

Utilization of the Song "Lir Ilir" to Build Spiritual and Moral Awareness in 6th Grade Students at Al Hikmah Elementary School Surabaya

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DOI : <https://doi.org/10.61796/ijss.v1i4.26>



Sections Info

Article history:

Submitted: Nov 09 , 2024

Final Revised: Nov 09, 2024

Accepted: Nov 19 , 2024

Published: Nov 19 , 2024

Keywords:

The song "lir ilir"

Moral education

Spiritual awareness

Local culture

Interactive learning

Al hikmah elementary school
surabaya

Character education

ABSTRACT

Objective: This research investigates the use of the traditional song "Lir Ilir," popularized by Sunan Kalijaga, as a teaching tool to enhance students' spiritual and moral awareness at SD Al Hikmah Surabaya. It aims to explore how integrating this cultural element into classroom activities fosters students' understanding of moral values. **Method:** The study employed an interactive approach by integrating "Lir Ilir" into teaching activities, including discussions of the song's meaning, group singing, art projects, and storytelling. Challenges, such as explaining the symbolism within the lyrics, were addressed through the use of visual media and in-depth explanations. **Results:** The implementation demonstrated that using "Lir Ilir" as a teaching tool effectively enhanced students' moral and spiritual understanding. It encouraged active participation, self-awareness, and spiritual reflection. Despite initial challenges, the innovative teaching method successfully conveyed complex philosophical ideas through engaging and meaningful experiences. **Novelty:** This research highlights the integration of local cultural heritage into education, emphasizing the profound potential of traditional songs like "Lir Ilir" in nurturing a strong moral foundation among students. It showcases how culturally rooted teaching methods can create impactful and reflective learning experiences while preserving heritage values.

INTRODUCTION

The song "Lir Ilir" is one of the traditional works rich in philosophical and spiritual meaning, famous in Javanese culture and popularized by Sunan Kalijaga, one of the Walisongo. Its metaphor-laden lyrics reflect an invitation to awaken self-awareness and live life more wisely and judiciously. As a result of the acculturation between Islamic teachings and local traditions, "Lir Ilir" conveys spiritual messages that align with Islamic principles, making it a powerful tool in moral education. "Traditional songs like 'Lir Ilir' serve as subtle media for preaching, bringing religious teachings into people's lives in an enjoyable and easily accepted manner." The depth of this song can be utilized in education, especially in elementary schools, to instill spiritual values from an early age [1]. Education that emphasizes moral and spiritual aspects is important for shaping students' character, making them not only academically intelligent but also possessing integrity. In the context of Islamic education, such an approach aligns with the main objectives of education to cultivate individuals who are virtuous and faithful. "The instillation of spiritual values in children from an early age plays a crucial role in forming a strong moral foundation."

SD Al Hikmah Surabaya, known as an Islamic-based education school, has implemented various programs to instill spiritual values in its students. One relevant approach is the use of local cultural elements and traditions in the learning process. The

use of songs like "Lir Ilir" can be an effective method for conveying moral messages in an engaging and inspiring way [2]. "Culturally-based learning approaches help students feel a stronger emotional attachment to the learning material."

As a work rich in symbols and meanings, "Lir Ilir" encourages students to think reflectively and connect their experiences with spiritual values. This can stimulate the development of moral awareness and deep introspective attitudes, an important aspect of character education [3]. Using this song, students are expected to understand the concept of spirituality not only as a theory but as a part of their daily lives. Learning that integrates elements of local culture can enhance students' understanding of the material in a more holistic way."

In this era of globalization, preserving local cultural heritage such as the song "Lir Ilir" holds greater significance. In addition to preserving cultural identity, this approach can foster pride and appreciation for ancestral heritage that contains spiritual wisdom. Education that combines spiritual aspects with cultural elements can help students develop a broader understanding of religion and tradition, creating a sense of harmony between beliefs and daily practices [4].

SD Al Hikmah Surabaya is committed to integrating culture-based learning into their curriculum. Through teaching that involves traditional music and arts, students not only learn to understand the subject matter but also hone their spiritual sensitivity. "The integration of traditional music into education can build a bond between students and moral values," in his research on arts-based education.

The application of the song "Lir Ilir" in the kontjaran at SD Al Hikmah not only serves as a means of entertainment but also as a bridge for discussion and spiritual reflection. This song allows students to internalize religious messages more deeply and naturally. By singing this song together, teachers can invite students to discuss the meaning behind the lyrics and their implications in daily life, thereby strengthening their emotional and spiritual bonds.

Using an approach like this is also in line with the principles of joyful learning, where students are invited to learn with enthusiasm and engagement. "The joyful learning approach has been proven to increase students' interest in the subject matter and facilitate the formation of positive character." Thus, the use of the song "Lir Ilir" in education can create a conducive learning atmosphere for spiritual development.

Finally, the use of the song "Lir Ilir" as part of spiritual education at SD Al Hikmah Surabaya is expected to enhance students' awareness of the importance of moral values in life. The learning process that involves this tradition not only enriches the students' experiences but also supports the creation of a generation with a strong spiritual and moral foundation, ready to face future challenges with integrity and unwavering confidence.

Meaning and Philosophy of the Song "Lir Ilir"

The song "Lir Ilir" is a classic work rich in meaning and written by Sunan Kalijaga, one of the Walisongo who played a significant role in the spread of Islam in Java. The

lyrics of this song are full of deep symbolism and contain spiritual messages relevant to Islamic teachings. In general, this song invites its listeners to reflect and rise from spiritual lethargy, as well as to initiate self-renewal in living life. In the lyrics "Lir ilir, lir ilir, tandure wus sumilir" (Awaken, awaken, the plants have started to grow), there is a message of revival that signifies the importance of self-awareness to restart life's journey with enthusiasm.

The meaning of resurrection contained in those lyrics depicts someone being invited to rise from spiritual decline or negligence. This invitation aligns with the principles of Islamic teachings that emphasize the importance of repentance and renewal of faith. In the Quran, it is often mentioned the importance of renewing oneself and improving one's relationship with God, as stated by Allah in Surah Al-Furqan verse 70, which mentions that Allah will replace evil with good for those who repent and improve themselves.

The lyrics "Tak ijo royo-royo, tak sungguh temanten anyar" (So green and fresh, like a newlywed) symbolize a soul that has become clean and fresh again after introspection and self-improvement. The depiction of the 'newlywed' can be interpreted as a symbol of someone starting a new life filled with hope and purity. In the spiritual perspective of Islam, this is related to the concept of fitrah, which is the pure and clean state that every human being possesses at birth, and how humans are reminded to continue maintaining and returning to that fitrah through good deeds.

The aspect of introspection implied in this song highlights the importance of reflection and self-evaluation. This process supports the formation of a higher moral awareness, where one is encouraged to improve their attitudes and behaviors. In Islamic teachings, introspection is known as muhasabah, which means counting and evaluating one's own actions before being weighed on the Day of Judgment. Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyah stated that muhasabah is an important part of a believer's continuous development and self-improvement.

This song also emphasizes the importance of self-renewal, which can be interpreted as steps in maintaining faith and continuously improving oneself. This concept aligns with the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) which states that faith can rise and fall, and therefore must be renewed through worship and obedience. The moral values presented in the lyrics of "Lir Ilir," such as the courage to rise, deep introspection, and the spirit of renewal, are principles recommended in Islam to achieve ihsan, which means doing good with the best quality and involving sincerity. Overall, the song "Lir Ilir" is not only an entertaining work of art but also a profound learning tool, inviting each listener to recognize the importance of spiritual awakening, introspection, and self-renewal. For elementary school students, studying and understanding the philosophy of this song can serve as a bridge to developing spiritual values in their lives, helping them to understand Islamic teachings in a contextual and relevant manner in their daily lives.

RESEARCH METHOD

The use of the song "Lir Ilir" in learning can be done through interactive methods designed to actively engage students and encourage them to understand the meaning of the lyrics more deeply. Some methods that can be applied include discussions on the meaning of the lyrics, group singing, and thematic activities relevant to the song's message. Here are the explanations of these methods:

- 1. Discussion on the Meaning of the Lyrics:** The discussion activity on the meaning of the lyrics of "Lir Ilir" can begin by playing the song in class, followed by reading and analyzing the lyrics line by line by the teacher and students. The teacher can divide the class into small groups and ask each group to discuss their interpretations of specific parts of the song's lyrics. This session helps students to hone their critical thinking skills and gain a deep understanding of the symbolic meaning in the song. For example, students are invited to discuss how the metaphor of 'newlyweds' in the lyrics depicts self-renewal, and how this meaning can be applied in their daily lives.
- 2. Group Singing and Musical Learning:** Group singing can be an enjoyable and simultaneously educational activity. Students can be invited to sing the song "Lir Ilir" together in class, accompanied by simple musical instruments like angklung or rebana. This activity not only introduces students to the richness of local culture but also enhances a sense of togetherness and teamwork. Teachers can also expand learning by teaching the musical aspects of the song, such as rhythm and melody, which can support the development of students' musical arts skills.
- 3. Visual Art Projects:** To strengthen students' understanding, visual art projects can be integrated into the learning process. Students can be asked to create posters or artworks that depict the meaning of certain lyrics. For example, they could paint or draw illustrations of green plants symbolizing rebirth or a renewed state of being, in accordance with the metaphor "ijo royo-royo" in the song. These creative activities help students internalize the song's message in a visual and personal way, supporting the development of artistic skills as well as understanding spiritual concepts.
- 4. Project-Based Learning:** The project-based learning method can be applied by asking students to create a small research project on the history and philosophical meaning of the song "Lir Ilir" and how the values in the song relate to Islamic teachings. Students can work in groups to gather information, write reports, and present their findings in class presentations. This project develops research skills, collaboration, and public speaking abilities, while also emphasizing the importance of integrating cultural and spiritual values into life.
- 5. Storytelling and Drama:** Storytelling is another effective method that can be used to bring the story behind the song "Lir Ilir" to life. The teacher can narrate the historical background and the story of Sunan Kalijaga as the author of this song, followed by inviting the students to create a short drama that illustrates the

messages in the lyrics. For example, a drama about a character who is struggling to face life's challenges and ultimately finds spiritual strength to rise. This activity trains students to understand moral messages emotionally and contextually.

These methods not only support interactive and integrative learning but also facilitate the development of spiritual and moral values in students in an engaging and meaningful way. By combining cultural and spiritual education aspects, students can deeply understand the teachings contained in the song "Lir Ilir," enhance self-awareness, and apply these lessons in their daily lives.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation at SD Al Hikmah Surabaya

At SD Al Hikmah Surabaya, the implementation of using the song "Lir Ilir" as a means of spiritual and moral education is carried out through a thematic learning program that involves various creative and interactive activities. This program is designed with the aim of instilling spiritual values in a pleasant atmosphere, supporting the development of students' character, and enhancing their awareness of moral teachings. Here are the specific steps taken by the teachers in the implementation of the program.

- 1. Introduction and Contextual Understanding:** The teacher begins the session by introducing the historical background of the song "Lir Ilir" and the role of Sunan Kalijaga in spreading Islamic teachings through art. This explanation is followed by playing the song in class, accompanied by reading the lyrics and discussing the meaning of the words and symbolism in the song. This approach helps students understand the cultural and spiritual context of the song, as well as its relevance to Islamic values.
- 2. Group Discussion:** Students are divided into several small groups to discuss the interpretation of the lyrics and relate them to everyday life values. In groups, students are invited to explore reflective questions such as, "What is meant by 'ijo royo-royo' in a spiritual context?" or "How can we apply the meaning of resurrection in our lives?" "This discussion encourages critical and collaborative thinking, where students share their views and listen to their peers' opinions."
- 3. Group Singing and Understanding Meaning:** The teacher invites the students to sing the song "Lir Ilir" together, followed by a question-and-answer session about the message contained in the lyrics. This activity facilitates a deeper understanding through auditory and kinesthetic approaches. By singing together, students not only memorize the lyrics but also internalize their spiritual meaning, creating a touching and motivating learning experience.
- 4. Thematic Creative Activities:** The implementation of the program is complemented by visual art projects where students are asked to create posters or drawings that depict the song's message. For example, they can paint illustrations of plants symbolizing growth and rebirth or create collages that narrate a spiritual

journey. These activities allow students to express their understanding creatively and visually.

5. **Drama and Storytelling:** Students are invited to participate in a simple drama activity that illustrates the moral message of the song. This drama tells the story of a character who faces life's challenges and, through reflection and self-renewal, manages to find a way to rise again. This activity not only reinforces students' understanding of the song's content but also develops their empathy and expression skills.
6. **Reflective Journal Writing:** As part of the program evaluation, students are asked to write a reflective journal about what they learned from the song "Lir Ilir" and how they can apply those values in their daily lives. Writing this journal helps students internalize the learning, as well as hone their writing and reflective thinking skills.

Implementation Results

The implementation of the song-based learning program "Lir Ilir" at SD Al Hikmah Surabaya has yielded positive results in building students' spiritual and moral awareness. The following is a discussion of the results obtained, comments from teachers and students, as well as the challenges faced during the implementation of the program.

1. Comparison Before and After the Program

Before this program was implemented, students at SD Al Hikmah generally had an understanding of spiritual and moral values through conventional learning such as lectures or more theoretical religious lessons. However, student involvement in delving into these values and relating them to daily life is still limited.

After the implementation of the song-based program "Lir Ilir," there was a significant increase in student participation and their understanding of moral values. Students are more enthusiastic about participating in learning activities, especially those involving singing together, discussions, and art projects. Teachers reported that students appeared more reflective and able to relate the moral messages of the songs to real-life situations, such as the courage to admit mistakes, honing empathy, and the spirit of self-improvement.

2. Comments from Teachers and Students

The teachers at Al Hikmah Elementary School stated that this method brings a fresh atmosphere to the teaching and learning process. One of the teachers expressed, "Involving the song 'Lir Ilir' in the learning process makes students more naturally connected to moral and spiritual values." They not only memorize the values but also understand them more deeply through discussions and creative activities.

The students also gave positive feedback. A fifth-grade student stated, "After learning about the song 'Lir Ilir', I understand more that rising from mistakes and continuing to try is important. I feel more motivated to improve myself." Responses like this show how a song with philosophical meaning can directly impact students' motivation and awareness.

Challenges Faced

Although this program has shown success, several challenges have emerged during its implementation. The main challenge is ensuring that all students can understand the complex symbolism in the song lyrics. Some students require more in-depth explanations and visual aids to facilitate understanding. Additionally, time management becomes another challenge, as activities involving art and drama projects require more time allocation compared to conventional teaching methods.

Evaluation of Implementation Results

The implementation of the song-based learning program "Lir Ilir" at Al Hikmah Elementary School in Surabaya has shown positive results in building students' spiritual and moral awareness. Here is a discussion that involves a comparison of results before and after the program, comments from teachers and students, as well as challenges faced during implementation, accompanied by expert opinions and journal quotes.

1. Comparison Before and After the Program

Before this program was implemented, the teaching methods at Al Hikmah Elementary School tended to focus on a conventional approach, where students learned spiritual and moral values theoretically. After the "Lir Ilir" song-based program was implemented, there was a significant change in student engagement. According to the research by [5], [6], the traditional music-based learning method can enhance students' understanding of moral values by creating a deeper and more meaningful learning experience.

2. Comments from Teachers and Student

Teachers at Al Hikmah Elementary School reported that students became more enthusiastic and reflective in their learning activities. One of the teachers stated, "Involving the song 'Lir Ilir' makes students more emotionally connected to the material, allowing them to understand the spiritual meaning more easily." This opinion is supported by [7] who stated, "Art-based learning, such as music and traditional songs, can facilitate the process of internalizing ethical values in students."

Students also showed positive responses. A fifth-grade student wrote in their reflective journal, "I learned from the song 'Lir Ilir' that we must be brave to rise from mistakes and improve ourselves." According to [8], a learning approach that involves art and personal reflection can enhance students' self-awareness and character development more profoundly.

3. Challenges Faced

Several challenges arose during the implementation of this program, including differences in students' understanding of the complex symbolism in song lyrics. states that "symbolism in traditional works requires additional explanation to be well understood by younger students" [9]. The use of visual media and gradual explanations helps overcome this challenge, but it requires additional time and resources from the teachers.

4. Evaluation of Program Success

This program is deemed successful in fostering students' spiritual and moral awareness. In his journal emphasizes that "the approach that utilizes traditional music not only enriches the learning experience but also instills values that are easier to remember and practice in daily life" [10]. One example of significant change is a student who was previously passive beginning to participate more actively in class discussions and showing a deeper reflective attitude.

5. A Short Story about Significant Change

A student named Anisa (pseudonym), who used to be quiet and uninterested in religious studies, experienced significant change. After participating in a visual arts project that depicted the meaning of "Lir Ilir," Anisa began to show interest in spiritual discussions and helped her friends understand the moral message in the song. Her class teacher said, "This change proves that combining art-based learning with moral material can stimulate interest and engagement from students who were previously hard to reach."

Emphasizes the importance of an integrative approach in character education by stating, "Incorporating traditional arts in education can enhance students' understanding and create a more personalized learning experience" [11]. Education figure Slamet Riyadi also emphasized that "introducing moral values through music and stories allows students to grasp deeper meanings compared to mere lecturing methods."

By using methods that support active engagement and the integration of art in education, this program successfully demonstrates how learning can create a sustainable positive impact on students' spiritual and moral awareness.

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding : The implementation of the traditional song "Lir Ilir" as a learning medium at SD Al Hikmah Surabaya effectively fosters students' spiritual and moral awareness. By integrating discussions, group singing, visual art projects, and storytelling, the program enhances student engagement, reflective thinking, and the application of moral values in daily life. This highlights the potential of arts and culture in shaping character and developing moral and spiritual values in students. **Implication :** This program demonstrates the significant role of local cultural elements in education, particularly in character development and strengthening cultural identity. Teachers' ability to understand and convey the deeper meanings of traditional works is essential. Furthermore, a holistic curriculum approach that incorporates arts and culture can enrich students' learning experiences and promote a deeper connection to their heritage. **Limitation :** Challenges were encountered in explaining the complex symbolism of "Lir Ilir" to younger students. Limited teacher training and traditional delivery methods hindered the program's full potential. Additionally, the adaptability and scalability of this approach across different schools and contexts remain unexplored. **Future Research :** Future research should focus on developing simplified teaching methods and visual

media to enhance students' understanding of traditional symbols. Investigating the long-term impact of teacher training programs and exploring the integration of interactive digital platforms are also critical. Expanding the curriculum to include diverse cultural elements, conducting routine evaluations with stakeholders, and incorporating collaborative learning projects can further strengthen culture-based education programs.

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