



Islamic Thought of Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani and His Contribution to Developing Islamic Education

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Abstract

This study examines the Islamic thought of Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani and his contribution to Islamic education in the Indonesian archipelago. The method used is qualitative with a literature study approach, analyzing Sheikh Nawawi's original works as well as secondary literature related to his biography, intellectual network, and influence on Islamic education. The results of the study show that Sheikh Nawawi developed more than a hundred works in the fields of interpretation, fiqh, Sufism, tawhid, and morals, emphasizing the integration of sharia, Sufism, and morals as the foundation of holistic education. His thoughts formed a paradigm of Islamic education that is moderate, integrative, and adaptive to the challenges of modernity and globalization. This study affirms the relevance of Sheikh Nawawi's thoughts as a conceptual reference for contemporary Islamic education, strengthening the character of the ummah, and developing Islamic scholarly traditions.

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INTRODUCTION

The Islamic scholarly tradition in the Indonesian archipelago has a long and dynamic history, marked by the central role of Islamic scholars as educators, preachers, and producers of Islamic knowledge. Indonesian scholars function not only as recipients and translators of Middle Eastern intellectual traditions, but also as active subjects who develop, contextualize, and transmit Islamic knowledge in accordance with local socio-cultural realities. This dialectical process between global traditions and local contexts has given rise to the distinctive character of Islamic education in the Indonesian archipelago: moderate, integrative, and oriented toward the formation of students' knowledge, morals, and spirituality (Azra, 2004; Dhofier, 2011).

In this context, Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani occupies a very important position in the history of Islamic education and scientific traditions in the Indonesian archipelago in the 19th century. This Bantenese scholar had a wide influence, not only in the Indonesian archipelago but also in the centers of Islamic learning worldwide, especially Mecca and Medina. Van Bruinessen, (1995) notes that Sheikh Nawawi was a key figure in the Jawi ulama network in the Haramain, with internationally recognized scholarly authority and students who later became the main drivers of Islamic boarding school education in the Indonesian archipelago.

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This strategic position indicates that Sheikh Nawawi's Islamic thought contributed significantly to shaping the direction, character, and continuity of Islamic education in the Indonesian archipelago.

The specialty of Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani lies not only in the breadth and depth of his knowledge, but also in his very high intellectual productivity. He wrote more than a hundred works in Arabic covering various disciplines, such as tafsir, jurisprudence, usul fiqh, monotheism, tasawwuf, hadith, and morality. These works include *Tafsir Marah Labid (al-Munir)*, *Nihāyatuz Zain*, and *‘Uqud al-Lujjain*, which are still the main references in the Islamic boarding school education curriculum in the archipelago and Southeast Asia. This fact confirms that Sheikh Nawawi's thinking is not only normative-theoretical, but also functions as a practice in building and maintaining the continuity of the tradition of classical Islamic education in the archipelago (Dhofier, 2011).

Substantively, Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani's Islamic thought reflects a holistic and integrative paradigm of Islamic education. He emphasized the integration of sharia, Sufism, and morals as the primary foundation in developing a faithful, knowledgeable, and civilized human being. In his view, Islamic education is not sufficient merely to master the normative-legal aspects, but must be directed towards developing personality, purifying the soul, and strengthening social ethics. This orientation aligns with the principle of *maqāṣid al-syari‘ah*, which places human welfare as the primary goal of Islamic teachings (Abdullah, 1996). This pattern of thinking is one of the main characteristics of Islamic education in the Indonesian archipelago, which emphasizes a balance between the intellectual, spiritual, and social dimensions.

The relevance of Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani's thought is growing stronger in the context of contemporary Islamic education, as globalization, modernity, and the moral crisis present serious challenges to the world of education. His approach, which balances text and context, classical scholarly tradition and social needs, offers a moderate and adaptive model of Islamic education. This model serves as an important alternative to the tendency of Islamic education to become trapped in legal formalism, ideological extremism, and value liberalism, torn from the roots of Islamic scholarly tradition (Azra, 2004).

Several previous studies have examined Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani from various perspectives, such as biographical and historical aspects (Rosyid & Suwahyu, 2023), Islamic educational thought (Kusuma, 2023; Wiyanto, 2024; Arif, 2021), religious-conservative educational philosophy (Agung et al., 2025), and his role in the network of ulama and Islamic boarding schools in the archipelago. Other studies have also highlighted his contributions to moral development, religious moderation, and strengthening the traditions of Islamic boarding schools. However, most of these studies are still partial and thematic, and have not comprehensively synthesized Sheikh Nawawi's Islamic thought as a conceptual foundation for Islamic education in the archipelago, particularly in the integration of sharia, Sufism, and morals.

Based on these research gaps, this study aims to analyze the Islamic thought of Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani and his contribution to the development of Islamic education in the Indonesian archipelago. This study not only explores the historical and textual dimensions of his thought but also emphasizes its relevance as a conceptual framework for the development of moderate, holistic, and adaptive Islamic education to contemporary challenges. Thus, this research is expected to enrich the scientific literature on Islamic education in the Indonesian archipelago and provide theoretical contributions to strengthening Islamic educational practices in Indonesia.

METHODS

This research uses a qualitative method with a literature study approach (qualitative library research). This approach was chosen because the research aims to study, interpret, and analyze in depth the Islamic thought of Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani as a conceptual construction, as well as examine his contribution in building Islamic education in the archipelago. Literature study allows researchers to explore the normative, philosophical, and pedagogical ideas contained in the works of Sheikh Nawawi, while linking them to the historical context and traditions of Islamic education in the archipelago comprehensively (Creswell, 2014; Engkizar et al., 2023; 2025; Mutiaramses et al., 2025; Baroud et al., 2025; Snyder, 2019; Muhammad et al., 2023; Aziz et al., 2025; Adib, 2022; War'i & Mushodiq, 2022).

The data sources in this study consist of two types, namely primary data and secondary data. The primary data consists of the original works of Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani, which represent his Islamic thought in various disciplines, such as tafsir, fiqh, tauhid, tasawwuf, and akhlak. Some of the main works analyzed include *Tafsir Marah Labid (al-Munir)*, *Nihayatuz Zain*, *Uqud al-Lujain*, and other relevant works. This primary data is used to identify and analyze key concepts regarding the integration of sharia, Sufism, and morals, as well as their implications for the orientation of Islamic education.

Secondary data includes books, scientific journal articles, dissertations, theses, and previous research results that discuss the biography, intellectual networks, Islamic thought, and contributions of Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani in the Islamic education and scientific traditions of the Indonesian archipelago. These secondary sources serve as contextualization, comparison, and strengthening analysis of the primary data, particularly in placing Sheikh Nawawi's thoughts within the framework of Islamic education in the Indonesian archipelago and contemporary scientific discourse (Azra, 2004; Bruinessen, 1995; Dhofier, 2011; Engkizar et al., 2025; Hidayat & Fasa, 2019; Arwansyah & Shah, 2015; Firdaus & Imawan, 2024).

The main instrument in this research is the researcher himself (human instrument), who plays a role in selecting, classifying, interpreting, and analyzing data critically and reflectively. To assist the analysis process, the researcher uses a literature classification sheet and a thematic analysis matrix, which are used to map the main themes of Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani's thoughts, especially those related to the integration of sharia, Sufism, and morals and their contribution to the formation of the Islamic education paradigm in the Indonesian archipelago.

Data collection techniques were conducted through a systematic search of relevant literature sources, both in print and digital form. Source selection criteria included relevance to the research focus, the author's authority and credibility, and the publisher's academic validity. The collected data were analyzed using content analysis (content analysis) and thematic analysis (thematic analysis). Content analysis is used to identify concepts, arguments, and thought patterns in the texts of Sheikh Nawawi's works, while thematic analysis is used to find the relationship between themes that show the construction of holistic Islamic thought and its contribution to Islamic education in the Indonesian archipelago (Krippendorff, 2013; Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The data analysis process was conducted through several stages, namely: in-depth reading of all data sources, data reduction by grouping main themes, descriptive-analytical data presentation, and interpretive and reflective conclusion drawing. To maintain the validity and credibility of the findings, this study applied source triangulation by comparing the results of the analysis of Sheikh Nawawi's primary works with the findings of previous research and relevant academic studies. Thus, the resulting interpretation is expected to be objective, consistent, and scientifically accountable.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Biography of Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani

Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani, whose full name is Muhammad Nawawi bin Umar bin Arabi, was born in Tanara, Banten, in 1230 H/1815 AD. Al-Bantani's attribution shows his geographical and cultural identity as a Nusantara scholar who grew up in a strong local Islamic scholarly environment. The Banten region at that time was one of the important centers of education and the spread of Islam in the archipelago, thus forming a socio-religious context conducive to the development of the pesantren tradition and the transmission of Islamic knowledge (Azra, 2004). The religious family background of his father, a cleric and a pesantren caretaker, formed the initial foundation of Sheikh Nawawi's scholarly ethos, spirituality, and manners, while connecting him to the network of the Nusantara Islamic scholarly tradition (Ulum, 2014).

The name "Nawawi" reflects the hope that he would follow in the footsteps of Imam al-Nawawi, a prominent figure in the Shafi'i school of thought, who became a symbol of scholarly authority and moral exemplar in classical Islamic education. This orientation is reflected in Sheikh Nawawi's intellectual journey, which is firmly grounded in the traditions of Shafi'i fiqh, Sunni Sufism, and Islamic morality. As a prolific scholar, he wrote more than one hundred works in various Islamic disciplines, such as tafsir, fiqh, tauhid, tasawwuf, hadith, and morality. His works, such as *Tafsir Marah Labid*, *Nihayatuz Zain*, and *Uqud al-Lujain*, are still widely used in Islamic boarding school curricula, emphasizing his structural contribution to building and maintaining the tradition of Islamic education in the Nusantara archipelago based on yellow books (Bruinessen, 1995).

Recognition of Sheikh Nawawi's scholarly authority came not only from within the Indonesian archipelago but also from the international Islamic world. In the Hijaz, he was known by the titles Sayyid al-'Ulama al-Hijaz and Imam 'Ulama al-Haramain, which emphasized his position within the global network of scholars. This role made Sheikh Nawawi a link between the classical Islamic scholarly tradition of the Middle East and the practice of Islamic education in the Indonesian archipelago. Through his students, who later became Islamic boarding school administrators and Islamic educational figures, his Islamic thought contributed significantly to shaping moderate Islamic education in the Indonesian archipelago, rooted in tradition and oriented towards moral development. Although he died in Mecca in 1314 AH/1898 CE, Sheikh Nawawi's intellectual legacy continues to live on and thrive in the Indonesian Islamic education system to this day.

Mapping Previous Research on the Thoughts of Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani

The results of this study were obtained through a systematic search and analysis of several scientific articles and publications discussing the Islamic thought of Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani and his contributions to the Islamic scholarly tradition of the Indonesian archipelago. This mapping is presented concisely in Table 1, which contains information on the author, year of publication, journal source, research method, focus of study, main findings, and the research position and gaps of each study.

Table 1. Mapping of Previous Research on the Thoughts of Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani

N o	Author & Year	Title & Source	Research Method	Focus of Study	Main Findings	Position & Research Gap
1	Ismail Rosyid & Irwansyah Suwahyu (2023)	Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani; Figure, Teacher of Ulama, and	Qualitative, library research, content analysis	Figure and role of Sheikh Nawawi in Islamic education of the Archipelago	Sheikh Nawawi was an influential scholar, teacher of ulama, and	Dominantly biographical-historical; has not discussed integration of sharia-

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	Students of the Homeland, Referensi Islamika Vol. 1 No. 1		driver of scholarly networks	Sufism–ethics
2	Imam Hadi Kusuma (2023) The Urgency of Conservative Religious Islamic Education in the 4.0 Era from Sheikh Nawawi's Perspective, Tembayat Journal Vol. 1 No. 1	Qualitative, library research	Conservative religious Islamic education	Education based on religious and ethical values as a critique of modern pragmatism Not yet linked to Islamic moderation in the Archipelago
3	Hary Wiyanto (2024) Islamic Education from Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani's Perspective and Its Relevance in the Modern Era, Reforma Vol. 4 No. 1	Qualitative, library research	Ta'lim, tarbiyah, ta'dib	Balance of knowledge and ethics relevant for the modern era Lacks exploration of philosophical and spiritual foundations
4	Much. Machfud Arif (2021) Islamic Education in Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani's View, Tadris Vol. 15 No. 1	Qualitative, library study	Islamic education and its implications	Orientation of faith, knowledge, and ethics Normative; not contextualized with globalization
5	Arnin Agung, Maragustam & Usman (2025) Philosophy of Conservative Religious Education of Sheikh Nawawi, Takuana Vol. 4 No. 3	Qualitative, content & descriptive analysis	Philosophy of education	Holistic education model based on Qur'an–Sunnah Focused on education; not yet interdisciplinarity
6	Saifudin & Neni Triana (2023) Mau'izhah: Journal of Islamic Studies	Qualitative, library research	Islamic education, Islamic law, Sufism	Nawawi as the axis of pesantren tradition and ulama of the Archipelago Not yet synthesized as a holistic paradigm
7	War'i & Mushodiq (2023) Bulletin of Indonesian Islamic Studies	Qualitative descriptive-interpretative	Diversity and tolerance	Inclusive and tolerant thought Not yet linked to Sufism and ethics
8	A. Muthalib & Khairuddin (2025) Jurnal Edukasi Vol. 13 No. 1	Historical method	Nawawi as motivator of generations	Example of scholarly ethos, moderation, nationalism Lacks epistemological analysis

9	Cindika Melia Safitri (2024)	Prosiding KONMASP I Vol. 1	Qualitative library, historical study	Kitab <i>Nuruzb Zhalam</i>	Relevant as a source of fiqh and ethics	Focused on one book
10	Fahmi Amrullah & Wasid (2025)	Prosiding KONMASP I Vol. 2	Descriptive library research	Ulama networks in the Archipelago	Major influence through modernist-traditionalist students	Not yet integrative between spiritual-intellectual
11	Perdana Putra Pangestu (2021)	Internationa l Journal Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din	Qualitative inductive	Hadith in the Archipelago (Qami' al-Tughyan)	Hadith style influenced by social context	Not yet linked to Sufism
12	Harits A. Hasibuan & Dzulkifli H. Imawan (2024)	Al-Hikmah: Journal of Religious Studies	Library research	Hadith and muhaddis of the Archipelago	Nawawi as guardian of sanad	Lacks exploration of socio-educational dimensions
13	Ita Nurmala Sar i & Mohamad Madum (2022)	Risâlah	Qualitative	Implications of educational thought	Strengthening ethics and responsibility of students	Local case study
14	Hasman Z. Muhamma d et al. (2023)	Nusantara: Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia	Literature review	Multidimensional Islamic education	Holistic education: physical-intellectual-spiritual	Sufi dimension not yet dominant
15	Fikri F. Aziz et al. (2025)	Reflection: Islamic Education Journal	Qualitative historical	Islamic education in Banten	Nawawi strengthened global networks	Macro context
16	Ahmad W. Hidayat & M. Iqbal Fasa (2019)	Khazanah	Analytical library research	Islamic education	Worship-and ethics-oriented education	Not yet linked to diversity
17	Maghfirotu n C. & Moh. Roqib (2025)	Pendas	Historical literature review	Genealogy of Islamic education	Pesantren as global nodes	Nawawi not the main focus
18	Syarif Firdaus & Dzulkifli H. Imawan (2024)	Al-Hikmah Vol. 10 No. 2	Qualitative historical-descriptive	Ulama of Haramain in the 19th century	Nawawi reached peak of global intellectual achievement	Historical; not yet conceptual

Based on the mapping of previous research, it can be concluded that the majority of studies on Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani use a qualitative approach using library research, literature reviews, and historical analysis. This pattern indicates that previous research tends to focus on textual exploration, biographical descriptions, and historical interpretations of Sheikh Nawawi's work and role in Islamic education. Meanwhile, efforts to examine his Islamic thought conceptually and integratively, particularly in relation to the construction and strengthening of Islamic education in the Indonesian archipelago, remain relatively limited.

The focus of previous research can generally be classified into several main themes. First, studies that position Sheikh Nawawi as a historical figure and a key actor in Islamic boarding school education and the network of Indonesian ulama. Second, research that highlights Islamic educational thought and a religious-

conservative educational philosophy that emphasizes the values of faith, knowledge, and morality. Third, thematic studies of his contributions to the fields of tafsir, fiqh, Sufism, and hadith through the analysis of specific works. Fourth, studies that emphasize the network of Indonesian ulama and Sheikh Nawawi's global influence through his students and the circulation of his works in centers of Islamic scholarship. Although diverse, these focuses generally stand alone and have not been integrated into a coherent framework of Islamic thought.

In general, previous research findings confirm that Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani is positioned as a Nusantara scholar with high scholarly authority and widespread influence. He played a significant role in the development of Islamic boarding school education, the establishment of Islamic scholarly traditions, and the dissemination of monumental works that have become references in the Nusantara and the Islamic world. Furthermore, his Islamic thought is recognized for emphasizing the balance between sharia, Sufism, and morality as the foundation of religious practice and Islamic education, oriented toward the formation of faithful, knowledgeable, and civilized individuals.

However, this mapping also reveals a significant research gap. Most studies remain partial and thematic, focusing on specific aspects such as education, hadith, Sufism, or a single work by Sheikh Nawawi, without any attempt at comprehensive synthesis. Furthermore, there is still a lack of research that explicitly constructs Sheikh Nawawi's Islamic thought as an integrative paradigm connecting the dimensions of sharia, Sufism, and morality in the context of developing Islamic education in the Indonesian archipelago. The relevance of his thought to the challenges of contemporary Islamic education has also not been systematically addressed.

Thus, the results of this mapping of previous research confirm the existence of an important academic space for research that emphasizes not only historical or biographical aspects but also examines the Islamic thought of Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani as an integrative conceptual construct. Such a study is expected to explain the contribution of his thought in building a moderate, holistic, and adaptive Islamic education in the Indonesian archipelago to the dynamics of modernity and globalization, while also providing a conceptual reference for the development of Islamic education and the religious practices of Muslims in the Indonesian archipelago.

Education and Intellectual Journey

Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani's intellectual development is inextricably linked to his family environment of scholars and the Islamic boarding school tradition, which served as the primary foundation of Islamic education in the Indonesian archipelago. His early education came from his father, *Kiai* Umar bin Arabi, who instilled in him the fundamentals of Islamic scholarship, including Arabic, jurisprudence, and interpretation. The educational system he implemented emphasized memorization (*hifz*) and textual mastery (*tahqiq al-nuṣūṣ*) as the basis for developing scientific reasoning and a moral ethos, as is common in classical Islamic education and Islamic boarding schools in the Indonesian archipelago (Dhofier, 2011). From an early age, Sheikh Nawawi was accustomed to memorizing the Quran, hadith, and basic books such as *al-Jurumiyyah*, *al-Imrithi*, *Alfiyyah Ibn Malik*, *Maqṣūd*, and *Taqrib*, which formed intellectual and spiritual discipline as the main character of his Islamic thought.

At around the age of eight, Sheikh Nawawi continued his education at several Islamic boarding schools (pesantren) in Banten and West Java, including the KH. Sahal Islamic boarding school in Banten, the *Kiai* Yusuf Islamic boarding school in Purwakarta, and the Cikampek Islamic boarding school. At these institutions, he studied classical texts using the Salaf method, such as the *Fath al-Qarib* and the *Syarḥ* *Ibn ‘Aqīl*, which emphasize the integration of knowledge acquisition and moral

development. After the death of his father in 1826, Sheikh Nawawi taught at the family Islamic boarding school, but his intellectual drive and spirit of scientific research encouraged him to continue his studies in Hijaz in 1828 AD. This decision shows Sheikh Nawawi's scientific orientation, which was not only rooted in local traditions but also open to the global Islamic scientific network, which would later become the basis for his contribution in building Islamic education in the archipelago (Azra, 2004; Bruinessen, 1995).

In Mecca, Sheikh Nawawi settled in the Syi'ib 'Ali area, the center of the Nusantara (Jawi) ulama community, and studied with several prominent ulama such as Sheikh Ahmad Zaini Dahlani, Sheikh Ahmad Khatib al-Minangkabawi, Sheikh Abdul Hamid Daghestani, and Sheikh Muhammad bin Sulaiman Hasbullah al-Makki. In this context, Sheikh Nawawi played not only a student but also a teacher and writer who actively transmitted Islamic thought to the next generation of Nusantara ulama. This intellectual network made him a liaison figure between the treasures of classical Islamic scholarship in the Middle East and the practice of Islamic education in the archipelago, especially through Islamic boarding schools and the teaching of *kitab kuning* (Azra, 2004; Ismail & Suwahyu, 2023).

Works and Intellectual Contributions of Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani

Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani was known as a highly productive and encyclopedic 19th-century Nusantara scholar. He produced over one hundred works covering the fields of tafsir, fiqh, tauhid, tasawwuf, morals, hadith, and socio-religious issues. These works were mostly written in Arabic and circulated widely in the Hijaz and Southeast Asia, particularly in the pesantren (Islamic boarding school) circles of the archipelago (Bruinessen, 1995). Works such as *Tafsir Marah Labid*, *Nibāyatūz Zain*, *Uqud al-Lujjān*, and *Al-Taqrīb* became primary references in the curricula of pesantren and Islamic educational institutions in the archipelago. Although most of them are syarah or commentaries on classical texts, these works display pedagogical elaboration, systematic argumentation, and contextual ethical emphasis. Thus, Sheikh Nawawi was able to integrate Islamic law, Sufism, morals, and Islamic economic ethics as the foundation for a holistic and character-building education (Muthalib & Khairuddin, 2025; Muldiah et al., 2025). Although many of his works take the form of commentary on classical texts, Sheikh Nawawi's works are not repetitive but instead feature pedagogical elaboration, systematic argumentation, and ethical emphases relevant to the needs of the community. This demonstrates that Sheikh Nawawi's Islamic thought serves as an educational instrument that instills the integration of Islamic law, Sufism, and morals.

Table 2. Works and contributions of Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani

No	Article / Journal	Focus of Study	Contribution of Sheikh	Relevance for the Modern Era
			Nawawi al-Bantani to Islamic Education in the Archipelago	
1	Jurnal Edukasi, Vol. 13 No. 1, 2025 (A. Muthalib & Khairuddin)	Motivation and role model of scholars	Presents Nawawi al-Bantani as an inspirational figure, author of hundreds of books, laying the foundation of Indonesian Islamic intellectualism, scholarly ethos, nationalism spirit, adaptability, and consistency in the tradition of moderate Islam	Intellectual and spiritual foundation relevant for the development of modern Indonesian Islam
2	Tadris, Vol. 15	Islamic	Education is not only	Islamic educational

	No.1, 2021 (Much. Machfud Arif)	educational thought	physical but also intellectual and spiritual (lifelong education). Goals: seeking God's pleasure, eliminating ignorance, reviving religion, and serving Islam	values remain relevant in the modern era, applicable in teaching and learning activities in pesantren and educational institutions
3	Nusantara: Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia, Vol. 3 No. 2, 2023 (Hasman Zhafiri Muhammad et al.)	Multidimensional teaching paradigm	Emphasizes holistic development: physical, intellectual, spiritual. Education as a means to shape individuals with noble character and active contribution to society	Nawawi's teachings can guide the integration of Islamic values in contemporary education, supporting lifelong learning
4	Al Qalam, Vol. 16 No.2, 2023 (M. Afiqul Adib)	21st-century educational thought	Conservative religious approach, emphasizing ethics and spirituality. Education oriented toward morality, God's pleasure, and character strengthening	Although it needs to be combined with other theories, ethical values remain crucial for shaping students' character in the 21st century
5	JAWARA, Vol.11 No.2, 2025 (Siti Muldiah, Ika Safitri, Muhamad Shoheh)	Fiqh of muamalah: business and trade	Integrates Islamic economic ethics (honesty, responsibility, justice, prohibition of usury) into Islamic religious education, shaping students' Islamic economic character	Prepares students to face modern social and economic realities, fostering Islamic work ethic and moral economic awareness

Several previous studies have emphasized Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani's significant contribution to the Islamic scholarly and educational traditions of the Indonesian archipelago. Muthalib & Khairuddin, (2025) highlight his role as an inspirational and motivating figure, author of hundreds of books, and a pioneer of Indonesian Islamic intellectualism, emphasizing a scholarly ethos, a spirit of nationalism, adaptability to changing times, and consistency in upholding moderate Islamic traditions. Much. Machfud Arif, (2021) emphasizes Nawawi al-Bantani's holistic educational thinking, encompassing physical, intellectual, and spiritual education (lifelong education), with the goal of attaining Allah's pleasure, eradicating ignorance, revitalizing religion, and serving Islam.

Previous research has highlighted several important contributions by Sheikh Nawawi. He is known as an inspirational figure who guided generations of scholars and established a network of scholars from the Indonesian archipelago to the international level (Rosyid & Suwahyu, 2023; Fikri et al., 2025). His educational thinking emphasized holistic education encompassing physical, intellectual, and spiritual aspects (Machfud Arif, 2021; Muhammad et al., 2023), balancing knowledge, morality, and spirituality (Kusuma, 2023; Wiyanto, 2024), and emphasizing morals and God's pleasure as the foundation for strengthening students' character (Adib, 2023). In addition, Sheikh Nawawi's works in *fiqh muamalah*, especially business ethics and buying and selling, emphasize honesty, justice, and social responsibility, which can be integrated into Islamic religious education to form a generation of Muslims

who are noble, knowledgeable, and productive in the modern era (Muldiah et al., 2025).

Another study highlights the development of multidimensional education that emphasizes physical, intellectual, and spiritual aspects to shape individuals with noble character and active contributions to society (Muhammad et al., 2023). Meanwhile, Adib, (2023) emphasizes the moral and ethical dimensions, which, although conservative, remain relevant to shaping the character of students in the 21st century. In addition, research by Muldiah et al., (2025) highlights the integration of *fiqh muamalah*, particularly business and buying and selling ethics, into Islamic religious education to foster Islamic economic character, honesty, responsibility, and moral awareness in students facing modern social and economic challenges.

Overall, the works and thoughts of Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani show that he is not only a historical figure, but also an Islamic thinker who contributed significantly to Islamic education in the archipelago, with a holistic, moderate, and relevant approach in facing the challenges of modernity and globalization.

However, previous research mapping shows that studies on Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani still tend to be partial and thematic. Not many studies have comprehensively synthesized his Islamic thought within an integrative framework encompassing sharia, Sufism, morality, and education, and linked it to the development of contemporary Islamic education in the Indonesian archipelago. Thus, Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani's early education, intellectual journey, and works demonstrate that he is not merely a historical figure, but an Islamic thinker who contributed significantly to building a moderate Islamic education in the Indonesian archipelago, rooted in tradition, holistic in approach, and relevant in responding to the dynamics of modernity, globalization, and the challenges of 21st-century education.

Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani's early education, intellectual journey, and works demonstrate that he was not merely a historical figure, but an Islamic thinker who developed a moderate Nusantara Islamic education, rooted in tradition, holistic in approach, and adaptive to the dynamics of modernity and globalization. His educational paradigm integrated normative-legal, spiritual, and social-ethical aspects, thus serving as a conceptual reference for the development of contemporary Islamic education that emphasizes a balance between knowledge, morality, and religious practice.

CONCLUSION

Based on biographical analysis, intellectual journey, works, and mapping of previous research, it can be concluded that Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani was a 19th-century Nusantara scholar with high scholarly authority and broad influence, both in the archipelago and in the global ulama network. His strong early education in the pesantren tradition, combined with studies in the Hijaz, formed a consistent intellectual, spiritual, and moral foundation throughout his life. Sheikh Nawawi's works, which include *tafsir*, *fiqh*, *tauhid*, *tasawwuf*, *akhlak*, *hadith*, and *fiqh muamalah*, emphasize the integration of *sharia*, *tasawwuf*, and *akhlak* as the foundation of Islamic education. His thinking is normative-theoretical as well as practical, functioning as an educational instrument to shape people who are faithful, knowledgeable, moral, and play an active role in society.

Mapping previous research shows that most studies are still partial and thematic, so studies that synthesize Sheikh Nawawi's thoughts conceptually and integratively, especially for developing contemporary Islamic education in the Indonesian archipelago, are still limited. Thus, this study confirms the relevance of Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani's thoughts as a conceptual framework for Islamic education in the Indonesian archipelago that is moderate, holistic, and adaptive to the dynamics of modernity and globalization. His educational paradigm emphasizes the balance between knowledge, morality, and religious practice, making it an important

reference for the development of contemporary Islamic education in Indonesia.

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