

# UNVEILING THE ESSENCE OF WORLDLY LIFE THROUGH THE PERSPECTIVE OF *TASAWUF* IRFANI: A STUDY ON ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR INDONESIAN URBAN MUSLIM SOCIETY

Fadillah Ulfa<sup>1</sup>, Mukhlizar<sup>2</sup>, Che Zarrina Saari<sup>3</sup>, &  
Syed Mohammad Hilmi Syed Abdul Rahman<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2</sup> Universitas Muhammadiyah Bengkulu, Indonesia

<sup>3,4</sup> University of Malaya, Malaysia

\*e-mail: fadillahulfa@umb.ac.id

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## Abstract

This study examines the essence of world life through Tasawuf Irfani, which emphasizes intellectual understanding of divine knowledge and soul purification. It explores how these teachings shape Indonesian Muslims' perspectives on materialism, wealth, and life's true purpose. The study emphasizes the increasing focus on how Tasawuf Irfani tackles materialism, consumerism, and spiritual fulfillment, while existing literature mainly explores its philosophical aspects, neglecting its practical implementation in Indonesian society. This qualitative study uses literature review and textual analysis to explore Tasawuf Irfani's teachings, Islamic views on worldly life, and their impact on socio-economic behaviors, focusing on the balance between material success and spiritual growth in Indonesia. The results reveal that Tasawuf Irfani provides a profound critique of materialism and consumerism, encouraging Indonesian Muslims to view wealth and worldly success as tools for spiritual growth rather than ultimate goals. It also fosters qualities such as humility, moderation and social responsibility. On the other hand, the study points out challenges like the risk of overly disengaging from material pursuits, which may result in limited involvement with pressing social issues in a pragmatic sense. Tasawuf Irfani concludes with a spiritually based perspective concerning wealth and success, suggesting potential integration within education and community initiatives to alleviate socio-economic issues in Indonesia, which can be the focus of future research.

**Keywords:** Tasawuf Irfani; Worldly Life; Indonesian Muslim Urban; Spiritual Perspective

## A. Introduction

In Islam, the perception of worldly life as a temporary journey filled with trials is deeply rooted in the teachings of the Qur'an, which emphasizes the transient nature of material pursuits and the goal of achieving eternal happiness in the Hereafter. *Sūra 102 al-Takāthur* warns against the preoccupation with wealth and worldly pleasures,

highlighting the eschatological consequences of such attachments and urging Muslims to focus on spiritual and moral development instead (Kulinich, 2022). This perspective is further reinforced by the concept of covenants in the Qur'an, which establish the framework for human existence and relationships, emphasizing the importance of righteousness, welfare, and the dissemination of the divine message as central to achieving balance between worldly life and the Hereafter (Rane, 2023). The development of a Muslim Spiritual Happiness Scale underscores the significance of integrating spiritual aspects into the understanding of happiness, contrasting with Western material-centric measures, and aligning with the Islamic view that true happiness encompasses both spiritual and material dimensions (Sukmawati et al., 2022). Additionally, practices such as fasting during Ramadan, one of the five pillars of Islam, serve as a practical embodiment of this balance, encouraging self-discipline and spiritual reflection while accommodating individual circumstances to prevent harm (Hamodat et al., 2020). These teachings and practices guide Muslims in navigating the challenges of worldly life, ensuring that their actions align with the goal of achieving eternal happiness in the Hereafter (Prayogo et al., 2024).

Tasawuf Irfani, as a philosophical and intellectual form of Sufism, emphasizes the inner understanding and purification of the soul through the attainment of *ma'rifah*, or divine knowledge, which is central to understanding the ephemeral nature of worldly life and its role to recognize the Divine. This perspective aligns with the teachings of Ibn 'Arabī, who highlights the spiritual essence of Prophet Muḥammad as a culmination of prophetic wisdom, emphasizing that spirituality cannot be separated from external actions, thus providing a framework for understanding the world to spiritual enlightenment rather than an end (Lala, 2023). The mystical experiences described by Ibn 'Arabī, such as spiritual unveiling (*Kashf*), further illustrate how divine knowledge can guide legal and spiritual practices, reinforcing the idea that the world is a platform for spiritual growth (Lala, 2022). This view is echoed in the allegorical interpretations of Sufi literature, which liken the journey of spiritual enlightenment to escaping Plato's Cave, where the world of shadows represents the material world, and the sun symbolizes divine truth (Shadi, 2022).

The philosophical exploration of mystical experiences, as discussed by Paul Marshall, suggests that these experiences can offer insights into deeper realities, challenging materialist metaphysics and encouraging a spiritual understanding of existence (Marshall, 2022). Thus, Tasawuf Irfani serves as a reminder for Muslims to view the world through a spiritual lens, prioritizing the purification of the heart and the pursuit of divine knowledge to achieve true happiness in the Hereafter, contrasting sharply with materialistic perspectives that treat the world as the ultimate destination (Dickson, 2022).

Tasawuf Irfani holds great relevance among the Muslim community in Indonesia, particularly within the context of a society often influenced by materialistic values and consumerism (Siraj et al., 2022). Indonesia, with its predominantly Muslim population and rich cultural diversity, has seen the development of various forms of Sufi teachings that seek to integrate spirituality with daily life. In many aspects of social life, Tasawuf provides an approach that emphasizes balance between this world and the Hereafter, as well as a deeper spiritual consciousness (Suwito et al., 2022).

Tasawuf Irfani, a branch of Sufism, offers Indonesian Muslims a philosophical framework that transcends the materialistic pursuits of modern life, emphasizing spiritual fulfillment and inner peace. This perspective is increasingly relevant in Indonesia, where many Muslims seek deeper spiritual understanding amidst the fast-paced, consumer-driven world. The Muhammadiyah movement, traditionally seen as

anti-Sufi, has incorporated Sufi values such as monotheism and noble character into its practices, reflecting a broader trend of integrating Sufi spirituality without adhering to specific Sufi orders (Muttaqin et al., 2023). Historically, Sufism in Indonesia has evolved through various phases, from the unorthodox *wujudiyah* to more orthodox practices, indicating a dynamic interplay between mysticism and Islamic jurisprudence. Hybrid Sufism, which balances the vertical dimension of seeking God's pleasure with the horizontal dimension of societal harmony, has been shown to enhance the quality of life by fostering respect for local wisdom and environmental preservation (Suwito et al., 2022).

In cultural practices like pencak silat, Sufi teachings promote spiritual intelligence and religious tolerance, contributing to personal and societal peace (Sutoyo, 2023). The Tarekat Shiddiqiyah exemplifies how Sufi orders can mitigate religious conflicts by promoting peace, balance, and comprehensive understanding through spiritual practices (Dodi & Abitolkha, 2022). Even within the Salafi context, Sufism finds a place, as seen in the teachings of prominent Indonesian televangelists who blend Salafi and Sufi elements to appeal to a broad audience. This integration of Sufi principles into various aspects of life, including addiction recovery, highlights the role of spirituality in addressing personal and societal challenges (Bensaid et al., 2021). The Naqshbandiyah order, through practices like khalwat, fosters spiritual growth and social responsibility, demonstrating the transformative potential of Sufi practices in modern life (Yusuf, 2020). Overall, Tasawuf Irfani and its related practices offer Indonesian Muslims a means to navigate life's challenges with wisdom and spiritual awareness, fostering a balanced approach to worldly and spiritual pursuits.

Tasawuf Irfani, as a philosophical and intellectual branch of Sufism, emphasizes the knowledge of the Divine (*ma'rifah*) and the purification of the soul, viewing the world as transient and a means to approach the Divine. This perspective aligns with the broader Sufi tradition, which often contrasts with materialistic views by focusing on spiritual fulfillment beyond the physical realm. The works of Ibn 'Arabī, for instance, highlight the spiritual essence of Prophet Muḥammad, emphasizing a comprehensive spiritual journey that transcends mere religious formalism, thus resonating with the Tasawuf Irfani's focus on deeper spiritual connections (Lala, 2023).

Furthermore, the mystical interpretations of allegories, such as Plato's Cave, in Sufi literature underscore the journey from the shadows of the material world to the enlightenment of divine truth, paralleling the Tasawuf Irfani's view of worldly life as a temporary stage in a greater spiritual journey (Shadi, 2022). The anthropology of Tasawuf, as discussed by Ahmad Asrori, also supports this view by integrating rational and spiritual perspectives, suggesting that true knowledge and understanding of human essence are achieved through spiritual enlightenment, not just material achievements (Riyadi, 2017). Additionally, the historical purification and differentiation within Sufism, as observed in the premodern period, reflect efforts to maintain the purity of spiritual pursuits against the encroachment of undesirable elements, further emphasizing the Tasawuf Irfani's focus on spiritual over material values (Meerasahibu, 2022). This synthesis of Sufi thought and practice illustrates how Tasawuf Irfani guides individuals to perceive life's challenges and pursuits as part of a spiritual journey, rather than ultimate goals, fostering a deeper connection with the Creator.

Tasawuf Irfani profoundly influences the worldview of Indonesian Muslims by offering a deeper, more spiritual understanding of life. In a society often dominated by material aspirations, the teachings of Tasawuf Irfani provide an alternative viewpoint that emphasizes inner growth, humility, and detachment from worldly desires (Suwito

et al., 2022). This approach encourages Muslims to shift their focus from the fleeting nature of material wealth and status to the pursuit of inner peace, righteousness, and closeness to Allah. By exploring the implications of Tasawuf Irfani on the daily lives of Indonesian Muslims, this study aims to analyze how these teachings shape personal values, social interactions, and the broader societal mindset, promoting a more spiritually conscious and balanced way of living (Khotimah & Sukron, 2023).

Indeed, the influence of Tasawuf Irfani on Indonesian Muslim society has been extensively researched, shedding light on its impact on spirituality, culture, and religious practices. The previous studies, such as those by Mohd Akib et al. (2022) and Muttaqin et al. (2023), focus on how prayer and the mystical practices of Sufism contribute to authentic Islamic spirituality. Meanwhile, research by Siraj et al. (2022) and Smith et al. (2023) explores the challenges faced by Sufi literature and the involvement of women as spiritual leaders, illustrating the evolving nature of Sufism. Subchi et al. (2022) and Sutoyo (2023) examine the relationship between religious moderation and the integration of Sufi principles into cultural practices, such as Pencak Silat. Suwito et al. (2022) investigate the blending of Sufism with modern approaches, while Yusuf (2020) emphasizes the communal aspect within the Naqsyabandiyah tarekat. Together, these studies highlight the significant role of Tasawuf Irfani in shaping both individual and collective spiritual and cultural identities in Indonesia.

In this regard, the primary objective of this study is to uncover the understanding of the essence of world life from the perspective of Tasawuf Irfani. This involves exploring how Tasawuf Irfani redefines world life as a temporary phase meant for spiritual development and a means to achieve ultimate closeness to Allah. By delving into the concepts of *ma'rifah* and spiritual purification, this study aims to provide a comprehensive insight into how Tasawuf Irfani shapes one's understanding of existence and its deeper meaning. Additionally, this study seeks to analyze the implications of Tasawuf Irfani on the daily lives of Indonesian Muslims. It will explore how these Sufi teachings impact various aspects of life, such as personal values, social interactions, and religious practices, ultimately influencing the way individuals engage with the material world and approach spiritual matters. Through this analysis, the study will shed light on how Tasawuf Irfani contributes to shaping a society that balances worldly endeavors with the pursuit of spiritual fulfillment, fostering a more harmonious and reflective Muslim community in Indonesia.

## **B. Methods**

The qualitative research approach employed in the study of Tasawuf Irfani within Indonesian Muslim society is well-suited for exploring the complex philosophical and spiritual dimensions of this mystical tradition. This approach allows for a deep examination of the underlying meanings and interpretations of Tasawuf Irfani, particularly in how it influences perceptions of world life. The study's methodology, which includes literature review and textual analysis, is crucial for synthesizing existing knowledge on Tasawuf Irfani and its societal impacts. By analyzing classical and contemporary texts such as the Qur'an, Hadith, and scholarly writings, the research aims to uncover the deeper meanings and assess their relevance to modern-day Indonesia (Rahman, 2019). The historical development of Tasawuf in Indonesia, from the 17th century to the present, highlights its dynamic nature and its role in shaping individual and societal values. Furthermore, the influence of Sufi literature, which has been a significant part of Indonesian Islamic literature since the 13th century, underscores the integration of spiritual and social life, contributing to the broader cultural and intellectual landscape (Siraj et al., 2022). This integration is

reflected in the Indonesian perspective of wellbeing, where spirituality and social relations are main components, indicating the profound impact of Tasawuf Irfani on the Indonesian worldview (Maulana et al., 2018). The study's holistic approach, combining historical insights with contemporary implications, provides a nuanced understanding of how Tasawuf Irfani shapes values and offers a perspective on the transient nature of the material world in relation to spiritual fulfillment.

## C. Findings and Discussion

### 1. Findings

Tasawuf Irfani, a school within Islamic mysticism, emphasizes intellectual and spiritual means to achieve divine knowledge and soul purification, distinguishing itself from other Sufi traditions by prioritizing intellectual development over mystical experience. This approach aligns with the views of influential Sufi thinker Ibn 'Arabi, who considered mystical experiences as a form of divine revelation, integrating them into his legal reasoning and emphasizing the inner aspects of rituals (Lala, 2022). In contrast, the Muhammadiyah perspective on Sufism, while positive, focuses on practical applications of Sufi teachings within the framework of shari'a, emphasizing noble character and social praxis rather than philosophical discourse (Biyanto, 2017). The relationship between Sufism and shari'a is further explored in contemporary contexts, where Sufi practices are categorized into juristic, supersessionist, and formless approaches, reflecting varied historical tendencies (Dickson, 2022). In South Punjab, Pakistan, Sufism has evolved from focusing on spiritual achievements to incorporating social and political dimensions, highlighting a shift in priorities with changing governance systems (M. Saeed & Naem, 2021). Meanwhile, the Naqshbandi Mujaddidi tradition, as introduced by Azad Rasool in the West, demonstrates continuity with early Sufi practices despite contextual changes, underscoring the asburyenduring nature of mystical doctrines (Asbury, 2022). Collectively, these perspectives illustrate the diverse expressions of Sufism, with Tasawuf Irfani's intellectual emphasis offering a unique path to understanding divine realities beyond material confines.

Tasawuf Irfani distinguishes itself from other forms of Sufism by integrating a philosophical and rational approach to spiritual growth, emphasizing intellectual understanding alongside traditional mystical practices. This approach is evident in the works of influential Sufi thinkers like Ibn al-'Arabi, who viewed mystical experiences as a form of divine revelation, thus blending rational inquiry with spiritual insights (Lala, 2022). The anthropology of Tasawuf, as discussed by Abdul Kadir Riyadi, further supports this by presenting man as both a rational and spiritual being, challenging the notion that Sufism is solely about ritualistic practices (Riyadi, 2017). This dual approach allows adherents to explore metaphysical questions about the soul, the universe, and the divine through critical reflection, aligning with the philosophical content found in Sufi literary texts like "*Mantiq al-Thuyur*" (Marshall, 2022). Moreover, the philosophical discourse in Tasawuf Irfani resonates with contemporary discussions on the metaphysical significance of mystical experiences, which seek to bridge the gap between mystical insights and rational understanding (Marshall, 2022). This synthesis of rational and mystical elements makes Tasawuf Irfani appealing to those seeking a deeper intellectual engagement with spirituality while maintaining the emotional and experiential dimensions typical of Sufi traditions.

### The Essence of Worldly Life According to Islam

In Islam, the concept of worldly life as a temporary existence and a divine test is deeply rooted in the Qur'anic narrative, emphasizing the transient nature of material pursuits and the ultimate significance of the Hereafter. Surah Al-Hadid (57:20) encapsulates this view by describing worldly life as mere play and amusement, underscoring the insignificance of wealth and status compared to eternal life. This perspective is further explored in Surah Al-Takāthur, which warns against the accumulation of wealth and worldly pleasures, highlighting the eschatological consequences of such pursuits and the interrogation about worldly pleasures on the Day of Judgment (Andrushchenko, 2022). The Qur'an's emphasis on covenants, as analyzed through the terms *'ahd* and *mīthāq*, further illustrates the divine framework governing human existence, where the focus is on righteousness and the dissemination of the divine message, rather than material accumulation (Rane, 2023).

Islamic theology, as discussed in the context of analytic theology, places the Qur'an at its center, advocating for a normative approach that aligns with the ethical teachings of Islam, which prioritize the afterlife over worldly gains (Abdelnour, 2023). The notion of life's meaning, as discussed in philosophical terms, aligns with the Islamic view that life's value is not in material wealth but in the intentional creation of value for oneself and others, which is ultimately insignificant from the eternal perspective (Persson & Savulescu, 2019).

Furthermore, the Balance doctrine in Islamic theology, which contrasts with the concept of purgatory, emphasizes that entry into heaven is determined by the balance of good deeds, reinforcing the idea that worldly life is a test for the afterlife (Al-Issa et al., 2021). This theological framework is supported by the contextualist approach to interpreting the Qur'an, which allows for the adaptation of its ethical teachings to contemporary circumstances while maintaining its core values (A. Saeed & Akbar, 2021). Thus, the Islamic view of worldly life as a temporary phase and a divine test is a multifaceted concept that integrates eschatological warnings, ethical covenants, and theological interpretations, all pointing towards the goal of preparing for the afterlife.

Islamic philosophy's dualistic view of existence, dividing life into the physical world (*Dunya*) and the eternal life after death (*Akhira*), is deeply rooted in the works of prominent Islamic philosophers and theologians. Mullā Ṣadrā, for instance, elaborates on the soul's journey, positing that death is not an end but a transition to a new mode of existence in the imaginal realm, where the soul's actions in the *dunya* shape its reality in the afterlife (Faruque, 2024). This perspective aligns with the broader Islamic worldview that sees the physical world as a place of trial, where individuals are tested in their faith and actions, with the Hereafter being the ultimate destination for reward or punishment based on one's deeds (Primadhany et al., 2022). Avicenna and Averroes, influenced by Aristotelian philosophy, also contribute to this discourse by exploring the nature of existence and essence, which further informs the understanding of life and the afterlife in Islamic thought (Calis, 2022).

The reconciliation of various Islamic philosophical traditions by Mullā Ṣadrā, through his transcendent theosophy, underscores the integrative approach to understanding the dual nature of existence, harmonizing rational proof, intellectual intuition, and Islamic sharia (Mufid & Subaidi, 2023). This dualism is not merely theoretical but has practical implications, as seen in Islamic bioethics, where end-of-life care is approached with a balance between the sacredness of life and the ethical considerations of pain and pleasure (Elmahjub, 2022). Furthermore, the spiritual teachings of Sufi literature, as explored in the mystical interpretations of allegories like Plato's Cave, emphasize the journey from the shadows of the physical world to the

enlightenment of the spiritual realm, mirroring the transition from *dunya* to *akhirah* (Shadi, 2022). This comprehensive understanding of existence in Islamic philosophy encourages Muslims to fulfill their worldly duties while preparing for eternal life, viewing the *dunya* as a more meaningful existence in the Hereafter.

### **Tasawuf Irfani in the Context of Indonesian Muslim Society**

Tasawuf Irfani, a form of Sufism emphasizing intellectual depth and knowledge, has played a significant role in the religious and cultural landscape of Indonesian Islam. The spread of Sufism in Indonesia can be traced back to the arrival of Islam through trade routes, where merchants also acted as propagators of the faith, leading to the establishment of Islamic kingdoms in the archipelago (Siraj et al., 2022). Early Sufi orders in Indonesia, such as those in Java and Aceh, focused on spiritual practices like dhikr and moral teachings, with figures like Hamzah Fansuri and Shams al-Sumatrani pioneering the *wujudiyah* stream of Sufism (Ni'am, 2020). The late 19th and early 20th centuries saw a shift towards Tasawuf Irfani as part of a broader Islamic reform movement, which sought to integrate Sufi spirituality with intellectual pursuits. This period coincided with the rise of modernist-reformer organizations like Muhammadiyah, which, despite being perceived as anti-Sufi, incorporated Sufi values such as tauhid and *akhlak al-karimah* into their quest for authentic Islamic spirituality (Muttaqin et al., 2023).

The localization of Islam in Indonesia, particularly in regions like Java and Sulawesi, further illustrates the dynamic interplay between Sufism and local traditions, where Islam was adapted to accommodate existing cultural practices (Ni'am, 2020). Additionally, Sufi literature has significantly influenced Indonesian culture, contributing to the nation's literary heritage and reflecting the broader societal values and worldviews (Siraj et al., 2022). Despite challenges, Tasawuf Irfani remains a vital component of Indonesia's diverse Islamic practices, reflecting a blend of spiritual depth and intellectual engagement.

The development of Tasawuf Irfani in Indonesia is deeply intertwined with the country's intellectual movements, particularly during periods of modernization and the quest for national identity. Historically, Tasawuf, or Sufism, has been a significant aspect of Indonesian Islam, with its roots tracing back to the 17th century when it was marked by a dynamic interplay between unorthodox and orthodox practices, as seen in regions like Aceh and Java (Suwito et al., 2022).

In contemporary times, Sufism has evolved to accommodate urban and educated demographics, reflecting a broader trend of urban Sufism that integrates traditional spiritual practices with modern lifestyles (Yusuf, 2020). This evolution is part of a larger neo-modernist movement in Indonesia, where intellectuals like Nurcholish Madjid and Abdurrahman Wahid have sought to harmonize traditional Islamic thought with modernist ideals, promoting a liberal and progressive interpretation of Islam (Siraj et al., 2022). Within this context, Tasawuf Irfani has emerged as a means for individuals to seek deeper existential understanding amidst the challenges of modernity, offering a counterbalance to the pervasive materialism and consumerism in Indonesian society (Muttaqin et al., 2023).

The Muhammadiyah movement, traditionally seen as anti-Sufi, has also engaged with Sufism by emphasizing ethical values and spirituality without adhering to specific Sufi orders, thus reflecting a broader acceptance and adaptation of Sufi principles (Muttaqin et al., 2023). Furthermore, the integration of local cultural elements, such as the Sundanese dangding, into Sufi practices highlights the indigenization of Islam in Indonesia, contributing to a unique Indonesian Sufi tradition

that resonates with the local populace (Khotimah & Sukron, 2023). This synthesis of Tasawuf Irfani with local culture and modern intellectual thought continues to shape the religious landscape in Indonesia, providing Muslims with a framework to navigate the complexities of contemporary life while maintaining a strong spiritual foundation.

### **The Concept of Worldly Life as a Place of Trial, While the Hereafter is the Ultimate Goal**

Tasawuf Irfani's perspective on worldly life as a temporary testing ground aligns with broader Islamic teachings, emphasizing spiritual growth over material success. This view is supported by the works of Muḥyī al-Dīn ibn 'Arabī, who highlights the spiritual essence of Prophet Muḥammad as a culmination of prophetic life, underscoring the importance of spirituality over mere religious formalism (Lala, 2023). The emphasis on spiritual intelligence and health in Islamic organizations further illustrates the significance of spiritual growth, as these qualities are shown to reduce occupational stress and enhance social functioning, reflecting the broader Islamic goal of nearness to God (Aini et al., 2023). Additionally, the integration of Salafist elements into Sufism, as seen in Indonesia, demonstrates a reformist zeal that values the spiritual teachings of the Prophet and his companions, reinforcing the idea that true success lies in spiritual and moral development rather than material achievements (Howell, 2001).

The concept of adulthood in Islam, which involves fulfilling religious and moral obligations, also supports this view by highlighting the importance of inner qualities such as belief and ethical virtues in living a religious life (Bensaid et al., 2021). Collectively, these perspectives affirm that the ultimate purpose of human existence in Tasawuf Irfani is to pursue spiritual growth and closeness to Allah, with worldly life serving to achieve this eternal goal. Tasawuf Irfani's teaching on the harmonious relationship between the material and spiritual realms aligns with various perspectives on spirituality and materialism discussed in the papers provided. The concept of integrating material pursuits with spiritual growth is echoed in the study of Islamic art and architecture, where the mystical opinions of Rumi are reflected in the design of the Sheikh Lotf-Allah Mosque, emphasizing a God-centered approach that transcends mere materiality (Askarizad et al., 2022). This perspective is further supported by the notion that the spiritual realm forms the base of society, influencing all aspects of life, including wealth, as discussed in the context of Nigerian spiritual economies (Lazarus, 2019).

The potential pitfalls of materialism are highlighted in the research on materialistic value orientation, which shows that excessive focus on material wealth can undermine well-being, suggesting the need for a balanced approach that Tasawuf Irfani advocates (Dittmar & Isham, 2022). Additionally, the adaptation process of new converts to Islam in Bali underscores the importance of integrating spiritual teachings with everyday life, reflecting the need for a supportive environment to maintain spiritual focus amidst material challenges (Paramita et al., 2021). Collectively, these insights affirm that while the material world is transient, it can be a conduit for spiritual growth if approached with detachment and aligned with divine will, as Tasawuf Irfani teaches.

In this sense, Tasawuf Irfani, as a branch of Sufism, emphasizes the importance of perceiving the material world through a lens of wisdom and understanding, which aligns with the broader Sufi tradition of seeking spiritual enlightenment beyond the physical realm. This perspective is akin to the mystical interpretation of Plato's Allegory of the Cave, where escaping the cave symbolizes transcending the world of

shadows to perceive the ultimate truth, a concept echoed in Sufi literature (Shadi, 2022). The practice of prayer in Islam, as discussed in the context of Tasawwuf psychotherapy, serves to strengthen one's spiritual health, fostering a harmonious balance between the spiritual and physical aspects of life. This balance is crucial for cultivating a positive character and maintaining a connection with Allah, thereby achieving inner peace and fulfillment (Mohd Akib et al., 2022). The Muhammadiyah movement, although not formally aligned with Sufi orders, incorporates Sufi values such as monotheism and noble character into its quest for authentic Islamic spirituality, promoting ethical living and virtuous actions in society (Muttaqin et al., 2023).

During Ramadan, the experience of isolation due to lockdowns highlighted the importance of individual reflection and connection with God, demonstrating how spiritual mindfulness can be maintained even in the absence of communal gatherings (Jones-Ahmed, 2022). Furthermore, the teachings of Ibn 'Arabī on the spiritual essence of Prophet Muhammad illustrate the integration of spiritual and material realms, underscoring the significance of spiritual realization in everyday actions (Lala, 2023). Collectively, these perspectives underscore Tasawuf Irfani's emphasis on living in the world without being consumed by it, fostering a life of spiritual mindfulness and fulfillment.

## 2. Discussion

### **Transforming Society: The Impact of Tasawuf Irfani on Wealth, Power, and Socio-Economic Views in Indonesia**

Tasawuf Irfani, a form of Sufism practiced in Indonesia, significantly influences the perception of material wealth, power, and worldly success among Indonesian Muslims by embedding these elements within a broader spiritual framework. This perspective is rooted in the historical development of Sufism in Indonesia, which has evolved since the 17th century, balancing between orthodox and unorthodox interpretations. The teachings of Tasawuf Irfani emphasize detachment from material possessions, advocating for their use as tools for spiritual elevation and societal contribution rather than as ultimate goals (Suwito et al., 2022). This approach aligns with the broader Sufi tradition, which often warns against the dangers of materialism, as excessive attachment to wealth and power can lead to spiritual decay, a concern echoed in the Qur'anic interpretations of sūra 102 al-Takāthur, which warns against the accumulation of wealth for its own sake (Kulinich, 2022).

Furthermore, the integration of Sufi teachings into urban settings, as seen in the Majelis Dzikir and Shalawat Nurul Mustafa, highlights the adaptability of Sufism in modern contexts, where it attracts urban youth by promoting spiritual values over material accumulation (Smith et al., 2023).

The concept of *fana'*, or self-annihilation, further underscores the Sufi emphasis on transcending the ego and material desires, fostering a mindset that prioritizes spiritual fulfillment (Dodi & Abitolkha, 2022). Additionally, the Muhammadiyah movement, although not formally recognizing Sufi orders, incorporates Sufi values such as monotheism and noble character, reflecting a broader acceptance of Sufi ethics in promoting virtuous actions in society (Muttaqin et al., 2023). This synthesis of Sufi principles with local cultural elements, as seen in the Sundanese Interpretations of Sufism, demonstrates the indigenization of these teachings, which harmonize spiritual practices with local traditions (Hidayat & Syahrul, 2017). Overall, Tasawuf Irfani encourages a balanced approach to wealth and power, viewing them as temporary blessings to be used responsibly and with humility, aligning with divine values such as

charity, justice, and community service.

Tasawuf Irfani, a form of Sufism, has significantly influenced the socio-economic perspectives of Indonesian Muslims by promoting a balance between material success and spiritual well-being. This shift is particularly relevant in a context where economic and social pressures often drive individuals towards materialism and competition. The teachings of Tasawuf Irfani emphasize life as a journey of inner transformation, encouraging individuals to align their actions with ethical standards and the greater good of society. This perspective aligns with the broader trend of religious moderation in Indonesia, which aims to prevent intolerance and radicalism by fostering a moderate religious outlook that integrates spiritual and ethical values into daily life (Subchi et al., 2022).

The Muhammadiyah movement, traditionally seen as anti-Sufism, has also embraced aspects of Tasawuf, focusing on ethical values and virtuous actions, which reflects a broader acceptance of Sufism as a system of values rather than a specific order (Biyanto, 2017). This integration of spirituality into everyday life is further evidenced by the positive relationship between spirituality and quality of work life among Indonesian employees, suggesting that organizations that support spiritual growth tend to be more successful (Kurniady et al., 2021).

Moreover, the emergence of new Islamic economic and business moralities indicates a reconciliation of modern economic practices with Islamic substantive morality, promoting ethical business practices that prioritize sustainability and social justice over mere profit (Sencal & Asutay, 2019). This transformation is part of a larger trend where Indonesian Muslims are increasingly adopting a sociocultural approach to Islam, focusing on moral and ethical advocacy rather than political Islamism (Latifa et al., 2022). Consequently, Tasawuf Irfani's teachings have contributed to a growing interest in economic models that emphasize collective well-being and ethical considerations, reflecting a broader shift towards integrating spirituality and ethical values into socio-economic structures in Indonesia.

### **Transforming Views on Success: Tasawuf Irfani's Influence in Combating Materialism and Consumerism in Indonesia**

Tasawuf Irfani plays a significant role in challenging materialism and consumerism in Indonesian society by promoting spiritual fulfillment and inner peace over material wealth. This approach aligns with the broader Indonesian perception of well-being, which emphasizes spirituality, gratitude, and social relations as key components of happiness and mental health (Hamka et al., 2022). The emphasis on detachment from material possessions, or *zuhd*, encourages Indonesian Muslims to resist consumer culture, which often leads to waste and the erosion of spiritual values (Mohd Akib et al., 2022). This is particularly relevant in a society where intrinsic religiousness positively influences consumer ethics, suggesting that a deeper spiritual engagement can mitigate unethical consumer behaviors (Shammout et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the resilience fostered by religiosity and social support enhances subjective well-being, providing individuals with the strength to resist consumerist pressures (Bukhori et al., 2022). The cultural context of Indonesian Islam, which integrates local traditions and global influences, supports this spiritual framework by promoting moral cultivation and intellectual discourse as strategies to address modern challenges (Al-Aharish, 2017). This approach is contrasted with the material consumption culture in other Islamic societies, where interpretations of religious guidelines vary, but the core principle of moderation remains central (Jafari & Süerdem, 2012). By advocating for a life of simplicity and mindful consumption,

Tasawuf Irfani offers a counter-narrative to the consumer economy, encouraging individuals to focus on personal growth and communal well-being rather than the accumulation of goods (Hudders & Pandelaere, 2012). This spiritual perspective not only enhances individual well-being but also contributes to a more ethical and sustainable society, aligning with the broader goals of Islamic thought to protect individuals from the extremes of materialism (Liu et al., 2025).

Tasawuf Irfani, a form of Sufism, significantly influences various aspects of Indonesian society, particularly in promoting a lifestyle centered on spiritual growth and community service over material accumulation. This influence is evident in the practices of individuals and organizations that prioritize spiritual values and social welfare. For instance, the Naqshbandiyah Khalidiyah order in Ponorogo emphasizes spiritual discipline through *khalwat* (seclusion), which enhances social and moral intelligence, leading participants to engage in charitable activities and social care, such as supporting orphans and alleviating poverty (Yusuf, 2020). Similarly, the Tarekat Shiddiqiyah in Jombang promotes peace and social harmony by focusing on inner spiritual practices that reduce religious conflicts and emphasize humanity and balance (Dodi & Abitolkha, 2022).

In educational settings, *pesantren* and Islamic organizations incorporate Tasawuf Irfani teachings, encouraging students to view wealth to fulfill religious duties rather than an end goal, aligning with the integrative educational approach advocated by figures like KH. Sahal Mahfudz, who emphasizes the integration of Islamic education with socio-cultural contexts (Irham, 2022). This approach is also reflected in business practices, where ethical entrepreneurship and fair-trade models are promoted, resonating with the hybrid Sufism that balances spiritual and material aspects to enhance quality of life. Furthermore, Tasawuf Irfani's principles are applied to address social inequalities, fostering community-oriented development that prioritizes collective well-being and environmental sustainability (Suwito et al., 2022). This shift towards ethical consumption and social justice aligns with the broader Sufi tradition in Indonesia, which, despite its diverse expressions, consistently emphasizes humility, generosity, and selflessness as core values (Muttaqin et al., 2023). Thus, Tasawuf Irfani not only shapes personal spiritual practices but also drives social change by embedding ethical and spiritual values into various facets of Indonesian life.

#### **D. Conclusion**

This study explored the principles of Tasawuf Irfani and its effects on how worldly life is understood within Indonesian Muslim society. It reveals that Tasawuf Irfani views the material world as a transient phase, with the aim being spiritual enlightenment and closeness to Allah. The teachings emphasize the importance of maintaining a balance between the material and spiritual aspects of life, encouraging Muslims to manage worldly possessions responsibly without becoming overly attached to them. The findings show both beneficial and challenging outcomes for Indonesian society. On the positive side, Tasawuf Irfani encourages a more balanced, ethical approach to life, reducing materialism and fostering virtues like humility, generosity, and spiritual growth. However, the study also points out potential drawbacks, such as an excessive focus on detachment from the material world, which may hinder active participation in practical socio-economic issues like economic development and societal progress.

Based on the findings, several suggestions are offered for future research and strengthening Tasawuf Irfani within Indonesian society. Future research should investigate how Tasawuf Irfani can address pressing contemporary issues such as

economic inequality, environmental sustainability, and social justice. Further field studies would also help to better understand its practical influence on daily practices in both urban and rural communities. There should be increased efforts to incorporate Tasawuf Irfani into mainstream Islamic education, with a focus on raising awareness about balancing material achievements with spiritual growth. Educational programs and seminars can further promote the application of these teachings. Indonesian Muslims are encouraged to integrate Tasawuf Irfani principles into their everyday lives by balancing material pursuits with spiritual and ethical growth, focusing on values such as humility, detachment from materialism, and community service. Additionally, community leaders should advocate for ethical economic practices and social responsibility, guided by the principles of Tasawuf Irfani, to help create a fairer and more compassionate society.

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#### F. Author Contributions Statement

All authors contributed collaboratively to the conception, development, and completion of this article. All authors make the research concept formulation and writing process, while, refined the theoretical and methodological framework, and provided analytical insights and ensured academic rigor, with all authors jointly reviewing and approving the final manuscript.

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