

Building a Sustainable Educational Ecosystem: Lessons from the Extinction Factors of Early Sunni Madzhas

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Abstrak

Artikel ini bertujuan menganalisis faktor-faktor penyebab hilangnya sejumlah mazhab fikih Sunni awal serta relevansi historisnya bagi pengembangan ekosistem pendidikan berkelanjutan di Indonesia. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kepustakaan melalui analisis literatur sejarah mazhab fikih dan pendidikan. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa lemahnya kaderisasi, keterbatasan dokumentasi keilmuan, terputusnya transmisi pengetahuan, dan minimnya dukungan kelembagaan berkontribusi terhadap keberlangsungan tradisi keilmuan. Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya budaya literasi, regenerasi pendidik, dan tata kelola kelembagaan dalam menghadapi tantangan pendidikan kontemporer. Dalam perspektif pendidikan Islam, keberlanjutan pendidikan perlu didukung integrasi nilai amanah, tanggung jawab intelektual, penghargaan terhadap tradisi keilmuan, dan keterbukaan terhadap perkembangan pengetahuan. Dengan demikian, sejarah intelektual Islam menjadi landasan konseptual untuk membangun sistem pendidikan modern yang adaptif, berintegritas, inklusif, dan berkelanjutan.

Kata kunci: Pendidikan Berkelanjutan; Mazhab Fikih Sunni; Tradisi Keilmuan Islam; Literasi; Pendidikan Islam.

Abstract

This article aims to analyze the factors contributing to the disappearance of several early Sunni schools of Islamic jurisprudence and examine their historical relevance to the development of a sustainable educational ecosystem in Indonesia. This study employs a qualitative approach using a literature review method, drawing on historical literature concerning Islamic legal schools and education. The findings indicate that weak scholarly regeneration, limited documentation of intellectual contributions, disrupted knowledge transmission, and insufficient institutional support are key factors affecting the continuity of scholarly traditions. These findings highlight the importance of strengthening literacy culture, ensuring educator regeneration, and improving institutional governance to address contemporary educational challenges. From the perspective of Islamic education, educational sustainability requires the integration of Islamic values, including amanah (trustworthiness), intellectual responsibility, respect for scholarly traditions, and openness to the advancement of knowledge. Thus, Islamic intellectual history provides a conceptual foundation for developing a modern educational system that is adaptive, ethical, inclusive, and sustainable.

Keywords: Sustainable Education; Sunni Schools of Islamic Jurisprudence; Islamic Scholarly Tradition; Literacy; Islamic Education.

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Introduction

Education serves as a fundamental instrument for human resource development and a primary indicator of a nation's progress. Through quality education, individuals acquire the essential knowledge, skills, and ethical values required to contribute productively to social life.¹ However, Indonesia continues to face significant challenges in establishing equitable access and standardizing educational quality, particularly within its frontier, outermost, and disadvantaged (3T) regions. The systemic crisis in these areas extends far beyond mere infrastructural limitations, it is deeply rooted in the uneven distribution of teaching staff, restricted access to learning resources, and fragile systems for teacher's professional development. Consequently, a severe educational disparity persists, threatening the continuous progress of human development in remote sectors.²

In investigating these educational challenges, existing literature generally pursues two separate streams. Studies focusing on Indonesian remote education examine policy trends, geographical barriers, and logistical challenges of teacher distribution. Conversely, historical studies within Islamic jurisprudence extensively document the expansion, survival, and eventual disappearance of early Sunni legal madzhabs. Historical records demonstrate that alongside the four surviving major madzhabs, several prominent early madzhabs specifically the Madzhab of Al-Auza'i, Sufyan Ats-Tsauri, Al-Laits bin Sa'ad, Dawud Adh-Dhahiri, and Muhammad bin Jarir Ath-Thabari flourished before experiencing total extinction. The literature attributes their decline to weak regeneration, fragile student networks, undocumented scientific knowledge, and the absence of sustainable institutional support.³

The historical development and decline of early Sunni schools of Islamic jurisprudence offer important insights into the development of a sustainable educational ecosystem grounded in Islamic values. The experiences of these scholarly traditions demonstrate the importance of maintaining the continuity of

¹ M Ngalim Purwanto, *Ilmu Pendidikan Teoretis Dan Praktis* (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2019), h. 19.

² Suyanto dan Asep Jihad, *Menjadi Guru Profesional: Strategi Meningkatkan Kualifikasi Dan Kualitas Guru Di Era Global* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2018), h. 112.

³ Muhammad Abu Zahrah, *Tarikh Al-Madzahib Al-Islamiyyah* (Kairo: Dar al-Fikr al-'Arabi, 2012), h. 34.

knowledge transmission, strengthening scholarly succession, preserving intellectual heritage, and establishing institutional support for the advancement of learning. These lessons can inform contemporary educational models by integrating Islamic ethical principles, intellectual responsibility, and respect for scholarly traditions into curriculum development, pedagogical practices, and institutional governance. Furthermore, sustainable Islamic education requires the integration of contemporary da'wah strategies that communicate Islamic values through educational activities, digital platforms, community engagement, and context-sensitive learning initiatives. In this framework, da'wah extends beyond religious communication to include the cultivation of ethical awareness, intellectual development, and socially responsible conduct. The dissemination of Islamic values therefore constitutes an integral component of sustainable educational strategies rather than a separate religious activity. By connecting historical insights from Islamic jurisprudence with contemporary educational innovation and da'wah, this study seeks to establish a conceptual foundation for an educational ecosystem that preserves the intellectual heritage of Islam while responding critically and constructively to the changing needs of Indonesian society.

Despite the richness of these two bodies of literature, previous research treats the history of Islamic jurisprudence and modern educational management as mutually exclusive domains. Historical treatises on extinct *madzhabs* are rarely projected onto modern pedagogical ecosystems, while contemporary educational research rarely looks to classical socio-intellectual history for organizational frameworks. This paper bridges that gap. The novelty of this research lies in its interdisciplinary approach: utilizing the historical extinction factors of early Sunni fiqh madzhabs as a novel diagnostic framework to evaluate and provide solutions for the sustainability of Indonesia's modern educational ecosystem.

This inquiry is driven by an urgent operational reality observed in Indonesia's remote areas: the extreme dependency of madzhabs on single dedicated figures. Numerous remote madzhabs survive entirely on the extraordinary dedication of a single pioneer who simultaneously acts as principal, teacher, and administrator. Once this central figure retires, transfers, or passes away, the institution loses its direction and collapses. From a management perspective, this institutional failure

mirrors the exact historical mechanism that caused the Al-Laits Madzhab in Egypt to vanish after the passing of its founder. Therefore, examining this historical parallel is critical to prevent modern educational institutions from repeating past systemic failures of knowledge transmission.⁴

Based on this rationale, this article aims to analyze the factors behind the extinction of early Sunni fiqh madzhabs and examine their direct relevance to constructing a sustainable educational ecosystem in Indonesia. Through this study, it is expected that educational stakeholders and policymakers will gain a reflective perspective on the urgency of systematic regeneration, a strong literacy culture, institutional support, and educator integrity. Scientifically, this paper contributes to the theoretical development of Educational Management by introducing a classical-historical comparative lens, offering a practical framework to ensure that educational processes can run effectively and continuously.

An educational ecosystem is a system created from various interacting components that mutually influence the implementation of education. These components include students, educators, curricula, learning environments, families, communities, and government support as policymakers. Quality education depends not merely on the success of one particular component, but on the synergy of all elements involved in the educational process.⁵ Therefore, educational success must be viewed as the outcome of collaboration among various parties forming a conducive and sustainable learning environment.⁶ The concept of a sustainable educational ecosystem emphasizes the importance of continuous educational processes through human resource regeneration, the strengthening of literacy culture, knowledge management, and consistent institutional support. From an educational management perspective, the sustainability of an educational institution is determined by its ability to build a system that does not rely on specific individuals, but rather rests upon strong organizational governance capable of

⁴ Abdul Wahhab Khallaf, *Tarikh Al-Tasyri' Al-Islami* (Kairo: Dar al-Qalam, 2014), h. 153.

⁵ E Mulyasa, *Manajemen Berbasis Sekolah* (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2022), h. 41.

⁶ Nanang Fattah, *Landasan Manajemen Pendidikan* (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2021), h. 27.

adapting to changing times.⁷ Educational institutions with good regeneration systems tend to be more capable of maintaining the quality of their educational services in the long term.⁸

Besides human resources, literacy culture is also a vital element in a sustainable educational ecosystem. Literacy is not merely about reading and writing skills, it also encompasses the ability to document, develop, and transmit knowledge to the next generation.⁹ Poorly documented knowledge risks being lost during staff turnover or leadership changes. Conversely, a strong culture of documentation enables systematic and continuous knowledge transfer.¹⁰ Furthermore, institutional support from both the government and the community is a determining factor in educational success. The government holds the responsibility to provide equitable educational access through affirmative policies, the provision of infrastructure, the equal distribution of teaching staff, and the improvement of educational service quality.¹¹ Meanwhile, community participation plays a role in fostering a supportive social environment for the educational process and reinforcing the sustainability of school programs.¹² Therefore, a healthy educational ecosystem is characterized by synergy among educators, students, literacy culture, and institutional support operating harmoniously and sustainably.¹³

In the historical development of Islamic law, alongside the four madzhab that survive today, there were several Sunni fiqh madzhab that once expanded widely but later experienced decline and lost their followers. One of these is the Al-Auza'i Madzhab, founded by Imam Al-Auza'i (d. 157 H), a prominent scholar who held strong influence in the regions of Sham and Andalusia. His thoughts were

⁷ Syaiful Sagala, *Manajemen Strategik Dalam Peningkatan Mutu Pendidikan* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2020), h. 84.

⁸ Husaini Usman, *Manajemen: Teori, Praktik, Dan Riset Pendidikan* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2019), h. 105.

⁹ Yunus Abidin, *Pembelajaran Literasi: Strategi Meningkatkan Kemampuan Literasi Matematika, Sains, Membaca, Dan Menulis* (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2018), h. 15.

¹⁰ Donni Juni Priansa, *Pengembangan Strategi Dan Model Pembelajaran* (Bandung: CV Pustaka Setia, 2019), h. 66.

¹¹ Arwildayanto, *Manajemen Keuangan Dan Pembiayaan Pendidikan* (Bandung: Widya Padjadjaran, 2017), h. 50.

¹² Samhaji, "Analisis Implementasi Kebijakan Pemerataan Akses Pendidikan Pada Daerah Tertinggal Indonesia," *Journal of Governance and Policy Innovation* 5, no. 2 (2025), h. 99–112.

¹³ Tilaar, *Manajemen Pendidikan Nasional* (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2020), h. 58.

known for their capacity to integrate local community practices with sharia principles, as well as his deep concern for public welfare (*maslahah*).¹⁴ Despite its widespread influence at the time, this madzhab was gradually displaced by the Maliki and Syafi'i madzhabs, which possessed stronger institutional networks and regeneration systems.¹⁵ Ats-Tsauri Madzhab was established by Imam Sufyan Ats-Tsauri (d. 161 H), a leading hadith scholar and *faqih* renowned for his high intellectual independence. His fiqh methodology relied heavily on a proportional combination of hadiths, sayings of the Companions (*atsar*), and rational consideration.¹⁶ His scientific reputation was immense among early generations of scholars. However, a lack of students systematically developing and codifying his views resulted in the madzhab's failure to survive in the long run.¹⁷

The Al-Laits Madzhab was founded by Imam Al-Laits bin Sa'ad (d. 175 H), a great Egyptian scholar whom Imam Syafi'i even acknowledged as a *faqih* of profoundly deep knowledge.¹⁸ The core strength of Al-Laits's thought lay in his ability to understand the social realities of Egyptian society and contextualize them with the principles of Islamic law. Nevertheless, weaknesses in the regeneration process and minimal documentation of his thoughts prevented this madzhab from developing further after the Imam's passing.¹⁹ The Adh-Dhahiri Madzhab was pioneered by Imam Dawud bin Ali Adh-Dhahiri (d. 270 H). This madzhab was recognized for its strictly textual approach in interpreting the Qur'an and hadiths, as well as its total rejection of analogical deduction (*qiyas*) in legal derivation (*istinbath*).²⁰ Although it gained substantial influence, particularly through the

¹⁴ Muhammad Abu Zahrah, *Tarikh Al-Madzahib Al-Islamiyyah* (Kairo: Dar al-Fikr al-'Arabi, 2012), h. 231.

¹⁵ Wahbah al-Zuhaili, *Al-Fiqh Al-Islami Wa Adillatuhu*, Edisi Revi., vol. 1 (Damascus: Dar al-Fikr, 2007), h. 39.

¹⁶ Muhammad Abu Zahrah, *Tarikh Al-Madzahib Al-Islamiyyah* (Kairo: Dar al-Fikr al-'Arabi, 2012), h. 171.

¹⁷ Muhammad Ali Hasan, *Perbandingan Mazhab* (Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada, 2002), h. 57.

¹⁸ Muhammad Abu Zahrah, *Tarikh Al-Madzahib Al-Islamiyyah* (Kairo: Dar al-Fikr al-'Arabi, 2012), h. 238.

¹⁹ Wahbah al-Zuhaili, *Al-Fiqh Al-Islami Wa Adillatuhu*, Edisi Revi., vol. 1 (Damascus: Dar al-Fikr, 2007), h. 40.

²⁰ Abdul Karim Zaidan, *Al-Wajiz Fi Ushul Al-Fiqh* (Beirut: Muassasah al-Risalah, 2013), h. 311.

works of later adherents like Ibn Hazm, the madzhab faced limitations in social and institutional acceptance, causing its influence to wane over time.²¹

Meanwhile, the Ath-Thabari Madzhab was founded by Imam Muhammad bin Jarir Ath-Thabari (d. 310 H), a great scholar famous as an expert in tafsir, hadith, history, and fiqh.²² This madzhab demonstrated immense breadth of intellectual insight and a high capacity for synthesis in understanding the sources of Islamic law. However, much like other non-surviving madzhabs, a limited network of followers and the absence of an institution to continuously preserve and develop his ideas caused this madzhab to slowly vanish from the map of Sunni fiqh development.²³ These five madzhabs illustrate that a scholar's intellectual brilliance does not always guarantee the longevity of a scientific tradition. Factors such as regeneration, knowledge documentation, institutional support, and transmission networks play a crucial role in determining the sustainability of an academic community.²⁴ Therefore, the historical experiences of these five madzhabs can serve as a source of learning for establishing a resilient and sustainable educational ecosystem in the modern era.

Method

This study utilizes a qualitative approach, specifically employing a library research design. Library research was conducted by collecting and analyzing various written sources related to the historical development of Islamic fiqh madzhabs and educational problems in Indonesia.²⁵ The research data consists of primary and secondary data. Primary data was gathered from literature discussing the history of fiqh madzhabs, the thoughts of the madzhab Imams, and the factors influencing the survival or extinction of a madzhab. Secondary data was obtained from books, academic journal articles, educational policy documents, and relevant

²¹ Muhammad Abu Zahrah, *Tarikh Al-Madzahib Al-Islamiyyah* (Kairo: Dar al-Fikr al-'Arabi, 2012), h. 251.

²² Abdul Wahhab Khallaf, *Tarikh Al-Tasyri' Al-Islami* (Kairo: Dar al-Qalam, 2014), h. 186.

²³ Muhammad Ali Hasan, *Perbandingan Mazhab* (Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada, 2002), h. 63.

²⁴ Rusli, "Interaksi Power Dan Knowledge Dalam Konstruksi Mazhab Fiqih Dalam Perspektif Historis," *ISLAMICA: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* (2009), h. 90.

²⁵ Mestika Zed, *Metode Penelitian Kepustakaan* (Jakarta: Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia, 2018), h. 3.

research reports addressing issues of educational equity, teacher distribution, literacy, educational management, and human resource development.²⁶ The data collection technique utilized was documentation of various literature dealing with similar problems. The collected data was then analyzed using content analysis by identifying major themes, categorizing information based on the focus of the study, and interpreting the connections between historical phenomena of fiqh madzhab and modern educational realities. Through this approach, the study attempts to generate a comprehensive understanding of the relevance of historical lessons from fiqh madzhab to the strengthening of a sustainable educational system in Indonesia.

This study is non-empirical in nature and primarily employs historical and conceptual analysis rather than collecting primary data through fieldwork, interviews, surveys, or experiments. Its methodological framework is grounded in Islamic values and the philosophy of Islamic education, which provide the normative foundation for interpreting the historical development and decline of Sunni schools of Islamic jurisprudence and their implications for contemporary educational sustainability. The analysis adopts an interdisciplinary perspective by connecting Islamic intellectual history, educational theory, and institutional development while considering moral, ethical, and spiritual values as integral dimensions of educational practice. In particular, principles such as *amanah* (trustworthiness), *‘ilm* (knowledge), *‘adl* (justice), *mas’uliyah* (responsibility), and *adab* (ethical conduct) serve as conceptual lenses for examining the continuity of knowledge transmission, scholarly succession, literacy practices, and institutional support. These principles are interpreted in relation to the broader aims of Islamic education, including the cultivation of knowledgeable, ethical, and socially responsible individuals and the development of a just and harmonious society. Through this framework, the study does not seek to establish causal relationships through empirical measurement; rather, it develops a historically informed and normatively grounded conceptual

²⁶ Syafrida Hafni Sahir, *Metodologi Penelitian* (Medan: KBM Indonesia, 2021), h. 68.

understanding of how Islamic intellectual heritage and ethical principles can contribute to a sustainable educational ecosystem.

Results and Discussion

Results

The historical and conceptual analysis reveals that the sustainability of scholarly traditions depends on the interaction of several interrelated factors, including scholarly succession, the preservation of intellectual knowledge, continuity of knowledge transmission, institutional support, and the wider social context. The historical trajectories of early Sunni schools of Islamic jurisprudence demonstrate that the establishment of a scholarly tradition does not automatically guarantee its long-term continuity. Rather, its survival depends on the capacity to reproduce knowledge across generations, maintain recognizable intellectual foundations, preserve scholarly works, and establish mechanisms through which subsequent generations can learn, interpret, and develop inherited knowledge. These findings provide a conceptual basis for understanding the sustainability of educational ecosystems beyond the immediate availability of qualified educators or educational institutions.

One prominent factor identified in the analysis is the weakness of scholarly succession. The continuity of a school of jurisprudence depended not only on the intellectual contributions of its founding scholars but also on the presence of students and subsequent scholars who could preserve, explain, transmit, and further develop its legal thought. When a scholarly tradition lacked a sufficiently sustained network of successors, its intellectual influence could gradually diminish. This historical pattern highlights the importance of systematic regeneration in education. A sustainable educational ecosystem requires structured mechanisms for preparing future educators, supporting professional development, facilitating intergenerational learning, and ensuring that essential knowledge and institutional experience are transferred effectively from one generation to the next.

A second finding concerns the preservation and documentation of knowledge. The survival of an intellectual tradition is closely associated with the recording, transmission, organization, and continued study of its scholarly works.

Written texts, teaching materials, scholarly commentaries, and educational networks can help maintain the accessibility of knowledge beyond the lifetime of individual scholars. Conversely, inadequate preservation or limited circulation of intellectual materials can weaken the continuity of a tradition. In contemporary education, this historical lesson underscores the importance of literacy, academic publishing, libraries, institutional repositories, and digital knowledge platforms. These mechanisms can strengthen the accessibility and continuity of educational knowledge while allowing future generations to engage critically with established intellectual traditions.

The analysis also identifies institutional support and the broader social environment as important dimensions of scholarly sustainability. The continuity of a school of jurisprudence may be influenced by the availability of teaching institutions, scholarly networks, patronage, opportunities for intellectual exchange, and the extent to which its teachings are incorporated into established educational practices. Scholarly influence is therefore not determined solely by the intellectual quality of a founder or the originality of a particular legal position. It is also shaped by the institutional and social conditions that enable a tradition to be taught, reproduced, and developed. Applied to contemporary education, this finding suggests that educational sustainability requires adequate institutional governance, consistent policy support, professional opportunities for educators, and collaborative networks among educational institutions and communities.

Another result concerns the relationship between intellectual continuity and the development of educational identity. Early Sunni jurisprudential traditions were sustained through the interaction of legal reasoning, scholarly interpretation, teaching, and the transmission of intellectual authority. Their historical trajectories illustrate the importance of maintaining a coherent intellectual identity while enabling the interpretation and development of inherited knowledge. In the context of Islamic education, this relationship points to the need for educational models that preserve foundational Islamic values while responding to changing social, technological, and intellectual circumstances. The continuity of an educational tradition should therefore not be understood as the uncritical repetition of inherited

knowledge, but as a process of preservation, interpretation, and responsible development.

The historical analysis further highlights the relevance of moral and ethical values to educational sustainability. Islamic education is concerned not only with the acquisition and transmission of knowledge but also with the cultivation of character, responsibility, and ethical conduct. Principles such as amanah (trustworthiness), 'adl (justice), adab (ethical conduct), and intellectual responsibility provide a normative framework for understanding the relationship between knowledge, educators, institutions, and society. Within this framework, educators are responsible not only for delivering subject matter but also for maintaining academic integrity, cultivating responsible inquiry, and transmitting knowledge in ways that benefit the wider community. These values provide a conceptual link between the preservation of Islamic intellectual heritage and the development of an educational ecosystem oriented toward both intellectual advancement and social responsibility.

Finally, the findings indicate that educational sustainability can be conceptualized as an integrated system rather than the outcome of a single intervention. Scholarly succession, knowledge preservation, institutional support, intellectual identity, and ethical responsibility function as mutually reinforcing dimensions. Weakness in one dimension may undermine the effectiveness of the others, whereas their coordinated development can create more favorable conditions for the continuity of knowledge and educational practice. The historical experience of early Sunni madhhabs therefore offers a conceptual framework for examining how educational institutions can strengthen intergenerational knowledge transmission, develop sustainable literacy practices, preserve intellectual heritage, and integrate Islamic ethical principles into contemporary educational governance. These results establish the historical and conceptual foundation for the subsequent discussion of how lessons from Islamic intellectual history may inform the development of a sustainable educational ecosystem in Indonesia.

Discussion

The Crisis of Educator Regeneration and Teacher Distribution: Lessons from the Al-Laits Madzhab.

One of the most determining factors in the survival of a scientific tradition is successful regeneration. In the history of Islamic fiqh development, a great scholar's intellectual brilliance does not guarantee the longevity of the madzhab they established. This is clearly evident in the case of the Al-Laits Madzhab. Imam Al-Laits bin Sa'ad was known as one of the most influential scholars in Egypt during the second century of the Hijrah. Even Imam Syafi'i once stated that Al-Laits was more learned (*faqih*) than Imam Malik, yet his students were unable to preserve and expand upon his scholarly heritage. This statement demonstrates that the sustainability of a scientific system is determined not only by the quality of its intellectual leader, but also by the ability to cultivate a successor generation capable of carrying on the mission.²⁷

This phenomenon holds very strong relevance to the condition of education in Indonesia, particularly in frontier, outermost, and disadvantaged (3T) areas. Many schools in remote areas were built upon the dedication of a single teacher or community leader with a profound commitment to education. They frequently act as principal, teacher, administrator, and social mobilizer all at once. When this central figure retires, passes away, or gets transferred, the previously thriving institution loses its direction and suffers a decline in quality.²⁸

From an educational management perspective, this condition reveals an over-reliance on specific individuals. A healthy organization should be capable of creating a regeneration system so that program continuity does not depend on a single person. Failure to carry out regeneration can lead to the loss of experience, knowledge, and social networks that have served as the primary capital of the educational institution.²⁹

²⁷ Imelda Ni'matul Wasih, Mohammad Hikmal Akbar, and Muhammad, "Sejarah Empat Madzhab Islam Dan Eksistensinya Di Indonesia," *TARUNALAW: Journal of Law and Syariah*, (2024), h. 142.

²⁸ Zuliana Rohmani, "Pendidikan Di Daerah 3T (Terdepan, Terluar, Tertinggal): Kondisi Dan Harapan," *Eduversity: Journal of Future Interdisciplinary Education* (2025), h. 17.

²⁹ E Mulyasa, *Manajemen Komunitas Belajar: Strategi Peningkatan Kompetensi Guru Berbasis Mutu Kontemporer* (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2021), h. 76.

The issue of teacher distribution further exacerbates this situation. Various educational studies indicate that 3T areas still face a shortage of qualified educators. Many young teachers are reluctant to be placed in remote areas due to limited facilities, difficult transportation access, and minimal career development opportunities. Consequently, schools in these regions experience stagnation due to a lack of teaching staff capable of continuing previously initiated programs.³⁰

The lesson from the Al-Laits Madzhab shows that the longevity of scientific institutions requires long-term investment in nurturing the next generation.³¹ In the context of modern education, this can be realized through inter-teacher mentoring programs, the establishment of teacher learning communities, the strengthening of regional-based professional teacher education, and the provision of adequate incentives for teachers serving in 3T areas.³² Ultimately, the success of an educational system relies heavily on its ability to prepare the next generation. Just as history shows that major madzhab survived because they had students actively expanding and spreading their Imam's thoughts, madzhab and educational institutions can only endure if they manage to build a systematic and sustainable culture of regeneration.³³

The Urgency of Literacy, Documentation, and Curriculum Contextualization

The second factor leading to the extinction of several Sunni fiqh madzhab was the weak documentation and codification of the Imams' thoughts. Madzhab that have survived to this day generally possess strong written traditions. The Imams' legal opinions were documented in primary classical texts (*kitab induk*), which were then taught systematically to subsequent generations. Conversely,

³⁰ Kementerian Pendidikan Kebudayaan Riset dan Teknologi, *Rencana Strategis Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi 2020-2024* (Jakarta: Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi, 2020), h. 45.

³¹ Heni Ani Nuraeni, "Pentingnya Mengenal Mazhab-Mazhab Fiqih Bagi Umat Muslim Di Indonesia," *AL-AFKAR: Journal for Islamic Studies* (2024), h. 1428.

³² Zuliana Rohmani, "Pendidikan Di Daerah 3T (Terdepan, Terluar, Tertinggal): Kondisi Dan Harapan," *Eduversity: Journal of Future Interdisciplinary Education* (2025), h. 17.

³³ E Mulyasa, *Manajemen Komunitas Belajar: Strategi Peningkatan Kompetensi Guru Berbasis Mutu Kontemporer* (Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya, 2021), h. 79.

several extinct madzhab lost much of their intellectual heritage because their ideas were not codified systematically.³⁴

In modern education, documentation plays an essential role as a means of maintaining the continuity of knowledge. Knowledge stored solely within an individual's memory is highly vulnerable to being lost once that individual is no longer involved in the educational process. Therefore, the success of an educational institution is measured not only by its teaching capabilities, but also by its capacity to document experiences, innovations, and best practices.³⁵ In many remote schools, the learning process still relies heavily on oral traditions. Teachers develop learning methods based on personal experience without adequate documentation. When teacher turnover occurs, these methods are frequently lost and must be restarted from scratch. This situation causes the quality improvement process to run slowly and discontinuously.³⁶

A strong literacy culture serves as a key solution to this problem. Literacy does not mean just reading and writing. It also involves managing knowledge so that it can be inherited by future generations. Teachers need to be encouraged to document lesson plans, teaching strategies, learning evaluations, and various innovations they have implemented.³⁷ Developing modules based on local wisdom is also an important part of educational documentation efforts. Every region possesses distinct socio-cultural characteristics. A contextual curriculum enables students to grasp subject matter through experiences closely tied to their daily lives. Documenting local teaching practices helps schools build an educational identity tailored to the needs of the local community.³⁸

³⁴ Wahbah al-Zuhaili, *Al-Fiqh Al-Islami Wa Adillatuhu*, Edisi Revi., vol. 1 (Damascus: Dar al-Fikr, 2007), h. 40.

³⁵ Novena Ade Fredyarni, *Pendidikan Berbasis Kearifan Lokal* (Jakarta: PT Penamuda Media, 2025), h. 20.

³⁶ Agus Dudung, *Model Penyelenggaraan Pendidikan Untuk Daerah Terdepan, Terluar, Dan Tertinggal Yang Mengakomodasi Keberagaman Kondisi Lingkungan, Sosial, Dan Budaya Setempat (Berbasis Kearifan Lokal)* (Jakarta: Pusat Penelitian Kebijakan Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, Badan Penelitian dan Pengembangan, Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 2014), h. 115.

³⁷ Lena Marziana, "Strategi Pemerataan Tenaga Pendidik Di Daerah Terpencil: Sebuah Kajian Literatur Tentang Pendekatan Yang Efektif," *EDUCATIONAL: Jurnal Inovasi Pendidikan & Pengajaran* (2025), h. 478.

³⁸ Andi Aswad Jahudin, "Tren Dan Tantangan Pemerataan Guru Pada Daerah 3T Di Indonesia: Narrative Literature Review 2015-2025," *Prosiding Fakultas Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Negeri Jakarta* (2025), h. 46.

The rise of digital technology offers massive opportunities to reinforce the culture of documentation. Teachers can utilize digital platforms to store learning materials, build online libraries, and share best practices with the broader educational community. In this way, knowledge is no longer confined to a specific space and time.³⁹ The lesson to be taken from the history of fiqh madzhab is that undocumented knowledge risks extinction, whereas knowledge that is written down and taught systematically has a much higher chance of enduring.⁴⁰ The exact same principle applies in the world of education. Schools with a solid culture of literacy and documentation will be better equipped to sustain educational quality amidst teacher turnover or shifting policies.

Institutional Synergy and State Support

The sustainability of a scientific tradition cannot be separated from institutional support. In Islamic history, the Hanafi, Maliki, and Syafi'i madzhab expanded rapidly not only due to the scholarly mastery of their Imams, but also because they secured backing from state institutions. The appointment of judges, the establishment of madrasas, and the structuring of educational systems during certain eras largely referenced these specific madzhab. This institutional support widened their sphere of influence and fortified the longevity of the scientific traditions they built.⁴¹ In contrast, schools lacking institutional support struggled to maintain their existence. Despite possessing high intellectual caliber, they lacked the institutional networks required to sustain knowledge transmission continuously.⁴²

An identical phenomenon can be observed in Indonesia's education sector. Schools in remote areas frequently face shortages of infrastructure, facilities, and funding. Local communities certainly attempt to support the continuity of education,

³⁹ Novena Ade Fredyarni, *Pendidikan Berbasis Kearifan Lokal* (Jakarta: PT Penamuda Media, 2025), h. 66.

⁴⁰ Achmad Musyahid Idrus, *Pengantar Memahami Mazhab* (Gowa: Pusaka Almaila, 2017), h. 60.

⁴¹ Siti Yusrona Daulay, Zainal Efendi Hasibuan, dan Erik Novianto, "Madrasah Nizhamiyah Dalam Perspektif Politik Pendidikan Islam: Analisis Historis Dan Implikasi Sosio-Intelektual," *Ahsani Taqwim: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Keguruan* (2025), h. 692.

⁴² Rusli, "Interaksi Power Dan Knowledge Dalam Konstruksi Mazhab Fiqih Dalam Perspektif Historis," *ISLAMICA: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* (2009), h. 90.

but their capabilities are often constrained by existing economic realities.⁴³ In educational development theory, the state holds the ultimate responsibility to ensure equal educational access for all citizens. Consequently, affirmative government intervention is desperately needed, particularly for areas lagging in development. State support can take the form of building educational infrastructure, providing internet access, distributing teaching staff equitably, offering scholarship programs, and improving teacher welfare. Additionally, the government must develop monitoring and evaluation systems to guarantee that educational policies actually reach the regions that need them most.⁴⁴

Collaboration among the government, communities, universities, religious organizations, and the private sector is likewise vital in constructing a robust educational ecosystem. Education is not solely the responsibility of the school, it is the shared collective responsibility of society as a whole.⁴⁵ The history of fiqh madzhab demonstrates that great ideas require powerful institutions to endure.⁴⁶ In the same vein, education requires adequate institutional support to develop sustainably and reach all layers of society.

Educator Integrity as the Heart of the Community

Beyond institutional aspects, a factor of equal importance in the sustainability of an educational system is the moral integrity of its educators. Imam Al-Auza'i and Imam Ats-Tsauri were renowned not merely for the vastness of their knowledge, but also for their courage in defending the public and maintaining their independence from political interests contrary to Islamic values.⁴⁷ In modern education, particularly in regions with limited facilities, public trust often becomes

⁴³ Amelia Vega, "Kesetaraan Akses Pendidikan: Analisis Pengimplementasian Nilai Pancasila Dalam Pemerataan Akses Pendidikan Di Indonesia," *Jurnal Lentera Ilmu (JLI)* (2024), h. 46.

⁴⁴ Arwildayanto, *Manajemen Keuangan Dan Pembiayaan Pendidikan* (Bandung: Widya Padjadjaran, 2017), h. 50.

⁴⁵ Samhaji, "Analisis Implementasi Kebijakan Pemerataan Akses Pendidikan Pada Daerah Tertinggal Indonesia," *Journal of Governance and Policy Innovation* (2025), h. 100.

⁴⁶ Imelda Ni'matul Wasih, Mohammad Hikmal Akbar, and Muhammad, "Sejarah Empat Madzhab Islam Dan Eksistensinya Di Indonesia," *TARUNALAW: Journal of Law and Syariah*, (2024), h. 142.

⁴⁷ Mashood A Baderin, *Hukum Hak Asasi Manusia Dan Hukum Islam* (Jakarta: Komisi Nasional Hak Asasi Manusia, 2007), h. 126.

the main factor dictating a school's success. Parents will continue to entrust their children's education to schools led by high-integrity teachers, even if the available facilities remain modest.⁴⁸ Teachers, at their core, are not merely instructors, but agents of social change. They serve as role models for students in cultivating character, ethics, and social responsibility. Therefore, the moral quality of teachers has an immense impact on educational success.⁴⁹

In remote areas, a teacher's social role frequently extends far beyond their formal duties. Teachers act as family consultants, community leaders, conflict mediators, and drivers of social activity. This strategic position makes integrity a priceless asset that must be guarded.⁵⁰ Character education for teachers must be placed on equal footing with professional competency development. Teacher training programs should not focus exclusively on pedagogical methods and educational technology. They must also reinforce the values of honesty, responsibility, empathy, and social concern.⁵¹ The lessons from Imam Al-Auza'i and Ats-Tsauri show that the longevity of a scholarly community is heavily influenced by the moral caliber of its leaders.⁵² In the realm of education, educators with integrity become the anchor of public trust and the fundamental cornerstone for sustainable educational development.

Integrating Islamic Values into a Sustainable Educational Ecosystem

The historical lessons drawn from the decline of certain early Sunni schools of Islamic jurisprudence provide a basis for understanding educational sustainability not merely as an institutional or managerial concern but also as a moral and intellectual responsibility grounded in Islamic values. The continuity of knowledge requires more than the availability of educational resources; it also

⁴⁸ Wiwi Okta Lestari, "Pengaruh Keteladanan Orang Tua Dan Guru Terhadap Akhlak Siswa Di Sekolah Menengah Atas (SMA) Negeri 6 Bengkulu Selatan" (2017), h. 9.

⁴⁹ Munirah, *Menjadi Guru Beretika Dan Profesional* (Solok: CV. Insan Cendekia Mandiri, 2020), h. 5.

⁵⁰ Andi Aswad Jahudin, "Tren Dan Tantangan Pemerataan Guru Pada Daerah 3T Di Indonesia: Narrative Literature Review 2015-2025," *Prosiding Fakultas Ilmu Pendidikan Universitas Negeri Jakarta* (2025), h. 47.

⁵¹ Muhammad Jafar, *Pendidikan Karakter Dan Peran Guru Di Sekolah* (Padang, Sumatera Barat: Azzia Karya Bersama, 2024), h. 3.

⁵² Muhammad Ali Hasan, *Perbandingan Mazhab* (Jakarta: PT Raja Grafindo Persada, 2002), h. 63.

depends on the ethical commitment of educators, the integrity of knowledge transmission, and the willingness of institutions to preserve and develop intellectual heritage for future generations. Within the framework of Islamic education, values such as *sidq* (honesty), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *ta'awun* (mutual cooperation), and *'adl* (justice) offer complementary principles for strengthening these dimensions.⁵³ Honesty supports academic integrity and the responsible communication of knowledge, while trustworthiness emphasizes educators' responsibility to fulfill their professional and moral obligations. Mutual cooperation encourages collaboration among educators, educational institutions, families, and communities, thereby reducing institutional isolation and strengthening the collective capacity to sustain educational practices. Justice, meanwhile, requires educational opportunities, learning resources, and qualified educators to be distributed fairly, particularly among communities that face structural disadvantages.⁵⁴ These principles suggest that a sustainable educational ecosystem should be evaluated not only in terms of institutional continuity and academic performance but also in terms of ethical conduct, equitable access, and its contribution to the common good.

Islamic literacy culture constitutes another important dimension of this framework. Literacy in Islamic education should extend beyond the ability to read religious texts to include the preservation, interpretation, critical examination, and responsible dissemination of knowledge. The historical experience of Islamic scholarly traditions demonstrates the conceptual importance of maintaining intellectual records and transmitting knowledge across generations.⁵⁵ In contemporary Indonesia, this principle can be translated into stronger reading and writing practices, scholarly publication, the preservation of manuscripts and educational materials, the development of institutional repositories, and the

⁵³ Mohammad Sabarudin et al., "The Effect of Contextual Teaching and Learning Models on Al-Quran and Hadith Subjects," *At-Tadzkir: Islamic Education Journal* 2, no. 2 (2023): 129–42, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.59373/attadzkir.v2i2.43>.

⁵⁴ Jayeel Cornelio and Septrin Calamba, "Going Home: Youth and Aspirations in Postconflict Marawi, Philippines," *Journal of Youth Studies* 26, no. 5 (May 28, 2023): 668–85, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2022.2038781>.

⁵⁵ I. R Al-Faruqi, *Islamization of Knowledge: General Principles and Work Plan* (International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1982).

responsible use of digital platforms. Such initiatives should encourage learners and educators to engage with Islamic intellectual heritage critically and contextually rather than treating inherited knowledge as detached from contemporary social realities. Integrating Islamic literacy with broader academic literacy can therefore support the continuity of knowledge while cultivating intellectual independence, ethical awareness, and lifelong learning.

Furthermore, the development of a sustainable educational ecosystem requires an Islamic approach that connects knowledge, character formation, institutional responsibility, and social welfare. From this perspective, education is not exclusively a mechanism for transferring information or preparing individuals for employment; it is also a process of cultivating morally responsible individuals who contribute to a just and harmonious society.⁵⁶ The principle of *ta'awun* provides a foundation for partnerships among schools, universities, religious institutions, families, and community organizations, while the principle of *'adl* directs these partnerships toward reducing educational inequalities and ensuring that marginalized communities are not excluded from meaningful learning opportunities. Sustainability also entails an intergenerational responsibility to preserve valuable intellectual resources, strengthen educational institutions, and ensure that the benefits of learning remain accessible to future generations. Consequently, Islamic values can inform educational policies and practices through equitable resource allocation, transparent institutional governance, ethical professional standards, collaborative knowledge production, and long-term investment in educators' development.

These considerations also have implications for contemporary *da'wah*, understood as the communication and practical embodiment of Islamic teachings in society. Educational institutions can contribute to *da'wah* by integrating Islamic ethical principles into teaching practices, community engagement, digital literacy initiatives, and programs addressing social challenges. Rather than limiting *da'wah* to formal religious instruction, this approach emphasizes the demonstration of

⁵⁶ Akib Akib et al., "Revitalizing Teacher Pedagogical Interaction with Students in Fiqh Learning," *Al-Hijr: Journal of Adulearn World* 3, no. 3 SE-Articles (September 30, 2024): 353–64, <https://doi.org/10.55849/alhijr.v3i3.696>.

Islamic values through honesty, professional responsibility, cooperation, justice, and service to the community.⁵⁷ Digital platforms can expand access to Islamic scholarship and educational resources, provided that information is communicated accurately, sources are evaluated critically, and intellectual property is respected. Through this integration, education and da'wah can reinforce one another: education develops knowledge and critical understanding, while da'wah connects these capacities with ethical conduct and social responsibility.

Taken together, these arguments extend the implications of the historical analysis beyond the preservation of scholarly traditions to the normative foundations of sustainable educational development. The decline of a scholarly tradition cannot be attributed to a single factor without detailed historical evidence; nevertheless, the broader lessons concerning knowledge transmission, institutional support, scholarly succession, and intellectual preservation offer useful points of comparison for contemporary education.⁵⁸ An educational ecosystem grounded in Islamic values should therefore combine systematic educator regeneration, a strong culture of literacy, professional integrity, institutional collaboration, and a commitment to social justice.⁵⁹ Such a framework positions Islamic intellectual heritage not simply as a historical legacy but as a source of ethical and conceptual resources for responding to present educational challenges. Its practical value ultimately depends on translating these principles into context-sensitive educational policies and practices and evaluating their effectiveness through further empirical research.

Conclusion

Furthermore, the sustainability of Indonesia's educational ecosystem should be grounded in Islamic ethical values, the principles of social justice, and the

⁵⁷ Salami Mahmud et al., "Building Students' Character Based on Maqasid Al-Shari'ah: Perspectives of Parents, Teachers, and Community Members in Banda Aceh," *Samarah* 7, no. 3 (2023): 1803–26, <https://doi.org/10.22373/sjkh.v7i3.17708>.

⁵⁸ Abdul Haris Rasyidi, S Abdul, and Jalil Al Idrus, "Exploration of PAI Teacher Challenges and Opportunities; Case Study of Implementation The Independent Learning Curriculum, In East Lombok Elementary Schools," *Jurnal Ilmiah Profesi Pendidikan*, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.29303/jipp.v9i1.2058>.

⁵⁹ Miftahur Rohman and Wakib Kurniawan, *PENDIDIKAN AGAMA ISLAM DI PERGURUAN TINGGI UMUM*, 2025.

intellectual heritage of Islamic scholarship. Efforts to strengthen educator regeneration, preserve knowledge, and maintain professional integrity must be accompanied by a commitment to honesty, trustworthiness, cooperation, fairness, and moral responsibility. These values provide a normative foundation for ensuring that educational opportunities and resources are distributed equitably, knowledge is transmitted responsibly across generations, and educational institutions contribute to the intellectual, moral, and spiritual development of society. Integrating Islamic values into contemporary educational policies and practices also enables Islamic intellectual heritage to serve as a constructive resource for addressing present educational challenges while remaining responsive to changing social conditions. Therefore, a sustainable educational system should not be evaluated solely by its institutional continuity or academic achievements, but also by its capacity to cultivate ethical individuals, promote social justice, strengthen spiritual awareness, and contribute to the common good. This values-based approach reinforces the central argument of this study: the historical lessons of Islamic jurisprudential traditions can inform the development of an educational ecosystem that is intellectually robust, morally responsible, socially just, and sustainable across generations.

The historical development of *fiqh madzhab*s demonstrates that the survival of a scientific tradition is determined not only by the quality of a figure's thoughts, but also by successful regeneration, the strength of literacy and documentation, institutional support, and the integrity of its leaders. These lessons hold powerful relevance to the Indonesian education sector, particularly in confronting various challenges in 3T areas. Educator regeneration is a critical factor in guaranteeing the continuity of educational programs. Furthermore, literacy and documentation cultures must be fortified so that educational knowledge and innovations can be handed down to future generations. Support from the state and various institutions is likewise necessary to ensure equitable access and educational quality. Moreover, the integrity of teachers as role models and agents of social change serves as the primary foundation for building public trust in educational institutions. Therefore, strengthening a sustainable educational system requires synergy among human resource development, literacy culture, institutional support, and character building

for educators. The values gleaned from the history of these fiqh madzhabs can serve as inspiration for formulating more effective, inclusive, and sustainable educational policies and practices.

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