REFLECTION OF HADITH AND SUFISM IN MODERN LIFE: THE TRANSFORMATION OF ISLAMIC SPIRITUALITY IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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Abstract:

This study examines the reflection of hadith and Sufism in modern life, particularly in addressing the spiritual crisis faced by contemporary society in the digital era. Through qualitative analysis using a comprehensive literature review methodology, this research explores how classical Islamic spiritual teachings can be contextually adapted to meet contemporary challenges while maintaining their authentic essence. The study analyses various dimensions, including the relevance of prophetic traditions in solving modern problems, transforming Sufi practices in digital spaces, integrating spiritual values in professional life, and contributing Islamic mysticism to mental health. The findings indicate that hadith and Sufism remain highly relevant as spiritual foundations capable of addressing existential crises, meaning vacuum, and social alienation experienced by modern society. Digital technology, rather than eliminating spirituality, actually creates new spaces for spiritual practice and broader dissemination of Islamic teachings through applications, online communities, and digital platforms. However, digitalisation of spirituality requires careful attention to maintain authenticity and avoid reduction of spiritual experiences into mere digital content. The study concludes that successfully integrating hadith values and Sufi

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wisdom in modern life requires sophisticated hermeneutical approaches that enable contextual interpretation without compromising fundamental Islamic principles. This integration offers alternative solutions to materialism, individualism, and secularisation that characterise modern civilisation, while providing practical guidance for achieving spiritual balance in contemporary life.

Keywords: Hadith, Sufism, Modern Life, Digital Era, Islamic Spirituality, Mental Health, Spiritual Integration

INTRODUCTION

Modern life has presented complex challenges for humanity. Technological advancement, urbanisation, and globalisation have created different social dynamics from previous eras[4]. Amidst rapid material progress, modern humans often experience profound spiritual crises, emptiness of meaning, and alienation from transcendental values[5]. This phenomenon raises fundamental questions about how classical spiritual teachings, particularly hadith and Sufism in Islam, can answer contemporary life's problems.

Hadith, the second source of Islamic teaching after the Quran, strategically provides practical guidance for Muslim life. Meanwhile, Sufism, the esoteric dimension of Islam, offers a profound spiritual approach to achieving closeness to Allah[6]. Both traditions, which

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[4] Nurcholish Madjid, *Islam, Doktrin dan Peradaban* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1992), 15-17

[5] Kuntowijoyo, *Paradigma Islam: Interpretasi untuk Aksi* (Bandung: Mizan, 1991), 25-27

[6] Harun Nasution, *Falsafah dan Mistisisme dalam Islam* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1973), 23-25.

have developed over centuries, now face the challenge of adaptation in the context of modernity, which is characterised by secularisation, individualisation, and digitalisation.

This research analyses how reflections on hadith and Sufism can be implemented in modern life, particularly in addressing contemporary challenges. Through a qualitative approach with literature study, this research seeks to identify the relevance and transformation of Islamic spiritual teachings in digital life and modern society.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research employs a qualitative method with a literature review approach. Primary data is obtained from authentic hadith texts and classical Sufi works. In contrast, secondary data is sourced from scholarly journals, academic books, and related publications that discuss Islamic spirituality in the modern context[7].

Data analysis is conducted using content analysis techniques and hermeneutical interpretation to understand the textual and contextual meanings of the examined sources[8]. A comparative approach is also applied to compare classical spiritual concepts with the realities of modern life.

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[7] Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2017), 183-185

[8] Burhan Bungin, *Analisis Data Penelitian Kualitatif* (Jakarta: RajaGrafindo Persada, 2003), 89-92.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hadith in Modern Perspective

Hadith, etymologically derived from the Arabic word *"hadith,"* meaning "occurred" or "new," refers in Islamic terminology to all sayings, actions, and approvals of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) as narrated by his companions. Hadith serves as an explainer and interpreter of the Quran and a source of law and morality in Islam.

In the modern context, hadith faces epistemological challenges related to authenticity, relevance, and applicability. Orientalist criticism and modern scepticism toward oral tradition demand a more sophisticated approach to understanding and applying hadith[9]. Nevertheless, the universal values contained within hadith, such as justice, compassion, and moral integrity, remain relevant for contemporary life.

Sufism as a Spiritual Path

Sufism, etymologically derived from the word *"suf"* (wool), refers to the simple clothing of Sufis. It represents the spiritual dimension of Islam that emphasises purification of the soul *(tazkiyah al-nafs)* and achieving closeness to Allah (*curb Allah*). Sufism offers a systematic spiritual methodology through the concepts of maqamat (spiritual stations) and *ahwal* (spiritual states)[10].

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[9] M. Syuhudi Ismail, *Hadis Nabi yang Tekstual dan Kontekstual* (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1994), 234-237.

[10] Simuh, *Tasawuf dan Perkembangannya dalam Islam* (Jakarta:RajaGrafindo Persada,1996),55

Classical Sufis such as Al-Junaid, Al-Hallaj, Ibn Arabi, and Al-Ghazali have developed comprehensive systems of Sufi thought.[11] Their teachings on *fanā'* (self-annihilation), *baqā'* (subsistence in Allah), and *ma'rifah* (spiritual knowledge) provide a theoretical framework for profound spiritual transformation.

Spiritual Crisis in Modern Life

Modernity has presented a paradox in human life. On one hand, technological advancement and scientific progress provide unprecedented material convenience and prosperity. On the other hand, modern humans experience a crisis of meaning, existential anxiety, and spiritual emptiness[12].

In his thesis on the "disenchantment of the world," Max Weber explains how modernity has created a disenchanted world in which the sacred and spiritual dimensions have lost their place in public life. Secularisation, a hallmark of modernity, has separated religion from the public sphere and reduced the role of spirituality in daily life.

This phenomenon is visible in various aspects of modern life: increasing rates of depression and suicide, identity crises among youth, excessive consumerism, and degradation of moral values.[13] In

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[11] Abdul Khaliq Ghazali, *Tasawuf Integratif: Mengembalikan Ruh Agama dalam Kehidupan* (Jakarta: Hikmah, 2005), 78-82

[12] Jalaluddin Rakhmat, *Psikologi Agama: Sebuah Pengantar* (Bandung: Mizan, 2004), 141-143

[13] Departemen Kesehatan RI, *Laporan Kesehatan Mental Indonesia* (Jakarta: Depkes RI, 2018), 12-15.

this context, hadith and Sufism offer spiritual alternatives that can answer modern humanity's need for meaning and transcendence.

Relevance of Hadith in Addressing Modern Challenges

The hadiths of Prophet Muhammad contain wisdom relevant to various aspects of modern life. In a hadith narrated by Bukhari and Muslim, the Prophet said: "Indeed, this world is green and sweet, and Allah has appointed you as His stewards over it, so Allah will observe how you conduct yourselves"[14]. This hadith guides human responsibility toward the environment, which is highly relevant to contemporary ecological issues.

In social relationships, hadiths about maintaining family ties and treating neighbours well provide solutions for the individualisation that characterises modern society[15]. The hadith "Whoever believes in Allah and the Last Day should treat his neighbour well" (narrated by Bukhari and Muslim) reminds us of the importance of building solid communities amid modern social atomization.

Hadith provides guidance for peaceful coexistence in increasingly diverse societies. Teachings about respecting differences and treating non-Muslims well provide a foundation for religious tolerance. The principle of justice that does not

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[14] Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sahih Muslim* (Riyadh: Dar Tayyibah, 2006), hadis no. 2742.

[14] Muslim ibn al-Hajjaj, *Sahih Muslim* (Riyadh: Dar Tayyibah, 2006), hadis no. 2742.

al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, hadis no. 6014

[15]al-Bukhari, *Sahih al-Bukhari*, hadis no. 6014

discriminate based on race, ethnicity, or social status becomes relevant in building inclusive and harmonious societies.

In economics, hadiths about the prohibition of usury, the importance of honesty in business, and the obligation of zakat provide alternatives to exploitative capitalist economic systems[16]. The complex modern economic system requires guidance from the hadith teachings. The prohibition of usury in the hadith offers options for more just and sustainable financial systems. The encouragement to share wealth and help those in need becomes the basis for modern social security systems and philanthropy. The principles of transparency and honesty in trade emphasised in the hadith have become the foundation for practice. Islamic economics sourced from hadith offers a more just and sustainable paradigm.

The relevance of hadith in addressing modern challenges lies in its ability to provide comprehensive and holistic guidance for various aspects of life. Hadith is relevant not only as historical heritage but also as a source of actual solutions for contemporary problems. The key to actualising the relevance of hadith is a balanced approach that balances a deep understanding of the text and historical context of hadith with sensitivity to the realities and needs of modern times.

Efforts to contextualise hadith require cooperation from various parties, from scholars and academics to the broader community. Only with mature understanding and wise

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[16] Adiwarman Karim, *Ekonomi Mikro Islami* (Jakarta: RajaGrafindo Persada, 2007), 67-70.

implementation can hadith continue to inspire and guide Muslims in facing the ever-evolving challenges of the times. Thus, hadith will remain relevant and provide positive contributions to civilisation.

Transformation of Sufism in the Digital Era

The digital era has significantly transformed the practice and dissemination of Sufi teachings. Social media, smartphone applications, and other digital platforms have become new mediums for transmitting spiritual knowledge[17]. The phenomenon of "cyber-sufism" or digital Sufism shows the adaptation of classical spiritual traditions with modern technology.

Dhikr applications, Sufi lecture podcasts, and online spiritual communities have expanded the reach of Sufi teachings. Practices such as muraqabah (Sufi meditation) and dhikr can be performed with technological assistance while maintaining their spiritual essence.

However, the digitalisation of Sufism also faces challenges. Reducing spiritual experience to digital content can eliminate the interpersonal and experiential dimensions core to traditional Sufi learning[18]. The personal and intensive teacher-student (shaykh-murid) relationship is challenging to replicate in digital space.

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[17] Hoiriyah, "Tasawuf di Era Digital: Tantangan dan Peluang," *Jurnal Studi Islam* 15, no. 2 (2019): 89-92

[18] Martin van Bruinessen, "Sufisme, Politik, dan Religi: Menguak Kebangkitan Sufisme di Indonesia," dalam *Sufisme dan Politik*, ed. Fuad Jabali (Jakarta: Logos, 2001), 265-268

Integration of Spiritual Values in Modern Professional Life

A critical aspect of reflecting hadith and Sufism in modern life is their integration into the professional world and careers[19]. The concept of ihsan in the hadith of Gabriel guides excellence in every job. "Ihsan is that you worship Allah as if you see Him, and if you do not see Him, then indeed He sees you" (narrated by Muslim).

This principle of ihsan can be applied in various modern professions, from business to technology, healthcare, and education. Muslim professionals can integrate spiritual values into their work by making work a form of worship and service to others[20].

The concept of tawakkul in Sufism also provides a unique perspective on stress and anxiety management in competitive professional life. Tawakkul does not mean passivity, but rather a combination of maximum effort with surrendering results to Allah[21].

Sufism's Contribution to Modern Mental Health

Sufism, as the spiritual dimension in Islam, has excellent potential to contribute to addressing mental health problems in the modern era. When the world faces an epidemic of anxiety, depression, and other mental disorders, Sufism offers a holistic approach that integrates spiritual, psychological, and social aspects in healing the soul. The Sufi tradition, which has developed over

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[19] Muslim, *Sahih Muslim*, hadis no. 8

[20] Mulyadhi Kartanegara, *Menyelami Lubuk Tasawuf* (Jakarta: Erlangga, 2006), 234-237

[21] Abu Hamid al-Ghazali, *Ihya' 'Ulum al-Din* (Beirut: Dar al-Ma'rifah, 1982), 4:256-259

centuries, contains wisdom and methods that have proven effective in achieving inner peace and optimal mental health.

Sufism can be understood as a comprehensive spiritual therapy system for mental health. Classical Sufis, such as Al-Ghazali, Ibn Sina, and Ar-Razi, have developed a deep understanding of the relationship between spiritual condition and human mental health.

The Sufi approach to mental health is both preventive and curative. Preventively, Sufism provides a strong spiritual foundation for facing life's pressures. Curatively, Sufism offers various methods for healing inner wounds and restoring psychological balance.

Sufi practices have significant contributions to maintaining mental health in the modern era. Techniques such as muraqabah, dhikr, and tafakkur (contemplation) have therapeutic effects that can help overcome stress, anxiety, and depression[22].

Modern psychology research has shown positive correlations between spiritual practices and mental health. Sufi concepts of fana, which teach about releasing ego and excessive attachment, align with modern psychological therapies such as Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) and Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR).

The practice of dhikr, which involves repeating Allah's names or spiritual formulas, has a calming effect on the nervous system and reduces amygdala activity responsible for stress responses. This shows that classical spiritual practices have a neurological basis that

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[22] Subandi, *Psikologi Dzikir: Studi Fenomenologi Pengalaman Transformasi Religius* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2009), 178-181

modern science can explain. Neuroscience research has proven that meditation practices, including dhikr, can change brain structure and improve mental health.

Spiritual Education in Modern Educational Systems

The integration of hadith and Sufi values in modern educational systems becomes an urgent need to form generations that are not only intellectually smart but also spiritually mature[23]. The concept of tarbiyah in Islam emphasises holistic character formation that includes cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions.

Hadiths about seeking knowledge motivate intellectual development, while Sufi teachings about character and adab guide character formation. Integrating both aspects can create an educational system that produces graduates with technical competence and moral integrity.

The pesantren model in Indonesia, which integrates formal learning with spiritual development, can inspire the development of holistic educational systems[24]. Adapting this model in modern educational contexts requires creativity in integrating technology with traditional values.

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[23] Abdurrahman Mas'ud, *Menggagas Format Pendidikan Nondikotomik* (Yogyakarta: Gama Media, 2002), 45-48.

[24] Zamakhsyari Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi Pandangan Hidup Kyai dan Visinya Mengenai Masa Depan Indonesia* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 2011), 123-126

The Role of Spiritual Communities in Urban Society

Urbanisation has created new challenges in forming solid and meaningful communities. An individualistic urban society requires spiritual spaces that provide a sense of belonging and meaning[25].

Spiritual communities based on hadith and Sufism can be alternatives to social atomization in urban society. Study circles, dhikr gatherings, and hadith study groups provide spaces for meaningful social interaction and positive collective identity formation[26].

The concept of ukhuwah (brotherhood) in Islam provides a model of social relationships that can serve as an antidote to modern alienation. Practices such as *takāful* (mutual responsibility) and *ta'āwun* (mutual assistance) can be implemented in urban social activities.

Challenges in Implementation

Implementing hadith and Sufi values in modern life faces various challenges. First, there are epistemological challenges related to understanding and interpreting classical texts in modern contexts. A sophisticated hermeneutical methodology is needed to bridge the gap between the text's historical context and contemporary reality.

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[25] Komaruddin Hidayat, *Psikologi Beragama dalam Masyarakat Modern* (Jakarta: Hikmah, 2010), 234-237

[26] Azyumardi Azra, "Komunitas Spiritual Urban: Fenomena Majelis Taklim di Jakarta," dalam *Spiritualitas Baru: Agama dan Aspirasi Rakyat*, ed. Bambang Pranowo (Jakarta: Pustaka Alvabet, 2010), 156-159.

Second, sociological challenges in the form of resistance from modern society, accustomed to secular thinking patterns, toward spiritual values. Secularisation has created a dichotomy between sacred and profane that complicates the integration of spirituality in public life[27].

Third, technological challenges relate to adapting traditional spiritual practices to digital media. Not all aspects of spirituality can be transferred to digital media without losing their essence.

Opportunities and Development Potential

On the other hand, the modern era also provides excellent opportunities for developing and disseminating hadith and Sufi teachings. Digital technology enables wider accessibility to classical texts and spiritual teachings[28].

Modern society's spiritual crisis creates a high demand for authentic spiritual alternatives. Hadith and Sufism, with their long and tested traditions, have great potential to fulfil these spiritual needs[29].

Interdisciplinary approaches involving modern science with Islamic spiritual traditions can produce syntheses that enrich both knowledge domains. Research on the neurological effects of dhikr

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[27] Azyumardi Azra, *Konteks Berteologi di Indonesia: Pengalaman Islam* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1999), 145-148

[28] Ahmad Munjin Nasih, *Teknologi Pendidikan Islam* (Semarang: RaSAIL Media Group, 2013), 156-159.

[29] Huston Smith, *Agama-Agama Manusia*, terj. Safroedin Bahar (Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia, 2001), 456-459

practices or the psychological impact of Sufi teachings can strengthen the scientific validity of spiritual practices[30].

CONCLUSION

The reflection of hadith and Sufism in modern life demonstrates the continuing relevance of Islamic spiritual traditions in addressing contemporary challenges. Despite various adaptation challenges, the universal values contained in hadith and the wisdom of Sufi traditions can still guide and solve modern life problems.

The digital era does not eliminate spirituality; it opens new spaces for practising and transmitting spiritual teachings. However, digitalising spirituality requires caution to maintain its essence and authenticity.

Integrating hadith and Sufi values in modern life requires a contextual approach while maintaining Islam's fundamental principles. This demands sophisticated interpretive abilities and creativity in practical application.

This research recommends further development in the following areas: (1) contextual hadith interpretation methodology, (2) models for integrating spirituality in modern education, (3) development of authentic spiritual technology, and (4) interdisciplinary research on the effects of spiritual practices on mental and physical health.

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[30] Subandi, "Neuropsikologi Dzikir: Perspektif Neurosain tentang Meditasi Islam," *Indonesian Journal of Islamic Psychology* 2, no. 1 (2020): 178-181

Ultimately, reflecting on hadith and Sufism in modern life is about preserving tradition and revitalising spirituality as an integral dimension of holistic human life.

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