

## SUNAN KALIJAGA'S PHILOSOPHICAL THINKING IS RELEVANT FOR REINFORCEMENT CHARACTER EDUCATION IN INDONESIA

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### Abstract

The aims of this study are to explore the philosophical thoughts of Sunan Kalijaga and, to inventory Sunan Kalijaga's philosophical thoughts that affect reinforcement character education in Indonesia. The method in this research is the historical factual character, which is to examine the character's thoughts on current actual problems with the help of the character's literature study. The results are reinforcement character education in Indonesia through the philosophical thinking of Sunan Kalijaga and, an education model characterized by Indonesia. Character education based on the philosophical values of these figures will lay the foundation for values to build strength and a basis for legitimacy for the practice of life, whether carried out by students at school or in everyday life. With the philosophical values of figures in character education, it will color the face of education in Indonesia to start building a non-western educational paradigm based on the embryo of national identity, namely the Nusantara.

**Keywords:** *Philosophy of Sunan Kalijaga; Reinforcement Character Education; Indonesia.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the significant factors in forming the generation that will continue the nation's leadership stick. Education aims to guide a more directed and good life. However, awareness about the importance of education is still one of the unresolved problems in Indonesia. The development of a lifestyle that is currently happening in addition to having a positive impact but also having a negative impact, many cultures and values that develop in life today are not following the noble values of the Indonesian nation. It found that young people are prouder of foreign cultures and admire foreign artists more than Indonesian figures. These problems cause chaos and anxiety towards the noble values of the Indonesian that fade away. This behavior causes promiscuity, violence, and even the use of illegal drugs. To respond to this phenomenon is by reflecting again on the noble values of the Indonesian. So, they integrated into a reference for solving the nation's problems.

One of the efforts to describe the problems in Indonesia is through education. Humans are the target of education. Character education is a foundation for creating a generation of character and excellence. Sources of character education values come from culture, values, customs, thoughts of figures, or mutual agreement. Indonesia has a Walisongo figure, namely a da'wah council, a missionary council, and a clerical organization in the form of a da'wah institution for the guardians, totaling nine. Walisongo consisting of Sunan Gresik, Sunan Ampel, Sunan Giri, Sunan Bonang, Sunan Kalijaga, Sunan Kudus, Sunan Drajat, Sunan Muria, and Sunan Gunungjati (Rachmad Abdullah, 2015). One of the most popular Sunan in Java is Sunan Kalijaga. He spread the religion of Islam in the Central Java area with the media of art. Sunan Kalijaga is known as "Sunannya Rakyat" (Society's Sunan). From various stories, Sunan Kalijaga is a Sunan who is close to the people. It found that the clothes used by Sunan Kalijaga are the same as his people, even though he comes from a noble family.

Sunan Kalijaga is known for his unique teaching style and is the only real Javanese-born guardian (Faiz, 2021). This condition makes him more mature and flexible in providing a lesson for the Javanese society regarding Islam. His influence in spreading Islam made him loved by many humans, and he taught religious values without coercion. Sunan Kalijaga bequeathed various cultural products such as songs, folklore, mosques, etc. (Khaelany, 2018: 44-45). The relics of Sunan Kalijaga are evidence of the cultural activities carried out. In addition to inheriting cultural products, Sunan Kalijaga provides a frame of mind to control oneself and look at reality more wisely. Sunan Kalijaga's frame of mind is the product of his thoughts that touch the philosophical dimension. This philosophical dimension in Sunan Kalijaga's great thought is the first step of self-actualization for humans

Sunan Kalijaga's philosophical thoughts will contribute to self-actualization references. So, they can grow and develop by the ethical values of this archipelago thinker. Sunan Kalijaga's philosophical thinking has become a bulwark for humans, especially the younger generation facing various challenges of this increasingly varied global value stream (Kuswanjono and others, 2021). Sunan Kalijaga, as a wise preacher, certainly has the privilege of delivering his teachings. Sunan Kalijaga's da'wah model has the principle of *Tutwuri Handayani-Tutwuri Hangiseni* that makes Sunan Kalijaga a preacher who provides lessons and fills in gradually regarding the values that he wants to teach (Faiz, 2021). The strongest reason Sunan Kalijaga is accepted by the Javanese people when spreading the symbols of Islam because it does not attack the community directly. Seeing the success of Sunan Kalijaga in carrying out Islamic da'wah, of course, a special consideration related to Sunan Kalijaga's philosophy is relevant for character development in Indonesia, characters that following local Indonesian cultural values. The dualism of ethical values is integrating to form an intellectually, socially, and spiritually intelligent generation. Three intelligence will lead the young nation generation to become complete human beings. The correlation of Sunan Kalijaga's philosophical thinking with reinforcement character education can be see from these two sides that simultaneously provide teaching related to morals as life-guiding values. Character education is an educational model that is one of the locomotives of educational transformation that seeks to revolutionize the mentality of students. Character education as the foundation of ethical morals for

the younger generation has already been emphasized in the aim of national education. It is confirmed Law No. 20 of 2003 about the national education system, states that national education has a role to develop knowledge, forming the character and civilization of a dignified nation in the context of educating the nation's life and also developing the ability of students become human beings who believe and fear of God. Noble character, healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, and become a democratic and responsible citizen.

Character education that is currently taking place is already good. However, efforts are needed to strengthen it in order to have a more comprehensive impact on the concept of education that liberates students. In addition, reinforcing character education as a preventive effort against moral degradation is a challenge for education in Indonesia. The rise of social deviance in the younger generation today seems to be a reminder that the role of an educational institution must be reinforced. Social deviance like fights, theft, drinking alcohol, drugs, and free sex that occur among the younger generation today require special attention. Indonesia country that upholds good cultural values and morality should indeed avoid despicable behaviors. Acts of violence that often appear in the school environment also become serious homework to be solved. The violence that arises from seniors to juniors at school is a scourge for the world of education in Indonesia today.

The urgency of reinforcement character education in responding to today's social phenomena is due to the awareness regarding the importance of teaching noble values of the nation that prioritizes aspects of decency, kindness, and nobility. In addition, teachers do not only focus on cognitive assessments. A character becomes important as capital for students to live in society. Character is a soft skill that must be mastered by all students. Character education is also a space for teachers to transfer values and not just transfer knowledge. Teachers will be increasingly motivated to continue to strive to provide the best teaching related to this morality. Considering the urgency of character education that reaches wide in its usefulness, this character education must run with the social culture of the Indonesian people. Indonesian education is already dominated by Western education, so it is time to build a paradigm of thinking for non-Western education in Indonesia. Therefore, Sunan Kalijaga's exploration of philosophy is one of the references that becomes a road map for reinforcing non-western paradigm character education in Indonesia.

The phenomenon of social deviation that often occurs in the younger generation today is the strongest reason for the importance of reinforcement character education in schools. A reinforcement character education through the philosophy of Indonesian figures is one of the references in instilling the value of good living practices for the younger generation. The philosophy of the Indonesian figure was deliberately chosen because it has a socio-historical affinity for the people of Indonesia. It will affect the actualization process so that it does not only stop at the concept but can be practiced in the real life of students. In addition, this form of character education, based on the original thoughts of Indonesian figures, will be a more adaptive method because it is in line with the culture of the people. Thus, reinforcement character education through Sunan Kalijaga's philosophy will become a teaching dualism that will transfer ethical values from the character's thoughts and remind the history of the struggles that the characters have done.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The method used in this research is a historical factual figure that examines the character's thoughts on current problems with the help of literature studies related to the figure studied. This type of research is philosophical research (Bakker and Zubair, 1994) by using library data as the primary source and supported by field data in the form of interviews.

The data processing is carried out through reflection and critical analysis to obtain solutions to the problems that occur. The methods of this research are interpretation, synthesis, historical continuity, and idealization. The interpretation method uses to find data. The synthesis method to find the existing problem. Then, the analysis process related to historical continuity. The last method is an idealization, the data that is already processed will go to the idealization stage to build a concept that becomes an alternative solution to the problems in the research.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Biography of Sunan Kalijaga

Sunan Kalijaga, known as Raden Syahid, Raden Mas Said (Oei Sam Ik), Prince Tuban, or Raden Abdurahman, is the son of a Duke of Tuban, Tumenggung Wilatikta and Dewi Ratna Dumilah who was born in 1430 or 1450. Kalijaga is embedded in the name Raden Said and comes from the name of a village in Cirebon (Khaelany, 2018: 17). His father is a descendant of Aria Teja III, which originated from Aria Adikara or Ranggalawe, a founder of the Majapahit kingdom. Therefore, Tumenggung Wilatikta became Aria Teja IV (Chodjim, 2003: 8).

Sunan Kalijaga experienced a long spiritual journey before meeting Sunan Bonang and spreading Islamic symbols. Sunan Kalijaga had time to become a *Maling Cluring* (thief). This *Maling Cluring* is a thief who distributes his stolen goods to the poor. At that time, Sunan Kalijaga carried out his theft in the warehouse of the Duchy of Tuban. His actions were caught and Sunan was expelled by his father from the Duchy of Tuban, then he went to the Jati Wangi forest. While in the Jati Wangi forest, Sunan Kalijaga met Sunan Bonang and made Sunan Bonang his target. However, Sunan Bonang did not give his belongings and judged Sunan Kalijaga's actions improperly (Chodjim, 2003: 8-9). His meeting with Sunan Bonang makes him strive to become a great and noble human being until Sunan Kalijaga be as a member of the Wali Songo. Sunan Bonang's da'wah made him repent and leave the mischief he had done in the past (Sunyoto, 2016). Sunan Kalijaga felt enlightened when he met Sunan Bonang because he thought what he was doing was not right. It became a turning point for Sunan Kalijaga to improve himself. Sunan also chose Sunan Bonang to be his spiritual teacher (Kuswanjono and others, 2021: 18). Besides Sunan Bonang, Sunan Kalijaga also studied under Sunan Giri and Sunan Ampel. His desire to deepen his religious knowledge made him learn as far as Pasai and then preach to the Malay Peninsula and Patani, Southern Thailand. That is what most likely caused Sunan Kalijaga to get the title of Sheikh of Malaya (Chodjim, 2003: 10).

After Sunan Kalijaga's return from Pasai and Patani, he made a member of the Wali Songo. Nine figures who spread the *syiar* of Islam. In addition, Wali Songo is defined as a collection of association Ulama, who spread Islam in Java. Their knowledge is very high (Chodjim, 2003: 11). Sunan Kalijaga is known as a non-caste preacher because of his ability to mix with various groups and afford to bring the context of da'wah according to the times. That made the nobles and scholars sympathize with him. Sunan Kalijaga, in addition to having critical power, also has very high tolerance in socializing with the community, has broad insight, and of course, has a noble character (Khaelany, 2018: 37).

According to Faiz (2021), when carrying out Islamic da'wah, Sunan Kalijaga has a da'wah concept, namely Momor (mingling and not exclusive), Momong (slowly unlocking potential), and momot (able to accommodate other people's situations and not easily blame). This da'wah emphasizes that Java is a place, and Islam is its content. The pattern of preaching also tends to be the same as Sunan Bonang. That seen from Sunan Kalijaga's religious understanding leads to Salaf-based Sufism, not pantheistic Sufis. Sunan Kalijaga uses a da'wah strategy gradually because the community will avoid it if it is directly attacked by its establishment. Therefore, Sunan Kalijaga is very tolerant of the local culture so that people do not feel that their position is being attacked directly (Khaelany, 2018: 37).

### Sunan Kalijaga's Philosophical Thoughts

Sunan Kalijaga figure whose influence is extraordinary in Islamic da'wah certainly has very constructive thoughts to overcome contemporary issues. One of the thoughts found is related to the philosophical thoughts of Sunan Kalijaga. This philosophical thought will further explore the role of philosophy as an alternative for reinforcement character education in Indonesia. The following are some lattices of Sunan Kalijaga's philosophical thoughts, which were conveyed by Fahrudin Faiz (2021) in the webinar of the Laboratory of Nusantara Philosophy's Character Study Series are considered relevant as supporting factors for reinforcement character education in Indonesia.

a. *Manunggaling Kawula Gusti*

This philosophical thought of Sunan Kalijaga is related to human relations with God. It will form an understanding that humans must understand how to build a good relationship with God and imitate God's good nature. This philosophical thought of Sunan Kalijaga also illustrates how important it is for humans to treat God in the best ways and make God a place to return. In addition, this philosophical thought will be a driving factor for humans to follow the nature of God to provide legitimacy for human actions so that they always do their best as a form of obedience to God. Therefore, humans understand their roles and responsibilities as servants of God.

b. *Memayu Hayuning Bawana*

Sunan Kalijaga's philosophical thoughts are related to human relations with nature and human relations with humans (macrocosm and microcosm). The harmonization in this relationship is an attitude of life that flows the energy of goodness for themselves, fellow humans, and the whole of nature. The concept of *Memayu Hayuning Bawana* brings people to philosophical contemplation in their every action. Therefore, it expects that it can serve as a reminder that humans should distribute kindness to anyone.

c. *Cakra Manggilingan*

This philosophical thought of Sunan Kalijaga is related to how humans should see the reality that is happening. Everything that happens in this world moves circularly and is intertwined. Therefore, humans must get used to the process of life that occurs one after another like a spinning wheel. This connection is manifested in feelings of sadness followed by feelings of pleasure or vice versa. When humans are in the lowest position, they will feel the top position or vice versa. This thought can form the human soul that is wiser and more mature in responding to every phase of life.

d. *Tapa, Pribatin, Tirakat*

The concept of Sunan Kalijaga's philosophical thought explains that the best victory is victory over oneself. The extent to which humans can control their passions, are not selfish, and do not uphold the nature of the self can be an obstacle to social and cultural life.

e. *Anglaras Ilining Banyu, Angeli Nanging Ora Keli*

In the workshop fiber, there is a lattice of Sunan Kalijaga's philosophical thoughts through his expressions. In the fiber of this workshop, it is related to how the current human attitude must be able to stand upright in its stance even though it collides with the currents of change that come and go. According to Kuswanjono and others (2021), this thinking can direct people to remain firm in their stance and should not be swept away in the current vortex of globalization. The younger generation must be able to stand up for their own national identity that is rich in culture and local wisdom. This philosophy emphasizes that humans may mingle but should not merge with other people and be influenced by something outside themselves. Thus, pride in oneself and the nation will be fostered without being dragged along by the trend.

### **The Concept of Character Education in Indonesia**

Discussions related to character education must clearly understand the meaning of real character education. According to Lickona (1997), Character education is a deliberate attempt to teach virtue. Virtue is objectively understood as the quality of a good human being. Humans do good for individuals (helping someone to satisfy his life) and society (allowing humans to live together harmoniously and productively). Virtue is not like a changeable value. However, virtue will always be a virtue, like honesty, justice, and patience. Because virtue or kindness always transcends time, culture, and individual preferences.

Character education, in its implementation, is faced with challenges raised in several questions by Thomas (1995), including whether this character education can develop students'

analytical and evaluative abilities and can grow their ability to show compassion and empathy for others. Then, this character education can build students' moral and intellectual perspectives independently of the cultural heritage they have. The paradigm of character education that needs to be re-understood is that character education emphasizes aspects of behavior that can be observed and not on reflections related to moral concepts. In other words, the good character creates through correct and acceptable actions, such as being polite and obeying the rules (Wynne 1985/1986, 1988a; Greer and Ryan 1989; Thomas 1991).

Character education is a fundamental task that seeks to reconstruct ethical values and good living practices for the nation's young generation. Character education is a joint effort that consistently fixes the mistakes that often appear in the learning process at school. Character education is the principal focus of a student's character and personality characteristics. It will certainly accommodate all matters relating to improving the implementation of good living practices for the younger generation.

The internal and external factors affect the character of each individual, including internal and external factors. Internal factors come from within humans themselves, while external factors come from the culture and values that exist in society (Suyono, 2021). Internal factors related to this self can include the will to change within the individual. External factors encourage the social responses that individuals generate when exposed to the values that develop in society to form individual attitudes that make them character. Character education in Indonesia has become a national movement that aims to form and nurture an ethical and responsible young generation. It is because character education is universal, and there is a CEQ (Character Education Quality), which is the standard for recommending that it is effective in developing student character. In addition, this Character Education Quality becomes the standard in recommending educational models on the following principles. First, using the basis of ethics or values to develop student character. Second, identifying character comprehensively and covering aspects of behavior, thoughts, and feelings. Third, using acute, proactive, and effective approaches. Fourth, create a school environment that has good social awareness. Fifth, the opening of opportunities for students to show kind behavior. Sixth, there is a meaningful curriculum that respects all students, builds student character, and helps students to achieve success. Seventh, foster student motivation. Eighth, the functioning of all school staff as a moral community that shares responsibility for character education and is loyal to the same basic values. Ninth, the functioning of families and community members as partners to collaborate in building student character. Tenth, evaluating the character of the school, the function of school staff as character teachers, and the manifestation of positive character in students' lives (Maunah, 2015: 93)

### **Sunan Kalijaga's Philosophy and Reinforcement Character Education in Indonesia**

Sunan Kalijaga's philosophical thoughts have relevance in reinforcing character education in Indonesia. The form of reinforcement character education based on the values of life that Sunan Kalijaga holds tightly is a source of reference values in forming the character of students by the noble values of the Indonesian nation. The philosophical thoughts of Sunan Kalijaga that support reinforcement character education in Indonesia are as follows:

First, *Manunggaling Kawula Gusti* guides for students to build a religious and spiritual soul. It is in line with the goal of character education in Indonesia, which always upholds the value of religiosity, to form students who believe in God Almighty. This philosophical thought of Sunan Kalijaga reaffirms how the role of humans is supposed to have a good relationship with God so that a person who is obedient and full of willingness is formed to carry out his duties as a servant of his God. This form of faith strengthens the students' character, so they always grow in wisdom and keep them from doing poor deeds because they believe God is always watching over them. The values of religiosity that arise can also be present in the frame of students' honesty, integrity, and professionalism.

Second, *Memayu Hayuning Bawana*. Sunan Kalijaga's philosophical thinking in character education can be implemented in an attitude that directs students to have a sense of mutual love (compassion). Love, tolerance, and help each other. In this case, the value of sympathy and

empathy for others can be developed so that a compassionate soul is formed and does not insult each other. Thus, Sunan Kalijaga's philosophy can shape the mentality of students to have a high social spirit and position themselves like other people if they are not treated well, will feel uncomfortable. This philosophy will shape the character of students who understand and understand the social context that occurs and avoid conflicts that often happen in schools.

Third, *Cakra Manggilingan*. The realization of Sunan Kalijaga's philosophical thoughts regarding the *Cakra Manggilingan* can form the character of a student that is big-hearted, patient, consistent, and adaptive. It is due to an understanding that life is circular and not always everything goes well. Therefore, this *Cakra Manggilingan* will guide students' ways of thinking and not give up easily in dealing with every condition that occurs in life. The character through this *Cakra Manggilingan* will make students' emotions more stable in dealing with all problems. Thus, a person who is patient, forgiving, consistent, and adaptive to a situation could be formed through the teachings of this philosophy of Sunan Kalijaga.

Fourth, *Tapa, Pribatin and Tirakat*. This teaching through Sunan Kalijaga's philosophical thought emphasizes prioritizing the common interest or public interest over selfishness. In the context of reinforcement character education, Sunan Kalijaga's philosophy is indispensable to forming students' personalities who are not selfish, cooperative, and oriented towards mutual success. The collaboration mindset will be formed through these values so that it does not make students an individual and selfish generation. Through this philosophy, Sunan Kalijaga can restrain personal desires or desires incarnated in self-interests to win each other's personality. Another form of the implementation of this philosophy is the formation of a humanist and democratic spirit in students.

Fifth, *Anglaras Illining Banyu Angeli Ananging Ora Keli*. Sunan Kalijaga's thoughts are relevant to reinforcement character education in Indonesia because this philosophy confirms that students get guidance and direction toward personal character. It serves to respond to the times that continuously provide new values from outside. Students would be directed to become individuals who are not easily carried away by the current globalization, are not easily swept away in association, and are not good at current trends. The affirmation of the student's identity will become a starting point value base for students capable of accepting their identity as a whole without having to get existential acknowledgment from groups that have poor ethical values. This effort to reinforce the students' identity and make them authentic human beings see the world more clearly, through the glasses of their understanding that they do not always have to follow trends that are not by the noble values of the Indonesian nation. It's okay to be in a round but not drift in it. Thus, the manifestation of the implementation of this philosophy is the formation of the soul and attitude of students with their uniqueness and firmness in their authentic selves.

### **Forms of Reinforcement Character Education in Indonesia**

Reinforcement character education is an alternative to building the energy of goodness possessed by students in schools which would be implemented in the surrounding environment. The value of a good life adopted from Sang Sunan becomes the capital and strength for students to consistently get used to practicing becoming complete human beings. Humans were finished in all aspects of life and have good faith and noble character in others. It is indeed relevant to the philosophical thought of Sunan Kalijaga so that education is a place for students to metamorphose into the appropriate space in facilitating the process of growing and developing students in inculcating life values related to character.

Character education as the foundation of values in schools will shape students' personalities to become complete human beings. To strengthen character education is through reinforcement values which are a significant part of guiding students to do good practices in life. The reinforcement of the character education's values could be done by adding references to how to act through the wisdom that has been done by the predecessors. The results of philosophical reflection become values that run and live in students. Thus, the philosophical values that are present through the thoughts of Sunan Kalijaga can reduce social deviations in schools which are one of the challenges of implementing the character education process in Indonesia. It is because

schools are one of the media or places for the growth of the nation's young generation, so had to be ensured that the values that grow and run are values that are appropriate and provide the exact reflection and adaptation power.

The strategy to implement the teachings of Sunan Kalijaga's philosophy towards reinforcement character education in Indonesia can be done through formal and informal channels. School is one of the formal channels for producing a generation of character and virtuous character. The philosophical values of Sunan Kalijaga could be internalized into the learning curriculum through personality development in schools. In addition, the role of parents and the community is a significant factor in forming one's character. Character values should be instilled in children from an early age through practice in life. Forming a generation characterized by the noble values of the Indonesian nation can be achieved if there is cooperation from all elements, both policymakers and the community. Character education also is done through various media that are currently developing. Innovation and creativity are needed in an effort to spread the values of character education based on the teachings of Sunan Kalijaga's philosophy cannot be separated from its substance. Character education based on the thoughts of Sunan Kalijaga aims to form a quality person in accordance with the expectations of character building and noble character (Damsuki, 2015).

## CONCLUSION

Sunan Kalijaga's philosophical thoughts were found, through the life process of Sunan. The spark of Sunan Kalijaga's thinking is here to be a source of reference for the nation's young generation to face this volatile situation. The teachings of Sunan Kalijaga's philosophical thought teach about the importance of building a relationship with God, humans, and nature. Growing up to be an obedient human and full of love for others. In living the process of life, Sunan also teaches big-hearted, patient, consistent, adaptive, honest, responsible, and not selfish. The main thing that is the biggest challenge for the new generation today is related to self-control because defeating the lust for self will be more complicated than dealing with outside interference. Forming a person who prioritizes common interests and is firm in his stance is one of the characteristics of a perfect human being. The creation of a young generation that is not easily carried away by the development of global currents and leads to immoral behavior is one of the goals expected by the previous generation. The heritage of thought and culture must continue to be held for the sake of instilling self-confidence in national identity and self-authenticity.

The relevance of Sunan Kalijaga's philosophical thought in affirming character education in Indonesia is to confirm the values that are present in character education based on the thinking of Indonesian figures. Therefore, a character education model that is more easily actualized and flexible would be created based on the proper life practices of the characters. The value of Sunan Kalijaga's philosophy is a source of reference in acting and learning output because the best form of implementation of character education is at the practical level. Through Sunan Kalijaga's philosophical thoughts, in the future, it will be a provision for students to respond to the challenges of an era that dynamically continues to change. Character education based on the philosophical values of these figures will lay the foundation for values to build strength and a basis for legitimacy for the practice of life, whether carried out by students at school or in everyday life. With the philosophical values of figures in character education, it will color the face of education in Indonesia to start building a non-western educational paradigm based on the embryo of national identity, namely the Nusantara. Thus, the dualism of roles related to reinforcement character education and historical education of national figures will be a slick collaboration in developing the Indonesian education model so that it will increasingly have a good impact on all aspects of the life of the nation and state.

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