

Concept and Practice of *Tarbiyatun Nafs* in Formal and Informal Educational Institutions (A Comparative Study of UIN North Sumatra and Jabal Hindi *Thariqah*)

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Abstract

This research aims to understand how soul education (*tarbiyatun nafs*) is implemented at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra and the Jabal Hindi *Thariqah* in shaping students and pupils with noble character, intelligence, caring, and well-mannered. By combining knowledge and virtuous conduct, intelligence is the main objective of this research in the two locations. The methodology used is qualitative field research, employing descriptive comparative analysis with the results based on descriptive phenomena and participatory observation. The research was conducted at the State Islamic University of North Sumatra and the Naqshbandiyah Jabal Hindi *Thariqah* to examine the concepts of soul education held by both institutions and to compare these concepts as a means towards achieving true soul education in the field of Education, ultimately contributing to the development of a morally upright society. The findings reveal that the State Islamic University of North Sumatra has developed an educational concept that integrates moral excellence into every aspect of campus life, with the entire campus community directed towards goodness, serving as role models and fostering ideal imagination. It acts as a stimulus and catalyst for the students' personalities through spiritual and physical guidance.

On the other hand, the Naqshbandiyah Jabal Hindi *Thariqah* places the soul as a faith that can be attained through contemplation, reflection, and remembrance, leading to the purification of the heart and soul (*tazkiyatul qalb* and *nafs*) achieved through spiritual practices to attain the pleasure of Allah. It stems from the servant's love towards Allah SWT and strengthens the physical body to achieve success (economically) to establish prosperity and noble civilization. The results of this research can be compiled into a textbook and contribute to society, especially for students and pupils.

Keywords: *tarbiyatun nafs, formal education, informal education, comparative study, Jabal Hindi Thariqah.*

A. INTRODUCTION

There has been a moral degradation in the behavior of the educational community in Indonesia, particularly among students. Education, which should aim to build a morally good society with noble character, is absent from its daily practice. Society sees Education as a means to fulfill financial needs, such as obtaining employment after completing their studies. This perspective has led to a stagnant society regarding moral and ethical excellence.¹ This phenomenon can be observed in disrespectful individuals who fail to greet their professors and teachers daily. The most obvious evidence can be found in their daily interactions; some students are influenced by and participate in criminal activities and misconduct, such as motorcycle gangs, engaging in casual sex, sexual harassment, substance abuse, skipping classes, and getting involved in fights. Ideally, these confrontations could be channeled and directed toward educational demonstrations that express the aspirations of the surrounding community. However, we observe merely a formalistic education system devoid of genuine concern for the campus, school environment, and the broader society, as genuine individual and social responsibility have been lost.

Indonesian society was recently alarmed by the news of hundreds of students in Bandung who tested positive for HIV

¹ Mardianto and Amini, *Concept of Teacher and Education: Tips for Beginner Teachers*, 3rd ed. (Medan: Perdana Publishing, 2022). p. 18.

AIDS. HIV AIDS is a disease that can be transmitted through sexual fluids and blood. Therefore, someone who is exposed to HIV AIDS is often associated with a lifestyle that involves multiple partners. The news refers to data from the Bandung City AIDS Commission (KPA), which stated that as of December 2021, out of 5,943 HIV cases in Bandung, students accounted for 6.97 percent, equivalent to 414 individuals. Chairperson of the Bandung City KPA Secretariat, Sis Silvia Dewi, stated that this data is an accumulation from 1991 to 2021, categorized based on occupation.²

Yoni Maslihuiddin discusses in his article about the lives of teenagers that the current condition shows many teenagers or young generations exhibit amoral behavior, which is far from the expectations of the nation's founders. Such behaviors resulted in the perception of moral degradation among teenagers. Degradation means regression, decline, or deterioration in something, while morality refers to character or virtues, according to the Indonesian Dictionary. If we interpret both terms, moral degradation is declining the virtues of an individual or a group of people. According to Lickona (2013), there are ten indications of symptoms of moral decline that need attention to change for the better: 1) Violence and anarchic acts, 2) Theft, 3) Dishonesty, 4) Disregard for established rules, 5) Student fights, 6) Intolerance, 7) Use of inappropriate language, 8) Premature and deviant sexual maturity, 9) Self-destructive behavior) drugs.³

Research conducted by Naibaho, Suyoto, and Pitaloka (2021) found several reasons students engage in dysfunctional behavior targets for such behavior. The research participants, students from ten study departments, indicated that students engage in dysfunctional behavior 1-5 times per month. This dysfunctional behavior towards the university, student associations, and other fellow students. The motives for engaging in dysfunctional behavior include (1) conflicts

² Mahar Prastiwi, 'Case of HIV/AIDS in Bandung', Kompas.com, n.d., <https://www.kompas.com/edu/read/2022/09/18/144923971/kasus-hiv-aids-di-bandung-dosen-unpas-berilangkah-preventifnya?page=all>.

³ Yoni Maslihuiddin, 'Moral Degradation of Indonesian Teenagers', umm.ac.id, n.d., <https://p2kk.umm.ac.id/id/pages/detail/artikel/degradasi-moral-remaja-indonesia.html>.

with other students, (2) dissatisfaction with the university's promised services when they enrolled as students, (3) dissatisfaction with lecturers, and (4) influence from friends. This study highlights the need for special attention in reiterating the objectives of Education and fostering moral Education in the higher education sector and its surrounding institutions.

The above indicates that the goals of Education in Higher Education still need to be fulfilled. In another language, mental education (*tarbiyatun nafs*) in tertiary institutions must be examined again in terms of its implementation method so that students and students as part of society should be able to grow up tackling every line of life with the implementation of the science acquired from colleges and schools.⁴

The Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI) explains that Education refers to the attitudes and behaviors of an individual or a group of people in human development through teaching and training efforts. According to the National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003, Chapter I, Article I, Paragraph I, Education is defined as a conscious and planned effort to create a learning environment and learning processes in which students actively develop their potential to achieve spiritual and religious strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, noble character, as well as the necessary skills for themselves, society, nation, and State. A teacher should possess qualities and traits that can be respected and emulated, firm characteristics, and competent educational methods.⁵

The objectives of Education, as stated in Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System (*Sisdiknas*), are to develop the potential of learners to become individuals who have faith and devotion to the One Almighty God, possess noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become democratic and responsible citizens. Education also functions to develop the abilities and shape the character and civilization of

⁴ Rusmaini, *Science of Education* (Palembang: Grafindo Telindo Press, 2014). p. 38.

⁵ Junaidi Arsyad, *Professional Teacher: Guide to Becoming a Successful Teacher Like Prophet Muhammad* (Depok: PT. Gravindo Persada, 2019). p. 15.

the nation to enhance the intellectual life of the nation. Meanwhile, Education in Islam aims to shape an individual's personality to become an *"insan kamil"* with a pattern of piety. *"Insan Kamil"* refers to a complete human being, both spiritually and physically, who can live and develop in a regular and balanced way through their devotion to Allah (SWT).⁶

Based on the above explanation, especially regarding the objective of Education, which is to create individuals who have faith and devotion to the One Almighty God, it becomes a significant matter. The issue is that holistic Education is required to shape individuals who have faith and devotion to God, encompassing both external and internal Education for human beings. The State mandates internal Education for individuals. It is immortalized in the lyrics of the Indonesian national anthem. *"Bangunlah Jiwanya Bangunlah Badannya/ Build its soul, build its body."*

From the excerpt of the Indonesian national anthem mentioned above, it is evident that the nation's founders have realized that the complete development of individuals must involve the development of both the soul and the body. The placement of the phrase "development of the soul" mentioned before the body implies that the holistic development of individuals should begin with the development of the soul allowed by the development of the body. The interpretation, at least the anthem lyrics, indicates that to shape and build individuals, both the soul and the body must be nurtured and not neglected. The soul and the body are inseparable entities, as their roles have been evident worldwide, especially in the Indonesian archipelago.

From the Islamic teachings perspective, the spirit proclaimed by the Indonesian national anthem annually, especially in commemorate Indonesia's Independence Day, on August 17th, to build the soul and body can be seen in a well-known Hadith of the Prophet, which explains that the essence of a person's character is their soul therefore, the goodness or badness of a person is determined by the purity of

⁶ Nur Uhbiyati, *Science of Islamic Education* (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 1997). p. 41.

their soul/heart. Rasulullah SAW said in his hadith;

أَلَا وَإِنَّ فِي الْجَسَدِ مُضْعَةً إِذَا صَلَحَتْ صَلَحَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ وَإِذَا فَسَدَتْ فَسَدَ الْجَسَدُ كُلُّهُ أَلَا وَهِيَ الْقَلْبُ (رواه البخاري ومسلم)

“Truly in the body, there is a morsel of flesh, which, if it is whole, all the body is whole, and which, if it is diseased, all of [the body] is diseased. Truly, it is the heart.” (HR. Bukhari dan Muslim)

From the perspective of Islamic philosophy, the relationship between the soul and body has been discussed in various opinions, which can ultimately be concluded as follows: 1. The body and soul are not separated in their functions. 2. The soul is the agent behind an action attributed to the body.⁷ This concept affirms that the soul is the primary object of human Education.

To address the above issues, UINSU (Universitas Islam Negeri Sumatera Utara), as the State Islamic University, focuses on developing Islamic higher Education entrusted by parents with tens of thousands of students and requires a concept to address these problems. It aims to shape them as pious, honest, caring, and courteous students. One possible concept that can be offered is the concept of soul education (*tarbiyatun nafs*), a concept that Sufi *Thariqahs* and studies have embraced. One Sufi *Thariqah* that possesses this concept is the Naqshbandiyya Jabal Hindi *Thariqah*, a rapidly growing *Thariqah* in North Sumatra, particularly in Medan and Deli Serdang.⁸

This research examines, identifies, and compares the Soul Education concept at UIN Sumatera Utara and the Naqshbandiyya Jabal Hindi *Thariqah*.“ The Qualitative Method used to collect data with interview, observation and documentation.⁹ In addition, comparative analysis utilized for data analysis while descriptive method used for data displays including findings and discussion.¹⁰

⁷ A Sulthon, ‘Concept of Soul According to Al-Ghazali and Ibn Qayyim al-Jauzy (A Comparative Analysis)’ (Bandung, IAIN Sunan Gunung Djati, 2003). p. 24.

⁸ Uqbatul Khoir Rambe, ‘The Thariqah in Babur Rido Islamic Boarding School, Naqshbandi Jabal Hindi’ (Medan: UIN Sumatera Utara, 2020).

⁹ Lexy J Moleong, *Qualitative Research Methodology* (Bandung: PT. Remaja Rosdakarya, 2010). p. 36.

¹⁰ S Nasution, *Research Method (Scientific Research)* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2011). p. 27.

B. The Educational Concept of UINSU and the Naqshbandi Jabal Hindi Sufi Thariqah

Education is intended to foster its students toward virtuous actions filled with dignity. The objective is establishing the community's well-being in constructing a large and civilized society. Every educational institution certainly possesses a concept in teaching what Education is, how to comprehend it, and how to implement it in daily life. The primary objective of the Education provided is to cultivate individuals of noble character, originating from the depths of their inner being. The educational process becomes harmonized with the fundamental goal of fostering the genuine essence of the human soul; the present study aims to examine the educational framework devised by UINSU and the Naqshbandi Jabal Hindi Sufi Thariqah, elucidating their individual goals and objectives.

1) The Concept of UINSU Education

As stated by Mardiyanto, the Dean of the Faculty of Education, Education is a perpetual endeavor to impart values to students across generations through meticulous planning and a comprehensive curriculum. This endeavor is directed towards attaining the predetermined vision and mission of the Higher Education institution.¹¹ The educational process forms an interconnected continuum, where every undertaking within the academic realm is dedicated to fostering the comprehensive growth of individuals, encompassing both their intellectual and physical aspects. In his view, the educational approach UINSU embraces holistically cultivates individuals' intellectual and physical aspects holistically, emphasizing the inseparable unity of their mind and body.

Furthermore, Amroeni delineates that the educational goals at FUSI UINSU can be categorized into two distinct dimensions: academic objectives, which pertain to acquiring knowledge and skills, and philosophical objectives, which delve into

¹¹ Mardiyanto, Dean Faculty of Education and Training Sciences UINSU, 8 September 2022.

broader philosophical and ethical aspects of Education.¹² The academic objectives of FUSI UINSU reflect the carefully crafted goals established by the institution. The primary institutional aspiration is to foster the development of Muslim students with a profound comprehension of Islamic values, enabling them to emerge as accomplished scholars upon graduation. Achieving this aim necessitates active engagement with authoritative sources, critical theoretical analysis, and empirical data through educational activities, scientific research, and community service initiatives.¹³

Regarding the philosophical aims of Education at FUSI UINSU, as articulated by Amroeni, the objective is to develop students with an enlightened intellect known as *aqlun mustafad*. This concept pertains to cultivating a spiritual bond between individuals and the divine, empowering students to actualize their inherent capabilities in both vertical and horizontal dimensions. In terms of the vertical aspect, the desired outcome is for students to develop a profound sense of God-consciousness (*taqwa*) in their relationship with God. In the horizontal aspect, the educational approach at FUSI UINSU strives to nurture students who exhibit humility, vision, enthusiasm, and optimism.

2) The Educational Concept of the Naqshbandi Jabal Hindi Sufi *Thariqah*

The educational approach within the Naqshbandi Jabal Hindi Sufi *Thariqah* exhibits distinct characteristics compared to conventional academic institutions. As per the insights of Sheikh Syahbuddin, Education in traditional academic settings is classified as formal Education, whereas the educational practices employed within the Naqshbandi Jabal Hindi Sufi *Thariqah* fall under the purview of non-formal Education. He

¹² Amroeni Drajat, Dean of Faculty of Ushuluddin and Islamic Studies, 1 September 2022.

¹³ Mhd Syahman, *Academic Guidebook of the State Islamic University of North Sumatra* (Medan, 2020).

frequently expressed such words yet failed to offer a clear-cut definition of the notion of Education within his spiritual retreat.¹⁴

Without a definitive explanation from him, the researcher proactively explored the perspectives of education experts to elucidate the concept of Education. This was subsequently integrated with the comprehension of Education within the Naqshbandi Jabal Hindi *Thariqah*. Furthermore, as stated by Ki Hajar Dewantara, the Father of National Education, Education entails the guidance of human nature, enabling individuals to attain the utmost well-being and happiness. Conversely, H. Horne asserts that Education is an eternal and ongoing process aimed at elevating human beings to a level of consciousness regarding their spiritual connections.¹⁵

Drawing from the discussion above, it can be deduced that the concept of Education within the Naqshbandi Jabal Hindi Sufi *Thariqah* revolves around the endeavor to evoke human aspirations and consciousness. In response to inquiries concerning the educational objectives within the Naqshbandi Jabal Hindi Sufi *Thariqah*, Sheikh Syahbuddin offered a dual response:

a. To awaken the spirit of human life

Education is expected to cultivate in individuals a sense of optimism, passion, diligence, enterprise, and a profound appreciation for time.¹⁶ According to his perspective, those lacking wisdom are prone to despair, leading to a life characterized by laziness, lack of enthusiasm, and a disregard for the value of time. As per his viewpoint, exemplary Education is characterized by its ability to imbue individuals with an enduring passion for continual improvement, empowering them to wholeheartedly

¹⁴ Syaikh Syahbuddin, the leader of Naqshbandi Jabal Hindi Sufi Thariqah at Paya, Deli Serdang, 2 August 2022.

¹⁵ Ki Hajar Dewantara, *Education* (Yogyakarta: Majelis Luhur Persatuan Taman Siswa, 1962). p. 58.

¹⁶ Ibn Atha'illah Al-Iskandari, *Al-Hikam*, 3rd ed. (Jakarta: Turos Pustaka, 2012).

embrace and envision their future with resolute optimism and unwavering conviction. This phenomenon extends beyond the realms of worldly matters and encompasses the realm of the afterlife as well. An individual who has received comprehensive religious Education will refrain from wasting any moment of their time without engaging in acts of worship that hold significance in the eyes of Allah.¹⁷

b. To attain knowledge and understanding of God.

According to Sheikh Syahbuddin's elucidation, the foremost aim of soul education (*tarbiyatun nafs*) within the Naqshbandi Jabal Hindi Sufi *Thariqah*, under his guidance, is to acquire knowledge of Allah. He posits that the divine mission bestowed by Allah upon the Earth is fundamentally rooted in disseminating awareness regarding the true divinity to humanity. Guidance and direction, in their entirety, rely on Allah, while the prophetic mission solely entails the transmission of the message. In connection with this, Surah Yasin:17 clarifies the subject matter, as it highlights the divine perspective on the interplay between guidance, the prophetic mission, and Allah's ultimate authority.

وَمَا عَلَيْنَا إِلَّا الْبَلْغُ الْمُبِينُ

"And nothing devolves on us but a clear deliverance (of the message)." QS. Yasin (36):17

Per his perspective, the fundamental purpose of conveying the message is to acquaint humanity with Allah by conveying divine words. Essentially, he posits that the core concept encapsulated within the mentioned verses of Allah's words is the pursuit of knowing Allah, notwithstanding the observable variations in their meanings and intentions. Moreover, he expounded that once individuals have attained knowledge of God, their moral conduct will exhibit

¹⁷ Syahbuddin, the leader of Naqshbandi Jabal Hindi Sufi *Thariqah* at Paya, Deli Serdang.

goodness in all aspects, encompassing their relationship with God, fellow human beings, and other realms. Individuals who do not encounter obstacles in the abovementioned domains are believed to manifest happiness, serenity, and tranquility in their demeanor. This is due to the absence of life problems that impede their well-being. Consequently, a person devoid of problems is deemed to be in a state of happiness.¹⁸

C. The concept of the Soul (*Nafs*), according to UINSU and the Naqshbandi Jabal Hindi Thariqah

1) The Concept of Soul (*Nafs*) in UINSU's Perspective.

The conceptualization of the soul (*nafs*), defined by the Dean of the Faculty of Education and Teaching Sciences at UINSU, denotes an internal entity inherent in human beings that motivates their actions and behaviors. It is important to note that this impetus is not fixed or absolute but rather subject to the influence of numerous factors that encompass the individual's physical being. External elements, including the environment, Education, circumstances, and situations, influence the soul substantially, shaping its expressions and conduct.¹⁹

This comprehension has given rise to an educational framework encompassing all aspects of the campus community, including administrators, faculty members, staff, and other support personnel, all organized in a manner that fosters kindness, exemplifies positive role models and cultivates idealistic aspirations. Such a framework catalyzes and instigates individual students, stimulating their personal growth and development. At UINSU, every endeavor is directed toward advancing students' spiritual well-being.

Amroeni asserts that the soul represents the intrinsic core of human existence, separate from the physical form, and possesses an autonomous essence. Regarding comprehending

¹⁸ Syahbuddin.

¹⁹ Mardiyanto, Dean Faculty of Education and Training Sciences UINSU.

the nature of the soul, Amroeni shares a closer affinity with the philosophical perspectives espoused by Ibn Sina. Hence, the soul is considered the fundamental essence or substance, while the physical body is considered an incidental or observable aspect. From his perspective, the human soul is not constrained by the physical body and does not rely on it. Conversely, the physical body is heavily reliant on the soul (the presence of the soul primarily determines its value) within it. When the soul departs from the body, the body undergoes a transformative change, assuming a new state known as *mayyit* (corpse/lifeless body without a soul).²⁰ However, the soul has its inherent value and significance even in separation from the body. Therefore, the soul's essence serves as the driving force behind all human actions and is the source of life.²¹

All endeavors undertaken at UINSU, while they may appear to be primarily physical in nature, are inherently intertwined with mental Education. According to his viewpoint, every activity at UINSU is ultimately directed towards fostering the well-being of the body and the soul, the broader academic community of UIN North Sumatra. Thus, irrespective of the objective nature of these activities, their underlying orientation remains focused on holistic Education encompassing individuals' physical and mental aspects.²²

2) The Concept of the Soul (*Nafs*) in the Naqshbandi Jabal Hindi *Thariqah* Perspective

According to the elucidation provided by Mr. Shaykh Syahbuddin, the soul is identified as the focal point of human consciousness, distinct from the spirit. It serves as the locus of all emotions (*dzauq*) experienced within an individual. Despite their distinction, the soul and spirit are inextricably

²⁰ Abdul Kadir Riyadi, *Archaeology of Sufism* (Bandung: Mizan Pustaka, 2016). p. 78.

²¹ Drajat, Dean of Faculty of Ushuluddin and Islamic Studies.

²² Mardiyanto, Dean Faculty of Education and Training Sciences UINSU.

intertwined.²³ He presented various illustrations, including sleep-related examples, To further strengthen and elucidate his statement regarding the soul as the center of human consciousness. In sleep, the human soul and the body render the individual unconscious while others may be present and active nearby. This can be likened to a person fainting, where their consciousness (soul/nafs) temporarily departs, resulting in an inability to respond to external stimuli or events.²⁴

Secondly, the human soul can be understood as the faculty of will or volition. The absence of one's soul can exemplify this, consequently leading to the absence of both desire and willpower.²⁵ This phenomenon is observable in individuals who suffer from mental disorders or insanity.²⁶ Thirdly, the soul represents the essence of human life, serving as the vital force that sustains one's existence. From his perspective, this interpretation holds ontological significance. The mere presence or absence of human life, both in its substantial and essential aspects, delineates the classification of an individual as either a living human being or a lifeless entity. The enduring presence of the human soul, despite the existence of debilitating illness or a physically weakened state, preserves one's status as a human being. Conversely, even if a person exudes vitality and exhibits physical preservation, their soul's departure makes them devoid of human life and transforms them into lifeless body.²⁷

According to his viewpoint, in the prevailing terminology used in Indonesia, it is customary for people to express that "the person's soul has departed, their soul is lost, or their soul is no longer present" when someone passes away. Despite

²³ Rambe, 'The Thariqah in Babur Rido Islamic Boarding School, Naqshbandi Jabal Hindi'.

²⁴ Rambe.

²⁵ Ibn Al-Qayyim Al-Jauziyyah, *Soul*, 7th ed. (Jakarta: Pustaka Al-Kautsar, 2000). p. 88.

²⁶ A Faj and Moh Ismail, 'Mental Education of Student Candidate's Guardian During Pandemic Covid-19 (Gontor Submission Exam Case Studies)', *At-Ta'dib* 16, no. 2 (n.d.): 156–69, <https://doi.org/10.21111/at-tadib.v16i2.6529>.

²⁷ Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani, *The Book of Secret of Secrets* (Jakarta: PT Rene Turos Indonesia, 2019). p. 58.

three interpretations associated with the concept of soul/*nafs*, Mr. Sheikh Syahbuddin asserts that the soul's true essence is intrinsically linked to human life. The provided illustration by him pertains to the papaya fruit. In various languages, the papaya is known by specific terms such as *kates* and *gandul* (in the Javanese language). Despite three different designations, the speaker posits that they all convey a shared significance. Likewise, this analogy extends to the concept of the human soul.

Despite the various descriptions of the soul, human consciousness, willpower, and life force, these aspects are fundamentally interconnected, representing the essential nature of humanity that influences matters of life and death. The variations in terminology merely reflect the diverse linguistic expressions and conceptualizations individuals employ to designate and comprehend these aspects.²⁸ Drawing from the preceding explanation and its pertinence to the current study, the concept of the soul resonates with the research title about the volition and consciousness of human beings. The researcher asserts that this assertion carries a higher degree of realism, given that the aspect susceptible to modification or permanence within individuals is their will (*iradah*) and consciousness.

The researcher deduces that the faculties being cultivated within individuals are their willpower (*iradah*) and consciousness, harmonizing with their intended goals and educational aspirations. Within the Naqshbandi *Thariqah* of Jabal Hindi, the conception of the soul and the educational objectives of the *Thariqah* can be interpreted as follows: the Education and nurturing of the soul education (*tarbiyatun nafs*) denote human endeavors to awaken or ignite human consciousness and desires, aiming to fortify faith and fulfill the material needs of individuals.

²⁸ Rambe, 'The Thariqah in Babur Rido Islamic Boarding School, Naqshbandi Jabal Hindi'.

D. Education of the Soul (*Tarbiyatun Nafs*) at UINSU and the Naqshbandiyya Jabal Hindi.

According to Amroeni, the steps taken for the Education of the soul (*tarbiyatun nafs*), particularly at FUSI UINSU. *Firstly*, make it mandatory for students to memorize at least one juz (section) of the Quran. This rule applies to departments other than Quranic Studies and Tafsir (IAT) and Hadith (IH). For the Hadith department, the requirement is to memorize two juz, while for the Quranic Studies and Tafsir department, the requirement is to memorize five juz. Through memorizing the Quran, students are expected to become closer to the essence of the Quran, leading individuals towards a tender heart, sensitivity towards divine guidance, and a profound understanding of divine signs. The Quran will also guide individuals with subtle and gentle instructions (*hudan*) from Allah, enabling students to grasp the divine signals that will guide them in their spiritual life. The inner spiritual life of humans is the starting point for individuals to fully know and dedicate themselves to their Lord.

With the proximity of the students to the Quran, they will be led to a realm filled with divine guidance. Each guidance will speak and illuminate their hearts and minds so that whatever challenges the students face, everything becomes clear (*furqan*). When humans reach such a realm, they are actually in a bright and radiant realm of light, and their entire lives are filled with the light of Allah (the realm of enlightened intellect).²⁹

His explanation above is a philosophical elaboration of the Word of Allah in Surah Al-Baqarah (185), which states:

شَهْرُ رَمَضَانَ الَّذِي أُنزِلَ فِيهِ الْقُرْآنُ هُدًى لِّلنَّاسِ وَبَيِّنَاتٍ مِّنَ الْهُدَىٰ وَالْقُرْآنِ ؕ

“Ramadhan is the (month) in which was sent down the Qur’an, as a guide to mankind, also clear (Signs) for guidance and judgment (Between right and wrong).”

²⁹ Drajat, Dean of Faculty of Ushuluddin and Islamic Studies.

Second, the implementation of soul education (*tarbiyatun nafs*) at UINSU, according to Amroeni, is carried out through teaching and instructional materials explaining righteous individuals' exemplary conduct and their journey in seeking closeness to Allah. Such materials are taught in the curriculum of Sufism, which is part of the academic subjects. Through these materials, students are expected to learn about the path of righteous individuals close to Allah and derive lessons and examples from them. These materials teach students about etiquette, manners, and actions that align with religious, cultural, and customary norms³⁰. They also contain teachings on various values following religious demands, such as sincerity, honesty, virtues, and the attitudes that an intellectually enlightened Muslim should uphold.

In the Faculty of Ushuluddin and Islamic Studies and other faculties at UINSU, the subject of *Wahdatul Ulum* is also taught. Through the material mentioned above, students are expected to avoid the dichotomy of knowledge, whether horizontal or vertical. Hopefully, students will be protected from the horizontal dichotomy that produces knowledgeable individuals who do not grow closer to their Lord. Regarding the vertical dichotomy, students are expected to be protected from becoming intellectually advanced but lacking in manners and morality. According to him, these behaviors are expected to build a complete and intellectually strong personality in students, firmly grounded in their faith as the generation of *Ulul Albab*. The generation of *Ulul Albab* referred to by him is a generation described in the Quran in Surah Al-Imran (Chapter 3: 191).

الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمَاوَاتِ
وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا سُبْحَانَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ

Men who celebrate the praises of Allah, standing, sitting, and lying down on their sides, and contemplate the (wonders of) creation in the heavens and the earth, (With the thought): "Our Lord! Not for naught Hast Thou created (all) this! Glory to Thee! Give us salvation from the penalty of the Fire.

³⁰ Zakiyah Darajat, *Science of Islamic Education* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2000).

Thirdly, according to Amroeni, the faculty or university should provide lecturers who have good capacity and capabilities and can serve as role models for students in their attitudes and actions in their daily lives within the campus environment. According to him, the attitudes displayed by lecturers, staff, and the entire academic community on campus greatly influence the mental development of students. Suppose the attitudes demonstrated by lecturers are humble, gentle, attentive, and focused on student development. In that case, a generation will emerge from the Faculty of Ushuluddin and Islamic Studies, particularly, and UINSU in general, consisting of well-mannered, knowledgeable, and devout students who adhere strongly to their religious teachings.³¹

For UIN Sumatera Utara, soul education (*tarbiyatun nafs*) is extremely important. The importance of soul education at UINSU is immortalized in its anthem, with a verse that states:

Together with UINSU, awaken the spirit and body

Together, honor Sumatera Utara

Together with UINSU, elevate Indonesia

Together, awaken the civilization of the world

The UINSU mentioned above the anthem implies that UINSU will bring honor to Sumatera Utara, elevate Indonesia, and build world civilization through the parallel development of the soul and body. This signifies that the educational concept advocated and embraced by UINSU aims not only to develop the physical aspects of individuals but also to nurture the soul simultaneously. The soul development fostered under the UINSU terminology, which the researcher suggests, may align with the concept of Soul Education.

³¹ Drajat, Dean of Faculty of Ushuluddin and Islamic Studies.

E. **Implementation of Soul Education (*Tarbiyatun Nafs*) in the Naqshbandiyya Jabal Hindi Sufi *Thariqah***

The steps in implementing Soul Education (*Tarbiyatun Nafs*) in the Naqshbandiyya Jabal Hindi Sufi *Thariqah*, under the leadership of Sheikh Syahbuddin, are as follows:

1) Faith

An interesting a discussed by the leader of the Naqshbandiyya Jabal Hindi Sufi *Thariqah* regarding educating the human soul according to him, the various routines and teachings within the *Thariqah*, such as prayer, spiritual focus (*tawajjuh*), spiritual journey (*suluk*), and other practices in the spiritual retreat, are not intended to educate the human soul become virtuous directly. Instead, these rituals and practices serve as a means for seeking forgiveness (*takhalli and tahalli*) and attaining blessings from the previous spiritual guides who have attained closeness to Allah SWT. He further explains that when an individual receives forgiveness from Allah, their heart becomes purified. Through the purification of the heart (*tazkiyatul qalb*), a person receives the mercy and love of Allah SWT in the form of inner enlightenment and guidance, enabling them to navigate life's challenges. Moreover, according to him, a person who attains forgiveness from Allah SWT will experience complete inner peace.

According to him, to implement faith in everyday life, there are three things that humans must do. These three things are:

a) Tadabbur

Sheikh Syahbuddin explains that tadabbur refers to reading many stories, especially the stories of the prophets, about how they faced trials from Allah and how they dealt with diseases, enemies, punishments, hostilities, challenges, and obstacles. No matter how difficult the trials from Allah were, the prophets of Allah remained steadfast in their faith. According to him, reading the life stories of the prophets of Allah and the righteous people will foster

a sense of faith in humans, and they will understand that the trials they receive in this world are incomparable to what the beloved of Allah, the prophets and the righteous people, experienced. They teach many examples of patience, perseverance, humility, wisdom, obedience, and other praiseworthy actions.

b) Tafakkur

According to him, tafakkur is also a very effective means to increase a person's faith. He exemplifies it by contemplating Allah's creations, almighty power, goodness, and perfection. According to him, through the above method, humans will realize their true selves and insignificance in Allah's sight. Everything in human beings is solely a gift from Allah, and they feel they depend on Allah, just like clothes hanging on a clothesline. That realization also leads humans to a firm conviction that the meaning of "*La Haula Wala Quwata Illa Billah*" (There is no power or strength except with Allah) is true.

The illustration he provides is about someone who is sick. When a person is sick, everything around them feels unpleasant. When sickness comes, the once strong body suddenly feels weak, powerless, and lacks the will to live. According to him, if humans reflect on the phenomenon within themselves when they experience illness, they will realize that everything they have taken for granted and not appreciated during their healthy days is a blessing. If the sickness is pondered upon and contemplated carefully, eventually, the person will realize that illness is also a good thing for them. According to him, a person who has reached this level of consciousness has a high faith in their Lord.³²

At the Naqshbandiyya Jabal Hindi Islamic Collage, the students are strongly encouraged to contemplate all of Allah's creations, particularly the spiritual aspects that

³² Syahbuddin, the leader of Naqshbandi Jabal Hindi Sufi Thariqah at Paya, Deli Serdang.

occur within themselves. One of the verses recited by Sheikh Syahbuddin to clarify his argument is the saying of Allah in Surah Al-Baqarah (2:216), which states:

وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَّكُمْ ۖ وَعَسَىٰ أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَّكُمْ
 ۗ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

It may well be that you dislike a thing even though it is good for you, and it may well be that you like a thing even though it is bad for you. Allah knows, and you do not know.

c) Tazakkur

According to Sheikh Syahbuddin, a method to strengthen faith is through *tazakkur*, which involves frequent self-reflection regarding death, mistakes, sins committed, past experiences of wrongdoing, ignorance, and negligence. By practicing *tazakkur* extensively, individuals will be reminded of Allah's promises, the existence of Hell, His punishment, and various misfortunes that may befall them.³³ All these occur due to their failure to adhere to the rules set by Allah. Through *tazakkur*, individuals will take account of themselves, evaluate their actions, and reflect on their circumstances.³⁴ Therefore, *tazakkur* must be thoroughly practiced for individuals to derive value (*natijah*) from their reflections. Genuine fear will create a sense of piety in individuals towards their Lord.³⁵

Some followers of the Naqshbandiyya Jabal Hindi Sufi *Thariqah* at the Babur Ridha Islamic Boarding School on Jln. Young Panah Hijau, Marelan, and Medan, including Sulaiman, state that to strengthen faith, individuals must engage in *uzlah*. *Uzlah* refers to seclusion and solitude, distancing oneself from social interactions and focusing

³³ Imam Al-Ghazali, *The Garden of the Soul of Sufis*, 4th ed. (Surabaya: Risalah Gusti, 2000).

³⁴ Ahmad Mubarrok, *Attaining Happiness with Sufism*, 3rd ed. (Jakarta: Dian Rakyat, 2010).

p. 79.

³⁵ Abdul Qadir Isa, *The Essence of Sufism*, 15th ed. (Jakarta: Qisthi Press, 2017). p. 43.

solely on Allah.³⁶ According to them, their previous teachers, such as Sheikh Muhammad Said bin Samsuddin, practiced this form of seclusion. They believe that the impact of *uzlah* will give birth to a new individual filled with divine energy, referred to as faith. This statement is further supplemented by Khalifah Ismail, who serves as a supervisor there, stating that *uzlah* is challenging to practice, and thus, it can be substituted by engaging in *dhikr* for three hours during one-third of the night. This statement is accepted by Khalifah Jasadi, who adds that faith implementation must be accompanied by patience in waiting for the pleasure of Allah SWT.

2) Body/Physicality

The second medium for soul education (*Tarbiyatun Nafs*) is the human body or physicality. The body's needs must be fulfilled to educate the human soul to be good and righteous.³⁷ Among the primary physical needs of humans is material or economic well-being. In addition to that, the physical needs that must be met include the need for a partner, respect, and affection, and the avoidance of danger, threats, and natural disasters. For a normal individual, for instance, not having a life partner (being unmarried) can result in restlessness.³⁸ When a person is caught in the waves of restlessness, it becomes challenging to educate their soul.³⁹ According to Sheikh Syahbuddin's perspective, humans should strive for a balance between their spiritual needs (faith) and the well-being of their physical bodies (happiness). The foundation of his argument is based on a verse from the Quran in Surah Al-Qasas (28:77), which states:

³⁶ Sudirman Tebba, *Positive Sufism* (Jakarta: Prenada Media, 2003). p. 52.

³⁷ Ibrahim Amini, *Treatise on Sufism* (Jakarta: Islamic Center Jakarta, 2002). p. 68.

³⁸ Ibn Al-Qayyim Al-Jauziyyah, *The Garden of Lovers* (Jakarta: Khatulistiwa Press, 2009). p. 84.

³⁹ Muhammad Mansur, *Tarbiyatun Nafs: Educating the Soul in the Manner of the Prophet*, 1st ed. (Jakarta: Senayan Abadi Publishing, 2004). p. 73.

وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ نَصِيبَكَ مِنَ الدُّنْيَا وَأَحْسِنَ كَمَا أَحْسَنَ
 اللَّهُ إِلَيْكَ وَلَا تَبْغِ الْفُسَادَ فِي الْأَرْضِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

Rather, seek the 'reward' of the Hereafter by means of what Allah has granted you, without forgetting your share of this world. And be good to others as Allah has been good to you. Do not seek to spread corruption in the land, for Allah certainly does not like the corruptors."

According to Sheik Syahbuddin's explanation, the Quran's aforementioned verse does not indicate that afterlife matters are more important than worldly affairs. The importance of both worldly and spiritual aspects is equal. He emphasizes that no act of worship can be performed without fulfilling the physical needs of human beings. This can be illustrated with the example of prayer, which requires clothing, a prayer mat, head covering, fragrance, and a suitable place to face Allah. Without these essentials, the worship of God cannot be fulfilled.⁴⁰ Therefore, according to him, the needs of faith and the physical body are equally important, and their significance is equivalent. He strongly criticizes those who trivialize worldly matters (human physical affairs) and those who criticize such matters. In his view, the physical needs of human beings are crucial in nurturing one's soul value of material possessions holds a high position in human life to the extent that the material goods given in charity for the needs of others are considered equivalent to what individual gains through worship. He explains that humans have distinct types, groups, and lifestyles. Those who possess wealth, they should serve Allah through their wealth. The same applies to other specific advantages and virtues. For someone who only possesses physical strength, they should contribute their energy to their devotion to God. In his implementation, he disagrees with those who belittle the world. On the contrary, he strongly encourages his disciples to spread across the earth for God's pleasure.

⁴⁰ Abdurrahman Saleh Abdullah, *Theories of Education Based on the Qur'an* (Jakarta: PT Rineka Cipta, 2017). p. 65.

CONCLUSION

Soul Education must be prioritized and embedded in every other field of knowledge. Without a soul deeply ingrained in understanding it through Education, everything learned will be in vain. The response from UINSU (State Islamic University of North Sumatra) and the Naqshbandiyya Jabal Hindi *Thariqah* regarding Soul Education is that the driving force in human life must be pursued to not lose direction in navigating the world of creative living. According to Tuan Guru Syahbuddin, the soul is the center of consciousness, desire, and life's main and true essence in directing human activities. Therefore, it must be cleansed through seeking forgiveness from Allah SWT, taking steps to love Him, and being influenced to care for one's body so it is always prosperous. The soul is humble when the body's systematic living system aligns with the soul.

The language of UINSU, as conveyed by the Dean of FUSI, Amroeni, states that the soul cannot be separated from the body and is the determinant of the body's existence in the eyes of humans. Therefore, students and other academicians (added by the Dean of FTK UINSU) are well-organized in building usefulness in life and bringing glory to UINSU for its prosperity and contributing to the world's civilization. Therefore, Soul Education is an obligation to be implemented in Education so that diverse fields of knowledge will not be learned in vain. It can uplift students and their educational environment to possess noble character, civilized manners, gentle and humble etiquette, and the ability to contribute to the world with a noble civilization.

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