

# THE ROLE OF LEARNING SUSPICION IN FORMING EMPATHY AND EMOTIONAL CONTROL IN EARLY CHILDREN IN KINDERGARTEN

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**Abstract:** *of children's socio-emotional and spiritual aspects. One relevant approach in Islamic education is Sufism, which focuses on moral development, self-awareness, and emotional control. This study aims to examine the role of Sufism in developing empathy and emotional control in early childhood in kindergarten. The research method used is library research by analyzing various primary and secondary literature sources, such as classical Sufism works, scientific articles, and research related to early childhood education and emotional intelligence. Data analysis was conducted using content analysis techniques. The results of the study indicate that Sufism values such as tazkiyatun nafs (observance of the nafs), muraqabah (respect for the soul), mercy (rahmah), patience, and humility play an important role in helping children recognize, understand, and manage their emotions and foster empathy for others. Sufism learning delivered simply through habituation, teacher role models, stories, prayers, and light dhikr (remembrance of God) can create emotional calm, reduce impulsive behavior, and increase children's social sensitivity. Thus, the integration of Sufism learning in early childhood education contributes positively to the formation of empathy, emotional control, and children's character as a whole.*

**Keywords:** *Sufism learning, empathy, emotional control, early childhood, Islamic education*

## Introduction

Early childhood education is the primary foundation for the development of all aspects of a child's life, including cognitive, social, emotional, and spiritual aspects. Optimal social and emotional development in early life will shape a child's psychologically mature character and ability to interact harmoniously with their environment. In Islamic education studies, social and emotional development is viewed not only in terms of a child's ability to interact socially but also through the internalization of spiritual values that shape the child's whole being. From an Islamic educational perspective, early childhood social and emotional development has two important dimensions: the relationship between humans and God and their relationships with others. This demonstrates that socio-emotional education in Islamic schools cannot be separated from the foundation of religious values (Hikmah, 2024).

Islamic education aims to develop students into individuals who are devout and faithful to Allah SWT, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and his companions, thus becoming individuals with noble character, both towards their Creator (hablum minallah), society (hablum minannas), and the universe (hablum minal'am). The goal of Islamic religious education is to develop a holistic Indonesian person who is devout, pious, and performs pious deeds, as well as possesses a high level of dedication. Therefore, Islamic religious education plays a significant role in supporting national development. Islamic education is a crucial component of education,

based on the Quran and Hadith and taught to students with the goal of developing a Muslim personality (Pradana & Masyitoh, 2018).

Emotional problems such as tantrums, inability to regulate emotions, and low empathy can occur in early childhood if not provided with appropriate stimulation. Therefore, an approach that integrates Islamic values, including teachings on compassion, patience, and self-reflection, is crucial in early childhood education environments to address these challenges and support balanced emotional development (Melvianti et al., 2024).

Teachers play a crucial role in achieving educational goals. In addition to delivering subject matter, teachers also serve as mentors and personality developers. Teachers are able to detect students' attitudes through observing their daily habits. Teachers gradually instill values, attitudes, knowledge, and skills in students, which then become an integral part of their personalities. However, many educational institutions today focus solely on intellectual understanding, neglecting the development of emotional, spiritual, social, and moral intelligence. This has resulted in moral decadence among students. A complete Muslim personality, or "syakhsiyatul muslimu al-kaaffah" in Arabic, reflects the ideals of Islamic teachings. Religious awareness influences the formation of a person's character and personality.

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### Method

This study employed a library research approach, a method used to collect, read, and analyze various literature sources relevant to the research topic (Sari, 2020), "The Role of Sufism Learning in Shaping Empathy and Emotional Control in Early Childhood in Kindergarten." This approach was chosen because the research focuses on a conceptual study of the role of Sufism learning in shaping empathy and emotional control in early childhood. Therefore, analysis of previous theories, concepts, and findings is a key aspect. The data sources in this study consist of two categories: primary sources, including classical and contemporary works in the field of Sufism, such as the writings of Al-Ghazali, Al-Qusyairi, and other Sufi scholars discussing the values of moral education and soul purification. Secondary sources include books, journal articles, research results, and scientific documents on early childhood education, emotional intelligence, and the integration of spiritual values into learning.

Data Collection Techniques: Data were collected through: Identification of literature through library catalogs, scientific repositories, and journal databases. Sources were selected based on relevance, credibility, and contribution to the research topic. Key information was recorded from each source, focusing on the concepts of Sufism, empathy, and emotional regulation in early childhood. Data analysis was conducted using content analysis, a technique used to identify, categorize, and draw conclusions based on the content of literary texts.

### Result and Discussion

Based on a literature review of various books, scientific articles, and research related to Sufism learning, it was found that Sufism values play a significant role in developing empathy and emotional control in early childhood. The literature review indicates that Sufism teachings such as tazkiyatun nafs (self-purification), muraqabah (self-awareness of God's supervision), rahmah (compassion), and tawadhu' (humility) are highly relevant to be instilled in children through habituation methods, teacher role models, and a heartfelt spiritual approach (Wulandari et al., 2022).

Sufism learning in the context of Islamic education is an effort to internalize spiritual values that focus on purifying the soul (tazkiyatun nafs) and developing positive inner attitudes. According to the literature review, Sufism values such as patience, honesty, humility, and self-control are directly related to children's emotional and social development. Sufism emphasizes self-control through the practice of reflection, dhikr, and inner awareness, which theoretically can help children better recognize their own and others' emotions and foster empathy (Aulia et al., 2025).

The articles reviewed indicate that when Sufism values are applied simply through stories, short dhikr practices, politeness toward others, and emotional management exercises, children become better able to understand others' feelings and manage their emotions when facing conflict. Furthermore, several studies have revealed that cultivating gentleness, mutual forgiveness, and the habit of praying before engaging in activities can provide inner peace in children, enabling them to more easily control their anger and demonstrate empathy.

Empathy, the ability to understand and feel the emotions of others, is a crucial component of early childhood social and emotional development. Sufism values have the potential to shape children's social awareness through the instilling of values such as compassion (mahabbah), tolerance, and mutual respect. This is evident when children are trained to observe the feelings of

friends, share with others, and help those who are sad. Although direct research on Sufism and empathy at an early age is limited, spiritual learning that integrates Islamic values has been shown to be effective in improving children's empathy and social skills (Santoso et al., 2025).

From the overall literature, it can be concluded that Sufism learning, delivered in a practical and age-appropriate manner, has been shown to increase social sensitivity, sharing skills, understanding friends' feelings, and reduce impulsive behavior or tantrums in kindergarten children. First, Sufism serves as the foundation for developing empathy in children. Sufism encompasses moral and spiritual values that emphasize compassion, gentleness, and caring for one another. In the context of early childhood education, these values are translated into simple activities such as encouraging children to greet others, help friends in need, share food, apologize and forgive, and demonstrate politeness.

The literature review shows that when Sufism values are introduced through role models, stories of the Prophet, and games that emphasize caring, children's empathy improves. Children become better able to understand the emotional situations of others, leading them to demonstrate positive social behaviors such as comforting crying friends, refraining from hitting, and being willing to share. Sufism also teaches *rahmah* (compassion), which is the primary foundation for developing empathy. Education that emphasizes compassion makes children feel emotionally secure, so they are better prepared to demonstrate good behavior toward others.

Second, Sufism serves as a tool for developing emotional control. Emotional control is one of the greatest challenges in early childhood. According to literature, Sufism learning provides an effective approach because it emphasizes self-awareness (*muraqabah*) and self-control (*mujahadah al-nafs*). This method can be implemented in kindergarten through: breathing exercises while reciting short prayers, reciting light *dhikr* (remembrance of Allah) or *astaghfirullah* when angry, getting used to sitting quietly before starting activities, games that cultivate patience, and simple reflection activities with teachers.

Literature studies show that children who regularly engage in simple spiritual activities show a decrease in tantrums, calm down more quickly after anger, and are able to express their emotions more purposefully. Sufism values provide a framework for understanding emotions, not simply suppressing or numbing them, but managing them in a positive manner. Third, the role of teachers as role models for Sufism. Nearly all of the literature analyzed emphasizes that the internalization of Sufism cannot be separated from the role model of teachers.

Early childhood learns through In general, Sufism education teaches values such as patience, self-control, adherence to moral rules, and inner awareness (*muraqabah*), which align with a child's ability to manage their internal emotions (Aulia et al., 2025). Furthermore, collaboration between schools, parents, and the community needs to be strengthened so that the Islamic emotional values taught in schools can be brought to life in the child's family and social environment. With good synergy between all parties, early childhood education will not only shape emotionally intelligent individuals but also individuals with noble character and a *rahmatan lil 'alamin* (blessing for the universe) personality (Arifin et al., n.d.).

## Conclusion

Based on the results of the literature review and discussion that has been conducted, it can be concluded that Sufism learning has a very important role in shaping empathy and emotional control of early childhood in kindergarten. Sufism as an Islamic spiritual teaching that emphasizes the purification of the soul (*tazkiyatun nafs*), self-awareness (*muraqabah*), patience, sincerity, and compassion (*rahmah*) has been proven relevant to the needs of early childhood

social-emotional development. Sufism learning that is packaged simply and in accordance with the characteristics of early childhood, through habituation of good behavior, teacher role models, Islamic stories, prayers, light dhikr, and reflective activities, can help children recognize and manage their emotions more healthily. This is indicated by an increase in children's ability to control anger, a decrease in impulsive behavior such as tantrums, and the growth of patience, calm, and the ability to express feelings appropriately. In addition, Sufism learning also contributes greatly to fostering empathy and social awareness in children. Sufi values such as gentleness, mutual assistance, and forgiveness make children more sensitive to the feelings of others, able to cooperate, and demonstrate positive social behavior in daily interactions at school. Overall, the integration of Sufism learning in early childhood education is an effective and relevant approach to developing children's emotional, spiritual, and social intelligence holistically. Therefore, Sufism learning deserves more attention in the development of the Early Childhood Education curriculum as an effort to shape a generation that is not only intellectually intelligent, but also has noble morals, high empathy, and is able to control emotions well.

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