

## CONCEPTUALIZATION OF STUDENT-TEACHER RELATIONSHIP: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF SYEKH NAWAWI AL-BANTANI AND SYEKH HASYIM ASY'ARI'S THOUGHT

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### Abstract

This study analyzes the conceptualization of student-teacher relationships according to Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani and Syekh Hasyim Asy'ari as a response to the moral crisis in contemporary education. Using a qualitative method with a comparative approach, this research examines Syekh Nawawi's *Maraaq al-Ubudiyyah* and Syekh Hasyim Asy'ari's *Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim*. The findings reveal that Syekh Nawawi employs a principle-minimalist approach with 13 universal moral dimensions, while Syekh Hasyim Asy'ari uses a procedural-maximalist approach with 81 detailed substantive points. Both approaches differ in writing format, theme placement, and level of elaboration, yet both emphasize *ta'dhim* (respect), *tawadhu'* (humility), and *husn al-adab* (good ethics) as foundations for blessed knowledge. This study concludes that integrating both approaches can produce an Islamic education model that is theologically solid, operationally clear, and applicable in addressing modern educational challenges. The relevance of their thoughts to achieving blessed knowledge manifests in forming students' characters who are not only intellectually intelligent but also spiritually mature.

**Keywords:** student-teacher relationship, Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani, Syekh Hasyim Asy'ari, moral education, blessed knowledge.

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini menganalisis konseptualisasi hubungan murid dengan guru menurut Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani dan Syekh Hasyim Asy'ari sebagai respons terhadap krisis akhlak dalam pendidikan kontemporer. Menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan komparatif, penelitian ini mengkaji kitab *Maraaq al-Ubudiyyah* karya Syekh Nawawi dan *Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim* karya Syekh Hasyim Asy'ari. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Syekh Nawawi menerapkan pendekatan prinsipil-minimalis dengan 13 dimensi akhlak yang bersifat universal, sementara Syekh Hasyim Asy'ari menggunakan pendekatan prosedural-maksimalis dengan 81 poin substantif yang detail. Kedua pendekatan memiliki perbedaan dalam hal format penulisan, penempatan tema, dan tingkat elaborasi, namun sama-sama menekankan pentingnya *ta'dhim* (penghormatan), *tawadhu'* (kerendahan hati), dan *husn al-adab* (etika yang baik) sebagai fondasi keberkahan ilmu. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa integrasi kedua pendekatan dapat menghasilkan model pendidikan Islam yang kokoh secara teologis, jelas secara operasional, dan aplikatif dalam menghadapi tantangan pendidikan modern.

*Relevansi pemikiran keduanya terhadap pencapaian keberkahan ilmu termanifestasi dalam pembentukan karakter murid yang tidak hanya cerdas secara intelektual tetapi juga matang secara spiritual.*

**Kata kunci:** hubungan murid-guru, Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani, Syekh Hasyim Asy'ari, pendidikan akhlak, keberkahan ilmu

## INTRODUCTION

Education serves as a fundamental instrument in shaping morally noble, virtuous human beings capable of recognizing their potential. In the Islamic context, education is not merely a process of knowledge transfer, but also a process of moral and spiritual formation that is deeply rooted in ethical values. The relationship between students and teachers occupies a central position in this process, as teachers are regarded as inheritors of the prophets (*warathah al-anbiya*'), who not only convey knowledge but also guide students toward righteousness and piety (Azra, 2019). However, contemporary educational realities indicate a significant moral degradation in this relationship, which threatens the essence of Islamic education itself.

The increasing cases of violence in educational environments, as reported by the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI), reflect a serious crisis in moral values within schools. The data indicating 573 cases of violence in 2024, with a significant portion occurring within educational institutions, highlights the urgency of addressing moral issues in education. This crisis is not limited to physical violence but extends to subtle forms of moral decline, such as diminishing respect toward teachers, disobedience, and the erosion of ethical communication between students and educators. Sitompul's findings further reinforce this condition by identifying patterns of student misconduct, including disregard for rules, lack of engagement in learning, and inappropriate behavior toward teachers (Sitompul, 2020).

In response to this crisis, it is essential to revisit classical Islamic educational thought, particularly the works of prominent scholars who have provided comprehensive frameworks for understanding the ideal relationship between students and teachers. Among these scholars, Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani and Syekh Hasyim Asy'ari stand out as influential figures whose ideas remain relevant in addressing contemporary educational challenges. Both scholars, rooted in the rich intellectual tradition of the Nusantara, offer profound insights into the ethical and spiritual dimensions of education. Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani, a renowned scholar who taught at Masjid al-Haram, articulated his views on education in his work *Maraaq al-Ubudiyyah*. His perspective emphasizes the spiritual dimension of learning, where the relationship between students and teachers is grounded in sincerity, humility, and devotion to Allah. For Nawawi, knowledge is not merely intellectual acquisition but a means of attaining closeness to God, and thus requires proper adab (etiquette) in the learning process.

According to Nawawi, students must exhibit profound respect toward their teachers as a prerequisite for gaining beneficial knowledge. This respect manifests in various forms, such as listening attentively, avoiding interruption, seeking permission before speaking,

and maintaining humility in the presence of the teacher. He emphasizes that arrogance and disrespect can obstruct the flow of knowledge and deprive students of its blessings (Nawawi, n.d.). This concept aligns with the broader Islamic principle that knowledge is a نور (light) granted by Allah, which cannot reside in a heart filled with arrogance or disobedience. Furthermore, Nawawi highlights the importance of sincerity (*ikhlas*) in seeking knowledge. Students are encouraged to purify their intentions, ensuring that their pursuit of knowledge is solely for the sake of Allah rather than for worldly recognition or material gain. This spiritual orientation reinforces the ethical dimension of the student-teacher relationship, where both parties are engaged in a sacred endeavor aimed at achieving divine pleasure.

In addition, Nawawi underscores the role of the teacher as a spiritual guide who shapes not only the intellectual but also the moral character of students. Therefore, students must trust and follow the guidance of their teachers, recognizing their authority as bearers of knowledge and wisdom. This hierarchical yet respectful relationship reflects the traditional Islamic educational model, where the teacher serves as a moral exemplar for students. Syekh Hasyim Asy'ari, the founder of Nahdlatul Ulama and a student of Syekh Nawawi, developed a more systematic and comprehensive framework for the student-teacher relationship in his work *Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim*. His approach integrates both ethical and practical aspects of education, providing detailed guidelines for both teachers and students. Hasyim Asy'ari emphasizes that the success of education depends largely on the observance of proper adab. He outlines various etiquettes that students must uphold, including respecting teachers, maintaining discipline, being diligent in learning, and avoiding behaviors that may harm the learning environment. According to him, respect for teachers is not merely a cultural norm but a religious obligation that reflects one's understanding of the value of knowledge (Hasyim Asy'ari, 2013).

One of the distinctive features of Hasyim Asy'ari's thought is his emphasis on the reciprocal nature of the student-teacher relationship. While students are required to respect and obey their teachers, teachers are also expected to demonstrate compassion, sincerity, and professionalism in their teaching. This balanced perspective highlights the ethical responsibilities of both parties, ensuring that the educational process is conducted in a harmonious and respectful manner. Moreover, Hasyim Asy'ari places great importance on the moral integrity of teachers. He argues that teachers must embody the values they teach, serving as role models for their students. This concept reflects the Islamic principle of *uswah hasanah* (good example), where the effectiveness of teaching is closely linked to the character of the teacher. A teacher who lacks moral integrity cannot effectively instill ethical values in students.

In addition, Hasyim Asy'ari introduces the concept of discipline and commitment in learning. Students are encouraged to manage their time effectively, prioritize their studies, and remain consistent in their pursuit of knowledge. This emphasis on discipline reflects his concern for developing students who are not only knowledgeable but also responsible and self-regulated individuals. A comparative analysis of the thoughts of Syekh Nawawi

al-Bantani and Syekh Hasyim Asy'ari reveals both similarities and differences that enrich the understanding of student-teacher relationships in Islamic education. Both scholars share a common emphasis on the importance of adab as the foundation of education. They agree that respect for teachers, sincerity in learning, and humility are essential qualities that students must possess to attain beneficial knowledge.

However, there are notable differences in their approaches. Nawawi's perspective is more spiritual and metaphysical, focusing on the inner dimensions of learning and the purification of the heart. His emphasis on sincerity and humility reflects a Sufi-oriented approach to education, where the primary goal is spiritual refinement. In contrast, Hasyim Asy'ari adopts a more systematic and practical approach, providing detailed guidelines that address both ethical and organizational aspects of education. Another difference lies in the scope of their discussions. Nawawi primarily focuses on the responsibilities of students, while Hasyim Asy'ari expands the discussion to include the responsibilities of teachers as well. This broader perspective reflects Hasyim Asy'ari's concern for creating a balanced and holistic educational environment.

Despite these differences, both perspectives complement each other and offer a comprehensive framework for understanding the ideal student-teacher relationship in Islamic education. Nawawi's emphasis on spirituality provides a strong moral foundation, while Hasyim Asy'ari's practical guidelines ensure the effective implementation of these values in educational settings. The concept of *ilmu berkah* (blessed knowledge) is central to Islamic education and refers to knowledge that brings benefit, both in this world and the hereafter. Blessed knowledge is not determined solely by the amount of information acquired but by the extent to which it influences one's character and actions. In this context, the thoughts of Nawawi and Hasyim Asy'ari are highly relevant, as they emphasize the ethical and spiritual dimensions of learning.

According to Islamic scholars, the attainment of blessed knowledge requires proper adab, sincerity, and respect for teachers. These values, as highlighted by Nawawi and Hasyim Asy'ari, serve as essential conditions for the acceptance and effectiveness of knowledge. Without these values, knowledge may become a source of arrogance and misguidance rather than a means of attaining righteousness (Al-Ghazali, 2005). In contemporary education, the relevance of these concepts is increasingly evident. The moral crisis observed in educational institutions indicates a disconnect between knowledge and character. Students may excel academically but lack the ethical foundation necessary to apply their knowledge responsibly. By reintroducing the principles of adab and spiritual orientation in education, it is possible to restore the balance between intellectual and moral development.

Furthermore, the integration of these classical concepts into modern education can contribute to the formation of holistic individuals who possess not only intellectual competence but also moral integrity and spiritual awareness. This aligns with the broader goals of Islamic education, which aim to develop الإنسان الكامل (*insan kamil*)—a complete

human being who embodies both knowledge and virtue (Langgulung, 2003). The thoughts of Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani and Syekh Hasyim Asy'ari provide valuable insights into the concept of student-teacher relationships in Islamic education. Both scholars emphasize the importance of adab, sincerity, and respect as the foundation of effective learning. While Nawawi focuses on the spiritual dimensions of education, Hasyim Asy'ari offers a more systematic and practical framework that addresses both student and teacher responsibilities. Their ideas remain highly relevant in addressing the moral crisis in contemporary education, particularly in restoring the ethical relationship between students and teachers. By integrating these classical concepts into modern educational practices, it is possible to cultivate blessed knowledge that not only enhances intellectual capacity but also fosters moral and spiritual development.

## **METHOD**

This study employs a qualitative method with a comparative study approach. Comparative study is a research method aimed at comparing variables between different subjects or different time periods and discovering their causal relationships. This research is library research with the object of study being the thoughts of two Islamic education figures in their books. The primary data sources for this research are *Maraaq al-Ubudiyyah* by Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani and *Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim* by Syekh Hasyim Asy'ari. Secondary data sources include books, scientific journals, and other literature relevant to the research theme. Data collection techniques were conducted through documentation study with the following steps: (1) collecting and selecting sources, (2) selecting writings related to student-teacher relationships, (3) comprehending in depth, (4) presenting ideas into an outline, (5) conducting analysis, and (6) drawing conclusions. Data analysis techniques employ comparative analysis methods with a content analysis approach to identify similarities and differences in the conceptualization of both figures' thoughts. Data validity is ensured through source triangulation by comparing data from various primary and secondary references.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The relationship between students and teachers occupies a central position in the Islamic educational tradition, as it is not merely an academic interaction but a spiritual and moral bond that determines the quality and blessing (*barakah*) of knowledge acquired. Classical Islamic scholars have emphasized that knowledge cannot be separated from ethics (*adab*), and that the success of education depends not only on intellectual mastery but also on the moral conduct of learners toward their teachers (Azra, 2019). Among the prominent scholars who elaborated this concept comprehensively are Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani and Syekh Hasyim Asy'ari. Their thoughts provide a rich framework for understanding the ethical foundations of the student-teacher relationship and remain highly relevant in addressing contemporary educational challenges.

Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani, in his work *Maraaq al-Ubudiyyah*, formulates the concept of the student-teacher relationship through what can be described as a principle-minimalist

approach. He outlines thirteen essential moral dimensions that must be internalized by every student in interacting with their teacher. These principles include greeting and asking permission before entering, minimizing speech in the presence of the teacher, refraining from speaking unless permitted, and avoiding asking questions without prior permission. Additionally, Nawawi emphasizes that students should not contradict their teacher's opinion, even if they feel more correct, nor compare it with others' views. Students are also instructed to maintain composure, avoid excessive questioning especially when the teacher appears tired, and demonstrate respect through gestures such as standing when the teacher stands (Nawawi al-Bantani, n.d.).

Beyond these behavioral norms, Nawawi's formulation reflects a deeper spiritual orientation. He draws analogies between the student's attitude toward the teacher and the state of devotion in ritual worship, particularly prayer. For instance, the instruction to sit calmly with lowered gaze "as if in prayer" illustrates that learning is a sacred act requiring reverence and humility. This perspective aligns with the concepts of *ta'dhim* (respect) and *tawadhu'* (humility), which are foundational in the Islamic pursuit of knowledge. Nawawi asserts that honoring teachers is a form of obedience to Allah, as teachers function as intermediaries (*wasilah*) through whom divine knowledge is transmitted. This theological foundation is supported by the prophetic tradition stating that "the scholars are the inheritors of the prophets" (Al-Ghazali, 2005).

Furthermore, Nawawi emphasizes the importance of maintaining *husnu zhan* (positive assumptions) toward teachers. Students are discouraged from harboring negative thoughts about their teachers' actions, recognizing the limitations of their own understanding. This principle reinforces the epistemological humility required in the learning process, where students acknowledge that knowledge is not merely a product of reasoning but also a spiritual gift that requires proper ethical disposition. In contrast, Syekh Hasyim Asy'ari, in his work *Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim*, develops a more comprehensive and systematic framework, which can be characterized as a procedural-maximalist approach. His work consists of eight chapters, with extensive discussions on the ethics of students toward teachers, including approximately 35 specific guidelines within a broader framework of 81 ethical points (Hasyim Asy'ari, 2013). This detailed elaboration reflects his concern for providing practical guidance that can be implemented in structured educational environments such as pesantren.

One of the key principles emphasized by Hasyim Asy'ari is the careful selection of teachers. He advises students to perform *istikharah* and choose teachers who possess deep understanding of Islamic sciences, not merely superficial knowledge. This highlights the importance of intellectual and spiritual competence in educators. Additionally, Hasyim introduces the concept of total submission, where students are expected to entrust their learning process to the teacher, similar to how a patient relies on a medical specialist. This analogy underscores the trust and dependence inherent in the educational relationship.

Hasyim Asy'ari also emphasizes the formation of *i'tiqad* (inner conviction) regarding the teacher's authority and excellence. He cites the statement of Abu Yusuf that "whoever does not believe in the greatness of his teacher will not be fortunate," indicating that the internal belief system of students plays a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of learning. Unlike Nawawi, who focuses primarily on external behavior, Hasyim places significant emphasis on the internal transformation of students' attitudes and beliefs.

Another distinctive aspect of Hasyim's thought is the concept of continuity in the student–teacher relationship, which extends beyond the teacher's lifetime. Students are encouraged to pray for their teachers, visit their graves, give charity on their behalf, and maintain relationships with their families. This reflects the concept of *barakah* in the chain of knowledge (*sanad*), where maintaining connections with teachers ensures the *استمرار* (continuity) of blessings in knowledge transmission (Qodir, 2020). Moreover, Hasyim provides detailed guidance on linguistic ethics, including appropriate ways of speaking, avoiding certain expressions, and offering respectful corrections when necessary. This demonstrates his attention to the subtleties of communication as an integral part of ethical conduct in education. His comprehensive approach reflects the needs of a structured educational system where detailed regulations are necessary to maintain discipline and order.

Despite differences in their approaches, both scholars share fundamental similarities. They both emphasize that the student–teacher relationship is rooted in theological principles, where respect for teachers is an expression of obedience to Allah. The concepts of *ta'dhim* and *tawadhu'* are central to both perspectives, highlighting the importance of humility and reverence in the pursuit of knowledge. Additionally, both scholars advocate *husnu zhan* toward teachers and recognize the limitations of students' understanding. Importantly, they also establish boundaries of obedience, affirming that there is no obedience to creation in matters that contradict obedience to Allah (Hidayat, 2021).

Another shared principle is the emphasis on *barakah al-'ilm* (blessed knowledge). Both Nawawi and Hasyim assert that ethical conduct is a prerequisite for obtaining knowledge that is beneficial and enduring. Knowledge devoid of ethical foundations is considered incomplete and potentially harmful. This perspective distinguishes Islamic epistemology from secular paradigms that often treat knowledge as value-neutral (Langgulung, 2003). However, their paradigmatic differences are equally significant. Nawawi's principle-minimalist approach provides universal guidelines that are simple, concise, and easily applicable across diverse contexts. His focus on behavioral discipline reflects an emphasis on external control as a means of character formation. In contrast, Hasyim's procedural-maximalist approach offers detailed and comprehensive guidance tailored to specific situations, emphasizing internal transformation through belief formation and cognitive-affective development.

These differences can be understood within their respective sociological and pedagogical contexts. Nawawi, who taught in Mecca to a diverse and international audience, required

a universal framework that could be easily understood and applied by students from various cultural backgrounds. Meanwhile, Hasyim Asy'ari, who developed the pesantren system in Indonesia, needed detailed operational guidelines to regulate the daily lives of students within a structured community (Soleh, 2022). From the perspective of educational psychology, both approaches can be seen as complementary rather than contradictory. Nawawi's emphasis on external discipline can serve as the initial stage of moral development through habituation (*ta'wid*), while Hasyim's focus on internal conviction facilitates deeper value internalization. This progression aligns with moral development theories, which suggest that individuals move from externally guided behavior to internally motivated ethical principles (Bandura, 1986).

The concept of *barakah al-'ilm* further illustrates the depth of their thought. Nawawi highlights the spiritual consequences of violating ethical norms, stating that contradicting the teacher can diminish the blessing of knowledge. Hasyim expands this idea by emphasizing the transformative nature of humility, where acts of submission and respect elevate one's spiritual status. Indicators of blessed knowledge include ease of understanding, ability to apply knowledge in practice, benefits for others, and the continuity of rewards through ongoing charity (*amal jariyah*) (Nata, 2016). In the contemporary educational context, the relevance of these concepts is increasingly evident. The moral crisis observed in modern education, including declining respect for teachers and increasing behavioral issues among students, reflects the absence of strong ethical foundations. The principles of *ta'dhim*, *tawadhu'*, and *husnu zhan* offer practical solutions to these challenges by fostering a culture of respect and humility within educational institutions.

Moreover, these concepts can be adapted to the digital era. For instance, the principle of not raising one's voice can be translated into maintaining respectful communication in online interactions. Similarly, the emphasis on discipline and responsibility aligns with the demands of modern education, which requires students to be self-regulated and ethically aware in a rapidly changing technological environment (Hidayat, 2021). The thoughts of Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani and Syekh Hasyim Asy'ari provide a comprehensive and complementary framework for understanding the student–teacher relationship in Islamic education. Nawawi's principle-minimalist approach offers universal ethical guidelines, while Hasyim's procedural-maximalist approach provides detailed practical guidance. Together, they form a holistic model that integrates external discipline and internal transformation, emphasizing that ethical conduct is essential for achieving blessed knowledge. Their ideas remain highly relevant in addressing contemporary educational challenges and can serve as a foundation for developing educational systems that prioritize both intellectual and moral development.

## CONCLUSION

This research reveals that Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani and Syekh Hasyim Asy'ari developed two different yet complementary approaches in conceptualizing student-teacher relationships. Syekh Nawawi employs a principle-minimalist approach with 13

universal moral dimensions that are easy to remember and applicable across contexts. Meanwhile, Syekh Hasyim Asy'ari uses a procedural-maximalist approach with 81 substantive points providing comprehensive guidance for nearly every aspect of interaction. Both approaches differ in epistemological paradigm, psychological emphasis, temporal dimension, and level of elaboration. However, both equally emphasize theological foundations, principles of *ta'dhim* and *tawadhu'*, the concept of *husnu zhan*, limits of obedience, and orientation toward blessed knowledge. Paradigmatic differences can be understood in their respective sociological-pedagogical contexts: Syekh Nawawi for heterogeneous audiences in Mecca, and Syekh Hasyim for structured *pesantren* systems in Jombang.

Integration of both approaches can produce an Islamic education model that is theologically solid, operationally clear, and practically applicable. Syekh Nawawi's universal principles provide philosophical foundations, while Syekh Hasyim's detailed guidance provides operational implementation. In the context of contemporary education facing character crises, their conceptualizations offer solutions rooted in authentic Islamic tradition yet remain relevant to contemporary needs. The most fundamental aspect of both thoughts is the understanding that *adab* constitutes the core of Islamic education. Knowledge without *adab* will not be blessed, and *adab* without knowledge will not be complete. Blessed knowledge (*barakah al-'ilm*) as the ultimate goal of education can only be achieved through harmonization between cognitive mastery and spiritual maturity manifested in noble character.

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