TUAN GURU-BASED ISLAMIC EDUCATION: RECONSTRUCTING LEARNING EPISTEMOLOGY FROM SHAYKH ARSYAD AL-BANJARI TO THE PRESENT

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Abstract:

This article reconstructs the epistemology of learning in the Banjar tuan guru tradition, from Shaykh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari in the eighteenth century to Guru Sekumpul in the late twentieth. It asks how knowledge is sourced, acquired, authorised, and directed across four periods. The study uses qualitative library research and thematic analysis of published scholarship on Arsyad, on Banjar scholarly networks, and on later tuan guru, coded along five dimensions: source of knowledge, mode of acquisition, the teacher's adab, authority (sanad), and purpose. The findings show a stable core: revealed text comes first, knowledge passes through personal companionship (shuhbah) and plural chains of authorisation, and learning aims at practice and at reproducing teachers. They also show change in institutions, from a fenced village to an open congregation. The article offers a model of tuan guru-based learning for pesantren research.

Keywords:

tuan guru; epistemology of learning; Banjar ulama; sanad; Arsyad al-Banjari; pesantren education

INTRODUCTION

Among the Banjar of South Kalimantan, the scholar-teacher is addressed as *tuan guru*, an honorific that marks both deep religious knowledge and a role in education and spiritual guidance.[1] Sari and Iqbal describe the tuan guru as an elite whose standing rests on mastery of religious knowledge rather than on political or economic power.[2] The position has deep historical roots. Azra places Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari (1710–1812), a member of the eighteenth-century Haramayn network, as the first scholar to build Islamic institutions and introduce new ideas in Kalimantan.[3] After returning in 1772, he established the learning community of Dalam Pagar, which became a base from which his students and descendants spread across the region.[4]

[1] Desi Mulia Sari and Muhammad Iqbal, "Tuan Guru dalam Sejarah Kesultanan Banjar," *Tashwir: Jurnal Penelitian Agama dan Sosial Budaya* 12, no. 1 (2024): 53.

[2] Sari and Iqbal, "Tuan Guru dalam Sejarah," 57.

[3] Azyumardi Azra, *Jaringan Ulama Timur Tengah dan Kepulauan Nusantara Abad XVII dan XVIII* (Bandung: Mizan, 1994), 251, cited in Yaqin, "Arsyad al-Banjari's Thought on Education," 336.

[4] Rahmadi, *Jaringan Intelektual Ulama Banjar Abad XIX dan XX* (Banjarmasin: Antasari Press, 2019), 19–25.

Scholarly attention to this tradition is substantial but dispersed. One strand studies Arsyad's educational thought. Yaqin reads it as a neo-Sufi paradigm that integrates the textual (*bayani*), demonstrative (*burhani*), and gnostic (*'irfani*) systems under the dominance of the first, and documents a semi-formal institution and a set of macro and micro teaching methods.[5] A second strand examines his epistemology directly. Working from *Kanz al-Ma'rifah*, Ihsan and colleagues argue that *ma'rifah* is reached through three paths, namely Nur Muhammad, *mutu qabla an tamutu*, and *fana'*, and that it joins the physical and metaphysical dimensions of knowledge.[6] A third strand maps the networks that carried this learning across time. Azra's study of the Haramayn network ends in the eighteenth century, and Rahmadi extends the analysis to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries by tracing Arsyad's students and descendants.[7] A fourth strand studies later tuan guru, including the transmission of Sufi learning in South Kalimantan[8] and the educational strategy of Guru Sekumpul.[9]

Each strand illuminates one figure, one field, or one period. What remains underdeveloped is an integrated account of how the *epistemology of learning* itself, meaning how knowledge is sourced, acquired, authorised, and directed, is reproduced and modified along the lineage from Arsyad to the present. A literature scan conducted in October 2026 across Indonesian and English journal sites and open repositories did not identify a study that follows these dimensions through the tuan guru lineage from the eighteenth to the twenty-first century. The gap matters for pesantren research, because tuan guru-based learning is often described through its rituals and personalities while the logic of knowledge beneath them stays unstated.

This article therefore asks three questions. First, what epistemic structure of learning can be reconstructed from Arsyad's teaching and writings? Second, how was that structure continued and modified by selected successors in the nineteenth, twentieth, and early twenty-first centuries? Third, what model of tuan guru-based Islamic education follows from this reconstruction? The study aims to answer these questions and to offer a conceptual model that pesantren educators and researchers can test in fieldwork.

[5] Husnul Yaqin, "Shaykh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari's Thought on Education," *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 5, no. 2 (2011): 335, 343–349, https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2011.5.2.335-352.

[6] Nur Hadi Ihsan et al., "Bridging the Epistemological Divide: Arsyad al-Banjari's Ma'rifah as a Response to Western Epistemological Dilemmas," *Al-Qalam* 31, no. 1 (2025): 71–84, https://doi.org/10.31969/alq.v31i1.1596.

[7] Rahmadi, *Jaringan Intelektual*, 4–6.

[8] Asmaran, Husnul Yaqin, and Mahmud, "Transmisi Ilmu Tasawuf Tuan Guru di Kalimantan Selatan," *Al Qalam: Jurnal Ilmiah Keagamaan dan Kemasyarakatan* 16, no. 2 (2022): 510–526, https://doi.org/10.35931/aq.v16i2.896.a

[9] Alaika M. Bagus Kurnia PS et al., "Pendidikan Karakter Abah Guru Sekumpul: Studi Relasi Kuasa Abah Guru Sekumpul dengan Kelompok Tarekat Sammaniyah," *TAJDID: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman dan Kemanusiaan* 9, no. 1 (2025): 35–54, https://doi.org/10.52266/tadjid.v9i1.4164.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses qualitative library research with a conceptual-historical orientation. It treats the tuan guru tradition as a lineage of epistemic practice and reconstructs that practice from published sources.

Data come from two kinds of sources. The first are texts attributed to the figures studied: Arsyad's *Sabil al-Muhtadin*, *Tuhfat al-Raghibin*, and *Kanz al-Ma'rifah*, the genealogical text *Syajarah al-Arsyadiyah*, and the compilation of devotions *al-Imdad fi Awrad Ahl al-Widad* associated with Guru Sekumpul. These texts are consulted through the scholarly analyses cited in the notes, and where a statement rests on a secondary description of a text it is cited as such. The second are academic studies and documentary profiles: journal articles, books on Banjar scholarly networks, and one journalistic profile used only as supplementary illustration.

Four figures were chosen purposively by three criteria: representation of four successive periods, a documented place in the Arsyad lineage of teachers and students, and the availability of scholarly sources. They are Arsyad (eighteenth century); Qadhi Abdussamad Bakumpai (nineteenth century), supported by Abdurrahman Siddiq as a second node of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; Syarwani Abdan (twentieth century); and Guru Sekumpul (late twentieth and early twenty-first century).

Analysis follows the sequence of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing described by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña.[10] A five-dimension coding scheme was developed from two sources. The first is the definition of transmission used by Asmaran, Yaqin, and Mahmud, namely receiving knowledge from a teacher, delivering it to students, and naming the chain through which it came.[11] The second is Yaqin's use of the typology of bayani, burhani, and 'irfani systems.[12] The dimensions are the source of knowledge, the mode of acquisition, the adab and spiritual standing of the teacher, authority and *sanad*, and purpose. Credibility was supported by triangulating across scholarly studies and by treating hagiographic material, such as *manaqib* and biographical accounts, as evidence of how the tradition remembers its teachers and not as independent proof of what they did. The main limitations are the absence of fieldwork and, for the twentieth-century figures, of directly examined primary documents.

[10] Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldaña, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, 2014).

[11] Asmaran, Yaqin, and Mahmud, "Transmisi Ilmu Tasawuf," 513.

[12] Yaqin, "Arsyad al-Banjari's Thought on Education," 344, where the bayani, burhani, and 'irfani systems follow the typology of Muhammad 'Abid al-Jabiri.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Four Figures and Their Evidence Base

Table 1 profiles the four figures and the evidence on which each case rests. The evidence is uneven. Arsyad is the best documented, Syarwani Abdan the least, and the table shows this openly so that the reader can weigh the claims that follow.

Table 1. Profiles of the Four Figures and the Evidence Base

Figure	Period	Formation	Teaching site	Main evidence
Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari	18th century (1710–1812)	About 30 years of study in the Haramayn; returned in 1772	Dalam Pagar, Martapura (fenced village on land granted by the sultan)	Yaqin; Rahmadi; Ihsan et al.
Qadhi Abdussamad Bakumpai (with Abdurrahman Siddiq)	19th century (1822–1899 for Abdussamad)	Dalam Pagar, then about eight years in the Haramayn	Marabahan (langgar for teaching, balai for khalwat and suluk)	Rahmadi; Asmaran et al.
Syarwani Abdan	20th century	Studied under Kasyful Anwar and in Makkah	Martapura, then Bangil	Rahmadi; Asmaran et al.; Republika (journalistic)
Guru Sekumpul (Muhammad Zaini bin Abdul Ghani)	Late 20th to early 21st century (d. 2005)	Many teachers (over one hundred, per a biography cited by Kurnia et al.)	Sekumpul, Martapura (prayer house and settled community)	Kurnia et al.; Asmaran et al.; Rahmadi

Note: Sources as cited in the text; period and teaching-site details follow those sources.

Source of Knowledge: Text First, Insight Under the Shariah

Arsyad's educational paradigm, as Yaqin reconstructs it, is neo-Sufi. It brings together the textual, demonstrative, and gnostic systems but gives the textual system the leading position, which Yaqin sees most clearly in Arsyad's decision to develop fiqh more than other fields.[13] The teaching material points the same way. Arsyad used his own writings and works by other scholars, preferred Arabic texts of the Shafi'i school in fiqh and of Ahl al-Sunnah in tawhid and Sufism, and favoured a Sufism acceptable to the shariah.[14] Ihsan and colleagues, who read the Sufi treatise *Kanz al-Ma'rifah*, describe *ma'rifah* as attainable through three paths and through the 'irfani method of purifying the heart and practising spiritual discipline.[15] Read together, the two studies describe a layered structure and not a rivalry between sources: revealed text and its scholarly elaboration form the base of the curriculum, and gnostic insight is the consummation that the base disciplines and protects. This reading is the present study's synthesis, because the two studies work on different corpora and do not themselves make the comparison.

[13] Yaqin, "Arsyad al-Banjari's Thought on Education," 344–345.

[14] Yaqin, "Arsyad al-Banjari's Thought on Education," 349.

[15] Ihsan et al., "Bridging the Epistemological Divide."

The demonstrative mode is secondary but not absent. Yaqin lists a treatise on astronomical calculation (*'ilm falak*) among Arsyad's writings, reports that he taught falak, farming, and irrigation, and relates that he corrected the qibla of mosques in Batavia on his way home.[16] Arsyad also wrote on teaching itself, including treatises that Yaqin classifies under educational science.[17]

Later figures keep this ordering. The Sufi curriculum that Asmaran, Yaqin, and Mahmud document for contemporary tuan guru is organised into ethical, practical, and philosophical strands, each tied to named texts. The first two draw on works such as *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din*, *al-Hikam*, and *Bidayat al-Hidayah*, and the third on texts that include *Tuhfat al-Raghibin* and *al-Durr al-Nafis*.[18]

Mode of Acquisition: Companionship, Circle, and Place

In Yaqin's analysis Arsyad's methods work on two levels. The macro methods include contextualization, which turns complex Arabic texts into more accessible Malay through translation, commentary, compilation, and selection; centralization, which gathers teaching in one place; gradualization, which teaches tawhid before fiqh and fiqh before tasawwuf; classification of students by sex, talent, and intelligence; and what Yaqin calls migration, the sending of graduates to other regions. The micro methods include the teacher's exemplarity, the *halaqah*, *sorogan*, lectures, question and answer, discussion, assignments, drill, and *takhassus*, which is intensive guidance in *suluk* and *khalwah*.[19]

Place was part of the method. Arsyad obtained land from the sultan, cleared it with his son-in-law Abdul Wahab Bugis and his students, and funded the centre through farming. Before the centre was built he fenced the land, which is how Dalam Pagar, "the village inside the fence," got its name.[20] Rahmadi adds that the fence was meant to restrict the free coming and going of students so that education could be intensive and effective, and that the compound held Arsyad's family, a prayer house, and student dwellings.[21] A bounded, residential learning community was therefore a pedagogical choice and not only a settlement pattern.

The nineteenth-century cases show this model dispersing. Rahmadi reports that Qadhi Abdussamad Bakumpai, born ten years after Arsyad's death, was brought to Dalam Pagar to study with his father, Mufti Jamaluddin, and his uncles, and then studied for eight years in the Haramayn, where he received ijazah in the Naqshbandiyah and Shadhiliyah paths.[22] Back in Marabahan he built a langgar in Banjar-house style to teach and house

[16] Yaqin, "Arsyad al-Banjari's Thought on Education," 341, 343, 349.

[17] Abu Daudi, *Maulana Syekh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari* (Sullamul Ulum, 1996), 50–57, cited in Yaqin, "Arsyad al-Banjari's Thought on Education," 343.

[18] Asmaran, Yaqin, and Mahmud, "Transmisi Ilmu Tasawuf," 518–520.

[19] Yaqin, "Arsyad al-Banjari's Thought on Education," 347–348.

[20] Yaqin, "Arsyad al-Banjari's Thought on Education," 345–346.

[21] Rahmadi, *Jaringan Intelektual*, 20.

[22] Rahmadi, *Jaringan Intelektual*, 50–51.

students, and a separate *balai* where he led *khalwat* and *suluk*.[23] Asmaran and colleagues observe that Banjar scholars who went to the Haramayn in the late nineteenth century had generally studied first at Dalam Pagar.[24] Learning thus followed a two-stage route, local grounding and then the Haramayn. The separation of langgar and balai suggests a spatial distinction between teaching external knowledge and training inner discipline, although the sources do not describe it in those terms.

In the twentieth century the pathways diversified. Rahmadi notes that study circles in langgar, home-based circles, madrasah, and pesantren multiplied, so that aspiring ulama no longer had to travel to the Holy Land, and that Dalam Pagar itself ran a circle system alongside a formal madrasah from 1931.[25] Asmaran and colleagues document that tuan guru in Sufi learning place heavy weight on *shuhbah*, companionship expressed as *khidmah* (service) and *mulazamah*, in which students serve the teacher and may live near him for decades before returning to their villages. They also describe *riyadhah* and *mujahadah*, dhikr, affiliation to a *tariqa*, initiation, and the *khirqah*.[26] Kurnia and colleagues describe Guru Sekumpul's strategy in two phases: a period of intensive learning in which he gathered ijazah from many teachers, and a period in which he built a prayer house and a settled community at Sekumpul around which daily and weekly routines of dhikr, mawlid, and study were organised.[27]

A place-based pedagogy therefore recurs: the fenced village of Dalam Pagar, the langgar and balai of Marabahan, and the prayer house and neighbourhood of Sekumpul. What changes is the permeability of the boundary, from a fenced and residential community of students to an open congregation that Kurnia and colleagues describe as numbering in the hundreds of thousands.[28]

The Teacher's Adab and Spiritual Standing

In Yaqin's analysis the first of Arsyad's micro methods is *uswah hasanah*, the teacher as a role model whose knowledge, devotion, service, and moral integrity are themselves the means of teaching.[29] The relation that the tradition expects between student and teacher has a Qur'anic archetype in the request of Moses to the one he followed:

قَالَ لَهُۥ مُوسَىٰ هَلۡ أَتَّبِعُكَ عَلَىٰٓ أَن تُعَلِّمَنِ مِمَّا عُلِّمۡتَ رُشۡدٗا (٦٦)

[23] Rahmadi, *Jaringan Intelektual*, 52.
[24] Asmaran, Yaqin, and Mahmud, "Transmisi Ilmu Tasawuf," 514.
[25] Rahmadi, *Jaringan Intelektual*, 3–4, 22–23.
[26] Asmaran, Yaqin, and Mahmud, "Transmisi Ilmu Tasawuf," 520–524.
[27] Kurnia et al., "Pendidikan Karakter Abah Guru Sekumpul," 43–46.
[28] Kurnia et al., "Pendidikan Karakter Abah Guru Sekumpul," 43.
[29] Yaqin, "Arsyad al-Banjari's Thought on Education," 347–348.

(66) Moses said to him, "May I follow you on [the condition] that you teach me from what you have been taught of sound judgment?"[30]

The student follows, and the teacher teaches from what he himself has been taught. In the Sufi transmission documented by Asmaran and colleagues, the student's service is justified by the belief that knowledge gained through service is more beneficial. The same study reports teachers who practised before they taught and who stressed character and humility in daily life as the basis for attracting students.[31] For Guru Sekumpul, Kurnia and colleagues report an example of exemplarity: a congregant saw him cleaning the prayer-house bathroom himself and joined him, and he explained that he did so that attendees would not find it dirty.[32] For Syarwani Abdan, a journalistic profile credits him with checking the authenticity of hadith before teaching them, with bearing his students' food costs, and with holding that religion should not be taught for payment, which, if accurate, indicates an ethic of teaching as service.[33] These reports are hagiographic in character and are used here to show how the tradition remembers its teachers. The consistency of the picture across periods, and not any single anecdote, is the finding.

Authority and Sanad

Asmaran and colleagues define transmission as receiving knowledge from a teacher, delivering it to students, and naming the chain through which the knowledge came; the resulting web of teacher–student relations is the *sanad*.[34] Authority in the tradition is built from four overlapping sources: scholarly chains, Sufi initiation, genealogy, and recognition by rulers.

The scholarly chain begins in the Haramayn. Yaqin names four of Arsyad's most influential teachers: Ataillah al-Misri, Muhammad al-Kurdi, Muhammad al-Samman al-Madani, and Ahmad al-Damanhuri.[35] Sufi chains continue the line. Rahmadi records the Sammaniyah chain cited by Guru Sekumpul, which runs from himself through Syarwani Abdan, Ali bin Abdullah al-Banjari, Zainuddin al-Sumbawi, Nawawi al-Bantani, and Syahabuddin, a son of Arsyad, to Arsyad and on to Samman.[36] Asmaran and colleagues give a related chain for Syarwani Abdan and a second chain that runs through Kasyful Anwar, Abdullah Khatib, Muhammad Shalih, and Hasanuddin to Arsyad.[37] Two features stand out. Chains are plural, so that a single teacher usually holds several and authority is cumulative. And the chains converge on Arsyad, which makes him the shared point of origin for the

[30] Qur'an 18:66, translation adapted from Saheeh International.

[31] Asmaran, Yaqin, and Mahmud, "Transmisi Ilmu Tasawuf," 520–521.

[32] Kurnia et al., "Pendidikan Karakter Abah Guru Sekumpul," 37.

[33] "KH Muhammad Syarwani Abdan, Tuan Guru Bangil," Republika.id, n.d., accessed October 30, 2026, https://www.republika.id/posts/7013/kh-muhammad-syarwani-abdan-tuan-guru-bangil.

[34] Asmaran, Yaqin, and Mahmud, "Transmisi Ilmu Tasawuf," 513.

[35] Yaqin, "Arsyad al-Banjari's Thought on Education," 339–340.

[36] Rahmadi, *Jaringan Intelektual*, 13.

[37] Asmaran, Yaqin, and Mahmud, "Transmisi Ilmu Tasawuf," 516–517.

lineage's claim to authenticity. The Marabahan line recorded by Asmaran and colleagues, from Basyuni Marabahan, one of Guru Sekumpul's teachers, through a certain Abdusshamad and Mufti Jamaluddin to Arsyad,[38] corresponds to the Marabahan family of scholars described by Rahmadi. This suggests, although the sources do not say so explicitly, that the Abdusshamad concerned is Qadhi Abdussamad Bakumpai.

Authority also reaches beyond the local lineage. Kurnia and colleagues report that Guru Sekumpul received the Khawatim Khawajagan ijazah from Syarwani Abdan, in a chain traced through Amin al-Kutbi of Makkah to Baha' al-Din Naqshband.[39] Genealogy overlaps with knowledge: Rahmadi counts eight generations of Arsyad's descendants and places both Syarwani Abdan and Guru Sekumpul in the eighth.[40] Rulers add a further layer. The sultan sponsored Arsyad's studies abroad and gave him land on his return,[41] and Qadhi Abdussamad was appointed qadhi by the Dutch colonial government.[42]

Sanad is also constructed, and its construction can be criticised. Rahmadi suspects that in a genealogical chain recorded for Ali bin Abdullah al-Banjari, the name of Arsyad's daughter Asiah was deliberately dropped because women's names are unusual in an *isnad*.[43] Yet Arsyad's own teaching had a place for women: Fathimah, his granddaughter, taught women while her half-brother, Mufti Muhammad As'ad, taught men.[44] The tradition's practice of teaching was therefore broader than its practice of recording chains.

The twenty-first-century change lies in codification. Before his death Guru Sekumpul collected his devotions in *al-Imdad*, which Kurnia and colleagues report became a general ijazah for his followers and the wider public.[45] In this study's reading, a permission that was once personal and oral, passed from one teacher to one student, was written into a text open to anyone.

Purpose: Tafaqquh, Reproducing Scholars, and Forming Community

Arsyad's priorities are visible in a reported exchange. When Abdussamad al-Palimbani invited him by letter to join a jihad, he is said to have replied that educating children, grandchildren, and descendants in the religious sciences is more meritorious than fighting unbelievers.[46] Rahmadi reads this as Arsyad's focus on training his descendants to become ulama.[47] The full title of his best-known fiqh work, *Sabil al-*

[38] Asmaran, Yaqin, and Mahmud, "Transmisi Ilmu Tasawuf," 517.

[39] Kurnia et al., "Pendidikan Karakter Abah Guru Sekumpul," 45.

[40] Rahmadi, *Jaringan Intelektual*, 19.

[41] Yaqin, "Arsyad al-Banjari's Thought on Education," 339, 345.

[42] Rahmadi, *Jaringan Intelektual*, 51.

[43] Rahmadi, *Jaringan Intelektual*, 12.

[44] Rahmadi, *Jaringan Intelektual*, 32.

[45] Kurnia et al., "Pendidikan Karakter Abah Guru Sekumpul," 46.

[46] Abu Daudi, *Maulana Syekh Muhammad Arsyad al-Banjari (Tuan Haji Besar)*, 3rd ed. (Dalam Pagar: Yapida, 2003), 446, cited in Rahmadi, *Jaringan Intelektual*, 29.

[47] Rahmadi, *Jaringan Intelektual*, 29.

Muhtadin li-l-Tafaqquh fi Amr al-Din, names the same purpose, the deepening of understanding of religion.[48] His students and descendants carried the purpose outward. Sari and Iqbal, following Buseri, report that they were sent as preachers to many parts of the sultanate.[49]

Abdussamad Bakumpai took teaching into the interior and, in Rahmadi's account, among Dayak communities, where many embraced Islam.[50] For Guru Sekumpul, Kurnia and colleagues read the purpose as character formation within a settled community. They report teachings on contentment, patience, and gratitude, an ethic of work as worship, and a routine of devotions that keeps people occupied with good.[51] Across the cases the purpose is practice-oriented: knowledge is meant to produce correct belief and conduct, to form a community, and above all to reproduce teachers.

Comparison Across the Four Figures

Table 2 sets the five dimensions against the four figures. Cells marked as reported rest on hagiographic or journalistic material, and cells left thin reflect thin evidence and not necessarily thin practice.

Table 2. Epistemic Dimensions Across the Four Figures

Dimension	Arsyad	Abdussamad Bakumpai	Syarwani Abdan	Guru Sekumpul
Source	Text first; gnostic insight under the shariah; falak and practical sciences	Shariah teaching with Naqshbandiyah and Shadhiliyah paths	Textual and Sufi learning from several teachers	Sufi devotional corpus; codified devotions (al-Imdad)
Acquisition	Halaqah, sorogan, discussion, takhassus; fenced residential village	Dalam Pagar, then Haramayn; langgar for teaching, balai for suluk	Study circles, pesantren, home majelis; companionship	Majelis at a prayer house; service and lifelong learning
Teacher's adab	Uswah hasanah	Teaching in remote villages (reported)	Care with evidence; teaching without fee (reported)	Modelling through service (reported)
Authority	Haramayn teachers; sultan's patronage; Sammaniyah	Haramayn ijazah in two paths; qadhi under the Dutch	Two chains to Arsyad; eighth-generation descendant	Many ijazah; chains to Arsyad; eighth generation; Khawatim Khawajagan
Purpose	Tafaqquh; training descendants as scholars	Outreach to the interior and Dayak communities	Training students at a pesantren (thin evidence)	Character formation and community building

Note: "Reported" marks cells that rest on hagiographic or journalistic material.

[48] "Informasi Manuskrip Keagamaan," Kantor Wilayah Kementerian Agama Provinsi Kalimantan Selatan, accessed October 30, 2026, https://kalsel.kemenag.go.id/artikel/34366/Informasi-Manuskrip-Keagamaan.

[49] Sari and Iqbal, "Tuan Guru dalam Sejarah," 56.

[50] Rahmadi, *Jaringan Intelektual*, 51.

[51] Kurnia et al., "Pendidikan Karakter Abah Guru Sekumpul," 39, 44.

Continuity and Change: Toward a Model of Tuan Guru-Based Learning

Four continuities stand out. The first is the ordering of sources, with text first and insight under the shariah. The second is learning through companionship and not through text alone. The third is authority through chains that are plural and converge on Arsyad. The fourth is a practice-oriented purpose in which the reproduction of teachers is the most constant element. Four changes also stand out. Institutions move from a fenced village to dispersed circles and madrasah and then to an open congregation. The route to authority shifts from a Haramayn-centred path to a pluralised local network. Permission is codified from personal ijazah to a text open to the public. And the mediating role of rulers passes from the sultan to the colonial administration.

These findings support the model in Figure 1. Its core is four components, source, acquisition, authority, and purpose, held together by the teacher's exemplary adab, which links what is taught to how it is lived. Around the core sits a variable layer, place, which has changed form across the four periods while keeping its function as a designed environment for learning.

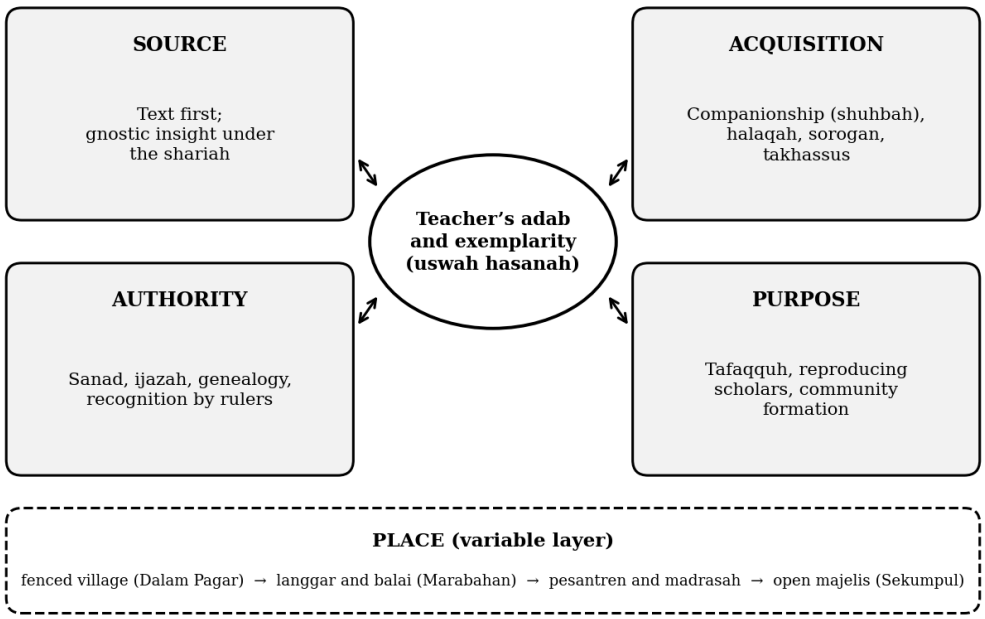


Figure 1. A Model of Tuan Guru-Based Learning

The model carries three implications for pesantren education. First, the learning environment is part of the curriculum, and its design, from the fence of Dalam Pagar to the prayer house of Sekumpul, deserves study as a pedagogical decision. Second, the sequence from tawhid to fiqh to tasawwuf that Yaqin describes as gradualization is a tested ordering

that can inform present-day curriculum design.[52] Third, documenting chains of transmission is valuable, but it should be done critically, with attention to who is omitted, as the case of Asiah shows.

Limitations

The study rests on published sources and does not include fieldwork. Primary texts are engaged through scholarly analyses and not through direct philological reading, the evidence for Syarwani Abdan is thin and partly journalistic, and several accounts of Guru Sekumpul are hagiographic. The model should therefore be treated as a hypothesis for testing in fieldwork with living tuan guru and in direct study of the primary texts and manuscripts.

CONCLUSION

This article reconstructed the epistemology of learning in the Banjar tuan guru tradition from Arsyad to Guru Sekumpul along five dimensions. In answer to the first question, Arsyad's teaching and writings show a layered epistemic structure in which revealed text and its scholarly elaboration form the base and gnostic insight is the consummation, taught gradually, through companionship, within a designed learning community, and for the purpose of reproducing teachers. In answer to the second, successors kept the core and changed its institutions, its routes to authority, and its means of codifying permission. In answer to the third, the study proposed a model with four components held together by the teacher's adab and set within a variable layer of place.

Three suggestions follow. Researchers should test the model through fieldwork with living tuan guru and through direct reading of the primary texts and manuscripts, especially for the twentieth-century figures for whom evidence is thinnest. Pesantren and madrasah leaders should document their own practices of learning, including chains of transmission, with attention to the full range of teachers. Future studies should extend the comparison to other tuan guru lineages, including those of the Dayak interior and the Banjar diaspora, to see whether the same epistemic structure holds.

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