

INTEGRATING MULTI-MADHHAB SUFISM IN PESANTREN EDUCATION

Zen Amrullah¹, Agus Maimun², Mohammad Asrori³

¹²³Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang; Indonesia

Correspondence Email; zenamrullah@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study examines the integration of multi-madhhab Sufism within the educational systems of Pesantren Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Sukorejo and Pesantren Zainul Hasan Genggong in East Java, employing a qualitative multi-case descriptive approach. Although both institutions formally adhere to the Sufi madhhabs recognized by Nahdlatul Ulama, namely Al-Ghazali and Al-Junaidi, field findings reveal that they organically sustain four madhhabs simultaneously: Al-Ghazali, Al-Junaidi, Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani, and Abu Hasan Al-Shadzili. Al-Ghazali dominates the cognitive domain through classical text instruction, while Al-Jailani and Al-Shadzili thrive in the ritual dimension through daily devotional practices (*wirid*), hagiographic recitations (*manaqib*), and litanies (*shalawat*). Al-Junaidi persists as a normative symbol without direct textual implementation, indicating that epistemic legitimacy in pesantren relies not only on textual authority but also on the charismatic authority of the kiai and oral tradition. A key difference lies in their pedagogical orientation: Sukorejo adopts an academic-institutional approach emphasizing *dzauf* (spiritual experiential awareness), whereas Genggong favors a personal-practical model centered on *riyadlah* (inner spiritual discipline) and the master-disciple relationship. This integration emerges organically from the interplay of kiai authority, local tradition, and the need for character formation, thereby preserving Sufism's relevance as the core of spiritual education without compromising its epistemic authenticity.

Keywords

Education, Multimadhhabic Sufism, Pesantren, Sufism.



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INTRODUCTION

Sufism is no longer the exclusive domain of Sufi orders or pesantren but has become a global discourse addressing modern spiritual emptiness. In the West, its aesthetic inspires artistic works depicting Islamic mystical experiences (Kuehn, 2023). In Indonesia, Sufism is growing through community religious gatherings that seek to counter spiritual voids caused by materialism and nihilism (Huda, 2008; Sauka, 2020). Scholars in Islamic psychology (Bastaman, 2011; Wiwaha et al., 2022) identify the primary problems of modern humans as a loss of life's meaning and inner turmoil, which cannot be resolved by rationalism alone. Consequently, many are turning back to spirituality, including Sufism (Tisnowijaya, 2011).

Unfortunately, in contemporary Islamic education systems, the dimension of Sufism is often marginalized in formal curricula (Faruq et al., 2024; Ilzam Dhaifi, Zukhriyan Zakariya, 2022), even though the essence of Islamic education is the formation of a balanced *insan kamil* (complete human being), integrating intellect, spirit, and ethics (Saifullah Idris, Tabrani ZA, 2018). An academic problem arises as modern Islamic education tends to overlook *tazkiyatun nufus* (purification of the soul), the core of Sufistic education. Therefore, it is crucial to examine how traditional pesantren maintain Sufi teachings in their educational systems, both epistemically and practically, and how their model of integrating multiple schools (multiple madhab) of Sufism becomes a distinctive strength for contemporary Islamic education.

Pesantren Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Sukorejo and Pesantren Zainul Hasan Genggong are concrete examples of Islamic education institutions that not only preserve Sufism but also integrate various schools of Sufi thought into a single system. In Sukorejo, Al-Ghazali's *Iḥyā 'Ulūm al-Dīn* is the primary text, but they also use Ibn 'Athāillah's *al-Hikam*, texts from the Shadhiliyah order, and the teachings of Abdul Qodir Al-Jailani through the study of Al-Ghunya, regular prayers (*wirid*), and commemorative rituals (*manaqib*) (As'ad As'ad, Mukhammad Baharun, 2020; Murtadlo, 2019). In Genggong, the teachings of KH. Moh. Hasan and other masters form a diverse spiritual foundation combining elements of miraculous grace (*karamah*), remembrance (*dzikir*), and Sufi ethics from various figures (Suradi et al., 2021). This integration happens not only on a cognitive level but also in daily practice. Students (*santri*) are trained through selfless service (*khidmah*), spiritual discipline (*mujahadah*), and a deep spiritual bond with the kiai as their guide (Kadir, 2012). However, a significant academic problem arises from this integration: a lack of systematic documentation of the specific Sufi schools being used, minimal conceptual exploration of how these different traditions

interrelate, and the potential for students to develop a confused understanding of Sufi practices blended with local culture. Therefore, a study of this multi-school Sufism in both pesantren is important to map how Sufism can remain relevant without losing its original, fundamental principles.

The contribution of the multi-madhab Sufism approach to character formation and the socio-religious life of students is profoundly evident. At Sukorejo in Situbondo, East Java, students are not only introduced to doctrine but also undergo spiritual processes through devotional practices, voluntary fasting, and the internalization of noble moral values embedded in the teacher-student relationship (Isriyah & Ayun, 2022; Muhajir, 2024; Zamili, 2014). Similarly, at Genggong, spiritual closeness to the kiai and the tradition of reciting spiritual biographies (*manaqib*) strengthen emotional bonds and faith in the concept of divine blessing (*barokah*), which forms an integral part of the students' spiritual construction (Aziz & Qalyubi, 2019; Fauzi, 2017; Muhammad, 2024). This demonstrates that integrating Sufi teachings from various schools does not weaken but rather enriches the students' character and religious practices. However, no academic study has yet comprehensively mapped the forms of this integration within the framework of pesantren education. Therefore, this research is essential for exploring in detail how the epistemic structure of multi-madhab Sufism is constructed and its influence on cultural and spiritual transformation in pesantren education. Contemporary studies on Sufism cover several important themes, ranging from the historicity and institutionalization of classical Sufi schools and the plurality of spiritual expressions in Sufi orders (*tarekat*), to the epistemological tension between philosophy and intuition, and the integration of Sufism with modern sciences such as psychology. This variety demonstrates the dynamic and adaptable nature of Sufi epistemology in responding to contemporary challenges.

A foundational theme in Sufi studies is the historicity and institutionalization of Sufi schools, particularly the Baghdad and Khurasan schools. Muhammad Shahid Habib (2023) examined their development in the 3rd century AH/9th century CE, showing that both schools had established systematic bodies of Sufi knowledge that stood parallel to other Islamic disciplines like jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and exegesis (*tafsir*). The Baghdad school was characterized by a calm, rational approach grounded in Islamic law (sobriety), while the Khurasan school placed greater emphasis on emotional and ecstatic spiritual experience (ecstasy) (Habib, 2023; Kurbanovich, 2025). Strengthening this mapping, Fahmi Rizal Mahendra (2024) elaborates on the rational character of the Baghdad school and the intuitive nature of the Khurasan school. He asserts that these two

schools formed the primary foundation for the growth of classical Sufism and established the epistemic basis for teachings throughout Islamic history (Mahendra et al., 2024).

Beyond historical discussions, another important theme is the plurality of Sufi approaches within a single spiritual order (*tarekat*). Qudsia Batool and Mohammad Dilshad Mohabba (2023) explore this theme through a study of the Suhrawardi-Bukhari order. They trace two figures from the same lineage (*silsilah*) who had different spiritual approaches: Syed Ahmed Kabir, who represented sobriety, and Makhdum Jahanian Jahangasht, who symbolized ecstasy. Their findings show that diverse spiritual expressions can coexist harmoniously within a single spiritual tradition, indicating the inherent flexibility of Sufi epistemology (Batool, 2021; Sheikh, 2018).

Meanwhile, the epistemological tension between philosophy, divine revelation, and spiritual intuition is the focus of Seyed Amir Hossein Ashgari's (2025) study. He outlines the conflict between two main currents in contemporary Shia madrasa education: those who support the integration of philosophy, Sufism, and revelation (as seen in the School of Najaf), and the proponents of the Maktab-i Tafaḳīk (the Separation School) who reject this approach. This tension impacts curriculum design, the structure of religious authority, and the boundaries of epistemological legitimacy in Islamic studies (Ashgari, 2025).

Furthermore, the integration of Sufism with modern science, specifically transpersonal psychology, is the central theme in the research of Sri Haryanto and Mohammad Muslih (2024). Through a qualitative study at Pesantren Al-Huda in Lombok, they found that the practice of *muraqabah* (a form of Sufi meditation) can deepen spiritual awareness and support an individual's psychological development. This study demonstrates that the Sufi tradition of inner purification (*tazkiyat al-nafs*) can harmoniously align with theories of expanded states of consciousness in psychology, creating a holistic framework for nurturing the soul and resolving existential crises (Haryanto & Muslih, 2024).

None of these existing studies has examined the multi-madhab Sufism that is authentically and simultaneously practiced within pesantren. Although each contributes to understanding specific aspects of Sufism—whether historical, epistemological, or related to individual practice—none have focused on how traditional Islamic educational institutions like pesantren actively and concurrently integrate various schools of Sufism into their educational systems. In the context of Indonesia's pluralistic and dynamic pesantren, the reality of using more than one Sufi school (such as the Ghazalian, Junaidian, Qadiriyyah, and Shadhiliyyah traditions) is common practice. However,

it has escaped academic attention. This research identifies a gap in the literature: the lack of exploration into how the practice of multi-madhab Sufism operates within pesantren education.

In his monumental work *Sufism: The Formative Period*, Ahmet T. Karamustafa (2007) emphasizes that from its earliest emergence, Sufism did not develop as a single, unified system. Instead, it formed as a diverse network of spiritual practices and thoughts, shaped by specific social and geographical contexts. Two of the most influential poles were the Khurasan and Baghdad schools. The Khurasan school emphasized an expressive, ascetic, and sometimes ecstatic spiritual approach. In contrast, the Baghdad school developed with a tendency towards ethical, normative, and rational frameworks within Sunni orthodoxy. This distinction is not merely methodological; it also demonstrates an epistemological diversity in understanding and realizing the divine experience. Karamustafa states that Sufism in this formative period reflected a legitimate plurality of religious lifestyles, which later became the foundation for the subsequent development of Sufi orders (*tariqas*) and educational systems (Karamustafa, 2007).

This diversity of Sufi schools, as mapped by Karamustafa, has important implications for studying pesantren education, particularly in integrating practical Sufism into student learning. Pesantren education, especially within the Nahdlatul Ulama tradition, often combines elements from various Sufi streams—both the sharia-oriented approach of the Baghdad school and the contemplative, inward-looking nature of the Khurasan school. This phenomenon can be understood as a form of multi-madhab Sufism—a pedagogical and spiritual approach that accommodates diverse Sufi traditions within a single, comprehensive learning system. Through this framework, the epistemology of Sufi education does not rely solely on the transmission of classical texts but also on the formation of inner and transcendental religious experiences. This approach aligns with the Sufistic pluralism that has existed since the formative period (Karamustafa, 2007).

Therefore, this paper aims to explore and examine the existence of multi-madhab Sufism in pesantren education as an epistemological and practical framework. The study focuses on two major pesantren in the "*Tapal Kuda*" (Horseshoe) region of East Java: Pesantren Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Sukorejo Situbondo and Pesantren Zainul Hasan Genggong Probolinggo. These two pesantren were selected due to their strong Sufistic character, evident in their doctrines, traditional practices (*amaliah*), and the spiritual experiences transmitted through their culture and education. This study is expected to provide theoretical and practical contributions to understanding how multi-madhab Sufism shapes the distinctive Islamic education system of pesantren, while also offering an

alternative approach for addressing the spiritual crisis in modern education.

METHOD

This research employs an interpretative qualitative approach with a descriptive multi-case study design, focusing on the integration of multi-madhab Sufism in pesantren education at Pesantren Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Sukorejo and Pesantren Zainul Hasan Genggong in East Java. Data collected from these two pesantren were categorized into three types: first, words, phrases, and spoken utterances; second, actions, behaviors, and activities, both individual and organized; and third, written records, classical texts (*kitab*), and books. Data were gathered from multiple sources, including the caretaker leaders (*kiai*), administrators/teachers (*ustad*), students (*santri*), and support staff (*khodim*). For observational data, the researcher documented the *santri's* daily routines from their early morning activities starting at 03:00 until their day concluded at 24:00. Documentary data, including archives and reference materials used by the pesantren community, were also collected from both institutions. Data analysis was conducted through reduction, presentation, conclusion drawing, and verification. The researcher simplified and organized the data on Sufi schools, performed critical analysis using relevant theories, and compared the findings with previous related studies to ensure comprehensive and validated results.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The integration of multi-school Sufism at Pesantren Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Sukorejo and Pesantren Zainul Hasan Genggong is not a superficial phenomenon limited to institutional formalities. Rather, it is an organic process born from the complex interaction between the authority of the *kiai*, local traditions, the need for student character education, and the dynamics of transregional spiritual networks (Muhajir, 2024; Suradi et al., 2021; Syakur, 2024). Although administratively and ideologically under the auspices of Nahdlatul Ulama, which normatively recognizes two main Sufi schools—those of Imam Al-Ghazali and Imam Al-Junaidi—the reality of daily educational and spiritual practice in these two pesantren reveals a much richer and more dynamic plurality of schools (Muhajir, 2024; Muhammad, 2024; Saifullah, 2024).

The findings of this study will not only map the presence of four Sufi schools (Al-Ghazali, Al-Junaidi, Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani, and Abu Hasan Al-Shadzili) within the educational systems of

both pesantren but will also reveal how each school is integrated, in what form (through texts, rituals, teacher-student relationships, or devotional practices), and why there are differences in emphasis between one pesantren and the other. Furthermore, these findings will demonstrate that epistemic legitimacy in the pesantren world does not always depend solely on written textual authority but also on oral tradition, the charisma of the kiai, and collective spiritual experience (Abdel-Kader, 2018).

This mapping is crucial because, until now, many studies on Sufism in *pesantren* have tended to reduce this complex reality into a single framework—typically that of Al-Ghazali—as if *pesantren* were merely the "successors" of Ghazalian thought alone (Karamustafa, 2007; Martin van Bruinessen, 1994). In reality, as the following findings will demonstrate, the influences of Al-Jailani and Al-Shadzili are in fact strongly alive within the ritual and cultural dimensions (Asmuki, 2024; Islam, 2024). Meanwhile, Al-Junaidi—although cited as a normative reference—leaves almost no textual trace, instead persisting primarily as a symbol of NU (Nahdlatul Ulama) identity (Abdel-Kader, 2018; Al-Tusi, 1960; Ridlo, 2024; Yaqin, 2024). The following table briefly summarizes the findings regarding the Sufi schools:

Table 1. The Integration of Multi-School Sufism in Pesantren Education

No.	Mazhab Tasawuf	Pesantren Sukorejo	Pesantren Genggong
1.	Imam Al-Ghazali	Dominant Texts: <i>Ihya'</i> , <i>Minhatus Saniyah</i> , <i>Kifayatul Atqiya'</i> Focus: Ethics, soul purification, inner deeds	Dominant Texts: <i>Ihya'</i> , <i>Bidayat al-Hidayah</i> Focus: Spiritual excellence (Ihsan), knowledge-practice-gnosis
2.	Imam Al-Junaidi	Mentioned, but original texts are not taught - Only appears in quotations within commentary texts - No direct implementation	Name only, not taught - Considered too linguistically complex/containing ecstatic expressions (syathahat) No original texts are taught
3.	Syaikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani	Actively taught & practiced - Text: Al-Ghunyah - Devotional prayers (wirid) and hagiographic readings (manaqib) - Strong influence from KH. Hariri	Actively practiced - Devotional prayers (wirid) in Munjiyat al-Mubarakah - Manaqib readings (taught during Ramadan) - Lineage connection and visits from his descendants
5.	Syaikh Abu Hasan Al-Shadzili	Taught through derivative texts - Al-Hikam of Ibn 'Ata'illah (by Kiai Azaim)	Practiced through devotional prayers - Shalawat al-Masyisyi in Munjiyat

· Understood as Sufi doctrine, not as a formal order (thariqah)	· Original texts are not taught, but the wirid is actively practiced
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Source: (Asmuki, 2024; Haris, 2024; Muhajir, 2024; Muhammad, 2024)

Sufi Schools in the Education of Pesantren Sukorejo and Pesantren Genggong

The Understanding of Sufism in Pesantren Sukorejo

Within the context of Pesantren Sukorejo, Sufism is understood with varying emphases by its members. One of the pesantren figures, Muzakki, emphasizes that Sufism relates to the dimension of soul purification, or *tazkiyatun nafs*. This encompasses cleansing the heart and soul through habituating noble traits such as patience (*sabar*), contentment (*qana'ah*), reliance on God (*tawakkal*), and avoiding characteristics like ostentation (*riya'*) (Muzakki, 2024). This understanding places Sufism within the realm of morality and daily practice, making it appear an integral part of the students' (*santri*) ethical education.

Meanwhile, a senior teacher at the pesantren links Sufism to a deeper inner experience, referred to as *dzaug* or spiritual taste. According to him, the principle held in this understanding is the classical expression *man lam yadzuq lam ya'rif*—whoever has not tasted, will not know. To reach this inner experience, students are encouraged to follow practices prescribed by the pesantren, such as reciting the Ratib al-Haddad litany, which is believed to bring about spiritual virtues and a profound sense of the divine (Zain, 2024). This view aligns with the interpretation of KH. Afifuddin Muhajir, who views Sufism as a matter of heart-based actions (*qolbiyah*). According to him, the core of Sufism is the clarity of the heart, where the heart becomes the source of spiritual behavior and ethics that reflect a person's inner dimension (Muhajir, 2024).

From these diverse understandings, it can be concluded that Pesantren Sukorejo views Sufism as a spiritual process that unites the dimensions of soul purification, experiential taste, and heart clarity. All of these are then expressed through ritual practices like litanies (*wirid*), as well as in the embodiment of noble character as a form of devotion to God.

Sufi Schools in Pesantren Sukorejo

Pesantren Sukorejo has deep historical roots in Sufi practice. Like other pesantren in Indonesia, the determination of which Sufi schools to follow is done selectively, considering the compatibility of the teachings with the *pesantren's* educational tradition. Muzakki explains that in terms of philosophical framework, Pesantren Sukorejo largely refers to Imam al-Ghazali. However, in its implementation, Sufism is practiced in the form of ethics and practical devotions (*amaliah*). He mentioned several texts studied at the pesantren, such as *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim*, *Kifayatul Atqiya'*,

Minhatus Saniyah, and *Mukhtashar Ihya' Ulumuddin*. Despite this, he himself seemed uncertain when assessing whether *Ta'lim al-Muta'allim* could be categorized as a Sufi text, as its primary focus is on learning ethics (Muzakki, 2024). This indicates some ambiguity in distinguishing between the philosophical and practical aspects of al-Ghazali's Sufism, although in practice, Pesantren Sukorejo never separates the two.

A further explanation was provided by Hasan Saifullah, who affirmed that the pesantren follows the two main schools recognized by Nahdlatul Ulama: al-Ghazali and al-Junaidi. However, he emphasized that in teaching practice, the works of al-Ghazali are more dominant, while the works of al-Junaidi are not found in the *pesantren's* formal curriculum (Saifullah, 2024). Thus, al-Junaidi's presence is more symbolic or as a conceptual reference quoted in other texts, not as a primary source of learning.

In addition to these two figures, the pesantren also adopts the teachings of Syaikh Abu Hasan al-Syadzili. However, the influence of this school manifests more in the form of Sufi thought taught through the book *al-Hikam* by Ibn 'Ata'illah al-Sakandari. This text was once taught by KH. Azaim, albeit only for alumni circles and not part of the core pesantren curriculum (Zain, 2024).

KH. Afifuddin Muhajir asserted that Pesantren Sukorejo follows four major figures in Sufism: al-Ghazali, al-Junaidi, al-Syadzili, and Abdul Qadir al-Jailani, in line with the general tradition of NU pesantren (Muhajir, 2024). Although formally NU only recognizes two schools—al-Ghazali and al-Junaidi—in practice, Pesantren Sukorejo also incorporates the thought of al-Shadzili and al-Jailani, both through texts and ritual practices.

The influence of Abdul Qadir al-Jailani is felt very strongly, particularly through traditions inherited from KH. Hariri. Al-Jailani's book, *al-Ghunyah li Thalibi Thariq al-Haqq*, is also taught at the pesantren, although on an incidental basis and dependent on the instructor's initiative (Asmuki, 2024). Furthermore, the recitation of the *manaqib* (hagiography) of Abdul Qadir al-Jailani forms an important part of the *pesantren's* spiritual rituals, demonstrating the strong cultural dimension of this school's influence.

The Concept of Sufism in Pesantren Genggong

The understanding of Sufism at Pesantren Genggong also demonstrates diversity. Haris, one of the pesantren's figures, positions Sufism within the framework of the Hadith of Jibril, which divides religion into Islam (submission), Iman (faith), and Ihsan (spiritual excellence). In his view, Sufism is synonymous with the dimension of Ihsan - the perfection of worship as a path to draw

closer to Allah (Haris, 2024). This perspective is reinforced by Fadli Syakur, who explains that Ihsan encompasses both vertical dimensions toward Allah and horizontal dimensions toward fellow human beings. Thus, Sufism in Genggong is understood as a spiritual teaching that cannot be separated from social ethics (Syakur, 2024).

In contrast, Hasan Ridlo emphasizes Sufism as a process of *riyadlah* (spiritual exercise) to draw closer to Allah. From this viewpoint, the path taken - whether through tarekat (Sufi order), teaching, or other forms of worship - is not crucial, as long as the ultimate goal is *taqarrub ilallah* (closeness to God) (Ridlo, 2024). This understanding is strengthened by Hifdil Islam, who asserts that Sufism represents a student's spiritual effort and endeavor to become closer to Allah (Islam, 2024).

Muhammad adds a perspective rooted in al-Ghazali's thought, emphasizing three main components of Sufism: knowledge (*ilmu*), practice (*amal*), and spiritual realization (*ma'rifat*). According to him, these three must progress together to produce genuine morality. Additionally, he cites al-Junaidi's view, which stresses the importance of balance between fear (*khauf*) and hope (*raja'*) in spiritual experience (Muhammad, 2024).

A more philosophical approach comes from Ainul Yaqin, who considers Sufism as a path to liberate the soul from the domination of base desires and worldly attachments. According to him, a Sufi must be able to be "at peace with themselves," thus remaining unshaken by external pressures. If someone remains attached to the world, they merely possess knowledge about Sufism rather than its genuine experience (Yaqin, 2024). From these diverse perspectives, it appears that Pesantren Genggong positions Sufism as a spiritual endeavor emphasizing aspects of effort, soul liberation, and perfection in worship.

Sufi Schools in Pesantren Genggong

Similar to its approach in jurisprudence, Pesantren Genggong also established its affiliated schools of Sufism from its early foundation. Formally, the pesantren declares its adherence to the schools of Al-Ghazali and Al-Junaidi, in line with the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) tradition. This was emphasized by Muhammad, who stated that as part of the Ahlus Sunnah wal Jama'ah an-Nahdliyah, the pesantren consistently refers to these two major figures (Muhammad, 2024). Haris also stressed that Genggong adheres to a moderate Sufism (*tawassuth*), which is not extreme, by referencing the teachings of Al-Ghazali and Al-Junaidi (Haris, 2024).

However, in practice, Al-Junaidi's presence is largely symbolic. Direct teaching of Al-Junaidi's original works is not found. Several informants even admitted they only heard Al-Junaidi's

name from the kiai's sermons without ever studying his original texts. The reason, according to Ainul Yaqin, is that the language in Al-Junaidi's works is considered too elevated and laden with ecstatic expressions (*syathahat*), making them difficult to teach to the students (*santri*) (Ridlo, 2024; Yaqin, 2024).

On the other hand, the influence of Syaikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani and Abu Hasan Ali-Syadzili is quite strong in this pesantren. This is evident in the text *Munjiyat al-Mubarakah*, which contains various devotional prayers (*wirid*) and *salawat* derived from these two figures, including the *Shalawat al-Masyisyi* and specific *wirid* of Al-Jailani (Islam, 2024). His tradition is reinforced by special study sessions on the *karomah* (miraculous gifts) of Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani held during Ramadan (Hidayatullah, 2024).

The spiritual connection to Al-Jailani is further strengthened by the regular visits of Muhammad Fadhil Jailani, a descendant of Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani, to Pesantren Genggong. These visits hold deep symbolic meaning, as this pesantren is also believed to have a genealogical lineage (*silsilah nasab*) connected to this major figure (Syakur, 2024). Nevertheless, Al-Jailani's works available at the pesantren are rarely taught in their entirety due to their high level of difficulty, so they are only used in the form of excerpts (Yaqin, 2024).

According to Fadli Syakur, the plurality of Sufi schools in Genggong is also influenced by the diverse backgrounds of its caretakers (*pengasuh*). Many of them are alumni of various pesantren, both within Indonesia and abroad—including Yemen and Mecca—thus bringing with them different devotional practices and Sufi tradition (Syakur, 2024). This enriches the Sufi practices at the pesantren, even while formally maintaining its reference to Al-Ghazali.

Thus, although institutionally Pesantren Genggong follows the schools of Al-Ghazali and Al-Junaidi in accordance with NU, in daily practice it also exhibits strong influences from Al-Jailani and Al-Shadzili. This demonstrates the development of a plurality of Sufi schools within the *pesantren's* spiritual education tradition.

Discussion

Sufism Schools in Islamic Boarding School Education

Understanding Sufism in Islamic Boarding Schools

The pesantren of Sukorejo and Genggong share a similar fundamental understanding of Sufism, which can be summarized in three key points: First, both view Sufism as a spiritual path to draw closer to God through specific devotional practices. Second, they agree that Sufism focuses on

purifying the heart and soul (*tazkiyat al-nafs*) and developing good moral character. Third, Sufism is practiced through spiritual exercises including regular prayers (*wirid*), remembrance of God (*dzikir*), spiritual discipline (*riyadlah*), and embodying spiritual excellence (*ihsan*) in daily life.

In the context of *ihsan*, Shahida Bilqies (Bilqies, 2014a) explains that *Ihsan* represents the highest dimension beyond Islam and Iman. It is regarded as the ultimate spiritual achievement for a Muslim, where one attains a profound awareness of religious truth. In the Prophet's Hadith, *Ihsan* is understood as a state of worship where one acts as if they can see Allah (Al-Bukhari, 2002). Based on this Hadith, Sufis assert that another term for *ihsan* is *mushahadah* (direct spiritual witnessing) (Bilqies, 2014b).

However, these two pesantren differ in their specific emphases when understanding Sufism. Pesantren Sukorejo places greater importance on the aspect of spiritual experience (*Dzauq*) in Sufism, while Pesantren Genggong focuses more on Sufism as a process of disciplined effort (*Riyadlah*) grounded in knowledge and practice. In other words, Sukorejo emphasizes the dimension of inner experience, whereas Genggong stresses the active struggle to achieve closeness to Allah.

Specifically, Pesantren Sukorejo places greater emphasis on Sufism as direct spiritual experience (*Dzauq*) and cultivating purity of heart through regular devotional practices (*wirid*) and acts of worship (Al-Ghazali, 1282). Meanwhile, Pesantren Genggong views Sufism as an integral part of Islamic law, emphasizing a balanced approach that combines knowledge (*ilmu*), practice (*amal*), and spiritual realization (*ma'rifat*), with spiritual discipline (*riyadlah*) serving as the means to draw closer to Allah.

According to (Dodego, 2021) this balanced approach originates from Al-Ghazali's intellectual tradition, which successfully reintegrated Sufism into mainstream Islamic teachings. Dodego's analysis of Al-Ghazali's framework demonstrates how he harmonized Islam's exoteric and esoteric dimensions. This balance is particularly evident in Al-Ghazali's detailed explanations of various spiritual stations (*maqamat*). Dodego further elaborates that theoretical knowledge (cognitive) generates spiritual states (*haal*), while these experiential states (affective), in turn, facilitate practical implementation (psychomotor). These distinct approaches between the two pesantren reflect the rich diversity in understanding Sufism within Islamic boarding school communities. Despite their different emphases, both institutions ultimately share the same fundamental objectives: drawing closer to Allah and achieving spiritual purification.

Based on the above explanation, the author concludes that Sufism is a spiritual path to draw closer to God through specific practices aimed at purifying the heart (*tazkiyah al-nafs*) and cultivating moral character. In practice, Sufism involves various spiritual exercises—such as devotional prayers (*wirid*), remembrance of God (*dzikir*), self-discipline (*riyadlah*), and the embodiment of spiritual excellence (*ihsan*) in daily life.

Although sharing the same ultimate goal, Sufism can be approached through different perspectives. Pesantren Sukorejo emphasizes spiritual experience (*Dzauq*) and heart purification through devotional practices and worship, while Pesantren Genggong views Sufism as an integral part of Islamic law, maintaining a balance between knowledge, practice, and spiritual realization (*ilmu, amal, ma'rifat*), with spiritual discipline (*riyadlah*) as the means to approach Allah. Thus, Sufism reflects diverse methods and approaches in soul purification, while remaining oriented toward the same primary objective: drawing closer to Allah and achieving spiritual perfection.

The Plurality of Sufi Schools in Pesantren

Sufism is one of the Islamic teachings most closely associated with pesantren. In keeping with its nature, Sufism guides humans by prioritizing intimacy and a close relationship between the individual and Allah. In this context, drawing the students (*santri*) closer to God is the primary focus of their religious education.

The Sufi teachings in a pesantren are inevitably influenced by the resident scholar's (kiai) inclination toward a particular Sufi school. The Sufism taught by the kiai is connected to a specific Sufi order or tradition. Both Pesantren Sukorejo and Pesantren Genggong adhere to the Sufi schools recognized by Nahdlatul Ulama (NU): those of Al-Ghazali and Al-Junaidi.

These pesantren position Sufism as an integral part of Islamic education, oriented toward nurturing the students' ethics, spirituality, and morality. By following a moderate form of Sunni Sufism, both institutions emphasize a balance between Islamic law (*sharia*) and inner truth (*haqiqah*), while avoiding extreme practices—whether overly liberal or excessively rigid and exclusive forms of Sufism.

Furthermore, both pesantren are also influenced by the teachings of other major Sufi figures, such as Abdul Qadir al-Jailani and Abu Hasan al-Shadzili. However, their implementation shows notable differences. The influence of Abdul Qadir al-Jailani's Sufism in these pesantren extends beyond moral and spiritual teachings to include practical manifestations such as specific devotional prayers (*wirid*), recitations of his hagiography (*manaqib*), and study sessions about his miraculous

deeds (*karomah*) and his struggles in the Sufi path. Meanwhile, the teachings of Abu Hasan al-Shadhili are primarily found in the form of devotional prayers (*wirid*) practiced by both students and pesantren leaders, although the core texts discussing his philosophical thought are not directly taught within the formal pesantren curriculum.

The explanation above clarifies that the teachings of these four scholars are not all equally or explicitly verifiable in practice. In reality, among the Sufi authorities referenced by Pesantren Sukorejo and Pesantren Genggong, the influence of only two scholars is clearly evident, both through doctrinal texts and the recitation of their hagiographies (*manaqib*) (Ishaq, 2010; Pesantren, 2015; Sholikhin, 2009), Al-Ghazali and Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani.

Al-Ghazali's influence on both pesantren is evident through the widespread study of his works, such as *Minhaj Al-'Abidin*, *Bidayah Al-Hidayah*, *Ihya' Ulum Al-Din*, and others. Meanwhile, the influence of Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani is acknowledged by Asmuki (Vice Secretary of Ma'had Aly) at Pesantren Sukorejo. He stated that Al-Jailani's impact on the form of Sufism practiced at Pesantren Sukorejo is substantial. According to Asmuki, the thoughts, quotations, and practices of the late KH. Hariri frequently referenced the Sufism of Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani. Furthermore, Al-Jailani's work *Al-Ghunyah* is also taught at this pesantren, although Asmuki noted that its study depends on the instructors' discretion and is not part of the regular curriculum at Pesantren Sukorejo. In contrast to Pesantren Sukorejo, Pesantren Genggong not only studies the text concerning the spiritual miracles (*karamah*) of Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani by KH. Ahmad Yasin Asymuni, but also regularly recites devotional prayers (*wirid*) considered to be connected to the spiritual lineage of Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani. Thus, the intellectual and doctrinal legacy of these two scholars remains clearly visible and actively preserved in both pesantren to this day.

The legacy of these two scholars remains clearly present in Pesantren Sukorejo to this day.

In contrast, no works by Abu Qasim Al-Junaidi Al-Baghdadi are found in either Pesantren Sukorejo or Pesantren Genggong, despite acknowledgments from Kiai Afifudin Muhajir (Sukorejo) and Muhammad (Genggong) regarding their Sufi affiliation with Al-Junaidi. This claimed connection is difficult to verify, as Al-Junaidi's documented works, including *Tashih Al-Iradah*, *Al-Munajat*, and *Al-Risalah* (Al-Tusi, 1960) they are unavailable in both institutions. The situation is particularly notable at Pesantren Genggong, where Ainul Yaqin's statement that Al-Junaidi's teachings are "very difficult to understand" appears to suggest an attempt to engage with his works. However, this claim contrasts with the reality that, as noted above, Al-Junaidi's texts have never

been physically present in the pesantren's collection.

Historically, Al-Junaid rarely relied on written materials for teaching. Instead, he preferred oral instruction—delivering lectures and engaging in dialogues with his immediate disciples. Consequently, a substantial body of his teachings reached pesantren through indirect transmission rather than through his own written works. Al-Junaid's contributions to Sufism survive mainly as quotations embedded in classical Sufi texts. Unknowingly, many of his ideas are scattered throughout Sufi literature. According to Kader, these quotations can be identified by Al-Junaid's distinct linguistic style and unique choice of words, whether in teaching or responding to questions (Abdel-Kader, 2018). Another reason for the absence of Al-Junaid's original works in pesantren is his apparent intention not to disseminate his writings. One account notes that on his deathbed, Al-Junaid requested that all his books be buried with him (Al-Baghdadi, 2001). As for *Al-Risalah*, a work often attributed to him, it is in fact a compilation of letters he sent to rulers and fellow Sufis. These letters were collected long after his passing and later titled *Al-Risalah Al-Junaidiyah* (Setiawan et al., 2020). This supports the conclusion that Al-Junaid did not deliberately bequeath a written Sufi legacy to later generations.

Another scholar whose influence cannot be clearly traced in Pesantren Sukorejo and Pesantren Genggong is Abu Hasan Al-Shadhili. There is no concrete evidence of his original works being used as references for Sufi studies in these two institutions.

However, in the case of Pesantren Sukorejo, the daily prayer compilation *Al-Adhkar Al-Yaumiyah* by Kiai Fawaid As'ad contains one practice attributed to Abu Hasan Al-Shadhili: the devotional recitation of *Hizb Al-Nasr* (As'ad, n.d.). This represents one of the few tangible connections to Al-Shadhili's teachings within the pesantren's practices. (Hadi, 2012).

Furthermore, the connection between Pesantren Sukorejo and the Sufi teachings of Abu Hasan Al-Shadhili can be observed through the study of the works of his student, Ibn Ata'illah Al-Sakandari. Although the pesantren does not directly teach Al-Shadhili's own works, his intellectual lineage is represented through the study of Ibn Ata'illah's seminal text, *Al-Hikam*, albeit in sessions reserved specifically for the pesantren's alumni. According to (Aryati, 2019) Ibn Ata'illah Al-Sakandari is recognized as the third major figure in the Shadhiliyah order founded by Abu Hasan Al-Shadhili. She further notes that he is credited as the first to systematically compile the order's teachings, wisdom, and prayers into written form.

Pesantren Genggong shares a similar situation. Its connection to the Sufi teachings of Abu Hasan Al-Shadhili was historically maintained through the study of Ibn Ata'illah Al-Sakandari's *Al-Hikam*, though this instruction occurred only during the early leadership of Kiai Mutawakkil Alallah and has since been discontinued. Currently, the pesantren's linkage to Al-Shadhili's tradition is preserved solely through the practice of *Sholawat Al-Masyisyyah* (Alallah, 2018; Anwar, 2022). This indicates that Pesantren Genggong has never engaged in formal textual study of Abu Hasan Al-Shadhili's Sufi philosophy. Rather, the connection remains limited to the recitation of devotional prayers associated with the Shadhili

Referring to the perspective of Al-Furaiji (2022) are fundamentally divided into two main axes, widely known as the Khurasan school (madrasah) and the Baghdad school. Although this division was initially more geographical than ideological, it evolved in subsequent periods into a significant benchmark for classifying Sufi traditions. The Khurasan school is characterized by an approach of *sukr* (spiritual intoxication or ecstasy), while the Baghdad school leaned more towards *sahw* (spiritual sobriety or consciousness). Major figures such as Abu Bakr Al-Shibli, Rabi'ah al-'Adawiyah, Abu al-Qasim al-Junayd, and Hasan al-Basri are all associated with the Baghdad school.

Although the roots of Sufism originate from the Arabic language—namely, the Qur'an and hadith—the development of Sufi literature in Persian has transcended geographical boundaries and shaped the spiritual identity of the Islamic world, even influencing the emerging Ottoman civilization. Persian figures such as Imam al-Ghazali, Mansur al-Hallaj, and al-Shibli also wrote in Arabic, yet the influence of works composed in Persian became exceptionally broad and profound (Mehdi Amrollahi, Mina Ansari, 2022).

Junayd al-Baghdadi (d. 298 AH) emerged as the central figure of the Baghdad school, while Bayazid al-Bastami (d. 261 AH) became the iconic representative of the Khurasan school. As highlighted by (Nurkholis & Haqq, 2023) regarding Al-Qushayri's (d. 465 AH) classification, this division was clearly more geographical than theological in nature. On the other hand, Hajwiri in his *Kashf al-Mahjub* categorizes Sufism into twelve distinct groups—such as the Mushabihah, Qassariyah, Tayfuriyah, Junaydiyah, Nuriyah, among others—demonstrating the diversity of thought even among figures residing within the same region, particularly Khurasan (Karamustafa, 2007). Thus, it can be understood that the division between the Baghdad and Khurasan schools serves as a general framework encompassing various sub-schools and Sufi approaches. For instance,

the Junaydi school represents one branch within the broader Baghdad school, not its entirety.

In the 4th century AH, figures such as Abu 'Uthman al-Maghribi, who originated from Egypt, relocated to Khurasan, thereby extending the influence of the Baghdad school in that region. Disciples of Shibli—including Abu al-Qasim al-Nasrabadi, Abu al-Hasan al-Husri, and Abu Bakar al-Tamastani—also contributed to disseminating the Baghdadi Sufi tradition in Khurasan.

During this period, for the first time, systematic works in the form of books began to be composed by adherents of the Baghdad school, such as *Tabaqat al-Sufiyyah* by Al-Sulami and *Al-Luma'* by Abu Nasr al-Sarraj (Al-Furaiji, 2022). By the 5th century AH, prominent figures of this school increasingly emerged from Khurasan, such as Abu Sa'id Abu al-Khayr, Khwaja Abdullah Ansari, and Abdulkarim al-Qushayri. It was during this period that Sufi works in Persian began to appear, including *Kashf al-Mahjub* by Hajwiri and the writings of the Ghazali brothers, which significantly expanded the reach of Sufism across Persia and surrounding regions (Al-Furaiji, 2022).

Indeed, based on the facts presented, it is evident that Pesantren Sukorejo and Genggong adhere to the Baghdad School of Sufism. This is reflected in their emphasis on spiritual sobriety (*ṣaḥw*)—a central characteristic of the Baghdad tradition—as seen in the teachings of key figures they follow, such as Al-Junaidi, Al-Ghazali, Abu Hasan Al-Shadhili, and Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani. Although these four scholars later developed distinct sub-traditions with unique emphases, their shared focus on balanced, sharia-compliant spirituality rooted in conscious divine presence aligns them with the Baghdad school. This observation also challenges the argument put forward by scholars such as (Bruinessen, 1994), who suggested that the intellectual tradition of pesantren in Sufism is predominantly shaped by Al-Ghazali's thought alone. In reality, the Sufistic orientation of these pesantren reflects a broader, more inclusive affiliation with the Baghdad lineage—one that cannot be reduced to Ghazalian influence exclusively.

Indeed, by combining the teachings of these various Sufi figures, both Pesantren Sukorejo and Pesantren Genggong demonstrate that they do not rely solely on Al-Ghazali as their single reference in understanding and practicing Sufism. Instead, these two pesantren maintain a Sufi tradition grounded in moral development and simplicity, while also adapting their practices to meet the educational and spiritual formation needs of their respective environments.

Differences in the Implementation of Sufi Schools

Pesantren Sukorejo demonstrates the dominance of Al-Ghazali's thought in its Sufi teachings. Key texts such as *Ihya' Ulumuddin* and *Bidayah al-Hidayah* form a core part of the

curriculum. This indicates that Al-Ghazali's ideas are not only studied intellectually but are also embodied in the daily lives of the students.

This approach confirms that Sufism in Sukorejo is not merely theoretical but is practiced as a moral and spiritual compass in everyday life. As emphasized by Khikamuddin, Sufism serves as a guide for the students' ethical and spiritual conduct, making spirituality the soul of their daily practices. Consequently, Khikamuddin observes that students at the pesantren actively cultivate gratitude (*syukur*), embrace a life of simplicity (*zuhud*), develop inner awareness through temporary seclusion (*uzlah*), and nurture divine love (*maḥabbah*) (Khikamuddin et al., 2024).

Although the direct teaching of Al-Junaidi's works is not found, his concepts remain a normative reference in the Sufi intellectual tradition at Pesantren Sukorejo. The influence of Al-Shadhili is present through the exclusive study of *Al-Hikam* (by Ibn Ata'illah), which is taught only to alumni and is not part of the formal curriculum. Meanwhile, the teachings of Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani are more practice-oriented (*amaliah*), manifested through the recitation of his biography (*manaqib*) and the study of his book, *Al-Ghunyah*. The existence of these traditions shows that although Sufism in Sukorejo is based on textual study, practical spiritual elements still hold an important place in the students' education.

On the other hand, Pesantren Genggong also places Al-Ghazali's thought as the primary foundation of its Sufi education. The texts *Ihya' Ulumuddin* and *Bidayah al-Hidayah* serve as key references, strengthening the fundamental similarity between Sukorejo and Genggong. However, the claim that this pesantren follows Al-Junaidi's teachings is not fully reflected in its curriculum, as Al-Junaidi's works are not directly taught. In fact, one of the pesantren's instructors acknowledged that the language used in Al-Junaidi's texts is too advanced for students to comprehend.

The influence of Al-Shadhili at Pesantren Genggong is found more in the form of devotional prayers (*wirid*), specifically the *Sholawat Al-Masyisiyah*—contained within the *Munjiyat al-Mubarakah*—which was written by Al-Shadhili's own teacher, Abdus Salam Al-Masyisy. This contrasts with Pesantren Sukorejo, which teaches Al-Shadhili's intellectual legacy through the text *Al-Hikam*, albeit in limited sessions for alumni. Meanwhile, the influence of Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani is notably stronger in Genggong than in Sukorejo. This is evident from the special, monthly recitation of his *manaqib* (spiritual biography) during Ramadan and the symbolic significance of visits from his descendant, Muhammad Fadhil Jailani.

The differences in the characteristics of Sufism at these two pesantren are influenced by several main factors. As part of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), both adopt a moderate form of Sufism (ethical Sufism) that emphasizes daily ethics and morality. Furthermore, the educational backgrounds of their leaders—both from within Indonesia and abroad (such as Yemen and Mecca)—have also shaped their respective methods of teaching Sufism. Another distinguishing factor is the body of texts used: Sukorejo focuses more on the study of classical texts, while Genggong places greater emphasis on the practice of devotional prayers (*wirid*) and remembrance (*dzikir*).

Although Pesantren Sukorejo and Genggong share the same Sufi roots, their implementation shows significant differences. Sukorejo takes a more academic approach, with an in-depth study of Sufi texts, while Genggong is more oriented toward practical devotion, stressing *wirid* and *dzikir* as spiritual means. Nevertheless, both maintain a tradition of moderate Sunni Sufism in accordance with NU, demonstrating that the Sufi path can develop through various methods without losing its spiritual essence.

CONCLUSION

This study examines the integration of multi-school Sufism in the education systems of Pesantren Salafiyah Syafi'iyah Sukorejo and Pesantren Zainul Hasan Genggong in East Java. While both institutions formally adhere to the Nahdlatul Ulama's recognized Sufi schools of Imam Al-Ghazali and Imam Al-Junaidi, they dynamically integrate four distinct Sufi traditions in practice. Al-Ghazali's teachings dominate textual studies, while Al-Junaidi serves primarily as a symbolic reference without direct textual implementation. The influences of Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani and Abu Hasan Ali-Shadhili remain vibrant through devotional practices, spiritual biographies, and ritual traditions. The institutions differ significantly in their approaches: Sukorejo emphasizes an academic-institutional method focused on spiritual experience through textual study, whereas Genggong prioritizes practical-personal implementation through spiritual discipline and daily devotions. This research demonstrates that multi-school integration not only proves feasible but also constitutes a distinctive strength, preserving Sufism's role in character education while maintaining its epistemic originality, thereby challenging narrow interpretations that reduce pesantren Sufism to merely Ghazalian thought.

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