

Integration of Sufi Healing and Psychotherapy in Religious Character Education at Vocational High School

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Abstract

The phenomenon of delinquency among school-age youth, such as gang fighting, has become a social problem that requires various forms of character education internalisation. This qualitative research in the form of a case study aims to describe the implementation of Sufi healing as a form of psychotherapy at the Sekolah Menengah kejuruan (SMK) Nusantara Nusantara Weru, Cirebon Regency. Data was obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation. The results of the study show the internalisation of religious character education in students at SMK Nusantara through the integration of Sufi healing and psychotherapy strategies. This can be seen from the habitual routine activities before teaching and learning activities, where students are gathered to read Surat Yasin and Solawat Nariyah. Then, counselling was conducted as therapy for internalising character education. This research contributes to affirming that the implementation of Sufi healing and psychotherapy can be an effective medium in religious character education in vocational education institutions.

Keywords: Sufi Healing, Psychotherapy, Character Education.

Abstrak

Fenomena kenakalan remaja usia sekolah, seperti aksi tawuran menjadi problem social yang menghendaki berbagai bentuk internalisasi pendidikan karakter. Penelitian kualitatif dalam bentuk studi kasus ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan implementasi sufi healing sebagai bentuk psikoterapi di Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan Nusantara Weru, Kabupaten Cirebon. Data diperoleh melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan internalisasi pendidikan karakter religius pada siswa di SMK Nusantara melalui integrasi antara staretegi sufi healing dan psikoterapi. Hal demikian dapat dilihat dari habituasi kegiatan rutin sebelum kegiatan belajar mengajar, siswa dikumpulkan untuk membaca surat Yasin dan Solawat Nariyah. Kemudian, dilakukan konseling sebagai terapi dalam internalisasi pendidikan karakter. Kontribusi penelitian ini menegaskan implementasi sufi healing dan psikoterapi dapat menjadi medium efektif dalam pendidikan karakter religius dalam aktifitas lembaga pendidikan kejuruan.

Kata Kunci : Sufi Healing, Psikoterapi, Pendidikan Karakter.

INTRODUCTION

Adolescence is a period in which an individual experiences a transition from one stage to the next and undergoes changes in emotions, body, interests, behaviour patterns, and is also fraught with problems that they face.(Perwitaningrum et al., 2016) However, adolescence is also referred to as a storm and stress period, a time when there is heightened emotional tension due to physical and hormonal changes in adolescents themselves. The heightened emotional state of adolescents is due to social pressures and facing new conditions in line with their physical and psychological development. (Nuariningsih et al., 2023)

Schools must comprehensively develop their students' potential, including their spiritual, social, intellectual and emotional intelligence and skills, as stipulated in Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System.(Malihah et al., 2014) Schools, as formal institutions, naturally have many forms of interaction and socialisation that greatly influence the formation of children's personalities through the supervision and guidance of teachers. (Haryono, 2023) Schools are expected to provide a learning environment designed to develop children's potential and educate them to become individuals with good character. However, in practice, there are many behavioural problems that can hinder the achievement of these goals, fighting being one of them. (Maputra et al., 2024)

The recent spate of fights between students has been widely reported in the media. Almost every day, even every week, there are local and national media outlets, both print and online, reporting on fights between students in Indonesia, particularly in the city and regency of Cirebon, West Java Province. According to data from Radar Cirebon, on 26 January 2022, a gathering of vocational school alumni ended in a brawl that resulted in serious injuries from stab wounds, requiring 100 stitches to treat. Even more recently, in 2022, another student brawl occurred around Plered Road in Cirebon Regency, where several students threw stones at each other in front of SMK Nusantara. This situation contradicts the community's expectations for the development of the younger generation. The younger generation, who are the focus of the nation's future, appear to be the bearers of hope and joy. (Nurhadiyanto, 2024)

The phenomenon of fighting among students as described above is not only detrimental to society at large but can also be detrimental to the students themselves, as fighting can constitute a criminal offence because it endangers human life. To prevent rampant delinquency among students, it is necessary to nurture moral character through various means and media in order to create a meaningful, peaceful and dignified life. The internalisation of Islamic values in the lives of each student is a necessity that must be pursued through educational institutions, whether through the family, school or community. In the context of Islam, the implementation of Sufi education in character building can be a strategy that focuses on the development of spiritual, emotional and moral aspects. (Muhlison, 2025) In other words, it can be achieved through the Sufi Healing method by implementing extracurricular programmes in educational institutions. (Mu'azzaz & Rikza Chamami, 2025) This programme is becoming increasingly urgent, especially in this complex era of globalisation, with all its conveniences and problematic impacts, requiring educational

institutions to be adaptive without neglecting their substantial aspects. (Anamisari et al., 2023)

The purpose of this study is to describe the implementation of Sufi healing as a form of psychotherapy among students at NusantaraWeru Vocational High School in Cirebon Regency, West Java Province. Various previous studies related to this topic include Rudi Haryanto's research, which explains that psychotherapy techniques can be developed to overcome mental disorders based on psychological and Islamic theories. In Islamic teachings, regular zikr can be an effective alternative therapy for overcoming mental disorders. (Haryanto, 2015)

Unlike previous studies mentioned above, the novelty aspect of this study focuses on describing the implementation of Sufi healing in shaping religious character as a form of psychotherapy for students at SMK Nusantara Weru in Cirebon Regency, West Java Province. This study is expected to contribute theoretically and practically to insights or strategies that combine Sufi healing and psychotherapy in shaping students' character. Therefore, this study is urgently needed.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study utilises a qualitative method. The qualitative approach was chosen considering the possibility that the data obtained in the field would be in the form of facts that require in-depth analysis. (Nurrisa & Hermina, 2025) The primary data sources in this study were obtained from the research location or the object of the study. In this study, the primary data were vocational high school (SMK) students at Nusantara Weru in Cirebon Regency. Meanwhile, the secondary data sources were various scientific references, such as journals, books, media, and so on, to support the study.

The data collection techniques used in this study were observation, interviews, and documentation. In this study, the author took the research location at SMK Nusantara Cirebon, located on Jalan Raya Ir.H.Djuanda-Panembahan No.14, Plered District, Cirebon Regency, West Java Province. In this study, the research sample consisted of male students of SMK Nusantara in grades XI and XII in each department. During the research process, the researcher used a sociological approach. The sociological approach in qualitative research methods attempts to capture the socio-cultural meanings and experiences of the research subjects. Data management techniques consist of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and data conclusion drawing. All data collected is from data reduction and data presentation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Relaxation Through Zikr

Zikir in the Arabic dictionary means "to remember or mention", in other words "reflection and teaching". Dhikr to Allah aims to improve oneself and calm the soul from anxiety, worry, desire, and the shackles of lust. Performing dhikr correctly and sufficiently can calm the heart and control lust. (Irhas et al., 2023) The term zikir is well known in the

world of Sufism. It is even one of the stages to reach the level of Sufi. Thus, one cannot become a Sufi if anxiety still envelops their soul. (Amin & Ambarwati, 2020).

Zikr is also a way to always remember the creator of the universe and mankind. Zikr should be done at all times, both verbally and in the heart. This means that whatever activities a Muslim does, he should always remember Allah. This will become the foundation of faith in Allah, and he will feel ashamed to commit sins and transgressions against Him. (Afifi et al., 2025) Shalawat is part of zikir, because shalawat is a way of expressing gratitude to Allah and honouring the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Shalawat Tafrijiyyah, also known as Shalawat Nariyah, is one of the many forms of shalawat practised by some Muslims.

Psychologically, muzakir (people who recite prayers) are those who are furthest from emotional turmoil (ambivalence) caused by suffering or abundance. This can be linked to Sigmund Freud's personality theory, which states that people who do not recite prayers are always influenced by their ID (Das Es) in all their movements and rhythms of life, and that the human ego (das ich) will always follow the influence of the subconscious (ID). (Yuniartika et al, 2023)

Through frequent remembrance, the 'super-ego' within a person functions as a control mechanism for proper behaviour. By remembering God, a person's soul will be at peace, leading to peaceful individual and social behaviour. They will be able to accept reality and realise their true humanity. (Septiawan et al., 2021)

In analytical psychology, as theorised by Carl Gustav Jung, the concept of the unconscious mind is nothing more than the realm that exists within the heart. When reciting prayers while praising God's name, a person fights against themselves, their desires, and their ego, which prevent them from reaching their true self and reaching God. (Purwanto et al., 2022)

The existence of zikir is also a form of spirituality and religiosity. Zikir, as a way to get closer to Allah SWT, can help individuals form perceptions other than fear, namely the belief that every problem can be faced well with Allah help. (Perwitaningrum et al., 2016) Zikr can be used as a medium for transcendence, which occurs when a person remembers Allah and has an attitude of surrender or resignation, because the meaning of transcendence itself is to depend. With this attitude, a person will be carried into a passive state, which will be very effective when combined with relaxation techniques. (Safitri et al., 2017)

In practising relaxation, it is necessary to deliberately relax the body deeply. Zikir relaxation will be combined with an attitude of surrender to Allah SWT. The relaxation referred to here is a physical activity, while the attitude of surrender is a psychological activity that will strengthen the quality of the relaxation itself.

The main difference lies in the transcendent attitude during surrender. With this attitude of surrender, the relaxation response occurs not only on a physical level but also on a deeper psychological level. This is because surrender is an attitude of total dependence/expectation (transcendence), as in the prayer recited five times a day: *'innaa sholati wanusuki wamahyaya wamamati lillahirobilalamin'* - truly, my prayers, my deeds, my life and my death I surrender to Allah, Lord of the universe. That is the attitude of surrender that will lead to acceptance, so that all of life's problems can be tolerated with this attitude.

Ontological Discourse on Psychotherapy

The term psychotherapy comes from two words, namely 'Psyche' and 'Therapy'. Psyche means soul, mind or mental. Meanwhile, Therapy means healing or treatment. Therefore, psychotherapy is psychological treatment as a solution to problems related to human thoughts, feelings and behaviour. Psychotherapy is also referred to as mental therapy, psychological therapy, or mind therapy. (Mufidah, 2015) Islamic psychotherapy uses the teachings of the Qur'an and hadith to help clients overcome physical, moral, mental, and spiritual problems. (Ponorogo, 2024)

According to James Chaplin in the Lentera Journal, psychotherapy is a special technique used in the treatment of mental illness or difficulties in daily adjustment. Broadly speaking, psychotherapy includes healing through religious beliefs through informal discussions or personal discussions with trusted teachers or friends. (Mufidah, 2015)

Psychotherapy is not only used to treat mental illness, but can also be used to help maintain and develop psychological integrity, so that individuals continue to grow healthily and are able to adapt more effectively to their environment. Thus, the main task of psychotherapists here is to provide a complete understanding and insight into the client's self and to modify or even change behaviour that is considered deviant by the wider community.

Psychotherapy is not only used by people with mental health issues, but is now also used for healthy people or those who have a right to mental health, whose suffering torments us all. (Islamy et al., 2022) According to Carl Gustav Jung, psychotherapy is not only used for curative (healing) purposes, but also serves preventive (prevention) and constructive (maintenance and development of a healthy mind) functions. These three functions indicate that consulting a psychotherapist is not only necessary when a person is mentally ill. It is better to do so before symptoms or mental illness arise, as this can help build a well-rounded personality. One effort to address and treat mental health issues is through psychotherapy. There are various types of psychotherapy, each with different objectives. This has given rise to modern psychology, namely psychoanalysis, behaviourism, humanism, and transpersonal psychology. (Arroissi & Mukharrom, 2021) Therefore, a new idea emerged in modern psychology, namely the recognition of the spiritual dimension of human beings.

Overview of Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan Nusantara Weru

Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan (SMK) Nusantara Weru, Cirebon Regency, located at Jalan Raya Panembahan No. 14, Panembahan Village, Plered District, Cirebon Regency, West Java Province, is a private school under the auspices of the Syuja'ul Mubarroh Nadhatul Ulama Foundation of Cirebon Regency. SMK Nusantara was established in 1997.

There are several vocational programmes at SMK Nusantara, including Machining Engineering, Light Vehicle Engineering (Automotive), Motorcycle Business Engineering, and Audio-Video Engineering. However, the Audio-Video programme has now been closed due to low interest from prospective SMK Nusantara students, so currently only three vocational programmes are still operational. SMK Nusantara has the following Vision and Mission:

The vision of SMK Nusantara Weru, Cirebon Regency, is "To realise SMK Nusantara Weru as a reliable institution in producing cadres with intermediate-level technological competence, professionalism, independence, and noble character in accordance with the teachings of Ahlussunnah Waljama'ah Islam. Meanwhile, the mission of SMK Nusantara Weru, Cirebon Regency, is (1) To provide integrated education and training based on the principles of modern Islamic education of Ahlussunnah Waljama'ah. (2) Fostering and developing an Islamic environment in education and training that is conducive to the norms and values that have developed in the world of vocational schools and the Ahlussunnah Waljama'ah Islamic religion. (3) Becoming a means of nurturing the young Islamic generation so that they are able to be independent, professional, competent at the intermediate level, and have noble character that is beneficial to themselves, the community, the nation, and the state.

Furthermore, students at SMK Nusantara consist of male and female students, although male students are very dominant. Every year, the condition of students experiences ups and downs, especially in the last two years due to Covid-19. During Covid-19, the learning system used an online system in the learning process, except for productive lessons which had to be face-to-face. The following are the objective conditions of SMK Nusantara Weru students in Cirebon Regency.

Internalisation of Sufi Healing and Psychotherapy Values in Religious Character Education for Students at SMK Nusantara Weru

The concept of Sufi Healing developed from Sufi practices that began to emerge in the 8th century AD, although its roots date back to the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. (Aminudin & Rusydi, 2025) Sufi Healing is a therapy that has been practised for a long time. Sufi Healing is based on the belief that all illnesses come from God, and only through His blessings can all illnesses be cured. (Huda, 2020).

The implementation of Sufi healing values in the form of religious values for Nusantara Vocational School students is as follows: every day at 7:00 a.m. before the teaching and learning process begins, all students gather in the field to recite Surat Yasin and Selawat Nariyah together. This activity takes place from 7:00 to 8:00 a.m. on the parade ground and is led by the Islamic Education teacher. The aim of this activity is to instil a high level of spirituality in students as a foundation for when they complete their education at the school. This applies not only to students but also to all teachers and staff at SMK Nusantara.

The efforts made by the school in the above activities have been going on for quite some time, and these activities have been well received by the students. The students feel that there are many benefits to be gained from the activities of reciting Surat Yasin and Selawat Nariyah. Based on data collected through interviews with students, the benefits gained from these activities include (1) Students who were previously unable to read the Quran are now able to read it and memorise Surah Yasin because they are accustomed to reading it regularly. (2) They shape students' characters to be more superior and Islamic. (3) They instil a love for the Quran and salawat in students. (4) They protect students from

committing sins, because if people always remember Allah, they will not do anything that is forbidden by Allah. In fact, these activities have become part of the strategy for accepting new students.

Through the routine activities of reciting prayers and reading Yasin and Selawat Nariyah conducted by the school, SMK Nusantara believes that its students will have a different character from graduates of other schools. The recitation of Surat Yasin and Selawat Nariyah was carried out for all students, but only 20 students, namely those in grades XI and XII, were the subjects of this study. The recitation of Surat Yasin and Selawat Nariyah was carried out intensively for 3 months, and the students who were the research respondents were interviewed during their free time.

Furthermore, in addition to the recitation of Surat Yasin and Solawat Nariyah, the researcher also took on the role of counsellor to the students as part of the therapy process in order to identify the main problems experienced by the students without any coercion from other parties. This also made it easier for the researcher to carry out the treatment. During the study, the researcher interviewed several students from Nusantara Vocational School in grades XI and XII to investigate the extent of the influence of reciting Surat Yasin and Solawat Nariyah as a form of psychotherapy on student delinquency at the school. The researcher interviewed the respondents three times during the research process.

After reciting Surat Yasin and Selawat Nariyah, there were 10 students out of 20 respondents who became the focus of student delinquency experienced by Nusantara Vocational School students. The following are the issues related to the misbehaviour of the 10 students. Among them, there were respondents who lacked confidence due to their parents' economic status, which was lower middle class, causing them to have low self-esteem. They were afraid that their friends would not accept them after learning about their families' financial difficulties.

Self-confidence must be instilled in students so that they can become good individuals despite their shortcomings. Self-confidence is a basic need. It is the fourth basic need, namely the need for self-esteem. A person's need for self-esteem can be fulfilled through themselves (self-respect) and through others. In other words, self-confidence can be obtained by respecting oneself or by being respected by others. (Perwitaningrum et al., 2016)

Through activities such as reciting Surat Yasin, Selawat Nariyah, and counselling, they have now begun to open up and share their experiences with researchers, who in turn help the subjects to regain their self-confidence. Respondents who cannot adjust to the situation where they reject their parents' choice for them to attend SMK Nusantara but cannot argue against it. As a result, they became quieter in class, often leaving and inviting other friends during class hours, leaving home to go to school halfway through their journey to find a place to hang out.

Respondents who could not adjust to their environment ended up willingly seeking an outlet by deliberately engaging in mischief. Adjustment is a process that involves mental and behavioural responses that individuals strive for in order to successfully deal with internal needs, tensions, frustrations, conflicts, and to produce a quality of harmony between

the demands of the individual's inner self and the demands of the outside world or the environment in which the individual exists. (Zai, 2019)

After the counselling process took place, the researcher began to approach the students by creating a space for them to open up. During the session, the students began to talk about how they felt comfortable at the school their parents had chosen for them. Respondents who did not understand themselves were students with low self-awareness; they were unable to position themselves according to their experiences.

After receiving treatment that they considered unpleasant, they would form a defence mechanism, becoming indifferent, quiet, and often doing as they pleased, such as sleeping in class, skipping the last lesson, and lacking enthusiasm for learning. Self-understanding of a problem like this would make them indifferent and assume that what they were doing was right. In this context, Maslow argues that self-understanding is experienced through self-actualisation, whereby individuals are motivated to know the reasons or purposes behind their existence. Maslow also says that every individual has the drive to fulfil their needs, from the simplest to the most complex. Self-actualisation is the achievement of one's greatest potential, becoming the best one can be, and achieving one's life goals. (Sosialisman et al., 2023)

Respondents who are unable to take responsibility, i.e. those who never pay attention to school rules, are always late, often skip school, never wear the full uniform, and often argue when advised by teachers, are unable to take responsibility for the obligations they have accepted, both at school and outside school. This is because responsibility is the ability to determine one's attitude towards an action that is undertaken and the ability to bear the risks of an action that is carried out. (Nurhadiyanto, 2024)

The above explanation shows that the implementation of Sufi healing and psychotherapy among students at SMK Nusantara Weru can be a medium for internalising character education values for adolescents that can be applied in educational institutions.

CONCLUSION

The main discussion of this study concludes that the internalisation of religious character education values in students at SMK Nusantara Weru, Cirebon Regency, is carried out through a strategy that combines Sufi healing with psychotherapy. This can be seen from the habitual routine every morning before teaching and learning activities, where all students are gathered in the field to read Surat Yasin and Selawat Nariyah together. After these activities, there are zikir Surat Yasin and Solawat Nariyah activities. The researcher also takes on the role of counselling students as part of the therapy process, which is the focal point for student delinquency.

The contribution of this research confirms that the implementation of Sufi healing and psychotherapy can be a medium for internalising character education values for adolescents that can be applied in vocational educational institutions. The limitation of this research is that it has not examined the obstacles in implementing the programme. This is important for further study.

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