# INTERNALIZED SUFISM VALUES AND MEANING IN LIFE AMONG MUSLIM ADOLESCENTS IN KAMPUNG KALIWEDI, PURWASARI, KARAWANG

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**Abstract**

Adolescence represents an important stage of development during which young people form their personal values, future orientations, and interpretations of life experiences, while contemporary digital environments may intensify psychological and social challenges. Although previous studies have linked religiosity and spirituality to meaning in life among adolescents, empirical research examining the internalization of specific Sufism values in relation to meaning in life remains limited, particularly among Muslim adolescents in local Indonesian communities. This study therefore investigates whether a statistical association exists between the internalization of Sufi values and meaning in life among Muslim adolescents in Kampung Kaliwedi, Purwasari, Karawang, Indonesia. A quantitative correlational approach with a non-experimental cross-sectional design was employed, drawing on Self-Determination Theory and contemporary perspectives on meaning in life. Data were collected using five-point Likert-scale questionnaires measuring the internalization of Sufism values and meaning in life. From a defined population of 200 Muslim adolescents aged 15–24 years in Kampung Kaliwedi, Purwasari, Karawang, 133 participants were selected through simple random sampling. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and simple linear regression with IBM SPSS Statistics. The mean score for internalization of Sufism values was 49.06 (81.77% of the maximum possible score), while the mean score for meaning in life was 32.49 (81.23%). Regression analysis revealed a positive and statistically significant association between Sufi-value internalization and meaning in life ($B = 0.547$, $\beta = 0.824$, $t = 16.625$, $p < .001$), with the model explaining 67.8% of the variance in meaning in life among the respondents. These findings indicate that higher reported internalization of Sufism values was statistically associated with higher reported meaning in life among the respondents. The findings may inform families, religious educators, and youth programs in developing reflective and value-oriented activities that support adolescents' engagement with Islamic ethical-spiritual values; however, such implications should be understood as potential applications rather than evidence of a causal relationship.

**Keywords:** Internalization of Sufism Values; Meaning in Life; Muslim Adolescents; Islamic Psychology; Self-Determination Theory

## A. Introduction

Adolescence is a critical developmental period characterized by substantial changes in identity, personal values, social relationships, and future orientation. During this period, adolescents gradually develop greater autonomy in interpreting their experiences and determining the direction of their lives. These developmental processes have become increasingly complex in contemporary digital environments, where adolescents are exposed to diverse information, social expectations, and patterns of interaction. Research has also highlighted the potential relationship between intensive social-media use and psychological distress among adolescents (Sawyer et al., 2018). Against these circumstances, the question of how adolescents construct a coherent and meaningful orientation toward their lives becomes increasingly important.

In contemporary psychology, meaning in life refers to the extent to which individuals experience their lives as comprehensible, purposeful, and significant. Martela & Steger (2016) distinguish three related dimensions of meaning in life: coherence, purpose, and significance. Coherence concerns the ability to understand and make sense of one's experiences; purpose concerns the possession of valued goals and direction; and significance concerns the perception that one's life is valuable and worth living. For adolescents, this process matters because their values, identities, and future orientations are still developing. Accordingly, meaning in life needs to be understood not only as an individual psychological construct but also in relation to the social, cultural, and value systems within which adolescents develop.

Existing literature has generally approached this issue from two complementary perspectives. The first emphasizes the psychological processes through which individuals construct meaning, while the second highlights religiosity and spirituality as important resources in this process. Previous studies have shown that religiosity and spirituality can be associated with psychological well-being and positive development, while meaning in life may function as an important pathway through which religious orientations are connected with well-being (Steger et al., 2006). Research among adolescents has similarly indicated that religiousness and spirituality are related to meaning-making and psychological adjustment (Buenconsejo & Datu, 2023).

However, treating religiosity or spirituality as broad constructs leaves an important conceptual question unresolved: which particular religious values and internal processes are associated with adolescents' meaning-making? Religious affiliation, participation in religious activities, and general religiosity do not necessarily indicate that religious values have become personally endorsed and integrated into an individual's motivational system. Internalization refers to the process through which externally introduced values, norms, or behavioral regulations become increasingly integrated into one's own motivational system (Ryan & Deci, 2000). This distinction suggests that the psychological relevance of religion may depend not only on exposure to religious teachings or participation in religious practices, but also on the extent to which religious values are personally internalized and reflected in everyday behavior and self-regulation.

This distinction becomes particularly relevant in the Islamic tradition, in which spiritual and ethical formation is not limited to religious knowledge or ritual participation. Sufism (*tasawuf*) represents a distinctive Islamic ethical-spiritual tradition

that emphasizes purification of the self, moral refinement, spiritual awareness, and the cultivation of a closer relationship with God. Its teachings include values such as *ikhlas* (sincerity), *sabar* (patience), *syukur* (gratitude), *tawakal* (trust in God), *qana'ah* (contentment), *muhasabah* (self-reflection), *muraqabah* (awareness of God), and *istiqamah* (steadfastness). These values concern not only what individuals believe but also how they cultivate their inner dispositions, regulate their responses, and translate spiritual orientations into everyday conduct. Contemporary discussions of Sufism and youth development have emphasized its relevance to spiritual formation and character development (Junaidi, 2024). From this perspective, Sufism offers a more specific Islamic ethical-spiritual lens than broad measures of religiosity or spirituality because it allows particular values and processes of inner transformation to be examined.

The distinction between general religiosity and internalized Sufism values is therefore conceptually important. The present study does not assume that Sufism is simply another form of religiosity or that Sufism is superior to general religious orientations. Rather, it treats Sufism as a specific Islamic ethical-spiritual tradition through which the internalization of particular values can be examined empirically. Internalized Sufism values refer in this study to the extent to which Sufi-derived ethical-spiritual values become personally endorsed and incorporated into adolescents' personal orientations and everyday conduct. Through this process, values such as patience, gratitude, trust in God, self-reflection, and steadfastness may function as interpretive and motivational resources in responding to life experiences and orienting oneself toward valued goals. Thus, the study moves the discussion from the broad question of whether religiosity or spirituality is related to meaning in life toward the more specific question of whether the internalization of particular Islamic ethical-spiritual values is statistically associated with adolescents' meaning in life.

This conceptual position also provides a point of dialogue between Sufism studies, Islamic psychology, and contemporary psychological theories of meaning. Within Islamic thought, Sufism places emphasis on the transformation of the inner self and the cultivation of ethical-spiritual dispositions. Contemporary psychological research, meanwhile, conceptualizes purpose, and significance (Martela & Steger, 2016). Bringing these perspectives into dialogue does not reduce Sufism to a psychological technique; rather, it provides an opportunity to examine whether a specific Islamic ethical-spiritual orientation can be operationalized as a measurable construct and examined in relation to a contemporary psychological construct. In this sense, internalization provides the conceptual bridge between the Islamic ethical-spiritual tradition of Sufism and the psychological processes through which adolescents organize values, goals, and interpretations of life.

Despite increasing research on religiosity, spirituality, adolescent well-being, and Sufism, three issues remain insufficiently addressed. First, research on religion and meaning in life has often examined religiosity or spirituality as broad constructs, providing limited insight into the role of specific Islamic ethical-spiritual values in adolescents' meaning-making processes (Li & Liu, 2023). Second, research concerning Sufism and Muslim youth has tended to emphasize spiritual development, character formation, and religious education rather than operationalizing the internalization of Sufism values as a measurable construct and examining its statistical relationship with meaning in life (Fahrizky et al., 2026). Third, there remains limited empirical attention to how this relationship appears within a specific local Muslim community in Indonesia. Therefore, the research gap is not merely the limited attention given to the internalization of Sufi values as a specific Islamic ethical-spiritual construct in relation to contemporary psychological constructs, particularly meaning in life.

Kampung Kaliwedi, RT 001/RW 003, Purwasari, Karawang, provides an analytically relevant setting for examining this question. The adolescents in this community develop their values and orientations through interactions involving family life, religious activities, community relationships, education, and youth activities, while also encountering broader changes associated with digital media and contemporary social life. The importance of this context does not lie in its statistical representation of all Muslim adolescents in Karawang, but in its potential to provide empirical evidence of how an Islamic ethical-spiritual construct can be examined within a concrete local Muslim community. The study therefore situates a contemporary psychological question concerning meaning in life within an Indonesian Muslim social and religious context.

Based on this conceptual and contextual argument, the present study offers three contributions. First, at the conceptual level, it operationalizes internalized Sufism values as a specific Islamic ethical-spiritual construct rather than treating religion only as a broad measure of religiosity or spirituality. Second, at the theoretical level, it brings the Sufi ethical-spiritual tradition into dialogue with Self-Determination Theory and contemporary meaning-in-life perspectives, using internalization as a conceptual bridge between personally endorsed spiritual values and psychological meaning-making. Third, at the empirical level, it provides evidence from Muslim adolescents in a specific local Indonesian community and contributes to the intersection of Sufism studies, Islamic psychology, and contemporary research on meaning in life.

Accordingly, this research investigates the statistical relationship between the internalization of Sufism values and meaning in life among Muslim adolescents in Kampung Kaliwedi, Purwasari, Karawang, Indonesia. More specifically, it investigates whether the level of internalization of Sufism values is statistically associated with adolescents' levels of meaning in life. The study asks whether there a statistically significant relationship between the internalization of Sufism values and meaning in life among Muslim adolescents in Kampung Kaliwedi, Purwasari, Karawang? Consistent with the non-experimental and cross-sectional design, the study examines statistical association rather than causal influence.

## B. Methods

The study was designed to examine the statistical association between the internalization of Sufism values and meaning in life among Muslim adolescents. Because the data were collected at a single point in time without experimental manipulation or random assignment to treatment conditions, the statistical findings were interpreted as associations rather than evidence of causal effects (Savitz & Wellenius, 2023).

The population of this study consisted of 200 Muslim adolescents aged 15–24 years residing in Kampung Kaliwedi RT 001/RW 003, Purwasari, Karawang. The age range of 15–24 years was established as part of the eligibility criteria for the research. A sample of 133 respondents was determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error. The sample frame consisted of eligible members of the defined population, and respondents were chosen through random sampling so that every eligible member had an equal opportunity to participate. Because the sample was drawn from a specific local community, the findings should not be generalized to Muslim adolescents in Karawang more broadly.

Data were collected using two researcher-developed questionnaires consisting of 20 items in total. The first questionnaire measured the internalization of Sufism values (X) and consisted of 12 items (items 1–12), while the second questionnaire measured

meaning in life (Y) and consisted of 8 items (items 13–20). Both instruments employed a five-point response scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The internalization of Sufism values instrument was formulated from the conceptualization of Sufism values and the perspective of internalization within Self-Determination Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000). The meaning-in-life instrument was designed to measure the overall meaning-in-life construct, encompassing coherence, purpose, and significance (Martela & Steger, 2016). The possible total score ranged from 12 to 60 for the internalization of Sufism values scale and from 8 to 40 for the meaning-in-life scale, with higher scores indicating higher reported levels of each construct. Negatively worded items were reverse-scored before statistical analysis.

The questionnaire items were initially formulated and linguistically refined with the assistance of ChatGPT. However, the researcher retained responsibility for determining the theoretical content, item relevance, and final wording of the items. The instruments were evaluated through expert judgment and empirical item analysis before being used in the statistical analysis. Questionnaire item validity was evaluated through Pearson Product-Moment correlation between each item score and the corresponding total scalescore. The analysis was conducted using data from 133 respondents. With a significance level of 5% and degrees of freedom (df) = 131, the critical correlation coefficient (r-table) was approximately 0.170. An item was considered valid when its correlation coefficient exceeded the critical value and its significance value was below 0.05.

Reliability was evaluated separately for the internalization of Sufism values scale and the meaning-in-life scale. The study obtained permission from the relevant local community authorities before data collection. Participation was voluntary, and participants were informed about the purpose and procedures of the study. Participants aged 18 years or older provided informed consent. For participants under 18 years of age, participation was conducted with permission from their parent or guardian and with the participants' own willingness to participate (assent). All participants were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Confidentiality was maintained by ensuring that no personally identifying information was included in the manuscript. The data were used solely for research purposes.

The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential statistical procedures with IBM SPSS Statistics. Descriptive analysis was used to examine the distribution of scores for the internalization of Sufism values and meaning in life. Before conducting regression analysis, assumption tests were performed, including normality, linearity, and heteroscedasticity tests. Normality was assessed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, linearity was examined using the Test for Linearity, and heteroscedasticity was assessed using the Glejser test. Simple linear regression was then conducted to examine the statistical association between the internalization of Sufi values and meaning in life.

## C. Findings and Discussion

### 1. Findings

#### a. Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive statistics were applied to examine the distribution of the two research variables. The findings are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Descriptive Statistics

| Descriptive Statistics | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| Internalization of Sufism Values (X) | 133 | 31 | 60 | 49.06 | 6.906 |
| Meaning in Life (Y) | 133 | 21 | 40 | 32.49 | 4.587 |

*Source: Data processed using IBM SPSS Statistics.*

The Internalization of Sufism Values variable had a mean score of 49.06 (SD = 6.906), while the Meaning in Life variable had a mean score of 32.49 (SD = 4.587). Relative to their respective maximum possible scores, these means corresponded to 81.77% and 81.23%. These percentages describe the position of the observed sample means relative to the maximum possible scores. No categorical label such as "very high" is assigned because predefined and empirically justified cutoff criteria were not established for these researcher-developed scales.

**b. Instrument Validity and Reliability**

Before hypothesis testing, the validity and reliability of the research Before hypothesis testing, the research instruments were evaluated for their validity and reliability. The study used two researcher-developed instruments: 12 items for Internalization of Sufism Values and 8 items for Meaning in Life. Item validity was evaluated through Pearson Product-Moment correlation using data from 133 respondents. With a 5% significance level and 131 degrees of freedom (df), the critical *r*-value was approximately 0.170. An item was classified as valid when its correlation coefficient was greater than the critical value and its significance value was below 0.05**.**

Table 1. Item Validity of the Research Instruments

| Variable | *r*-count | *r*-table | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|
| Internalization of Sufism Values | ,645** | 0,170 | Valid |
| | ,726** | 0,170 | Valid |
| | ,307** | 0,170 | Valid |
| | ,613** | 0,170 | Valid |
| | ,473** | 0,170 | Valid |
| | ,391** | 0,170 | Valid |
| | ,660** | 0,170 | Valid |
| | ,735** | 0,170 | Valid |
| | ,421** | 0,170 | Valid |
| | ,715** | 0,170 | Valid |
| | ,457** | 0,170 | Valid |
| | ,684** | 0,170 | Valid |
| Meaning in Life | ,376** | 0,170 | Valid |
| | ,645** | 0,170 | Valid |
| | ,598** | 0,170 | Valid |

| Variable | *r*-count | *r*-table | Decision |
|---|---|---|---|
| | ,556** | 0,170 | Valid |
| | ,701** | 0,170 | Valid |
| | ,360** | 0,170 | Valid |
| | ,405** | 0,170 | Valid |
| | ,714** | 0,170 | Valid |

Note: An item was considered valid when the *r*-count exceeded the *r*-table value of 0.170.

The validity analysis showed that all 12 items measuring Internalization of Sufism Values and all 8 items measuring Meaning in Life met the predetermined validity criterion. Accordingly, all 20 items were retained for the subsequent analysis. The reliability of each instrument was then assessed using Cronbach's Alpha. A coefficient of 0.170 or higher was considered to indicate acceptable internal consistency. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table 2. Instrument Validity and Reliability

| Variable | Number of Items | Cronbach's Alpha | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Internalization of Sufism Values | 12 | 0.831 | Good internal consistency |
| Meaning in Life | 8 | 0.715 | Acceptable internal consistency |

Source: Data processed using IBM SPSS Statistics.

The Internalization of Sufism Values instrument obtained a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.831, while the Meaning in Life instrument obtained a coefficient of 0.715. Both coefficients exceeded the 0.170 criterion, indicating adequate internal consistency. Thus, the two instruments demonstrated satisfactory item validity and internal consistency and were considered suitable for the subsequent statistical analysis.

**c. Normality Test**

Before conducting the regression analysis, the normality of the regression residuals was examined using the One-Sample Kolmogorov–Smirnov test.

Table 3. Normality Test

| **One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test** | | |
|---|---|---|
| | | Unstandardized Residual |
| N | | 133 |
| Normal Parameters[a,b] | Mean | 0.0000000 |
| | Std. Deviation | 2.60109859 |
| Most Extreme Differences | Absolute | 0.053 |
| | Positive | 0.053 |
| | Negative | -0.051 |
| Test Statistic | | 0.053 |
| Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) | | .200[c,d] |

*Source: Data processed using IBM SPSS Statistics.*

The Asymp. Sig. value obtained was 0.200, exceeding the 0.05 significance threshold. This result indicates that the regression residuals followed a normal distribution and, consequently, fulfilled the normality assumption.

**d. Linearity Test**

A linearity test was performed to assess whether the association between Internalization of Sufism Values and Meaning in Life demonstrated a linear relationship.

Table 4. Linearity Test

| ANOVA Table | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | Sum of Squares | f | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| Meaning in Life * Internalization of Sufism Values | Between Groups | (Combined) | 2096.325 | 27 | 77.642 | 11.973 | .000 |
| | | Linearity | 1884.159 | 1 | 1884.159 | 290.548 | .000 |
| | | Deviation from Linearity | 212.166 | 26 | 8.160 | 1.258 | .207 |
| | Within Groups | | 680.908 | 105 | 6.485 | | |
| | Total | | 2777.233 | 132 | | | |

*Soucce: Data processed using IBM SPSS Statistics.*

The linearity analysis examined the form of association between Internalization of Sufism Values and Meaning in Life. Table 5 shows a significance value of 0.000 for Linearity and 0.207 for Deviation from Linearity. Because the Deviation from Linearity significance value exceeded 0.05, the analysis indicated no meaningful departure from a linear relationship. Thus, the relationship between the two variables can be regarded as linear, providing support for the application of simple linear regression.

**e. Heteroscedasticity Test**

The heteroscedasticity analysis was performed to determine whether the variance of the regression residuals remained consistent across the predicted values. The results are presented in Table 6.

Table 5 Heteroscedasticity Test

| Coefficients[a] | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 3,176 | ,989 | | 3,212 | ,002 |
| | Internalization of Sufism Values | -,023 | ,020 | -,100 | -1,146 | ,254 |
| a. Dependent Variable: ABS_RES | | | | | | |

The heteroscedasticity test was performed using the Glejser method to assess whether the absolute residuals were influenced by the predicted values. As shown in Table 6, the significance value for Internalization of Sufism Values was 0.254, which is greater than 0.05. Therefore, the regression model showed no evidence of heteroscedasticity, indicating that the homoscedasticity assumption was satisfied.

**f. Simple Linear Regression Analysis**

Simple linear regression was employed to assess the statistical association between Internalization of Sufism Values (X) and Meaning in Life (Y).

Table 6. Simple Linear Regression Analysis

| Coefficients[a] | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. | 95,0% Confidence Interval for B | |
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | | Lower Bound | Upper Bound |
| 1 | (Constant) | 5,649 | 1,630 | | 3,465 | 0,001 | 2,424 | 8,874 |
| | Internalisasi Nilai-nilai Tasawuf | 0,547 | 0,033 | 0,824 | 16,625 | < ,001 | 0,482 | 0,612 |
| a. Dependent Variable: Meaning in Life | | | | | | | | |

*Source: Data processed using IBM SPSS Statistics.*

The regression equation was:

$$Y = 5,649 + 0,547\,X$$

Note:
Y = Meaning in Life
X = Internalization of Sufism Values

The positive regression coefficient (B = 0.547) indicates a positive statistical relationship between Internalization of Sufism Values and Meaning in Life. The coefficient was statistically significant (t = 16.625, p < .001). Thus, higher scores on Internalization of Sufism Values were statistically associated with higher scores on Meaning in Life among the respondents.

**g. Coefficient of Determination Test ($R^2$)**

The coefficient of determination ($R^2$) was assessed to identify the proportion of variance in Meaning in Life that could be statistically accounted for by the regression model. The $R^2$ value was derived from the simple linear regression analysis. The results are presented in Table 8.

Table 7. Coefficient of Determination Test ($R^2$)

| **Model Summary** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
| 1 | .824[a] | 0.678 | 0.676 | 2.611 |

*Source: Data processed using IBM SPSS Statistics.*

The obtained $R^2$ value was 0.678, indicating that 67.8% of the variance in Meaning in Life statistically explained by the regression in the current sample, whereas the remaining 32.2% was not accounted for by the predictor included in the model. Given the non-experimental and cross-sectional design, this result should be

understood as the explanatory capacity of the statistical model rather than evidence of a causal relationship.

## 2. Discussion

The present study identified a positive internalization of Sufism values and Meaning in Life among Muslim adolescents in Kampung Kaliwedi, Purwasari, Karawang. The regression coefficients were $\beta = 0.547$, $\beta = 0.824$, $p < .001$, and the regression model statistically accounted for 67.8% of the variance in Meaning in Life within the present sample. Because the study employed a non-experimental and cross-sectional design, however, this finding should be understood as a statistical association rather than evidence that internalization of Sufism values causes greater Meaning in Life.

The finding can be theoretically understood through Self-Determination Theory (SDT), particularly its concept of internalization. In SDT, internalization refers to the process through which values, norms, and behavioral regulations that initially come from the social environment become increasingly accepted and integrated into an individual's own motivational system. SDT distinguishes different forms of internalization, ranging from more controlled forms of regulation to more autonomous forms, depending on the extent to which individuals personally endorse and integrate a value or regulation. Internalization is therefore different from merely being exposed to a value or complying with a behavior because of external pressure. More autonomous forms of internalization occur when individuals recognize a value as personally meaningful and willingly incorporate it into their own behavioral orientation. Research on adolescent religious motivation similarly shows that identified religious motivation is associated with more adaptive developmental outcomes, whereas more externally regulated religious motivation tends to show a less adaptive pattern (Hardy et al., 2020).

Applied to the present study, the statistical association may therefore be understood not simply as reflecting adolescents' possession of religious knowledge, participating in religious activities, or identifying as Muslim. Rather, the construct examined in this study concerns the extent to which Sufism-related ethical-spiritual values are reflected in adolescents' personal orientations and everyday conduct. When values such as patience, gratitude, sincerity, trust in God, self-reflection, and steadfastness are personally endorsed, they may function as internal standards for interpreting experiences, regulating responses, and making decisions. In this sense, internalization provides a possible theoretical bridge between religious values and meaning-making.

This interpretation is consistent with the SDT distinction between controlled and autonomous regulation. A religious value may be followed because an adolescent feels pressured by parents, teachers, or the surrounding community, or because the adolescent fears guilt, criticism, or social disapproval. Such regulation may involve compliance without deep personal endorsement. In contrast, when the adolescent understands the value as personally important and incorporates it into his or her own system of values, the regulation becomes more autonomous. SDT literature describes this increasing ownership as an important feature of internalization. Importantly, however, the present study did not directly measure the specific forms of religious regulation described by SDT.

The distinction is particularly relevant to the present findings. The positive association observed in the data is theoretically compatible with the possibility that Sufism values become meaningful when adolescents do not merely perform religiously

valued behaviors because they are required to do so, but instead regard those values as personally relevant principles for living. Thus, the statistical relationship may reflect an association between personally endorsed ethical-spiritual regulation and adolescents' perceptions that their lives are coherent, purposeful, and significant. This interpretation should be regarded as a theoretical explanation rather than a mechanism demonstrated by the present analysis, because the present study did not directly test the mediating role of autonomous motivation or compare different forms of religious regulation.

Internalized spiritual values may provide interpretive and motivational resources that support these dimensions. For coherence, values such as *sabar* and *tawakal* may provide a framework through which adolescents interpret difficulties, uncertainty, and experiences that cannot be completely controlled. Rather than removing adversity, these values may offer a way of interpreting adversity within a broader spiritual framework. For purpose, *istiqamah* and *muhasabah* may encourage adolescents to maintain direction, evaluate their conduct, and orient their actions toward personally valued goals. For significance, *ikhlas*, *syukur, qana'ah,* and *muraqabah* may contribute to a perception that everyday conduct has value beyond immediate social recognition or material outcomes.

These mechanisms should be understood as possible theoretical pathways rather than mechanisms demonstrated by the present statistical analysis. The current study measured the overall construct of Meaning in Life and did not separately test whether internalization of Sufism values predicts coherence, purpose, or significance. Nevertheless, this conceptual interpretation helps explain why an association between the two constructs is theoretically plausible.

This perspective also corresponds with the broader SDT literature, which connects autonomous regulation, personal meaning, and eudaimonic aspects of well-being. From an SDT perspective, a meaningful life involves not merely experiencing positive feelings but engaging in ways of living that are experienced as valuable and congruent with one's personally endorsed values.

The eight values examined in the study—*ikhlas, sabar, syukur, tawakal, qana'ah, muhasabah, muraqabah,* and *istiqamah*—should not be understood as an unrelated list of desirable personality traits. They can instead be interpreted within the broader Sufi emphasis on the transformation and purification of the inner self. In the present study, these values represent interconnected ethical-spiritual orientations through which individuals cultivate their inner dispositions and translate spiritual awareness into everyday conduct.

Conceptually, this process can be related to *tazkiyat al-nafs*, understood broadly as the cultivation and purification of the self. From this perspective, Sufi ethical formation is concerned not merely with knowing what is considered good but with gradually cultivating dispositions that shape intention, self-regulation, awareness of God, and conduct. Muhasabah, for example, represents reflective examination of one's own conduct; muraqabah concerns awareness of God's observation; *istiqamah* concerns consistency in maintaining valued conduct; while *ikhlas* concerns the purification of intention. *Sabar, syukur, tawakal,* and *qana'ah* can similarly be understood as dispositions that shape how a person responds to difficulty, blessing, uncertainty, and limitation.

Accordingly, the values can be viewed as mutually related aspects of inner ethical formation rather than independent characteristics. The present operationalization therefore treats Sufism values as a connected orientation toward the cultivation of the self, while recognizing that the study did not empirically test each

value as a separate dimension. This distinction is important because the questionnaire measured the overall construct of Internalization of Sufism Values rather than separate statistical effects for each individual value.

This conceptualization is also consistent with the existing discussion in the manuscript, which frames Sufism as an Islamic ethical-spiritual tradition emphasizing purification of the self, moral refinement, spiritual awareness, and a closer relationship with God. Contemporary research has also examined Islamic-Sufi spirituality in relation to mental well-being, although the existing evidence base remains methodologically heterogeneous.

The present finding should not be interpreted as evidence that Sufism is more effective or more important than general religiosity. The study did not measure general religiosity as a comparison variable, nor did it statistically compare Sufism internalization with other forms of religious orientation. The conceptual distinction lies instead in the specificity of the construct. General religiosity may encompass religious belief, participation, salience, practice, and identification, whereas the present study focuses specifically on the internalization of Islamic ethical-spiritual values associated with Sufism. This means that the relevant question is not simply whether adolescents are religious or participate in religious activities, but whether particular spiritual-ethical values have become personally endorsed orientations that guide everyday self-regulation.

This distinction is supported by research using SDT in the study of religious motivation. Religious behavior can be regulated through external pressure, internal pressure such as guilt, or more autonomous forms of identified and integrated regulation in which the individual personally values the religious orientation. Thus, the contribution of the present study is not to replace general religiosity with Sufism, but to identify a more specific level of analysis: the internalization of particular Islamic ethical-spiritual values as a form of personal regulation and meaning-making.

This also differentiates the present study from research that examines spirituality or religiosity as broader constructs. The manuscript's earlier discussion of Li & Liu, (2023) and Buenconsejo & Datu (2023) provides a broader context in which intrinsic religiosity and spirituality are associated with adolescent well-being and positive development. The present study narrows this discussion by examining Sufism-value internalization in relation.

**Relationship to Previous Studies**

The findings are broadly consistent with previous research indicating that religious and spiritual orientations can be associated with positive developmental and psychological outcomes among adolescents. (Li & Liu, 2023), for example, examined intrinsic religiosity in relation to adolescent well-being, while Buenconsejo and (Buenconsejo & Datu, 2023) demonstrated the relevance of spirituality in the relationship between religiosity and positive youth development. These studies provide a broader context for understanding why personally meaningful religious and spiritual orientations may be associated with adolescent psychological functioning. The present study extends this discussion by focusing specifically on internalized Sufism values rather than religiosity or spirituality as broad constructs. It therefore contributes a more specific Islamic ethical-spiritual perspective to research on adolescent meaning-making.

The findings also complement Junaidi (2024), whose work emphasizes the relevance of Sufism values for adolescent character development. The present study extends that discussion from character formation toward Meaning in Life by

examining the statistical association between internalized Sufism values and adolescents' perceptions of meaning. Similarly, the present study is related to Sufya & Abas (2025), which examined Islamic spirituality and psychological well-being, but the constructs examined are not identical. The current study focuses specifically on Sufism-value internalization and Meaning in Life. This distinction is important because well-being and meaning in life are conceptually related but not interchangeable outcomes. The contribution of the present study therefore lies in examining a more specific Islamic ethical-spiritual construct in relation to a distinct psychological dimension of adolescents' lives.

Although the regression model statistically explained 67.8% of the observed variance in Meaning in Life within the present sample, this value should not be interpreted as indicating that Internalization of Sufism Values independently determines 67.8% of adolescents' Meaning in Life. The remaining 32.2% should not be treated simply as an undifferentiated group of "other factors," because Meaning in Life may be shaped by multiple interconnected individual, relational, social, and contextual influences.

Potential alternative explanations include family religiosity, parental education, socioeconomic circumstances, peer networks, mosque participation, general religiosity, personality characteristics, mental-health status, and significant life experiences. For example, adolescents who receive stronger family support or participate more actively in religious communities may simultaneously report stronger internalization of Sufism values and higher Meaning in Life. In such a case, part of the observed association could reflect shared influences rather than a unique. The present measure or statistically control for these factors. Therefore, it is not possible to determine whether the observed association would remain at the same magnitude after accounting for family, socioeconomic, social, psychological, and broader religious variables. This limitation is particularly important because the study used a cross-sectional design, which does not establish temporal precedence between the variables.

Another consideration is common-method variance. Both Internalization of Sufism Values and Meaning in Life within research context. Similar response tendencies, social desirability, or respondents' general tendency to provide positive self-evaluations may therefore statistical test specifically designed to assess common-method variance. Accordingly, this possibility should be considered when interpreting the relatively strong association.

The principal contribution of this study is to position Sufism-value internalization as a measurable form of Islamic ethical-spiritual regulation that is statistically associated with adolescent meaning-making. This contribution operates at the intersection of Sufism studies, Islamic psychology, and contemporary research on Meaning in Life. The study therefore adds a more specific conceptual layer to the existing literature. Rather than asking only whether religiosity or spirituality is associated with adolescents' psychological outcomes, the study examines whether particular Islamic ethical-spiritual values, when understood as personally internalized orientations, are associated with how adolescents experience meaning in their lives.

At the same time, this contribution should not be interpreted as demonstrating that Sufism internalization has an independent causal effect on Meaning in Life or that it operates independently of general religiosity, family relationships, social support, personality, or other contextual factors. The appropriate interpretation is that within the present sample, higher reported internalization of Sufism values was statistically associated with higher reported Meaning in Life, providing empirical grounds for further investigation of Sufism as a specific Islamic spiritual framework in the study of

adolescent meaning-making.

Future research can extend this contribution by distinguishing autonomous from controlled forms of religious internalization, examining the individual dimensions of Meaning in Life, measuring general religiosity alongside Sufism internalization, and testing potential mediating or moderating variables such as family support, religious community participation, and psychological characteristics. Such designs would allow researchers to examine whether the association observed in the present study reflects a distinctive contribution of internalized Sufism values or a broader constellation of religious, social, and psychological influences.

## D. Conclusion

This study examined the statistical association between the internalization of Sufism values and meaning in life among Muslim adolescents in Kampung Kaliwedi, Purwasari, Karawang. The findings showed a mean score of 49.06 for the internalization of Sufism values and 32.49 for meaning in life. The regression analysis indicated ($B = 0.547$, $\beta = 0.824$, $t = 16.625$, $p < .001$), with the regression model statistically explaining 67.8% of the observed variance in meaning in life ($R^2 = .678$). These findings indicate that the internalization of Sufism values is a statistically associated with variations in meaning in life among the adolescents included in this study.

From the perspective of contemporary Islamic spirituality, these findings suggest that Sufism values can be understood as an ethical-spiritual orientation through which adolescents interpret their experiences and develop perspectives on purpose, significance, and coherence in life. Values such as *ikhlas*, *sabr*, *shukr*, *tawakkul*, and *muhasabah* provide a framework for connecting spiritual values with everyday experiences and personal development. This perspective is relevant to contemporary adolescent meaning-making, particularly as adolescents encounter changing social and digital environments. However, the findings demonstrate a statistical association and should not be interpreted as evidence that internalization of Sufism values causes changes in meaning in life.

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the cross-sectional design prevents conclusions about temporal ordering or causality between the two variables. Second, the study was conducted among adolescents in a specific community, namely Kampung Kaliwedi, Purwasari, Karawang; therefore, the findings should not be generalized to Muslim adolescents in Karawang as a whole or to other populations without further evidence. Third, both variables were measured through self-report questionnaires, which may be influenced by respondents' subjective perceptions and social desirability and may introduce common-method variance. In addition, the researcher-developed instruments were assessed through item-level validity and internal consistency but were not examined using exploratory or confirmatory factor analysis.

Islamic educators, mosque youth programs, and counselors. Families can provide opportunities for adolescents to encounter Islamic spiritual values through everyday example, reflection, and dialogue. Islamic educators can connect Sufism values with adolescents' experiences, ethical choices, emotional challenges, and questions about life purpose. Mosque youth programs can provide mentoring, reflective discussion, and community activities that enable adolescents to relate spiritual values to everyday life. Counselors may also consider adolescents' spiritual and religious frameworks when understanding how they interpret significant life experiences, while maintaining appropriate professional boundaries. These implications represent potential areas for

educational and community practice rather than evidence that particular interventions have been proven effective.

Future research should examine how he association between internalization of Sufism values and meaning in life develops over time. Multi-site studies involving adolescents from different communities are also needed to examine the consistency of findings across contexts. Further research could test mediation and moderation models involving factors such as general religiosity, family religiosity, and social support. Comparative studies could also examine whether internalized Sufism values show patterns of association with meaning in life that are distinguishable from broader religiosity or social support. Finally, qualitative research could explore how adolescents themselves understand and experience *ikhlas*, *tawakkul*, *muhasabah*, and other spiritual values in constructing meaning in contemporary digital life.

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## F. Author Contributions Statement

Amalia Widjastuti developed the study concept, designed the research procedures, gathered and analyzed the data, interpreted the results, and prepared the manuscript. Akhmad Sodiq contributed to the research design, checked the methodology, reviewed the manuscript, and provided academic supervision. Abdul Mukti oversaw the research process, critically evaluated the manuscript, and approved the final version for publication.

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