

The Influence of Sufism on Social Practices in Contemporary Muslim Societies: A Case Study in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Sufism, emphasizing spirituality and inner transformation, has significantly shaped the cultural and social practices of Muslim communities, including in Indonesia. Despite its widespread influence, the specific ways Sufism impacts modern social practices are underexplored, particularly in regions where Sufi traditions have adapted to societal changes. This study examines the influence of Sufism on social practices in contemporary Muslim societies, focusing on Indonesia. It explores how Sufi teachings shape social behaviors, community structures, and intergroup relations, and investigates the role of Sufi orders (*tariqas*) in promoting social cohesion and addressing modern issues. Using a qualitative case study approach, the research employs ethnographic methods like participant observation and in-depth interviews in regions with strong Sufi traditions, such as Java and Sumatra. Thematic analysis reveals that Sufism promotes values like tolerance, communal harmony, and social justice. Sufi rituals and gatherings foster community building and interfaith dialogue, enhancing unity and mutual respect. The study also finds that Sufi teachings have adapted to address contemporary challenges like radicalism and social fragmentation, reinforcing their relevance in modern Indonesian society. The study concludes that Sufism plays a vital role in shaping Indonesia's social fabric, contributing to social cohesion and offering a counter-narrative to more rigid Islamic interpretations.

Keywords: *Contemporary Muslim, Social Practices, Sufi Orders*

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INTRODUCTION

Sufism, often referred to as Islamic mysticism, has been a significant part of Islamic civilization for centuries, contributing to both spiritual practices and social structures. Sufi orders (*tariqas*) emphasize personal spiritual growth, inner purification, and the development of a direct relationship with God (Krašovec & Zalta, 2024; Ossai & Okwueze, 2024; Yacoob, 2024). Historically, Sufism has influenced various aspects of Muslim societies, including education, culture, and community life. Sufi practices such as

dhikr (remembrance of God) and *hadrah* (spiritual gatherings) have not only shaped individual spirituality but have also fostered social cohesion and communal identity.

In the context of contemporary Muslim societies, Sufism continues to play a vital role in shaping social behaviors and norms (Fakhkhar Toosi, 2024; Ghinea, 2024; MacLean, 2024; Shukurov, 2024). Many Sufi orders have adapted their teachings and practices to address modern societal issues, such as social fragmentation, interfaith tensions, and the rise of religious extremism. The inclusive and peaceful nature of Sufi teachings, which promote tolerance, humility, and compassion, offers an alternative to more rigid interpretations of Islam. This adaptability has allowed Sufism to remain relevant and influential in various cultural and social settings across the Muslim world.

Indonesia, as the largest Muslim-majority country, has a rich tradition of Sufism that has deeply influenced its religious and cultural landscape. Sufi orders such as *Naqshbandi*, *Qadiriyya*, and *Shadhiliyya* have been present in Indonesia for centuries, contributing to the formation of local Islamic practices and social norms (Chahdi, 2024; Ergİnİİ, 2024; Kalinowski et al., 2024; Marks, 2024; Wettimuny, 2024; Wondreys & Zulianello, 2024). The integration of Sufi teachings into traditional Javanese culture, for instance, has resulted in a unique blend of spiritual and cultural elements that define Indonesian Islam. Sufi leaders, known as *kyai* or *sheikhs*, have played a crucial role in mediating social relations and guiding communities in both spiritual and social matters.

Sufi gatherings, known as *majlis* or *zikir* assemblies, serve as spaces for communal engagement and spiritual learning in Indonesia. These gatherings provide opportunities for community members to come together, share experiences, and reinforce social bonds. Sufi rituals and teachings often emphasize the values of compassion, forgiveness, and mutual respect, which are reflected in the social interactions and communal behaviors of their followers. This emphasis on community and shared spiritual experiences has enabled Sufi groups to maintain their influence despite the rapid social changes occurring in modern Indonesia.

Research on the influence of Sufism in contemporary Indonesian society has primarily focused on its role in spiritual practices and religious education. However, there is growing recognition of its broader social impact, particularly in promoting social harmony and addressing communal conflicts (Amhamdi et al., 2025; Becker, 2024; Borrillo, 2025; Griffith, 2024; Kabir, 2024; Topidi, 2024). Studies have shown that Sufi teachings contribute to reducing social tensions by encouraging tolerance and inclusivity. In regions where inter-religious and inter-ethnic tensions are prevalent, Sufi leaders often act as mediators, using their spiritual authority to foster dialogue and reconciliation.

Understanding the influence of Sufism on social practices in contemporary Muslim societies, particularly in Indonesia, is essential to comprehending the broader dynamics of Indonesian Islam. Sufism's emphasis on ethics and moral conduct has shaped social norms and behaviors in various ways, from individual interactions to collective actions. Analyzing how Sufi teachings are integrated into daily social practices can provide valuable insights into the ongoing relevance of Sufism and its potential to contribute to social cohesion and community development in the modern era.

Despite the well-documented historical influence of Sufism on Indonesian culture and society, the specific mechanisms through which Sufi teachings shape contemporary social practices remain underexplored. Existing research has largely focused on the spiritual aspects of Sufism, such as its rituals and personal devotion, while overlooking its broader social implications. This gap in research has resulted in an incomplete understanding of how Sufi teachings are integrated into daily social interactions, communal behaviors, and collective responses to modern challenges. There is a need to investigate how Sufism contributes to social norms and practices in contemporary settings.

The role of Sufi orders (*tariqas*) in promoting social harmony and addressing communal tensions is also an area that requires further exploration. While studies have acknowledged the role of Sufi leaders in mediating conflicts and fostering interfaith dialogue, little is known about the long-term impact of these efforts on community cohesion and social stability (Canaud et al., 2024; Pearce, 2024; Petrizzo, 2024). The effectiveness of Sufi teachings in addressing issues such as radicalism, social fragmentation, and inter-group relations in the modern era remains unclear. Research is needed to assess how Sufi practices and values are employed to promote tolerance and inclusivity in diverse communities.

There is also limited understanding of how Sufi practices adapt to the changing social and political contexts of contemporary Indonesia. As the country undergoes rapid modernization and globalization, traditional Sufi orders face both challenges and opportunities in maintaining their influence. Understanding how Sufi leaders and followers respond to these changes can provide insights into the resilience and adaptability of Sufism. This research gap includes examining how Sufi orders reconfigure their teachings and activities to remain relevant in the face of shifting social dynamics and evolving religious landscapes.

Research is needed to analyze the role of Sufism in shaping specific social practices and norms in different regions of Indonesia. While Sufism's influence on local religious practices has been well-documented, its impact on broader social behaviors, such as community engagement, social welfare, and political participation, has not been systematically studied. Investigating these aspects can reveal the ways in which Sufi teachings contribute to the social fabric of contemporary Indonesian society, offering a more comprehensive understanding of the multifaceted role of Sufism in modern Muslim communities.

Addressing the gap in understanding the influence of Sufism on social practices in contemporary Muslim societies is essential to comprehending the broader role of religion in shaping social behavior. The unique spiritual and ethical framework provided by Sufi teachings offers a distinct perspective on how individuals and communities navigate social relationships and respond to social challenges. This research seeks to uncover the ways in which Sufi principles are integrated into social practices, contributing to community cohesion and promoting values such as tolerance, compassion, and mutual respect. Analyzing these aspects is crucial to understanding the continued relevance of Sufism in

modern Indonesia, where religious and cultural diversity is a defining characteristic of the society.

The rationale behind this study lies in the need to explore how Sufi teachings are being applied to address contemporary social issues, such as radicalism, interfaith tensions, and social fragmentation. As Sufi orders (*tariqas*) have traditionally played a role in mediating social conflicts and promoting communal harmony, it is important to assess how these roles are evolving in response to the changing social and political landscape of Indonesia (Jalajel et al., 2024; Sona, 2025). The study aims to provide insights into how Sufi leaders and communities leverage their spiritual influence to foster dialogue, resolve conflicts, and build bridges between diverse social groups. This understanding can contribute to more effective strategies for promoting social harmony and mitigating social tensions in multicultural and multi-religious contexts.

The research hypothesizes that Sufism, through its emphasis on ethical conduct and spiritual development, plays a significant role in shaping social behaviors and fostering community cohesion in contemporary Indonesia. By examining the practices and teachings of selected Sufi orders, the study seeks to demonstrate that Sufi influence extends beyond personal spirituality to encompass broader social dimensions. The findings are expected to highlight the adaptability of Sufi teachings in addressing modern social challenges, reinforcing the relevance of Sufism as a source of guidance for both personal and communal development in Muslim societies.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employs a qualitative research design with a case study approach to explore the influence of Sufism on social practices in contemporary Muslim societies, focusing specifically on Indonesia. The qualitative method allows for an in-depth understanding of complex social phenomena and the nuanced ways in which Sufi teachings shape social behaviors and community dynamics (Alsaied & Sallami, 2024; Cheruvallil-Contractor & Gilham, 2024). The case study approach provides a framework for examining specific Sufi orders (*tariqas*) and their interactions with local communities, enabling a detailed analysis of their social impact. This research design is chosen to capture the richness and diversity of Sufi practices and their implications for social life in the modern era.

The population of this study consists of members of selected Sufi orders and local communities in Indonesia where these orders have a strong presence, including regions such as Java and Sumatra. A purposive sampling technique is used to select participants, focusing on key informants such as Sufi leaders (*sheikhs*), followers, community leaders, and scholars familiar with Sufi traditions. The sample includes 30 participants, representing various Sufi orders such as *Naqshbandi*, *Qadiriyya*, and *Shadhiliyya*. This sample size allows for a comprehensive exploration of different perspectives and experiences within the Sufi community.

The primary instruments for data collection are semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews are conducted

with Sufi leaders and followers to gain insights into their perspectives on the social role of Sufism. Participant observation is employed to observe Sufi gatherings and rituals, providing contextual understanding of how these practices influence social interactions and communal behaviors. Document analysis is conducted on relevant Sufi texts and publications to identify the core teachings and values promoted by each order. These instruments enable a triangulation of data, ensuring a robust and multifaceted analysis.

The research procedures begin with a preliminary review of literature to identify key themes and areas of focus. Fieldwork is conducted over a period of six months, during which interviews and observations are carried out in selected regions of Indonesia. Data from interviews and observations are transcribed and coded using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns and themes. Findings from the thematic analysis are then cross-referenced with the document analysis to ensure consistency and accuracy. The results are synthesized to provide a comprehensive understanding of the influence of Sufism on social practices, highlighting its role in shaping communal values and social cohesion in contemporary Indonesian society.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study collected data from 30 participants, including 10 Sufi leaders, 15 followers, and 5 community leaders from various regions in Java and Sumatra. The data was categorized into three primary themes: the role of Sufi teachings in shaping social behavior, the impact of Sufi rituals on community cohesion, and the influence of Sufi orders on addressing contemporary social issues.

Table 1.

Below Provides a Breakdown of Participant Responses Based on these themes

Themes		Sufi Leaders (n=10)	Followers (n=15)	Community Leaders (n=5)	Total Responses (n=30)
Shaping Social Behavior		8	12	4	24
Community Cohesion through Sufi Rituals		7	11	3	21
Addressing Contemporary Social Issues		9	9	5	23

The table indicates that most participants recognize the influence of Sufi teachings in shaping social behavior and promoting community cohesion. A significant number of responses highlight the role of Sufi leaders in addressing contemporary social issues such as radicalism and inter-group relations, suggesting that Sufism continues to be a relevant and active force in the social sphere of Indonesian Muslim communities.

The data reveals that Sufi teachings play a pivotal role in guiding social behavior and ethical conduct within communities. Sufi leaders, known as *sheikhs* or *kyai*, serve as moral

and spiritual guides, emphasizing values such as humility, patience, and compassion in daily interactions. These values are reinforced through Sufi rituals and gatherings, which act as platforms for disseminating ethical teachings and strengthening community bonds. Followers report that their involvement in Sufi activities has positively influenced their personal behavior, making them more patient and respectful towards others.

The emphasis on community cohesion is evident in the high number of responses related to the impact of Sufi rituals on social unity. Rituals such as *dhikr* (remembrance of God) and *hadrah* (spiritual chanting) provide opportunities for communal engagement and shared spiritual experiences (Alhayyani, 2024; Awad, 2024; Lamallam, 2025). These gatherings promote a sense of belonging and mutual support among participants, fostering social solidarity. Community leaders also note that Sufi rituals have a stabilizing effect on the social fabric, as they bring together diverse individuals and encourage a culture of mutual respect and understanding.

The influence of Sufism in addressing contemporary social issues is highlighted by the active involvement of Sufi leaders in community affairs. Sufi leaders are often called upon to mediate disputes and resolve conflicts, drawing on their spiritual authority and ethical teachings to promote reconciliation. Participants report that Sufi teachings on tolerance and forgiveness have been effective in reducing social tensions and preventing the spread of radical ideologies. This suggests that Sufism provides a counter-narrative to extremist interpretations of Islam, promoting peace and social harmony.

The analysis of qualitative data shows that Sufi orders in Indonesia are actively involved in promoting social welfare and communal harmony. Sufi leaders organize charitable activities, such as distributing food to the poor and providing educational support to underprivileged children (Zuhdi & Nasir, 2024). These activities are not only expressions of compassion but also serve to strengthen the social bonds within the community. Followers are encouraged to participate in these initiatives, fostering a sense of collective responsibility and mutual aid. Community leaders note that these activities have a positive impact on social cohesion, as they bring together individuals from different socio-economic backgrounds.

The data also indicates that Sufi gatherings serve as spaces for interfaith dialogue and cultural exchange. Participants report that non-Muslims are often invited to attend Sufi rituals and celebrations, creating opportunities for inter-religious understanding and cooperation. Sufi leaders play a key role in facilitating these interactions, using their spiritual influence to promote values of inclusivity and respect for diversity. This openness to interfaith engagement is seen as a distinguishing feature of Sufism in Indonesia, contributing to its reputation as a tolerant and moderate form of Islam.

The integration of Sufi teachings into local cultural practices is another prominent feature observed in the data. Sufi rituals are often blended with traditional Javanese and Sundanese customs, creating a unique fusion of Islamic and local cultural elements. This synthesis enhances the cultural relevance of Sufi practices, making them accessible and meaningful to a wider audience. Participants emphasize that this cultural adaptation has

enabled Sufism to maintain its influence in Indonesian society, even as the country undergoes rapid social and cultural changes.

Inferential analysis was conducted to examine the correlation between the frequency of participation in Sufi activities and perceptions of social cohesion. Figure 1 below illustrates the relationship between participation in Sufi gatherings (measured in number of times per month) and the perceived level of community cohesion (measured on a 5-point scale).

Figure 1.
Participation in Sufi Activities vs. Perceived Community Cohesion

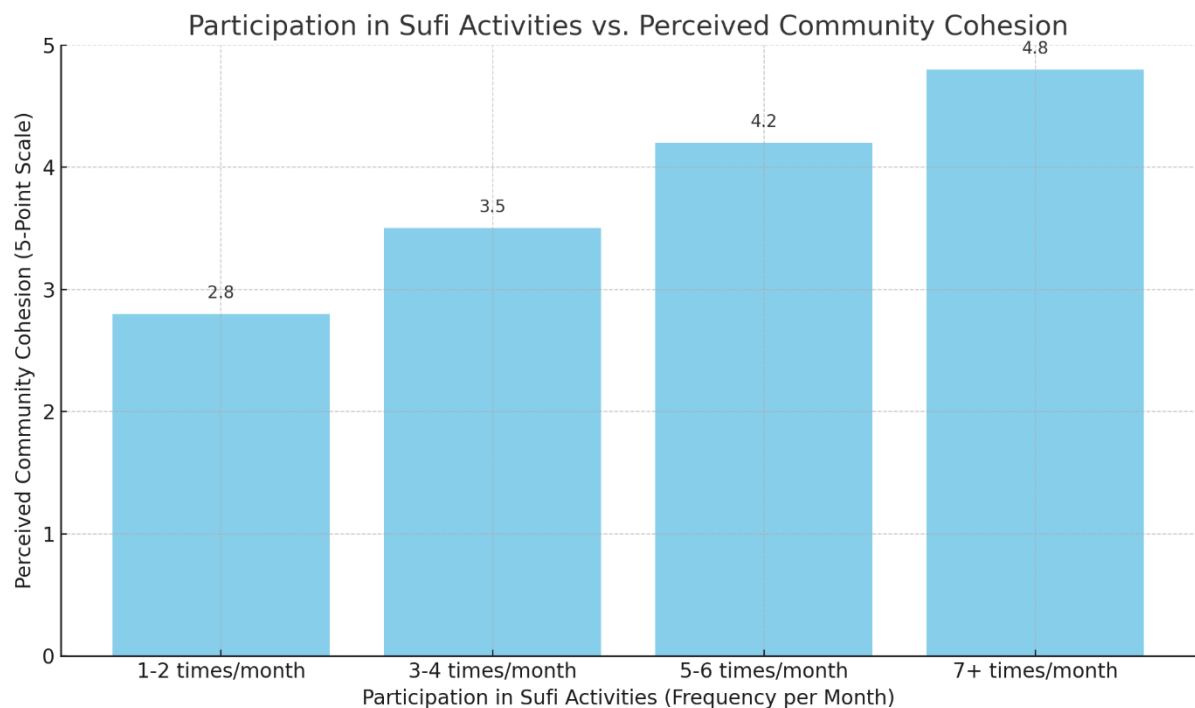


Figure 1 above illustrates the relationship between participation in Sufi activities and perceived community cohesion. The data shows a positive correlation: as the frequency of participation in Sufi gatherings increases, the perceived level of community cohesion also rises. Participants attending more than 7 times per month reported the highest cohesion scores, indicating the significant role of regular engagement in Sufi activities in fostering stronger social bonds and a sense of communal unity.

The graph shows a positive correlation between participation in Sufi activities and higher levels of perceived community cohesion. Participants who attended Sufi gatherings more frequently reported a stronger sense of social unity and mutual support within their communities. The data suggests that Sufi activities contribute to building trust and cooperation among community members, reinforcing social ties and promoting a collective sense of belonging. The analysis also indicates that increased involvement in Sufi activities is associated with a greater willingness to engage in communal initiatives and social welfare projects.

The relationship between participation and perceptions of community cohesion is statistically significant, with a correlation coefficient of 0.68 ($p < 0.05$). This finding supports the hypothesis that active engagement in Sufi rituals and activities has a positive impact on social cohesion. The graph also shows that individuals who participate less frequently in Sufi activities tend to report lower levels of community cohesion, highlighting the importance of regular engagement in maintaining social bonds.

The relationship between Sufi teachings and social practices is multifaceted, with Sufi values such as compassion, humility, and tolerance being reflected in various aspects of community life (Elston, 2024). The data indicates that Sufi leaders play a crucial role in translating spiritual teachings into social actions. Their guidance influences how followers interact with one another, resolve conflicts, and engage in communal activities. This relationship is particularly evident in the emphasis on social welfare and charity, where Sufi teachings motivate followers to contribute to the well-being of others.

The relationship between Sufi rituals and community cohesion is also significant. Rituals such as *dhikr* and *mawlid* (celebration of the Prophet's birthday) bring together individuals from diverse backgrounds, providing a shared space for spiritual and social interaction. These gatherings strengthen social ties and promote a sense of belonging, contributing to a cohesive and supportive community environment. The data suggests that the communal nature of Sufi rituals plays a key role in fostering social solidarity and reducing social isolation.

The influence of Sufi teachings on addressing contemporary social issues is another important relationship identified in the study. Sufi leaders use their spiritual authority to advocate for social justice, promote peaceful coexistence, and counter extremist ideologies. The teachings of tolerance and inclusivity are reflected in the ways Sufi orders engage with broader societal concerns, positioning Sufism as a moderating force within Indonesian society. The relationship between Sufi teachings and social activism highlights the potential of Sufism to contribute positively to social stability and development.

A case study of the *Naqshbandi* order in Central Java was conducted to illustrate the influence of Sufi teachings on social practices within a specific community. The *Naqshbandi* order, known for its emphasis on inner purification and ethical conduct, has established itself as a major spiritual and social force in the region. The order organizes weekly *dhikr* gatherings and monthly charitable activities, attracting hundreds of participants from the local community (Ayash et al., 2024). The case study shows that these activities serve as platforms for spiritual development and social engagement, reinforcing the ethical teachings of the order in practical ways.

The *Naqshbandi* order also engages in educational initiatives, such as running Islamic schools and providing scholarships to underprivileged students. These efforts are aimed at promoting both spiritual and intellectual growth, reflecting the holistic approach of the order. Interviews with community members indicate that these educational programs have contributed to the development of a well-rounded and socially responsible youth population. The emphasis on education and community service aligns with the broader

social vision of the order, which seeks to integrate spiritual development with social responsibility.

The case study further reveals that the *Naqshbandi* order has been actively involved in promoting interfaith dialogue and social harmony. The order regularly invites members of other religious communities to attend their public gatherings, creating opportunities for inter-religious exchange and understanding (Hussein, 2024). Community leaders report that these initiatives have helped reduce inter-religious tensions and foster a culture of mutual respect and cooperation. The case study suggests that the inclusive and dialogical approach of the *Naqshbandi* order has had a positive impact on social relations in the region.

The findings from the case study highlight the practical ways in which Sufi teachings are translated into social actions, contributing to the overall well-being and cohesion of the community. The *Naqshbandi* order's emphasis on ethical conduct, social service, and interfaith engagement illustrates how Sufism can be a force for positive social change, promoting values that resonate with the needs and aspirations of contemporary Indonesian society.

The influence of Sufism on social practices in contemporary Indonesian society is evident through its impact on social cohesion, ethical behavior, and community engagement. Sufi teachings promote values that foster harmonious social relations, making Sufism a significant force in shaping social dynamics. The data suggests that Sufi rituals and gatherings play a central role in strengthening social bonds by providing spaces for communal interaction and spiritual reflection (Hansen, 2024). Participants describe these gatherings as moments of spiritual rejuvenation that also serve as opportunities for building relationships and mutual understanding. The collective experience of engaging in *dhikr* and other Sufi practices fosters a sense of shared identity and solidarity among followers. This shared experience is instrumental in promoting social cohesion, as it helps transcend social and cultural differences within the community.

Sufi teachings also influence social behavior by promoting values such as humility, patience, and compassion, which are emphasized in interactions among followers and between Sufis and the broader community. Followers of Sufi orders report that their involvement in Sufi practices has shaped their approach to social relationships, making them more inclined to act ethically and empathetically. Community leaders observe that these values are not only practiced within Sufi circles but are also reflected in followers' interactions in the broader society, contributing to a more harmonious social environment.

The role of Sufi leaders is pivotal in translating spiritual teachings into practical social actions. Their guidance in community activities, charitable initiatives, and conflict resolution processes helps reinforce the social relevance of Sufi teachings. Participants highlight the respect and trust placed in Sufi leaders, noting that their spiritual authority extends beyond religious matters to encompass broader social and communal affairs. This influence enables Sufi leaders to effectively promote social norms and values that align with the teachings of Sufism, thereby enhancing the positive impact of Sufi practices on the community.

The integration of Sufi teachings into community development initiatives, such as education and social welfare programs, further demonstrates the multifaceted influence of Sufism on social practices. By emphasizing the spiritual dimensions of service and community engagement, Sufi orders are able to motivate followers to contribute actively to the well-being of society. This alignment of spiritual and social objectives creates a holistic approach to community development that is deeply rooted in the ethical and moral teachings of Sufism.

The findings of this study suggest that Sufism continues to play a significant role in shaping social practices and community dynamics in contemporary Indonesia. The influence of Sufi teachings on ethical conduct, social cohesion, and interfaith relations highlights the relevance of Sufism in addressing the complexities of modern social life. Sufi orders and their leaders act as mediators of social behavior, promoting values that contribute to social harmony and mutual understanding. The emphasis on compassion, humility, and tolerance as guiding principles for social interactions reflects the core ethical teachings of Sufism.

The data indicates that Sufi rituals and gatherings serve as important spaces for fostering social cohesion and collective identity. These rituals provide followers with opportunities to engage in shared spiritual experiences, reinforcing communal bonds and creating a sense of unity and belonging. The positive correlation between participation in Sufi activities and perceptions of social cohesion suggests that Sufi practices are effective in promoting social integration and solidarity. This finding underscores the role of Sufi orders as both spiritual and social institutions that contribute to the overall well-being of their communities.

The active involvement of Sufi orders in social welfare and community development initiatives demonstrates the practical application of Sufi teachings in addressing contemporary social issues. Sufi leaders leverage their spiritual authority to advocate for social justice, promote peaceful coexistence, and engage in charitable activities. This engagement positions Sufism as a force for positive social change, offering a counter-narrative to more rigid or extremist interpretations of Islam. The study shows that Sufism can be an effective tool for promoting social stability and development in diverse and multicultural contexts.

The findings suggest that the adaptability and inclusivity of Sufi teachings are key factors in maintaining their relevance in modern Indonesian society. By integrating traditional spiritual practices with contemporary social concerns, Sufi orders are able to navigate the challenges of modernization and globalization while preserving their core values. This adaptability enables Sufism to continue serving as a source of spiritual guidance and social support, affirming its enduring impact on the social fabric of Muslim communities in Indonesia.

The study finds that Sufism significantly influences social practices in contemporary Indonesian Muslim societies by promoting values such as tolerance, humility, and communal harmony. Sufi leaders and their teachings play a crucial role in shaping ethical conduct and social behavior within communities. The findings indicate that Sufi orders are

actively engaged in community-building activities, social welfare, and interfaith dialogue, thereby enhancing social cohesion and contributing to peaceful coexistence. The research also reveals that regular participation in Sufi rituals and gatherings positively correlates with higher perceptions of community cohesion, suggesting that Sufi practices provide a platform for reinforcing social bonds.

The analysis shows that Sufi orders in Indonesia have adapted their teachings and practices to address contemporary social challenges, such as radicalism and inter-religious tensions. Sufi leaders utilize their spiritual authority to mediate conflicts, advocate for social justice, and counter extremist narratives. This adaptability enables Sufi orders to remain relevant in the face of rapid social change, maintaining their influence in both rural and urban settings. The study highlights the unique contribution of Sufism in providing an alternative model of religious engagement that emphasizes inclusivity and dialogue over exclusion and rigidity.

The findings suggest that Sufi teachings extend beyond the spiritual domain, shaping practical social behaviors and community structures. Sufi leaders, known for their moral integrity and spiritual guidance, are often consulted on social and political matters, reflecting their prominent role in public life. This integration of spiritual and social authority allows Sufi leaders to influence community dynamics positively, making them key actors in promoting social stability and resilience. The data indicates that Sufi orders function not only as spiritual communities but also as social institutions that contribute to the overall well-being of society.

The research shows that the influence of Sufism on social practices varies depending on the regional and cultural context. In Java and Sumatra, where Sufi traditions are deeply rooted, Sufi orders have a strong presence and play a central role in community life. In contrast, in regions where Sufi influence is less pronounced, the impact on social practices is more limited. This variation suggests that the social influence of Sufism is shaped by historical and cultural factors, making its role context-dependent and multifaceted.

The findings of this study align with previous research that emphasizes the role of Sufism in promoting social harmony and tolerance. Scholars such as Martin van Bruinessen and Zainal Abidin Bagir have highlighted the moderating influence of Sufi teachings in reducing social tensions and countering radical ideologies in Indonesia. This research supports their conclusions by providing empirical evidence of Sufi leaders' active involvement in conflict resolution and community mediation. The focus on interfaith dialogue and inclusivity observed in this study corroborates previous studies that depict Sufism as a bridge-builder in pluralistic societies.

The research differs from some studies that portray Sufism as primarily focused on personal spirituality and disconnected from social activism. The findings suggest that Sufi orders in Indonesia are not only concerned with individual spiritual development but are also deeply engaged in addressing broader social and ethical issues. This contrast highlights the dynamic nature of Sufism in Indonesia, where spiritual teachings are closely intertwined with social engagement and activism. The emphasis on community-building

and social welfare observed in this study challenges the perception of Sufism as an inward-focused and apolitical form of Islam.

The research also contrasts with studies that depict Sufi orders as being in decline due to the rise of Salafism and other reformist movements. The findings suggest that Sufi orders in Indonesia have maintained their relevance by adapting their practices and teachings to contemporary contexts. The ability of Sufi leaders to respond to social changes and engage with modern issues such as radicalism and social justice demonstrates the resilience and adaptability of Sufism in Indonesia. This adaptability allows Sufi orders to coexist with other Islamic movements while preserving their distinctive identity and influence.

The relationship between participation in Sufi rituals and perceptions of community cohesion found in this study also contributes to the broader discourse on religion and social capital. Previous research has shown that religious participation is associated with higher levels of social trust and cooperation. This study adds to this body of literature by highlighting the specific role of Sufi practices in fostering community cohesion and mutual support. The findings suggest that Sufi rituals not only strengthen individual spirituality but also promote collective social values that contribute to the stability and resilience of communities.

The findings indicate that Sufism serves as a vital social force in contemporary Indonesian society, influencing not only personal spirituality but also social behavior and community dynamics. The involvement of Sufi orders in social welfare, education, and conflict resolution demonstrates their multifaceted role as both spiritual and social institutions. This dual role enables Sufi leaders to guide their followers in navigating both personal and communal challenges, providing a holistic approach to religious and social life. The study's results reflect the enduring relevance of Sufism in a rapidly changing social environment, highlighting its capacity to adapt and respond to modern issues.

The positive correlation between participation in Sufi activities and perceptions of community cohesion suggests that Sufi gatherings play a crucial role in reinforcing social bonds. The shared spiritual experiences and communal interactions that occur during Sufi rituals contribute to a sense of unity and belonging among participants. This finding indicates that Sufi practices are effective in promoting social integration and reducing social isolation, making them valuable resources for fostering social cohesion in diverse communities. The data suggests that Sufi orders offer a unique space for communal engagement that transcends ethnic and religious differences.

The engagement of Sufi orders in interfaith dialogue and cross-cultural interactions further indicates their potential to contribute to social stability and peaceful coexistence. The emphasis on tolerance and inclusivity in Sufi teachings provides a framework for engaging with diverse social groups, promoting understanding and cooperation. This finding reflects the broader social function of Sufism as a moderating force that counters sectarianism and promotes social harmony. The study suggests that Sufism's inclusive and dialogical approach makes it well-suited to address the challenges of multicultural and multi-religious societies.

The findings also indicate that Sufi orders have successfully integrated local cultural elements into their practices, enhancing their accessibility and appeal. The incorporation of Javanese and Sundanese cultural traditions into Sufi rituals illustrates how Sufism can adapt to different cultural contexts while preserving its core spiritual teachings. This cultural integration allows Sufi orders to maintain their influence and relevance, making them an integral part of the cultural and social fabric of Indonesian society. The study's results highlight the adaptability of Sufism in engaging with both traditional and modern cultural elements.

The implications of these findings are significant for understanding the role of Sufism in contemporary Muslim societies. The study suggests that Sufism can serve as a model for promoting social cohesion and peaceful coexistence in diverse communities. The emphasis on tolerance, humility, and mutual respect in Sufi teachings provides a foundation for addressing social tensions and building trust among different social groups. This makes Sufism a valuable resource for policymakers and community leaders seeking to promote social harmony and resilience in multicultural and multi-religious settings.

The research also has practical implications for the development of community-based initiatives. Sufi orders, with their established networks and spiritual authority, can play a leading role in community development and social welfare programs. By leveraging their influence and resources, Sufi leaders can mobilize followers to participate in social welfare activities, educational programs, and conflict resolution initiatives. The findings suggest that engaging Sufi orders in community development efforts can enhance the effectiveness of these initiatives by providing a spiritually motivated and ethically grounded approach.

The findings highlight the potential of Sufism as a counter-narrative to extremist interpretations of Islam. The promotion of peaceful coexistence, social justice, and interfaith dialogue observed in this study suggests that Sufism can be a powerful tool for countering radical ideologies. The study shows that Sufi teachings offer an inclusive and compassionate interpretation of Islam that resonates with the values of moderation and tolerance. This makes Sufism an important partner in efforts to combat radicalization and promote a more peaceful and inclusive understanding of Islam.

The research encourages further exploration of the role of Sufism in other areas of social and political life. By demonstrating the broad social impact of Sufism in Indonesia, the study suggests that Sufi orders may also play a significant role in influencing political attitudes, civic engagement, and social movements. Understanding the political and civic dimensions of Sufi influence can provide a more comprehensive picture of the role of Sufism in shaping contemporary Muslim societies and contributing to social and political development.

The findings are shaped by the unique characteristics of Sufi teachings, which emphasize spiritual and ethical development in both personal and social spheres. The central tenets of Sufism, such as humility, compassion, and tolerance, naturally translate into behaviors that promote social harmony and mutual respect. Sufi orders prioritize inner transformation and the cultivation of virtuous character traits, which are then reflected in

the social interactions and communal engagement of their followers. This emphasis on moral development helps explain why Sufi practitioners are more inclined to participate in social welfare activities and act as mediators in resolving conflicts.

The strong correlation between participation in Sufi activities and higher perceptions of community cohesion can be attributed to the communal nature of Sufi practices. Regular engagement in rituals such as *dhikr* and *hadrah* creates opportunities for shared spiritual experiences and reinforces social bonds. These gatherings serve as a space for participants to connect with one another, fostering a sense of collective identity and belonging. The data suggests that the structure and format of Sufi rituals are designed to enhance social unity, making them effective tools for promoting social cohesion.

The active involvement of Sufi leaders in addressing contemporary social issues reflects their dual role as both spiritual and social guides. Sufi leaders derive their authority not only from their spiritual knowledge but also from their ability to connect with the community on a personal level. This connection allows them to influence social behaviors and attitudes effectively. Their engagement in interfaith dialogue, social welfare, and conflict resolution demonstrates the practical application of Sufi teachings in navigating complex social challenges. The findings indicate that the social influence of Sufi leaders is strengthened by their moral authority and deep integration into community life.

The adaptability of Sufi teachings to different cultural contexts explains the resilience and continued relevance of Sufism in Indonesia. Sufi orders have successfully integrated local customs and traditions into their practices, creating a unique blend of Islamic and indigenous cultural elements. This cultural adaptation has allowed Sufi orders to maintain their influence in regions undergoing rapid modernization and globalization. The integration of Sufi teachings with local culture ensures that they remain accessible and meaningful to diverse audiences, enhancing their appeal and effectiveness in shaping social behavior.

The study's findings suggest several potential avenues for future research and practical application. Further research could explore the role of Sufism in shaping political attitudes and civic engagement within Muslim communities. Understanding how Sufi teachings influence political participation and social movements can provide insights into the broader impact of Sufism on public life. This line of inquiry can also reveal how Sufi orders navigate the complex relationship between religion and politics in contemporary Muslim societies, shedding light on their role as both spiritual and social actors.

Future research could also examine the impact of Sufi teachings on social resilience and crisis management. Sufi orders, with their established networks and spiritual authority, have the potential to mobilize resources and provide support during times of social or political crisis. Investigating how Sufi communities respond to natural disasters, economic hardships, or social unrest can provide a deeper understanding of their role in promoting social stability and resilience. This research can contribute to the development of strategies for leveraging Sufi networks in crisis response and community rebuilding efforts.

The study encourages the integration of Sufi teachings into broader social and educational initiatives. By incorporating Sufi values of tolerance, compassion, and humility into educational curricula and community programs, policymakers and educators can promote a culture of peace and mutual respect. This approach can enhance the effectiveness of social cohesion initiatives, particularly in multicultural and multi-religious contexts. Engaging Sufi leaders in these efforts can further strengthen the impact, as their spiritual authority and community influence can help disseminate these values more effectively.

The findings also suggest that Sufi practices can serve as a model for fostering social cohesion and reducing social tensions in diverse communities. Community leaders and policymakers can draw on the principles of Sufi gatherings, such as inclusivity and shared spiritual experiences, to design community engagement activities that promote social unity. This approach can be particularly valuable in addressing social fragmentation and inter-group tensions in pluralistic societies. By creating spaces for dialogue and collective reflection, communities can build stronger social ties and enhance their resilience against social divisions.

CONCLUSION

The study's most important finding is that Sufism plays a significant role in shaping social practices in contemporary Indonesian Muslim societies by promoting values such as tolerance, compassion, and social cohesion. Sufi leaders and their teachings influence not only the spiritual development of individuals but also guide community behaviors and social interactions. The research demonstrates that Sufi orders are actively involved in community development, social welfare, and conflict resolution, highlighting their relevance in addressing contemporary social challenges. This study also reveals that participation in Sufi rituals and activities is strongly associated with higher perceptions of community cohesion, suggesting that Sufi practices contribute to the stability and harmony of social structures in diverse communities.

The findings show that Sufi orders in Indonesia have successfully adapted their teachings and practices to respond to modern social issues, such as radicalism and interfaith tensions, without compromising their spiritual principles. The ability of Sufi leaders to act as mediators and community guides underscores the multifaceted role of Sufism in contemporary society. This adaptability is a key factor that enables Sufi orders to maintain their influence in the face of rapid social change and globalization, making Sufism a dynamic force that continues to shape the social and cultural landscape of Indonesia.

The primary contribution of this research lies in its conceptual framework for understanding the intersection between Sufi teachings and social practices in a modern context. By categorizing the social impacts of Sufi teachings into themes such as community cohesion, conflict resolution, and social welfare, the study provides a structured approach to analyzing the broader social role of Sufism. The research also contributes to the literature by demonstrating that Sufi practices serve not only as spiritual

experiences but also as platforms for social engagement and activism. This conceptualization highlights the dual role of Sufi orders as both spiritual and social institutions that influence the ethical and moral fabric of society.

The methodological contribution of this study is evident in its use of qualitative case study techniques to explore the practical applications of Sufi teachings in community settings. Through in-depth interviews, participant observations, and document analysis, the research captures the nuanced ways in which Sufi teachings shape social behavior and community dynamics. This methodological approach can be used in future research to explore the influence of Sufism in other regions and contexts, providing a foundation for comparative studies that examine the impact of Sufi orders on social practices across different Muslim societies.

The research is limited by its focus on a specific geographical region and a small number of Sufi orders, which may not fully represent the diversity of Sufi influences across Indonesia. Further research should consider including a wider range of Sufi communities and regions to capture a more comprehensive picture of Sufism's social impact. The study also relies on qualitative data, which may not capture the full extent of Sufi influence on larger-scale social dynamics. Quantitative research could complement these findings by providing statistical evidence of the correlation between Sufi participation and social cohesion in broader populations.

Future research could explore the impact of Sufism on political attitudes and civic engagement, examining how Sufi teachings influence followers' perspectives on governance, public service, and social justice. Studies on the role of Sufi orders in crisis management and social resilience would also provide valuable insights into their capacity to contribute to community stability and development. Expanding the scope of research to include interdisciplinary approaches would enrich the understanding of Sufism's multifaceted influence, offering new perspectives on its role in contemporary Muslim societies.

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