



## STUDY OF TASAWUF: EXISTENCE AS A SOLUTION TO THE CRISIS OF MODERN SOCIETY DUE TO THE CURRENT DEVELOPMENT

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### ABSTRACT

This article discusses Sufism, a solution to the spiritual crisis in modern society due to the times. This study aims to explain how Sufism can solve the dryness of spirituality—reintroducing the values of Sufism to the community so that they can be applied in everyday life. This research method is qualitative research conducted using observational surveys, document analysis, and information from online libraries such as ebooks. Based on research, human spirituality will increase again using Sufism, which can train humans not to follow lust, which tends to be strong towards materialism.

**Keywords:** Spiritual Crisis, Sufism, Modern

### ABSTRACT

*This article discusses Sufism, which is the solution to the spiritual crisis in modern society due to the times. This study aims to explain how Sufism can solve dry spirituality. To reintroduce to the community the values of Sufism so that they can be applied to everyday life. This qualitative research method is conducted using surveys, observations, document analysis, and information from online libraries such as ebooks. Based on research, human spirituality will increase again by using the path of Sufism, which can make people calm so they do not follow too much lust, which tends to be strong towards materialism.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Spiritual Krisis, Sufisme, Modern*



## INTRODUCTION

In today's modern era, life is great with all the rapid developments. Technological developments are very influential in all areas of life. Undeniably, this is very beneficial for humans, such as ease of transportation, communication, rapid development of technology and science, expanding the scope of life, and many other benefits. Life is fun and seems like an "easy life," especially during a pandemic like today; many people call themselves "ordinary people." Everything can be accessed easily, from clothing to food to education.

This phenomenon causes the faith of Muslims to be eroded by thoughts of moderation, most of which are hedonism and secularism. With rapid progress with all worldly luxuries, humans should have arrived at the conditions of life they dream of happiness, calm, security, and peace. However, the facts presented differ from those described above; modernization has made humans fall into the abyss of disaster, namely a spiritual and moral crisis, especially in the younger generation. Facing a world civilization that has entered a period of crisis where humans begin to lose their human values to the point of ignoring God's rules, humans need to be exposed to and watered by the values of Islamic teachings, whose elaboration and application are contained in the teachings of Sufism.

Sufism, as one of the teachings of Islam, provides solutions to various problems in modern society. The emergence of Sufism in people's lives today is a cure for psychic ailments for all the problems that arise one after another and must be faced in this modern era. Sufism and its spiritual practices are the answer that can stabilize the psychological crisis of Muslims when their condition is getting worse.

According to Zakiah Drajat, the cause of many modern societies is psychologically disturbed due to the inability to balance physical, psychological, and social needs. Many modern humans have lost their purpose in life because they do not know who they are; they are not good at managing their emotions and thoughts, so they easily think negatively. Other scholars also argue about the causes of psychological problems for modern humans; according to Yunasril Ali, many people experience psychological problems because these humans have become increasingly distant from God. Many modern humans forget their obligations to God because their life is too attached to this ever-growing world.

Strengthened by an article written by Nilyati (2015), "The Role of Sufism in Modern Life." This article aims to identify Sufism as a spiritual teaching and noble character that has an important role in becoming a medicine and solution to modernization. Due to modern developments, the research findings reflect that Sufism can be an alternative solution to spiritual needs. Therefore, the presence of Sufism in modern society is very much needed to lead people to continue to yearn for God, to make life interesting, and has the potential for those who enjoy it and become ascetic people (Zuhud to the world).

Humans must pay attention to their spirituality because, in essence, humans need spirituality to achieve their goals in life. Humans are expected to regain their identity and worldly touch, so it is important to strengthen this spirituality.

The similarities between previous research and current research are that both use library research methods and also discuss the scope of Sufism as a solution, while the difference between previous research and

current research is that prior research has not been specific in explaining why Sufism can be a solution to society's spiritual crisis while the current research will discuss specifically why Sufism can be a critical solution to modern society due to the times.

This study aims to discuss the role of tasawuf studies as a solution to the spiritual crisis of modern society due to the times. The research question is how the study of Sufism can solve modern society's problems. The formulation of the problem in this study is that there is a study of Sufism as a tool for the crisis of spirituality in modern society due to the times. Practically, it is hoped that this research can be a self-reflection for readers so that they can increase their spirituality.

## RESEARCH METHODS

The method used in this writing is to use a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is a systematic technique to help writers carry out research and generate knowledge related to this research efficiently and coherently. (Darmalaksana, 2020) This research is library research, so the main data sources are journals, books, documents, and articles (Chuzaimah Batubara, 2018). Previous research discusses the problem of Sufism as a solution to the crisis of modern society due to time. The literature review was carried out by reading themes related to the problem of Sufism.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### The definition of Sufism

The meaning and origin of Sufism are the origin of the words in the book *Sharpening the Eyes of the Heart* (in *Seeing God*) (Romance, 2012). According to Sheikh Ahmad bin Athaillah in the translation of Abu Jihaduddin Rafqi al-Hānif (al-Hanif, 1990):

1. They were derived from the word *suffah*, namely a group of the Prophet's companions who set themselves aside in the foyer of the Prophet's Mosque because, in that foyer, the companions always sat with the Prophet to listen to his fatwa, which would be conveyed to others, who had not yet received a fatwa.
2. Derived from the word *sūfatun*, which is animal fur, because people who enter Sufism wear clothes made of animal fur and do not like to wear beautiful clothes just like that. that most people use.
3. Derived from the word *suuf al sufa'*, the softest fur, meaning the Sufi is soft.
4. They are derived from the word *safa'*, namely pure purity and dirty opponent because people who practice Sufism are always pure in their bodies and minds and leave dirty deeds that can incur God's wrath.

The opinion above needs to be corrected by the scholars; there are even opinions that do not accept the meaning of Sufism from the meaning of the accent or the origin of the word. According to al-Sheikh Abd Wahid Yahya said (Sahabuddin, 1996):

“There are many differences of opinion about the word “*sufi*” and various provisions have been established, without one opinion being more important than the other because all of them are acceptable.”

Apart from the etymological understanding above, Sufism can also be interpreted terminologically. There are various opinions about the meaning of Sufism, namely (Sahabuddin, 1996): *first*, According to Labib, Sufism can also be interpreted as “Searching for a way to gain love and spiritual harmony. Apart from that, it can also be interpreted as moving from ordinary life to the life of a Sufi who is always diligent in worship and is clear and clean in soul and heart, sincere for the sake of Allah SWT alone.

*Second*, Junaidi al-Baghdad explained, “Sufism must be your state with Allah without intermediaries.” Sufism is “Getting out of despicable thoughts and entering into good and commendable ethics.” *Third*, Al-Ghazali said that Sufism is eating halal food, following good morals, and following the deeds and orders of the Apostle that have been listed in his sunnah, referring to the Al-Qur’an and al-Hadith.

Based on the definitions above, Sufism is a science that studies efforts to draw closer to Allah by holding fast to worship, purifying oneself from reprehensible qualities, adorning oneself with praiseworthy qualities, not caring about worldly affairs, feeling content for all the gifts of Allah to him accompanied by trust and mahabbah to Allah SWT.

### **The purpose of Sufism**

In general, the most important goal of Sufism is to get as close to Allah as possible (Bahreisy, 1984). However, looking at the characteristics of Sufism in general, we can see that Sufism has three “intermediary” goals of Sufism, namely: (1) Sufism aims to put forward the moral aspect. This aspect includes continuously perpetuating mental stability, mastery, and control of passions so that humans are consistent and committed only to moral excellence. Sufism, which aims at morality, is generally practical; (2) Sufism addressed ma’rifatullah through direct disclosure or the al-Kasyf al-Hijab method. This type of Sufism is theoretical and has a specific set of provisions that are formulated analytically and systematically; and: (3) Sufism, which aims to discuss how the system of self-knowledge and approach to God is philosophically mystical, the study of the line of relationship between God and creatures, especially the relationship between humans and God and what it means to be close to

God. In the sense of being close to God, there are three symbolisms, namely, Close in the sense of seeing and feeling God’s presence in the heart, close in the sense of meeting God so that a dialogue occurs between man and God, and eats closely, the last is the union of man and God so that what happens is mutual help among united humans, in God’s will.

Based on this brief description of the goals of Sufism, there are different goals. However, the ultimate goal of Sufism can be summarized as pure ethics or pure psychology, and both simultaneously, namely: (1) total surrender to God’s absolute will because he is the prime mover of all events in nature; (2) total abandonment of all personal desires and release from bad traits related to worldly (terrestrial) life which are referred to as *fana’ al-ma’asi* and *baqa’ al-ta’ah*, and (3) self-awareness and oneself - focus on contemplation of God alone, nothing but Him.

### **The Crisis of Modern Society**

The spiritual crisis of modern society is a state of imbalance in the reality of life, where many people have lived in a modern civilization environment by using various technologies, even high technology, as a facility for their lives. However, in life, there is inequality in human values, and dehumanization occurs—caused by intellectual, mental, and mental capacities that are not ready to sail the seas or forests of modern civilization.

The term modern comes from the Latin word ‘modern,’ which means “now,” “new,” or “now.” When referring to the original modern meaning, humans have always lived in modern times. However, what scientists mean by modern is the critical awareness of contemporary problems. Therefore, the terms change, progress, revolution, and

growth are important concepts of modern consciousness. In other words, the modern stage is marked by the advancement of human rationality. A sociologist, Peter L. Berger, describes modern humans experiencing anomie, a condition where individuals lose ties that provide a sense of security and stability with other people, causing a loss of understanding that gives clues about purpose and meaning from life in this world. Sociologists also see the symptoms of the modern human crisis on the scale of people's lives, which describe regression as an undeniable social reality. Van Der Weij explained that this modern era is marked by rapid scientific and technological advances and violence, alienation from meaningless boredom, hatred, and dehumanization. More specifically, he said that, in this modern era, what is more troubling is not physical violence but the deterioration of human personality and conscience.

Humans often lose balance in dealing with problems due to the hard blows of life and the emotional response to these blows, so humans easily despair. Despair is a phase of emotional pain experienced by humans caused by the death of a lover, the breakup of a romantic relationship, or someone suddenly attacked by a disease that causes disability. Despair is a situation where a person believes that all his potential and efforts can no longer support the achievement of his goals and ideals. When a person is unable to achieve what he wants, then he feels that there is no more possibility of achieving his wish and gives up, then it can be said that he has given up hope (Kholik & Hasan, 2020).

The emergence of spiritual problems experienced by modern society today stems from the loss of the vision of divinity caused by society itself. Religion is not only an

instrument of social problems, but the most important thing is how spiritual values in the religion known as Sufism can become a pillar of the life of the education community and a source of solutions to all problems (Maharani, 2017).

### **Sufism as a Solution to the Crisis Caused by Modern Society's Current Developments**

The teachings of Sufism contain an ethical essence based on human moral development, which is based on the development of human morality. Especially in times like these, corrupt morality is seen as the basic foundation of society, and arbitrary behavior is seen as a habit that does not need attention—building morality because we all know that world civilization is currently experiencing a moral crisis, where many phenomena manifest human violence and cruelty, resulting in moral distortions that cause destruction and loss to human beings themselves. In this context, Sufism can act as a therapy for mental crises that impact moral distortions. Sufism itself still needs to be clarified about the classification of its people, especially those who are religiously illiterate. Therefore, it is not uncommon for the behavior of the Sufis themselves (tasawuf writers) to be considered strange and unusual. This is why the new science is built on the foundation of Marten Van Bruinessen's Sufism.

Modern Sufism itself is easily recognized and accepted without having to display strange behavior such as excessive loneliness and indifference to the state of the world. Well, you need to know that this kind of Sufism is easy today because it has various advantages. The first reason is that psychological Sufism results from various spiritual experiences and is a form of direct knowledge about the reality of God, which

tends to innovate in religious matters. Second, the presence of God in a mystical form can generate very strong beliefs. Third, in Sufism, the relationship with Allah is built based on love. In other words, ethics, which is the core of the teachings of Sufism, encourages humans to take care of themselves by not ignoring their spiritual needs because ignoring their spiritual needs is the opposite of spiritual practice, an action desired by Allah SWT. Ethical issues in Sufism can be used as a substitute in the da'wah process because it has three objectives: first, to be involved in a joint role to save humanity from things that are confusing due to the loss of moral values, and second, introducing literature or understanding the esoteric aspects of Islam to modern humans. Third, it shows that the esoteric aspect of Islam, namely Sufism, is the center of Islamic teachings. By applying the teachings of Sufism, humanity can achieve happiness in this world and the hereafter. This happiness can be maximized without dropping or turning off one to get the other. However, this can be achieved consistently and balanced by applying and instilling the teachings of Sufism in religious, social, and national life.

From another point of view, Islam cures one of the diseases of the modern world, namely secularization that transcends boundaries, a process that is nothing but the distance of aspects of life from spiritual values. At the heart of the shari'ah lies the daily worship of Muslims or prayer, which, according to hadith, is the pillar of religion. Islam has everything necessary for spiritual realization in a sublime sense, and Sufism is the vehicle of choice for this purpose (Hosseini, 2020).

## CONCLUSION

From the explanation above, the development of the times and technological advances have had a very influential impact on human life, which has positive and negative impacts that make humans forget their existence as humans and servants—God and remote or spiritually barren. In human life, the weakening of human spirituality can lead to the loss of the soul and spiritual identity. Therefore, the emergence of Sufism is very useful to restore spiritual sources that have begun to disappear due to the development of technology in people's lives.

Sufism can solve various crises of modern life, which are all materialistic, hedonistic, and secular, coupled with an increasingly difficult life. The most basic teachings of Sufism that can be used to overcome modern society's problems is to do self-introspection, or in Sufism, it is known as self-muhasabah.

Sufism teachings must be applied in all aspects of modern human life: economic, social, political, cultural, etc. By applying the teachings of Sufism proportionally and applying the principles of Islamic morality, the main human personality will be realized, capable of becoming good and useful citizens of society and the nation.

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