

## MORAL EDUCATION IN THE BOOK TA'LIMUL MUTA'ALLIM THARIQ AL-TA'ALLUM BY SHEIKH BURHANUDDIN AZ-ZARNUJI

Nurhaizan Sembiring<sup>1\*</sup>, Rabiatul Adawiyah<sup>2</sup>, Nurdiani<sup>3</sup>, Siti Marisa<sup>4</sup>

<sup>\*1</sup>Universitas Islam North Sumatera

<sup>\*1</sup>email: [nurhaizan@fai.uisu.ac.id](mailto:nurhaizan@fai.uisu.ac.id)

---

**Abstract:** This research examines the moral education in the book Ta'limul Muta'allim Thariq Al-Ta'allum by Shaykh Burhanuddin Az-Zarnuji. The focus of the discussion in this research is how moral education is in the book Ta'limul Muta'allim Thariq Al-Ta'allum by Syaikh Burhanuddin Az-Zarnuji. Moral education is the most important thing in education because with moral students it will give birth to a religious person, close to God, and so on. This study uses a type of library research by looking at the text contained in the book written by Syaikh Burhanuddin Az-Zarnuji. The research object is explored in the book 'Ta'limul Muta'allim Thariq Al-Ta'allum' using a content analysis approach. The results of this study indicate that the moral education contained in the book Ta'limul Muta'allim Thariq Al-Ta'allum by Shaykh Burhanuddin Az-Zarnuji has six criteria, namely 1) Intention in learning. 2) Choosing knowledge, teachers and friends. 3) Glorify knowledge and experts. 4) Seriousness in Seeking Knowledge, Beristiqamah, and noble ideals. 5) Tawakkal. 6) Wara'.

**Keywords :** Education, Morals, Shaykh Burhanuddin Az-Zarnuji

---

### INTRODUCTION

Education is a process of developing fundamental abilities that involve both intellectual and emotional capacities of an individual. Viewed as an integral part of the process of organizing and directing individuals to become better, education becomes the sole guarantee for humans to lead a moral life. However, in its journey, education continues to experience changes and developments with the works and potential possessed by each generational level.<sup>1</sup>

According to Marimba, in the book written by Ahmad Tafsir titled "Ilmu Pendidikan Islam," education is defined as conscious guidance or leadership by educators towards the physical and spiritual development of students, aiming to form a noble personality.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> M. Zamhari dan Ulfa Masamah, Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam, (2016), *Relevansi Metode Pembentukan Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Kitab Ta'lim Muta'allim Terhadap Pendidikan Modern*, Vol 11, No 2.

<sup>2</sup>Ahmad Tafsir, (2012), *Ilmu Pendidikan Islam*, Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, hal. 24.

Based on the explanation above, education is an act of transferring knowledge, experience, and values that lead to the formation of intellectual and emotional capacities.

Morals are qualities inherent in humans that reside within one's soul and serve as the source of certain actions, thus creating a balance of forces within the human soul that drive one to have personality, habits, natural traits, and good behavior.

Many Islamic education experts have discussed moral education, including Sheikh Burhanuddin Az-Zarnuji in his book titled *Ta'limul Muta'allim Thariq al-Ta'allum*. This book highlights the importance of character education in the present time to achieve the goal of education, which is to form positive character in the behavior of students.

*Ta'limul Muta'allim* discusses moral education that can be instilled in students to ensure they exhibit good behavior in their daily lives.

From the explanation above, the writer attempts to explain how moral education is perceived by Sheikh Burhanuddin Az-Zarnuji in his book *Ta'limul Muta'allim Thariq al-Ta'allum*.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Terminologically, Ibn Miskawayh, as cited by Rahmat Hidayat et al., explains that morals are qualities ingrained in the soul that motivate actions without the need for thought and consideration.<sup>3</sup>

In terminology, morals are defined as a state attached to the human soul, from which actions arise easily without going through a process of evaluation, consideration, or investigation. If this state gives rise to good and commendable actions, it is called good morals.<sup>4</sup>

According to Imam al-Ghazali in his book titled *Ihya' Ulumiddin*, morals are defined as follows:

فالخلق عبارة عن هيئة في النفس راسخة، عنها تصدر الأفعال بسهولة ويسر من غير حاجة إلى فكر وروية، فإن كانت الهيئة بحيث تصدر عنها الأفعال الجميلة المحمودة عقلا وشرعا سميت تلك الهيئة خلقا حسنا، وإن كان الصادر عنها الأفعال القبيحة سميت الهيئة التي هي المصدر خلقا سيئا.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Miswar, dkk (2015) *Akhlaq Tasawuf*, cet 1, Medan: Perdana Publishing, h. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Abdul Khaliq, dkk (1999), *Pemikiran Pendidikan Islam*, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, h. 87

<sup>5</sup> Al-Ghazali, (2008), *Ihya' Ulumiddin*, Juz 3, Beirut: Darul Fikr, h. 57.

The meaning is: Morals are the stable habits of the soul within humans that easily and without the need for thought give rise to actions and behaviors. If these behaviors are beautiful and commendable, they are called good morals; if they are vile, they are called bad morals.

Thus, morals are qualities inherent in humans, residing within one's soul and serving as the source of certain actions, creating a balance of forces within the human soul to drive one towards possessing universal values such as personality, habits, natural traits, and good behavior.

Morals or character in Islam are the primary targets in education. This can be seen from several hadiths of the Prophet that explain the importance of moral education, one of which is the following hadith: "Teach your children goodness and educate them." The concept of education in Islam views that humans are born with inherent potentials, namely: 1) The potential to do good to the environment, 2) The potential to cause harm to the environment, 3) The potential for divinity which has non-physical functions. The development of these three potentials is then handed back to humans. This leads to the emergence of a comprehensive approach in Islamic education, which includes elements of knowledge, morals, and faith.<sup>6</sup>

Morals have always been the primary target of the educational process in Islam because morals are considered the foundation for the balance of human life, determining the success of other pedagogical potentials. Therefore, Islam prioritizes the educational process as an agent for forming morals in children. Islam consistently positions the formation of morals or character in children as a main pillar of educational goals.

The moral education found in the book *Ta'limul Muta'allim* includes the following:

1) Intention in studying

Intention is the most important aspect within a person to act as a good human being. In Islam, intention is a crucial part that one must possess, and it is also counted as a reward by Allah SWT. As we have heard in the saying of the Prophet Muhammad SAW: "Actions are judged by their intentions." The intention that is considered worthy of reward is the one spoken in the heart, not merely uttered by the tongue.

Sheikh Az-Zarnuji, in his book, states that when seeking knowledge, one should begin with the intention of seeking the pleasure of Allah SWT alone, not to show off one's

---

<sup>6</sup> Nur Ainiyah, (2013), *Pembentukan Karakter Melalui Pendidikan Agama Islam*, Jurnal Studi-Studi Islam, Vol 13 nomor 1 Juni, h. 32.

intelligence, let alone to display arrogance towards others. Furthermore, in studying, one should intend to strengthen Islam, uphold the rules or laws of Sharia, and seek happiness in the hereafter. It is hoped that with a good intention in learning, it will foster sincerity and not be oriented towards anything else.

## 2) Choosing Knowledge, Teachers, and Friends

When seeking knowledge, one should choose knowledge that is truly beneficial and aligns with one's own desires and abilities, not the desires of others. Similarly, when choosing a teacher, one should select a teacher who is humble, compassionate, pious, and older than oneself, as age often correlates with humility in a teacher. One should also choose friends who are diligent, cooperative, and avoid friends who are lazy, troublesome, talkative, and idle. In this context, the author interprets this point as the learning environment, as it greatly influences the learner.

Thus, students or individuals will develop good morals, becoming friendly, humble, not arrogant, peaceful, fostering a spirit of camaraderie, and so on.

## 3) Honoring Knowledge and Scholars

Knowledge is an essential understanding that must be acquired through good means. Possessing knowledge simplifies all affairs because it facilitates the attainment of various things. Knowledge also distinguishes between darkness and bright light. Knowledge can be obtained by learning from experts in a particular field of study.

In Islamic teachings, it is obligatory to honor knowledge and the scholars who possess it.

Sayyidina Ali bin Abi Talib once said, "I am willing to be a slave for the sake of knowledge."

From this statement, we can conclude that seeking knowledge requires honoring the knowledge itself and respecting those who impart it.

## RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, the author employs a type of research known as library research, which involves a series of methods related to the collection of library data or research materials. This study is an examination of the texts contained in the book written by Sheikh Burhanuddin Az-Zarnuji. The research object is explored within the book *Ta'limul Muta'allim Thariq Al-Ta'allum* using a content analysis approach.

## DISCUSSION

### A. Biography of Sheikh Burhanuddin Az-Zarnuji

Sheikh Az-Zarnuji is believed to be the sole author of the book *Ta'limul Muta'allim Thariq Al-Ta'allum*, yet his name is not widely recognized from what he has written. There are discrepancies in several studies regarding the full name (title) of Sheikh Az-Zarnuji.

The full name of Imam Zarnuji is Burhanuddin Ibrahim al-Zarnuji al-Hanafi. The term "al-Zarnuji" itself is derived from a place named Zarnuj (with "u") or Zarnuji (with "a"), a well-known city near the Oxus River, Turkey (Konseptual, 2017). This is also stated by Dr. Muhammad Abdul Qadir Ahmad. There is no definite information regarding his birthplace. However, based on his nisbah, which is Az-Zarnuji, researchers suggest that he originated from Zaradj. In this regard, Abdul Qadir Ahmad mentions that Az-Zarnuji came from an area now known as Afghanistan.<sup>7</sup>

he term "*al-Hanafi*" refers to the school of thought followed by Imam Zarnuji, which is the Hanafi school. The two titles commonly associated with Imam Zarnuji are "Burhanuddin," meaning "*proof of the truth of religion*," and "*Burhanul Islam*," meaning "proof of the truth of Islam."<sup>8</sup>

While there is not much data informing about the exact time and place of Imam Zarnuji's birth, it is believed that he lived during the same period as another Zarnuji. Like our Az-Zarnuji, another Zarnuji named Tajuddin Nu'man bin Ibrahim Az-Zarnuji was also a great scholar and author who passed away in 640 H/1242 AD. Sheikh Az-Zarnuji, the author of the book *Ta'limul Muta'allim Thariq Al-Ta'allum*, is believed to have died around 592 H.<sup>9</sup>

Another opinion suggests that he passed away in 591 H/1195 AD, while yet another opinion states that Az-Zarnuji died in 840 H/1243 AD. At that time, although the political state of the Islamic Caliphate was in decline, knowledge and scholarship were advancing, as described by Ahmad Amin. He noted that if politics were considered weak, the period (467-656/1075-1261) was certainly not weak in terms of knowledge and scholarship.<sup>10</sup>

During that period, the Islamic Caliphate held a higher status in knowledge and scholarship compared to the previous century. Even if political power began to wane, the light of knowledge shone even brighter. This implies that Az-Zarnuji lived during a time when knowledge flourished up until the fourteenth century. It is important to note that

---

<sup>7</sup> Jurnal Ilmiah Keislaman Al-Fikra, (2008), *Metode Belajar Dalam Kitab Ta'lim Muta'alim Thariqat At-Ta'alum (Telaah Pemikiran Tarbiyah Az-Zarnuji)*, Vol.7, No.2, hal. 312

<sup>8</sup> Jurnal Riset dan Konseptual,hal.410

<sup>9</sup>Jurnal Cendekia, (2015), *Pendidikan Dalam Perspektif Islam Burhanuddin Al-Islam Az-Zarnuji*,Vol 13, No 1, hal. 70

<sup>10</sup> Jurnal Ilmiah Keislaman Al-Fikra, hal. 313

knowledge at that time was not yet considered a separate branch of science but was categorized under the field of civilization.<sup>11</sup>

## **B. Moral Education According to Sheikh Burhanuddin Az-Zarnuji**

*Akhlaq* (morals) is derived from the Arabic word *khuluqun*, which, according to the language, means character, behavior, and nature. In the Dictionary of Fiqh Terms, the word *akhlaq* is defined as a mental attitude or disposition, expressed in the form of thinking, speaking, behaving, and so on, as an expression of the soul.<sup>12</sup>

According to Sheikh Burhanuddin al-Zarnuji, the principles of character education (*akhlaq*) in Islam are identical to the education of ethics or *adab* (manners), both outward and inward. This can be understood as an educational goal that leads to the formation of morals. Thus, it can be concluded that the formation of morals or ethics is synonymous with character formation.<sup>13</sup>

In the book *Ta'limul Muta'allim*, Sheikh Az-Zarnuji opines that education emphasizes aspects of *akhlaq*, both outward and inward. Therefore, education is not merely a process of transferring knowledge but, more importantly, a process of forming the morals of students and changing their behavior from bad to better.

Sheikh Az-Zarnuji offers moral education that can be instilled in students to develop *akhlaqul karimah* (noble character). According to Sheikh Az-Zarnuji, the ways to instill good moral education include: intention when studying, choosing beneficial knowledge, selecting the right teacher and friends, honoring knowledge and scholars, being diligent and steadfast in seeking knowledge, relying on Allah (*tawakkal*), and practicing piety (*wara'*).

Therefore, it can be concluded that the moral education proposed by Sheikh Burhanuddin Az-Zarnuji must be oriented towards Islamic or spiritual values with a strong intention to shape moral education. This does not mean disregarding worldly education, as worldly education serves as a means and infrastructure to achieve spiritual education. For this reason, Sheikh Burhanuddin Az-Zarnuji, in his initial discussions, emphasizes the importance of pure and strong intentions in providing teaching and education.

The moral education found in the book *Ta'limul Muta'allim* by Sheikh Burhanuddin Az-Zarnuji is still very relevant today, considering that he emphasizes the principles of Islamic teachings which focus on the formation of morality. Once good morality is

---

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, hal. 314

<sup>12</sup> M Abdul Mujeb, *Kamus Istilah Fiqih*, h. 15.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, h. 9.

established, outward behavior will naturally be good as well. Moreover, the formation of moral education will also bring abundant rewards and lead to entry into Allah's paradise, which is the hope of all believers.

Sheikh Az-Zarnuji said that a student will not achieve success in their knowledge unless they honor the knowledge itself and respect the scholar or teacher.

Respecting knowledge can be done by adhering to its etiquettes, such as performing ablution when seeking knowledge and before handling books or study materials, honoring the books, not placing pens on top of books, not placing books on one's feet or the floor, and not writing in books with red ink as this is a habit of philosophers, not the tradition of the early scholars (Salaf).

Respecting scholars or teachers includes not walking in front of them, not sitting in their seat, not speaking before them without permission, and not asking too many questions to the point of causing annoyance.

By practicing these etiquettes, one will develop commendable morals, such as politeness, responsibility, reverence, and so on.

#### 4) Diligence in Seeking Knowledge, Perseverance, and Lofty Aspirations

Students must be diligent in their studies, persistent, and continuous in seeking knowledge. Additionally, students should have high aspirations, as having lofty goals will motivate them to be more enthusiastic in their pursuit of knowledge. This will cultivate noble morals such as responsibility, compassion, and others.

#### 5) Reliance on Allah (Tawakkal)

Sheikh Az-Zarnuji advises students to practice tawakkal (reliance on Allah) in their pursuit of knowledge. They should not be overly concerned or troubled about sustenance, and their hearts should not be preoccupied with it.

It is undeniable that seeking knowledge often involves facing difficulties, financial constraints, and reducing personal wealth to meet daily needs beyond basic necessities, such as purchasing study materials. However, such worries should not burden them because Allah guarantees the sustenance of those who seek knowledge. Therefore, students are required to rely solely on Allah by entrusting all matters to Him while striving to the best of their abilities. This will develop good morals, such as enthusiasm in seeking knowledge, trust, and a strong conviction in Allah SWT.

6) Piety (Wara')

*Wara'* is defined as avoiding sin, immorality, and doubtful matters. In this regard, Az-Zarnuji encourages students to adopt *wara'* in their pursuit of knowledge.

Students should possess the quality of *wara'* to easily achieve their goals. *Wara'* is also one of the morals held by early scholars (Salaf) in seeking knowledge. This will lead to the development of commendable morals such as honesty, religiosity, indifference to wealth, and greater caution in actions.

The forms of moral education mentioned above can be instilled in students by taking several steps to develop noble moral education, including: teaching, habituation, role modeling, motivation, and the enforcement of rules.<sup>14</sup> *First*, teaching is a process that requires interaction between the educator, who acts as the teacher, and the students, who act as learners. One way to make it easier for students to be taught and thus form their character is to communicate gently, clearly, and transparently. As the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad SAW states in delivering words

عن عائشة رحمها الله قالت كان كلام رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم كلاما فضلا يفهمه كل من سمعه (اخرجه ابوداود في كتاب الادب)

The meaning is: From Aisha, may Allah be pleased with her, who said: "Indeed, the words of the Prophet Muhammad SAW were clear and understandable to everyone who heard them." (Narrated by Abu Dawood in the Book of Manners).<sup>15</sup>

*Second*, role modeling holds a very important position. Educators must first possess the character they wish to teach. Role modeling should not only come from educators but also from everyone in the educational environment, including family and society.<sup>16</sup> his role modeling was exemplified daily by the Prophet Muhammad SAW to his companions, many of whom adopted the qualities of the Prophet. As explained in the Quran, the Prophet Muhammad has a good example in Surah Al-Ahzab, verse 21, which states:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ أَلْءَاخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا

<sup>14</sup> Aan Hasanah, (2012), *Pendidikan Karakter Berspektif Islam*, h. 134.

<sup>15</sup> Abu Daud Sulaiman ibn Al-Asy'as Al-Sastani Al-Azdi, (1990), *Sunan Abu Daud*, juz III, Jakarta: Dar Al-Fikr, h. 443.

<sup>16</sup> Aan Hasanah, *Pendidikan Karakter Berspektif Islam*, h. 43.



The meaning is: "Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah you have a good example for anyone who hopes for (the mercy of) Allah and the Last Day and remembers Allah often."<sup>17</sup>

*Third*, habituation is a practical effort in the development and formation of students. Fourth, motivation is one of the driving forces that encourages individuals to take action. Fifth, the enforcement of rules is an aspect that must be considered in education, especially in character (moral) education.<sup>18</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Moral education is the most important aspect of educational activities and teaching in improving the quality of education and the standards of a nation and state.

The essence of morals is a habit, characteristic, and nature that reflects a person's good identity in terms of morality, behavior, and speech in daily life. Although humans are inherently born with good nature, it is not sufficient to establish these good traits without proper education and teaching of noble morals, which help individuals become even better.

Sheikh Burhanuddin Az-Zarnuji, in his book *Ta'limul Muta'allim*, explains morals that are highly relevant for students to practice in order to develop high moral standards and good civilization. Therefore, Sheikh Burhanuddin Az-Zarnuji explains that moral education can be achieved through sincere intentions, choosing beneficial knowledge, selecting the right teachers and friends, honoring knowledge and teachers, diligence in seeking knowledge, perseverance, lofty aspirations, reliance on Allah (tawakkal), and possessing the quality of piety (wara'). This, in turn, will produce noble morals in line with the objectives of Islamic education itself.

---

<sup>17</sup> Departemen Agama R.I, *Alquran Al-Karim dan Terjemahannya*, h. 420.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*,

## REFERENCES

- Abu Daud Sulaiman ibn Al-Asy'as Al-Sastani Al-Azdi, (1990), *Sunan Abu Daud*, juz III, Jakarta: Dar Al-Fikr.
- Ainiyah. Nur (2013), *Pembentukan Karakter Melalui Pendidikan Agama Islam*, Jurnal Studi-Studi Islam, Vol 13 nomor 1 Juni.
- Al-Fikra. Jurnal Ilmiah Keislaman (2008). *Metode Belajar Dalam Kitab Ta'lim Muta'alim Thariqat At-Ta'alum (Telaah Pemikiran Tarbiyah Az-Zarnuji)*, Vol.7, No.2.
- Az-Zarnuji, Syeikh Burhanuddin, (2013), *Matan Ta'lim Al-Mutaallim Thariq Al-Ta'allum*, Jakarta: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Islamiyah.
- Cendekia. Jurnal (2015). *Pendidikan Dalam Perspektif Islam Burhanuddin Al-Islam Az-Zarnuji*, Vol 13, No 1.
- Departemen Agama R.I, *Alquran Al-Karim dan Terjemahannya*.
- Dkk. Miswar (2015). *Akhlaq Tasawuf*, cet 1, Medan: Perdana Publishing.
- Hasanah. Aan. 2012. *Pendidikan Karakter Berspektif Islam*. Bandung: Insan Komunika.
- Khaliq. Abdul. dkk (1999), *Pemikiran Pendidikan Islam*, Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Konseptual dan Jurnal Riset (2017), *Metode Belajar Menurut Imam Zarnuji: Telaah Kitab Ta'lim Al-Muta'alim* ,Vol 2, No 4.
- Mujeb. M Abdul. *Kamus Istilah Fiqih*.
- Tafsir. Ahmad (2012), *Ilmu Pendidikan Islam*, Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Ulfa Masamah dan M. Zamhari: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam, (2016), *Relevansi Metode Pembentukan Pendidikan Karakter Dalam Kitab Ta'lim Muta'allim Terhadap Pendidikan Modern* ,Vol 11.
- Yaqub. Hamzah. 1983. *Etika Islam*, cet. 2. Bandung: Diponegoro.