

SUFI EDUCATION IN THE BOOK *MAU'IZAT AL-MU'MININ* AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION IN MORAL EDUCATION AT MADRASAH

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Abstract: This study analyzes Sufi and moral education in *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin*, its implementation at Madrasah Aliyah Muallimin UNIVA Medan, and its supporting and inhibiting factors. Using a qualitative phenomenological approach complemented by document analysis, data were collected through in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, and document study involving the head of the madrasah, teachers, and purposively selected students. The data were analyzed thematically through condensation, coding, categorization, display, and conclusion drawing. The findings show that *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin* frames Sufi education as soul purification, self-control, and moral formation through worship, social conduct, avoidance of blameworthy traits, and cultivation of virtues. Its implementation occurs through instructional integration, religious habituation, teacher modeling, and moral evaluation. Religious culture, teacher commitment, and a supportive spiritual environment facilitate implementation, while limited time, digital influences, and differing student motivation constrain it. The study highlights the shift from external moral control to internal awareness through *muhasabah* and *muraqabah* in contemporary madrasahs.

Keywords: Sufi Education, Moral Education, *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin*

Abstrak: Penelitian ini menganalisis pendidikan tasawuf dan akhlak dalam *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin*, implementasinya di Madrasah Aliyah Muallimin UNIVA Medan, serta faktor pendukung dan penghambatnya. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif fenomenologis yang dilengkapi analisis dokumen, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi nonpartisipatif, dan studi dokumen yang melibatkan kepala madrasah, guru, serta peserta didik yang dipilih secara purposif. Data dianalisis secara tematik melalui kondensasi, pengodean, kategorisasi, penyajian data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin* menempatkan pendidikan tasawuf sebagai proses penyucian jiwa, pengendalian diri, dan pembentukan akhlak melalui ibadah, perilaku sosial, penghindaran sifat tercela, serta pengembangan sifat terpuji. Implementasinya dilakukan melalui integrasi pembelajaran, pembiasaan religius, keteladanan guru, dan evaluasi moral. Budaya religius, komitmen guru, dan lingkungan spiritual yang mendukung memperkuat implementasi, sedangkan keterbatasan waktu, pengaruh digital, dan perbedaan motivasi siswa menjadi hambatan. Penelitian ini menegaskan pergeseran dari kontrol moral eksternal menuju kesadaran internal melalui *muhasabah* dan *muraqabah* dalam konteks madrasah kontemporer.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Tasawuf, Pendidikan Akhlak, *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin*

INTRODUCTION

Islamic Religious Education is essentially not only directed toward the mastery of religious knowledge but also toward the development of personality, self-control, and students' spiritual maturity. This orientation places moral character as an important outcome of Islamic education, since the success of religious learning cannot be measured solely by students' cognitive ability to understand concepts of creed, Islamic jurisprudence, or Islamic history, but also by their ability to manifest these values in attitudes and behavior. Within the framework of Islamic education, the educational process should ideally integrate knowledge, internalization, and practice in a coherent manner. An-Nahlawi (2004) emphasizes that Islamic education should be directed toward the formation of individuals who submit to Allah while simultaneously demonstrating virtuous conduct in social life. This perspective is consistent with the Sufi tradition, which places purification of the soul, control of desires, and habituation to noble character as essential processes in the formation of a well-rounded human being.

The need for education that addresses the inner dimension has become increasingly relevant amid rapid social change and digital culture. Character education in schools often encounters a gap between values formally taught in the classroom and behaviors that develop outside the educational environment. Abdullah et al. (2019) demonstrate that character formation cannot rely solely on

school-based instruction but requires a consistent value environment and supportive social practices. In the context of Islamic education, this condition requires religious learning that does not stop at the transmission of subject matter but encourages the internalization of values. Madrasahs therefore need an approach capable of integrating instruction, role modeling, habituation, and the strengthening of inner awareness so that religious knowledge does not remain merely verbal. Sufism has considerable potential in this regard because it emphasizes spiritual discipline, self-reflection, tazkiyat al-nafs, self-control, and the cultivation of virtues such as sincerity, patience, humility, and moral responsibility (Munjiat, 2018; Khotib & Mubin, 2019; Lubis et al., 2021). In the digital era, the revitalization of Sufi values is also considered relevant for strengthening students' moral and spiritual resilience amid rapidly changing patterns of interaction and life orientation (Rahmi & Arisnaini, 2025).

A number of studies have demonstrated a close relationship between Sufism, moral education, and character formation. Rubaidi (2020) explains the need to mainstream Sufi values in contemporary Islamic education so that education does not become trapped in a merely formalistic orientation. Abitolkha and Mas'ud (2021) show that Sufi values can be integrated into the Islamic Religious Education curriculum through learning that connects subject matter, habituation, exemplary conduct, and school culture.

Baharuddin et al. (2024) also argue that Sufism has strong relevance as a foundation for character education because it directs students toward self-control and moral awareness. The findings of Sahri and Hali (2023) indicate that Sufism-based education in madrasahs can support students' character formation through the habituation of spiritual and ethical values. Meanwhile, Hidayatulloh et al. (2015) demonstrate that Sufi concepts have practical implications for the development of Islamic Religious Education in schools, particularly in strengthening spiritual and moral dimensions.

Nevertheless, existing studies still leave considerable room for further investigation. Most previous research has discussed Sufism as a general concept, the integration of Sufi values into the curriculum, or character education practices based on Sufism. Studies that specifically position *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin* by Muhammad Jamaluddin al-Qasimi as a conceptual source for Sufi education while linking it to the practice of moral education in madrasahs remain limited. In fact, the book occupies an important position because it summarizes ethical teachings and concepts of soul purification from *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* in a more concise and pedagogical form (Al-Ghazali, 2005; Al-Qasimi, 2013). Furthermore, previous studies have rarely connected textual analysis of the book with concrete implementation in teaching, habituation, role modeling, madrasah culture, and moral evaluation in an integrated manner. This limitation indicates a gap between

normative studies of Sufi values and empirical investigations into how these values are translated into formal educational practice, particularly at the Madrasah Aliyah level, where the challenges of adolescent character formation are increasingly complex.

On this basis, this study takes Madrasah Aliyah Muallimin UNIVA Medan as an empirical setting for examining the relationship between classical Islamic sources and contemporary moral education practices. The contribution of this study lies in its attempt to connect textual analysis of *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin* with an examination of the implementation of Sufi values in moral education within a madrasah environment. This approach is expected not only to clarify the educational content of Sufism contained in the text but also to demonstrate how such values are translated into actual educational practices. Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the concepts of Sufi and moral education contained in *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin*, examine their implementation in moral education at Madrasah Aliyah Muallimin UNIVA Medan, and identify the factors that support and hinder their implementation in everyday educational practice.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design to explore how Sufi educational values contained in *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin* are understood, experienced, and implemented in moral education at Madrasah Aliyah Muallimin UNIVA Medan. The qualitative

approach was selected because the study sought to examine meanings, experiences, educational practices, and contextual interpretations rather than measure variables statistically. The phenomenological orientation enabled the researchers to investigate how educational actors interpret Sufi values through their everyday experiences within the madrasah environment. Since the study also examined the conceptual foundations of Sufi and moral education contained in *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin*, phenomenological inquiry was complemented by document analysis of the text to establish the conceptual categories used in examining empirical practices.

Participants were selected purposively based on their direct involvement in educational policy, classroom instruction, religious habituation, and student activities. The informants included the head of the madrasah, two Akidah Akhlak teachers, one Fiqh teacher, student council representatives, and selected students from grades XI and XII. Participant selection considered their knowledge and experience of moral education and spiritual practices implemented within the institution. Data collection continued until the information obtained was considered sufficiently repetitive and capable of explaining the principal themes of the study.

Data were collected through semi-structured in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, and document analysis. Interviews explored participants' understanding, experiences, and interpretations of Sufi values and their

implementation in moral education. Observations focused on classroom learning, congregational prayers, collective dhikr, religious habituation, teacher-student interactions, and other activities reflecting moral and spiritual formation. Documentary data included the madrasah curriculum, teaching plans, learning materials, student regulations, records of religious activities, and relevant institutional documents. *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin* was also examined to identify concepts related to purification of the soul, self-control, moral virtues, spiritual discipline, and relationships with God and others.

Data were analyzed thematically through an interactive process of data condensation, coding, categorization, data display, and conclusion drawing. Interview transcripts, observation notes, and documents were coded to identify recurring meanings and patterns. These codes were subsequently organized into broader themes corresponding to the research objectives, particularly the concepts of Sufi education, forms of implementation in moral education, and supporting and inhibiting factors. Interpretation was conducted by relating empirical findings to the conceptual teachings identified in *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin*.

Data trustworthiness was ensured through source, technique, and time triangulation. Information obtained from administrators, teachers, and students was compared across interviews, observations, and documentary evidence. Repeated observations at different times were also

conducted to examine the consistency of educational and spiritual practices. These procedures enabled the study to develop a contextual and empirically grounded understanding of the implementation of Sufi education at Madrasah Aliyah Muallimin UNIVA Medan.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Concepts of Sufi and Moral Education in *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin*

The textual analysis of *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin* shows that Sufi education is constructed as a process of inner purification that is inseparable from the formation of observable moral behavior. The work does not present Sufism merely as a collection of spiritual doctrines or ascetic practices, but as an educational framework through which individuals discipline their desires, cultivate awareness of God, and gradually develop virtuous conduct. *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin* itself is a concise adaptation of Al-Ghazali's *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, in which Muhammad Jamaluddin al-Qasimi reorganizes extensive discussions on worship, social conduct, destructive traits, and saving virtues into a more accessible structure (Al-Ghazali, 2005; Al-Qasimi, 2013). This structure suggests that Sufi education operates through the continuous relationship between knowledge, spiritual exercise, self-examination, and moral habituation.

The findings indicate four interrelated domains of education in the text. The first concerns worship, corresponding to *rub' al-'ibadat*, in which ritual practices are not treated merely as

formal obligations but as means of cultivating sincerity, humility, discipline, and consciousness of divine presence. Prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and other acts of worship are therefore educational processes that train the inner self. The second domain, *rub' al-'adat*, extends moral education into everyday social life. Eating, speaking, friendship, family relations, and social interaction are presented as fields in which spiritual quality is tested. This perspective reinforces the view that Islamic morality cannot be separated from ordinary human conduct.

The third domain is *rub' al-muhlikat*, which deals with destructive qualities such as arrogance, envy, ostentation, excessive attachment to worldly life, anger, and uncontrolled desire. From an educational perspective, this section functions as a diagnosis of moral and spiritual weaknesses. Students of Sufism are not only expected to recognize immoral actions but also to understand the internal tendencies that produce them. The fourth domain, *rub' al-munjiyat*, focuses on virtues that lead to spiritual and moral maturity, including repentance, patience, gratitude, trust in God, sincerity, hope, and love of God. These virtues represent not merely normative ideals but qualities developed through repeated spiritual practice and self-discipline.

The relationship between Sufism and morality in this text can therefore be understood as an inner-outer continuum. Sufism works at the level of intention, desire, awareness, and purification of the heart, whereas morality represents the

behavioral expression of this inner formation. This finding is consistent with Lubis et al. (2021), who explain that *tasawuf akhlaqi* emphasizes purification of the soul as the basis for the emergence of commendable character. Setiawan (2025) likewise emphasizes the epistemological relationship between moral knowledge and Sufism within the wider system of Islamic sciences. From this perspective, moral conduct that is not supported by inner transformation risks becoming formal, situational, or dependent on external control.

A further important finding is that the educational orientation of *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin* does not advocate withdrawal from social life. Instead, spiritual discipline is directed toward improving participation within it. This pattern resonates with the concept of Sufism as a means of developing both religiosity and social piety (Khotib & Mubin, 2019). Rubaidi (2020) similarly argues that Sufi values remain relevant to contemporary Islamic education because they connect personal spirituality with ethical responsibility in social contexts. Thus, the significance of *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin* for education lies in its integration of worship, self-control, social ethics, and character formation.

The study therefore finds that the central educational logic of the text can be summarized as a movement from knowledge to self-awareness, from self-awareness to purification, and from purification to moral action. This distinguishes its approach from moral instruction based primarily on rules,

prohibitions, or memorized definitions. The findings support the broader argument that Sufi education can provide an internal foundation for character formation because it addresses the motives and spiritual consciousness underlying human behavior (Munjiat, 2018; Baharuddin et al., 2024). In this respect, *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin* offers a conceptual basis for moral education in which the formation of character begins with the management of the inner self and is manifested in consistent ethical conduct.

Implementation of Sufi Values in Moral Education at Madrasah Aliyah Muallimin UNIVA Medan

The empirical findings demonstrate that the implementation of Sufi values at Madrasah Aliyah Muallimin UNIVA Medan does not take the form of a separate formal subject specifically entitled "Sufi Education." Instead, the values identified in *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin* are incorporated into the educational environment through classroom instruction, religious habituation, teacher modeling, and moral supervision. This pattern shows that implementation operates mainly through value integration rather than through an independent curricular structure. The model is consistent with Abitolkha and Mas'ud (2021), who found that Sufi values can be integrated into Islamic Religious Education through the combination of curriculum content, educational culture, and habituation.

At the classroom level, the most visible integration occurs in subjects such as

Akidah Akhlak and Fiqh. Teachers do not limit discussions of patience, sincerity, gratitude, repentance, or trust in God to conceptual definitions. These themes are connected with situations encountered by students, including academic pressure, peer relationships, family problems, emotional reactions, and their interaction with digital media. In this process, values corresponding to *rub' al-munjiyat* are translated into concrete moral reflection. The findings suggest that the pedagogical relevance of the classical text becomes stronger when teachers contextualize its concepts rather than simply reproduce its terminology. This supports Hidayatulloh et al. (2015), who argue that Sufi teachings become educationally meaningful when their spiritual principles are connected with the realities of school life.

Beyond classroom instruction, Sufi values are reinforced through the culture of the madrasah. Morning prayers, recitation of *Asma' al-Husna*, collective supplication, congregational prayer, religious advice, and norms of respectful interaction constitute repeated practices that create a morally structured environment. These routines function as mechanisms of habituation through which students repeatedly encounter values such as discipline, humility, respect, patience, and religious awareness. The finding is in line with Sahri and Hali (2023), who demonstrate that character formation in a Sufism-based madrasah depends not only on instructional content but also on repeated spiritual and social practices. Abdullah et al. (2019) similarly emphasize that character

education becomes stronger when the values promoted in formal instruction are supported by the wider school environment.

Teacher behavior also emerged as a significant component of implementation. Teachers are expected to model punctuality, politeness, emotional restraint, respectful communication, and consistency in religious practice. From the perspective of Bandura's (1977) social learning theory, such behavior provides models that students can observe, remember, and potentially reproduce. However, the findings indicate that modeling alone is insufficient. Its educational influence becomes stronger when students understand the moral reasoning and spiritual values underlying teachers' actions. Therefore, exemplary conduct functions together with explanation, habituation, and reflection rather than as an isolated instructional technique.

Another important dimension concerns moral evaluation. The madrasah does not rely solely on written examinations to evaluate Akidah Akhlak learning. Student discipline, participation in religious activities, patterns of interaction, and everyday conduct also become part of teachers' observations. In Sufi terms, these external forms of supervision are directed toward the development of *muhasabah* and *muraqabah*. Students are encouraged gradually to evaluate their own behavior and recognize moral responsibility even when teachers are absent. This process may be interpreted through Rotter's (1966) concept of locus of control, particularly the

movement from behavior primarily regulated by external sanctions toward greater internal regulation. Nevertheless, in the context of this study, internal moral control is not understood merely as psychological autonomy; it is linked to religious consciousness and the perception of responsibility before God.

These findings show that the implementation of Sufi values at Madrasah Aliyah Muallimin UNIVA Medan is best understood as an integrated educational process involving cognitive understanding, spiritual habituation, social modeling, and moral self-regulation. This pattern parallels the contemporary argument that Islamic character education should combine knowledge, lived experience, and internalization (Baharuddin et al., 2024; Nafsiyah et al., 2025). The contribution of the implementation identified in this study lies particularly in its attempt to translate classical Sufi concepts into everyday educational practices without transforming the madrasah into a specialized Sufi institution. In this sense, *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin* serves less as a rigid textbook and more as a value framework that gives moral and spiritual direction to educational practices.

Supporting and Inhibiting Factors in the Implementation of Sufi Education

The implementation of Sufi education at Madrasah Aliyah Muallimin UNIVA Medan is shaped by a combination of institutional, pedagogical, cultural, and individual factors. The findings indicate that the strongest supporting factor is the religious orientation of the institution itself.

The madrasah operates within an Islamic educational environment in which religious observance, moral discipline, and respect for Islamic traditions are already recognized as important elements of institutional identity. This environment facilitates the acceptance of practices associated with spiritual formation because they are not perceived as additions that are foreign to the culture of the institution. Such institutional support is important because character formation requires consistency between classroom instruction and the broader educational environment (Abdullah et al., 2019).

Teacher commitment constitutes another major supporting factor. Teachers who demonstrate consistency between the moral values they teach and their everyday conduct provide students with direct examples of how religious principles can be translated into behavior. The significance of this factor confirms the relevance of observational learning, in which students learn not only through verbal instruction but also through the behavior of figures they consider credible and authoritative (Bandura, 1977). In the context of Sufi education, teacher credibility is particularly important because values such as sincerity, patience, humility, and self-control are difficult to teach convincingly if they are not reflected in the educator's own interactions.

The religious infrastructure and social environment of UNIVA Medan also strengthen implementation. The availability of spaces for congregational prayer and religious activities facilitates the regular practice of spiritual habituation.

Furthermore, the cultural familiarity of teachers and students with Islamic devotional practices reduces resistance to activities such as collective prayer, *dhikr*, and moral reflection. These findings support Sahri and Hali (2023), who emphasize that Sufism-based character formation becomes more effective when supported by a religious culture that provides students with opportunities to experience values repeatedly rather than encounter them only as theoretical material.

Despite these advantages, several inhibiting factors were identified. One of the most prominent is limited curricular time. The formal structure of Islamic Religious Education subjects requires teachers to achieve prescribed learning outcomes, while in-depth discussions of classical Sufi texts require additional time for interpretation, reflection, and contextualization. Consequently, *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin* cannot always be studied systematically as a complete text within regular classroom hours. This limitation means that teachers tend to select relevant themes rather than follow the structure of the text comprehensively. The implementation therefore remains value-based rather than text-based.

A second challenge arises from the digital environment surrounding students. Social media exposes adolescents to lifestyles, forms of communication, and value orientations that do not always correspond to the principles of self-restraint, moderation, patience, and simplicity emphasized in Sufi education.

Rahmi and Arisnaini (2025) argue that the revitalization of Sufi values has become increasingly important in the digital era precisely because digital culture may intensify instant gratification, self-display, and weakened self-control. The findings of the present study suggest that madrasah-based spiritual habituation must compete with influences students encounter continuously outside school. This makes internalization more difficult when religious practices are experienced only as institutional routines.

The third inhibiting factor concerns differences in students' levels of motivation and spiritual awareness. Not all students interpret religious practices in the same way. Some participate because of personal conviction, while others initially comply because of institutional rules or teacher supervision. This distinction is crucial because the objective of Sufi education is not merely behavioral compliance but the development of self-awareness and internal moral control. In this respect, the findings reveal a tension between external discipline and internal spiritual formation. Rotter's (1966) framework helps explain the psychological dimension of this transition, while Sufi concepts of *muhasabah* and *muraqabah* give it a distinct religious meaning.

Overall, the supporting and inhibiting factors demonstrate that the effectiveness of Sufi education depends on the interaction between institutional culture, educator modeling, learning opportunities, external social influences, and students' internal readiness. The

findings reinforce the argument that Sufi-based character education cannot depend on ritual habituation alone. It requires reflective learning capable of helping students understand why particular practices matter and how they relate to personal moral choices. This observation is consistent with Rubaidi (2020) and Baharuddin et al. (2024), who emphasize that Sufism in contemporary education should function as a process of internalizing ethical-spiritual values rather than merely preserving religious symbols. Therefore, the central challenge for Madrasah Aliyah Muallimin UNIVA Medan is to move from institutionalized religious practice toward deeper personal appropriation, so that moral behavior is sustained not only by school regulations but also by students' internal spiritual consciousness.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Sufi education in *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin* is constructed as an integrated process of spiritual purification, moral formation, and self-discipline. Its educational framework connects worship, social conduct, identification of destructive traits, and cultivation of saving virtues, thereby positioning morality as the outward expression of inner spiritual development. At Madrasah Aliyah Muallimin UNIVA Medan, these values are implemented not through a separate Sufi subject, but through integration into Islamic Religious Education, religious habituation, teacher modeling, and moral evaluation. The implementation shows that classical Sufi

teachings can be contextualized within formal madrasah education when they are translated into daily educational practices. Supporting factors include institutional religious culture, teacher commitment, and a conducive spiritual environment, while limited curricular time, digital influences, and differences in students' internal motivation constitute major challenges. The most important finding is that effective Sufi-based moral education depends on the transition from externally regulated behavior to internally grounded moral awareness through *muhasabah* and *muraqabah*. The novelty of this study lies in connecting the textual concepts of *Mau'izhat al-Mu'minin* with their empirical implementation in a contemporary formal madrasah, thereby demonstrating a practical model for integrating classical Sufi values into modern moral education in response to current educational challenges effectively.

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