



JOURNAL OF ISLAMIC EDUCATION
Vol. 10 No. 2 July – December 2025
P-ISSN 2503-5363; E-ISSN 2528-0465
<http://www.ejournal.stitmuhsbangil.ac.id/index.php/jie>

Muhammadiyah Sufism: Building Students' Character and Faith Through Spiritual Education

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| Artikel Information | Abstract |
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| Received: 10 January 2025 | <i>This study explores the important role of Muhammadiyah Sufism in building character, optimising the purification of students' beliefs, and exploring the positive impact of the Islamic spirituality approach implemented by Muhammadiyah. The research method used involves qualitative data collection with a phenomenological approach involving semi-structured interviews, non-participant observation, and documentation with Muhammadiyah educational actors who have implemented the Sufi approach, namely the principal, teachers, and several students of Muhammadiyah Elementary School, Lahat. The data analysis technique uses the Miles and Huberman method, which focuses on the stages of data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion, for data validity techniques using triangulation. The research findings show that Muhammadiyah Sufism can strengthen the beliefs of Muhammadiyah Elementary School Lahat students, increase a deep understanding of Islamic teachings, and form positive characters in living their daily lives. This can be done through spiritual practices such as reading the Qur'an, sunnah prayers, dhikr, and sunnah fasting. This study also found that the implementation of Sufism in Muhammadiyah education helps students recognise and avoid practices inconsistent with pure Islamic teachings, such as excessive tawassul (circumambulation) and extreme meditation. Thus, Muhammadiyah Sufism education serves as a tool to purify faith and shape individuals with noble character and positive societal contributions. This study emphasises the importance of integrating Sufi values into the educational curriculum to create a generation that is intelligent, ethical, and capable of facing the challenges of the modern era. A limitation of this study is its limited focus on Muhammadiyah Elementary School in Lahat, which may reduce the generalizability of the findings regarding the implementation of Sufism in the broader context of Muhammadiyah education.</i> |
| Revised: 29 July 2025 | |
| Accepted: 12 August 2025 | |
| Published: 23 August 2025 | |
| Keywords: <i>Muhammadiyah Sufism, Islamic Spirituality Approach, Student Character, Student Faith, Spiritual Education.</i> | |

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Penelitian ini menelusuri peran penting sufisme Muhammadiyah dalam membangun karakter, mengoptimalkan pemurnian keyakinan siswa, dan mengeksplorasi dampak positif dari pendekatan spiritualitas Islam yang diterapkan oleh Muhammadiyah. Metode penelitian yang digunakan melibatkan pengumpulan data kualitatif dengan pendekatan fenomenologi yang melibatkan wawancara semi-terstruktur, observasi non-partisipan, dan dokumentasi dengan para pelaku pendidikan Muhammadiyah yang telah menerapkan pendekatan sufisme yakni kepala sekolah, guru, dan beberapa siswa Sekolah Dasar Muhammadiyah Lahat. Teknik analisis data menggunakan metode Miles and Huberman yang terfokus pada tahap pengumpulan data, reduksi data, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Untuk teknik keabsahan data menggunakan triangulasi. Temuan penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sufisme Muhammadiyah mampu memperkuat keyakinan siswa Sekolah Dasar Muhammadiyah Lahat, meningkatkan pemahaman yang mendalam terhadap ajaran Islam, dan membentuk karakter positif dalam menjalani kehidupan sehari-hari dengan. Hal tersebut dapat dilakukan dengan beberapa praktik spiritual seperti membaca Al-Qur'an, sholat sunnah, dzikir, dan puasa sunnah. Penelitian ini juga menemukan bahwa penerapan sufisme dalam pendidikan Muhammadiyah membantu siswa mengenali dan menghindari praktik-praktik yang tidak sesuai dengan ajaran Islam yang murni, seperti *tawassul* berlebihan dan meditasi ekstrem. Dengan demikian, pendidikan sufisme Muhammadiyah berfungsi tidak hanya sebagai alat untuk memurnikan keyakinan, tetapi juga untuk membentuk individu yang berakhlak mulia dan berkontribusi positif di masyarakat. Penelitian ini menekankan pentingnya integrasi nilai-nilai sufisme dalam kurikulum pendidikan untuk menciptakan generasi yang cerdas, beretika, dan mampu menghadapi tantangan di era modern. Adapun limitasi dari penelitian ini adalah fokus yang terbatas pada Sekolah Dasar Muhammadiyah Lahat, yang mungkin mengurangi generalisasi temuan terkait implementasi sufisme dalam konteks pendidikan Muhammadiyah secara lebih luas.

I. INTRODUCTION

Sufism plays a vital role in shaping the beliefs and spirituality of Muslims. Some of the positive values within Sufism encompass spiritual, ethical, and humanitarian dimensions (Syatori, 2020). The concept of *ihsan* in Sufism emphasises the attainment of deep love and awareness of Allah, which is the core of Sufism (Muttaqin et al., 2023). Sufi practices such as *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah) serve as a means for individuals to attain a higher spiritual presence. Akmansyah's research suggests that Sufism can be a foundation for tolerance and virtue. Sufism can build a harmonious society by emphasising humility, compassion, and openness to diversity (Akmansyah, 2017). Sufism ideally embodies the positive values outlined

above. However, in reality, Sufi practices often deviate from pure Islamic teachings. Mystical practices and rituals such as excessive asceticism and *tawassul*, as well as extreme meditation, are examples of Sufi practices that contradict pure Islamic values (Mubarok, 2022).

Another deviation related to the practice of Sufism is excessive *tawassul* (religious prayer) to spiritual figures, which can lead to a deviation from faith in Allah. Thinkers in the transcendental school of philosophy believe that the "Friends of Allah" (spiritual figures) possess a special closeness to Allah, enabling them to intercede for forgiveness of sins, avoid punishment, and seek His mercy (Farhan & Arafat, 2021).

However, the practice of *tawassul* that prevails in society tends to involve supplication or excessive dependence on spiritual figures. *Tawassul* should be a means to get closer to Him, not to replace or match Allah's position with spiritual figures. The prohibited practice of *tawassul* is making intermediaries exceed the limits of Islamic teachings, thereby deviating from the creed of tauhid (belief in the oneness of Allah) (Zulfikar & Hendro, 2023). Previous research revealed that the sacred tombs of Islamic preachers were used as places to make vows to ask for something and gain knowledge, as if positioning them as the power of Allah (Rosada & Wawansyah, 2018). Furthermore, extreme meditation can also make individuals indifferent to social conditions. Extreme meditation practices cause individuals to become less concerned about social conditions (Sarwan & Sabri, 2023). When people focus too much on their internal dimensions through excessive meditation, they lose sensitivity to external realities, including the dynamics and challenges the surrounding society faces.

Based on the above description, it shows that there are actions that contradict Islamic faith, making it important for the author to conduct research on Muhammadiyah's Sufism in purifying students' beliefs from an early age. This is expected to provide students with the necessary skills now and in the future when faced with social problems, enabling them to take appropriate steps to purify and advance Islam. This research is crucial to understanding Sufism, which is consistent with pure Islamic teachings and the steps taken.

Research on Muhammadiyah Sufism in educational institutions, particularly Muhammadiyah schools, is needed to understand the impact of neo-Sufism on purifying students' beliefs. In Muhammadiyah education, Sufism is implemented through various spiritual activities designed to bring students closer to Allah and help them understand the meaning of Islamic teachings (Ridwan et al., 2020). Activities such as dhikr, reading the Qur'an, and sunnah prayers aim to increase students' spiritual awareness, form good character, and encourage mutual respect (Akmansyah, 2017). Through these practices, students are trained to have a heightened spiritual awareness and a more intimate relationship with Allah. Furthermore, education at Muhammadiyah also focuses on preventing deviations from Sufi practices inconsistent with pure Islamic teachings. Students are taught to recognise and avoid practices inconsistent with religious values (Zubair et al., 2023). Thus, Muhammadiyah Sufism serves as a tool to purify students' beliefs and shape good character, creating a knowledgeable generation with noble morals and a strong relationship with Allah (Humaidi et al., 2022).

As a Muhammadiyah-based educational institution, this research provides in-depth insight into the influence of pure Islamic teachings, under Muhammadiyah's vision of popularising and instilling deep Sufi values to form good, faithful, obedient, and noble students (Hamami & Nuryana, 2022). This study aims to explore the implementation of Sufism in Muhammadiyah education and its impact on the development of students' character and faith, so that it can significantly contribute to Islamic education in Indonesia.

II. METHOD

This research is a descriptive qualitative research where the author focuses on an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of Muhammadiyah Sufism, which involves analysing text, images, or sound to explore subjective meanings and specific contexts (Wijaya, 2020). Researchers collect information, conduct observations, interviews, and data analysis (Anggito & Setiawan, 2018).

The researcher used data collection techniques through interviews, observation, and documentation. The researcher conducted semi-structured

interviews with the principal, teachers, and several students at Muhammadiyah Elementary School in Lahat. This sample served as the primary data source because they were directly involved and understood the focus of the study, enabling the researcher to obtain the most relevant and representative information in line with the research objectives (Sumargo, 2020). The researcher also conducted non-participant observations over three months, during which the research was underway. She also collected several important documents to support the observations and interviews. This approach enabled the author to understand Muhammadiyah school principals' steps to purify their students' beliefs (Creswell, 2019).

The data analysis technique used the Miles and Huberman method, which focuses on systematic data collection and analysis. This method involves data collection, reduction, presentation, and conclusion. This analysis uses an inductive approach to understand the meaning of the data and produce a rich interpretation of the Muhammadiyah Sufism phenomenon that the author is studying (Miles et al., 2014). The researcher used triangulation to verify the validity of the data. For this research to be valid, a comparison is needed. In this study, the researcher checked the data between the information provided by the principal and the information provided by the teachers and students. This way, they could find a common ground or common thread between the principal's information regarding Muhammadiyah Sufism in purifying students' beliefs and what the students practice in implementing the concept of Muhammadiyah Sufism.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Sufism from the Perspective of Muhammadiyah

Muhammadiyah, an Islamic reformist movement in Indonesia, holds a unique perspective on Sufism. Although Muhammadiyah's founders established it as a movement emphasising renewal and the elimination of heresy, the organisation does not explicitly oppose Sufism. In Muhammadiyah's view, Sufism is acceptable as long as it conforms to pure Islamic teachings and does not conflict with the principles of monotheism (Bachtar et al., 2025). Muhammadiyah prioritises the authenticity of the Sufi aspects in monotheism and morals, which are interpreted as

ethical values and ethos for carrying out virtuous actions in society (Muttaqin et al., 2023).

Sufism in Muhammadiyah is expected to achieve the primary goal of Islam, namely drawing closer to Allah. In Muhammadiyah's understanding, Sufi practices involving dhikr and self-introspection can be beneficial if they do not deviate from the pure teachings of Islam (Masrur, 2019). This movement emphasises that the practice of Sufism should not lead to heretical acts or change the essence of established Islamic teachings. Ideologically, Muhammadiyah portrays its movement as a Tajdid movement (Umar et al., 2024). Muhammadiyah interprets Sufism as ethics and values that encourage individuals to do good deeds in society (Aziz, 2024). This is in line with the principal of Muhammadiyah Elementary School in Lahat, who stated:

"Sufism in Muhammadiyah is not about following a particular order, but rather about internalising spiritual values that can shape students' character for the better."

This statement shows that Muhammadiyah is trying to take the essence of Sufism without being tied to practices that might be considered deviant from the pure teachings of Islam. Furthermore, research by Muttaqin et al. (2023) indicates that although Muhammadiyah does not officially recognise the existence of a Sufi order, many individuals within the organisation engage in Sufi practices. This reflects a deep spiritual need among its members, prompting them to seek deeper spiritual experiences. In an interview with one of the school's teachers, he added:

"We often hold dhikr (religious remembrance) and religious study activities to strengthen students' faith. This is part of our effort to integrate Sufism into education."

On the other hand, challenges will remain, particularly regarding a proper understanding of Sufism. Research suggests that some members of society may become trapped in excessive *tawassul* (religious practice) or extreme meditation, which can lead to deviations from the creed of monotheism (Sarwan & Sabri, 2023; Zulfikar & Hendro, 2023). The principal emphasised the importance of proper education in Sufism, saying:

"Besides teaching, we also need to ensure that students truly understand that tawassul should be a means of drawing closer to Allah, not replacing Him with inappropriate actions."

This demonstrates that education based on properly understanding Sufism is crucial for preventing deviation. From Muhammadiyah's perspective, Sufism is a tool for building students' character and faith through integrated spiritual education. By prioritising Sufi values in Islamic teachings, Muhammadiyah strives to create a generation that is not only academically intelligent but also possesses high morals and a strong connection with Allah (Zubair et al., 2023).

Muhammadiyah's Sufi teachings adhere to the principle of pure monotheism within a solid sharia framework, based on the teachings of the Qur'an and the hadith. In theory, Muhammadiyah Sufism combines spirituality with the provisions of Islamic law, teaching that spiritual experiences must be in harmony with religious norms (Masrur, 2019). In line with the research results, Muhammadiyah's Sufi practices, such as dhikr, prayer, and fasting, are directed towards a deeper understanding of the concept of monotheism, in line with Islamic teachings which prioritise obedience to Allah and His guidance (Ariadi et al., 2021). In this context, Muhammadiyah's Sufism becomes a path to achieving spiritual harmony with Islamic teachings.

On the other hand, research by Faizah (2018) reflects Muhammadiyah's approach to Sufism, which also reflects its efforts to harmonise religious traditions with moderate and contextual values. Within this framework, Muhammadiyah teaches that spiritual experience and daily life should not conflict. Sufism can be a means to achieve perfection in worship and develop good morals (Ali, 2019).

Implementation of Muhammadiyah's Sufi Values in Building Students' Character and Faith Through Spiritual Education

Implementing Muhammadiyah's Sufi values in the educational environment creates a strong foundation for refining students' faith. This involves the central role of the principal, teachers, and staff. This concept is not limited to formal worship activities but also encompasses work ethic, mutual respect, and a spirit of cooperation. Therefore, understanding and practising Sufism in the Muhammadiyah context is key to developing individuals with true faith, noble character, and positive societal contributions.

As the primary role model, the principal carries out his role with full dedication to embodying Sufi attitudes in daily life. The principal of Muhammadiyah Lahat Elementary School provides encouragement and support, inspiring teachers, staff, and students to internalise Muhammadiyah's Sufi values in their daily duties and routines. Based on observations, several concrete steps have been taken, including organising Quran reading, voluntary prayers, dhikr (remembrance of Allah), regular religious study groups, and voluntary fasting as part of daily activities. Through this approach, the principal fosters a school culture that internalises spiritual experiences and instils Muhammadiyah's Sufi concepts in every aspect of school life.

Reciting Al-Qur'an

To instil spirituality, reading the Quran in the morning before classes begin has become a routine activity for students. Based on observations, students are also directed to memorise short chapters of the Quran. During this activity, teachers are present in the classroom to monitor the progress and serve as student role models. Students are encouraged to read each page of the Quran and connect with the meaning of the verses contained therein. A further step is taken by encouraging students to read translations of the Quran to open the door to broader understanding. This initiative deepens students' spiritual connection with Allah and equips them with in-depth knowledge and understanding of Islamic teachings.

Reading the Quran and its translation is an activity that not only absorbs the holy verses but also serves as an important guide in guiding students to understand the meaning of each verse (Siregar et al., 2022). Through this understanding, the stories contained in the Quran become a primary source of inspiration for students in developing Islamic character. Whether about courage, patience, or determination, each story provides a moral message that can guide everyday life (Puji et al., 2025). In the context of Islamic character building, Quranic stories teach positive values necessary for social life. Patience, a recurring theme in the Quran, gives students a strong foundation for managing their emotions. Through understanding these stories, students at Muhammadiyah Elementary School in Lahat are taught to be patient when facing life's trials and tribulations.

Successfully managing emotions is a crucial element in students, and this emotional intelligence positively impacts their preparation for the future. This aligns with research. Ikhwan et al. (2025) revealed that emotionally intelligent students can better face various life challenges, including responding wisely to every aspect, from academic success to social relationships. A complete personality, or *Insan Kamil*, can be developed through a deep understanding of the Quran. This understanding helps students adapt and live well in the broader society. Furthermore, students are taught a sense of responsibility towards themselves, others, and Allah, thus becoming individuals who contribute positively to their surroundings. By exploring the Quran, students gain religious knowledge and develop a sense of openness to diversity and tolerance of differences (Aderibigbe et al., 2023). This understanding helps them develop an inclusive and respectful attitude toward others, creating a society based on justice and peace.

Previous research has revealed the importance of reading the Quran and its translation as part of the educational process, creating a strong foundation for students to become individuals who are not only intellectually intelligent but also possess profound emotional and spiritual intelligence (Nufus et al., 2023). Thus, students who can face the complexities of modern life with confidence and peace of mind will indirectly shape a generation that brings positive change to society.

Furthermore, this school also implements the habit of performing the *sunnah Dhuha* prayer during the first break, a practice reflected in daily practice that significantly strengthens the spiritual connection. This routine practice is not merely an additional act of worship but also a foundation for strengthening an individual's connection to their spirituality. This aligns with Zahro's (2025) research, which revealed that the *Dhuha* prayer deepens spiritual reflection and strengthens students' daily connection to religious values.

Dhikr After Prayer

Observations have shown that the practice of *dhikr* after congregational *Dhuhr* prayer creates a profound moment of togetherness, where teachers and students remember Allah together, creating a spiritual atmosphere that strengthens their close relationship with their Creator. Through *dhikr*, hearts become at peace and a

deeper closeness with Allah is established, aligning with previous research that revealed that dhikr after prayer is not merely a routine practice. However, a means of reflection, strengthening spiritual bonds, and experiencing a sense of realisation that brings happiness to daily life (Irhas et al., 2023).

The principal, teachers, and school staff play a crucial role in fostering purity of faith and good morals in students. One approach is to integrate the practice of dhikr to foster closeness with Allah. The principal acts as a leader, encouraging and supporting this dhikr activity, making it an integral part of the school culture. With this support, the practice of dhikr becomes a routine activity and a value applied in daily school life.

Teachers act as facilitators, teaching and guiding students in performing dhikr correctly and consciously. They also inspire students to experience peace of mind through the practice of dhikr. In addition to dhikr practice, school staff also play a role in creating an atmosphere that supports the development of pure faith and morals. Students can organise activities that strengthen religious and moral values, such as group class activities, religious seminars, or group discussions on how to apply Islamic values in daily life. This expands the learning space for students, extending beyond the classroom to include the entire school community. Commitment to consistently practising dhikr is key to developing students with good morals. The principal, teachers, and school staff actively ensure the continuity of dhikr practice. This creates a supportive environment and motivates students to continue engaging in dhikr activities.

The importance of dhikr in developing good morals is also reflected in the instilling of values in daily life. In line with the research findings of Sholihah et al. (2024), several teachers and school staff consistently convey Islamic moral and ethical messages in various contexts, both inside and outside the classroom, one of which is through dhikr and istighosah activities. Through these activities, students experience peace of mind through dhikr and understand how to apply spiritual values in their daily lives. The principal, teachers, and school staff work together to create a profound educational environment supporting students' spiritual growth. By making dhikr their primary tool, they guide students toward purity of faith and

good morals, creating a generation with polite personalities and a sense of being under the watchful eye of Allah.

Sunnah Fasting on Mondays and Thursdays

The implementation of Muhammadiyah Sufism is also carried out through sunnah fasting. One form of Sufism practice recommended by the principal and teachers to students is the sunnah fasting on Mondays and Thursdays. This is done to cultivate self-discipline, increase piety, and internalise the values of Muhammadiyah Sufism. The importance of this practice is also reflected in the dedication of the principal, teachers, and all staff who regularly carry out this practice. This action is not merely an obligation, but a concrete effort to set an example for students, demonstrating that spiritual values must be embodied in daily actions to achieve moral and religious maturity.

In this regard, students of Muhammadiyah Elementary School, Lahat, are also given a deeper understanding of the benefits of fasting, which emphasises that fasting is not merely about abstaining from hunger and thirst. More than that, fasting is a means of drawing closer to Allah, expiating sins, gaining abundant rewards, and cultivating gratitude for the blessings received. In this learning environment, students are encouraged to feel the presence of Allah in every moment of their fast. This understanding fosters a deep sense of reverence and spiritual awareness when fasting. This is consistent with previous research that revealed that fasting helps students recognise temptation and strengthen themselves (Ahdi et al., 2024).

Thus, students can learn to internalise piety while fasting, refrain from things that can physically invalidate the fast, and also learn emotional and spiritual self-control. Students learn the importance of patience in fasting and how it serves as a foundation for avoiding sinful acts. In this way, students observe fasting as a routine and a form of profound self-control to achieve the blessings and virtues of fasting.

Regular Qur'anic (Pengajian) Recitation

In addition to the religious practices described above, the principal, assisted by the teaching staff, also holds regular Qur'anic recitations. Regular Qur'anic recitations at Muhammadiyah Elementary School in Lahat are a highly effective

means for the principal and teachers to refine students' beliefs. In an atmosphere full of cultural diversity, Qur'anic recitations are not merely religious activities but also a golden opportunity to foster an attitude of tolerance and appreciation for diversity among students. Given that students come from diverse cultural backgrounds, Qur'anic recitations can foster an understanding that diversity is a gift from Allah for which we should all be grateful.

In this context, the importance of Qur'anic recitations lies in developing students' character. Research by Andra et al. (2025) revealed that the messages conveyed through Qur'anic recitations are not limited to faith but also encompass the values of tolerance, which are essential for building a harmonious society. The principal and teachers act as facilitators, guiding students in addressing differences with an open and respectful attitude.

Religious study groups also serve as a platform to teach people how to draw closer to Allah in many ways. However, it is important to remember that as long as these methods do not deviate from Islamic teachings, differences in religious approaches need not be a source of conflict. This is in line with an interview with one teacher who revealed:

"Through religious study groups, students are encouraged to understand that freedom of worship is the right of every individual, as long as it is carried out responsibly and by Islamic teachings."

By involving students in regular religious study groups, it is hoped that they will grow as individuals who possess strong beliefs and become Muslims open to differences. The school community can become a vehicle for positive and inclusive character development through this process. Students are taught to embrace diversity as an integral part of their lives, building a solid foundation to face an increasingly complex and multicultural world.

Religious study groups in schools are a religious obligation and a means of developing a younger generation capable of uniting in diversity (Burhanudin et al., 2022). In line with observations, principals and teachers must consistently ensure that religious studies are directed toward a deep and inclusive understanding of cultural and religious diversity. Thus, students will be able to become believers who not only possess strong faith but also live peacefully and tolerantly.

All school components' commitment and full involvement in implementing Muhammadiyah's Sufi concept create a holistic educational environment. The principal is a prime role model, demonstrating dedication to implementing Sufi values. As mediators and facilitators, teachers play a central role in guiding students directly. Staff also act as caring friends, reminding students when they forget. Sufism is not limited to formal worship activities but is reflected in a work ethic, mutual respect, and a spirit of cooperation (Hamim, 2023). This forms a strong foundation for students' character, who are noble and contribute to society.

The Positive Influence of Muhammadiyah Sufism on Faith

Based on observations, several spiritual activities positively influence Muhammadiyah Sufism, including: *First*, regularly reciting the Quran in the morning brings significant benefits in purifying students' faith. This ritual creates a deep spiritual connection with the Quran and facilitates students in understanding and reflecting on the meaning of Allah's verses. Connecting with the Quran, including reading translations, provides a deeper dimension to understanding Islamic faith (Hamzah et al., 2023). The spiritual awareness developed through this activity provides a solid foundation for purifying students' faith, creating a closer connection with religious values.

Second, practising the sunnah Dhuha prayer brings substantial benefits in purifying students' faith. This practice, performed regularly, significantly strengthens spiritual connection. The sunnah Dhuha prayer is not simply an additional practice but a foundation for strengthening students' connection with their spiritual dimension. Research by Rodiyah et al. (2024) revealed that the Dhuha prayer creates deep spiritual reflection, leading students to a profound experience that strengthens their connection to religious values. This aligns with interview results, which revealed that students gain inner balance and peace through this practice, develop strong beliefs, and incorporate religious values into their daily lives.

Third, practising dhikr after the Dhuhr prayer significantly benefits purifying students' beliefs. This practice creates a moment of profound togetherness, where teachers and students remember Allah together. Dhikr deepens spiritual reflection,

cultivates inner peace, and strengthens the inner connection with the Creator. Through dhikr, students perform routine practices and experience a profound sense of realisation, bringing happiness to their daily lives (Ahdi et al., 2024). Thus, practising dhikr after the Dhuhr prayer effectively fosters strong beliefs and guides students toward moral and spiritual maturity.

Fourth, fasting on Mondays and Thursdays offers extraordinary benefits in purifying students' faith. This practice, carried out regularly, trains self-discipline and increases piety. Fasting provides students with an opportunity for spiritual reflection, internalising Muhammadiyah's Sufi values, and deepening their inner connection with Allah (Lubis et al., 2024). Adherence to this practice creates a consistent religious atmosphere, shaping noble character. Through fasting, students strengthen their faith and integrate Sufi values into their daily lives, positively impacting the maturation of their faith and morality (Ahdi et al., 2024).

Opportunities for the Development of Muhammadiyah Sufism

Opportunities for further development of Muhammadiyah's Sufi teachings in various aspects of life can serve as a foundation for supporting the positive growth of individuals, society, and the nation, first, in the context of education. Opportunities for further development can be utilised to improve the quality of the curriculum and teaching methods that incorporate Sufi values. The integration of Muhammadiyah's Sufi teachings can be expanded to various levels of education, from elementary school to university, thereby significantly developing students' character and ethics (Hamami & Nuryana, 2022). Furthermore, there are opportunities to utilise technology in this digital era to disseminate and broaden the understanding of Muhammadiyah's Sufism. Digital platforms can provide learning materials, discussion forums, and other resources accessible to the wider community (Agung et al., 2025). This can broaden the reach and enhance understanding of Sufi teachings worldwide.

Opportunities also lie in developing training programs and workshops focused on introducing and practising Muhammadiyah's Sufi teachings. In line with the findings of this study, several approaches have been developed to foster a school culture that deepens spiritual experiences and instils Muhammadiyah's Sufi

concepts. These include: reading the Quran, reciting dhikr after congregational prayers, voluntary fasting, and religious study. Through these approaches, students can understand and apply Sufi values in their daily lives. This can be done both locally and nationally.

These habits will indirectly impact students' well-being, as these activities deepen spiritual values, fostering adaptive behaviour and preventing high stress levels. From a psychological perspective, there is an opportunity to integrate Sufi concepts as part of mental health and well-being programs. Practising the positive values of Sufism, by pure Islamic teachings, can be an effective tool to help overcome stress, anxiety, and other mental health issues (Afiani & Haririe, 2024).

Furthermore, development opportunities can also be found in the economic context. Applying Sufi values, such as honesty, justice, and concern for others, can form the basis for developing sustainable and socially just business models. This can create inclusive economic opportunities and positively impact society. In efforts to build harmony between religious communities, opportunities for further development also lie in promoting interfaith dialogue that incorporates an understanding of Sufism. Interfaith dialogue forums can create opportunities to share universal spiritual values, strengthening understanding and tolerance between religious communities (Nugroho, 2021).

Finally, opportunities for further development can be found in supporting social and humanitarian initiatives. This aligns with the regular religious study activities held at Muhammadiyah Elementary School in Lahat, which foster solidarity and social interaction among people. These teachings emphasise love, empathy, and community empowerment, which can serve as a foundation for garnering support and participation in social activities, thus significantly impacting the communities' empowerment. This also aligns with the concept of compassion in Muhammadiyah Sufism, which creates a strong moral foundation to foster concern for the environment and society (Masrur, 2019). The principle of empathy instilled through Sufi teachings motivates its followers to feel and understand the suffering of others, becoming the primary foundation for involvement in various humanitarian activities (Mubarok, 2022). By taking advantage of these opportunities, further development

of Muhammadiyah's Sufi teachings can contribute to forming a more harmonious, ethical, and sustainable society.

IV. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My deepest gratitude to the Head of STIT YPI Lahat for the valuable opportunity to continue my studies. My gratitude also goes to the lecturers at UMM, who have shared their extraordinary knowledge and dedicatedly guided me. I would also like to thank my loyal friends who have always supported me materially and immaterially. May Allah reward their kindness with an abundance of blessings and success. This gratitude serves as an expression of gratitude and appreciation for the role of all parties in assisting in completing this research.

V. CONCLUSION

This study shows that Muhammadiyah Sufism plays a significant role in building the character and faith of students at Muhammadiyah Elementary School in Lahat. Through spiritual practices such as reciting the Qur'an, sunnah prayers, dhikr, and sunnah fasting, students are taught to draw closer to Allah and internalise good moral values. These practices have proven effective in strengthening students' faith and improving their understanding of Islamic teachings. Furthermore, this study emphasises the importance of an educational approach based on Sufi understanding that aligns with pure Islamic teachings. The principal, teachers, and staff act as role models in implementing Sufi values, creating an inclusive and harmonious environment in the school. With the commitment of all school components, a positive learning atmosphere can be created, encouraging students to respect and appreciate differences. This study emphasises that implementing Sufism in Muhammadiyah education contributes to the refinement of faith and the development of better student character. By prioritising the values of tolerance and respect for diversity, Muhammadiyah's Sufi education can shape a generation that is not only academically intelligent but also has noble morals and is ready to face challenges in society.

VI. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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