



Ibn Bajjah's Concept of Solitude as a Foundation for Moral Education: A Philosophical Analysis

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Abstract

This study explores how the concept of solitude in Ibn Bājjah's philosophy can be utilized as an educational instrument to cultivate moral character and ethical integrity. It argues that Ibn Bājjah's notion of solitude does not imply total isolation, but rather a process of introspection and self-discipline essential for strengthening reason and attaining moral virtue. Employing a qualitative approach and a descriptive-analytical method of literature review, this research finds that solitude encourages individuals to liberate themselves from the distractions of the material world in order to focus on intellectual and spiritual development. The significance of this study lies in its relevance to the challenges of contemporary Islamic education, in which the overwhelming flow of information and constant social interaction often erode the space for personal reflection. This study offers a theoretical framework for character education rooted in the Islamic intellectual tradition, highlighting the importance of self-development and moral autonomy as foundational elements in the formation of the complete human being (*al-insān al-kāmil*). Thus, the study contributes meaningfully to the discourse on moral philosophy within Islamic education by presenting a fresh perspective that bridges classical intellectual heritage with modern educational needs.

Keywords: Islamic Education, Solitude, Morality, Ibn Bājjah

INTRODUCTION

Solitude is often perceived negatively in society, frequently associated with the avoidance of social interaction, which is considered essential for an individual's psychological well-being. This perception has developed within social contexts that

emphasize the importance of interpersonal relationships and social integration. However, in Islamic philosophy, particularly in the thought of Ibn Bajja, solitude possesses a more complex dimension.

Ibn Bajja views solitude not as an escape or social isolation but as a means to cultivate the intellect and attain moral perfection. In his perspective, solitude serves as a pathway for intellectual development and the cultivation of virtue. During solitude, individuals have the opportunity for introspection and to test the capacity of their intellect, enabling them to comprehend the truth and achieve a better life, both personally and socially (Hanif, 2019). Ibn Bajja regards solitude as a crucial tool for the development of reason and moral excellence. Through solitude, one can engage in self-reflection, sharpen intellectual faculties, and apprehend truth. This process not only fosters personal improvement but also positively contributes to social life.

Solitude is a vehicle for developing virtue and attaining happiness through intellectual and moral enhancement (Al-Shaar, 2015). Therefore, it is important to delve deeper into Ibn Bajja's conception of solitude and its implications within the moral context. This moral perfection encompasses intellectual independence, self-awareness, and wisdom (*hikmah*). Individuals who have reached this level are capable of thinking and acting based on principles of rationality, unperturbed by emotions or worldly interests. Furthermore, they possess a profound understanding of life's purpose and their relationship with God. This perfection not only grants inner tranquility but also positions the individual as a role model in societal life. This view is reflected in his work *Tadbīr al-Mutawahhid*, which emphasizes the importance of moral virtue through reflection and intellectual development.

The concept of solitude in Ibn Bajja's philosophy has been the subject of significant scholarly inquiry, with previous studies identifying several key aspects of his thought.

First, some studies focus on the interpretation of the term *mutawahhid* (the solitary individual). Adamson (2016), in his comprehensive book on the history of Islamic philosophy, explains that Ibn Bajja regards solitude as an ethical and epistemological necessity. He argues that in a corrupt or imperfect society—what Ibn Bajja describes as a "wild plant"—the philosopher must intellectually withdraw from prevailing erroneous views. Thus, solitude is a prerequisite for the development of theoretical intellect and the attainment of truth.

Second, other research highlights the ethical and political implications of this concept. Butterworth (2001), in his analysis of the political thought of Islamic philosophers, emphasizes that the *mutawahhid* is not an ascetic who flees from the world. Instead, he is a moral leader who, through self-discipline, manages and governs himself. His solitude is an internal process that shapes him into an individual capable of acting rationally, unaffected by passions or public opinion. This indicates that solitude is a means to achieve moral virtue, which ultimately benefits the community as a whole.

Third, several scholars have compared Ibn Bajja's thought with that of other philosophers. Fakhry (2004), in his monumental work, emphasizes that Ibn Bajja's philosophy serves as a response to al-Farabi's ideal political theory. While al-Farabi posits that happiness can only be achieved in a "perfect city," Ibn Bajja offers a practical solution for philosophers living in imperfect societies. Solitude becomes a pragmatic strategy that enables individuals to attain happiness and perfection even amidst adverse social conditions.

Although previous studies have elaborated on the concept of solitude in Ibn Bajja's philosophy, there remain limitations in their analyses, particularly regarding the direct

implications of this concept for education and the development of individual morality. Existing research tends to focus predominantly on its philosophical and political dimensions, with insufficient exploration of its practical relevance in character formation and intellectual autonomy within educational contexts.

Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by conducting an in-depth analysis of the concept of solitude in Ibn Bajja's philosophy and its relevance to the development of individual morality in educational settings. Employing a qualitative approach and descriptive method, this research is expected to contribute to a broader understanding of the positive role of solitude in moral development, which may serve as a foundation for improving curricula and educational approaches that emphasize introspection and intellectual independence.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilizes a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical method. According to Ibrahim, qualitative research involves a worldview, assumptions, beliefs, concepts, propositions, or perceptions related to naturalistic inquiry, subjective approaches, as well as interpretative and contextual investigation. Analysis, meanwhile, entails a dialogical process among data, theory, and interpretation (Apjan, S. S., 2019). In line with this, the researcher analyzes the concept of solitude in Ibn Bajja's thought. The qualitative approach was selected to gain a profound understanding of Ibn Bajja's perspective on solitude as a means for moral development.

The research technique employed in this article is library research, whereby the researcher collects and analyzes relevant literature related to the subject matter. Data collection involves an in-depth comprehension of theories associated with Ibn Bajja's philosophy concerning the concepts of solitude and morality. Through this methodology, the study aims to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of solitude in Ibn Bajja's philosophy and its impact on morality within the framework of Islamic philosophy.

IBN BAJJA AND HIS PHILOSOPHICAL FRAMEWORK

Islamic philosophy, as a tradition of thought rooted in the teachings of Islam, has produced diverse perspectives on the nature of humanity, the purpose of life, and the path to attaining true happiness. One of the major contributors to this intellectual legacy is Ibn Bajja (Avempace), a prominent thinker from 11th-century Andalusia. Ibn Bajja is renowned not only for his contributions to logic and metaphysics but also for his profound reflections on moral philosophy and the concept of happiness (Hanif, 2019).

His full name was Abu Bakr Muhammad Ibn al-Sayigh. Born in Zaragoza in the 11th century, Ibn Bajja was a Muslim philosopher and scientist. Although details of his birth and early life remain uncertain, it is known that he spent time in Seville, Granada, and Fez. Ibn Bajja is recognized for his contributions across various disciplines, including medicine, astronomy, and philosophy. His work played a crucial role in integrating Aristotelian thought into the Islamic intellectual tradition, significantly influencing scholars in both the Islamic world and Europe (Zaini, 2015).

Ibn Bajja authored several significant works, including *Tardiyyah*, a collection of laudatory poems; *Kitab al-Nafs*, which addresses the nature of the soul; and *Risalat al-Ittisal*, which explores the human connection with the Active Intellect ('Aql al-Fa'al). Other important texts include *Risalat al-Wada'*, which discusses the Prime Mover, human beings, nature, and medicine. His most well-known work is *Tadbir al-Mutawahhid*, a treatise on ethics, politics, and the individual's (al-Mutawahhid) pursuit of happiness by

distancing oneself from the moral decay of society. These writings collectively reflect Ibn Bajja's philosophical engagement with ethics, metaphysics, and the relationship between the individual, nature, and society (Barhami, 2024).

In addition to his status as a philosopher, Ibn Bajja was also a scientist proficient in multiple fields, including medicine, astronomy, music, and mathematics. At that time, science and philosophy were not considered separate disciplines; studying one often involved engagement with the other. Mastery in one area typically required a broad understanding of interconnected fields. Ibn Bajja demonstrated exceptional intellectual capacity in this regard, exemplifying the deep interrelation between philosophy and science during his era (Zar, 2010).

Ibn Bajja was a Muslim philosopher who developed and introduced Aristotelian philosophy to both the Islamic and Western worlds. Although many of his works remained incomplete, his contribution was significant in filtering and interpreting Aristotelian thought within the framework of Islamic philosophy. Influenced by al-Farabi and Ibn Sina, he synthesized their ideas while placing a strong emphasis on the role of reason (*'aql*) in attaining happiness and living a morally virtuous life. Despite the limited number of his completed writings, his role as a bridge between Greek philosophy and the Western intellectual tradition remains vital—particularly in integrating rationalist thought into Islamic philosophical discourse.

This study also aims to elaborate on Ibn Bajja's thought concerning the concept of solitude (*al-tawāḥḥud*) as a path to achieving moral perfection. His most notable work on this subject is *Tadbīr al-Mutawahhid*, in which he articulates that solitude is not inherently negative, nor does it imply a rejection of society. Rather, it is better understood as a process of *muhasabah*—critical self-reflection—through which the individual prepares and refines the self toward a higher moral and intellectual state.

IBN BĀJJAH'S CONCEPT OF SOLITUDE

In discussing the solitary individual (*al-mutawahhid*), Ibn Bājjah begins by outlining the concept of *tadbīr al-mutawahhid*, which refers to the deliberate governance of one's actions in order to achieve a specific and higher end. In this framework, *tadbīr* is defined as the conscious regulation of human behavior aimed at attaining a state of perfection. This process involves rational capacity—unique to human beings—and free will (*ikhtiyār*), which distinguishes humans from animals. *Tadbīr* encompasses two dimensions: in its general sense, it refers to all human actions governed by reason; in its particular sense, it refers to individual self-regulation for the purpose of achieving moral and intellectual perfection (Zaini, A., 2015). In essence, Ibn Bājjah emphasizes that through reason and autonomous choice, human beings can orient their actions toward noble goals. Within this context, solitude represents a state of disciplined self-direction aimed at intellectual and moral excellence. In other words, *al-mutawahhid* refers to one who withdraws from social distractions in order to pursue understanding and wisdom.

As previously mentioned, Ibn Bājjah does not view solitude as a form of escapism or mere social withdrawal, but rather as an intellectual liberation and moral refinement necessary for attaining true happiness (Hanif, 2019). He considers solitude a positive and productive condition, not merely a rejection of society or a sign of alienation. Solitude (*'uzlah*) serves as a path for individuals to reach intellectual and spiritual perfection. For Ibn Bājjah, society in his time was largely corrupt and posed obstacles to the pursuit of the highest human purpose—intellectual happiness and connection with the Active Intellect (*al-'Aql al-Fā'il*). Thus, he advocates for intellectual—not necessarily

physical—isolation from the morally detrimental influences of society (Hanif, 2019). This solitude is not total seclusion, but a mental and ethical disposition in which the individual remains in society while remaining unaffected by its corrupt values. In this sense, the solitary individual continues to play an active role in society but remains inwardly focused on the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom.

For Ibn Bājjah, solitude provides the intellectual space needed for deep, independent reflection, free from social pressures and dominant norms. Moreover, it serves as a means for cultivating moral integrity and personal wisdom. This process is essential to the attainment of genuine happiness, which he sees not merely as physical or material, but also as intellectual and spiritual (Hanif, 2019). Solitude, then, becomes a condition in which reason guides moral action, particularly important in flawed societies where dominant norms often contradict higher moral values (Ferdawani, F., 2021).

Ibn Bājjah's vision presents a synthesis between intellect ('aql) and heart (qalb), encapsulated in two interrelated dimensions of solitude: 'uzlah 'aqliyyah (rational solitude) and 'uzlah šūfiyyah (spiritual solitude). 'Uzlah 'aqliyyah emphasizes rational and cognitive development, bearing similarities to Western psychological approaches, whereas 'uzlah šūfiyyah highlights inner purification and the heart's orientation toward God. Both forms aim at achieving moral and spiritual excellence (Shihab, M. Q., 2018).

The term 'uzlah derives from the Arabic root 'azala ya'zilu, meaning "to withdraw" or "to distance oneself." In the context of Sufism and Islamic philosophy, it refers to a conscious detachment from the distractions of society. For Sufi thinkers, 'uzlah is a means of purifying the heart from worldly heedlessness and drawing nearer to the Divine through introspection and self-discipline, in order to attain inner sanctity and spiritual proximity (Ibn 'Aṭā'illāh in Shihab, 2018).

Ibn Bājjah's notion of solitude, however, is not about physical separation from society but rather intellectual and ethical disengagement from its corruptive influences. A person who practices 'uzlah may still interact with others, but must maintain moral restraint and avoid being drawn into the moral decay prevalent in society (Hanafi in Zaini, 2015). The emphasis lies in the individual's ability to maintain internal discipline and avoid the negative moral trends of their environment.

Furthermore, Ibn Bājjah highlights the importance of moral self-cultivation and internalizing sound ethical values. This implies that the solitary individual is not merely disengaged from society, but is actively engaged in personal development, preserving moral integrity, and serving as a moral exemplar for others. If individuals are able to attain this level of awareness and self-control, society as a whole will benefit and progress toward moral perfection (Zaini, 2015).

In Ibn Bājjah's view, individual moral development is more urgent than social reform. Before attempting to improve society, one must first address the moral instability of the individual. Morality, he argues, begins with the governance of the soul (Anshori, 2011).

In other words, the concept of uzlah refers to a form of constructive seclusion, whereby an individual distances themselves from harmful influences while remaining within society to serve as a positive example and contribute to social improvement. The ultimate aim is to shape individuals who are wise, just, and capable of safeguarding themselves from the moral corruption around them. According to Ibn Bājjah, if everyone were able to embody this principle, society as a whole would inevitably undergo significant transformation for the better.

THE ROLE OF REASON AND FREE WILL IN SOLITUDE

According to Ibn Bājjah, reason (‘aql) and free will (ikhtiyār) play a pivotal role in the state of solitude (mutawahhid). Reason serves as a rational instrument that guides human beings in choosing actions aligned with the ultimate aim of life—namely, happiness and perfection. Free will, or the capacity to choose, enables individuals to consciously regulate their actions based on rational deliberation. In other words, human action governed by choice and reason constitutes a defining characteristic of solitude in Ibn Bājjah’s philosophical perspective (Ferdiawan, F., 2021).

This underscores the essential distinction between humans and animals: humans rely on their intellect and volition in navigating life. Ibn Bājjah emphasizes that true happiness can only be attained through a life structured by rational principles—something made possible only through the deliberate use of reason and free will to orient one’s actions toward a higher goal.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF SOLITUDE FOR SOCIAL LIFE

Solitude (mutawahhid) enables individuals to distance themselves from negative influences within society, particularly in environments marked by moral decay and ignorance. This withdrawal is vital for preventing individuals from falling into patterns of behavior that corrode moral and intellectual integrity (Ferdiawan, F., 2021). However, Ibn Bājjah does not advocate for complete social withdrawal. While one may choose a life of solitude, it remains essential to maintain meaningful, selective engagement with society—especially in ways that are morally constructive, such as sharing knowledge or participating in ethical communal activities.

Therefore, solitude in this context does not equate to absolute social isolation; rather, it involves the intentional regulation of social interactions. It allows individuals to focus on self-cultivation through intellect and morality, which, in turn, can positively influence societal development. Those who attain a degree of perfection through reason and ethical action are better equipped to make meaningful contributions to their social environments.

Solitude thus functions as a means of preserving personal integrity, shielding oneself from the corrupting influences of an imperfect society, while still enabling one to contribute positively when appropriate. In a modern context, Ibn Bājjah’s view suggests that withdrawing from negative social influences can help individuals safeguard their moral and spiritual integrity amid a world increasingly prone to distraction and immorality.

For Ibn Bājjah, uzlah does not merely entail physical withdrawal but also involves mental and emotional detachment from detrimental social values (Budiyanto & Hasan, M., 2022). This concept remains highly relevant for individuals seeking to preserve religious and moral values in the face of contemporary societal challenges. However, if misapplied in today’s social landscape, uzlah may lead to feelings of alienation or isolation, particularly in societies where social connectivity and collective responsibility are strongly emphasized.

Thus, the social implication of Ibn Bājjah’s conception of uzlah is that morally driven solitude can serve as a powerful tool for preserving ethical integrity. Yet, if taken to extremes, it also carries the risk of social alienation, potentially undermining the healthy social bonds necessary for communal well-being.

THE CONCEPT OF SOLITUDE AS A PATH TOWARD MORALITY

In his seminal work *Tadbīr al-Mutawahhid*, Ibn Bājja explains that solitude constitutes the first essential step for individuals seeking to attain moral perfection and true happiness. He asserts that genuine happiness cannot be achieved through mere physical or material pleasures, but rather through intellectual development and moral refinement. Solitude provides the opportunity for introspection, control of the lower desires, and the enhancement of rational capacity (Hanif, 2019). In other words, by distancing oneself from the distractions of the external world, the individual is better able to sharpen the intellect and pursue higher knowledge, free from the often deceptive or misleading influence of society.

In *Tadbīr al-Mutawahhid*, Ibn Bājja further emphasizes that solitude enables the individual to preserve the purity of thought and attain a deeper understanding of the self, God, and the cosmos. The highest form of happiness, he argues, is realized through the union between the Active Intellect (divine knowledge) and the Acquired Intellect, thus combining intellectual achievement with spiritual closeness to the Divine (Hanif, 2019).

He also presents the theory of *al-ittisāl*, which posits that humans can connect with the Active Intellect through knowledge and the unique human faculties. To reach the pinnacle of knowledge, one must exert serious effort, whether through engagement with society or through solitude. In contrast to *al-Ghazālī*, who regarded divine inspiration (*ilhām*) as the most trustworthy and superior source of knowledge, Ibn Bājja criticizes this view. He maintains that the highest form of knowledge is attained when an individual purifies themselves from the moral corruption and inferiority present in society (Julham, M., 2023). By withdrawing into solitude and utilizing reason, one can acquire deeper knowledge and intellectual insight.

Ibn Bājja believes that the *mutawahhid*—the one who isolates themselves—who is connected to the Active Intellect achieves the psychological maturity necessary to grasp universal and spiritual truths. Those who remain bound to the material world cannot hope to effect external transformation without first undergoing internal change. With understanding derived from the Active Intellect, such individuals achieve authentic happiness and become capable of contributing to societal reform grounded in universal goodness. In *Tadbīr al-Mutawahhid*, Ibn Bājja stresses the importance of psychological transformation as a prerequisite for the realization of truth and genuine happiness (Hanif, 2019).

From this, it is evident that Ibn Bājja places great emphasis on internal transformation as the key to attaining true happiness and understanding universal truths. He portrays the *mutawahhid* as an individual who, through connection with the Active Intellect, reaches the psychological maturity required for spiritual and universal insight. According to him, external change in society can only occur once individuals have first reformed their internal states. With such understanding, the *mutawahhid* not only achieves authentic happiness but is also able to foster positive change in society based on universal moral principles.

Ibn Bājja's thought reflects the recognition that human beings, as inherently social creatures, cannot live entirely without the assistance of others. Within communal life, individuals must act wisely, choose what is good, and avoid what is harmful. By employing rational thought, humans are capable of weighing options before taking action, ensuring that their decisions align with the pursuit of virtue and higher moral aims (Pagesti, H. W. & Hidayat, R., 2023). Although Ibn Bājja underscores the importance of solitude in the attainment of personal happiness, he also acknowledges the social nature

of human existence. In this context, solitude does not imply the abandonment of social responsibility or the avoidance of interaction with others. On the contrary, it is intended to cultivate a morally upright character that ultimately enriches the quality of social engagement.

Solitude should lead individuals toward heightened moral awareness, which is then reflected in their wise social participation. A person who has honed their intellect and attained virtue through solitude will be better equipped to engage with others in a just, wise, and morally elevated manner. Thus, the happiness achieved through solitude ultimately contributes to social well-being, as such individuals bring positive contributions to their communities.

The concept of *uzlah* (solitude) as a path toward morality is further explored by emphasizing its role in preserving faith and moral integrity in an era of globalization marked by temptations and ethical challenges. In modern contexts, *uzlah* is understood as an effort to distance oneself from harmful influences that may corrupt moral values, such as vice and reprehensible social behavior. However, the form of *uzlah* being referred to here is not limited to physical withdrawal, but also includes inner seclusion (*uzlah bāṭiniyyah*), which involves mental and emotional detachment aimed at purifying the heart from negative traits such as arrogance, envy, and hypocrisy (Budiyanto & Hasan, M., 2022).

Budiyanto also cites the views of several scholars who consider *uzlah* highly relevant in today's world—especially in confronting the ongoing crises of morality and faith within society. Through *uzlah*, individuals can focus more intently on worship and spiritual purification, shielding themselves from the detrimental influences of their surroundings. It is seen as a method for preserving noble character, maintaining inner tranquility, and achieving spiritual peace.

Nevertheless, the article also highlights potential drawbacks (*maḍārr*) of excessive *uzlah*, such as social isolation that may hinder learning, interpersonal interaction, and meaningful contributions to the collective good. Therefore, Budiyanto recommends that *uzlah* be practiced in a balanced manner—integrating spiritual life with social responsibility—so as not to fall into a form of solitude that is ultimately harmful.

The concept of *uzlah* in the thought of Ibn Bājjah thus represents a means of attaining moral perfection through an approach that integrates intellect and the heart (Shihab, M. Q., 2018). The steps to achieve this ideal are elaborated in detail in the thesis *Konsep Uzlah dalam Perspektif Ibnu Bajjah* by Shihab (2018), outlining a structured path of spiritual and intellectual refinement through balanced solitude.

The Purification of the Soul through Sufi Solitude (*Uzlah Sufiyah*)

Uzlah sufiyah centers on the purification of the heart through a spiritual approach aimed at drawing the individual closer to God. In this form of solitude, a person deliberately withdraws from worldly distractions and immoral influences in order to deepen their connection with the Divine. This withdrawal is not merely physical, but also involves deep inner contemplation (*tafakkur*), through which the individual reflects on personal shortcomings, sins, and spiritual weaknesses. Such introspection gives rise to genuine repentance and a sincere desire for moral reform. Through acts of worship, remembrance of God (*dhikr*), and continuous self-reflection, the individual cultivates spiritual virtues, sharpens moral awareness, and nurtures a soul increasingly inclined toward righteousness.

Rational Solitude (Uzlah ‘Aqliyah) for Cognitive Development

Uzlah ‘aqliyah focuses on the intellectual dimension of solitude, emphasizing the control and refinement of rational thought. In this practice, the individual engages in deep philosophical reflection and analytical reasoning as a means to develop the Active Intellect, a central concept in Ibn Bājja’s epistemology. Reason becomes a guiding force, and knowledge serves as the substance through which one preserves the clarity and light of the intellect. In this form of solitude, the pursuit of knowledge is not merely academic but existential, aiming to align the intellect with the heart. Such harmony between reason and emotion ensures that individuals do not become detached or purely rationalistic, but instead act with moral sensitivity and philosophical depth.

The Aims of Uzlah

The ultimate objective of uzlah is the attainment of a purified soul (nafs zakiyyah)—a soul that has been morally refined and is capable of embodying noble character. Through inner purification, individuals are guided to become exemplary figures who can positively influence their communities. Moreover, uzlah serves to cultivate spiritual intelligence by instilling Sufi values that nurture empathy, humility, and a sense of divine purpose. This, in turn, allows individuals to become a source of benefit to others. When properly understood and practiced, solitude elevates one’s spiritual and moral stature, both in the eyes of God and in the perception of fellow human beings. Thus, whether approached from a spiritual (sufiyah) or rational (aqliyah) perspective, uzlah offers a disciplined path toward happiness by perfecting the soul through moral excellence.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE CONCEPT OF SOLITUDE FOR MORALITY IN CONTEMPORARY EDUCATION

Ibn Bājja’s conception of solitude (uzlah) holds profound implications for moral development in contemporary educational contexts. Although the historical and cultural circumstances of his time differ from those of the present, the principles he put forth remain highly relevant and can be effectively applied to address current moral and social challenges within modern education.

1. The Importance of Self-Reflection in the Learning Process

Self-reflection is a fundamental component of holistic educational development. Through the process of introspection, students are encouraged not merely to focus on academic performance or content mastery, but also to critically engage with their lived experiences, evaluate their actions, and understand the broader moral and social consequences of those actions. This process fosters the cultivation of resilient character and deeper wisdom. In modern educational contexts, which often prioritize cognitive achievement and technical competence, creating space for reflection is crucial. As Peter Adamson (2016) suggests, incorporating self-reflection into educational practice helps learners develop the moral discernment necessary to make decisions that are not only intellectually sound but also ethically responsible.

This view is strongly aligned with the thought of Ibn Bājja, particularly through his concept of uzlah (constructive solitude), which he defines as a deliberate withdrawal from harmful societal influences in order to purify the soul, strengthen the intellect, and achieve moral perfection. For Ibn Bājja, self-reflection is an essential pathway to attaining true happiness and moral integrity, as only through deep contemplation and detachment from distractions can one come to fully recognize the essence of the self and the Divine (Hanif, 2019).

Moreover, Syamsul Kurniawan, in his book *Pendidikan Karakter* (Character Education, 2013), underscores that character education must go beyond cognitive instruction. It should involve the internalization of moral values through habituation and role modeling that shape the learner's personality holistically. He emphasizes that moral character must be cultivated through continuous interaction between personal experience and a conscious commitment to ethical values. For Kurniawan, self-awareness and reflective practices are essential tools for nurturing moral identity, especially across family, school, and societal settings.

By integrating the perspectives of Ibn Bājja, Peter Adamson, and Syamsul Kurniawan, it becomes evident that self-reflection is not a mere contemplative activity but a foundational element in moral character formation. When reflection is combined with value internalization and the sharpening of intellect, students are better equipped to become individuals who are not only intellectually capable but also morally resilient and socially constructive. In contemporary character education, self-reflection acts as a bridge toward the development of a well-rounded individual—one who excels academically while also demonstrating wisdom and social responsibility.

2. Developing Self-Control

In today's world—where digital technology, social media, and consumer temptations are omnipresent—self-control emerges as an essential life skill. Ibn Bājja's emphasis on the discipline of desires (*nafs*) can be integrated into education to help students cultivate delayed gratification, sound judgment, and ethical behavior. Modern education must stress the importance of self-regulation in academic, emotional, and social domains. In academic terms, this includes developing study discipline, effective time management, and resistance to procrastination. Socially and emotionally, students are taught to regulate emotions, engage respectfully, and appreciate diversity (Dunlop, 1955).

By mastering self-control, students are better equipped to navigate modern life with wisdom and accountability. They are empowered to prioritize long-term goals over short-term satisfaction, avoid impulsive actions, and maintain healthy social interactions. This capacity contributes not only to their personal well-being but also to the moral stability of society. An education that fosters self-regulation nurtures individuals who act with responsibility and integrity in the face of external pressures and internal urges alike.

3. Collective Morality and Education as a Means for Social Well-Being

Morality, in Ibn Bājja's view, is not confined to the individual but extends to the collective good. Within contemporary education, this insight underscores the necessity of teaching students to care about social welfare and to act for the common good. Education should not only cultivate academic and cognitive skills but also instill a sense of civic responsibility, social empathy, and ethical engagement. A curriculum that highlights social ethics and sustainability can inspire students to think beyond themselves and commit to meaningful social contributions (Opwis & Reisman, 2012).

Such moral-oriented education represents a shift from a purely academic paradigm to a more holistic model that embraces character development and collective well-being. It prepares individuals to respond to global issues—such as inequality, climate change, and injustice—not only with knowledge but with ethical commitment. In doing so, it nurtures graduates who are not merely professionally successful, but who also contribute to a more just, compassionate, and sustainable society.

4. Educating for Wisdom in a Globalized World

Globalization brings about new challenges in education, especially as interactions between diverse cultures and value systems intensify. Ibn Bājja's emphasis on solitude,

introspection, and the pursuit of wisdom offers a relevant framework for teaching students how to navigate cultural plurality with respect and discernment. Education that fosters global wisdom and inclusive ethics prepares learners to engage with a complex, multicultural world.

Ibn Bājjah's model of cultivating wisdom through internal reflection supports the development of intercultural understanding and moral sensitivity. In the face of increasing cultural tensions, students must be equipped not only with academic competence but also with the capacity to appreciate diversity and collaborate across cultural lines (Hanif, A., 2019). Educators should help learners view cultural difference as a strength rather than an obstacle. When global wisdom and inclusive ethics are embedded in curricula, students are prepared to contribute meaningfully to a pluralistic and interconnected world.

This form of education fosters not only open-mindedness and respect for difference but also the ability to live and work constructively with people from various cultural and ideological backgrounds. It strengthens their capacity to adapt, empathize, and resolve conflict peacefully. As a result, education guided by Ibn Bājjah's principles can nurture morally grounded individuals who are prepared to meet global challenges and actively promote a more harmonious and just world (Papadopoulou et al., 2022).

In light of Ibn Bājjah's thought, the integration of self-reflection, self-control, wisdom, and social responsibility into contemporary education offers a holistic framework for moral and intellectual development. Such a curriculum enables students not only to acquire knowledge and skills but also to develop the ethical awareness necessary to address personal, social, and global challenges of the contemporary era. Referring to the thought of Ibn Bājjah, the integration of the principles of self-reflection, self-control, wisdom, and social responsibility into modern educational curricula can foster a truly holistic approach. Self-reflection encourages students to evaluate their actions; self-control teaches them to regulate emotions and impulses; wisdom enables them to make ethical decisions; and social responsibility cultivates an awareness of their role in contributing to the well-being of society. Such a curriculum equips students with both the skills and values necessary to navigate the complex moral, social, and personal challenges of the globalized era.

CONCLUSION

The implications of Ibn Bājjah's thought on morality in the contemporary era are highly relevant, particularly in addressing the moral and existential challenges faced by individuals and modern societies. Solitude and self-reflection emerge as essential keys to cultivating wisdom, self-restraint, and a deeper moral consciousness—qualities that can be translated into constructive social action. Through the wisdom gained in solitude, individuals are better equipped to contribute to societal well-being and help shape a more just and harmonious world. Ibn Bājjah's emphasis on solitude underscores the importance of self-reflection as a means of restraining one's desires and refining the intellect. Solitude enables individuals to elevate their moral standards and make wiser decisions in their social lives, thereby avoiding moral deviation and enhancing the quality of interpersonal relationships. Furthermore, a significant moral implication is that an individual who attains happiness through solitude tends to develop greater empathy toward others. This is because solitude does not merely foster personal growth, but also leads to a heightened moral awareness. Thus, morality in Ibn Bājjah's perspective is not limited to proper social behavior; it is deeply rooted in self-mastery and the realization of true happiness. This study is highly relevant for exploring Ibn Bājjah's perspective on the concept of solitude

and its application to moral development. It also offers valuable contributions to the broader body of intellectual and philosophical discourse.

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