



Islamic Education in the Sultanate of Banten during the Glory Period in a Contemporary Educational Perspective, 1552–1683

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Abstract: Islamic education during the Banten Sultanate represented one of the traditional educational models in the Indonesian archipelago, characterized by a structured system and a strong orientation toward character formation. This study aims to analyze the system, values, and practices of Islamic education during the golden age of the Banten Sultanate (1552–1683), as well as their relevance to the development of contemporary educational paradigms. The study is motivated by the moral crisis and dehumanization in modern education, which tends to emphasize academic achievement over the cultivation of spiritual values and character. This research employs a qualitative approach using a library research method by analyzing historical sources and literature on Islamic education. The findings reveal that Islamic education in the Banten Sultanate was conducted through institutions such as mosques, surau (small prayer houses), halaqah (study circles), and *pesantren* (Islamic boarding schools), with an integrated learning system combining religious knowledge, moral conduct (*adab*), and character development. Educational principles emphasized the internalization of *tawhid* (Islamic monotheism), discipline in worship, teachers' exemplary conduct, and experiential learning through halaqah, sorogan, and wetonan methods. The effectiveness of this system is reflected in the emergence of influential scholars such as Shaykh Yusuf al-Maqassari and Shaykh Nawawi al-Bantani. These findings demonstrate that the educational legacy of the Banten Sultanate remains relevant as a humanistic, integrative, and character-oriented educational model. Its values provide both conceptual and practical references for developing curricula, teaching methods, and educational management that balance intellectual, spiritual, and moral development while strengthening national cultural identity.

Keywords: Banten Sultanate; character education; Islamic education

Abstrak: Pendidikan Islam pada masa Kesultanan Banten merupakan salah satu model pendidikan tradisional Nusantara yang berkembang secara terstruktur dan berorientasi pada pembentukan karakter. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis sistem, nilai, dan praktik pendidikan Islam pada masa keemasan Kesultanan Banten (1552–1683) serta relevansinya terhadap pengembangan paradigma pendidikan kontemporer. Penelitian ini dilatarbelakangi oleh krisis moral dan dehumanisasi dalam pendidikan modern yang cenderung menitikberatkan pencapaian akademik dibandingkan pembinaan nilai spiritual dan karakter. Metode yang digunakan adalah pendekatan kualitatif melalui studi kepustakaan dengan menganalisis berbagai sumber sejarah dan literatur pendidikan Islam. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pendidikan Islam di Kesultanan Banten diselenggarakan melalui lembaga seperti masjid, surau, halaqah, dan *pesantren* dengan sistem pembelajaran yang mengintegrasikan ilmu agama, *adab*, dan akhlak. Prinsip pendidikan menekankan internalisasi nilai tauhid, disiplin ibadah, keteladanan guru, serta pembelajaran berbasis pengalaman melalui metode halaqah, sorogan, dan wetonan. Efektivitas sistem tersebut tercermin dari lahirnya ulama berpengaruh, seperti

Syekh Yusuf al-Maqassari dan Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa warisan pendidikan Islam Kesultanan Banten tetap relevan sebagai model pendidikan yang humanistik, integratif, dan berorientasi pada pembentukan karakter. Nilai-nilai tersebut dapat menjadi rujukan dalam pengembangan kurikulum, metode pembelajaran, dan pengelolaan lembaga pendidikan yang menyeimbangkan kecerdasan intelektual, spiritual, moral, serta memperkuat identitas budaya bangsa.

Kata Kunci: Pendidikan Islam, Kesultanan Banten, Pendidikan Karakter



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Introduction

The development of Islamic education in Indonesia has undergone significant changes. In recent decades, the number of madrasahs and *pesantren* has continued to grow in various regions, both in cities and in villages. In addition, various Islamic educational institutions have also begun to integrate traditional learning systems with modern educational approaches, including incorporating general subjects and utilizing information technology in the teaching-learning process (Enhas et al., 2023). This transformation of Islamic education in Indonesia not only reflects adaptation to the times but also serves as a strategic effort to shape a generation that is well-informed, of noble character, and capable of facing global challenges without losing their Islamic identity.

However, in reality, the modern education system faces serious challenges. Many educational institutions focus more on academic aspects, competition, achievement, and outcomes, while aspects of character, morality, spirituality, and cultural identity are often neglected. This has given rise to phenomena such as a crisis of character, the erosion of moral values, individualism, and vulnerability to the impacts of modernization or globalization (Bahiyah, 2022). According to Rifki, the lack of spiritual guidance is a primary factor in the emergence of a moral crisis, making the younger generation vulnerable to negative behaviors such as being easily exposed to instant and consumerist lifestyles and losing their sense of values (Muchamad Rifki & Selvi Puspitasari, 2025).

Ideally, Islamic education in Indonesia should be able to provide a holistic learning system that develops intellectual intelligence while building a strong moral, spiritual, and social foundation (Idhar, 2024). According to Gianto and Sumanik, from an Islamic educational perspective, the integration of knowledge, the values of tawhid, and local wisdom constitutes the foundation that must be upheld to shape individuals who are intellectually, emotionally, socially, and spiritually balanced (Gianto & Sunanik, 2024). Thus, education aims not only to produce academically competitive graduates but also individuals of character, with a well-developed personality, and possessing historical and cultural awareness.

A number of previous studies have examined Islamic education during the Banten Sultanate from various perspectives. A study by Fikri Fathul Aziz et al. (2025) explains that the Islamic education system in the Banten Sultanate developed through a network of *pesantren* and the role of ulama in the process of Islamizing society (Aziz et al., 2025). However, that study focused more on the historical aspects of the development of educational institutions without linking them to the needs of contemporary Islamic education. Furthermore, a study by Atika et al., (2025) reveals that the progress of the Banten Sultanate was inextricably linked to the sultans' policies in supporting scholarly activities, da'wah, and community development. However, this study focused more on political and social dynamics and thus did not conduct an

in-depth examination of the educational values that were passed down. Another study by Ngulwiyah et al., (2022) highlights the contributions of Banten's leading scholars to the development of Islamic intellectual traditions across the Indonesian archipelago. Nevertheless, this study has not analyzed the relevance of the Banten Sultanate's educational values to the development of Islamic educational paradigms in the modern era.

Based on these various studies, it is clear that research on Islamic education in the Sultanate of Banten is still dominated by a historical-descriptive approach. There has not yet been much research that comprehensively integrates an analysis of the structure, values, principles, and practices of Islamic education in the Sultanate of Banten while also reflecting on its relevance to contemporary educational challenges in Indonesia. However, there is a gap between this ideal and the reality of contemporary education. Many Islamic educational institutions have not yet been able to integrate historical values, traditions, and spirituality with the demands of modern scientific development, such as science, technology, and global social dynamics (Mudzakkir et al., 2024). Consequently, Islamic education has underutilized the historical heritage of the Nusantara, including the legacy of the Sultanate of Banten, as inspiration for curriculum design and character-building models. Yet, the scholarly traditions, educational practices, and social values that flourished during that era hold great potential to enrich contemporary approaches to Islamic education. This gap underscores the need for a more contextual design of Islamic education rooted in local history and capable of integrating the wisdom of the Nusantara so that learning is not only academically relevant but also meaningful for the development of students' identity and character.

In this context, an examination of the educational legacy of the Sultanate of Banten becomes crucial, particularly during the reign of Sultan Maulana Yusuf. During this period, Banten flourished and emerged as a major power in the archipelago. In the field of education, Sultan Maulana Yusuf was known as a figure who promoted the establishment of various madrasahs as centers of learning, where students studied religious knowledge, writing and arithmetic skills, and Arabic which was designated as the primary subject of instruction at the time (Kusumajati, 2024). Another prominent figure, Syaikh Yusuf, also made significant contributions to the intellectual and spiritual development of Islam within the Banten Sultanate. Many residents of Banten, including the Makassar community settled in the region, came to seek knowledge and receive scholarly guidance from him (Imawan, 2021). Therefore, revisiting the educational legacy of the Banten Sultanate is not only crucial for understanding the historical roots of Islamic education's development in Indonesia but is also highly relevant for shaping contemporary educational paradigms.

Given this gap, this study aims to fill the void in research that has thus far been limited to historical aspects. The novelty of this study lies in an analysis that not only describes the history of Islamic education in the Sultanate of Banten but also constructs that educational legacy as a source of values and paradigms relevant to the development of contemporary Islamic education. Thus, this study seeks to connect the historical, philosophical, and practical dimensions to produce a reflective model that can serve as a reference for strengthening Islamic education grounded in character, spirituality, and local wisdom.

Against this backdrop, this study aims to analyze the Islamic educational heritage of the Sultanate of Banten its structure, values, principles, and practices and reflect on its relevance to contemporary educational needs. This study is structured with a theoretical framework and practical recommendations to strengthen the modern education system through the integration of historical values, spirituality, morality, and local wisdom, without neglecting the demands of science and the progress of the times. Thus, this study is expected to make a significant contribution to the discourse on educational reform in Indonesia, particularly in efforts to build

an educational paradigm that balances knowledge, character, and cultural identity. Regarding the periodization, the focus of the study on Islamic education in this research is limited to the golden age of the Banten Sultanate, spanning from the establishment of the Islamic Kingdom of Banten by Maulana Hasanuddin in 1552 CE to the reign of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa from 1651 to 1683 CE. This period was chosen because it was marked by political stability, economic progress, and the most significant intensity of Islamic educational development compared to subsequent periods, making it considered representative of the character and strengths of the Islamic education system of the Banten Sultanate.

This study uses the perspective of integrative Islamic education theory as the basis for its analysis. This perspective views education as not only oriented toward the development of intellectual abilities but also encompassing the integrated nurturing of spiritual, moral, social, and cultural aspects. In addition, this study also employs a local wisdom-based education approach, which positions historical and cultural heritage as a source of values in shaping students' character. Through this perspective, the educational heritage of the Banten Sultanate is analyzed as an educational system capable of integrating the dimensions of scholarship, religiosity, and cultural identity, thereby remaining relevant in addressing the challenges of contemporary Islamic education.

Research Methods

This study employed the historical research method to examine the educational system of the Banten Sultanate during its golden age (1552-1683) and its relevance to contemporary Islamic education. Historical data were collected through library research by examining books, peer reviewed journal articles, historical documents, and other relevant scholarly publications related to the Banten Sultanate and Islamic education (Sidiq et al., 2019). In the context of this study, data sources include works on the history of Islamic education, studies on the Sultanate of Banten, and contemporary research on education based on local culture as well as *pesantren* as the continuation of the traditional Nusantara educational system. The collected data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis. The analysis involved identifying, categorizing, and interpreting historical evidence to examine educational institutions, curriculum principles, teaching methods, educational values, and their relevance to contemporary Islamic education (Subagiya, 2023). Through content analysis, the researcher identifies key aspects such as the institutional structure of education, curriculum principles and teaching methods, the Sultan's policies regarding knowledge, as well as the interplay between education, *da'wah*, and international trade networks as defining characteristics of Islamic education in Banten.

Research Result

The History of Islamic Education During the Banten Sultanate

The history of Islamic education during the Banten Sultanate cannot be separated from the political and social trajectory of the kingdom as one of the largest and most influential centers of Islamic power in the Archipelago from the 16th to the 19th centuries. From its emergence as an Islamic power in the western part of the Indonesian archipelago, Banten was known not only as a center of trade and political power but also as a space where Islamic scholarly traditions and education flourished. The development of Islamic education in Banten occurred alongside the process of the Islamization of society, the strengthening of Islamic governmental structures, and the active role of ulama in fostering the religious and social life of the community.

In a historical context, the discussion of Islamic education in the Sultanate of Banten in this study focuses on the period 1552–1683 CE, that is, from the establishment of the Sultanate

of Banten by Maulana Hasanuddin until the end of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa's reign. This period is regarded as the most significant in Banten's history, marked by political stability, economic progress, and the intensive and structured development of Islam and education. Furthermore, the establishment of the Sultanate of Banten began with the conquest of Banten Girang by Maulana Hasanuddin, the son of Sunan Gunung Jati, who subsequently moved the seat of government to Banten Lama. From that point onward, Banten flourished not only as an international trade hub but also as a center for the spread of Islam and a cosmopolitan coastal cultural hub (Rahayu & Sulaeman, 2025). It was this development of Islamic civilization that served as a strong foundation for the growth of the Islamic education system in Banten. Stable political conditions and global interactions through trade routes made Banten an open space for the exchange of knowledge and the presence of scholars from various regions. This situation allowed for the formation of a dynamic intellectual environment that supported the progressive development of Islamic educational institutions.

In the context of education, the Sultanate of Banten implemented an Islamic education system that developed in a structured and organized manner through various educational institutions that served as centers for the advancement of knowledge and the moral development of society (Kusumajati, 2024). In the early phase of the Sultanate of Banten's development, particularly during the reigns of Maulana Hasanuddin and Maulana Yusuf (1552–1570 CE), the foundations of Islamic education were laid through the construction of mosques and centers for the teaching of the Qur'an. Mosques became the first educational institutions to play a central role not only as places of worship but also as learning spaces for foundational religious studies such as the Qur'an, creed, jurisprudence, and ethics. Subsequently, *pesantren* emerged as more formal and organized educational institutions, providing in-depth and continuous education for students. Additionally, suraus and halaqahs functioned as flexible, informal educational spaces closely integrated into the social life of the community. As emphasized by Bambang and Elis, *pesantren* played a crucial role in shaping the character and Islamic identity of the Nusantara community through a culture of exemplary conduct and strong habit formation, thereby making educational institutions in Banten a significant contributor to producing a generation of learned and virtuous individuals (Triyono & Mediawati, 2023). Thus, this demonstrates that the institutional structure of education in Banten has played a strategic role in producing a generation that is knowledgeable and of noble character.

In terms of its organizational structure, the Islamic education system during the Banten Sultanate operated in a tiered and organized manner, beginning with basic education within the family, mosques, suraus, or langgar which served as centers for early learning of the Qur'an and an introduction to the fundamentals of religion and then continuing through intermediate and advanced levels via Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) (Muslimah, 2017). This tiered structural pattern reflects the existence of a system for training religious scholars and strengthening scholarly competence, which is passed down through the tradition of scholarly lineage (*sanad*) connected to international centers of Islamic education such as Mecca and Medina (Anshori et al., 2024). Such an educational model underscores that the Islamic education system in Banten has developed systematically, professionally, and with a long-term vision to produce Muslim scholars and intellectuals who not only play a role at the local level but are also capable of contributing at the global level. Thus, the educational structure of the Banten Sultanate reflects a direction toward the development of a civilization rooted in robust and sustainable knowledge.

In terms of educational values and orientation, Islamic education during the Banten Sultanate placed character building and etiquette at the core of the learning process (Aziz et al., 2025). Thus, education was not merely understood as the transfer of religious knowledge but

also as a means of internalizing moral and social values through habit formation and direct guidance from the ulama. Values such as humility (*tawadhu'*), a culture of respect and obedience toward teachers, discipline in performing religious rituals, and the strengthening of social solidarity became key principles instilled in both *pesantren* life and the broader community. Character development is carried out through the balanced integration of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects, ensuring education proceeds holistically by prioritizing the exemplary conduct of kiai and ulama as central figures in shaping students' personalities (Maulida & Hikmah, 2025). This values-based educational model demonstrates that Islamic education in the Sultanate of Banten has implemented a strong humanistic and spiritual orientation in building a knowledgeable and virtuous society.

Meanwhile, from the perspective of learning principles and practices, Islamic education during the Banten Sultanate employed an experience-based learning method that emphasized students' direct involvement in the process of internalizing values. This approach was realized through the halaqah, sorogan, and religious practice models, which facilitated personal interaction between students and teachers and provided space for dialogic and in-depth learning (Aziz et al., 2025). Traditional educational institutions such as mosques, suraus, langgars, halaqahs, and *pesantren* played a strategic role as centers for moral and spiritual development, as they served not only as venues for the transmission of Islamic knowledge but also as spaces for shaping the character and integrity of Muslim generations through exemplary conduct and habitual practice (Niswah et al., 2025). These educational methods do not merely emphasize cognitive aspects but also address the affective and psychomotor domains through religious practices, daily life discipline, and students' involvement in social activities. Thus, Islamic educational practices in Banten demonstrate that the learning process is not merely about acquiring knowledge, but also about experiencing and concretely practicing values within the realities of life.

The peak of Islamic education's development in the Sultanate of Banten occurred during the reign of Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa (1651–1683 CE). During this period, Islamic education received strong political and material support from the kingdom, particularly for ulama and *pesantren*. This success is evidenced by the emergence of prominent ulama figures with international influence. Sheikh Yusuf al-Maqassari, for example, not only played a role in the spiritual development of society but also became a key figure in the struggle against colonialism alongside Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa (Muzhiat, 2021). Another figure is Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani, known as a world-renowned scholar whose works serve as references in various Islamic countries (Malihah & Habdin, 2023). The success of these figures proves that the Islamic education system in Banten was not merely locally oriented but also capable of producing influential human resources within the global Islamic world. This demonstrates that the education implemented in Banten successfully integrated mastery of religious knowledge with leadership skills and social-political activism, thereby producing scholars who were both intellectually profound and fiercely committed to the cause.

Thus, the history of Islamic education during the Banten Sultanate demonstrates that education has served as a strategic instrument in the development of Islamic civilization. A structured, values-oriented educational system, supported by a conducive political environment, was able to produce a generation of Muslims who were knowledgeable, virtuous, and resilient. This model of Islamic education from the Banten Sultanate offers a vision of holistic education that integrates mastery of knowledge, character development, and social awareness, making it relevant as a reference for the development of contemporary Islamic education.

The Basic Structure of Islamic Education During the Banten Sultanate

The basic structure of Islamic education during the Banten Sultanate was built upon a strong historical and cultural foundation, which developed alongside the process of Islamization and the formation of the religious identity of the Banten community. Based on an examination of the history of the establishment of Islamic educational institutions in Banten, it is evident that from the very beginning, the fundamental pillars defining the character of Islamic education were already in place. These foundational elements have become ingrained in its educational system and shaped the distinctive character of Islamic education in the region, namely (Muslimah, 2017):

First, regarding educational principles, the institutions of the Banten Sultanate established the Qur'an as the primary reference for understanding, teaching, and practicing Islamic teachings. The Qur'an, as the fundamental guide in Islamic teachings, serves to provide both normative direction and a pedagogical foundation for the formulation of the educational curriculum. Various verses within it contain fundamental principles that not only emphasize the transmission of knowledge but also stress the cultivation of moral character and the strengthening of spiritual conviction (Febriani et al., 2025). In educational practice, this understanding of the Qur'an is supported by the use of exegetical texts, one of which is *Tafsir al-Jalalayn* by Jalaluddin al-Mahalli and Jalaluddin as-Suyuthi. This exegetical text was chosen for its concise, systematic, and accessible nature, making it a long-standing popular and favored reference within the *pesantren* tradition (Fadal, 2015). Thus, the Qur'an and this text serve not only as sources of law and doctrine but also as the foundation guiding the direction, purpose, and overall quality of the Islamic educational process.

Second, the educational objectives developed align with the purpose of human creation as affirmed in Surah Adz-Dzariyat, verse 56, namely that humans were created for no other purpose than to worship and serve Allah. This orientation positions education as a means of shaping faithful individuals capable of fully realizing the function of khilafah in social life. This aligns with Azdillah and Dayusman, who assert that Islamic education must be directed toward the formation of a complete human being (*insan kamil*) who integrates spiritual, moral, and social values into every aspect of learning (Azdillah & Dayusman, 2025). Thus, education is aimed at shaping individuals who possess a strong sense of divine consciousness and spiritual dedication.

Third, regarding educational content, students are guided to master the material contained in specific texts designated as graduation standards. Just as educational content in Islamic boarding schools is not arbitrary, students are systematically guided through classical texts (Kitab Kuning) that have been established as graduation standards. Through their research, Mardiansyah et al. demonstrate that the Kitab Kuning-based curriculum in Islamic boarding schools plays a crucial role in shaping a scholarly community and bringing about profound transformation for students and the boarding school community (Mardiansyah et al., 2024). For example, during the golden age of the Banten Sultanate, advanced studies in Sufism were taught through the monumental work *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* by Imam al-Ghazali. This book emphasizes two main dimensions in character education: the cultivation of the soul or spirituality, and the formation of practical behavior and discipline (Salaeh et al., 2023). Thus, the curriculum already possesses a clear structure and objectives, not only in the mastery of knowledge but also in instilling moral and ethical values.

Fourth, regarding the subject and object of education, the relationship between educators and students is built on sincerity and a sense of mutual dependence. Teachers teach with sincere intentions, while students seek knowledge with the awareness to improve themselves and

contribute to society. Bahri et al. emphasize that the relationship between educators and students in Islamic education forms a civilizational bond based on prophetic, humanistic, and divine values, encompassing dimensions of educational interaction, the internalization of moral and spiritual values, the formation of a religious personality, and teacher professionalism (Bahri et al., 2024).

Fifth, the educational methods applied balance theory and practice. Students not only study religious concepts but are also prepared to engage directly with the community through service activities, making practical experience an integral part of the learning process.

Sixth, educational evaluation emphasizes self-assessment. This evaluation is based on the belief that Allah is the All-Seeing, making the spiritual dimension an integral part of the assessment system. Similarly, Khoiriyah's research demonstrates that *self-assessment* in religious education (PAI) at Islamic schools helps students evaluate their spiritual attitudes, enhances learning motivation, and supports the development of religious attitudes and moral values (Khoiriyah et al., 2023). This self-assessment effort involves each student's introspection to measure the quality of their deeds and knowledge.

Thus, the structure of Islamic education in Banten since its golden age has demonstrated conceptual maturity and established practices that reflect the distinctive nature of Islamic education as a whole. This is evident not only in the presence of well-organized foundational elements but also in how these elements function harmoniously to form a sustainable educational system, as well as the use of religious texts as the primary references in its curriculum. This maturity is evident in the way educational institutions integrate religious texts, spiritual values, social practices, and character building into a cohesive educational framework.

The Relevance of Banten Sultanate Islamic Education in the Development of Contemporary Educational Paradigms

Modern education today is facing a fundamental problem in the form of a moral crisis and a process of dehumanization within the educational world. The evolving educational system places greater emphasis on academic aspects and competitive achievements, thereby neglecting education's essential function as a means of fostering values, ethics, and spiritual character. A pragmatic and materialistic orientation has shifted the meaning of education into merely an instrument for achieving worldly success, without considering the balance between intellectual development and moral cultivation. This situation is deeply concerning, as warned by Theodore Roosevelt in M. I. Suhifatullah: "*To educate a person in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society*" that is, educating someone solely on intellectual aspects without moral values means creating a threat to society (Suhifatullah, 2024, p. 40). In line with this, Mansur Muchlish also emphasizes that educational institutions lacking character will face collapse and lose their humanistic aspects due to the loss of their human spirit (Muslich, 2022, p. 2). Understanding this reality demands a paradigm shift in education toward a new model focused on the holistic development of the human person one who is not only intellectually intelligent but also morally mature, of good character, and spiritually grounded.

In this context, the educational legacy of the Islamic Sultanate of Banten becomes highly relevant to be revived as inspiration for the development of a contemporary educational paradigm. The Islamic educational system of that era was not only oriented toward the transmission of religious knowledge but also emphasized character formation through the internalization of values, the cultivation of religious practices, the exemplary conduct of scholars and religious leaders, and a religious and humanistic social environment. Traditional educational institutions such as mosques, suraus, langgars, halaqahs, and *pesantren* played a strategic role as centers for moral and spiritual training, as they not only taught Islamic sciences

but also shaped the character and integrity of the early Muslim generations (Niswah et al., 2025). The Sultanate of Banten itself functioned as a center for Islamic da'wah and education, marked by the establishment of a network of mosques and Islamic boarding schools that served as important symbols in the spread of Islamic teachings while strengthening the social-religious structure of society (Atika et al., 2025). This holistic and integrative educational model offers a viable alternative for the modern education system, which is increasingly trapped in the secularization of knowledge and the neglect of moral dimensions; thus, it is worthy of being used as a reference in formulating an educational paradigm that is more humanistic, character-building, and oriented toward the formation of the whole person.

The educational values that developed during the Banten Sultanate also hold strong relevance for efforts to transform education based on character and cultural identity in the modern era. Banten Islamic education is rooted in the harmonious integration of religious teachings and local culture, resulting in a contextual learning system closely aligned with the social life of the community. The Sultanate of Banten not only embedded Islamic teachings through informal education and Islamic boarding schools (*pesantren*) but also integrated them into the system of governance, political policies, and public life, thereby functioning as an instrument for shaping cultural awareness and collective identity (Atika et al., 2025). This is reflected in the use of primary reference texts such as *as and Tafsir al-Jalalayn* for Qur'anic studies, *Matan al-Ghayah wa al-Taqrīb* (Matan Abu Syuja) for basic Shafi'i fiqh, and *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* by Imam al-Ghazali for advanced Sufi studies (Aziz & Imawan, 2025). The use of these authoritative sources indicates that the educational system in Banten was closely connected to the major traditions of Islamic scholarly centers in the Middle East, such as Cairo and Mecca. Thus, the historical value of Banten's Islamic education can serve as a crucial foundation for designing character education reforms grounded in local contexts that are relevant and responsive to the needs of modern humanity.

The educational legacy of the Sultanate of Banten also makes a significant contribution to the development of contemporary educational curricula. During the Sultanate of Banten, education did not rigidly separate religious knowledge from practical knowledge but rather integrated both to cultivate individuals who are both knowledgeable and cultured (Aziz & Imawan, 2025). This integrative model is a fundamental principle highly relevant for application in modern curricula, thereby creating a balance between cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. Conceptually, Islamic Religious Education itself is directed toward developing these three aspects in a balanced manner through the imparting of knowledge, the cultivation of attitudes, and the practice of concrete actions (Basri et al., 2025). As demonstrated by the research of Muhammad Arrafi Muzhaffar et al., modern Islamic boarding schools have successfully integrated the national curriculum with religious education while implementing interactive learning methods supported by the use of technology, thereby producing a holistic educational model (Permadi et al., 2025). Such a curricular approach can serve as inspiration for the national education system in fostering well-rounded, balanced student competencies that align with the demands of the modern era.

From the perspective of curriculum and teaching methods, education during the Banten Sultanate demonstrated the use of an approach emphasizing direct experience, exemplary leadership, and community-based learning. Methods such as halaqah, sorogan, and religious practices serve as examples of learning models that emphasize the internalization of values through the process of habit formation and real-life experiences in daily life (Aziz et al., 2025). If adapted to the context of modern education, these approaches can be implemented through *Project-Based Learning (PBL)*, *Community-Based Learning (CBL)*, and a personalized mentoring system as effective strategies for character development. Strengthening students'

character can also be optimized through contextual approaches and the use of immersive technology that allows students to directly experience moral values in real-life situations (Adiputra & Hidayah, 2025, p. 4). Thus, the experience-based learning methods inherited from the Sultanate of Banten can serve as inspiration for the development of character education relevant to the challenges of the modern era.

In addition to contributing to the development of curricula and teaching methods, the Islamic education system of the Sultanate of Banten also offers an important example of values-based management of educational institutions. Islamic boarding schools in Banten implement a community-based management model that involves the entire school community including students, clerics, teachers, and the surrounding community in the process of character building and moral strengthening (Atika et al., 2025). Through the establishment of Islamic educational institutions and a network of *pesantren*, the Sultanate of Banten played a strategic role in expanding religious understanding and shaping the social identity of the people of Banten and its surrounding areas. This participatory and humanistic management model is relevant for strengthening modern educational management, which often loses its human touch due to the dominance of administrative and bureaucratic orientations. In this context, as stated by Nabilla Cintana Gusti Banafsa et al., an approach that positions institutional leaders as moral and cultural role models is an effective strategy for addressing the problem of school cultures that lack values and fail to inspire students (Banafsa et al., 2025). Thus, the Sultanate of Banten's educational management system can serve as a model for building modern educational institutions that are principled, participatory, and humanistic.

Thus, the relevance of the Islamic education of the Banten Sultanate during its golden age (1552–1683 CE) to contemporary education lies in its success in shaping individuals who are both knowledgeable and of good character. This relevance is conceptual because Banten's education integrates knowledge, moral values, and spirituality into a unified educational paradigm. In practical terms, the Banten educational system has proven to produce influential scholars and leaders across regions and generations. In the context of modern education, which still faces a moral crisis and dehumanization, the revitalization of the principles of Banten Islamic education becomes a strategic endeavor to restore education to its essence as a process of humanizing humanity and building a meaningful civilization.

Conclusion

Islamic education during the Banten Sultanate demonstrated an organized system of administration oriented toward the formation of knowledgeable individuals of noble character. The educational structure was built in tiers, starting from basic education within the family and mosque environments, up to advanced education in *pesantren* as centers for the development of Islamic knowledge. The educational orientation emphasized not only cognitive aspects but also the cultivation of manners, discipline, independence, and exemplary behavior through the process of habit formation and practical application in daily life. The principles and practices of experience-based learning are clearly evident through methods such as halaqah, sorogan, and wetonan, as well as the boarding school culture that fosters the spiritual and moral character of students. The success of this educational system is evidenced by the emergence of influential international Islamic scholars such as Syekh Yusuf al-Maqassari and Syekh Nawawi al-Bantani, who have become key references within the global Islamic scholarly network. The educational legacy of the Sultanate of Banten thus holds profound relevance for the development of a modern educational paradigm that is more humanistic, integrative, and character-based in addressing the challenges of the moral crisis in the contemporary era.

Furthermore, the findings of this study confirm that the success of Islamic education during the Banten Sultanate lay not only in its ability to pass down religious knowledge but also in its success in building an educational ecosystem that harmoniously integrated intellectual, spiritual, social, and cultural dimensions. An educational model rooted in the value of tawhid, the exemplary conduct of teachers, the cultivation of moral character, and a connection to community life demonstrates that education is, in essence, a process of shaping civilization, not merely the transfer of knowledge. Therefore, reconstructing and reinforcing the values of Islamic education from the Banten Sultanate is essential as a source of inspiration for formulating contemporary educational policies, curricula, and practices capable of producing a generation of individuals with strong character, integrity, and historical awareness a generation capable of facing global challenges without losing their Islamic identity or local cultural wisdom.

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