

Mental Health from al-Balkhi's Perspective and Its Implications for Character Education in the Digital Age

Kesehatan Mental Perspektif Abu Zaid al-Balkhi dan Implikasinya terhadap Pendidikan Karakter

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Abstract

*Mental health is the cornerstone of developing a well-rounded and high-quality character, especially in the digital age, which is marked by social media pressure, instant gratification expectations, and identity crises. This study aims to analyze the thoughts of Sheikh Abu Zaid al-Balkhi in his book *Maṣāliḥ al-Abdān wa al-Anfus* (The Well-being of the Body and Soul) and to examine its implications for character education in the digital age. This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach based on library research, with content and discourse analysis of primary texts and contextual data. The findings reveal that al-Balkhi divides mental health into preventive and curative functions, grounded in the balance between physical aspects (*al-abdān*), spiritual aspects (*al-anfus*), rationality, and spirituality. The implications of these findings in humanistic-oriented education encourage the development of empathetic, resilient, and reflective character, as indicated by Maslow's basic needs such as safety, love, self-esteem, and self-actualization. Meanwhile, in a holistic approach, al-Balkhi's thinking aligns with Miller's emphasis on integrative character education, encompassing cognitive, affective, psychomotor, and spiritual aspects, thereby producing intellectually and emotionally balanced character. Indicators include emotional management skills, moral stability, healthy social relationships, and spiritual reflection. The conclusion of this study affirms that al-Balkhi's ideas are highly relevant as a foundation for character education in the digital age, blending classical Islamic approaches and modern psychological theories within a humanistic, holistic educational framework.*

Keywords: Al-Balkhi, digital age, mental health, character education.

Abstrak

Kesehatan mental merupakan fondasi utama dalam pembentukan karakter yang utuh dan berkualitas, terlebih di era digital yang ditandai oleh tekanan media sosial, ekspektasi instan, dan krisis identitas. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pemikiran Syekh Abu Zaid al-Balkhi dalam kitab *Maṣāliḥ al-Abdān wa al-Anfus* (kesejahteraan jasmani dan rohani), serta mengkaji implikasinya terhadap pendidikan karakter di era digital. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif berbasis studi pustaka (*library research*), dengan analisis isi dan wacana terhadap teks primer dan data kontekstual. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa al-Balkhi membagi kesehatan mental ke dalam fungsi preventif dan kuratif yang berlandaskan keseimbangan antara aspek jasmani (*al-abdān*), rohani (*al-anfus*), rasionalitas, dan spiritualitas. Implikasi hasil ini dalam pendidikan berorientasi humanistik mendorong pembentukan karakter empatik, tangguh, dan reflektif, sebagaimana indikator kebutuhan dasar Maslow seperti rasa aman, cinta, harga diri, dan aktualisasi diri. Sementara itu, dalam pendekatan holistik, pemikiran al-Balkhi selaras dengan Miller yang mendorong pendidikan karakter yang integratif, meliputi aspek kognitif, afektif, psikomotorik, dan spiritual sehingga menghasilkan karakter seimbang secara intelektual dan emosional. Indikatornya meliputi kemampuan mengelola emosi, stabilitas moral, relasi sosial sehat, dan refleksi spiritual. Simpulan menunjukkan bahwa pemikiran al-Balkhi sangat relevan sebagai landasan pendidikan karakter di era digital, yang memadukan pendekatan keislaman klasik dan teori psikologi modern dalam kerangka pendidikan yang humanistik dan holistik.

Kata Kunci: Al-Balkhi, era digital, kesehatan mental, pendidikan karakter.

1. Introduction

The development of digital technology has had a significant impact on society's mental health, especially among the younger generation, which is the main user of digital media. The pressure of social media, the demands of self-image, and continuous exposure to negative information contribute to increased stress, anxiety, depression, and identity crises (Sagala et al., 2024). These mental health disorders not only affect individuals but also pose serious challenges for education, especially in the process of shaping students' character. Character education in the digital age is confronted with students' vulnerable psychological conditions, thus requiring an approach that integrates mental strengthening, emotional management, and moral guidance in a sustainable manner.

This phenomenon of mental crisis is even more concerning when linked to the widespread symptoms of moral degradation among students. Digital bullying, gadget addiction, technology abuse, and the increasing number of deviant cases in cyberspace indicate not only weak self-control but also the mental unpreparedness of the digital generation in facing the tide of change. In fact, several cases of suicide among university students in 2023 reveal a deep psychological crisis, not merely academic failure (Setiawan & Setiawan, 2024). In this context, the character education approach implemented so far does not appear to have fully addressed the psychological dimension.

Character education cannot be separated from mental health. Individuals who experience psychological disorders will find it difficult to develop empathy, responsibility, and ethical awareness. Therefore, education oriented towards the formation of true character must begin by strengthening students' mental resilience (Maijuana et al., 2024). However, there are still very few educational models that incorporate psychological and spiritual approaches into concrete learning practices. To address this challenge, it is necessary to rediscover the intellectual heritage of Islam, which has already comprehensively discussed the relationship between the human psyche, spirituality, and morality.

One figure who has made a significant contribution in this field is Abu Zaid al-Balkhi (849–934 M), a classical Muslim thinker known as a pioneer in the study of Islamic mental health. In his monumental work *Maṣāliḥ al-Abdān wa al-Anfus*, al-Balkhi emphasizes the importance of maintaining a balance between physical health (*al-abdan*) and mental health (*al-anfus*) to enable humans to live healthy and meaningful lives (Raudah et al., 2023). Al-Balkhi not only clearly distinguished between physical and mental illness, but also offered a therapeutic approach that encompassed cognitive, spiritual, and emotional dimensions. His views were progressive in that he examined the human psyche as a dynamic entity that could be restored through a therapeutic approach oriented towards mental and character development.

Mental health in al-Balkhi's perspective is also strongly influenced by spirituality. In al-Balkhi's view, spirituality is a transcendent force, a non-material dimension that connects humans with God, which serves to calm the soul, stabilize emotions, and provide meaning in the face of suffering. This is in line with the findings of Waluyojati & Swari (2024), who state that spirituality plays a major role in increasing the mental resilience of Generation Z in facing life's pressures. Spiritual support, such as *zikr*, prayer, and contemplation, can alleviate symptoms of anxiety and depression, as well as protect against extreme actions such as the desire to end one's life. In this context, character education that does not imply spirituality can be said to lack one of the important components in shaping students' holistic personalities.

The contribution of this article is not only to revive al-Balkhi's classical thinking but also to offer a new approach in developing a character education model that is responsive to the mental health crisis in the digital age. Based on these issues, this study aims to analyze the concept of

mental health in Abu Zaid al-Balkhi's thinking, particularly the holistic approach that integrates medical, psychological, and spiritual dimensions, and examine its implications for the development of character education in the digital age. By positioning mental health as the main foundation in the educational process, it is hoped that character education can run more effectively and touch the deepest dimensions of human existence.

Al-Balkhi's thinking also enriches this framework with an Islamic perspective that unites rationality, spirituality, and emotional balance into a single whole. Thus, this article is expected to contribute to the development of a more adaptive, relevant, and solution-oriented character education paradigm amid the increasingly apparent mental crisis in the digital age and the future.

2. Literature Review

Previous studies have shown that mental health issues, particularly among adolescents and university students, are a serious problem that is becoming increasingly relevant amid the dynamics of the digital age. Research conducted by [Karisma et al. \(2024\)](#) discusses the relationship between adolescent mental health, bullying cases, and suicide trends in Indonesia, emphasizing the importance of active community participation in creating an environment that supports mental health. Although it provides an important overview of social factors and preventive intervention strategies, the study has not examined the conceptual dimensions of mental health from the perspective of classical Islamic psychology, particularly that originating with early figures such as Abu Zaid al-Balkhi. Therefore, this article fills this gap by offering an alternative approach based on classical Islamic psychology that places mental health as an integration of medical, psychological, and spiritual aspects, and relates it to the challenges of adolescent mental crisis and character education in the digital age.

Another study conducted by [Fauzan \(2023\)](#) examined Generation Z's response to mental health education through the YouTube channel Satu Persen. The findings of this study indicate that today's young generation has a high level of acceptance of mental health literacy, especially when delivered in socially relevant media and formats. Well-crafted messages and a communicative delivery style are considered effective in shaping new awareness about the importance of mental health. The similarity with this article lies in the effort to improve mental literacy, but the striking difference lies in the theoretical approach. [Fauzan \(2023\)](#) research centers on digital media, while this research highlights al-Balkhi's ideas as the root of alternative thinking in addressing the mental health issues of the current generation.

[Destriawati \(2023\)](#) research also offers an interesting perspective by highlighting Zakiah Daradjat's thoughts on shaping students' religious character through the concept of mental health. In her research, Destriawati explains that the habit of reciting prayers, self-adjustment, education, experience, and harmony between the soul and body are key elements in fostering inner resilience in students. Although using different figures, there are similarities between Daradjat and al-Balkhi's views, particularly in their emphasis on the importance of balancing the spiritual and psychological dimensions in maintaining mental health. However, this article focuses more on the relevance of al-Balkhi's thoughts in responding to character and mental crises in the digital age, not only on the formation of religiosity alone.

A different approach is presented in the study by [Susanto et al. \(2022\)](#), which examines the effectiveness of Hatha Yoga practices in helping final-year students manage stress and pressure while writing their theses during the pandemic. This study shows that physical and meditative approaches can be quite effective alternatives for stress management. Although it does not use an Islamic framework, this study is still thematically relevant to this article, namely in terms of the

importance of maintaining mental balance when facing academic pressure. This article expands the discussion by presenting an approach based on classical Islamic values, particularly through the emotional and spiritual therapy offered by al-Balkhi.

Meanwhile, research by [BR Sembiring \(2015\)](#) highlights the negative impact of digital technology development on the mental health of the younger generation. In his article, Sembiring emphasizes that in order to maintain mental health amid intensive exposure to technology, cross-sector collaboration between the government, educational institutions, families, and the technology industry is needed. This study reinforces the urgency of this article in emphasizing the importance of an integrative approach in addressing the mental health crisis. The difference is that this article takes the perspective of a classical figure, namely al-Balkhi, to develop a character education model responsive to mental pressures in the digital age, while Sembiring highlights aspects of contemporary policy and the social environment

3. Research Methods

This study uses a library research approach with qualitative content analysis of the classic text by Abu Zaid al-Balkhi, *Maṣāliḥ al-Abdān wa al-Anfus*. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to examine the concept of mental health in depth through a systematic review of written sources ([Hakim et al., 2025](#)). This library research was conducted systematically using reading materials, written documents, and scientific references relevant to the study's focus, especially the book *Maṣāliḥ al-Abdān wa al-Anfus* by Abu Zaid al-Balkhi. The approach used was a descriptive qualitative approach, which allowed researchers to examine the deeper meanings and messages of the text, based on the principles of rational logic and objective interpretation of the phenomena studied ([Nurfida et al., 2024](#)). Researchers acted as the main instruments in processing, interpreting, and compiling data systematically.

This diagram shows the methodological stages of qualitative research, based on literature reviews, used in examine the concepts of mental health and character education. The research flow begins with identifying the study's focus, followed by determining the primary and secondary data sources, particularly the book *Maṣāliḥ al-Abdān wa al-Anfus* and relevant supporting literature. The next stage involves critical reading and text selection, data coding, and thematic categorization covering aspects of emotion, fear, panic, and anxiety. The entire process culminates in a systematic conceptual analysis and the formulation of integrated research findings.

The main object of study in this research is the thoughts of Abu Zaid al-Balkhi as expressed in his work *Maṣāliḥ al-Abdān wa al-Anfus*, which is analyzed as the primary source of data in this literature study. This study uses Abu Zaid al-Balkhi's book *Maṣāliḥ al-Abdān wa al-Anfus* as the primary data source, referring to the Arabic edition and Indonesian translation. The Arabic text is used as the main reference, while the translation is used to aid in the interpretation and clarification of terms, as it directly contains the concept of mental health and various approaches offered by al-Balkhi in dealing with mental disorders and strategies for recovery. In addition, secondary data were obtained from various sources in the scientific literature that support the analysis, such as books on Islamic psychology, academic journals, articles, and previous studies relevant to character education and mental health challenges in the digital age. The data collection technique used the documentation method, which involves collecting written information related to the object of study, in both physical and electronic formats ([Wiratomo et al., 2022](#)). The authenticity and relevance of the sources were maintained by selecting credible, up-to-date literature.

In maintaining data validity, this study refers to four criteria of validity according to Lincoln and Guba: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability ([Susanto et al., 2023](#)).

Credibility is achieved through triangulation of sources and analysis techniques involving primary and secondary texts from various scientific fields. Transferability is maintained by providing detailed descriptions of the context, both regarding the historical background of al-Balkhi and the reality of digital character education today. Dependability is realized through the reporting of sequential procedures, from data collection to interpretation. Meanwhile, confirmability is maintained by including direct quotations from the main text and comparing the analysis results with the views of other articles to avoid the researcher's subjective bias.

The data analysis techniques used are a combination of content analysis and discourse analysis. Content analysis is used to identify and categorize messages in the text based on character education indicators that include affective, moral, and spiritual dimensions, such as emotion management, control of negative impulses, steadfastness, and the formation of value awareness in individuals (Ajizah, 2021). While discourse analysis is used to explore the implied meanings in the book's language and narrative structure, taking into account the accompanying social, historical, and ideological contexts (Setiawan, 2024). The analysis steps were carried out by reading the entire text of the book, marking sections relevant to the theme of mental health, categorizing data based on character education indicators, and drawing conclusions that explain the implications of al-Balkhi's thinking in shaping students with strong character and psychological health in facing a digital era full of pressure and distractions.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1. Research Result

The results of this study indicate that Abu Zaid al-Balkhi was an early thinker in Islamic history who systematically developed the concept of mental health as an integral part of human life. In his book *Maṣāliḥ al-Abdān wa al-Anfus*, al-Balkhi explains that mental health is a state of calmness of the soul, free from psychological symptoms such as excessive anger, fear, or anxiety, and the ability to respond to life's realities in a proportionate manner. This concept is in line with the modern view that emotional balance and adaptive capacity are key indicators of psychological health (Al-Balkhi, 2005). This study found that al-Balkhi classified mental health as the main foundation for emotional stability, clarity of thought, and decision-making ability. When the soul is at peace, all functions of life will run more effectively and productively. Conversely, prolonged mental stress can cause physical disorders and even reduce the body's resistance (Al-Balkhi, 2005). This confirms the importance of the implications between mental and physical health, as stated in modern biopsychosocial theory.

In addition, al-Balkhi developed indicators of mental health based on an individual's ability to manage emotions proportionally, maintain inner peace in the face of difficulties, and engage in social activities harmoniously. This view rejects the narrow definition that defines mental health as the absence of mental illness. Instead, according to al-Balkhi, mental health reflects the capacity to live a full, meaningful, and resilient life in the face of various pressures (Ibrahim, 2024).

One of the important contributions in al-Balkhi's thinking is the division of the mental health process into two main approaches, namely preventive and curative. Preventive strategies focus on maintaining peace of mind by avoiding factors that can trigger emotional stress, whether external or internal. External protection is achieved through control of the social environment, while internal protection is achieved through thought management and strengthening self-awareness (Al-Balkhi, 2005). This process demonstrates a systematic effort to maintain mental stability from an early age, even before disorders arise.

The curative approach in al-Balkhi's thinking comprises two important dimensions: internal therapy and external therapy. Internal therapy relies on healthy mental principles and logical abilities to calm oneself when emotions are shaken. Meanwhile, external therapy is carried out with the help of trusted others, such as counselors, friends, or teachers, who can provide advice and facilitate emotional healing. These two approaches are similar to modern strategies such as cognitive therapy and social support used in contemporary clinical psychology (Muwafiqi et al., 2025).

This study also found that al-Balkhi explained the factors that influence mental health in great detail. The first factor is innate character or personality structure. Individuals with strong personalities tend to be more stable in dealing with pressure than individuals with more sensitive personalities. The second factor is situational experiences, such as exposure to stress, conflict, or psychological trauma. These two factors show that mental health is dynamic and influenced by the interaction between internal and external conditions (Al-Balkhi, 2005). These overall results confirm that al-Balkhi's thinking is not only relevant in a classical context but also capable of making an important contribution to the discourse on character education and mental health in the current digital era.

Table.1. Mental Health from the Perspective of Abu Zaid al-Balkhi

No	Aspects of Mental Health	Main Explanation
1.	Definition	A calm mind, not controlled by extreme emotions (anger, fear, panic, sadness, and anxiety).
2.	Indicators	Emotionally stable, able to manage stress, with optimal functioning of the entire body system in social, intellectual, and emotional aspects.
3.	Urgency	Mental health affects physical performance, making it difficult to think clearly and leading to suboptimal decision-making.
4.	Factors	Factors that are innate (character) and factors that are influenced by each individual's situational experiences (life pressures).
5.	Approaches	Preventive (to prevent mental disorders) and Curative (internal and external therapy to recover after being affected).

Abu Zaid al-Balkhi, in his book *Maṣāliḥ al-Abdān wa al-Anfus*, explains that the term mental disorder in Arabic more accurately refers to the word *a'rād*, which means symptoms that appear in certain psychological conditions, not just a condition of "sickness" such as *al-marīd* (Al-Balkhi, 2005). In this context, al-Balkhi categorizes mental disorders based on the emotional symptoms most commonly experienced by humans, namely anger, fear, sadness, and *waswas* or recurring negative thoughts. According to him, these emotional disorders are fluctuating and have a direct relationship with a person's physical condition, such as changes in body temperature, tense

muscles, or confusion, so that mental disorders affect not only psychological aspects but also biological ones.

The first type of disorder identified is al-ghadhab or anger, which is described as the most dangerous form of disorder. Intense anger can trigger extreme physical and psychological reactions, such as uncontrolled behavior and emotional outbursts similar to Intermittent Explosive Disorder (IED) in the DSM-5 classification (Liu et al., 2025). Furthermore, al-khauf wa al-faza', or deep fear and panic attacks, are described as disorders that occur suddenly and can cause physical symptoms such as temporary muscle paralysis, skin discoloration, and disorientation. These symptoms are very similar to the description of Panic Disorder in contemporary psychology literature (Plunkett et al., 2024).

The third disorder is al-huzn wa al-jaza', which is deep sadness that develops into depression due to prolonged emotional stress or significant loss. Al-Balkhi emphasizes that this condition affects one's zest for life and social behavior, in line with the criteria for Major Depressive Disorder (MDD) in the DSM-5 (Zhao et al., 2021). Meanwhile, the fourth disorder is wasawis ash-shadr and ahādits an-nafs, which describe disturbing obsessive thoughts and compulsive actions, closely related to the concepts of Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and negative self-talk in current psychology (Saliani et al., 2024).

From all of the above descriptions, it can be seen that al-Balkhi's classification of mental disorders is very close to modern psychological diagnostic systems such as the DSM-5. This shows that even though he lived more than a millennium ago, al-Balkhi had a comprehensive and contextual understanding of various symptoms of mental disorders. His approach, which considers the implications between emotional symptoms and physical manifestations, makes his work relevant as a reference in contemporary holistic and transdisciplinary mental health approaches.

Table.2. Al-Balkhi's Classification of Mental Health Disorders

No	Type of Disorder	Al-Balkhi's Description	DSM-5 Correlation
1.	Al-Ghadhab (Anger)	Extreme emotions and loss of control	Intermittent Explosive Disorder (IED)
2.	Al-Khauf wa al-Faza' (Fear and Panic)	Deep fear and confusion	Panic Disorder
3.	Al-Huzn wa al-Jaza' (Sadness and Depression)	Acute sadness, loss of will to live, behavioral changes	Major Depressive Disorder (MDD)
4.	Wasawis ash-shadr & Ahādits an-nafs (Waswas & Negative Thoughts)	Obsessive thoughts and recurring anxiety	Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) and Negative Self-Talk

Based on this classification, it can be seen that Abu Zaid al-Balkhi's mapping of psychological disorders has significant conceptual correspondence with the categories of mental disorders in the DSM-5 framework, even though the two were born from different epistemological backgrounds and historical contexts. This alignment shows that al-Balkhi not only offers a symptomatic description that explains apparent symptoms in terms of an individual's emotions, thoughts, and behavior, but also a framework that emphasizes the role of reason, emotional balance, and ethical foundations in maintaining mental health. Thus, this discussion directly supports the research objective, which is to demonstrate the relevance and actuality of al-Balkhi's thinking in the contemporary mental health discourse, particularly as a conceptual basis for the

development of character education and preventive approaches to psychological disorders in the modern era. These findings confirm that the integration of classical Islamic perspectives and modern psychology is not merely a comparative effort, but a scientific strategy to enrich the holistic understanding of human beings and strengthen educational and mental health practices oriented towards the formation of a balanced and meaningful personality.

4.2. Discussion

Mental health management plays a central role in shaping a character education system that focuses not only on cognitive aspects but also on holistic human values. Abu Zaid al-Balkhi's thought provides a classical foundation rich in psychological and spiritual values, highly relevant in contemporary education. In school environments, it is common to find students who withdraw from social interaction due to academic pressure or peer conflicts. In the digital space, this is evident in behaviors such as isolating oneself in the virtual world or expressing negative emotions through social media posts. When not managed properly, this situation leads to moral degradation in including decreased empathy, indifference towards others, and reduced social awareness. Education that does not pay attention to students' mental health risks produces individuals who are emotionally isolated and socially unbalanced.

Within Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs, managing emotions such as anger, as described by al-Balkhi, falls under the need for safety and comfort (Irfan et al., 2023). In the school environment, the prevalence of verbal and physical bullying is a manifestation of unmanaged anger. In the digital space, this behavior manifests as cyberbullying through negative comments or the dissemination of content that is harmful to peers. When anger is not constructively suppressed, the learning environment becomes uncondusive, leading to tension between individuals (Chailani et al., 2024). The impact is the emergence of moral degradation in including a loss of respect, resentment between friends, and a weakening of students' values of tolerance and compassion (Diantofa & Irsyadunnas, 2025). Therefore, efforts to reduce anger must be part of the character education process so that students can develop patient, empathetic, and self-controlled behavior.

The management of fear and panic, as discussed by al-Balkhi, is highly relevant to the need for self-actualization in Maslow's approach (Irfan et al., 2023). At school, unmanaged fear often arises when facing exams, speaking in front of the class, or competing for achievement (Maijuana et al., 2024). In the digital world, many students experience fear of missing out (FOMO), fear of falling behind trends, or failing to gain social validation through likes and comments. This kind of fear can lower self-confidence, cause social anxiety, and encourage students to act contrary to moral values for the sake of recognition. The impact of moral degradation is evident in dishonesty, manipulative behavior, and the tendency to hide one's true identity (Widirahayu & Husna, 2024). Therefore, character education must equip students with the emotional skills to manage fear in a mature manner and build personal integrity in the face of challenges.

The relevance of al-Balkhi's thinking is also very strong, as indicated by the indicator of wholeness in John P. Miller's holistic education theory (Rahila & Khozin, 2024). In the school environment, students who experience pressure from home or personal conflicts often show symptoms of prolonged sadness, such as withdrawal, loss of enthusiasm for learning, or signs of mild depression (Yuliana et al., 2020). In the digital world, these expressions of sadness appear in melancholic posts, excessive searches for recognition, or even comments that indicate despair. When sadness and psychological burdens are not responded to with a holistic approach, what emerges is moral degradation in the form of a loss of gratitude, the emergence of pessimism, and

a decline in resilience. Holistic education that involves the mind, body, and spirituality is essential for shaping a character that is steadfast, sincere, and maintains inner balance in facing life (Asnaini et al., 2024).

In addition, efforts to overcome obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) and negative self-talk, as developed by al-Balkhi, are in line with the indicators of self-awareness in Miller's theory (Rusmanto & Hanif, 2024). In schools, the phenomenon of excessive perfectionism is evident in students who are afraid of making mistakes, repeat their work too many times, or are unable to divide their focus proportionally. Meanwhile, on social media, negative self-talk arises when individuals feel inadequate after comparing their own content to others'. This often triggers feelings of inferiority, overthinking, and excessive stress. If left unaddressed, the resulting moral degradation includes self-deprecation, loss of confidence, and the formation of a fragile character that is vulnerable to social criticism. Character education that is grounded in self-understanding is needed so that students can think positively, maintain emotional stability, and control themselves in a healthy manner (Mudarsa, 2021).

Thus, al-Balkhi's approach to mental health management offers a powerful synthesis of psychological, spiritual, and educational dimensions highly relevant to today's world. In school life, this approach can help overcome academic pressure, build healthier communication among students, and prevent deviant behavior. In the digital age, this approach serves as an antidote to the existential pressures of dependence on social media. When combined with Maslow's humanistic and Miller's holistic educational principles, mental health management serves as the primary foundation for shaping students who are characterful, resilient, and fully self-aware. Such education not only saves the present but also builds a more humane future.

Based on the analysis of Abu Zaid al-Balkhi's thoughts in the book *Maşāliḥ al-Abdān wa al-Anfus*, it can be concluded that mental health management makes a significant contribution to the development of character education, especially in the context of the digital era, which is full of emotional pressure and social complexity. These findings consistently address the research objectives, namely to demonstrate how the preventive, curative, and preservative values in mental health, according to al-Balkhi, can be incorporated in a humanistic and holistic educational approach. These results also reinforce Abraham Maslow's theory of basic needs and self-actualization, as well as John P. Miller's theory of the importance of integration and self-awareness in character formation. This argument is strengthened by previous studies showing that digital stress increases the risk of psychological disorders such as anxiety, depression, and identity crisis (Karisma et al., 2024). Therefore, the classical approach developed by al-Balkhi is not only historically relevant but also has epistemological and pedagogical urgency to be used as a basis for designing more contextual, adaptive, and sustainable character education strategies in facing the psychosocial challenges of the current generation.

Table.3. Implications of Al-Balkhi's Mental Health Approach for Character Education in the Digital Age

No	Aspect	Al-Balkhi's Concept	Educational Approach	School and Digital Phenomena	Impact of Moral Degradation	Character Formed from These Implications
1.	Anger Management	Uncontrolled anger damages the body	Humanistic (Maslow – the need for security)	Bullying at school and <i>cyberbullying</i> through	Increasing violence, intolerance, and	Patience, empathy, self-control, friendliness

		social relationships		malicious comments or the dissemination of harmful content	resentment between individuals	
2.	Managing fear and panic	Mental exercises to avoid exaggerating fears	Humanistic (Maslow – self-actualization)	Anxiety during exams; FOMO, digital existential pressure, fear of failure or social rejection	Dishonest, identity crisis, inauthentic behavior	Courageous, confident, honest, integrity
3.	Managing sadness and depression	Sadness must be managed so that it does not interfere with the mind and body as a whole	Holistic (Miller – <i>wholeness</i>)	Decreased motivation to learn; melancholic moods, expressions of loss of zest for life	Loss of gratitude, pessimistic attitude, and weak fighting spirit	Resilient, sincere, enthusiastic, resilient
4.	Addressing OCD and negative self-talk	Training the mind and strengthening logic to counter recurring negative thoughts	Holistic (Miller – <i>self-awareness</i>)	Extreme perfectionism; comparing oneself to digital standards, excessive anxiety about the judgment of others	Low self-esteem, dependence on external validation, and inability to accept oneself	Reflective, confident, positive thinking, independent

Based on this conceptual mapping, it can be asserted that Abu Zaid al-Balkhi's thoughts on emotion management and mental health are highly relevant to the challenges of character education in contemporary school and digital environments. The integration of al-Balkhi's concepts with humanistic and holistic educational approaches shows that issues of anger, fear, sadness, and obsessive disorders not only affect an individual's psychological condition but also contribute to moral degradation if not managed properly. Therefore, this discussion is in line with the research objective, which is to contextualize al-Balkhi's classical thinking as a conceptual foundation in developing character education that emphasizes balance between reason, emotion, and behavior. These findings reinforce the argument that mental health management grounded in rational, spiritual, and ethical values is not only historically relevant but also strategic for shaping students' character to be resilient, have integrity, and be adaptive in navigating social dynamics and psychological pressures in the digital age.

5. Conclusion

This study shows that Abu Zaid al-Balkhi's thoughts on mental health place a balance between the soul and body as the basis for forming a stable, reflective, and meaningful personality. Unlike previous studies, which generally position al-Balkhi's thoughts in a historical or clinical context, this article offers a new perspective by contextualizing the classical concept of mental health as the foundation of character education in the digital age, marked by increasing psychological vulnerability among students. The research findings show that managing emotions such as anger, fear, sadness, and obsessive tendencies not only has implications for restoring individual mental health but also directly contributes to the development of character traits such as patience, empathy, courage, self-integrity, and reflective awareness. In explaining the relevance of al-Balkhi's thinking to contemporary psychological discourse, Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory and Miller's concept of human integration are used as conceptual analogies to demonstrate their compatibility with modern psychological approaches, without being used as the main analytical framework of the study. Thus, the main contribution of this article lies in the integration of classical Islamic psychological thought with contemporary character education needs, particularly in responding to mental health challenges in the digital age. This study recommends the integration of spiritual, rational, and social mental health values into the character education curriculum so that education is not only oriented towards cognitive achievement but also towards the emotional resilience and spiritual depth of students, as well as encouraging further research through empirical or experimental approaches to test the effectiveness of implementing these concepts in digital education and learning practices.

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