

Teachers' Strategies in Improving Students' Learning Concentration through Simple Relaxation Techniques in the Classroom (A Case Study at MTs Futuhiyyah Kudu Semarang)

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Abstract

This study aims to describe teachers' strategies in enhancing students' learning concentration through the application of simple relaxation techniques in the classroom. The background of this research is the low level of student concentration, which is influenced by the demanding activities in the pesantren environment and high academic pressure. This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach using a case study design conducted at MTs Futuhiyyah Kudu Semarang. Data collection techniques include observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation involving subject teachers and students from grades VII and VIII. The findings indicate that simple relaxation techniques such as breathing exercises, listening to Qur'anic recitation (murottal), and light stretching have proven effective in improving students' mental readiness, extending their focus span, and creating a calmer and more conducive classroom atmosphere. Students responded positively, feeling calmer, more confident, and spiritually connected to the learning process. Despite challenges such as limited policy support and diverse student characteristics, this strategy shows great potential if systematically integrated into the learning culture. This research recommends implementing relaxation techniques as part of a pedagogical approach in madrasahs to support holistic, humanistic, and contextual learning

Keywords: Teacher strategy, learning concentration, simple relaxation techniques

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan strategi guru dalam meningkatkan konsentrasi belajar siswa melalui penerapan teknik relaksasi sederhana di kelas. Latar belakang penelitian ini adalah rendahnya tingkat konsentrasi siswa yang dipengaruhi oleh aktivitas padat di lingkungan pesantren serta tekanan akademik yang tinggi. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif dengan jenis studi kasus yang dilakukan di MTs Futuhiyyah Kudu Semarang. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi, wawancara mendalam, dan dokumentasi terhadap guru mata pelajaran dan siswa kelas VII dan VIII. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa teknik relaksasi sederhana seperti latihan pernapasan, mendengarkan murottal, dan peregangan ringan terbukti membantu meningkatkan kesiapan mental siswa, memperpanjang daya fokus, dan menciptakan suasana kelas yang lebih tenang dan kondusif. Siswa menunjukkan respons positif, merasa lebih tenang, percaya diri, dan terhubung secara spiritual dengan proses belajar. Meskipun terdapat hambatan seperti

minimnya dukungan kebijakan dan keberagaman karakter siswa, strategi ini memiliki potensi besar jika diintegrasikan secara sistematis dalam budaya pembelajaran. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan penerapan teknik relaksasi sebagai bagian dari pendekatan pedagogis di madrasah untuk mendukung pembelajaran yang holistik, humanis, dan kontekstual.

Kata Kunci: Strategi guru, konsentrasi belajar, teknik relaksasi sederhana,

Introduction

Education is a transformative process that is not only oriented toward mastery of subject matter but also towards the formation of students' character and mental readiness in facing the dynamics of learning. In this process, learning concentration plays a crucial role as it forms the foundation for students to receive, process, and retain the information delivered by teachers (Slameto, 2010). Without optimal concentration, learning becomes ineffective, and student achievement tends to decline. Students' learning concentration is often influenced by both internal and external factors. Internal factors such as physical and psychological conditions, and external factors like learning environment, teaching methods, and classroom atmosphere, can all disrupt students' focus during lessons (Uno, 2011). In today's digital era, concentration challenges become more complex due to the presence of social media, gadgets, and high academic pressure. This situation demands that teachers not only master the teaching material but also be capable of providing strategies that support students' mental readiness. As facilitators, teachers must understand students' conditions comprehensively and create a learning climate that is not only enjoyable but also emotionally supportive. One approach increasingly used is the application of simple relaxation techniques as part of classroom management and as a strategy to improve learning concentration.

Previous studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of relaxation techniques in educational settings, particularly in enhancing focus and reducing students' academic stress. A study conducted by Wahyuni (2020) in the *Journal of Islamic Psychology and Mental Health* showed that techniques such as diaphragmatic breathing and short meditation were effective in lowering stress levels among senior high school students during exams. While this study emphasized the potential of relaxation as a learning support strategy, its application has been mostly limited to counseling settings and not widely implemented in classroom routines. Meanwhile, Saputra (2021) highlighted relaxation techniques in the context of adolescent education as part of psychological guidance programs rather than as a daily instructional strategy used by teachers.

In contrast to the above studies, the current research places relaxation techniques in a more practical and applicable context within madrasah classrooms, specifically at MTs Futuhiyyah Kudu Semarang. This study aims to address the research gap by emphasizing the

teacher's role in initiating and guiding relaxation techniques as part of a pedagogical strategy. This approach highlights the integration of students' emotional needs with more humanistic, reflective, and Islamic pedagogical methods. As such, this study contributes to expanding the use of relaxation techniques from psychological to pedagogical frameworks.

Simple relaxation techniques such as breathing exercises, light stretching, or short meditations have been scientifically proven to ease mental tension, reduce stress, and enhance students' focus (Maramis, 2009). In the educational context, these techniques can be implemented as daily routines or short sessions before lessons begin to help students achieve a state of calm that supports cognitive readiness. Moreover, this relaxation approach aligns with educational principles emphasizing the balance between cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. By creating a relaxed and comfortable learning environment, teachers can help students understand subject matter more easily and foster a natural enthusiasm for learning (Wahyuni, 2020).

Particularly at the Madrasah Tsanawiyah (MTs) level, students are in early adolescence, a phase marked by emotional and psychological changes. At this stage, the ability to manage attention and emotions is crucial for academic success. However, students at this level tend to be more easily distracted and experience fatigue during lessons (Santrock, 2012). This phenomenon was also observed at MTs Futuhiyyah Kudu Semarang, a private Islamic educational institution with a diverse student background. Initial observations and input from teachers indicated that many students experienced decreased concentration during lessons, especially in the final periods of the school day. Some teachers reported that students appeared restless, sleepy, or unfocused, even when the material was delivered using varied conventional methods. This issue is closely related to the fact that many MTs Futuhiyyah students are also santri (boarding students), who follow a highly demanding daily routine—from early morning religious activities, formal schooling during the day, to nightly religious studies—causing both physical and mental fatigue that affects their concentration in formal classroom learning.

Although several strategies have been implemented, such as the use of interactive media and active learning approaches, they have not been fully effective in improving students' concentration. There has yet to be a systematic approach that specifically utilizes simple relaxation techniques as part of the teaching strategy at this madrasah. This forms the core problem addressed by this study and underscores the need for in-depth research. The research gap lies in the lack of empirical studies that integrate relaxation techniques into teaching strategies within madrasah contexts, especially at the MTs level. Previous studies have largely focused on relaxation in therapeutic or counseling settings, not as part of routine classroom

activities led directly by teachers (Saputra, 2021). Hence, there is a need for research that maps out practical and contextual teacher strategies in religious classroom environments.

This study offers novelty in two ways. First, it positions simple relaxation techniques not merely as stress control strategies but as affective-based pedagogical tools applied directly in teaching and learning activities. Second, it focuses on the actual practices of teachers in Islamic-based madrasahs, which are traditionally known for discipline and rote learning, rather than for humanistic or relaxation-oriented approaches. Through this method, the teacher acts not only as a knowledge transmitter but also as a companion in the emotional development of students. Teachers play a significant role in creating a healthy, empathetic classroom culture that supports students' mental well-being. Simple changes in how teachers manage classroom environments can have a significant impact on student learning outcomes (Hidayat, 2019). Therefore, this study focuses on analyzing teachers' strategies to improve students' learning concentration through simple relaxation techniques in the classroom, identifying the forms of techniques used, and observing their impact on the dynamics of the learning process. The results of this research are expected to provide practical contributions to teachers in enhancing the effectiveness of student-centered, holistic, and well-being-oriented learning.

Method

Penelitian The This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with a case study design. This approach was chosen to explore and deeply understand the teacher's strategies in enhancing students' learning concentration through simple relaxation techniques within a specific context—namely, at MTs Futuhiyyah Kudu Semarang. The qualitative approach allows the researcher to explore the subjective meanings and perceptions of both teachers and students directly involved in the learning process (Creswell, 2014).

The research was conducted at MTs Futuhiyyah Kudu Semarang, a madrasah integrated with pesantren (Islamic boarding school) activities, which characterizes it with a unique and tightly scheduled learning environment. The study took place in July 2025 and included classroom observations, interviews, and documentation as the primary sources of data. The subjects of this research consisted of classroom teachers who implemented simple relaxation techniques, as well as seventh- and eighth-grade students who experienced the learning process directly. The subjects were selected purposively, based on the criterion that they were actively involved and relevant to the research focus.

Data collection was carried out using three main techniques. First, participatory observation was conducted to directly observe the implementation of relaxation techniques in the classroom, as well as students' behavior before and after the activities. Second, in-depth

interviews were conducted with teachers and selected students to gather more detailed information on their perceptions, experiences, and the impact of the applied strategies. Third, documentation was used to complement the data, including lesson plans (RPP), photographs of classroom activities, and existing learning records.

The collected data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive analysis model (2014), consisting of three main stages: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. Data reduction involved selecting and filtering information relevant to the research focus. Then, the data were presented in a narrative format to facilitate interpretation, and conclusions were drawn based on a deep understanding of the emerging patterns.

To ensure data validity, the researcher applied triangulation techniques, including both methodological and source triangulation. This was done by comparing the results from observations, interviews, and documentation, and by verifying the consistency of information from various informants. Additionally, member checking was conducted, wherein the researcher confirmed the interview findings with the informants to ensure the accuracy and validity of the collected data (Moleong, 2017). Through this method, the research aims to authentically portray the practices of teachers in applying simple relaxation techniques and their impact on students' concentration within a madrasah education system integrated with a pesantren environment

Result and Discussion

1. Implementation of Relaxation Techniques by Guidance and Counseling (BK) Teachers and Subject Teachers

The practices carried out by BK teachers and subject teachers reflect an awareness of the importance of managing students' psychological conditions before the learning process begins. In essence, effective learning is not solely determined by content and methods but also by students' mental readiness. BK teacher Nur Said recognizes that students who are overly tired, anxious, or mentally drained will have difficulty absorbing new information. Therefore, introducing relaxation activities before the learning session begins serves as an initial preventive intervention. In the pesantren-based setting of MTs Futuhiyyah, students undergo a tightly packed daily routine, starting from congregational dawn prayers, the study of classical Islamic texts (*kitab kuning*), formal schooling, to evening activities. This intense schedule makes students vulnerable to mental and physical fatigue. Thus, simple relaxation techniques are not merely supplementary activities but a genuine necessity to maintain the

students' physical and mental balance. Here, the teacher's role becomes essential in adapting teaching strategies to the lived realities of students.

Teachers Muslih and Nur Cholis utilize relaxation techniques not only to calm students but also to stimulate cognitive engagement. These techniques act as a psychological bridge between the outside world and the classroom environment. The use of *murottal* (Qur'anic recitation) serves both spiritual and psychological functions, fostering inner peace and a sense of meaning. This strategy reflects an integrated approach between spiritual and academic dimensions, highly relevant to Islamic education. Pedagogically, it aligns with contemplative pedagogy, which emphasizes mindfulness and full presence as integral to the learning process. In other words, relaxation techniques teach students to be fully present in the classroom – not just physically, but also mentally and emotionally. This transforms the teacher's role from being merely a facilitator of knowledge to also becoming an emotional and spiritual guide.

Thus, the practices of MTs Futuhiyyah teachers affirm that effective education must begin from a state of calm, not pressure. The application of simple relaxation techniques has proven to provide a transitional space for students to harmonize with the rhythm of the class. Teachers act as key agents in cultivating a classroom atmosphere that is reflective, peaceful, and enjoyable. If this technique is implemented consistently and collaboratively by all teachers, it can foster a more humanistic learning culture that is responsive to the needs of today's students.

These practices also emphasize the teacher's role as an "emotional leader of the classroom," capable of creating a psychosocially conducive learning atmosphere. Goleman (2006), in his concept of emotional intelligence, asserts that teachers with emotional awareness and empathy can foster a more productive learning environment by managing emotional pressures within the classroom. BK teacher Nur Said embodies this role effectively – by recognizing the importance of students' mental readiness before class, he engages in a form of psycho-pedagogical intervention focused on preventing learning difficulties.

In the pesantren-based context of MTs Futuhiyyah, the complexity of students' daily routines can impact their attention span and learning stamina. This corresponds with Santrock's (2012) findings that early adolescents (the typical age range of MTs students) are in a developmental stage characterized by significant emotional and physical challenges. Excessive fatigue and stress can impair concentration and even trigger academic stress if not properly addressed. Therefore, the application of relaxation techniques is not a peripheral activity but rather an integral component in fostering the psychophysical balance students need to thrive in their learning journey. Teachers Muslih and Nur Cholis demonstrate pedagogical practices that are not only informative but also transformative. The use of

relaxation as a bridge between students' inner world and academic material exemplifies affective-oriented learning. This intersects with Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, particularly in the domains of intrapersonal and spiritual intelligence, highlighting the need for educators to nurture non-cognitive dimensions to create more meaningful learning experiences. The use of *murottal* as a spiritual stimulus represents the integration of Islamic values into the learning process, touching both heart and mind.

From a pedagogical perspective, these practices closely relate to contemplative pedagogy, a model introduced by Tobin Hart and further developed by Arthur Zajonc. This approach emphasizes the importance of full awareness (mindfulness) as part of the educational process. Students are not only encouraged to think critically but also to become aware of their emotions, breathing, and bodily presence. The relaxation techniques implemented at MTs Futuhiyyah enable students to achieve a "state of presence"—a full awareness during learning moments—which serves as a foundation for deep cognitive engagement (*deep learning*).

In conclusion, the practices of the MTs Futuhiyyah teachers reaffirm that effective education must begin from a place of tranquility, not pressure. This also embodies the educational philosophy of Ki Hajar Dewantara, which emphasizes that educating is about guiding the natural growth of children's potential, not forcing it through pressure. Simple relaxation techniques serve as a means of such guidance—not only academically, but also in nurturing students' mental and spiritual development. If all teachers are able to implement this approach consistently and reflectively, madrasahs can evolve into institutions that are not merely centers of knowledge transmission, but also sanctuaries for the holistic formation of character and soul. This strategy offers a concrete response to the demand for an educational model that is humanistic, spiritual, and contextually grounded in the modern era

2. Student Responses and Perceptions of Relaxation Techniques

The students' positive responses indicate that this strategy addresses their basic psychological needs—namely, the need to feel safe, calm, and valued. In interviews, students expressed feeling more cared for because the teachers showed concern for their condition before beginning the lesson. This attitude strengthens a more dialogical and less transactional teacher-student relationship. Students begin to view the teacher not merely as a deliverer of material, but as a figure who is emotionally present. Testimonials from students such as Ahmad Badrun and Lailatul Badriyah, who felt more prepared to face tests or group presentations after relaxation sessions, demonstrate that this technique has short-term impacts on students' self-confidence. Under normal conditions, many students experience anxiety or

self-doubt when faced with academic tasks. However, after undergoing relaxation, they felt more confident, calmer, and less panicked – an essential foundation for active learning.

Additionally, students noted that the relaxation technique helped them feel “closer to God,” especially when *murottal* (Qur'anic recitation) was played. This spiritual effect is significant in the context of a madrasah, where education aims not only to enhance academic competencies but also to build character and religious awareness. Spiritually-based relaxation techniques provide space for students to connect with Islamic values, reinforcing their identity as Muslim learners.

These student responses reinforce Goleman's (2006) theory on the importance of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) in educational settings. When students feel calm, appreciated, and attended to, their cognitive potential can be optimized. Relaxation techniques are part of this emotional learning process, teaching students how to calm themselves, manage stress, and develop empathy for others in the classroom. Therefore, students' responses to the relaxation technique are not only positive in terms of learning comfort, but also have an impact on changes in attitude, behavior, and intrinsic motivation. Students feel more capable of facing academic challenges, more open in interactions, and more prepared to become mentally resilient learners. This shows that education that humanizes students is capable of responding to the increasingly complex demands of the times.

Students' responses also reflect the fulfillment of the need for **self-regulation**. In interviews, seventh-grade students such as Muhammad Syafiq stated that after performing breathing exercises and listening to *murottal*, his mind felt “less chaotic” and more focused. This indicates that students are beginning to recognize their emotional state and find ways to manage it. This aligns with Zimmerman's (2002) concept of *self-regulated learning*, which states that students who can manage their emotions and attention will perform better academically because they are able to direct their behavior autonomously during the learning process.

Furthermore, relaxation techniques help foster a positive internal atmosphere. A student named Rohmah from grade VIII mentioned that relaxation sessions before lessons made her feel “happy to enter the classroom, like it wasn't a burden.” This indicates that learning is no longer perceived as an obligation, but as an activity to look forward to. This joyful learning environment is in line with the *Joyful Learning* approach proposed by Hosford and Siders (2010), which emphasizes the importance of positive learning experiences in increasing student engagement and satisfaction with the learning process.

Relaxation techniques also enhance the sense of togetherness and social solidarity within the classroom. When all students participate in relaxation together, a non-competitive sense of unity emerges. Activities such as *murottal*, guided breathing, or moments of shared silence

create emotionally bonding experiences. Vygotsky's *socio-cultural learning* theory highlights the significance of social interaction in the learning process and asserts that activities carried out collectively can enhance understanding and student engagement within the group. In this context, relaxation benefits not only individuals but also strengthens social bonds within the learning community.

Beyond psychological and social effects, relaxation techniques also influence changes in students' learning habits. Several students have started applying these techniques independently outside of class, such as before studying at home or prior to exams. This shows that students have internalized the benefits of these techniques and adopted them as part of their personal strategies for managing academic pressure. Bandura's theory of *self-efficacy* explains that when students feel capable of managing themselves in challenging situations, their confidence in achieving academic success also increases. Relaxation techniques contribute to building this self-efficacy in a simple yet effective way.

The positive impacts felt by students can also be seen as indicators of the success of a well-being-based learning approach. The *Kurikulum Merdeka* launched by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture (2022) encourages schools to implement educational practices that humanize learners. Relaxation techniques fulfill this goal by providing space for students' emotional and spiritual needs—areas that have often been overlooked in conventional learning environments. Thus, students' responses to relaxation are not merely personal impressions but also reflections of a broader educational transformation toward a more holistic, student-centered approach a transformation of the educational approach toward a more holistic and learner-centered paradigm

3. Learning Dynamics After the Implementation of Relaxation Techniques

After relaxation techniques were implemented consistently, the classroom dynamics underwent a significant transformation. Teachers no longer struggled to manage the class during critical times of the day, such as just before noon or after recess. Students demonstrated improved learning discipline, were less easily distracted, and responded more promptly to teacher instructions. This suggests that a relaxed emotional state can serve as a foundation for more stable academic performance. In group learning contexts, the technique also fostered more positive collaboration among students. When students felt calm and unpressured, they found it easier to interact and engage in discussions with their peers. Teacher Muslih observed an increase in the quality of arguments and students' confidence in expressing their opinions following the relaxation sessions. This demonstrates that the technique affects not only the classroom atmosphere but also the patterns of communication and interaction during learning.

Documentation from learning modules and teacher notes indicate that relaxation techniques have been integrated into the lesson structure, not treated as supplementary activities. This integration is crucial to ensure that the activity is not perceived as a distraction or time burden, but rather as a vital part of preparing students to learn. Teachers also began adjusting their teaching methods to align with students' emotional conditions post-relaxation, for example, by incorporating light ice-breaking activities and educational humor. This aligns with Hidayat's (2019) view that teachers must facilitate a balance between academic rigor and emotional sensitivity. In this context, teachers act as mediators between the pressures of the external world and the classroom, which is expected to be a space for growth. Relaxation techniques show that classrooms are not only spaces for knowledge transfer, but also for psychological and spiritual healing.

Furthermore, this positive shift in classroom dynamics contributes to a more conducive and enjoyable learning climate. It extends students' focus, enhances material retention, and reduces disruptive behavior. Minor adjustments in the daily routine can significantly improve the overall learning atmosphere. This reinforces the idea that education does not always require revolutionary change—evolutionary adjustments, driven by empathy and an understanding of students' realities, can be equally transformative. The application of relaxation techniques also impacts students' engagement in active learning activities such as discussions, group presentations, and project work. Previously passive students—those who were reluctant to speak or participate—began to show initiative. Teacher Nur Cholis reported that students who had been typically silent in class became more confident after the relaxation sessions. This indicates that a calm and non-intimidating environment fosters a sense of safety that enables students to express their potential more fully.

In practice, relaxation techniques help establish an inclusive psychological climate in which students are not afraid of making mistakes or being judged. According to Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, the need for safety must be met before individuals can achieve self-actualization. In a learning context, relaxation helps fulfill this need, ultimately opening the way for students' cognitive and social development. The classroom becomes more open, communicative, and supportive of collaborative learning. Additionally, the technique also enhances time management and classroom efficiency. With students in a stable emotional state, teachers spend less time repeating instructions or managing disruptive behavior. Learning time can be devoted more fully to core activities because students are mentally prepared from the start. This reflects the classroom management theory by Wolfgang and Glickman (1986), which emphasizes the importance of *preventive discipline*—a proactive, rather than reactive, approach to classroom management. Relaxation techniques function as a

preventive measure that reduces conflict potential and increases student attentiveness early on.

Observations also reveal that relaxation techniques encourage a more natural and humanistic learning rhythm. Teachers become more aware that not all material must be delivered linearly or rapidly. There is room for pauses, silence, and time allocated to adjust to students' learning tempo. Within progressive pedagogical frameworks, as advocated by John Dewey, learning should respect the process and consider students' individual conditions. Relaxation techniques offer teachers the opportunity to design more emotionally adaptive lesson flows.

Overall, the integration of relaxation techniques has transformed the classroom from a formal-instructional space into a reflective, dialogical, and emotionally healthy learning environment. This change reflects teachers' success in turning learning into a holistic life experience rather than merely a cognitive activity. In such an environment, students do not only learn *about something*, but also learn *to become someone*—individuals who are intellectually and emotionally whole. This transformation is in line with the spirit of the *Kurikulum Merdeka* (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022), which emphasizes differentiated instruction and the strengthening of student well-being

4. Barriers and Challenges in Implementation

Despite its positive impact, the implementation of relaxation techniques still encounters obstacles, particularly in terms of teacher mindset and school culture. Some teachers perceive such techniques as "less serious" or "non-essential" activities. These teachers tend to prioritize curriculum completion over emotionally centered approaches. As a result, the implementation of relaxation techniques remains uneven across classrooms and subjects. This attitude poses a significant challenge to realizing a holistic educational framework.

Another key challenge is the absence of internal school policies that structurally support the adoption of relaxation practices. At present, these techniques are only applied by teachers who are personally aware of the importance of affective approaches. There are no formal guidelines issued by the school that integrate relaxation into curriculum development or academic supervision programs. Consequently, the practice tends to be incidental and individual-driven. On the student side, challenges arise from the diversity of student characteristics and discipline levels when participating in relaxation sessions. Some hyperactive students or those accustomed to fast-paced learning feel disengaged by silent and calming activities. This requires teachers to adopt a more flexible and varied approach to relaxation, such as incorporating physical movement or game-based breathing exercises.

According to Uno (2011), these challenges illustrate that learning motivation is highly influenced by instructional strategies that adapt to the unique characteristics of students. Relaxation techniques cannot be imposed uniformly; they must be tailored to the students' social, psychological, and cultural learning contexts. Teachers must become flexible, creative, and reflective learners in implementing suitable strategies. Therefore, the solution to these challenges lies not only at the technical level but also in a paradigm shift in education. Teachers and institutions must recognize students as whole individuals with physical, mental, spiritual, and social dimensions. Simple relaxation techniques serve as practical tools for translating a vision of humanistic and transformative education. When applied collectively and consistently, this approach makes Islamic school education more relevant to contemporary challenges.

Implementation barriers are also rooted in school cultures that remain focused on cognitive academic achievement. In many Islamic schools (madrasahs), the success of education is still primarily measured by memorization outcomes, exam scores, and graduation rates. In such an environment, affective approaches are often perceived as time-consuming or ineffective in producing immediate academic results. However, based on the *Whole Child Approach* developed by the ASCD (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development), education should encompass five core dimensions: physical safety, emotional health, social support, academic challenge, and active engagement. In this light, relaxation techniques play a vital role in fulfilling these aspects.

The lack of teacher training or workshops is another critical factor that hinders broader implementation. Many teachers lack the necessary knowledge and skills to apply these techniques professionally and contextually. This issue is compounded by the absence of official modules or practical guides that teachers can refer to. In this regard, the role of school leadership becomes essential in providing structural support and funding for teacher development. Based on *Organizational Support Theory*, institutional support for individuals – in this case, teachers – can significantly enhance their motivation and performance. Without such systemic support, innovations like relaxation techniques will struggle to scale and sustain.

Consistency in implementation is another major challenge. Since relaxation techniques are not formally included in the daily instructional standards, teachers often omit them when faced with time constraints or administrative pressures. As a result, students do not receive consistent exposure to the practice. According to Thorndike's *Law of Exercise*, behaviors or habits are most effectively formed through consistent repetition. If relaxation is to become part

of students' learning culture, it must be practiced regularly and not depend on the mood or discretion of individual teachers.

From the students' perspective, particularly those with kinesthetic tendencies or active learning styles, stillness-based relaxation techniques may cause boredom or disinterest. This challenge calls for teacher creativity in adapting relaxation into more dynamic forms. For instance, *mindful movement*, light stretching, or playful breathing games can make the experience more enjoyable. This is in line with *Differentiated Instruction* principles (Tomlinson, 2014), which emphasize the need to tailor instructional methods to students' needs, learning styles, and readiness levels.

In conclusion, the challenges of implementing relaxation techniques are not merely technical but also paradigmatic. Teachers and school stakeholders must recognize that strengthening students' mental, emotional, and spiritual readiness is an essential part of the learning process. If these techniques are integrated into school culture—for example, through “class rituals” or regular beginning-of-lesson routines—they can gradually shape healthy learning habits. This approach aligns with the vision of integrative Islamic education, which emphasizes not only intellectual intelligence but also *qalbiyyah* (heart) and *ruhiyyah* (soul), as articulated in the educational paradigm of Syed Naquib Al-Attas.

Conclusion

Based The following research findings are formulated into three main points in accordance with the research objectives:

1. Teachers play an active role in implementing relaxation techniques as a learning strategy. Guidance and Counseling (BK) teachers and subject teachers at MTs Futuhiyyah Kudu Semarang do not merely focus on delivering academic material, but also act as facilitators for students' emotional and spiritual balance. They actively implement simple relaxation techniques such as breathing exercises, listening to Qur'anic recitations (murottal), and light meditation before class begins. These techniques serve as a psychological transition for students, helping them shift from a busy schedule at the boarding school to a state of readiness for classroom learning. This strategy has proven effective in reducing tension, increasing student focus, and creating a calmer and more comfortable learning atmosphere.
2. Relaxation techniques enhance learning concentration and shape students' mental readiness. The application of relaxation techniques has a positive impact on improving students' cognitive engagement. Students become more focused, less easily distracted, and quicker to comprehend the learning material. Student responses to the techniques are very positive; they feel calmer, more confident, and have even begun adopting these techniques in their independent study routines. Relaxation practices contribute to the development of

healthy study habits and strengthen students' self-regulation, self-efficacy, and spirituality—especially when consistently applied by teachers across different subjects.

3. Relaxation fosters positive transformation in classroom dynamics and culture. After the implementation of relaxation techniques, classroom dynamics shifted to become more structured, harmonious, and reflective. The classroom environment became more communicative and dialogical, peer interaction increased, and teachers found it easier to manage the learning process. The classroom transformed into a psychologically safe space that supports inclusive learning. These findings are in line with the principles of the Merdeka Curriculum, which emphasizes the importance of differentiated learning, student-centered approaches, and the holistic well-being of learner

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