

Date Received : November 2025  
Date Revised : December 2025  
Date Accepted : December 2025  
Date Published : December 2025

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## DEVELOPMENT OF CHARACTER EDUCATION BASED ON TASAWUF AT AUTO MATSUDA VOCATIONAL SCHOOL

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**Kata Kunci:**

Pendidikan Karakter;  
Tasawuf; Spiritualitas

**ABSTRAK**

**Latar belakang** penelitian ini berangkat dari kebutuhan akan pendekatan spiritual yang mampu membentuk karakter peserta didik secara holistik di tengah tantangan pendidikan vokasional yang cenderung berorientasi pada keterampilan teknis. **Tujuan:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji dan mengembangkan model pendidikan karakter berbasis tasawuf di SMK Auto Matsuda, Kuningan, Jawa Barat. **Method:** Penelitian ini menggunakan metode Research and Development (R&D) dengan model pengembangan Rowntree yang meliputi tiga tahap utama, yaitu tahap perencanaan (planning), tahap pengembangan (development), dan tahap evaluasi (evaluation). **Hasil:** Temuan menunjukkan bahwa integrasi nilai-nilai seperti ketulusan, kesabaran, dan kerendahan hati melalui praktik sehari-hari seperti zikir bersama dan teladan telah berdampak positif pada pengembangan karakter siswa.". **Kesimpulan:** Implikasi dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa pendekatan tasawuf dapat menjadi alternatif strategis dalam membangun karakter siswa yang berintegritas, terutama di sekolah vokasi yang menuntut kesiapan mental dan moral dalam menghadapi dunia kerja. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan penguatan kurikulum spiritual dan pelatihan guru dalam memahami serta mengimplementasikan nilai-nilai tasawuf secara sistematis.

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<b>Keywords:</b>	<b>ABSTRACTS</b>
Character Education; Sufism; Spirituality	<p><b>The background</b> of this research departs from the need for a spiritual approach that is able to shape the character of students holistically amidst the challenges of vocational education that tends to be oriented towards technical skills. <b>Purpose:</b> This study aims to examine and develop a Sufism-based character education model at SMK Auto Matsuda, Kuningan, West Java. <b>Method:</b> This research uses the Research and Development (R&amp;D) method with the Rowntree development model which includes three main stages, namely the planning stage, the development stage, and the evaluation stage. <b>Result:</b> The findings show that the integration of values such as sincerity, patience, and humility through daily practices such as collective dhikr and role models has had a positive impact on the development of student character. <b>Conclusion:</b> The implications of this study indicate that the Sufism approach can be a strategic alternative in building the character of students with integrity, especially in vocational schools that demand mental and moral readiness in facing the world of work. This study recommends strengthening the spiritual curriculum and teacher training in understanding and implementing Sufism values systematically.</p>

## A. INTRODUCTION

Character education is a fundamental aspect of the Indonesian education system, given the complex challenges facing today's young generation. Schools, as formal educational institutions, are not only tasked with transferring knowledge but also have a significant responsibility in shaping the morals, ethics, and positive attitudes of students. Through character education, students are taught values such as honesty, responsibility, empathy, and discipline, which are crucial for their future social and professional lives (Sakti, Endraswara, and Rohman 2024).

The moral crisis plaguing modern society, such as increasing intolerance, corruption, and immoral behavior, demands reform at its source: the younger generation. Character education in schools serves as a foundation for prevention, enabling students to instill and implement these positive values in their daily lives. Thus, character education serves as a strong bulwark that can produce the nation's next generation of responsible and virtuous individuals (Hart 2022).

Beyond just normative content, character education also serves to develop students' emotional intelligence. The ability to manage emotions, empathize, and build social relationships are essential skills students must possess to adapt to diverse environments and navigate the dynamics of life. Schools, through various programs and practices, play a strategic role in fostering this emotional intelligence. Providing comparative insight on how character education is typically implemented in vocational schools versus general schools might better contextualize the need for Sufism-based education (Dabdoub et al. 2024).

The development of vocational education in the modern era demands not only mastery of technical competencies and work skills, but also the development of strong character, noble morals, and mature personalities in students. As a vocational education institution, Auto Matsuda Vocational School has a strategic responsibility to prepare graduates who are not only ready for work but also possess moral integrity, a strong work ethic, and a balanced spiritual attitude. In this context, the development of Sufism-based character education is a relevant and contextual approach to addressing

the challenges of moral degradation, low discipline, and weak self-control among some students (Forsler, Nilsson, and Walan 2025).

In this context, Sufism, as a branch of Islamic spiritual knowledge, plays a very strategic role in character education. Sufism's values, which emphasize purification of the heart, sincerity, patience, and piety, serve as a spiritual foundation that can strengthen students' holistic character development. The integration of Sufism into character education not only builds students' morals at the practical level but also fosters a strong inner awareness (Asyibli et al. 2025).

Auto Matsuda Vocational School, located in Kuningan, West Java, is one of the schools that has taken the initiative to develop Sufism-based character education. The school combines vocational education with spiritual character development to develop students who are not only technically competent but also excel in morals and personality. This approach is relevant to the needs of the workplace, which increasingly demands integrity and high professional ethics.

The development of character education at SMK Auto Matsuda is driven by the need to address the challenges of globalization and social change. The school understands that students' future success is measured not only by technical skills but also by the quality of character and attitudes that will guide them in social life and careers. Therefore, Sufism-based character education serves as a strong spiritual and moral shield for students (Eddy Saputra et al. 2023).

The implementation of character education at this school involves integrating Sufi values into every subject and extracurricular activity. Through a multidisciplinary and participatory approach, the school strives to build a school culture that reflects the values of honesty, sincerity, patience, and social responsibility. Activities such as the 3S (Smile, Greet, Greet) and Scouting are effective ways to instill these character traits in a fun and practical way (Saleem 2020).

Sufism-based education at Auto Matsuda Vocational School also strengthens students' work competencies by making character development a key pillar of the vocational competencies taught. Assessment of attitude and character is a prerequisite for graduation and promotion, ensuring that character and skills go hand in hand as an inseparable whole in the educational process (Rahmat and Yahya 2021).

Thus, Matsuda Auto Vocational School not only produces ready-to-use workers but also fosters a generation with strong spiritual and moral integrity. Sufism-based character education is a concrete manifestation of the school's commitment to producing graduates who are not only professional but also responsible and virtuous, ready to face the challenges of the future world.

Sufism, as a spiritual dimension of Islamic teachings, emphasizes the process of purifying the soul (tazkiyatun nafs), fostering morals, controlling desires, and fostering awareness of God's presence in every aspect of life. Sufism values such as sincerity (ikhlas), patience (sabr), honesty (shidq), humility (tawadhu'), responsibility, and steadfastness are strongly relevant in shaping the character of vocational school students, particularly in fostering discipline, hard work, trustworthiness, and professional ethics in the industrial world (Ciputri, Safitri, and Panotogama 2025).

The development of Sufism-based character education at Auto Matsuda Vocational School is implemented through the integration of spiritual values into learning activities, habits, and school culture. Sufism values are not taught purely theoretically, but are internalized through students' daily practices, such as practicing

timely worship, dhikr and prayer together, self-reflection before and after learning activities, and fostering an attitude of humility and mutual respect between teachers and students. This process aims to shape students' inner awareness so that every action they take is based on the right intention and moral responsibility (Wang and Cao 2024).

A Sufi approach is also applied in developing students' work attitudes by reinforcing the value of ihsan, which refers to working diligently as if under God's supervision. This value is crucial for Matsuda Auto Vocational School students, who are preparing to enter the automotive industry, where honesty, precision, and responsibility are key factors for job success. With a Sufi approach, students are encouraged to work not only for grades or wages, but also as a form of worship and devotion with spiritual value (Sarim Karimullah 2023).

Through the development of Sufism-based character education, SMK Auto Matsuda is expected to produce graduates who not only excel in vocational competency but also possess strong spiritual character, noble morals, discipline, responsibility, and are ready to face the challenges of the workplace and social life. This approach emphasizes that the success of vocational education is measured not only by technical skills, but also by the quality of character and spiritual maturity of students as whole individuals.

## **B. METHOD**

This study uses a qualitative research method with the Rowntree Research and Development (R&D) model approach. The choice of this method is based on the research objective which not only focuses on understanding the phenomenon of character education in schools, but also on efforts to develop a Sufism-based character education model that is contextual, applicable, and appropriate to the needs of students at SMK Auto Matsuda, Kuningan Regency, West Java. The qualitative approach is used to deeply explore the social reality, school culture, and the dynamics of student character formation, while the R&D approach is directed at producing a development product in the form of a character education model that can be implemented sustainably (Caggiano and Weber 2023).

The development model used in this study is the Rowntree model, which consists of three main stages: planning, development, and evaluation. These three stages were implemented systematically and continuously, prioritizing qualitative data as the basis for decision-making in the model development process for Class X and Class XI grade students majoring in Automotive Engineering (Mursid, Muslim, and Fariyah 2023).

In the planning stage, researchers conducted a needs analysis as a first step to understand the actual conditions of character education at SMK Auto Matsuda. The needs analysis was conducted through observations of student behavior and attitudes during and outside of class, in-depth interviews with the principal, Islamic Education teacher, homeroom teacher, and several students, and a documentation study of school programs, regulations, and ongoing habituation activities (Saluky and Marine 2022). This stage aims to identify character issues faced by students, character values that need to be strengthened, and opportunities for integrating Sufism values into the school's culture and education system (Mutimukwe et al. 2022).

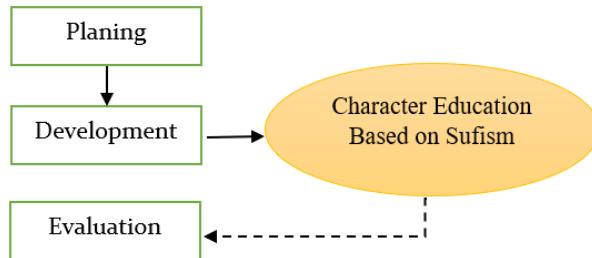


Figure 1 development model

The next stage is the development stage, namely the design and preparation of a Sufism-based character education model. At this stage, researchers formulate the philosophical, theoretical, and practical foundations for model development by referring to Sufism concepts, specifically the values of *tazkiyatun nafs*, sincerity, patience, honesty, discipline, responsibility, and the value of *ihsan* in work. The developed model is designed to be integrated in three main domains, namely classroom learning activities, religious and spiritual habits in schools, and school culture that reflects Sufism moral values. Model development is carried out in a participatory manner by involving teachers and school officials so that the resulting product is in accordance with the needs and characteristics of vocational high school students (Kurt et al. 2024).

Data collection techniques in this study included participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation studies. Observations were used to observe student behavior and the implementation of Sufism values in school activities. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to obtain in-depth data regarding the school community's views, experiences, and responses to Sufism-based character education. Documentation studies were used to strengthen the research data through analysis of official school documents, activity programs, and evaluation records (Wei et al. 2022).

Through qualitative research methods using the Rowntree R&D model, this study is expected to produce a Sufism-based character education model that is not only theoretically relevant but also applicable and sustainable in the context of vocational education. This model is expected to make a real contribution to strengthening the spiritual and moral character of students and can serve as a reference for the development of character education in other vocational high schools .

## C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### Planning for the development of Sufism-based character education at Auto Matsuda Vocational School

Sufism-based character education at Auto Matsuda Vocational School is a holistic and comprehensive approach to fostering spiritual, moral, and social values within students. The school's primary strategy is to integrate Sufism values into every aspect of learning, both the formal curriculum and extracurricular activities, so that character education becomes more than just theoretical material but a daily life experience practiced by students. Strengthening teacher capacity plays a crucial role in implementing this strategy. Through intensive training and regular workshops, educators are equipped with a deep understanding of Sufism principles and how to apply them in learning. With these competencies, teachers become effective facilitators in guiding students and serve as spiritual and moral role models.

A participatory approach is also a crucial pillar, encouraging students to actively participate in various religious and social activities that foster values such as sincerity, patience, and concern for others. Routine activities include Sufism recitation, spiritual guidance from religious leaders, and the implementation of the 3S program (Smile, Greet, and Greet), which successfully fosters a culture of mutual respect and harmonious relationships within the school community. Auto Matsuda Vocational School also focuses on developing a school culture conducive to character development. Instilling the values of honesty, discipline, and a spirit of mutual cooperation is a daily routine supported by the entire school community. This positive environment is also expected to foster self-awareness and a sense of social responsibility, fostering spiritual and emotional maturity in students.

To strengthen the effectiveness of its character education program, SMK Auto Matsuda closely collaborates with families and the community as the primary support environment. Intensive communication between the school, parents, and community leaders ensures that the Sufism and character values taught in school are also reinforced in students' daily lives outside the school environment. The use of digital technology is also integrated as a modern strategy in character education. Through online learning media, religious study videos, and online discussions, students and teachers can access Sufism materials anytime and anywhere, making the character education process more flexible, contextual, and relevant to current developments.

The school also engages religious institutions and socio-religious organizations such as Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) and religious study groups (Majelis Taklim) as strategic partners. This collaboration enriches students' knowledge while strengthening the spiritual learning atmosphere, providing authentic and contextual learning experiences. Anticipating current challenges such as the threat of radicalism and shifting values, SMK Auto Matsuda has developed a preventive program focused on the values of compassion, tolerance, and sincerity. As the core of Sufism, these values are expected to strengthen students' mental and spiritual well-being so they can wisely face social pressures and maintain high moral principles (Firnando 2024).

As a long-term solution, the school is committed to building a sustainable character education ecosystem integrated with its overall educational vision and mission. Through regular monitoring and evaluation involving all stakeholders, SMK Auto Matsuda continues to encourage innovation and improvement so that Sufism-based character education can shape a young generation that is not only technically proficient but also morally and spiritually strong, ready to contribute positively to society.

### **Implementation Of Character Education Based On Tasawuf**

The implementation of Sufism-based character education at Auto Matsuda Vocational School is based on the awareness that vocational education is not enough to only equip students with technical skills and work competencies, but must also shape spiritual character and noble morals as the foundation of students' personalities. Sufism-based character education is implemented as part of the school's efforts to instill Islamic values that are profound, reflective, and transformative, so as to shape students' inner awareness in their attitudes, behavior, and work.

Sufism-based character education at Auto Matsuda Vocational School is integrated through classroom learning activities, religious practices, and strengthening

of school culture. Within the learning domain, Sufism values are internalized in Islamic Religious Education and other relevant subjects. Teachers not only convey material cognitively but also link it to the values of sincerity, patience, honesty, responsibility, and self-control. The learning process is directed at fostering students' awareness that every learning activity and vocational practice is part of worship, and therefore must be based on sound intentions and a responsible attitude.

In religious habituation activities, Sufism-based character education is realized through consistent spiritual routines. Activities such as group prayer before and after lessons, congregational prayer, short dhikr (remembrance of God), and self-reflection serve as a means to foster inner peace and spiritual awareness in students. These habits aim to train students to constantly remember God in all activities, while simultaneously fostering discipline, orderliness, and steadfastness in carrying out religious obligations (Febriyanti and Supriyadi 2023).

School culture is a crucial aspect in the implementation of Sufism-based character education at Auto Matsuda Vocational School. The school strives to create a conducive and religious environment through the exemplary behavior of teachers and educational staff. Teachers act as role models (uswah hasanah) who demonstrate politeness, humility, honesty, and fairness in their interactions with students. This exemplary behavior serves as an effective means of indirectly instilling Sufism values, as students learn through concrete examples they observe in their daily lives at school.

Sufism-based character education is also implemented in vocational and industrial work experience (PKL) activities. The values of ihsan, amanah, and responsibility are emphasized in every automotive practice activity, both in the school workshop and in the industrial world. Students are guided to work meticulously, honestly, and professionally, and to avoid carelessness and manipulative behavior. Through a Sufism approach, students are guided to understand that the quality of their work reflects the quality of one's morals and spirituality (Plaku and Leka 2025).

Furthermore, Sufism-based character development is also carried out through extracurricular activities and non-academic development. Religious activities, Islamic spiritual development, and social activities serve as a means to cultivate empathy, social awareness, and humility. Students are actively involved in these activities so that Sufism values are not only understood theoretically but also internalized and practiced in social life.

Evaluation of the implementation of Sufism-based character education at Auto Matsuda Vocational School is conducted continuously through observations of student behavior, teacher reflections, and communication with parents. Changes in student attitudes, such as increased discipline, honesty, responsibility, and mutual respect, are indicators of the program's success. However, the school also faces several challenges, such as differences in student backgrounds and inconsistent implementation of habits, which are being addressed through ongoing coaching and strengthened collaboration between the school, parents, and the community.

The implementation of Sufism-based character education at Auto Matsuda Vocational School demonstrates that a spiritual approach emphasizing the process of purifying the soul (tazkiyatun nafs) and fostering morals plays a significant role in shaping students' overall character. Character education is understood not only as a process of normatively instilling moral values, but also as an effort to internalize spiritual values that touch students' inner consciousness. Through a Sufism approach,

students are guided to understand themselves, control their desires, and foster an awareness of their responsibilities as servants of God and as members of society.

Sufism-based character education at Auto Matsuda Vocational School focuses not only on strengthening formal religious dimensions, such as understanding worship and religious norms, but also on developing inner attitudes that underpin every student's behavior. Values such as sincerity, patience, honesty, humility, and steadfastness are instilled through habituation, role modeling, and ongoing self-reflection. This process helps students not only understand right from wrong but also develop an inner drive to consistently do good, both within and outside the school environment (Wajahat 2024).

The positive impact of implementing Sufism-based character education is evident in the development of a better work ethic in students. Students begin to understand that studying and working are not merely academic obligations or demands of the professional world, but rather forms of worship that must be carried out earnestly and responsibly. This spiritual awareness encourages students to work with greater discipline, thoroughness, and honesty, especially in vocational and industrial internships. The value of *ihsan* emphasized in Sufism serves as a moral foundation for students to produce quality work with integrity.

Consistently practicing religious practices teaches students to value time, obey rules, and be responsible for their assigned tasks. Discipline is no longer seen as a compulsion imposed by school rules, but rather as a personal need born of spiritual awareness. This sense of responsibility fosters students' crucial skills in facing the world of work, which demands professionalism and high commitment (Pabbajah 2020).

The implementation of Sufism-based character education at Auto Matsuda Vocational School also strengthens students' social and community interactions. The values of empathy, caring, and mutual respect taught through a Sufism approach help students build harmonious social relationships. Students are guided not only to become skilled workers but also individuals with social sensitivity, the ability to work together, and uphold humanitarian values in community life.

This approach ultimately proves that vocational education oriented toward skills development and job readiness can go hand in hand with the strengthening of profound spiritual and moral values. Sufism-based character education at SMK Auto Matsuda demonstrates that the spiritual dimension does not hinder productivity but rather serves as a foundation that strengthens the quality of human resources. By integrating vocational skills mastery with spiritual character development, the school is able to produce graduates who are not only technically competent but also morally and spiritually mature, thus ready to face the challenges of the workplace and social life holistically and sustainably.

## **Model Development Evaluation Observation Results**

Based on observations, the development of a Sufism-based character education model demonstrated a fairly good level of implementation. Sufism values such as sincerity, patience, discipline, honesty, responsibility, and *ihsan* (goodwill) began to be internalized in various school activities. This was evident in students' increased awareness of participating in spiritual habituation activities, such as group prayer and congregational worship, as well as a more orderly and polite attitude in daily

interactions. Observations also showed changes in student behavior, from previously lacking discipline to becoming more organized in following learning schedules and vocational practice activities.

In the context of classroom learning, observations indicate that teachers have begun to integrate Sufi values contextually into the learning process. Teachers not only deliver academic material but also reinforce moral and spiritual values relevant to the material being taught. For example, in vocational practice activities, students are guided to work meticulously, honestly, and responsibly as a form of practicing the values of trustworthiness and ihsan. Interactions between teachers and students also demonstrate a more humanistic and persuasive approach, resulting in a more conducive and meaningful learning environment (Choiriyah, Khuriyah, and Hakiman 2023).

Observations of school culture indicate that the development of a Sufism-based character education model is beginning to create a more religious and character-based school climate. The exemplary behavior of teachers and educational staff is a key contributing factor to the model's successful implementation. The polite, humble, and consistent attitudes demonstrated by educators positively influence student behavior. Observations also noted that students are beginning to demonstrate mutual respect, concern for the school environment, and responsibility for their respective tasks and roles.

Observations also revealed several obstacles in the implementation of the model that require evaluation and improvement. One obstacle identified was the varying character backgrounds and levels of spiritual understanding among students. This resulted in the internalization of Sufism values occurring at varying rates for each student. Furthermore, consistency in implementing spiritual habits still requires strengthening, particularly in activities that rely on students' personal awareness. Observations also indicated that not all teachers share the same understanding of the concept and implementation of Sufism-based character education, necessitating further guidance and training (Zamzizwaya, Syawaludding, and Syahrizul 2024).

In terms of impact, observations indicate that the development of a Sufism-based character education model has positively contributed to the development of students' work ethic. Students appear more responsible in completing assignments, value time more, and demonstrate a more serious attitude during vocational practice. These changes are early indicators that the developed model is capable of bridging the need for spiritual character building with the demands of the workplace, which emphasizes professionalism and integrity.

Evaluation of model development based on observation results shows that the Sufism-based character education model developed at SMK Auto Matsuda has a good level of feasibility and usefulness. Although there are still several aspects that need to be refined, this model has proven to be able to provide a clear direction in developing students' character holistically. The results of this evaluation serve as an important basis for revising and strengthening the model, so that the development of Sufism-based character education can be implemented more optimally, sustainably, and can be replicated in other vocational high schools.

### **Student Interview Results**

Evaluation of the development of the Sufism-based character education model at Auto Matsuda Vocational School was also conducted through in-depth interviews

with students, the primary subjects of the model's implementation. These interviews aimed to explore students' perceptions, experiences, and responses to the implementation of Sufism-based character education in learning activities, spiritual habits, and school culture. Interview data served as an important source for assessing the model's acceptability, students' level of understanding, and its impact on changes in their attitudes and behavior.

Based on interviews, most students stated that Sufism-based character education provided a different learning experience compared to previous character education. Students revealed that the approach, which emphasizes spiritual development, sincerity, and self-control, helped them better understand the meaning of each activity at school. Practicing prayer, short dhikr (remembrance of God), and self-reflection before and after learning helped students feel calmer, more focused, and more prepared to participate in learning activities and vocational practice.

Interview results also indicated that students were beginning to notice changes in their daily attitudes and behavior. Several students expressed that they had become more disciplined in attending school, more responsible in completing assignments, and more careful in their behavior and conversations with teachers and peers. The values of honesty and trustworthiness emphasized in Sufism-based character education were perceived as relevant to students' lives, particularly in workshops and group work, where trust and cooperation are crucial.

In the context of vocational practice activities, students reported that the Sufi approach helped them understand the importance of working diligently and responsibly. Several students stated that they began to view the work practice not merely as a curriculum requirement, but as a form of worship and professional training. This awareness encouraged students to be more meticulous, to work diligently, and to strive to maintain the quality of their work. This demonstrates that the values of *ihsan* instilled in the Sufi-based character education model are beginning to be internalized in students' practice activities.

In addition to the positive impacts, interviews also revealed several challenges experienced by students in implementing the model. Some students admitted that, initially, they felt unaccustomed to the routine self-reflection and spiritual practice activities. Differences in family background and religious understanding meant some students needed more time to adjust. However, students also reported that with teacher guidance and consistent practice, the activities became easier to accept and understand.

Students also assessed the teacher's role as crucial to the successful implementation of Sufism-based character education. Teachers' exemplary behavior of patience, fairness, and consistency was considered a key factor in motivating students to follow and practice the values taught. Several students noted that when teachers were able to connect Sufism values to real life and the workplace, the material presented became more meaningful and easier to understand.

Interview results showed that students responded positively to the development of a Sufism-based character education model at Auto Matsuda Vocational School. This model was considered non-patronizing, but rather emphasized self-awareness and fostering internal attitudes. Students experienced a change in their perspectives on learning, working, and interacting with their social environment. Evaluation based on these interviews indicated that the Sufism-based character education model had a high

level of acceptance among students and had the potential to have a long-term impact on the development of their spiritual character, work ethic, and social responsibility.

## **Discussion**

### **The Relevance and Effectiveness of Sufism-Based Character Education in the Context of Vocational High Schools**

The relevance and effectiveness of Sufism-based character education in the context of Vocational High Schools (SMK) is a crucial issue, particularly in facing the challenges of vocational education in the modern era. SMKs are not only required to produce graduates with technical competencies needed by the industrial world, but also to shape students' character with integrity, ethics, and responsibility. In this context, Sufism-based character education holds strong relevance because it offers a profound approach to character development, touching on the inner aspects, and capable of shaping students' moral awareness in a sustainable manner.

Sufism-based character education is relevant for vocational schools due to the characteristics of vocational school students who are in the late adolescence to early adulthood phase, namely the phase of identity discovery and personality formation. In this phase, students are not sufficient with just being equipped with rules and sanctions, but require an educational approach that can foster self-awareness, emotional control, and personal responsibility. Sufism with the concepts of tazkiyatun nafs, muhasabah, and strengthening intentions provides a strong foundation for developing character from within students, not just compliance with external rules. Thus, Sufism-based character education is relevant as an approach that balances the cognitive, affective, and spiritual aspects in vocational education.

In terms of effectiveness, Sufism-based character education has been proven to have a positive impact on the behavior and attitudes of vocational school students. This approach instills values such as sincerity, patience, honesty, trustworthiness, discipline, and ihsan, which are essential in the workplace. In the context of vocational education, the value of ihsan working optimally as if under God's supervision is a crucial principle that encourages students to work professionally, meticulously, and responsibly. These values are not only understood theoretically but also internalized through habituation and role modeling, thus fostering a positive and sustainable work attitude.

The effectiveness of Sufism-based character education is also evident in its ability to bridge the gap between the goals of moral education and the demands of the industrial world. Today's workplace demands not only technical skills but also emphasizes soft skills such as discipline, honesty, teamwork, and work ethic. Sufism-based character education provides a strong spiritual foundation for the development of these soft skills. Students are not only guided to work for their own benefit but are also encouraged to understand work as a trust and a form of devotion. This awareness fosters a strong commitment to quality work and social responsibility.

Furthermore, Sufism-based character education is effective in creating a conducive and character-based school climate. When Sufism values are integrated into the school culture, interactions between teachers and students become more humane and exemplary. Students feel valued, guided, and persuasively directed, rather than simply controlled by rigid rules. Such a school climate supports the formation of positive habits and reduces deviant behavior, making the educational process more effective and meaningful.

The relevance and effectiveness of Sufism-based character education in the context of vocational high schools (SMK) demonstrate that a spiritual approach does not conflict with the skills and productivity orientation of vocational education. On the contrary, Sufism-based character education strengthens the moral and spiritual foundations of students, enabling them to carry out their technical competencies responsibly, ethically, and with a focus on the common good. This approach emphasizes that the success of vocational education is measured not only by the employability of graduates, but also by the quality of character and moral integrity inherent in them as future professionals and members of society.

In terms of spiritual outcomes, the implementation of Sufism-based character education has been proven to encourage the strengthening of the values of faith, piety, and sincerity in students. Habitual practices such as dhikr (remembrance of God), prayer before and after learning, self-reflection (muhasabah), and the instilling of patience, humility, and trustworthiness foster a deeper spiritual awareness. This awareness is reflected in changes in students' attitudes in school life, such as increased discipline, adherence to rules, honesty in completing assignments, and a decrease in negative behaviors such as inter-student conflict and violations of rules. Thus, the spiritual dimension serves as a moral foundation that consistently guides student behavior, both inside and outside the classroom.

Meanwhile, in terms of academic outcomes, strengthening Sufi character has an indirect but significant impact on student learning performance. Sufi values such as steadfastness, responsibility, and sincerity (mujahadah) foster a more positive learning ethic. Students become more focused in their learning, have stronger intrinsic motivation, and demonstrate perseverance in completing assignments and vocational practice. A calmer and more stable psychological state, resulting from spiritual guidance, also contributes to increased concentration and absorption of learning materials, ultimately improving academic achievement.

The relationship between spiritual and academic outcomes can be understood as mutually reinforcing. Moral character developed through a Sufi approach is a prerequisite for creating a conducive learning climate. When students possess good self-control, respect for teachers, and an awareness of good values, the learning process is more effective. This demonstrates that academic success does not exist in isolation but is influenced by the quality of a student's character and spirituality.

The development of Sufism-based character education at Auto Matsuda Vocational School can be viewed as a holistic educational model, synergizing spiritual development and academic achievement. Discussions that structuredly connect these two aspects strengthen the argument that Sufism character education is not only relevant in developing noble morals but also strategic in improving the academic quality and professionalism of vocational school students. This approach ultimately contributes to the realization of graduates who are not only professionally competent but also morally and spiritually mature.

## **The Role of School Environment and Teacher Exemplary Behavior in the Success of Model Development**

The school environment plays a strategic role as an educational ecosystem that shapes students' habits, attitudes, and mindsets. In developing Sufism-based character education, the school environment is understood not only as a physical space but also

as a social, cultural, and spiritual environment that influences student behavior. A religious, orderly school atmosphere filled with respect for moral values is an important medium for instilling Sufism. When schools consistently promote the habit of worship, self-reflection, and polite and respectful interactions, students will more easily absorb and internalize these values as part of their lives.

The role of the school environment and teacher role models are key factors in the successful development of a Sufism-based character education model, particularly in vocational high schools (SMK). Character education, which focuses on spiritual and moral development, cannot be effective if it relies solely on model planning and learning tools. The success of this model development is largely determined by the extent to which the school environment can provide a conducive space for the internalization of Sufism values, as well as the extent to which teachers and educational staff can provide real role models in everyday life.

In the context of vocational high schools, where vocational practice and teamwork are essential parts of the learning process, an environment that emphasizes the values of trust, honesty, and professionalism is essential. Sufism-based character education, supported by a consistent school culture, will help students understand that every learning and work activity has moral and spiritual dimensions. Thus, the school environment serves as a habituation space that strengthens students' inner awareness of the values being instilled.

Beyond the school environment, teacher role models play a crucial role in the successful development of a Sufism-based character education model. Teachers serve not only as transmitters of material but also as role models (uswah hasanah) whose behavior and attitudes serve as a guide for students. In Sufism-based education, teacher role models serve as the primary means of internalizing values, as values such as sincerity, patience, humility, and honesty are more easily understood through concrete examples than through mere verbal explanations.

Teachers' exemplary behavior is reflected in how they interact with students, address differences, manage emotions, and carry out professional duties responsibly. A teacher's patience and fairness in dealing with students, along with their consistency in implementing the values they teach, convey a strong moral message to students. In the context of Sufism-based character education, teachers who demonstrate integrity and sincerity in their work will foster respect and trust in their students, enabling a more effective character-building process.

Furthermore, teachers' exemplary behavior also plays a role in bridging Sufism concepts with the realities of students' lives, particularly in the workplace. When teachers are able to connect spiritual values with work ethic, professional responsibility, and discipline, students will more easily understand the relevance of Sufism-based character education to their future. This is especially important in the context of vocational high schools, where students are prepared to enter the industrial world, which demands not only technical skills but also strong character and work ethics.

The success of developing a Sufism-based character education model depends heavily on the synergy between a conducive school environment and consistent teacher role models. The school environment provides a space for habituation and value reinforcement, while teacher role models serve as the primary medium for internalizing Sufism values within students. This synergy ensures that Sufism-based character education is not limited to the conceptual level but is manifested in students' actual

behavior. Ultimately, the role of the school environment and teacher role models emphasizes that developing a character education model is not merely a matter of program design, but rather a continuous cultural and spiritual process within school life.

## CONCLUSION

The development of a Sufism-based character education model implemented at Auto Matsuda Vocational School shows that Sufism values such as tazkiyatun nafs, sincerity, patience, honesty, discipline, responsibility, and ihsan can be integrated contextually into learning activities, religious habits, and school culture. The systematic model development process is able to produce an applicable character education model, in accordance with the characteristics of vocational school students, and in line with the demands of the world of work. The implementation of Sufism-based character education has a positive impact on changes in student attitudes and behavior. Students show increased discipline, responsibility, work ethic, and spiritual awareness in carrying out learning activities and vocational practice. Character education is no longer understood as a normative rule, but as an inner awareness that encourages students to behave well consistently, both in the school environment and in social life. The success of the development of a Sufism-based character education model at Auto Matsuda Vocational School is also greatly influenced by the role of a conducive school environment and the exemplary role of teachers as uswah hasanah figures. A religious and character-based school environment, along with consistent, patient, and exemplary teachers, are key supporting factors in the internalization of Sufi values. The synergy between model design, school culture, and educators' exemplary behavior makes Sufi-based character education effective and sustainable. This study demonstrates that Sufism-based character education is a viable model for vocational schools, not only strengthening students' technical abilities but also their moral and spiritual readiness for the workforce

**Acknowledgments:** The author would like to express his gratitude to all members of the school community, especially the teachers and principal of the vocational school, as well as the students who ultimately enabled the author to complete this research.

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