Theology and Social Empowerment of Marginal Subcultures: A Study on Pondok Tasawuf Underground Jakarta

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Abstract

This study examines the theological principles underlying the social empowerment efforts implemented for the punk community at Pondok Tasawuf Underground Jakarta, focusing on articulating theological values in the context of empowerment and their implementation in daily life. Employing a qualitative phenomenological approach, several data in this study were collected through in-depth interviews with the founder and members of the punk community, participatory observation, and document analysis. The findings reveal that the theological principles underlying empowerment at Pondok Tasawuf Underground are rooted in holistic *hijrah*, encompassing both spiritual and social transformation. The "Roadmap to Return" program serves as the core agenda, consisting of two main paths: the Roadmap to Return to Allah, which emphasizes religious education and spiritual awareness, and the Roadmap to Return to Family, which underscores social responsibility and family relationship restoration. The principle of human equality serves as the theological foundation of this empowerment effort, affirming the universal dignity of every individual regardless of their background. The implementation of the theology of empowerment includes skill training, social assistance, and spiritual strengthening, significantly transforming the punk community from a marginalized group into productive individuals.

Keywords: Holistic *hijrah*, Punk community, Social empowerment theology, Spiritual transformation, Tasawuf Underground

Abstrak

Penelitian ini mengkaji prinsip teologis yang mendasari pemberdayaan sosial yang diterapkan pada komunitas punk di Pondok Tasawuf Underground Jakarta, dengan fokus pada pengartikulasian nilai-nilai teologis dalam konteks pemberdayaan dan implementasinya dalam kehidupan sehari-hari. Menggunakan pendekatan fenomenologis kualitatif, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan pendiri dan anggota Pondok tasawuf underground, observasi partisipatif, dan analisis dokumen. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa prinsip teologi dalam pemberdayaan di Pondok Tasawuf Underground berakar pada hijrah holistik, yang mencakup transformasi spiritual dan sosial. Program "Roadmap to Return" menjadi agenda inti, yang terdiri dari dua jalur utama: Roadmap to Return to Allah, yang menekankan pendidikan agama dan kesadaran spiritual, dan Roadmap to Return to Family, yang mengedepankan tanggung jawab sosial serta pemulihan hubungan keluarga. Prinsip kesetaraan manusia menjadi dasar teologis dari upaya pemberdayaan ini, yang menegaskan martabat universal setiap individu tanpa memandang latar belakang mereka. Implementasi teologi pemberdayaan ini mencakup pelatihan keterampilan, bantuan sosial, dan penguatan spiritual, yang secara signifikan mengubah komunitas punk dari kelompok terpinggirkan menjadi individu yang produktif.

Kata Kunci: *Hijrah holistik, Komunitas punk, Tasawuf Underground, Teologi pemberdayaan sosial, Transformasi spiritual.*

Background

The punk community, particularly those on urban streets, constitutes a vulnerable group in need of empowerment efforts. They are often indifficult economic and social conditions, marginalized from education, healthcare, and civil and political rights. Moreover, they struggle to develop social, mental, and spiritual capabilities.[1] Factors such as family instability, poverty, and

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[1] Herlina Astri, 'Kehidupan Anak Jalanan di Indonesia: Faktor Penyebab, Tatanan Hidup dan Kerentanan Berperilaku Menyimpang', *Aspirasi: Jurnal Masalah-Masalah Sosial'*, 5.2 (2016),doi: https://doi.org/10.46807/aspirasi.v5i2.454.

unequal access to educational opportunities make street punks vulnerable to exploitation, violence, and living conditions unfit for human dignity[2]

However, society often attaches a negative stigma to the punk community, perceiving it as a fringe group that tends to violate social norms. This stigma arises because they are seen as rejecting the established norms and social order.[3] They are also perceived as potentially engaging in criminal behavior such as extortion, theft, and drug use.[4]

Amidst the negative stigma and vulnerability dynamics of the punk community in Jakarta, a unique social empowerment initiative exists, namely Pondok Tasawuf Underground. This sanctuary is located in the heart middle of urban life, and offers an innovative approach to bringing Islamic-based social empowerment concepts to street punks. The youth at Pondok Tasawuf Underground are guided to break free from drugs and alcohol and embark on a religious path, aiming to restore their mental awareness so they can reintegrate into society and be accepted by their families.[5]

This approach is based on social-religious reflections that suggest mosques are often limited to the "pious people," yet it is equally important to embrace the "non-pious," including street children and punks, in the process of religious and entrepreneurial learning. This approach is seen as

an effort to implement the Islamic teachings of *"raḥmatan lil Ālamīn,"* which show solidarity with the oppressed or marginalized.[6]

In this context, Islam is applied as a source of compassion and a foundation for empowering all layers of society, including street children and marginalized groups.[7] The concept of *"rahmatan lil Alamin"* teaches the importance of inclusively benefiting others, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or race, especially for the marginalized one.

The integration of Islamic values in the social empowerment process of the punk community raises an interesting question: What values underpin this approach, and how are these values concretely implemented in the daily lives of the punk community members? Previous studies on the empowerment of the punk community by Pondok Tasawuf Underground have been conducted by several researchers. For instance, Nur Hana Putri Nabila explored the strategies and preaching patterns employed by Pondok Tasawuf Underground to engage with the punk community.[9] This initiative strongly emphasizes the importance of worship, initially addressing the low awareness of religious practices among street children.[10] As a result, participants have shown significant improvements, such as developing a desire to worship, learning the Qur'an, and pursuing education.[11]

[2] Sri Mugianti, Sri Winarni, and Wulandari Dyah Pangestuti, 'Faktor Penyebab Remaja Menjadi Anak Jalanan', *Jurnal Pendidikan Kesehatan*, 7.1 (2018), 25–31, doi: https://doi.org/10.31290/jpk.v7i1.292.

[3] Muhammad Jullyo Bagus Firdaus, 'Kemiskinan, Ketidakadilan Dan Pegiat Punk Sebagai Fringe Community Di Era Globalisasi', *Global and Policy Journal of International Relations*, 7.02 (2019), doi: https://doi.org/10.33005/jgp.v7i02.1828.

[4] Dedy Syaputra and Sartika Lia Apriana, 'Anak Punk Jalanan Di Jambi Dalam Perspektif Hukum Pidana', *Wajah Hukum*, 4.2 (2020), 467–75,doi: https://doi.org/10.33087/wjh.v4i2.236.

[5] Khairul Ma'arif, 'Pondok Tasawuf Underground dengan Santri Anak Jalanan dan Punk', *detiknews*, 2022 <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-6025577/pondok-tasawuf-underground-dengan-santri-anak-jalanan-dan-punk> [accessed 22 December 2023].

[6] Khairul Ma'arif, 'Bagaimana Cara Pondok Tasawuf Underground Merangkul Anak Punk?', *detiknews*, 2022 <https://news.detik.com/berita/d-6025812/bagaimana-

cara-pondok-tasawuf-underground-merangkul-anak-punk> [accessed 22 December 2023].

[7] NUonline, 'Islam sebagai Rahmatan Lil Alamin harus Dimulai dari Umatnya Dulu', *NU Online*, 2007 <https://www.nu.or.id/warta/islam-sebagai-rahmatan-lil-alamin-harus-dimulai-dari-umatnya-dulu-4NRE7> [accessed 22 December 2023].

[9] Nur Hana Putri Nabila, 'Dakwah dan Pemberdayaan: Strategi Pengembangan Masyarakat Islam Melalui Komunitas Tasawuf Underground terhadap Anak Punk dan Anak Jalanan', *Indonesian Journal for Social Responsibility*, 3.02 (2021), 83–94, doi : https://doi.org/10.36782/ijsr.v3i02.81.

[10] Nur Hana Putri, 'Tasawuf Underground: Pemberdayaan Ekonomi Anak Punk', *LPM Institut UIN Jakarta*, 4 May 2021 <https://lpminstitut.com/2021/05/04/tasawuf-underground-pemberdayaan-ekonomi-anak-punk/> [accessed 6 January 2025].

[11] Agustina Norma Pratama, 'Tasawuf Underground: Menumbuhkan Self-Awareness Anak Jalanan Dalam Kesadaran Melaksanakan Ibadah', *Syntax Idea*, 4.10 (2022),

Additionally, Fauzi (2022) highlights the substantial role of Pondok Tasawuf Underground in enhancing the skill set of marginalized individuals through its empowerment programs.[12] However, while these studies document the empowerment efforts, they primarily focus on the actions themselves rather than exploring the deeper values that underpin these initiatives. However, most of these studies focus on documenting the empowerment efforts rather than examining the underlying values guiding these actions.

Therefore, this study aims to explore the theological constructs underlying social empowerment at Pondok Tasawuf Underground. Specifically, the research focuses on two main questions: how is the theology of social empowerment applied to the punk community at Pondok Tasawuf Underground Jakarta, and how are these theological values implemented in the daily lives of this community? This study seeks to describe and analyze the theological principles underlying the social empowerment efforts implemented for the punk community at Pondok Tasawuf Underground Jakarta. It aims to explore how these principles shape the construction of this social empowerment theology and illustrate their practical implementation. This research is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the role of Islamic values in guiding social empowerment for marginalized groups.

This study aims to understand how Islamic and punk values are implemented in social empowerment efforts within the punk community in Jakarta. Using a qualitative phenomenological approach, the researcher explored the in-depth experiences of the founder of Pondok Tasawuf Underground and community members, including both new and senior participants of the 'Roadmap to Return' program. The participants were purposively selected to represent a range of perspectives and experiences in the community. Data was collected through in-depth interviews to capture personal narratives, participatory observation to understand community dynamics, and document analysis to examine theological frameworks and program documentation.[13] Data analysis followed an inductive approach, focusing on identifying recurring themes and patterns that explain the theological principles underlying social empowerment and their implementation in daily life. The validity of the findings was ensured through data triangulation, combining insights from multiple sources and methods to enhance the reliability and depth of the analysis.[14]

Theological Principles in the Social Transformation of the Underground Sufism Community

The Underground Sufism Community, founded by Halim Ambiya on February 8, 2012, began as a Sufism preaching community on social media. The community spreads Sufism teachings through classical texts such as *Ihya Ulumuddin* and *Al-Hikam*, to make Sufism accessible to the wider public, including those who have never studied in pesantren. The community shares wisdom from various classical Sufi texts using social media, especially Facebook. With the positive responses received, the community gradually evolved into a bridge for spiritual knowledge for those who lack direct access to pesantren or formal religious education.[15]

As time went on, Halim began extending his preaching into the real world, embracing the spirit of "grounding celestial knowledge" and inviting people from various backgrounds, especially street

pp. 1471–82, doi: https://doi.org/10.46799/syntax-idea.v4i10.1975.

[12] Imam Fauzi, 'Pemberdayaan Kaum Marginal Melalui Keterampilan Wirausaha Sablon (Studi Analisis Deskriptif Di Komunitas Tasawuf Underground)', *Jurnal Syntax Admiration*, 3.3 (2022), pp. 607–25, doi: https://doi.org/10.46799/jsa.v3i3.412.

[13] John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*, 2nd edition (Thousand Oaks, Calif: SAGE Publications, Inc, 2002).

[14] Ari Kamayanti, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif Akutansi;Pengantar Relegiositas Keilmuan* (Jakarta: Yayasan Rumah Peneleh, 2016).

[15] *Anak Punk Baca Al-Qur'an Dan Kitab: Dulu Ngobat, Sekarang Salat Dan Salawatan*, dir. by Narasi Newsroom, 2024 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LBVMgtrTYKQ>.

children and punks, to learn Sufism. In 2016, concrete steps were taken to mentor orphans, followed by personal approaches to street children and punks. In 2018, one punk member requested to hold a study session at their location, which eventually took place under the Tebet Bridge in South Jakarta. This study session is held regularly every Friday from 14:00-17:00 and Saturday from 11:00-15:00 WIB, with the help of volunteers.[16] Currently, there are approximately 25 underground Sufism students, with about 15 living at the pesantren and 10 residing in the surrounding Jabodetabek area, some already married and working.

One of the preaching programs carried out by the Underground Sufism Community is the introduction of the concept of the "Roadmap Home" to punk members. The "Roadmap Home" program consists of two pathways: the first, the "Roadmap Home to Allah," teaches spiritual awareness through religious education and spiritual practices such as learning fiqh, tafsir, and the basics of worship. Through this concept, members are encouraged to undergo *hijrah* in the sense of transitioning to a better spiritual state, including freeing themselves from the negative habits they previously engaged in on the streets. The implementation of this program includes providing spiritual education, such as Qur'an memorization and reading, learning fiqh, and studying tafsir from the most basic level.

This study session takes place regularly every week. Punk members who have declared their commitment to join Halim Ambiya's pesantren (boarding school) at the Tasawuf Underground basecamp in Ciputat are taught to recite "*lā ilāha illallāh*" both loudly (*jahar*) and quietly (*khofi*) after prayers at least 165 times. They also hold events such as Dhikr and Muhasabah, including the Manaqib of Sheikh Abdul Qadir Al-Jailani and Dhikr Khataman every Friday night.[17]

In addition to regular study sessions, there are also incidental gatherings based on invitations or specific occasions, such as hydrotherapy, which involves a repentance ritual bath at night before dawn. *Muhāsabah* and *Dhikr* are also held at the end of each year, and visits to the graves of influential scholars (*ziarah kubur*) are organized.

The second path, the "Roadmap Home to Family," aims to help members reconnect with their families or build a stronger foundation for their social life in the future. This program raises awareness of the importance of spiritual and social responsibility in daily life. For those without families or living on the streets, the community also helps them build economic independence.

This activity brings members closer to the concept of *hijrah* in Islam as a journey back to *fitrah* (human natural tendency), the purity of the soul, and a closer relationship with Allah. The rituals and activities conducted by the Underground Sufism community, such as Muhasabah (self-reflection), Dhikr, *Khataman*, and Ziarah Kubur (visiting the graves), are efforts to undergo *hijrah*, leading them from the turbulent life on the streets to inner peace and a higher spiritual awareness. Meanwhile, the efforts to build social life and raise awareness of the importance of responsibility, both spiritually and socially, in daily life represent the implementation of *hijrah* as a social transformation towards becoming a better and more responsible individual, including in family and community life.

Thus, Halim Ambiya, as the founder of Tasawuf Underground, has made the concept of *hijrah* the foundation of the theological construction that guides personal and social transformation for the street punk community in Jakarta. For Halim, *hijrah* is not merely an individual spiritual ritual, but a collective journey that changes its members' lifestyle and social orientation. The concept of *hijrah* is understood as a total change, both internally and socially, that

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[16] Tasawuf Underground, 'Tasawuf Underground | South Tangerang', *facebook*, 2023 <https://id-id.facebook.com/tasawufunderground> [accessed 19 November 2024].

[17] *Anak Punk Baca Al-Qur'an Dan Kitab: Dulu Ngobat, Sekarang Salat Dan Salawatan.*

gives profound meaning to those coming from a life entire of struggles.

Halim instills the understanding that *hijrah* is a process of self-improvement that must be carried out continuously, which is why each member is taught to leave behind bad habits and replace them with habits that bring them closer to Allah and improve their quality of life within society. The concept of "*hijrah*" serves as the theological basis that guides punk community members back to their fitrah, which bad habits have obstructed due to life on the streets. *Hijrah* is understood as a bridge that connects spiritual depth with real social change in the lives of punk community members.

The *hijrah* concept applied by Halim Ambiya in the Tasawuf Underground community, focusing on the personal and social transformation of street punk members, reflects many aspects discussed in recent studies on *hijrah*. In this context, *hijrah* is interpreted as both a spiritual shift and a comprehensive social change, involving continuous improvement in behavior and mindset. Gunawan,[18] in his study on the relationship between *hijrah* and *taubah* in the Tafsir Al-Nur by Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy, argues that true *hijrah* is a process of sincere behavioral change, where one leaves behind bad habits and replaces them with practices that align with religious teachings. *Hijrah* is also understood as a journey towards piety and moral purity, often depicted as a movement from a sinful past to a more obedient present.[19]

Meanwhile, the study conducted by Musthofa[20] emphasizes the importance of mutual support in goodness and a serious commitment to performing good deeds in *hijrah*. This study shows that environmental support amidst great social challenges significantly influences religious commitment and broader social change.

Therefore, *hijrah* also becomes a path to preserve faith amid social challenges, as demonstrated in the study by Cécile Evers[21] on *hijrah* among Muslim youth in France. She highlights the challenge of maintaining faith in a secular environment. In this context, *hijrah* becomes an effort for them to find a supportive community that strengthens their faith, which ultimately leads to broader social change.

These studies align with Halim Ambiya's understanding of *hijrah* as a continuous self-improvement process that must be undertaken not only individually but also collectively. Members of the Tasawuf Underground community are taught to improve themselves through religious education and deeper worship practices, such as *dhikr* (remembrance and chanting of Allah) and *muhāsabah* (self-reflection), which in turn guide them towards better behavioral changes. The *"Peta Jalan Pulang"* program run by the Tasawuf Underground community reflects values of mutual help and sharing goodness, which are integral parts of the *hijrah* process experienced by the community members. Thus, "Peta Jalan Pulang" serves not only as a spiritual path but also as a means to build social solidarity within the community, aligning with a more comprehensive understanding of *hijrah*.

By integrating various perspectives, it becomes evident that the concept of *hijrah* within the Tasawuf Underground community reflects not only an individual's spiritual journey but also a transformative, profound, and comprehensive social process, which positively impacts both the personal lives of the members and the surrounding community.

In addition to the concept of *hijrah*, a key foundation in Halim Ambiya's efforts to empower

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[18] Iwan Gunawan, 'Relasi Hijrah dan Taubat Perspektif Hasbi Ash-Shiddieqy dalam Tafsir Al-Nūr', *Tanzil: Jurnal Studi Al-Quran*, 5.1 (2022), 1–14, doi: https://doi.org/10.20871/tjsq.v5i1.192.

[19] Hadri Hasan, 'Contemporary Religious Movement in Indonesia: A Study of Hijrah Festival in Jakarta in 2018', *Journal of Indonesian Islam*, 13.1 (2019), 230–65, doi: https://doi.org/10.15642/JIIS.2019.13.1.230-265.

[20] 'The Concept of Hijrah in the Al-Qur'an: Contextualization in the Millennial Era in the Ma'na-Cūm-Maghza Approach', *Al-Bunyan: Interdisciplinary Journal of Qur'an and Hadith Studies*, 2.1 (2024), 31–53, doi:https://doi.org/10.61166/bunyan.v2i1.10.

[21] 'The Journey from France to France: The Spiritual Moves of Muslim Youth from Marseille', *Contemporary Islam*, 15.1 (2021), 83–106, doi: https://doi.org/10.1007/s11562-021-00466-2.

the punk community is the principle of human equality. In Islam, human equality is expressed through the concept of *al-musāwāt* (المساواة). This view suggests that all humans are created equal before Allah, regardless of race, social status, or economic standing,[22], meaning that every individual has the right to receive religious guidance and the opportunity to improve themselves.

Halim Ambiya views the punk community not as a group distant from religion but as part of society with spiritual potential. Therefore, he founded the Tasawuf Underground Community as a "physical and spiritual sanctuary" for punk youth who are often marginalized. This community provides a space for those who frequently experience social exclusion, aiming to offer empowerment and religious understanding. Halim Ambiya believes that religion should be accessible to all, including those who are considered marginalized by society.

In Jakarta, punk youth are often negatively stigmatized as being far from religious values. For instance, when they approach mosques, they are frequently turned away with accusations of poor morality, such as concerns about lost sandals or charity boxes. Halim Ambiya perceives that such stigma only distances punk youth further from religion, even though many of them are seeking hope and spiritual guidance. This motivated him to embrace them, as he believes that scholars and those who claim to be pious should deliver da'wah (preaching) and guidance to vulnerable and marginalized communities, rather than distancing them.

As a theological foundation, Halim adheres to the verse "*wa laqad karramnā banī Ādam*" (QS Al-Isra:70), which emphasizes that Allah has honored all human beings without exception. As a theological consequence, this demands that humans respect one another, including those who experience social exclusion, such as the punk community. Nasaruddin Umar interprets that the honor granted by God to the descendants of Adam is inclusive, covering humans from all religious, ethnic, and social backgrounds. This understanding forms the foundation for universal human values that must be upheld by every Muslim (Antara News, 2023).

From a Sufi perspective, the idea of equality and compassion is further strengthened by teachings on *Asmā'ul Husna* (the Beautiful Names of Allah), as explained by Sachiko Murata in The Tao of Islam. Murata elaborates that Allah's attributes, such as *jalāl* (majesty) and *jamāl* (beauty), should serve as a foundation for human behavior. *Jalal* teaches individuals to reject oppression and injustice, while *jamal* motivates them to spread love and compassion to all beings. The combination of both, referred to by Murata as *kamal* (perfection), becomes an ideal guide for humans to develop perfect moral character, both in relation to God and to others.[23]

The theological principles underlying social empowerment within the Tasawuf Underground Community, as developed by Halim Ambiya, have guided the punk and street youth community toward a compassionate and nurturing understanding of Islam. This Sufi movement encourages punk youth to undergo *hijrah* from wrongdoing to goodness with the value of *rahmatan lil 'ālamīn* (mercy for all the worlds), emphasizing that the transformation achieved is not only personal but also involves social empowerment, creating a positive impact for the broader community.[24] The concept of *rahmatan lil 'ālamīn* (universal compassion) and other Sufi values serve as a crucial foundation for social change within Sufi orders, including efforts in environmental conservation.[25]

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[22] Faisol Nasar Bin Madi and Aminullah Elhady, 'Egalitarianism in the Mabadi Al-Irsyad: An Analytical Study on the Concept of Al-Musawah', *Asian Social Science*, 16.11 (2020), p24 , doi: https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v16n11p24.

[23] Sachiko Murata, *The Tao of Islam: Kitab Rujukan Tentang Relasi Gender Dalam Kosmologi Dan Teologi Islam* (Bandung: Mizan, 2000).

[24] Moh Anas Kholis and Kholid Rahman, *Menjadi Muslim Nusantara Rahmatan Lil 'Alamin Ikhtiar Memahami Islam Dalam Konteks Keindonesiaan* (Naila Pustaka, 2015).

[25] Ilham Tohari and Umar Faruq, 'Aktualisasi nilai-nilai ekologis ajran Tasawwuf dalam pelestarian lingkungan: Studi pada Tarekat Rowobayan', *Peradaban Journal of Religion*

In response to the stigma and social judgment, Halim Ambiya strongly criticizes those who claim to be pious but expel punk youth from places of worship. According to him, these individuals are preoccupied with seeing the "social impurity" in the punks, while they may themselves have "spiritual impurity" that hinders their empathy and social concern. For Halim Ambiya, this is a significant challenge in da'wah (preaching), where scholars should be able to embrace and guide those who are marginalized rather than excluding them.

For Halim Ambiya, spiritual impurity in the form of hatred or judgment is far more dangerous than physical impurity. This aligns with the well-known Sufi story of Abu Yazid Al-Bustami and a dog. In various Sufi narratives, it is told that Abu Yazid Al-Bustami, who had performed wudhu (ablution), encountered a dog and sought to avoid it due to its perceived physical impurity. Unexpectedly, the dog spoke to him, saying,

> "O Abu Yazid, why are you so preoccupied with the heavy external impurity, while you forget the heavy impurity inside your heart?"

Abu Yazid immediately wept and embraced the dog, regretting his focus on external impurities while neglecting the internal impurity within himself.[26] This perspective drives Halim to view every person with a clean heart without being hindered by social stigma. Consequently, community members are guided to purify their hearts from bad habits and the negative stigma often directed at them.

Additionally, Halim's understanding is reinforced by Imam Qushayri's perspective, which states that the perfection of worship relies not only on external actions but must also be rooted in inner purity.[27] Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali also emphasizes the importance of the spiritual dimension as a complement to physical rituals. Within this framework, legalistic narratives, which tend to be black and white, should be complemented by Sufism, which focuses more on the spiritual and inner purity needed to achieve perfection in worship.[28]

Furthermore, Halim stresses that theological values should not merely be theoretical discussions but must be realized through concrete actions. According to him, guiding punk youth is not just about offering advice but also includes social empowerment that helps them improve their quality of life. Through life skills development and spiritual guidance, Halim demonstrates that *hijrah* is not just a personal spiritual journey but also a tangible social transformation.

The Implementation of Theological Values in the Empowerment of Street Punks

The Tasawuf Underground Community, led by Halim Ambiya, has developed various empowerment programs that integrate social empowerment with religious values to assist punk youth and street children. Halim strives to cultivate skills and provide social support to the community members. These programs are tailored to their interests and needs, ranging from graphic design training for those interested in art to barista training for coffee enthusiasts. Additionally, the community organizes online business workshops, entrepreneurship training, and legal counseling to assist members facing legal challenges.

Through interviews and documentation, the community's participants expressed that the Tasawuf Underground Community provides not only spiritual refuge through Sufi teachings that bring them closer to Allah but also physical refuge through skill development programs.

and Society, 1.1 (2022), pp. 42–54, doi:https://doi.org/10.59001/pjrs.v1i1.30.

[26] Hari Noer Muhammad, 'Kisah Abu Yazid Al Busthami Dan Kata-Kata Seekor Anjing Yang Menyentak Hati - Edu Historia', *Eduhistoria*, 2023 <https://www.eduhistoria.com/khazanah/pr-8806990257/kisah-abu-yazid-al-busthami-dan-kata-kata-seekor-anjing-yang-menyentak-hati> [accessed 10 September 2024].

[27] Ibrahim Basyuni, *Nasy'ah at-Tasawuf al-Islami* (Kairo: Dar al-Fikr, 1969).

[28] Enung Asmaya, 'Hakikat Manusia Dalam Tasawuf Al-Ghazali', *KOMUNIKA: Jurnal Dakwah Dan Komunikasi*, 12.1 (2018), 123–35, doi: https://doi.org/10.24090/komunika.v12i1.1377.

One distinctive aspect of the Tasawuf Underground Community's approach is its ability to adapt and redirect punk youth's habits toward positive pursuits. For instance, tattoo artistry, common among punk members, is repurposed into graphic design training. This initiative aims to equip members with new skills to serve as a livelihood and entrepreneurial opportunity.

"Our creativity in tattooing can now be expressed in graphic design,"[29] said one community member. This creative potential is further developed through a series of graphic design workshops involving experts from renowned universities in Jakarta.

The community not only provides training but also creates opportunities for punk youth to establish their graphic design businesses. Thus, the skills they acquire are not merely hobbies but valuable tools for achieving economic independence. "After receiving the training, I feel like I have a new skill that I can use to earn a living,"[30] added another member.

Beyond graphic design, the Tasawuf Underground Community also leverages the nocturnal habits of its members to support entrepreneurial ventures by establishing coffee shops. With the help of donors, the community offers training in setting up and managing coffee shops, transforming previously unproductive late-night activities into economically valuable initiatives. Through these coffee shops, punk youth and street children gain the opportunity to learn business management and achieve financial independence.

The community also empowers the punk culture of playing in bands, a common activity among punk youth. Songs that typically contain social criticism are infused with lyrics of Islamic *sholawat*, creating a more positive and peaceful atmosphere. Alcohol, which often accompanies these band sessions, is replaced with coffee and tea from the community's coffee shop, promoting a healthier lifestyle.

The various forms of empowerment within the Tasawuf Underground Community reflect the principles of liberation theology as conceptualized by figures like Gustavo Gutiérrez and Farid Esack. According to Gutiérrez, theology should serve as a foundation for liberating people from injustice, poverty, and oppression rather than becoming an instrument that suppresses human rights.[31] He argues that ideal theology uplifts human dignity by resisting authoritarianism and oppressive power structures[32] With an inclusive approach focused on social justice, Gutiérrez posits that religion plays a vital role in fostering human dignity and supporting marginalized groups.

This perspective aligns with the ideas of Farid Esack, a South African scholar who formulated a liberationist interpretation of the Qur'an in the context of resisting apartheid. Esack emphasizes that religious teachings should not legitimize oppressive policies, as often practiced by some religious elites supporting repressive power structures. Instead, Esack advocates for a "liberative" and "transformative" interpretation of religious texts, asserting that these texts should empower communities against colonialism, racism, and injustice. For Esack, theology should be a tool of resistance that fosters empathy, combats oppression, and defends human rights.[33]

The discussion above indicates that Islamic teachings and theological values play a crucial role in empowering marginalized groups. Islamic teachings offer significant potential for supporting empowerment, particularly in fostering social justice and welfare for the marginalized. This is reflected in various studies and practical applications of empowerment for marginalized groups rooted in Islamic values.

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[29] Afief Irenk, Member of Tasawuf Underground community, 2024.

[30] Suryana Sandi, Member of Tasawuf Underground, 2024.

[31] Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation* (New York: Orbis Books, 2017).

[32] Marthinus Ngabalin, 'Teologi Pembebasan Menurut Gustavo Gutierrez dan Implikasinya bagi Persoalan Kemiskinan', *Kenosis: Jurnal Kajian Teologi*, 3.2 (2017), 129–47, doi: https://doi.org/10.37196/kenosis.v3i2.10.

[33] Farid Esack, *Liberation and Pluralism, an Islamic Perspective of Interreligious Solidarity against Opperasion*, trans. by Watung Budiman (Bandung: Mizan, 2000).

For instance, Islamic teachings emphasize the importance of social justice, ethical conduct, and human happiness as core values in social life.[34] These principles serve as a foundation for empowering marginalized communities in various ways. In Islam, protecting vulnerable groups, including street children, is highly emphasized. These teachings not only promote their rights but also provide pathways for their development, creating a supportive environment for their growth.

One form of empowerment involves religious activities such as prayers and group discussions, which introduce them to Islamic values while transforming their mindset from negative to positive and strengthening their sense of community.[35] For example, institutions like the Association Kafil Al-Yateem in Algeria focus on street children by providing care and support to help them rise from adversity.[36]

Empowering marginalized groups is also realized through the development of practical skills that help them achieve independence. Training programs such as culinary arts and electrical skills provide street children with opportunities to learn and develop their potential, enabling them to become self-reliant and start their ventures in the future.[37] Entrepreneurship training further equips them to identify business opportunities, allowing them to make positive contributions to society while improving their quality of life.

The empowerment initiatives of the Tasawuf Underground Community for punk youth have demonstrated tangible impacts in spiritual, social,

and educational aspects. Widhi, one of the community's members, shared his experience:

> "Initially, maintaining prayer was challenging because of our past bad habits, like drinking alcohol or using drugs. However, Alhamdulillah, I have gradually succeeded in letting go of those negative habits."[38]

Through the *hijrah* journey initiated by the community, Widhi found a better spiritual path and began envisioning a brighter future. He has now pursued higher education and started his entrepreneurial journey, reflecting a significant shift in his mindset.

One of the major transformations Widhi experienced was an improvement in his relationship with his family, especially his father. As a former street performer who once felt inferior among family members with higher education, he now has more explicit goals. With the community's support, he completed his high school equivalency through the Paket C program and is currently pursuing a degree in Pancasila and Civic Education at Pamulang University.

> "I even received a full scholarship from Ustadz Halim through generous donors," he stated, highlighting how the community provides tangible opportunities for its members to rise above their circumstances."[39]

Moreover, the community offers profound spiritual resources. The teachings of *tasawuf* help members deeply understand themselves and strengthen their connection to God. Classical Islamic texts such as *Safinatun Najah*, *Bulughul Maram*, and the practices of the Qadiriyah-

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[34] Abdul Munir Mulkhan, 'Islamic Education and Da'wah Liberalization: Investigating Kiai Achmad Dachlan's Ideas', *Al-Jami'ah: Journal of Islamic Studies*, 46.2 (2008), 401–30, doi: https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2008.462.401-430.

[35] Muhammad Husni, 'Konseling Sebaya Dalam Memberdayakan Anak Jalanan Berbasis Masjid (Inkorporasi Perspektif Anak Jalanan Berbasis Komunitas Melalui Pendekatan Participatory Action Research)', *Panangkaran: Jurnal Penelitian Agama Dan Masyarakat*, 1.2 (2017), 237–56, doi: https://doi.org/10.14421/panangkaran.2017.0102-03.

[36] Slimane Naimi, Abdollatif Ramchahi, and Khadher Ahmad, 'ظاهرة أطفال الشوارع وعلاجها من منظور المنهج الإسلامي: جمعية كافل اليتيم الوطنية بالجزائر أنموذجا: Phenomenon of Street

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[37] Husni; Zulkarnain Zulkarnain and others, 'Pemberdayaan Anak Jalanan Dalam Pengembangan Kewirausahaan Binaan Pondok Pesantren Sabilul Hikmah Malang', *Abdimas Pedagogi: Jurnal Ilmiah Pengabdian Kepada Masyarakat*, 3.1 (2020), 59–68 , doi:https://doi.org/10.17977/um050v3i12020p59-68.

[38] Widhi, Member of Tasawuf Underground, 2024.
[39] Widhi.

Naqshbandiyah order not only to shift their worldview but also instill meaningful practices in their lives. For instance, Widhi explained how prayer is no longer just a physical act but a deeply spiritual experience.

The Tasawuf Underground Community's empowerment efforts have successfully fostered transformative mindsets among its members. For instance, Widhi, once a marginalized street punk, now embodies an educated and entrepreneurial outlook. This transformation highlights the effectiveness of the community's integrated approach, combining spiritual, social, and educational elements to create meaningful change for marginalized individuals.

The community's integration of Islamic spiritual teachings with practical social empowerment programs is central to this success. This holistic approach reflects the view that spirituality and social life are inseparable, reinforcing each aspect to create impactful and sustainable change for individuals and society.

The community's various programs demonstrate the implementation of Islamic values such as social justice, cooperation, and compassion. For example, members receive training in graphic design, barista skills, and business management. These initiatives aim not only to achieve economic self-sufficiency but also to instill essential values like diligence and social responsibility.

The community's innovative use of punk culture and habits demonstrates this balance between spirituality and social empowerment. Practices like tattoo artistry and band performances are reimagined to create new opportunities, such as graphic design workshops and music with Islamic themes. These efforts highlight that empowerment extends beyond material aspects to include shifts in mindset and behavior grounded in spiritual principles.

The Tasawuf Underground Community has developed a holistic empowerment model by blending spiritual and social dimensions. Members not only acquire skills to improve their quality of life but also experience a deeper connection to God and their community. This comprehensive approach has resulted in profound transformations enhancing the spiritual, social, and economic well-being of community members

Conclusion

This study demonstrates that the theological principles underlying social empowerment at the Tasawuf Underground Community in Jakarta are rooted in a holistic concept of *hijrah* (spiritual migration), which encompasses both spiritual and social transformation. The implementation of this *hijrah* concept is embodied in the "Roadmap to Return" program, which is divided into two main pathways: the Roadmap to Return to God and the Roadmap to Return to Family. The first pathway is designed to awaken members' spiritual awareness through religious education and spiritual exercises, such as learning *fiqh*, *tafsir*, and the fundamentals of worship. Meanwhile, the "Roadmap to Return to Family" focuses on strengthening social responsibility. Members are encouraged to repair their relationships with their families or establish a more stable social foundation. The theology of empowerment approach is also grounded in the principle of human equality (*al-musāwāt*), which asserts that all humans share the same dignity before God, as emphasized in the Quran (QS Al-Isra: 70). This principle provides a theological foundation for accepting and guiding socially marginalized communities, such as punk groups. The implementation of the values of social empowerment theology in the community's daily life is realized through various empowerment programs, including graphic design training, social mentoring, and strengthening spiritual identity. The *tasawuf* approach has created significant social transformations within this community. Punk members, who were previously marginalized and associated with negative stereotypes, are now able to demonstrate their potential as productive and contributing individuals.

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