

Neo-Sufism as a Social Da'wah Paradigm: Addressing Challenges and Transforming Spirituality in Modern Indonesia

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Abstract. *In contemporary Indonesia, Neo-Sufism has emerged as a significant paradigm for Islamic social da'wah, particularly in response to growing spiritual disorientation, religious radicalism, and socio-cultural fragmentation in urban contexts. This research explores how institutionalized Sufi orders, especially those rooted in traditional tarekat such as TQN is redefining their spiritual missions through transformative, socially-engaged practices. Using a qualitative library-based methodology, the study analyzes primary and secondary texts to trace how core Sufi values—such as ikhlas (sincerity), sabr (patience), and zuhd (asceticism)—are applied within modern da'wah strategies. Rather than functioning as apolitical or inward-facing traditions, these Sufi orders have implemented socially responsive initiatives including pesantren-based empowerment, Sufi clinics, and ethical microeconomics. The findings challenge stereotypes of Sufism as detached from social realities and instead position Neo-Sufism as a framework for moral reform and community development. This rearticulation of Sufism not only addresses urban spiritual crises but also contributes a sustainable and values-based model of religious engagement. To ensure continued relevance, the study recommends strengthening urban Sufi literacy and institutional collaboration among tarekat networks.*

Keywords: *Islamic social da'wah; Neo-Sufism; Sufi ethics; Sufi order; urban spirituality.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, the development of Islam in Indonesia has faced significant challenges, including rapid urbanization, economic inequality, fragmentation in the digital sphere, and increasing ideological polarization. These dynamics have triggered a spiritual crisis, particularly among urban Muslims, which has not been adequately addressed by traditional forms of da'wah that are legalistic, political, or confrontational in nature. This phenomenon has led younger generations of Muslims to establish new forms of religious authority through social media and to develop more personal and aesthetic expressions of religiosity as a response to the limitations of conventional religious institutions (Kholidi et al., 2024). Numerous studies indicate that normative da'wah often fails to meet the spiritual needs of urban Muslims, who now seek more dialogical and reflective approaches (Saputra, 2022). In this context, the resurgence of Neo-Sufism as a contemporary form of Sufism offers an alternative spiritual approach rooted in prophetic ethics, social praxis, and transformative service in the modern era (Meyer, 2019).

The emergence of Sufi orders (tarekat) in Indonesia reflects the active contribution of traditional spiritual groups in responding to contemporary social challenges. The Qadiriyyah Naqsyabandiyah Order (TQN) of Suryalaya, for instance, through its Inabah Program, has successfully rehabilitated drug users by integrating spiritual practices with pseudo-medical

approaches. Furthermore, this order has implemented community empowerment programs such as Islamic ethical cooperatives and has provided healthcare and education services in urban areas (Kamaludin & Ula, 2020a). Such active engagement indicates that the role of tarekat is no longer confined to spiritual matters but has expanded into being agents of social transformation by applying Sufi values in practical ways.

Moreover, field observations and literature analyses demonstrate that Sufi values such as sincerity (*ikhlas*), patience (*sabr*), and asceticism (*zuhd*) have been implemented in sustainable Islamic social initiatives aimed at enhancing community welfare and fostering collective responsibility in addressing social issues (Hijazi, 2023). These findings suggest that Sufi orders are not only spaces for spiritual experience but also function as active agents of social change. Nevertheless, systematic research on the structural relationship between tarekat and social da'wah activities remains limited. This gap opens up opportunities for further research that can explore how internal structures and Sufi teachings are operationalized in community empowerment practices that are sustainable and socially relevant.

In recent years, scholarly discourse on Neo-Sufism and Islamic social da'wah has grown, focusing on the renewal of Islamic spirituality to address modern challenges and bridge secular-religious divides in everyday life, as discussed by Bartolini et al. (2017). Simultaneously, Islamic social da'wah has evolved within frameworks of empowerment and social transformation, emphasizing the role of faith in enhancing individual and community well-being (Pentaris, 2023). While both perspectives share core values such as compassion, justice, and moral transformation, they are often studied separately within distinct academic disciplines, weakening the potential for integration between spirituality and social action in contemporary Islamic practice.

Where a disconnect exists between the personal spiritual expressions of Neo-Sufism and the tangible implementation of social da'wah, a conceptual gap must be bridged. The concept of trans-liminal space offers a solution by allowing the integration of Sufi values into the public sphere, thus making da'wah more responsive to social issues and relevant to the broader community context (van der Tol & Gorski, 2022). It is therefore crucial to examine institutions such as tarekat, which not only function as spiritual centers but also as agents of social change with their existing community networks and structures. This approach opens the possibility of exploring how Islamic spirituality can move from the personal to the collective sphere, combining contemplation with social contribution in addressing modern societal challenges.

This paper proposes a synthetic approach to Neo-Sufism, viewing it not merely as a spiritual or ethical movement, but as an institutional and transformative framework for social da'wah. Neo-Sufism reflects a modernized form of Sufism, wherein values such as sincerity, simplicity, and compassion are integrated within socio-political contexts. By highlighting collective practices and the role of tarekat as agents of change, this approach bridges gaps in normative da'wah studies while converging Sufi spirituality with modern epistemologies (Abenante & Vicini, 2017a). From this perspective, tarekat are no longer seen as exclusive spiritual communities but as social entities capable of facilitating social justice advocacy, community empowerment, and peaceful conflict resolution.

In facing the identity, social, and ecological crises affecting contemporary Muslim societies, the Neo-Sufism approach offers a more contextually relevant alternative to traditional forms of da'wah. Sufi values not only guide personal spiritual development but also provide a foundation for social ethics that promote a more just, inclusive, and sustainable society. As such, Neo-Sufi-based Islamic social da'wah holds great potential to contribute to comprehensive social transformation by integrating ethical, spiritual, and social dimensions in response to the challenges of modernity. As Seto (2020) notes, the revitalization of Sufi values in the public sphere is essential for strengthening social piety and expanding the understanding of da'wah as a transformative process embedded in everyday Islamic consciousness and practice.

The aim of this study is to explore Neo-Sufism as a paradigm for Islamic social da'wah rooted in tarekat institutions within the context of contemporary Indonesia. This research intends to contribute theoretically to the development of transformative Sufi thought and serve as a practical reference for religious institutions in designing ethical, inclusive, and sustainable da'wah models. The novelty of this research lies in its understanding of Neo-Sufism as an institutional social da'wah system that integrates spiritual development with community capacity building. In contrast to previous studies that often separate spiritual and structural dimensions, this article demonstrates that tarekat—through practices such as suluk, silsilah, and khidmah—can serve as deep and impactful vehicles for da'wah. Rather than proposing a hypothesis, this study adopts a qualitative-interpretative approach that emphasizes contextual and narrative readings of Sufi practices within modern social spaces.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative-descriptive approach using a library research method, focusing on the examination of primary and secondary texts related to Neo-Sufism as a

paradigm for social da'wah in Indonesia. The researcher identifies units of analysis in the form of ideas, values, and social practices implemented by Sufi institutions, such as the Qadiriyyah wa Naqsyabandiyah (TQN) Suryalaya Order. The main variable in this research is the form and strategy of social da'wah based on Sufi values such as ikhlas (sincerity), sabr (patience), and zuhd (asceticism), as well as how these values are articulated in the social da'wah programs conducted by urban Sufi institutions in Indonesia.

The subject of study is determined purposively, limited to Sufi orders that clearly maintain a formal spiritual structure—such as silsilah (spiritual lineage), suluk (spiritual retreat), and murshid (spiritual guide)—and have a proven record of social engagement, including health services, education, community-based economic initiatives, or moral rehabilitation programs. The selection of TQN Suryalaya is based on data accessibility, the intensity of its socio-religious activities, and its influence within the network of urban Sufi orders in Indonesia.

The primary research instrument is a thematic analysis sheet developed by the researcher to classify and categorize information according to themes such as the spiritualization of social services, the integration of Sufi ethics into public activities, and institutional challenges in implementing Sufi-oriented da'wah. The documents analyzed include books, academic journals, field reports, official publications of the order, and relevant media articles. The researcher also employs narrative recording techniques to document discourse structures and the transformation of ideas within the texts.

The analysis is conducted thematically and interpretively through three stages: (1) data reduction based on relevant themes; (2) contextual interpretation of the practices and values identified; and (3) the construction of a critical narrative that links texts, context, and the research objectives. The researcher also applies source triangulation by comparing data from various types of documents and different authors to enhance the validity of the interpretations.

With this analytical model, the study is expected to be replicable by other researchers focusing on different Sufi orders, broader areas of study, or alternative expressions of Sufi da'wah. The entire process is conducted with a commitment to methodological transparency to ensure that the findings are verifiable, accountable, and useful for the development of a discourse on praxis-based Islamic da'wah in the modern era.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study demonstrates that Neo-Sufism, as reflected in the practices of the TQN Suryalaya order, has undergone a transformation into a form of social da'wah rooted in praxis-

oriented spirituality and capable of adaptively responding to contemporary challenges (Hidayat & Zein, 2022). Sufi da'wah is no longer confined to contemplative and ritual spaces but has evolved into a movement that engages various aspects of social life. The utilization of digital media and charismatic leadership that can engage global contexts has fostered the emergence of virtual piety and da'wah structures that are more relevant to modern society (Piraino, 2016a). Through a qualitative approach grounded in library research and critical analysis of academic literature, journal articles, institutional documents, and field reports, this study highlights how the practices of the order shape a contextual and transformative pattern of Sufi da'wah.

From the findings, three primary patterns in contemporary Sufi da'wah practices in Indonesia are identified. First, the integration of Sufi values into various areas of social service, such as education, healthcare, and community empowerment. Second, the development of economic models based on the principles of the order, upholding justice, solidarity, and sustainability. Third, a rejection of shallow and consumerist forms of modern spirituality that obscure the ethical depth of Sufi teachings. These three patterns affirm that Neo-Sufism is not only concerned with individual spiritual development but also carries a reformative orientation toward social structures through a holistic and relevant approach to da'wah in today's dynamic society (Mangunjaya, 2021).

Sufism in Indonesia is currently undergoing a significant transformation—from an esoteric tradition to a more pragmatic hybrid form of spiritual expression—combining both vertical (transcendental) and horizontal (social and environmental) dimensions of engagement (Suwito et al., 2022). The Neo-Sufi orders' focus on social services and ethical economic models reflects their commitment to societal welfare and to addressing economic inequality as a moral issue. Sufi teachings, now applied more practically, offer solutions to social challenges while retaining spiritual depth. By integrating ethics into economic practice, Neo-Sufism provides a moral framework for addressing social issues, offering solutions that balance practical needs with spiritual understanding (Franks & Scherr, 2019).

Furthermore, resistance to the erosion of spiritual meaning in the modern era has become a crucial element in the development of Neo-Sufism. By rejecting the commodification of religion and emphasizing inner transformation and ethically grounded living, Sufi teachings serve as a counterforce to materialistic tendencies in public religious expression. Neo-Sufism not only adapts to cultural changes but also seeks to reshape social ethics and spirituality in Indonesia through collective practices and transcendent goals, ultimately establishing a solid moral foundation to confront the complexities of modern society (Abenante & Vicini, 2017b).

The implementation of these values is evident in the structured approach of Sufi institutions, as exemplified by TQN Suryalaya through the Inabah Program. This program serves as a concrete example of how Sufi principles such as ikhlas (sincerity), sabr (patience), and zuhd (asceticism) are applied in social services, particularly in the rehabilitation of drug abuse among urban youth. By combining physical, mental, and spiritual aspects, the recovery process involves dhikr (remembrance of God), prayer, and repentance, directly guided by a Sufi master. This approach fosters patience, self-control, and a deepened spiritual awareness among participants, encouraging a more meaningful and God-centered life commitment (Kamaludin & Ula, 2020b).

Available data indicates that the Sufi-based approach in the Inabah Program is effective in reducing recidivism rates, with participants showing significant decreases in addiction and overall improvements in quality of life. Through a holistic Islamic psycho-spiritual therapy—which addresses physical, mental, and spiritual dimensions—participants demonstrate increased self-awareness, confidence, and commitment to positive change. This reinforces the argument that integrating Sufi values into rehabilitation programs not only facilitates personal recovery but also fosters sustainable transformation and positively impacts broader social well-being (Ismail et al., 2022).

More broadly, this approach confirms how the Inabah Program demonstrates the effective implementation of Sufi values in sustainable social solutions that encompass individual recovery and community empowerment. By instilling values such as responsibility, discipline, and social solidarity, this spiritual approach not only aids participants in overcoming addiction but also builds a strong moral and ethical foundation, particularly for urban youth who are vulnerable to social problems. The integration of inner spirituality with social well-being shows that spirituality is not merely personal, but can also strengthen collective social life. As a result, this program fosters deep and lasting transformation, positioning spirituality as a crucial foundation for building a healthier, more harmonious, and empowered society (Mansor et al., 2024).

The ethical microeconomic model developed by the Tanbih Cooperative and TQNMart retail outlets represents a tangible translation of Sufi values into contemporary economic practice. Spiritual values such as justice, transparency, and solidarity serve as the core principles in building an economic system not solely oriented toward material profit, but also one that cultivates social solidarity and community sustainability. The Tanbih Cooperative, for instance, emphasizes collective growth through savings-and-loans mechanisms and cooperative ventures, reflecting the spirit of ukhuwah (brotherhood) and ta'awun (mutual

assistance) in Sufism. Meanwhile, TQNMart applies Sufi ethics in everyday commercial practices, such as honesty in pricing and transparency in profit-sharing. These two initiatives illustrate that Sufi teachings can underpin the formation of a just and empowering economic ecosystem while supporting the order's transformative da'wah agenda amid the socio-religious dynamics of urban society (Ahmad Syafiq, 2019).

The presence of these two institutions underscores that Sufi approaches to economics are not only spiritual but also transformative and contextual. This approach offers a just and participatory economic system oriented toward collective well-being, rather than mere individual capital accumulation as seen in capitalist systems. Sufi economics is based on moral principles such as distributive justice, the rejection of monetary illusion, and muamalah ethics that balance spirituality with social welfare. Initiatives like Tanbih and TQNMart provide concrete evidence that Sufi values can be actualized in inclusive and humanistic economic systems. This model presents a relevant alternative to conventional economic systems that are often exploitative and incapable of addressing welfare issues or restoring public trust (Benhamed & Gassouma, 2023).

As part of the transformative da'wah carried out by orders such as TQN Suryalaya, an economy grounded in classical Sufi values—such as *ikhlas*, *sabr*, and *zuhd*—is reinforced through the implementation of microeconomic models emphasizing ethics and spirituality. Initiatives such as the Tanbih Cooperative and TQNMart reflect tangible efforts to translate principles of social justice, simplicity of life, and collective solidarity into an inclusive economic system oriented toward shared prosperity. This approach is not centered on private profit accumulation but instead represents a praxis form of Conscious Capitalism, prioritizing human dignity and community values as the main foundation of economic management (Frémeaux & Michelson, 2017).

As part of the expanded role of social transformation promoted by Neo-Sufism, the Sufi economic model developed by orders such as TQN Suryalaya not only offers an alternative to the dominance of the capitalist paradigm but also introduces an economic approach that emphasizes sustainability and collective welfare. In this orientation, social well-being is positioned as the primary goal—surpassing mere capital accumulation—and rejecting exploitative economic practices. Spiritual values such as *ikhlas*, *sabr*, and *zuhd* are transformed into ethical foundations for a more just economic activity. Spirituality, therefore, is no longer confined to personal dimensions but becomes a driving force for morally grounded and inclusive economic change. As Franzoni & Ait Allali (2018) assert, the Sufi approach in Islamic economics and finance simultaneously resists global materialism, encourages

collective consciousness and social responsibility, and facilitates the emergence of sustainable economic systems rooted in ethical values and benefit for all stakeholders.

The following table summarizes the transformation of Sufi values into a social economic model:

Sufi Values	Social Manifestation	Functional Description
Sincere	Operational transparency	Growing community trust
Trust	Public fund management	Ensuring accountability of zakat management
Zuhd	Anti-consumerism ethics	Strengthening the economy based on needs, not prestige

Third, through symbolic selection and a strict spiritual development process, tarekat institutions actively maintain the purity of Sufi teachings from the banality of modern public space. Practices such as bay'ah, suluk, and murshid guidance are still carried out in a disciplined manner as part of the da'wah framework that focuses on deep spiritual transformation. Bay'ah is understood not merely as a symbolic ceremony, but as a spiritual contract that binds the inner self between the student and the teacher, which reflects the seriousness in undergoing the Sufi path. Meanwhile, suluk is not seen as a mere ritual activity, but as a spiritual journey that is full of learning, mujahadah, and internalization of Sufi ethical values. In this context, the tarekat carries out its da'wah practices in a structured and controlled manner, so as not to get caught up in market commodification or political exploitation, and is still able to maintain the authenticity of deep Islamic spirituality.(Yusuf, 2020).

In addition to the transformative approach in social service, the role of the murshid as a spiritual guide remains a key pillar in maintaining the authenticity of the Sufi path in the tarekat. Direct supervision by the murshid ensures that the students' Sufism practices do not deviate from pure spiritual values, and are not co-opted by political or economic interests. This spiritual leadership becomes a control mechanism that affirms the boundaries between religious-mystical authority and political power. In this context, the tarekat plays an important role as an institution that maintains the purity of Sufism from the commodification of spiritual meaning that is prone to occur in public spaces dominated by market logic and power.(Curry, 2018). Thus, the active involvement of the congregation is not only as a center for personal

spiritual development, but also as an institutional actor that maintains transcendent values from the dangers of banality and profanation.

As part of the response to the challenges of contemporary spirituality and the fragmentation of values, this approach emphasizes the importance of maintaining the purity of Sufism teachings from the tendency of commodification and instrumentalization by market and political interests. In a context where religion is often marketed as a symbol or lifestyle, orders such as TQN Suryalaya emphasize their commitment to the integrity of Sufi teachings by strengthening the practice of *baya'ah*, *suluk*, and the accompaniment of a *murshid*. Through this strict spiritual discipline, the order community is formed as a space of resistance to consumerism and the banality of public space, while maintaining the authenticity of values such as *ikhlas*, *sabr*, and *zuhd*. Although the presence of digital opens up opportunities to spread Sufi preaching more widely, the challenge of the decay of spiritual meaning remains a major concern. (Piraino, 2016b).

4. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study also show that Neo-Sufism based on *tarekat*, such as TQN Suryalaya, offers a *da'wah* paradigm that combines spiritual, social, ethical, and institutional dimensions. Personality transformation is understood as an outward manifestation of inner development, reflecting the relationship between spiritual practice and social identity. This approach is in line with the concept Rytter (2016), which seeks to bridge Islamic spirituality with social sustainability in a pluralistic society. In this context, these orders not only foster individual spirituality, but also articulate Sufi values in concrete social action. With a holistic approach, they integrate spiritual values in areas such as health care, alternative economics, and moral rehabilitation, especially in urban communities facing social challenges. This approach emphasizes social justice and shows how spiritual values can inform social work and create meaningful social change. (Carrington, 2023).

By emphasizing Sufi principles such as justice, togetherness, and social responsibility, the *tarekat* emphasizes Sufi values such as justice, altruism, and social responsibility in responding to the problems of poverty, injustice, and moral degradation in urban society. This approach combines individual spiritual purification with collective action through education and social assistance, which encourages contextual *da'wah* that is relevant and transformative. Although coming from different backgrounds, both place social *da'wah* as a means to build inclusive and sustainable welfare, and foster a spirit of sincere service to actively and strategically respond to the social challenges faced by Indonesia. (Aziz & Huda, 2018).

This finding theoretically expands the framework previously proposed by Abdullah (2022) about Preserving formal spiritual structures is important to counter the secularization and commodification of religion, maintaining spiritual identity. Preserving formal spiritual structures is important in facing the wave of secularization and commodification of religion. Although often considered to hinder modernization, these structures actually function as a fortress that maintains the essence of religious teachings amidst the current of globalization. In Abdullah's view, formal rituals and teachings not only have historical relevance, but also offer a depth of meaning that can be applied in the modern world. This spiritual essence is the basis for resistance to modernity which often erodes traditional values and deep spirituality.

In the Indonesian context, the results of this study indicate that the institution of the tarekat is not only able to survive in the midst of modernity, but also plays a role as an agent of regeneration of spiritual values that are adaptive to contemporary socio-cultural dynamics. The reformulation of Sufi teachings in the realm of social practice allows values such as ikhlas, sabr, and zuhd to be integrated with social and economic programs that are relevant to urban society without obscuring the core of Sufism teachings as a profound spiritual guideline. This shows that the formal structure of the tarekat is able to become a catalyst for social change, by integrating social services, alternative economic empowerment, and moral development into their da'wah framework. In this configuration, the tarekat plays a role as a liaison between the rich spiritual treasures of Islam and the needs of modern society, with a contextual and transformative da'wah approach. (Falach & Assya'bani, 2022).

The Inabah Program managed by TQN Suryalaya is a concrete representation of the application of Sufi values in the realm of social services, especially through the concept of tazkiyatun nafs (purification of the soul) which is adapted in the context of psychosocial rehabilitation. This program combines classical spiritual discipline with modern therapeutic methods to address drug abuse problems. This holistic approach not only focuses on physical recovery, but also strengthens the spiritual and moral dimensions of the individual. The success of the Inabah Program which has been recognized by various medical institutions shows that Sufi values such as ikhlas, sabr, and zuhd can be translated practically into a transformative da'wah strategy, proving the relevance of Sufism in solving contemporary social problems. (Rizal, 2022).

The Inabah program reflects a holistic approach by integrating physical, mental, and spiritual aspects as a response to modern social challenges. This approach emphasizes the relevance of Sufi teachings and the active role of the order in addressing the spiritual crisis of

urban society, and shows that Sufism remains relevant as a therapeutic solution today ((Umam & Suryadi, 2019).

This study also highlights significant differences between the institutional Neo-Sufism promoted by the tarekat and the individualistic popular Sufism. The Neo-Sufism of the tarekat is characterized by a systematic spiritual guidance system that is deeply rooted in authentic genealogy and scholarly authority. In contrast, popular Sufism tends to be sporadic and symbolic, adopting Sufi elements selectively without a deep spiritual guidance process. The Last Supper (2016) underlines the criticism of popular Sufism which places too much emphasis on aesthetic aspects, while emphasizing that authentic spiritual attainment can only be achieved through the appreciation of ethical values, love, and discipline in self-control.

As a consequence of the development of Sufism in the modern context, the expression of Sufism often emphasizes the external aspects such as spiritual symbols, public rituals, and aesthetic religious affirmations. However, this approach risks neglecting the core dimension of Sufism, namely *tazkiyatun nafs* (purification of the soul), which is the foundation for authentic spiritual transformation. Although this form of Sufism has succeeded in attracting the interest of the younger generation and urban society because it appears inclusive and contextual, it is prone to being trapped in superficial cultural practices without a commitment to spiritual ethics and spiritual discipline. Therefore, in the Neo-Sufism current that seeks to become a moral and social force, it is important for contemporary orders to balance adaptation to modernity with inner purification in order to remain rooted in the essence of Sufism: the cultivation of the heart and the achievement of deep and sustainable spirituality. (Diah Arvionita, 2023).

In contrast, Sufi orders such as TQN Suryalaya demonstrate the harmony between external spiritual practices—such as *dhikr*, *suluk*, and *silsilah keilmu*—with social functions such as education, empowerment, and public service, creating a synthesis between the inner and outer dimensions of religious life. Unlike studies that highlight the religious practices of Muslim patients with schizophrenia—such as prayer and *dhikr*—which focus more on their impact on the individual's mental and spiritual health, these orders combine deep spiritual practice with real contributions to society through health, education, and economic services. (Irawati et al., 2023).

With a valid structure of guidance and consistent spiritual guidance, these orders demonstrate how the values of Sufism can be translated into concrete and impactful actions. The practice of *dhikr* and *suluk* is not merely an inner experience, but a transformative journey that gives birth to love, compassion, and social justice. Authentic spirituality, when practiced with commitment and discipline, is able to integrate the inner and outer dimensions

harmoniously, and become a positive force that drives social change towards a more prosperous, civilized, and caring society.(McEntee, 2017).

As a development of previous findings, this study confirms the strategic role of Neo-Sufism in bridging two extreme poles in contemporary Islamic da'wah practices. On the one hand, there is a confrontational and legalistic approach, which tends to strengthen social polarization and trigger tensions between groups of people. On the other hand, there is also a growing spirituality that is too liberal and individualistic, which often ignores social responsibility in religiosity. Neo-Sufism appears as a moderate alternative that integrates personal spiritual depth with active and constructive social commitment. This approach reflects the principle of balance that is in line with Al-Farabi's thinking, which emphasizes the importance of social harmony and rejection of extremism in order to build a healthy, just, and inclusive society.(Famarzgharamaleki, 2018).

In this framework, Neo-Sufism shows a common vision with the mindfulness approach, especially in terms of balancing the spiritual dimension with social responsibility. Neo-Sufism upholds the values of compassion, tolerance, and justice as the foundation of Islamic preaching rahmatan lil 'alamin, and opens up space for dialogue in a pluralistic society without losing commitment to universal ethical values. On the other hand, mindfulness contributes through the development of self-awareness, emotional control, and deep experiences of transcendence—all of which strengthen ethical sensitivity and social empathy. The collaboration of values between the two can be a force in reducing potential conflict and strengthening social cohesion in an increasingly diverse and complex society.(Miller & Verhaeghen, 2022).

The harmony of values between Neo-Sufism and mindfulness is the foundation for the prophetic preaching model promoted by Neo-Sufism-based orders. This preaching is based on the principle of rahmatan lil 'alamin and is oriented towards islah or sustainable social transformation. Spirituality is not only interpreted as a personal experience, but also as a foundation for structural change through concrete approaches such as ethics-based education, systematic social services, and equitable economic development. In facing the challenges of the times, a preaching approach that is inclusive theologically and contextually is needed, in order to move Muslims towards unity and constructive social change.(Whyte & Yucel, 2023).

Thus, Neo-Sufism combines the practices of dhikr and suluk with a commitment to broader social responsibility. In the contemporary context, this approach demonstrates flexibility and innovation, including by adopting digital platforms as a form of borderless zawiya—a spiritual space that is no longer bound by geography, but still voices Sufi values in

a globally relevant and transformative format.(Diego Gonzalez, 2025). This kind of preaching pattern is in line with the ideaThe Greatest Showman (2024)about the collaborative preaching model, which integrates the spiritual dimension with a social improvement agenda based on the values of mutual cooperation and deliberation. This model not only encourages healing of collective trauma, but also contributes to the formation of a just, harmonious, and civilized community.

Neo-Sufi orders in Indonesia demonstrate the integration of spirituality and social involvement through da'wah that emphasizes compassion, justice, and inclusiveness as core values. This approach not only emphasizes individual dimensions such as asceticism, but also broadens the scope of da'wah to the realm of universal humanity through cross-identity social charity practices.(Rijal & Alhabsyi, 2024). Through the prophetic da'wah model, the tarekat articulates the spirit of rahmatan lil 'alamin as a moral foundation that integrates compassion and social justice in the context of a pluralistic society. This approach goes beyond the boundaries of normative teachings, focusing on islah and concrete social transformation that targets contemporary humanitarian issues.(Larsen, 2023). The implementation of these values is evident in various institutional programs, such as education based on Sufi ethics, social and health services that are responsive to the needs of grassroots communities, to economic development based on the principle of distributive justice. Thus, spirituality is no longer limited to the private sphere, but is transformed into a transformative force that encourages social participation, structural liberation, and improvement of social relations in order to achieve collective welfare.(Meintel, 2023a).

Within this framework, Neo-Sufism is no longer limited to the practice of dhikr and suluk as a means of purifying the soul, but rather makes transcendental experience an ethical foundation in encouraging active and transformative social involvement.(Thibdeau, 2025). The approach to preaching that is developed is comprehensive—combining spiritual depth with real action in the midst of society—so that it is able to answer contemporary dynamics without letting go of its Sufi roots. This movement carries a flexible and contextual preaching model, avoiding the trap of rigid religious symbolism or isolated spirituality. As explained bySingh & Awasthy (2024), this approach represents the concept of da'wah that unites the dimensions of individual piety with social responsibility, which reflects the spirituality of social entrepreneurship in order to encourage integral, sustainable societal transformation, and is based on ethical, ecological and shared welfare values.

This discussion confirms that Neo-Sufism appears as an adaptive and progressive religious paradigm, which combines deep spirituality with social sensitivity in responding to

the ethical and identity crisis in the modern era.(Faruque, 2022). In the face of the pressures of globalization, secularization, and the dominance of materialistic values, many individuals and groups experience a void of meaning and loss of orientation in life. In such a situation, Neo-Sufism plays a strategic role by integrating the reflective inner dimension with real social action, so that it is able to connect individual religiosity with collective social commitment. Through this approach, Neo-Sufism provides a relevant ethical offering, by making the values of compassion, love for others, and virtue the main pillars of moral transformation in society.(Younis et al., 2024).

Neo-Sufism thought and practice are not only oriented towards personal spiritual attainment, but also act as an inner force that drives social change. Through an ethical, inclusive, and humanist approach, Sufi spirituality is interpreted as a foundation for active involvement in the social realm, in order to encourage the transformation of social relations and the improvement of collective welfare.(Meintel, 2023b). In this context, Neo-Sufism integrates Sufi values into socio-political dynamics by emphasizing the importance of social justice, solidarity among human beings, and moral responsibility. This is an alternative response to the crisis of values caused by the dominance of pragmatism and consumerism. Values such as sincerity, simple living, and empathy that are at the core of Sufism, are in line with the Qur'anic principles of human dignity, freedom, and justice in the distribution of wealth—all of which form the foundation for a more just, sustainable, and adaptive social ethic to the challenges of the times.(Junaidi et al., 2023).

In this case, Neo-Sufism has an important role in reconstructing public ethics and reviving human values that are increasingly eroded by the rapid progress of modernity and often ignore the spiritual dimension of humans. In accordance with the view Junaidi et al. (2023), Neo-Sufi spirituality is not only personal, but also social, inspiring transformational action in society. Sufi concepts such as *ishq-i haqiqi* (true love for God) can provide deeper meaning, while encouraging the formation of more humane and sustainable social and economic organizations. Culliford (2020) also emphasizes that Neo-Sufism is able to bridge the inner dimension with social reality, integrating spirituality into public life. This approach supports the formation of a more just, moral and meaningful society, and provides solutions to the challenges of the modern era by strengthening the relationship between individuals and their communities.

Through this study, it is hoped that further development in the study of Sufi da'wah will not only focus on theoretical or historical aspects, but also on its practices and transformational impacts in building a more moral, ethical, and just Islamic society. Further research can explore

how the application of Sufi values in social life can strengthen the moral foundations of society, renew ethics in the fields of economics, education, and social services, and reduce social inequality. Given that Neo-Sufism offers solutions to contemporary social problems by integrating the tawhidic paradigm as a framework for liberation, this approach emphasizes inclusivity and engagement with non-Muslim perspectives, recognizing them as moral agents in the struggle for freedom, and contributing to Islamic da'wah that is more transformative and relevant to the challenges of the times.(Saffari, 2023).

5. CONCLUSION

The most striking finding of this study is that the practice of Neo-Sufism in Indonesia—as exemplified by the TQN (Tarekat Qadiriyah wa Naqsyabandiyah) Suryalaya—has not only survived the forces of modernity, secularization, and the globalization of values, but has in fact evolved into a form of social da'wah that is contextual, transformative, and highly relevant to the needs of urban society. The success of these Sufi orders in developing spiritually-based drug rehabilitation programs, ethically grounded economic cooperatives, and education and healthcare systems inspired by Sufi values demonstrates that spiritual teachings are neither passive nor ahistorical. On the contrary, Sufi spirituality can serve as an active force in addressing complex and evolving social problems.

This finding challenges the conventional assumption that spirituality is confined to the inner domain and personal rituals. In the context of these Sufi orders, spirituality is articulated as a robust foundation for public ethics—relevant to addressing moral crises, social disintegration, and ideological polarization affecting urban Muslim communities. Their approach illustrates that transcendental values need not be abandoned for social engagement; rather, it is from deep spirituality that commitments to justice, welfare, and sustainable communal life emerge. Accordingly, Indonesian Neo-Sufism represents not merely a reaction to modernity but also an alternative paradigm for addressing broader spiritual and social crises.

Academically, this article contributes a new perspective that integrates classical Sufi approaches with the practical needs of contemporary society. It does not merely reaffirm the role of Sufism as an expression of individual religiosity, but instead challenges outdated assumptions about the irrelevance of Sufi orders in the contemporary public sphere. Furthermore, it proposes a model of institutionalized Sufi da'wah that is not only ethical and spiritual but also socially measurable. Thus, this article advances the concept of Neo-Sufism as a structured paradigm of social da'wah that can be transformed into a programmatic framework for community empowerment.

However, the study is limited in its scope, focusing only on two major Sufi orders and partial field data from associated pesantren (Islamic boarding schools). Alternative models of Sufi da'wah, such as those emerging in non-Javanese regions, among female Sufi orders, or within digital expressions of Sufism, remain underexplored. In addition, the qualitative library-based approach used in this study does not allow for in-depth exploration of the subjective experiences of Sufi practitioners. Therefore, future research employing ethnographic methods or comparative studies across different orders and regions is necessary to broaden the validity and depth of the findings. Such efforts will enable the development of a more comprehensive understanding and inform the creation of inclusive, contextual, and transformative Islamic da'wah policies.

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