

Integrating Humanistic Learning Theory with Religious Values in Classroom Management of Social Studies Education Students

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Abstract: Classroom management is vital to a successful learning process, especially in higher education settings rooted in Islamic values. In social studies education, effective classroom management establishes order and discipline and serves as a foundation for helping students reach their full potential. However, balancing academic achievement with character development presents several challenges. Integrating humanistic learning theory with religious values offers a relevant solution to address these issues. This study examined the implementation of integrating humanistic learning theory with religious values in classroom management for social studies education students at one university in Ponorogo. A qualitative descriptive approach was used for the study. The participants included 10 students from first-year students to senior students, selected through purposive sampling. Data were gathered using in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. The data analysis followed an interactive model that comprised four stages: data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The findings illustrated that integrating humanistic learning theory with religious values is evident in classroom management practices. These practices prioritize respect for student individuality, employ dialogic and participatory learning methods, and reinforce religious values such as honesty, responsibility, and tolerance. Such an approach contributes to creating a classroom atmosphere that is conducive, participatory, and meaningful. Additionally, this integration fosters active academic and social engagement among students, promoting their development of their religious and social character. The study concludes that classroom management rooted in the synergy between humanistic theory and religious values enhances holistic learning outcomes, preparing students to become future social studies educators with strong academic skills and moral integrity.

Keywords: classroom management; humanistic learning theory; qualitative descriptive; religious values; social studies education.

Introduction

Classroom management is a fundamental aspect of the learning process that affects all levels of education (Abidin and Muhammad, 2024). In higher education, it serves not only to establish order and discipline but also as a crucial tool for fostering a conducive, participatory, and meaningful learning environment (Albayrak and Ateşkan, 2022). In Islamic higher education institutions, classroom management assumes a broader significance, as it encompasses not only pedagogical aspects but also aims to foster

character development and the internalization of religious values in students. Therefore, the effectiveness of classroom management is evaluated not solely by academic performance but also by its contribution to the development of students' personalities and moral values (Tumiran et al., 2025).

In Social Studies education, effective classroom management is critical as this field synthesizes knowledge, social skills, and human values. However, universities still face several challenges, including low student engagement, an overreliance on lecture-based teaching with

minimal interaction, and insufficient attention to the affective and spiritual dimensions of learning (Bakar, 2021). As a result, the educational experience can become mechanical, missing the humanistic essence that should be central to education. These challenges underscore the need for a new approach to classroom management that strikes a balance between academic success and character development.

Previous research has explored classroom management from various angles. Some studies focus on positive discipline strategies (Alasmari and Althaqafi, 2024), constructivist approaches (Harputra and Tambunan, 2024), and the importance of interpersonal communication between lecturers and students in cultivating productive learning environments (Zariipova, 2025). In the realm of Islamic education, research often emphasizes the moral internalization, development of religious character, and spiritual enhancement of students (Bahiyah, 2025). Although both perspectives are valuable, they are frequently examined in isolation. There is limited research that integrates humanistic learning theory and religious values within classroom management practices in Islamic higher education.

Humanistic learning theory and religious values share significant overlap in their view of learners as whole individuals. Humanistic theory emphasizes respect for human dignity, the freedom of thought, and the pursuit of self-actualization (Amin et al., 2025), while religious values provide moral and spiritual guidance for personal growth and development (Prasong, 2025). By combining these two perspectives, it is possible to develop classroom management practices that address intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions. In this integration, lecturers not only manage the classroom but also act as facilitators who nurture students' moral awareness, honesty, responsibility, and tolerance.

The synergy between humanistic learning theory and religious values is expected to create a more dialogical classroom atmosphere that honors students' individuality and encourages active participation in the learning

process. In the context of Islamic higher education, this integration will not only enhance academic achievement but also deepen students' spiritual and social awareness, preparing them for future Social Studies educators with integrity.

This study aims to explore and describe the implementation of integrating humanistic learning theory and religious values in classroom management among Social Studies Education students one university in Ponorogo. It is anticipated that this research will contribute theoretically to the development of value-based classroom management models and serve as a practical guide for lecturers in fostering humanistic, religious, and meaningful learning experiences within Islamic higher education.

Materials and Methods

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive design (Creswell, 2016) aimed at providing an in-depth depiction of the integration of humanistic learning theory and religious values in classroom management among Social Studies Education students at an Islamic higher education institution in Ponorogo. First-year students to senior students, selected through purposive sampling, were selected through purposive sampling because they were well-positioned to offer relevant insights for the research focus. Data were collected using non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation. Non-participant observation allowed the researcher to observe classroom management practices directly, without active involvement, while semi-structured interviews provided an opportunity to explore students' views and experiences more deeply. Data analysis followed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), which involves four stages: data collection, data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. This process was carried out cyclically throughout the research. To ensure data validity, the study employed triangulation of sources and

methods, along with member checking, to maintain consistency and accuracy in their research findings. This study was conducted in three stages: preparation, implementation, and analysis (Bogdan and Biklein, 2021). The aim was to generate a comprehensive understanding of the synergy between humanistic theory and religious values in shaping effective classroom management rooted in Islamic morality.

Results and Discussion

Results

The results of the study indicate that integrating humanistic learning theory and religious values into classroom management among Social Studies Education students at an Islamic higher education institution in Ponorogo is evident across various dimensions of the learning process, including planning, implementation, and evaluation. Through non-participant observations and semi-structured interviews with ten students from the first to the seventh semester, it was discovered that lecturers consistently work to create an open, participatory, and student-centered classroom environment. This is reflected in students' active participation in discussions, case studies, group presentations, and self-reflection activities that connect their learning experiences to social life and Islamic values.

In the planning stage, lecturers pay attention to students' needs, potential, and backgrounds. Some lecturers design their lesson plans considering students' diverse abilities and learning styles (interview, October 6 2025). Their learning plans not only focus on cognitive achievements but also emphasize affective and spiritual dimensions. For example, lecturers link Social Studies content with moral values, such as social justice, civic responsibility, and empathy, helping students understand that Social Studies education is closely tied to character formation.

During implementation, the learning environment is conducive and dialogical. Lecturers emphasize the importance of

respectful communication, mutual appreciation of differing opinions, and academic honesty in all classroom activities. Religious values are integrated naturally; for instance, each class begins with a prayer (observation, October 28 2025), social concepts are connected to Qur'anic verses or hadiths, and practical examples illustrate how Islamic values can be applied in everyday life. These practices are contextual rather than indoctrinative, allowing students to see the relationship between social knowledge and religious teachings.

Throughout the learning process, lecturers also provide opportunities for students to share personal experiences and critical perspectives on social issues. Students feel valued as unique individuals who are free to think independently. They view lecturers not merely as instructors but as mentors guiding their moral and emotional development. This aligns with the principles of humanistic learning, which considers learners as whole persons capable of holistic growth.

In terms of evaluation, it was found that lecturers assess not only final outcomes but also students' learning processes and attitudes throughout the course. Self-reflection plays a crucial role in assessment, encouraging students to evaluate their own thinking, behavior, and the values they have embraced during the semester. This reflective evaluation enhances students' awareness of both academic and spiritual responsibilities.

Furthermore, the classroom environment established by lecturers promotes mutual respect, empathy, and collaboration. Students report feeling more comfortable interacting and sharing opinions without fear of judgment. The relationship between lecturers and students is warm and egalitarian, reflecting values of compassion (rahmah) and respect for human dignity. This positive atmosphere not only boosts learning motivation but also aids students in internalizing professional attitudes and ethics as future educators.

Overall, the findings suggest that integrating humanistic learning theory with religious values fosters a holistic learning process that

balances cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions. Such classroom management enhances students' identities as future Social Studies teachers who are not only intellectually competent but also characterized by integrity, reflection, and moral awareness in fulfilling their professional roles.

Discussion

Integration of the Humanistic Approach in Classroom Management

The findings of this study reveal that the humanistic learning approach is consistently implemented by lecturers in managing classrooms for Social Studies Education students. The central principle of humanistic theory is to view learners as complete human beings individuals with inherent potential, emotions, and motivation for self-development. In the context of Islamic higher education in Ponorogo, the application of this approach is reflected in the lecturers' efforts to create an open, dialogical, and student-centered learning environment.

This aligns with the perspectives of Carl Rogers (2002) and Abraham Maslow (2000), who emphasized student-centered learning and self-actualization as the core of meaningful education. Lecturers do not merely act as transmitters of information; instead, they serve as facilitators who guide students towards self-understanding and the realization of their potential. A classroom environment grounded in humanity allows students to feel accepted, respected, and free to express their ideas.

The academic freedom granted to students comes with moral and ethical responsibilities in thought and action (Jackson, 2021). Students are encouraged to learn from their mistakes, engage in self-reflection, and derive meaning from their learning experiences. In practice, lecturers often conclude learning sessions with reflective activities, such as asking students to write about what they have learned and how it can be applied in real-life social contexts. This reflective practice is a hallmark of the humanistic approach, emphasizing self-awareness and the cultivation of personal values.

Moreover, the interpersonal relationships built between lecturers and students demonstrate empathy and respect for human dignity. Two-way communication and inclusive classroom interactions enhance students' motivation to learn and foster a sense of belonging to the educational process (Pattiasina et al., 2025). These findings affirm that humanistic learning theory can be effectively implemented in Islamic higher education, providing lecturers understand that learning is a deeply human process rather than just a means of transmitting knowledge.

Therefore, the integration of a humanistic approach in classroom management not only leads to effective learning outcomes (Fikri, 2025) but also supports students' holistic personal development (Salamuddin et al., 2025). This process helps Social Studies students become reflective, empathetic individuals with strong social awareness essential qualities for future educators who will interact with diverse communities.

Nevertheless, this study has its limitations, particularly concerning the sample size, which includes only ten students from a single study program at one institution. This limitation suggests that the variation in learning experiences presented may not fully capture the dynamics of implementing the humanistic approach across other Islamic universities. Future research involving a broader range of participants and institutions could provide a more comprehensive picture of the humanistic learning model in Islamic higher education.

Thorough discussion re-presents the causal effect mainly explains for why and how the results of the research were taken place, and do not only re-express the mentioned results in the form of sentences, not repeat them.

Internalization of Religious Values in the Learning Process

The integration of religious values into Social Studies learning at Islamic higher education institutions in Ponorogo is a crucial aspect of the classroom management strategies employed by lecturers. Rather than teaching religious values as separate subjects, these values are

internalized through behaviors, interactions, and the overall learning environment. This method aligns with the Islamic educational philosophy, which emphasizes the unity of knowledge and morality; the ultimate goal of learning is to shape the *insan kamil* a complete human being who is intellectually, morally, and spiritually sound (Kusno, 2025).

Lecturers incorporate Islamic values in various ways. They may start classes with communal prayers, link social issues to relevant Qur'anic verses or hadiths, and highlight the importance of academic honesty and moral responsibility. This internalization helps students recognize that learning is not merely an academic exercise, but also a process of character and spiritual development.

The integration of religious values enriches humanistic learning by adding a transcendental dimension to the educational experience (Prasong, 2025). While humanistic theory emphasizes human potential and psychological needs, religious values introduce a spiritual orientation that encourages students to strive for higher purposes—close to God and positive contributions to society.

In the context of Social Studies, values such as social justice, responsibility, empathy, and compassion are woven into meaningful academic activities (Waghid, 2024). Lecturers motivate students to analyze social issues through the lens of Islamic ethics (Mahmudhassan et al., 2024). For instance, when discussing poverty, social inequality, or interfaith harmony, students not only develop a theoretical understanding of these social realities, but also cultivate moral sensitivity in addressing them.

Furthermore, the incorporation of religious values in the learning process strengthens students' identities as future teachers within Islamic institutions (Succariei, 2024). Students learn from lecturers' attitudes demonstrating patience, fairness, and respect for diversity showing how Islamic values can be embodied in daily practice rather than just understood conceptually. Consequently, the internalization of religious values fosters a spiritually conscious

learning environment that encourages ethical behavior and professional responsibility among students.

However, this study has a limitation: it primarily captures students' perspectives without deeply exploring the strategies employed by lecturers in designing and evaluating the integration of religious values. Future research that includes observations of lecturers' planning and reflection stages, as well as comparative analysis between Islamic and non-Islamic programs, is essential for achieving a more comprehensive understanding of the internalization of religious values in higher education learning contexts.

Conclusions

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that integrating a humanistic approach with religious values in classroom management at Islamic higher education institutions in Ponorogo fosters a holistic, dialogical, and character-oriented learning process. The humanistic approach allows students to develop emotionally and socially, while the internalization of religious values establishes a moral and spiritual foundation that enhances academic responsibility and professional ethics among future educators. These two approaches work together to create a learning environment that is both compassionate and faith-based, supporting the objectives of Islamic education, which emphasizes the balance between knowledge, faith, and good deeds. Consequently, it is essential for lecturers in Islamic higher education to continuously develop learning models that incorporate both humanistic and spiritual dimensions in order to nurture reflective, empathetic, and morally upright future educators.

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