

Implementation of Spiritual Education in Improving the Morals of Students at MTs YMI Wonopringgo Pekalongan

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Abstract

The development of the digital era has attracted attention from various circles. This era provides easy access to information, which has a significant impact on individual behavior. The implementation of moral values in madrasas/schools is very important and can be realized through various activities, both formal and non-formal. This research uses a qualitative descriptive research approach, emphasizing phenomena experienced by subjects such as behavior, perceptions, views, and motivations. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation studies with various components of MTs YMI Wonopringgo, Pekalongan Regency as sources of information. Data analysis was conducted through stages of collection, reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data validity was examined through credibility tests. The results of the study show: (1) the implementation of moral values at MTs YMI Wonopringgo, Pekalongan Regency, through routine and obligatory activities such as humility, discipline, simple living, and honesty in words and deeds; (2) the spiritual activities applied become the hope of all parties, including students, with the application of salaf values to achieve humility, discipline, honesty, and simplicity; and (3) the relevance of spiritual values to students, which includes the formation of humility behavior, effective time use (discipline), involvement in worship and practical activities, as well as honesty in words and deeds.

Keywords: implementation, spiritual education, morality

A. Introduction

Spiritual education, also known as tarbiyahruhiyyah, can be viewed as an essential supplement for human well-being. Beyond fulfilling physical needs, this education encompasses deeper dimensions of human existence. It is necessary for individuals to remain connected to the guidance of Allah SWT, so that their lives do not fall into disorientation that may lead them astray towards materialism, secularism, or hedonism. With adequate spiritual nourishment, it is hoped that individuals can maintain balance in life, attain inner peace, and avoid drifting away from His teachings.

Spiritual education possesses remarkable ability to stimulate the improvement of individual emotional and intellectual conditions. Through this education, one can undergo profound transformation, where behavior and attitudes are no longer solely influenced by instincts or negative impulses, but reflect genuine goodness and obedience to Allah.

In the context of Islam, spiritual education is known as tasawuf. Tasawuf is not merely a set of teachings or practices, but rather a profound spiritual journey. In its practice, tasawuf focuses on deep understanding and spiritual experiences inspired by the teachings and example of Prophet Muhammad SAW.

Amidst the busyness of the modern world, spiritual education as well as tasawuf provides space for individuals to explore spiritual dimensions in their lives. By deepening understanding of Islamic teachings and experiencing spirituality, individuals can develop a closer relationship with God and enhance the quality of their spiritual and moral lives.

Tasawuf also plays a significant role in guiding individuals towards deeper self-awareness. Through reflection and meditation, one can be better in understanding the essence of existence and the meaning of life. Thus, spiritual education not only helps individuals achieve self-perfection, but also prepares them to become better global citizens, filled with love, generosity, and compassion towards fellow human beings.

Spiritual education aims to provide individuals with the opportunity to listen to their inner voice, so they can gain clearer understanding of their purpose of existence and life mission. Harmonious interaction between the mind, heart, and body is considered the key in this process. When these three elements are balanced and harmonious, they can shape good character and noble ethics.

The term "Akhlak" is often encountered in society, and almost everyone has a basic understanding of its meaning, as it is consistently associated with human behavior. However, to clarify the concept for readers, it is important to provide a good definition both linguistically and terminologically to obtain clarity of its substance.

The word "akhlak" originates from Arabic which has been Indonesianized. It is derived from "akhlaqkhuluqun." The word "akhlak" shares the same root with the word "khaliq," which means creator, and "makhluq," which means creation, the created, from the word "khalafa," to create. Thus, the words "khulq" and "akhlak" refer to the meaning of "creation" of everything other than God, including human beings.(Aminuddin, 2006).The definition of akhlak in terminology is the human soul's inclination that generates an action easily out of habit without requiring prior consideration of the mind(Hamalik, 2001).

Spiritual education equips students not only with religious understanding but also with the development of affective aspects, appreciation, and internalization and implementation of moral and spiritual values in various aspects of life. In its practical context, the values of spiritual education can be reflected in behaviors that prioritize peace, such as attitudes of respect, warmth in interactions, hospitality, wholehearted service, non-skeptical attitudes, emotional control, and ease in assisting others. Meanwhile, the principle of feeding the needy can be symbolized by behaviors full of empathy, social solidarity, concern for the suffering of others, a spirit of sharing, and efforts to find solutions to common problems. Furthermore, building good relationships with others can be realized

through ease of socializing, open and effective communication, avoiding conflicts, fostering friendships, collaborating, supporting each other, and so forth. On the other hand, the practice of *qiyamullail*, which is an expression of spirituality in action, includes consistent behaviors in remembering Allah, perseverance in worship, sincerity in prayer, sincerity in deeds, patience in facing life's trials, and so on.

B. Method

This study is classified as qualitative research, where the researcher must act as the primary instrument in data collection and strive to obtain relevant information related to the research focus through interactions with respondents. Flexibility, reflection, and maintaining distance are expected from the researcher in this process. Hadari Nawawi argues that qualitative research is characterized by the data being presented in its natural state or as it is (natural setting), without being altered into symbols or numbers (Nawawi, 2005). In essence, this qualitative research is utilized due to three considerations: (1) adapting qualitative methods is easier when dealing with multiple realities; (2) this method gradually presents the relationship between the researcher and informants; and (3) it is more sensitive and adaptable to many nuances, joint influences on the patterns encountered (Moleong, 2001).

This research adopts a qualitative approach aimed at delving into the phenomena experienced by research subjects, such as their behaviors, perceptions, views, motivations, and daily actions in depth. It utilizes a descriptive method in the form of narrative through words and language, within a specific natural context, and employs various naturalistic observation techniques. This approach is chosen to ensure that the gathered data is descriptive, consisting of written and oral information from respondents, as well as documents or observed behaviors.

C. Results and Discussion

Generally, implementation aims to (1) execute carefully crafted plans, whether by individuals or groups, (2) test and record procedures in implementing plans or policies, (3) achieve desired objectives in formulated planning or policies, (4) assess the community's ability to adopt policies or plans as expected, (5) evaluate the success level of a policy or plan designed for improvement or quality enhancement.

The implementation of spiritual values at MTs YMI Wonopringgo Pekalongan, aims primarily to nurture students' spiritual aspects comprehensively. In this context, the application of spiritual values becomes an essential part of a holistic education approach, which not only focuses on students' intellectual development but also their spirituality. The efforts to implement spiritual values are not merely formal processes but integral parts of the school atmosphere and students' learning experiences. The integration of spiritual values is incorporated into every aspect of learning activities and school life, from the curriculum to the daily interactions among students, teachers, and school staff (Naely Thoyyibah, 2024).

One form of implementing spiritual values that is emphasized is the effort to enhance students' spiritual intelligence. This is done by giving special attention to fostering strong moral values, ethics, and personalities within the school environment. Additionally, the importance of developing empathy, compassion, and tolerance towards individual differences is also emphasized. The implementation of spiritual values at MTs YMI Wonopringgo is not only focused on individual aspects but also on building a spiritually characterized community. In this context, activities such as religious studies, discussion classes, and social activities encourage students to share spiritual values and strengthen their social bonds among fellow members of the school community. Through this approach, MTs YMI Wonopringgo in Pekalongan Regency strives to create an educational environment that not only produces academically intelligent students but also those with strong spiritual intelligence. Thus, the school plays a role in shaping individuals who are not only intellectually excellent but also have solid morality and character. (Taufiq Chusnan, 2024).

The implementation of spiritual values applied at MTs YMI Wonopringgo in Pekalongan Regency for enhancing spiritual intelligence in the academic year 2023/2024 includes:

1. Humility Behavior

Upon the entry of educators or teachers into the classroom, the students exhibit humility behavior. They instantly become quiet, lower their heads, and redirect their attention to the textbooks to be studied. Even when greeting, they do not directly look at the educator or teacher. During the learning process, if a student asks a question to the educator or teacher, they do so with a low voice, polite language, and gentle tone. Humble behavior, such as bowing their heads, is also observed when students meet academic staff in the Madrasah environment. Therefore, humility behavior at MTs YMI Wonopringgo in Pekalongan Regency encompasses polite and courteous actions in behavior and interaction, as well as speaking softly when communicating with educators or teachers, both inside and outside the classroom.

The humility behavior at MTs YMI Wonopringgo in Pekalongan Regency is implemented gradually in every activity and has a significant impact on shaping the spirituality and habits of students to become better individuals. Another way to implement spiritual education for Madrasah students in daily life is by forming a team consisting of homeroom teachers, guidance counselors, and student affairs teachers who handle ethical issues and the manners of students, as well as humility behavior during teaching and learning activities.

The value of humility in modest dressing, which indicates equality among students, is reflected in their activities. Similarly, the value of humility related to manners in actions and attitudes is evident when students meet educators and educational staff in the madrasah environment. Educators/teachers claim that MTs YMI Wonopringgo in Pekalongan Regency is among the typologies

of madrasahs that still maintain the values of humility, as found in interviews with educators/teachers. Educators or teachers also emphasize that humility begins with small actions, such as emulating the behavior of older individuals, so that we can learn from important values that can be imitated, especially in the spiritual context. Emulating the behavior of senior students in trivial matters, such as behaving politely and speaking courteously to educators, is part of humility. Additionally, it is important to respect and obey every educator and educational staff when meeting or interacting with them (Aprilianti, 2024).

2. Discipline Behavior in Participating in Activities

Discipline behavior is implemented at MTs YMI Wonopringgo in Pekalongan Regency through both formal and non-formal education processes. Additionally, discipline behavior is instilled to ensure that every student values discipline, such as arriving on time for school or extracurricular activities, ceremonies, and other religious activities, including congregational prayers in the mosque. Non-formal learning aims to supplement, complement, and enhance formal education, especially in spiritual values.

The implementation of spiritual values such as discipline in non-formal learning, such as in Madrasah, particularly at MTs YMI Wonopringgo in Pekalongan Regency, is evidenced by observations during routine classroom and environmental cleanliness activities held every Monday for each grade level, accompanied by homeroom teachers. Moreover, classroom learning activities begin with praying together, salawat 9, and reading the Qur'an for 15 minutes to guide students towards ma'rifat (spiritual knowledge) to Allah and His Messenger through the cultivation of students' inner or spiritual well-being.

Religious lecture after congregational Dhuhr prayers are considered important and beneficial, and students feel a sense of loss if they do not attend. Discipline and compassion towards others, mutual respect, and efforts to avoid hurting others are emphasized. For further clarity, there are several activities: (1) Dhuha Prayer, (2) Congregational Dhuhr Prayer, (3) Kultum after congregational Dhuhr prayer, (4) Reading Qur'an and Blessings for 9 times, (5) Memorization of Surah Yasin, Waqiah, and Al-Mulk, (6) reading of manaqib and barzanji. As per Aminuddin's perspective, quoting the opinion of Ibn Maskawaih (d.421H/1030M), spiritual definition refers to the condition of the soul that constantly influences behavior without thought or consideration (Aminuddin, 2006).

In addition to preserving and accommodating local spiritual wisdom and culture, these activities also preserve the spiritual culture of the Nahdliyin community. Furthermore, they aim to foster closer relationships between educators and students, as the charismatic influence of educators can impact the character development of students towards nobility. This is in line with another perspective by DzakiahDaradjat, who interprets spirituality slightly more broadly as behavior stemming from the integration of conscience,

thought, and habitual practices, forming a unified spiritual action experienced in the realities of daily life (Daradjat, 1993).

The activities mentioned above represent the implementation of spiritual education values at MTs YMI Wonopringgo in Pekalongan Regency, aiming to encourage students to actively engage with the hope of character development. Students not only gain experience through these activities but also unconsciously build positive character traits within themselves. With a total of 897 students at MTs YMI Wonopringgo, it is undoubtedly challenging to instill spiritual education in each student until a culture with noble spirituality is cultivated. These positive habits will also accompany students as they integrate into society in the future.

In general, MTs YMI Wonopringgo has its own way of instilling spiritual education values in students procedurally, which indirectly shapes a procedural and systemic culture. The regulations of MTs YMI Wonopringgo, as observed and interviewed by the researcher, outline the obligations, rights, and prohibitions of students, as well as the sanctions for students. From these regulations, it can be observed that they are implemented to instill character education values, including spiritual education, in students through habituation. This means that by obliging students to adhere to these regulations, if followed, it will shape their character positively, including improving their spiritual values, which will then be carried into their community life. The guidance and learning of students regarding behavior and morality, including part of the supportive factors for the implementation of spiritual education values in the madrasah, are the responsibility of all components of the madrasah, including the headmaster, teachers, and educational staff.

In essence, true spiritual education is depicted as one of the measures (standards) in nurturing various personalities of individuals with complete growth and development, serving as a guide for reason (Hamid, n.d.). Such behavior is cultivated through the nurturing process within the Madrasah, a discipline process that materializes in daily experiences. Discipline is not a superficial attitude of merely obeying and following rules; rather, it is a sincere attitude of the heart driven by a desired goal. The value of discipline is manifested in learning activities, where students are required not to speak with their peers until the teacher permits or initiates a discussion.

Furthermore, there is a distinctive activity in the Madrasah, namely the religious study sessions for educators and staff held every Thursday at the beginning of the month, focusing on Sufi teachings. This indicates that not only students are nurtured, but educators and staff are also cultivated to possess discipline and spiritual refinement as exemplary figures for the students. In these sessions, spiritual values such as discipline, sincerity, patience, and enthusiasm in navigating life are imparted. The traditional Salaf-style religious study sessions for educators and staff hold values that can stimulate awareness among all members about the importance of seeking

knowledge, discipline, patience, sincerity, and active engagement in activities, thus enabling them to become role models for the students.

3. Living a Simple Life

Embracing a simple lifestyle by refraining from luxury and excessive pursuit of worldly pleasures is highly esteemed. This encompasses one's appearance, dietary habits, beverage consumption, choice of transportation, living arrangements, and other aspects of life. The concept of simplicity taught in the Madrasah also includes modesty in speech and actions. Maintaining boundaries in communication and conduct is considered a way to avoid wasteful or futile behavior, which is prohibited by religious teachings, as explained in the Quran:

إِنَّ الْمُبَذِّرِينَ كَانُوا إِخْوَانَ الشَّيْطَانِ طٰٓءِىٰنًا وَكَانَ الشَّيْطٰنُ لِرَبِّهٖ كَفُوْرًا

“Indeed, the wasteful are brothers of the devils, and ever has Satan been to his Lord ungrateful”. (Al-Isra 17:27)

In another verse, it is also explained:

يٰٓبَنِي آدَمَ خُذُوْا زِيْنَتَكُمْ عِنْدَ كُلِّ مَسْجِدٍ وَكُلُوْا وَشَرَبُوْا وَلَا تُسْرِفُوْا اِنَّهٗ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُسْرِفِيْنَ

“Children of Adam, take your adornment at every masjid, and eat and drink, but be not excessive. Indeed, He likes not those who commit excess”. (Al-A’raf 7:31)

Among the prohibitions for students in the Madrasah is the use of excessive adornments and jewelry for female students and dressing extravagantly. Related to appearance, as stipulated in the code of ethics and regulations for students, students are required to have a simple and neat appearance both within and outside the Madrasah. This practice has yielded significant results in nurturing the spiritual aspects of the students. As conveyed by the source, as a Madrasah teacher at MTs YMI Wonopringgo, the implementation of spiritual education values in the form of simple behavior initiated by the Madrasah begins with a regulation that eventually becomes a culture aimed at character-building in students.

Based on the statements above, it can be concluded that the implementation carried out by the Madrasah in nurturing the spiritual aspects of students in daily life is by adhering to all Madrasah's codes of conduct, especially in dressing simply. The practice of simple living by all components of the Madrasah can produce new behaviors in line with the changing times. It is hoped that the structured practice of simple living can become a spiritual value instilled in the students and consistently practiced within society.

MTs YMI Wonopringgo Kabupaten Pekalongan, greatly upholds the values of spiritual education, both in religious aspects, dressing, eating, drinking, and others, particularly in fostering good behavior and conduct. This educates students as a guide for life, both for themselves and when living in society in the future, contributing significantly to the nation's development by producing intelligent and dignified generations, the hope of the nation and state, parents, teachers, and the Madrasah.

4. Honesty in Words and Deeds

One of the behaviors highly valued in society is honesty, both in speech and action. Someone who consistently acts and speaks honestly will gain the trust of others and be beloved by Allah SWT. However, if someone is proven to lie, then others will lose trust in them. Honesty in behavior and speech can expand one's circle of social interaction because those who are honest tend to be liked and do not arouse worry or suspicion among others, thus leading to peace and happiness in life, which ultimately brings Allah SWT's pleasure.

Honesty in behavior and speech, especially in words, is implemented in the Madrasah in every action and deed performed by the students during formal or non-formal activities. The practice of honesty at MTs YMI Wonopringgo, Kabupaten Pekalongan, begins with the educators and educational staff. This is applied so that students have role models in speech and action. Thus, spiritual sources are the measure of good and bad, or noble and reprehensible. As per Islamic teachings, the spiritual source is the Quran and Sunnah, not mere human reasoning or societal views as in the concept of ethics and morality. It is also not determined by inherent goodness or badness, as viewed by the Mutazilah perspective (Aminuddin, 2006).

The spiritual values of humility, discipline, simplicity, and honesty practiced by MTs YMI Wonopringgo Pekalongan are in line with the view that the qualities ingrained in the soul give rise to actions that are easy and effortless, without requiring much thought and consideration. If these qualities lead to actions that are considered good according to reason and religious law, then they are called good spirituality; if they result in bad deeds, they are called bad spirituality (Ilyas, 2006).

D. Conclusion

Based on the discussion findings of the research entitled "Implementation of Spiritual Education in Improving the Morals of Students at MTs YMI Wonopringgo Pekalongan," the following conclusions can be drawn:

- a. The spiritual education values implemented to enhance the spiritual intelligence of students at MTs YMI Wonopringgo Pekalongan in the academic year 2023/2024 include humility, discipline, honesty, and simplicity. These four values are carried out in both formal and non-formal activities accompanied by the application of Salaf values.
- b. The implementation of moral values is carried out through scheduled activities, such as integrating character education into all subjects, morning and post-learning prayers, Quran recitation, recitation of the Salawat 9, Dhuha and Dhuhur prayers in congregation, post-Dhuhur prayer sermons, memorization of Quranic verses, manaqib, barzanji, and extracurricular activities. These activities result in an improvement in the morals of students in the form of humility, discipline, simple living, and honesty in words and actions.

However, there are still some students who have not behaved as expected by the madrasah. This is normal, as it is influenced by the large number of students and the diverse backgrounds they come from. This should serve as a note for the madrasah to continue efforts in various ways to ensure that all components of the madrasah, especially the students, have good morals as preparation for life.

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