

## REFINING ADAB, LOVE, AND TOLERANCE IN ISLAMIC PEDAGOGY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF IMAM NAWAWI AND KH. HASYIM ASY'ARI'S THOUGHT

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**Abstract:** *This study is a comparative literature review of two monumental works titled *Adabul 'Ālim wal Muta'allim*, authored respectively by Imam Nawawi and KH. Hasyim Asy'ari. Both texts encapsulate a rich legacy of scholarly ethics and the spiritual foundations of Islamic education, particularly in shaping students and educators of noble character, deep love for knowledge, and a strong commitment to tolerance and humanity. Employing a philosophical approach to Islamic education and content analysis, this research aims to explore the convergence and distinctions between Imam Nawawi—representing global Islamic scholarship—and KH. Hasyim Asy'ari—embodying local wisdom from the Indonesian pesantren tradition. The findings reveal that despite differing socio-historical contexts, both scholars share a unified vision of education that elevates adab (ethics) as a prerequisite for knowledge, love as the basis for learning, and tolerance as the path toward harmony. This study highlights that integrating global scholarly heritage with local wisdom offers a powerful paradigm for developing a humanistic Islamic education that contributes to global peace and inter-civilizational dialogue.*

**Keywords:** *Islamic Education, Philosophy of Education, Adab, Local Wisdom, Global Harmony.*

### INTRODUCTION

Islamic education since the early stages of civilization has not only been understood as a process of transmitting knowledge, but also as an effort to shape human personality, spirituality, and morality in a holistic manner.<sup>1</sup> In classical Islamic thought, education is regarded as a path toward self-purification (*tahdzīb al-nafs*).<sup>2</sup> In classical Islamic thought, education is regarded as a path toward self-purification (*tahdzīb al-nafs*) and the

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<sup>1</sup> Abd Rahman, "Peran Pendidikan Islam Dalam Pembentukan Moral Bangsa," *AL-RIWAYAH: Jurnal Kependidikan* 7, no. 1 (2015): 45–59.

<sup>2</sup> Iqbal Asid Maududin, Abas Mansur Tamam, and Wido Supraha, "Konsep Pendidikan Tazkiyatun Nafs Ibnul Qayyim Dalam Menangani Kenakalan Peserta Didik," *Rayah Al-Islam* 5, no. 1 (2021): 140–56, <https://doi.org/10.37274/rais.v5i1.393>.



cultivation of noble character (*takhalluq bi akhlāq Allāh*)<sup>3</sup>, In classical Islamic thought, education is regarded as a path toward self-purification (*tahdzīb al-nafs*) and the cultivation of noble character (*takhalluq bi akhlāq Allāh*), with the ultimate goal of producing a civilized human being (*insān ādabī*) who embodies a balance between intellectual intelligence, spiritual depth, and moral maturity.<sup>4</sup> In this context, two monumental works entitled *Adab al-ʿĀlim wa al-Mutaʿallim*—authored respectively by Imām Yahyā ibn Sharaf al-Nawawī (d. 676 AH)<sup>5</sup> and KH. Hasyim Asy'ari (d. 1947 CE)<sup>6</sup>—hold a significant position in the intellectual tradition of Islamic education. Despite living in different historical periods and socio-cultural settings, both scholars emphasized that the essence of education lies not merely in the acquisition of knowledge, but in the cultivation of *adab*, love, and tolerance as the foundation of human spiritual and social life.

Imam al-Nawawī, a prominent scholar from Damascus<sup>7</sup>, is widely recognized as a symbol of global Islamic scholarship. Through his seminal works such as *Riyāḍ al-Ṣāliḥīn*, *al-Arbaʿīn al-Nawawīyyah*, and *Adab al-ʿĀlim wa al-Mutaʿallim*<sup>8</sup>, he emphasized that the pursuit of knowledge must be driven by sincere intention, a pure heart, and deep reverence for one's teachers. For him, knowledge is not merely a tool for attaining worldly status, but a means of drawing closer to Allah and refining human character. Accordingly, knowledge devoid of *adab* is without light, just as action without sincerity holds no value in the sight of Allah. Meanwhile, KH. Hasyim Asy'ari, a leading Nusantara scholar and the founder of *Nahdlatul Ulama*, articulated an educational vision that harmonized classical Islamic values with the pluralistic socio-cultural reality of Indonesia, particularly amid the struggle against colonialism. In his work—also titled *Adab al-ʿĀlim wa al-Mutaʿallim*,<sup>9</sup> H. Hasyim Asy'ari contextualized Imam al-Nawawī's teachings within the local *pesantren* tradition, instilling *adab*, love (*maḥabbah*), and tolerance (*tasāmuḥ*) as the core of Islamic education. This vision seeks to form the complete human being: knowledgeable, virtuous, and deeply rooted in humanitarian values.

Philosophically, the educational thought of both figures is rooted in *tawḥīd*-consciousness—the belief that all learning activities are integral to one's worship of Allah.

<sup>3</sup> Yosep Farhan, Adang Hambali, and Hasan Basri, "Konsep Pendidikan Akhlak (Takhallaqu Bi Akhlaqillah) Sebagai Proses Dan Tujuan Pendidikan Islam," *JSTAF: Siddiq, Tabligh, Amanah, Fathonah* 2, no. 2 (2023): 231–41, <https://doi.org/10.62515/staf.v2i2.264>.

<sup>4</sup> Nurwahid Ihsanudin, "PENDIDIKAN ISLAM DALAM PERSPEKTIF HADITS; Kajian Konsep Al-Tarbiyah, Al-Taʿlīm, Al-Taʿdīb Dan Al-Tazkiyah," *Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Pemikiran* 17, no. 2 (2022): 795.

<sup>5</sup> Muhammad Husni and Ardani, "Adab Murid Terhadap Guru Menurut Imam Nawawi Dalam Kitab Adabul ʿĀlim Wal MutaʿĀlim," *ADDABANA: Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 6, no. 2 (2023): 135–44, <https://doi.org/10.47732/adb.v6i2.295>.

<sup>6</sup> Sari Nur Malita Siswoyo, Fathurrahman Alfa, and Eko Setiawan, "Kitab Adabul ʿĀlim Wal MutaʿĀlim Karya KH. Hasyim Asy'ari Dan Relevansinya Dengan Pendidikan Karakter," *Vicratina: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 10, no. 6 (2025), <http://riset.unisma.ac.id/index.php/fai/index>.

<sup>7</sup> Syamsyuddin Muhammad bin Abdur Rahman as-Sakhawi, *Al-Manḥal Al-ʿAdzb Ar-Rawy Fi Tarjamati Quthbi Al-Awliyaʿ an-Nawawi* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-Ilmiyah, 2005).

<sup>8</sup> Imam an-Nawawi, *Adab al-ʿĀlim wa al-Mutaʿallim wa Adab al-Mufti wa al-Mustafti* (Thantha: Maktabah ash-Shahabah, 1987).

<sup>9</sup> Hasyim Asy'ari, *Adab Al-ʿĀlim Wal MutaʿĀlim Fi Ma Yajibu Ilaihi Al-Mutaʿallim Fi Ahwali Taʿlimihi Wa Ma Yatawaqafu Alaihi Al-Muʿallim Fi Maqamati Taʿlimihi* (Tebuireng, Jombang, Jawa Timur: Maktabah At-Turats Al-Islamy, 1415).



Within this framework, education is not merely a cognitive pursuit but also a spiritual and moral endeavor. Knowledge serves as a path to knowing God, while *adab* functions as a means of drawing nearer to Him through respect for teachers, knowledge itself, and fellow human beings. This consciousness shapes Islamic education into a theocentric-humanistic paradigm: centered on the human being, yet ultimately oriented toward the Divine. In Imam al-Nawawī's tradition, *adab* is the foundation of knowledge, whereas for KH. Hasyim Asy'ari, *adab* must be actualized within the social context through love (*maḥabbah*) and tolerance (*tasāmuḥ*).<sup>10</sup> By synthesizing these two perspectives, Islamic education emerges not merely as a system of instruction, but as a holistic process of forming noble-hearted individuals who harmonize intellect, spirituality, and righteous action.

This study aims to philosophically analyze the values of *adab* (ethical conduct), love, and tolerance in the educational thought of Imam al-Nawawī and KH. Hasyim Asy'ari, and to explore their relevance for the development of Islamic education in the global era. Employing a comparative philosophical approach, this research juxtaposes their ideas both textually and contextually in order to examine how the ethical values they promote can serve as a conceptual foundation for a humanistic model of Islamic education. Specifically, the study seeks to address how the concepts of *adab*, love, and tolerance are interpreted by these two scholars; how these values contribute to the formation of social ethics and the epistemology of Islamic education; and to what extent their thought remains relevant in addressing contemporary educational challenges. As such, this research is not merely descriptive, but also reflective—aiming to revive the ethical and spiritual ethos that constitutes the soul of Islamic education.

The relevance of this study becomes increasingly significant amidst the currents of globalization and technological advancement, which often give rise to moral crises, the dehumanization of education, and the secularization of values. Modern educational systems tend to prioritize intellectual achievement over moral and spiritual development, resulting in academically capable generations who are ethically and empathetically impoverished. In this context, the educational visions of Imam al-Nawawī and KH. Hasyim Asy'ari regain their urgency. Both scholars emphasized that true education is one that enlivens the heart, not merely fills the mind. The value of *adab* fosters reverence for teachers and knowledge; love (*maḥabbah*) inspires sincere and compassionate learning; and tolerance (*tasāmuḥ*) cultivates awareness for peaceful coexistence within diversity. These three values form a spiritual triangle that supports the entire structure of Islamic education—spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, and socially—as an integrated manifestation of Divine values.

Beyond that, the educational thought of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari illustrates how Islamic education can serve as a means for cultivating national and humanitarian consciousness.<sup>11</sup> In the context of colonial oppression and a national identity crisis, the *pesantren* under his leadership functioned as moral and intellectual strongholds of the

<sup>10</sup> Rahmat Siregar, "Pemikiran KH. Hasyim Asy'ari Tentang Etika Guru Dan Relevansinya Dengan Pendidikan Modern," *Jurnal Kajian Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 2 (2023).

<sup>11</sup> Rahmat Rifai Lubis, "Nilai-Nilai Pendidikan Akhlak Dalam Kitab Adabul 'Alim Wal Muta'Allim Karya KH. Hasyim Asy'ari," *Jurnal Tarbiyah Dan Ilmu Keguruan* 8, no. 1 (2024): 114–29.



society. He instilled the belief that to love knowledge is to love life, and to honor one’s teacher is to honor humanity. Accordingly, Islamic education does not end with mastery of religious texts, but evolves into a process of social transformation that nurtures a sense of responsibility toward the nation and fellow human beings. This concept aligns with global initiatives such as UNESCO’s *Education 2030* agenda, which emphasizes education for peace and intercultural dialogue. Thus, an education rooted in *adab*, love (*maḥabbah*), and tolerance (*tasāmuḥ*) represents Islam’s vital contribution to global peace and civilizational harmony.<sup>12</sup>

By integrating the global scholarly legacy of Imam al-Nawawī with the local wisdom of KH. Hasyim Asy’ari, this study seeks to affirm that Islamic education can be developed into an inclusive, humanistic, and contextually relevant paradigm. Both scholars demonstrate that spirituality and morality are not antithetical to intellectual advancement; rather, they constitute its very foundation. Education rooted in Divine values and oriented toward humanity is capable of producing a generation that is intellectually capable, ethically grounded, and peace-minded. Ultimately, the model of Islamic education envisioned by these two figures is one that humanizes the learner, guides with compassion, and fosters a civilized and tolerant society. Thus, the synthesis of global scholarly heritage and local wisdom not only enriches the intellectual treasury of Islam but also offers a new direction for the construction of a more humane and civilizational conscious future amid the growing complexity of the modern world.

## **ADAB AS A PREREQUISITE FOR KNOWLEDGE**

In classical Islamic tradition, *adab* occupies a highly fundamental epistemological position. Etymologically, the term *adab* connotes “moral excellence” and “the regulation of proper conduct.” Within the context of Islamic education, *adab* represents the integration of morality, social ethics, and spirituality in the pursuit of knowledge. Al-Attas (1990) explains that the ultimate aim of Islamic education is the inculcation of *adab*—that is, the act of placing everything in its proper place within the cosmic and ethical order.<sup>13</sup> *Adab* is not merely a matter of etiquette, but an ontological awareness of the Divine order that underlies human relationships with God, with knowledge, and with fellow human beings. From this perspective, education is not solely intended to produce intellectually capable individuals, but also to cultivate human beings who are conscious of their moral and spiritual responsibilities. The moral crisis in modern education stems from the loss of *adab*-centered orientation—when knowledge is treated as value-neutral and

<sup>12</sup> UNESCO, “Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action: Education 2030” (UNESCO, 2015), <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000245656>; UNESCO, *Global Citizenship Education: Topics and Learning Objectives* (UNESCO, 2015), <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000232993>; UNESCO, “Declaration of Principles on Tolerance” (UNESCO, 1995), <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000108231>; UNESCO and INEE, “Learning to Live Together: Education Policies and Realities” (UNESCO, 2012), <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000219731>.

<sup>13</sup> Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas, *The Concept of Education in Islam* (Kuala Lumpur: Muslim Youth Movement of Malaysia (ABIM), 1980). 28-30.



detached from its spiritual dimension.<sup>14</sup> For this reason, the educational philosophies of Imam al-Nawawī and KH. Hasyim Asy'ari offer a relevant and necessary alternative paradigm—one in which education begins with the purification of the heart, sincere intention, and reverence for teachers.

Imam al-Nawawī viewed *adab* as an epistemological prerequisite for the acquisition of knowledge. In his treatise *Adab al-Ālim wa al-Muta'allim*, he emphasized that knowledge is of no benefit without *adab* and sincerity of intention. Before seeking knowledge, a student must first purify the heart from traits such as ostentation (*riyā'*), arrogance, and envy. For Imam al-Nawawī, *adab* comprises three essential dimensions: first, *adab* toward Allah, which entails the sincerity of intention in seeking knowledge solely for His pleasure (*riḍā'*); second, *adab* toward the teacher, expressed through deep respect and spiritual submission to the guide of knowledge; and third, *adab* toward the self and knowledge itself, manifested in patience, humility, and the preservation of inner purity. He asserted that *adab* precedes knowledge just as water precedes the growth of plants. Knowledge without *adab* leads to intellectual arrogance rather than wisdom. This view aligns with al-Ghazālī's assertion in *Iḥyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn* that knowledge is a "light" (*nūr*) that can only be reflected by a heart that has been purified.<sup>15</sup> According to Nata (2016), Imam al-Nawawī's concept of *adab* forms the root of the *tazkiyat al-nafs* (self-purification) paradigm in Islamic education, wherein knowledge serves as a means of *taqarrub ilā Allāh* (attaining closeness to God), rather than merely a tool for material advancement.<sup>16</sup>

In his *pesantren*-based adaptation of *Adab al-Ālim wa al-Muta'allim*, KH. Hasyim Asy'ari expanded the meaning of *adab* to ensure its relevance to the socio-national realities of Indonesia. While adopting the spiritual ethos of Imam al-Nawawī, he infused it with the social dimension characteristic of the *pesantren* tradition. For him, *adab* was not limited to the personal relationship between student and teacher, but also encompassed collective responsibilities—maintaining harmony among fellow students, the broader community, and the surrounding environment. He wrote that a seeker of knowledge must uphold *adab* not only toward the teacher, but also toward peers and toward knowledge itself. This shift marked a significant epistemological transformation in Islamic education: from an individual-spiritual orientation to a socially engaged praxis rooted in love and communal responsibility. As Zuhri points out, KH. Hasyim Asy'ari established *adab* as the moral framework of the *pesantren*, instilling in students values such as discipline, humility (*tawāḍu'*), solidarity, and *khidmah* (devotional service) as principles of life.<sup>17</sup> The ultimate goal of this education was not merely to produce the

<sup>14</sup> Noor Zulina S De Asildo et al., "An Overview of Akhlak and Moral Concepts and Their Relevance to Moral Education in Malaysia," *Journal of Public Administration and Governance* 12, no. 4S (2022): 101–116, <https://doi.org/10.5296/jpag.v12i4S.20574>.

<sup>15</sup> Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum Al-Din: Kitab Sharh 'Aja'ib Al-Qalb (Marvels of the Heart)*, *Marvels of the Heart (English Translation)*, n.d., 29; Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, *The Alchemy of Happiness (Kimya-Ye Sa'adat)*, *English Translation*, n.d., 23.

<sup>16</sup> Abuddin Nata, *Ilmu Pendidikan Islam* (Jakarta: Prenada Media, 2016). 32.

<sup>17</sup> Moh. Slamet Untung, *Sejarah Sosial Pesantren Menurut Prof. KH. Saifuddin Zuhri*, (Pekalongan: Duta Media Utama; IAIN Pekalongan Press, 2018).



*‘ālim* (the learned), but the *‘ārif* (the wise)—one who is capable of interpreting life both spiritually and socially.

Modern literature on Islamic education highlights that the concept of *adab* comprises three major thematic dimensions: spiritual, ethical, and social. The spiritual dimension relates to the purification of intention. Imam al-Nawawī emphasized learning as an act of worship (*‘ibādah*), while KH. Hasyim Asy’ari expanded this notion to encompass *khidmah*—studying for the sake of religion, nation, and humanity. In this view, *adab* binds knowledge to *tawhīd*: knowledge becomes a path of devotion, not merely a worldly instrument. The ethical dimension encompasses learning ethics, such as respect for teachers, maintaining discipline, avoiding arrogance, and refraining from futile arguments. Qomar (2013) asserts that KH. Hasyim Asy’ari constructed a “scientific code of ethics” within the *pesantren* that balances intellectual freedom with reverence for tradition. The social dimension positions *adab* as an ethic of communal life. Whereas Imam al-Nawawī emphasized individual spiritual formation, KH. Hasyim Asy’ari stressed social *adab*: courteous social interaction, concern for the community, and openness to diversity. In the context of Indonesia’s plural society, *adab* serves as the foundation for *tasāmuḥ* (tolerance) and *ukhuwwah* (brotherhood), both of which are essential to maintaining social cohesion.

Various studies support the centrality of *adab* in Islamic education. Hidayat (2019) found that the exemplary *adab* demonstrated by teachers in *pesantren* exerts a stronger influence on the character formation of students than formal curricula. Al-Attas (2015) emphasized that the crisis in the Muslim world is not due to a lack of knowledge, but rather to the loss of *adab*—that is, the loss of the ability to place things in their proper place. Similarly, Munir et al. concluded that KH. Hasyim Asy’ari’s concept of *adab* constitutes the philosophical foundation for character education in modern *madrasah* institutions.<sup>18</sup> These findings indicate that *adab* functions as the “soul” of Islamic education, harmonizing rationality, spirituality, and social consciousness. Imam al-Nawawī and KH. Hasyim Asy’ari thus represent the historical continuity of this value, bridging the idealism of classical Islamic scholarship with the social praxis of modern education.

From the perspective of educational philosophy, the thoughts of Imam al-Nawawī and KH. Hasyim Asy’ari illustrate the integration between the universality of Islam and the locality of culture. Imam al-Nawawī represents the global dimension by emphasizing sincerity of intention and personal morality within the scholarly tradition of the Greater Syria (Shām) region, while KH. Hasyim Asy’ari brings forth the local dimension by embedding these values into the *pesantren* system rooted in the cultural plurality of Indonesia. This integration gives rise to a paradigm of humanistic *adab*-based education—an educational model that balances intellect and heart, knowledge and practice, individual development and social responsibility. Within this paradigm, the teacher serves as a spiritual guide rather than merely an instructor; the student is a seeker of truth, not just

<sup>18</sup> A Munir, Munzir Hitami, and Mas’ud Zein, “Relevansi Konsep Pendidikan Akhlak Dalam Kitab ‘Adabul ‘Alim Wal Muta’allim’: Perspektif KH. Hasyim Asy’ari Dalam Pembentukan Karakter Dan Etika Berbasis Islam,” *Al-Fikra: Jurnal Ilmiah Keislaman* 21, no. 2 (2022): 219–34, <https://doi.org/10.24014/af.v21i2.29532>.



a passive recipient of information; and knowledge becomes a path toward wisdom, not merely a means to worldly success. This study affirms that *adab* is the foundational pillar of the entire structure of Islamic education. Imam al-Nawawī positioned it at the core of Islamic epistemology, while KH. Hasyim Asy'ari expanded it into a principle of social ethics that sustains the harmony of the scholarly community. Both figures demonstrate that true Islamic education is one that humanizes—teaching knowledge with sincerity, nurturing love, and upholding tolerance. In this light, their conception of *adab* is not only relevant but urgently needed to be revived as the foundational framework for the renewal of Islamic education in response to the moral crises and dehumanization facing modern educational systems.

## LOVE AS THE SPIRITUAL ESSENCE OF EDUCATION

Imam al-Nawawī positioned *maḥabbah* (love) as the core of the epistemic relationship in Islamic education. In his view, the teacher serves as a spiritual guide leading the student toward truth, while the student is a seeker on a path marked by patience, affection, and prayer. Their relationship is not merely an intellectual exchange, but a spiritual bond rooted in love for Allah and reverence for knowledge.<sup>19</sup> KH. Hasyim Asy'ari further interpreted love as a spirit of devotion—directed toward God, the teacher, and the wider community. In the *pesantren* tradition, love is manifested through respect for teachers, sincerity in learning, and solidarity among fellow seekers of knowledge.<sup>20</sup> Thus, love is not understood merely as an emotion, but as an educational methodology—one that cultivates empathy, patience, and human fraternity.

In the tradition of Sufism and Islamic philosophy, *maḥabbah* (love) occupies the highest rank within the moral and spiritual hierarchy.<sup>21</sup> Sufi thinkers such as al-Ghazālī and al-Qushayrī describe love for Allah as the "soul" of all acts of worship and the primary source of motivation for the pursuit of knowledge. Accordingly, education in Islam is not merely a cognitive activity but a process of cultivating love—love for God, for the teacher, and for knowledge itself.<sup>22</sup> Kumalla (2019) links *maḥabbah* to the ultimate goal of Islamic education: to lead the human being to a conscious and loving recognition of the Divine. In this framework, knowledge is not sought merely to be known, but to be loved—for only through love can knowledge become internalized and transformative for the seeker.<sup>23</sup> Quraish Shihab (2019) further asserts that love is a form of spiritual energy that generates empathy, reverence, and sincerity.<sup>24</sup> Education grounded in love rejects mechanistic approaches; it centers instead on the warmth of the heart and the spiritual connection between teacher and student as the essence of the learning process.

<sup>19</sup> an-Nawawī, *Adab al-'Alim wa al-Muta'allim wa Adab al-Mufti wa al-Mustafti*.

<sup>20</sup> Asy'ari, *Adab Al-'Alim Wal Muta'Allim Fi Ma Yajibu Ilaihi Al-Muta'allim Fi Ahwali Ta'limihi Wa Ma Yatawaqafu Alaihi Al-Mu'allim Fi Maqamati Ta'limihi*.

<sup>21</sup> Jasminto, *Sufindragogi: Sufisme Ibn Atha'illah Perspektif Andragogi* (Pamekasan: Duta Media Publishing, 2021).

<sup>22</sup> Suteja Ibnu Pakar, *Tokoh-Tokoh Tasawuf Dan Ajarannya* (Yogyakarta: Deepublish (CV Budi Utama), 2013).

<sup>23</sup> Ayub Kumalla, "Konsep Mahabbah (Cinta) Dalam 'Rubaiyat' Karya Rumi Dan Relevansinya Dalam Pendidikan Agama Islam" (UIN Raden Intan Lampung, 2019).

<sup>24</sup> M Quraish Shihab, *Jawabannya Adalah Cinta* (Lentera Hati Group, 2019).



Imam al-Nawawī asserted that knowledge is of no benefit without sincere intention and love for Allah. In *Adab al-ʿĀlim wa al-Mutaʿallim*, he described love as the bridge that connects knowledge to wisdom. He wrote that a seeker of knowledge must purify the heart from *riyāʾ* (ostentation), arrogance, and envy, for love of knowledge is a form of devotion to the Creator.<sup>25</sup> For Imam al-Nawawī, the teacher is not merely a transmitter of information but also a bearer of love for truth and for God. This concept is rooted in the epistemology of *maʿrifah* (gnosis), wherein love is seen as the gateway to true understanding. Knowledge acquired without love results in intellectual arrogance, while knowledge nurtured through love leads to wisdom and humility.<sup>26</sup> Putri et al. explain that Imam al-Nawawī's orientation toward *maḥabbah* forms the ethical and spiritual foundation of classical Islamic education. The teacher-student relationship must be framed by compassion and sincerity, for without these, the transmission of knowledge loses its transcendent significance.<sup>27</sup>

Meanwhile, KH. Hasyim Asy'ari interpreted *maḥabbah* within the social and communal context of the *pesantren*. He emphasized that love is not merely a religious emotion but also an educational methodology that fosters empathy, solidarity, and social responsibility.<sup>28</sup> In *Adab al-ʿĀlim wa al-Mutaʿallim*, KH. Hasyim wrote that a teacher must love their students as they love themselves, care for their well-being, and engage with them gently and compassionately.<sup>29</sup> For him, love for Allah serves as the foundation for the development of *akhlāq marḍiyyah*—moral character pleasing to God.<sup>30</sup> Love for the Divine gives rise to love for His creation, as compassion for humanity is viewed as a reflection of Divine love. This value of *maḥabbah* is also expressed in the form of reverence for teachers (*taʿẓīm al-ustādḥ*), sincerity in learning, and mutual solidarity among students.<sup>31</sup> Thus, *maḥabbah* becomes the social foundation of *pesantren* education—sustaining the cohesion of the scholarly community and fostering harmony between knowledge, *adab*, and service.

Munsi (2020) found that the value of *maḥabbah* in the teachings of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari transforms the dynamics of learning into a vibrant spiritual space. The teacher is no longer merely an instructor but a *murshid*—a spiritual guide who leads the student toward inner awareness and authentic humanity.<sup>32</sup> In this context, love (*maḥabbah*) operates across three interrelated dimensions. *First*, love for Allah as a spiritual

<sup>25</sup> an-Nawawī, *Adab al-ʿĀlim wa al-Mutaʿallim wa Adab al-Mufti wa al-Mustafti*.

<sup>26</sup> as-Sakhawī, *Al-Manḥal Al-ʿAdzb Ar-Rawī Fi Tarjamati Quthbi Al-Awliyaʾ an-Nawawī*.

<sup>27</sup> Mega Aulia Putri, A Gani, and Muhammad Akmansyah, "Konsep Adab Pendidik (Perspektif Imam Nawawī Dan KH. Hasyim Asy'ari)," *JlIP-Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Pendidikan* 6, no. 3 (2023): 1969–77.

<sup>28</sup> ABDUL ROKHIM, "KONSEP PENDIDIKAN KARAKTER BAGI GURU DALAM KITAB ADABUL ʿĀLIM WA AL MUTAʿALLIM KARYA KH. HASYIM ASY'ARI SEBAGAI UPAYA MEMBANGUN RUH PENDIDIK" (Universitas Islam Sultan Agung Semarang, 2024).

<sup>29</sup> Jasminto, *Etika Profesi Guru: Telaah Kitab Adabul ʿĀlim wa al-Mutaʿallim* (Jombang: Nakomu, 2024).

<sup>30</sup> Zulfaizah Fitri, *Konsep Pendidik Menurut KH. M. Hasyim Asy'ari Dalam Kitab Al Adab Al-ʿĀlim Wa Al-Mutaʿallim Dan Relevansinya Terhadap Kompetensi Guru PAI* (Guepedia, 2022).

<sup>31</sup> M A Rosyidin, "The Absorption of Islamic Education Thought of KH. M. Hasyim Asy'ari through Teaching of Adab Al-ʿĀlim Wa Al-Mutaʿallim among the Santri at the Pesantren Tebuireng," *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies* 22, no. 2 (2023): 611–40, <https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol22.iss2.art12>.

<sup>32</sup> Laili Munsi, "Pemikiran Tasawuf Akhlaki Dalam Kitab Adab Al-ʿĀlim Wa Al-Mutaʿallim Karangan KH Hasyim Asy'ari," *Pasca Sarjana*, 2020.





orientation. Both Imam al-Nawawī and KH. Hasyim Asy'ari affirmed that love for Allah is the root of the entire educational process. This love purifies learning intentions from worldly ambitions and transforms the act of learning into an act of worship. Through love for Allah, knowledge becomes a means of drawing closer to Him, the teacher becomes a conduit of Divine mercy, and the learning process becomes a spiritual journey. *Second*, love as an ethic of the teacher-student relationship. Imam al-Nawawī viewed this relationship as one of compassion and prayer, while KH. Hasyim emphasized gentleness and patience in the act of teaching. Education grounded in love gives rise to *tarbiyah bil-qulūb*—education of the heart—which cultivates moral sensitivity and social empathy. Resya et al. (2021) note that educational practices in *pesantren* rooted in this ethic of love significantly contribute to the development of students' empathetic character.<sup>33</sup> *Third*, love as a social and humanistic methodology. KH. Hasyim framed *maḥabbah* as the foundation of *ukhūwah* (brotherhood), *khiḍmah* (service), and *ta'āwun* (mutual assistance). Within the *pesantren* tradition, love inspires teachers to teach with compassion and motivates students to learn with humility.

Recent studies increasingly affirm the relevance of *maḥabbah* (love) in Islamic education. Zannatunnisya (2024) found that teachers who teach with love enhance students' emotional engagement and strengthen their spiritual character.<sup>34</sup> Darsyah (2025) emphasized that KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's concept of love contributes significantly to character education rooted in compassion within modern *madrasah*.<sup>35</sup> Hanapi (2025) concluded that love serves as a bridge between *adab* and tolerance in global Islamic education, linking universal scholarly heritage with local wisdom.<sup>36</sup> The synthesis of these studies suggests that love is not merely an emotion, but an epistemological and methodological paradigm that transforms education into an inner dialogue aimed at cultivating humanity. In a global era marked by moral fragmentation, the *maḥabbah* paradigm offers an alternative approach to education: as a transcendent ethic that unites the spiritual and intellectual dimensions; as a social praxis that fosters cross-cultural empathy; and as a pedagogical methodology that turns the classroom into a space for soul formation. The integration of Imam al-Nawawī's and KH. Hasyim Asy'ari's thought reveals a historical continuity between global Islamic tradition and local cultural wisdom. Imam al-Nawawī emphasized love as a path to spiritual wisdom, while KH. Hasyim interpreted it as a means to social harmony and national unity. In this sense, *maḥabbah* is the very heart of Islamic education: a light that illuminates knowledge, a force that nurtures compassion, and a path that humanizes the learner.

<sup>33</sup> Nurresa Fi Sabil Resya and Fery Diantoro, "Sistem Pendidikan Nasional Di Pondok Pesantren," 2021.

<sup>34</sup> Zannatunnisya Zannatunnisya et al., *PENDIDIKAN KARAKTER UNTUK ANAK USIA DINI: Integrasi Nilai Spiritual* (PT. Sonpedia Publishing Indonesia, 2024).

<sup>35</sup> SYUKRON DARSYAH, "REKONSTRUKSI PENDIDIKAN KARAKTER DALAM PERSPEKTIF KH HASYIM ASY'ARI PADA KITAB ADAB AL-'ALIM WAL MUTA'ALLIM DAN RELEVANSINYA DENGAN MERDEKA BELAJAR" (UNIVERSITAS ISLAM NEGERI SULTAN SYARIF KASIM RIAU, 2025).

<sup>36</sup> Jamaluddin Hanapi and Amaluddin Amaluddin, "Implementasi Pendidikan Agama Islam Berbasis Kearifan Lokal Dalam Konteks Global," *Journal of Humanities, Social Sciences, and Education* 1, no. 3 (2025): 142–53.



## TOLERANCE AS A UNIVERSAL ETHIC

Tolerance (*tasāmuḥ*) in Islamic education is rooted in the awareness that difference is a *sunnatullāh*—a divine inevitability that cannot be eliminated, but must be managed with wisdom. Imam al-Nawawī instilled the value of *tasāmuḥ* through the teachings of *wara’* (moral caution) and *tawāḍu’* (humility), two ethical attitudes that distance the seeker of knowledge from fanaticism and hostility toward differing views. He emphasized that knowledge should cultivate caution and humility, not intellectual arrogance. KH. Hasyim Asy’ari developed this notion into a *pesantren*-based principle of *tasāmuḥ*—respecting differences in schools of thought (*madhhab*) and religious interpretations, as long as they remain within the boundaries of sound *‘aqīdah* (creed). For him, tolerance is the manifestation of mature love and *adab*, a pathway to social harmony and universal humanity. Within this framework, *tasāmuḥ* becomes a pillar of Islamic education that not only nurtures intellectual development, but also builds human character.

tymologically, *tasāmuḥ* derives from the Arabic root *samaha*, which connotes openness of heart, generosity, and the willingness to appreciate differences.<sup>37</sup> Within the framework of Islamic education, this value reflects openness to diverse thoughts and religious traditions without compromising the foundational commitment to the principle of *tawḥīd* (Divine Oneness). The Qur’an affirms that difference is part of God’s will, as stated in Surah al-Ḥujurāt (49:13) and Surah Hūd (11:118), where humanity is described as being created into nations and tribes “so that you may know one another” (*li-ta’ārafū*), not to negate or dominate one another. In the philosophy of Islamic education, *tasāmuḥ* is not merely a moral virtue but also an epistemological principle.<sup>38</sup> Nasr (2020) explains that knowledge in Islam is hierarchical and plural in its manifestations, yet it ultimately originates from a single Divine Truth.<sup>39</sup> Thus, intellectual diversity in Islam should not lead to division but serve as a means for dialogue in the pursuit of wisdom (*ḥikmah*). An education that cultivates *tasāmuḥ* trains students to think critically yet humbly, to uphold principles without falling into fanaticism, and to engage in dialogue without abandoning *adab*.

In *Adab al-‘Ālim wa al-Muta’allim*, Imam al-Nawawī affirms that true knowledge gives rise to *wara’* (moral caution) and *tawāḍu’* (humility). These two virtues serve as the ethical foundation for cultivating tolerance within both scholarly and social life. He warned that seekers of knowledge must not disparage the views of other scholars, engage in argumentation to defeat others, or regard their own opinions as absolute truth. He wrote: “Whoever seeks knowledge to argue with scholars or to gain prestige shall be cast into Hell.” This statement underscores that truth is not personal property, but a trust that must be pursued with sincerity and *adab*. Thus, *tasāmuḥ* is not merely a social disposition, but a form of spiritual and intellectual discipline rooted in the awareness of human epistemic limitation. Khotimah (2023) confirms that Imam al-Nawawī’s teachings on *wara’* and *tawāḍu’* form the basis of an Islamic academic culture that is open, critical,

<sup>37</sup> Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, “KONSEP TAWASSUTH, TAWAZUN DAN TASAMUH,” n.d.

<sup>38</sup> Jasminto, *Filsafat Pendidikan Islam: Mengurai Jalinan Konsep* (Jombang: Nakomu, 2023).

<sup>39</sup> Seyyed Hossein Nasr, *Knowledge and the Sacred* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2020).



and ethical.<sup>40</sup> In this view, *tasāmuḥ* emerges from an epistemological consciousness: that human knowledge represents only a fragment of the absolute truth known by Allah.

KH. Hasyim Asy'ari further developed the concept of *tasāmuḥ* in a more contextual and socially grounded direction. In his *pesantren*-based version of *Adab al-Ālim wa al-Muta'allim*, he emphasized that respecting differences in *madhhab* and religious perspectives is an integral part of *adab* toward knowledge. Students (*santri*) are taught not to disparage teachers or scholars from other schools of thought, as such differences stem from legitimate *ijtihād* within the Islamic tradition. This perspective is rooted in two core insights: first, a theological awareness that diversity is a *sunnatullāh*—a divine reality that must be embraced with an open heart; and second, a social awareness that harmony amid diversity is essential for the advancement of the Muslim community and the nation. As the founder of *Nahdlatul Ulama* and a leader in Indonesia's independence movement, KH. Hasyim interpreted *tasāmuḥ* as a foundation of national identity. He taught that maintaining unity among Muslims and showing respect to adherents of other religions are expressions of patriotism (*ḥubb al-waṭan min al-īmān*—love of the homeland is part of faith). In this context, *tasāmuḥ* is not merely a religious ethic, but also a social strategy for safeguarding unity in the midst of Indonesia's cultural and religious pluralism.

Mollah (2018) notes that KH. Hasyim Asy'ari positioned *tasāmuḥ* as a “social ethic of scholarly life in the *pesantren*,” balancing loyalty to religious teachings with openness to universal human values.<sup>41</sup> Within the *pesantren* context, this principle is actualized through traditions such as *baḥth al-masā'il* (legal-discussion forums), intertextual discourse across classical Islamic texts, and deep respect for scholarly authority across various *madhāhib* (schools of thought). This spirit illustrates that Islamic education can serve as a space for dialogue and solidarity, rather than a source of polarization. In the *pesantren*, *tasāmuḥ* integrates spiritual, epistemological, and social dimensions. Spiritually, *tasāmuḥ* is rooted in the awareness of human limitations before Allah. Imam al-Nawawī emphasized that humility enables acceptance of difference, while KH. Hasyim Asy'ari taught that love for God naturally leads to love for His creation. Epistemologically, *tasāmuḥ* functions as an intellectual ethic: differences among scholars are considered a source of blessing that enriches the body of Islamic knowledge. Yusuf (2020) observes that the practice of *baḥth al-masā'il* in *pesantren* reflects epistemological tolerance, where divergent views are examined critically yet respectfully.<sup>42</sup> Socially, *tasāmuḥ* serves as a foundation for harmony and national unity. KH. Hasyim expanded this ethic into a national framework by promoting *ukhuwwah waṭaniyyah* (national brotherhood) and *ukhuwwah insāniyyah* (human fraternity), demonstrating that tolerance in Islamic education is both a religious imperative and a civic responsibility.

<sup>40</sup> KHUSNUL KHOTIMAH, “IMPLEMENTASI PEMBELAJARAN KITAB TA'LĪM MUTA'ALĪM DALAM PEMBENTUKAN ETIKA BELAJAR SANTRI,” n.d.

<sup>41</sup> Moch Kalam Mollah, “Hasyim Asy'ari: Mendidikan Dengan Etika Dan Tasamuh,” *EL-BANAT: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pendidikan Islam* 8, no. 1 (2018): 118–35.

<sup>42</sup> Moh Asror Yusuf, *Konstruksi Epistemologi Toleransi Di Pesantren* (CV Cendekia Press, 2020).



Yusuf (2021) found that *pesantren*-based education grounded in *tasāmuḥ* fosters social skills, empathy, and a spirit of cross-identity solidarity.<sup>43</sup> Sutrisno (2025) affirms that KH. Hasyim Asy’ari’s concept of *tasāmuḥ* serves as a foundational value for modern multicultural education.<sup>44</sup> Muvid (2019) concludes that *tasāmuḥ* is the practical manifestation of both *adab* and *mahabbah*, bridging personal ethics with social responsibility. He argues that Islamic education that nurtures *tasāmuḥ* offers a meaningful contribution to inter-civilizational dialogue and global peace.<sup>45</sup> Synthesizing these insights, *tasāmuḥ* emerges as the intersection between individual spirituality and social ethics; it cultivates an awareness of how to accept diversity without compromising one’s commitment to truth. In today’s global context—marked by polarization and identity-based conflicts—*tasāmuḥ* is a value that must urgently be revived. It functions as a spiritual ethic that nurtures sincerity and humility, an intellectual ethic that promotes openness of thought, and a social ethic that reinforces cohesion within pluralistic societies.

The educational thought of Imam al-Nawawī and KH. Hasyim Asy’ari reflects a continuity between classical Islam and *Islam Nusantara*. Imam al-Nawawī laid the spiritual and epistemological foundations of *tasāmuḥ*, while KH. Hasyim expanded its scope to encompass social, national, and universal human dimensions. In this regard, *tasāmuḥ* is not merely passive tolerance, but an active consciousness that regards difference as a form of Divine mercy.

## PHILOSOPHY OF ADAB AS A PATHWAY TO WISDOM

Both Imam al-Nawawī and KH. Hasyim Asy’ari viewed *adab* not merely as outward etiquette or social decorum, but as a philosophical path toward *ḥikmah*—wisdom that integrates knowledge, morality, and spirituality. From Imam al-Nawawī’s perspective, *adab* serves as the epistemological foundation of knowledge; it purifies the heart from *riyā’* (pretension), arrogance, and envy, allowing one to receive the light of Divine knowledge. He firmly rejected any dichotomy between knowledge and morality: true knowledge is inseparable from sincerity and humility, and knowledge that does not yield humility becomes a “burden of information” that darkens the soul. Genuine knowledge cultivates *ḥikmah*—the capacity to place everything in its proper place—resonating with Al-Attas’s metaphysical conception of *adab* as the foundation of *ta’dīb*, the educational process that disciplines the soul in accordance with the order of truth. KH. Hasyim Asy’ari developed a parallel principle into a comprehensive educational system within the *pesantren* tradition, through the stages of *takhallī*, *taḥallī*, and *tajallī*: the cleansing of the self from blameworthy traits, the cultivation of noble virtues such as sincerity, patience, and humility, and the manifestation of spiritual light in concrete actions—service (*khidmah*) to teachers, community, and religion. These three stages illustrate that learning

<sup>43</sup> Achmad Yusuf, *Pesantren Multikultural Model Pendidikan Karakter Humanis-Religius Di Pesantren Ngalah Pasuruan-Rajawali Pers* (PT. RajaGrafindo Persada, 2021).

<sup>44</sup> Andri Sutrisno, “The Concept of Ahl Al-Sunnah Wa Al-Jamaah in Increasing Religious Harmony from KH Hasyim Asy’ari Perspective.,” *Values: Jurnal Kajian Islam Multidisiplin* 2, no. 4 (2025): 467–73.

<sup>45</sup> Muhamad Basyrul Muvid, *Pendidikan Tasawuf: Sebuah Kerangka Proses Pembelajaran Sufistik Ideal Di Era Milenial* (Pustaka Idea, 2019).



is not merely a cognitive activity, but an ontological and existential process of self-formation toward becoming the *insān kāmil*—the complete, ethically formed human being.

In the hands of Imam al-Nawawī, intention and purity of heart become the source of moral legitimacy in the pursuit of knowledge; wisdom does not arise from the accumulation of data, but from an inner transformation that binds intellect to *dhikr*, ethics to sincerity, and argumentation to humility before truth. KH. Hasyim Asy'ari emphasized the social dimension of *adab*: love for the teacher, solidarity among students (*santri*), respect for legitimate differences in *madhhab*, and concern for national and communal life. Thus, *adab* manifests in two mutually reinforcing dimensions: the individual-transcendental dimension of Nawawī—soul purification as a journey toward God—and the social-practical dimension of Hasyim—collective ethics aimed at building a civilized society. Both converge at the same summit: *hikmah* (wisdom) as the ultimate goal of education—an illuminated understanding of reality through the Divine Light (*nūr ilāhī*) and the fulfillment of knowledge as a sacred trust that brings benefit to all creation.

From this synthesis, several concrete implications emerge for contemporary Islamic educational theory and practice. Theoretically, *adab* must be positioned as an integrative paradigm of education—not merely an addendum to the moral curriculum, but the core of Islamic epistemology. This aligns with Al-Attas's concept of *ta'dīb*, which harmonizes the spiritual, intellectual, and social dimensions of education. Pedagogically, the teacher is not merely a *mu'allim* who transmits knowledge, but also a *murabbī* and *murshid*—a nurturer and spiritual guide who shapes character through example, compassion, and prayer. The teacher-student relationship thus becomes a spiritual bond that radiates warmth, rather than a rigid hierarchy. Socially, the internalization of *takhallī-taḥallī-tajallī* produces individuals who are humble, tolerant, and empathetic—linking knowledge to service, from the classroom to the public sphere—and fostering fraternity in a pluralistic society. In this way, the philosophy of *adab* as articulated by Imam al-Nawawī and embodied in practice by KH. Hasyim Asy'ari functions both as a critique and a remedy for modern education, which often falls into the traps of instrumental rationality and the commodification of knowledge. Knowledge without *adab* loses direction; *adab* without knowledge loses substance. A truly *adab*-centered education produces human beings who are both intellectually capable and spiritually grounded—who understand their rightful place before God and others. This is *hikmah* in its truest sense—the ultimate goal of every intellectual journey within the Islamic tradition.

## LOVE AS AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL FOUNDATION OF KNOWLEDGE

In the philosophy of Islamic education, *maḥabbah* (love) is not merely an emotional dimension, but an epistemological foundation that shapes how human beings acquire, understand, and embody knowledge. Both Imam al-Nawawī and KH. Hasyim Asy'ari positioned love at the heart of the relationship between teacher, student, and God. However, each emphasized different aspects: Imam al-Nawawī viewed love as a spiritual intention that purifies the pursuit of knowledge, while KH. Hasyim Asy'ari framed love as social devotion that fosters humanitarian responsibility. For Imam al-Nawawī, *maḥabbah* is a spiritual energy that propels the seeker of knowledge toward Allah. In *Adab al-Ālim*



*wa al-Muta’allim*, he asserted that knowledge is of no benefit without love for both Allah and the teacher. Love cultivates humility, patience, and reverence toward the sources of knowledge. Therefore, *maḥabbah* functions as a moral epistemology that determines the quality of truth one can attain; knowledge pursued without love leads to arrogance, while knowledge grounded in love gives rise to *ḥikmah* (wisdom) and spiritual submission.

KH. Hasyim Asy’ari expanded this conception by extending it into the realms of society and nationhood. He emphasized that love for Allah must be actualized through love for fellow human beings and dedicated service to the community. Within the *pesantren* context, love functions as a pedagogical principle that governs the relationship between teachers and students—marked by mutual prayer, respect, and cooperation in goodness. Love also serves as the foundation for social engagement and religious nationalism—a form of *maḥabbah fi sabīlillāh* that transcends personal boundaries. In this light, love becomes a bridge between individual spirituality and social responsibility. It animates the spirit of solidarity and cultivates a sense of universal humanity grounded in Divine compassion.

A synthesis of both thinkers’ perspectives reveals that *maḥabbah* is not merely an emotional motivation, but an epistemological method for apprehending reality. In the Islamic worldview, a heart filled with love becomes the vessel for true knowledge. Love opens the inner space for meanings that transcend the reach of pure logic. As such, *maḥabbah* serves as a bridge between intellect and heart, between rationality and spirituality. Within the framework of Islamic epistemology, love is the light that illuminates the learning process: it purifies intention, guides conduct, and directs knowledge toward righteous action (*‘amal ṣāliḥ*).

In the modern context, the paradigm of love in Islamic education serves as a critique of the instrumental rationalism that dominates contemporary educational systems. Modern education often positions knowledge as a tool for power or economic gain, rather than as a path to truth and humanity. It is in this regard that the educational thought of Imam al-Nawawī and KH. Hasyim Asy’ari gains renewed relevance. Imam al-Nawawī taught that learning must be grounded in *maḥabbah lillāh*—love for the sake of Allah—so that knowledge does not fall into the trap of intellectual arrogance. Meanwhile, KH. Hasyim Asy’ari emphasized that true love does not end with the vertical relationship between human beings and God, but must also be manifested in the horizontal relationship between human beings and one another.

Love, therefore, embodies two complementary epistemological orientations. *The first* is a contemplative orientation, as emphasized by *Imam al-Nawawī*, in which love serves as a means of attaining inner truth through the purification of the heart. *The second* is a practical orientation, as asserted by *KH. Hasyim Asy’ari*, in which love forms the foundation of social solidarity and national devotion. Imam al-Nawawī established the inner, spiritual foundation of love, while KH. Hasyim articulated it through a contextualized praxis aligned with the sociocultural realities of Indonesia. This synergy gives rise to a holistic Islamic epistemology—one that unites contemplation and action, piety and humanity.

From the thoughts of both scholars, three important implications can be drawn. *First*, on a theoretical level, *love becomes the source of a spiritual epistemology*, affirming

that true knowledge does not arise from reason alone, but also from a heart purified and beloved by God. *Second*, on a pedagogical level, *love becomes the foundation of a humanistic educational relationship*: the teacher is not merely an instructor, but a figure of compassion who guides with gentleness; the student is not merely a recipient of knowledge, but a spiritual companion who grows together in the love of truth. The pesantren system of KH. Hasyim Asy'ari stands as a concrete example of a pedagogy of love rooted in exemplary character and prayer. *Third*, on a social level, *love serves as the driving force of nationhood and humanity*. KH. Hasyim positioned love for the homeland as an expression of love for God—one that gives rise to social ethics and a spirit of tolerance within a pluralistic society.

Thus, *mahabbah* as an epistemology of knowledge presents an educational paradigm that unites intellectuality, spirituality, and humanity. *Imam Nawawi* taught that knowledge should be loved for the sake of Allah, not for personal ambition; KH. Hasyim Asy'ari demonstrated that love for Allah must be manifested in love for fellow human beings and for the nation. An education rooted in love does not merely produce intelligent individuals, but also empathetic human beings who bring mercy to the world. This is the true essence of Islamic education: an education that revives the heart, guides the intellect, and honors the human as a compassionate khalifah on Earth.

## TOLERANCE: GLOBAL AND LOCAL INTEGRATION

Tolerance (Tasamuh) in Islamic education functions not only as a social norm but also as a spiritual expression of *tawhid* consciousness—the awareness that all human beings originate from the same Divine source. From a comparative philosophical perspective, the thoughts of Imam Nawawi and KH. Hasyim Asy'ari reveal two complementary faces of Islamic education: *global scholarship*, rooted in the classical intellectual tradition of Islam, and *local wisdom*, grounded in the cultural context of the Indonesian archipelago. The integration of these two dimensions gives rise to an Islamic educational paradigm that is civilized, loving, and respectful of diversity. Imam Nawawi represents the universal dimension of Islam, emphasizing spirituality and the purity of intention in the pursuit of knowledge. In *Adabul 'Ālim wal Muta'allim*, he urges students of knowledge to avoid fanaticism and to be open-minded toward differences of opinion. True knowledge, according to him, is born from a pure and loving heart; differences among scholars are a mercy that enriches the intellectual heritage of Islam.

Meanwhile, KH. Hasyim Asy'ari instilled these values within a social and national context. He developed *tasamuh* not merely as an academic ethic but as a principle of life in the pesantren (Islamic boarding school) and a foundation of nationhood. In the *pesantren* version of *Adabul 'Ālim wal Muta'allim*, he emphasized that students (*santri*) must respect differences in schools of thought (*mazhab*) and opinions, as long as they remain within the framework of sound *'aqidah* (creed). Differences are not meant to create conflict, but to be managed in the spirit of *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) and *rahmah* (compassion). Through this spirit, KH. Hasyim transformed the *pesantren* into a center of civilization, nurturing generations who are knowledgeable, virtuous, and tolerant. He believed that love for Allah must be manifested through respect for humanity and devotion to the nation, for social service is the tangible expression of faith.



The synthesis of their thoughts shows that *tasamuh* (tolerance) is not the result of a compromise with truth, but the fruit of deep conviction. Imam Nawawi laid the spiritual foundation by emphasizing *tawhid* consciousness and purity of heart, while KH. Hasyim Asy’ari translated these principles into social and national practice. Thus, Imam Nawawi directed the vertical dimension of *tasamuh* as an expression of love for Allah, whereas KH. Hasyim enlivened its horizontal dimension as a manifestation of human responsibility. These two approaches complement each other, affirming that true tolerance arises from the balance between faith and humanity—between awareness of God’s greatness and respect for His creation.

In the context of modern education, this integration of the global and the local becomes highly relevant. Modern secular education often sidelines spiritual values and emphasizes competition, while some forms of religious education tend to isolate themselves from dialogue and pluralism. The thoughts of Imam Nawawi and KH. Hasyim Asy’ari offer a middle path: an education rooted in *tawhid* yet open to diversity. Imam Nawawi warned that knowledge without manners breeds arrogance, whereas KH. Hasyim affirmed that religion without tolerance leads to division. In a multicultural society like Indonesia, KH. Hasyim’s values of *tasamuh* serve as a national ethic that unites the people amid differences in religion, culture, and ethnicity.

From this reflection, there are three important implications for Islamic education. *First*, theoretically, *tasamuh* represents the social epistemology of Islam—a framework of thought that demands intellectual openness and scholarly integrity. *Second*, pedagogically, KH. Hasyim’s *pesantren* system serves as a model of integrative education, uniting the classical Islamic heritage with national realities, in harmony with Imam Nawawi’s spirit that emphasizes balance between knowledge, ethics, and love. *Third*, socially, *tasamuh* functions as the foundation of peace education, fostering empathy and a culture of dialogue within a plural society. Thus, *tasamuh*, as the result of spiritual and social integration, represents the culmination of wisdom in Islamic education. Imam Nawawi instilled its universal spiritual dimension, while KH. Hasyim embodied it in grounded human practice. Islamic education that follows their example will give rise to individuals who are cultured in thought, loving in action, and wise in facing differences—realizing Islam as a mercy for all creation (*rahmatan lil-‘alamin*).

## CONCLUSION

A comparative analysis of the thoughts of Imam Nawawi and KH. Hasyim Asy’ari affirms that both are rooted in an Islamic educational paradigm that places ethics (*adab*), love, and tolerance as the three main pillars of holistic human formation. Their concern was not limited to how knowledge is taught, but also to how it is internalized and manifested in noble behavior. Their ideas reflect the continuity between the universality of classical Islamic scholarship and the locality of Nusantara culture, forming an integrative, spiritual, and humanistic model of Islamic education. Imam Nawawi emphasized the transcendental dimension of learning—that true knowledge can only be attained through purity of heart and sincerity of intention—while KH. Hasyim Asy’ari expanded this principle into an educational system grounded in social, national, and humanitarian contexts.





First, for Imam Nawawi and KH. Hasyim Asy'ari, *adab* (ethics or refined conduct) is the epistemological root of knowledge. Imam Nawawi viewed *adab* as a spiritual prerequisite for receiving the light of knowledge. He emphasized that knowledge without *adab* is a moral emptiness that leads to intellectual arrogance. In *Adabul 'Ālim wal Muta'allim*, he wrote that a student must purify his intention, distance himself from hypocrisy and pride, and show wholehearted respect toward his teacher. KH. Hasyim Asy'ari further developed this principle through the concept of takhalli–tahalli–tajalli—that is, purification from negative traits, cultivation of noble character, and manifestation of spirituality through social action. In the *pesantren* system, *adab* becomes the soul of education: students (*santri*) are trained to be polite to their teachers, respectful toward knowledge, and virtuous in social life. Thus, *adab* is not merely an individual ethical norm but also an epistemological foundation that ensures knowledge produces wisdom and public good (*maslahah*).

Second, love (*mahabbah*) is the spirit of Islamic education. Imam Nawawi regarded love as the spiritual energy that guides human beings toward Allah and truth. He emphasized that knowledge not grounded in love for Allah and one's teacher will bring no benefit. *Mahabbah* nurtures patience, sincerity, and moral humility, transforming the process of learning into an act of worship. Meanwhile, KH. Hasyim Asy'ari interpreted love as the spirit of service (*khidmah*), which fosters social solidarity and national responsibility. In the *pesantren* tradition, love is manifested through respect for teachers, brotherhood among students, and dedication to the community. Learning becomes worship, teaching becomes service, and loving others becomes an expression of love for Allah. Thus, love functions as a spiritual epistemology that transforms education into an inner journey toward wisdom—integrating reason, heart, and action into a single spiritual unity.

Third, tolerance (*tasamuh*) represents the pinnacle of spiritual and social maturity in Islamic education. Imam Nawawi emphasized the virtues of *wara'* (moral vigilance) and *tawadhu'* (humility) as essential foundations for avoiding fanaticism and respecting differences of opinion. He viewed diversity as a divine mercy that enriches the treasury of knowledge. KH. Hasyim Asy'ari expanded this idea within the context of Indonesia's nationhood and pluralism. In the *pesantren* version of *Adabul 'Ālim wal Muta'allim*, he stressed the importance of respecting differences among schools of thought (*mazhab*) and religious perspectives as long as they remain within the framework of Islamic creed (*'aqidah*). He established *tasamuh* as both a social ethic of the *pesantren* and a foundation of brotherhood within a plural society. In his view, tolerance is not a compromise with truth, but an expression of the maturity of faith—the awareness that all human beings originate from the same Divine source.

Through these three pillars—adab, love, and tolerance—both thinkers present a holistic paradigm of Islamic education: knowledge is purified by ethics, animated by love, and perfected by tolerance. These three are not merely moral values, but a philosophical system that shapes both an Islamic epistemology grounded in civility and an educational anthropology that humanizes the learner. From this synthesis of thought arise several important implications for the development of contemporary Islamic education.



1. Philosophical Implication of Education – The Reintegration of Knowledge and Spirituality. The thoughts of Imam Nawawi and KH. Hasyim Asy’ari highlight the need for a reconciliation between knowledge and spiritual values. Amid the global ethical crisis brought about by the secularization of knowledge, Islamic education must restore the function of knowledge as a means of self-purification and a path toward wisdom. *Adab* should serve as the core of the curriculum, not merely as a moral supplement.
2. Epistemological Implication – Love as the Path of Knowledge. *Mahabbah* (love) functions as an epistemological energy that transforms the learning process from a mere intellectual activity into a spiritual journey. Through love, knowledge is grasped not only by reason but also by the heart. The relationship between teacher and student is not defined by formal hierarchy, but united by affection and prayer. Education grounded in love revives the affective and ethical dimensions of learning.
3. Social Implication – Tolerance as the Foundation of Civilization. In the social realm, *tasamuh* (tolerance) stands as a core value that upholds interreligious and intercultural harmony. An Islamic education grounded in tolerance will cultivate a generation that is both religious and pluralistic, capable of preserving brotherhood and social justice.
4. Practical Implication – An Integrative Global-Local Educational Model. The collaboration of ideas between Imam Nawawi and KH. Hasyim Asy’ari gives rise to a model of glocalized education—a system that absorbs the depth of classical Islamic tradition while adapting to the social context of the Indonesian archipelago. This model is highly relevant for the renewal of *pesantren* and *madrasah* education, enabling them to become centers of learning that are open, inclusive, and globally competitive.

Philosophically, Islamic education according to Imam Nawawi and KH. Hasyim Asy’ari is a path toward complete humanity—a spiritual journey toward wisdom. *Adab* ensures that knowledge bears the fruit of wisdom; *love* infuses education with compassion; and *tolerance* perfects it through social harmony. An Islamic education grounded in these three pillars does not stop at the transmission of knowledge but transforms into a process of spiritual and social awakening. In a modern world marked by moral crisis and polarization, the paradigm of *adab*, *love*, and *tolerance* offers a new direction for Islamic education—an education that liberates without losing sanctity, globalizes without losing its roots, and humanizes without losing faith. This is the kind of education that guides human beings to become knowledgeable, virtuous, and humane—the embodiment of the ideal *insān kāmil* envisioned by Islam.

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