

# INTEGRATING ISLAMIC SPIRITUALITY IN TEACHER TRAINING: ANALYSIS OF FACULTY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS AND THEIR IMPACT ON TEACHING PRACTICES

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**Abstract:** *The significance of integrating Islamic spirituality-based pedagogy into teacher training programs for the enhancement of both academic and moral teaching is now widely recognized. This paper attempts to analyze the role of Islamic spirituality as a component in teacher training programs by looking at several faculty developments models. Additionally, this paper explores the types of teacher training programs in integrate spirituality at the respective faculty. Rather than providing instruction in institutional policy and regulations, as is the case in professional programs, these programs focus on spiritual leadership, ethical teaching, and reflective practice to educate educators who are academically proficient as well as capable of moral and spiritual development of their students. This paper explains that integrating Islamic spirituality within educator training improves teaching methodology, fostering student engagement, and enables holistic education. Although the benefits are clear, there are significant challenges, particularly in secular educational settings where balancing religious teachings with secular rules requires careful negotiation. This paper examines these challenges, including the shortage of trained Islamic educators and the difficulties of integrating religious values within secular systems. Nevertheless, positive ways of providing an opportunity are via inter-religious dialogue and can build a mutual understanding among the different nationalities in multicultural classrooms. Moreover, it is imperative to fill these gaps and complete training programs that involve tackling both religious and secular goals with a view to making Islamic spirituality successfully embedded in education.*

**Keywords:** *Islamic Spirituality, Faculty Development, Teacher Training*

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## Introduction

There has been increasing interest in recent years in the role of spirituality in education. In an effort to make more holistic and meaningful learning, it is important that spiritual elements are integrated into programs that are designed for the training and development of teachers. This paper aims to examine the initiatives of faculty development in integrating spirituality in teacher training programs and its effect on the inclusion of Islamic spirituality within faculty development initiatives on teaching practices in higher education institutions.

The existing research suggests that spiritual development and learning lead to a positive experience of transcendence or connectedness, meaning-making, personal integrity, and wholeness (Capeheart-Meningall, 2005). In addition, previous research has emphasized that personal and social as well as religious spiritual development must be protected and further developed in an educational setting. Spirituality in education is not just a philosophical concept but an implementation method to empower faculty and help to transfer specific spiritual concepts through teaching (Nasrollahi et al., 2020).

Islamic spirituality integration in higher education is an important but often neglected part of faculty development and teacher training. Research indicates that the integration of transformational and spiritual learning experiences will contribute to greater student success (Duerr et al., 2003). The California Institute of Integral Studies and Naropa University have also provided proof positive for this model, providing great perspectives to educators looking toward greater ways to help individuals learn in more holistic and meaningful ways.

Islamic spirituality is a growing concern in Islamic and secular educational settings regarding the integration of Islamic spirituality into teacher training programs. Spirituality in Islamic education is not only a concept but also involves teaching ethics and reflective practices in an educational way to shape both intellectual and moral growth. The purpose of this paper is to investigate how Islamic spirituality can be embedded in faculty development programs for teacher training and its implications for teaching practices in Indonesia, Malaysia, Turkey, and European countries, including Germany and the Netherlands.

Along with the pedagogical training, other important values in teacher education, such as ethical behavior, compassion, and reflection, are highlighted through Islamic spirituality. Educators are required not only to teach but also to serve as models of good examples with regard to ethical and spiritual values for their classrooms. The holistic perspective is adopted in pesantren institutions in Indonesia: the teachers are trained to be the leaders of both religious and secular subjects besides developing the spiritual development (Wahid & Wardatun, 2023).

Islamic higher education in Malaysia and Turkey has been known to unite spiritual values with modern pedagogy. This dual trajectory approach matters for teacher identities (Hendek et al., 2022) and drives the norm that educators in higher religious education institutions are expected to both excel academically as well as strive for spiritual growth (Bin Jamil et al., 2024). Similarly, Budak (2022) elaborated on how ideology-related personality formation is also highlighted by non-Muslim teachers as well as in Islamic institutions and madrasas, emphasizing the spiritual dimension in education (Ismanto et al., 2024).

This paper aims to explore various types of faculty development programs in which Islamic spirituality and the spiritual practices found in their programs are integrated and how the elements of Islamic spirituality affect teaching. Thus, its first objective is to explore strategies for the onboarding of faculty through teacher training programs or faculty development

programs that have been incorporating spiritual values of Islam, for example, workshops and mentorship. Secondly, this paper aims to examine how these integrative approaches improve teaching practices and foster holistic student development in educational settings.

### **Methodology**

A structured search strategy was used in this narrative review to provide a comprehensive search of the literature on the inclusion of Islamic spirituality in teacher training and faculty development. Literature was obtained from electronic databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus and Web of Science (WOS). The search string used is: "(Islamic spirituality OR Islamic religious practices OR Islamic religiosity) AND (teacher training OR faculty development) AND (teaching practices OR education)." The review was based on the original articles, review articles, books, and papers in conferences published in English and studying the explicit role of Islamic spirituality in enabling the teaching practices. For the synthesis, we reviewed the findings manually and categorized the findings in order to identify different types of faculty development or teacher training programs that integrate Islamic spirituality and are dedicated to embedding Islamic ethical values in teaching. Additionally, the impact of such programs on teaching practices, that is, moral and ethical pedagogy, teacher-student relations, and a holistic educational process, were also examined through synthesis. A broad view of the impact of integrating spirituality into faculty development on educational outcomes and areas for further research are presented in this review.

### **Literature Review**

The inclusion of Islamic spirituality in education has become one of the main foci in Islamic and secular educational systems, and there are more and more efforts being made nowadays to integrate its culture in the formation of faculty and teacher development training programs. Research shows that the values of Islam provide the foundation for developing educators who teach not only scholars but also ethics and spiritual leaders for their students. Based on examples from Malaysia, Turkey, Finland, Indonesia, and the Netherlands, this review of existing research considers how Islamic spirituality could be integrated into faculty training programs in which spiritual development is understood as a vital dimension of effective teaching and learning practices.

In Malaysia and Turkey, Islamic higher education institutions have an immense role in incorporating Islamic spirituality into faculty training programs. Using case comparison, Hendek et al. (2022) compared public universities from these two countries specifically as the way Islamic values are integrally connected to academic and administrative aspects of the universities are unique in each. For instance, higher religious education institutions in Malaysia attempt to strike a balance between traditional Islamic teaching and modern pedagogic approaches so as to enable educators not only to teach ethically but also to become spiritual leaders and reflect in their practices. In Malaysia, faculty development programs often emphasize the influence of spirituality in producing educators who are rightly knowledgeable in their fields of expertise and securely rooted in Islamic ethical principles to cultivate those same principles in their students.

In Turkey, Islamic institutions like Imam Hatip schools are dedicated to training teachers who can easily teach Islam and Islamic ethics via the Qur'an in their instructional programs (Zengin & Hendek, 2023). These institutions find that the spiritual development of educators possesses a great role, too, aside from their academic proficiency. Hendek et al. (2022) state that both Malaysia and Turkey were able to create faculty training programs that mixed modern

education with Islamic spirituality, leading to teachers capable of leading not only the intellectual but also the moral growth of their students.

Pesantren, or Indonesian Islamic boarding schools, have long been known for their blend of religious and secular education and practice of spiritual leadership. Through the analysis of the features used for the design of pesantren, Rahtikawatie et al. (2021) identify pesantren leadership in terms of its ability to achieve educational and spiritual development of teachers and students. In these schools, teachers not only teach academic knowledge but are spiritual guides to the students and are responsible for forming the moral and ethical values of the students. The pesantren model of education focuses on nurturing spiritual leadership in teachers and integrates the Islamic spirit in all ways teaching is performed. This spiritual integration within teacher formation programs are essential in upholding the integrative and holistic approaches of pesantren education (Rahtikawati et al., 2021). While academic knowledge is inculcated into students, teachers are also encouraged to practice reflection and ethical decision-making as well as receive spiritual guidance. The implementation of pesantren system indicates how Islamic spirituality can be enlisted into the educational leadership and faculty development programs.

In this regard, Rosliza et al. (2017) studied the effect of Islamic spirituality on the development of academic performance among accounting students in one of the higher institutions in Malaysia. This research shows the influence of spiritual models on students' learning outcomes when these are integrated into education. In relation to this, Islamic spirituality helps to build discipline, ethical conduct, and a correct sense of responsibility needed for success in both the academic and professional ambiance. Incorporating Islamic values such as integrity, accountability, and hard work into the curriculum enables educators to create a curriculum with a holistic approach to learning, which enables them to excel morally, ethically, as well as academically. In discussion of spiritual education, Rosliza et al. (2017) point out that spirituality approached as an integrated part of education improves not only student's academics but also their personal growth and is beneficial in a broad sense.

Sözeri et al. (2022) discuss the role of mosque education in forming Turkish Dutch youth religious identities in the Dutch context. The value of mosque-based education in facilitating the integration with their Dutch society of the youth's religious identities is illustrated in their research. Education in the mosque has a dual function: it gives religious instruction reinforcing Islamic values and, at the same time, encourages social integration. This largely allowed students to rethink their religious and national identities and bridge the gap between their faith and standing as full organisms of Dutch society. Sözeri et al. (2022) conclude that, especially in multicultural contexts, spiritual education serves a vital role to be incorporated within the strategies of effective teacher training since teachers tend to have a significant influence on students' process in negotiating dual identity formation.

Integration in Finland faces different challenges owing to its secular educational system and the concept of Islamic spirituality is entirely unknown. Reflecting on the challenges to which Muslim educators find themselves in promoting Islamic religious education in a largely secular curriculum, Kallioniemi (2018) examined the problems faced by Muslim educators in sensing an inconceivable association between the adopted curriculum and Islam. Given the equal and neutral position Finnish schools have on religious issues, it has proved difficult to practice spirituality-focused teacher training programs.

According to Kallioniemi (2018), one of the main problems is the lack of enough skilled Islamic educators who can integrate the Finnish secular education system with Islamic spiritual principles. Moreover, the integration of Islamic spirituality is further complicated by the tensions between secular educational policies and those of Muslim students and educators. Kallioniemi (2018) argues, however, that with sufficient support and training, Islamic educators may be able to enhance a more inclusive and spiritually aware education environment even in a secular context.

In conclusion, integrating Islamic spirituality into education shows its influence on academic and moral development. Islamic values function to shape holistic educational environments either through student engagement, faculty training, or identity formation. These examples demonstrate, therefore, the extent to which successful integration of spirituality in education depends on the way spiritual principles are incorporated into the methods and frameworks of teaching and teacher development. With this insight into the function of Islamic spirituality in education, the subsequent section will explore the type of faculty development programs that have been designed to assist teachers in focusing on these spiritual qualities in addressing their teaching needs.

### **Faculty Development Program**

The programs in which Islamic spirituality is included in training and development courses have been introduced into various niches of academic education, and all of them are aimed at providing teachers with useful working tools to apply religious values alongside their teaching. These programs are concerned with spiritual leadership, ethical teaching, and critical reflection, which many educators need in order to integrate religion with modern education systems. We will explore a few models of faculty development and teacher training programs that can be applied to improve educators' capacity to integrate Islamic spirituality into their practice.

Pesantren-affiliated institutions in Indonesia serve the most significant function of enhancing Islamic spirituality among the faculties through their training programs. They are very much rooted in spiritual leadership, designed to produce educators who can integrate traditional religious teachings with contemporary methods of education. Bukhori Muslim et al. (2024) explain that in pesantren, teachers are not only trained to educate their students in subject matters but also act as moral teachers in the process of shaping morality and character. Emphasis on spiritual leadership allows educators to apply Islamic teachings in their classrooms, ensuring that students are taught to implement and integrate religious values within educational lessons for a robust education system.

There is a significant relationship between the leadership and faculty development factors and the successful implementation of Islamic value integration into teacher training. Hence, in the pesantren context, faculty members are required to convey not only academic knowledge but also Islamic behaviors, as well as enrich the pesantren environment to foster and nurture the spirituality of the students. As argued by Bukhori Muslim et al. (2024), pesantren-affiliated institutions successfully navigate in-between by implementing strategies that allow for the presence of strategic programs that cater to the need to ensure that pesantren institutions get the recognition they deserve in academic circles whilst at the same time ensuring that they remain spiritually inclined. Through its faculty development programs these institutions are produced educators who are able to foster this balance to produce learners who are academically competent and ethically correct. Through the incorporation of Islamic values within faculty



member training, educators are prepared to understand how to foster the development of the mind in combination with the spirit of learners.

Higher religious education institutions in Malaysia and Turkey have also been among the few to provide faculty development programs that emphasise integrating Islamic spirituality within secular courses as well. Hendek et al. (2022) explore the extent to which higher education faculty development programs in these countries are aligned with contemporary pedagogical approaches as well as traditional Islamic virtues. The programs serve to guide educators through the increasingly complex domain of contemporary education while staying true to Islamic Moral ethics. They educate teachers who then have the ability to integrate spirituality into teaching and develop an environment with standards of achievement and moral conduct.

A study by Rosliza et al. (2017) displays Islamic spirituality models in one of the higher institutions in Malaysia that are incorporated into educational programs to increase academic achievement. Islamic motivation programs that focus on activities of the spirit help to improve academic performance. These programs stress the value of spiritual factors that include self-discipline, integrity, and ethical behavior, which promote not only superior academic outcomes but a train of moral responsibility on the part of the students. Through the inclusion of spirituality in their teaching, educators can produce a learning arena that combines both educational effectiveness and personal change.

However, in Western Europe especially, integrating Islamic spirituality into teacher training presents special challenges because, as is the case in many of the European education systems, the education system's nature is secular. Islamic religious educators in Germany (Fuess, 2007) face the task of adapting the values of Islam into the educational system, which encounters secular policies. Nevertheless, advances have been made for such development of faculty training programs with an emphasis on spirituality. The goal of such programs is to supply consecrated teaching personnel with the equipment they require to counterbalance the spiritual needs of their students with those of any significantly secular curriculum, moreover, in a veil-ready way to religious education.

The subsequent section will analyze how the incorporation of Islamic spirituality in teacher training circumscribes classroom practices and influences students' personal development and learning outcomes. This analysis encourages a better understanding of how spirituality can contribute to transformation in both education and students.

### **Impact of Islamic Spirituality Integration on Teaching Practices**

The inclusion of Islamic spirituality in teacher training fundamentally changes the classroom practice and the development of the students. Promotion and emphasizing of spiritual and ethical values in faculty development programs develop an environment in which teachers teach and guide students academically as well as spiritually. In this section, how Islamic spirituality can impact teaching practices in different contexts will be discussed.

Teachers trained with Islamic spiritual principles demonstrated an increased likelihood of responsible teaching approaches, reflection-based learning, and compassionate classroom interactions. According to Afham and Rizqi (2024), interweaving science and religion in the context of the Islamic education curriculum will enable the students to understand both subjects better due to holistic development. This approach highlights the interdependence of scientific knowledge and religious teaching and prompts the student to study further and to enter a moral force field. It was also found that Islamic spirituality increases not only academic performance

but also personal development in Islamic educational institutes from the idea of putting value into things like discipline and integrity (Rosliza et al., 2017).

Interestingly, Wahid and Wardatun (2023) also note that Indonesian intellectualism in peers can determine the spiritual and academic development of students in Indonesia. Islamic spiritual values in the field of pedagogy are included by teachers of these pesantren-affiliated schools in dealing with their students to give them not only academic success but also morality. By taking this approach it gives students a learning environment where they learn as well as grow morally as ethical persons. Pesantren's system accentuates spirituality that teaching is equipped with the model of reflective practice, in which educators can model and stimulate ethical behavior in their students.

The inclusion of Islam spirit in teacher training positively contributes to community engagement among students. According to Bukhori Muslim et al. (2024), volunteerism alongside community service was regarded as an element of the pesantren system. The model of behavior set by faculty members and participation in community building activities is facilitated by faculty members. The result is that from such teachings in Islam, students imbibe a sense of responsibility and a commitment to belong to the larger society, driven to contribute positively as educators, not just knowledgeable but also in terms of commitment to serve the larger society. Therefore, teacher training programs centered on the integration of Islamic spirituality should promote community involvement as being in continuity with religious practice and help future educators realize that service to their communities can be spiritual and practical.

Importantly, the introduction of Islamic spiritual concepts in the teacher's training could lead to the development of teachers who can influence their students greatly. This prior research engaged by Bukhori Muslim et al. (2024) reveals the unique dual focus on the spiritual and academic development of the students and that the graduates from pesantren are multilingual, open-minded and involved in community volunteerism.

In particular, the integration of Islamic spirituality in teacher training provides Western Europe with particular benefits in encouraging intercultural dialogue, as well as the adjustment of the Muslim youth in a context in which they are forced to deal with their dual identity. According to Sözeri et al. (2022), mosque education in the Netherlands is a means whereby Turkish Dutch youth can integrate their religious identity with broader societal values. By integrating Islamic spiritual values into teacher education, teachers are best able to cater to the inherent needs of Muslim students and, in so doing, create an inclusive and cohesive social environment in the classroom. The goal of these programs is to create a sense of belonging for students from the Muslim population, while developing civic responsibility and intercultural dialogue, showing the role of spirituality as well in the transmission of knowledge

Hasan (2010) examines how transnational Islamic education programs cultivated teaching methodologies within Indonesia. The local and global Islamic educational practices are drawn on in these programs for their ethical teaching and reflective practice deeply grounded in Islamic spiritual traditions. Trained in these programs, teachers are better prepared to build on the diversity of their classroom, applying Islamic ethical principles to build a positive, accepting space to learn. This focus demonstrates how spiritual integration holds the potential to change individual teaching practices and the larger educational framework.

Mushaben (2010) discusses how Islamic instruction through the public education system plays a major part in civic integration in Germany. These programs seek to foster civic responsibility and social integration of Muslim students through Muslim/secular school frameworks with the integration of Islamic values. The combination of religious instruction and social action in this school helps ground Muslim students more firmly culturally while demonstrating ethical values discernible to other members of society. As is the case with Islamic spirituality, it was used to establish social cohesion, implying how spiritual integration plays a part in teacher training.

### **Challenges and Opportunities in Integrating Islamic Spirituality in Teacher Training**

Teacher training, when combined with Islamic spirituality as a holistic approach has much more to offer in terms of classroom practice and student engagement. However, it is in for a major struggle, particularly within secular-multicultural educational systems. This is particularly the case among Muslims residing in Western Europe where a secular system requires religion to be set aside, which would have significant implications on fundamental Islamic concepts as well raised inside public schools (Fuess, 2007). A scarcity of trained Islamic educators facing the challenge in Finland makes the situation even worse as educators are confronted with the dilemma of integrating Islamic content into teaching materials while respecting state policies on neutrality (Kallioniemi, 2018).

Interreligious dialogue constitutes one of the ways of meeting the challenges posed by the coexistence of secular and religious education. In communities, especially those of Flanders, where multiple cultures and religions converge, interreligious dialogue has led to success in developing understanding and neutralizing radicalization among students (Lafrarchi, 2021). When educators encourage open discussions on spirituality, they establish a respectful, inclusive place for all views to be entertained. This approach integrates Islamic spirituality and promotes social cohesion as the means to balance spiritual engagement with secular educational goals.

To summarize, there are many opportunities with which to integrate Islamic spirituality into teacher training programs. Connecting spirituality with social justice can be a way to foster more inclusive education spaces and, as suggested by González-Doğan (2023), mosque education in the Netherlands successfully integrates religious and social integration (Sözeri et al., 2022). However, there is a more effective way we can bridge the gap between religious values and secular requirements in the encouraging sense to equip educators with the expertise to integrate ethical and spiritual teachings into practice (Wahid & Wardatun, 2023).

### **Conclusion**

Incorporating Islamic spiritual practices in teacher training can provide immense benefits to the educational process and student growth. Educators can cultivate the development of spiritual principles, such as ethical leadership, reflective practice and compassion within teacher education to promote both academic excellence in tandem with moral values. However, notable challenges continue to be experienced especially in multicultural and secular environments where reconciling religious and secular aspirations can prove difficult.

For the successful incorporation of Islamic spirituality into existing teacher training programs, there will have to be closed gaps surrounding current teacher training programs. Therefore, there is a need for building adequate faculty development programs to prepare educators to practice the infusion of spirituality while maintaining the context of a secular educational



approach. Moreover, it is important for us to integrate interreligious dialogue and collaboration between religious and secular educators to create inclusive environments that respect faith, spirituality, and intellectual goals.

More research is needed to investigate the influence of spirituality-focused teacher training on student outcomes and also to create new ways of incorporating Islamic spirituality in education. Facilitating international collaboration and knowledge sharing between and among Islamic educational institutions, as well as secular ones could potentially help educators identify best practices from a global

Ultimately, integrating the Islamic spirit into training teachers is the pathway to developing holistic and inclusive educational systems. This further prepares educators to be not only academic leaders but also ethical and spiritual guides that can mold students to be responsible, compassionate, and morally sound people. As our world becomes more and more diverse and interconnected, educators will be required to strike a balance between spiritual values in our curriculum and the needs of modern education.

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