



## EXPLORING SUFISTIC VALUES IN THE CONTEXT OF ADAT BASANDI SYARAK: A STUDY OF IBN TAYMIYYAH'S SUFISM AND ITS RELEVANCE TO SOUTHEAST ASIAN ISLAMIC TRADITIONS

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### Abstrak

#### Kata Kunci:

Adat Basandi Syarak, Ibn Taymiyyah, Minangkabau, Sufisme

Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi nilai-nilai sufistik dalam filosofi Minangkabau “Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah” (ABS-SBK) melalui lensa tasawuf Ibnu Taimiyyah. Dikenal karena kritiknya terhadap mistisisme yang berlebihan, Ibnu Taimiyyah juga menganjurkan tasawuf yang seimbang yang mengintegrasikan pengabdian kepada Tuhan dengan manfaat sosial. Penelitian ini mengadaptasi ide-idenya ke dalam konteks Minangkabau, dengan menekankan kesesuaian antara spiritualitas Islam dan tradisi lokal. Dengan menggunakan metode deskriptif-analitis dengan pendekatan integratif, penelitian ini menggunakan karya-karya Ibnu Taimiyah sebagai sumber primer, dilengkapi dengan literatur sekunder yang relevan. Temuan-temuan dalam penelitian ini menyoroti elemen-elemen sufistik utama dalam ABS-SBK, termasuk penyucian diri, kesederhanaan hidup, integrasi spiritualitas dengan tanggung jawab sosial, keterlibatan kritis terhadap bid’ah, penyelarasan adat dengan syarak (hukum Islam), peran penting para cendekiawan agama (ulama) dan pemimpin budaya (pemangku adat). Penelitian ini menawarkan perspektif baru dengan menjembatani sufisme moderat Ibnu Taimiyyah dengan kearifan lokal Minangkabau, memberikan model untuk menyelaraskan prinsip-prinsip Islam dengan tradisi adat. Implikasinya meluas ke diskusi yang lebih luas tentang kontekstualisasi spiritualitas Islam dalam latar budaya yang beragam.

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## Abstract

### Keywords:

*Adat Basandi Syarak, Ibn Taymiyyah, Minangkabau, Sufisme*

This study explores Sufistic values within the Minangkabau philosophy of “*Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah*” (ABS-SBK) through the lens of Ibn Taymiyyah’s Sufism. Known for his critiques of excessive mysticism, Ibn Taymiyyah also advocates a balanced Sufism that integrates devotion to God with social benefit. This research adapts his ideas to the Minangkabau context, emphasizing the compatibility between Islamic spirituality and local traditions. Using a descriptive-analytical method with an integrative approach, the study draws on Ibn Taymiyyah’s works as primary sources, supplemented by relevant secondary literature. The findings highlight key Sufistic elements in ABS-SBK, including self-purification, simplicity in living, the integration of spirituality with social responsibilities, critical engagement with *bid’ah*, alignment of *adat* (custom) with *syarak* (Islamic law), and the pivotal roles of religious scholars (ulama) and cultural leaders (pemangku adat). Additionally, it identifies Sufistic dimensions in the cultural role of *Bundo Kanduang* in Minangkabau society. This study offers a novel perspective by bridging Ibn Taymiyyah’s moderate Sufism with Minangkabau’s local wisdom, providing a model for harmonizing Islamic principles with indigenous traditions. Its implications extend to broader discussions on contextualizing Islamic spirituality within diverse cultural settings.

## Introduction

Sufism, a significant dimension of the Islamic tradition, is often seen as the path to spiritual closeness to God through inner purification and devotion.<sup>1</sup> While historically centered on personal spirituality and divine union, recent discourse has emphasized the need for Sufism to engage more with societal and human concerns. This shift highlights the growing relevance of a balanced Sufism—one that integrates spiritual devotion with social responsibility.<sup>2</sup>

Ibn Taymiyyah, a prominent 13th-century scholar, offers a nuanced perspective on Sufism.<sup>3</sup> Despite his well-known critiques of certain

<sup>1</sup>Diah Arvionita et al., “Tasawuf Urban dan Tasawuf Perenial dalam Kehidupan Masyarakat Perkotaan,” *JPI: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 3, no. 1 (2023): 1–13, <http://dx.doi.org/10.22373/jpi.v3i1.16368>.

<sup>2</sup>Martin Lings, *What Is Sufism?* (Islamic Texts Society) (Cambridge: Islamic Texts Society, 1999).

<sup>3</sup>Rahmat Setiawan dan Suparman Syukur, “Menguak Etika Sufistik Ibnu Taimiyah,” *Didaktika Islamika: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Islam Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Tarbiyah Muhammadiyah Kendal* 12, no. 2 (2021): 1–23.

mystical practices, such as *waḥdat al-wujūd* (unity of being) and *fanā'* (annihilation), he did not reject Sufism entirely. Instead, he proposed a model rooted in the Qur'ān and Sunnah<sup>4</sup>, emphasizing moral purification (*taṣawwuf akhlāqī*), practical spirituality, and strict adherence to Islamic law (*syarī'ah*). Ibn Taymiyyah's vision reconciles esoteric spirituality with exoteric obligations, harmonizing Sufi inspiration with sharia-compliant practices. This unique approach contrasts with other prevalent Sufi traditions of his time, particularly those aligned with philosophical mysticism.

It can be understood, then, that Ibn Taymiyyah did not reject all the doctrines of Sufism, although he criticized some of them. For example, he firmly rejected the doctrines of *waḥdat al-wujūd* and *fanā'* altogether. Ibn Taymiyyah had a unique concept of Sufism, different from other concepts of Sufism disseminated by other Sufis, especially the supporters of *Wujūdīyah*. Ibn Taymiyyah's concept of Sufism strongly emphasizes its compatibility with the provisions of sharia. The compatibility of sharia and Sufism is the main feature of his model of Sufism. When other Sufis start their mystical journey from the stage of sharia, Ibn Taymiyyah places sharia as the last stage. For him, sharia is the main goal of the mystical journey; Sufism must be based on sharia, and must also end with sharia.<sup>5</sup> As explained by Nurcholish Madjid (Cak Nur), Ibn Taymiyyah's type of Sufism is *Taṣawwuf Akhlāqī*. This is because he prefers to purify morals over mystical experiences such as *waḥdat al-wujūd* or *fanā'* and the use of symbols to express these mystical experiences.<sup>6</sup>

Ibn Taymiyyah also recognized the validity of *ḥanq* and inspiration in tasawuf, both of which are human potential (*fiṭrah*) given by God. According to him, if human nature is based on piety, it is impossible to

<sup>4</sup>Barsihannoor Sukimin dan Salahuddin, "Pandangan Ibnu Taimiyah terhadap Wali," *Jurnal Diskursus Islam* 6, no. 1 (2018): 156–174, <https://doi.org/10.24252/jdi.v6i1.7113>.

<sup>5</sup>Izzuddin Washil dan Ahmad Khoirul Fata, "Pemikiran Ibn Taymiyah Tentang Shari'ah Sebagai Tujuan Tasawuf," *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf dan Pemikiran Islam* 7, no. 2 (2017): 353–375, <https://doi.org/10.15642/teosofi.2017.7.2.316-338>.

<sup>6</sup>Washil and Fata.

lead and mislead. Ibn Taymiyyah, in his *Syarḥ Futuḥ al-Ghaib*, emphasized that he did not deny Sufism that was intertwined with the al-Qur'ān and Sunnah as the basis of its epistemology. Ibn Taymiyyah tried to harmonize the two; between Sufism and sharia, between Sufi inspiration and *ẓānq* and fiqh, and between *ḥaqīqah* and sharia. Because the truth is not to be contradicted, because everything is intertwined under the auspices of *Imān*, *Islām*, and *Iḥsān*.<sup>7</sup> In addition, Ibn Taymiyyah proposed the Islamic method of thinking (based on the al-Qur'ān and Ḥadīs). He pointed out that the al-Qur'ān uses more intuitive methods, such as analogy (*qiyās syar'ī*), to establish understanding.<sup>8</sup>

Related to locality, some of the concepts held by Ibn Taymiyyah have local implications in religious practice, especially in terms of maintaining the balance between faith, morals and charity in a particular society. Some points related to locality in Ibn Taymiyyah's Sufism thought are:

*First*, is the principle of balance. Ibn Taymiyyah emphasized the balance between the life of the world and the hereafter.<sup>9</sup> As explained by Ibn Taymiyyah: "Whenever the affairs of the world are not upheld with justice, (the affairs of the world) will not be upheld even though the owner has faith that can reward him in the hereafter)."<sup>10</sup> In the context of locality, this could mean that a Muslim should actively participate in the social and economic life of his community while maintaining his spiritual integrity. This is relevant in local communities that may face certain challenges in maintaining such a balance.

*Secondly*, respect for local traditions that are sharia-compliant. Ibn Taymiyyah emphasized the importance of returning to the pure teachings

<sup>7</sup>Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah, *Syarḥ Futuḥ Al-Ghaib* (Damaskus: Dār al-Qādirī, 2005).

<sup>8</sup>Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah, *Al-Radd Ala al-Manḥiqiyyin* (Beirut: Muassasah ar-Rayan, 2005).

<sup>9</sup>Dani Suryaningrat dan Abdul Wahab, "Pemikiran Tokoh-tokoh Ekonomi Islam pada Periode Kedua Mengenai Konsep Distribusi," Jurnal Ilmiah Falsafah: Jurnal Kajian Filsafat, Teologi dan Humaniora 9, no. 2 (2023): 85–97, <https://doi.org/10.37567/jif.v9i2.2301>.

<sup>10</sup>Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah, *Al-Amru Bi Al-Ma'ruf Wa Al-Nahy 'an Al-Munkar* (Saudi Arabia: Wizarah Syu'un al-Islamiyyah wa al-Da'wah wa al-Irsyad, n.d.), 29.

of Islam and rejecting understandings and practices that are considered *bid'ah* (innovations) in religion or contrary to the authentic teachings of Islam.<sup>11</sup> He criticized practices such as *tawasul* (praying through intermediaries) to pious people or pilgrimages to tombs as forms of worship that were wrong and incompatible with the principles of pure Islam.<sup>12</sup> In the context of the history of Islamic civilization, this means that Ibn Taymiyyah emphasized the importance of critically examining history and filtering out practices that are incompatible with the original teachings of Islam.<sup>13</sup> Although highly critical of innovations in religion (*bid'ah*), Ibn Taymiyyah did not completely reject local traditions as long as they did not contradict Islamic principles.<sup>14</sup> In this case, Ibn Taymiyyah's approach can be relevant to see how local practices based on morals and sharia can be developed and maintained.

*Third*, local education and *da'wah*. Ibn Taymiyyah has some thoughts about education, among the thoughts of Ibn Taymiyyah's education and its explanation put forward by Mājīd Irsān al-Kailānī in his work *Al-Fikr al-Tarbawī 'inda Ibn Taimiyyah*, among others:

*First*, philosophy of education. The principle that is the basis for Ibn Taymiyyah's philosophy of education is useful knowledge, namely the principle of intelligent life and superior standing on the pillars of truth revealed by Allah. This is expressed by al-Kailānī in his book: "The principle underlying Ibn Taymiyyah's philosophy of education is that useful knowledge is the principle of intelligent life and superior is something that stands on the pillar of truth and revealed by the creator along with the nature of creation and the types of human beings who are

<sup>11</sup>Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah, *Al-Iman*, Terj. Kathur Suhardi, (Bekasi: Darul Falah, 2020).

<sup>12</sup>Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah, *Qaidah Jalilah Fi al Tawasul Wa al Wasilah* (Beirut: Dar al Arabiyah, 1965).

<sup>13</sup>Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah, *Gardens of Purification* (United Kingdom: Dar-Us-Sunnah, 2016).

<sup>14</sup>Nurcholish Madjid, *Ibn Taimiyah Tentang Kalam dan Falsafah* (Jakarta: Nurcholish Madjid Society, 2020).

holy and the rules governing nature and life.<sup>15</sup>

*Second*, the general purpose of education. According to al-Kailānī, the purpose of education for Ibn Taymiyyah there are three main or basic *first*, the education of individual Muslims; *second*, to raise the degree of Muslim women; *third*, to spread the *da'wah* of Islam on earth.<sup>16</sup>

*Third*, curriculum. Al-Kailānī revealed the principle of Ibn Taymiyyah's curriculum, namely that Muslims learn the commandments of Allah with them learning to understand and educate people to obey Allah and His Messenger. Ibn Taymiyyah's curriculum is divided into several types, *first*, the curriculum that leads to *tauhīd*, namely religious studies; *second*, the curriculum that leads to *ma'rifat Allāh*, namely seeing the perfection of the form of creatures; *third*, the curriculum that leads to *ma'rifat* or understanding the *qudrat* or ability of Allah. of the three curricula, Ibn Taymiyyah has an important position in the education of Muslims today.<sup>17</sup>

*Fourth*, the method of education and its basics. Al-Kailānī revealed that Ibn Taymiyyah's educational methods are divided into two methods, *first*, the scientific method (*al-Tarīqah al-'ilmiyyah*); and second, the *irādīyyah* method (*al-Tarīqah al-Irādīyyah*). The scientific method and the *irādīyyah* method are both methods that are composed of the understanding that the heart is a tool for demanding knowledge. The heart is the driver of the body and the goal in the life of mankind.<sup>18</sup>

With the four discussions above, it can be understood that Ibn Taymiyyah emphasises the importance of spreading useful knowledge and wise *da'wah* in society.<sup>19</sup> In the context of locality, his approach can be adapted to strengthen religious and moral education in local communities,

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<sup>15</sup>Majid 'Irsan Al-Kaylani, *Al-Fikr at-Tarbāny 'inda Ibn Taimiyah* (Madinah: Maktabah Dar al-Turats, 1986), 91–92.

<sup>16</sup> Majid 'Irsan Al-Kaylani, *Al-Fikr at-Tarbāny 'inda Ibn Taimiyah*, 107.

<sup>17</sup> Majid 'Irsan Al-Kaylani, *Al-Fikr at-Tarbāny 'inda Ibn Taimiyah*, 117.

<sup>18</sup> Majid 'Irsan Al-Kaylani, *Al-Fikr at-Tarbāny 'inda Ibn Taimiyah*, 145.

<sup>19</sup>Achmad Fageh, "Paradigma Baru Konsep Pendidikan Islam Perspektif Syaikh al-Islam Ibn Taimiyah," *Kuttab: Jurnal Ilmu Pendidikan Islam* 1, no. 2 (2017): 126–133, <https://doi.org/10.30736/ktb.v1i2.34>.

while maintaining the authenticity of Islamic teachings.

*Fourth, amr ma'ruf nahi munkar.* In Ibn Taymiyyah's thought, *amr ma'ruf nahi munkar* has a central role in maintaining the morality of society.<sup>20</sup> Many sharia laws involve many people (social), such as the commandment of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar*. Ibn Taymiyyah said: 'Allah commanded us to do good and forbid evil, and they cannot be enforced except by force and government.'<sup>21</sup> If the affairs of the state, which manages the needs and interests of the people at large, are separated from religion, this contradicts the command to do good and forbid evil. In other words, separating the state (worldly matters) from religion (*ukebrāmī*), known as secularism, is tantamount to privatising religion and rejecting its laws, which are mostly related to social life.<sup>22</sup> This practice is often adapted to suit local conditions, where the community has an active role in safeguarding the good and preventing the bad within its local sphere.

Thus, although Ibn Taymiyyah did not explicitly address 'locality' in a specific geographical or cultural context, his teachings allow for relevant applications to local communities who wish to maintain harmony between spiritual and social life based on the pure teachings of Islam. Ibn Taymiyyah championed the unification of religion and culture in Islamic civilisation. He emphasised that religion should not be separated from aspects of people's daily lives. In the historical context, Ibn Taymiyyah tried to build a relationship between Islamic values and the traditions and culture of each time, thus creating harmony in Islamic civilisation.

Minangkabau, as one of the majority Muslim ethnic groups in Indonesia, has a unique concept of life, namely the philosophy of 'Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah'. This philosophy emphasises

<sup>20</sup>Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah, *Etika Beramar Ma'ruf Nabi Munkar* (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 1995).

<sup>21</sup>Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah, *Siyasah Asy Syar'iyah Fi Isblah Ar Ra'iy Wa Ar Ra'yyati* (Beirut: Darul Kutub al 'Ilmiyah, 1988), 129.

<sup>22</sup>Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah, *Al-'Ubudiyah: Hakikat Penghambaan Diri* (Jakarta: Griya Ilmu, 2017), 35.

that adat and religion are inseparable, and both complement each other.<sup>23</sup> In this context, integrative Sufism thinking such as that offered by Ibn Taymiyyah can make a significant contribution to the development of Minangkabau spirituality.

In the Minangkabau tradition, Islam plays an important role in daily life, but customs also have a major influence. Therefore, any spiritual approach, including Sufism, must be able to adapt to the local context without abandoning pure religious teachings. Ibn Taymiyyah's approach to Sufism, which focuses not only on God but also on human welfare, is relevant to be applied in Minangkabau. This is in accordance with the spirit of Minangkabau customs that uphold togetherness, justice and social welfare.

In various literatures, Ibn Taymiyyah's *taṣawwuf* thought in terms of locality, let alone specifically related to the locality of Minangkabau, has so far not been found by many authors, both in national (Sinta) and international (Scopus) reputable journals. Nevertheless, to support this research, there are some that the author summarises literature related to Ibn Taymiyyah's *taṣawwuf* thought, including his criticism of *taṣawwuf*, especially exclusive theocentric *taṣawwuf*. Thus, the author can avoid excessive truth claims can see the development of Ibn Taymiyyah's Sufism thought, and can see the gap of the problem.

As revealed by Taqiuddin explaining that the discussion of Ibn Taymiyyah gets a significant portion, the study of this figure is needed, especially his views on Sufism because some orientalis and some groups of Muslims argue that Ibn Taymiyyah is against Sufism. This view is inseparable from the background of Ibn Taymiyyah's thought which is considered salafi and salafi is considered a group that is against Sufism.<sup>24</sup>

This is expressed also by Amir the intellectual and theological influence of Ibn Taymiyyah as a pioneer of the famous Islamic *mazhab* and

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<sup>23</sup>Azyumardi Azra, *Surau: Pendidikan Tradisional dalam Transisi dan Modernisasi* (Jakarta: Pusat Pengkajian Islam dan Masyarakat (PPIM) UIN Syarif Hidayatullah, 2017).

<sup>24</sup>Ahmad Taqiuddin, "Pemikiran Tasawuf Ibnu Taimiyyah," *EL-HIKAM: Jurnal Pendidikan dan Kajian Keislaman* 3, no. 2 (2010): 65–88.



reformist in medieval times. The flow of thought and legal views and fatwas have coloured many contemporary Islamic schools of thought that are impressed with the ideology philosophy and views of the salaf mazhab that he pioneered. Some of Ibn Taymiyyah's writings that speak deeply about the problem of Sufism are included in the book *Majmū' al-Fatawā* which is a collection of writings from Ibn Taymiyyah. In addition, Ibn Taymiyyah's views on Sufism can be seen from Ibn Taymiyyah's criticism of some concepts of Sufism, especially criticism of Ibn 'Arabī about *waḥdat al-wujūd*.<sup>25</sup>

But it needs to be underlined, as stated by Usman that Ibn Taymiyyah was not completely anti-*taṣawwuf*. He greatly appreciated some of the early Sufis, but he criticised the falsafī Sufi figures and the practitioners of the *ṭarīqah* that developed in his day who were only busy thinking about the afterlife. Ibn Taymiyyah strongly criticised the notion of *ittiḥād* initiated by Yazīd al-Bisṭāmī, strongly criticised the notion of *al-ḥulūl* taught by al-Ḥallāj, and rejected the notion of *waḥdat al-wujūd* initiated by Ibn 'Arabī.<sup>26</sup>

Setiawan and Syukur also explained that Sufistic ethics according to Ibn Taymiyyah is a science that discusses human behaviour towards God and humans. Ibn Taymiyyah's Sufistic ethics has a realistic-empirical-active character. That is, humans behave in real, sensory, and active ways because it is human nature that wills and moves as well as sensory beings. A person should practice the teachings of Islam in an integral way, not in pieces. The sources are reason, heart, and revelation placed in proportion. *First*, is knowledge, which will consider one's behaviour. *Secondly*, *maqāmāt* is the essence of *uṣūl al-dīn* which is the basis of outward behaviour.

<sup>25</sup> Ahmad Nabil Amir, "Fahaman Ibn Taimiyah dan Pengaruhnya dalam Tradisi Kalam," *Ulumuddin: Jurnal Ilmu-ilmu Keislaman* 12, no. 1 (2022): 133–158, <https://doi.org/10.47200/ulumuddin.v12i1.939>.

<sup>26</sup> Muh. Ilham Usman, "Meneroka Pemikiran Ibn Taymiyah: Kritik terhadap Filsafat dan Tasawuf," *Rausyan Fikir* 16, no. 1 (2020): 29–60, <https://doi.org/10.24239/rsy.v16i1.533>.

Outward behaviour is of no value without being based on inner charity. *Third, ma'rifah Allāh* becomes the starting point for doing good deeds. Because people who know Allah will do good deeds. The good and bad of a person's actions depend on how much a person knows Allah.<sup>27</sup>

Mujib and Helmy also explained that Sufism in Ibn 'Taymiyyah's perspective cannot be separated from Islamic law, but each of the two has a relationship that arises from his thoughts that link esoteric understanding and exoteric understanding. The dichotomy between esoteric and exoteric understanding of some concepts of Sufism such as *ahwāl*, *maqāmāt*, *ma'rifah*, and *karāmah* makes Muslims further away from Islamic teachings. The synthesis of Ibn 'Taymiyyah's understanding is manifested in the form of faith as a form of inner action (*taṣawwuf*) and piety as a form of outer action (*Syarī'ah*).<sup>28</sup> Sukimin, et. al. added that Ibn Taymiyyah asserted that anyone who reaches him is the treatise of the Prophet Muḥammad. Then he will not become a *walī* of Allāh except by following him, because whatever is obtained by someone in the form of guidance and true religion he must go through the mediation of the Prophet Muḥammad. Similarly, the one who reaches him with the message of a messenger will not become a *walī* unless he follows the messenger.<sup>29</sup>

Maghribi in his writings also includes a critique of traditional Sufi practices that deviate from orthodox Islamic teachings, stating that true Sufism should focus on inner purification while remaining firmly rooted in textual authenticity. Maghribi highlights Ibn 'Taymiyyah's stance against what he considered the excesses of mysticism, advocating a form of Sufism that fosters moral integrity and spiritual discipline without straying into what he considered innovations (*bid'ah*). In his analysis, Maghribi shows that Ibn 'Taymiyyah's approach provides a framework for a reformation of Sufism that can coexist with Salafi doctrines, reinforcing

<sup>27</sup>Setiawan dan Syukur, "Menguak Etika Sufistik Ibnu Taimiyah."

<sup>28</sup>Lalu Supriadi bin Mujib dan Muhammad Irfan Helmy, "Relasi Hukum Islam dan Tasawuf dalam Pemikiran Ibn Taimiyah," *Dialogia Jurnal Studi Islam dan Sosial* 18, no. 2 (2020): 227–251, <https://doi.org/10.21154/dialogia.v18i2.2173>.

<sup>29</sup>Sukimin dan Salahuddin, "Pandangan Ibnu Taimiyah terhadap Wali."

the idea that mystical experiences need not conflict with fundamental Islamic beliefs. The synthesis of Sufi practices with strict adherence to Sharia allows for a holistic understanding of spirituality that is both experiential and grounded in orthodoxy.<sup>30</sup>

Central to Ibn Taymiyyah's thought is the principle of balance—between faith and action, spirituality and worldly engagement, and divine devotion and human welfare. His ideas also recognize the value of local traditions, provided they align with shariah, and advocate for contextualized education and *da'wah* to strengthen community life. Such perspectives resonate with the Minangkabau philosophy of “Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah”, which underscores the inseparability of Islam and local customs.

However, despite Ibn Taymiyyah's relevance to contextualizing Islamic spirituality, limited studies explore the applicability of his Sufism in specific local contexts, particularly in the Minangkabau tradition. This gap forms the basis of the present research, which investigates the potential alignment of Ibn Taymiyyah's Sufistic values with Minangkabau's integrative philosophy. The study examines how his principles—such as balance, adherence to sharia, and moral integrity—can enrich Minangkabau spirituality while maintaining its distinct cultural identity.

By bridging Ibn Taymiyyah's moderate Sufism with Minangkabau's local wisdom, this research provides a fresh perspective on contextualizing Islamic spirituality in diverse socio-cultural settings. It also contributes to broader discussions on harmonizing universal Islamic values with local practices, thereby offering practical insights for sustaining spirituality in pluralistic societies.

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<sup>30</sup> Hamdan Maghribi, Alfina Hidayah, and Arikhah, “Ibn Taimiyyah Dan Rancang Bangun Taşawuf Salafi,” *Esoterik: Jurnal Akhlak Dan Tasawuf* 08, no. 02 (2022): 193–216, <http://dx.doi.org/10.21043/esoterik.v8i2.16509>; Hamdan Maghribi, *Tasawuf Salafi: Rekonstruksi Tasawuf Ibn Taimiyyah* (Malang: Madani, 2024).

## Method

This study employs a descriptive-analytical methodology with an integration approach to explore the relevance of Ibn Taymiyyah's Sufism concepts to the Minangkabau philosophy of "Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah" (ABS-SBK). A qualitative research design was adopted, focusing on the systematic classification and review of primary data, such as Ibn Taymiyyah's writings, and secondary sources, including scholarly analyses of his ideas and Minangkabau traditions. Thematic and descriptive analyses were used to extract and synthesize Sufistic values in ABS-SBK through the lens of Ibn Taymiyyah's emphasis on moral purification, sharia compliance, and social engagement. The integration approach bridges universal Islamic principles with local cultural contexts, demonstrating their compatibility and adaptability. Limitations, such as the availability of primary sources and interpretive challenges, were mitigated through reliance on recognized commentaries, multiple secondary sources, and contextual expertise. This methodology offers a comprehensive framework for understanding the intersection of Islamic spirituality and local traditions.

## Sufistic Values in ABS-SBK in the Perspective of Ibn Taymiyyah's Sufism Thought

In the Minangkabau context, the customary philosophy known as 'Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah (ABS-SBK)' is a strong foundation that maintains the balance between custom and religion. When actualising Ibn Taymiyyah's Sufism thought into the Sufistic values of ABS-SBK, there are several aspects that can be seen as harmony between these two thoughts, as follows.

## Self Purification in Ibn Taymiyyah's Sufism and Minangkabau

One of the central themes in Ibn Taymiyyah's Sufism is *tazkiyah al-nafs* or self-purification. According to Ibn Taymiyyah, true Sufism aims to purify the heart of inner diseases such as *riya'*, *hasad*, and pride. This self-purification must be done by following the sharia in a disciplined manner

and avoiding excessive behaviour in worship that was not taught by the Prophet Muhammad.<sup>31</sup> In Minangkabau, the ABS-SBK principle also teaches that all forms of customary and social activities must be based on *syarak* (Islamic law), which aims to maintain the purity of the heart and moral hygiene of the community. Minangkabau customs teach values such as honesty, simplicity and cleanliness of heart, which are very much in line with the teachings of Ibn Taymiyyah's Sufism.

Minangkabau customary practices that prioritise deliberation and cooperation can also be seen as a form of *riyāḍah* (spiritual exercise)<sup>32</sup> to achieve cleanliness of heart because in this process individuals are taught to restrain their ego and prioritise the common good. This is in line with Ibn Taymiyyah's thinking, which emphasises the importance of harmonious social life as a form of true spirituality.

### One Simplicity and Social Life

Ibn Taymiyyah strongly emphasised the importance of a simple and unpretentious life as part of the practice of Sufism. He rejects extreme asceticism that separates individuals from social life because according to him, Islam requires its people to be active in world life while maintaining the spiritual dimension.<sup>33</sup> This principle of simplicity is also reflected in the life of the Minangkabau people. The egalitarian Minangkabau culture based on the principle of *gotong-royong* reflects a simple yet mutually supportive life. For example, the concept of 'deliberation in *adat*' is a reflection of how the Minangkabau people strive to maintain social unity and balance without excessive exploitation or social inequality.<sup>34</sup> This is in line with Ibn Taymiyyah's thought that true spirituality can be applied in

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<sup>31</sup>Ahmad Ibn Taymiyyah, *Faṣl Fi Taṣkiyah Al-Nafs*, Ed. Fawwāz Muḥammad al-ʿAwadī (Kuwait: Maktabah al-Nahj al-Wadih, 2018).

<sup>32</sup>Taymiyyah, *Al-'Ubudiyyah: Hakikat Penghambaan Diri*.

<sup>33</sup>Taymiyyah, *Al-'Ubudiyyah: Hakikat Penghambaan Diri*.

<sup>34</sup>Muhammad Raffin Althafullayya dan Ali Akbar, "Analisis Integrasi Islam dan Budaya Minangkabau dalam Tradisi Batagak Penghulu Berdasarkan Perspektif Al-Qur'an," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 1, no. 2 (2024): 1–12, <https://doi.org/10.47134/pjpi.v1i2.155>.

social life.

In Minangkabau customs, a person is not seen from wealth or social status, but from his contribution and character to society. This is in line with the teachings of Ibn Taymiyyah's Sufism, which views that the virtue of a human being lies in his faith and piety, not in material wealth or worldly achievements alone.

### **Synergy of Spirituality and Social Activity**

Ibn Taymiyyah emphasised that true Sufism is Sufism that is not only concerned with the personal spiritual dimension but also has an impact on social good. For him, a true Sufi is one who actively contributes to his society and carries out his role as *kehalīfah* on earth.<sup>35</sup> In the Minangkabau context, the synergy between spirituality and social activity is very clear. The Minangkabau customary system teaches that one's spiritual life must be in harmony with one's social responsibilities. The principle of '*adat nan kawi, syarak nan lazim*' suggests that worldly and *ukhrawi* life must be balanced.<sup>36</sup> This can be seen in the daily lives of the Minangkabau people who uphold the values of togetherness, cooperation and social responsibility.

For example, in traditional celebrations or religious rituals such as surau recitation and traditional events, spirituality is not only seen as something individual but also collective, where every member of the community contributes to the common welfare.<sup>37</sup> This communal life reflects Ibn Taymiyyah's idea that Sufism should have an impact on social life and bring benefits to society at large.

### **Criticism of *Bid'ah* and Conformity of Custom with *Syarak***

Ibn Taymiyyah was very vocal in his criticism of *bid'ah* (innovations in religion) that deviated from the pure teachings of Islam. He argued that

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<sup>35</sup>Taqiuddin, "Pemikiran Tasawuf Ibnu Taimiyyah."

<sup>36</sup>Althafullayya dan Akbar, "Analisis Integrasi Islam dan Budaya Minangkabau dalam Tradisi Batagak Penghulu Berdasarkan Perspektif Al-Qur'an."

<sup>37</sup>Azra, *Surau: Pendidikan Tradisional Dalam Transisi Dan Modernisasi*.

any form of worship or spiritual practice that is not grounded in the al-Qur'ān and Sunnah is a deviation.<sup>38</sup> In the Minangkabau context, the ABS-SBK philosophy also teaches something similar, namely that adat must always rely on syarak. If some local customs or habits contradict syarak, they must be abandoned or modified to conform to Islamic teachings. This process is known as “adulterated adat” where evolving customs can be changed if they conflict with the principles of syarak.<sup>39</sup> This reflects the spirit of spiritual reform taught by Ibn Taymiyyah, in which the teachings of Sufism must always be based on the al-Qur'ān and Ḥadīṣ and avoid all forms of deviation.

### **The Role of ‘*Ulamā*’ and Traditional Leaders in Society**

In Ibn Taymiyyah’s thought, scholars have an important role as spiritual leaders who not only guide the people in religious aspects but also in social affairs. He emphasized that the ‘*ulamā*’ must play an active role in community life and provide exemplary examples of maintaining a balance between spirituality and worldly life.<sup>40</sup> In Minangkabau, the role of ‘*ulamā*’ is highly valued, especially in implementing syarak, which is the foundation of adat. Ulama and Pemangku Adat work together to maintain morality and community harmony.<sup>41</sup> The presence of ‘*ulamā*’ close to the community, especially in surau and recitation institutions, reflects the importance of their role in maintaining spiritual and social balance, as advocated by Ibn Taymiyyah.

<sup>38</sup>Hamdan Maghribi, *Tasawuf Salafi: Rekonstruksi Tasawuf Ibn Taimiyyah* (Malag: Madani, 2024).

<sup>39</sup>Andi Ritonga, Salma, dan Bakhtiar, “Mengulas Makna Adat Basandi Syarak Syarak Basandi Kitabullah (ABSSBK) dalam Masyarakat Minangkabau,” *Humani (Hukum dan Masyarakat Madani)* 14, no. 1 (2024): 95–109, <http://dx.doi.org/10.26623/humani.v14i1.8228>.

<sup>40</sup>Maghribi, “Rekonstruksi Tasawuf Ibn Taimiyyah (Tinjauan Epistemologis).”

<sup>41</sup>Silfia Hanani, “Tradisi Ulama Transformatif Minangkabau dalam Membangun Pendidikan Karakteristik Berbasis Responsif Teologis dan Kontribusinya terhadap Penguatan Moralitas,” *Sosial Budaya* 12, no. 2 (2015): 191–202, <http://dx.doi.org/10.24014/sb.v12i2.1939>.

### **Sufistic Values of *Bundo Kanduang* in Minangkabau**

If men in Minangkabau have a big role, so do women in Minangkabau. Nashroen<sup>42</sup> and Hamka<sup>43</sup> explained that one of the uniqueness of Minangkabau culture is its matrilineal system (based on maternal lineage). The matrilineal kinship system places women called “Bundo Kanduang” as the centre of life activities.

*Bundo Kanduang* is the woman who owns the *rumah gadang* and the place of return of the *saparuik* or one-mother family. The *rumah gadang* is a symbol of the greatness of the matrilineal system and a symbol of Minangkabau identity and culture.<sup>44</sup> The leader in the *rumah gadang* is a female grandmother called *bundo kanduang*. The position of *bundo kanduang* according to custom has honour and virtue. *Bundo kanduang* is the recipient of the lineage according to the mother, the recipient of the *rumah gadang* as a place to live, the recipient of the provisions of property and economic resources, the recipient and saving the results of economic efforts and the holder of special voting rights in deliberations.

There are at least four functions of *bundo kanduang* in Minangkabau: *First*, as *limpapeh rumah gadang* which means a pillar in a building which is the foundation of the strength of all other pillars. *Second*, as an organizer in the household. *Third*, as a member of society. *Fourth*, as a symbol of pride and glory that is raised, respected and maintained. Evidence of the balance of the position of men and women in Minangkabau can be seen when making decisions in a community must be decided by deliberation.<sup>45</sup>

Thus, it can be understood that *bundo kanduang* is the main moral pillar of the *rumah gadang*. *Rumah gadang* is an institution that maintains the dignity of women while controlling the ethical and moral course of the family. Moral teachings that aim to guide the attitudes and behaviour of

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<sup>42</sup>M. Nashroen, *Dasar Falsafah Adat Minangkabau*, 2nd ed. (Jakarta: Bulan Bintang, 1971).

<sup>43</sup>Hamka, *Islam dan Adat Minangkabau* (Jakarta: Pustaka Panjimas, 1984).

<sup>44</sup>Mariana Pfliegerová, “Matrilinearita, Migrace A Sociální Změna V Minangkabau Z Historické Perspektivy,” *Český lid* 94, no. 2 (2007): 113–139.

<sup>45</sup>Agusti Efi Marthala, *Rumah Gadang: Kajian Filosofi Arsitektur Minangkabau* (Bandung: Humaniora, 2013).



Minangkabau women are contained in the teachings of *Sumbang Dua Baleh*. The values of *Sumbang Dua Baleh* are the values of courtesy that must be passed down by *bundo kanduang* to their daughters to be prepared to continue the relay of the *rumah gadang*.<sup>46</sup>

More than just a traditional position, *bundo kanduang* symbolizes spiritual and leadership values that emphasize wisdom, gentleness, and social responsibility. In the context of Sufism, the figure of *bundo kanduang* exudes Sufistic values that are closely related to self-development, cleanliness of heart, and balance between worldly and *ukbrāwī* responsibilities. Here are some of the Sufistic values manifested in the role of *bundo kanduang* as follows.

*First*, cleanliness of heart and sincerity. *Bundo kanduang* is expected to be a role model in terms of cleanliness of heart and sincere intentions, especially in leading the family and community.<sup>47</sup> In line with the teachings of Sufism, the figure of *bundo kanduang* emphasizes the importance of straight intentions in every action. She symbolizes sincerity in serving and educating the community without expecting anything in return, by the concept of sincerity in Sufism which is oriented towards the pleasure of Allah.

*Second*, simplicity and *zuhd*. Simple life and *zuhd* (not being attached to the world) are the characteristics of *bundo kanduang* which are also part of the value of Sufism. In the Minangkabau tradition, *bundo kanduang* is not judged by wealth or status, but by her contribution and moral integrity.<sup>48</sup> This principle reflects the teachings of Sufism, which emphasizes that true position and happiness do not depend on material things but on peace of mind and closeness to God.

<sup>46</sup> Agusti Efi Marthala, *Rumah Gadang: Kajian Filosofi Arsitektur Minangkabau*.

<sup>47</sup> Sekar Dea Islamiati, "Bundo Kanduang Peranan Perempuan Minangkabau," *Jurnal Desain – Kajian Penelitian Bidang Desain* 2, no. 2 (2022): 195–204, <http://dx.doi.org/10.33376/jdes.v2i2.1694>.

<sup>48</sup> Buchari Alma, *Bundo Kanduang (Limpapeh Rumah Nan Gadang: Tuntunan Moral Wanita Minang)* (Padang: Gerakan Buku Adat Minang (Gebu). Perhimpunan Keluarga Minangkabau (PKM) dan Klub Buku Adat Budaya Minangkabau, 2004).

*Third*, wisdom in leadership. *Bundo kanduang* plays an important role in maintaining traditional values and mediating family and community problems.<sup>49</sup> Sufistic teachings encourage the development of the trait of wisdom as a result of the process of introspection and self-purification. In this capacity, *bundo kanduang* acts with wisdom and compassion, prioritizing deliberation and consensus, thus creating social harmony. This attitude reflects Sufism's view of leadership based on love and peace.

*Fourth*, social responsibility and care. *Bundo kanduang* in Minangkabau is not only responsible within the family but also plays an active role in society.<sup>50</sup> She exemplifies the values of Sufism by showing concern for the surrounding environment and ensuring social welfare is achieved through cooperation and empathy. This concept is in line with the views of Ibn Taymiyyah who emphasized that true Sufis are those who contribute to social welfare, not only to personal spiritual improvement.<sup>51</sup>

*Fifth*, the balance between *adat* and sharia. One of the main values maintained by *bundo kanduang* is the balance between *adat* and sharia in the life of Minangkabau society, by the principle of “Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah (ABS-SBK)”.<sup>52</sup> The Sufistic value of *bundo kanduang* is seen in her efforts to maintain traditions that are in line with Islamic teachings, while at the same time maintaining the purity of sharia in customs. Through her role, *bundo kanduang* shows how *adat* can be harmonious with sharia, reflecting the unity of worldly and spiritual life taught in Sufism.

From the discussion above, it can be understood that the Sufistic values in ABS-SBK when viewed from the thoughts of Ibn Taymiyyah's Sufism show a harmony between the principles taught by Ibn Taymiyyah and the philosophy of ABS-SBK. Both emphasize the importance of self-

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<sup>49</sup>Ernatip dan Silvia Devi, *Kedudukan dan Peran Bundo Kanduang dalam Sistem Kekerabatan Matrilineal di Minangkabau* (Padang: Balai Pelestarian Nilai Budaya Padang, 2014).

<sup>50</sup>Muhammad Jamil, *Bundo Kanduang di Minangkabau* (Bukittinggi: Cinta Buku Agency, 2019).

<sup>51</sup>Taymiyyah, *Majmu' al-Rasail Wa Masail*.

<sup>52</sup>Hakymi Dt. Rajo Penghulu, *Pegangan Penghulu, Bundo Kandung, dan Pidato Alua Pasambaban Adat di Minangkabau* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 1991).

purification, simplicity, and synergy between spirituality and social responsibility. Thus, the teachings of Ibn Taymiyyah's Sufism can be adapted harmoniously to the lives of the Minangkabau people who uphold Islamic values that have merged with local customs.

Also, the Sufistic values embodied by *bundo kanduang* in Minangkabau show how the concept of Sufism can be adapted to social and cultural roles. The figure of *bundo kanduang* who emphasizes sincerity, wisdom, simplicity, and social responsibility, as well as commitment to *adat* and sharia, is a clear example of the application of Sufism values in daily life. This shows that Sufism not only teaches the individual's relationship with God but also the social role in maintaining community harmony and welfare.

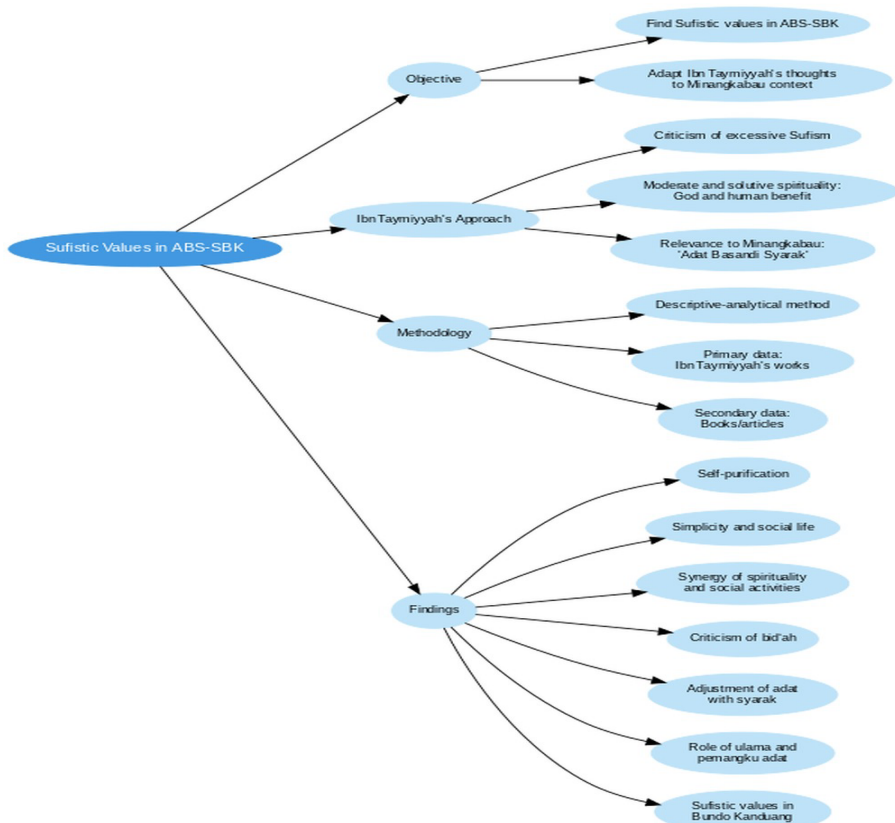


Figure 1: Framework for the content of Sufistic values in Adat Basandi Syarak-Syarak Basandi Kitabullah (ABS-SBK) Perspective of Ibn Taymiyyah's Sufism Thought

## Conclusion

Ibn Taymiyyah's Sufism thinking in the context of Sufistic values in ABS-SBK, as presented in this study, offers a new approach that is more inclusive and relevant to the dynamics of modern society. The transformation from geocentrically oriented Sufism to Sufism based on human benefits, as initiated by Ibn Taymiyyah, opens space for the incorporation of Islamic spiritual values into the local social and cultural context. This is in line with the spirit of "Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah (ABS-SBK)" which is a basic principle in Minangkabau society.

In this framework, Sufism is no longer seen merely as an individual practice separated from social life, but rather as a path towards the perfection of self and society through devotion to Allah and social responsibility. Ibn Taymiyyah's thoughts on Sufism also emphasize the importance of balance between spirituality and practical life, based on sharia as a guide to life. This makes Sufism a holistic solution to overcoming various social, moral and spiritual problems faced by society.

Thus, the contextualization of Ibn Taymiyyah's Sufism thought in the locality of Minangkabau shows that Islam, with its universal teachings, has an extraordinary adaptive ability to change in times and places. This thinking is not only relevant for Minangkabau society but can also be an inspiration for Muslim communities in various parts of the world who are looking for ways to harmonize religious teachings with the challenges of modernity. Therefore, this inclusive and sharia-based approach to Sufism has the potential to be a solution to creating a more just, harmonious and spiritual society, with true Islamic values.

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