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Nurturing Students' Spirituality through Holistic Instructional Communication Implementation: a Case Study from Indonesian Islamic Higher Education

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Abstract

Spiritual strengthening of Islamic Higher Education students through learning activities is not only enough rely on teaching materials, but also need a new instructional communication model. This study aims to investigate the implementation of Holistic Instructional Communication (HIC) for nurturing students' spirituality of the Sufism and Psychotherapy Study Program. This paper reports a qualitative and quantitative study about the implementation of HIC for students of Indonesian Islamic higher education in Kudus and Semarang, Indonesia. This study was derived from interviews with Islamic education lecturers about instructional communication patterns at the universities. It also included observations of instructional communication implementation in the classroom. Data were garnered through a qualitative and quantitative approach to enable substantial descriptive data collection about how students' spirituality can be nurtured by implementation of holistic instructional communication. The results showed that the holistic instructional communication (HIC) model that had been implemented was a message-oriented circular communication model, so that spiritual strengthening was not optimal.

Therefore, HIC model was implemented based on the holistic education paradigm by adapting Barnlund's transactional communication model which is oriented towards the construction and negotiation of meaning for student spiritual strengthening. The HIC model has met the valid criteria, is considered practical and effective for strengthening student spirituality based on the validation result 89.02% and 85.75% of students' activities. The conclusion of the effectiveness of the model is based on the increase in the spiritual dimension of students after participating in learning with the HIC model, with an average percentage gain score is 59% and an average normalized gain score (N-gain) is 0.6 with a fairly effective category. This confirms that efforts to strengthen student spirituality can be done by implementing the HIC model.

Keywords: Holistic Education; Instructional Communication; Spiritual Strengthening

A. Introduction

Nurturing student spirituality through the implementation of instructional communication is a major need for Islamic Higher Education (HEIs). Instructional communication activities are an important space for the process of negotiation and construction of meaning. Course content that is full of spiritual values is important to be transformed through the implementation of effective and affective instructional communication in order to have an impact on nurturing student spirituality. The implementation of instructional communication is signaled as a medium to create a connected and harmonious classroom climate. Class emotions, positive or negative, are strongly influenced by the lecturer's instructional communication behavior. In addition, students are in the generation at risk period with high curiosity about meaning, identity, responsibility and purpose, which needs to be understood and facilitated. In fact, the fact of student demoralization is allegedly due to class emotional problems as a result of lecturers' instructional miscommunication that prioritizes material completeness over meaningful learning.

Nurturing spirituality through the implementation of instructional communication has received less attention from researchers. Previous studies on nurturing student spirituality focused on the context of macro education implementation. Nur Chanifah's article (2021) revealed the design framework of Islamic education based on spirituality with an integrated learning pattern between direct learning and supporting learning. Erlene Grise-Owens describes

Pedagogy and Spirituality in Higher Education: Perspectives, Practices, and Possibilities. Hok-Ko Pong's (2021) study showed that students' spiritual wellbeing develops very well with holistic education through experiential learning. The study emphasized that students' spirituality can be nurtured through learning. However, the study still portrayed efforts to strengthen spirituality through educational activities universally. Spiritual nurturing in learning activities needs to be implemented in learning activities at the micro level, namely learning communication activities in the classroom. The micro (classroom) approach is very important because the classroom is a primary site where lecturer-student interaction occurs and values are directly transmitted

This study was conducted to fulfill this shortcoming by formulating two research questions. *First*, how is the conceptual rationality of the holistic instructional communication framework for spiritual nurturing. *Second*, how is the implementation of holistic instructional communication to nurture students' spirituality in HEIs?

This paper is based on several arguments. First, it is based on the paradigm of spiritually oriented holistic education with the principles of connection, balance, inclusiveness which can be used as the basis for the implementation of holistic instructional communication (HIC), and learning communication that involves physical, emotional and spiritual modalities. HIC optimizes the process of construction and negotiation of meaning from all public cues, private cues, verbal and non-verbal communication using multimodality communication, namely spiritual modality with divine consciousness or transcendence, as the basis of emotional and physical modality. HIC focuses on bringing inner peace and spirituality to lecturers so that they can produce good verbal and non-verbal instructional communication behavior, have a positive impact, and inspire students. *Second*, HIC is implemented in effective and affective instructional communication behavior starting from the preparation, core and closing stages of learning. Effective learning communication fulfills students' basic academic needs, while affective communication fulfills their affection needs. Both are intertwined and cannot be separated.

The study of nurturing students' spirituality through holistic instructional communication implementation is very important because spiritual strengthening actually needs to involve the inner dimension of students which is connected to the inner dimension of a lecturer. Positive emotions of the lecturer can spread out the positive emotions to the classroom, and related to this, instructional

communication activities become an important space to make it happen. Theoretically, the results of this study initiate a new framework and become an alternative solution for new methods of strengthening students' spirituality. The results of this study can also be implemented as a practical reference for communicating in learning which has a deep impact on students' spirituality.

Instructional Communication is defined as the process of building effective and affective learning communication relationships. Effective instructional communication focuses on what is communicated, how it is packaged and how educators and learners let each other know how they are doing. Affective instructional communication focuses on how educators feel about learners and vice versa, about the communication process, and about what is being taught and learned. The definition includes competencies in communication and instructional to facilitate effective and affective learning (McCroskey et al., 2004). The effectives and affective matters of instructional communication depends on three aspects of educators' instructional communication behavior, both verbal and non-verbal, which include aspects of physical and psychological closeness (teacher immediacy), ability and mastery of the field of knowledge (teacher clarity), personality and integrity of educators in learning (teacher credibility) (Rasna et al., 2020).

Teacher immediacy means the level of physical and psychological closeness between educators and students in learning activities. Immediacy is a series of verbal and nonverbal communication behaviors that show the willingness of educators to approach and be approached by students. This closeness can reduce the gap in physical and psychological distance (Titsworth et al., 2013). Indications of nonverbal immediacy behavior are tone of voice, loudness, varied tempo, friendliness, reducing physical barriers (such as podiums or tables), relaxed body movements and positions, taking time with learners, and good performance. Gorham (2009) indicates verbal immediacy with the educator's willingness to communicate with learners inside and outside the classroom.

Cruickshank, Kennedy, Powell and Harville (Mazer et al., 2014) calls teacher clarity as a set of educator behaviors that have the effect of strengthening knowledge and understanding the learning materials. Combining these two definitions, teacher clarity relates to educator behaviors that contribute to clear understanding of the content of learning messages. Teacher credibility means learners' perceptions and trust in the educator's ability and competence. The dimensions of credibility are competence, trustworthiness, and goodwill.

Competence refers to the extent to which learners judge lecturers to be true experts in their fields. Trust means the extent to which learners believe in the integrity of the lecturer. Goodwill means the extent to which learners judge their lecturers to be sensitive and responsive to their comfort.

Instructional communication in the perspective of Islamic education is emphasized by Abdullah Nasih Ulwan (1981) in his book specifically outlines the ethics of educators when communicating in academic forums. *First,* speak with eloquent language. *Second*, speak slowly and unhurriedly so that people can easily understand and think about the meaning of the message conveyed. *Third*, do not force yourself to speak fluently. *Fourth*, the conversation must be understood, namely by using a language style that is accordance with the sense of understanding and age level of the audience. *Fifth*, do not shorten and lengthen the conversation. It is advisable to use words of wisdom in speaking to strengthen the emotions and thoughts of the audience. *Sixth*, giving full attention to the speaker, so that the audience can truly understand the message conveyed. *Seventh,* the speaker's gaze is fully on the audience, so that each individual feels cared for. *Eighth*, giving leeway to the audience during and after speaking, so that they do not feel bored and tense when listening to the talk. Nasih Ulwan (1981) also outlines the need to combine sincerity of speech with humor, logic and words of wisdom with ethics and moderation, not hurting the feelings of others, and avoiding lies and falsehood. Al-Ghazali (2016) requires educators who are humane, humanist, democratic, open, fair, honest, siding with the truth, upholding noble morals, tolerant, egalitarian, forgiving, and joyful.

Holistic education is a paradigm that from the beginning of its emergence was initiated oriented to the wholeness and connectedness of the physical to spiritual dimensions (1996). The holistic education paradigm has three principles, namely balance, inclusiveness, and connections (R. Miller, 2010). The principle of balance requires a balance between collaborative and individual approaches to learning, orientation on how to learn and remember (memorization) of learning materials, focus on interpreting and interpreting knowledge (knowledge) imaginative knowledge, promoting a balance of the use of rational reasoning and intuition. The principle of inclusiveness in holistic education is realized through a combination of transmission learning, transaction learning, and transformation learning. The principle of connection is realized by connecting linear and intuitive thinking, mind and body, integration of various fields of science, the relationship

between the individual and himself (self), society, the universe and the Creator (Self) (J. P. Miller, 1996, hal. 8–9; Miseliunaite et al., 2022).

The concept of Islamic education also contains the principles of a holistic education paradigm (Hussain, 2021), because it contains the development of the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual dimensions of learners contained in the terms *tarbiyah, ta'lim, ta'dib, tahzib, mau'idzah, riyadhah, tazkiyah, talqin, tadris, tafaqquh, tabyin, tazkirah, and irsyad* (Nata, 2010). The term *Tarbiyyah* refers to social intelligence, the term *ta'lim* to the acquisition of knowledge and thought or cognitive intelligence. This transmission and development of knowledge is never completely separate from ethics, manners and spirituality. The term *ta'dib* refers to emotional intelligence. Spiritual knowledge in Islam is commonly recognized through the term *ma'rifah* and through the act of *tazkiyah*, which means purification (Hussain, 2021). The conceptual formulation of Islamic education places education as a strategic means for fostering physical, psychological, intellectual, spiritual, fitrah, talent and social potential in order to carry out the function of devotion to God and achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter (Nata, 2010).

The goal of Islamic education is to realize the whole person (*kaffah*) by educating all physical, cognitive, emotional and spiritual elements in a balanced manner. Spirituality in Islamic education refers to the deep relationship between learners, educators, and subjects, a relationship that is so honest, vital, and vibrant that it becomes very memorable and relevant to the provision for graduates' work in various fields (Jones, 2010). Educational spirituality means transcendence requires learning activities to be a medium for *taqarrub to Allah* (Divine consciousness), learning becomes a space to spread love as the essence of His Rahman and Rahim, learning becomes a medium to emulate the wisdom of the Prophet in educating and communicating with his friends (Abdullah et al., 2021). In principle, transcendence calls for educators and learners to travel into the self (self) whose ultimate goal is a deep awareness of devotion to Him (Self). Spirituality in the context of education is also manifested in the form of compassion. This is closely related to the educator's personality. Al-Ghazali made the attitude of mercy, compassion, humility, gentleness as the ethics of educators (Nata, 2010).

The main basis of human spirituality is transcendence which describes the quality of his relationship with God. This is emphasized by Pasiak by mentioning that spirituality is an empirical human experience related to the purpose and

meaning of life, in relation to intrapersonal, social-interpersonal relationships and life as a whole, as a manifestation of his relationship with God. The spiritual development of learners requires guidance, direction and training by the whole teacher, which is an authentic educator and full of love and caring (J. P. Miller, 1996). Therefore, efforts to develop students' spirituality require the main role of educators through the implementation of holistic instructional communication.

Robert G. Powell and Dana L. Powell categorizes two models of communication in learning, message-centered model of communication and meaning-centered model of communication (Powell & Powell, 2015). Dean Barnlund came up with the transactional model of communication, which focuses on the way communicators act based on the meanings they construct. Barnlund's transactional communication model emphasizes the fact that communication is complex and individuals ultimately act on the meanings they construct. Some recipients may derive their meaning from personal cues and others may focus on verbal messages. All elements of context interact to help shape understanding. The educator's nonverbal style (gestures, mannerisms), verbal style (sentence structure, vocabulary), the physical environment (a warm and inviting room or a cold and uninviting place), all influence the meaning constructed by the learner. Frymier dan Houser (2017) research about communication skills associated with this process, and extend Burleson and Sampter's research about the skills required for friendship into the classroom environment (Houser & Waldbuesser, 2017). Below are the eight communication skills (table 1).

Table 1. Communication Skills in the Meaning Negotiation Process

No	Skills	Indicator
1.	Conversataional Skills	Ability to start, sustain and end conversations
2.	Referential skill	Ability to convey information
3.	Ego-supportive skill	Ability to make others feel good about themselves
4.	Comforting skills	Ability to make others feel better when stressed
5.	Conflict management	Ability to reach mutually satisfactory solutions to conflicts
6.	Persuasive skill	Ability to get others to change their minds or behavior
7	Narrative skill	Ability to entertain through jokes and stories
8	Regulation	The ability to help someone who

	has violated norms to correct their mistakes effectively

Barlund's meaning-centered communication model helps us understand the differences in how educators respond to classroom activities. Expert teachers, those with a lot of classroom experiences, see classroom events differently from novice teachers. Besides being more knowledgeable, expert educators are also better able to contextualize the learning materials. Thus, the concept of communication has evolved from a linear notion to exclusively focusing on messages to a "transactional" one where participants share in the construction and the management of meaning. Each individual enters the communication exchange with a set of experiences, values, and beliefs. In addition, each person has a wide range of competencies that also influence the production and reception of meaning. Central to these processes is the individual's symbol system (Powell & Powell, 2015).

B. Methods

This study focused on the extent to which lecturers foster students' spirituality through the implementation of holistic instructional communication by integrating holistic education principles in their instructional communication behavior. Two HEIs were selected as sample locations, namely the Tasawuf and Psychotherapy study programs at Walisongo State Islamic University Semarang (UINWS) and Kudus State Islamic Institute (IAINK). Observational data from both universities were integrated as additional or confirmatory research (Gray, 2009). This research involved lecturers and students at IAINK and UINWS (Table 2.). The reason for selecting these two sample universities is that they represent the characteristics of various university Sufism and Psychotherapy study programs in Indonesia as both have been accredited as excellent in the field of Sufism and Psychotherapy studies. Sufism asserts that spirituality can improve the quality of the human person (Siddiqi, 2018). Therefore, it is important to ascertain how the efforts of HEIs lecturers in transforming the value of spirituality in their students.

Table 2. Research Participants

Participant	HEIs	Total	Gender

			/Semester
Lecture	IAINK	3	Woman / IV
Lecture	UINWS	3	Woman / VI
Student	IAINK	25	Woman / IV
Student	IAINK	21	Man / IV
Student	UINWS	25	Woman / VI
Student	UINWS	15	Man / VI

The author used the interpretive paradigm to understand the experiences and actions of participants (Kaplan, 2015). In this case, some efforts in integrating the value of holistic education in instructional communication were carried out by investigation. Data in this study were obtained through interviews and observations (Jamshed, 2014). By utilizing an emic perspective, combined with the researcher's position, or ethical point of view, this qualitative research is expected to facilitate the understanding of phenomena by focusing more on a complete and holistic picture (Cooper & White, 2012). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with lecturers of Sufism and Psychotherapy, and students at this HEIs. The author interviewed lecturers and students in a focus group consisting of ten participants at each HEIs, which lasted approximately 90 minutes. Thus, there were four groups, two groups of lecturers and two groups of students. Itua, Coffey, Merryweather, Norton, and Foxcroft (2014) explain that unmoderated focus groups can facilitate deeper exploration of participants' views and opinions that may not be expressed in interview sessions. Participants in this study were determined using purposive sampling technique.

Theoretical basis instrument development in this study used the indicators from Holistic Education Miller, and the instructional communication from McCroskey, Gorham theories which is as a reference in developing the interview/observation guidelines. All interviews were recorded and then transcribed. The interview data were analyzed using the manifest analysis method (Bengtsson, 2016) and including latent analysis as a complement to manifest analysis (figure 1).

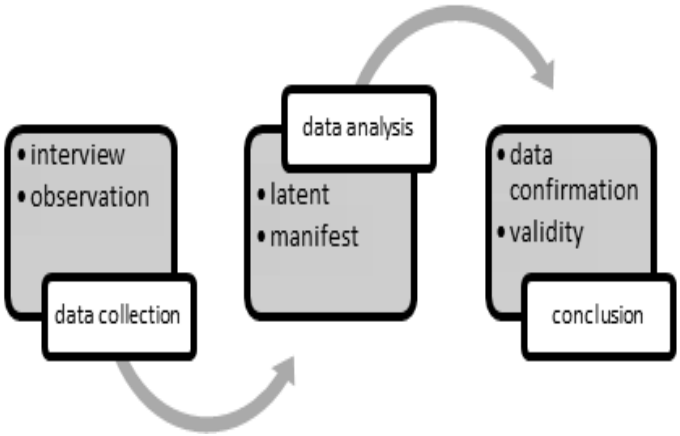


Figure 1. Data analysis process

In the first step, the interview recordings were played back to listen for voice modulation and emphasis of the speaker's words. Then, the final transcript was read in its entirety repeatedly. This was done to familiarize oneself with the data which allowed the researcher to have a deeper understanding. In the second step, the answers of each interview question were analyzed to identify and categorize the concepts. The researchers assigned a different color of text to each code. This allowed the researchers to label the raw data, analyze it, and group it thematically into a single category. Next, together with the principal investigator, we used an iterative inductive process to consolidate the concepts into important themes - the value of holistic education, learning communication behaviors, learning experiences - related to the two main topics reflecting the research questions: the integration of holistic education in learning communication and the positive impact on students' spirituality. Finally, conclusions were drawn and member checks were conducted by confirming the data with informants to ensure internal validity. In addition, to maximize the validity of the research, observations were also made during the learning process. The syllabus, lesson plans, textbooks, and learning materials on the courses used by the university were also reviewed to provide another source of data that enabled data triangulation.

C. Result and Discussion

Broadly speaking, the efforts made by lecturers in building holistic instructional communication to nurture spirituality are by developing instructional communication patterns that are integrated with holistic education principles of connectedness, balance and inclusiveness. The integration of the three values is manifested in the verbal and nonverbal instructional communication behaviors including the teacher immediacy, teacher clarity, and

teacher credibility. Meanwhile, from the perspective and assessment of students, the efforts made by their lecturers have had a considerable impact on the development of spirituality through various forms of activities inside and outside the classroom.

1. Conceptual Design of Holistic Instructional Communication Framework for Spiritual Nurturing: Lecturers' Perspective

Ideally, students of Tasawuf and Psychotherapy study programs have optimal spirituality because every lecture they interact directly with the content of courses on purifying the soul (spirituality). However, this ideal has not been directly proportional to the resources of students. Observation data and initial interviews conducted by the author with lecturers and students of IAIN Kudus's Tasawuf and Psychotherapy study program found data that instructional communication carried out in the classroom still found several obstacles to its effectiveness and effectiveness. Learning materials with spiritual content considered by lecturers have not significantly affected the student's spiritual dimensions. Meanwhile, students assessed that lecturers' learning strategies were considered less varied, the learning communication was considered less effective in which impacted on students' affection for lecturers and learning materials (Classroom Observation, 2024).

Instructional communication that has been implemented by lecturers is message-centered learning communication, so that the process of transforming spirituality has not been optimal. According to the experience of UIN Walisongo lecturers, the goal of nurturing spirituality can only be realized with a meaning-centered transactional learning communication model that prioritizes the process and dynamics of communication during learning (Interview, 2024). Lecturers of IAIN Kudus also emphasized that positive emotions and thoughts only grow from a peaceful inner atmosphere, namely a mind that is always adrift and connected to the presence of God (Lecturers Interview, 2024). Lecturers at IAINK and UINWS elaborated on their experiences and emphasized that the spiritual modality is the basis for the emotional and physical modalities in communicating learning (Lecturers Interview, 2024).

A good and peaceful inner/spiritual condition becomes the estuary of emotions, thoughts and perceptions to produce good verbal and non-verbal language. If the lecturer's verbal and nonverbal language is good, then the message is easier to be conveyed and students' perceptions will also be good. Lecturers'

perception will then affect their instructional communication behavior (Lecturers Interview, 2024). If students' perceptions of lecturers are good, then moral improvement is easier to be achieved. The condition of students' hearts that are comfortable, relaxed, feel appreciated, feel full of love can affect the structure of their reasoning and behavior (Students Interview, 2024). The perception of lecturers and students, will also affect the attitude of lecturers in responding to classroom dynamics, especially negative things such as student misbehavior, passive classes, and other things. This in turn can trigger lecturer burnout behavior, so that the process of providing feedback is not optimally implemented.

Meanwhile, the communication process between lecturers and students in learning becomes an important space for the process of negotiation/construction of meaning. Students of UIN Walisongo and IAIN Kudus get and find their “insight” from various aspects during the learning process (Students Interview, 2024). Communication is complex and individuals ultimately act on the meanings they construct. Some recipients may derive their meaning from private cues and others may focus on verbal messages. All elements of context interact to help shape understanding. The lecturer's nonverbal style (gestures, mannerisms), verbal style (sentence structure, vocabulary), the physical environment (a warm and inviting room or a cold and uninviting place), all influence the meaning constructed by the students (Lectures Interview, 2024).

Barnlund's model of classroom communication asserts that meaning is negotiated between communication participants. Lecturers and students work through subject content and lecturer-student relationships through the communication process. The goal of strengthening students' spirituality through instructional communication can be understood using Barnlund's transactional communication model approach. HIC is a process-based and meaning negotiation-oriented communication model. The process base requires a clear form of lecture’s clarity, lecture’s immediacy, and lecture’s credibility. Instructional communication supported by these behaviors is considered to be able to help the process of negotiating meaning optimally. In this context, the content of courses in the Tasawuf and Psychotherapy study program which is full of messages to live and interpret life, build positive emotions, transcendental spiritual experiences and management of changes in thinking and behavior (Document Observation, 2024) can be achieved by implementing holistic instructional communication.

Based on the description of the interview results regarding the conceptual holistic learning communication perspective, the lecturer's thinking framework can be described in the figure 2.

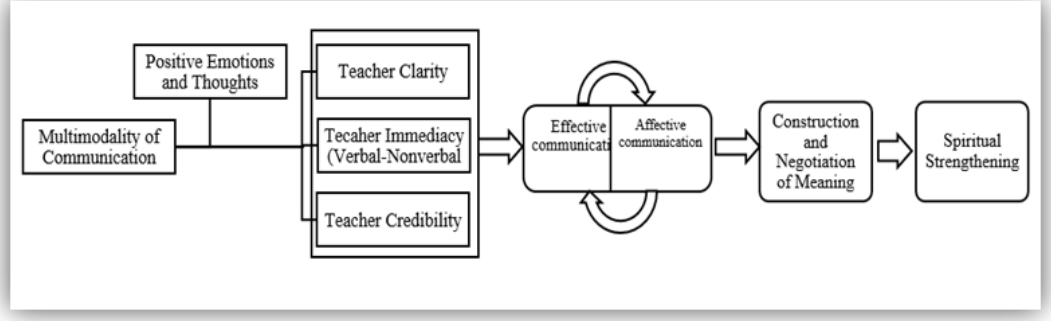


Figure 2. Framework of Instructional communication impact on student spirituality

The characteristics of HIC are reflected in all communication components in the HIC process, namely educators (source), materials (massage), learning strategies (channel), students (receivers). This means that the holistic paradigm is reflected in all components of instructional communication (table 2).

Table 3. Principles of Implementing HIC from Lecturer's Perspective

Component	Connection	Balance	Inclusiveness
Lecturer	Building a connection with God	Maintaining mental and emotional stability	Physical, cognitive, emotional and spiritual dimensions
Course material	Connected with self, society, environment and God	Interpreted as a balance between logic and intuition	Interpreted contextually
Learning Strategies	Transformative learning strategies	Collaboration-based learning strategies	Transformative learning strategies
Student	Building a connection with	Maintaining mental and emotional	Experience spiritual growth and

	God	stability	strengthening

Based on the interview data of lecturers' experiences regarding the implementation of instructional communication, it can be concluded that HIC for spiritual nurturing should accommodate physical modalities in the form of verbal, non-verbal, emotional and spiritual language. In addition, the principles of holistic education are also integrated into the components of instructional communication, namely, educators, learning materials, learning strategies, students and learning environments.

2. Implementation of Holistic Instructional Communication to Nurture Students' Spirituality

Holistic instructional communication for nurturing students' spirituality is implemented in the Sufism and Psychotherapy study program of IAIN Kudus and UIN Walisongo based on guidebook of holistic instructional communication (figure 3), in three main stages, namely the holistic preparation stage, the multimodality core stage, and the peaceful and memorable closing stage (Classroom Observation, 2024). Each stage and its relevance and significance for nurturing students' spirituality are described in the following paragraphs.



Figure 3. Holistic Instructional Communication Implementation Guidebook

3. Holistic Learning Preparation: Urgency and Relevance for Effective and Affective Instructional Communication

The holistic preparation stage is an important stage because it provides lecturers with the provision to carry out effective and affective learning. Holistic preparation in the syntax of holistic instructional communication includes physical and emotional preparation, both of which will greatly influence instructional communication behavior. Physical readiness focuses on learning materials that are prepared and designed well and systematically, because this will be one of the factors in lecturers' self-confidence and good teaching performance, thus impacting optimal explanations (Lecturers Interview, 2024). Materials that are delivered clearly can increase learning motivation and facilitate understanding. This good understanding will be a good provision for internalizing values that will inspire students to realize these values in their lives. The main values in the learning materials in the Sufism and Psychotherapy study programs are good behavior/morals towards Allah, oneself, fellow human beings and the universe (Document Observation, 2024). Therefore, this preparation stage is oriented towards efforts to prepare learning materials and design holistic instructional strategies.

The emotional preparation referred to in this stage is building and maintaining positive emotional stability. In the perspective of the emotional contagion theory or emotional vibration, it is believed that the emotional condition of educators, both positive and negative, will vibrate in students. (Frisby, 2019; Houser & Waldbuesser, 2017; Mottet & Beebe, 2000). Positive emotions of educators will affect learning communication behavior and class emotions. Positive emotions from educators can maintain good teaching performance and prevent teacher misbehavior. Positive emotions can keep the mind from over-judging students' behavior and class dynamics.

The holistic preparation stage is also very beneficial for students. Students will experience anxiety in class if learning is unclear and irregular.(Wrench et al., 2009, hal. 67). All students need clear learning goals, objectives, and purposes in order to understand well, otherwise, they will feel unconfident in doing assignments. Furthermore, ambiguous learning goals trigger student misbehavior (Wrench et al., 2009), such as not being actively involved in learning, busy with gadgets, and other apathetic behaviors that trigger learning chaos. Thus, holistic learning communication for strengthening students' spirituality requires physical and non-physical preparation from educators as the learning managers.

4. Core Stages of Multimodality: Impact on Students' Spiritual Nurturing

The lecturer of UIN Walisongo and IAIN Kudus have begun the lesson and invite students to focus on experiencing the lesson that will be carried out by taking relax and deep breathing while being aware of God's love (Lecturers Interview 2024). This step was considered by students to be very useful because it can foster feelings of calmer, more peaceful and fresher minds, more focused, more able to control themselves and be more ready to learn. Although this relaxation can be done at the beginning, middle or end of learning, the majority of students in the Sufism and Psychotherapy study programs emphasized that relaxation is more useful when carried out at the beginning of learning. This relaxation activity was also believed by students can make them easier to build solemnity when the lecturer invites to pray before the learning begin (Students Interview, 2024).

The relaxation stage is also useful for lecturers in presenting a relaxed condition, calm thoughts and feelings, as expressed by the lecturers. The lecturers emphasized that there are no special obstacles in implementing this step, because they admitted that they had attended Functional Breathing training. However, the relaxation techniques from the training have never been implemented in a teaching context. This relaxation stage is used by the model lecturers to invite and guide students to realize the form of God's love. All the trial model lecturers admitted that this relaxed and calm condition is an important basis for interacting and communicating affectively and effectively in learning.

In the stages of building a deep connection with God (transcendence), before the class begins, the lecturers invite the students by reading prayers that are intended for themselves and others, internalizing prayers, and presenting a sense of gratitude. This is to train students to always be connected to God and others, and this connection is created through a series of prayers. This stage is called John P. Miller, with contemplation (J. P. Miller, 2000). Miller believes that meditation can prioritize the spirituality of both educators and students. Miller asserts that teaching is best done when educators work from the soul and not from the ego. If teaching is based on the ego, then it often becomes an act of control, which often causes conflict with students. However, if educators can teach from their soul and spirit, then educators begin to see themselves in their students and see their students in themselves (J. P. Miller, 2000). Teaching then becomes a different act where learning and exploration can occur in an atmosphere of freedom, love and respect.

This stage is also used by lecturers to motivate students to be grateful for His love by continuing to do good and always progressing towards goodness. A clear and relaxed state of mind and feelings is fertile ground for carrying out positive internalization, motivation, and strengthening the dimensions of positive emotions and holistic thinking and behavior (Grossenbacher & Parkin, 2006). Students admitted that this stage make them more optimistic about God's help, more at peace with difficult conditions, more able to control themselves and more enthusiastic about doing good. In addition, students revealed that this stage has increased their sense of peace and felt God's love.

In relation to the step of "lecturers vibrating happiness, joy and peace through positive emotions", the research of Marian L. Housera and Caroline Waldbuesserb (2017) using emotional contagion theory as an approach, confirms that educators' perceptions of their own affirmative behavior most strongly influence their perceptions of how nonverbally responsive students are in the classroom. Thus, more expressive instructors are likely to encourage students to be more expressive, leading them to determine that their students are more nonverbally responsive. Furthermore, expressive instructors are more attuned to student interactions because they may subconsciously expect students to mirror their actions through the nonverbal behaviors they expect. Furthermore, satisfied instructors will view their students as satisfied and look for this feeling to be exposed through nonverbal response behaviors.

The results of the research by Marian L. Housera and Caroline Waldbuesserb are in line with the research by Ann Q. Staton-Spicer & Cheryl R. Marty-White (2015) emphasizes that the behavior of educators in the classroom is directed and influenced by what they think and also reveals that the communication behavior of educators in the classroom is directed and influenced by their concern for communication. Therefore, the dynamics of the interaction between educators and students are influenced by the perceptions brought by both, because the perceptions brought will affect the perceptions obtained, and the perceptions obtained affect the response holistic instructional communication requires physical and spiritual modalities in order to minimize negative emotions that trigger miscommunication and disharmony. This dual modality is prioritized to be owned by educators as the main stimulus for the learning process. Spiritual modality is the main filter for educators to manage their thoughts and emotions when starting and ending each instructional communication activity in the

classroom, because the thoughts and feelings of educators will influence their instructional communication behavior in the classroom.

Additional evidence related to the dynamics of interactions between educators and students, especially the fact of the relationship between learning communication and emotional responses, is the theory of emotional contagion in the classroom which is initiated by Houser and Waldbuesser (2017). Although not explored through the lens of Emotional Response Theory (ERT), the study revealed a strong positive correlation between educators' perceptions of their own communication behaviors and their perceptions of learners' nonverbal responsiveness. Educators who demonstrate positive emotions through communication behaviors are more likely to perceive that learners are attuned to and mirror their positive emotions through nonverbal expressions. Behaviors that influence emotions have the potential to create emotional momentum in situations where educators or learners are predisposed to mirror the emotions of others through the process of emotional contagion. In such situations, learners or educators may experience arousal and become more nonverbally expressive when reacting to the emotional messages from others.

Lecturers who are friendly, enthusiastic, passionate, deliver material in depth and comprehensively, vary assignments and provide positive motivation are able to provide deep "insight" for students, especially regarding the connection with God, themselves, and the surrounding environment. The ability to explain material in depth and comprehensively and creativity in providing a variety of assignments are indicators of teacher clarity (Richmond, 2018). Several studies have revealed a major influence between teacher clarity and learning, both cognitive and affective learning.(Janah & Sukartono, 2022). Thus, the lecturer's explanation which is systematic and easy to understand as well as problem-based learning (Sutiyono et al., 2024) inspire students to appreciate and interpret life and transcendental experiences in depth.

Perceptions of teacher clarity are a result of the various ways in which teachers provide examples, descriptions, and explanations to help students understand information. Although clarity can be divided into one or more intermediate constructs such as spoken clarity and written clarity, it is not easily reduced to a number of components; rather, clarity is viewed as an overall impression of how well teachers negotiate complex meanings with students. When teachers present information clearly, students have greater perceptions of their own well-being, which also influences increased trust in the teacher's credibility

and enjoyment of the course (Titsworth et al., 2013). Based on this, it is understandable why lecturers' clarity behavior in instructional communication can contribute to students' positive emotional dimensions.

Lecturers who implement effective communication behavior have more positive impact on the classroom environment (Rasna et al., 2020) and increase cognitive, behavioral, and emotional engagement of students (Tan & Amiel, 2022). Lecturers encourage creativity and comfortable learning atmosphere by presenting and explaining material that can stimulate learning and attract students' attention, using learning methods that are relevant to learning outcomes, and implementing collaborative learning. (Rohman, 2021) and providing space and are willing to listen to students convey their feelings, ideas, reflections and analysis and provide reviews effectively and without delay. Lecturers' techniques in managing collaborative learning-based learning and students' indiscipline behavior inspire the students to control themselves and feel at peace with difficult situations. Lecturers' ability to manage conflict recognized by students will inspire them to learn to manage emotions and improve teamwork.

The implementation of holistic education paradigm education, as emphasized by John P Miller, requires authentic and caring educators. Pedro De Bruyckere & Paul A. Kirschner emphasizes four criteria of authentic teachers, namely expert, passion, unicity and distance (De Bruyckere & Kirschner, 2016). Expert lecturers are indeed experts in their fields of knowledge (expert teachers), not just experienced, lecturers who can explain the subject matter clearly and intelligently, and ensure the time needed to master it. Passionate lecturers who have harmonious passion, not obsessive passion. Harmonious passion is a teaching activity that is internalized by one's identity and learning activities are freely accepted as something important, while obsessive passion teaching may be the only activity that allows teachers to maintain a sense of self-esteem. Day (2006) states that passion creates energy, determination, conviction, commitment and obsession in a person. A passionate and harmonious lecturer can have a "contagious" or "vibrating" effect on his students (De Bruyckere & Kirschner, 2016).

Furthermore, the effectiveness of HIC can be concluded based on a summary of the achievement of strengthening student spirituality based on the results of the pretest and posttest, the average gain score and N gain in the trial implementation of the effectiveness of HIC (table 3).

Table 4. Summary of Pretest and Posttest Results, Mean Gain Score and Normalized Gain Score

Location	N Gain Score	Category	N Gain %
IAIN Kudus	0,6	Medium	57,4%
UIN Walisongo	0,6	Medium	58,7%
Average	0,6	Medium	59%

Based on the table, it is known that the overall average value of the percentage gain score is 59% and the average normalized gain score (N-gain) is 0.6. Based on the interpretation criteria from Hake (1999), which is contained in Table 5.38, the results of individual trials that obtained (<g>) of 0.6 are included in the category of moderate improvement and the effectiveness of holistic instructional communication for strengthening student spirituality with 59% including having a fairly effective category. These results provide information that HIC is effective enough to be used to increase the strengthening of spirituality of students of Tasawuf and Psychotherapy study programs at IAIN Kudus and UIN Walisongo.

D. Conclusion

Holistic instructional communication is implemented in three stages of learning, namely the preparation stage, the core of multimodality and peaceful closing. The principle of connection, balance and inclusiveness is the main spirit of holistic learning communication behavior, which is manifested in the behavior of verbal and non-verbal teacher immediacy, clarity behavior and credibility behavior. Holistic instructional communication behavior is implemented with the modality of Divine consciousness (transcendence) as the main basis with emotional and physical modalities. The principle of holistic education is considered capable to strengthen the ego-supportive skills, comforting skills, conflict management skills, persuasive skills and regulation skills of lecturers. It turns out that the spiritual dimension of students can be nurtured with holistic learning communication behavior that includes skills.

This study still generally reveals the impact of the implementation of holistic instructional communication done by lecturers on the spiritual nurturing for students. Therefore, further research can examine in detail what spiritual dimensions have truly developed as an impact of the implementation of holistic

instructional communication. Lecturers need to continue to strengthen their human resources in their communication skills through training, workshops and seminars. The implementation of holistic instructional communication also requires non-professional development training such as training in soul purification, mind and emotion management.

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