

The Values Of Suluk Education In The Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah At The Babussalam Islamic Boarding School Batu Korong, Simpang Kanan District Aceh Singkil Regency

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the educational values embedded in the Suluk practice of the Naqsyabandiyah Tarekat at Babussalam Batu Korong Islamic Boarding School, examines how these values are implemented by participants, identifies supporting factors and obstacles in the Suluk process, and proposes solutions to overcome these challenges. Using a qualitative phenomenological approach, data were collected from 10 key informants including the Abuya/Mursyid, Suluk administrators, and members of the congregation. The findings reveal that the Suluk practice promotes self-discipline and spiritual closeness to Allah SWT, guided closely by the Mursyid through rituals such as the repentance bath and prayer. Implementation support includes both material and family encouragement, while initial difficulties faced by participants represent the main obstacles. This study contributes to understanding the role of Suluk education in shaping spiritual and behavioral development within Islamic boarding schools. The specific contribution of this study is introducing suluk as a spiritual-based Islamic educational method that can be adapted to strengthen the character of the Muslim community across various cultural and social contexts.

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INTRODUCTION

The term “suluk” originates from the Arabic word “سَلَكَ,” which means the act of entering, crossing a path, and performing an action. (Ibn Manzur, 2018). The practice of suluk is a profound and challenging spiritual development process for its adherents. Therefore, the practice of suluk requires great patience and determination (Mulyadhi, 2016). In the context of spiritual practice (riyadah ruhaniyah), suluk refers to the spiritual journey undertaken by a servant with the aim of drawing closer to Allah, seeking forgiveness, and seeking his pleasure (Kanafi, 2022). This is as written in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Baqarah, verse

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ ٢٢٢

Meaning: “Indeed, Allah loves those who repent and loves those who purify themselves” (Indonesia, 2005).

This verse explains the absolute necessity of purification, because Allah greatly loves those who perform such acts (namely, those who truly wish to cleanse themselves). Therefore, perfect purity is a prerequisite for the validity of prayer, as well as other types of worship such as suluk (Akrim, 2022).

Suluk is referred to as part of Islamic education for adults, as can be seen in the famous Hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, which reads:

حَدَّثَنَا مُحَمَّدُ بْنُ غَيْلَانَ قَالَ: حَدَّثَنَا أَبُو أُسَامَةَ، عَنْ الْأَعْمَشِ، عَنْ أَبِي صَالِحٍ، عَنْ أَبِي هُرَيْرَةَ، قَالَ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ: مَنْ سَلَكَ طَرِيقًا يَلْتَمِسُ فِيهِ عِلْمًا سَهَّلَ اللَّهُ لَهُ طَرِيقًا إِلَى الْجَنَّةِ: هَذَا حَدِيثٌ حَسَنٌ. (الترمذي، محمد بن عيسى، سنن الترمذي ت شاكر)

"Mahmud bin Gailani told us, he said: Abu Usamah told us, from Al-A'masy, from Abu Shalih, from Abu Hurairah, he said that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: 'Whoever walks (travels) in search of knowledge, Allah will make easy for him the path to Paradise' (Rifki Sofa Izurrohman, Azani, Th, & Salim, 2023).

The above hadith serves as the basis and a sign that suluk is an indicator of adult education practices, and within it lies the reward for those who practice suluk in accordance with Islamic law, namely that Allah will ease their path to paradise. The importance of suluk for adult education has also become commonplace because it has constructive values (Akrim, 2022).

In Islam, Prophet Muhammad SAW was an educator for his companions, most of whom were adults (Sukirman, Baiti, & Syarnubi, 2023). The companions then became educators for adults from the Tabi'in generation, and eventually the Tabi'in became educators for adults from the Tabi'it-Tabi'in generation, and so on (Taranova & Gavra, 2021). Additionally, the revelations received by Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) demonstrate that the content of the Quran has a background or reason for its revelation, and this revelation certainly has a cause (Nurfaruqi, 2022). According to Imam al-Suyuthi in his book *Lubab al-Nuqul fi Asbab al-Nuzul*, understanding the context of the revelation of verses is crucial to avoid misinterpretation in exegesis (Al-Suyuti, 2016). The verses of the Qur'an were revealed in a specific chronological order that must be understood in detail, so that in interpreting the verses, one does not take them out of context and must align with the conditions of the society in which the community resides. Thus, in interpretation, there will be no contradiction with what is enshrined in the holy book of the Qur'an, and all issues must refer back to the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet SAW (Nurfaruqi et al., 2022).

In Islamic teachings, there are many paths offered to draw closer to the Almighty, one of which is through the teachings of the Sufi order (Fauzi, Andriani, & Syarnubi, 2023). Sheikh Abdul Qadir al-Jailani, Imam Junaid Al-Baghdadi, and other Sufi figures state that the Sufi order is a method followed by Sufis to more easily achieve closeness to Allah SWT and by adhering to the Sharia and the teachings of the Prophet SAW (Al-Jilani, 1990). The Sufi path is a unique way for an individual to draw closer to Allah through the guidance of the Quran and Hadith. In the practice of andragogy, the principles and foundations of Islam are not disregarded (Shabrina et al., 2023).

The study of the tradition of suluk is based on the researcher's observations of a religious activity carried out by the Naqsyabandiyah Tarekat congregation, namely the suluk procession. However, there is a lack of adequate understanding of the unanswered questions related to this activity, namely how the Naqsyabandiyah Order community views and understands the meaning of Suluk. As a result, they prioritize participating in the suluk procession for an extended period rather than focusing on other Islamic religious traditions (Ramadhan, 2023)

Based on the above description, the researcher is interested in conducting further research on the topic of *"The Values of Suluk Education in the Naqsyabandiyah Order at the Babussalam Batu Korong Islamic Boarding School in Simpang Kanan District, Aceh Singkil Regency."*

In the context of the Naqshbandi Order, a member of the Order is not considered to be fully compliant with the teachings of the Order if they do not participate in the suluk procession. Furthermore, this procession places significant emphasis on new members of the Order. In the initial examination of individuals who are not part of the Naqshbandi Order community. (Bruinessen, Martin van, 1992). The practice of suluk aligns with the teachings of the Prophet. Is suluk considered bid'ah or sharia-compliant? The reasons behind the Naqshbandi Order's desire for members to spend days in

solitude as a prerequisite for performing suluk, the benefits or unique aspects of suluk, and the procedures for performing suluk (Bagir, 2019).

The introduction should briefly place the study in a broad context and highlight why it is important. It should define the purpose of the work and its significance. The current state of the research field should be reviewed carefully, and key publications cited. Please highlight controversial and diverging hypotheses when necessary. Finally, briefly mention the main aim of the work and highlight the principal conclusions. As far as possible, please keep the introduction comprehensible to scientists outside your particular field of research. References should be cited as (Kamba, 2018) or (Marchlewska, Cichocka, Łozowski, Górski, & Winiewski, 2019) or (Cichocka, 2016; Hidayat & Khalika, 2019; Ikhwan, 2019; Madjid, 2002) or (Miller & Josephs, 2009) or Rakhmat (1989). See the end of the document for further details on references. Technical terms should be defined. Symbols, abbreviations, and acronyms should be defined the first time they are used. All tables and figures should be cited in numerical order.

METHODS

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method aimed at providing a comprehensive understanding and explanation of the phenomenon under investigation. This approach enables researchers to systematically collect and analyze data to present a thorough depiction of the research topic (Sugiyono & Lestari, 2021)

The qualitative method focuses on describing social phenomena, attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions of individuals or groups in natural settings (Lexy, 2008). Data were collected through several techniques: semi-structured interviews with key participants to obtain in-depth insights, direct observation to capture contextual and behavioral aspects, and document analysis to review relevant secondary data supporting the research objectives (Jw, 2009)

The selection of participants was purposive, targeting individuals closely involved with the Suluk practice to ensure rich and relevant data. For data validity and reliability, the study applied triangulation by cross-checking information from interviews, observations, and documents, thus enhancing the trustworthiness of findings (Sugiyono & Lestari, 2021). Data analysis followed thematic procedures, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing, to ensure systematic interpretation and clear presentation of results. This methodological framework aligns with the study's aim to provide a detailed and contextualized understanding of the Suluk educational values in the Naqsyabandiyah Order (Sugiyono & Lestari, 2021).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the researcher first conducted observations at the Babussalam Batu Korong Islamic boarding school. In analyzing the educational values contained in the Suluk practices of the Naqsyabandiyah Order, these practices are not only carried out physically but also involve deep spiritual aspects, with the ultimate goal of achieving the highest level of closeness to Allah. The core activities in the Suluk practices of the Naqshbandiyah Order follow the following sequence: Suluk involves increasing zikir through 'uzlah (seclusion) and riyadah (reducing eating, drinking, and speaking about unimportant matters). Bai'at, which is the oath of allegiance of the member to their spiritual guide. The spiritual practices of the Naqshbandi Order are a form of worship or devotion for a servant of Allah, which is not limited to prayer mats or specific times, but can be performed anywhere and anytime as long as one is aware of the great blessings and mercy of Allah that deserve our gratitude.

In the results of the researcher's interviews at the Babussalam Batu Korong Islamic boarding school, there are educational values contained in the practice of Naqshbandi Sufism, namely spiritual improvement through suluk, where the congregation can increase spiritual awareness, closeness to God, and a deeper understanding of religious teachings. (Davidson & Laroche, 2018)

Dalam Hal ini perkataan Abuya/Mursyid Abi Hasan. M.Pd Pimpinan Pesantren Babussalam Batu Korong yang mengatakan bahwa :

"Suluk is a form of spiritual education taught by a Mursyid to his students or congregation, emphasizing the values of faith and closeness to the Creator through zikr, because the human heart is constantly turning back to Allah through the tranquility of the soul, which is achieved by remembering Allah. and by remembering Allah, the human heart finds peace, and one can focus on remembering Allah's name through the practice of suluk. One of the spiritual educations, along with physical education, also teaches etiquette and how to interact between humans, between students and teachers, because in suluk, one of the emphases is on etiquette" (Interview with Abuja/Mursyid of Babussalam Batu Korong Abi Hasan Islamic Boarding School, M.Pd, on June 16, 2025).

From the above explanation, it can be understood that the educational values contained in the practice of Naqshbandi Sufism can bring positive changes to daily life. The formation of character through discipline and consistency can help the congregation develop better character traits, such as patience, humility, and self-control.

This is in line with the opinion of Mr. Syaifudin Berutu, administrator/secretary at the Babussalam Batu Korong Islamic boarding school, who said:

"The value of education or upbringing is very important, especially as we are trained in etiquette. Etiquette is highly valued there, and perhaps in public places as well, because etiquette is more important than knowledge. In the suluk environment, etiquette is about mutual respect between juniors and seniors; we are trained to be polite, and everything is structured accordingly." (Interview with the administrator/secretary at the Babussalam Batu Korong Islamic boarding school, Mr. Syaifudin Berutu, on June 15, 2025).

Based on the researcher's observations, the researcher found several values of suluk education in the Naqsyabandiyah order in Batu Korong. This can be seen from how the suluk participants always follow the rules that apply during suluk. No suluk participant violates the rules unless it is unintentional. They consistently uphold the etiquette prescribed by the spiritual guide throughout the suluk. The etiquette in question includes completing the suluk until the end, not violating the spiritual guide's discipline, and constantly engaging in zikr during idle moments (Mulitawati & Retnasary, 2020)

In this case, Mr. H. Sahbidun, S.P Berutu, a participant in the Babussalam Batu Korong Islamic boarding school, said:

"There are two types of educational values: the first is external, and the second is internal. The internal values cannot be explained because only we ourselves know about our inner selves and spiritual practices, but the external values are numerous, such as our behavior, our choice of clothing, as if we have already fulfilled the Islamic teachings as recommended by the Prophet Muhammad, who forbade the use of short pants because we feel that we are already one with ourselves wherever we go. The more we engage in spiritual practices, the more we will guard our speech and avoid insulting others. It educates us from within." (Interview with the administrator/secretary of the Babussalam Batu Korong Islamic boarding school, Mr. H. Sahbidun, S.P., as a participant in the spiritual practice community at the Babussalam Batu Korong Islamic boarding school on June 14, 2025)

This explanation shows that in their daily lives, the congregation at the Batu Korong Islamic boarding school refrains from using inappropriate language and behavior, in terms of dress and actions. Additionally, the solidarity among the community members, as well as the collective spiritual practices they engage in, can strengthen the bonds and solidarity among them. They can support and encourage one another on their spiritual journey. Discipline and commitment are essential, as spiritual practices demand strong discipline and commitment from the community members. This can help them improve the quality of their worship and the practice of religious teachings.

Based on the researcher's observations, the researcher found several educational values in the Naqshbandiyah order, namely that educational values train oneself to get closer to Allah SWT, because in suluk there are several things that we must avoid or not do. During suluk, each member of the community practices patience because there are certain things that cannot be done there. Additionally, the members train themselves to be honest, as in suluk, they must always maintain

their state of purity (wudu') by keeping themselves in a clean and sacred condition. The educational values themselves teach the participants about honesty, even when it is difficult. For example, if we break our wudu' in the middle of the night because one of the requirements is that during suluk we must always remain in a state of purity from hadas, we act honestly there. One of the requirements is that we must obey and be obedient to the Mursyid, so whatever commands the Mursyid gives, we follow. Perhaps these are the educational values that bring inner peace.

In relation to this, the results of an interview with Mrs. Hj. Tarna, a participant in the Suluk Pesantren Babussalam Batu Korong congregation, revealed that:

"In my personal opinion, I feel that participating in suluk has increased my knowledge and taught me how to change my behavior and personality, which is something I can gain during suluk. Because suluk is more than just school. In school, we can play around, but in spiritual retreat, we can't play around." (Interview with Mrs. Hj. Tarna, a participant in the Babussalam Batu Korong Islamic Boarding School spiritual retreat on June 14, 2025)

In relation to this, the results of an interview with Siti Nurhaliza, a participant in the Suluk Pesantren Babussalam Batu Korong congregation, revealed that:

"So, the Naqsyabandiyah Order at the Babussalam Batu Korong Islamic Boarding School is good. This order is a path or direction in drawing closer to Allah Ta'ala. In the suluk activity, there are several processes, namely first Tawajuh, then zikr. In this case, we are required to draw closer to Allah. Sunna prayers are like that. Before participating in spiritual retreats, one must first join the order. If one has not joined the order, they are not permitted to participate in spiritual retreats. After joining the order, participants may then join the spiritual retreats and are already able to engage in Tawajuh." (Interview with a participant of the Suluk community at the Babussalam Batu Korong Islamic boarding school, Siti Nurhaliza Suluk, on June 14, 2025).

In relation to this, the results of an interview with Mrs. Amriati, a participant in the Suluk Pesantren Babussalam Batu Korong congregation, revealed that:

"One of the educational values is in the form of worship to get closer to Allah SWT. Another educational value is training, in the form of training to teach us to be patient in getting closer to Allah SWT, because in suluk there are several things that we must avoid or not do, so there we train our patience because there are several things that we cannot do there. then training ourselves to be honest because in suluk we are also taught, for example, one of the things we do in suluk is always maintaining our wudu'—keeping ourselves in a state of purity. If our wudu' is invalidated, even in the middle of the night, we must purify ourselves and continue to remember Allah." (Interview with Mrs. Amriati, a participant in the Suluk retreat at Babussalam Batu Korong Islamic Boarding School on June 16, 2025)

From the above statement, it can be concluded that spiritual practices, such as zikir, meditation, and muraqabah, can provide inner peace for the congregation, helping them to be honest and obedient in following the rules, starting from the smallest things such as maintaining wudu' and purity. Essentially, the activities of the tarekat in society must foster good communication among members and require mutual respect, creating harmony in the environment, working together, and helping one another. This fosters a sense of sympathy or empathy within individuals to assist and collaborate with one another. In this way, society can cultivate a sense of care for others, avoid isolation, engage in social interaction, develop a high level of social responsibility, and become individuals who are beneficial to others and their environment.

Based on the results of observations during the suluk at the Batu Korong Islamic boarding school, it was found that they only worship Allah SWT through zikr, and this is what leads to the perception among the community that practitioners of the tarekat are less sociable and prefer to isolate themselves in one of the houses designated as the location for the practice of the Naqsyabandiyah tarekat. Additionally, before participating in the spiritual retreat, the congregation is required to first join the Naqshbandiyah order. This was evident to me as well, as I had to join the order before conducting my research. This is because, in the process of drawing closer to Allah, one must not only purify oneself physically but also spiritually.

Based on the results of analysis, observation interviews, and case studies, information was found related to analyzing the educational values contained in the practices of the Naqsyabandiyah Sufi order, implementing these educational values in the lives of Tarekat participants, analyzing the enablers and barriers to implementation in the Suluk Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah, and analyzing solutions to the barriers to implementation in the Suluk Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah at the Babussalam Batu Korong Islamic boarding school.

1. Educational Values Contained in the Practice of Suluk Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah at the Babussalam Batu Korong Islamic Boarding School.

The value of education in the practice of Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah suluk requires participants to observe etiquette and ethics before performing zikir. The etiquette of zikir includes being free from impurities and uncleanness in terms of the body, place, and clothing used during suluk, as well as facing the qibla, sitting tawaruk, and performing rabitah. The educational values obtained when becoming a member of the Suluk community or wishing to participate in the Suluk practices at the Batu Korong boarding school involve several stages that must be carried out: Baiat, which is one form of the community's pledge of allegiance to the Mursyid. The actions and words performed during this process include repentance. The process of repentance is recommended to be done with purification. This begins with the ritual bath of repentance and ablution to cleanse the body of impurities and uncleanness, followed by ablution after the ritual bath of repentance. (Sawaluddin Siregar, 2017). After purification, it is required to perform the two-rak'ah sunnah prayer of repentance. Then, one should reflect on the sins committed, feel remorse, and resolve never to repeat them.

The position of humans on earth is always associated with the concept of servitude and as caliphs. This is in accordance with the teachings of Islam in QS. Al-Baqarah (2): 30, which states:

وَإِذْ قَالَ رَبُّكَ لِلْمَلٰٓئِكَةِ اِنِّىْ جَاعِلٌ فِى الْاَرْضِ خَلِیْفَةً قَالُوْۤا اَتَجْعَلُ فِیْهَا مَنْ یُّفْسِدُ فِیْهَا وَیَسْفِكُ الدِّمَآءَ وَنَحْنُ نُسَبِّحُ بِحَمْدِكَ وَنُقَدِّسُ لَكَ قَالَ اِنِّىْۤ اَعْلَمُ مَا لَا تَعْلَمُوْنَ ۝۳۰

"Remember when your Lord said to the angels, 'I am going to place a vicegerent on earth. They said, 'Why would You place someone on earth who will cause corruption and shed blood, while we constantly glorify You and sanctify You?' The Lord said, 'Indeed, I know what you do not know' (Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia, 2015).

This is in line with Musthofa & Sukardi (2023) opinion that mentally, someone who is going to perform suluk must first repent from all physical and spiritual sins and acknowledge that they have committed many sins. Therefore, they must sincerely intend to perform suluk solely for the sake of Allah, solely to obey the commands of Allah and His Messenger, and to follow the guidance of their Mursyid Sheikhs. Before undertaking suluk, one must perform a ritual bath of repentance with clean water, intending to repent for both outward and inward sins for the sake of Allah SWT. After the ritual bath of repentance, one then performs several optional prayers: the optional prayer of ablution (2 rak'ah), the optional prayer of repentance (2 rak'ah), and the prayer of need (2 rak'ah) for undertaking suluk. After that, they intend to undertake the spiritual retreat by following the path toward Allah through performing the most perfect acts of worship, as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad SAW and the scholars of the Naqshbandi Sufi Order.

In the practice of Suluk Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah at the Babussalam Batu Korong Islamic Boarding School, there are three things that must always be done, namely:

1. Speak in the manner of a suluk, meaning someone who is educated in both mind and spirit.
2. Act like a suluk, in your actions, clothing, food, and all aspects of your life.
3. Think like a wise person thinks, like the righteous predecessors, so that our words, actions, and thoughts will influence the human soul.

Because in this spiritual practice, it is emphasized that one should speak little, meaning that unnecessary words should not be uttered, and meaningless speech should be avoided. It is better to

remain silent. There is both outward and inward education, and both are emphasized through an inward approach, which influences the spiritual aspect—that is, through speech and behavior.

As for those whose tongues never cease from mentioning the name of Allah, Allah will instill tranquility in their hearts. This inner peace is the goal and the meaning for the other authors. Inner peace for those who constantly mention the name of Allah is written in Surah Ar-Ra'd (QS. Ar-Ra'd (13): 28):

الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَتَطْمَئِنُّ قُلُوبُهُمْ بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ ٢٨

“That is, those who believe and whose hearts find peace in remembering Allah. Remember, it is only by remembering Allah that hearts find peace.” (Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2015).

The zikir recited is zikir qalbu, and followers must follow the zikir recited by the master, who is present there as a mursyid. The teachings directed at the followers of the Naqshbandiyah order are not merely intended to increase religious knowledge, but also serve as enlightenment and a means for self-reflection on past actions. Just as the physical body requires nourishment, so too does the spiritual self need spiritual nourishment for inner peace.

Based on the researcher's interviews with the Babussalam Batu Korong suluk congregation, suluk is not an obligation that must be carried out. Rather, it is simply a sincere intention of a person to draw closer to Allah SWT. Performing suluk is not limited to those of advanced age; rather, it is required for all Muslims who have free time (Nasution, 2024). Anyone who has a sincere intention to perform suluk, Allah will make it easy for them to do so. Researchers conclude that it is not as easy as it seems to follow suluk unless one does so with a sincere heart and sincerity in their actions. Therefore, one should follow the conditions and requirements set by the mursyid (Sarifuddin, Akkas, & Janudin, 2025).

The teachings of the Naqsyabandiyyah order are teachings and guidance in the practice of dhikr, which involves a highly spiritual inner dialogue within the heart. This practice aims to enhance communication and intimacy between the teacher and student, achieved through a conscious approach to the mursyid. This involves rituals that strengthen the bond between student and mursyid, known as tawajjuh. In tawajjuh, there is a mutual concentration between one another, based on faith and the hope of achieving something better, which results in a spiritual union and the perfection of zikr worship (Qodim, 2022)

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion and analysis of the educational values in the Suluk Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah practice at the Babussalam Batu Korong Islamic Boarding School, this study concludes that the Suluk practice primarily trains members to draw closer to Allah SWT through spiritual discipline and self-purification. During Suluk, participants cultivate patience by adhering to specific prohibitions and develop honesty by maintaining their state of purity (wudu'). These practices contribute significantly to character formation, fostering inner peace, self-control, and enhanced spiritual awareness.

This research highlights the important role of Suluk as a form of adult Islamic education that integrates both spiritual and ethical development. The findings offer practical implications for Islamic boarding schools and spiritual communities to strengthen their educational programs by emphasizing spiritual values alongside formal education. Future research may explore longitudinal impacts of Suluk on participants' social behavior and educational outcomes to further enrich understanding in this field. The specific contribution of this study is introducing suluk as a spiritual-based Islamic educational method that can be adapted to strengthen the character of the Muslim community across various cultural and social contexts.

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