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# Suluk Wujil: Model of Normatif-Spiritual Management in Islamic Education

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#### Abstract

The present study offers an analytical review of the content of Suluk Wujil, entitled "Normative-Spiritual Management of Islamic Education." An understanding of the values espoused in Suluk Wujil can contribute to the advancement of pragmatic science in real-life contexts, particularly in the field of Islamic education, which must continue to innovate and identify itself. The objective of this article is to make a contribution to the field of spiritual normative management science in an era of accelerated progress and heightened complexity. This qualitative descriptive research aims to elucidate the mystical concept of Sunan Bonang and reconstruct the cultural mindset that provides the background. The findings of this study indicate that Suluk Wujil encompasses normative spiritual values that can be integrated into conventional management systems, specifically those related to planning, leading, organizing, and controlling. These four management systems can be compared with the spiritual values contained in Suluk Wujil Sunan Bonang, which reads, "al Hayatu bila Nafsin, an Nadloru bila 'Ainin, as Sam'u bila Udlunin dan al Qadaru bila 'A'dloi."

In general, the meaning of spiritual normative management will be more effective and efficient in building an organizational climate that is comfortable and focused on achieving goals.

Keywords: Management; Normative-spiritual; Suluk Wujil; Sunan Bonang.

#### Abstrak

# Suluk Wujil: Model Manajemen Normatif-Spiritual dalam Pendidikan Islam.

Penelitian ini menawarkan tinjauan analitis terhadap isi Suluk Wujil, yang berjudul "Manajemen Normatif-Spiritual Pendidikan Islam." Pemahaman tentang nilai-nilai yang dianut dalam Suluk Wujil dapat memberikan kontribusi bagi kemajuan ilmu pengetahuan pragmatis dalam konteks kehidupan nyata, khususnya di bidang pendidikan Islam, yang harus terus berinovasi dan mengidentifikasikan dirinya. Tujuan dari artikel ini adalah untuk memberikan kontribusi pada bidang ilmu manajemen normatif spiritual di era yang semakin cepat dan kompleks. Penelitian deskriptif kualitatif ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan konsep mistik Sunan Bonang dan merekonstruksi pola pikir budaya yang melatarbelakanginya. Temuan dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa Suluk Wujil mencakup nilai-nilai spiritual normatif yang dapat diintegrasikan ke dalam sistem manajemen konvensional, khususnya yang terkait dengan perencanaan, kepemimpinan, pengorganisasian, dan pengendalian. Keempat sistem manajemen tersebut dapat dibandingkan dengan nilai-nilai spiritual yang terkandung dalam Suluk Wujil Sunan Bonang, yang berbunyi, "al Hayatu bila Nafsin, an Nadloru bila 'Ainin, as Sam'u bila Udlunin dan al Qadaru bila 'A'dloi." Secara umum, makna manajemen normatif spiritual akan lebih efektif dan efisien dalam membangun iklim organisasi yang nyaman dan fokus pada pencapaian tujuan.

Kata kunci: Manajemen; Normatif-spiritual; Suluk Wujil; Sunan Bonang.

### A. Introduction

The rich scientific, cultural, and intellectual heritage of Muslims in the Indonesian archipelago is widely recognized by Islamic studies researchers, both in academia and the pesantren (Islamic boarding school) circles. From the early days, Islam entered the region in a distinctive, peaceful manner, fostering an acculturation and assimilation of Islamic and Indonesian cultural values. Islam and the cultural diversity of Java are interwoven, as the spread of Islamic teachings and local cultural expressions became closely linked. This interconnectedness characterizes the legacy of Islam as conveyed by the Walisongo.

Both Indonesian and international scholars have been captivated by the archipelago's cultural diversity, linguistic richness, literature, and historical Islamic manuscripts. These elements contribute not only to the depth of Islamic teachings but also to their practical application, making Islam in the archipelago more than just a normative faith. One significant manuscript, Suluk Wujil, attributed to Sunan Bonang, provides historical evidence of his efforts to introduce and teach Islam to new converts. Suluk Wujil is replete with wisdom, noble educational values, and spiritual teachings intended for daily practice of the Islamic faith.

The spiritual and normative management values found in Suluk Wujil are detailed in Poerbatjaraka's Indonesian translation, consisting of 104 stanzas. Select stanzas reflect specific values: loyalty in stanza two, sincerity in stanza three, responsibility in stanza eight, and honesty in stanza twenty-two. Through a philosophical lens, encompassing ontological, axiological, and empirical approaches, Suluk Wujil also emerges as a foundational work for the development of educational management in the archipelago.

Moreover, on a spiritual level, Suluk Wujil embodies leadership values within an organizational framework, including qualities such as ineffability (religious experience), noetic quality (resembling), transiency (mystical state), and passivity (awareness) (Nugraha, 2019; p. 172).

#### B. Discussion

#### 1. Research Method

This research employs a library research method, which involves gathering data from literature relevant to the research objectives. Library research, as defined by Bungin (2012: 129-133), is a method often used in social research for historical data exploration. According to Mary Jo Lynch, library or bibliographical research can be understood as the "reordering of others' thoughts," aiming to reconstruct the perspectives and findings of previous scholars (Connaway & Powell, 2010).

For data collection, documentation techniques are utilized. The documentation method involves gathering data from written sources such as archives, books, and other documents pertinent to the research questions (Sukmadinata, 2015).

To analyze this data, content analysis is applied. This method facilitates extracting information from recorded communications, enabling the analysis of symbols and meanings documented in various forms like newspapers, books, and films. Through content analysis, this

study seeks to gain a comprehensive understanding of communication messages, allowing for objective, systematic, and relevant interpretations (Subrayogo, 2001).

# 2. Navigating Educational Management in a Rapidly Changing World: Integrating Human Values and Spiritual Insights

The essential functions of a management system revolve around planning, leadership, organizing, and controlling—principles grounded in the foundational management theories presented by Taylor. The management of educational institutions across all levels has become both urgent and compelling due to the increasingly complex landscape of interests, demands, and evolving challenges. The rapid pace of change makes these dynamics more unpredictable, further emphasizing the importance of a robust management system to navigate this fluid environment. Educational institutions are undeniably central to a nation's advancement, as they are instrumental in nurturing high-quality human resources through equally high-quality education processes (Ahmad Yusuf, 2021, p. 184).

In today's postmodern era, one prominent trend is the relentless pace of environmental change, which disrupts social orders, norms, and values. This turbulence has reshaped relationships, technology, culture, and even the fundamental roles humans play in life. Such shifts have led to what Arief (2010) describes as a degradation in moral and spiritual values, resulting in a society increasingly obsessed with materialism, often measured by innovative but material-driven thought processes. This fixation on material success, alongside liberalism, has contributed to various psychological issues, such as identity crises, depression, stress, and the fear of failure. Over time, this relentless focus has weakened the intrinsic human qualities that connect individuals with divine and natural principles, giving rise to a more mechanistic, less humanistic society.

Globalization, while strengthening connections and efficiencies, also highlights the limitations of relying solely on market mechanisms to address resource disparities (Junaedi & Waruwu, 2020). This emphasis on profit, particularly in management spheres like Islamic Education, often leads institutions to operate with self-serving motivations, prioritizing market demands and profitability over ethical considerations. The drive for short-term gains results in actions that exploit available resources—both internal and external—and reinforces egocentric behaviors that disrupt social, economic, cultural, and political equilibrium.

Amirul Ulum, as cited by Ahmad Yusuf, reflects on the teachings of Sunan Bonang, whose contributions to Islamic thought remain a profound legacy. The teachings of Ma'rifatullah, encompassing the principles of Sufism, offer a framework that addresses these

ethical and moral challenges. Sunan Bonang's legacy, particularly in the domains of ushul fiqh, fiqh, and Sufism, emphasizes the integration of spiritual depth into practical life, an approach that balances material pursuits with ethical and spiritual grounding (Yusuf, 2021). This holistic perspective offers a pathway for educational and managerial practices that respect both human values and divine guidance.

# 3. Suluk Wujil: The Legacy of Sunan Bonang and the Sufi Influence on Javanese Spirituality

Suluk Wujil, one of Sunan Bonang's notable poetic works, emerged during the early spread of Islam in Java. This Suluk contains guidance and teachings directed at one of his students, Wujil (Farobi, 2018). Exploring the historical development of religions unveils the deep-rooted beliefs individuals hold. A historical approach is essential to understanding and analyzing Islamic traditions in Java, particularly the relationships between Islamic elements and local traditions (Ghazali, 2005).

The version of Islam brought to Java at the time was rich in Sufi teachings. This strong emphasis on Sufism eased the work of the preachers, the Walisongo, in spreading Islam, as the local populace was inclined to embrace it with a spirit of *Nerima ing pandhum* (accepting their destiny) (H.R. Warsito, 2015). The tolerance inherent in Sufi practices allowed for harmonious relationships among diverse communities, fostering mutual respect despite varying beliefs and traditions. The cultural identity of the Javanese, passed down through generations, carries symbols and values essential to life. These symbols hold not only aesthetic and ethical significance but also serve pragmatic and philosophical functions (Susetya, 2007).

The Javanese, as a community, displayed a distinctive tolerance and resilience in the face of European influence, embodying these qualities even in the process of Islamic assimilation. This acceptance is evident in the evolution of Javanese literary works, which often combine religious mysticism with elements from other traditions, including Hindu-Javanese influences. Javanese literature developed with a unique inclination towards mystical themes, often presented as prose poetry or *Macapat* songs. These literary works can be categorized into three main groups: (1) those emphasizing orthodox Islamic ethics and law, (2) works of didactic narrative poetry, and (3) mystical writings (Raffles, 1830).

Among the most prominent works of Sunan Bonang, one of the revered Walisongo, is the *Suluk Wujil*, a poem renowned for its philosophical and spiritual depth. The *Suluk* uses traditional *Macapat* melodies such as *Dhandanggulo* and *Mijil*, as well as the *Aswawalita* style of

Old Javanese songs. The story centers on Wujil, who originally served as a palace attendant in the Majapahit Kingdom. Driven by a thirst for spiritual knowledge, he left the kingdom to study with Sunan Bonang, also known as Queen Wahdat. Despite studying for ten years, Wujil had yet to receive the esoteric knowledge he sought. Eventually, he mustered the courage to ask Sunan Bonang about it. In response, Sunan Bonang explained that Wujil was not yet ready, as mastery of secret knowledge requires one to be honest and pure in both body and soul—a cleansing and preparation essential for receiving such profound wisdom (Achmad, 2014).

The *Suluk Wujil* serves as an allegorical journey, illustrating the deep connection between self-discipline, spiritual readiness, and the ultimate quest for truth. It underscores the Javanese synthesis of Sufi Islam with local values, providing timeless guidance on spiritual maturation, which resonates deeply within Javanese cultural and religious identity. The values contained in *Suluk Wujil* include the following:

#### a. Loyalty

In the second stanza of Suluk Wujil, it is stated:

"Sadasa warsa sira genap Wujil/Angasta padane Sangane Adiningrat/anantun warah dikane/ing feelingjilanipun/sira Wujil ing Maospahit/amêng-amênganira/nateng Majapahit/têlas sandining aksara/Wujil matur sira the adi gusti/anuwun Pangandika"

Meaning: "For ten years, Wujil studied with Panembahan Agung but received no special knowledge. Originally, Wujil had come from Majapahit, where he was a favorite servant to the king. After mastering all the grammar, he humbly asked for guidance from Panembahan Agung."

These verses portray loyalty, symbolizing a devoted student patiently awaiting the teacher's guidance. Wujil's unwavering dedication over ten years reflects loyalty, even when no results are visible, demonstrating pure obedience and self-discipline (Apriana, 2015).

# b. Sincerity

This value is expressed in the third stanza:

"Pun Wujil byate kang anuwun sih/ing têlapakan Jati Wati/ngaturkên pejah gêsange/sampun wening pamuruk/aras panduka warti/wêkasane alodrang agêng di antara kayun/sabên dina rêrakêtan/even bosên kawula kang aludjaga / ginawe alan-alan"

Meaning: "Servant Wujil sincerely asks for mercy, bowing before the teacher, surrendering his life and death, having learned the teachings but still seeking knowledge. Though faced with monotony, he remains committed."

This verse embodies sincerity. Sincerity, here, is the absence of pride in one's actions, with Wujil remaining patient and steadfast despite his long journey. He demonstrates sincere surrender to God's will, reflecting the virtue of ikhlas (Achmad, 2014).

#### c. Religious Values

Piety, or taqwa, is evident in the sixth stanza:

"Pun Wujil byate kang anuwun sih/ing têlapakan Jati Wati/ngaturkên pejah gêsange/ampun wening pamuruk/sastra arab panduka warti/wêkasane alodrang/ agêng di antara kayun/sabên dina rêrakêtan/bahkan bosên kawula kang aludjaga/ginawe alan-alan"

Meaning: "He asks for forgiveness, surrendering before God, entrusting his life and death to divine wisdom."

This verse underscores a religious devotion and surrender to God's will. Wujil's commitment to divine obedience, despite ridicule from others, shows his dedication to piety and spiritual obedience to his Creator (Apriana, 2015).

#### d. Responsibility

In the eighth verse, responsibility is conveyed:

"Alis Ratu Wahdat lingira/Hira ra Wujil mareng to den enggal/trus dencekel kekucire /sarwi den elus-elus/tiniban sih ing sabadi wadi /ra wujil rungokene / sasmita katengsun /lamun sira kalebua /ing naraka ingsung dwewek angleboni/aja kang Tuan kaya//"

Meaning: "Hi Wujil, come here," while holding Wujil's ponytail and gently stroking it, the teacher expresses, "Wujil, listen. If you must go to hell because of my words, I will take your place."

This verse emphasizes responsibility, demonstrating that the teacher assumes accountability for the guidance provided, willing to bear the consequences on behalf of Wujil (Apriana, 2015).

#### e. Honesty and Self-Awareness

Honesty is illustrated in the 22nd verse:

"Sayogyane heh sira ra Wujil / deku ta mangke sariranira / ya kantiya nyayangi sautuhe / iku tetanggamu / rumput laut sira dera alah / sing kang real sarira / polahe ambesur / amarang rêraganira / kang dadi tingal ananging keki iki / kang den liling netyama"

Meaning: "It's better for you, Wujil, to know yourself. I admire your spirit; be mindful of your shortcomings and remember them."

The 22nd stanza advocates self-awareness and honesty. According to Purbatjaraka in Mahfudh et al., honesty should underpin all actions. In this verse, Wujil displays honesty and self-reflection, embracing his vulnerabilities and authentic self (Mahfudh et al., 2017). These values in *Suluk Wujil* offer moral teachings on loyalty, sincerity, religious devotion, responsibility, and honesty, serving as guidance for character development and spiritual growth.

#### 4. The Concept of Normative-Spiritual Management Model of Islamic Education.

Ontologically, Hendrawan, as cited in Mohammad Ali, defines spirituality as a principle that breathes life into physical organisms, encompassing elements related to the sacred and the supernatural. Spirituality involves three core elements: (1) a source of life force; (2) a sacred status; and (3) a connection to the Divine (Arief, 2010). Ali (2009) further explains that spirituality is a distinct component within belief systems or religions. While spirituality acts as a life force and holds a sacred character, it is often perceived separately from formal religious structures, though they may overlap. Life force and holiness, in this context, can be seen both in form and essence (Arief, 2010, p. 176).

The term "spiritual" derives from the English word "spirit," which encompasses meanings such as soul, essence, morality, and purpose. In Arabic, spirituality is related to the essence and governance of all things. This concept, therefore, focuses on the conscience, morals, and positive behaviors of individuals. From birth, humans do not inherently exhibit good or bad behaviors; rather, spirituality develops alongside physical growth, shaped by environmental influences. Building good character requires a long, formative process within an individual's surroundings (Junaedi & Waruwu, 2020).

According to Schuon, exoteric religion emphasizes literal forms, focusing on doctrines, moral behavior, and personal salvation—concepts that align with the majority's understanding and seek to assure rewards in the afterlife. Esoteric religion, however, is more metaphysical and

contemplative, prioritizing wisdom, unity with the Divine, and the essence over literal adherence to teachings. Sabatier (1905) also distinguishes between approaches focused on authority and those centered on the spiritual essence of religion (Saucier & Skrzypin 'ska, 2006).

In essence, spirituality is connected to goodness, which is the core of religious teachings. Every human possesses an intrinsic purity rooted in divinity. However, environmental and social influences shape a person's character, either nurturing goodness or leading astray. In Sunan Bonang's teachings, as conveyed in *Suluk Wujil*, several primary concepts address spiritual guidance and management. These include:

# a. al Hayah bila Nafsin (Living without soul)

A monitoring system to ensure the continuity of the organization is one of the main components of management in the controlling aspect. The meaning of an Nadloru bila 'Ainin is seeing without eyes. If understood linguistically, of course this is impossible because humans can see because they have perfect vision tools by God. Understanding of the environment will decrease when there are problems with the visual apparatus. Then how is it possible for someone to see without eyes

The understanding of this concept is acceptable and very relevant if humans do not only understand the visual apparatus of their physical eyes. On the other hand, God gave every human being a heart to be able to feel, believe and even see very clearly something that is not visible to the physical eye. As with the existence of God and His supernatural creatures, it is impossible for the physical eye to see and accept belief. However, with the sharpness of the eyes of the heart, belief and faith which are placed in the depths of the human heart, humans can finally feel and believe in the existence of God, the creator of the entire universe. The correlation of this concept in management is not to sever the relationship between human birth and spirituality. With good correlation and integration, it will produce higher quality products.

### b. an Nadloru bila 'Ainin (Seing without Eyes)

as Sam'u bilaa Udlunin still has something to do with the previous concept, namely seeing without eyes. Thus, the management concept of Sam'u Bilaa Udlunin includes a monitoring system. The sensitivity of a leader in carrying out his main duties and functions in an organization is very necessary. In an effort to gather opinions and desires of employees and management components, they do not have to hear directly from them. However, because of this sensitivity, a leader already captures the desires and thoughts of his employees before they express them. With a control system like this, you can ensure consistent continuity of the system and avoid turbulence from an organizational climate that may not be good.

# c. al Qadaru bilaa 'A'dlo'i (The power without limbs/ Limbless Strength)

The concept of al Qadaru bilaa 'A'dlo'i encompasses both leadership and the activation of management functions. Within spiritual normative management, leadership and actuation emphasize modeling, motivation, and charismatic guidance. Leadership, as defined here, is the process by which one individual influences others to achieve objectives and fosters cohesion within an organization. This aligns with Northouse's (2007) definition, in which leadership is "a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (Sharma, 2013).

Charismatic leadership effectively drives all management components with minimal direct intervention, as the leader's actions and demeanor foster a positive and influential organizational environment. Spiritual normative management, therefore, serves as a practical approach to resolving management challenges, particularly in Islamic education management. Spiritual management is defined as the capacity to impart spiritual significance to one's thoughts and actions, aiming for divine grace. Agustian (2006) describes spiritual intelligence (SQ) as the ability to incorporate religious values as a core belief, grounding all actions while harmonizing IQ, EQ, and SQ comprehensively.

Beliefs surrounding religious or spiritual phenomena significantly impact human behavior, offering a worldview that renders existence meaningful. These beliefs provide frameworks for understanding life, purpose, justice, and mortality, and they serve as buffers against anxiety by fostering a sense of security (Saucier & Skrzypin´ska, 2006). Individuals with high spiritual intelligence display flexibility in life, adapting easily to changing situations and approaching challenges openly. This adaptability reduces stress, as such individuals accept reality without rigid attachment (Azzet, 2010).

Normativity refers to recognized standards of meaningful, valuable principles that are universally respected. Within a normative framework for meaningful work, literature often highlights the interplay between subjective moral worth and conformity to objective standards of goodness (Vu & Burton, 2021). Numerous studies by psychologists and business experts reveal that spirituality and normativity are intrinsically linked. Norms are more likely to be upheld when supported by strong spiritual foundations, as spirituality fosters actions that align with normative values. Experts such as Helminiak, Cavanagh, and Bandsuch emphasize that spirituality embodies beliefs, ethics, commitments, meanings, and values that facilitate a meaningful life. Spirituality supports a person's pursuit of a higher purpose, encouraging

authentic connections between their work and a transcendent life purpose beyond personal gain (Vu & Burton, 2021).

Spirituality entails an inner and outer synergy, wherein external actions are guided by intrinsic values that emphasize quality over quantity in life and management. Management's primary aim, rooted in spirituality, is effectiveness and efficiency in fulfilling organizational objectives. Spirituality represents an internal appreciation for the Divine, as evidenced by one's actions. Western interpretations of spirituality focus on the inner self, a concept believed to be endowed by God. Sim identifies five core aspects of spirituality grounded in psychology: (1) the meaning of life, (2) interpersonal tolerance, (3) personality, (4) morality, and (5) an awareness of God and the relationship between humanity and the Divine (Arief, 2010).

In the spiritual normative management of *Suluk Wujil* values, there are at least four key terms which, if a leader can possess them, will make his leadership more charismatic because it is respected by the staff in the organization, namely;

- 1) *Ineffability* namely religious experience is something that is indescribable and cannot be expressed in words.
- 2) Noetic, although it resembles a state of feeling but is also a state of knowledge. In this situation there is revelation, enlightenment, filling, which cannot be articulated but can be felt.
- 3) *Transiency,* mystical conditions that do not last long, can last half an hour and a maximum of two hours.
- 4) *Passivity*, this consciousness is as if it were its own desires which were bound and gripped and grasped by enormous power (Nugraha, 2019).

The existence of universal good values in humans will be reflected in everyday behavior, of course this will provide more awareness to each individual to always apply the values of honesty, humility, mutual respect and tolerance as well as helping each other in the organizational climate. which is harmonious. With a harmonious and.

#### C. Conclusion

In conclusion, the synthesis of Islamic and Javanese cultural values through works such as *Suluk Wujil* reflects a distinctive Indonesian Islamic heritage that emphasizes ethical and spiritual development within educational and organizational management. This approach, influenced by Sufi principles as espoused by the Walisongo, particularly Sunan Bonang, fosters values of loyalty, sincerity, responsibility, and honesty that are integral to the archipelago's cultural identity and spiritual worldview. The findings underscore that the *Suluk Wujil* not only

guides individual spiritual growth but also informs an indigenous model of educational management. By promoting values like seeing without eyes and hearing without ears, it encourages leadership sensitivity, underscoring the critical role of spiritual awareness in organizational resilience and human development. This study highlights how Indonesia's rich Islamic tradition can contribute to contemporary educational management frameworks, integrating spirituality and human values to counterbalance materialism and reinforce ethical governance in a changing world.

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