

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 explored how integrating humanistic learning theory with religious values is implemented in classroom management for social studies education students at UIN Kiai Ageng Muhammad Besari Ponorogo. A qualitative descriptive approach was utilized for the study. The participants included ten 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 the 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 an essential part of the teaching process in all categories of learning (Abidin and Muhammad, 2024). In the field of higher education, it is used not only as a means to establish peace and discipline but also an important device for enhancing conducive learning, participatory learning, and meaningfulness in academic activities (Albayrak and Ateskan, 2022). The nature of classroom management in Islamic higher education institutions takes on meaning that is broader than just pedagogy, as it also seeks to develop morality

and internalization of values in students. For this reason, classroom management effectiveness is determined not only by students' academic achievement but also by its impact on their character and moral development (Tumiran et al., 2025).

In the social studies education, effective classroom management is essential because the discipline integrates knowledge, social skills, and human values. Yet, higher learning institutions confront some problems such as students' lack of deep involvement in the classroom, overdependence on lecture-based teaching with little

interaction and minimum consideration given to affective and spiritual aspects of learning (Bakar, 2021). Consequently, the educational experience may become mechanical, losing the humanistic essence that lies at the heart of education. These challenges highlight the need for a classroom management approach that balances academic achievement with students' moral and character development.

Studies on how lecturers manage the class have been conducted from different perspectives. Some of these research focus on positive discipline techniques (Alasmari and Althaqafi, 2024), constructivist strategies (Harputra and Tambunan, 2024), and the role of interpersonal relationship between the lecturers and students in developing effective learning environment (Shaxobiddinovna, 2025). Meanwhile in Islamic education, research has primarily focused on the internalization of moral values, the development of students' religious character, and the enhancement of their spiritual growth (Bahiyah, 2025). Although these perspectives are valuable, they have generally been examined separately. Few studies have integrated humanistic learning theory and religious values within classroom management practices in Islamic higher education.

The integration of humanistic learning theory and religious values is expected to foster a more dialogical classroom environment that respects students' individuality and encourages their active engagement in the learning process. In the context of Islamic higher education, this integration is expected to enhance students' academic-achievement while strengthening their spiritual and social awareness, thereby preparing them to become competent and ethical social studies teachers.

This study aims to investigate and describe the integration of humanistic learning theory and religious values into classroom management practices among social studies education students. The findings of this study are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of value-based classroom management models and provide practical guidance for lecturers in fostering humanistic, religious, and meaningful learning experiences in Islamic higher education.

Materials and Methods

This study employed qualitative research with a descriptive design (Creswell, 2014) to explore the integration of humanistic learning theory and religious values in classroom management practices among social studies education students at a state university in Ponorogo. The participants consisted of ten students, ranging from first year to senior students, who were selected through purposive sampling because they were considered capable of providing rich and relevant information to address the research objectives. Data were collected through non-participant observation, semi-structured interview, and documentation. The data were analyzed using the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), which consist of four stages: data collection, data condensation, data display, and drawing conclusion. This iterative process was carried out continuously throughout the study. To ensure the trustworthiness of the findings, triangulation of data sources and methods, together with member checking, was used to enhance the credibility and consistency of the data.

Results and Discussion

Result

The findings of this study indicate that integrating humanistic learning theory into classroom management, which include religious values among social studies education students at a state university in Ponorogo namely a) based on planning b) when it was implemented c) the final result. Based on non-participant observation and semi-structured interviews with ten students, the findings indicate that lecturers consistently strive to create an open, participatory, and student-centered classroom environment. This is reflected in students' active engagement in discussions, cases studies, group presentations, role-play activities, and self-reflection exercises that connect classroom learning with real-world social issues and Islamic values.

During the instruction planning stage, lecturers take into account students' needs, potential, and educational background. Some lecturers design lesson plans that accommodate students' diverse

ability and learning styles (Interview, October 6, 2025). These instructional plans focus not only cognitive outcomes but also on students' affective and spiritual development. For example, lecturers integrate social studies content with values such as social justice, empathy, and civic responsibility, helping students understand that social studies education is closely linked to character development.

The implementation of classroom management is characterized by a conducive and dialogical learning environment. Lecturers emphasized respectful communication, mutual appreciation of diverse perspectives, and academic integrity in all classroom interactions. Religious values are naturally integrated into the learning process. For example, each class begins with a prayer (Observation, October 28, 2025), social issues are linked to relevant Qur'anic verses or hadith, and real-life examples are used to demonstrate how Islamic values can be applied in everyday life. These practices are implemented in a contextual rather than an indoctrinate manner, enabling students to understand and relationship between social studies knowledge and Islamic teachings.

Lecturers make attempts to bring personal experience and critical understanding of social issues into the classroom during learning session. Students reported feeling respected as individuals and encouraged to develop independent and critical thinking. They perceived lecturers not only as instructors but also as mentors who provide moral guidance and emotional support. These findings are consistent with the principles of humanistic learning, which view learners as individuals with the potential for holistic development.

Regarding assessment, the findings indicate that lecturers evaluate not only students' learning outcomes but also their learning processes and attitudes throughout the course. Self-reflection constitutes an essential component of the assessment process, encouraging students to critically examine their thoughts, action, and the values they have developed during their learning experience. This reflective practice enhances students' awareness of both their academic responsibility and their spiritual growth.

Furthermore, lecturers foster a classroom environment characterized by respect, empathy, and collaboration. Students reported feeling more confident in expressing their opinions and exchanging ideas without fear of being judged. The relationship between lecturers and students is warm, democratic, and grounded in the Islamic values of *Rahmah* (compassion) and respect for human dignity. Such a supportive learning environment not only enhances students' motivation to learn but also facilitates the internalization of the professional attitudes and ethical values expected of future social studies educators.

Overall, the findings demonstrate that integrating humanistic learning theory with religious values promotes holistic learning theory with religious values promote holistic learning by addressing students' cognitive, affective, and spiritual development. This approach to classroom management contributes to the formation of future social studies teachers who are not only intellectually competent but also reflective, morally responsible, and professionally committed.

Discussion

Integration of the Humanistic Approach in Classroom Management

The result show that the humanistic teaching philosophy is almost always applied by lecturers when handling classes for social studies education course. The fundamental concept of humanistic theory is to regarded learners as total individual having their own latent abilities, feeling and willing for further growth. An open, dialogical, and student-centered learning environment reflects the successful implementation of humanistic learning principles in classroom management. This interpretation is consistent with the perspectives of Rogers (2002) and Maslow's (2000) view that authentic education should promote self-actualization through student-centered learning. Accordingly, lecturers serve not only as knowledge facilitators but also as mentors who encourages students to develop self-awareness and realize their full potential through meaningful learning experiences.

The emphasis on academic freedom is complemented by ethical responsibility, allowing students to express their ideas while remaining accountable for their decisions and actions (Jackson, 2021). Humanistic learning also promotes reflective thinking by encouraging students to evaluate their learning experiences and relate them to real-life contexts. In the present study, lecturers consistently incorporated reflective activities at the end of learning sessions, enabling students to connect social studies concepts with their personal and social experiences. This practice strengthens self-awareness and facilitates the development of personal values, which constitute essential characteristics of humanistic learning.

Another important finding concerns the quality of lecturer-student relationships. The findings demonstrate their interactions characterized by empathy, respect, and mutual trust enhance students' motivation and encourage active participation in classroom activities. These results are consistent with Pattiasina et al. (2025) who found that democratic communication and learner participation contribute positively to students' engagement and their sense of ownership of learning. The present findings suggest that humanistic learning theory can be effectively implemented in higher education when lecturers perceive learning as a process of human development rather than merely the transmission of knowledge.

The integration of humanistic principles into classroom management also contributes to students' holistic development. Beyond improving learning outcomes (Fikri, 2025), this approach cultivates reflective, empathetic, and socially responsible individuals who possess the professional values required of future social studies educators (Salamuddin et al., 2025). These competencies are particularly important because social studies teachers are expected not only to facilitate students' cognitive development but also to foster democratic value, social responsibility, and ethical citizenship.

This study has several limitations. The findings are based on the student participant from a single study program, which may limit their transferability to other educational contexts. Furthermore, the study focuses primarily on students' perspectives and does not

comprehensively examine lecturers' experiences in implementing humanistic classroom management. Future research should therefore involve a broader range of participants and institutions and investigate how lecturers design, implement, and evaluate classroom management practices based on humanistic learning principles to provide a more comprehensive understanding of their application in higher education.

Internalization of Religious Values in the Learning Process

Within the classroom management practices implemented by lecturers, the integration of religious values into social studies learning at a state university in Ponorogo plays a significant role. Instead of being transmitted exclusively through formal religious instruction, these values are embedded in the classroom through lecturers' interactions, role modeling, and daily learning activities. This hidden curriculum enables students to internalize religious and ethical values naturally as part of their educational experience. This approach is consistent with the Islamic education philosophy: the concept of integrating knowledge and morality, aimed at developing *insan kamil* as a complete human being that is intellectually, morally, and spiritually competent (Kusno, 2025).

The lecturers express Islamic values in a variety of ways. They could be beginning their classes with communal prayers, connecting social issues to relevant Qur'anic verse or hadith, and emphasizing the value of honest work and moral virtue. This internalization serves to help students understand that learning is not restricted to the mind but also addresses character and spiritual growth.

The integration of religious values into humanistic learning adds a transcendent dimension to the educational process (Ake Prasong, 2025). While humanistic learning theory emphasizes learners' potential, autonomy, and psychological development, religious values provide spiritual guidance that encourages students to pursue higher purposes, including devotion to God and service to humanity.

In social studies education, values such as social justice, responsibility, empathy, and compassion become integral components of meaningful learning experiences (Waghid, 2024). Lecturers encourage

students to critically examine social issues from both academic and Islamic perspective (Mahmudulhassan et al., 2025). For example, when discussing poverty, social inequality, or interfaith harmony, students are encouraged not only to understand these issues conceptually but also to develop the moral sensitivity required to respond to them responsibly.

Furthermore, integrating religious values into classroom learning strengthens students' professional identities as future educators in higher education (Succarie, 2024). Students observed that lecturers consistently demonstrated patience, fairness, and respect for diversity, reflecting Islamic values through their everyday classroom practices rather than merely explaining them conceptually. Such role modeling facilitates the internalization of religious and ethical values, fostering a learning environment that nurtures spiritual awareness, ethical responsibility, and professional commitment.

Despite these contributions, this study has several limitations. It primarily captures students' perspectives and does not fully explore lecturers' experiences in integrating religious values into classroom management or the ways they evaluate its implementation. Future research should investigate how lecturers design, implement, and evaluate classroom management practices that integrate humanistic learning principles and religious values, while also comparing these practices across different higher education contexts to identify factors that support their effective implementation.

Conclusions

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that a humanistic and values-based approach to classroom management in higher education fosters a holistic, dialogical, and character-oriented learning environment. The humanistic approach supports students' emotional, social, and intellectual development, while the integration of religious values strengthens the moral and spiritual foundations that shape their academic responsibility and professional ethic as future teachers. The combination of humanistic learning

principles and religious values create a compassionate and faith-centered learning environment that is consistent with the objectives of Islamic education, emphasizing the integration of knowledge, faith, and righteous conduct. Therefore, lecturers should consistently implement classroom management practices that integrate humanistic principles with religious values to cultivate reflective, empathetic, ethically responsible, and professionally competent future educators.

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