

Islamic Educational Epistemology in Twentieth-Century Indragiri Hilir: A Philological Study of *Majmû' al-Âyât wa al-Aḥâdîth*

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Abstract

*This study examines the reconstruction of Islamic education in twentieth-century Indragiri Hilir, Riau, Indonesia through a philological analysis of the manuscript *Majmû' al-Âyât wa al-Aḥâdîth fî Faḍâ'il al-'Ilm* by Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq al-Banjari. This qualitative study employs philological and intellectual-historical approaches using the manuscript as the primary source and relevant historical literature as supporting data. Content analysis was employed to examine the manuscript's textual structure and educational themes. The findings indicate that this manuscript represents an effort to develop Islamic education grounded in the Quran and hadith through a systematic and normative approach. The manuscript presents educational principles concerning religious learning, ethics, and scholarly authority. The manuscript integrates 42 Quranic verses, 55 hadith, and classical scholarly authorities, demonstrating the interconnection between epistemic authority, intentionality (niyyah), and transregional knowledge transmission. It also illustrates how Quranic verses and prophetic hadith were pedagogically employed to construct and legitimize educational knowledge within a local scholarly tradition. This study shows that the manuscript contains educational concepts that offer important insights into the development of Islamic education in Indragiri Hilir within its historical context. The manuscript reflects an epistemic framework integrating intellectual, moral,*

and social dimensions of Islamic education. The findings highlight the value of local manuscripts for reconstructing the history of Islamic education and understanding the epistemological foundations of Islamic learning. Thus, this study contributes to broader discussions in Islamic philology and the history of education in Southeast Asia.

Keywords: Islamic education; *majmû‘ al-Âyât wa al-aḥādīth*; philology; verses and hadith

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Introduction

The Islamic education development in twentieth-century Indragiri Hilir, Riau, Indonesia cannot be separated from the broader process of Islamization in the Indonesian archipelago (Pransiska et al. 2017, 9). This period was considered as a significant phase. It was characterized by the emergence of educational institutions, the strengthening of ‘*ulamâ’* (Muslim scholars) networks, and the influence of colonialism and modernization, all of which contributed to the increasing organization of educational activities (Hasibuan 2003, 24). The expansion of Islam in the region was facilitated through religious, commercial, and scholarly networks that connected local communities with broader Malay-Islamic traditions (Azhar & Rasyid 2020, 81; Muthalib 2020, 1; Susanty et al. 2024; Gunawan et al. 2025, 31; Najamuddin et al. 2025, 76). As these networks expanded, the transmission of Islamic knowledge required more systematic forms of teaching and textual preservation. Despite these developments, religious learning often remained limited to ritual knowledge, while access to formal instruction and qualified teachers was relatively restricted. Differences in the interpretation of unvowelled Arabic texts (*Arab gundul*) further reflected variations in religious understanding within society (Muthalib 2009, 7). In this context, religious manuscripts became important textual references through which Islamic knowledge was organized, transmitted, and studied in Indragiri Hilir. Among these textual traditions, locally produced manuscripts offer valuable evidence for understanding how educational knowledge was conceptualized and transmitted within particular Muslim communities (Susanty et al. 2024, 63).

Numerous previous studies on Islamic education within Indonesian archipelago have been conducted by academicians. In Sumatra particularly, those studies centered on *surau*'s role as centers for knowledge transmission, religious authority, and the formation of '*ulamâ*' networks (Muthalib 2020; Naldi 2022; Silvia et al. 2023). Others examined the intellectual contributions of Nusantara '*ulamâ*' and their influence on curriculum formation and local educational traditions (van Bruinessen 2012; Rohmana 2021; Suwendi et al. 2024; Baihaqi et al. 2025). Meanwhile, studies concerning Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq primarily focused on intellectual legacy, including theological, Sufi, ethical, and literary works, as well as their contribution to the development of Islamic thought (Hasibuan 2003; Wahidi et al. 2019; Arbi et al. 2021; Madjid et al. 2022; Wahidi & Rahman 2023).

It is unfortunate that *Majmû' al-Âyât wa al-Aḥâdîth fi Faḍâ'il al-'Ilm wa al-'Ulamâ' wa al-Muta'allimîn wa al-Mustami'in* (hereafter referred to as *Majmû' al-Âyât wa al-Aḥâdîth*) has received comparatively limited attention, particularly in discussions of educational thought. Two gaps may therefore be identified. First, the manuscript has rarely been examined as a source for understanding educational knowledge at the regional level. Second, philological approaches that investigate textual structure and the context of knowledge transmission embedded in the manuscript remain relatively limited. Addressing these gaps, this study explores the manuscript as a source for understanding the epistemological foundations of Islamic education in twentieth-century Indragiri Hilir. Accordingly, this study approaches *Majmû' al-Âyât wa al-Aḥâdîth* not only as an educational manuscript but also as a textual witness of the reception and pedagogical use of Quranic verses and hadith in the construction of Islamic educational knowledge.

Unlike studies focusing on institutional history, educational organizations, or scholarly biographies, this current study centers on the philological analysis of *Majmû' al-Âyât wa al-Aḥâdîth* by Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq al-Banjari (1922). A philological approach enables an examination of the manuscript's textual structure. It includes the arrangement of chapters, thematic organization, and sequence of materials presented in the text (Fathurahman 2022, 184). Beyond textual description, the study explores how knowledge is organized within the manuscript through the selection and compilation of Quranic verses, hadith, and *athar* (the sayings of the Prophet's Companions). Particular

attention is given to representations of scholarly authority, the teacher-students relationship, and patterns of pedagogical relationships reflected in the text. Through this perspective, the manuscript is examined as evidence for understanding the epistemological foundations that informed traditional Islamic education in Indragiri Hilir.

Based on this framework, this study argues that *Majmû' al-Âyât wa al-Aḥâdith* reflects an educational outlook grounded in the epistemological foundations of traditional Islamic learning. It offers a structured compilation of Quranic verses, hadith, and *athar*. They illustrate how educational knowledge was organized and legitimized within a particular scholarly milieu (Siddiq 1922). Rather than focusing solely on instructional content, the text provides insight into conceptions of knowledge, scholarly authority, and the ethical orientation associated with learning. In this sense, the manuscript offers valuable material for reforming the rational assumptions that informed educational activities and religious learning in 20th-century Indragiri Hilir. Its constant use within local educational settings further indicate its validity within the region's academic tradition (Jamalie 2015, 286).

To explore the relationship between the manuscript and Islamic education in twentieth-century Indragiri Hilir, the study addresses two main questions: (1) how are the concepts and values of Islamic education represented in *Majmû' al-Âyât wa al-Aḥâdith*? and (2) how does the manuscript reflect the epistemological foundations of Islamic educational thought within its socio-religious context? These questions are intended to situate the manuscript within broader discussions of educational knowledge and intellectual history rather than merely institutional developments. This study treats the manuscript as a primary source for examining educational concepts, intellectual orientations, and modes of knowledge transmission.

Through philological and contextual analysis, the study investigates the manuscript's structure and content while situating it within the intellectual tradition in which it was produced and transmitted. The findings are expected to contribute to the historiography of Islamic education. They provide insights into the ways local scholarly works articulated educational knowledge and preserved particular understandings of learning and religious authority. More broadly, the study offers a perspective on the relationship between texts, intellectual traditions, and socio-religious dynamics. It also highlights the significance

of local manuscript heritage for understanding the historical development of Islamic education in Indragiri Hilir.

Research Method

This study employs a qualitative method through two main approaches, namely philological and historical approaches. The former is carried out through the stages of inventory, description, transliteration, and text translation (Fathurahman, 2022, 69). Meanwhile, the latter is applied in source collection stage, including documents, manuscripts, archives, and oral sources (Herlina 2020, 31). Historical analysis followed the stages of heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography. It contextualizes the manuscript within the socio-religious dynamics of twentieth-century Islamic education in Indragiri Hilir. The research procedures consist of exploration, identification, and classification (Sayono 2021, 372). Both approaches are integrated to analyze the manuscript *Majmû' al-Āyât wa al-Aḥādīth* by Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq as the main unit of analysis in examining the development of Islamic education in the twentieth century in Indragiri Hilir. Primary data were obtained through direct examination of the manuscript at *Pesantren* (Islamic Boarding School) Jilussalamah Tembilahan, Riau, which offers relatively open accessibility for academic research purposes.

The secondary data were sourced from Islamic philology literature, the history of Indonesian education, biographies of scholars, and historical documents related to the spread of Islam in Indragiri Hilir, Riau. The analysis was conducted using a descriptive-analytical approach through content analysis and transliteration techniques. This approach involved categorizing textual units related to teacher-student ethics, curriculum components (Quranic verses and hadith), and the structure of knowledge transmission (*sanad*) to map the educational paradigm developed in relation to Islamic education at the time. Triangulation is applied to enhance the findings' validity by verifying the manuscript's content through interviews with descendants of Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq as key informants. Therefore, it produces a more in-depth and comprehensive historical and contextual understanding. The manuscript is understood not only as a historical document in this approach. It is also an educational instrument reflecting traditional Islamic educational

practices, the epistemic hierarchy of scholars, and the dynamics of local knowledge transmission.

Results and Discussion

Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq's Brief Biography

Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq ibn Muhammad Afif ibn Mahmud ibn Jamaluddin al-Banjari was a prominent *'ulamā'* born in Kampung Dalam Pagar, Martapura, South Kalimantan, in 1284 H (Wahidi et al. 2019). Genealogically, he was linked to the scholarly lineage of Shaykh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari, one of the most influential scholars in the Malay-Indonesian world (Kusrini et al. 2021, 217). Through both paternal and maternal lines, he was raised within a family environment closely associated with Islamic learning and religious authority (Wahidi & Rahman 2023, 7). His early education was under the guidance of family members and local scholars. He completed Quranic studies and acquired foundational knowledge of *fiqh* and Arabic grammar at a young age. These formative experiences provided an intellectual foundation. It later shaped his engagement with broader traditions of Islamic scholarship and contributed to the development of his scholarly authority.

A significant stage in the formation of Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq's intellectual outlook occurred during his studies in the Hijaz. After periods of study, teaching, and commercial activity in South Kalimantan and Padang, he travelled to Mecca around 1886 CE. He participated in scholarly circles (*ḥalaqah*) at the Grand Mosque, a major center of Islamic learning in the Muslim world (Azra 2004, 8). His teachers were prominent scholars associated with both the Hijaz and the Nusantara scholarly community. They include Shaykh Said Bakri Satta, Shaykh Said Babasyid, Shaykh Ahmad Dimiyati, Shaykh Ahmad Bapadhil, Shaykh Umar Sambas, Sayyid Ahmad Zaini Dahlan, and Shaykh Muhammad Nawawi al-Jawi (Jamalie 2015, 289). His association with these scholars positioned him within a wider transregional network that linked Southeast Asian Muslims with intellectual developments in the Hijaz. Following further study in Medina, particularly in the field of Sufism (Arbi et al. 2021, 86), and after receiving authorization to teach at the Grand Mosque (Risadiana 2023, 67), he returned to the archipelago in 1316 H. This trajectory illustrates not only scholarly mobility but also the circulation of knowledge, authority, and educational traditions between the Hijaz and the Malay-Indonesian world.

Beyond his role as a scholar, Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq maintained extensive social and familial connections through nine marriages and thirty-five children, both during his residence in Mecca and after his return to the archipelago. These kinship ties connected him with diverse communities and formed part of the social context within which his scholarly activities were carried out (Suprpto 2009, 107). He is also recognized for his substantial literary output across various disciplines, including *fiqh*, theology, Sufism, Arabic grammar, *farâ'id*, history, and literature (Lailan 2024, 41-42). The breadth of these works reflects the range of intellectual traditions to which he was connected and provides evidence of the educational concerns that informed his writings. Circulating in Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore, these texts contributed to the preservation and transmission of Islamic knowledge within the Malay world (Madjid et al. 2022).

From the perspective of intellectual history, his writings offer valuable resource. They examine the formation of educational knowledge, scholarly authority, and the epistemological orientations that characterized Islamic learning in the Malay-Nusantara context. Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq died in 1361 H (1939 CE) and was buried in Hidayat Hamlet, Sepat Village, Tembilahan, Indragiri, Riau. His legacy remains associated with the scholarly networks, students, and written works that belong to the region's intellectual heritage (Suprpto 2009, 108).

Motivation for Writing the Manuscript

The writing date of the *Majmû' al-Âyât wa al-Aḥādith* is unknown. However, it was completed on 10 Zulhijjah 1345 H (1926 AD) in Sapat, Indragiri, and then distributed through a printing press in Singapore. This manuscript is a critical response to social changes and societal challenges that influenced the educational orientation of Muslims at the time. It was believed that economic preoccupations and the dynamics of life were the main obstacles to pursuing religious knowledge. Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq viewed this perception as an epistemological and theological fallacy.

Therefore, this work was compiled to correct the public's perspective and reaffirm the position of knowledge as the foundation of religious and intellectual awareness. He stated:

“When I see our brothers in this era who think with false prejudice and utter corrupt words, among them their words, ‘How can we seek knowledge while we are in the narrowness of life, or in anxiety, or busy with worldly affairs, or hearts are not yet open to seeking knowledge,’ and various other statements that contradict the Sharia; then they also abandon the pursuit of knowledge and busy themselves with things detrimental and not beneficial to them, without realizing that it is the cause of their error and loss” (Siddiq 1922, 2–3).

This idea corresponds to the discourse of adaptive Islamic education towards modernity initiated by Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq. It promotes continuous learning that remains rooted in normative religious values while being responsive to social changes in Muslim society in the 20th century.

Epistemological Basis of Traditional Islamic Education

Majmū’ al-Āyât wa al-Aḥādīth contains a compilation of verses from the Quran, the Prophet’s hadiths, and the Companions and ‘*ulamā*’s *athar* regarding the virtues of knowledge, ‘*ulamā*’, and students. The text combines Arabic and Malay translations, with the Arabic script at the top and the Malay translation below. This manuscript demonstrates the efforts of local ‘*ulamā*’ in preserving and transmitting the Islamic scientific tradition by adapting it to the socio-cultural context of the Malay community. The use of Malay as a medium of explanation is a strategy to bridge the classical text with the understanding of the local community. Historically, this manuscript marks a crucial phase in Islamic education in 20th-century Sumatra. The knowledge dissemination was not only confined to formal institutions but also through easily accessible treatises. During this period, manuscript writing patterns tended to be uniform, in line with the model used by Shaykh Abdurrahman Ya’qub. This pattern strengthened a structured and communicative local intellectual tradition (Masyhur 2018, 93).

The manuscript contains a thematic compilation showing the primacy of knowledge as the epistemological foundation of traditional Islamic education. It integrates 42 verses of the Quran, 55 hadiths, *athar*, and the views of Muslim scholars. Meanwhile, the references used show a network of scientific authority rooted in classical literature, with reference to thoughts such as Al-Ghazālī in *Iḥyâ’ ‘Ulûm al-Dîn*, al-Ḥabīb ‘Abdullâh

ibn ‘Alawī al-Ḥaddād through *al-Naşā’ih al-Dīniyyah*, and Imām al-Shāfi‘ī (Siddiq 1922, 6, 29–32). This framework is also enriched by the perspectives of ‘ulamā’ such as Ibrāhīm al-Bājūrī in Jalāluddīn al-Suyūṭī and Ibn Ruslān; *athar*, among them are Abū Bakr al-Ṣiddīq, ‘Umar ibn al-Khaṭṭāb, ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān, ‘Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib, and Ibn al-‘Abbās; as well as the messages of Luqmān al-Ḥakīm (Siddiq 1922, 28–30).

Table 1

Epistemic Hierarchy and Pedagogical Structure in *Majmū‘ al-Āyāt wa al-Aḥādīth*

No	Theme	Epistemic Source	Data Count	Incipit	Pedagogical Function
1	<i>Tawḥīd</i> and the Knowledge Legitimacy	The Quran (primary revelation)	6	<i>Shahida Allāh annahu lā ilāha illā huwa</i>	Theological foundation of knowledge
2	The Virtues of Knowledge and Scholars	Verses & hadith (normative foundations)	18	<i>Yarfa‘ Allāh alladhīna āmanū/ Al-‘ulamā’ warathat al-anbiyā</i>	Learning motivation
3	Knowledge vs. Ignorance	Verses & hadith (epistemological guidance)	10	<i>Hal yastawī alladhīna ya‘lamūn</i>	Epistemological contrast
4	Authority of Scholars	Verses & hadith (normative foundations)	8	<i>Aṭī‘ū Allāh wa aṭī‘ū al-rasūl wa ulī al-amr/ Ittabi‘ū al-‘ulamā’</i>	Structure of authority
5	Ethics of the Knowledge Seeker	Hadith (elaboration of Quranic verses)	12	<i>Man zāra ‘āliman/ Man khadama ‘āliman</i>	Educational ethics
6	Intention in Seeking Knowledge	Verses & hadith (normative foundations)	7	<i>Man kāna yurīdu ḥartha al-dunyā/</i>	Spiritual orientation

				<i>Man talaba al-'ilma li ghayr Allâh</i>	
7	Da'wah and Enjoining Good (<i>Amr Ma'rûf</i>)	Quranic verses (the Quran as the primary reference)	8	<i>Wa iltakun minikum ummah</i>	Social function of knowledge
8	Knowledge as the Path to the Hereafter	Hadith (elaboration of Quranic verses)	9	<i>Ṭarîq al-jannah al-'ilm</i>	Eschatological orientation
9	Critique of Knowledge Misuse	Hadith (elaboration of Quranic verses)	7	<i>Al-'ulamâ' alsû'</i>	Moral control
10	Social Impact of Knowledge	Hadith (elaboration of Quranic verses)	6	<i>Al-'âlim ashaddu 'alâ Iblîs</i>	Social transformation
11	Conflict and Sectarian Division	Quranic verses (the Quran as the primary reference)	5	<i>Fa ikhtalafa al-aḥzâb</i>	Historical warning
12	Pedagogical Repetition	Verses & hadith (normative foundations)	11	<i>Ya'murûna bi al-ma'rûf</i>	Reinforcement of memorization

Table 1 demonstrates that the manuscript constructs a coherent pedagogical framework through the integrative synthesis of Quranic verses, hadiths, *athar*, and scholarly opinions. It reveals a layered epistemological structure rooted in revelation and transmitted knowledge. The dominance of themes such as the virtues of knowledge, the authority of scholars, and the ethics of learners indicates that the text presents a normative framework for intellectual and moral formation. The blend of theological foundations (*tawḥîd*), epistemological contrasts (knowledge versus ignorance), and spiritual orientation (*niyyah*) suggests that knowledge is conceptualized as both a cognitive pursuit and a transformative ethical practice. Furthermore, the presence of social-oriented themes, including *da'wah* and the critique of knowledge misuse, highlights the manuscript's role in regulating communal life and

safeguarding religious authority. The recurrence of key motifs across verses and hadiths also reflects a deliberate pedagogical strategy of repetition aimed at reinforcing memorization and internalization. Thus, the manuscript operates as an active educational instrument that integrates doctrinal, ethical, and social dimensions into a unified paradigm of traditional Islamic learning.

Despite the substantive richness, the presentation of Quranic sources without specifying the *sûrah* and verse number within the manuscript may pose difficulties for readers, particularly regarding verification and traceability. A similar issue arises when the manuscript presents hadiths without explicit information on narrators and chains of transmission (*sanad*), thus reducing clarity of their authority and level of authenticity. Accordingly, a process of *takhrîj al-ḥadîth*, along with critical examination of authoritative hadith collections (*ḥadîth al-mu'tabarah*), aims to assess their validity, quality, and transmission context within the classical hadith tradition.

Nevertheless, such a practice can be understood within the broader context of classical *risâlah* writing. Within this genre, the simplification of references was often intended to facilitate memorization. It also reflected the text function as a practical guide for general readers rather than as a work designed for rigorous academic debate. This feature may be viewed as a limitation from a modern academic perspective. However, it simultaneously reflects a pragmatic pedagogical orientation characteristic of knowledge transmission in the classical Islamic tradition.

Epistemological Construction of Education in the Manuscripts

The philological study of *Majmû' al-Âyât wa al-Aḥâdîth* by Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq shows that 20th-century Islamic education in Indragiri Hilir was built on a strong normative foundation through the integration of Quranic verses and hadith. The arguments are arranged thematically, where the verses and hadith reinforce each other in explaining the glory of knowledge, the virtue of '*ulamâ'*', and the obligation to seek knowledge. This pattern demonstrates an epistemic construction that relies on the legitimacy of revelation. This way, education is viewed both as a social practice and as a theological mandate.

Philologically, the consistency of the argument selection and the order in which they are presented demonstrates the author's methodological awareness. He endeavored to construct a systematic and

persuasive argumentative framework. This integration serves as a pedagogical strategy to instill the authority of the sacred text in the collective consciousness of the local Muslim community. Thus, this manuscript can be read as an ideological tool that structures the orientation of revelation-based education. Simultaneously, it responds to the socio-religious needs of the Indragiri Hilir community in the early 20th century.

In the manuscript, the concept of *ulil amri* is understood substantively as the authority of '*ulamâ*'. By contrast, the ruler's position is placed in a *majâzî* sense (Siddiq 1922, 6). Accordingly, '*ulamâ*' are positioned as figures who have both scientific authority and moral legitimacy in directing religious and social policies. This interpretation is historically strengthened through the moment when Sultan Mahmud requested Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq to serve as the mufti of the kingdom. His initial refusal was based on pedagogical responsibilities at his *madrrasah* in Parit Hidayat Village. However, after repeated proposals for religious interests in the Indragiri region (Syihab 2002, 8), he finally accepted it on the condition that he remained residing in Parit Hidayat and refused a royal salary (Sebastian 2015, 73). In 1337 H/1935 AD, he was officially appointed as *mufti*, the highest judicial position. It functioned to oversee the law implementation, lead the sharia court, and control the general courts ensuring that they run according to the principles of justice and Sharia (Muhammad 2016, 154).

'*Ulamâ*', in the manuscript, is a symbolic representation. They illuminate the intellectual and moral life of society. Therefore, their role extends to the epistemic and civilizational realms as agents of knowledge transmission, guardians of orthodoxy, and guides of collective social ethics. This conceptual legitimacy is formulated through the hadith,

"Follow the 'ulamâ', for they are the lamps of Allah in the universe; if there were no 'ulamâ', my people would surely perish" (Siddiq 1922, 7).

Within this analytical framework, '*ulamâ*' guarantee the continuity of scientific authority while maintaining religious stability and the continuity of the socio-religious order. It complements the previous construction of the '*ulamâ*' as a normative authority and mediator between Sharia and power.

In line with this construction, the epistemological orientation of religious education in the manuscript places mastery of *fiqh* as the fundamental basis for responding to society's pressing need for a correct

and standardized understanding of worship. It stems from the assumption that the quality of religious practice is determined by the depth of normative understanding of Islamic law. Consequently, education is directed not only at the transmission of general knowledge but also at the internalization of the legal framework governing the dimensions of worship and transactions. This is confirmed through the Prophet's hadith,

“Allah is not worshipped with anything more important than understanding (*fiqh*) in religion. A *fiqh* expert is harder on Satan than a thousand worshippers. Everything has a supporting pillar, and the supporting pillar of religion is *fiqh*” (Siddiq 1922, 8).

Analytically, the hadith shows that the equalization of *fiqh* competence at that time had not been fully achieved. Hence, education was focused on building a foundation of valid and systematic religious practice, which supported the formation of sustainable religious order in the local Muslim community.

Patterns of Islamic Pedagogy in Indragiri During the 20th-Century

Pedagogically, *halaqah* system is the basis of educational model forged by Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq. It supports the intensive personal relationship between teacher and student as the core of the transmission process of religious science. Teaching activities were initially carried out at home. Once the mosque had been built in 1915 AD, all teaching-learning activities took place in it (Sebastian 2015). The mosque is not only a place of worship but also a center for religious socialization, a forum for deliberation, and a structured Islamic educational institution. Architecturally and functionally, the presence of a porch (*ambin*) and a bridge directly connected to Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq's house reflects the integration of domestic and institutional spaces in traditional educational practices. Furthermore, the provision of *muṭāla'ah* (reading) and *mudhākarah* (discussion) spaces before entering the *halaqah* indicates systematic pedagogical stages. The internalization of knowledge, in these stages, is carried out through independent reading, scientific dialogue, and classical learning in sequence.

The educational institution teaches diverse Islamic disciplines, including *'aqidah* (belief), *fiqh* (jurisprudence), *tasawwuf* (Sufism), hadith, Arabic grammar, and *farā'id* (Islamic Inheritance Law). They reflect the breadth of the curriculum based on classical scholarly traditions. The learning process involves senior students as teaching assistants who are

projected to be successors to scholarly authority (Nasrullah 2026). This pattern indicates the existence of a structured *'ulamā'* cadre mechanism within the educational system developed by Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq. This finding reveals that knowledge transmission is not the only goal of the applied educational approach. The goals include the religious character formation, the reproduction of *'ulamā'* leadership, and the sustainable social empowerment of the community. Thus, the learning strengthens students' intellectual and moral capacity.

In addition to the practice of *ḥalaqah*, this manuscript demonstrates a dialogical educational model. It manifested through the Q&A interaction on the issue of *ʿĪsā al-Masīh* between Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq (student) and Shaykh Nawawi al-Bantani (teacher). It referred to the diverse Christian views on Jesus after his ascension, which caused conflicting theological constructions, while affirming the Islamic position that he is God's servant, spirit, messenger, and word (Siddiq 1922, 1). This integration in the educational process shows that the 20th-century Islamic scientific tradition is not passive but dialogical-critical. It opens to scientific clarification based on the text authority. This interaction pattern also shows the continuity of the intellectual network of Nusantara scholars with broader centers of Islamic scholarship. Within this network, the exchange of theological ideas becomes an important medium to strengthen orthodoxy while enriching the epistemological dynamics of Islamic education.

In line with the *ḥalaqah*-based approach, a comprehensive scientific curriculum, and a dialogical tradition connected to the network of Indonesian *'ulamā'*, the educational orientation developed the urgency of traveling to seek knowledge. That is the way to strengthen the intellectual capacity of students. The encouragement as emphasized in the well-known hadith, "*Seek knowledge even as far as China*" (Siddiq 1922, 26) functions both as a normative legitimacy and a practical framework for academic mobility to Islamic study centers outside the local region. Historically, this tendency was verified through the departure of several of his students to the Middle East, including Ibrahim, Abdul Fatah, Sulaiman Abdul Ghani, Muhammad Noer, Abdurrahman Ya'qub, Abdul Bakri, and Abdul Hamid Sulaiman, as well as to Singapore, such as Muhammad Arsyad Noer, and Akil. This transregional mobility shows that the educational system developed was cosmopolitan and networked. It aims to reproduce scholars

with global capacity who would later function as religious authorities and agents of knowledge transmission in local Muslim communities.

Conceptually, the educational model and practice formulated by Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq constitutes an integral educational construction. It combines a personal-intensive relationship-based *ḥalaqah* system, a comprehensive classical scientific curriculum, and a dialogical-critical tradition connected to the Indonesian ‘*ulamā*’ network. The integration of domestic and institutional spaces through the centralization of learning in the mosque, the pedagogical stages of *muṭāla‘ah-mudhākarah-ḥalaqah*, and the involvement of senior students as teaching assistants shows a systematic and sustainable ‘*ulamā*’ cadre mechanism. Concurrently, the theological dialogue with Shaykh Nawawi al-Bantani reflects epistemological openness and the continuity of cross-regional intellectual networks. This entire framework is strengthened by the orientation of the intellectual mobility of students to regional and global centers of Islamic study. Thus, education becomes an instrument for character formation, reproduction of ‘*ulamā*’ authority, and social empowerment of the community within the networked and transregional horizon of Islamic education.

Ethos and Values of 20th-Century Islamic Education in Indragiri

Islamic education is rooted in revelation, the prophetic model (*uswah ḥasanah*), and a centuries-old tradition of scholarship. Core concepts such as ethics and moral discipline (*adab*), wisdom (*ḥikmah*), and spiritual purification (*tazkiyah*) have long shaped the goals and practices of education in Islamic civilization (Budiman & Isnaeni 2025, 171; Budiyanto 2025, 330–335) and Islamic teachings. They emphasize certain values, such as honesty, integrity, and spiritual growth are reflected in an evaluation model that goes beyond mere cognitive achievement (Rahman 2025, 62). The ethos and values of Islamic education formulated in the manuscript place sincerity (*ikhhlās*) and an orientation towards community service (*khidmah li al-ummah*) as the normative foundations of educational practice.

These principles are reflected in the attitude of Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq. He refused material rewards for both the position of *mufti* and teaching activities at his educational institution, as stated in his resignation letter, dated April 3, 1935 (Sebastian 2015, 74). His commitment to education is also evident in the management of students’

welfare. During the period 1920–1930, the number of students reached more than 300 people. They came from various regions including Malaysia, Singapore, Riau, and surrounding areas, with all the needs for three meals a day fully covered by him (Sebastian 2015, 72).

This ascetic-intellectual attitude suggests that education is perceived as a religious mandate oriented towards religious public service, not an instrument of economic mobility. This orientation gains theological legitimacy through a hadith attributed to the Prophet Muhammad,

“Whoever learns a chapter of knowledge and then teaches it to people, seeking Allah's pleasure, will be given a reward as that of seventy prophets” (Siddiq 1922, 10).

Thus, educational practice is constructed as a moral-spiritual devotion that shows the ethical responsibility of educators before Allah as well as a commitment to the sustainable empowerment of the people. It demonstrates that the integration of scientific ethics, social service, and educational management is the foundation of traditional Islamic education in Indragiri Hilir in the 20th century.

In line with the foundation of sincerity and devotion, this manuscript also upholds the ethical dimension of education through student-teacher relations as the basis for the formation of *pesantren* with intellectual and spiritual character. Traditional Islam plays a central role in preserving and channeling the values of politeness (Firmansyah et al. 2025, 196). This relationship is positioned as not only an educational relation. It is also a space for internalizing the values of love and respect for teachers as heirs of scientific authority. The Prophet even highlights the glory for those honoring scholars and that respect for teachers has both theological and eschatological implications (Siddiq 1922, 25). Thus, the said ethic serves as an instrument for the formation of scientific manners uniting moral, spiritual, and intellectual dimensions.

Besides, *Majmû' al-Âyât wa al-Aḥâdith* reviews decent communication in pedagogical relationships as an essential requirement for the successful transmission of knowledge. This is affirmed by the warning of the Prophet Muhammad, that raising one's voice above the teacher's has moral consequences in this world and the hereafter, unless accompanied by repentance and self-improvement (Siddiq 1922, 15). It shows that verbal and nonverbal respect for teachers is an inherent part of intellectual discipline because the learning process is not only about mastering knowledge but also building a good character (Yunita 2016, 141). The

arrangement of etiquette in addressing, speaking to, and behaving toward teachers reflects a pedagogical construction that simultaneously integrates epistemological, pedagogical, and moral dimensions. Thus, 20th-century Islamic education in Indragiri Hilir, as depicted in this manuscript, presents a holistic educational framework. Within this framework, the internalization of *adab* functions to maintain the authority of knowledge, the blessings of the learning process, and shape religious character according to Islamic scientific traditions.

Conceptually, Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq's ethos and values of Islamic education emphasize the integration of sincerity, devotion to the community, and the internalization of good manners for the successful transmission of knowledge. This framework is reinforced by the normative legitimacy of the Prophet Muhammad's sayings about the virtue of teaching for the sake of Allah, honoring '*ulamâ*', and maintaining ethical standards for teachers. Therefore, this educational model creates a holistic pedagogy that integrates epistemological, pedagogical, and ethical dimensions into a unified whole oriented toward exemplary behavior and the continuity of Islamic scientific traditions.

Linking Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq's Legacy to Modern Framework

The historical-epistemic approach in this article is designed to integrate the biographical analysis of a certain figure with a philological study of a manuscript as primary sources. It aims to comprehensively read Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq's contribution to traditional Islamic education in 20th-century Indragiri. This framework aligns with the trend in contemporary Islamic education studies that explores cultural and social contextualization in understanding pedagogical practices (Machali & Suhendro 2022). Moreover, studies of Islamic education policy demonstrate that curriculum dynamics and institutional practices are always intertwined with socio-political changes, thus, influencing the direction of educational development (Khumayroh & Lismawati 2025). Discourse on intellectual networks and *halaqah* pedagogy also noted that classical Islamic education is shaped by complex interactions between '*ulamâ*', *santri*, and local communities (Syahril et al. 2024).

This study indicates that *Majmû' al-Âyât wa al-Aḥādīth* functions as an epistemological representation of traditional Islamic education that places revelation as a normative and pedagogical foundation. It records how classical texts are used as instruments for articulating the scientific

and moral ethos of students in the local context. This is consistent with recent studies that conceptualize Islamic educational epistemology as an integration of revelation, reason, and ethical formation within a unified framework of knowledge transmission and learning (Hashim & Nashrullah 2025, 168–170). This finding corresponds to the modern Islamic education studies that promote the integration of classical texts and contextual understanding in learning practices (Zakawali 2025, 1672; Sulton 2022). Recent literature also shows that Islamic education faces the demands of global modernization and the need to preserve traditional values rooted in local culture (Rahman 2025, 61). Furthermore, in Islamic educational management, quality is the result of a structured process of collaborative planning, execution, and evaluation to meet institutional standards and student needs (Fadillah 2015, 121).

Discussions on the *halaqah* system demonstrate that this pedagogical model builds an intense personal relationship between teacher and student. It enables the educational process to function as a medium for internalizing moral and religious values. Continuous and direct interaction can build students' character through exemplary behavior and the strengthening of *adab*, the core of traditional Islamic education (Zahara et al. 2025, 35207). Contemporary studies confirm that *halaqah* remains relevant as an Islamic educational structure that is adaptive to social change. It provides space for students' contextual involvement and reinforces the value of moderation in facing the dynamics of the times (Zahra 2025, 13). However, the integration of this traditional model with modern learning is confronted by digital technology. Potentially, it reduces the intensity of face-to-face interactions and presents content that is not always in line with religious values (Sanusi 2024, 209). Therefore, the *halaqah* model developed by Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq is conceptually relevant to contemporary Islamic educational practices. This approach balances tradition, technology, and character building.

Commonly, the previous studies focused on the role of religious figures or educational institutions in isolation. On the other hand, studies of the evolution of Islamic education in Indonesia and Malaysia offers broader scope, showing that classical institutions (*pesantren*) underwent a gradual transformation in response to modernity (Mas'ud et al. 2019). Recent discourse also indicates a significant increase in Islamic education studies over the past two decades. They focus on improving the quality of learning, integrating moral values, and utilizing educational technology as

an interactive learning medium. Digital platforms and educational applications could make Islamic materials more dynamic, effective, and accessible to students from various social backgrounds (Sari & Bakar 2024, 132). This article complements those earlier studies by demonstrating that the *ḥalaqah* tradition, networks of Islamic scholars, and the integration of classical texts form an adaptive and sustainable model of Islamic education. It goes beyond approaches that focus on curriculum changes or institutional structures.

Furthermore, the results show a close relationship between traditional Islamic education and the network of '*ulamā*' and regional educational institutions within the framework of Islam Nusantara. Islamic education in Nusantara is known to be able to balance between religious values and local traditions, producing a contextual and inclusive educational model for society (Harahap et al. 2025, 92). Mapping global trends in Islamic education also shows the complex relationship between classical texts, local educational practices, and contemporary social changes (Alfianti et al. 2026, 209). Besides, literature on the intellectual network of Southeast Asian '*ulamā*' emphasizes that '*ulamā*' are producers of knowledge as well as agents of social transformation in the transregional space (Zaman et al. 2025, 160). Therefore, students' mobility and scholars' dialogue in this study strengthen the argument that traditional Islamic education operates in a broad network that influences each other epistemically and pragmatically.

The educational ethos of Islam as articulated by Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq emphasizes sincerity (*ikhhlās*) and a strong orientation toward social service. It aligns with contemporary Islamic educational discourse that places character formation and moral development at the core of the educational process (Gea et al. 2024, 4933). Within the *pesantren* tradition, character building is cultivated through intensive teacher-student relationships and the mechanism of *sanad*, which functions as an instrument to legitimize scholarly authority (Side & Cahyani 2025, 312). However, the advancement of digital technology presents new challenges to the sustainability of *sanad*-based authority. It has traditionally been physical and centered on the teacher's direct presence as the primary authoritative source. The digitalization of education offers opportunities to expand access, yet it simultaneously risks diminishing the dimensions of *adab*, spiritual presence, and pedagogical intimacy that lie at the heart of the *sanad* system. Therefore, conceptual

adaptation is necessary to enable the transformation of *sanad* authority within cyberspace. This may include structured digital mentorship models, verification of teachers possessing authenticated *sanad*, and synchronous learning grounded in recognized scholarly authority. Through such efforts, the values of sincerity, *adab*, and the continuity of knowledge transmission can be preserved within the evolving ecosystem of digital education.

Conclusion

This study affirms that the manuscript *Majmû' al-Âyât wa al-Aḥâdith* by Shaykh Abdurrahman Siddiq al-Banjari constitutes an important source for understanding the epistemological foundations and historical development of Islamic education in 20th-century Indragiri Hilir. Through a philological approach, the study demonstrates that the manuscript presents educational concepts grounded in the Quran, hadith, and classical Islamic scholarship, emphasizing the interconnected roles of knowledge, scholarly authority, ethical conduct, and religious learning. Accordingly, the manuscript should not be understood merely as a passive artifact, but as a dynamic intellectual resource that preserves, articulates, and transmits educational knowledge within the Islamic scholarly tradition of the Malay-Indonesian world. It also highlights the strategic role of texts in reconstructing the history of Islamic education and shaping local epistemological paradigms. The manuscript further provides evidence for understanding the reception and pedagogical use of Quranic verses and hadith in the construction and transmission of Islamic educational knowledge.

Although this study provides a philological perspective on the epistemological foundations of Islamic education through *Majmû' al-Âyât wa al-Aḥâdith*, its analysis is primarily based on a single manuscript and historical context in 20th-century Indragiri Hilir. The present study therefore focuses on the textual representation of educational concepts and their intellectual context. It does so rather than pursuing a broader comparative examination of similar manuscripts or the wider social reception of the text across different educational settings. Future research may expand this perspective by comparing related Nusantara manuscripts, exploring networks of manuscript transmission, and examining the continuity of local educational traditions within broader Southeast Asian Islamic intellectual history.

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