



**Riwayah : Jurnal Studi Hadis**

issn 2460-755X eissn 2502-8839

Tersedia online di: [journal.iainkudus.ac.id/index.php/riwayah](http://journal.iainkudus.ac.id/index.php/riwayah)

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.21043/riwayah.v1i1.31428>

## **PRESERVING THE TRADITION OF HADITH SANAD IJAZAH IN *PESANTREN* OF MANDAILING NATAL: Scholarly Continuity and Academic Challenges**

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### Abstract

The *sanad* tradition serves as a fundamental mechanism for preserving the authenticity and continuity of hadith through a reliable and accountable chain of transmission. In Indonesia, particularly in Mandailing Natal, this tradition is actively maintained in *Pesantren* (*pesantren*), where the transmission of canonical hadith texts—such as *Arba'in an-Nawawi*, *Bulugh al-Maram*, and *Sahih al-Bukhari*—relies on a *sanad*-based educational system. This study explores the mechanism of granting *ijazah sanad* (*sanad* certificates) in selected *pesantren*—notably Musthafawiyah, Darul Ulum, and Roihanul Jannah—and examines their contribution to sustaining hadith scholarship. Employing a qualitative methodology that includes fieldwork and historical analysis, the research reveals that *sanad* certification is not a mere formal acknowledgment, but the result of a rigorous academic and spiritual process. Teaching methods such as *musyafahah*, *talaqqi*, and *sorogan* are employed alongside recitations in class, mosques, and during Ramadan. Certificates are granted only to students who meet strict academic criteria, including completion of hadith study under a teacher with authenticated *sanad* lineage, comprehension of the *matan*, and observance of proper *adab*. Most *sanad* lineages trace back to scholars connected to Madrasah Ash-Shalatiyah and Darul Ulum Makkah, including Shaykh Muhammad Yasin al-Fadani. Despite its critical role, academic studies on hadith *sanad* remain limited compared to Qur'anic *sanad* research. This study underscores the need to revitalize scholarly attention to hadith *sanad* traditions and affirms the strategic role of *pesantren* as institutions preserving the integrity and transmission of classical Islamic knowledge.

**Keywords:** Hadith Transmission, Ijazah, Mandailing Natal *Pesantren*, *Sanad* Tradition.

## Abstrak

Tradisi *sanad* merupakan mekanisme fundamental dalam menjaga keautentikan dan kesinambungan hadis melalui rantai transmisi yang andal dan dapat dipertanggungjawabkan. Di Indonesia, khususnya di Mandailing Natal, tradisi ini secara aktif dilestarikan di lembaga pendidikan *pesantren*, di mana transmisi kitab-kitab hadis klasik seperti *Arba'in an-Nawawi*, *Bulugh al-Maram*, dan *Sahih al-Bukhari* dilakukan melalui sistem pendidikan berbasis *sanad*. Penelitian ini mengkaji mekanisme pemberian *ijazah sanad* (sertifikat *sanad*) di beberapa *pesantren*—terutama Musthafawiyah, Darul Ulum, dan Roihanul Jannah—dan menelaah kontribusinya dalam mempertahankan keberlanjutan keilmuan hadis. Dengan pendekatan kualitatif melalui studi lapangan dan analisis historis, penelitian ini menemukan bahwa pemberian *ijazah sanad* bukan sekadar formalitas, melainkan hasil dari proses akademik dan spiritual yang ketat. Metode pengajaran seperti *musyafahah*, *talaqqi*, dan *sorogan* diterapkan bersamaan dengan pengajian di kelas, masjid, dan selama bulan Ramadan. Sertifikat hanya diberikan kepada santri yang memenuhi kriteria akademik ketat, termasuk menyelesaikan kajian kitab hadis di bawah bimbingan guru *bersanad* sah, memahami *matan* hadis, dan menunjukkan *adab* serta komitmen belajar. Mayoritas rantai *sanad* ditelusuri hingga ulama-ulama yang terhubung dengan Madrasah Ash-Shalatiyah dan Darul Ulum Makkah, termasuk Syekh Muhammad Yasin al-Fadani. Meskipun memiliki peran krusial, kajian akademik tentang *sanad* hadis masih terbatas dibandingkan dengan kajian *sanad* Al-Qur'an. Studi ini menegaskan pentingnya revitalisasi perhatian akademik terhadap tradisi *sanad* hadis dan meneguhkan peran strategis *pesantren* dalam menjaga integritas dan transmisi keilmuan Islam klasik.

**Kata kunci:** Transmisi Hadis, Ijazah, *Pesantren* Mandailing Natal, Tradis *Sanad*.

## Introduction

Islam emphasizes the importance of authenticity (*sahih*) in the transmission of knowledge as the main foundation in maintaining the purity of teachings and ensuring

correct understanding. The validity of knowledge is not only determined by the content (*matan*), but also the transmission (*sanad*) that is maintained from generation to generation (Khon, 2022, p. 156). This principle reflects prudence in receiving and conveying knowledge, as advocated in various Islamic disciplines, especially in the science of hadith. Clarity of *sanad* and scholarly sources plays a crucial role in preventing distortions of religious understanding that can arise due to the dissemination of information from non-credible sources (Saifuddin & Nurita, 2023, p. 6-9). In the Islamic scholarly tradition, the validity of a teaching is highly dependent on ensuring its transmission through authoritative channels that have high scholarly integrity (Rambe, Husna, & Waharjani, 2023, p. 259-260). Therefore, tracing the scientific *sanad* becomes the main instrument in ensuring the validity of a science, as well as maintaining the continuity of the Islamic intellectual tradition from generation to generation.

The *sanadic* tradition, or the chain of transmission of traditions, is a fundamental mechanism in maintaining the authenticity of traditions (Su'aidi, 2023, p. 181-183). This tradition emphasizes the importance of learning from teachers who have a clear and accountable lineage of knowledge (Rochmawati, 2024, p. 434-436). The *sanad* also serves as a verification system that ensures that Islamic teachings are passed down in a valid and reliable manner. The existence of the *sanad* has become increasingly relevant in the modern era, where access to Islamic information via the internet is increasingly widespread, but often without guidance from the correct scholarly authority (Asmarita, 2023, p. 15). Therefore, understanding and maintaining the *sanad* tradition is a must in maintaining the purity of Islamic teachings.

In the context of hadith, the *sanad* refers to the chain of narrators who transmit a hadith continuously up to the Prophet Muhammad (Ardiansyah & Firmansyah, 2023, p. 122). This concept is the main principle of hadith science as stated by Abdallah b. Mubarak: The chain of transmission is part of the religion. Had there been no *sanad* then everyone would have said whatever he wanted (Suhendra, 2019, p.203-205 ). This statement confirms that the *sanad* acts as an academic filter that prevents distortions and irregularities in the transmission of hadith.

In Indonesia, especially in the *pesantren* environment, the *sanad* tradition has been preserved as part of the Islamic scientific heritage (Romli, 2024, p. 2-6). One region

that still maintains this tradition is Mandailing Natal, which has a number of *pesantren* with a *sanad*-based teaching system. Some of the hadith books passed down through the *sanad* system in these *pesantren* include *Arba'in an-Nawawi*, *Mukhtasar Abi Jamrah*, *Bulugh al-Maram*, and *Sahih al-Bukhari* and *Sahih Muslim*. The existence of hadith *sanad* certificates in these institutions is evidence that the transmission of hadith knowledge in Mandailing Natal has strong and continuous roots.

History shows that the scholars who established *pesantren* in Mandailing Natal were mostly alumni from Makkah, which at that time was the centre of Islamic knowledge (Ja'far, Syahnan, Asrul, Dahlan, & Ritonga, 2022, p.301-303), especially in the field of hadith. Some prominent scholars such as Shaykh Abdul Hamid Lubis, Shaykh Mustafa Husein, Shaykh Syihabuddin, Shaykh Abdul Qadir al-Mandily, and Shaykh Abdul Halim Khatib brought with them the tradition of strict *sanad* in hadith transmission (Musa, 2023, p. 3136). One of the figures who also played a major role in the development of the *sanadic* tradition in Indonesia was Shaykh Muhammad Yasin al-Fadani, who was known as *musnid al-dunya* because he had many certificates and *sanad* in hadith narration (Misbakhuddi, 2019, p. 3-5).

A *sanad* certificate is an official document that serves as authoritative evidence that an individual has obtained the permission or approval of a prominent teacher to narrate certain traditions (Romli, 2024, p.5). This document is an important instrument in maintaining the authenticity and continuity of oral transmission of hadith from one generation to the next. The certificate of *sanad* generally lists the names of the narrators or teachers who were the chain of transmission of the hadith starting from the Prophet Muhammad through the early generations of Islam to the individual who received the certificate (Ilham, Yusri, & Itrayuni, 2023, p. 99). In addition, the *sanad* certificate also includes information on the qualifications of the teachers as well as the validity of the hadith transmission.

This certificate is proof that the individual receiving it has fulfilled the requirements and has a comprehensive understanding of the method of hadith narration (Nursyahbani, 2022, p. 3-7). *Ijazah* is one of the most commonly used methods of hadith transmission. It falls under the concept of *al-tahammul wa al-ada fi*

al-hadis (M R Mohamad, Ramli, & Alias, 2020, p. 425). which allows a teacher to authorize his student to narrate hadith either orally or in writing (Su'aidi, 2023, p.183).

The certificate of *sanad* is given to students who have completed the study of a particular hadith with a teacher and obtained authorization to transmit it to others (Ulya, Alkaff, Anwar, & Ulinuha, 2023, p. 246-248). The *sanad* certificate plays an important role in ensuring the authenticity of the hadith and ensuring the continuity of its transmission. The granting of hadith *sanad* certificates in the *pesantren* tradition is done after the *khataman* of the hadith books (Satibi, 2010, p. 2-5). In field research, researchers found that some *pesantren* in Mandailing Natal regency still maintain the tradition of certificates and the division of hadith *sanad*. These boarding schools include *pesantren* of Musthafawiyah, Darul Ulum, Roihanul Jannah, Darul Ikhlas, and Bi'tsatul Islamiyah.

However, although the tradition of *sanad* is still maintained in some *pesantren*, academic attention to the study of hadith *sanad* is still relatively minimal compared to the study of Quranic *sanad*, which has become increasingly popular (Uli Rif'atul Millah, 2018, p. 2-3). Various Quranic teaching programmes have placed the *sanad* as the main attraction in attracting the public, while the study of hadith with the *sanad* system has not received the same extensive attention (Hafidh & Rahyasih, 2023, p. 63-64). This lack of attention has implications for the declining understanding of the importance of the *sanad* in hadith science and the weakening of respect for *sanad*-based scholarly authority.

Therefore, this study aims to analyse how the tradition of granting hadith *sanad* certificates is carried out in Mandailing Natal *Pesantren* and to examine its role and impact on the preservation of the authority of hadith scholarship. The main questions to be answered in this study are: how is the mechanism of granting hadith *sanad* certificates carried out in the *pesantren*, and to what extent does this tradition contribute to maintaining the continuity of transmission of hadith knowledge? This study is expected to make an academic contribution in strengthening the understanding of the importance of *sanad* in the transmission of hadith knowledge as well as reaffirming the position of *pesantren* as centres for the preservation of Islamic scientific

*sanad*. In addition, this study is expected to be a reference for hadith studies in various Islamic universities in order to expand the scope of hadith *sanad* studies in Indonesia.

## Discussion

### *Quranic and Hadithic Basis of Sanad Tradition*

The tradition of *sanad* in Islamic scholarship is not just a concept created by scholars, but has a strong foundation in the Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet Muhammad (Noor, 2020, p. 280). This tradition was born out of the urgent need to ensure the authenticity, accuracy, and validity of knowledge passed down from generation to generation, especially with regard to religious teachings sourced from revelation (Rochmawati, 2024, p. 434). In the Quran, the principle of verification and validation of information is implied in several verses, one of which is:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِن جَاءَكُمْ فَاسِقٌ بِنَبَأٍ فَتَبَيَّنُوا أَن تُصِيبُوا قَوْمًا بِجَهَالَةٍ فَتُصْبِحُوا عَلَىٰ مَا  
فَعَلْتُمْ نَادِمِينَ

“O you who believe! If a wicked person comes to you with news, then research the truth, so that you do not harm a people through ignorance (carelessness), which you will eventually regret.” (QS. Al-Hujurat: 6)

This verse emphasizes the importance of being careful in receiving news in order to avoid regretting actions based on information that has not been verified (Aidh, 2007, p. 65). This verse also provides guidance for believers to always be critical in receiving news or information, especially if the source comes from someone who is unfaithful (Abdul Kadir & Vahlepi, 2021, p. 424-425). As Muslims, we are required to verify and research information before believing it. Accepting and spreading news without investigation can potentially cause harm, even leading to destruction. As a smart society, we are required to be more critical and always apply the principle of *tabayyun* (clarification) in responding to any information received, regardless of its source.

In the context of Islamic scholarship, this principle is realised through the *sanad* system, which ensures that the knowledge received has a clear transmission path and is connected to the original source.

In addition, the principle of inheriting knowledge is also affirmed in the word of God:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ إِلَّا رِجَالًا نُوحِيَ إِلَيْهِمْ فَاسْأَلُوا أَهْلَ الذِّكْرِ إِنْ كُنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

*"We did not send before you (Prophet Muhammad, any other man to whom We gave revelation. So ask those who have knowledge if you do not know " (QS. An-Nahl: 43).*

This verse emphasizes the importance of learning from authentic scholarly authorities, a principle that underpins the existence of *sanad* in the Islamic tradition (Aidh, 2007, p. 72). Thus, the *sanad* system not only ensures the authenticity of knowledge but also maintains the continuity of transmission of teachings sourced from the Prophet, to the next generation.

The concept of *sanad* is not only rooted in the Qur'an but also receives special attention in the Prophet's hadith. The basis for the urgency of the *sanad* in the study of hadith is the hadith narrated by Imam Muslim in his sahih book:

إِنَّ هَذَا الْعِلْمَ دِينٌ فَانظُرُوا عَمَّنْ تَأْخُذُونَ دِينَكُمْ

*"Verily, knowledge is part of religion, so pay attention to whom you take your religion from" (Muslim bin al-Hajjaj, n.d., p. 175).*

This Hadith asserts that religious knowledge is not just ordinary knowledge, but part of a belief that must be obtained from a trusted source. Therefore, the *sanad* serves as a mechanism to ensure that the knowledge taught has a valid and credible transmission path. This explanation is in accordance with the Hadith also narrated by Imam Muslim in his Sahih book as follows:

لَا تَزَالُ طَائِفَةٌ مِنْ أُمَّتِي قَائِمَةٌ بِأَمْرِ اللَّهِ ، لَا يَضُرُّهُمْ مَنْ خَذَلَهُمْ ، وَلَا مَنْ خَالَفَهُمْ ، حَتَّى يَأْتِيَ أَمْرُ اللَّهِ ، وَهُمْ ظَاهِرُونَ عَلَى النَّاسِ

*"There will always be a group from my Ummah who will stand firmly on the command of Allah, and they will not be swayed by those who oppose them (Muslim bin al-Hajjaj, n.d., p. 186).*

This hadith confirms the existence of a group of scholars who maintain the purity of Islamic teachings in every era. In this context, the tradition of hadith *sanad* diploma plays an important role in maintaining the authenticity of knowledge by ensuring the continuity of the *sanad* up to the Prophet Muhammad. Through the *sanad* certificate, a scholar authorises his disciple to legitimately narrate the hadith so that the transmission of knowledge is maintained from generation to generation.

### *The Tradition of Giving Sanad Diplomas in Hadith Teaching in Mandailing Natal Pesantren*

The *Sanad* of Hadith is the chain of transmission that connects each narrator from one generation to the next until it connects to the Prophet Muhammad (Al-Khatib, 1980, p. 286). This *sanad* is a form of transmission of knowledge, especially in the field of hadith, which is passed on from the Prophet, to the Companions, then to the *tabi'in*, *tabi'ut tabi'in*, scholars of hadith, until it reaches the current generation (B.u Shalah, 1995, p. 143). The existence of a certificate of hadith transmission plays an important role in maintaining the authenticity and authenticity of hadith knowledge (Roni, 2024, p. 825), ensuring that the teachings passed down are kept pure from the time of the Prophet Muhammad until the end of time.

The *sanad* tradition is not just a cultural heritage, but a systematic scientific method in ensuring the authenticity of the transmission of knowledge (Syaifuddin, 2022, p. 3-5), especially in the discipline of hadith science. In hadith studies, the *sanad* serves as the main instrument in assessing the validity of a narration by tracing the lineage of transmission and assessing the credibility of the narrators. This system not only serves as a verification mechanism, but also as an effort to maintain scientific continuity so that the knowledge passed down is truly sourced from the Prophet Muhammad (Maulana, 2016, p. 110-112), More than just hadith science, the tradition of *sanad* is also applied in various Islamic disciplines, such as *tafsir*, *fiqh*, and *qira'at* (Mohamad Redha Mohamad & Adi, 2023, p. 17-18). Scholars emphasize the importance of learning directly from teachers who have a *sanad* as a form of authoritative and guaranteed scientific continuity. The absence of a *sanad* in the process of transmitting

knowledge can open up opportunities for distortion and the transmission of knowledge without a clear foundation.

In the context of *pesantren* and traditional educational institutions, the provision of *sanad* certificates has become a tradition that has continued since the early development of *pesantren* in Indonesia (Muntaqo, 2018, p. 33-34 ). In many *pesantren*, especially on the island of Java, *sanad* certificates are often given in the form of *musalsal* certificates. One form of *musalsal* diploma that is still preserved today is the *musalsal bi al-musafahah*, which is the granting of a certificate by shaking hands directly between the teacher and the student, as a symbol of the transmission of knowledge (Huda, Jannah, Rosidah, Rosidah, & Agustin, 2023, p. 73-86).

The hadith traditions of the teachers at the *Pesantren* in Mandailing Natal are mostly from scholars who have studied at Madrasah al-Shalatiyah and Dar al-Ulum Makkah (Imron Nasution, Personal Interview, June 2024). The preservation of the *sanad* is an effort to maintain the continuity of authentic transmission of hadith knowledge to the author of the book who can then be linked to the Prophet. Hadith teachers believe that the *sanad* is a symbol of scientific legitimacy, and is an important medium to maintain the purity of knowledge as passed down by previous scholars. This tradition is also an integral part of the identity of *pesantren* as an institution that upholds the clarity of the classical scientific authority of *pesantren* in Mandailing Natal. Most of the *sanad* are connected to Sheikh Muhammad Yasin al-Fadani, a scholar known as *musnid al-dunya* (holder of the world's hadith *sanad*) (Putri Azka Syofarina, 2023, p. 317-319). Through him, the chain of scholarly transmission was connected to the authors of the classical hadith books, which eventually led to the Messenger of Allah.

Hadith *sanad* owners in Mandailing Natal in the process of granting *sanad* certificates to students follow the tradition inherited by their teachers, both those from Mustafawiyah *pesantren* and from other *Pesantren*. Mustafawiyah, as one of the leading centres of Islamic studies, has a central role in the transmission of knowledge, especially in the field of hadith. Many hadith *sanad* certificates given by scholars at this *pesantren* were then disseminated to various *Pesantren* in Southern Tapanuli.

In the tradition of hadith education in *pesantren*, not all students are entitled to receive a *sanad* certificate. The *sanad* certificate is only given to students who have gone

through an intensive learning process and successfully completed a certain book of hadith under the guidance of a teacher who has scientific authority (Romli, 2024, p. 4). This shows that the certificate of *sanad* is not just a formality, but rather a recognition of a *santri's* competence and deep understanding of the science of hadith.

The process of granting *sanad* certificates in *pesantren* in Mandailing Natal is inseparable from the learning system applied in them. The *sanad* certificate is only given to *santri* who have completed a certain book of hadith such as the book of *Arbai'in al-Nawawiyah*, the book of *Mukhtashar Abi Jamrah*, the book of *Bulugh al-Maram* as a form of recognition of their understanding and feasibility in transmitting knowledge. To achieve the target of khatam and improve the quality of *santri* understanding, hadith teaching in Mandailing Natal *Pesantren* is carried out through various systematic and tiered learning methods. However, the preservation of the *sanad* tradition in these *pesantren* faces a number of obstacles, such as the decreasing number of teachers who have hadith knowledge *sanad* certificates, the lack of attention of *pesantren* leaders to the importance of hadith *sanad* certificate documentation, and the lack of awareness of the younger generation of *pesantren* students of the importance of *sanad* certificates as a pillar of Islamic knowledge transmission. As a result, the existence of teachers who have scientific *sanad* certificates is increasingly rare so that not all *Pesantren* in this region are able to maintain the continuity of the *sanad* as done by previous generations of scholars.

The method of teaching hadith in Mandailing Natal *Pesantren* involves several main approaches, namely formal classroom recitation, weekly recitation in the mosque, and intensive recitation during the month of Ramadan. In formal recitation, the teacher reads the hadith book verbatim, explains the meaning, and provides the context and relevance, supported by lecture, discussion, and question and answer methods. The weekly recitation in the mosque aims to deepen the material that has been taught in class using certain books. Meanwhile, the intensive Ramadan recitation, organised in *pesantren* such as Mustafawiyah Purba Baru, Darul Ulum Muara Mais, Darul Ikhlas, and Raihanul Jannah, focuses on in-depth study under the guidance of teachers who have authoritative scientific *sanad*.

In the process of hadith transmission, *pesantren* apply several main methods, namely *musyafahah*, *talaqqi*, and *sorogan*. *Musyafahah* takes place in the form of direct

dialogue between the teacher and the santri to ensure in-depth understanding. *Talaqqi* is a one-way learning in which the teacher reads and explains the hadith in front of the *santri*, often in large groups, which, although systematic, can limit individual understanding to the maximum. Meanwhile, the *sorogan* method allows *santri* to learn individually by reading, explaining, and memorizing material directly in front of the teacher, especially in the intensive Ramadan recitation. The Ramadan recitation tradition in *pesantren* takes place in a *halaqah*, where santri sit in a circle facing the teacher, creating a more personalised interaction and strengthening academic understanding and the blessing of the scholarly *sanad*. These methods not only ensure a deep understanding of the hadith, but also maintain the continuity of the *sanad*-based scholarly tradition that has been inherited from generation to generation.

### *The Process of Granting a Sanad Diploma*

The tradition of hadith *sanad* certificates in *pesantren* in Mandailing Natal is one of the scholarly activities that has been going on for a long time and adopts the method of granting hadith *sanad* certificates practised in Madrasah Sholatiyah and Darul Ulum Makkah (Imron Nasution, Personal Interview, June, 2024). With this certificate of *sanad*, the transmission of hadith knowledge is indirectly connected to the Prophet, thus maintaining the continuity of authenticity and authenticity of hadith knowledge. However, obtaining a certificate of hadith transmission from a hadith teacher is not an easy process but requires diligence and fulfilment of certain requirements.

Based on interviews conducted with several resource persons, it can be concluded that there are several main requirements that must be met by a student before being given a certificate of hadith *sanad*. Based on the results of in-depth interviews with several resource persons, namely hadith teachers in the Mandailing Natal Islamic boarding school environment, it was found that there are several main requirements that must be fulfilled by a student before being given a hadith *sanad* certificate.

Firstly, students must complete one of the hadith books such as *Arba'in al-Nawawiyah*, *Mukhtashar Abi Jumrah* and *Bulugh al-Maram* from beginning to end in the presence of the hadith teacher. A resource person, Hamdani Lubis, stated::

*“We will not give a certificate of sanad if the student has not finished the book from beginning to end. It must be read directly in front of the teacher, it is not enough just to read it yourself” (Hamdani Lubis, Personal Interview, August 2024).*

This shows that the granting of a *sanad* diploma is not just a formality, but a form of recognition for academic and spiritual achievements obtained through a rigorous learning process, whether in the classroom, in the mosque, or in a special *halaqah*.

Second, the standard of understanding of the *santri* is also an important criterion. Laung Lubis, one of the senior hadith teachers, explained:

*“The diploma is not just because the santri attended the recitation, but because he fully understands the contents of the book. If they are not able to understand, we do not allow them to carry our sanad (Laung Nasution, Personal Interview, July 2024).*

Thus, the certificate of *sanad* becomes a symbol of scientific trust (*al-Amanah al-Ilmiyyah*) from the teacher to the student, as well as a mandate to maintain and pass on hadith knowledge responsibly.

Third, even though there are *santri* who do not complete the book in full, it is still possible to get an oral diploma. A resource person, Ibrahim Daulay, said:

*“There are also those who are given a verbal diploma, usually because they have been learning for a long time and the teacher feels satisfied with their knowledge, even though they have not formally completed it” (Ibrahim Daulay, Personal Interview, July 2024).*

Third, even though there are *santri* who do not complete the book in full, it is still possible to get an oral diploma. A resource person, Ibrahim Daulay, said.

Fourth, the process of giving diplomas is done symbolically at the end of the recitation. Anwar Khoir said:

*“Usually, the diploma is given at the end of the book recitation in written form, some only in oral form, depending on the achievement of the students in the pesantren (Anwar Khoir, Personal Interview, May, 2024).*

After the students have completed the study of the hadith book, the teacher will recite the *sanad* of the book. This *sanad* includes the genealogy of the teachers who taught the book up to the author of the book. The teacher then gives an official *sanad* certificate to the student by putting the student's name behind the teacher's name as a sign of scholarly authentication.

For students who have not completed the hadith book, the *sanad* certificate is not given in writing, but they still receive a verbal certificate from the hadith teacher as a form of recognition of their involvement in the learning process.

At the time of khataman, the teacher recites the *sanad* by mentioning the chain of transmission of knowledge up to the author of the book, then certifies the book to the students by saying:

*"Ajaztukum hadza al-kitab kama ajazani bihi syaikhi" It means: I give this book to you as my teacher gave it to me.*

*The students then accepted the certificate by replying: "Qabiltu" Meaning: I accept.*

This event is usually closed with a prayer as a form of blessing in the transmission of knowledge. This ceremony is a formal sign that a student has completed a book of Hadith, is scientifically sound and can teach the book of Hadith.

### *Scholars' Perspectives and Practices at Mustafawiyah Islamic Boarding School*

The authenticity of knowledge is a fundamental principle in Islam that plays a role in maintaining the validity of religious teachings. This concept emphasizes the importance of ensuring that the knowledge learnt and delivered has a clear and reliable source (Maulana, 2016, p. 112). One of the main mechanisms in maintaining the authenticity of knowledge in Islam is the *sanad* and *ijazah* system, which functions as a chain of knowledge. In the modern era, the flow of unverified information is increasingly prevalent, especially with the presence of digital media, which is often the

main source for many people in obtaining religious knowledge. This phenomenon poses a major challenge, namely the increasing risk of distortion and deviation in the understanding of Islamic teachings (Manaf, Zulfa, & M. Nasiruddin, 2020, p. 45-46 ). Therefore, this study aims to highlight the importance of *sanad* and *ijazah* in the Islamic scholarly tradition as an effort to maintain the authenticity of knowledge and avoid religious misunderstanding.

Islam teaches that knowledge must come from an authentic source and have clear continuity. The clarity of the origin of knowledge is an essential principle in avoiding misunderstanding and ensuring that the teachings received are in accordance with the guidance of the Prophet Muhammad (Idriz & Nurhamidah, 2019, p. 20-22). In the Islamic tradition, the continuity of legitimate knowledge is determined by the *sanad*, which is the chain of knowledge that connects an individual with previous scholars to the Prophet Muhammad.

In an interview, Khairul Bahri explained that:

*“The authenticity of knowledge in Islam is the main foundation in maintaining the purity of religious teachings. This is not only related to the content of the text, but also the context of its delivery. Therefore, it is very important to trace the origins of knowledge to avoid mistakes in understanding or teaching religion. The scholarly sanad is one of the unique legacies in Islam that serves as a chain that connects the knowledge we receive with its trusted source to the Prophet Muhammad. With the sanad, we can ensure that the knowledge conveyed comes from individuals who are competent, trusted, and have scientific integrity (Khairul Bahri, Personal Interview, June, 2024).”*

In the modern context, one of the main challenges in maintaining the authenticity of knowledge is the spread of unverified information through the internet and social media. Many individuals are more likely to trust viral content rather than refer to sources that have scientific legitimacy. Therefore, more intensive education is needed to raise public awareness of the importance of scientific *sanad* in maintaining the purity of Islamic teachings.

The *Sanad* is the main guarantee of the validity of knowledge because it ensures that the teachings conveyed have a strong basis and are not distorted by individuals who do not have scientific competence.

As ‘Abdallah b. Mubarak said:

*“Sanad is part of religion. Without it, people would say whatever they like.”*

In an interview, Azhar, a teacher at a boarding school, explained that:

*“Learning from a teacher who has a sanad of knowledge is a major recommendation in Islam. This is not only a matter of maintaining the authenticity of the knowledge, but also ensuring that the knowledge is conveyed with the correct understanding in accordance with the teachings of the Prophet, and the scholars after him. In contrast, learning independently through the internet is often risky because the information obtained is not necessarily valid or in accordance with the correct understanding. Therefore, the sanad serves as a guarantee that the knowledge received comes from a trusted source and has scientific integrity” (Azhar, Personal Interview, June 2024).*

In addition to *sanad*, the *ijazah* system is also an important mechanism in ensuring the validity of knowledge in Islam. *Ijazah* is a form of authorization from a teacher to his student after he is deemed fit to narrate or teach a knowledge. This tradition has long been part of the Islamic education system as a method of maintaining scientific continuity and ensuring that knowledge is passed on legitimately.

As Zulkarnaen explained in an interview:

*“Ijazah in hadith narration is not just a permission or authorization, but also a symbol of respect for the Islamic scientific tradition. Ijazah shows that a person has received knowledge from his teacher directly, with validation of the sanad that connects the chain of teaching to the Prophet Muhammad. This function is important because it preserves the authenticity of knowledge transmission and prevents any deviation in hadith narration. In the modern era, the diploma remains relevant to maintain scholarly validity even though technology has facilitated access to information. Without a diploma, it is difficult to ascertain the authenticity and validity of the knowledge received, thus increasing the risk of irregularities in the transmission of knowledge” (Zulkarnaen, Personal Interview, June 2024).*

In the Islamic education system, a diploma is one way to ensure that individuals who teach a science have sufficient competence. Without this validation, Islamic teachings can be distorted, potentially leading to deviations in religious practice.

The granting of hadith *sanad* certificates in Mandailing Natal is a long-standing scholarly practice and an integral part of the educational tradition in *pesantren*. This tradition not only confirms that the knowledge taught has an authentic and accountable transmission route, but also serves as a sign of recognition of the academic achievement of a *santri* in understanding and completing a certain book of hadith.

One of the figures who illustrated the continuity of this tradition was Laung Lubis, a teacher at *pesantren* Darul Ulum Muara Mais. According to him, teachers in *pesantren* in Mandailing Natal not only teach hadith books systematically, but also provide *sanad* certificates as authentic evidence that the knowledge received by students has continuity with previous scholars.

The hadith books used in learning in Mandailing Natal *pesantren*, especially in *pesantren* Darul Ulum, include several important works such as *Arba'in an-Nawawi*, *Mukhtasar Abi Jamrah*, *Bulugh al-Maram*, and *Subulus Salam*. The teaching process of these books is conducted classically in the classroom, which is then complemented by recitation sessions at night.

After completing the study of a book, students who have completed it are entitled to receive a certificate of hadith *sanad* as a form of recognition of their graduation. This certificate is not just a formality document, but reflects a continuous learning system in which knowledge is passed on through a valid chain of knowledge that can be traced back to the compiler of the book.

The existence of hadith *sanad* certificates is important in maintaining the originality and continuity of hadith science. This certificate serves as: *First*, a mark of academic completion as proof that a student has completed the study of a hadith book. *Second*, an attestation of scholarly authority to confirming that the knowledge acquired comes from a clear and valid *sanad* path. *Third*, a link in the scholarly *sanad*, maintains continuity between generations of scholars and ensures that the knowledge taught remains in a reliable line of transmission.

However, it is important to note that a *sanad* diploma does not automatically guarantee the level of mastery of one's hadith knowledge. It is rather a form of legitimization that a student has completed the study of a book and that the *sanad* of his knowledge is connected to previous scholars.

The granting of *sanad* certificates is not given arbitrarily. Only students who have met certain criteria of having completed a book and gained sufficient understanding are entitled to receive the certificate. This shows that the granting of *sanad* certificates is not just an administrative formality, but part of an educational system that emphasizes a deep understanding of hadith texts.

In addition, although many *santri* follow the same book studies, only those who actually complete the full course of study will receive a written certificate of *sanad*. Meanwhile, students who have not completed the full course of study will only receive an oral *sanad*, which indicates that they are still in the process of learning and have not reached a level of understanding sufficient to be given a written certificate.

In the early days of *pesantren* development in Mandailing Natal, local scholars had brought with them and deeply rooted the tradition of *ijazah sanad* in this area. Many of them were alumni of renowned madrasas in Mecca, such as Madrasah Shalatiyah and Darul Ulum, which are known as centres of Islamic education, especially in the field of hadith.

In Mecca, the scholarly *sanad* had a strict and highly organized structure. Every knowledge taught has a valid and accountable line of transmission. The Mandailing Natal scholars who studied in Mecca not only gained a deep understanding of the science of hadith, but also received *sanad* diplomas from great scholars who had high authority in this field. After returning home, they continued this tradition through the *pesantren* education system.

One of the scholars who played a major role in the spread of the tradition of hadith transmission, both in Indonesia and in Mandailing Natal, was Shaykh Muhammad Yasin al-Fadani. He was an Indonesian scholar who earned the title of *musnid al-dunya*, a title given to scholars who have many certificates and *sanad* in hadith narration. The *sanad* inherited by Sheikh al-Fadani has become part of a vast network of hadith scholarship and has had a great influence on the scholars of Mandailing Natal. Almost all hadith *sanad* in this area lead to him, who is known for his dedication in maintaining the continuity of hadith knowledge in the Islamic world.

Although in its development the tradition of granting *sanad* certificates may not be as strict as in the past, the hadith *sanad* still has an important role in providing

legitimacy to the knowledge of a *santri*. The *sanad* certificate confirms that the knowledge acquired comes from a valid source and has a clear line of transmission.

In the modern context, the scientific *sanad* is still considered a fundamental element in maintaining the quality and authority of knowledge. This tradition ensures that the knowledge taught is not just self-taught, but has a chain of transmission that can be accounted for. However, *sanad* preservation faces serious challenges, especially in the midst of digitalization, the development of instant learning patterns, and the declining interest in in-depth study of the books of the Turats. Modernization of the education system often shifts the focus from *sanad* transmission to formal academic achievement, so that the values of adab and scientific authority inherent in *sanad* tend to be marginalized. Therefore, an integrative strategy is needed that is able to bridge the *sanad* tradition with the current educational approach so that the sustainability of the *sanad* remains relevant and alive in the midst of changing times.

## Conclusion

The tradition of granting *sanad* certificates in hadith education at Mandailing Natal pesantren serves as a key mechanism for preserving the authenticity and continuity of hadith knowledge. The *sanad* connects current generations to the Prophet through a trusted chain of narrators. Learning methods include formal classes, mosque recitations, and intensive Ramadan sessions, using approaches like *musyafahah*, *talaqqi*, and *sorogan* to ensure deep comprehension. *Sanad* certificates are awarded only to students who meet rigorous criteria, including completing hadith study under qualified teachers, understanding the *matan*, and demonstrating proper *adab*. Most *sanad* lineages trace back to scholars linked to Madrasah al-Shalatiyah and Darul Ulum Makkah, particularly Shaykh Muhammad Yasin al-Fadani. The *ijazah sanad* is not given arbitrarily but reflects a serious academic and spiritual process, reaffirming pesantren's vital role in the structured transmission of hadith knowledge through a valid scholarly chain.

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