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THE TWENTY ATTRIBUTES OF GOD IN *'AQIDATUL 'AWAM* AND AHMAD SAMBAS' MANUSCRIPT: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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Abstract

This study aims to make a comparison between the concept of the twenty-nature of Allah SWT contained in the Book of 'Aqidatul 'Awam by Sayyid Ahmad Marzuqi with the concept contained in the Book of Quotations of Ahmad Sambas Mufti Kutai, and analyze its relevance to the development of modern monotheistic education. Through the qualitative Library Research literature research method, it was found that both literatures present the nature of twenty as the foundation of the Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah faith, but with a different approach. While the Book of Quotations of Ahmad Sambas divides these qualities into the groups of Salbiyah, Ma'ani, and Ma'nawiyah, 'Aqidatul 'Awam is written in the form of a concise nadzam. It also gives a stern warning against the erroneous interpretation that equates beings with the Dzat Allah of the infidel zindiq. In monotheistic education, this comparison has strategic value because it offers a learning model that combines the 'Aqidatul 'Awam memorization method with the contextual and analytical approach of Ahmad Sambas Mufti of Kutai. The results of this study emphasize that the study of the nature of the twenty is very important in shaping Muslims who have spiritual strength, moral integrity, and a strong monotheistic consciousness in the midst of the challenges faced by modern society.

Keywords: *The Nature of Twenty; 'Aqidatul 'Awam; Book of Ahmad Sambas Quotes; Education of Tawhedan.*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk melakukan komparasi antara konsep sifat dua puluh bagi Allah SWT yang terkandung dalam Kitab 'Aqidatul 'Awam karya Sayyid Ahmad Marzuqi dengan konsep yang terdapat dalam Kitab Kutipan Ahmad Sambas Mufti< Kutai, serta menganalisis relevansinya terhadap pengembangan pendidikan ketauhidan modern. Melalui metode penelitian pustaka Library Research kualitatif, ditemukan bahwa kedua literatur menyajikan sifat dua puluh sebagai fondasi akidah

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Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah, namun dengan pendekatan yang berbeda. Sementara Kitab Kutipan Ahmad Sambas membagi sifat-sifat tersebut menjadi kelompok Salbiyah, Ma'ani, dan Ma'nawiyah, 'Aqidatul 'Awam ditulis dalam bentuk nadzam yang ringkas. Itu juga memberi peringatan keras terhadap interpretasi yang salah yang menyamakan makhluk dengan Dzat Allah kafir zindiq. Dalam pendidikan ketauhidan, perbandingan ini memiliki nilai strategis karena menawarkan model pembelajaran yang menggabungkan metode hafalan 'Aqidatul 'Awam dengan pendekatan kontekstual dan analitis Ahmad Sambas Mufti< Kutai. Hasil penelitian ini menekankan bahwa studi sifat dua puluh sangat penting dalam membentuk orang Muslim yang memiliki kekuatan spiritual, integritas moral, dan kesadaran tauhid yang kokoh di tengah tantangan yang dihadapi oleh masyarakat modern.

Kata Kunci: *Sifat Dua Puluh; 'Aqidatul 'Awam; Kitab Kutipan Ahmad Sambas; Pendidikan Ketauhidan.*

INTRODUCTION

Studying the science of Tawhid (Islamic monotheism) is the fundamental first step towards a correct understanding of Islam. Any error in one's belief in Tawhid can lead to grave deviation, as its very foundation is the unwavering conviction in the Oneness of Allah. A proper grasp of this foundational science instills a firm belief in the existence of Allah and the acceptance that all occurrences in this world are subject to His divine will. In contemporary times, while many profess belief in the Oneness of Allah, a significant gap exists in the practical application of these principles in daily life. This is analogous to the rise of various deviant teachings that stray from orthodox Islam. Esoteric practices, including certain forms of sorcery, which claim to grant extraordinary abilities like levitation or foreseeing future events, represent such deviations (Erwin et al., 2022).

Faith-based education and efforts to safeguard one's creed serve as the primary guidelines for developing individuals with strong spiritual foundations and the capacity to embody noble character in all aspects of societal life. Creedal education is paramount because a robust aqidah constantly reminds a Muslim of their ultimate accountability to Allah SWT. Consequently, this education is crucial not only for theoretical understanding of theological concepts but also for their practical application in everyday life. However, maintaining faith and creed presents a significant challenge amidst the powerful currents of globalization, which bring both positive and negative influences (Wibowo & Sapri, 2024).

The science of Tawhid is a discipline that employs both scriptural and rational proofs to establish religious creed. Utilizing these dual sources facilitates a more comprehensive understanding of Tawhid's explanations today. At the core of Tawhid discourse is the absolute Oneness of Allah SWT. The discussion revolves

around Allah's attributes, categorized into: (1) the Twenty Essential Attributes befitting His Majesty and Perfection, (2) the Twenty Impossible Attributes incompatible with His Majesty, and (3) the Permissible Attribute, which signifies Allah's absolute power to choose as He wills. This systematic theological framework, often referred to as *'Aqa'id al-Khamsina* (The Fifty Tenets), encompasses fifty creedal points: twenty essential and twenty impossible attributes for Allah, plus one permissible attribute for Him; alongside four essential, four impossible, and one permissible attribute for the Prophets (Adenan et al., 2020).

In today's world of diverse religious beliefs, Muslims hold the conviction that Allah SWT is the singular God who governs the universe and all within it. A fundamental component of Islamic belief for every Muslim is the knowledge of the Twenty Essential Attributes of Allah: Existence (Wujud), Pre-Eternity (Qidam), Everlastingness (Baqa'), Dissimilarity from Creation (Mukhalafatu lil-hawadith), Self-Subsistence (Qiyamuhu binafsihi), Oneness (Wahdaniyyah), Power (Qudrah), Will (Iradah), Knowledge (Ilm), Life (Hayah), Hearing (Sam'), Sight (Basar), Speech (Kalam), and their active, perpetual manifestations (Kaunuhu). The internalization of these attributes aids believers in integrating faith into every facet of their existence, fostering a harmonious balance between belief and ethics (Wibowo & Sapri, 2024; Lutfiah et al., 2024).

Reviewing previous relevant studies, particularly those conducted in West Kalimantan and its surrounding regions, is crucial for strengthening the position and novelty of this research. First, the study conducted by M. Ihsan and Erwin Mahrus (2023) entitled "Konten Materi Aqidah Karya Haji Muhammad Saleh Pada Mata Pelajaran Aqidah Akhlak Di Madrasah Tsanawiyah Telaah Kitab Syarah *Aqidatul Al-Awam",* demonstrates that the *'Aqidatul Awam* text is highly beneficial in reinforcing the foundations of Ahlussunnah wal Jama'ah creed among Madrasah students. Second, the research by Herfan Nurjaya and Erwin Mahrus (2025) entitled "Pendidikan Keluarga Dalam Perspektif Kitab *Nasihat Al-Zaman* Karya Tuan Besar Raja Kubu Syarif Saleh Alaydrus (W.1943)", identifies his perspective on family education, which encompasses aspects such as creed (aqidah), ethics (*akhlaq*), jurisprudence (*fiqh*), mysticism (*tasawwuf*), and righteous deeds (*'amal salih*), as well as the significant role of the family in sustaining and benefiting a kingdom.

Third, the study by Masruji and Erwin Mahrus (2023) entitled *"Relevance Of The Bidayat Al-Tauhid Book Of Syekh Muhammad Basiuni Imran In Islamic Religious Education Curriculum In Schools",* demonstrates the importance of teaching *tauhid* and the attributes of God within the Islamic education curriculum in Indonesia, and how this relates to the development of students' character and faith at the elementary and secondary levels. Fourth, the research conducted by Asmanah and

Erwin Mahrus (2023) entitled "Relevansi Kitab *Khulasah* dalam Pendidikan Karakter (Sebuah Tinjauan pada Materi Sejarah Kebudayaan Islam)", highlights the significance of the Khulaṣah text in imparting Islamic values and character education, including the exemplary conduct of the Prophet Muhammad. Although the primary focus of this study is on character and morality, it also contributes to research on how the narratives and values contained in the text enhance aspects of tauhid and the attributes of God.

Fifth, the study by Sita, Erwin, and Sukino (2023) entitled *"The Relevance of the Book on Marriage Schedules by the Mufti of the Kingdom of Kubu, West Kalimantan, to Fiqh Subjects at Madrasah Aliyah",* affirms that classical works such as Mufti Ismail Mundu's Marriage Schedules are highly useful as sources for fiqh instruction and for strengthening students' understanding of tauhid and the divine attributes. Sixth, the research by Erwin et al. (2025) entitled *"Transmission of Local Islamic Texts in Islamic Education: Materials, Actors, and the Historical Trajectory of Islamic Knowledge in Borneo",* investigates the transmission of local Islamic manuscripts used in West Kalimantan for Islamic education throughout the twentieth century. Seventh, the study by Eka, Erwin, and Sahri (2025) entitled *"Kompetensi Kepribadian Pendidik Berdasarkan Manuskrip Maharaja Imam Basiuni Imran Sambas: Mas'alah Ichlas dan Tanggung Jawab"*, explores Muhammad Basiuni Imran's thought on teacher competence, with particular emphasis on sincerity (ikhlas) and responsibility.

Eighth, the research by Erwin and Sukino (2019) entitled *"Jejaring Keilmuan Ulama Borneo; Kajian Atas Naskah Korespondensi Antara Naib Kadi Tutong-Brunei dan Maharaja Imam Sambas."*, examines the correspondence between Awang H. Mas Hanafi, Naib Kadi of Tutong-Brunei, and H. Muhammad Basiuni Imran, Maharaja Imam of Sambas. Through this correspondence, the authors highlight issues that emerged within the scholarly networks during that period. Ninth, the study by Sajila and Erwin (2025) entitled *"Analysis of Teachers' Personality Competence in the Manuscript "Sedikit Tentang Pendidikan" by Haji Ismail Arsyad",* analyzes teacher personality competence as articulated in Haji Ismail Arsyad's manuscript Sedikit Tentang Pendidikan, in response to the growing moral decadence in education. Tenth, the research by Erwin et al. (2023) entitled *"Potensi Karya-Karya Ulama Lokal Kalimantan Barat sebagai Sumber Belajar Pendidikan Agama Islam di Sekolah/Madrasah",* discusses how the works of Maharaja Imam Sambas are highly suitable for use as educational resources and supplementary texts in Islamic Religious Education at schools and madrasahs.

Eleventh, the study by Piansyah and Erwin (2025) entitled *"Pemikiran Pembaharuan Pendidikan Islam:Tinjauan Atas Manuskrip Maharaja Imam Sambas*

(1885-1976)", examines the manuscript of a speech delivered by Maharaja Imam Sambas Haji Muhammad Basiuni Imran at the Gathering of Ulama of West Kalimantan held in Pontianak in 1948. Twelfth, the research conducted by Hefran, Erwin, and Patmawati (2025) entitled *"Pendidikan Anak dalam Perspektif Kitab Hidayyat Al-Irshad Fi Nasihat Al-Walad Karya Tuan Besar Raja Kubu Syarif Saleh Alaydrus (W.1943)"*, demonstrates that child education is not merely focused on the acquisition of knowledge, but rather on moral and spiritual formation so that children grow into faithful, responsible individuals capable of controlling their desires and avoiding wrongful actions.

Thirteenth, the study by Sofwan and Erwin (2024) entitled "*Pendidikan Agama Islam Dalam Keluarga: Perspektif Manuskrip H. Ismail Arsyad Kubu (1956)",* shows that the writings of H. Ismail Arsyad Kubu emphasize the crucial role of parents as primary exemplars in religious education. Several works of Nusantara scholars, particularly those originating from West Kalimantan, contain valuable insights. Like hidden gems, they hold little value unless uncovered. Consequently, it is imperative for scholars to analyze and investigate these works (Nurjaya & Erwin, 2025). The analysis reveals that researchers in West Kalimantan have not yet undertaken studies on the twenty attributes of God (sifat dua puluh) in the cited text of Ahmad Sambas, Mufti of Kutai.

Researchers found that the text 'Aqidatul 'Awam differs from other works, which prompted further interest in its study. Unlike other texts that also employ nadzam (didactic verse), 'Aqidatul 'Awam is distinctive in its origin, reportedly stemming from a dream. In contrast, other texts were composed by earlier scholars either to meet the needs of their time or at the request of their students for written explanations. Another unique feature of 'Aqidatul 'Awam is that it does not address every theological aspect comprehensively. Its verses mention only certain impossible attributes of God, but not all of them (Ismail et al., 2024). Meanwhile, the cited text authored by Ahmad Sambas, Mufti of Kutai, discusses three domains: jurisprudence (fiqh), Qadariyyah creed ('aqidah qadariyyah), the obligatory attributes of God (sifat wajib Allah), and the creed of Ahl al-Sunnah wa'l-Jama'ah.

This study holds strategic relevance for the development of modern tauhid education. When the memorization method of 'Aqidatul 'Awam is combined with the contextual approach of Ahmad Sambas, there emerges the potential for a more flexible model of tauhid learning rooted in the intellectual richness of Islam Nusantara. Accordingly, this research is expected to contribute to the enhancement of aqidah curricula in madrasahs, pesantrens, and Islamic higher education institutions.

RESEARCH METHODS

This qualitative research adopts a library research approach. The data sources are divided into two categories: primary and secondary. The primary sources consist of texts such as ‘Aqidatul ‘Awam and excerpts from Syekh Ahmad Sambas, Mufti of Kutai. The secondary sources are drawn from other materials, including documents, journals, scholarly works, and related references. The purpose of the library research approach is to obtain accurate, valid, and relevant information and data to support analysis and problem-solving. Research on topics, phenomena, or events through written sources and archaeological evidence is referred to as the historical approach in historical research (Ihsan & Erwin, 2023).

Broadly speaking, the library research method—also known as book-based research—is considered highly appropriate for this study, as it enables in-depth analysis of literature related to moral attributes and moral crises. This research is expected to make a significant theoretical contribution by analyzing the text Kifayatul Awam and other relevant references. Therefore, the library research approach is deemed suitable to support the objectives of this study (Wibowo & Sapri, 2024).

The research was conducted over approximately two months, from September to December 2025, encompassing phases of data collection, examination, and literature analysis. The primary sources of this study are the cited text of Ahmad Sambas, Mufti of Kutai, and Sayyid Ahmad al-Marzuqi’s ‘Aqidatul ‘Awam. The secondary sources include works on tauhid, scholarly journals, academic articles, and other relevant studies. Data collection was carried out through documentation study, involving reading, note-taking, and classification of the research focus. Content analysis, employing comparative and descriptive-analytical approaches, was used to identify similarities and differences in the ideas presented in the two texts. Subsequently, these ideas were interpreted to determine their relevance to the development of contemporary tauhid education.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Description of the Book *‘Aqidatul ‘Awam*

The poetic composition (*nazham*) of the book *'Aqidatul 'Awam*, authored by Sayyid Ahmad al-Marzuqi, was initiated on a Friday night in the month of Rajab, 1258 AH. The physical manuscript utilizes yellow HVS paper, a sturdy, thick softcover, and a water-resistant Lux Gloss finish. It is equipped with explanatory formulas and reference codes, complete with a guide for learning to write *Pegon* script. The content is valid, having undergone verification (*tashih*) prior to publication to ensure caution (*ihtiyat*) against textual errors. The book employs a

clear *Khat* calligraphic font with generous spacing to facilitate the addition of interlinear meanings (*makna*), printed on thick paper with a contemporary cover design. Notable advantages of this edition include the use of yellow paper, a distinctive and elegant cover, and widely spaced text allowing clear separation between one word and the next.

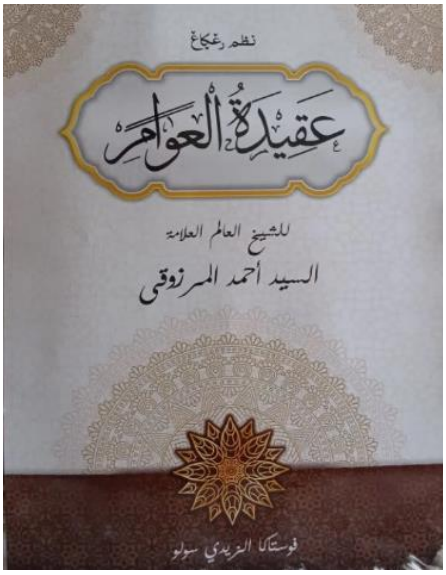

Figure 1. The Book 'Aqidatul 'Awam by Sayyid Ahmad Marzuqi

Description of the Excerpted Book by Ahmad Sambas *Mufti* of Kutai

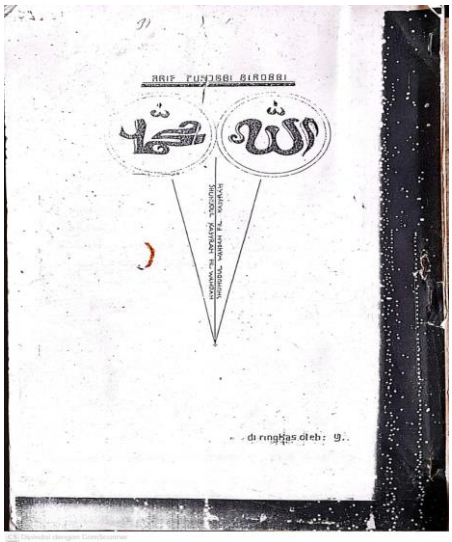

Figure 2. The Compilation of Ahmad Sambas, Mufti of Kutai

Ahmad Sambas, Mufti of Kutai, produced a written work, and this manuscript exists only in a single copied version, namely a photocopy on F4-sized paper. The researcher obtained this manuscript from Dr. Erwin Mahrus, M.Ag., a lecturer and academic at IAIN Pontianak, who is active in the fields of Islamic education, history, and culture, frequently serves as a seminar speaker, and is also an author based in Pontianak.

The content of Ahmad Sambas' manuscript begins on page three; the researcher did not find a front page containing the title or year of composition. However, on the final page, it is stated that the manuscript was authored by Ahmad Sambas, Mufti of Kutai. At the beginning, the author discusses the chapter on the attributes of faith. He then addresses three domains of religion: jurisprudence (*fiqh*), *aqidah qadariyyah*, and the faith of *Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah*. The author explains his book with the aid of diagrams and handwritten charts, making the text easier to read. The manuscript also elaborates on the meaning of *shari'ah*, its characteristics, and the significance of *dhikr* and *wird* practices taught therein. The original manuscript was found by the researcher in the form of loose sheets.

Classification of the Twenty Divine Attributes

According to Husaini (2021, pp. 14–16) several terminologies are employed to categorize the twenty attributes of Allah SWT, namely *Nafsiyyah*, *Salbiyyah*, *Ma'ani*, and *Ma'nawiyyah*. These are as follows:

1. *Nafsiyyah*

   Nafsiyyah means singularity or uniqueness, not shared by any other. This attribute refers to existence, which belongs solely to Allah SWT. It reminds believers that only Allah truly exists, while all else is contingent and created. Faith in this attribute encourages constant remembrance (*dhikr*) of Allah SWT, recognizing Him as the Creator of all things.

2. *Salbiyyah*

   Salbiyyah signifies negation, namely the denial of attributes inappropriate for Allah SWT. These consist of five attributes: *wahdaniyyah* (oneness), *qidam* (pre-eternity), *baqa'* (everlastingness), *mukhalafatuhu lil-hawadith* (dissimilarity to created beings), and *qiyamuhu bi-nafsihi* (self-subsistence). Through these, one understands that any attribute contrary to these five cannot be ascribed to Allah SWT.

3. *Ma'ani*

   Ma'ani means meanings that can be understood, which implies that understandable qualities exist in a substance. For example, someone can be called 'the forgiving one' because they have a forgiving nature, or perhaps it

is precisely this forgiving nature that makes the person been called "the forgiving one". The seven *ma'ani* attributes are *qudrah* (power), *iradah* (will), *'ilm* (knowledge), *hayat* (life), *sama'* (hearing), *basar* (sight), and *kalam* (speech). These highlight that human capacities, such as strength or knowledge, exist only through Allah's creation and support.

4. *Ma'nawwiyah*

   Ma'nawiyyah are necessary attributes derived from the *ma'ani*, expressed as relational qualities. For instance, because Allah possesses *qudrah*, He is necessarily *qadir* (All-Powerful). The seven *ma'nawiyyah* are *qadirun* (powerful), *muridun* (willing), *'alimun* (knowing), *hayyun* (living), *sami'un* (hearing), *basirun* (seeing), and *mutakallimun* (speaking). These affirm that all human actions depend upon Allah SWT, and thus believers must continually remember Him in all aspects of life.

The Twenty Divine Attributes in the Treatise *'Aqidat al-'Awam*

Belief in the attributes of Allah is an integral part of faith. Allah Most High possesses twenty obligatory attributes (Afnanda & Salimi, 2025, p. 5). As explained in the treatise *'Aqidat al-'Awam*, Sayyid Ahmad al-Marzuki presents these attributes in poetic form, thereby facilitating memorization and transmission among students of theology.

وَبَعْدُ فَاعْلَمْ بِوُجُوبِ الْمَعْرِفَة ۞ مِنْ وَاجِبٍ لِلَّهِ عِشْرِينَ صِفَهْ

"And thereafter, know with certainty that Allah possesses twenty obligatory attributes."

فَاللَّهُ مَوْجُودٌ قَدِيمٌ بَاقِي ۞ مُخَالِفٌ لِلْخَلْقِ بِالْإِطْلَاقِ

"Indeed, Allah is existent (mawjud), pre-eternal (qadim), everlasting (baqi'), and absolutely dissimilar to creation (mukhalif lil-khaliq)."

*First, Existence (*wujud*): This denotes that Allah necessarily exists by His own Essence, independent of any external cause. In other words, nothing apart from Allah plays any role in His existence. Contingent existence (*wujud ghayru dhati), such as our own, depends entirely upon Allah's creative act. Thus, the actions of Allah—His power—are the reason for our existence. The existence of all creation serves as evidence of Allah's existence, for no created being could exist if Allah did not exist (Habib, 2017, p. 26).

*Second, Pre-eternity (*qidam): This means that Allah is without beginning, and nothing precedes Him. He is the First without origin and the Last without end. Every

believer who possesses sound faith must continually express gratitude to Allah, who by His grace has made him a believer and a Muslim (Yahya, 2024, p. 13).

*Third, Everlastingness (*baqa'): Allah's existence has no termination; He will always remain, without limit or end, and is eternally abiding (Habib, 2017, p. 26). As affirmed in the Qur'an: *"All that is upon it (the earth) will perish, but the Face of your Lord, full of majesty and honor, will remain"* Qur'an, al-Rahman 26–27) (Kementerian Agama, 2019, p. 784).

*Fourth, Absolute Dissimilarity (*mukhalafatuhu lil-hawadith)**: This signifies that Allah is utterly distinct from all contingent beings; He cannot be associated with anything created. Every believer must frequently glorify and praise Allah in order to attain His mercy. As the Qur'an declares: *"And there is none comparable unto Him"* (Qur'an, al-Ikhlas 4) (Kementerian Agama, 2019, p. 914).

وَقَائِمٌ غَنِي وَوَاحِدٌ وَحَيْ ۞ قَادِرٌ مُرِيدٌ عَالِمٌ بِكُلِّ شَيْ

"And Allah is self-subsistent (qaimun), absolutely rich (ghaniyyun), One (wahidun), Living (hayyun, never subject to death), Powerful (qadirun), Willing (muridun), and All-Knowing ('alimun) of all things."

سَمِيعٌ بَصِيرٌ وَالْمُتَكَلِّمُ ۞ لَهُ صِفَاتٌ سَبْعَةٌ تَنْتَظِمُ

"He is Hearing (sami'un), Seeing (basirun), and Speaking (mutakallimun); He possesses seven attributes in perfect order."

فَقُدْرَةٌ إِرَدَةٌ سَمْعٌ بَصَر ۞ حَيَاةُ عِلْمُ كَلَامُ اسْتَمَرْ

"Power (qudrah), Will (iradah), Hearing (sama'), Sight (basar), Life (hayat), Knowledge ('ilm), and Speech (kalam) remain eternally."

*Fifth, Self-subsistence (*qiyamuhu binafsihi): Allah exists independently, without need of place or creator. He is absolutely self-sufficient, not dependent on anything beyond Himself (Habib, 2017, p. 30). *Sixth, Oneness (*wahdaniyyah): Allah is One in Essence, Attributes, and Acts. It is impossible for Him to possess multiplicity in any of these. Every occurrence in the universe must be regarded as the sole act of Allah (Yahya, 2024, p. 15).

*Seventh, Power (*qudrah): An eternal attribute inherent in Allah's Essence, by which He creates and annihilates. *Eighth, Will (*iradah): An eternal attribute by which Allah determines possibilities according to His wisdom. Through this attribute, Allah exercises authority over creation, shaping beings in diverse forms—tall or short, beautiful or otherwise, knowledgeable or ignorant (Habib, 2017, pp. 33–34).

Ninth, Knowledge ('ilm): Allah knows all things; ignorance is impossible for Him. Nothing escapes His knowledge, and thus believers must fear offending Him through their actions. *Tenth, Life (*hayat): Allah is Living and cannot die. Muslims must entrust themselves to the Ever-Living who never perishes (Yahya, 2024, p. 16).

*Eleventh, Hearing (*sama'): Allah hears all things; deafness is impossible for Him. Believers must guard their speech, for Allah hears every utterance of His servants (Yahya, 2024, p. 16). *Twelfth, Sight (*basar): Allah sees all things. His vision encompasses even the smallest details, such as a black ant on a smooth stone in the darkness of night. His perception is perfect and unlimited. *Thirteenth, Speech (*kalam): Allah speaks, an eternal attribute not composed of letters or sounds. His speech reveals realities beyond human comprehension (Habib, 2017, pp. 39–40).

The Twenty Attributes of Allah in the Compilation of Ahmad Sambas, Mufti of Kutai

One of the most fundamental theological concepts within the tradition of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah, particularly in the Ash'ari school, is the doctrine of the Twenty Attributes of Allah (sifat dua puluh). This doctrine functions not only as a conceptual framework for understanding the perfection of the Divine, but also as a pedagogical instrument that shapes the intellectual orientation of Muslims in their knowledge of God. These attributes represent the systematic formulation of Ash'ari scholars who sought to bridge the revealed texts with human rationality. By emphasizing the obligatory, impossible, and permissible attributes of Allah, this doctrine affirms that knowledge of the Divine is not merely dogmatic, but also rational and argumentative. Consequently, the study of the Twenty Attributes serves as an epistemological foundation for Muslims to establish firm conviction while avoiding theological misunderstandings that may lead to deviations in creed. As emphasized by Wibowo & Sapri (Wibowo & Sapri, 2024, p. 452), comprehension of these attributes is a primary requirement for knowing Allah correctly and profoundly.

Every legally responsible believer (mukallaf—a Muslim who has reached maturity and possesses sound intellect) is obliged to know and affirm the obligatory attributes of Allah. This obligation is not merely a normative demand, but also a rational necessity: the human intellect cannot conceive of the Divine without the attributes that affirm His perfection. (Habib, 2017, p. 26) emphasizes that these attributes are rational necessities (daruriyyat 'aqliyyah), without which the intellect is incapable of comprehending the concept of divinity. For instance, the attribute of wujud affirms the existence of Allah, qiyamuhu binafsihi rejects any dependence upon other than Him, and mukhalafatuhu lil-hawadith asserts the absolute

distinction of Allah from created beings. In the compilation of Ahmad Sambas, Mufti of Kutai, the explanation of the Twenty Attributes is not only descriptive but also contextual, seeking to connect classical doctrine with the educational needs of tauhid in the Nusantara. As presented in the compilation of Ahmad Sambas, Mufti of Kutai, these attributes are explained as follows:

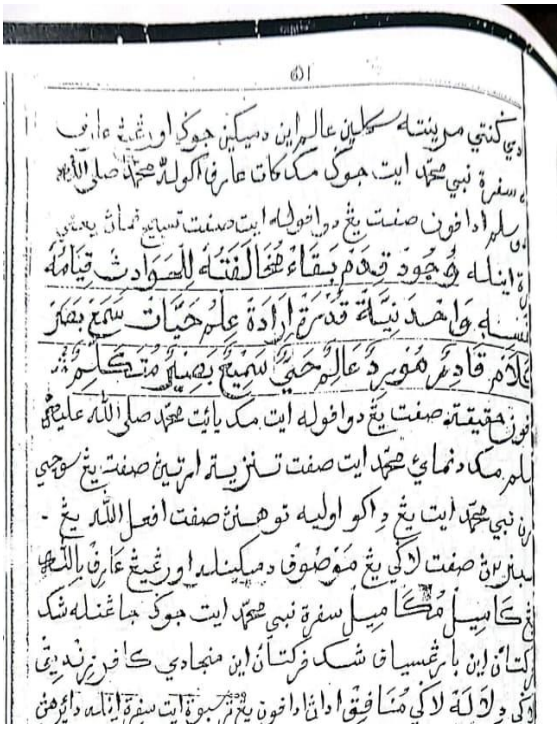

Figure 3. The Compilation of Ahmad Sambas, Mufti of Kutai

As for the twenty attributes, they are referred to as sifat tasbih (attributes of glorification). These include: wujud (existence), qidam (pre-eternity), baqa' (everlastingness), mukhalafatuhu lil-hawadith (absolute dissimilarity to contingent beings), qiyamuhu binafsihi (self-subsistence), wahdaniyyah (oneness), 'ilm (knowledge), hayah (life), sama' (hearing), basar (sight), kalam (speech), qadirun (powerful), muridun (willing), 'alimun (knowing), hayyun (living), sami'un (hearing), basirun (seeing), and mutakallimun (speaking). The essence of these twenty attributes is identified with Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him). Thus, Muhammad is described as embodying sifat tanziyah, meaning attributes of purity, for he is acknowledged by his Lord as manifesting the true af'al Allah (acts of God). Such attributes are also realized in those who are 'arif billah (gnostics of God) and kamil mu kamil (perfected ones), resembling the Prophet Muhammad himself. However, it is cautioned that one must not frivolously utter such statements. Whoever does so without proper

understanding risks being deemed a kafir zindiq (heretical unbeliever), misguided, and hypocritical. The discourse presented here is framed within such a doctrinal circle.

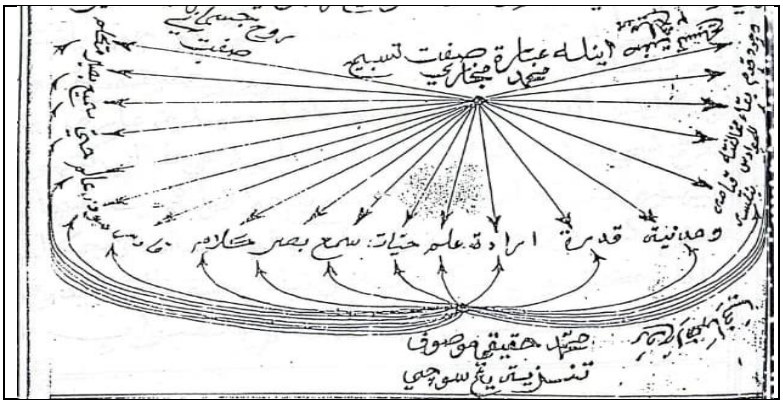

Figure 4. Diagram of the Twenty Divine Attributes of Allah in the Compilation of Ahmad Sambas, Mufti of Kutai

The diagram of the twenty Divine attributes in the compilation of Ahmad Sambas, Mufti of Kutai, begins with the expression *ibarat sifat tasbih, Muhammad mencari*, inscribed at the center of the line, symbolizing the Prophet Muhammad as the focal point of glorification. On the upper right of the inverted line appears *sifat tasbih berbilang-bilang*, representing the multiplicity of theological formulations of the twenty attributes. On the upper left of the line is *sifat ruh jasmani*, which emphasizes the human dimension composed of spirit and body, highlighting humanity's capacity to know Allah while remaining within the bounds of creaturehood and servanthood.

The upper curved line on the right directs attention to the attributes of *wujud* (existence), *qidam* (pre-eternity), *baqa'* (everlastingness), *mukhalafatuhu lil-hawadith* (absolute dissimilarity to contingent beings), and *qiyamuhu binafsihi* (self-subsistence). The central lower line points to the attributes of *wahdaniyyah* (oneness), *qudrah* (power), *iradah* (will), *'ilm* (knowledge), *hayat* (life), *sama'* (hearing), *basar* (sight), and *kalam* (speech). Meanwhile, the lower left curved line rises upward toward the attributes of *qadirun* (powerful), *muridun* (willing), *'alimun* (knowing), *hayyun* (living), *sami'un* (hearing), *basirun* (seeing), and *mutakallimun* (speaking).

At the center of the lower line is inscribed *Muhammad haqiqi mausuf, tanziyah yang suci*, portraying the Prophet Muhammad as the most perfect exemplar of purity and servanthood, embodying the ideal of *insan kamil* without being equated with

the Divine Essence. On the lower right of the line appears *ruh idhafi*, which depicts the spiritual dimension of humanity as contingent, relative, and wholly dependent upon Allah.

The twenty attributes mentioned above are classified as *sifat tasbih*, intended to purify Allah from all deficiencies and dependence upon creation. These include *wujud, qidam, baqa', mukhalafatuhu lil-hawadith, qiyamuhu binafsihi, wahdaniyyah, qudrah, iradah, 'ilm, hayat, sama', basar, kalam*, and the seven *ma'nawiyyah* attributes: *qadirun, muridun, 'alimun, hayyun, sami'un, basirun, mutakallimun*. This division aligns with Ash'ari theology, which categorizes the Divine attributes into *nafsiyyah*, *salbiyyah*, *ma'ani*, and *ma'nawiyyah*.

In his exposition, Ahmad Sambas employs a circular diagram (*da'irah*) to illustrate the relationship between Divine attributes, human qualities, and the reality of prophethood. Muhammad is placed at the center as the representation of the *insan kamil*, the most perfect human in reflecting Divine perfections granted to creation, without conflating them with the Divine Essence. The central line, *ibarat sifat tasbih, Muhammad mencari*, emphasizes that the path to *ma'rifah* (gnosis) of Allah is through recognition of the Prophet Muhammad as the perfect servant and messenger, not as a representation of God. Thus, spiritual orientation is centered on following the Prophet rather than conflating Creator and creation.

The upper right inverted line, *sifat tasbih berbilang-bilang*, discusses the conceptual dimension of the twenty attributes as theological formulations to be studied and taught in the discipline of *'ilm al-tawhid*. The upper left line, *sifat ruh jasmani*, highlights the human dimension as composed of spirit and body, capable of knowing Allah but always within the limits of creaturehood and servanthood. The diagram thus produces three main groups of attributes: *salbiyyah* (negating deficiencies), *ma'ani* (affirming perfections), and *ma'nawiyyah* (necessary states derived from perfections).

The concept of *insan kamil* is emphasized in *Muhammad haqiqi mausuf, tanziyah yang suci*. The Prophet Muhammad is portrayed as the most perfect exemplar of servanthood and moral excellence, not as a representation of Divine attributes. The manuscript explicitly warns that misinterpreting this idea to equate Muhammad or the gnostics with Allah constitutes disbelief (*kufr*), heresy (*zindiq*), and hypocrisy. Finally, the section *ruh idhafi* on the lower right depicts the spiritual dimension of humanity as contingent, limited, and wholly dependent upon Allah.

Belief in the attributes of Allah is a fundamental component of Muslim faith. As explained in *'Aqidat al-'Awam* by Sayyid Ahmad al-Marzuqi, Allah possesses twenty obligatory attributes that are essential and eternal: *wujud* (absolute existence), *qidam* (pre-eternity), *baqa'* (everlastingness), *mukhalafatuhu lil-hawadith*,

qiyamuhu binafsihi (self-subsistence), *wahdaniyyah* (oneness), *qudrah* (power), *iradah* (will), *'ilm* (knowledge), *hayat* (life), *sama'* (hearing), *basar* (sight), *kalam* (speech), along with seven *ma'nawiyyah* attributes derived from these.

Relevance of Tauhid Education

Contemporary Islamic education is designed to prepare the present generation to know, understand, internalize, and believe in the teachings of Islam and all matters related to it. For this reason, Tauhid education is of paramount importance within Islamic education, particularly in the modern era, so that every individual may possess a firm spiritual foundation in their religious life (Fodhil & Zulfa, 2023, p. 533). Tauhid education in Islam is not merely a theological doctrine but also a moral inspiration that encourages individuals to act righteously. It can influence attitudes and behaviors, making it essential to examine how people comprehend Tauhid. A strong understanding of Tauhid enables individuals to discover their true purpose in life and apply spiritual values in daily practice. Through Tauhid, one realizes that all actions must be aligned with principles consistent with Divine guidance, thereby rediscovering meaning in life (Dina et al., 2025, p. 70).

Tauhid signifies the oneness of God, encompassing His Essence, decrees, actions, and relationship with His servants. To affirm Tauhid is to hold firmly to the belief that Allah is One, incomparable, and the sole recipient of worship and supplication. Tauhid is also a vital component of the intellectual spirit in the pursuit of knowledge, which serves as a means to attain happiness in both this world and the hereafter. Awareness of Tauhid toward the Creator should inspire scientific inquiry and intellectual reflection (Hamidah, 2021, p. 188).

Tauhid-based education involves a deep understanding of religion and the application of Islamic values in everyday life. Integrity and honesty are among the principles emphasized, particularly in a world increasingly driven by competition. Tauhid-based education asserts that every action must be grounded in honesty and trustworthiness, with the ultimate aim of attaining Allah's pleasure. Consequently, learners are expected to excel not only in knowledge but also in virtuous character (Suhendri et al., 2024, p. 138). Moreover, Tauhid-based education plays a crucial role in shaping effective leadership. It produces not only intelligent learners but also responsible leaders with high moral standards. In the era of globalization, leaders must be committed to truth and justice and capable of guiding others toward goals beneficial to humanity.

Tauhid-based education is also essential in reforming educational systems increasingly influenced by modern developments. Contemporary education often

emphasizes academic achievement and material success, whereas Tauhid-based education offers an alternative by stressing the balance between intellectual advancement and moral character formation. In this way, education acquires a higher purpose: to produce individuals who are not only knowledgeable but also morally upright and socially responsible before both society and God (Suhendri et al., 2024, p. 139).

The science of Tauhid serves several functions: it provides a foundational source and inspiration for thought and action in accordance with Divine values; it guides humanity toward truth; and it grants strength to live with tranquility, avoiding anxiety and misguidance. Tauhid itself is categorized into several types. Tauhid *Rububiyyah* affirms Allah's acts, recognizing Him as the sole Creator, Sustainer, and Provider of mercy to all beings. Denying this by attributing such acts to others contradicts Tauhid. Tauhid *Uluhiyyah* emphasizes worship directed solely to Allah, through practices such as prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and pilgrimage, both inwardly and outwardly. Worship directed to others is a violation of this principle. Tauhid *Asma' wa Sifat* highlights the Divine names and attributes introduced in the Qur'an and Sunnah. Allah has ninety-nine beautiful names, and His attributes are classified as obligatory, impossible, and permissible. Among His beautiful names are *Ar-Rahman* and *Ar-Rahim*, while His obligatory attributes include *wujud*, *qidam*, *baqa'*, and others (Hamidah, 2021, pp. 189–190).

The primary goal of Tauhid education is to instill a strong conviction of Divine unity within the human soul, enabling individuals to live daily life in accordance with Islamic guidance. In other words, Tauhid education seeks to form individuals with Tauhid consciousness, defined as the ability to apply Tauhid in everyday life through behavior consistent with Divine values and worldly realities (Pranoto & Isnawati, 2023). Thus, Tauhid-based education not only provides solutions for the challenges of globalization but also nurtures a generation with strong character, morality, and integrity. It teaches that knowledge and morality must complement and reinforce one another. Therefore, Tauhid-based education represents the most effective method for shaping individuals who are both intellectually capable and spiritually grounded.

CONCLUSION

The concept of the twenty obligatory Divine attributes (sifat wajib) as presented in 'Aqidatul 'Awam by Sayyid Ahmad Marzuqi and in the Compilation of Ahmad Sambas, Mufti of Kutai, highlights the distinctive approaches of each text. 'Aqidatul 'Awam is concise, expressed in poetic form (nadzm), and rooted in a visionary experience, whereas Ahmad Sambas' compilation discusses theology and

jurisprudence through a schematic framework that emphasizes the twenty attributes as sifat tasbih and explicitly warns against the danger of disbelief (kufr zindiq) when these teachings are misinterpreted to equate the Prophet Muhammad or the 'Arif Billah with the Divine Essence. Overall, this study underscores the strategic relevance of studying the twenty attributes through both literatures for the development of modern Tauhid education that is flexible, grounded in the richness of Islam in the Nusantara, and crucial in shaping Muslim individuals with spiritual strength, moral integrity, and the ability to apply the principles of monotheism amidst the challenges of globalization.

One of the contributions of this research is the provision of an in-depth comparison between the representation of the twenty Divine attributes in 'Aqidatul 'Awam and in Ahmad Sambas' compilation. The study also offers a potential model for Tauhid learning that integrates memorization methods with contextual approaches. Nevertheless, limitations remain due to the nature of the research, which is primarily library-based, meaning that the analysis relies heavily on the interpretation of available textual sources. Furthermore, the Compilation of Ahmad Sambas, Mufti of Kutai, exists only in a copied version without a definitive title or date, and thus does not provide a detailed description of the historical and social context of its composition. Therefore, further research is required to contextualize Ahmad Sambas' manuscript through field studies or philological analysis. In addition, it is recommended to develop curricula for Islamic theology education that integrate the comparative findings on the twenty attributes into madrasahs, pesantrens, and Islamic higher education institutions.

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