

Prophetic sufism in Muhammadiyah: *Tuan Guru Haris'* education model

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how prophetic sufism is embodied and pedagogically transmitted within Muhammadiyah through the life and educational practices of *Tuan Guru Haji* (TGH) Haris in Lombok, Indonesia. It aims to demonstrate how spirituality operates as a lived, community-based learning model rather than merely a theological discourse. The research employed a qualitative life-history design with a historical-critical-philosophical orientation. Data were collected through manuscript analysis, observation, literature review, and in-depth interviews with six purposively selected informants representing familial, organizational, and community perspectives. Data were analyzed using the Miles-Huberman interactive model, including reduction, display, and verification through triangulation. The findings reveal that TGH Haris practiced prophetic sufism as an embodied pedagogical framework grounded in *ikhlas* (sincerity), *kana'ah* (contentment), and *khauf* (fear of God). His *berugak* (traditional Sasak pavilion) functioned as an informal learning center characterized by dialogical interaction, experiential teaching, and community-based moral formation. Spiritual values were transmitted through exemplarity, relational authority, and everyday engagement rather than institutionalized mystical structures. This study demonstrates that prophetic sufism operates as a practical Islamic pedagogical model integrating reformist theology, ethical discipline, and informal community learning. It contributes empirically grounded insights into how spirituality is enacted and reproduced within Muhammadiyah's grassroots educational context.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Muhammadiyah is an Islamic organization and movement founded by Ahmad Dahlan in 1330 H (1912 A.D.) [1]. However, there has long been a misunderstanding that Muhammadiyah, as a modern Islamic organization [2], rejects sufism and even considers it an adversary. As a result, Muhammadiyah is often perceived as paying little attention to the ethical, inner, and spiritual dimensions of human life, which are the focus of sufi study and practice. Critics argue that Muhammadiyah's worship rituals are overly formalistic limited to fulfilling requirements and pillars while the spiritual dimension appears barren and lifeless. This modernist mass organization (ORMAS) is thus seen as focusing primarily on purifying religion, eradicating

TBC or *tachayyul* (superstition), *bid'ah* (religious innovation), and *churafat* (myths and superstitious beliefs), and developing charitable endeavors in education, health, and social services.

In this study, sufism is concisely understood as Islamic spirituality oriented toward inner purification, moral discipline, and closeness to God grounded in the Qur'an and *sunnah* (way of life), traditions, and practices of the Prophet Muhammad. Within Muhammadiyah discourse, the rejection of sufism stems from the assumption that it is not part of authentic Islamic teachings but rather an external import (*tasawwuf ad-dakhiilah*). Sufism commonly understood as Islamic mysticism in Western scholarship and as *tasawwuf* in the Arabic Islamic tradition is widely regarded as one of the most controversial currents within Islam [3], sustaining ongoing debates over its legitimacy. The historical evolution of Sufi thought has nevertheless secured its position as a recognized branch of Islamic teaching oriented toward divine consciousness and spiritual devotion [4], and in contemporary cosmopolitan contexts it has re-emerged as a frequently discussed and sometimes alternative mode of Islamic religiosity. In Indonesia, this trajectory is particularly evident, as the presence of sufism is inseparable from the historical formation of Islam in the region [4]. Taken together, these tensions between doctrinal contestation, historical embeddedness, and contemporary revival make sufism a critical framework for examining how modern Islamic movements reinterpret spirituality, including within Muhammadiyah itself [5].

Sufi rituals, particularly those associated with *tarekat* (Sufi order) and *maqamat* (spiritual stations), are often considered deviations from the Qur'an and *sunnah* [6]. However, sufism does not exist in a vacuum; like any other religious discourse and practice, it is shaped by broader social, cultural, and political forces, suggesting that its interpretation and reception including within Muhammadiyah must be understood within specific historical and societal contexts. In contrast, Muhammadiyah emphasizes spirituality aligned with *al-ruju' ila al-Qur'an wa as-sunnah al-maqbulah* (return to the Qur'an and *sunnah*) based on *tauhid* (the oneness of God) and rationality. Its model promotes personal spiritual development without reliance on esoteric orders [7] which are often associated with excessive worship (*asyik masyuk*).

Since the late twentieth century, global religious patterns have shifted with the rise of new spiritual movements, often described as a "spiritual revival" or the era of spiritual seekers. This revival emerged as an antithesis to modern materialism, calling for a return to spirituality, frequently expressed through ascetic-esoteric lifestyles such as sufism. Within Muhammadiyah, this dialectic has led to renewed engagement with spiritual discourse. Although the term "sufism" was not initially found in official Muhammadiyah documents [2], many researchers question whether Muhammadiyah is truly anti-sufism. Studies show that Muhammadiyah leaders and members practice "positive sufism" in daily life, balancing spiritual and moral needs with modern demands [8]. Prominent figures include Hamka, who authored *Tasauf Moderen (at-tasawwuf al-'ashri)*, KH. AR Fachruddin, and KH. Ahmad Dahlan [9], [10].

Despite the growing literature on Muhammadiyah and sufism, existing studies have largely focused on national figures, institutional discourses, or abstract conceptual debates. Most emphasize elite intellectual formulations, organizational policies, or theological reinterpretations at the macro level, leaving limited attention to how spirituality is lived, taught, and transmitted by local Muhammadiyah leaders in everyday community settings. This imbalance privileges doctrinal analysis over pedagogical practice. Consequently, the mechanisms through which ethical and spiritual values are cultivated through informal learning outside formal institutions remain underexplored. This gap is particularly significant for Islamic education research [11], where community-based transmission plays a central role in shaping religious subjectivity.

Recent developments further demonstrate this evolving discourse. Since 2010, sufism studies have been conducted by the Sukodono branch of Muhammadiyah in Sidoarjo, East Java. In Bandung, such studies are broadcast live on the West Java Muhammadiyah YouTube channel, while in Yogyakarta, they are organized by the Regional Leadership of Muhammadiyah. Key references include *al-Hikam* by Ibn Athaillah al-Iskandariyah, *Nashaihlul Ibad* by Sheikh Nawawi al-Bantani, and *Madaarij as-Salikin* by Ibn Qayyim al-Jauziyyah. To avoid negative sufism which has caused aversion and trauma among members Muhammadiyah intellectuals have proposed a range of reformist spiritual formulations intended to integrate Sufi ethics with Muhammadiyah's modernist orientation. Such as "spiritualization of Sharia" or "Sharia plus sufism", *tazkiyatun nufus*, *ihsan*, neo-sufism, ethical sufism, substantive sufism, modern sufism (*at-tasawwuf al-'ashri*), transformative sufism, *ihsani* (ethos) sufism, *ijtima'i* (social) sufism, and progressive sufism.

Rather than representing isolated conceptual proposals, these formulations collectively reflect an evolving scholarly effort to reconcile Muhammadiyah's reformist theology with the continuing need for spiritual, ethical, and socially engaged religious practice. The desired Muhammadiyah model is sufism integrated with social justice, ethical behavior, and community service. In practice, moral education in Muhammadiyah schools fosters spiritual awareness and ethical behavior, showing that sufism has been integrated into the Al-Islam and Kemuhammadiyahan (AIK) curriculum [12], [13]. Taken together, this body of scholarship demonstrates a gradual shift from debates over legitimacy toward efforts to operationalize spirituality within modern Islamic institutional life. However, how these reformist spiritual formulations are

pedagogically enacted and embodied in local, informal Muhammadiyah settings remains insufficiently examined.

While various terms such as neo-sufism, ethical sufism, transformative sufism, and substantive sufism have been used to describe the integration of spirituality and reformist Islam, this study positions prophetic sufism as a distinct analytical and pedagogical framework rather than merely another terminological variant. neo-sufism generally emphasizes doctrinal renewal and compatibility with modernity, while ethical sufism foregrounds individual moral cultivation as a personal orientation. In contrast, prophetic sufism is defined as an operational model of lived religious learning that integrates spiritual discipline, social responsibility, and pedagogical exemplarity grounded in the model of the prophet.

Within this framework, spirituality is not merely an inner ethical state or theological discourse, but a lived educational practice manifested through daily conduct, humility, service, and informal knowledge transmission in community settings. Its analytical focus lies in explaining how spirituality is embodied, taught, and socially reproduced at the grassroots level, rather than only conceptualized normatively. By situating prophetic sufism within Muhammadiyah's reformist ethos, this study frames sufism not only as a moral orientation but as a community-based pedagogical model linking personal piety, social engagement, and informal Islamic education. To clarify these distinctions, Table 1 presents a comparative positioning of prophetic sufism alongside related reformist sufism frameworks.

Table 1 shows comparative clarification allows the present study to move beyond terminological classification and instead examine how prophetic sufism operates empirically as a lived educational system within local Muhammadiyah communities. At the 48th Muhammadiyah congress in Surakarta, sufism was officially accepted as a practice for members. This "progressive sufism" integrates three dimensions: *akhlaqi* (moral), *ihsani*, and *ijtima'i*. Yet, progressive sufism remains largely conceptual, and its practical models require further exploration, especially among local leaders. Annemarie Schimmel emphasizes that the study of sufism should not be limited to historical and phenomenological aspects but must also include subjectivity [14]. Studying figures is therefore crucial, as it reveals unique interpretations and practices of Sufi teachings.

Table 1. Conceptual comparison of reformist sufism frameworks

Concept	Primary focus	Main orientation	Level of analysis	Pedagogical dimension	Key limitation addressed by this study
Neo-sufism	Renewal of Sufi teachings	Doctrinal reform and modern compatibility	Intellectual/theological	Indirect	Focuses on reform discourse rather than lived teaching practice
Ethical sufism	Moral self-discipline	Individual character formation	Personal spirituality	Limited	Emphasizes ethics but not structured community transmission
Transformative/substantive sufism	Social engagement of spirituality	Integration of faith and social responsibility	Socio-religious reform	Partial	Highlights social role but less attention to informal pedagogy
Progressive sufism	Compatibility with modern Islamic reform	Institutional and ideological synthesis	Organizational/conceptual	Limited	Often remains conceptual rather than empirically grounded
Prophetic sufism (this study)	Embodied prophetic ethics in lived practice	Community-based spiritual formation	Grassroots learning environment	Central analytical focus	Explains how spirituality is taught, transmitted, and reproduced in everyday informal muhammadiyah settings

In this context, *Tuan Guru Haji* (TGH) Haris, a prominent Muhammadiyah leader in Sasak-Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara, represents a significant yet underexplored case. Widely respected for his expertise in *tauhid*, *hadith* (narrative record of the sayings or customs of Prophet Muhammad), *tafsir* (explanation or commentary on the Quran), *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence), and *ushul fiqh* (roots of Islamic jurisprudence), he is often characterized as a puritanical figure. Nevertheless, he practiced Sufi-oriented spirituality through simplicity, ascetic discipline, and the establishment of informal learning spaces that shaped community religious life. Accordingly, this study aims to analyze how prophetic sufism operates as a lived pedagogical model through the embodied practices and informal educational activities of TGH Haris within grassroots Muhammadiyah communities. By addressing this objective, the study responds directly to the identified research gap and contributes to Islamic education scholarship by explaining how reformist spirituality is concretely taught, transmitted, and socially reproduced in everyday community settings.

2. METHOD

2.1. Research design

This study employed a qualitative research design, specifically the life history model (*al-bahts fi al-rijāl*), commonly used in Islamic studies to examine the lived experiences, intellectual trajectories, and spiritual practices of influential figures. In this research, however, the approach is used not merely to document biography but to analyze how religious knowledge, ethical commitments, and pedagogical values are formed, embodied, and transmitted through social interaction and community engagement. This design enables a holistic reconstruction of TGH Haris' personal, social, and religious trajectory, situating his Sufi practices within broader historical and cultural contexts. It is particularly relevant as spirituality in Muhammadiyah is often transmitted through informal mentorship, exemplarity, and relational authority rather than formal curricula. Accordingly, the life history approach integrates biography, social memory, and community interaction into a coherent analytical framework, prioritizing depth, meaning, and interpretation over measurement and generalization.

Operationally, the study applied three analytical stages: i) reconstructing TGH Haris' biography using manuscripts, interviews, and community narratives; ii) identifying key phases in his spiritual, educational, and social development; and iii) interpreting how personal experiences shaped the formation and transmission of spiritual and pedagogical values. Thus, life history functions not only as narrative description but as an analytical tool to trace patterns of authority, learning practices, and value internalization over time. The emphasis lies in identifying mechanisms through which spiritual authority and teaching practices are socially reproduced, translating the life history model into systematic analytical procedures.

The study adopts a historical-critical-philosophical orientation as an interpretive framework. The historical dimension situates TGH Haris within the socio-religious context of Lombok and Muhammadiyah reformism. The critical dimension involves cross-examining interviews, manuscripts, and observations to ensure data credibility. The philosophical dimension interprets the ethical and spiritual foundations of his worldview, particularly *ikhlas* (sincerity), *kana'ah* (contentment), and *khauf* (fear of God), reflecting the philosophical pursuit of underlying structures. Through this framework, the study moves beyond descriptive biography toward an analytical explanation of how reformist spirituality is formed, practiced, and transmitted in community-based learning contexts.

2.2. Participants

This study involved six key informants selected through purposive stratified sampling to capture diverse perspectives on TGH Haris' life, teachings, and influence. The participants represented varied relational positions, including family members, former students, Muhammadiyah activists, community figures, and religious observers. This composition ensured analytical complementarity across personal, pedagogical, organizational, and societal domains.

Informants were selected based on their direct knowledge of TGH Haris across multiple contexts. Family members provided insights into daily spiritual practices and character formation, while former students described teaching methods, mentorship, and value transmission. Muhammadiyah activists highlighted organizational roles and reformist commitments, whereas community and religious observers offered external perspectives on his public authority and influence.

This stratified approach strengthened data triangulation by integrating both internal Muhammadiyah perspectives and external assessments. The number of informants was considered sufficient as thematic saturation was achieved, reflected in recurring themes such as *ikhlas*, *zuhud* (ascetic discipline), and the role of the *berugak* (traditional Sasak pavilion) as an informal learning space. Consistent with qualitative life history research, the study prioritized depth over breadth to ensure rich, credible, and contextually grounded data.

2.3. Instrument

The instruments used in this study included interview guidelines, observational protocols, and document analysis frameworks to capture TGH Haris' spiritual practices, pedagogical interactions, and community influence. Interviews employed open-ended questions to elicit narratives on personal experiences, daily religious practices, teaching methods, and views on sufism, allowing flexibility in exploring mentorship and informal learning processes. This approach ensured depth in understanding value transmission and spiritual discipline.

Observational protocols were used to document the physical setting, symbolic structures, and interaction patterns within the *berugak* as an informal learning space. The focus was on how religious knowledge was communicated, how participants interacted, and how spiritual practices were embodied in everyday activities. Document analysis examined manuscripts, personal notes, written works, and Muhammadiyah archival materials in Lombok to identify theological perspectives, critiques, and sufi-oriented reflections, forming a textual basis for reconstructing his intellectual trajectory.

2.4. Data collection

Data collection was conducted through documentation, literature review, observation, and interviews, which were systematically integrated to ensure credibility and consistency. Documentary sources, including manuscripts, personal notes, and archival records, provided insights into theological positions, critiques, and Sufi practices, serving as foundational data for reconstructing religious life. These findings were cross validated with interviews and observations to ensure chronological and contextual accuracy.

The literature review examined Muhammadiyah perspectives on sufism, including the discourse on “positive sufism”, alongside classical texts such as *al-Hikam*, *Nashaihl Ibad*, and *Madaarij as-Salikin*. This integration strengthened theoretical triangulation and provided analytical reference points for interpreting field data. Conceptual insights from these sources were compared with observed practices to assess alignment or divergence from established Sufi traditions.

Direct observation was conducted in locations associated with TGH Haris, particularly the *berugak* as an informal learning center. It focused on spatial arrangements, symbolic meanings, and interaction patterns, including participation in community and religious activities to connect textual data with lived practices. Observational findings also functioned as contextual validation to ensure consistency between reported and observable practices.

In-depth interviews were conducted in an unstructured format to allow participants to freely narrate experiences and reflect on TGH Haris’ practices, teachings, and influence. This approach generated rich data across familial, intellectual, organizational, and communal dimensions. Interview data were analyzed comparatively and validated through triangulation with documentary and observational evidence, ensuring that key findings were supported by convergent sources.

2.5. Data analysis

Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman interactive model, consisting of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing [15]. Data reduction involved organizing data from documents, interviews, and observations into key themes while eliminating redundancies. Thematic coding was conducted inductively, identifying recurring categories such as *ikhlas*, *kana'ah*, *khauf*, informal pedagogy, and reformist spirituality through constant comparison across sources.

Data display organized findings into matrices, narrative summaries, and thematic groupings to reveal patterns and relationships. Connections between manuscripts, observed practices, and interview data were mapped to support interpretation. Conclusion drawing and verification were conducted iteratively, supported by triangulation across data sources and member checking with selected informants to ensure validity and credibility.

This iterative process enabled continuous interaction between data, interpretation, and theory, ensuring analytical rigor. The integration of life history reconstruction with a historical-critical-philosophical framework allowed the analysis to capture both subjective meanings and structural dimensions of prophetic sufism in Muhammadiyah. The coded categories were further synthesized into broader themes, such as ethical discipline, ascetic spirituality, and community-based learning, forming the basis for interpreting the learning model.

2.6. Ethical considerations

Ethical integrity was central to this study. Informed consent was obtained from all interview participants, who were briefed on the purpose of the research, the voluntary nature of participation, and their right to withdraw at any time. Given the sensitivity of religious and spiritual topics, confidentiality was maintained by anonymizing certain details where necessary. Respect for cultural norms was observed during fieldwork, particularly in interactions within the *berugak* and during religious gatherings.

The researcher also acknowledged the importance of positionality. As engagement took place within communities deeply rooted in Muhammadiyah traditions, reflexivity was practiced remaining aware of how personal background and assumptions might shape interpretations. This reflexive stance enhanced the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. These ethical safeguards ensured respect, integrity, and cultural sensitivity throughout the research process.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

3.1.1. Biography of TGH Haris

The biographical reconstruction of TGH Haris is based on narratives obtained from six key informants representing familial, intellectual, and organizational perspectives. The informants are displayed in Table 1.

TGH Haris (Harist/Harits) was born in 1906 or 1910 in Batuyang, Pohgading, East Lombok. Coming from a family background that combined local leadership and noble lineage, he was exposed early to religious authority and social responsibility [15]. This early exposure formed the social foundation of his later authority as a community-based educator whose legitimacy rested on moral presence and public trust. His intellectual formation was shaped by long-term study in Mecca, particularly at Darul Hadis, where he developed expertise in hadith, tafsir, fiqh, theology, and Arabic, and later served as both student and teacher. This experience fostered a pedagogical orientation integrating textual mastery with ethical discipline and lived practice. After returning to Lombok in 1932, he emerged as a religious authority by combining reformist theology with accessible community-based teaching.

Table 1. Informant detail

Name	Details
Mrs. Hadisiah	(83 years old), biological daughter
Anhar Anshari, Ph.D.	(67 years old), close relative and student
Ahmad Sugeng	(42 years old) great-grandson, observer, writer, and admirer
Ir. Agus Alwi	(60 years old), grandson grandson
Nurhayati Usman	(79 years old), chair of PW Aisyiah NTB (2005-2015)
Prof. Dr. Manshur Ma'shum	Member of Mustasyar PWNU NTB (2015-2030)

Manshur Ma'shum noted that Haris' views reflected Muhammadiyah reformism and differed from many traditional *tuan guru*. His engagement with Muhammadiyah likely began in Mecca through interaction with Hamka and was formalized in 1938 through organizational roles and congress participation. This affiliation reinforced a model emphasizing doctrinal purification, ethical formation, and community guidance. Within the Muhammadiyah reformist context in Lombok, Haris combined intellectual authority, pedagogy, and ethical-spiritual discipline. His engagement with classical texts, reformist theology, and hadith collections shaped both interpretation and transmission of religious knowledge. This orientation reflects a scriptural and reformist spirituality rather than institutional Sufi orders.

Institutionally, Haris contributed through the establishment of the *Pendidikan Guru Agama Muhammadiyah* (PGAM) or Muhammadiyah religious teacher education, later becoming the *Madrasah Muhammadiyah Pohgading* (MMP) or Muhammadiyah Pohgading Islamic School, while maintaining strong informal teaching networks. His influence extended across West Nusa Tenggara and into Ende through preaching and community engagement. This combination shows that his authority relied on relational and community-based learning rather than formal institutions alone.

3.1.2. *Berugak* as a learning center

The *berugak* (*berugaq*) is a traditional Sasak, West Nusa Tenggara [16] structure with four or six pillars, functioning not as a residence but as a communal space [17], [18]. Architecturally like a gazebo, it symbolizes openness, cooperation, and social interaction. In this study, it served as a culturally embedded foundation for informal religious learning. According to Hadisiah, Haris' *berugak* functioned beyond its traditional role as a social space and became a center for informal education. It was highly accessible, allowing individuals from various backgrounds to engage in consultation and learning without restriction. Visitors ranged from community members to prominent figures, illustrating the openness of his pedagogical approach.

Learning in the *berugak* was informal, unscheduled, and dialogical, differing from formal institutions such as *pesantren* or *majelis taklim* [19]. Participants could freely ask questions, seek guidance, and shape discussions according to immediate needs. This flexibility made learning socially embedded rather than institutionally regulated. The *berugak* fostered interactive learning, where Qur'anic interpretation, *nahwu* and *sharaf* (grammar), and *hadith* were explained contextually. Religious authority emerged through dialogue and lived interaction rather than formal hierarchy. As Hadisiah described, learning involved explanation of Qur'anic verses alongside linguistic and interpretive analysis, as well as consultation on religious matters.

Other informants confirmed this dialogical model, emphasizing active participation, accessibility, and relational engagement. Learning occurred not only through formal explanation but also through observing Haris' behavior and interaction. From an organizational perspective, his influence was built through continuous community engagement rather than institutional authority. These accounts show that the *berugak* functioned as a relational pedagogical space integrating textual knowledge, ethical reflection, and spiritual guidance. Learning was responsive, contextual, and embedded in everyday interaction. This model highlights how informal environments can sustain community-based religious education.

3.1.3. Sufism in the view of TGH Haris

In this study, prophetic sufism is conceptualized as a form of spirituality grounded in the Qur'an and Sunnah, oriented toward moral discipline, and expressed through lived example and informal pedagogy. It emphasizes *uswah nabawiyyah* (prophetic imitation) as a unifying spiritual-educational paradigm. Thus, it is understood not only as a theological concept but also as a pedagogical model for transmitting spiritual values in everyday community life.

As a Muhammadiyah figure with reformist and puritanical views, TGH Haris distinguished between authentic and deviant forms of sufism. He did not reject sufism entirely but affirmed that only the sufism practiced by the prophet Muhammad was valid. In his manuscript, he asserted that all forms of creed, jurisprudence, and sufism outside the prophetic model were misguided. This position reflects his acceptance of "prophetic sufism" while rejecting practices that deviate from sharia or promote superstition, pantheism, and cultic traditions. In this study, prophetic sufism is defined as spirituality grounded in scriptural authority, oriented toward ethical transformation, and expressed through community-based practice. It is analytically distinct from "positive" and "progressive" sufism due to its explicit anchoring in prophetic norms.

Prophetic sufism is characterized by normative-ethical and pedagogical dimensions rather than purely mystical experience. Its core elements include scriptural obedience, moral discipline, *ikhlas*, social responsibility, and imitation of the prophet. Within this framework, spirituality functions as an ethical foundation for reform, integrating purification, theology, and prophetic guidance into a unified model. Haris' manuscripts also show respect for classical Sufi scholars such as Imam al-Ghazali, whom he regarded as aligned with *Ahlusunnah wal-Jama'ah* (Sunni Islamic tradition) and the salafi tradition. He similarly acknowledged Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jaelani, emphasizing that authentic sufism remains rooted in the teachings of the prophet, companions, and early generations. These references highlight that Haris viewed legitimate sufism as inseparable from tauhid and adherence to Qur'an and Sunnah.

At the same time, he criticized contemporary deviations that introduced heresy, blind imitation, and excessive veneration of teachers or graves. Although he did not produce specific sufism treatises, his writings and practices reflect what he termed "sufism of the prophet." Informants confirmed that he embodied Sufi values such as sincerity, simplicity, and ethical conduct within a Muhammadiyah framework.

3.1.4. TGH Haris' Sufi practices

The Sufi practices of TGH Haris can be understood through three central values, they are *ikhlas*, *kana'ah*, and *khauf*. These values, rooted in classical Sufi thought, were integrated into his daily life and pedagogical approach. They shaped both his personal spirituality and his influence within the community.

a. *Ikhlas*

Ikhlas is defined as total devotion to Allah, expressed through obedience and purification of intention from worldly recognition. It involves the integration of sincere intention, proper action, and responsible outcomes as key criteria of authentic religious practice. For TGH Haris, *ikhlas* was fundamental in safeguarding the integrity of religious deeds. Haris demonstrated *ikhlas* through strict independence in religious teaching. He refused financial compensation for lectures and discouraged reliance on external support to avoid compromising scholarly objectivity. This stance reflects an effort to preserve the authenticity of religious authority and prevent external influence. His approach can be understood as contextual rather than absolute rejection of material support. It aligns with the principle of *sadd az-zari'ah*, emphasizing the prevention of potential ethical compromise. Thus, *ikhlas* functioned as a guiding principle ensuring integrity in intention, practice, and outcomes.

b. *Kana'ah*

Kana'ah is defined as accepting one's condition while continuing effort, characterized by patience, trust in God, and resistance to material excess. It reflects a form of *zuhud*, where individuals are not controlled by wealth but remain spiritually detached. This balance between effort and detachment shaped Haris' lifestyle. Haris was known for his simplicity despite having sufficient financial means. Informants described him as living modestly while maintaining independence in funding his religious activities. His modest house and lifestyle symbolized his commitment to non-materialistic values. This attitude influenced his students, some of whom practiced generosity by sharing their income with those in need. However, his prioritization of *da'wah* over material stability occasionally created tension within his family. His *kana'ah* thus reflects a conscious prioritization of spiritual service over economic accumulation.

c. *Khauf*

In Sufi tradition, *khauf* refers to awareness of divine judgment, encouraging moral vigilance and restraint from wrongdoing. It is closely related to *muraqabah*, or the constant awareness of being observed by God. This value reinforces ethical accountability in everyday life. Haris embodied *khauf* through both personal conduct and social practice. He emphasized responsibility in managing resources, ensuring that all possessions were used in ways accountable before God. His generosity, such as providing for students and granting land to caretakers, reflects this ethical orientation. These practices illustrate that *khauf* functioned as

a moral foundation for both individual discipline and social responsibility. It aligns with the principle that wealth and actions will be judged based on their source and use. Thus, Haris' spirituality integrated ethical awareness with community-oriented practice.

3.2. Discussion

3.2.1. Reformist spiritual leadership and educational practice

The life history of TGH Haris illustrates how religious authority can emerge from the integration of scholarly training, ethical discipline, and sustained engagement with community life. His educational influence did not rely solely on institutional positions but also on relational authority formed through everyday interaction with learners and community members. His long-term scholarly formation in Mecca and later involvement with Muhammadiyah shaped a pedagogical orientation grounded in reformist Islamic thought. Within this framework, religious learning emphasized doctrinal purification or *tajdid*, moral discipline, and community guidance rather than institutionalized mystical hierarchies. This orientation reflects the broader Muhammadiyah approach that prioritizes scriptural authority and ethical reform in religious education.

At the same time, the narratives of informants reveal that Haris' teaching practices incorporated elements of spiritual discipline that resonate with what this study conceptualizes as prophetic sufism. Rather than institutional Sufi orders, spirituality was expressed through ethical conduct, humility, and sustained commitment to community service. From an educational perspective, this combination of reformist theology and ethical-spiritual practice suggests a model of learning in which religious knowledge is inseparable from moral formation. Informants repeatedly emphasized that *ikhlas*, *zuhud*, and *khauf* were not only personal virtues but also principles guiding how knowledge was taught and transmitted. This pattern indicates that spiritual values functioned as pedagogical mechanisms shaping both teaching practice and learner formation. Through moral exemplarity, dialogical interaction, and community engagement, the life of TGH Haris demonstrates how prophetic sufism can operate as a value-based learning model within reformist Islamic educational contexts.

3.2.2. *Berugak* pedagogy and prophetic sufism learning model

These interactions had significant pedagogical and spiritual implications, consistently conveying religious messages, ethical advice, and spiritual wisdom as moral guidance for everyday Muslim life. The *berugak* functioned simultaneously as an instructional site, consultative forum, and space of relational authority, distinguished from formal settings by its informal and community-embedded character. Haris' simple lifestyle further reinforced its symbolic meaning as a space of humility and moral exemplarity. As an educational environment, the *berugak* was characterized by dialogical interaction, experiential learning, and moral modeling, where knowledge developed through spontaneous questioning, lived religious practice, and sustained social engagement rather than structured curricula.

Learning practices in the *berugak* reflected key principles of experiential pedagogy, with understanding formed through direct engagement, reflection, and interpersonal interaction. Dialogical exchanges between TGH Haris and visitors enabled knowledge to emerge collectively through consultation, storytelling, and real-life problem solving. At the same time, values such as *ikhlas*, *zuhud*, and ethical conduct positioned the *berugak* as a site of moral education grounded in lived example and relational authority. While comparable to halaqah-based learning and mosque-centered study circles, Haris' approach remained distinctive in prioritizing informal, dialogical space as the primary pedagogical arena, representing a localized expression of broader Islamic traditions of community-based and experiential learning.

By situating the *berugak* within both Muhammadiyah reformist pedagogy and wider Islamic educational traditions, this model is not only locally rooted but also conceptually relevant to broader discussions on informal religious education and character formation. From a theoretical perspective, the *berugak* can be interpreted through the framework of prophetic sufism, where core values such as *ikhlas*, *kana'ah*, *khauf*, humility, and *zuhud* function as structuring pedagogical principles shaping trust, participation, and moral internalization. Through exemplarity and dialogical engagement, prophetic sufism becomes educationally enacted within this community-based setting.

A conceptual model was developed to synthesize these findings as in Figure 1, illustrating a dynamic process consisting of three interconnected components: core spiritual values as input, *berugak*-based pedagogical interaction as process, and ethical-spiritual community formation as output. This synthesis demonstrates that prophetic sufism operates not only as a spiritual orientation but also as an integrated pedagogical system embedded in everyday life.

These findings also carry practical implications for contemporary Islamic education, particularly within Muhammadiyah contexts. The *berugak* model shows that effective learning extends beyond formal classrooms and can be strengthened through dialogical mentoring spaces, community consultation, and

ethically grounded teacher-student interaction. Such approaches can complement institutional curricula by reinforcing moral internalization and experiential understanding as essential components of religious education.

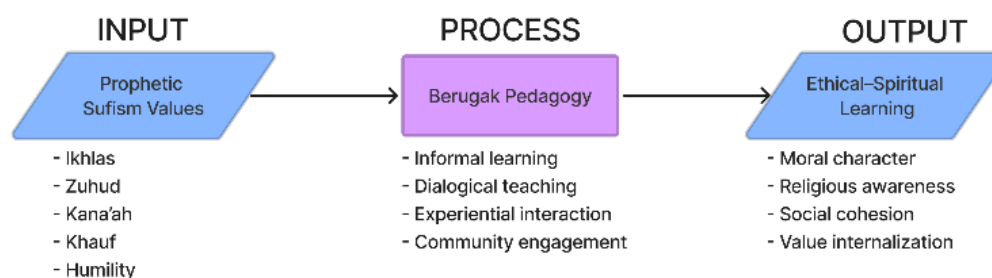


Figure 1. Conceptual model of prophetic sufism learning through *berugak*-based informal pedagogy

3.2.3. Prophetic sufism as reformist spiritual pedagogy

In comparative perspective, TGH Haris' understanding of sufism demonstrates both continuity and distinction within Muhammadiyah's reformist tradition. Like KH Ahmad Dahlan, he grounded spirituality in Qur'anic and *sunnah* principles, rejecting practices without textual legitimacy while emphasizing ethical transformation and moral discipline. This reflects Muhammadiyah's epistemology, where spirituality is subordinated to scriptural authority and ethical reform rather than metaphysical speculation.

Parallels can also be observed with Hamka's conception of modern sufism, which emphasizes moral purification, *ikhlas*, and social responsibility rather than withdrawal from worldly life. However, TGH Haris differs in his pedagogical localization of sufism through informal community-based spaces such as the *berugak*, functioning as micro-institutions of spiritual formation. While Hamka articulated sufism through intellectual discourse, Haris embodied it through lived practice, community interaction, and informal pedagogy.

This comparison positions TGH Haris not as an anomaly but as a localized expression of Muhammadiyah's broader reformist spirituality. His "prophetic sufism" represents a contextualized model integrating ethical sufism, puritanical reformism, and community-based education. This supports the argument that Muhammadiyah's relationship with sufism is selective, ethical, and grounded in scriptural principles. In this study, "prophetic sufism" is defined as a scripturally grounded and ethically oriented spirituality modeled on prophetic example (*uswah nabawiyyah*). It integrates reformist theology, moral discipline, and community engagement within a unified epistemological framework. Unlike "positive sufism" and "progressive sufism," it is explicitly anchored in prophetic authority as its primary epistemic reference.

Positive sufism mainly functions as an ethical corrective to mystical excess, while progressive sufism emphasizes social activism and reformist engagement. In contrast, prophetic sufism operates as a comprehensive paradigm unifying scriptural obedience, ethical formation, pedagogy, and social engagement. This distinction clarifies that it is a distinct conceptual category grounded in prophetic normativity.

This conceptualization provides clearer theoretical boundaries and prevents overlap with other Muhammadiyah terminologies. TGH Haris' practices should be understood within Muhammadiyah's broader discourse on spirituality and reform, where spirituality functions as ethical discipline and social responsibility. His emphasis on *ikhlas*, *kana'ah*, and *khauf* reflects this institutional orientation.

By linking Haris' practices to Muhammadiyah's discourse, this study positions him as a localized embodiment of reformist spirituality. His informal pedagogy and community engagement represent a micro-level manifestation of Muhammadiyah's macro-level ideology. This strengthens the argument that his spirituality aligns with Muhammadiyah's vision of reform and prophetic moral leadership. From a theoretical perspective, Haris' learning model can be situated within informal learning theory, which emphasizes knowledge transmission through social interaction and lived experience rather than formal curricula [20], [21]. His *berugak*-centered pedagogy exemplifies community-based learning through relational interaction, moral exemplarity, and embodied practice [22].

Within Islamic pedagogy, his approach reflects *tarbiyah ruhaniyyah*, prioritizing character formation and spiritual discipline over purely cognitive instruction. This aligns with traditions emphasizing moral cultivation (*akhlaq*), sincerity, and prophetic imitation (*ittiba' al-nabi*) as core educational goals [23], [24]. Education thus becomes a transformative moral-spiritual process rather than mere knowledge transfer. In relation to neo-sufism, Haris' spirituality represents a reconstruction of sufism that is ethically grounded,

socially engaged, and reformist. Rather than retreating into inward mysticism, it integrates inner purification with social responsibility, consistent with neo-sufism discourse [25], [26]. This situates him as a reformist spiritual educator within contemporary Islamic thought.

Comparatively, his model shows both continuity and distinction within Muhammadiyah's educational tradition. While Ahmad Dahlan emphasized institutional reform and Hamka focused on intellectual discourse, Haris localized these values within informal community settings centered on the *berugak*. This pattern resonates with broader Islamic traditions such as halaqah and pesantren learning, where knowledge is transmitted through relational authority and lived experience.

3.2.4. Comparative contextualization of effectiveness

To contextualize the effectiveness of the learning and spiritual interventions observed in this study, the findings can be compared with broader research on community-based Islamic education, informal religious learning, and reformist spirituality. Previous studies have shown that non-formal religious spaces such as halaqah, community study circles, and pesantren-based informal learning environments play a significant role in shaping ethical behavior, spiritual discipline, and communal identity [26], [27]. Like these models, TGH Haris' *berugak*-centered learning system operates as a community-based pedagogical space that integrates moral formation with everyday religious practice.

Comparative scholarship on Muhammadiyah has traditionally emphasized rational theology, textual authority, and reformist purification over mystical or ritual spirituality [23], [24]. However, more recent studies indicate a growing reintegration of ethical spirituality within reformist Islamic movements through models of character education (*akhlak*), prophetic ethics, and socially embedded religious learning [27]. In this comparative context, Haris' learning model reflects a localized expression of a broader reformist-spiritual synthesis rather than an isolated phenomenon.

Compared to intervention models that rely on formal institutional structures, standardized curricula, or programmatic religious education, the effectiveness of Haris' approach lies in its relational, experiential, and embodied character. This pattern aligns with informal learning theories that emphasize learning through social participation, lived experience, and community interaction. The effectiveness of the proposed methods, therefore, should be understood not as programmatic success, but as culturally embedded sustainability, where spiritual values are transmitted through daily practice and social relations. This comparative framing demonstrates that the effectiveness of TGH Haris' model is consistent with broader patterns of community-based spiritual education observed in similar socio-religious contexts. It strengthens the analytical grounding of the findings and situates the proposed interventions within wider scholarly debates on Islamic education, reformist spirituality, and informal learning systems.

3.2.5. Limitation of the study

This study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. As a qualitative life history study, it relies on interpretive analysis of documents, interviews, and observations, which inevitably involves a degree of subjectivity, and although triangulation, member checking, and methodological rigor were applied to enhance credibility, potential researcher bias cannot be fully eliminated. The data were derived from a limited number of key informants and localized historical sources centered on Lombok, which strengthens contextual depth but limits generalizability beyond the socio-cultural and religious context of Sasak-Lombok, meaning the findings should not be interpreted as universally representative of Muhammadiyah practices in other regions or settings. In addition, the focus on a single figure TGH Haris emphasizes individual agency and localized religious expression, providing rich insights into the coexistence of Puritanism and sufism but not capturing the full diversity of Muhammadiyah spiritual practices across generations, regions, and institutional structures. These limitations indicate important directions for future research, including comparative multi-site studies involving other Muhammadiyah figures and regions to strengthen external validity, the use of mixed-method approaches to enhance analytical robustness, and further exploration of how similar ethical-spiritual learning models operate within formal Muhammadiyah educational institutions.

3.2.6. Critical analytical synthesis paragraph

Beyond descriptive representation, the findings of this study contribute to broader scholarly debates on reformist spirituality in modern Islam. Existing literature often positions Muhammadiyah within a rigid dichotomy between puritanical reformism and anti-Sufi orientation. However, the case of TGH Haris problematizes this binary by demonstrating how prophetic sufism, as articulated in this study, can function as an internal resource for reformist movements rather than as an oppositional tradition.

This study critically extends existing scholarship by showing that reformist Islam is not inherently incompatible with spirituality but rather selectively reconstructs it through scriptural authority, ethical discipline, and social engagement. In this sense, TGH Haris' model challenges dominant narratives that

frame Islamic reformism as spiritually reductionist, instead positioning it as spiritually reconfigurative. By situating TGH Haris within broader debates on Islamic modernism, reformism, and spirituality, this research contributes theoretically to the understanding of how Islamic movements negotiate tradition, reform, and ethics. The findings suggest that spiritual practices within reformist movements should not be interpreted merely as residual traditions but as actively reconstructed ethical systems shaped by epistemological and theological frameworks.

3.2.7. Sustainability and long-term impact

This study primarily captures the immediate outcomes of the learning and spiritual interventions associated with TGH Haris' educational model, demonstrating meaningful ethical, spiritual, and pedagogical impacts within the observed community, yet it does not include longitudinal data, so the long-term sustainability of these outcomes cannot be empirically verified. Nevertheless, the model is rooted in informal pedagogy, community-based transmission, and embodied spiritual practice, reflecting a form of sustainability that is culturally embedded through daily social relations, moral exemplarity, and communal learning spaces rather than formal institutional structures. Future research should therefore incorporate longitudinal and follow-up designs such as ethnographic studies, intergenerational assessments, and comparative research across Muhammadiyah communities to better examine the durability, scalability, and adaptive capacity of spiritually oriented learning models in changing socio-religious contexts.

3.2.8. Prophetic sufism learning model (conceptual synthesis)

To synthesize the findings, this study proposes a conceptual model of the prophetic sufism learning process as practiced by TGH Haris. The model integrates three interconnected dimensions: core spiritual values, pedagogical practices, and educational outcomes. At the foundational level, prophetic sufism is grounded in ethical-spiritual values, particularly *ikhlas*, *kana'ah*, and *khauf*. These values shape Haris' personal character and serve as the moral basis of his authority and leadership.

At the practical level, these values are translated into pedagogical actions through informal, dialogical, and community-based learning practices centered in the *berugak*. Learning occurs through spontaneous consultation, interpretive explanation of Qur'anic verses, and ethical advice. This process allows knowledge transmission to take place naturally within everyday social interaction and lived example.

At the outcome level, this process contributes to moral formation, spiritual discipline, and the strengthening of community-oriented religious leadership. The *berugak* functions not only as a physical space but also as a pedagogical medium for learning and reflection. Through this space, the values of prophetic sufism are internalized, practiced, and transmitted across generations.

Figure 2 presents this conceptual model, illustrating how spiritual values shape pedagogical practices and ultimately generate educational and social outcomes. This visual synthesis highlights the contribution of the study in framing prophetic sufism not merely as a theological orientation but as a community-based learning model within Muhammadiyah. Throughout this article, the term "prophetic sufism" is used consistently as the primary analytical framework, while other terminologies (e.g., ethical sufism, progressive sufism, and neo-sufism) are employed only for comparative and historiographical purposes.

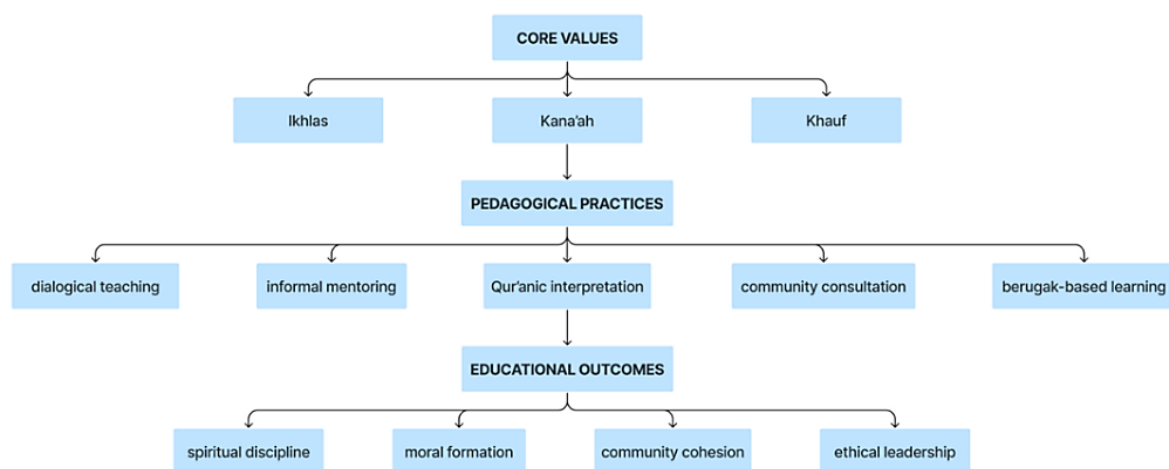


Figure 2. Conceptual model of prophetic sufism learning (values→practices→outcomes)

4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that prophetic sufism can function as a pedagogical framework integrating reformist theology, ethical spirituality, and informal learning practices within Muhammadiyah. Through the case of TGH Haris in Sasak-Lombok, the findings show that a puritanical Muhammadiyah scholar can embody a synthesis of reformist thought and Sufi practice, as reflected in his strong grounding in Qur'anic and Hadith sciences alongside references to classical Sufi figures such as Imam al-Ghazali and Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jailani. This indicates that his reformist orientation does not reject spirituality but aligns with what this study conceptualizes as prophetic sufism. The study also finds that TGH Haris' learning model is predominantly informal and community-based, centered in the *berugak* as a space for religious instruction, dialogue, and ethical formation. His teachings emphasize core values such as *ikhlas*, *kana'ah*, and *khauf*, shaping both individual piety and communal ethics through lived interaction. These findings suggest that prophetic sufism operates not only as a theological concept but also as a practical and embodied pedagogy. Furthermore, the findings challenge the assumption that Muhammadiyah uniformly rejects sufism by showing that both central and local figures have practiced forms of spirituality consistent with prophetic sufism. The case of TGH Haris illustrates how Sufi values can be integrated within Muhammadiyah's reformist ethos through ethical discipline, scriptural grounding, and community-based learning rather than institutionalized mysticism. This highlights the flexibility and diversity of spiritual expression within the movement. This study contributes to Islamic education by providing an empirical example of how ethical spirituality and informal learning environments can enrich pedagogical practice, particularly in community-based religious contexts. It also broadens the understanding of Muhammadiyah by emphasizing the diversity of its spiritual interpretations at the grassroots level. However, the study is limited to a single figure and regional context, so future research should conduct comparative studies across different Muhammadiyah settings and examine how informal Sufi-based pedagogy interacts with formal AIK curriculum, especially in relation to character education and experiential learning.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS STATEMENT

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C : Conceptualization

M : Methodology

So : Software

Va : Validation

Fo : Formal analysis

I : Investigation

R : Resources

D : Data Curation

O : Writing - Original Draft

E : Writing - Review & Editing

Vi : Visualization

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial or personal interests that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, [P], upon reasonable request.

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