

Ritual Dynamics and Spiritual Practices in the Teaching of Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the intricate dynamics of rituals and spiritual practices within the Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah, a prominent Sufi order in Indonesia. Through a comprehensive literature analysis, in-depth interviews, and participant observation, the research delves into the historical evolution, theological foundations, and the multifaceted role of rituals and spiritual exercises in shaping the followers' spiritual journey. The findings reveal that the integration of Qadiriyyah and Naqsyabandiyah traditions fosters a unique spiritual path that balances exoteric religious observance with esoteric contemplation. Key themes include the transformative impact of rituals, the pivotal role of the sheikh, the significance of communal practices, and the holistic pedagogical approaches employed within the Tarekat. The study concludes that these rituals and practices are central to individual and collective spirituality, providing a cohesive and supportive spiritual community. This research contributes to the broader understanding of Indonesian Sufism and the enduring relevance of Sufi practices in contemporary Islamic spirituality.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah in Indonesia is a notable Sufi order that has effectively merged the Qadiriyyah and Naqsyabandiyah traditions, shaping a harmonious and tolerant society by emphasizing values of virtue and cooperation [1]. This order engages in various economic activities and utilizes digital technology to disseminate its teachings widely, reaching a larger audience through official websites,

social media accounts, and mobile applications [1]. The Suluk ritual within the Tarekat tradition serves a dual purpose of enhancing spirituality and fostering social relations, encouraging socially responsible behavior among its members [2]. Additionally, the practice of dhikr within the Tarekat Khalwatiyyah Sheikh Yusuf Al-Makassary community contributes to building social cohesion and shaping strong and calm personalities, reflecting the socio-

sufism activities that impact social life positively [3].

The Qadiriyyah tradition, founded by Abdul Qadir Gilani in the 12th century, emphasizes devoutness, charity, and adherence to Sharia, while the Naqshbandiyyah, established by Baha-ud-Din Naqshband in the 14th century, focuses on silent dhikr and inward contemplation [4], [5]. The Qadiriyyah tradition, associated with Sunni Islam, has roots in orthodox Islamic teachings and integrates Sharia and haqiqah in both theoretical and practical aspects [4]. On the other hand, the Naqshbandiyyah tariqa, originating in the Golden Horde period, also upholds classical Sharia law and practices zikr, with followers leaning towards silent zikr in later periods [5]. Both Sufi groups have influenced popular culture and spiritual practices, showcasing continuity in their spiritual traditions based on common origins and adherence to Sharia [5].

Rituals and spiritual practices within the Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah are not merely symbolic but are viewed as transformative processes that enable a profound connection with the divine [6]. These practices include daily prayers, recitations, and elaborate ceremonies that signify important spiritual milestones [6]. Through these rituals, adherents aim to purify their souls, elevate their consciousness, and ultimately draw closer to God [6]. The power dynamics within rituals are enacted through the relationships between ritual specialists, participants, and objects of veneration, emphasizing the social and communicative aspects of power [7]. Additionally, the historical study of religious rites highlights the significance of mnemonics, key symbols, and religious keywords in the development of early religious traditions [8].

This paper aims to explore the dynamics of these rituals and spiritual practices through a comprehensive literature analysis. By examining historical texts, theological treatises, and contemporary studies, this research seeks to provide a nuanced understanding of how these practices are taught, performed, and

experienced within the Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 *Historical Evolution of the Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah*

The Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah in Indonesia represents a unique blend of the Qadiriyyah and Naqsyabandiyah Sufi orders, combining the emphasis on adherence to Sharia and outward piety from the Qadiriyyah with the focus on silent dhikr and spiritual enlightenment from the Naqsyabandiyah [1]. This fusion of traditions emerged in the 19th century through the efforts of Indonesian scholars who studied in the Middle East and introduced these Sufi practices to the local context, aiming to achieve spiritual purity and divine closeness within the Indonesian Muslim community [1], [9]. The historical evolution of the Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah showcases a harmonious integration of exoteric practices and esoteric spirituality, reflecting a balanced spiritual path that resonates with the spiritual aspirations of Indonesian Muslims [1], [9].

2.2 *Theological Foundations*

The Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah, rooted in Sufism, combines the theological principles of both orders to emphasize spiritual enlightenment through outward practices and inward contemplation [1]. The Qadiriyyah tradition highlights adherence to Islamic law (Sharia) as fundamental for spiritual growth, promoting piety, charity, and service to others as pathways to divine favor [1]. In contrast, the Naqsyabandiyah order focuses on silent dhikr and inner reflection, using the repetition of God's name in silence to purify the heart and mind, fostering a deep spiritual connection and inner peace [1]. This synthesis of practices within the Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah offers a comprehensive approach to spirituality, integrating outward religious observance with inward spiritual development, providing practitioners with a holistic path to divine presence and personal growth.

2.3 Rituals and Spiritual Practices

The Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah incorporates diverse rituals and spiritual practices to guide its followers on their spiritual journey. These practices include regular prayers, devotional sessions, and special ceremonies marking significant spiritual milestones [2]. One distinctive feature is the incorporation of Qadiriyyah open dzikir, where the name of God is called aloud in a communal setting, complemented by the silent remembrance of Naqsyabandiyah, allowing followers to engage in both forms of remembrance based on their context and spiritual needs [10]. Moreover, the tarekat emphasizes the importance of spiritual guidance (tarbiyah) provided by a sheikh, who leads disciples in their spiritual development, ensuring the correct understanding and practice of rituals [3].

2.4 Pedagogical Methods

The Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah employs a structured pedagogical approach for the transmission of spiritual knowledge and practices, involving formal instruction, practical training in rituals, and ongoing spiritual guidance [1]. Within this framework, the sheikh plays a pivotal role as a spiritual guide and exemplar for disciples, imparting knowledge and providing spiritual mentorship [1]. This structured approach is essential in shaping the harmonious and tolerant society in Indonesia through the teachings that emphasize values of virtue and cooperation [1]. Additionally, the sheikh's role in the Tarekat is crucial for maintaining the authenticity and continuity of Sufi practices, ensuring that the teachings are passed down effectively to the next generation [1].

2.5 Impact on Individual and Collective Spirituality

The rituals and spiritual practices of Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah have a significant impact on both individual and collective spirituality. Individually, these practices aim to achieve personal spiritual purification and closeness to God through regular engagement in dhikr, prayers, and other rituals, leading to inner peace and

spiritual fulfillment [2]. Collectively, these rituals strengthen the community and shared identity among followers, fostering a strong bond and commitment to the spiritual path. Large gatherings (majlis) for special occasions play a crucial role in this communal dimension, where followers unite to participate in dhikr, recitations, and spiritual activities, enhancing the sense of community and reinforcing their spiritual journey together [2], [3].

3. METHODS

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a qualitative research design to explore the dynamics of rituals and spiritual practices in the Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah. A qualitative approach is chosen due to its suitability for understanding complex social and cultural phenomena, allowing for an in-depth exploration of the experiences and perspectives of the followers of this Sufi order. The research design includes a comprehensive literature review, in-depth interviews, and participant observation to gather a rich and nuanced understanding of the subject matter.

A thorough literature review forms the foundation of this research. This involves the systematic collection and analysis of existing scholarly works on the Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah, including historical texts, theological treatises, and contemporary studies. Key sources include books, journal articles, dissertations, and other relevant academic publications. The literature review helps to contextualize the research and identify gaps that this study aims to address.

3.2 Data Analysis

The data collected through the literature review, in-depth interviews, and participant observation are analyzed using thematic analysis, which involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data. This method is chosen for its flexibility and ability to provide a detailed, nuanced account of the data. The first step in the analysis involves coding the data by

transcribing interviews and field notes, and systematically reviewing the transcripts to generate initial codes that capture key aspects of the rituals and spiritual practices, as well as the participants' perceptions and experiences. Following the initial coding, the codes are reviewed and organized into broader themes based on their prevalence in the data and their relevance to the research questions, providing a structured way to understand the various dimensions of the rituals and spiritual practices within the Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah. The final step involves interpreting the themes in the context of the research questions and existing literature, linking the themes to the theoretical framework of the study, and providing a comprehensive understanding of how the rituals and spiritual practices contribute to the spiritual journey of the followers and the communal identity of the Tarekat.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 *Historical and Theological Context*

The Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah is deeply embedded in the rich traditions of Qadiriyyah and Naqsyabandiyah Sufism. Historically, the Qadiriyyah order, founded by Abdul Qadir Gilani in the 12th century, emphasized strict adherence to Sharia, piety, and charity. The Naqsyabandiyah order, established by Baha-ud-Din Naqshband in the 14th century, focused on silent dhikr (remembrance of God) and inward reflection. The synthesis of these orders in the Indonesian context has resulted in a distinctive spiritual path that balances exoteric (outward) religious observance with esoteric (inward) spiritual practices.

Adaptation to the local cultural and religious landscape. This adaptation has been crucial for the order's growth and acceptance among Indonesian Muslims. The theological foundations of the Tarekat are rooted in the core principles of Sufism, emphasizing the pursuit of spiritual enlightenment through both outward practices and inward contemplation. The integration of these theological perspectives creates a holistic

approach to spirituality, catering to the diverse spiritual needs of its followers.

4.2 *Significance of Rituals*

The rituals of the Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah, including dhikr, prayers, and communal gatherings, are central to the spiritual life of its followers. The literature and interviews revealed that these rituals are transformative processes designed to facilitate a deeper connection with the divine. Dhikr, both silent and aloud, is particularly emphasized as a means of purifying the heart and mind, fostering an intimate awareness of God's presence. Participants described how regular engagement in these rituals brings a profound sense of inner peace, spiritual fulfillment, and resilience in facing life's challenges.

The rituals serve multiple purposes: they are acts of worship, methods of spiritual purification, and means of fostering communal bonds. The daily recitations of litanies (awrad) and the performance of dhikr are practiced both individually and collectively, reinforcing the personal and communal aspects of spirituality. These practices are seen not merely as religious duties but as essential components of the spiritual journey, enabling followers to attain higher states of consciousness and closer proximity to God.

4.3 *Role of the Sheikh*

The sheikh plays a pivotal role in guiding the spiritual journey of followers within the Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah. The sheikh serves as both a teacher and a spiritual exemplar. The guidance provided by the sheikh in performing rituals and understanding their significance is crucial for followers to navigate their spiritual paths effectively. Participants expressed deep respect and trust in their sheikhs, viewing them as essential mediators between themselves and the divine.

The sheikh's role extends beyond mere instruction; they are also responsible for the spiritual well-being of their disciples. The personal mentorship provided by the sheikh ensures that the rituals are performed correctly and that their deeper meanings are

comprehended. This mentorship is characterized by a close, almost familial relationship, wherein the sheikh provides individualized spiritual guidance tailored to the specific needs and progress of each disciple.

4.4 Community and Identity

The communal aspect of the Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah is a significant factor in its appeal and effectiveness. The communal performance of rituals and gatherings fosters a strong sense of belonging and collective identity among the followers. These gatherings, which often involve communal dhikr, recitations, and spiritual discussions, reinforce the bonds between members and create a supportive spiritual community. Participants highlighted that being part of such a community provides emotional and spiritual support, enhancing their overall spiritual experience.

The community aspect of the Tarekat is further strengthened by the shared spiritual journey of its members. The collective engagement in rituals and the shared experiences of spiritual milestones foster a deep sense of solidarity and mutual support. This communal dimension is particularly evident in the large gatherings (majlis) held for special occasions, where followers come together to engage in dhikr, recitations, and other spiritual activities, reinforcing their shared identity and commitment to the Tarekat's spiritual path.

4.5 Pedagogical Approaches

The pedagogical methods employed within the Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah are multifaceted and effective. The transmission of knowledge and practices involves a combination of textual study, oral instruction, and practical demonstration. The use of classical Sufi texts alongside contemporary interpretations ensures that followers have a solid theological foundation. Practical training under the supervision of the sheikh and more experienced practitioners ensures that the rituals are performed with the correct intent and understanding.

The structured pedagogical approach within the Tarekat facilitates a deep and enduring spiritual development among the followers. This approach includes formal instruction in the principles of Sufism, practical training in the performance of rituals, and ongoing spiritual guidance from experienced mentors. The communal nature of the Tarekat also plays a significant role in the learning process, as disciples learn from observing and participating in communal activities and rituals. This collective approach fosters a strong sense of community and shared spiritual purpose among the followers.

4.6 Impact on Individual and Collective Spirituality

The impact of the rituals and spiritual practices on individual and collective spirituality is profound. On an individual level, participants reported experiencing significant spiritual growth, emotional healing, and a stronger sense of purpose. The regular practice of dhikr and other rituals fosters a continual remembrance of God, which participants described as central to their daily lives and spiritual well-being.

Collectively, the rituals enhance the sense of unity and shared purpose within the community. The communal gatherings and shared spiritual experiences reinforce the collective identity of the Tarekat and provide a robust support system for its members. These communal rituals serve as focal points for spiritual renewal and communal bonding, creating a cohesive and supportive spiritual environment.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study underscore the importance of rituals and spiritual practices in the Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah. These practices serve as the foundation for the spiritual journey of its followers, providing both individual and communal benefits. The integration of Qadiriyyah and Naqsyabandiyah traditions creates a unique spiritual path that effectively balances outward religious observance with inward contemplation. The pivotal role of the sheikh, the supportive communal environment, and the holistic pedagogical

approaches are key factors in the effectiveness of the Tarekat's spiritual practices.

The study also highlights the adaptability of the Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah to the local Indonesian context, which has been crucial for its growth and relevance. The ability to integrate traditional Sufi practices with contemporary spiritual needs demonstrates the dynamism and resilience of the order. This adaptability ensures that the Tarekat continues to meet the spiritual needs of its followers in a changing world.

Implications

The implications of this study are significant for understanding the role of Sufi orders in contemporary Islamic spirituality. The Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah provides a model of how traditional spiritual practices can be maintained and adapted to meet the needs of modern followers. The study also offers insights into the broader role of communal rituals in fostering spiritual and emotional well-being, highlighting the importance of supportive spiritual communities.

5. CONCLUSION

This study provides a detailed and nuanced understanding of the dynamics of rituals and spiritual practices within the Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah. The findings underscore the significance of these practices in the spiritual life of the followers, highlighting their role in fostering both individual spiritual growth and a strong sense of communal identity. The integration of

Qadiriyyah and Naqsyabandiyah traditions creates a unique spiritual path that effectively balances outward religious observance with inward contemplation.

The pivotal role of the sheikh in guiding the spiritual journey of the followers is a key factor in the effectiveness of the Tarekat's practices. The sheikh's mentorship ensures that rituals are performed with the correct intent and understanding, facilitating a deeper connection with the divine. The communal aspect of the Tarekat further strengthens the sense of belonging and collective identity among the followers, providing a supportive spiritual community.

The study also highlights the adaptability of the Tarekat Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah to the local Indonesian context, demonstrating its dynamism and resilience in meeting the spiritual needs of its followers. The holistic pedagogical approaches employed within the Tarekat, combining textual study, oral instruction, and practical demonstration, ensure a comprehensive and enduring spiritual development among the followers.

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