

THE TAREKAT MOVEMENT IN ISLAMIC AND MINANGKABAU CULTURAL DEVELOPMENT

Gusti Ratu Liana¹, Elga Putri Sarli², Cinta Febrida Candra³, Jeni Apriani⁴, Annisa Nurfadhilah⁵, Pisdoni Mardianto⁶

¹ Universitas Islam Negeri Mahmud Yunus, Batusangkar, Indonesia

² Universitas Islam Negeri Mahmud Yunus, Batusangkar, Indonesia

³ Universitas Islam Negeri Mahmud Yunus, Batusangkar, Indonesia

⁴ Universitas Islam Negeri Mahmud Yunus, Batusangkar, Indonesia

⁵ Universitas Islam Negeri Mahmud Yunus, Batusangkar, Indonesia

⁶ Universitas Islam Negeri Mahmud Yunus, Batusangkar, Indonesia

Corresponding Author:

Pisdoni Mardianto,

Department of Islamic Religious Education, Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, Mahmud Yunus State Islamic University of Batusangkar, Indonesia.

Email: pisdonimardianto@uinmybatusangkar.ac.id

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Abstract

The tarekat movement has played a significant role in the development of Islam and the cultural life of Minangkabau society. This study aims to analyze the contribution of tarekat movements to the development of Islam and Minangkabau culture as well as their implications for social and religious life. The study employed a qualitative approach using a library research method. Data were collected from books, scientific journals, and other relevant academic sources and analyzed through descriptive qualitative techniques. The findings indicate that tarekat movements have contributed not only to strengthening religious understanding and spiritual values but also to preserving cultural identity, promoting social cohesion, and supporting Islamic education through surau institutions. In addition, tarekat movements have demonstrated adaptability in responding to modernization and social change while maintaining their religious and cultural functions. The novelty of this study lies in its examination of tarekat movements as both religious and socio-cultural institutions that contribute to the continuity of Islamic values and Minangkabau cultural traditions. Therefore, tarekat movements remain relevant in sustaining the relationship between Islam and local culture in contemporary Minangkabau society.

Keywords: Islamic Development, Minangkabau Culture, Tarekat Movement



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INTRODUCTION

The tarekat movement is an important part of the development of Islam in the Indonesian archipelago, including the Minangkabau region. Tarekat emerged not only as a spiritual teaching within the Sufi tradition but also as a medium for disseminating Islamic values that influenced the social and cultural life of the community (Khamim, 2022). In the history of Islam in Minangkabau, the development of tarekat was closely related to the activities of Islamic scholars (ulama), surau institutions, and religious educational traditions that flourished within society. The presence of tarekat had a significant influence on shaping the religious character of the Minangkabau people through religious practices, Islamic learning activities, and social relationships based on Islamic values. Furthermore, tarekat served as a means of Islamic propagation capable of adapting Islamic teachings to local culture without diminishing the community's religious identity.

The development of tarekat in Minangkabau cannot be separated from the relationship between customary law (adat) and Islamic law (syariah), which have long served as the foundation of community life. The philosophy of *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah* reflects the integration of Minangkabau culture and Islamic teachings in everyday life (Mariana & Anna, 2024). In this context, tarekat functions as a religious institution that strengthens the spiritual relationship of the community while preserving local social and cultural values. The Syattariyah and Naqsyabandiyah orders are among the most prominent tarekat movements in Minangkabau (Ahmad, 2019) and have significantly influenced community life, particularly in the fields of education, religious traditions, and the formation of social morality.

In addition to serving as a means of spiritual development, the tarekat movement has also contributed to the advancement of Islamic education in Minangkabau. Surau institutions, as centers of tarekat activities, are used not only for worship but also as places for religious learning and character development within the community (Afrina et al., 2024). Through this traditional educational system, tarekat scholars instill discipline, social solidarity, and religious understanding among community members. This condition has positioned tarekat as an important element in shaping the Islamic identity of Minangkabau society. Its influence can still be observed in various religious traditions that continue to be preserved today.

Moreover, the development of the tarekat movement has faced various social dynamics and contemporary challenges. Modernization, technological advancement, and changes in social perspectives have influenced the continuity of tarekat activities within modern society (Rozi et al., 2024). Some members of society perceive tarekat as a traditional religious practice that is less relevant to contemporary developments. However, in several areas of Minangkabau, tarekat continues to survive and adapt to modern social conditions through religious propagation, educational activities, and moral guidance programs. This demonstrates the ability of tarekat to adapt and maintain its existence amid ongoing social transformation.

Previous studies on the tarekat movement have generally focused on spiritual aspects, Sufi teachings, and the historical development of tarekat in Indonesia (Erina et al., 2022). Meanwhile, studies that specifically examine the relationship between tarekat movements and the development of Islamic culture in Minangkabau society remain relatively limited. Several studies have only highlighted the influence of tarekat on worship practices or religious life,

while few have explored its contribution to the formation of cultural values, social relationships, and the identity of Minangkabau society in greater depth. This condition constitutes the research gap of the present study, highlighting the need for a more comprehensive discussion of the role of tarekat movements in the development of Islam and Minangkabau culture.

Unlike previous studies that primarily emphasized the spiritual and historical dimensions of tarekat, this study positions the tarekat movement as part of the process of Islamic cultural development within Minangkabau society (Handrihadi et al., 2025; Ritonga, 2024). This perspective provides a broader understanding of the contribution of tarekat not only to religious life but also to the formation of cultural identity, social relationships, and the sustainability of local values amid the changing dynamics of modern society.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the role of the tarekat movement in the development of Islam and Minangkabau culture and to explain its contribution to the social and religious life of the community.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach using a library research method. This approach was selected because the study focused on examining various written sources related to the tarekat movement in the development of Islam and Minangkabau culture (Adlini et al., 2022; Fadli, 2021). The library research method was utilized to understand the concepts, history, and influence of the tarekat movement through the analysis of scientific literature, journals, books, and other academic sources relevant to the research topic. Furthermore, the qualitative approach enabled the researcher to describe social and cultural phenomena in depth based on data obtained from various written sources.

The data sources in this study consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from scientific journals, books on Islamic history, and academic articles discussing the tarekat movement, the development of Islam in Minangkabau, and the culture of Minangkabau society (Sari & Asmendri, 2020). Meanwhile, secondary data were collected from supporting documents, previous research findings, and other scholarly sources relevant to the study. The selection of data sources was conducted carefully by considering their credibility, relevance, and relationship to the focus of the research.

Data collection was conducted through documentation studies and literature reviews (Abdurrahman, 2024). The researcher gathered various references related to the tarekat movement from books, scientific journals, research articles, and other academic sources. The collected data were then recorded, classified, and organized according to the research themes, including the development of tarekat, the role of tarekat in community social life, and its influence on Minangkabau Islamic culture. This technique was applied to obtain systematic data that supported the research analysis process.

The data in this study were analyzed using descriptive qualitative analysis (Agustina & Mustofa, 2024). The collected data were analyzed through several stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. During the data reduction stage, the researcher selected and focused on information relevant to the research topic. Subsequently, the data were systematically presented in the form of narrative descriptions to facilitate the interpretation process. Finally, conclusions were drawn based on the analysis of the reviewed sources to obtain an understanding of the role of the tarekat movement in the development of Islam and Minangkabau culture.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the analysis of various literature sources, the tarekat movement plays a significant role in the development of Islam and Minangkabau culture (Khotimah et al., 2026). The presence of tarekat serves not only as a means of spiritual guidance but also as a medium for disseminating Islamic values that influence various aspects of community life. Through religious activities, surau-based education, and moral development programs, tarekat contributes to shaping religious character and strengthening the Islamic identity of Minangkabau society.

In addition to its religious function, the tarekat movement also influences the social and cultural life of the community. The values promoted by tarekat encourage the development of social solidarity, mutual cooperation, and harmonious relationships among community members. In line with these findings, the following discussion elaborates on the various roles and contributions of the tarekat movement in the development of Islam and Minangkabau culture in greater depth.

The findings further indicate that the Syattariyah and Naqsyabandiyah orders are the two most influential tarekat movements in the history of Islamic development in Minangkabau. Both orders have extensive networks of scholars and disciples, enabling them to expand the dissemination of Islamic teachings across various regions. Their existence has strengthened the Islamic identity of Minangkabau society and shaped patterns of life based on religious values. Furthermore, this study shows that the tarekat movement maintains a close relationship with Minangkabau culture. The Islamic values transmitted through tarekat have been integrated into Minangkabau customs, as reflected in the philosophy *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah* (Manday et al., 2024). This integration has enabled religion and local customs to develop harmoniously without diminishing their respective identities.

From a social perspective, the findings indicate that tarekat exerts a positive influence on community life (Satria & Sahayu, 2024). Collective religious activities foster stronger social relationships, enhance solidarity, strengthen the sense of brotherhood, and promote social concern among community members. Values such as mutual cooperation, mutual assistance, and deliberation continue to develop through activities organized by tarekat groups.

Furthermore, the findings reveal that the tarekat movement faces various challenges resulting from contemporary developments (Wicaksono, 2024). Modernization, globalization, technological advancement, and changing social perspectives have reduced the interest of some younger generations in tarekat activities. Nevertheless, various tarekat groups in Minangkabau have been able to maintain their existence by adapting to ongoing social changes. Overall, the findings of this study indicate that the tarekat movement continues to occupy an important position in Minangkabau society. Its role can be observed in religious, educational, cultural, and social spheres, all of which continue to influence community life today.

The Role of the Tarekat Movement in the Development of Islam in Minangkabau

A review of the literature indicates that the tarekat movement has been one of the key factors in the development of Islam in Minangkabau. These findings suggest that the spread of Islam was carried out not only through formal religious preaching but also through the spiritual approach implemented by tarekat institutions (Rozi et al., 2024). This approach enabled Islamic teachings to be more readily accepted by the community because it emphasized not only religious law but also profound spiritual guidance.

The role of tarekat in Islamic development can be observed through educational activities conducted in surau institutions. Surau function not only as places of worship but also as centers for religious learning and character formation. Through educational activities led by tarekat scholars, community members gain a balanced understanding of Islamic creed, worship, morality, and Sufism. These findings indicate that tarekat has made a substantial contribution to the formation of a religious and morally responsible society. The existence of the Syattariyah

and Naqsyabandiyah orders further demonstrates the extensive influence of tarekat on the religious life of Minangkabau society. Both orders have successfully established educational and preaching networks that strengthen Islamic values within the community. This evidence confirms that tarekat functions not only as a spiritual movement but also as an institution for education and community development.

The success of the tarekat movement in disseminating Islam throughout Minangkabau is attributable not only to its spiritual approach but also to its ability to accommodate local cultural values. This approach enabled Islamic teachings to be accepted more easily by the community without creating conflict with pre-existing traditions. Therefore, tarekat serves as a medium of integration between religious teachings and local culture, thereby strengthening the Islamization process in Minangkabau.

The Role of the Tarekat Movement in the Preservation and Development of Minangkabau Culture

The findings indicate a strong relationship between the tarekat movement and Minangkabau culture. This relationship can be understood through the philosophy *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah*, which serves as a fundamental principle of Minangkabau society. This philosophy reflects the close connection between custom and religion, demonstrating that both elements support one another and cannot be separated.

In this context, tarekat functions as a bridge connecting Islamic values with local cultural traditions. Various traditions that have developed within society can be maintained as long as they do not contradict Islamic teachings. Consequently, tarekat contributes to the creation of a harmonious process of cultural acculturation between Minangkabau customs and Islamic values. Furthermore, *surau* institutions, which serve as centers of tarekat activities, also function as institutions for cultural preservation. Within these institutions, younger generations are taught various cultural values, including respect for elders, politeness, mutual cooperation, social responsibility, and concern for the wider community. Through this process, Minangkabau culture can be transmitted continuously from one generation to the next.

This phenomenon demonstrates that tarekat does not merely preserve religious traditions but also plays an important role in maintaining the continuity of cultural identity within society. In this regard, tarekat functions as a social institution that helps communities preserve local values amid the challenges of social change and globalization.

The Influence of the Tarekat Movement on Social Life

The findings indicating increased social solidarity through tarekat activities can be understood in light of the teachings of Sufism, which emphasize the importance of maintaining positive relationships among individuals. Within the tarekat tradition, individuals are taught not only to strengthen their relationship with Allah SWT but also to develop concern and responsibility toward their social environment.

Activities such as religious gatherings, collective *dhikr*, deliberative meetings, and various social programs serve as means of strengthening relationships among community members. These activities create intensive social interactions that reinforce the sense of brotherhood, togetherness, and mutual support. Such conditions are essential for maintaining social harmony within Minangkabau society, which is characterized by strong communal ties and collective values.

Furthermore, the values promoted through tarekat teachings, including honesty, patience, simplicity, and responsibility, contribute significantly to character formation within society. These values serve as important forms of social capital that support the creation of a peaceful, harmonious, and cohesive community. As a result, the influence of tarekat extends beyond the spiritual sphere and contributes to strengthening social relationships and collective well-being within Minangkabau society.

Challenges of the Tarekat Movement in the Modern Era

Contemporary developments have brought various challenges to the sustainability of the tarekat movement. Modernization and globalization have transformed social perspectives, particularly among younger generations. The ease of access to information has enabled people to obtain religious knowledge from diverse sources, resulting in a gradual decline in dependence on traditional religious institutions.

Nevertheless, this condition does not imply that tarekat has lost its role within society. This study indicates that many tarekat groups have begun to implement various innovations to adapt to contemporary developments. The utilization of social media, digital platforms, and communication technologies has become one of the strategies employed to disseminate Islamic teachings to a broader audience. This adaptation demonstrates the ability of tarekat to maintain its existence amid ongoing social transformation. By preserving spiritual values as the foundation of its teachings, tarekat is able to respond to the needs of modern society without losing its identity as a religious guidance institution.

The challenges posed by modernization do not always have negative consequences for the continuity of tarekat. On the contrary, these conditions encourage tarekat institutions to adapt to social change through the use of communication media, the development of innovative preaching methods, and the strengthening of religious education. This phenomenon indicates that the existence of tarekat is not static but continues to evolve in response to the changing needs of society.

Implications of the Tarekat Movement for Minangkabau Society

The tarekat movement has various important implications for the life of Minangkabau society in religious, social, educational, and cultural aspects. In the religious sphere, tarekat plays a significant role in strengthening the understanding and practice of Islamic teachings through activities such as dhikr, religious gatherings, and continuous spiritual guidance. The presence of tarekat helps community members enhance their religious awareness and deepen their understanding of Islamic values in everyday life. Through this process, tarekat has become one of the important means contributing to the formation of the religious character of Minangkabau society.

In the social sphere, the tarekat movement contributes to the creation of harmonious social relationships within the community. Collective religious activities encourage the development of brotherhood, solidarity, and social concern among community members. The values of togetherness promoted through tarekat teachings also reinforce the tradition of mutual cooperation that has long been an integral part of Minangkabau society. Consequently, tarekat functions not only as a medium for spiritual development but also as an institution that strengthens social integration within the community.

Another important implication can be observed in the fields of education and cultural preservation. Through surau institutions and various religious activities, tarekat contributes to the transmission of Islamic knowledge to younger generations. In addition to serving as centers of religious learning, surau also function as spaces for the development of moral values, ethics, and character. At the same time, the tarekat movement plays an important role in preserving Islamic traditions that have become integrated with Minangkabau culture. This demonstrates that tarekat contributes significantly to maintaining the Islamic cultural identity of Minangkabau society amid ongoing social change.

In the modern era, the implications of the tarekat movement extend beyond the preservation of tradition and include efforts to maintain a balance between religious values and social development. Although tarekat faces various challenges resulting from modernization and changing social perspectives, it remains relevant as a medium for moral and spiritual guidance. Therefore, the existence of the tarekat movement can be regarded as one of the

factors supporting the continuity of Islamic values and Minangkabau culture within the dynamics of contemporary society.

In the modern era, the implications of the tarekat movement extend beyond the preservation of tradition and encompass efforts to maintain a balance between religious values and social development. Although tarekat faces various challenges resulting from modernization and changing social perspectives, it continues to remain relevant as a medium for moral and spiritual guidance. Therefore, the existence of the tarekat movement can be regarded as one of the factors that supports the continuity of Islamic values and Minangkabau culture amid the dynamics of contemporary life.

Based on the analysis conducted, the tarekat movement in Minangkabau can be understood not only as a religious organization but also as a socio-cultural institution that plays a significant role in maintaining a balance between Islamic values and local traditions. These findings demonstrate that the sustainability of tarekat is determined not only by its spiritual dimensions but also by its ability to respond to the evolving social needs of the community. Consequently, tarekat continues to serve as an important institution in preserving religious values, strengthening cultural identity, and fostering social cohesion within Minangkabau society.

CONCLUSION

The tarekat movement has played a significant role in the development of Islam and Minangkabau culture. The findings indicate that tarekat functions not only as a medium of spiritual guidance but also as an institution that contributes to religious education, character formation, social solidarity, and cultural preservation. Through religious activities and surau-based education, tarekat has strengthened Islamic values while supporting the continuity of local cultural traditions within Minangkabau society.

This study further demonstrates that the role of tarekat extends beyond religious practices. Tarekat serves as a socio-cultural institution that facilitates the integration of Islamic teachings and Minangkabau customs, as reflected in the philosophy *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah*. Its contribution to maintaining cultural identity and social cohesion highlights the continuing relevance of tarekat in contemporary society.

Although modernization and social change present various challenges, tarekat has shown the capacity to adapt through educational activities, religious outreach, and the utilization of modern communication media. Therefore, tarekat remains an important element in sustaining Islamic values and Minangkabau culture. This study contributes to a broader understanding of tarekat as both a religious and socio-cultural institution and may serve as a reference for future studies on Islam, local culture, and social transformation in Minangkabau society.

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