



The repercussions of Sufi thoughts in the contemporary Qur'anic Interpretation to Sustainable Development in Indonesia

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Abstract

The repercussions of Sufi thought on contemporary Qur'anic interpretation in Indonesia align with several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by fostering values such as inclusivity, environmental stewardship, and social justice. Sufi-inspired interpretations often emphasize compassion, charity (zakat), and equitable resource distribution, which directly contribute to poverty reduction and social equity. Sufi teachings promote spiritual equality between men and women, which has influenced Qur'anic interpretations advocating for gender justice. Sufi thought emphasizes harmony with nature, reflecting the Qur'anic mandate to maintain ecological balance. Efforts to harmonize these perspectives remain crucial for maximizing the role of Islamic teachings in achieving sustainable development goals. Indonesia has become a dynamic arena for the struggle of religious thoughts. Among the most exciting aspects of this are the repercussions of Sufi thoughts in interpreting the Qur'an. In the cultural and historical context of the region, the connection between the Sufi view that emphasizes to develop inner spirituality and Qur'anic interpretation has been deeply rooted. Analyzing the data to identify patterns, correlations, or trends and from the findings concluding the overall repercussion of Sufi thoughts in contemporary Qur'anic interpretation to sustainable develop in Indonesia. Islam is the basis of Sufism and it accepts that all of creation has benefits and must be sustained, and glorify Allah. All creatures glorify Allah and this is considered to be the basis of truth. This study concludes that the repercussions of Sufi thoughts on interpretation to sustainably develop Indonesia can be classified as "moderate". The conclusion is based on the findings that several interpretations to sustainable development, especially social cohesion, are often adopted in the thoughts of prominent Sufi figures and used as a basis for interpreting Qur'anic verses.

Keywords: Sufism, Contemporary Tafsīr, Zuhd, Asceticism, Sustainable, Develop



Introduction

Indonesia is a large Muslim country and it has involved into a dynamic stage for the struggle of religious ideas. One of the most fascinating features is how Sufism shapes Qur'an towards a sustainable development interpretation. As is widely known, the link between Sufi philosophy and Qur'anic interpretation has been firmly ingrained in the cultural and historical progressions. However, due to human preoccupation with worldly affairs which tend to ignore spirituality, this relationship and its impact on modern interpretation is always overlooked in academic discourse (Riddell, 2001). This situation has occurred after tensions between modernity and tradition which coloured the contemporary landscape of Qur'an interpretation towards sustainable development in Indonesia. On the one hand, there is still a high reverence for the Qur'an's mystical-spiritual dimensions, which are closely related to Sufi thoughts. On the other hand, the global Islamic movement has pushed strongly towards a more reformist and literalist approach (Howell, 2001: 701-729). Although traditional interpretations to sustainable development still have great influence, modernist ideas are becoming more popular since they mirror local sociopolitical changes and general global trends. These conflicts highlight the continuous debate between initiatives to satisfy the changing needs of modern society and attempts to preserve past religious practices.

In contemporary Indonesia, the above tension raises a crucial issue, the inadaptability and discontinuity of Sufi thoughts, including interpreting the Qur'an. Given the increasing impact of conservative Puritanism doctrine, Sufistic interpretations risk being considered irrelevant (Bruinessen, 2013). Scholarly disregard for how Sufi ideas were included or transformed into modern interpretation aggravates the problem. The above raises a problem, namely the neglect of the study of how Sufi thoughts have repercussions, in the sense of a ripple effect, echoing, reverberating, and interconnecting with the interpretation of the Qur'an that has emerged in contemporary times in Indonesia. Although some academics have investigated the historical influence of Sufism in Indonesia, knowledge of how Sufistic readings of the Qur'an are changing in response to contemporary issues still needs to be improved (Azra, 2004). This aspect is essentially what prompted the authors to write this research article.

The basis of Sufism lies in the search for inner purity. One needs to directly encounter the divine. "Sufis seek to transcend the material world and achieve a state of union with God through practices such as poetry, music, and dance. This quest for spiritual enlightenment emphasizes love, compassion, and humility, values that are not only spiritually enriching but also socially transformative... a shared emphasis on inner transformation and non-violence... the Sufi pursuit of harmony and peace" (Harde, 2024). Sufism supports a life of simplicity, compassion, and mindfulness, which are needed for promoting and driving sustainable and inclusive development.

Addressing this problem is crucial (1) to counteract extremism Sufi readings of the Qur'an often stress the inner elements of religion, tolerance, and love, while literalist and puritanical readings can occasionally develop exclusivist or even extremist ideas. Religious authorities' encouragement of a Sufi reading of the Qur'an promotes a more inclusive and peaceful picture of Islam, (2) to preserve religious diversity which is deeply ingrained, rich, and varied in Indonesia's cultural and spiritual heritage, Sufism is essential to Islamic thinking. and (3) to fully grasp the current dynamic relation of Indonesian Qur'anic exegesis and the Sufi philosophy in the future in the region is vital.

This study aimed to answer the following questions (1) What is the current state of Qur'anic interpretation to sustainable develop in contemporary Indonesia? and (2) To what extent are the repercussions of Sufi thoughts felt in the Qur'anic interpretations to sustainable development in contemporary times in Indonesia? To our knowledge, no specific study has been conducted to address this problem directly. However, there are some studies, such as Rifai's "The Sufi Influence on the Qur'anic Interpretation" (Rifai, 2021: 1-15) which aims to assess the influence of Sufism on Qur'anic interpretation in Islamic history and concludes that



the works of the Sufis contain some incorrect concepts, but we cannot generally reject their many positive contributions. However, it examines general Sufi interpretation, even with a minimum of references. Another article is "Wajah Tafsir Sufistik di Indonesia" (Wahyudi & Wahyudin, 2021: 121-125), which concluded that the *tafsīr* of Sufis is unique and different from other forms of *tafsīr* because they interpret the Qur'an from two vantage points, the outward-inward, and have mystical or supernatural nuances. Most Sufi figures in Indonesia use the Sufi *nazarī* interpretation.

Several other important articles enrich the authors' insights, namely "Perkembangan Tafsir di Indonesia Pra-Kemerdekaan (1900-1945)" ("The Development of Tafsir in Pre-Independence Indonesia (1900-1945)") by Rifa Roifa et al., which asserts that *Tafsir Qur'an Karim*, *Tafsir Al-Furqan*, *Tafsir Malja Al-Talibin*, and *Tamsiyah Al-Muslimin* are pre-independence interpretations so that in their interpretation there are verses that touch aspects of a fighting spirit. The writing of exegetical works during this period is inherently connected to the prevailing social and political conditions (Roifa et al., 2017: 21-36).

Moreover, research entitled "Studi Penelitian Tafsir Di Indonesia: Pemetaan Karya Tafsir Indonesia Periode 2011-2018" ("Research Study on Tafsir in Indonesia: Mapping Indonesian Tafsir Works for the 2011-2018 Period") by Fatimah Fatmawati, states that when viewed from an internal aspect, interpretation in Indonesia for the 2011-2018 period is dominated by modern thematic methods. When viewed externally however, *tafsīr* works in Indonesia at this time are more dominated by individual interpretations to sustainable development relating to human activities, from various scientific backgrounds (Fatmawati, 2020: 81).

In addition, Badruzaman's "Naḥwa Andasat al-Tafsīr: Muḥāwala fī Tafīl Maqāshid Al-Qur'ān wa Ta'āqqulumuhā" (Badruzaman, 2019: 2), contextualizes the Qur'an with modern Indonesia by interpreting three concepts: *ghanīma*, *jihād*, and polygamy. Additionally, "The Relevance of Muhammad Abduh's Thought in Indonesian Tafsir; Analysis of Tafsir Al- Azhar" (Badawi & Zulkarnaini, 2021: 113-148) examines how Muhammad Abduh's ideas and his *Tafsīr Al-Manār* influenced Hamka's *Tafsir Al-Azhar*.

Finally, Regarding the term "contemporary," there is no firm agreement as to whether it covers the 19th century or refers to only the 20th to 21st centuries. Meanwhile, according to Ahmad Syirbasi, the contemporary period is from the 13th century AH or the end of the 19th century AD up to the present (Syirbasi, 1999). The authors referred to the last opinion in determining the contemporary period of Qur'anic interpretation. By referring to it, contemporary *tafsīr* means an interpretation of Qur'anic texts which are appropriate for current conditions. Specifically, it adapts religious precepts to modern life by interpreting them as per scientific development and societal conditions in the 20th century.

Considering that there are too many contemporary works of interpretation to sustainable development in Indonesia, the authors intend to examine the repercussions of Sufi thoughts in four works of modern Indonesian interpreters who lived in the twentieth century, namely T. M. Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy's (1904-1975) *Tafsir an-Nur*, (Ash-Shiddieqy, 2016) Mahmud Yunus' (1899-1983) *Tafsir Qur'an Karim*, (Yunus, 2015), Hamka's (1908-1981), *Tafsir Al-Azhar* (Hamka, 1990), and Muhammad Quraish Shihab's (1944-present), *Tafsir al-Mishbah* (Shihab, 2017). These four works are the primary sources of this study. The selection of the four *tafsīr* works is based on the fact that they are the full *tafsīr* works (30 juz) most widely used by the Indonesian people.

Methodology

A "literature review" was used in the research study and the researchers analysed existing published research on the topic, and critically evaluated and summarized the current state of knowledge in the field. The literature study examined the repercussions of Sufi thoughts on sustainable development in contemporary Qur'anic interpretations in Indonesia, mainly through historical and thematic analysis. The research mainly depended on finding and collecting pertinent bibliographies and critically analyzing the data from primary as well as

secondary sources (MacKall, 2004), using the library as the source of materials (including books, journal articles, theses, and dissertations) and also online sources (Creswell, 2014).

The techniques for data collection represented the most crucial phase in this study. The techniques entailed the collection of written sources (George, 2008) including books and documents, to enhance understanding and concepts related to themes of Sufism (*taṣawwuf*) and interpretations (*tafsīr*). The authors (1) thoroughly reviewed the literature to identify major schools of thought, publications, and scholars within Sufism that have impacted Qur'anic notions to sustainable development interpretation in Indonesia; (2) concentrated on identifying primary works (The four contemporary *tafsīrs* in Indonesia mentioned above as the main sources of this study) and additional literature; (3) classified the works according to thematic lines, such as mystical interpretation and the impact of particular Sufi leaders on exegesis.

In analyzing the data, the authors used "content analysis" method (Schreier, 2012) in three steps: (1) The developed a coding scheme: by creating a system for categorizing the text and identifying key themes, concepts, or specific words, focusing on how different aspects of Sufi thoughts (e.g., concepts of divine love and spiritual purification) are reflected in contemporary Qur'anic interpretation to sustainable development in Indonesia; (2) Then they coded the databy applying the coding scheme to the text and systematically categorized the content based on the predefined criteria; and (3) Analysed and Interpreted the data to identify patterns, correlations, or trends and from the findings concluding To Sufism, unlike previous understandings, contemporary Qur'anic interpretations are less accommodating of the depth of Sufi interpretation to sustainable development in Indonesia.

Results and Discussion

The Qur'an has been interpreted in various ways since the Prophet's time. Especially in verses that were unclear or difficult to grasp, he frequently explained the Qur'an to his Companions, therefore exposing its relevance and meanings (Firdausiyah, 2019: 274-278). A Muslim with a *fiqh* background will interpret it legally, while one with a Sufism background will interpret it esoterically. A Muslim with a *fiqh* background will interpret it legally, while one with a Sufism background will interpret it esoterically. The motivation of the exegetes, differences in depth and variation of knowledge mastered, and differences in time and environment surrounding were all elements that led to the variety of Qur'anic interpretations. This inevitably generated a range of characteristics and evolved into several interpretive streams (Sharbāṣī, 1962: 39-41). In the contemporary context, the issue of understanding and interpretation—including the interpretation of the Qur'an on sustainable development in Indonesia—is not stagnant but even uses various approaches (such as the trend in Social Sciences that has developed since the 18th century to the present day) in addition to the Sufistic approach.

Contemporary Qur'anic Interpretations to Sustainable Development in Indonesia

Qur'anic interpretation in Indonesia began in the 16th and 17th centuries, most notably in Aceh. The emergence of this work of Qur'anic exegesis coincides with the rise of intellectual study in the field of *ḥadīth* such as Nuruddin Ar-Raniri's *Hidāyat al-ḥabīb fī al-targhīb wa al-tarhīb* and Abd al-Rauf As-Sinkili's (1693 AD) commentary on Imam Nawawi's *Ḥadīth al-arba'īn* (Gusman, 2013).

There are four periods in the history of the growth and compilation of Qur'anic interpretation to sustainable development in Indonesia: First, the classical period (14th and 15th centuries AD), namely the period of Islamization associated with the presence of the *Wali Songo* (Nine Guardians). Second, the medieval period (16th to 18th centuries AD) began with the introduction of explanatory works from the Middle East, such as *Tafsīr al-Jalālayn*, and the discovery of the anonymous manuscript *Surat al-Kahf* during the sultanate of Ala' al-Din Riayat Shah Sayyid al-Mukammil (1537-1604). The Qur'anic interpretation began with Abd al-Rauf As-Sinkili's (1615-1693 AD) *Tarjumān al-Mustafīd* (Latif, 2019: 105-124). Third, the pre-

modern period (19th century AD). The publication of *Marāḥ labīd* (also known as *Tafsīr al-munīr li-ma'ālim al-tanzīl*) marked this period. Its author is Muhammad Nawawi al-Bantani (1813-1879 AD). After al-Bantani wrote down his *Marāḥ Labīd*, Indonesia's *tafsīr* tradition is growing (Ma'arif, 2017: 117-127). Fourth, the modern period (20th century AD to the present). Among the *tafsīr* works in this period was Mahmud Yunus' *Tafsīr Qur'an Karim*, initially written in Javanese from 1922 to 1938 and then refined in Indonesian. Then, from 1928 to 1956, Ahmad Hassan wrote *Al-Furqan*, Munawwar Khalil wrote *Tafsīr Hidayaturrahman* in Javanese, and in 1942, Mahmud Aziz wrote *Tafsīr Qur'an* in Indonesian. After that T.M. Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy published *Tafsīr An-Nur* (1952). Huwaida, K. (2020) said, the IIQ Repository where Huwaida's work is located said, "The server is temporarily unable to service your request due to maintenance downtime or capacity problems.

Zainuddin Hamidy and Fachruddin HS later wrote *Tafsīr Qur'an* (1955) (Hamidy & Hs, 1988) and Bisyrī Musthafa wrote his *Tafsīr al-ibrīz li-ma'rifat tafsīr al-Qur'ān al-'azīz* (1960). In 1960, Malik Mahmud also wrote *Tafsīr Sinar* and Hakim Bakri et al. wrote *Tafsīr al-Qur'an al-Hakim*. Ahmad Sanusi wrote *Rawḍat al-'irfān fī ma'rifat al-Qur'ān*, and in 1967 Hamka wrote *Tafsīr al-Azhar*, while H.B. Jassin wrote the controversial *Qur'an'ul Karim Bacaan Mulia* in 1977. In 1983, Oemar Bakry wrote *Tafsīr Rahmat*; in 1985, Misbah Mustafa wrote *Tafsīr al-iklīl fī ma'āni al-tanzīl*; and in 2000, Muhammad Quraish Shihab wrote *Tafsīr al-Mishbah* (Iqisani, 2018).

Four Leading Contemporary Qur'anic Commentaries

The first is Mahmud Yunus' *Tafsīr Qur'an Karim*. According to Mahmud Yunus (1899-1983). His interpretative work resulted from "in-depth research" over approximately 53 years, from the age of 20 to 73. The writing of this book began in 1922 AD. After the publication of the first, second, and third volumes in 1924 AD, Yunus stopped writing because he wanted to pursue his education at al-Azhar in Cairo. Upon returning from Egypt, he resumed his writing in 1935 AD. Finally, in April 1938 AD, all 30 volumes of the Qur'an were completed (Yunus, 2015: ii-iv). This *Tafsīr Qur'an Karim* uses the global interpretive method (*ijmālī*). The sources and materials of interpretation combine two methods: textual interpretation (*bi al-ma'thūr*) and rational interpretation (*bi al-ra'y*) (Hermawan et al., 2017: 370-390).

Second is T.M. Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy's *Tafsīr al-Qur'anul Majid an-Nur*. Ash-Shiddieqy (1904-1975). He wrote this commentary when scholars were still arguing about whether it was permissible to translate and write the Qur'an in languages other than Arabic, its parent language. The scholars who forbade it followed Ibn Taymiyah (1328 AD) because it was impossible to translate the Qur'an into another language with a precise and adequate meaning. The scholars who allowed it, including Ash-Shiddieqy, followed Ash-Shāṭibī (1388 AD). This *tafsīr* was written from 1952 to 1961 while he was also inter alia busy teaching, leading the faculty, and being a member of the Constituent Assembly of the Republic of Indonesia (Ash-Shiddieqy, 2016: 4).

Ash-Shiddieqy became a Professor of Hadith Science at IAIN Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta in 1960. At the same year, he was named Dean of IAIN Sunan Kalijaga's Sharia Faculty and served until 1972 (Supian, 2014: 270-291). Along with his daily activities, he has written many scientific works, including *Tafsīr an-Nur*.

The third is Hamka's *Tafsīr Al-Azhar*. The word "Al-Azhar" originates from a mosque, the Al-Azhar mosque, where Hamka (1908-1981, the writer) presented the *tafsīr* lectures (Badawi & Zulkarnaini, 2021: 121). In 1964, the New Order's government officials detained him on accusations of treason and imprisoned him for two years and seven months. During his imprisonment, he utilized his time to refine his interpretation, resulting in a 30-volume work. The structure of this *Tafsīr al-Azhar* follows the Ottoman order (*tartīb 'uthmānī*), with the chapters and verses arranged according to the Ottoman *muṣḥaf* (manuscript).

Paired with scientific discoveries, Hamka's proficiency with Arabic and Indonesian literature enabled him to create interpretive works that are accessible to a broad audience. With his enormous contribution to the Al-Azhar commentary, Hamka has united the humanities and

natural philosophy unambiguous principals. For example, regarding Surat al-Rahman 55:5-6 ("The sun and the moon run according to calculation. And the stars and the trees prostrate themselves to Him.") Hamka explained that this verse shows the harmony of the universe, and this harmony is under the laws of nature and modern astronomy. Then he linked the law of balance in nature with human social harmony, that as God's law governs nature, humans must also live in moral and social balance. (Syefriyeni & Nasrudin, 2023: 1-7). For example, regarding Surat al-Rahman 55:5-6 ("The sun and the moon run according to calculation. And the stars and the trees prostrate themselves to Him.") Hamka explained that this verse shows the harmony of the universe, and this harmony is under the laws of nature and modern astronomy. Then he linked the law of balance in nature with human social harmony, that as God's law governs nature, humans must also live in moral and social balance.

Social etiquette (*adab ijtimā'ī*) is the pattern used in *Tafsir Al-Azhar*, where the content of the Qur'anic explanation is related to aspects of life within society (Hidayati, 2018: 25-42). From a methodological standpoint, *Tafsir al-Azhar* is a mixture of rational exegesis (*tafsir bi al-ra'yi*) and explanation based on *hadith*, other Quranic passages, and also companions' opinions (*tafsir bi al-ma'thūr*) (Jamarudin et al., 2019: 24-47).

Hamka has more than 76 works covering socio-political criticism, history, and the science of Qur'anic exegesis. One such work is *Tafsir Al-Azhar*. Egypt's Al-Azhar University and the National University of Malaysia awarded Hamka an Honorary Doctorate for his outstanding services in the field of religious studies. (Hidayati, 2018)

The last is Muhammad Quraish Shihab's *Tafsir al-Mishbah*. Muhammad Quraish Shihab was born in Rappang, South Sulawesi, on February 16, 1944. He obtained a Bachelor's degree (1967), Master's degree (1969), and doctorate (1982) in Qur'anic Exegesis from Al-Azhar University. Shihab has produced various works. Among his numerous works, *Tafsir Al-Mishbah* is the most well-known. It took him four years and three months to write this work (Shihab, 2017: XV/759)

Tafsir bi al-ma'thūr, or interpreting using *al-riwāyah* (narration of the Qur'an, the Sunnah, and the traditions of the Companions and the Successors) as the primary source, is the general style of interpretation employed by Shihab in his writings (Hidayat, 2020: 29-76). He employs the reason in addition to the *tafsir bi al-ma'thūr* style. Shihab believes *ta'wīl* can help understand the Qur'an's relevance in today's world and into the future. In light of this logical interpretation, it appears that Shihab agreed with Mohammed Arkoun's (Algerian-born Muslim scholar) view that interpreting the Qur'anic passages also requires reason because the Qur'an offers countless interpretation opportunities. The passages are, therefore, never definitive or limited to a single interpretation but rather continually open to new ones (Budiana & Gandara, 2021: 85-91).

The Sufi thoughts in the contemporary Indonesian *Tafsir*

To avoid expanding the discussion, this article only analyzes three themes that are central to Sufism. These are asceticism (*zuhd*), trust (*tawakkul*), and divine love (*maḥabbah*) in the four contemporary *tafsir* books stated above. Sufism emphasizes asceticism (*zuhd*) rather highly. It is one of the *maqām* (stations) that a Sufi must undergo. Etymologically, it means *raghab 'an shay'in wa tarkuhū*--not being interested in something and leaving it. Individuals performing *zuhd* are known as *zāhid* (Syukur, 1997). Extreme ascetic behaviours, such as traveling without food, living alone, using wool clothing, and not working, were prevalent in the second century A.H. and were criticized when classical *Ṣūfism* emerged. Criticisms of these practices have appeared in literature since the third century A.H. Early writers of the *Ṣūfī* school, including al-Muḥāsibī (d. 857), al-Kharrāz (d. 899), and al-Sarrāj (d. 988), addressed this issue (Özel, 2022: 647- 659). Many scholars, especially experts on Sufism, have provided definitions of *zuhd*. 'Alī ibn Abī Ṭālib (Ali, 1954: 1/157-158) interprets it as not being jealous of those greedy for the world, whether he is a believer or not (Kalābādhī, 1994: 65).

Zuhd, according to Rābi'ah al-'Adawiyyah, is an inward state of detachment from everything



other than God rather than just physical abstinence from worldly pleasures. Her well-known statement, "O God! If I worship You for fear of Hell, burn me in Hell; and if I worship You in hope of Paradise, exclude me from Paradise; but if I worship You for Your Own sake, do not be reluctant to show Your everlasting Beauty," illustrates her belief that true asceticism involved a heart free from anything but divine love (Nicholson, 2002: 82).

The vocabulary derived from the word *al-zuhd* in the Qur'an is only found in Sūrat Yūsuf 12/20 (*wa kānū fīhi min al-zāhidīn*), indicating that *zuhd* signifies being content with little and not being willing or attracted to treasures. This view is further supported by other scriptures that caution humans about worldly pleasures and possessions (Wahid et al., 2023: 263-282). Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy and Mahmud Yunus do not explain the meaning of *zuhd* in this verse. Ash-Shiddieqy interprets it as "unwillingness" (*tidak ingin*) (Ash-Shiddieqy, 2016: II/398), while Yunus interprets it as "dislike" (*kurang suka*) (Yunus, 2015: 334). Quraish Shihab interprets it as "displeasure" (*ketidaksenangan*) with something that is usually enjoyed. (Shihab, 2017: VI/41) As Yunus, Hamka interprets it as "dislike" (*kurang suka*) (Hamka, 1990: V/3620), while in another place he viewed *zuhd* as moderation in pursuing worldly pleasures (Hamka, 2013). However, *zuhd* can generally be interpreted as believing that whatever is on God's side is better than what is in our hands.

Another verse related to *zuhd* is Sūrat al-Qaṣaṣ 28/77 (*wa-btaghi fīmā ātāka l-Lāh al-dār al-ākhirata wa lā tansa naṣībaka min al-dunyā*) which teaches balance (*tawāzun*) between worldly and hereafter life. Interpreting this verse, ash-Shiddieqy states that God does not want people to avoid all the delights of the world and live with the help of others. However, they must work lawfully. Moreover, after obtaining wealth, they must fulfill God's rights but not forget their part in this world (Ash-Shiddieqy, 2016: III/345). It is wrong, Yunus said, if we are only busy with worship in mosques, without trying to make a fortune (Yunus, 2015: 581). Shihab states that there is an unbalanced opinion that this verse suggests leaving worldly pleasures by limiting oneself to necessities (eating, drinking, clothing). Some understand it as a requirement to balance the worldly and spiritual life (Shihab, 2017: IX/666-667).

Without quoting his statement literally, their view aligns with al-Ghazzali's view that *zuhd* does not mean that we should not have wealth, but should not be controlled by wealth. Al-Ghazzali, a prominent Islamic theologian and mystic, integrated Sufi teachings into mainstream Islamic thought. In his seminal work *Iḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn* (The Revival of Religious Sciences), he described *zuhd* as a necessary practice for reaching worship's sincerity. He distinguished between outward and inward asceticism, arguing that the latter was more important. He wrote, "Asceticism is not that you should own nothing, but that nothing should own you." (Ghazzālī, 2009: IV/226-229).

The treasures in this world are a gift from God, wrote Hamka, and in the afterlife, humans will die. So, doing good and spending a fortune on the path of virtue is necessary. They must use wealth to build a life in the hereafter. In interpreting this verse, Hamka quoted the famous Sufi view of Ibn Arabi. ('Arabī Ibn, 1899: III/430) "Do not forget your portion in the world, which is a lawful treasure" (Hamka, 1990: VII/5376). Hamka's view is also not much different from the view of Hasan al-Basri, a prominent early Sufi and ascetic, who emphasized *zuhd* as a way to get closer to God and cleanse the soul. He preached that the only way to be content was to give up on worldly pleasures because they are brief and distracting. He also stated, "The foundation of this world is calamity, and the foundation of the next world is eternity. The intelligent man abandons the ephemeral for the eternal." (Qushayrī, 2001: 154) (Hujwīrī 'Alī al-, 1974: 294). Give physical rights as you give spiritual rights because humans are composed of body and spirit." (Yunus, 2015: 166). In interpreting this verse, Shihab quoted the opinions of several scholars, such as al-Biqā'ī (d. 1480), al-Ṭabarī (d. 923), and al-Wahīdī (d. 1075).

The word *lā ta tadū* (do not go beyond the limit) in the form of a word that uses the letter *tā'* in this verse, he continued, means compulsion, which is beyond the limit of generality. It shows



that human nature leads to moderation, being neither excessive nor nihilist. Every transgression is an inherently heavy and risky imposition of nature (Shihab, 2017: III/230). This verse, Hamka wrote, warns those who forbid what God permits. Islam teaches that through this world, humans will live in the afterlife. Abandoning the good gifts of God means opposing life itself. If such a view influences Muslims, there will be two kinds of life: "holy" people who are excluded from people whose work is *dhikr* (remembering) and meditating, and others who only obey the will of lust as they please (Hamka, 1990: III/1849-1850). In interpreting this verse, Hamka quoted the story of ‘Uthmān ibn Mazh‘ūn, insinuating the attitude of al-Ghazzali, who once praised the *zuhd* life excessively because he had praised people whose clothes had not changed for one year.

In connection with these *zuhd* teachings, it is also necessary to put forward an interpretation of the verse of Sūrat al-A‘rāf 7/31 (*khudhū zīnatakum ‘inda kulli masjid wa kulū wa-shrabū wa lā tusrifū*). In the early days, it can be seen that Islam was a religion that brought humans to progress and high civilization in society, according to Yunus, with a recommendation of simple jewelery and proper clothing. In this verse, Islam also teaches us to eat and drink delicious food simply and without exaggeration. Islam teaches us to eat to live, not live to eat (Yunus, 2015: 212-213). Ash-Shiddieqy stated that this verse instructs us to achieve spiritual perfection, the height of mind, and health. Islam also likes beauty and pleasure, as long as it is not exaggerated (Ash-Shiddieqy, 2016: II/96-97).

Shihab says this verse teaches a proportional attitude regarding eating and drinking. There is a message, including exaggeration, if people eat what their appetites do not have (Shihab, 2017: IV/87-88). Hamka stated that the verse also prohibits extravagance. Extravagance or wastefulness is exceeding the appropriate limit. Here, Hamka quotes al-Ghazzali's opinion which states that husband and wife should have intercourse on Thursday night so that Friday morning they can take a bath and decorate to go to the mosque for Friday prayer (Ghazzālī, 2009: II/58). The measure, said Hamka, is our awareness of our faith. Faith becomes a subtle weighing tool in this matter of simplicity and waste (Hamka, 1990: IV/2352-2354). In interpreting this verse, he also quoted the thoughts of Ibn Kathīr and Sarojini Naidu (Indian poet).

The second central theme of Sufism is *Tawakkul* which is primarily based on the belief in the omnipotence and majesty of God (Afnibar Afnibar et al., 2023: 959). Therefore, it fortifies the soul: a strong soul can aid reason and intellectualise in overcoming adversity. On the other hand, restlessness and anxiety will obstruct reasoning. These are crucial ideas in both the Qur’an and Sunnah. Nonetheless, an erroneous understanding of fate significantly shapes people’s wrong belief in *tawakkul*, which contradicts the fundamental principles of religion (Kandemir, 2022: 121-133).

Tawakkul is an Arabic noun derived from the verb *tawakkala-yatawakkalu*. The word's origin is *wakala*, which means to surrender (M. Ibn, 2000: XI/734). Meanwhile, in the book *al-Qāmūs al-muḥīt*, it means to submit and then leave (Fayrūzābādī, 1998: 1069). Two primary meanings of *tawakkul* are “to believe” and “to surrender,” and they are intimately connected to vulnerability and weakness. The primary reason for giving something to someone else is their weakness (QS 4:28 states that humans are inherently weak) (Yusam & Ridwan, 2023: 10).

Ibn Arabi saw *tawakkul* as acknowledging the unity of existence and the total reliance on God for everything. He viewed *tawakkul* as a necessary step towards realizing the God’s Oneness (Tawhid). In his *al-Futūḥāt al-Makkiyyah*, he described *tawakkul* as the whole submission of the heart to God’s will (‘Arabī, 1999: III/300). According to Hamka, *tawakkul* means turning to Allah, the only God of this universe, in every choice and endeavour (Hamka, 2013: 232-233). He stated that *tawakkul* is carried out after effort and determination (*‘azm*). With *tawakkul*, there will be no loss of mind if we experience failure and no arrogance if we achieve success. *Tawakkul* must be ringed with gratitude and patience. We should be grateful if what we want is achieved, and patient if it is still disappointing (Hamka, 1990: II/971-973) and he stated this



when he interpreted verse 159 of Sūrat Āli ʿImrān, *fa-idhā ʿazamta fa-tawakkal ʿalā l-Lāh*.

Ash-Shiddieqy interprets this verse as follows: After deciding deliberation with unanimous determination, we are obliged to trust in Allah and strive for the paths that must be taken as we realize the results of the deliberation. One must trust in Allah after preparing the reasons (requirements) to achieve the intention that has been set. But baseless *tawakkul* is foolishness (Ash- Shiddieqy, 2016: I/399). Yunus stated that *tawakkul* is when we work with energy, effort, and perfect conditions, we leave it to Allah because even though we have enough tools and conditions, unexpected obstacles may suddenly appear. Therefore, we need to surrender ourselves to Allah and hope in Him, hopefully avoiding barriers that stand in the way (Yunus, 2015: 94-95).

Indeed, their views are in line with al-Ghazzali's views on *tawakkul*. He viewed *tawakkul* as an essential state of the heart where one realizes that everything in existence is under the control of God. He elaborated on this in his famous work, *Iḥyāʾ ʿulūm al-dīn*, emphasizing that true trust breeds a deep sense of peace and a lack of worry about worldly things (Ghazzālī, 2009: IV/270-272). He defined *tawakkul* as an effort to rely on God and ask for His help after doing business (*ikhtiyār*). It is not an escape for those who fail at trying. He is not in a state of waiting for fate while idling but doing his best, then surrendering to God. He will determine the outcome later.

Shihab viewed *tawakkul* and belief as interconnected and impacting one another (Shihab, 2007). People who believe in God will leave all matters to Him after making an effort. He is the One who provides sustenance for what His servants have done, as said in Sūrat al-Aḥzāb 33/3 "*wa tawakkal ʿalā al-Lāh. Wa kafā bi-l-Lāhi wakīlā.*" According to Ash-Shiddieqy, this verse instructs us to surrender all our affairs to God and hold on to His Revelation. It is enough that He is the custodian of all affairs and that all problems are left to Him (Ash-Shiddieqy, 2016: III/428). Explaining this verse, Shihab borrowed the opinion of the expert commentators Abu Ḥayyān and Ibn Kathīr, and said, the word *tawakkul* ("*wa tawakkal*") means "relying on other parties in matters that should be handled by one party." (Shihab, 2017: X/407-409). Shihab then stated the command to trust (*tawakkul*) does not mean that it encourages people not to attempt or ignore the law of cause and effect. The Qur'an only wants its people to live in the reality that without effort no hope will be achieved and there is no point in grief if the reality cannot be changed anymore (Shihab, 2017: IX/125).

God said in Sūrat an-Nisāʾ 4/81 (*wa tawakkal ʿalā l-Lāh. Wa kafā bi-l-Lāh wakīlā*). Ash-Shiddieqy commented on this verse, especially the last sentence, "Leave your affairs to Allah and hold yourselves to His teachings in everything. Because Allah can protect you from their crimes and who will reward you for your practices" (Ash-Shiddieqy, 2016: I/500). While Hamka wrote that the munafiq must exist, as cited in this verse. So, God instructed him not to overthink about them to cause distress because God's assurance was still there; God would defend him (Hamka, 1990: II/1322). Shihab commented on this verse that the word *tawakkul*, which also has the same root word *wakīl*, does not mean absolute surrender to God but surrender that must be preceded by human effort (Shihab, 2017: II/637). Furthermore, he said that a Muslim must try but also surrender to God. He must fulfill his obligations and then wait for the results according to His will and determination. If considerations and calculations are missed, there is God, whom people make as representatives, so they do not dissolve in sadness and despair. Our "representatives" have acted wisely and made the best choices (Shihab, 2017: II/638). The third theme is *Maḥabbah* which, in Arabic, means "love." Love, in its literal sense, is trust. Someone can tell another person he loves them when he trusts them. Concerning God, a servant will put all his trust in Him and fulfill his commitment to Him, for He is the only one who created the whole world—something incomparable (Ebrahimi et al., 2021: 65-76). Love is crucial to the human experience because it symbolizes Love for God (Divine Love), which the Sufis regard as a process of perfection (Bunyadzade, 2020: 27-33). It is generally seen as a Sufistic experience, during which a Sufi spends all of his time in solitude, comprehending and giving himself to God (Jamarudin et al., 2022: 579-590).

After some initial disputes among the Sufis, the idea of God and man having a loving relationship evolved into a comprehensive theology and one of the main Sufistic doctrines.



Rābi‘ah al-‘Adawiyyah (d. 801), a well-known Sufi woman, was among the earliest mystics who contributed to the formation of the doctrine of Love (Rouzati, 2020: 1-15). When asked about Love, she replied: "Love is about desire and feelings. Only those who feel Love can know what Love is. Love cannot be described in words" (Mustamin, 2020: 70).

Al-Hallaj is known for his radical and ecstatic expressions of divine love. His declaration "*Anā al-Haqq*" (I am the Truth) is often interpreted as an expression of his complete annihilation in God's love, where he saw no distinction between himself and the Divine. Eventually, this incredible experience of *maḥabbah* resulted in his martyrdom. His poetry and works demonstrate his faith in divine love's transformative and all-encompassing power (Schimmel, 1975: 63-76).

Ibn ‘Arabī conceptualized *maḥabbah* as the fundamental principle underlying the universe. He held that all that exists manifests divine love and that the universe was made from God's love. He examined the notion that love is the basis of creation and the bond between the lover (the human soul) and the Beloved (God) in his book *Fuṣūṣ al-Ḥikam* (The Bezels of Wisdom) (‘Arabī, 1946: 216-220). He defined love as unfathomable wisdom, in that until one feels and experiences love, one cannot understand what Love is like (Çelik, 2023: 679-696). Al-Qushayrī (d. 1072) states, Love for God is the harmony of a lover with whom he loves, namely God, so that a lover's heart is finally connected to His will. Love is the culmination of feelings that arise in the deepest heart (Qushayrī, 2001).

We should note that "The principles of Sufism can significantly inform and enhance participatory development. The emphasis on community, solidarity, and mutual support in Sufi teachings aligns well with the goals of inclusive and sustainable development. For instance, the concept of baraka, or blessings, in Sufism underscores the idea that communal well-being is a source of divine favor. This aligns with development models that prioritize the collective good over individual gain. Moreover, Sufi practices encourage a deep connection with the environment, which is crucial for sustainable development." (Harde, 2024).

According to al-Sarrāj (d. 988), *maḥabbah* has three levels: (1) Love of ordinary people (*‘āmmah*), which involves constant remembrance of God through dhikr and a liking for chanting His names; (2) Love of those who know God (*ṣādiqīn*), a love capable of lifting the veil that separates one from God, thus revealing the secrets within Him; and (3) Love of those with a profound understanding of God (*‘arīfīn*). What is observed and felt is not just love but the self that becomes the object of Love. Eventually, the characteristics of the beloved become part of the one who loves (Sarrāj, 1960: 86-87).

Sūrat al-Māidah 5/54 (*fa sawfa ya’tī l-Lāh bi qawmin yuḥibbuhum wa yuḥibbūnahū*) is a verse always mentioned when discussing *maḥabbah* in Sufism. People whom God loves, as stated in the verse, according to ash-Shiddieqy, have several characteristics: First, God loves them. However, discussing the nature and intricacies of God's love and hatred is not appropriate. Second, they love God by following His commands and avoiding His prohibitions. Third, they are gentle towards fellow believers. They love the believers and humble themselves because of his compassion for them. Fourth, they were harsh on unbelievers. Fifth, they strive in the way of God. Sixth, they are not afraid of people's criticism and dislike human flattery (Ash-Shiddieqy, 2016: I/599). Ash-Shiddieqy's discussion of *maḥabbah* does not use the Sufistic approach.

Hamka interpreted that God would replace those who apostatized (out of their religion) with those who converted to Islam out of love for God. God appreciates and repays their passion, not unrequited. God loves them because they love Him. Their faith reaches a high peak because they are attracted to Islam out of love for God, not just because they want to go to heaven and are afraid of going to hell. Everything is light for them because their lover, God, gives orders (Hamka, 1990: I/1773). Here, Hamka's interpretation appears to have the Sufistic 'scent', namely when he stated that they love God, not because of heaven or fear of hell, as recorded in the poem of al-‘Adawiyyah (Hamka, 1990: III/1773). She expressed the idea that divine love transcends all other types of love and is an all-consuming longing for God. Her sincere desire and unwavering love for God are evident in her prayers and writings. As she



memorably stated, "O God! If I worship You for fear of Hell, burn me in Hell; and if I worship You in hope of Paradise, exclude me from Paradise; but if I worship You for Your Own sake, grudge me, not Your everlasting Beauty." (Smith, 2001: 113-140).

In interpreting love in this verse, Hamka quotes Ahmad's *ḥadīth* that Abū Dhar al-Ghifārī (a Sufi companion of Muhammad) said, "I was ordered by my beloved friend Muhammad with seven testaments which I must uphold: (1) I was ordered to love poor people and get closer to them..." By understanding that people who embrace Islam reciprocated in love with God, there is no need to be afraid of apostates (Hamka, 1990: III/1775). Shihab commented that God's love for His servants is in the sense of His infinite abundance of goodness and grace. He further cites the view of notable Sufi figures such as al-Junayd and al-Qushayri that human love for God is multi-level and that love is the basis of the journey to Him. All ranks (*maqām*) experienced by one who walks towards God are levels of love for Him. All *maqām* can experience destruction except love (*maḥabbah*) (Shihab, 2017: III/157-160).

Related to the verse of Sūrat Āl 'Imrān 3/31 (*qul in kuntum tuḥibbūna l-Lāh fattabi'ūnī yuḥbibkumu l-Lāh*), Ash-Shiddieqy wrote, "Two opposing things cannot be combined in a person, namely loving God and rejecting His commands" (Ash-Shiddieqy, 2016: I/319). God will bless and forgive those who love Him by getting closer to Him, following His teachings, and following His Prophet. What was impressive after reading this verse and the previous one, said Hamka, was love, the love of God for His servants. It is as if God is saying, "I also felt the desire to repay that love," known as clapping hands (Hamka, 1990: II/756). According to him, love is a subtle feeling, *'iffa* or *wijd*. The feeling that is never separated from God's sight, always in His blessings and guidance. Humans fear God because of God. However, in that fear, they also miss Him. Because of their shortcomings, they are ashamed that they will see God but also want to see. They ask Him to solve the complexity of this problem. "Here, God formulates the answer that if we love Him, then the way to meet Him is easy. It is the apostle He sent who guides the way to Him, and we are commanded to follow him" (Hamka, 1990: II/757). The basis for the Prophet's meeting with Christian figures, which was the reason for the revelation of this verse, was love. However, love in words alone, Hamka continued, is not enough. Expressing love but not following the will of a loved one is fake love.

Interpreting this verse, Shihab wrote that love (*maḥabbah*) is the pinnacle of the relationship between humans and God. Bagir, Haidar, (2019) said If they love God by carrying out His commands, they enter the gate to reach His love. If they maintain continuity of obedience and increase the practice of their obligations by carrying out His Prophet's sunnah, then God will love them (Shihab, 2017: II/79). Quoting al-Qushayri, Shihab describes human love for God as "care more about lovers than friends," prioritizing what is pleasing to the lover, namely God, rather than personal interests (Qushayrī, 2001: 350).

Furthermore, Shihab quoted al-Junayd's view on who serves to be called 'lovers of God'. The lover does not turn to himself anymore and is always in an intimate state with God through *dhikr*. So that when he speaks, hears, moves, and is silent, he is only with Allah (Sarrāj, 1960: 88). Then, the opinion of some Sufis was also cited, saying that love is the basis of the journey to God and that all ranks (*maqām*) reached by the traveler can be destroyed except love. Love cannot be destroyed as long as the path to God remains traced (Shihab, 2017: II/81).

In general, the views of the *mufasssirs* described above are in harmony with those of al-Ghazzali discussed extensively in his magnum opus *lḥyā' 'ulūm al-dīn*. According to him, divine love is the ultimate goal of human life and the highest spiritual fulfillment. He added that true love for God involves both knowledge and action that results in a close relationship with the Divine. He highlighted that true happiness and fulfillment can only be attained via God's love, which is greater than all other loves (Ghazzālī, 2009: IV/308-310).

Of the four interpretations studied, Ash-Shiddieqy and Yunus never mention names, let alone opinions, of famous Sufis, even in interpreting verses related to Sufism. While Hamka and Shihab explicitly quoted some of the Sufis' thoughts. Hamka, for example, quoted the opinion of Abū Dharr al-Ghifārī (a companion of the Prophet who had an ascetic behavior), Rābī'ah al-'Adawiyyah, Ibn 'Arabī, and al-Ghazzālī. Even Hamka also mentioned the opinion of Ibn



Arabi, a Sufi figure who was controversial because he brought teachings about *Waḥdat al-wujūd*. Meanwhile, Shihab quoted some statements from Sufis, such as al-Qushayrī and al-Junayd.

From the above explanations, we can illustrate in a table the range of echoes of Sufi thoughts on the four contemporary *tafsīr* as follows:

Table 1. Echoes of Sufi thoughts on the four contemporary *tafsīr*

	Minimal	Moderate	Significant
<i>Tafsir Qur'an Karim</i>	V		
<i>Tafsiral-Qur'anul Majid an-Nur</i>	V		
<i>Tafsir al-Azhar</i>			V
<i>Tafsir al-Mishbah</i>		V	

Conclusion

Sufi thought continues to shape contemporary Qur'anic interpretation to sustainably develop Indonesia by fostering spiritual depth, promoting moderation, and encouraging interfaith harmony. However, its influence is moderated by historical separations between mysticism and mainstream exegesis and challenges posed by competing Islamic ideologies. Discussing the repercussions of Sufi thoughts in contemporary interpretation is particularly interesting because it involves the convergence of two different intellectual worlds: mystical thought in the Sufi tradition and a more academic rational-textual approach to contemporary interpretation.

Sufism's highlighting of egalitarianism and collective societal drives towards spiritual growth can advance a sense of shared responsibility and ownership in sustainable development. It helps promote culturally appropriate, sustainable actions, and is beneficial to the communities it serves.

The study shows that Indonesia's interpretation of the Qur'an in the contemporary era, from the beginning of the twentieth century until now, is developing rapidly. Scholars have produced dozens of interpretations in the last hundred years, from thin to thick, from one to thirty volumes. With a systematic analysis method, this study provides a new perspective that connects the spiritual dimension with sustainable development efforts. However, the limitations of certain interpretations with minimal empirical data in this study do not explain the direct impact on Sustainable Development.

As an implication for the discipline, this study provides a unique perspective by connecting Sufi thought with sustainable development. This can be a basis for further, more in-depth studies.

Future studies can involve empirical studies with interviews or observations of Sufi order communities to see how they understand and apply this interpretation in real life. Furthermore, with the increasing number of digital interpretations, further studies can examine how Sufi interpretations are adapted in digital spaces and social media

Based on this study's findings, even though *tafsīr* in Indonesia was in the Sufistic style at the beginning of its emergence, the Sufi thoughts have moderate repercussions in contemporary interpretation in Indonesia. This is evident when some interpretations moderately adopt the views of prominent Sufi figures and use them as a basis for interpreting Qur'anic verses.

Given the time and effort limitations, the authors recommend that future researchers expand their research to cover various important, and more subtle, aspects of Sufism. Likewise, their research sources include small works of interpretation scattered in multiple regions.

Finally, the *tafsīr* by a Sufistic approach and other mystical works, should be encouraged in society. Technological advances and progress that tend to ignore spiritual aspects may cause spiritual emptiness, and Sufistic views serve to fill this spiritual void. These views may also help promote interreligious tolerance and respect and promote social cohesion and



sustainability.

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