

**TRANSFORMATION OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION THROUGH THE
INTEGRATION OF SUFISM FOR THE ENHANCEMENT
OF SPIRITUAL INTELLIGENCE**

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Sufism Integration, Islamic Education Transformation, Spiritual Intelligence

ABSTRACT

Islamic education faces a significant challenge in the Society 5.0 era, where the dominance of cognitive approaches often fails to address the critical need for students' spiritual strengthening. This situation creates an urgent demand for more holistic educational models grounded in Sufi principles. This study aims to map the development of research on the integration of Sufism into Islamic education and its contribution to enhancing spiritual intelligence. A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) was employed to analyze scholarly literature from 2000 to 2024, following the stages of research question formulation, selection criteria establishment, cross-database searching (international and national), article screening, data extraction, and thematic analysis. The synthesis of findings reveals that Sufi values—such as contemplation (tafakkur), soul purification (tazkiyah), and character building—significantly strengthen curriculum design, learning strategies, and student transformation. This integration has been proven to foster the development of spiritual, cognitive, and emotional intelligence as the foundation for cultivating the complete human (insan kamil). The study's implications underscore the necessity of developing more humanistic, adaptive, and holistic-oriented Islamic education models to navigate the complexities of the digital age.

KATA KUNCI:

Integrasi Sufisme, Transformasi Pendidikan Islam, Kecerdasan Spiritual

ABSTRAK

Pendidikan Islam menghadapi tantangan besar di era Society 5.0 karena dominasi pendekatan kognitif yang belum sepenuhnya menjawab kebutuhan penguatan spiritual peserta didik. Kondisi ini memunculkan kebutuhan mendesak untuk menghadirkan model pendidikan yang lebih holistik melalui integrasi nilai-nilai Sufisme. Penelitian ini bertujuan memetakan perkembangan kajian mengenai integrasi Sufisme dalam pendidikan Islam serta kontribusinya terhadap penguatan kecerdasan spiritual. Pendekatan Systematic Literature Review digunakan untuk menelaah literatur ilmiah dari tahun 2000 sampai 2024 melalui tahapan perumusan pertanyaan penelitian, penetapan kriteria seleksi, pencarian lintas database internasional dan nasional, penyaringan artikel, ekstraksi data, dan analisis tematik. Hasil sintesis menunjukkan bahwa nilai sufistik seperti kontemplasi, penyucian jiwa, dan pembinaan karakter mampu memperkuat desain kurikulum, strategi pembelajaran, serta proses transformasi peserta didik. Integrasi ini terbukti mendorong perkembangan kecerdasan spiritual, kognitif, dan emosional sebagai fondasi pembentukan insan kamil. Implikasi penelitian menegaskan perlunya pengembangan model pendidikan Islam yang lebih humanistik, adaptif, dan berorientasi pada keutuhan manusia dalam menghadapi kompleksitas era digital.

INTRODUCTION

Contemporary Islamic education faces fundamental challenges in the era of Society 5.0, when the need for high academic competence must be aligned with the strengthening of spirituality as the core of the mission of Islamic education (Azra, 2012). The paradigm shift towards digitization and the integration of advanced technology in learning has prompted Islamic educational institutions to reorganize their educational orientation. However, this transformation process has not always been balanced (Rusadi et al., 2019). An educational orientation that places too much emphasis on academic achievement and cognitive skills often strays from the mandate of Islamic education, which emphasizes character building, honing spiritual sensitivity, and the process of *tazkiyah al-nafs*. This phenomenon has led to a crisis of identity in Islamic education, evident in the weakening of spiritual values, the underdevelopment of students' emotional intelligence, and the declining relevance of Islamic education in addressing the complexities of modern life (Sukma et al., 2025; Yana et al., 2024).

Various studies show that Islamic education models based on academic competition marginalize students' affective and spiritual aspects. This has resulted in a generation of Muslims who are intellectually intelligent but lack spiritual depth and sensitivity to values. At the same time, the wave of digitalization sweeping the world of education

requires Islamic education systems to be adaptive, innovative, and responsive to the times. If Islamic education only focuses on adopting technology without strengthening its spiritual foundation, then the direction of education will stray further from the core values of Islam, which emphasize a balance between knowledge and morals. This condition indicates the need for a new paradigm that is able to bridge the gap between digital modernity and Islamic spirituality (Mustofa, 2018; Tohari & Nafiah, 2024).

Sufism, as the deepest dimension of Islamic spirituality, offers a relevant approach to overcoming this gap (Nufus et al., 2023). The Sufi tradition emphasizes the process of purifying the soul, character building, and the transcendental relationship between humans and their God, so that it can become a philosophical and pedagogical framework capable of enriching the Islamic education system (Al-Chudri & Najib, 2025). However, the integration of Sufism into modern education has been the subject of little systematic research, especially regarding how it can be operationalized in contemporary learning. Some studies only discuss Sufi concepts normatively or historically, while studies linking Sufism to modern learning problems are still very limited. This condition indicates an important research gap that needs to be filled through comprehensive research based on solid scientific analysis.

Amidst the growing need for education that focuses on mental well-being and character

building, spiritual intelligence has become an important aspect that is once again gaining global attention. International studies show that spirituality has a significant impact on mental health, leadership, social relationships, and psychological resilience. However, most concepts of spiritual intelligence used in academia are still dominated by Western frameworks that are not entirely in line with Islamic spiritual traditions. Therefore, an alternative framework rooted in Islamic epistemology is needed to ensure that the integration of spiritual values in education is not merely an adoption of external concepts, but truly reflects the uniqueness and richness of the Islamic intellectual tradition (Gani, 2020; Herni et al., 2021).

This study aims to fill this gap through the development of an Islamic Spiritual Intelligence Integration Model based on Sufism values as a pedagogical foundation. This study aims to formulate a comprehensive theoretical framework capable of integrating Sufism into the contemporary Islamic education system, thereby responding to the need for a transformative education model oriented towards spiritual strengthening. In addition, this study seeks to identify global research gaps through bibliometric analysis to see how trends in Islamic education research are moving, which areas are under-explored, and what strategies can be used to develop spirituality-based Islamic education. This approach provides a strong

scientific basis for mapping new opportunities in the development of Islamic education.

The main uniqueness of this study lies in the combination of bibliometric analysis with the development of a theoretical model rooted in Sufism. Previous studies have rarely used bibliometrics to analyze the development of Sufism studies and spiritual intelligence in Islamic education. Thus, this study produces a distinctive contribution in the form of scientific mapping that confirms the urgency of integrating the spiritual dimension into global Islamic education. Another distinction is the formulation of seven domains of Islamic spiritual intelligence that are systematically formulated as a framework that can be implemented in learning practices. Not only that, this study also offers a spiritual pedagogical approach that is relevant to the needs of education in the digital age, including the use of technology as a means of internalizing spiritual values, not merely as a technical learning tool.

The theoretical contribution of this research includes the development of a transformative Islamic education model based on spirituality, the formulation of an authentic assessment framework to measure students' spiritual development, and the integration of Sufi values in the context of digital-based education. Its practical contributions include providing implementable guidelines for Islamic educators in integrating spiritual values into learning, developing a curriculum that balances academic and spiritual needs, and providing a

basis for the formulation of quality standards for Islamic education based on spiritual intelligence. This research is expected to provide a new direction for Islamic education policy, particularly in formulating curricula, learning strategies, and teacher training programs that emphasize spiritual competence.

Thus, this introduction emphasizes that Islamic education requires a new framework capable of responding to two demands simultaneously: the demands of dynamic digital modernity and deep spiritual needs. The integration of Sufism as a theoretical and pedagogical approach provides a great opportunity to create holistic, relevant, and transformative Islamic education. This research not only fills a gap in the literature but also has the potential to provide a model that can be adapted by Islamic educational institutions in various global contexts.

THEORY DESCRIPTION

The theory of integrating Islamic spirituality into education stems from the understanding that the ultimate goal of Islamic education is to develop a complete human being, that is, a person who is balanced in terms of intellectual, emotional, moral, and spiritual dimensions. Conceptually, Islamic education aims not only to transfer knowledge, but also to internalize values, foster good character, and guide students towards divine consciousness. The epistemological foundation of Islamic education is built on three main pillars: faith, knowledge, and

action, which are inseparable from one another. It is in this context that Islamic spirituality, particularly through Sufism, gains an important position as a theoretical framework that guides the internal transformation of students (Narulita et al., 2021; Sofa et al., 2024).

Sufism, as an esoteric dimension of Islam, focuses on inner development through the processes of *tazkiyah al-nafs*, *mujahadah*, and *muraqabah* (Herni et al., 2021). In educational theory, Sufi values provide a profound approach to character building and moral purification. The concept of *tazkiyah al-nafs* emphasizes that spiritual development requires a process of cleansing oneself of despicable traits and strengthening praiseworthy traits. This process can be integrated into learning through mechanisms of self-reflection, habitual worship, ethical awareness, and learning practices that emphasize value awareness. Meanwhile, the principle of *mujahadah* teaches self-discipline, perseverance, and continuous efforts to direct human potential towards goodness. These Sufi principles are universal in education and can be adapted in modern pedagogical practices through experience-based learning and self-transformation approaches (Chanifah et al., 2021; Narulita et al., 2021).

Within the framework of spiritual intelligence development, a number of contemporary theories offer an understanding that can be aligned with Islamic values. Spiritual intelligence is described as a person's ability to understand the meaning of life, find purpose, overcome existential difficulties, and interpret

experiences more deeply. However, this concept in the Islamic perspective has a more holistic meaning, covering the dimensions of tawhid, divine consciousness, closeness to Allah, and the meaning of life based on revelatory values. Islamic spiritual intelligence does not only refer to the search for individual meaning, but is also bound to the values of sharia, prophetic ethics, and orientation towards universal goodness. Therefore, the theory of Islamic spiritual intelligence reflects the integration of reason, heart, and spirit, which creates balance within learners (Cecero & Prout, 2014; T. N. Rahman et al., 2022).

In the transformative education approach, learners undergo personal change when they experience a critical process that challenges old assumptions and builds new, more meaningful understandings. This theory of self-transformation has common ground with Sufi teachings, as both emphasize internal processes, deep reflection, and rediscovering the meaning of life. Transformative education in Islam places the process of spiritual change at the core of learning, where learners not only acquire information but also experience a transfiguration of values and character. Thus, transformative education theory can be used as a conceptual framework for integrating Sufi teachings into modern learning processes.

Another relevant concept is the theory of holistic education, which views learners as multidimensional beings who must be developed in a balanced manner. Holistic education emphasizes the relationship between the body, mind, heart, and spirit, in line with the Islamic

view of the unity of human dimensions. From an Islamic perspective, spiritual development cannot be separated from cognitive and moral development. Therefore, holistic education can serve as a theoretical basis for formulating learning strategies that integrate spiritual values—such as empathy, honesty, self-awareness, and responsibility—into the Islamic education curriculum.

In addition, value-based learning theory emphasizes that education should guide students toward character building and the internalization of noble values. In Islamic tradition, Sufi values such as sincerity, humility, patience, gratitude, and compassion are important elements in character building. Value-based learning theory provides a conceptual framework for how these values can be instilled through behavioral examples, habituation, reflection, and meaningful dialogue. The integration of Sufi values in learning involves the process of connecting learning experiences with higher moral and spiritual values, so that education not only transfers information but also shapes personality (Al-Ghazali, 2011; Miskawaih, 1991).

Finally, modern theories about the role of technology in education can be integrated with Islamic spirituality through an approach that utilizes technology as a means of strengthening values, rather than merely as a mechanistic instrument. From an Islamic educational perspective, technology can be used to expand access to spiritual learning, enrich learning experiences, and provide a space for reflection through digital media. However, the use of

technology must remain oriented towards spiritual goals, so as not to eliminate the human dimension in education. The integration of these theories provides a comprehensive foundation for the development of a transformative Sufism-based Islamic education model that is relevant to contemporary educational needs. This applies not only to higher education but to all levels of education in general.

METHOD

This study uses the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach as the main method to

map the development of research on the integration of Sufism, spiritual intelligence, and the transformation of Islamic education in the Society 5.0 era. The SLR method was chosen because it is able to provide a comprehensive, measurable, and transparent picture of research trends, scientific gaps, and theoretical development directions that are relevant to the development of a model for the integration of Islamic spiritual intelligence. This approach was carried out systematically through a series of coherent and structured stages in order to produce a scientifically accountable synthesis.



Figure 1. Systematic Literature Review Research Procedure

The first stage is the formulation of research questions (RQ). At this stage, researchers identify the main focus of the study related to the integration of Sufism's, the paradigm of transformative Islamic education, and the concept of spiritual intelligence from an Islamic perspective. The research questions are aimed at exploring: how has research related to the integration of Islamic spirituality in education developed? What are the research gaps that have not been explored much? And

how can theoretical approaches related to Islamic spiritual intelligence be formulated in a transformative education model? Clear and focused RQ formulations are an important foundation in ensuring consistency in the search and selection of literature in the next stage.

The second stage is determining the inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria include scientific journal articles published between 2000 and 2024, articles in English or Indonesian, and research discussing the themes of

Sufism, Islamic education, educational transformation, spiritual intelligence, and the integration of Islamic values in learning. Exclusion criteria include non-scientific articles, popular publications, unreputable reports, and writings that are not directly related to the focus of the research. The establishment of these criteria aims to ensure that the literature used is truly relevant and of adequate academic quality.

The third stage was the literature search strategy. Researchers conducted searches on international databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, Dimensions, and Google Scholar, as well as national repositories such as Garuda and Moraref. The keywords used included combinations of phrases such as Islamic education, Sufism, spiritual intelligence, transformative learning in Islam, Islamic spirituality, and Islamic pedagogical models. The search strategy was carried out using Boolean operators (and, or, not) to expand and narrow the search results as needed. The search process was repeated to ensure that the literature obtained was comprehensive and representative.

The fourth stage is literature selection through a gradual screening process. Selection is carried out in three stages: (1) title selection, (2) abstract selection, and (3) full-text review. This process aims to ensure that the content is relevant to the research theme. Researchers compile a final list of selected articles using the Prisma flowchart to maintain transparency and accountability in the selection process.

The fifth stage is data extraction. At this stage, researchers read all selected articles and extract key information such as research objectives, theories used, research methods, core findings, and conceptual implications. Extracted data is organized in a matrix table to facilitate cross-research comparison and analysis. This stage is crucial for generating a deep understanding of patterns, trends, and gaps in the relevant field of research.

The sixth stage is data synthesis and thematic analysis. Researchers conducted thematic coding of each article to identify main themes such as the concept of Islamic spiritual intelligence, the integration of Sufi values in learning, the role of technology in Islamic education, and transformative education models. Synthesis was conducted narratively by examining the relationships between themes, identifying research gaps, and developing a new theoretical framework based on the findings from the literature.

In this study, data analysis techniques used a thematic content analysis approach involving coding, theme categorization, and thematic integration. The analysis was conducted by repeatedly reading each article to find consistent and relevant conceptual patterns. The analysis process was supplemented with bibliometric mapping (where necessary) to visualize the relationships between topics and research developments.

To maintain the validity of the findings, this study applied data validity assurance techniques in the form of audit trails, source

triangulation, and peer debriefing. Audit trails were carried out by documenting each step of the literature selection and analysis process. Triangulation was carried out by comparing findings from various databases and different literature sources. Meanwhile, peer debriefing was conducted through discussions with colleagues to minimize researcher bias and ensure the objectivity of the results.

This SLR method provides a strong scientific basis for the development of an Islamic spiritual intelligence integration model while filling the theoretical gap in contemporary Islamic education research.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of Selected Literature

The literature search process in this study yielded a number of publications relevant to the theme of Islamic education transformation through the integration of Sufism and the development of spiritual intelligence. From the overall search on various international databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, Dimensions, and Google Scholar, as well as national repositories such as Garuda and Moraref, approximately 1,240 initial articles containing general keywords related to Islamic education, Sufism, spiritual intelligence, transformative learning, and Islamic spirituality were obtained. This number was then reduced after initial selection based on titles and abstracts, leaving 210 articles that were deemed to have the potential to be relevant to the research theme.

The next stage of the screening process was conducted by strictly applying the

predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure the relevance and academic quality of the selected literature. The inclusion criteria covered scientific articles published between 2000 and 2024, written either in English or Indonesian, and studies that explicitly examined the integration of Sufism within Islamic education or explored the development of spiritual intelligence in an Islamic context. These criteria were established to guarantee that the reviewed literature provides both conceptual depth and empirical relevance to the focus of this study.

In contrast, the exclusion criteria eliminated publications that did not meet academic standards, such as non-scientific articles, popular opinion pieces, or writings lacking methodological clarity. Works that discussed Sufism solely from a theological or doctrinal perspective without offering connections to educational practice or pedagogical development were also excluded. This step ensured that the final selection remained aligned with the objectives of the systematic literature review.

Following a rigorous evaluation of thematic suitability, methodological soundness, and the contribution of each publication to the analytical framework, a total of 15 core articles were deemed to meet all criteria and included in this SLR. These selected studies demonstrated theoretical consistency and provided substantial insight into the discourse on Sufism-based education and the cultivation of spiritual intelligence, making them essential references for constructing the analysis in this research.

Table 1. Selected Literature According to Research Theme

No	Article Title	Author	Source
1	Sufism Education in the Formation of Spiritual Intelligence and Good Character	A. Gani	Al-Tadzkiyyah: Journal of Islamic Education
2	A Fistic Approach in Islamic Education	Zulfiana Herni, Junaidi, Ernaka Heri Putra	Journal of Islamic Education
3	The Effectiveness of Sufism Learning in Achieving Emotional and Spiritual Intelligence at the Fajar Dunia Islamic Boarding School in Bogor	Sari Narulita, Devi Kurniati, Andy Hadiyanto	Mozaic: Islam Nusantara
4	Enhancing Islamic Spiritual Intelligence from the Perspective of Sheikh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah in the Book Al-Tuhfah al-'Iroqiyyah	Wido Supraha, Taufik Nur Rahman, Ahmad Ahmad	Tawazun: Journal of Islamic Education
5	The Role of Sufi Education in Character Formation and Spiritual Intelligence	Fitria Harahap, Karin Chairunisa	Proceedings of the International Seminar on Islamic Studies
6	Sufism Education as a Solution for Spiritual Intelligence and Character Formation	Ali Mustofa	Innovative: Journal of Education, Religion, and Culture Research
7	Integration of Islamic Religious Education: Spiritual and Emotional Intelligence through the Book Mahfudzot	Ainur Rofiq Sofa, Mundir, Ubaidillah	Islamic Education: Journal of Islamic Education
8	Enhancing Students' Spiritual Intelligence through Learning Juz Amma Memorization	Kamim Tohari, Umi Nahdiyatur Nafiah	Journal of Elementary Madrasah Teacher Education
9	Spiritual Intelligence in Islamic Religious Education: A Hadith Perspective	Raisa Zuhra Salsabila Awaluddin, Resti Okvani Kartika, Zulkipli Lessy	Saliha: Journal of Islamic Education
10	The Use of Artificial Intelligence in Sufism Education to Strengthen Students' Spiritual Character	Cahaya Cahaya, Anri Naldi, Aqila Khairani Nasutioan	Bilqolam Journal of Islamic Education
11	Designing a spirituality-based Islamic education framework for young Muslim generations: a case study from two Indonesian universities	Chanifah, N., Hanafi, Y., Mahfud, C., & Samsudin, A.	Higher Education Pedagogies – Taylor & Francis
12	The Faculty Spirituality Questionnaire and Its Relationship to Teaching Style with	Cecero, J. J., & Prout, T. A.	Religion and Education – Taylor & Francis
13	A Viable Model and Self-Report Measure of Spiritual Intelligence	King, D. B., & DeCicco, T. L.	International Journal of Transpersonal Studies – Digital Commons
14	Measuring Islamic Spiritual Intelligence	Rahman, Z. A., & Shah, I. M.	Procedia – Economics and Finance – ScienceDirect
15	Seven domains of spiritual intelligence: An Islamic perspective	Baharuddin, E. B., & Ismail, H. N.	International Proceedings – ScienceDirect

The selected literature in this SLR shows significant developments in the study of the integration of Sufism and spiritual intelligence in Islamic education over the past two decades. Of the 15 selected articles, it can be seen that the publications originate from various academic regions: Southeast Asia (Indonesia and Malaysia), the Middle East (Iran and Turkey through proceedings and comparative studies), and the Western world (the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom through Taylor & Francis, Digital Commons, and ScienceDirect). This diverse geographical distribution confirms that the study of spiritual intelligence and Sufism in education is no longer a local issue, but part of a global discourse.

In terms of chronological development, publications from 2000–2010 show the early foundations of Islamic spirituality studies in education, marked by conceptual works such as King & DeCicco's (2009) (*International Journal of Transpersonal Studies*) and Rahman & Shah's (2015) (ScienceDirect), which introduce models for measuring spiritual intelligence from a general and Islamic perspective. Although not explicitly linking Sufism with Islamic education, these early works became an important stepping stone for subsequent research.

Entering 2011–2024, there has been a sharp increase in publications that directly integrate Sufism into Islamic education. Articles from Indonesia—such as the works of Gani (2020), Herni et al. (2021), Narulita et al., (2021) and Ali Mustofa (Mustofa, 2018)—reinforce the

practical context through research based on Islamic boarding schools, schools, and classical book learning. Malaysia has made a strong contribution through a structural approach, particularly through the article by Baharuddin & Ismail(2015) (ScienceDirect), which formulates the Seven Domains of Islamic Spiritual Intelligence. Meanwhile, America and Europe contribute psychometric and pedagogical perspectives through Cecero & Prout (2014) (Taylor & Francis) and university-based spiritual education framework research by Chanifah et al (Taylor & Francis). This diversity confirms that the integration of Sufism has moved from a local context to cross-continental academic recognition.

Thematic analysis reveals four main trends. First, all literature affirms that Sufism has a significant contribution to the formation of spiritual intelligence, in line with Mezirow's transformative learning theory which emphasizes deep reflection as a path to consciousness change. Second, more and more studies link Sufi values such as *ihsan*, *muraqabah*, and *muhasabah* with the character development of students, both in traditional and modern contexts. Third, Western literature enriches quantitative methodology through spirituality measurement tools that have been adapted by Islamic literature. Fourth, there is a new trend that combines Sufism with educational technology, such as the use of AI to strengthen spiritual character (Cahaya et al., 2025).

Overall, this literature shows that the integration of Sufism in Islamic education is a global academic theme that is becoming

increasingly relevant. The dominance of publications from Southeast Asia, combined with significant contributions from Europe and America, has resulted in a broad and solid scientific landscape for the development of Islamic education models that are more spiritual, reflective, and transformative.

The Concept of Sufism Integration in Islamic Education

The integration of Sufism into Islamic education is viewed in selected literature not merely as the addition of ritual practices or Sufi material, but as an ethical-pedagogical framework that holistically structures the objectives, methods, and evaluation of education. The authors in the table (e.g., Gani; Herni et al.; Narulita et al.; Chanifah et al.) tend to define this integration as an intentional process that incorporates Sufi values—*tazkiyatun nafs* (purification of the soul), *muhasabah* (introspection), *muraqabah* (divine consciousness), *ihsan* (quality of sincerity/perfection), and *mahabbah* (divine love)—into each layer of the curriculum, pedagogical practices, and classroom activities. This approach places spirituality as a learning outcome that is equal in status to cognitive and affective competencies.

Theoretically, the integration of Sufism resonates strongly with the tradition of *tazkiyah* in classical literature and is contextualized by contemporary studies (Baharuddin & Ismail; Rahman & Shah) through the construction of Islamic spiritual intelligence. Baharuddin & Ismail,

who proposed seven domains, provide an operational conceptual framework for designing spiritual learning objectives—a bridge between classical Sufi texts and modern educational indicators. In the realm of measurement, models such as King & DeCicco (spiritual intelligence) and the Islamic Spiritual Intelligence scale offer a quantitative theoretical basis that allows for the systematic evaluation of spiritual growth without neglecting Islamic theological values.

From a pedagogical perspective, the literature proposes a learning model that combines experiential learning, contemplative pedagogy, and transformative learning (Mezirow). Chanifah et al. present a spirituality-based educational framework that places reflective practice and transformative experiences at the core of the learning process; Mezirow's theory reinforces the idea that meaning-perspective change occurs through critical reflection—the modern equivalent of Sufi *muhasabah*. Cecero & Prout emphasize the role of faculty spirituality in shaping teaching styles, indicating that integration involves not only material but also the formation of teachers' professional identities as *murshid* or facilitators of spiritual transformation.

At the curriculum level, integration is recommended in the form of two strategies: (1) horizontal integration—incorporating Sufi values into existing subjects (e.g., Islamic religious education, ethics, leadership), and (2) vertical integration—developing special courses on spiritual pedagogy, applied Sufi practices, and spiritual laboratories. Classroom practices, as

described by pesantren studies (Narulita et al.; Sofa et al.), involves concrete techniques: structured dhikr exercises, guided tafakkur, reflective journals, spiritual mentoring, and social service practices as manifestations of *mahabbah*—all linked to authentic assessments that observe changes in attitudes and behaviors (Ananda et al., 2025; Tohari & Nafiah, 2024).

Conceptually, Sufism provides pedagogical ethics (*adab, ihsan*) that guide teacher-student relationships, making education a process of character building rather than merely the transmission of knowledge. However, this theory requires methodological attention: the need for valid instruments (ISI, seven domains), the development of educator capacity, and a balance between formal academic standards and spaces for spiritual experience. Based on these theories, the integration of Sufism can be formulated as a model of transformative Islamic education that produces balanced individuals—cognitively, affectively, and spiritually—and serves as a strong conceptual framework for further empirical analysis.

Model and Approach of Sufism-Based Islamic Educational Transformation

The literature review analyzed in this SLR shows that the integration of Sufi values has shaped various models and approaches to Islamic education transformation that are holistic, contemplative, and oriented towards the formation of spiritual awareness. Literature from Indonesia, Malaysia, and other countries such as the United States and Canada shows that Sufism is

no longer understood as a purely theological discipline, but as a pedagogical tool capable of shaping the consciousness, character, and spiritual intelligence of students.

First, the contemplative learning model emerged as a major trend in the literature. Gani, Herni et al., and Narulita et al. emphasized that contemplation through *dhikr, tafakkur*, and strengthening presence (*hudhur al-qalb*) can enhance students' self-awareness. This approach is in line with the theory of contemplative pedagogy that has developed in Western education, but in Islamic education this model has normative legitimacy through the teachings of tazkiyah al-nafs. Baharuddin & Ismail (2015) add that the contemplative aspect is one of the main domains of Islamic spiritual intelligence.

Second, the literature shows the development of a sufistic practice-based experiential learning approach. This model is evident in the research conducted by Narulita et al. in Islamic boarding schools and the research conducted by Tohari & Nafiah (2024) related to tahfidz learning. Practices such as dzikir, riyadhah, muraja'ah, and muhasabah are positioned not merely as ritual obligations, but as transformative experiences that internalize meaning. This is in line with Kolb's experiential learning theory (2014), but reinforced by the Sufi principle that spiritual experiences must be repeated in a structured manner to form a stable inner state (*istiqamah*).

Third, the spiritual education approach as a complement to intellectual and moral education has become a significant model of transformation.

Harahap & Chairunisa (2025) and Ali Mustofa (2018) show that spiritual education plays a role in producing students who have intrinsic moral awareness, not just normative obedience. Ibn Taymiyyah's perspective in the work studied by Supraha et al. emphasizes that spiritual strengthening must precede intellectual strengthening, because the true mind only functions perfectly when the heart is pure (*qalbun salim*).

Fourth, the literature highlights the transformation of the teacher-student relationship into a pattern resembling the *mursyid-salike* relationship in Sufism. Although not entirely identical to the tarekat relationship, research by Gani, Herni et al., and Chanifah et al. shows that the role of the teacher has changed to that of a facilitator of spiritual awareness, a guide for transformative experiences, and a model of inner exemplarity. This is consistent with the concept of pedagogical presence in modern theory and the concept of *ta'dib* according to Al-Attas's (Al Attas, 1997), which emphasizes that educators must be a source of discipline through spiritual example, not just verbal instruction.

Fifth, some literature—including works by Cecero & Prout (2014) and King & DeCicco (2009)—emphasizes the importance of self-awareness, self-regulation, and inner peace as key components of spiritual intelligence. In Islamic education, these values are manifested through muhasabah, muraqabah, and tazkiyah al-nafs. The integration of these concepts results in learning that pursues not only cognitive achievement, but

also inner depth, clarity of mind, and emotional stability.

Finally, recent literature such as Cahaya et al. (2025) shows that even technologies such as AI are beginning to be utilized to facilitate reflective practices and spiritual character building. This indicates that Sufism can adapt to the modern educational ecosystem without losing its essence.

Overall, the literature describes how the integration of Sufism has transformed Islamic education towards a more holistic model—combining reason, heart, and behavior—so that education is not only a process of knowledge transfer, but a process of forming true human beings (*insan kamil*).

Transformative Learning in the perspective of Sufism-based Islamic education

Transformative Learning in the perspective of Sufism-based Islamic education as reflected in selected literature shows that the process of self-transformation of students does not only take place at the cognitive level, but also at a deeper level in the form of spiritual awareness and morality. While Western transformative learning emphasizes the reconstruction of frameworks of thinking (meaning perspectives), the Sufism literature in this research table shows that transformation in Islamic education is holistic: it encompasses changes in the heart (*qalb*), character, life orientation, and relationship with God (*ta'alluq billah*).

Most of the articles in the table describe that transformative learning in the context of

Islam occurs through the mechanisms of tazkiyah al-nafs, muhasabah, muraqabah, and riyadah. For example, Gani; Mustofa; and Narulita et al. explain that Sufi education can trigger spiritual transformation through purification of the soul, introspective exercises, and consistent ethical practices. This process is in line with the idea of consciousness transformation but is more profound, because Sufism works on an inner dimension that is not fully explained by the Western framework of .

In addition, several articles, such as those by Fitria Harahap and Chanifah et al., show that transformation in Islamic education is based on the pedagogical relationship between teachers, students, and revelatory values. Transformation is not merely the result of individual reflection, but the result of spiritual guidance (*irsyād*) and community interaction that instills the values of ihsan, adab, honesty, empathy, and self-control. This shows that transformative learning in Islamic education has a communal and relational character, unlike Western models that strongly emphasize independent personal reflection.

The theme of muhasabah as a form of critical reflection emerges strongly in the articles by Wido Supraha, Raisa Zuhra, and Baharuddin & Ismail. Muhasabah is not merely self-evaluation, but a process of deep awareness that touches on one's intentions, motives, and existential relationship with God. Thus, in the Sufi context, critical reflection not only assesses the rationality of actions, but also the sincerity of the heart and the accuracy of spiritual

orientation. This enriches the transformative learning framework by adding a transcendental dimension that is absent in Mezirow's theory.

Behavioral changes as a result of transformation are clearly evident in articles on tahfidz (Tohari & Nafiah, 2024), mahfudzot integration (Sofa et al., 2024), and the application of Sufi values in character education (Rahmatika & Susilawati, 2024; Yana et al., 2024). All of these studies indicate that when Sufi values form the foundation of learning, students experience a transformation in their spiritual identity: they become more disciplined, more caring toward others, and have a more stable sense of purpose in life.

In addition, psychometric-based articles such as King & DeCicco (2009); Rahman & Shah; and Baharuddin & Ismail (2015), provide a theoretical basis that spiritual intelligence can be measured through cognitive, affective, and moral indicators. This supports the argument that spiritual transformation in Islamic education has empirically verifiable implications.

Thus, the literature in the table confirms that transformative learning in Sufi-based Islamic education is a comprehensive process of change: involving purification of the soul, reconstruction of meaning, reorientation of life, and internalization of divine values. This transformation is not only a pedagogical goal, but also a theological mandate for education to shape people with ihsan character. This model offers constructive criticism of Western transformative learning theory and expands it

through an Islamic epistemological framework that is more spiritual, communal, and revelation-based.

Directions for Development and Implications for Contemporary Islamic Education

The direction of contemporary Islamic education development revealed in selected literature points to an urgent need to formulate an integrative curriculum model that places Sufi spirituality as its normative and pedagogical axis. Articles such as those by Gani, Herni et al., and Chanifah et al. emphasize that a curriculum oriented solely toward cognitive competencies fails to address the moral crisis and emptiness of meaning experienced by the modern generation; therefore, an integrative curriculum must synergize the dimensions of faith–knowledge–action and the practice of *tazkiyah* (purification of the soul) so that learning produces a transfiguration of values, not just knowledge. Theoretically, this foundation is rooted in the concept of holistic *tarbiyah*—combining cognitive, affective, and spiritual aspects—as recommended by the studies in the table (Baharuddin & Ismail; Fitria Harahap).

The second requirement is the development of Sufi learning modules that are relevant to Gen-Z. Empirical literature from Narulita et al., Sofa et al., and Tohari & Nafiah shows that traditional practices (*tadabbur*, *muraqabah*, *muhasabah*) need to be redesigned to be contextual, interactive, and multimodal—

utilizing digital media without losing the spiritual dimension. Modules for Gen-Z should be experiential learning-oriented, concise, problem-based, and combine digital reflection (e.g., reflective journals, guided meditations based on Sufi texts) and social activities that emphasize social responsibility. Cahaya et al. demonstrate the potential of integrating AI to support personalized spiritual learning pathways—but technological approaches must be guided by ethics and Sufi dimensions to avoid reducing spirituality to mere algorithms.

Third, strengthening teacher training in spiritual competence is a critical need. International literature such as Cecero & Prout and Chanifah shows that teachers as agents of transformation require spiritual skills (self-awareness, authenticity), *Sufi* pedagogical competence (*irsyād*, spiritual guidance), and spiritual evaluation skills. The training program must be multi-layered: Sufi knowledge, reflection facilitation skills, spiritual supervision, and assessment literacy for spiritual intelligence instruments (Al-Chudri & Najib, 2025; Cecero & Prout, 2014; T. N. Rahman et al., 2022; Sukma et al., 2025). A mentoring system between *mursyid/ulama* and formal educators is recommended to bridge the Sufi tradition with school practices.

Fourth, opportunities for further research are vast. The literature reveals methodological gaps: a lack of longitudinal studies assessing the sustainability of spiritual change, limitations in validating Islam-specific

instruments in different contexts, and a lack of quasi-experimental or RCT studies testing the effectiveness of Sufi modules on cognitive, affective, and moral outcomes. Future research should adopt mixed methods: development and validation of the ISI scale (Rahman & Shah; Baharuddin & Ismail), implementational case studies (Chanifah et al.), cross-cultural comparative studies, and mapping the impact of technology (Cahaya et al.). In addition, implementation research needs to examine institutional factors—curriculum policy, accreditation, and funding models—as indicated by several studies.

As a policy, making Sufism the ethical and spiritual foundation requires formal integration into curriculum standards and teacher training, as well as the establishment of indicators of spiritual education quality. This is

not merely adding to the subject matter, but changing the grammar of education: the orientation of objectives, the evaluation of results, and the mechanisms of learning. With the empirical basis provided by this table, such a transformation can be designed systematically—combining Sufi traditions with modern evaluative methodologies—so that contemporary Islamic education can shape individuals who are knowledgeable, moral, and spiritually meaningful.

Analysis of Key Research Findings

The main findings of the study are illustrated in a conceptual model showing that the development of perfect human beings in the context of education requires the simultaneous integration of Sufi dimensions, learning practices, student transformation, and policy implications.

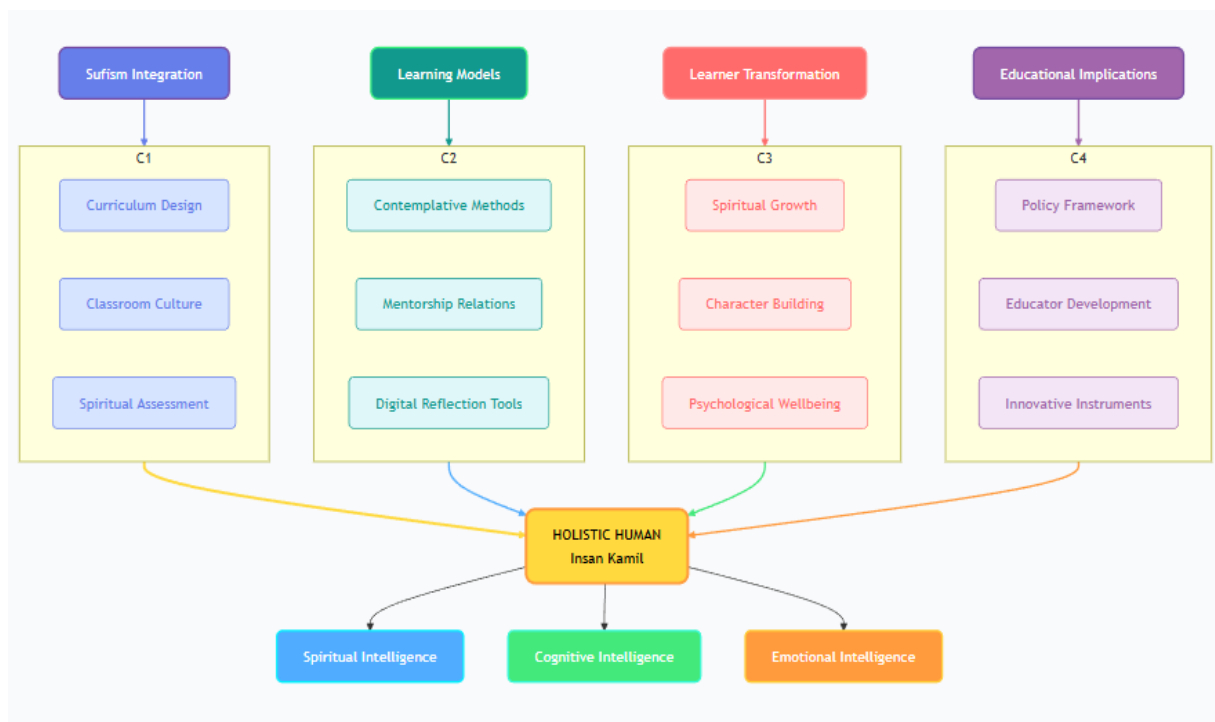


Figure 2. Research findings and novelty scheme

The integration of Sufism serves as a philosophical and methodological foundation that influences curriculum design, classroom culture, and spiritual assessment mechanisms. These three elements encourage the creation of a learning environment that is not only knowledge-oriented, but also promotes inner awareness and ethical behavior. The learning model in the second category shows that contemplative methods, mentorship relationships, and the use of reflective digital technology serve as pedagogical strategies that enable students to experience a personal, dialogical, and fully conscious learning process. The presence of reflective technology also points to a direction for educational reform that remains in harmony with spiritual values, so that spirituality is not positioned as the antithesis of innovation, but as an ethical orientation for the use of technology.

The transformation of students in the third category confirms that spiritual growth, character building, and psychological wellbeing are three mutually reinforcing components. These three components explain that holistic education must touch on the depth of human experience, not merely improve academic competence. This transformation then contributes directly to the formation of spiritual, cognitive, and emotional intelligence as the three pillars of forming a complete human being.

The implications of education in the fourth category emphasize the need for a policy framework that supports a holistic approach.

The development of educators is a crucial aspect so that Sufi values can be implemented pedagogically, not merely normatively. Furthermore, the need for innovative instruments proves that spirituality-based education must remain adaptive to the times. Overall, the research findings emphasize that *insan kamil* is not only a moral ideal, but also an operational framework that can be applied through curriculum design, learning methods, psychological transformation, and integrated educational policies.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study confirms that the development of complete human beings in education can only be achieved through consistent integration between Sufi values, contemporary learning strategies, the transformation process of students, and relevant policy support. The integration of Sufism that touches on curriculum design, classroom culture, and spiritual assessment provides an ethical foundation for the entire educational process. This foundation is further strengthened by a learning model that combines contemplative methods, mentorship relationships, and reflective technology so that the learning experience becomes more meaningful, personal, and adaptive to the times. The transformation of students is an inseparable focus. Spiritual growth, character building, and psychological well-being emerge as indicators that education is not only tasked with improving intellectual capacity, but also with fostering

wholeness. These three aspects have been proven to contribute to the formation of spiritual, cognitive, and emotional intelligence, which are the main characteristics of a perfect human being. The educational implications indicate that a holistic approach requires structural support in the form of policies, educator development, and innovative instruments capable of bridging spiritual values with modern educational needs. Overall, this study concludes that insan kamil is not an idealistic concept, but a practical framework that can be applied through the systematic integration of values, pedagogical practices, and educational policies. This approach opens up space for a more humane, relevant, and sustainable model of education.

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