethical lenses. Qur'anic values that promote knowledge, compassion, and mutual respect should be subtly embedded in lesson plans and moral education programs.
5. Teachers often pray not just for students' academic results but also for their moral and spiritual well-being. Collaboration with parents can amplify the effects of such intentions. Thus: Parents should be sensitized to the moral objectives of teachers through school communication or parent-teacher meetings. Parents and teachers can mutually discuss values such as respect, empathy, and diligence, which are reinforced through spiritual means including prayer

## 5.5 References

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