

# THE RELEVANCE OF THE CONCEPT OF MORAL SUFISM IN ISLAM TO ISLAMIC EDUCATION PRACTICE

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**ABSTRACT** – Islamic education has a holistic goal, which is to form kamil people who have a balance between intellectual, spiritual, and moral aspects. One of the important approaches in achieving this goal is through the integration of moral Sufism values. This research will try to analyse and explain the concept of moral Sufism as one of the branches in the study of Sufism that develops as a study of mysticism in Islam. The concept of moral Sufism, which has only focused on religiosity, can certainly also be implemented in the educational process. This research uses a qualitative method with a library research approach where data is collected and analysed through literature studies from various relevant library sources. This method was chosen to understand and analyse in depth the concepts related to the relevance of the concept of moral Sufism in Islam to the practice of Islamic education. The results of the study show that moral Sufism can be used as an effective approach in instilling moral and spiritual values in the Islamic education system. The implementation of moral Sufism in Islamic education can be carried out in several aspects, including: First, Internalisation of moral values through habituation, this can be done by getting students used to being trained to practise values such as honesty, patience, tawadhu, and other spiritual values. Second, forming teachers as uswah hasanah (good examples) in schools has an important role in transferring religious values in moral Sufism to students; Third, the learning process carried out by teachers in the classroom not only focuses on cognitive aspects, but also on fostering students' hearts and spiritual awareness in an integrative manner.

**Keywords:** Morals, Sufism, Education

**ABSTRAK** – Pendidikan Islam memiliki tujuan yang holistik, yaitu membentuk insan kamil yang memiliki keseimbangan antara aspek intelektual, spiritual, dan moral. Salah satu pendekatan penting dalam mencapai tujuan tersebut adalah melalui integrasi nilai-nilai tasawuf akhlaki. Penelitian ini akan mencoba menganalisis dan menjelaskan konsep tasawuf akhlaki sebagai salah satu cabang dalam kajian ilmu tasawuf yang berkembang sebagai kajian mistisme dalam Islam. Konsep ajaran tasawuf akhlaki yang selama ini hanya fokus pada religiusitas, tentu dapat pula diimplementasikan dalam proses pendidikan. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan library research di mana data dikumpulkan dan dianalisis melalui studi literatur dari berbagai sumber pustaka yang relevan. Metode ini dipilih untuk memahami dan menganalisis secara mendalam konsep-konsep yang berkaitan dengan relevansi konsep tasawuf akhlaki dalam Islam dengan praktik pendidikan Islam. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa tasawuf akhlaki dapat dijadikan pendekatan yang efektif dalam menanamkan nilai-nilai moral dan spiritual dalam sistem pendidikan Islam. Implementasi tasawuf akhlaki dalam pendidikan Islam dapat dilakukan pada beberapa aspek, diantaranya adalah: Pertama, Internalisasi nilai-nilai akhlak melalui pembiasaan, hal ini dapat dilakukan dengan membiasakan peserta didik dilatih untuk mengamalkan nilai-nilai seperti kejujuran, kesabaran, tawadhu, dan nilai spiritual lainnya. Kedua, membentuk guru sebagai uswah hasanah (teladan yang baik) di sekolah memiliki peran penting dalam mentransfer nilai-nilai religius dalam tasawuf akhlaki kepada peserta didik; Ketiga, proses pembelajaran yang dilaksanakan guru di kelas tidak hanya berfokus pada aspek kognitif, tetapi juga pada pembinaan hati dan kesadaran spiritual peserta didik dilaksanakan secara integratif.

**Keywords:** Akhlak, Tasawuf, Pendidikan

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The role of Sufism in the present time is very much needed as a means of strengthening faith and devotion to Allah SWT amidst the challenges of an increasingly modern era. By behaving according to the principles of Sufism, individuals

strive to form a personality with noble character, as the implementation of faith and devotion to Allah SWT produces a noble attitude to face the challenges of the increasingly modern times today [1].

The awareness among Muslims today of the importance of exhibiting noble character has gradually begun to be neglected.



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This is due to the weak stance of Muslims in reinforcing their faith and devotion, which gives birth to noble behaviour. The greatest temptation that Muslims feel today is the fatalistic attitude that necessitates accepting circumstances according to prevailing trends, while sidelining religious values that could turn into a burden in responding to the developments of the era [2].

The behaviour of Sufism in the personality of a Muslim needs to be taken more seriously. The Sufis always practice the values of Sufism as an effort to reinforce their beliefs amidst the changes of the times, always worrying about falling into the misguidance that arises in the course of development, thus neglecting themselves regarding the greatness of Allah Swt as the God present in the souls of the Sufis and as the motivator of life [3].

In the midst of a societal situation that tends towards moral decadence, as evidenced by the symptoms that are beginning to emerge and the negative consequences that are being felt in life, the issue of Sufism has begun to gain attention and its role is called upon to actively address these problems [4]. To tackle this issue, Sufism, which possesses potential and authority, offers an intensive approach on how individuals can continuously feel the presence of God within themselves. In this way, they would feel ashamed to engage in deviant behaviour, as they are aware of being observed by God [5].

In line with this, it is widely known that Islamic education not only serves as a process of transferring knowledge but also plays a central role in shaping the personality and morals of students. The main goal of Islamic education is to produce a complete individual, that is a person who is perfect in spiritual, moral, intellectual, and social aspects [3]. In this context, education is not merely about achieving academic success, but also aims at forming noble character based on Islamic values.

One approach that can strengthen the moral and spiritual dimensions in Islamic education is ethical Sufism. Ethical Sufism is part of the Sufi tradition that emphasises moral improvement and the purification of the soul (*tazkiyatun naf*). Its aim is to draw closer to Allah SWT through the practice of high spiritual values and ethics [5]. Historically, ethical Sufism has been an integral part of classical Islamic education, as seen in the great works of scholars such as Imam Al-Ghazali, who emphasised the importance of educating the heart in shaping the perfect human being [6].

The moral crisis occurring in the education sector today highlights the urgency of integrating spiritual values into the education system. Misuse of technology, deviant behaviour, and a lack of empathy among students serve as indicators of weak character education [7]. Therefore, the concept of ethical Sufism is relevant to revive as an alternative solution to address moral problems within the educational environment.

This article aims to deeply examine how the concept of ethical Sufism can be implemented in Islamic education. Using a qualitative approach through library research methods, this study will explore various classical and contemporary literature that explains the relationship between ethical Sufism and the educational process, as

well as how to apply strategies in the context of modern educational institutions.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This research employs a descriptive qualitative method of library research, where data is collected from various sources including books, journal articles, and others. The data sources in this study consist of primary sources, which include classical works of Sufi scholars and Muslim thinkers as well as contemporary works on moral Sufism, while secondary sources include scientific journals, academic articles, and modern books that discuss the integration of Sufism and Islamic education.

Data collection techniques were carried out through documentation, which involves tracing, recording, and organising the contents of various relevant documents and literature. The obtained data was then analysed using a descriptive-analytical approach, explaining the content and meaning of each concept of moral mysticism, as well as examining how it is applied in the context of Islamic education. The validity of the data was reinforced through source triangulation techniques, by comparing the contents of various literature sources to ensure consistency and accuracy in understanding the concept of moral mysticism, resulting in an in-depth, holistic, and comprehensive study of the integration between moral mysticism values and contemporary Islamic education.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The Understanding of Sufi Ethics

Etymologically, the definition of Sufism can be seen in several ways, such as: firstly, Sufism comes from a term connotated with *ahlu suffah*, which means a group of people during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) who lived in the verandas of mosques to worship Allah SWT. Secondly, Sufism derives from the word *shafa*, which denotes a name for people who are clean or pure, meaning those who purify themselves in front of their Lord. Thirdly, the term Sufism from the word *shaf* refers to those who are always in the front row during prayers [8].

According to Ibn Khaldun, as quoted by Hamka, Sufism is a kind of religious jurisprudence that arose later within the religion. The essence of Sufism is to persist in worship and sever ties with everything other than Allah Swt, turning solely towards Him [9]. Sufism rejects worldly adornments and loathes matters that deceive the masses, such as the pleasures of wealth and grandeur. It involves solitude on the path to God in seclusion and worship.

In general, according to Ibrahim Basyuni, as quoted by Abuddin Nata, the understanding of Sufism can be classified into three perspectives. The first is *al-bidâyah*, which is Sufism at an elementary level, meaning from the perspective of humans as limited beings; thus, Sufism is defined as an effort to purify oneself by distancing oneself from the influences of worldly life and focusing one's attention solely on Allah SWT. The second is *al-mujâhadah*, which is sufism at the intermediate level, that is, from the perspective of humans as beings who must struggle, thus sufism can be defined as the effort to beautify oneself with morals based on religious teachings to draw closer to Him. The third is *al-madzâqat*, which is sufism at the advanced level, that is, from the perspective



of humans as beings with God, thus sufism can be defined as the innate awareness in the form of faith in God that can guide the soul to always focus on activities that connect humans with God [10].

If the three definitions of Sufism are linked to one another, it soon becomes clear that Sufism, at its core, is an effort to train the soul through various activities that can free a person from the influences of worldly life, always being close to Allah Swt, so that the soul becomes pure and radiates noble character. In principle, Sufism can be understood as seeking a path to attain love and spiritual perfection. Sufism concerns the spiritual and inner aspects of humans that cannot be seen, which makes it very difficult to establish a definition of Sufism. Understanding this term does not lie in its essence, but in the phenomena that appear in the words, ways, and attitudes of the Sufis.

In the science of Sufism, there are several terms or types of Sufism based on their approach. Among them is the Akhlaki type of Sufism, which developed in the 3rd century Hijri and early 4th century Hijri. Akhlaki Sufism has a specific character that focuses on the development of morals as a representation of the sublime inner self of a Sufi [11].

According to language, ethics originates from Arabic, which is the noun of the verb akhlaqa, yakhliq, ikhlaqan that can be interpreted as character, nature, habit, good civilization and religion. However, if viewed from the noun of the verb akhlaqa, it is not akhlaq but ikhlaq. From various perspectives, ethics can also be linguistically interpreted as moral conduct, customary practices, behaviour, dignity or anything that has become habitual [12].

The word akhlaq is also the plural form of khuluq, which originally means measure, training and habit. From the first word (measure) the term makhluk emerged because a creature has dimensions; from the second meaning (training) and also the third (habit), something positive and negative arises. The meanings generally imply that morality, in the sense of character and traits that are firmly established in a person, can be realised in one's soul after undergoing a repeated process of training and self-habit through consistent practice [3].

Modern society is haunted by anxiety, restlessness, frustration, depression, loss of motivation and other psychosomatic illnesses, especially in large cities. Where this psychological burden has become so widespread. As a result, many modern individuals suffer from existential vacuum (emptiness of life) caused by a sense of meaningless existence [5].

In principle, mysticism is the science of Islamic morality, up until the fourth hijri century. During this period, the moral aspects of mysticism were closely related to discussions about the soul, its classifications, weaknesses, mental illnesses, and simultaneously seeking solutions or cures [6]. In other words, initially, mysticism was characterised by psychological and moral traits, specifically an analytical discussion about the human soul in an effort to create perfect morality.

It seems that during this period, the Sufis recognised that humans are both physical and spiritual beings, which means that their personality is not merely defined by

material qualities but is rather characterised by spiritual qualities that are alive and dynamic. A perfect human is one after the soul has been breathed into the body by God, without that soul it cannot be called a complete human. Therefore, it is the aspiration of Sufism to make the perfect human as a prototype of moral life through the establishment of Asma Al-Husna as a moral ideal of Sufism [13].

Based on the description above, it is understood that moral tasawuf is a tasawuf that focuses on the development of noble character. Morality is a state ingrained in the soul, fostering actions that are performed easily, without prior thought or reflection. Thus, it appears that these actions are driven by the soul, with a strong and sincere motivation or intention, carried out effortlessly and without contemplation, resulting in actions that seem automatic.

### Figures of Ethical Sufism

Like other teachings of Sufism, moral Sufism as one type of Sufi teaching in Islam has figures that developed the teachings of moral Sufism. Among the figures of moral Sufism are as follows:

#### 1. Hasan al-Bashri

His full name was Abu Sa'id al-Hasan ibn Yasar al-Bashri. He was a highly esteemed ascetic among the Tabi'in. He was born in Medina in the year 21 AH and died in 110 AH [11]. The teachings of Sufism of Hasan al-Bashri, Hamka presents some of Hasan al-Bashri's teachings as follows:

- a. The feeling of fear that brings peace to your heart is better than the sense of calm that evokes feelings of fear.
- b. The world is a place for doing good deeds. Whoever meets the world with feelings of hatred and asceticism will be happy and gain benefits from it. Whoever meets the world with feelings of longing and a heart patched with worldly desires will suffer and face unbearable anguish.
- c. Contemplation leads us to goodness and encourages us to practise it.
- d. This world is an old widow who has become hunched and has been left by her husband several times.
- e. Humans are caught between two feelings of fear, namely the fear of recalling past sins and the fear of contemplating the impending death and the dangers that will threaten.
- f. Everyone must be aware of the death that constantly threatens them, the Day of Judgment that will demand its promise.
- g. Many condolences in the world strengthen the spirit of good deeds.

#### 2. Al-Muhasibi

His full name is Abu Abdillah al-Harits ibn Asad al-Bashri al-Baghdaadi al-Muhasibi. He was born in Basra, Iraq, in the year 165 AH (781 AD) and he is estimated to have died around the year 243 AH (857



AD) [11]. His teachings on Sufism:

- a. The teachings of Al-Muhasibi explain the stages of knowledge, where the first stage is Obedience, the second is the activities of the limbs illuminated by the light filling the heart. The third stage involves the treasures of knowledge and the unseen granted to those who have reached the previous stage. The fourth stage is what the Sufis refer to as annihilation, which leads to enduring existence.
- b. Fear and Hope In the view of al-Muhasibi, khauf (fear) and raja' (hope) hold important positions in a person's journey to cleanse the soul. Khauf and raja' can be perfected only by adhering firmly to the Quran and the Sunnah.

### 3. Al-Ghazali

His full name is Abu Hamid Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Ta'ush al-Thusi Al-Shafi'i Al-Ghazali. He is called Al-Ghazali because he was born in the village of Ghazlah, a town in Khurasan, Iran in the year 450 AH (1058 AD) [11]. Al-Ghazali's teachings of Sufism: In his Sufism, Al-Ghazali chose Sunni Sufism based on the Quran and the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW), supplemented by the doctrines of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamaah. According to Al-Ghazali, the path to Sufism can only be achieved by breaking down the barriers of the soul and cleansing oneself from immoral behaviors so that the heart can be freed from everything except Allah, and be adorned by constantly remembering Allah. Al-Ghazali also regarded Sufism as a means to cultivate emotions and the soul, so that one can attain knowledge that helps in achieving (*sa'adah*) [14].

### The Teachings and Thoughts of Akhlaqi Sufism

The teachings of moral Sufism, like other Sufi teachings, are based on the Quran and Hadith, focusing on the development of a person's morality who practices moral Sufism. Moral Sufism has its own teachings to guide its followers to reach a certain level. Among the teachings of moral Sufism are as follows.

#### 1. Takhalli

Takhalli is the primary step that must be taken by a Sufi. Takhalli is an effort to liberate oneself from terrible states of mind and ethics. One of the vile ethics that leads to some of the despicable ethics, among others, is excessive admiration for collective efforts. Takhalli can also be interpreted as freeing oneself from the nature of reliance on shared pleasures. This will be achieved by going without disobedience in all its forms and striving to eliminate the driving force of evil desires [15].

Takhalli means emptying oneself of reprehensible traits, one of which is excessive love for the world (hubbul dunya). Humans are not required to abandon worldly life completely, nor are they instructed to eliminate desires, but rather to utilise the world according to their needs while controlling desires that may disturb reason and feelings. If the

heart is afflicted by reprehensible traits, it must be treated. The remedy is to cleanse it first. According to the Sufis, sinful actions are divided into two: outward sins committed by the hands and inward sins performed by the heart [8].

#### 2. Tahalli

Tahalli is the effort to adorn or beautify oneself by habituating oneself to attitudes, behaviours, and commendable morals. This tahalli stage is performed after the soul has been emptied of bad morals [14]. Tahalli is about embellishing oneself with commendable traits, illuminating the heart with obedience both outwardly and inwardly.

This tahalli is performed after a person cleanses themselves from impurities that taint their soul with various despicable traits and sins. Furthermore, it is accompanied by the illumination of the heart so that the dirty and dark heart becomes clean and bright, because such a heart is able to receive the radiant light of divinity (*Nur*). The effort to beautify the heart that has been cleansed with commendable traits (*Akhlakul Karimah*). One of the commendable traits in Islam is gratitude. With good character, attitude, and actions, striving to ensure that every movement always adheres to religious precepts, both outward and inward obligations or external and internal obedience [1].

Outward obedience refers to obligations of a formal nature, such as prayer, fasting, almsgiving, pilgrimage, and so on. Meanwhile, inward obedience includes faith, benevolence, and similar aspects. Tahalli is meditation, which systematically and methodically merges consciousness and thought to focus on contemplation of God, motivated by a deep longing that a Sufi experiences after undergoing a heart cleansing process contaminated by worldly desires [15].

#### 3. Tajalli

Tajalli means the revelation of divine light. At this stage, the heart must always be occupied with remembrance and thinking of Allah. Tajalli is also a term in Sufism that refers to the "manifestation of God" which is absolute in the form of the limited nature. For Ibn Arabi, the understanding of tajalli is not limited to the manifestation of God for those who experience kasyf (the lifting of the veil from their inner sight), but more than that. *Kasyf* provides the understanding that the universe is the tajalli of God in various forms, in accordance with the fixed ideas (about the universe) in God's knowledge [8].

To consolidate and deepen the material that has been traversed in the tahalli phase, the series of moral education is perfected in the tajalli phase. This stage includes the perfection of the purity of the soul. Sufis agree that the level of perfection of the purity of the soul can only be achieved through one path, namely love for Allah and deepening that love. Tajalli is a stage that a servant can reach when he is capable of passing through the stages of takhalli and tahalli. Tajalli is the disappearance or vanishing of the veil from the nature of humanity or the brilliance of the light that has long been hidden or the ephemeral



nature of everything besides Allah, when the face of Allah becomes visible [10].

The stage of manifestation is reached by a servant when they have been able to transcend the stages of takhali and tahalli. This means that to enter the stage of manifestation, a servant must make an effort and engage in spiritual practices or exercises, including cleansing themselves of mental ailments such as various forms of sinful and disgraceful actions, arrogance, and worldly pleasures, then filling themselves with commendable actions, attitudes, and qualities, increasing remembrance of Allah, engaging in worship, and adorning themselves with praiseworthy deeds that can eliminate the spiritual ailments in the heart or self of a servant [14].

So the point is, we must always practice the teachings of takhali and tahalli in our daily lives. God willing, the feeling of al-Murāqabah will automatically arise in the *qalb* (heart) of the servant towards the Worshipped, and will always be accompanied by His guidance, blessings, and mercy, which is referred to as (Tajalli) in ethical mysticism. Within humans lies the potential to be good (noble character) and the potential to be bad (blameworthy character). The potential to be good is *al-'Aql* (the intellect) and *al-Qalb* (the heart). Meanwhile, the potential to be bad is *an-Nafs* (the desires) aided by Satan [16].

### The Implications of Ethical Sufism in Islamic Education

When examining the ethical constructs of the Quran and Sunnah, it can be concluded that Islamic ethics encompasses several psychological dimensions, namely attitudes, characteristics, behaviours, and direct practices such as faith in Allah and His Messenger (attitude), acceptance of Allah's tests (characteristic), praying with fear and hope (behaviour), and performing the five daily obligatory prayers (direct practice). This formulation aligns with the ethical concepts as stated by several Islamic ethical scholars such as Imam al-Ghazali [17].

Islamic religious education, in this context, is viewed and believed to be one of the efforts in fostering the morals and mentality of Indonesian children, as religious education plays a direct role in shaping the quality of faith-filled and devout individuals. One strategy in developing a model for moral development in children is to place the child as the subject of development, rather than merely as an object to be filled with a set of dry values that do not engage with the realities of daily life experienced by the child.

Through a subject-oriented approach, children are encouraged to recognise and solve the issues they face on their own. Moral education, therefore, necessitates that education is aimed at creating a perfect human being. Ahmad Tafsir, quoting Jalal, states that the general aim of education from an Islamic perspective is the realization of man as a servant of Allah the Most Gracious. Ibn Khaldun believes that Islamic education directs students to be obedient in worship and to draw closer to Allah, achieving perfection in this world and the hereafter.



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According to al-Ghazali, the aim of Islamic education is to approach Allah the Most Gracious and achieve human perfection, which aims for happiness both in this world and in the hereafter [10].

The perfection of the perfect human is fundamentally caused by the fact that God manifests perfectly within them through the essence of Muhammad (*al-haqiqah al-Muhammadiyah*). The essence of Muhammad (nur Muhammad) serves as the perfect vessel for God's manifestation and is the first creature created by God. Thus, on one hand, the perfect human is a complete vessel for God's manifestation, while on the other hand, they are a miniature of the entire universe, as they project all individual realities of the universe, both physical and metaphysical [18].

In the realm of moral mysticism, there are mental training systems known as takhali, tahalli, and tajalli [4]. Mental training, the purification of the soul to come closer to God, begins with the cleansing of the soul from despicable traits; only after that can a pure soul be filled with commendable qualities, reaching the next level called tajalli, where the veil is lifted and the divine light is attained. Praiseworthy morals are all kinds of good attitudes and behaviours, born from the commendable traits that lie hidden within the human soul, just as with blameworthy morals. The attitudes and behaviours that arise are a reflection of one's inner qualities [12].

Moral Sufism as a branch of Sufism that places more emphasis on the formation and purification of human character. Its main focus is on *tazkiyatun nafs* (purification of the soul) and tahalli (adornment of oneself with commendable character), which are central to Islamic character education [19]. In the context of Islamic education, this concept is highly relevant as it touches on the emotional, spiritual, and moral dimensions of the learners. Therefore, there are at least three strategic forms in implementing the concept of moral Sufism in the practice of Islamic education.

#### 1. Internalisation of Moral Values

Sufism teaches the internalisation of noble values such as sincerity, patience, honesty, and humility. According to Al-Ghazali in *Ihya 'Ulum al-Din*, moral education is not sufficient with cognitive teaching alone, but must also involve spiritual practice and the habituation of good behaviour through repetition [20]. In the context of education, students are trained to habituate themselves to noble behaviour in their daily lives, so that these values become ingrained in their souls.

The role of moral Sufism in education not only shapes students who understand the concept of ethics theoretically, but also internalises those values within the students' personalities. Consequently, a generation emerges that possesses polite manners, sincerity of heart, and a strong commitment to Islamic values in daily life.

The implementation of ethical tasawuf in the internalization of moral values must be holistic by building the heart (*qalb*), strengthening outward deeds, and creating a conducive educational environment for spiritual growth [10]. In the implementation of ethical tasawuf in the classroom,

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teachers can internalise moral values through daily habituation such as self-reflection, group prayer, and writing ethical journals that record students' good behaviour each day.

## 2. Teachers as Exemplary Figures

Teachers in Islamic education serve as *uswah hasanah* (good role models). Ibn Miskawaih in *Tabdhib al-Akhlaq* emphasises that exemplarity has a stronger influence than mere verbal instructions. By demonstrating noble character in daily life, teachers become tangible models for students to internalise the values of Sufism in their lives [21].

In Islamic education, the exemplary behaviour of teachers (*uswah hasanah*) occupies a central position as one of the most effective methods in the formation of students' character. Theoretically, this concept is based on the principle that character is not only taught through lectures or instructions, but is primarily transmitted through real behaviour that is observed and imitated by students [22]. Al-Ghazali in *Ihya 'Ulum al-Din* emphasises that the influence of actions is stronger than words. Children learn not only from what they hear, but more deeply from what they witness directly. Therefore, teachers serve as living models that reflect Islamic values such as honesty, patience, sincerity, and compassion, which will automatically be instilled in the souls of students [20].

In practical application, a teacher's exemplary conduct can be manifested through consistent behaviour in daily life within the educational environment. Teachers should demonstrate commendable morals, such as starting meetings with greetings, keeping promises made to students, being fair in assessments, and responding to students' mistakes with patience and kindness. Moreover, teachers can show sincerity in teaching by avoiding discriminatory attitudes and showing concern for students' moral and spiritual development.

This exemplary behaviour is not limited to the classroom but also extends to interactions outside of teaching and learning activities, such as in extracurricular activities, study trips, or school religious activities, allowing students to have a real model of applying Islamic values in various life situations [23].

It is also important for educational institutions to systematically nurture and develop exemplary awareness among educators. Character training programs based on ethical Sufism, the spiritual development of teachers through *halaqahs* or remembrance assemblies, as well as periodic evaluations of teachers' moral integrity can serve as concrete steps [24]. By strengthening the exemplification of teachers as an integral part of school culture, Islamic education will be more effective in shaping students who are not only knowledgeable but also possess noble character and high spiritual awareness. Therefore, the exemplification of teachers is not just a teaching method, but the soul of the entire ethical Sufi-based

educational process.

## 3. Spirituality-Based Learning

Moral Sufism also teaches that learning should involve spiritual aspects, not just intellectual ones. Al-Attas in Islam and Secularism states that true education must guide students towards "*adab*", which refers to the management of the soul, intellect, and actions based on divine truth. Thus, spirituality-based learning trains students to be aware of Allah's presence in every activity, strengthening their internal motivation to do good [25].

Spirituality-based learning in Islamic education begins with the principle that the ultimate goal of education is not only to develop intellectual intelligence but more importantly to bring humans closer to Allah SWT. This theory aligns with Al-Attas's thought which emphasises that true education is the process of *ta'dib*, which is the formation of manners, namely the recognition and placement of everything in its rightful place according to the will of Allah [26]. In this context, spirituality becomes the main foundation in all educational processes, not merely an addition. Education that only emphasises cognitive aspects without fostering spiritual awareness will produce individuals who are technically intelligent but weak in morality and ethics.

In practice, spirituality-based learning must be integrated into all subjects and school activities. For example, in Science lessons, teachers can guide students to admire the grandeur of God's creation through the study of the universe. In Language lessons, students are encouraged to understand the importance of speaking the truth and safeguarding their speech as part of their worship. Each teaching material is not only presented scientifically but also linked to the values of monotheism, allowing students to see that knowledge is a means to further know and love God. Thus, the learning atmosphere is not merely academic but also imbued with profound spiritual meaning.

In addition to integrating values into the teaching materials, spirituality-based learning should also foster spiritual awareness through positive habits in the classroom. Each lesson can begin with a prayer, a brief recitation, or a spiritual reflection on the meaning of the knowledge to be learned. Teachers can hold regular "class self-reflection" sessions, where students are invited to contemplate the relationship between their daily behaviours and the values of Islamic ethics [27]. With this approach, learning becomes a means of cultivating a tranquil soul (*nafs al-muthmainnah*) and training students to always feel observed (*muraqabah*) by Allah in all their activities.

To support the success of spirituality-based learning, the school environment must also be designed to be conducive to the spiritual growth of students [28]. Schools can provide special spaces for dhikr or sunnah prayers, increase activities that have a spiritual nuance such as intensive religious training, night prayers together, or religious competitions that emphasise moral values. Teachers and all academic



staff are expected to set an example in maintaining relationships with Allah, fellow humans, and the environment. With this approach, Islamic education not only produces knowledgeable generations but also nurtures individuals who are pious, morally upright, and possess strong spiritual awareness in living their lives.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Ethical Sufism is a form of Sufism that focuses on the development of noble character. The teachings of Ethical Sufism include takhallai, tahalli, and tajalli. Takhallai means emptying oneself of blameworthy traits, one of which is excessive love of the world. Tahalli is the effort to fill or adorn oneself by habituating oneself to commendable attitudes, behaviours, and ethics. Tajalli serves as the consolidation and deepening of the material previously experienced in the tahalli phase, and the series of ethical education is perfected in the tajalli phase.

The application of moral mysticism in Islamic education comprehensively encompasses several strategic forms that are interconnected and reinforce one another. The internalisation of moral values serves as the main foundation, where students are directed to make noble character an integral part of their personality through habituation, reflection, and gradual instillation of values. At the same time, the exemplary behaviour of teachers becomes a concrete medium that shows how these values are embodied in real daily behaviour. Teachers not only act as educators but also as inspirational figures who demonstrate the practical application of the principles of moral mysticism in real life, allowing students to learn through observation and imitation.

In addition, spirituality-based learning expands the scope of implementing moral mysticism by integrating spiritual awareness into the entire educational process. Through this approach, students not only understand knowledge rationally but also absorb spiritual meanings that connect knowledge with divine values. With the combination of these three forms (internalisation of moral values, exemplary teachers, and spirituality-based learning), Islamic education is expected to shape the perfect human being, which is an individual who is intelligent, virtuous, and has a deep connection to Allah SWT. The implementation of moral mysticism like this is not only relevant in shaping individual character but also becomes an urgent need in fostering a generation that can face the challenges of the times with a strong moral and spiritual foundation.

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