



THE ROLE OF MURSHID IN PREVENTING DIVORCE AMONG NAQSHBANDIYAH FOLLOWERS IN ROKAN HULU REGENCY

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Abstract

This article explores the spiritual dimension of the Naqshbandiyah order, with its emphasis on harmonious family as an aspect of family law, so broadening the study of Islamic family law, which typically focuses on fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) to a more sociological and Sufi perspective. The article focuses on the spiritual aspect, which is at the core of the Naqshbandiyah order's teachings, and is crucial in preventing divorce among its followers, particularly in Rokan Hulu Regency, known as the Land of a *Thousand Suluk*. This study employed a qualitative method with a participatory approach, conducting observations, interviews, and analyzing data in same stages. The study found that the relationship between divorce prevention among Naqshbandiyah congregations in Rokan Hulu Regency can be observed from the position of the murshids in two ways. Firstly, the *spiritual internalization of tarekat* through the murshid spiritual teachings and secondly the murshid's role in mediation. However, the divorce rate among the congregation remains quite high because the internalization of spiritual aspects is not directly related to the household problems faced. In addition, the role of the murshid in preventing divorce is not completely successful since unsupported by a comprehensive competency of conflict management. But, this problem can be overcome with the support of traditional leaders.

Abstrak

Artikel ini mengeksplorasi dimensi spiritual tarekat dengan keharmonisan rumah tangga sebagai salah satu aspek hukum keluarga sehingga memperluas studi hukum keluarga Islam yang biasanya lebih fokus pada aspek fiqh, menjadi lebih sosiologis dan sufistik. Fokus dari artikel ini adalah aspek spiritual yang menjadi inti ajaran tarekat naqsabandiyah menjadi modal dalam mencegah terjadinya perceraian di kalangan pengikutnya terutama di kabupaten rokan hulu yang terkenal dengan gelar negeri seribu suluk. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan partisipatif dalam melakukan observasi, wawancara dan analisa data secara bertahap. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa relasi pencegahan perceraian pada jamaah tarikat Naqsabandiyah di kabupaten rokan hulu dapat diamati dari posisi para murshid dalam dua hal. Pertama internalisasi aspek spiritual dari tarekat melalui sugesti spiritual para murshid dan kedua dari peranan murshid melakukan mediasi. Namun angka perceraian di kalangan jamaah masih cukup tinggi disebabkan ajaran tarikat naqsabandiyah yang diajarkan para murshid karena internalisasi aspek spiritual tidak langsung terkait dengan masalah rumah tangga yang dihadapi. Di samping itu peran para murshid dalam pencegahan perceraian tidak sepenuhnya berhasil sebab tidak disertai dengan kemampuan yang komprehensif dalam manajemen konflik. Namun persoalan ini dapat diatasi dengan dukungan pemimpin adat.



INTRODUCTION

Preventing divorce has great potential to be realized through a spiritual approach, considering that divorce often occurs due to arguments that do not find a solution to the problems faced. The spiritual approach in preventing divorce is through a spiritual approach, namely *the Tariqat*. 'Ali bin Muhammad bin 'Ali Al-Jurjani, the Tariqat is a special method used by *salik* (pathfinders) to Allah through various stages (*maqamat*) of dhikr based on the model certain.¹ Ahmad Al-Kamisykhonawi An-Naqsyabandi stated that the order is carried out by leaving the place of residence (house) and ascending to a noble place (*maqam*) through various practices in the context of temporal – conditional improvement which is based on the main points of learning exercises which are used as a medium for achieving peace and purity of the soul from various impurities and rejection of heart diseases.² Sayyid Nur bin Sayyid Ali defines tareqat as the science of knowing the affairs of the soul (lust) and its nature to determine which deeds should be abandoned and which deeds should be practiced.³

The rising divorce rate in Indonesia has become a pressing social issue, demanding interventions beyond the formal legal framework. Data shows that thousands of divorces each year are caused by acute internal factors, including domestic violence (KDRT), which was the cause of 4,972 cases in one of the study areas reviewed. This high rate indicates a crisis in emotional management and spirituality, as well as a failure to build interpersonal resilience.⁴ Interventions attempted by the formal legal system, such as mediation in Religious Courts, often show increasing failure rates. This mediation failure is caused by the accumulation of long – standing frustration and discomfort on the part of one party (usually the wife), as well as non – technical factors such as a lack of adequate system support for mediators.⁵

The limitations of legal approaches that tend to focus on fiqh necessitate the search for preventative alternatives based on the esoteric dimension of Islam, namely *Sufism* or *tashawwuf*. One study explains the role of the Shiddiqiyah Sufi Order in Jombang, which has unique characteristics because it teaches a balance between Sufism and Sharia, enabling it to adapt to mental, social, and economic crises.⁶ The study demonstrated that the Sufi Order serves a role in building family resilience through healthy emotional expression and emotional maturity. The role of the murshid (spiritual teacher) is central to this preventive framework, not only leading rituals but also acting as a mediator, advisor, and social controller, particularly in sensitive issues such as matchmaking and

¹ Ecep Ismail, "Landasan Qur'an Tentang Zikir Dalam Ajaran Tarekat," *Syifa Al-Qulub* 1, no. 2 (2017): 88 – 94, <https://doi.org/10.15575/saq.v1i2.1434>; Fuady Abdullah, "Spiritualitas Sosial Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah: Kajian Terhadap Prinsip Khalwat Dar Anjuman," *Tsaqafah* 14, no. 2 (2018): 223, <https://doi.org/10.21111/tsaqafah.v14i2.2341>.

² Elin Nur Aslichah, *Sufisme Lokal Di Jawa*, ed. Neli Nur Asriningrum, 1st ed (Bandung: Cendekia Press, 2019).

³ Agus Yahya and M. Nawawi Syafi'i, *Mengenal Thariqah; Panduan Pemula Untuk Mengenal Jalan Menuju Allah*, 1st ed (Semarang: Bina Ilmu, 2005).

⁴ L N Khotijah and U N Ristiana, "Konseling Sufistik Sebagai Upaya Preventif Kdrt (Kekerasan Dalam Rumah Tangga)," *Tembayat*, 2023, <http://jurnal.staispa.ac.id/tembayat/article/view/21>.

⁵ Ahmad Faisal, "The Failure of Mediation in Divorce Cases Handling at Gorontalo Religious Court," *Al-Mizan* 18, no. 2 (2022): 337 – 56, <https://doi.org/10.30603/am.v18i2.3445>.

⁶ Amir Maliki Abitolkha et al., "The Convergence of Sufism and Sharia," *El-Usrah: Jurnal Hukum Keluarga* 8, no. 2 (September 13, 2025): 678 – 700, <https://doi.org/10.22373/dvp86k16>.

conflict resolution.⁷ Thus, these various studies collectively confirm that the Congregation has a dual function; not only as a spiritual institution, but also as a social institution that produces spiritual capital and social capital that are empirically positively correlated with emotional stability and marital satisfaction.

In married life, a good relationship is necessary between husband and wife. In that experience, a harmonious environment is needed, especially through fostering mutual understanding, being open to every difference, maintaining every difference, respecting every difference, and assembling each different desire. It is the obligation of each party to consider and strive to continue to create and maintain a good and strong relationship between father and mother and children and to increase the goodness and harmony of life in the family environment itself. Because it is most effective with the right family members among family members themselves, instructional sports can be carried out correctly and can guide the introduction of a harmonious family lifestyle.⁸

The practice of suluk by followers of the Naqshbandiyah order has a clear causal relationship with divorce prevention because it focuses on the purification of the soul (*tazkiyatun nafs*), which is the root of emotional and spiritual peace.⁹ Through this intensive practice of asceticism and contemplation, a practitioner (*salik*) achieves a higher level of inner peace and self-control. This inner peace directly affects the quality of communication and interaction within the household, as calm individuals are less likely to respond to conflict with destructive emotions or aggression, but rather with patience, empathy, and wisdom. In other words, suluk provides couples with strong internal spiritual support (spiritual resilience), enabling them to view marital difficulties as trials to be faced together, rather than as reasons for separation, thus effectively reducing the primary triggers for rift and divorce.¹⁰

In the context of modern society with increasingly complex social, economic, and psychological pressures, the number of family conflicts leading to divorce shows a worrying trend. Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2023 showed a significant increase in divorce cases in Indonesia, with the dominant factor being the inability to manage emotional conflict. This situation requires a comprehensive approach that focuses not only on legal and economic aspects but also on psychological and spiritual dimensions.¹¹

⁷ Ahmad Hasan Afandi, "Masyarakat Pesantren Dan Resolusi Konflik," *POLITIK: Jurnal Kajian Politik Dan Masalah Pembangunan* 12, no. 1 (2016): 1809 – 1809, <https://journal.unas.ac.id/politik/article/view/168>.

⁸ Hasan Basri, *Keluarga Sakinah Tinjauan Psikologi Dan Agama*, 1st ed (Yogyakarta: CV. Pustaka Pelajar, 2004). Muhammad Ali Wafa, "Implementasi Khitbah Berbasis Takzim Pada Pesantren Salafiyah Syafiyyah Asyhariyah Curahlele Balung Jember," *Rechtenstudent* 2, no. 2 (2021): 184 – 96, <https://doi.org/10.35719/rch.v2i2.58>. Maila Stivens, "'Family Values' and Islamic Revival: Gender, Rights and State Moral Projects in Malaysia," *Women's Studies International Forum* 29, no. 4 (2006): 354 – 67, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.wsif.2006.05.007>. Martyarini Budi Setyawati et al., "The Family Caregiving; A Rogerian Concept Analysis of Muslim Perspective & Islamic Sources," *Heliyon*, 2024, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e25415>.

⁹ Masri Masri, "Konsep Keluarga Harmonis Dalam Bingkai Sakinah, Mawaddah, Warahmah," *Jurnal Tahqiqa: Jurnal Ilmiah Pemikiran Hukum Islam* 18, no. 1 (2024): 109 – 23, <https://doi.org/10.61393/tahqiqa.v18i1.219>.

¹⁰ Said Ali Syahroni and Ferri Irawan, "Suluk Dan Transformasi Diri: Pendekatan Spiritual Dalam Kehidupan Budaya Melayu Baru," *Tapak Melayu* 2, no. 1 (2024).

¹¹ Muhammad Iqbal and Kisma Fauzea, *Psikologi Pasangan: Manajemen Konflik Rumah Tangga*, 1st ed. (Depok: Gema Insani, 2020).

Ahmad Ubaidillah al-Jazili stated that there are six steps to building a harmonious family: maintaining religious life within the family, spending sufficient time together, and interacting with each other to foster good relationships, mutual respect, and unity. Within the family, household problems should be handled calmly. Marriage not only impacts civil relations but also the rights and obligations of husband and wife, joint property, the status of children, and also concerns customs and religion. This is based on the principle that marriage is a legally binding act between a man and a woman (husband and wife) that embodies the value of worship to Allah.¹²

Islam teaches that fulfilling household needs is not only material but also encompasses spiritual aspects. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) always guided his wives in matters of faith and devotion to Allah SWT. In various narrations, it is mentioned that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) often woke his wives for night prayers, encouraged them to improve their worship, and always provided constructive advice on their married life. This shows that in a harmonious household, the spiritual aspect must also be a top priority, because true peace and happiness can only be achieved by drawing closer to Allah SWT.¹³

Therefore, Islamic marriage encourages spirituality as a primary consideration in building a household. The end of a marriage is due to the various problems, dynamics, and issues that can disrupt domestic harmony. Household problems can sometimes be addressed and resolved successfully, but sometimes they are so difficult to resolve that they escalate and drag on, often ultimately resulting in divorce. Divorce is an integral part of marriage, as there is no divorce without first being married. In all legal traditions, whether civil law, common law, or Islamic law, marriage is a contract based on the voluntary, personal agreement between a man and a woman to become husband and wife. In this regard, marriage has always been viewed as the foundation of the family unit, crucial for maintaining the morals and ethics of society and the formation of civilization. Islam considers divorce the ultimate solution to safeguarding the well-being of the household. Talaq is a command that is hated, not to say forbidden, as evidenced by the Prophet's hadith from Abdullah ibn Umar: *"The lawful act that is most hated by Allah is divorce."*¹⁴

Based on the above hadith, it can be understood that the basic law of divorce is permissible, with the term "*halal*". Among the ulama, differences in the origin of thalaq law are influenced by legal changes based on taklifiy law or what is usually called al-ahkam altaklifiyyah al-khamsah. Ibn Qudamah¹⁵ states that the original law for talak is forbidden, and is only permitted according to need. However, there are also those who state that the law is permissible, even though it is basically hated and also because of the

¹² Taufik, Ubaidillah Al-Jazili, and Fini Krisanti, "Hak Dan Kewajiban Suami Istri Dalam Al-Qur'an," ASA 3, no. 1 (February 2, 2021): 1–17, <https://doi.org/10.58293/asa.v3i1.47>. Wahyu Wibisana, "Pernikahan Dalam Islam," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam - Ta'lim* 14, no. 2 (2016): 185–93, http://jurnal.upi.edu/file/05_PERNIKAHAN_DALAM_ISLAM_-_Wahyu.pdf.

¹³ Muhamad Zainul Abidin, "Pemenuhan Kebutuhan Suami Dan Istri Dalam Keluarga Rasulullah Presfektif Al-Quran Dan Hadist," *La Zhulma | Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Bisnis Islam* 6, no. 1 (March 30, 2025): 94–107, <https://doi.org/10.70143/lazhulma.v6i1.502>; Hira Amin, Logan Cochrane, and Nouf Al-Kaabi, "The Role of the Family in Re-Imagining Islam, Cultural Traditions and Society in the Arabian Gulf," *International Journal of Sociology and Social Policy* 45, no. 7–8 (2025): 696–709, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSSP-10-2024-0473>.

¹⁴ Ibnu Majah, *Sunan Ibnu Majah* (Semarang: Toga Putra, 1997).

¹⁵ Ibn Qudamah, *Al-Mughni*, 3rd ed. (Kairo: Dar 'Alam Al-Kutub, 1997).

generality of the verse. Al-Qurthubi states that the Qur'an and al-Sunnah and the ijma' of Muslims show that divorce is permissible and not prohibited.¹⁶

Islam also provides an opportunity for women who feel they have not received their rights to apply for thalaq, on condition that they pay a ransom or in fiqh terms it is called al-khulu'. Islam provides rules that are so difficult and multi-layered, this implies that talaq in Islam is not an easy command to carry out and is not a recommended command. Because thalaq will have an impact on the development and benefit of society in general. Muhammad Abdurrahman saw that thalaq would have an impact on the destruction of household order which in the end would have a big influence on the dynamics and benefit of society. Therefore, Muhammad Abdurrahman placed a new rule by granting the right of divorce only to local judges. Muhammad Abdurrahman explained that thalaq must be carried out in front of a judge as a form of duty for the state and the Muslim community as a whole to safeguard the benefit of future generations, families and society in general.¹⁷

Qasim Amin saw that thalaq is basically prohibited, but is permitted in emergency situations. This opinion was inspired by several verses of the Quran, including QS. al-Nisab' verse 19, verse 35 and verse 128.¹⁸ As a consequence of the statement that thalaq is an alternative that is not liked by Allah, limits are set in thalaq as a way to protect marriage. Ibn Katsir explained that this verse is the basis of benefit in order to lift the harm of the thalaq law which was in effect during the jahiliyah era where a husband could mentally divorce his wife an unlimited number of times. The benefit contained in the wife's rights is that she loses the right to determine her own fate and becomes the object of divorce which can be divorced at any time and at any time by her husband at will.¹⁹

Rokan Hulu Regency is known for its development of Sufi orders, especially the Naqshbandiyah Order, making it known as the land of a thousand suluk (mysticism). In this study, the existence of suluk as part of the order is expected to have implications for the lives of saliks in various dimensions of life, especially domestic life. Riau Province, as one of the provinces with easily found suluk activities, shows a divorce phenomenon that continues to increase from year to year, reaching an alarming level. Throughout 2024, it reached 8,085 cases, with the highest trigger for divorce being continuous disputes and arguments, reaching 7,469 cases. One of the regions where divorce rates have shown a significant increase is Rokan Hulu Regency in Riau. According to data from the Statistics Indonesia (BPS), Riau Province recorded 722 divorces, making it the fourth-highest divorce rate after Pekanbaru, Kampar, and Rokan Hulu.²⁰

Interestingly, in Rokan Hulu Regency—a region synonymous with "Negeri Seribu Suluk"—the divorce rate appears to be inversely proportional to the number of adherents of the Naqshbandiyah order. Despite this, the number of divorces has not decreased. This study aims to uncover how the suluk teachings disseminated by the murshid, or caliph of the order, can prevent divorce. This spiritual practice is expected to provide peace of mind for couples, enabling them to foster positive relationships and provide spiritual support to resolve emotional family issues. Thus, the role of the Naqshbandiyah order in Rokan Hulu is crucial in helping married couples overcome various challenges.

¹⁶ Al-Qurthubi, *Tafsir Al-Qurthubi Al-Jami' Li Ahkam AlQur'an* (Mesir: Dar Al-Kutub Al-Mishriyyah, 1964).

¹⁷ Muhammad Abdurrahman, *Tafsir Al-Manar* (Mesir: Dar Al-Fikr, 1947).

¹⁸ Qasim Amin, *Tahrir Al-Mar'ah* (Kairo: Al-Hindawi, 2017).

¹⁹ Ibn Katsir, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-Azhim* (Dar al-Fikr, 1997), juz I, 610.

²⁰ potretnews.com, "Pekanbaru Angka Perceraian Tertinggi Di Riau Pada 2024, Capai 8.085 Kasus," Potretnews.Com, August 14, 2025.

Preventing divorce has great potential to be realized through a spiritual approach, considering that divorce often occurs due to unresolved continuous disputes. The implementation of this spiritual approach can be realized through the Tariqat (Sufi order). 'Ali bin Muhammad bin 'Ali Al-Jurjani defined the Tariqat as a special method used by a *salik* (seeker or pathfinder) to reach Allah through various stages (*maqamat*) of *dhikr* based on a specific model. Ahmad Al-Kamisykhonawi An-Naqsyabandi stated that the order is carried out by leaving one's place of residence (house) and ascending to a noble place (*maqam*) through various practices in the context of temporal-conditional improvement, which is based on key spiritual exercises. These exercises are used as a medium for achieving peace and purity of the soul from various impurities and the rejection of heart diseases. Sayyid Nur bin Sayyid Ali defines *tareqat* as the science of knowing the affairs of the soul (lust) and its nature to determine which deeds should be abandoned and which should be practiced.

One of the regions showing a significant increase in divorce rates is Rokan Hulu Regency in Riau. According to data from the Statistics Indonesia (BPS), Riau Province recorded 722 divorces, making it the fourth-highest divorce rate after Pekanbaru, Kampar, and Rokan Hulu. The divorce rate in Rokan Hulu Regency appears inversely proportional to the number of adherents of the Naqshbandiyah order in the regency. This area, renowned for its slogan "The Land of a Thousand *Suluk*," has yet to reduce the number of divorces.

This study attempts to uncover the impact of the *suluk* teachings imparted through the Naqshbandiyah order on divorce prevention. These teachings are delivered by the order's teachers (*murshid/caliphs*), who are spiritual figures with charisma and are followed by their students. The practice of *suluk* in Rokan Hulu Regency is expected to bring spiritual peace to married life, as the spiritual level attained by the ascetics fosters positive family relationships and provides spiritual support for dealing with emotional conflict within the family. Therefore, *suluk* practices in Rokan Hulu Regency play a crucial role in addressing the challenges faced by married couples. Therefore, it is interesting to examine the role of the Naqshbandiyah order in Rokan Hulu Regency in preventing divorce."

METHODS

This research was carried out among the followers of the Naqshbandiyah Order who are members of the congregation residing in the Land of a Thousand Suluks, located in Rokan Hulu Regency. The group consists of *murshid* (spiritual guides), *khalifah* (assistants), *salik* (disciples), and respected traditional leaders who play a vital role in maintaining the continuity of spiritual practices within the community. The Naqshbandiyah Order in Rokan Hulu is characterized by its strong adherence to spiritual exercises known as *suluk*, which serve as a form of spiritual purification and moral training. The term "Land of a Thousand Suluks" symbolizes the deep-rooted tradition of Sufism and spirituality embedded in the daily life of its people. The population of this study, therefore, includes all members who actively practice the teachings of the *tareqat* or have previously participated in *suluk* activities under the guidance of a *murshid*. These followers are dispersed across several sub-districts in Rokan Hulu, reflecting the wide influence of Naqshbandiyah teachings in the region. Due to the absence of accurate population data and the dispersed nature of the followers, random sampling was not feasible. Consequently, the study adopted a purposive sampling technique to ensure that only

participants relevant to the research objectives were included. This approach allowed the researcher to focus specifically on individuals with direct experience and understanding of *tareqat* practices, thereby improving the credibility of the data obtained.

The main objective of this study is to explore the perceptions and preventive measures against divorce among members of the Naqshbandiyah congregation in Rokan Hulu Regency. To achieve this, qualitative methods were employed, primarily through participant observation and in-depth interviews. The researcher was directly involved in religious and social activities within the Naqshbandiyah community, particularly in *al-syarikah al-'ubudiyah* gatherings, to gain a firsthand understanding of their interactions and value systems. Through this immersion, the study was able to capture authentic expressions of belief, social behavior, and the moral framework guiding the community's view of marriage. The participant observation provided a nuanced insight into how the teachings of the *murshid* influence marital harmony and conflict resolution. In-depth interviews were conducted with selected respondents—including *murshid*, *khalifah*, and *salik*—to gather comprehensive data on the congregation's understanding of divorce and the strategies they employ to prevent it. The use of multiple data collection techniques enhanced the validity and reliability of the findings. Overall, the methodology reflects a deep ethnographic engagement designed to uncover the spiritual, cultural, and social dimensions that underpin the Naqshbandiyah community's resilience in maintaining family unity.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

Emotional Regulation Practice, Barriers to Spiritual Internalization of Tareqat

The word "Tarekat" comes from the Arabic word *thariqah* which means path, state, flow or line in something. Tarekat is the "path" taken by Sufis and can be described as a path that stems from the *Shari'a*, because the main path is called *Shari'a*, while the subsidiary path is called *thariq*.²¹ This derivative word shows that according to Sufis, mystical education is a branch of the main path consisting of divine law, a foothold for Muslims. There can be no path without the main path from which it stems. Mystical experience cannot be obtained if the binding *Shari'a* commands are not first carefully obeyed.²²

Sheikh Najmudin Amin Al-Kurdi in his book "tanwirul qulub" as quoted by Fuad Said, comes from two Arabic words, "Naqsy" and "band" meaning "carving or image stamped on a candle or other object". And "Band" means "Flag or wide screen". So "Naqsbandi" means a carving or image painted on an object, attached to it, and no longer separated, like being printed on a flag or banner. It is called "Naqsyabandiyah", because Sheikh Bahaudin, the founder of this order, always makes dhikr remembering Allah for a long time, so that the word "Allah" is engraved tightly in his heart.²³

²¹ M Solihin and Rosihan Anwar, *Ilmu Tasawuf* (Bandung: Pustaka Setia, 2014), 203. Sururin, *Perempuan Dalam Dunia Tarekat; Belajar Dari Pengalaman Beragama Perempuan Anggota Tarekat Qodiriyah Wa Naqsyabandiyah* (Jakarta: Kementerian Agama Republik Indonesia, 2012), 86.

²² Annemarie Schimmel, *Dimensions of Mysticism in Islam* (Jakarta: PT Temprint, 1986).; Muhammad Zainuddin Abdul Madjid, *Gagasan Dan Gerakan Pembaharuan Islam Di Nusa Tenggara Barat* (Mataram: Pustaka al-Miqdad, 2007), 124 – 25.

²³ Fuad H A Said, *Hakikat Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah* (Jakarta: Pustaka al-Husna, 2007).; Ismail Nawawi, *Tarekat Qadiriyyah Wa Naqsyabandiyah* (Surabaya: Karya Agung, 2008), 21 – 22.

The rapid development of Tariqat in Indonesia is driven by the need to achieve inner peace and heightened spiritual attainment, a consequence of hedonism and moral decline, and other dimensions of life. Various Tariqat organizations have emerged, each with its own distinctive characteristics, including the Guru (Murshid), the murid (disciple), and the practices they develop. The Guru or Murshid holds a crucial and decisive position in the Tariqat, leading, guiding, and guiding murids in carrying out practices to draw closer to Allah SWT. Below him are students or followers who must pledge their allegiance to the Murshid, declaring that they will sincerely practice all forms of practice and *wirid* (recitation) the Murshid has recommended to them. This pledge of allegiance is known as *bai'at*. An important component of the tareqat also includes tareqat practices, especially *dhikr* (remembrance of God). The practice of *dhikr* within the tareqat world can vary, depending on the characteristics and personality of the tareqat itself, as directed by the murshid.²⁴

The Naqshbandiyah is a tareqat that first entered North Sumatra and has been associated with the Babussalam or Basilam Sufi pesantren complex since the mid – 13th/19th century. This is associated with the establishment of suluk (sacred meditation) in Babussalam, Langkat, North Sumatra. One characteristic of the Naqshbandiyah congregation is prioritizing practice and experience over knowledge. The Murshids always emphasize that students practice the teachings first, until they discover the wisdom of the teachings they practice. This is found in carrying out an exercise, for example *dhikr* which must be done at a certain time, a student does not need to ask a lot about what it means or what the basis is, he just has to carry it out consistently so that later he will find the answer himself. In addition, the Naqshbandiyah Tareqat congregation emphasizes adab education because adab is a guide to the (physical) movements, thoughts, feelings, character and beliefs of students in their relationship with Allah, Teachers and fellow students who adhere to the Sunnah of the Prophet and the behavior of the Salaf al – *ṣalihin*. For this reason, the path taken is bersuluk or also called *khalwat*, namely being in a quiet place, so that you can worship solemnly and perfectly. In suluk, a student is taught various *zikr* lessons and gets a *dhikr* diploma from the Murshid Leader.²⁵

Suluk or *khalwat* is done by doing meditation (*i'tikaf*) in a mosque or surau for 10 days, 20 days or 40 days. The person who performs suluk must be under the guidance of a person who has *ma'rifat*, in this case is Sheikh Murshid. A person who will perform suluk, must be physically and mentally prepared, especially in order to forget and complete all worldly affairs first and prepare for the realm of death. Before performing suluk, a person must take a clean bath of repentance with the intention that he is bathing in repentance from both physical and spiritual sins because of Allah SWT. After the bath of repentance, he then performs several voluntary prayers, namely the voluntary ablution prayer of 2 rakaat, the voluntary repentance prayer of 2 rakaat, and the *hajat* prayer to perform suluk 2 rakaat. Afterward, he intended to meditate on the path to Allah by performing *akmalus shalihat*, acts of worship exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the Naqshbandiyah Sufi order (*silsilah*). This includes practicing

²⁴ Mustofa Zahri, *Kunci Memahami Ilmu Tasawuf* (Surabaya: Bina Ilmu, 1993).; Pismawendi, "Tarekat Naqshbandiyah Dan Pembinaan Mental Remaja," *Al-Qalb* 7, no. 1 (n.d.): 40 – 41; Lidayat Siregar, "Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah Syaikh Abdul Wahab Rokan," *Miqot* 35, no. 1 (2011): 60.

²⁵ Luqman Abdullah, "Kontribusi Tarekat Naqshbandiyah Terhadap Pendidikan Agama Islam Dan Perubahan Perilaku Sosial Jamaah," *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 1, no. 1 (2018); Kharisuddin Aqib, *Al-Hikmah: Memahami Teosofi Tarekat Qadiriyah Wa Naqshbandiyah* (Surabaya: Bina Ilmu, n.d.), 61 – 62.

night vigils, fasting, and dhikr before meditate. He also stepped with his right foot when entering the house.²⁶

On the other hand, there is also research that focuses on the role of spiritual guides (murshids) in family life. Anwar Kurniawan explained that it was found that spiritual guides (murshids) as husbands were expected to sacrifice household matters for their activities as spiritual guides (murshids) of community service. The role of a spiritual guide as husband demands time and energy, which can diminish the intensity of the husband's role in domestic affairs. In this regard, the wives of spiritual guides generally understand and even support this role as part of their path of devotion. In many cases, the wives of spiritual guides have witnessed firsthand the positive impact of spiritual guides on the surrounding community and the spiritual atmosphere within the family. Thus, a spouse's support for the role of the spiritual guide is a crucial foundation for maintaining marital harmony, built on mutual understanding, open communication, and shared spiritual awareness. A wife who understands and participates in maintaining her husband's spiritual guide's role ensures that the practice of suluk does not conflict with family life but rather becomes an integral part of the household's identity and spiritual journey.²⁷

One practice practiced by the Naqshbandiyah is self-introspection, which is not as widespread as other groups. According to the Naqshbandiyah, self-introspection, as a recommendation, is not found in Islamic law. Therefore, it should not be practiced as a recommendation or as a procedure. In fact, several Naqshbandiyah figures consider such practices to be heretical because there are no sources in the Quran or Hadith regarding such behavior.²⁸ However, this does not mean that this is something that is completely abandoned by the Naqshbandiyah. Introspection is intended to be an obligation within it, even to the point of being incorporated into law. The implementation procedures must vary from one group to another.²⁹ Comparing the Protestant Calvinist school and the Naqshbandiyah order, equating the concept of worldly asceticism with the concept of khalwat dar anjuman is incorrect. The first is certainly both derived from different traditions and beliefs. Furthermore, the concept of worldly asceticism emphasizes reason and rejects aesthetic and emotional matters. The framework is one of salvation that relies heavily on hard work, with worldly material desires aside from aesthetic values. This is certainly different from the concept of khalwat dar anjuman, which is used as a concept for a mystical spiritual journey. As Sirhindi mentioned, with this concept, a person divides himself into three parts. The entire intellect is connected to the Truth and the outer half, while the other half is engaged in worldly matters, particularly fulfilling the rights of

²⁶ Nurasiah Lubis and Jufri Naldo, "Implementasi Diri Sebagai Hamba Dalam Aktivitas Suluk Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah," *Jurnal Educatio: Jurnal Pendidikan Indonesia* 10, no. 2 (2024): 92, <https://doi.org/10.29210/1202424714>; Muhammad Faisal, *Tarekat Naqsyabandiyah Di Kepulauan Melayu* (Bintan: STAIN Sultan Abdurrahman Press, 2019), 13.

²⁷ Anwar Kurniawan and Arisman, "Analisis Terhadap Keharmonisan Rumah Tangga Mursyid Suluk Kabupaten Rokan Hulu Perspektif Hukum Keluarga Islam," *Al-Qanun: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Pembaharuan Hukum Islam* 28, no. 1 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.37411/sjgc.v2i2.2148>.

²⁸ Ajid Thohir, *Gerakan Politik Kaum Tarekat: Telaah Historis Gerakan Politik Antikolonialisme Tarekat Qodiriyah Naqsabandiyah Di Pulau Jawa* (Bandung: Pustaka Hidayah, 2002), 29; Ahmad Tajuddin Arafat, "Interaksi Kaum Sufi Dengan Ahli Hadis: Melacak Akar Persinggungan Tasawuf Dan Hadis," *Journal of Islamic Studies and Humanities* 2, no. 2 (2017): 129–55, <https://doi.org/10.21580/jish.22.2520>.

²⁹ Sayyid Abi Bakar Ibnu Muhammad Syatha, *Misi Suci Para Sufi*, trans. Djamaruddin Al-Buny, cet. Ke-1 (Yogyakarta: Mitra Pustaka, 2002), 2; Romzan Fauzi, "Tarekat Naqsabandiyah Khalidiyah Di Slemanan Kabupaten Blitar," *Analisa* 15, no. 1 (2016): 33, <https://doi.org/10.18784/analisa.v15i01.322>.

creatures and striving for things that guarantee the general welfare of humanity.³⁰ Because fulfilling the rights of creatures is actually obedience to God's commands, this half-way, in essence, returns to God. Involving worldly matters here is also inseparable from the contemplative path with aesthetics connected to the Truth.³¹

Divorce prevention efforts among the Naqshbandiyah tariqa congregation in Rokan Hulu are pursued through both physical and spiritual mechanisms. Concerning the problems faced by the congregation, they are brought to the murshid for advice and religious fatwas. Similar to the method used by most institutions, one by one, either one or both parties in conflict are brought before the murshid to address the root causes of the breakdown in their marriage. Based on this information, the Murshid, with his wisdom, provides advice, guidance, and religious fatwas that can be considered by both parties in resolving the marital issues they face.

In other Naqshbandiyah Sufi orders, according to murshid leader (*Khalifa*) Umar, the Murshid accompanies external work with internal work through the practice of tariqah (community practice). In the practice of suluk, congregants are taught to always remember that God is the solution to all human problems, including those within the household. By placing God above all issues faced in the household, it will bring spiritual maturity and hope for solutions.³² Sheikh Alwizar, whose have titled Engku Khotib, consider the practical aspect equally important as external work. According to the Murshid of the Naqsyabandiyah Tariqat, this practice is a way to achieve a calm inner state because it is done repeatedly and intensively. This internal work is often done at night and is preceded by total surrender to Allah by reciting the phrase:

اللهم أنت مَفْتُوحُ الْبَلَاغِ وَرَضَاكَ مَطْلُوبِي (My God, you are the one I turn to and your pleasure is the one I seek).³³

Sheikh H. Muhammad Bashir conveys that the practices among the Naqshbandiyah Trikat in Rokan Hulu Regency are complemented by instilling an understanding of Allah's words through brief explanations from the Murshid to the congregation, which are usually carried out in between dhikr practices. This initial stage is further refined by reading short verses and ending with tahlil and prayers addressed to these sequences. First, the prayer to the spirit of the Apostle, then to people who are instrumental in providing knowledge and inner guidance. Second, the prayers are intended to mothers and fathers and people who are instrumental in looking after the body. Third, they are purposed specifically to the spirit of the person in question based on wishes and requests. At this point, the Tawajuh work is finished as the initial stage of inner work.³⁴

The various information above shows that the murshid prioritizes the general principles of the tareqat in all matters, including when addressing crucial marital issues. In practice, each problem is addressed by strengthening dhikr (remembrance of God) and wirid (prayer) practices, which are expected to be a path to resolving marital problems. However, this is not accompanied by more detailed and direct tareqat's teaching regarding the threat of divorce. This hinders the implementation of the murshid's role, thus

³⁰ Ahmad Muhasim and Tuti Harwati, *Amalan Suluk: Tinjauan Yuridis Dan Alternatif Mengurangi Kekerasan Dalam Rumah Tangga (KDRT) Di Indonesia* (Lombok: Alfa Press, 2022).

³¹ Ahmad Dimyati, *Dakwah Personal: Model Dakwah Kaum Naqsyabandiyah* (Yogyakarta: Deepublish, 2016), 28.

³² Tuan Guru Umar, "Interview." Edited by Suhaiyib, August 13, 2024

³³ Khalifah Alwizar, "Interview." Edited by Suhaiyib, August 10, 2024

³⁴ Sheikh H. Muhammad Bashir, , "Interview." Edited by Suhaiyib, August 10, 2024

preventing the tareqat's teachings from optimally addressing divorce. The Naqsabandiyah Congregation consists of several levels of society, from teenagers, adults and the elderly.

DISCUSSION

The high number of divorce applications in Rokan Hulu Regency, which is known as "Land of a Thousand Suluks," is an interesting phenomenon that contrasts with the renowned role of the Naqshbandiyah order. The nickname "Land of a Thousand Suluks" is given to this region because, according to data released by the Ministry of Religious Affairs of Rokan Hulu Regency, there are 93 Suluk prayer houses (surau suluk) spread across all districts within the regency. This number tends to increase as the rank of the congregation increases, reaching the level of murshid, allowing them to build suluk prayer houses, as they now have the legal authority to guide their own congregation.

However, there is no specific official statistical data that separates and details the divorce rate only among followers of the Naqsyabandiyah Order in Rokan Hulu. Several academic studies have highlighted the issue of domestic harmony among followers of the Naqsyabandiyah Order in Rokan Hulu, particularly in relation to the practice of suluk. This number has determined through the study as to whether the practice of suluk really has an influence on the domestic harmony of the murshid and followers of the order, or whether there are other more dominant factors. The distribution of suluk prayer houses across all districts not only demonstrates the large number of suluk prayer houses but also reflects the large number of Naqshbandiyah followers in the region. Each suluk prayer house is led by a murshid and several servants. The 93 suluk prayer houses represent 93 murshids. Each murshid has a substantial congregation. Various *Surau Suluk* (prayer rooms) with the largest number of followers is the surau suluk al – mukminin that reaches more than 1.000 participants.

Based on the table above, the large number of tariqa congregations and their murshids, distributed evenly across all sub – districts within Rokan Hulu Regency, presents significant potential for divorce prevention. This potential for divorce prevention is based on the strong influence of the murshid, who is very close to the murshid. For followers of the tariqa, the murshid is respected both physically and spiritually. His views and advice are followed, likewise his prayers are eagerly awaited, including in matters of marriage.

In addition to the role of the mursyid as a spiritual leader, the prevention of divorce among the Naqshbandiyah congregation in Rokan Hulu is also supported by the role of mediation in collaboration with traditional leaders. The subsistence naqasabandiyah community in The Rokan Hulu identified with its religious congregation consistently with the Traditional Council Institution (LKA) and the regency government. Therefore, Rokan Hulu social life is governed by three elements, known in oral tradition as "*Tungku 3 Sojorang*" (three – twisted rope – a stove consisting of three pillars): religion leader, the government, and traditional figures. Of these three pillars, two directly impact community life: traditional and religious leaders. Therefore, collaboration between these two elements plays a crucial role in resolving family issues.

This Traditional Council Institution (*Lembaga Kerapatan Adat/ LKA*) plays a strategic role in the lives of the Rokan Hulu community. Therefore, all issues within human life from birth to burial, involve the participation of traditional leaders (*datuk*). This circle of life includes marriage and divorce. This latter issue is currently of great concern. The rise of number of divorce applications concern is not only for men, who are accustomed to having their needs taken care of, but also for women who have lost the companionship and protection of their families. Even more concerning is the fate of

children who have lost the companionship of their parents. Institutionally, the collaboration of naqsabandiyah's murshid and Traditional Council Institution plays a strategic and systematic role in preventing domestic disputes from reaching the Religious Court. This is strategic because their role and figures in the community (Datuk and khalifah) are chosen individuals who represent various aspects, such as charisma, religious scholars, intellectual, courageous, wealthy, and wise. These qualities ensure their words are listened to, their advice followed, and their prohibitions obeyed. The Datuk, with all their strengths, are deemed necessary by all parties to resolve emerging issues before they are handed over to the government.

A married couple facing domestic problems that are headed for divorce is summoned by the legal representative of both parties. The husband is summoned or voluntarily comes to meet the wife's uncle, while the wife comes to meet the husband's uncle. This cross-relationship system ensures that the uncle receives information not only from his biological nephew but also from other sources, such as his wife or husband, about his nephew's household. The uncle in this initial stage is the brother of the husband's or wife's father/mother. In this sense, the uncle is called the legal uncle. After receiving a report from the nephew's wife or husband, the elders of both parties then sat down to discuss the situation their nephew was facing. The elders of both parties then agreed to summon their nephew to a council to find common ground to resolve their nephew's marital dispute. If the nephew's marital dispute reaches an impasse and is not resolved at the first level by the elders of both parties, then the handling is delegated to the mato – mato (head of traditional court) but is unsuccessful, then the matter is handed over to the traditional tungkek (head of traditional court).

These tribal and tarikat collaboration provides the religious advice offered and traditional wisdom. Perhaps there was some consideration, perhaps a tenderness of heart for reunion. However, after several meetings failed to produce results, a final meeting was held. This meeting resulted in a conclusion based on the choices of both parties. They chose to reconcile before the customary elders, the tribal elders, the traditional elders, and the customary leaders, or to separate. The authority of the elders in handling the marriage of their nephews and their children is severed by word of mouth; marriage, fortune, and death are determined by the Almighty. The separation chosen by a husband and wife carries not only religious sanctions but also sanctions stipulated in the customs of the Luhak Kepenuhan tribe, namely the construction of a traditional house.

Based on in-depth interviews with elders and leaders, Suluk emphasizes spiritual messages in providing solutions to household problems. Economic problems, which are often the source of problems, are returned to the spiritual principle that Allah is the best provider and never makes mistakes in providing sustenance appropriate to a person's circumstances. This message is a positive stimulus for some of the order's students. However, this is not effective for some other students of the tarikat due to the lack of linear support for this stimulus from their spouses. Divorce prevention in this context does not provide optimal results because it is not followed up with mediation for spouses who do not accept the spiritual message as a stimulus.

However, this spiritual experience must contend with the reality of conflict within the household. The ability of murshids to deal with conflict management has not developed comprehensively. Thomas and Kilmann in Karko developed five styles of conflict management, namely Competition, Collaboration, Compromise, Mitigation, and Accommodation. In their mediation skills in household matters, murshids must understand the model that suits the pattern of conflict that occurs in the household. When domestic conflicts arise with an imbalance between the parties, a coercive form of accommodation

that forces the other party to submit or obey the will of the stronger party will not be effective. This is why not all domestic problems can be prevented among the tarikat congregation in Rokan Hulu district.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study indicate that the rapid expansion of the Naqshbandiyah congregation in Rokan Hulu Regency has not yet achieved an optimal impact in reducing the rate of divorce among its members. Although the Naqshbandiyah *tareqat* emphasizes spiritual discipline, inner purification, and obedience to religious guidance, these teachings—when transmitted by the *murshid*—tend to remain general in scope and have not been systematically directed toward addressing domestic and marital issues. The relatively high incidence of divorce reflects a gap between spiritual instruction and its practical application in family life. The *murshid*'s mediating role, while recognized as important within the community, often results in partial rather than comprehensive conflict resolution. As a consequence, the underlying psychological, social, and economic factors contributing to marital breakdown remain unresolved. Therefore, despite the strong spiritual framework of the Naqshbandiyah tradition, its implementation as a preventive mechanism for divorce still requires institutional and methodological refinement to become more effective and sustainable.

To strengthen the role of spiritual leadership in family resilience, this study recommends enhancing the capacity of *murshid* in conflict management and counseling within the context of Islamic psychology and contemporary family studies. A more systematic integration of religious education, mediation techniques, and community-based support mechanisms is needed to make the Naqshbandiyah approach more responsive to current social challenges. Furthermore, collaboration between *murshid* and traditional tribal leaders—who already play an influential role in dispute resolution—can provide a culturally grounded and holistic model for marital harmony. The development of a contextualized framework for spiritual mediation, supported by empirical studies and community participation, would strengthen the social relevance of Sufi teachings in modern life. Thus, the Naqshbandiyah Order in Rokan Hulu has the potential to evolve from a purely spiritual movement into a transformative socio-religious institution that not only nurtures individual piety but also safeguards family integrity as a cornerstone of social stability.

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