

A QUR'AN-BASED, TAWHID-ORIENTED SPIRITUAL-EDUCATIONAL MODEL FOR CHILDREN WITH AUTISM IN ISLAMIC EDUCATION CONTEXTS

Dwi Nar Hajiyan¹, Mega Satria Nurul Falah², Ilham³

¹ Master of Arts in Islamic Studies, Islamic Education Program, International Open University, Gambia

² Lecturer in Islamic Studies, Islamic Education Program, Universitas Muhammadiyah Banten, Indonesia

³ English Education Department, Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Universitas Muhammadiyah Kendari, Indonesia

¹ dwinar.hajiyan@student.iou.edu.gm, ² mega.satria@umbanten.ac.id,

³ pbranding01@gmail.com

Abstract

This study analyzes the implementation and perceived outcomes of a Qur'an-based, tawhid-oriented spiritual-educational model for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in an Islamic education context. A qualitative descriptive design was employed using purposive sampling involving Qur'an teachers, parents, children with ASD, and an Islamic psychology practitioner. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, participant observation across six sessions, and document analysis, then analyzed thematically with source and method triangulation. The findings identified five core components: Qur'anic auditory stimulation, simplified tawhid instruction, light makharij practice, short supplications and dhikr, and Qur'anic storytelling. Participants perceived these practices as supporting emotional calmness, learning readiness, engagement, and early spiritual awareness. The findings indicate that spirituality can be integrated as a structured affective-educational experience rather than treated as a supplementary intervention. The proposed model offers an inclusive framework responsive to the developmental characteristics of children with ASD while explicitly avoiding claims of therapeutic effectiveness or clinical impact.

Keywords: Autism Spectrum Disorder; Inclusive Islamic Education; Tawhid; Qur'anic Learning; Spiritual Education

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisis implementasi dan hasil yang dipersepsikan dari model spiritual-edukatif berbasis Al-Qur'an dan berorientasi tauhid bagi anak dengan Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) dalam konteks pendidikan Islam. Penelitian menggunakan desain kualitatif deskriptif dengan purposive sampling yang melibatkan guru Al-Qur'an, orang tua, anak dengan ASD, dan praktisi psikologi Islam. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara semi-terstruktur, observasi partisipatif selama enam sesi, dan analisis dokumentasi, kemudian dianalisis secara tematik dengan triangulasi sumber dan metode. Hasil penelitian mengidentifikasi lima komponen utama model, yaitu stimulasi auditori Al-Qur'an, pembelajaran tauhid sederhana, latihan makharij ringan, doa dan zikir singkat, serta kisah Qur'ani. Implementasi model dipersepsikan mendukung ketenangan emosional, kesiapan belajar, keterlibatan, dan pengenalan nilai spiritual awal. Temuan menegaskan bahwa spiritualitas dapat diintegrasikan sebagai pengalaman afektif-edukatif yang terstruktur, bukan sekadar intervensi tambahan dalam rutinitas pembelajaran Al-Qur'an sehari-hari yang adaptif dan relasional. Model ini menawarkan kerangka inklusif yang responsif terhadap karakteristik perkembangan anak dengan ASD tanpa mengklaim efektivitas terapeutik atau dampak klinis.

Kata Kunci: Autism Spectrum Disorder; Pendidikan Islam Inklusif; Tauhid; Pembelajaran Al-Qur'an; Pendidikan Spiritual



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INTRODUCTION

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) presents complex challenges within educational contexts, encompassing not only cognitive and behavioral aspects but also emotional and affective dimensions of development. Children with ASD commonly experience difficulties in communication, social interaction, and emotional regulation, which require adaptive and responsive educational approaches.¹ Within faith-based educational environments, these challenges are often compounded by limited pedagogical frameworks that address emotional security and meaning-making processes alongside academic instruction.²

Although various intervention models have been developed to support children with ASD, most educational and therapeutic approaches continue to prioritize behavioral modification and clinical outcomes.³ While such approaches offer important contributions, they often overlook the role of spiritual and affective dimensions in supporting emotional stability and learning readiness.⁴ As a result, Spirituality is often treated as supplementary rather than integral component of educational practice. Such approaches, while effective in structured settings, often provide limited space for affective meaning-making within religious or value-based education.

In Islamic education contexts, several studies have explored adaptive instructional strategies for children with ASD, including structured routines, teacher modeling, audiovisual

¹ American Psychiatric Association, *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Fifth Edition (American Psychiatric Association, 2013), <https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.books.9780890425596>; Matthew J. Maenner et al., "Prevalence and Characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorder Among Children Aged 8 Years — Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, 11 Sites, United States, 2020," *MMWR. Surveillance Summaries* 72, no. 2 (2023): 1–14, <https://doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.ss7202a1>; Carla A Mazefsky et al., "Emotion Regulation in Autism Spectrum Disorder," 2013 52, no. 7 (2013): 679–88; Andre C. Samson et al., "Emotion Regulation in Autism Spectrum Disorder," 2014 7, no. 2 (2014): 201–12.

² Nurussakinah Daulay et al., "Religious Coping of Muslim Mothers of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder in Indonesia," *Journal of Disability & Religion* 29, no. 1 (2025): 33–50, <https://doi.org/10.1080/23312521.2024.2372021>; Sulistiana Dewi and Soufni Morawati, "Gangguan Autis Pada Anak," *Scientific Journal* 3, no. 6 (2024): 404–17, <https://doi.org/10.56260/sciena.v3i6.177>.

³ Samson et al., "Emotion Regulation in Autism Spectrum Disorder."

⁴ Dilla Astarini and Hermi Pasmawati, "Islamic Counseling as a Therapy to Reduce Impulsive Behavior In Autism Children," *An Nadwah* 29, no. 1 (2023): 1, <https://doi.org/10.37064/nadwah.v29i1.15119>; Elsa Pramita and Indah Muliati, "Strategi Guru Menanamkan Nilai Ibadah Kepada Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus (Autis) Di SLB Autis Bima Pariaman," *An-Nuha* 1, no. 2 (2021): 69–80, <https://doi.org/10.24036/annuha.v1i2.33>; Samson et al., "Emotion Regulation in Autism Spectrum Disorder."

media, and Qur'anic auditory stimulation.⁵ These studies report positive outcomes such as increased emotional calmness and improved classroom engagement. However, the majority of existing research remains fragmented, emphasizing specific techniques rather than proposing an integrated spiritual-educational framework grounded in core Islamic values.⁶

Islamic educational philosophy conceptualizes human development as a holistic process that integrates intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions. Spiritual education is therefore not treated as an auxiliary aspect but as a foundational element that shapes moral orientation, emotional regulation, and personal meaning.⁷ This holistic perspective underscores the importance of addressing spiritual needs within inclusive educational settings, particularly for learners with developmental differences.

Central to Islamic spirituality is *tawhid*, which represents a comprehensive worldview encompassing awareness of divine care (*rububiyah*), devotion and orientation toward worship (*uluhiyyah*), and emotional attachment to divine attributes (*asma' wa sifat*). These interconnected dimensions provide a spiritual foundation that fosters emotional reassurance, gratitude, and a sense of dependence on God.⁸ When introduced in a simplified and affective manner, *tawhid* values may offer children with ASD a sense of consistency and emotional security within educational environments.

⁵ Lutfiadji Agung Hidayat et al., "Strengthening the Psychological Aspects of Autistic Children through Islamic Learning Methodology," *Scaffolding: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Dan Multikulturalisme* 5, no. 1 (2023): 606–26, <https://doi.org/10.37680/scaffolding.v5i1.2272>; Sigit raharja, "Islamic Education Learning to Develop Emotional Intelligence (EQ) for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)," 2024 9, no. 2 (2024): 117–30, <https://doi.org/10.22515/attarbawi.v9i2.10915>.

⁶ Hanif Kistoro et al., "Implementation of Islamic Religious Learning Strategies in Children with Autism in Indonesia," *Specijalna Edukacija i Rehabilitacija* 19, no. 4 (2020): 227–46, <https://doi.org/10.5937/specedreh19-28813>; Lia Utari et al., "Peran Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Membina Akhlak Peserta Didik Autis," *Journal of Education and Instruction (JOEAI)* 3, no. 1 (2020): 75–89, <https://doi.org/10.31539/joeai.v3i1.1304>.

⁷ Umi Muzayanah, "Sistem Pendidikan Kuttub Al Jazary Sebagai Representasi Pendidikan Islam Klasik," *EDUKASI: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Agama Dan Keagamaan* 18, no. 2 (2020): 186–203, <https://doi.org/10.32729/edukasi.v18i2.763>; Azhar Nurachman et al., "Aqidah Tauhid Sebagai Dasar Pendidikan Anak Dalam Perspektif Al Qur'an," *TSAQOFAH* 4, no. 1 (2024): 730–41, <https://doi.org/10.58578/tsaqofah.v4i1.2546>; Muhammad Zamzam and Winsidi Winsidi, "Psycho-Theological Learning Model to Improve Mental Resilience in Muslim Adolescents," *Scaffolding: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam Dan Multikulturalisme* 6, no. 3 (2024): 502–16, <https://doi.org/10.37680/scaffolding.v6i3.7639>.

⁸ H. Abu-Raiya and K. I. Pargament, "Religious Coping and Mental Health," *Psychology of Religion and Spirituality* 12, no. 3 (2020): 294–306, <https://doi.org/10.1037/rel0000183>; Elvi Rahmi and Febria Syafyusari, "Edukasi Mental Health Dipandang Dari Segi Perspektif Islam Pada Penderita Penyakit Kronis," *Jurnal Pustaka Mitra (Pusat Akses Kajian Mengabdikan Terhadap Masyarakat)* 5, no. 1 (2025): 14–18, <https://doi.org/10.55382/jurnalpustakamitra.v5i1.868>; Dyah Mawaridlotus Shofia Hati and Nurjannah, "Strategi Dan Peran Bimbingan Orang Tua Untuk Membentuk Kepribadian Melalui Bimbingan Tauhid Pada Anak Autis (Studi Kasus Terhadap Anak Autis Spektrum Ringan)," *El-Wasathy: Journal of Islamic Studies* 3, no. 1 (2025): 33–48, <https://doi.org/10.61693/elwasathy.vol3i1.2025.33-48>.

Despite the centrality of *tawhid* in Islamic thought, existing studies rarely translate these foundational dimensions into a structured spiritual-educational model tailored to the characteristics of children with ASD. Current literature tends to focus on parental coping, teacher strategies, or isolated religious practices rather than child-centered spiritual value internalization within daily learning routines.⁹ This gap highlights the need for an integrative model that embeds Qur'an-based practices and *tawhid* values into inclusive Islamic education. This study differs from previous works by conceptualizing tawhid not as doctrinal instruction or therapeutic intervention, but as an affective-experiential educational framework embedded in daily Qur'anic learning routines for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Responding to this gap, the present study proposes a Qur'an-based, *tawhid*-oriented spiritual-educational model designed for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder within Islamic education contexts. Rather than framing spirituality as a clinical intervention, this study conceptualizes it as an educational approach integrated into daily Qur'anic learning activities, teacher guidance, and affective engagement. By drawing on qualitative insights from educators, parents, and practitioners, this study aims to contribute a contextualized conceptual model that advances discourse on inclusive Islamic education and provides a foundation for future empirical research.

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative descriptive design to explore the implementation and perceived outcomes of a Qur'an-based, *tawhid*-oriented spiritual-educational model for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) within an Islamic education context. A qualitative approach was considered appropriate due to the exploratory nature of the study and its emphasis on understanding experiences, meanings, and educational practices as perceived by participants within a specific social and cultural setting.¹⁰ Rather than examining causal relationships, this design enabled an in-depth examination of how spiritual-educational practices were enacted in daily learning activities and how they were interpreted by key stakeholders.

⁹ Kistoro et al., "Implementation of Islamic Religious Learning Strategies in Children with Autism in Indonesia"; Dira Rosalia Nurkholifah et al., "Peran Koordinasi Guru Kelas Dan Guru Pembimbing Khusus Dalam Penyusunan Program Pembelajaran Individual Bagi Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus," *JIIIP - Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan* 7, no. 8 (2024): 7739–44, <https://doi.org/10.54371/jiip.v7i8.4860>.

¹⁰ J. W. Creswell and C. N Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*, 4th ed. (SAGE Publications, 2021), <https://us.sagepub.com/en-us/nam/qualitative-inquiry-and-research-design/book246896>.

Research Setting and Participants

The study was conducted at an Islamic education institution that provides Qur'an-centered learning programs and accommodates children with special educational needs, including those diagnosed with ASD. The institution applies adaptive instructional strategies and emphasizes spiritual education as part of its educational philosophy.

Participants were selected using purposive sampling to ensure relevance to the research objectives. The participants consisted of Qur'an teachers directly involved in teaching children with ASD, parents or primary caregivers of children with ASD enrolled at the institution, and an Islamic psychology practitioner familiar with spiritual-based educational approaches. These participants provided rich and contextual insights into the implementation of the spiritual-educational model. The study involved 3 Qur'an teachers, 3 parents, 3 children with ASD and 1 Islamic psychology practitioner, with observations conducted over 6 sessions.

Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through multiple qualitative techniques to enhance the depth and credibility of the findings. First, semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers, parents, and the practitioner to explore their experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of Qur'an-based and *tawhid*-oriented educational practices. The interviews focused on the structure of learning activities, the role of teachers in guiding spiritual engagement, and observed emotional and behavioral responses of children with ASD.

Second, participant observation was carried out during Qur'anic learning sessions to document instructional interactions, learning routines, and children's responses to spiritual-educational activities. Observations emphasized affective expressions such as emotional calmness, attentional focus, and engagement during Qur'anic recitation, short supplications, and simplified *tawhid* instruction.

Third, documentation analysis was conducted by examining lesson plans, learning schedules, teaching materials, and institutional guidelines related to spiritual education. These documents provided supporting evidence for understanding how *tawhid* values were embedded within daily educational practices.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which allows for the systematic identification, analysis, and interpretation of patterns within qualitative data.¹¹ Interview transcripts,

¹¹ Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, *Thematic Analysis: A Practical Guide*. (SAGE Publications, 2021), <https://uk.sagepub.com/en-gb/eur/thematic-analysis/book248481>.

observation notes, and documents were coded inductively to generate initial codes. These codes were then organized into broader categories and refined into key themes representing core components of the Qur'an-based, *tawhid*-oriented spiritual-educational model.

To enhance analytical rigor, triangulation was employed by comparing data from interviews, observations, and documentation. This process ensured consistency across data sources and strengthened the credibility of the findings.

Trustworthiness of the Study

Several strategies were employed to enhance the trustworthiness of the study. Credibility was strengthened through data triangulation involving multiple participants and data collection methods. Prolonged engagement within the research setting enabled the researcher to gain a contextual understanding of educational practices and participant perspectives.

Transferability was supported by providing a clear description of the research context, participants, and procedures, allowing readers to assess the applicability of the findings to similar Islamic education settings. Dependability and confirmability were addressed through systematic documentation of the research process and reflective analysis to minimize researcher bias.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were carefully observed throughout the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to data collection. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, the voluntary nature of their involvement, and their right to withdraw at any time. The anonymity and confidentiality of participants and institutions were maintained by using pseudonyms and removing identifying information. Special attention was given to the ethical treatment of children with ASD by ensuring that observations did not interfere with learning activities or cause emotional discomfort.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of the Qur'an-Based, Tawhid-Oriented Spiritual-Educational Model

The findings indicate that the Qur'an-based, *tawhid*-oriented spiritual-educational model implemented in the research setting was structured around daily learning routines that integrated spiritual values with adaptive educational practices. Rather than introducing spiritual instruction as a separate or abstract component, *tawhid* values were embedded gradually within Qur'anic learning activities and teacher–student interactions. This approach was intentionally designed to accommodate the cognitive and emotional characteristics of children with ASD, who often require predictable routines, affective support, and simplified instructional cues.

The model emphasizes affective engagement over cognitive explanation.¹² Unlike behavioral-based ASD interventions that prioritize observable compliance, this model foregrounds emotional safety and spiritual familiarity within learning routines. Teachers introduced *tawhid* concepts through repetition, emotional tone, and relational interaction, allowing children to experience spiritual values in a non-demanding and supportive environment. This aligns with inclusive Islamic education principles that prioritize emotional safety and meaningful engagement for learners with diverse needs.

Core Components of the Spiritual-Educational Model

Analysis of interview, observation, and documentation data revealed five key components that consistently shaped the implementation of the model.

1. Qur'anic Auditory Stimulation

Qur'anic recitation served as the foundational component of the model.¹³ Teachers regularly played short Qur'anic verses using a calm and steady rhythm before and during learning sessions. Observations indicated that Qur'anic auditory exposure contributed to a calmer classroom atmosphere and helped children with ASD transition more smoothly into learning activities. Several teachers reported that children demonstrated reduced restlessness and improved attentional focus when Qur'anic recitation was introduced consistently as part of the routine. Consistent with autism research on auditory-based emotional regulation, Qur'anic sound exposure may function as an affective regulatory medium rather than a purely religious practice.

Rather than emphasizing memorization accuracy, teachers focused on familiarization and emotional exposure, allowing children to engage with the sound and rhythm of the Qur'an at their own pace. This finding supports previous studies highlighting the calming effects of Qur'anic auditory stimulation while extending its role as an educational rather than purely therapeutic practice.

2. Simplified Tawhid Instruction

Tawhid values were introduced using simple language, repetition, and concrete expressions. Teachers avoided abstract theological explanations and instead emphasized basic affirmations such as the existence of God, divine care, and gratitude. For example, short phrases related to God's protection or kindness were repeated during learning activities and daily routines.

¹² Samson et al., "Emotion Regulation in Autism Spectrum Disorder."

¹³ Mazefsky et al., "Emotion Regulation in Autism Spectrum Disorder"; Khadijeh Moulaci et al., "The Effect of the Holy Quran Recitation and Listening on Anxiety, Stress, and Depression: A Scoping Review on Outcomes," *Health Science Reports* 6, no. 12 (2023): e1751, <https://doi.org/10.1002/hsr2.1751>.

Parents reported that such simplified expressions were more easily recognized by children with ASD and occasionally repeated spontaneously at home. This suggests that tawhid instruction, when adapted to the developmental characteristics of autistic learners, can function as a form of value internalization rather than doctrinal transmission.

3. Light Articulation and *Makharij* Practice

The model also incorporated light articulation practice focused on basic Qur'anic pronunciation (*makharij al-huruf*). Teachers emphasized gentle guidance rather than correction, allowing children to explore articulation without pressure. This component was perceived as beneficial not only for Qur'anic learning but also for supporting speech development and oral motor coordination.

Importantly, teachers reported that this practice fostered positive teacher–student interaction and reduced anxiety commonly associated with verbal tasks among children with ASD. The integration of articulation practice within a spiritual context contributed to a learning environment characterized by patience and emotional reassurance.

4. Short Supplications and Dhikr

Short supplications (*du'a*) and simple forms of dhikr were introduced at specific moments, such as before starting lessons or after completing activities. These practices were intentionally brief and repetitive, enabling children with ASD to participate without cognitive overload.

Observational data indicated that these short spiritual expressions functioned as emotional anchors, helping children regulate transitions and maintain a sense of routine. Teachers noted that children gradually became familiar with specific phrases and associated them with feelings of comfort and predictability.

5. Qur'anic Storytelling

Qur'anic storytelling was employed selectively to introduce moral and spiritual themes in a narrative format. Stories were shortened, simplified, and often supported by gestures or visual cues. Rather than focusing on moral instruction, teachers emphasized emotional tone and relational messages, such as kindness, patience, and trust.

This component was perceived as particularly effective in capturing children's attention and fostering emotional engagement. Parents reported that some children recalled story elements through gestures or brief verbal expressions, suggesting an emerging form of narrative-based spiritual understanding.

To provide a clearer overview of the proposed spiritual-educational model, the core components identified in this study are summarized in Table 1. This table presents the main

elements of the Qur'an-based, *tawhid*-oriented approach and highlights their respective educational and spiritual focuses.

Table 1. *Components of the Qur'an-Based, Tawhid-Oriented Spiritual-Educational Model*

Component	Description	Educational-Spiritual Focus
Qur'anic Auditory Stimulation	Exposure to short and repetitive Qur'anic recitations delivered with a calm rhythm during learning routines	Emotional calmness, learning readiness, sensory regulation
Simplified Tawhid Instruction	Introduction of basic tawhid values using simple phrases, repetition, and concrete expressions	Awareness of divine care (<i>rububiyyah</i>) and emotional security
Light Makharij Practice	Gentle articulation practice of selected Qur'anic sounds without corrective pressure	Speech engagement, confidence, positive teacher–student interaction
Short Du'a and Dhikr	Brief supplications and simple dhikr integrated at the beginning or end of activities	Routine formation, emotional anchoring, spiritual familiarity
Qur'anic Storytelling	Simplified Qur'anic stories delivered through short narratives and supportive gestures	Moral sensitivity, emotional engagement, value internalization

As illustrated in Table 1, the components of the model function in an integrated manner, forming a structured yet flexible spiritual-educational framework that accommodates the emotional and developmental characteristics of children with ASD.

Perceived Outcomes of the Model

Participants consistently reported positive initial outcomes associated with the implementation of the model. Teachers observed improvements in emotional calmness, learning readiness, and engagement during Qur'anic activities. While behavioral changes varied across individuals, the overall classroom atmosphere was described as more emotionally stable and supportive.

Parents reported that children appeared more relaxed after participating in Qur'anic learning sessions and, in some cases, demonstrated increased responsiveness to familiar spiritual expressions at home. These findings suggest that the model contributes to emotional regulation and early spiritual awareness rather than measurable cognitive or behavioral transformation.

It is important to note that the study does not claim therapeutic effectiveness or clinical impact. Instead, the findings highlight the model's potential as a complementary educational approach that supports emotional and spiritual dimensions within inclusive Islamic education.

Discussion

The findings of this study contribute to existing literature by offering an integrative spiritual-educational model grounded in Qur'anic practices and *tawhid* values. Unlike previous studies that emphasize isolated instructional techniques, this model positions spirituality as a structured educational process embedded in daily learning routines.¹⁴ This approach addresses the need for coherent frameworks in inclusive Islamic education for children with ASD.

The emphasis on affective engagement aligns with broader discussions in inclusive education that highlight emotional safety and relational learning as essential elements for learners with developmental differences. For children with ASD, learning environments characterized by consistency, emotional presence, and predictable routines are particularly important for supporting engagement and emotional regulation.¹⁵

Findings related to Qur'anic auditory stimulation further support previous studies indicating that structured auditory exposure may contribute to emotional calmness and attentional readiness among children with ASD. When delivered with appropriate rhythm and emotional tone, Qur'anic recitation functions not only as a religious practice but also as a sensory-regulatory medium.¹⁶

Conceptualizing *tawhid* as an experiential value rather than a cognitive construct allows Islamic education to respond more inclusively to developmental diversity.¹⁷ Such an approach allows spiritual values to be internalized through routine, emotional presence, and symbolic interaction rather than abstract theological explanation. This perspective resonates with contemporary discussions on embodied spirituality, which emphasize that spiritual awareness may

¹⁴ Kistoro et al., "Implementation of Islamic Religious Learning Strategies in Children with Autism in Indonesia"; Utari et al., "Peran Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Membina Akhlak Peserta Didik Autis."

¹⁵ Abdulloh Azzahid et al., "Terapi Audio Murotal Al-Qur'an Terhadap Emosi Anak Autis (Studi Kasus SD Plus Al-Ghifari)," *Jurnal Riset Agama* 2, no. 1 (2022): 147–61, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jra.v2i1.17121>; Nurkholifah et al., "Peran Koordinasi Guru Kelas Dan Guru Pembimbing Khusus Dalam Penyusunan Program Pembelajaran Individual Bagi Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus."

¹⁶ Hidayat et al., "Strengthening the Psychological Aspects of Autistic Children through Islamic Learning Methodology"; Moulaei et al., "The Effect of the Holy Quran Recitation and Listening on Anxiety, Stress, and Depression"; Edwina Sukmasari Yunus et al., "Scoping Review: Pengaruh Mendengarkan Murottal Al-Quran Terhadap Tingkat Stres Orang Dewasa," *Jurnal Integrasi Kesehatan & Sains* 3, no. 1 (2021): 110–16, <https://doi.org/10.29313/jiks.v3i1.7503>.

¹⁷ Abu-Raiya and Pargament, "Religious Coping and Mental Health"; Ali Ali Gobaili Saged et al., "The Effect of an Islamic-Based Intervention on Depression and Anxiety in Malaysia," *Journal of Religion and Health* 61, no. 1 (2022): 79–92, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-021-01484-3>.

be cultivated through routine, emotional presence, and relational interaction rather than abstract reasoning.¹⁸ For children with ASD, such experiential engagement provides an alternative pathway for spiritual value internalization that respects their developmental profile.

The findings also underscore the central role of teachers as mediators of spiritual meaning in inclusive Islamic education.¹⁹ This positioning aligns with contemporary discussions on inclusive faith-based education that emphasize neurodiversity and relational pedagogy. Beyond instructional competence, teacher sensitivity, patience, and emotional presence shape the affective climate in which spiritual values are introduced. This supports previous research highlighting that inclusive religious education depends not only on curriculum design but also on the relational quality between educators and learners.²⁰

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that a Qur'an-based, tawhid-oriented spiritual-educational approach can be structured as an integrated component of inclusive Islamic education for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder rather than being positioned merely as supplementary religious instruction. The model places spiritual values within predictable daily learning routines and adapts their presentation to the developmental and affective characteristics of children with ASD. In this framework, spiritual education is oriented less toward abstract theological mastery and more toward emotional familiarity, meaningful interaction, and gradual exposure to Qur'anic and tawhid-based values.

The findings identify five interconnected components that constitute the core of the model: Qur'anic auditory stimulation, simplified tawhid instruction, light *makharij* practice, short *du'a* and *dhikr*, and Qur'anic storytelling. These components operate through repetition, simplicity, predictable routines, gentle guidance, and relational interaction. Their integration indicates that Qur'anic education for children with ASD can simultaneously address religious learning and affective needs without imposing excessive cognitive or verbal demands. Accordingly, adaptation does not require reducing the spiritual substance of Islamic education but rather modifying the ways in which that substance is experienced and communicated.

¹⁸ Abu-Raiya and Pargament, "Religious Coping and Mental Health"; Saged et al., "The Effect of an Islamic-Based Intervention on Depression and Anxiety in Malaysia."

¹⁹ Mark J. Cartledge and Nicholas Raffety, *Neurodiversity, Faith Formation, and Theological Education* (Routledge, 2025).

²⁰ Kahfi Pratama et al., "Management of Islamic Religious Education Values Implementation for Students with Autism: A Case Study at SLB Nur Asih Bintaro," *Faiyadhah | Journal of Islamic Education Management* 1, no. 2 (2025): 87–96, <https://doi.org/10.64344/fydh.v1i2.34>; Utari et al., "Peran Guru Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Membina Akhlak Peserta Didik Autis."

The perceived outcomes further indicate that the model may support emotional calmness, learning readiness, attentional engagement, and early spiritual awareness. Qur'anic auditory stimulation was associated with a calmer learning atmosphere, while short prayers and *dhikr* functioned as predictable emotional anchors during transitions. Simplified tawhid expressions enabled children to become familiar with concepts of divine care and gratitude, and Qur'anic storytelling provided an accessible pathway for introducing moral and spiritual meaning. These outcomes suggest that affective engagement can constitute an important pathway for spiritual learning among children whose developmental profiles may make abstract religious instruction less accessible.

The study also highlights the central role of teachers as mediators of spiritual meaning. Effective implementation depends not only on instructional materials but also on patience, emotional presence, sensitivity, consistency, and the capacity to adjust religious learning to individual needs. This finding positions relational pedagogy as a fundamental element of inclusive Islamic education. Teachers are therefore required to create an emotionally secure environment in which Qur'anic practices and tawhid values can be experienced gradually and meaningfully rather than delivered through rigid doctrinal instruction.

Overall, the study contributes a contextual framework for integrating spiritual, emotional, and educational dimensions in Qur'anic learning for children with ASD. However, the findings should be interpreted as exploratory and educational rather than therapeutic, given the qualitative design, limited participants, single institutional context, and six-session observation period. Further research should examine the model across diverse educational settings, longer implementation periods, and larger participant groups, while employing mixed-method or longitudinal designs to assess its applicability, sustainability, and relationship with emotional regulation, learning engagement, spiritual awareness, and Qur'anic learning development.

Research Novelty

The novelty of this study lies in conceptualizing tawhid as an affective-experiential educational framework for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder rather than as abstract doctrinal instruction or a clinical therapeutic intervention. Previous studies in Islamic education for children with ASD have generally examined isolated practices such as structured routines, teacher modeling, audiovisual media, parental strategies, or Qur'anic auditory stimulation. This study integrates these dimensions into a coherent spiritual-educational framework in which Qur'anic practices and tawhid values are embedded systematically within everyday learning routines and teacher–student interactions.

A further contribution is the identification of five interconnected components—Qur'anic auditory stimulation, simplified tawhid instruction, light *makharij* practice, short *du'a* and *dhikr*, and Qur'anic storytelling—as a structured model responsive to the emotional and developmental characteristics of autistic learners. Rather than prioritizing doctrinal comprehension or behavioral compliance, the model emphasizes predictability, emotional security, relational engagement, repetition, and gradual spiritual familiarization. This provides an alternative pathway for understanding spiritual education as an embodied and relational learning process suitable for neurodevelopmentally diverse learners.

The study also extends inclusive Islamic education discourse by positioning spiritual accessibility as an important dimension of educational inclusion. Inclusion in faith-based education is therefore not limited to physical access, curriculum modification, or academic participation, but also concerns the extent to which children with developmental differences are provided appropriate pathways for experiencing religious meaning. This perspective contributes a child-centered framework in which neurodiversity, relational pedagogy, Qur'anic learning, and Islamic spirituality are brought into a single conceptual model.

Research Implications

Theoretically, the findings imply that inclusive Islamic education should expand its conceptualization of learning beyond cognitive achievement to encompass affective and spiritual accessibility. For children with ASD, religious values may be internalized not only through verbal explanation and conceptual understanding but also through repetition, sensory familiarity, relational interaction, emotional tone, and predictable routines. This perspective provides a basis for developing Islamic educational theories that recognize multiple pathways through which spiritual understanding and religious familiarity may emerge among neurodiverse learners.

Pedagogically, the findings suggest that Qur'an teachers should adapt spiritual instruction according to the developmental profiles of children with ASD. Qur'anic recitation may be introduced through calm and repetitive auditory exposure; tawhid concepts can be expressed through short and concrete statements; *makharij* practice should emphasize encouragement rather than corrective pressure; and *du'a*, *dhikr*, and Qur'anic stories can be integrated into predictable routines. Teacher training should therefore include not only Qur'anic instructional competence but also knowledge of neurodiversity, sensory sensitivity, emotional regulation, communication differences, and relational approaches to inclusive learning.

Institutionally, Islamic educational institutions serving children with special educational needs may use the proposed model as a foundation for developing more systematic spiritual-education programs involving collaboration among teachers, parents, special-needs practitioners,

and Islamic psychology professionals. Implementation should remain individualized and should not be treated as a substitute for clinical or therapeutic services when these are needed. Future institutional development should also establish appropriate monitoring and evaluation mechanisms so that spiritual learning outcomes are assessed proportionally through indicators such as engagement, familiarity, emotional comfort, participation, and meaningful responses rather than through standardized expectations designed for typically developing learners.

Suggestion and Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several suggestions and recommendations can be proposed for educational practice and future research. First, Islamic education institutions that serve children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) are encouraged to integrate spiritual values into daily learning routines in a manner that is adaptive, affective, and developmentally sensitive. The Qur'an-based, *tawhid*-oriented spiritual-educational model proposed in this study demonstrates that spiritual education for children with ASD does not require complex theological instruction, but rather consistent routines, emotional tone, and supportive teacher guidance.

Second, educators working with children with ASD in Islamic settings should be provided with adequate training and reflective support to implement spiritual-educational practices effectively. This ensures that spiritual engagement becomes a sustained pedagogical effort, not a sporadic initiative. Teacher sensitivity, patience, and flexibility play a central role in mediating spiritual values and fostering emotional security among learners with diverse needs.

For future research, further empirical studies are recommended to examine the effectiveness of Qur'an-based spiritual-educational models using mixed-method or experimental designs. Longitudinal studies may also explore the long-term impact of *tawhid*-oriented education on emotional regulation, well-being, and spiritual awareness among children with ASD. Expanding research contexts to include diverse Islamic education institutions may further strengthen the generalizability of the proposed model.

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