



RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE CONCEPTS OF LATA'IF QUR'ANIYYAH AND AL-SUHBAB AS RECENT INNOVATION IN REFLECTIVE TEACHING

Ahmad Fakhurrrazi Mohammed Zabidi¹, Mahfuzah Mohammed Zabidi², Norbaiti Tukiman³, Nur Najwa Hanani Abd. Rahman⁴, Akmaliza Abdullah⁴ and Ezad Azraai Jamsari⁵

1. Research Centre for al-Quran and al-Sunnah, Faculty of Islamic Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 UKM Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia.
2. Academy of Contemporary Islamic Studies, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Pasir Gudang, Bandar Seri Alam 81750 Masai, Johor Malaysia.
3. Faculty of Computer and Mathematical Sciences, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Pasir Gudang, Bandar Seri Alam, 81750 Masai, Johor, Malaysia.
4. Academy of Islamic Civilization, Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, 81310 Skudai, Johor Bahru, Johor, Malaysia.
5. Research Centre for Arabic Language and Islamic Civilization, Faculty of Islamic Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 UKM Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia.

Manuscript Info

Manuscript History

Received: 30 June 2021

Final Accepted: 31 July 2021

Published: August 2021

Key words:-

Al-Suhbah, Qur'anic subtleties, Islamic education, Reflective teaching, Industrial Revolution 4.0

Abstract

Learning methods in this Industrial Revolution 4.0 era extensively uses computers. This leads to effective abandonment of teacher-student relationship, namely al-Suhbah (Human bonding through social interaction). Excessive concern for syllabus completion and achievement in final exams focus on the cognitive domain of students, but neglect their psychomotor and affective domains. Reflective Teaching is very important in the aspect of students' affective domain. Thus, this study highlights the combination of Lata'if Qur'aniyyah (Qur'anic Subtleties) and al-Suhbah (Human Bonding) concepts as the main thrust for emphasizing the affective domain in order to balance it with the cognitive and psychomotor domains. This teaching innovation was implemented for students taking the course PPPN3103 al-Qur'an Education, for Semester 1 Session 2019/2020, and surprisingly proved effective in producing very positive results and impact on achieving the objectives or course learning outcomes outlined in Reflective Teaching.

Copy Right, IJAR, 2021., All rights reserved.

Introduction:-

Comprehensive learning involves a combination of cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains integrated through the steps of orientation, exploration, reinforcement and inference (Usep 2016; Bawaneh et al. 2020). Included in this is Reflective Teaching that is more student-centered, compared to the more teacher-centred traditional method (Ambady 2018; Boyd & Fales 1983). The intent behind Reflective Teaching (Schon 1983; Sellars 2014) is to enable students to be better guided to place emphasis on the human element of daily life in order to achieve happiness (Naicker & Rensburg 2018; Salifu et al. 2017). It is in response to the expected aftermath of the Industrial Revolution 4.0 (IR4) that many people's daily affairs would be replaced by a combination of cyber and automation technology, which creates a social network between robots and machines that could communicate with

Corresponding Author:- Ahmad Fakhurrrazi Mohammed Zabidi

Address:- Research Centre for al-Quran and al-Sunnah, Faculty of Islamic Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, 43600 UKM Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia.

one another (Wahyudi et al. 2017). This eventually leads to robots and machines replacing a large number of human roles in various fields, in particular occupational aspects (Shwab 2016).

In addition, this emphasis on Reflective Teaching is also a response to the issue of mental health affected by the increasing burden and cost of living, on top of the rising unemployment rate, as many careers have been taken over by the computer (Sri Mulyani 2018; Suyatno et al. 2019). Unfortunately, human values are being neglected and ignored. Depression, emotional stress and various psychological problems begin to affect humans, including Muslims themselves (Mohd Noor 2017; Teasdale 1983; Wahyudi et al. 2017).

Maslow's hierarchical theory states that in order to ensure a prosperous life, humans must fulfill all basic needs (Feidman 2003) which include physiological needs, safety requirements, social needs, self-worth and self-esteem needs (Santrock 2003). All five of these basic needs are under threat by the effects of IR4 now, depending on the human behavior itself, whether to leverage technology for good or otherwise. This is directly related to applying good and humane values to the education system (Brockbank & McGill 2006; Mac Leod 2005; Maksimović & Osmanović 2019).

From a psychological point of view, disruption to these basic needs leads to negative thoughts, and even to depression and despair (Mac Leod 2005), and confuses the meaning of well-being in one's life (Jung 2007). If left untreated, it can lead to more serious mental health issues, including suicide or attempted suicide and other acts that endanger others (Ahmad Rusydi 2012; Teasdale 1983). This also leads to many kinds of negative issues in society such as gangsterism, hedonism, vandalism and more. All this occur due to unstable emotions from negative thoughts in one's affective domain in the face of the volatile social and economic ecosystems (Charoensuk 2007; Cuesta et al. 2016).

However, it is the Qur'an that Allah Almighty preserves throughout the ages that should be a guide in dealing with this challenge, wisely through consideration of the present life and the hereafter (Jum'ah 2019; Abdel-Khalek 2010). In a hadith from Abu Ya'la Syaddad ibn Aws RA, the Prophet Muhammad PBUH said, "A wise man is the one who calls himself to account (and refrains from doing evil deeds) and does noble deeds to benefit him after death, and the foolish (weak in faith) person is the one who subdues himself to his temptations and desires and seeks from Allah the fulfillment of his vain desires (that Allah will forgive him)" (Hadith hasan by Tirmidhi, no. 2459). This hadith is to be read in conjunction with the words of Allah Almighty in verse 77 of Surah al-Qasas which means, "And claim the wealth which Allah has bestowed upon you for the reward and happiness of the Hereafter, and do not forget your part (of your need and supply) of the world and do good to others as Allah does unto you, and do not do evil in the land; surely Allah does not like those who do evil".

In the context of the IR4 challenge, the above verse implies that priority should be given to the aspect of life in the hereafter, as it is an indicator of intelligence. As for the rest of our lives in this world, we should always look to the good of Allah as we spread the good to our neighbours, and never misuse the favors of God to the valley of destruction (al-Zuhayli 1997; al-Khalidi 1992).

Al-Suhbah and Lata'if Qur'aniyyah Concepts: Its Relevance to Reflective Teaching

Al-Suhbah is a process of bonding between teachers and students over a period of time through a variety of activities being performed together. It aims to make pupils emulate good character from their teachers. The Qur'an explains this concept through the terminology of al-Ma'iyah (togetherness) in believers' compassion for one another in verse 29 of Surah al-Fath, which describes the praiseworthy qualities of those who were close to the Prophet Muhammad PBUH. They emulated the noble character of the Prophet Muhammad PBUH (Yasin 2018).

In the Islamic scholarly tradition, al-Suhbah is the dominant method of spiritual guidance, namely in tasawuf (al-Khalidi 1992). This concept is often synonymous with the story of Prophet Moses AS who followed the process of teaching and learning based on his direct experience throughout his journey with Prophet Khidr AS, as told in verses 60-82 of Surah al-Kahfi. At the end of their discourse, Prophet Khidr AS explained every event that led to reflection by Prophet Moses AS in fulfillment of his affective domain. Emphasis on manners, service and devotion to teachers is dominant without ignoring the discussion of knowledge itself (Jum'ah 2019).

The direct effect of al-Suhbah, will awaken the soul by the element of love as the basis of behavior and character. Thus, the student will serve his principles purely for the universal benefit of humanity, regardless of religion, race

and so on (Hashash et al. 2018; Tan et al. 2019). This is also referred to as the 'value' of the Qur'anic Subtleties (al-Khalidi 1992), which is the culmination of the high-level process of reflection (tadabbur) towards al-Qur'an driven by the high level of spirituality (tasawuf) that was described by Imam Fakhr al-Din al-Razi in his venerated work, al-Tafsir al-Kabir also known as Mafatih al-Ghayb. It is based on the value of the servant's bondage to his Creator, Who is Merciful and Lovingful. This concept focuses on the servant's relationship with Allah from a spiritual point of view after the verses of the Qur'an are observed in its interpretation (Ahmad Fakhrrrazi 2018).

Thus, both concepts (al-Suhbah and Lata'if Qur'aniyyah) concepts reside in the affective domain that very much associated with Reflective Teaching which aims to instill this value in developing students' independence and wisdom in their daily lives (Ambady 2018; Ashraf et al. 2016; Brockbank & McGill 2006). The Reflective Teaching is actually a developmental thread from active and experience-based learning formulated by John Dewey in his book 'Experience and Education' in 1938, which was later developed by David Kolb, David Boud and Donald Schön, also known as pioneers in this field (Pelayo 2015).

Through Reflective Teaching, students are expected to be able to deal with all issues and challenges of life with optimism and confidence (Cuesta et al. 2016; Naicker & Rensburg 2018; Sugerman 2000), by encouraging students to change their perspectives for the better, especially in making conceptual reasoning about the meaning of existence in life based on their respective contexts (Boyd & Fales 1983; Naz & Murad 2017). In turn, it also influences students' intelligence and their rational judgment in taking appropriate action on the reality presented before them (Salifu et al. 2017). Thus, Reflective Teaching is synonymous with the concept of al-Suhbah because they both meet at the point of metacognitive and internal reasoning processes (affective domains) that bring the soul of humanity in shaping a better character for students (Sellars 2014).

Case Study on Innovation in Teaching and Learning for Course PPPN3103 al-Qur'an Education

This qualitative study uses observation and interview design to obtain students' feedback on reflective learning. Data were analyzed descriptively. To create positive values and a sense of self-worth for students, we have developed a comprehensive and holistic method of learning (Abdullah & Abdullah 2007) by making Reflective Teaching an integral part of it (Pelayo 2015; Schon 1983; Slade et al. 2019). The concept of al-Suhbah is the main mechanism, whereby the course lecturers are actively involved in each activity carried out across the three domains of teaching and learning. Lecturers constantly remind students to remain optimistic (Ahmad Rusydi 2012), and consistent in practicing goodwill, reciting the Surah of al-Fatihah for parents and scholars and emphasizing praiseworthy character traits throughout their learning process.

Throughout the Semester 1, Session 2019/2020, all 55 students carried out the following activities:

1. First: The discussion of verse 2 of Surah al-Jumu'ah and the Hadith of Gabriel to form the Islamic 'worldview' of education for the students. The entire Qur'anic verse and hadith should be read in line with their essence (Figure 1).
2. Second: The reading and reflection of the book 'The concept of al-Lata'if according to Imam Fakhr al-Din al-Razi in Mafatih al-Ghayb', so that students are exposed to affective elements when interacting with the Qur'an. Reflection is handwritten, to bring it closer to the elements of heart and feeling (Figure 2).
3. Third: Program planning and reflection. Students were divided into three groups to organize three programs: (a) Mobility Program to Ruwaq Jawi, Cairo, Egypt (Figure 3); (b) 'Deradicalization and Rehabilitation Program: Experience, Reality and Challenges in Malaysia' (Figure 4); and (c) Discourse Program on 'Understanding Religion in the Context of Qur'anic Education' (Figure 5).
4. Fourth: Participation in Zikrullah Program and reflection. Students went through their own spiritual experiences in reciting the zikrullah. The first ceremony was held at the Selangor Menteri Besar's official residence (Figure 6) for students to interact with the middle and upper social classes (Figure 7), while the second ceremony was held with the disadvantaged and homeless at Chow Kit Road (Figure 8), including the Street Dakwah activity (Figure 9).
5. Fifth: Presentation of oral reflection individually, regarding three things: (a) the value gained; (b) the most valued thing during the teaching and learning process in the course; and (c) aspiration and desire to contribute to the Ummah of Prophet Muhammad PBUH. In addition to written reflections for each program, the oral presentation was for evaluating the effectiveness of Reflective Teaching, whether it achieved its objectives and learning outcomes or otherwise.

All these student activities were conducted with active involvement of the lecturers. Observations on students' attitudes were conducted to observe their emotions throughout the activities. In addition to written reflections, verbal reflections were also recorded on video (Figure 10). It was analyzed inductively to identify the effectiveness of al-Suhbah and the Qur'anic al-Lata'if concepts applied to this course. The way students conveyed their reflections was examined to identify how they interacted with their affective elements, through body language, voice intonations, and facial expressions. Focus was on identifying whether the student's emotions in affective domain were generated or not.



Figure 1:- Students Are Discussing Verse 2 of Surah al-Jumu'ah and the Hadith of Gabriel.



Figure 2:- Students Show a Handwritten Reflection after Reading the 'The Concept of al-Lata'if according to Imam Fakhr al-Din al-Razi in Mafatih al-Ghayb'.



Figure 3:- Student group participating in Ruwaq Jawi Mobility Program, Cairo, Egypt.



Figure 4:- Discourse of 'Deradicalization and Rehabilitation Program: Experience, Reality and Challenges in Malaysia'.



Figure 5:- Discourse of 'Understanding Religion in the Context of Qur'anic Education'.



Figure 6:- Zikrullah Program at Selangor Menteri Besar's Official Residence.



Figure 7:- Students Interacting with the Middle and Upper Social Classes at the Selangor Menteri Besar's Official Residence.



Figure 8:- Program with the Disadvantaged and Homeless at Chow Kit Road.



Figure 9:- Street Dakwah Activity.

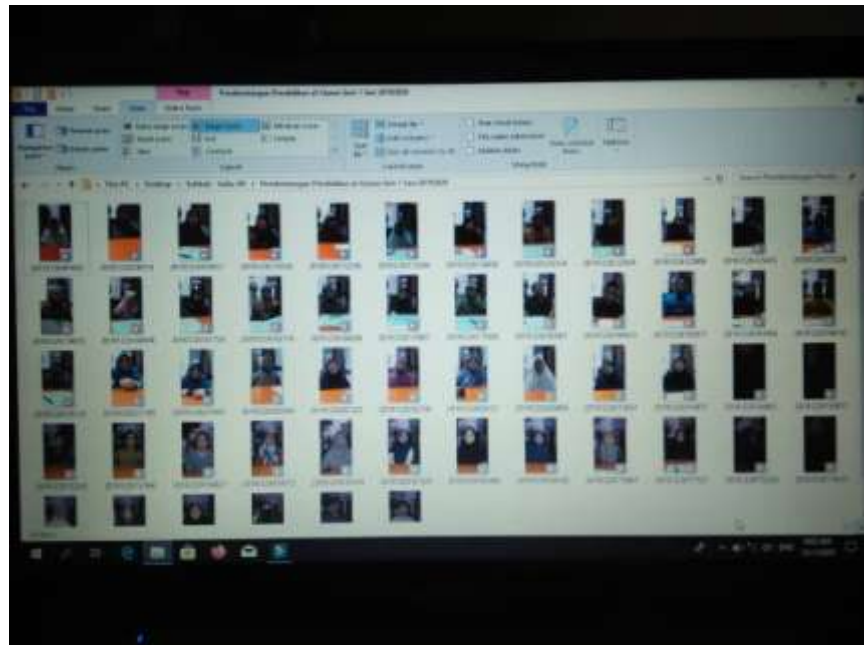


Figure 10:- Recorded Videos of Students' Reflection after Completing All Activities Throughout the Semester.

Results and Discussion:-

Based on the reflection for the first activity, the student learnt holistically about the essence of discussion in Islamic studies which has links between the aspects of Aqidah in the cognitive, Tasawuf in the affective and Fiqh in the psychomotor domains. This is evidenced by the work of the mind mapping task that was performed.

In the second activity, students recognized that the study of the Qur'an, in fact, became more meaningful when they felt the element of 'connection with Allah Who spoke through the Qur'an'. Many shed tears when describing this matter, for they were too anxious to be given spiritual and religious blessings from Allah in order to experience the 'deliciousness' of the Qur'an through the revealed Lata'if Qur'aniyyah (Qur'anic Subtleties) concept.

In the third activity, students felt appreciated and valued for the given opportunity to organize the program. It led to a change in their perspective, increased their skills and fostered in them a sense of accountability and team spirit. According to them, the first discourse was related to the Qur'anic Lata'if in suppressing radical understanding or ideology, while the second discourse strengthened their understanding of the Islamic Worldview.

Most students reported having fun in the fourth activity. They expressed some of the values that most affected their inner personality, such as the values of positive assumptions (husn al-zann) or positive thinking and optimism towards Allah SWT and fellow humans (Surah al-Hujurat, verse 12), honesty, gratitude and patience, self-sufficiency, and empathy for the less fortunate. Here, they acknowledged the importance of extending the Salawat to Rasulullah PBUH, to show our gratitude towards him and demonstrate our love and veneration for him, as the reason for the grace of Allah SWT. If before the program, this was only discussed in the cognitive domain, after attending these zikr ceremonies they actually felt this matter in the affective domain.

In the fifth activity, students said this course was special because it included all aspects of humanity, from the aspects of thought, action, sympathy and empathy and the opportunity to gain valuable experience. They really appreciated the Zikrullah ceremony. Finally, the students stated that they should be the beneficiaries of the good and the love connection between the Ummah and the Prophet Muhammad PBUH.

The comprehensive reflections verbally expressed by the students, in addition to the written reflections of each of the other activities, show that teaching and learning of this course not only encompassed Comprehensive Learning, but also, through Reflective Teaching, illumined values and meanings for the students in the context of their own lives. These values and meanings, in turn, are reflected onto their current realities, relating to issues of family, friends, friends and future aspirations.

This study found that students admitted to being more optimistic than ever before, for making Rasulullah PBUH as their main motivation. It is a supreme achievement, derived from the Zikrullah Ceremony which they attended. In the perspective of Islamic studies, the definition of 'Love for the Prophet' covers not only belief (cognitive domain) and action (psychomotor domain), but rather 'spiritual happiness' in the affective domain itself. This is the cornerstone of the success of Reflective Teaching by integrating teaching and learning activities within the framework of the al-Suhbah concept between students and lecturers, combined with the Lata'if Qur'aniyyah concept.

Conclusion:-

Undeniably, Reflective Teaching is proven to bring more meaning and values to students. It is essential to make it a mainstream teaching and learning approach and process at Institutes of Higher Education in order to balance student life between the use of technology in the Industrial Revolution 4.0 and instilling uncompromising values and meanings of humanity in them. In order to succeed in this approach, in the context of Islamic studies, it must be based on the concept of al-Suhbah in interacting with the teacher, and in line with the Lata'if Qur'aniyyah concept in interacting with the Divine revelation, the Qur'an itself. The practice of Salawat towards Prophet Muhammad PBUH and Zikrullah ceremonies are proven to be effective in bringing intellectual and spiritual enlightenment as well as polite thinking, optimism, cordiality and rapport in student-teacher relationships and in life. Without being asked, students apply this positive reflection to their own realities of life, which they have shared in their individual presentation sessions. In the authors' opinion, this undoubtedly proves the success and effectiveness of the Reflective Teaching approach of this course.

Acknowledgement:-

This study is financed by *Geran Galakan Penyelidik Muda* (GGPM-2019-017), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

References:-

1. Abdel-Khalek, A.M. (2010). Quality of life, subjective well-being, and religiosity in Muslim college students. *Quality of Life Research* 19(8): 1133-1143.
2. Abdullah, M.A., & Abdullah, M.A. (2007). *Islamic Studies dalam Paradigma Integrasi Interkoneksi: Sebuah Antologi*. Yogyakarta: Suka Press.
3. Ahmad Fakhurrrazi Mohammed Zabidi. (2018). *Konsep al-Lata'if menurut Imam Fakhr al-Din al-Razi*. Bangi: UKM Press.

4. Ahmad Rusydi. (2012). Husn al-zhann: Konsep berpikir positif dalam perspektif psikologi Islam dan manfaatnya bagi kesehatan mental. *Proyeksi* 7(1): 1-31.
5. Ambady, K.G. (2018). *Reflective Practices in Teaching: Profession and Professionalism* (September), 1-11.
6. Ashraf, H., Samir, A., & Yazdi, M.T. (2016). Reflective teaching practice in an EFL context: A qualitative study. *International Journal of English Linguistics* 6(7): 48-58.
7. Bawaneh, A.K., Moumene, A.B.H., & Aldalalah, O. (2020). Gauging the level of reflective teaching practices among science teachers. *International Journal of Instruction* 13(1): 695-712.
8. Boyd, E.M. & Fales, A.W. (1983). Reflective Learning. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 23(2): 99-117.
9. Brockbank, A. & McGill, I. (2006). *Facilitating Reflective Learning through Mentoring & Coaching*. London: Kogan Page Publishers.
10. Charoensuk, S. (2007). Negative thinking: A key factor in depressive symptoms in Thai adolescents. *Mental Health Nursing* 28(1): 55-74.
11. Chen, Y. (2017). The application of effective teaching theory in higher education. *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education* 13(12): 8185-8191.
12. Cuesta, J., Azcarate, P. & Cardenoso, J.M. (2016). The role of reflection and collaboration in the evolution of a group of novice secondary education science teachers. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education* 41(5): 136-152.
13. Feidman, R.S. (2003). *Essentials of Understanding Psychology*. New York: McGraw Hill Higher Education.
14. Hale, C.C., Nanni, A. & Hooper, D. (2018). Conversation analysis in language teacher education: An approach for reflection through action research. *Hacettepe University Journal of Education (HUJE)* 33(Special Issue): 54-71.
15. Hashash, M., Abouchedid, K. & Abourjeily, S. (2018). Student-teacher interaction in public schools in Lebanon: A symbolic interactionist perspective in grade 6 classes. *SAGE Open* 8(2): 1-24.
16. Jum'ah, 'Ali (2019). *Madkhal ila al-Tasawwuf al-Islami*. Cairo: Dar al-Wabil al-Sayyib.
17. Jung, J.Y. (2007). Positive-thinking and life satisfaction amongst Koreans. *Yonsei Medical Journal* 48(3): 371-378.
18. al-Khalidi, Salah 'Abd al-Fattah. (1992). *Lata'if Qur'aniyyah*. Vol. 1. Damascus: Dar al-Qalam.
19. MacLeod, A.K. (2005). Hopelessness and positive and negative future thinking in parasuicide. *British Journal of Clinical Psychology* 44(4): 495-504.
20. Maksimović, J. & Osmanović, J. (2019). Perspective of cognitive thinking and reflective teaching practice. *International Journal of Cognitive Research in Science, Engineering and Education* 7(2): 1-10.
21. Mohd. Noor Omar. 2017. Cabaran Revolusi Industri 4. *Utusan Malaysia*, 6 November. <http://www.ikim.gov.my/index.php/2017/11/06/cabaran-revolusi-industri-4/>
22. Munlim, L.O. (2017). Mental processes in teachers' reflection papers: A transitivity analysis in systemic functional linguistics. *3L: The Southeast Asian Journal of English Language Studies* 23(2): 154-166.
23. Naicker, K. & Rensburg, G.H. (2018). Facilitation of reflective learning in nursing: Reflective teaching practices of educators. *Africa Journal of Nursing and Midwifery* 20(2): 1-15.
24. Naz, F. & Murad, H.S. (2017). Innovative teaching has a positive impact on the performance of diverse students. *SAGE Open* 7(4): 1-8.
25. Pelayo, V.R. (2015). *Design and Application of Quantified Self Approaches for Reflective Learning in the Workplace*. Karlsruhe: KIT Scientific Publishing.
26. Salifu, I., Worlanyo E.K. & Kuyini, A.B. (2017). Classroom engagement dynamics: examining the potency of reflective teaching approach among some selected universities in Ghana. *Reflective Practice* 18(6): 725-736.
27. Santrock, J.W. (2003). *Psychology*. New York: McGraw-Hill Education.
28. Schon, D.A. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals think in Action*. New York: Basic Books.
29. Sellars, M. (2014). *Reflective Practice for Teachers*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
30. Shwab, K. (2016). *The Fourth Industrial Revolution*. New York: Crown Business.
31. Slade, M. L., Burnham, T. J., Catalana, S. M. & Waters, T. (2019). The impact of reflective practice on teacher candidates' learning. *International Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* 13(2): 1-8.
32. Sri Mulyani (2018). Bicara era digital: Akan ada pergeseran jenis tenaga kerja. *Detiknews*, 3 February.
33. Sugerman, D.A. (2000). *Reflective Learning: Theory and Practice*. Iowa: Kendall Hunt.
34. Suyatno, Mardati, A., Wantini, Pambudi, D. I. & Amurdawati, G. (2019). The impact of teacher values, classroom atmosphere, and student-teacher relationship towards student attitude during learning process. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research* 18(8): 54-74.
35. Tan, F.D.H., Whipp, P.R., Gagné, M. & Van Quaquebeke, N. (2019). Students' perception of teachers' two-way feedback interactions that impact learning. *Social Psychology of Education* 22(1): 169-187

36. Teasdale, J.D. (1983). Negative thinking in depression: Cause, effect, or reciprocal relationship?. *Advances in Behaviour Research and Therapy* 5(1): 3-25.
37. Usep Supriatna. (2016). Pengembangan model pembelajaran komprehensif dalam pendidikan ilmu pengetahuan sosial di sekolah dasar. *JINoP (Jurnal Inovasi Pembelajaran)* 2(1): 319-333.
38. Wahyudi Setiawan, Fitriah M. Suud, Moh Toriqul Chaer & Azam Syukur Rahmatullah. (2017). Pendidikan kebahagiaan dalam Revolusi Industri 4. *AL-MURABBI: Jurnal Studi Kependidikan dan Keislaman* 5(1): 101-120.
39. Yasin, 'Abd al-Salam. (2018). *Kitab al-Ihsan*. Beirut: Dar Lubnan li al-Tiba'ah wa al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi'.
40. al-Zuhayli, Wahbah Mustafa. (1997). *al-Tafsir al-Munir fi al-'Aqidah wa al-Shari'ah wa al-Manhaj*. Damascus: Dar al-Fikr al-Mu'asir.