Development of Spiritual Intelligence through the Learning of Aqidah Akhlak
(Case Study of Madrasah Aliyah YTP Kertosono)

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Abstract
This article aims to elucidate the process of developing spiritual intelligence through education in Madrasah Aliyah. To achieve this, an understanding of moral and spiritual values must first be established as the foundation. In this setting, spiritual intelligence is fostered through various means, one of which is the subject of Aqidah Akhlak. This research is a qualitative field study, which generates descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from observed individuals and behaviors. Data collection techniques include participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Data analysis employs reflective thinking (data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing). The validity of the data is checked using extended participation, observation persistence, triangulation, and auditing. This study finds that planning starts with defining learning objectives, selecting methods, choosing media, and evaluating, all of which are accommodated in the lesson plans derived from the syllabus, prota, and promes. The study also reveals that the implementation of this planning through an emotional approach involves educators activating the affective domain of students, fostering positive behavior through repetition. Methods used include dogmatic, deductive, and inductive approaches. The study further presents the outcomes of implementing these plans, such as a more conducive learning atmosphere, moral and spiritual improvement of students, prevention of negative behavior, emotional control, and the development of strong Aqidah and noble character in students.

Keywords: Spiritual Intelligence, Aqidah Akhlak, Qualitative Field Study, Reflective Thinking, Emotional Approach, Madrasah Aliyah

INTRODUCTION

Madrasah Aliyah Yayasan Taman Pengetahuan (MA YTP) Kertosono Nganjuk is an educational institution characterized by its Islamic and pesantren-based approach. This institution integrates two elements of education: religious education with the unique features of pesantren and "general" education. Initial observations at MA YTP Kertosono in November 2022 revealed that students exhibited polite,
disciplined, orderly behavior, and the environment appeared very conducive. Among these positive behaviors were: greeting others with "salam," showing politeness to others, especially guests and elders, confidence, and many others.

The researcher observed that these good behaviors were formed through habituation within the pesantren environment. MA YTP is indeed a pesantren-based madrasah, with the majority of its students residing in dormitories within the pesantren complex. The positive behaviors of these students indicated a high level of awareness, the ability to be flexible (spontaneously and actively adaptive), and a quality of life inspired by a vision and values of good morals. This shows that the students of MA YTP Kertosono possess several characteristics of individuals with spiritual intelligence (Lubis, 2018; Danah Zohar and Marshall, 2002; Fata, 2011).

The formation of good attitudes and behaviors in MA YTP Kertosono students is closely linked to the vision and mission of MA YTP Kertosono, which prioritizes moral and spiritual education before the development of academic aspects. This vision is inspired by the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH): “I was only sent to perfect good character.” In this regard, MA YTP Kertosono considers the development of spiritual intelligence to be important because a person’s life success depends not only on intellectual and emotional intelligence but also on spiritual intelligence, which is even more crucial (Hanief Irmawan, S.Si/Principal of MA YTP Kertosono, interview, April 3, 2023).

Indeed, madrasahs play a vital role in building students’ spiritual intelligence through classroom subjects. Teachers are expected to transfer knowledge effectively while emphasizing spiritual intelligence in the learning process, without neglecting intellectual and emotional intelligence, balancing them according to their proportions. At this point, the subject of Aqidah Akhlak plays an important role in shaping students’ character because it is directly related to aspects of spiritual intelligence. The lessons that forge students to be spiritually intelligent with the ability to recognize themselves, develop empathy, and foster good relationships with others are part of the Aqidah Akhlak curriculum.

The efforts of Aqidah Akhlak teachers are crucial in developing students’ spiritual intelligence in schools. These teachers must provide guidance and direction while serving as role models, educating students to become individuals of noble character and capable of controlling their emotions well. The early stages of child development are conducive, as children can respond well to everything taught to them. Gradually, children will have a strong foundation and be able to control their emotions in the future.

Based on the above facts, this study aims to examine the process of developing spiritual intelligence through the Aqidah Akhlak curriculum at Madrasah Aliyah Yayasan Taman Pengetahuan (MA YTP) Kertosono. The Aqidah Akhlak subject was chosen because it is closely related to spiritual intelligence.
METHOD

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach. The aim is to understand and describe how the observed conditions are formed, from planning, implementation, to the outcomes achieved. This type of research is qualitative field research, a procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words from people and observed behaviors (Meleong, 2002, p. 174).

The qualitative approach in this study involves aligning empirical reality with existing theories using descriptive methods. This entails describing how the learning process can develop students' spiritual intelligence through the Aqidah Akhlak subject at MA YTP Kertosono Nganjuk. To answer these questions, the researcher began collecting data through interviews, observations of daily life within the madrasah environment, and the necessary document collection.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Teaching of Aqidah Akhlak at MA YTP Kertosono

According to Hanief Irmawan, preparatory meetings are held before the start of each academic year to improve the quality of students. Additionally, an annual working meeting is organized by the foundation and the principal. The outcomes of these meetings are then discussed with the teaching staff to determine the programs to be implemented at the school (Hanief Irmawan, S.Si, interview).

The Vice Principal of Curriculum and Student Affairs is responsible for creating schedules, monitoring religious activities, and assigning teachers to supervise these activities. Evaluations are conducted every semester to measure the success of the implemented programs (Hanief Irmawan, S.Si, interview).

Tuhfatur Rusuli, the Vice Principal of Curriculum, emphasizes that the school plays a crucial role in addressing issues by developing students' spiritual intelligence through classroom subjects. This process starts with planning and is supported by appropriate implementation models to produce students with multiple intelligences. Teachers are expected to transfer knowledge effectively while emphasizing spiritual intelligence, without neglecting intellectual and emotional intelligence (Tuhfatur Rusuli, Vice Principal of Student Affairs, interview, March 17, 2023).

Aqidah Akhlak is selected as a means to develop spiritual intelligence because of its direct link to the formation of such intelligence. The teaching plan for Aqidah Akhlak involves setting learning objectives, choosing methods and media, and conducting evaluations, all encapsulated in lesson plans derived from the syllabus, annual programs, and the principal's organization of religious guidance (Tuhfatur Rusuli, interview).

The creation of a work structure facilitates coordination in implementing the teaching program. This ensures all teachers understand their roles and
responsibilities. Teachers are given the autonomy to select methods for their subjects. Specifically, for Aqidah Akhlak, teachers must seek additional digital resources to complement printed textbooks (Tuhfatur Rusuli, interview).

Ahmad Firdausy Perdana, an Aqidah Akhlak teacher, states that the teaching of Aqidah Akhlak requires a structured plan for guidance and collaboration with the Vice Principal of Student Affairs and counseling teachers. Counseling teachers provide insights on students' tendencies, analytical abilities, and behaviors, which helps in selecting appropriate teaching methods (Ahmad Firdausy Perdana, Aqidah Akhlak teacher, interview, March 19, 2023).

Firdausy Perdana highlights that teaching Aqidah Akhlak involves not only understanding the material but also guiding students to internalize its meaning and apply it in daily life, such as greeting with "salam," being honest, respecting elders, and maintaining discipline. These practices aim to enhance students' faith and devotion to Allah SWT, embedding noble character and spiritual intelligence within them (Ahmad Firdausy Perdana, interview).

Students at MA YTP are engaged in activities that promote polite speech and respectful behavior towards teachers and parents. Other habituation activities include daily Quran reading, Dhuha prayers, and congregational prayers, all aimed at increasing faith and devotion (KH. Saifulloh Al Ali, MSI, Vice Chairman of the Foundation, interview, April 10, 2023).

Planning the Development of Spiritual Intelligence

Data indicates that Aqidah Akhlak teachers play a vital role in developing spiritual intelligence at the school. They are not just educators but also mentors who guide students to follow the right path according to religious principles. Therefore, an Aqidah Akhlak teacher is expected to help students understand Islamic laws and apply them in daily life (Nasution and Abadi 2014; Fata 2005).

According to the Indonesian Ministry of Religion, Aqidah Akhlak is a part of Islamic Religious Education (PAI) that instills strong faith in the Almighty and encourages students to know and believe in Allah SWT. This subject promotes noble behavior in social life and is mandatory in madrasahs from elementary to high school levels (Solihin 2020; Ainiyah 2013).

The scope of Aqidah Akhlak includes two main aspects: the relationship between humans and Allah SWT, and the relationship between humans and other beings. It covers principles of faith, methods of enhancing it, Asma al-Husna, types of monotheism, polytheism, and its implications, as well as the understanding and functions of classical and modern theology (Nasution and Abadi 2014). The functions of Aqidah Akhlak education are to:
1. Instill Islamic values as a guide for achieving happiness in this world and the hereafter.
2. Develop faith and piety to Allah SWT and noble character to the fullest, initially nurtured within the family environment.
3. Adjust students' mental attitudes towards physical and social environments through faith and morality.
4. Correct students’ mistakes and weaknesses in practicing Islamic teachings in daily life.
5. Prevent negative influences from the environment or foreign cultures.
6. Channel students' interests in deepening Aqidah Akhlak at higher educational levels (Supriatna and Rahayu 2021).

The goal of Aqidah Akhlak education is to foster and enhance students' faith, manifested in commendable behavior, through imparting knowledge, understanding, and practice of Islamic faith and morality, enabling them to continuously improve their faith and piety (Supriatna and Rahayu 2021).

The teaching of Aqidah Akhlak aligns with the principles of spiritual intelligence, which include:

1. God-Spot (inner voice) - The human conscience universally seeks truth and justice, inspired by Allah’s attributes (Kemenag, n.d.).
2. Wisdom - Understanding and applying Allah’s attributes in a balanced and wise manner, using a clean heart and mind.
3. Integrity - Working wholeheartedly with high enthusiasm and integrity.
5. Confidence - Deriving confidence from faith in Allah, helping to enact positive changes in oneself and the environment.

The steps taken by the Principal of the Madrasah to develop a well-structured plan include setting the madrasah’s vision and mission, organizing annual meetings, and coordinating with the teaching staff. The Vice Principals of Curriculum and Student Affairs schedule religious activities and assign supervisory duties to teachers. This planning aligns with Nawawi's definition of planning as a process of selecting activities to achieve set objectives (Nawawi 2003, 30) and Terry’s emphasis on visualizing and formulating future actions (Majid 2005, 12).

At MA YTP Kertosono, Aqidah Akhlak teachers plan their lessons by identifying learning materials, methods, and creating lesson plans (RPP). This approach aligns with Sukmadinata’s theory that lesson planning should be a detailed development of the curriculum, considering the school’s specific conditions and potentials (Sukmadinata 2007, 31).
Key findings from the research include:

1. Teachers at MA YTP have the autonomy to implement their teaching strategies, including those for Aqidah Akhlak to develop students’ spiritual intelligence.
2. The principal plays a crucial role in policy-making related to teaching methods, emphasizing habituation and role modeling, particularly for Aqidah Akhlak.
3. Teachers are expected to be role models for students in daily behavior.
4. Teachers are actively involved in instilling Islamic values through religious activities.

The planned development of spiritual intelligence through Aqidah Akhlak includes organizing religious activity supervisors, systematically coordinating tasks, and making Vice Principal of Student Affairs responsible for implementation. The role of Aqidah Akhlak teachers is supported by structural organization, collaborative efforts, and a clear understanding of their responsibilities, ensuring effective lesson delivery and character formation.

**Implementation of Spiritual Intelligence Development through Aqidah Akhlak**

Aqidah Akhlak teachers continuously guide students to understand and internalize the subject matter, encouraging them to apply these teachings in real life. This includes promoting daily practices like greeting, praying Dhuha, congregational Dzuhur prayers, honesty, good behavior, and noble character. Group tasks and regular Quran reading are also emphasized (Ahmad Firdausy Perdana, interview).

Supporting Suharsono’s theory, the program involves enhancing general intelligence (IQ and EQ), performing additional worships, purifying oneself from negative actions, and maintaining a commitment to truth and intellectual pursuit (Suharsono 2005, 161).

Teachers are responsible for moral and spiritual guidance, aiming to develop students’ potential through Aqidah Akhlak education. This aligns with aspects of Aqidah Akhlak learning, such as faith, practice, habituation, rational understanding, emotional engagement, functional benefits, and role modeling.

Therefore, Aqidah Akhlak education is a deliberate and planned effort to prepare students to know, understand, internalize, and believe in Allah SWT, translating this into noble behavior through guidance, teaching, training, and habituation.

Selecting appropriate teaching models is crucial, and teachers should plan their lessons considering the material and students’ conditions. Emotional approaches and positive reinforcement are emphasized to foster good behavior among students at MA YTP Kertosono.

Several programs at the madrasah support spiritual intelligence development, including daily prayers, Quran reading, group tasks, and religious activities. These
programs help instill spiritual values and protect students from negative influences of globalization.

The positive environment created by these programs demonstrates the importance of spiritual intelligence as the foundation of all other intelligences, as stated by Zohar (2002, 78).

**Outcomes of Spiritual Intelligence Development through Aqidah Akhlak Education**

Current issues related to students’ behavior indicate a crisis of moral and spiritual values, influenced by external cultures through social media. This presents a challenge for educational institutions to attract parents to enroll their children in these schools.

The spiritual and moral deviations among teenagers highlight the need for a deeper understanding of life’s true meaning, as described by Ary Ginanjar Agustian (2008, 57). Spiritual intelligence enables individuals to find worshipful meaning in their actions and thoughts, leading to a holistic and integrative approach to life with a principle of “solely to Allah.”

Observations indicate that tenth-grade students at MA YTP Kertosono often experience instability due to environmental changes and transitional phases from childhood to adolescence. This instability can lead to behavioral deviations, which are addressed through structured programs that foster spiritual and moral development.

Research findings show that MA YTP Kertosono has successfully instilled spiritual and moral values through classroom and extracurricular activities. The results include students applying Aqidah Akhlak teachings to strengthen their faith and noble character, creating a conducive classroom environment, and a religious and moral madrasah atmosphere.

The madrasah’s programs, such as mandatory boarding school activities and religious events, have effectively addressed the spiritual and moral crises among students. These programs help stabilize students’ emotions and protect them from the negative impacts of globalization.

Thus, the spiritual intelligence development programs have proven successful in creating a positive and conducive environment at the madrasah, supporting the view that spiritual intelligence is foundational to all other forms of intelligence (Zohar 2002, 78).

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the research conducted, several conclusions can be drawn regarding the development of spiritual intelligence through Aqidah Akhlak education at Madrasah Aliyah Yayasan Taman Pengetahuan Kertosono as follows:
1. **Planning for Spiritual Intelligence Development:** The development of students' spiritual intelligence through Aqidah Akhlak education begins with an annual working meeting to discuss the programs to be implemented by the madrasah. This is followed by the Aqidah Akhlak teachers’ planning process, which involves analyzing the material, understanding students' learning characteristics, creating teaching materials, planning the teaching methods to be used, identifying learning materials, organizing the implementation methods related to spiritual intelligence development, setting success standards or indicators, and preparing lesson plans (RPP) as detailed in the syllabus, annual programs, and semester programs.

2. **Implementation of Spiritual Intelligence Development:** The implementation of spiritual intelligence development through Aqidah Akhlak education is carried out using exemplary methods and good advice, accompanied by the application of rewards and punishments. This is reflected in the religious guidance provided to educators, students, and the entire madrasah community through: a) Routine habituation; b) Spontaneous habituation; and c) Exemplary habituation in daily behavior.

3. **Outcomes of Spiritual Intelligence Development:** Although not all plans and implementations have yielded results, the development of students' spiritual intelligence through Aqidah Akhlak education has shown tangible outcomes. These include a more conducive learning environment, improved student morals and spirituality, prevention of deviant behavior, better emotional control among students, and overall, the achievement of strong faith (aqidah) and commendable character (akhlaqul karimah). These outcomes underscore the importance of comprehensive planning and implementation in effectively fostering spiritual intelligence in students through Aqidah Akhlak education.

**REFERENCES**


