

## CHARACTER EDUCATION OF *SANTRI* FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF QADIRIYYAH WA NAQSYABANDIYYAH AL UTSMANIYYAH SUFISM

### *Pendidikan Karakter Santri Perspektif Tasawuf Qadiriyyah Wa Naqsyabandiyyah Al Utsmaniyyah*

**Aminatul Fattachil 'Izza**

UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia

*aminatulfizza@gmail.com*

**Mufidah Ch**

UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia

*fidah\_cholil@yahoo.co.id*

**Mokhammad Yahya**

UIN Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang, Indonesia

*mokhammadyahya@pips-uin.malang.ac.id*

| Keywords                                                                              | Abstract                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Asrori al-Ishaqi<br>Character Education<br>Qadiriyyah wa<br>Naqsyabandiyyah<br>Sufism | <i>Karakter mejadi parameter individu dalam berpikir, berkata, serta berperilaku digadang sebagai solusi dari segala permasalahan sosial lingkungan melalui integritas kuat dalam reputasi setiap individu. Eksistensi pesantren digadang sebagai institusi pendidikan tradisional Indonesia yang adaptif dengan tantangan perubahan zaman, salah satunya melalui pendidikan karakter profetik-sufistik. Penelitian ini dikategorikan sebagai studi pustaka. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa langkah-langkah strategis pendidikan karakter santri, yaitu menanamkan pemahaman moral (pengetahuan moral) yang membedakan antara yang baik dan yang buruk, memperkuat kesadaran dan kepekaan moral (perasaan moral), serta kebiasaan perilaku nyata (tindakan moral) berdasarkan motivasi internal dan keyakinan yang kuat. Proses ini diperkuat melalui praktik-praktik Sufi yang dapat diterapkan seperti muhasabah, mu'aqabah, mu'abadah, dan mujahadah sebagai siklus perbaikan diri, serta riyadhah dan kebiasaan ibadah terstruktur dalam kehidupan pesantren.</i> |



Character, as an individual's guiding principle in thought, speech and behaviour, is touted as the solution to all social and environmental problems through the strong integrity reflected in each individual's reputation. Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) are regarded as traditional Indonesian educational institutions that have adapted to the challenges of changing times, one example being the prophetic-Sufi character education of the students. This research is categorised as a literature review. The results indicate that strategic steps in character education for students include instilling moral understanding (moral knowledge) that distinguishes between right and wrong, strengthening moral awareness and sensitivity (moral feelings), and fostering actual behavioural habits (moral actions) based on internal motivation and strong conviction. This process is reinforced through applicable Sufi practices such as *muhasabah* (reflection), *mu'aqabah* (punishment), *mu'abadah* (commitment), and *mujahadah* (striving) as a cycle of self-improvement, as well as *riyadah* (spiritual discipline) and structured worship practices within the life of the Islamic boarding schools.

| Received        | Revised          | Accepted      | Available Online |
|-----------------|------------------|---------------|------------------|
| 21 Januari 2026 | 15 Februari 2026 | 11 Maret 2026 | 31 Maret 2026    |

## A. INTRODUCTION

Character identifies crucial issues across regions and generations. Character becomes an individual parameter in thinking, speaking, and behaving in their environment. Character education is touted as the solution to all social problems. Whether in the family, educational institutions, society, or the world of work, strong integrity is required in the reputation and character of each individual. In this case, the Prophet Muhammad SAW has set a relevant example of positive character integrity. This should be the foundation in all aspects of life, especially in facing the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which has led to various social problems such as moral, intellectual, and spiritual degradation due to increasingly modern technology. Many parents choose Islamic boarding schools to nurture their children's character and minimise the negative impact of intensive use of social media.

The existence of Islamic boarding schools or *pesantren* is touted as a traditional Indonesian educational institution that is adaptive to the challenges of changing times, one of which is through the character education of *santri* (Islamic boarding school students) based on Sufism. *Pesantren* are central to the process of human resource development, both quantitatively and qualitatively (Syam, 2008). *Pesantren* are Islamic educational institutions with preserved traditions that are touted as educational



centres capable of shaping the following individual characteristics: *First*, performing religious obligations in accordance with one's level of understanding; *Second*, behaving well towards others as members of the family; *Third*, internalising and practising Muslim character in accordance with the Islamic sciences studied; *Fourth*, appreciating religious and cultural diversity as the basis for daily attitudes and behaviour; *Fifth*, practising tolerance in religious life; *Sixth*, adopting a moderate attitude in interpreting differences in thought and behaviour in a diverse society (Ali, 2013).

The role of Islamic boarding schools is not immune to the complex challenges of the masses. Islamic boarding schools are not rehabilitation centres, but rather places of education and character development, as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad SAW. Ismail, a researcher at the BRIN Centre for Religious and Belief Research, explained that Islamic boarding schools play a very important role in shaping morality, character and religious understanding in Indonesia. As traditional Islamic educational institutions, *pesantren* have long been centres for religious learning and social ethics education. 'In many studies, Islamic boarding schools are recognised as bastions of religious moderation because they teach the values of tolerance, balance, and the positive values that we have been promoting in recent years, especially in the Ministry of Religious Affairs,' added Ismail in the Webinar Series on Countering Radicalism through Religious Moderation, in Jakarta (BRIN, 2025). This was emphasised by the Minister of Religious Affairs, Nasaruddin Umar, who stated that Islamic boarding schools have long played a role as centres for character building, social civility, and strengthening national values. The contribution of Islamic boarding schools to the country cannot be ignored because it is from this environment that a generation of polite, obedient, and nationalistic individuals is born (Gede Dipayana, 2025).

However, on the other hand, there is a contrasting phenomenon, namely the emergence of deviant behaviour from religious and social norms. This underlies the urgency of instilling the spiritual aspect of Sufism in the character of *santri* in order to combat moral degradation that has spread to the *pesantren*. Among the events that have emerged is data from the National Commission on Violence Against Women (*Komnas Perempuan*) on the number of reports of violence in educational institutions (2022), which shows that sexual violence in *pesantren* ranks second highest after cases occurring in universities. Additionally, a content analysis study of media reports shows that the number of violence cases in Islamic boarding schools in the past year exceeded 90 cases, with 72 per cent of them being sexual violence (Kemenko PMK, 2025).

Data supported by the 2021 National Survey on the Experiences of Children and Adolescents (SNPHAR) shows that 46% of girls and 37.44% of boys have experienced violence in their lifetime. Meanwhile, the Online Information System for the Protection of Women and Children (SIMFONI PPPA) reported 19,813 cases of violence against children from January to October 2024, with 1,117 cases (1,447 victims) occurring in Islamic boarding schools. In response to this, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU)



emphasised the need for a more effective national strategy to tackle the increasing number of violence cases through cooperation with the Coordinating Ministry for Human Development and Culture, including forming a Five-Member Team, organising a PBNU Syuriyah *Halaqah* with clerics, establishing a Task Force for the Prevention of Violence in *Pesantren* (SAKA Pesantren), and developing a Roadmap for the Transformation of a Non-Violent Boarding School Culture (Kemenko PMK, 2025).

Notwithstanding, Islamic boarding schools, with their various visions and missions, aim to produce a generation of Muslims who possess strong religious and moral competencies. The essence of their purpose is to seek Allah's pleasure as His servants and caliphs on earth, both of whom move dynamically towards restoring the natural framework of humanity through professional means (Arbi, 2024). This is supported by the character of society as the owner of pathological elements that require a social system that can maintain balance (Muliono, 2020). Its importance lies in providing solutions to the problems faced by the community, as it is full of advice, religious and social messages, and examples to avoid negative and destructive things and embrace positive and constructive things in seeking Allah's pleasure amid contemporary challenges (Munir & Ilahi, 2021). For this reason, *santri* character education must accommodate the complexity of human potential in responding to problems critically.

Following up on this, character education through Sufism learning is very important. This is confirmed by Solihin in (Harini, 2019), who states that there are three reasons why a person should practise Sufism. *First*, Sufism is a natural basis within every human being because it is a divine potential that serves to shape world civilisation and colour all activities, whether social, political, economic or cultural. *Second*, Sufism functions as a means of self-control so that the human dimension is not tarnished by modernisation, which leads to moral decadence and value anomalies, so that Sufism is able to lead to moral excellence or supremacy. *Third*, Sufism is relevant to human problems because it provides both inner peace and Sharia discipline in a balanced manner. It is at this era that Muslims should hold fast to the *hanif* nature of Islam, improving themselves through the Qur'an and Hadith (Thohari et al., 2006). Practising Islamic values with a foundation in Sufism will increase the moral integrity of each individual.

Furthermore, the implications of religious understanding (*tafaqquh fiddin*) on character education include: *First*, contributing to interpersonal and community relationships so that people can complement each other's shortcomings. *Second*, making nature a source of knowledge. *Third*, training highly competent individuals with professional skills in managing and utilising nature and its contents as a form of devotion to Allah. *Fourth*, training human attitudes and spirits towards trust and responsibility. *Fifth*, shaping well-rounded individuals who are able to transfer and internalise the 99 Beautiful Names of Allah (*Asmaul Husna*) so as to reflect the image of humans as the most noble creatures (Tilmasani, 2020). Accordingly, the relevance of Sufism in fostering the character of *santri* needs to be studied more seriously.



Several studies have examined the relevance of Sufism in character building. Rosidi (2024) researched Sufism as a basis for anti-social discrimination based on the thoughts of KH. Ahmad Asrori Al-Ishaqi, and found that the concept of Sufism can be applied as an anti-discrimination effort through the transformation of teachings and examples that foster noble and tolerant attitudes. Zidan Syahrul Akbar and Dwi Hizami (2023) examined Sufi education in *Nazkah Al-Malhubzat KH. Ahmad Asrori Al-Ishaqi*, as well as its relevance to national education goals, and found that the integration of sharia, *tarekat*, and *hakikat* with a balance of *raja'* and *khauf* can enhance contemporary spirituality. Additionally, Anas Ma'arif (2019) researched the role of zikir in developing tolerance, showing that TQN Al-Utsmaniyyah zikir produces personalities with self-control, patience, and harmonious social relationships that respect differences.

This study is based on the assumption that the integration of Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyyah Al Utsmaniyyah Sufism into character education brings out the prophetic-Sufi character of *santri* in their interactions, socialising and community life in general. This study focuses on: How can profetic-sufistic character be fostered in *santri*? What patterns of Sufism education are relevant and can be applied in 21<sup>st</sup> century character education? Thus, this study will examine the practical Sufism of Sheikh Achmad Asrori Al-Ishaqi's in Jama'ah Al-Khidmah and Assalafi Al Fithrah boarding school Surabaya and its integration into character education, with the aim of producing new insights that have not been found in previous studies.

## B. METHOD

This research tendency is categorized as a library research approach where research data is collected based on journal documentation, books, and literature relevant to the research to produce new conclusions based on data and researcher interpretation. Research data instruments are collected based on literature review documentation (Darmalaksana, 2020). This research began by identifying the topic, selecting relevant literature and searching for bibliographic data whilst noting down key points and summaries, comparing the content of sources, and identifying the shortcomings of previous studies, before reorganising the material into a coherent, structured narrative, complete with appropriate citations to support the research's theoretical framework.

## C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Character Education

Allah created human beings endowed with certain attributes, namely life (*hayat*), knowledge (*ilmu*), hearing (*sama'*), sight (*basar*), speech (*kalam*), power (*qudrat*) and will (*iradah*) (Ishaqy, 2015a). God has made the human heart, in accordance with its *fitrah* (natural disposition), capable of perceiving



what is real and true, able to grasp the essence of knowledge, and ready and strong enough to accept trust and responsibility (Ishaqy, 2015a). The *fitrah* is the fundamental character inherent in every individual. Al-Ghazali viewed character as being closer to morals, namely attitudes and actions that have become ingrained in a person, emerging spontaneously when interacting with their environment (Sani & Kadri, 2016). In line with this, Omeri in (Fadilah et al., 2021) explains that character education is a system of instilling character values that includes the components of knowledge, awareness or willingness, and action to implement these values towards the Creator, oneself, fellow human beings, the environment, and the homeland. Character can be shaped through education, because education is the most effective tool for making individuals or humans aware of their human identity (Zubaedi, 2015). Character is inherent in every human being and is the result of a combination of biological potential and interaction with the environment, giving rise to actions and reactions as part of character education.

In Oos M. Anwas' grand design for character education, character education is understood as an effort to instil intelligence in thinking, appreciation in attitude, and experience in the form of behaviour that is in accordance with the noble values that constitute one's identity, manifested in interactions with God, oneself, others, and one's environment. These noble values include honesty, independence, politeness, social dignity, intellectual curiosity, and logical thinking (Zubaedi, 2015). This can be done by discussing and encouraging students to think about good deeds and then encouraging them to do good, as well as telling stories and drawing lessons from them (Sani & Kadri, 2016). Discussions allow students to share their views, exchange ideas, and develop critical and analytical thinking skills, appreciate differences of opinion, and develop empathy (Sani & Kadri, 2016). The axiology of character education needs special attention from all levels of education policy makers, both in the formal and non-formal sectors.

In line with this, the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia issued Regulation No. 20 of 2018 concerning the Strengthening of Character Education in Formal Education Units. Character Education Strengthening, hereinafter referred to as PPK, is an educational movement under the responsibility of education units to strengthen the character of students through the harmonisation of the heart, emotional development, intellectual development, and physical development with the involvement and cooperation between educational institutions, families, and communities as part of the National Mental Revolution Movement (GNRM). The cultivation of character education cannot be limited to merely transferring knowledge or training specific skills, but requires a process, role models, and habituation or acculturation within the family, school, community, and mass media environment (Zubaedi, 2011). Therefore, the implementation of holistic character education must be carried out systematically and continuously, involving the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects of students in the school, family, and community environments.



Character education for *santri* through Lickona's three stages includes moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action, as follows:

*First*, Moral knowing (knowing the good), which is knowing and understanding between good and bad or despicable and praiseworthy (Ependi et al., 2023). Imam Ghazali said that despicable morals are known as *mublikat*, which are all human behaviours that can lead to destruction and ruin, while praiseworthy morals are eliminating all despicable habits as taught in Islam, staying away from such deeds, then cultivating good habits, practising them and loving them (Hidayat, 2014). Allah SWT says:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا ۖ

*Indeed, in the Messenger of Allah there is a good example for you, (namely) for those who hope for (the mercy of) Allah and (the coming of) the Day of Judgement and who remember Allah often (Q.S. Al-Ahzab [33]: 21).*

*Second*, Moral feeling (desiring the good), which is the stage where a person already has the intention and interest in goodness or conscience, which is the precursor to the emergence of empathy (Ependi et al., 2023). Interest in goodness is one of the indicators of the perfection of a person's faith.

مُسْتَكْمِلُ الْإِيمَانِ، وَلَا يَسْتَكْمِلُ الْإِيمَانَ إِلَّا بِالْعَمَلِ، وَلَنْ يَسْتَكْمِلَ عَبْدٌ الْإِيمَانَ وَلَا يَكُونَ مُؤْمِنًا حَقًّا حَتَّى يُؤْثِرَ دِينَهُ عَلَى شَهْوَتِهِ، وَلَنْ يَهْلِكَ عَبْدٌ حَتَّى يُؤْثِرَ شَهْوَتَهُ عَلَى دِينِهِ.

*A servant will not perfect his faith or become a true believer until he chooses his religion over his desires, and a servant will not perish until he chooses his desires over his religion (Rabat et al., 2009).*

*Third*, Moral action (doing the good), which is the highest stage of moral implementation, is doing good based on personal will or internal motivation (Ependi et al., 2023). Internal motivation in doing good is influenced by a person's knowledge, faith, and spiritual involvement. Furthermore, it serves as a barrier against immoral or reprehensible acts. Ibn Sina emphasised:

وَمِنْ أَوَائِلِ مَا يَلْزَمُ مِنْ زَامِي سِيَاسَةِ نَفْسِهِ أَنْ يَعْلَمَ إِنَّ لَهُ عَقْلاً هُوَ السَّائِسُ وَنَفْسًا أَمَّارَةً بِالسُّوءِ كَثِيرَةَ الْمَعَائِبِ جَمَّةَ الْمَسَاوِي فِي طَبْعِهَا وَأَصْلَ خَلْقِهَا هِيَ الْمُسْوَسَةُ.

*One of the first things necessary for someone who wants to rule himself is to know that he has a mind that is a ruler and a soul that is prone to evil, full of mistakes and many shortcomings in nature and origin of his creation, and that is what is controlled. (Al-Mulk, n.d.)*

In addition, character education can also be carried out through several spiritual efforts as follows (Hidayat, 2014):

*First, Muhasabah*, is always reflecting on their actions and their consequences, both good and bad. This can be done by encouraging students to introspect and reflect on their behaviour and activities, assessing which are in line with the values of the *pesantren* and Islamic teachings and which are not.

*Second, Mu'aqabah*, is imposing punishment for various deeds and actions that they have committed as an educational measure for the students. Such punishment (*ta'zir*) is spiritual in nature and



oriented towards virtue, such as performing more sunnah prayers than usual, reciting *zikr*, and so on.

*Third, Muahadah*, is making a commitment with one's conscience (inner self) not to repeat mistakes and bad deeds, and to replace them with good deeds. Students are encouraged to make an inner commitment not to repeat mistakes and to replace them with good deeds..

*Fourth, Mujahadah*, which is striving to the utmost to perform good deeds in order to attain the level of *ihsan*, thereby drawing closer to Allah SWT (*Muraqabah*). *Muraqabah* can be achieved by maintaining and enhancing the consistency of good deeds in order to attain closeness to and the pleasure of Allah alone. As a result, the commendable character that is being pursued will have a maximum impact on daily life, making one a calmer person, and able to maintain a balance between *hablu minallah* and *hablu minannas* as part of *taqarrub ila Allah*.

In practice, *muhasabah*, *mu'aqabah*, *mu'ahadah*, and *mujahadah* interpret the Sufi cycle of self-improvement as a reflective, step-by-step process that can be applied with discipline in Islamic boarding schools to shape the character of students through structured daily routines.

## 2. Tasawuf Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyyah Al Utsmaniyyah

Seyyed Hossen Nasr states that true Sufism discusses three important elements, namely the nature of God, the nature of humans, and spiritual wisdom (Nasr, 2020). In line with this, according to Abu Bakar al-Kalabadzi, Sufis are those whom God has blessed with sensitive minds, sharp intelligence, spiritual nature, and purity almost like that of angels, and a nature almost created from light (Al-Hanafi, n.d.). In addition, earlier Sufi scholars, including Al-Junayd, have defined Sufism, its essence, its position, its conditions and stations, its behaviour, and its morals based on the Qur'an and Sunnah, which was originally an effort to perfect worship so as to be free from the shackles of lust and heresy (Khoir, 2012). Sufism is also an esoteric aspect of Islam as well as a manifestation of *ihsan*, which recognises the communication between servants and God as the heart of the implementation of Islamic teachings and the key to the perfection of practice, as well as creed and sharia (Amin, 2012).

Furthermore, according to Hasbi, Sufi terminology based on the opinions of experts can be viewed from three perspectives: *First*, humans as limited beings, so Sufism is defined as an effort to purify oneself by distancing oneself from the influences of worldly life and focusing one's attention solely on Allah SWT. *Second*, humans as beings who must strive, so Sufism is defined as an effort to beautify oneself with morals derived from religious teachings in order to draw closer to Allah SWT. *Third*, humans as creatures of God, so Sufism is defined as an awareness of the nature of God that can direct the soul towards activities that can connect humans with God (Hasbi, 2020).

Al-Adfawi explains the terminology of a person who practices Sufism or a Sufi as follows:

أَنَّ الصُّوفِيَّ هُوَ مَنْ اتَّصَفَ بِالصِّفَاتِ الْمَحْمُودَةِ فِي الشَّرْعِ، وَتَخَلَّقَ بِالأَخْلَاقِ الْمَمْدُوحَةِ، وَإِنْ بَاعَدَ مِنْهَا التَّبَعُ، مُعْرِضٌ



عَنِ الدُّنْيَا، مُقْبِلٌ عَلَى الْآخِرَى، سَالِكٌ الطَّرِيقَ الَّتِي هِيَ أَوْلَى بِالْمَرْءِ وَآخِرَى.

*A Sufi is a person who possesses praiseworthy qualities according to Islamic law, acts with praiseworthy morals, even though his nature is far from that, shuns the world, accepts the hereafter, and follows the most appropriate and noble path for a person (Al-Misri, 1977)*

Al-Adfawi's explanation of the definition of Sufism emphasises the essence of Sufism as a process of profound self-transformation, in which a person not only understands virtuous qualities theoretically according to Sharia law, but also actively instils them in their daily conduct, even though their innate nature (*tabi'at*) is still far from perfect. It can be underlined that Sufism is a continuous struggle against worldly attachments, with a full orientation towards the hereafter, so that Sufis become role models in pursuing 'the most noble path' that is in harmony with human nature. The Sufi approach can be integrated to build the character of *santri* through the habit of praiseworthy morals and the reduction of early materialism. A cooperative learning approach can be utilised to replicate this '*suluk*' (spiritual journey) in a simple manner, helping *santri* reflect on the distance between *tabi'at* and ideal morals, so that Sufism is not merely memorisation, but the formation of a soul that is ready to face the trials of this world and the hereafter.

In essence, Sufism teaches love (*mahabbah*) in worshipping Allah (Harini, 2019). Rumi also emphasised that the purpose of Sufism is to strengthen the human soul by increasing love and faith, morality and spiritual knowledge, and increasing worship and righteous deeds (Suteja, 2016). The reinterpretation and contextualisation of the spiritual values of Sufism will be more meaningful when applied in social life (Badrudin, 2015). For example, a person performs prayers, fasts, goes on the hajj, and does good deeds for others not only because it is an obligation or to carry out Allah's commands, but also as a manifestation of the servant's love for Allah in an effort to obtain His pleasure and love.

The Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyyah Al-Utsmaniyah Sufism is a unique synthesis of the Qadiriyyah order's practice of *jahri* (loud) *dhikr*, which emphasises collective glorification of the words to purify the soul from *riya'* and '*ujub*, while the *khafi* (silent) *dhikr* of the Naqshbandiyyah order (with a soft voice and affirmation of the heart) focuses on continuous inner awareness (*ithbat*) without sound, creating a deep spiritual harmony for its devotees. Meanwhile, the name 'Al-Utsmaniyah' refers to Sheikh Muhammad Utsman bin Nadi al-Ishaqi as the main mursyid, who continued the sanad vertically to Sheikh Muhammad Romli al-Tamimi and connected to the Prophet Muhammad SAW through a *mu'tabarab* (valid and verified) *tarekat* lineage. Sheikh Achmad Asrori al-Ishaqi RA, as his son and student, received *bai'at*, *talqin* (teaching of *wirid*), and *tahkim* (strengthening of spiritual bonds), thus becoming a key representative in the spread of this order in Indonesia, particularly through Islamic boarding schools such as As-Salafi Al-Fithrah.



Sufism Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyyah Al-Utsmaniyyah by Sheikh Achmad Asrori Al-Ishaqi emphasises the practical aspects of Sufism in the daily lives of students. These Sufi practices are formulated into wadhifah or boarding school activities. If analysed further using a Sufi approach, the Sufi education model applied is Sufism as an educational experience for the students' psyche, which has implications for social transformation. In this context, Sufism is relevant to other disciplines such as theology, which has an influence on cultural transformation and human consciousness to achieve progress in ethical and aesthetic constitutions, as well as advances in science and technology (Burhanuddin, 2020). In addition, the close correlation between the practice of Sufi education and inner experience will lead to outward behaviour.

The harmony between inner experience and outward behaviour, Sheikh Achmad Asrori quotes Sayyidina Umar bin Khattab's statement that during the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, people were judged based on the revelations that came directly from God. However, after the revelations ceased, people were judged based on their outward actions. Anyone who displays goodness will be trusted and approached, while the contents of one's heart are not within human authority, as it is Allah SWT who will judge and hold one accountable for their intentions. Conversely, anyone who displays deeds other than goodness will not be trusted, even if they claim to have good intentions and goals in their hearts (Ishaqy, 2015a). Empirically, the balance between inner and outer qualities cannot be taught theoretically alone; rather, it must be embodied in habits and concrete actions reflected in daily behaviour, not merely in rhetoric or declarations of intent.

Sufism education according to the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyyah order of Sheikh Achmad Asrori, with its practices, aims to optimise moral education as a manifestation of spiritual stability and control of desires, so that humans remain consistent in their moral excellence (Alansyari, 2021). Consistent practice of Sufism will have implications for the piety of a servant's character. Piety of character arises from the perfection and purity of the soul, which is formulated through strict mental attitude management and behavioural discipline to achieve optimal happiness. This process begins with recognising one's existence through divine attributes, through the purification of the soul and body, thereby forming a moral and noble character (Alansyari, 2021). In this case, Sheikh Achmad Asrori applied education to his students in the same way that his father, KH. Utsman Al-Ishaqy, had raised him, thereby successfully producing the character of a *murshid tariqah mu'tabar*.

The focus of Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyyah Sufism education under Sheikh Achmad Asrori is to obtain moral excellence and improve the moral character of students. Goodness and what is good are clear, as are evil and wicked deeds (Ishaqy, 2015b). Sufism provides a balance amid the peak of rationalism and positivism (Mustaghfiroh et al., 2021). Sufism guides *santri* in facing the spiritual crisis of modern society, which has led to materialistic, hedonistic, totalitarian, positivist attitudes and a tendency to



neglect spiritual aspects (Zubaedi & Utomo, 2021). Strategic steps through a Sufi approach that can be applied include: *First*, instilling an attitude of *rahmatan lil'alamin*. *Second*, instilling an attitude of *tawadu'*. *Third*, guidance and mentoring through *rabithah*, *riyadah*, and *mujahadah* (Redaksi NUGres, 2022) This three-pronged approach is interconnected in fostering the moral character of *santri*.

In line with this, Sheikh Hasan revealed that faith as the basis of Sufism is not merely a facade or a fantasy, but something that is embedded in the heart and proven by deeds. Therefore, whoever speaks well and does good deeds, their deeds will be lifted up by Allah SWT (Ishaqy, 2015b). As Allah SWT says:

مَنْ كَانَ يُرِيدُ الْعِزَّةَ فَلِلَّهِ الْعِزَّةُ جَمِيعًا إِلَيْهِ يَصْعَدُ الْكَلِمُ الطَّيِّبُ وَالْعَمَلُ الصَّالِحُ يَرْفَعُهُ وَالَّذِينَ يَمْكُرُونَ السَّيِّئَاتِ لَهُمْ عَذَابٌ شَدِيدٌ وَمَكْرُ أُولَئِكَ هُوَ يَبُورُ ﴿١٠﴾

*Whoever desires glory (know that) all glory belongs to Allah. To Him will ascend good words and righteous deeds will be raised by Him. As for those who plan evil, they will receive a severe punishment and their evil plans will be destroyed (Q.S. Fatir [35]: 10).*

His also confirms that character is formed through repeated, continuous, and consistent activities through positive habits through spiritual discipline (*riyadah*) and perseverance in restraining and controlling desires (*mujahadah*) so as to bring about personal and community benefits. Thus, Sufi practices hold significance for character education, which grows through remembrance (*dhikr*), reflection (*tafakkur*), humility (*fakir*), and love and longing for Him.

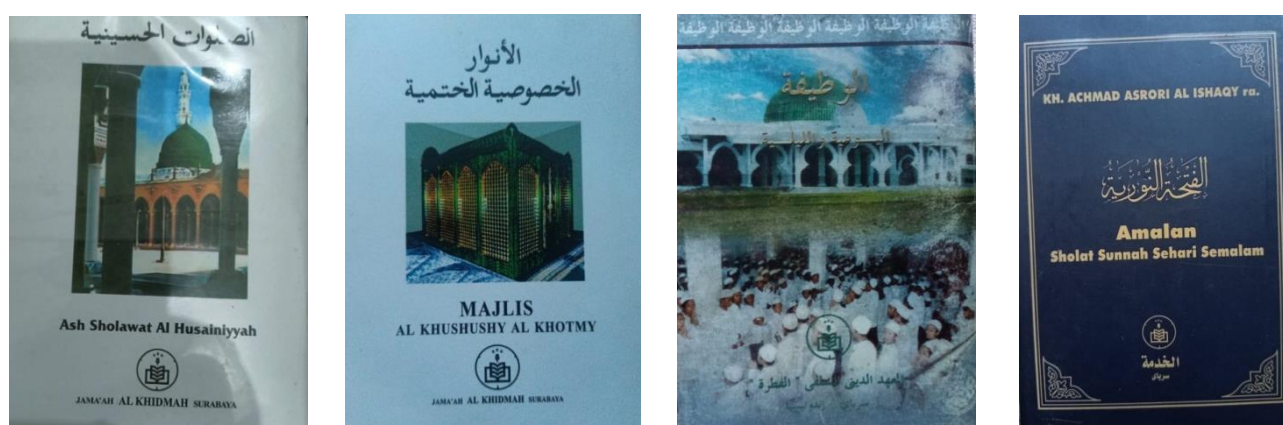


Figure 1. Literature of Qadiriyyah and Naqshbandiyyah Dhikr

*First, Dhikr*, in Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyyah Al Utsmaniyyah Sufism takes the form of *laa ilaaha illallah*, or *dzikir jalalah*, by optimising the movement of the tongue, the movement of the heart (*khawas*), and the *sirri* (the deepest part of the heart) (Ishaqy, 2015a). A person who internalises *laa ilaaha illallah* in speech, heart, and deeds or actions with sincerity by fighting their desires will receive benefits from Allah SWT and be spared from feelings of arrogance and envy. Sincerity in *laa ilaaha*



*illallah* is prostrating oneself when facing the deeds and commands of Allah SWT like a servant (Ishaqy, 2015c). The remembrance of *laa ilaaha illallah* serves as a spiritual revitalisation that strengthens the axis of the relationship between Allah SWT and His servants, so that all existential manifestations are subject to His absolute authority. However, the practice of this remembrance does not necessarily make servants passive, but rather always strives to involve Allah SWT in all their activities.

*Second*, Contemplation or reflection (*tafakkur*) on the oneness of Allah SWT brings about the blessing of new knowledge that has never been learned before. For true seekers of knowledge, *tafakkur* aims to make knowledge a provision for the hereafter, to attain His pleasure, so that they may be among the fortunate ones (Ishaqy, 2015b). *Tafakkur* is a foundation for people of knowledge, as Allah SWT says:

إِنَّ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَاخْتِلَافِ اللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ لَآيَاتٍ لِّأُولِي الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿١٩٠﴾ الَّذِينَ يَذْكُرُونَ اللَّهَ قِيَامًا وَقُعُودًا وَعَلَىٰ جُنُوبِهِمْ وَيَتَفَكَّرُونَ فِي خَلْقِ السَّمُوتِ وَالْأَرْضِ رَبَّنَا مَا خَلَقْتَ هَذَا بَاطِلًا سُبْحَنَكَ فَقِنَا عَذَابَ النَّارِ ﴿١٩١﴾

*Indeed, in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and the alternation of night and day, there are signs for those of understanding. (That is) those who remember Allah while standing, sitting, or lying down, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth (saying), ‘Our Lord, You have not created all this in vain. Glorified are You. Protect us from the punishment of Hell.’*” (QS. Ali Imran [3]: 190-191).

Contemplation brings a sense of spaciousness and joy to the heart. This is because those who contemplate are filled with praise, thanksgiving, and sanctification of Allah SWT, so that their hearts are revealed and open to see His beauty, loveliness, and perfection (Ishaqy, 2015a). They easily accept and seek solutions to all the dynamics of life they face.

*Third*, The humility (*fakir*), realising that they are truly servants of Allah SWT, thus giving rise to hope for His help and forgiveness, fear of His wrath, gratitude for all His blessings, favours, and gifts, and patience in facing all the destinies He has decreed. Awareness of one's poverty before Allah SWT will certainly suppress attitudes of arrogance, pride, vanity, and hypocrisy, thereby giving rise to humility. For indeed, everything on earth moves by the power of Allah SWT, so in facing all situations, one must utilise all potential—intellectual, physical, and spiritual—to the fullest and surrender the outcome entirely to Him, for He is the Best of Helpers. Allah SWT states:

فَسَقَىٰ لَهُمَا ثُمَّ تَوَلَّىٰ إِلَى الظِّلِّ فَقَالَ رَبِّ إِنِّي لِمَا أَنْزَلْتَ إِلَيَّ مِنْ خَيْرٍ فَقِيرٌ ﴿٢٤﴾

*So he (Moses) gave the two women's livestock to drink. He then moved to a shady spot and prayed, “My Lord, I am in dire need of any good (provision) You may bestow upon me* (Q.S. al-Qasas [28]: 24).

In addition to showing complete hope in Allah SWT, this verse also implies that Allah SWT's blessings and help are abundant, and will come in accordance with the level of preparation and readiness of the servant in his struggle (Ishaqy, 2015). Therefore, it can be concluded that Allah SWT's help requires the active movement (*tawakkal*) of the servant to bring it about.



*Fourth*, Love and longing for Allah SWT, as the pinnacle and foundation for achieving closeness to Him, which is relevant to daily deeds. If a person's deeds or intentions are in accordance with Sharia law, then they are called obedient; if not, then they are called sinful (Ishaqy, 2015a). In truth, closeness cannot be attained without love and longing for the true Essence, reflected through speech, inner feelings, and physical behaviour. The love and longing that dwell in the heart are manifested through speech that always speaks of goodness and remembers Him, as well as physical behaviour that tends towards His pleasure.

The cultivation of moral character as a dynamic process through consistent spiritual discipline (*riyadhab*) and spiritual struggle (*mujahadah*), wherein remembrance (*dhikir*), contemplation (*tafakkur*), self-denial (*fakir*), and a deep longing for Allah SWT serve as the main pillars for revitalising the soul, purifying the heart from spiritual ailments such as arrogance (*ujub*) and ostentation (*riya'*), and bringing about holistic well-being for both the individual and society as a whole. The practice of Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyyah Al-Utsmaniyah Sufism through the recitation of '*La ilaha illallah*' with specific movements represents a harmonious integration of the physical, verbal and inner dimensions, making it an effective tool for character education through cooperative habituation that gradually builds awareness of tawhid. This practice is also applied comprehensively to the al-Khidmah congregation, not all of whom hold the status of students at the Al Fithrah Islamic boarding school in Surabaya. The observable implications are that their individual characters are not significantly different, as they stem from the same roots or teachers. Contemplation and the awareness of one's own poverty within the community are manifested through the sincerity and willingness to sit together in a single gathering, as illustrated by verse al-Qasas [28]:24, fostering an active attitude of humility that combines human effort with *tawakkal*, whilst love and longing, as the foundation of the earnest practice of Sufi teachings, reflect an orientation towards the Hereafter that prevents one from becoming intoxicated by the fleeting and often manipulative pleasures of this world.

#### D. CONCLUSION

Character education for *santri* so that they embody profetic-sufistic characteristics must be carried out through a holistic, sustainable educational approach that is oriented towards the simultaneous formation of the inner self and behaviour. The strategic steps begin with instilling moral understanding (moral knowing) that distinguishes between good and evil, followed by strengthening moral awareness and sensitivity (moral feeling), and finally, practising real behaviour (moral action) based on internal motivation and strong faith. This process is reinforced through applicable Sufi practices such as *muhasabah*, *mu'aqabah*, *mu'ahadah*, and *mujahadah* as a cycle of self-improvement, as well as *riyadah* and the habit of structured worship in *pesantren* life. In the context of 21<sup>st</sup>-century character education,



Sufi education has a very strong relevance as a foundation for inner control and spiritual health amid moral crises, materialism, and value disorientation. The values of Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyyah Al - Utsmaniyyah, through dhikr, *tafakkur*, awareness of poverty, and love and longing for Allah SWT, can be recontextualised in the modern education system as a means of shaping the character of *santri* who are faithful, have noble character, have a balanced personality, and are able to face the challenges of the times without losing their divine and human orientation.

The researcher acknowledges the limitations and imperfections of this study, which merely provides a brief overview of character education through the practice of the Qadiriyyah wa Naqshbandiyyah Sufism of Sheikh Ahmad Asrori; therefore, the research variables may be refined in future studies to serve as a basis for consideration or reference, thereby making the discussion more comprehensive and practical.

As for recommendations for future research, it could explore strategies and approaches to character education that integrate the Qadiriyyah wa Naqshbandiyyah Sufism in a more practical manner.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Al-Hanafi, A. B. M. bin A. I. bin I. bin Y. A.-K. A.-B. (n.d.). *التعرف لمذهب أهل التصوف*. Darul Kutub Al-Ilmiyah. <https://shamela.ws/book/6518>
- Al-Misri, K. A. al-F. J. bin T. al-A. (1977). *الموفي بمعرفة التصوف والصوفي*. Maktabat Dar al-‘Urubah li al-Nashr wa al-Tawzi’. <https://shamela.ws/book/97>
- Al-Mulk, A.-H. bin A. bin S. A. A. S. (n.d.). *رسالة ضمن (مجموع في السياسة)* (III). Muassasah Syabab Al-Jami’ah. <https://shamela.ws/book/7227>
- Alansyari, R. (2021). *Pendidikan Karakter Melalui Tasawuf Akhlaki Perspektif Al-Qur’an* [Institute PTIQ Jakarta]. <https://repository.ptiq.ac.id/id/eprint/475/>
- Ali, S. (2013). *Mengawal Tradisi, Meraih Prestasi: Inovasi dan Aksi Pendidikan Islam*. UIN-Maliki Press.
- Amin, S. M. (2012). *Ilmu Tasawuf* (1st ed.). Amzah.
- Arbi, A. (2024). *PsikMuliono, W. A. (2020). Sosiologi Dakwah. Prenadamedia Group.ologi Komunikasi Dakwah*. AMZAH.
- Badrudin. (2015). *Akhlak Tasawuf*. IAIB Press.
- BRIN. (2025). *Peran Pesantren dalam Membentuk Moral, Karakter, dan Pemahaman Keagamaan di Indonesia*. <https://www.brin.go.id/news/125492/peran-pesantren-dalam-membentuk-moral-karakter-dan-pemahaman-keagamaan-di-indonesia>
- Burhanuddin, N. (2020). Prinsip Epistemologi Makrifat dalam Tasawuf bagi Penguatan Karakter. *FUADUNA: Jurnal Kajian Keagamaan Dan Kemasyarakatan*, 04(02), 114–125. <https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.30983/fuaduna.v4i2.3593>



- Darmalaksana, W. (2020). Metode Penelitian Kualitatif Studi Pustaka dan Studi Lapangan. *Pre-Print Digital Library UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung*, 2020, 1–6. <http://digilib.uinsgd.ac.id/id/eprint/32855>
- Ependi, N. H., Pratiwi, D., Ningsih, A. M., Kamilah, A., Wijayanto, P. W., Dermawan, H., Hutapea, B., Yusuf, M., Indarwati, Alamsyah, T., Sholikhah, N., Efendi, S., Subiantoro, & Wibowo, T. P. (2023). *Pendidikan Karakter*. PT Sada Kurnia Pustaka.
- Fadilah, Rabi'ah, Alim, W. S., Zumrudiana, A., Lestari, I. widya, Baidawi, A., & Elisanti, A. D. (2021). *Pendidikan Karakter*. CV. Agrapana Media.
- Gede Dipayana, I. (2025). *Menag Nasaruddin Umar, Pesantren Adalah Cermin Kesantunan dan Kebijaksanaan Bangsa*. 15 Oktober; Ditjen Bimas Hindu Kementerian Agama RI. <https://bimashindu.kemenag.go.id/berita-pusat/menag-nasaruddin-umar-pesantren-adalah-cermin-kesantunan-dan-kebijaksanaan-bangsa-mhtUD>
- Harini, S. (2019). *Tasawuf Jawa*. Araska.
- Hasbi, M. (2020). *Akhlak Tasawuf (Solusi Mencari Kebahagiaan dalam Kehidupan Esoteris dan Eksoteris)*. TrustMedia Publishing.
- Hidayat, D. R. (2014). *Akhlak Sufi: Kajian Kitab Sirrul Asrar Karya Syaikh Abdul Qadir Jailani*. Royyan Press.
- Ishaqy, A. A. Al. (2015a). *Untaian Mutiara dalam Ikatan Hati dan Jalinan Rohani terj. Al Muntakhobat fi Robithotil Qolbiyyah wa Shilatih Rubiyyah* (1st ed.). Al Wawa.
- Ishaqy, A. A. Al. (2015b). *Untaian Mutiara dalam Ikatan Hati dan Jalinan Rohani terj. Al Muntakhobat fi Robithotil Qolbiyyah wa Shilatih Rubiyyah* (5th ed.). Al Wawa.
- Ishaqy, A. A. Al. (2015c). *Untaian Mutiara dalam Ikatan Hati dan Jalinan Rohani terj. Al Muntakhobat fi Robithotil Qolbiyyah wa Shilatih Rubiyyah* (4th ed.). Al Wawa.
- Kemenko PMK. (2025). *Konbes NU 2025 Soroti Kekerasan di Lembaga Pendidikan, Pemerintah Siap Dorong Grand Strategy Nasional*. <https://www.kemenkopmk.go.id/konbes-nu-2025-soroti-kekerasan-di-lembaga-pendidikan-pemerintah-siap-dorong-grand-strategy>
- Khoir, B. M. S. (2012). *كتاب مفهوم تجديد الدين* (1st ed.). Markaz At-Ta'shili lid Dirosati wal Buhuts. <https://shamela.ws/book/17731>
- Muliono, W. A. (2020). *Sosiologi Dakwah*. Prenadamedia Group.
- Munir, M., & Ilahi, W. (2021). *Manajemen Dakwah* (V). Kencana.
- Mustaghfiroh, S., Nazar, T. H., & Safe'i, B. (2021). Etika Keutamaan dalam Akhlak Tasawuf Abdul Qadir Al-Jilani: Relevansinya dengan Pengembangan Karakter Manusia. *Jurnal Islam Nusantara*, 05(1), 23–37. <https://doi.org/10.33852/jurnalin.v5i1.241>
- Nasr, S. H. (2020). *Tasawuf Dulu dan Sekarang terj. Living Sufism*. IRCiSoD.



- Rabat, K., Eid, S. E., & Tawab, M. A. A. (2009). *العقيدة - الإمام أحمد* (3 (Ed.)). Dar Al-Falah.  
<https://doi.org/https://shamela.ws/book/20879>
- Redaksi NUGres (2022). *Kisah Dunia Sufistik dan Biografi KH. Achmad Asrori Al Ishaqy RA*.  
<https://www.nugresik.or.id/kisah-dunia-sufistik-biografi-kh-achmad-asrori-al-ishaqy-ra/>
- Sani, R. A., & Kadri, M. (2016). *Pendidikan Karakter: Mendidik Karakter Anak yang Islami*. Bumi Aksara.
- Suteja. (2016). *Tasawuf di Nusantara: Tadarus Tasawuf dan Tarekat*. CV. Aksarasatu.
- Syam, N. (2008). *Transisi Pembaharuan: Dialektika Islam, Politik, dan Pendidikan*. LEPKISS.
- Thohari, H., Rais, I., & Nasma, T. (2006). *Tumbuh Kembang Kecerdasan Emosi Nabi*. Pustaka Inti.
- Tilmasani. (2020). *Filsafat Pendidikan Islam*. Literasi Nusantara.
- Zubaedi. (2011). *Desain Pendidikan Karakter: Konsepsi dan Aplikasinya dalam Lembaga Pendidikan* (1st ed.). Kencana.
- Zubaedi. (2015). *Desain Pendidikan Karakter: Konsepsi dan Aplikasinya dalam Lembaga Pendidikan* (1st ed.). Kencana.
- Zubaedi, & Utomo, P. (2021). Nilai Kerja dalam Pendekatan Tasawuf dan Pengaruhnya Sebagai Bimbingan Pribadi-Sosial Terhadap Pembentukan Karakter Masyarakat Modern. *Altifani: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Ushuluddin, Adab, Dan Dakwah*, 1(2), 99–112.  
<https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.32939/altifani.v1i2.912>

