Spiritual and Professional Motivation of Indonesian Academics Entering the Chattriya Sufi Order

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Abstract

Shaṭṭāriyah is one of the forty-six ṭarīqa (Sufi order) in Indonesia that are mu'tabarah (Ṣaḥīḥ, straight, valid), which attracts academics from major cities, including Bandung. Questions such as (1) Why are academics interested in joining this Sufism? (2) Are they only motivated spiritually? and (3) Does professional development conflict with the concept of zuhd and 'uzlah? have remained unanswered. Therefore, this study aims to explore the spiritual and professional motivations of Indonesian academics entering ṭarīqa Shaṭṭāriyah. This is qualitative research with data collected from eight lecturers in Bandung through observation and in-depth interviews from May 2021 to April 2022. The results showed that respondents interpreted religion as being submissive to Wasiṭah, a Shaykh of Shaṭṭāriyah who the only successor of the Prophet Muhammad is. Spirituality development through mujāhadah under the guidance of Wasiṭah by combining the goodness of *Sharī'a* and *Ḥaqīqa*. All respondents had reached the mutawassiṭ (intermediate) spirituality level, muṭmainnah, and *rāḍiya* stages, which are levels of spirituality far above most Shaṭṭāriyah citizens. Furthermore, in terms of professional motivation, they possessed zuhd and 'uzlah, which are prominent levels of professionalism.

Keywords: *Shaṭṭāriyah; spiritual Sufism; mujāhadah; Sharī'a; Ḥaqīqa; zuhd; 'uzlah.*

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Introduction

The pro-contra debate about Sufism among Muslims led to the creation of 'anti' and 'pro' Sufism and ṭarīqa (Sufi Order) groups. According to Wagemakers (2017), Salafis are the most vehemently opposed schools of Sufism. This is in addition to the research conducted by Ibrahim (2002), who compiled a chapter on *Tasawuf and Pengaruh Asing* (Sufism and Foreign Influence). Anwar (2002)'s research titled "*Kenapa Harus Tasawuf*?" (Why Sufism?) and "*Tasawuf Tanpa Ṭarīqa*" (Sufism without Ṭarīqa) stated that Islam already has an umbrella, namely morality. These studies criticized the concept of *ma'rifa* as heretical and heretical. Citing Nicholson Hilal (2002) reported that the *ma'rifa* process comes from the Greek word gnosis, *kashf*, which means direct knowledge from God without intermediaries. Conversely, Sufism is used to examine how human nature meets God's essence through the blessing of knowledge by a *dhikr* expert (Afandi, 2009). In this research, Afandi emphasized the role of a *dhikr* expert without using *kashf*.

The ṭarīqa are some of the supporters of Sufism and ṭarīqa, which has continued to thrive. Studies have shown that there are more than seventy parent *ṭarīqas* globally, one of which is Shaṭṭāriyah (en.wikipedia.org., 2022; slife.org., 2022). In Indonesia alone, there are forty-six ṭarīqa *muʿtabarah* (Tedy, 2017). Harun Nasution, an Indonesian Islamic reformist, vehemently denied that Sufism and ṭarīqa originate from outside Islam. Harun rebuttals are summarized as follows: (1) The Prophet PBUH lived as a Sufi, (2) The four Khalifs: Abu Bakr Siddiq, Umar ibn Khattab, Uthman ibn ʿAffan, Ali ibn Abu Ṭalib – and their senior companions imitated the Prophet for being Sufis, (3) when the caliphate was in the hands of the corrupt and nepotistic Umayyads and Abbasids, many scholars lived as Sufis, and (4) its teachings had solid roots in the Qur'ān and Hadith (Nasution, 1990; Saude, 2011; Rahmat, 2016). Nahdhatul Ulama (NU), Indonesia's largest Islamic organization, oversees Sufism and ṭarīqa. Recently Muhammadiyah (inclined Salafi), the second-largest Islamic organization, supports Sufism even without ṭarīqa (Beck, 2014).

Shaṭṭāriyah is the oldest, and largest ṭarīqa in Indonesia with forty-six *mu'tabarah* ṭarīqas (Azra, 2004; Mulyati, 2006; Laffan, 2011; Fathurahman, 2017; Taufani, 2018; Tedy, 2017). The lineage of ṭarīqa comes from the Prophet Muhammad, then continued to the 12 Shi'a Imams, then the Wasiṭah (Shaykh of Shaṭṭāriyah) in India and spread widely through the Mecca-

Medina route thanks to Shaykh Sibgatullah (died, 1606). This ṭarīqa flourished in North Africa through Shaykh Muhammad al-Sanusi (d., 1859 AD) (Ernst, 2013). Then it developed in Indonesia and Southeast Asia through Shaykh Abd al-Rauf al-Sinkili (Aceh) at the behest of his teacher, Shaykh Ahmad al-Qushashi (died, 1660) (Christomy, 2001; Affandi, 2002; Ngadhimah, 2007; Fathurahman, 2003, 2017). In Indonesia, this ṭarīqa is one of forty-six *mu`tabarah* ṭarīqa (Tedy, 2017). The largest Shaṭṭāriyah is based in Jogomerto (Nganjuk, East Java) (Rahmat, 2018).

Shaṭṭāriyah Jogomerto had vast influence in Java and Sumatra, with the majority of its members' farmers living in rural areas. A small number live in urban areas and work as entrepreneurs, traders, employees, state civil servants, soldiers, police, teachers, lecturers, notaries, doctors, and specialists. In the previous Wasiṭah period, there were also ministers in the Cabinet of President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono (Rahmat, 2018). This ṭarīqa attracts academics from major Indonesian cities, including Bandung.

Levels of Spirituality

In general, spirituality is an awareness of a transcendental dimension (Elkins et al., 1988) and living a sacred life (Puchalski et al., 2009). According to Hughes (2013) and Marzband et al. (2016), it can be based on religion or other worldviews.

In Islam, experts differently interpret it. For instance, Abbasi et al. (2012) defined it as a situation that has a meaningful life purpose, which stems from the belief in unlimited power, the perfection of God, and belief in life after death. Damad et al. (2011) stated that peoples' spirituality depends on their knowledge and faith in Allah. In contrast, Marzband et al. (2016) reported that it is based on the Qur'ān and its commentary (16:97 and 37:83-84) terms *hayātan tayyibatan* (the good life) and *qalbun salīm* (pure heart). *Hayātan tayyibatan* is defined as a good and worldly life, while the holy one is more afterlife oriented. Humans enjoy this holy life with charitable deeds and noble character without being tarnished by sins and bad morals (Ṭabaṭaba'i, 2010). Meanwhile, Ibn Kathir means a peaceful life because he obeys Allah and the Messenger by obtaining halal, good sustenance, and likes to give charity (Alu-Shaykh, 2009). The *qalb*un (heart) is a source of moral virtue and a determinant of good and bad morals, hence it is a state of the soul that accumulates good qualities such as faith, healthy thinking, fear of God, benevolence, compassion, and peace. The ultimate goal of human action, and

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the true perfection of man, is to become closer to God (Marzband et al., 2016).

A novice Muslim approaches God through the *Sharīʿa*, by worshipping in spiritual place (Latifa et al., 2019). Prayers can be performed in the mosque, at home and in other places. This is in addition to fasting in the month of Ramadan and conducting Hajj in Mecca in the month of Dhulhijjah. However, a Muslim does not stop at the *Sharīʿa* dimension but understands that God is everywhere, irrespective of their location. Based on this understanding, Muslims increase their spirituality through the ṭarīqa way by following the *Sharīʿa* to further increasing their holiness and being closer to God (Latifa et al., 2019).

At the ṭarīqa level, the most prominent characteristic of this phase is the remembrance of God, called *dhikr* (recollection). The Qur'ān (2:152), which states "Remember Me, and I will remember you. Give thanks to Me, and do not be ungrateful," is constant *dhikr* through continual repetition of the ninety-nine names of God (*al-Asmāʾ al-Ḥusnā*). *Dhikr* in one's heart and rehearsing His holy name verbally is a way of facilitating divine proximity and hence constitutes another attachment for Muslims. When individuals remember God, it brings them closer to Him. A divine saying assures Muslims of the relationship with the divine when God says, "I am present in My servant's thought of Me, and I am with him when he remembers Me" (Ibn-ʿArabi, 2005). At this level, the original meaning is the information and the knowledge about God, wherein one may stop questioning and discussing God (Simuh, 1996; Latifa et al., 2019).

The highest level of spirituality is *maʿrifa*, and the most obvious feature of this phase is a close relationship with God (Latifa et al., 2019). The Sufis often quote two hadiths. First, "I was a hidden treasure who loved to be known, which led to the world's creation" (Shah-Kazemi, 2002; Ibn-ʿArabi, 2005). The phrase " to be known" here is from *maʿrifah*, which implicitly commands humans to recognize their Lord. The second is "Whosoever knows himself knows his Lord" (Shah-Kazemi, 2002; Ibn-ʿArabi, 2005), where the verb (*to know*) here is *ʿarafa*.

Maʿrifa aims to bring oneself near God and experience being with Him because there is no distance between the "subject" and the "object." A spiritual traveler (Sufi) sees God as imminent and omnipresent with their divine sight (Simuh, 1996; Latifa et al., 2019). According to Allah's Word:

"And when My servants ask you about Me, then answer by saying that I am near. This is because I grant the supplication of those who pray to Me and obey all commands, hence they may always be in the truth" (Qur'ān, 2:186, 40: 60; 55:29). This is in addition to the verse "We are closer to him than his jugular vein" (Qur'ān 50:16). Since God is non-material and holy, the only element of a human being used to approach Him is the *qalb*, thereby the human soul should be pure. Purifying the *qalb* is accomplished through worship, making one closer to God. Therefore, a person should follow the *ṭuruq* (the ways or paths), which is a long and complicated process consisting of stages (*maqāmāt*) as well as certain conditions (*aḥwāl*). This process utilizes the sense of feeling in the heart to seek God (Simuh, 1996; Latifa et al., 2019).

Shaykh Muḥammad Bahārī (1265/1849–1325/1907) introduced *Sharī'a*, *ṭarīqa*, and *Ḥaqīqa* to Muslims through Shi'a Sufi, which were replaced by three terms, namely *fiqh, akhlāq*, and *tawhīd* though the contents remain *Sharī'a, ṭarīqa*, and *Ḥaqīqa. Fiqh* is an introduction to *'amal*, which is the implementation of worship, *'amal* is an introduction to moral perfection (*tahdhīb al-akhlāq*) and morals towards tawhīd. This indicated that Bahār attempted to reframe mystical thought by making it more acceptable to the Shīī seminary characterized by a rigid interpretation of Islamic law (Asghari, 2021).

Shaṭṭāriyah also uses the three terms in addition to *Ḥaqīqa* hence the explanation is different. This Sufi order relates to the four human elements, namely body, heart, spirit, and sense. God's command in the Al-Qur'ān (2:208) "*udkhulū fī al-silmi kāffah* (Enter Islam totally)" from the perspective of Shaṭṭāriyah stated that "Islamize all human elements!". This implies that the body, heart, spirit, and *Sirr* conduct *Sharī'a, ṭarīqa, Ḥaqīqa*, and *ma'rifa* as a way to Islam (Simuh, 1996; Affandi, 2002; Muttaqien, 2014). Among Sufis, there is a hadith: "*Sharī'a* without *Ḥaqīqa* is *fisq* (great sin), and *Ḥaqīqa* without *Sharī'a* is *zindiq* (heretic) (Ibn-`Arabi, 2005). *Ḥaqīqa* starts and ends with *ṭarīqa*, and *ma'rifa* (Rahmat, 2016). *Sharī'a* is the process of conducting bodily worship, namely prayer, fasting, zakat, pilgrimage, and having noble character beneficial for humans. Ṭarīqa is *dhikr*, which is associated with the process of remembering God as much as possible with each breath. Humans are created in the world in God's image, which implies they move, think, and others. Therefore, the spirit's task is to express *Ḥaqīqa*, which exists and moves by God. Humans should not claim to be intelligent or rich because it all comes from God, who provides these

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attributes to test them. People who pass God's test will use their intelligence to think of things that are beneficial too as many people as possible, such as easing the economic hardships of the poor. The *Sirr* is human identity to God, which returns them to heaven in a happy state because they obeyed His commands. This can also be in the form of misery by going to hell for disobeying the commands of God and His Messenger. *Sirr's* task is to achieve *ma'rifa*, namely *fanā' dhāt* oneness with God after previously being mortal` and *fanā' af'āl* by always conducting His commands (Affandi, 2002; Affandi, 2006; Muttaqien, 2014; interview with Wasiṭah).

The level of spirituality depends on the stages of lust, comprising of seven stages. Bad spirituality is in the first and second stages of lust, anger, and *lawwāmah* (rude and rebellious). The characteristics of the lust of anger are excessive happiness, wasteful, greed, envious, revenge, jealousy, hateful, ignorant of obligations, arrogance, happy to indulge in lust, and anger (Affandi, 2002; Muttaqien, 2014). This lust exists in the realm of the senses and is controlled by various desires of the lower world (Armstrong, 2000). The characteristics of *lawwāmah* lust are reluctant, indifferent, happy to praise oneself, showing off, seeking to disgrace others, persecuting, lying, and pretending not to know obligations (Affandi, 2002; Muttaqien, 2014).

The mediocre level of spirituality is at the third level of lust, *mulhimah* and *murīd mubtadi'*. Its characteristics are likes to give, simple, compassionate, gentle, humble, repentant, patient, and ready to endure difficulties while conducting obligations, such as prayer, fasting, paying zakat, and Hajj (Affandi, 2002; Muttaqien, 2014). This lust keeps man away from evil and acts to happiness under God's watchful eye (Armstrong, 2000). Lack of *mujāhadah*, makes it possible for the disciple who has been in the *mubtadi* level for a long time to descend to a poor level of spirituality.

Muṭmainnah and *rāḍiya* (*murīd mutawassiṭ* level) are at the fourth and fifth levels of spirituality, also known as the last stage. The characteristics of *muṭmainnah* lust are happy to give alms, *tawakkul*, worship, being grateful to God, being excited with Allah's provisions, and fear for Allah. The characteristics of *rāḍiya* lust are noble personality, ascetic, sincerity, *wara'*, *rāḍiya*, and keeping promises (Affandi, 2002; Muttaqien, 2014). Humans who are already at this level of spirituality are close to God and keep being closer until they reach a higher level of spirituality. Al-Qur'ān 89:27-30 " *Yā ayyutuhā al-nafsu al-muṭmainnah irji'ī ilā rabbiki rāḍiyatan marḍiyyatan* means O muṭmainnah soul, return to your Lord with increase in spirituality

for *rāḍiya* and marḍiyyah, *Fa-dkhulī fī ʿibādī* means Enter the congregation of My servants and increase spirituality to the peak of lust, *insān kāmil*, while *wa-dkhulī jannatī* denotes enter into My paradise (Rahmat, 2016). This is because in the *mujāhadah* the new murīd is already at the level of *mutawassiṭ*.

The highest levels of spirituality are in the sixth and seventh stages of lust, *marḍiyyah,* and *kāmilah,* also known as the level of *murīd* al-Shaṭṭār. The characteristics of *Marḍiyyah,* lust are good characters, clean from all sins, willingness to remove darkness, and happiness to invite and enlighten the souls of creatures. The characteristics of *kāmilah* lust are *ʿilm al- yaqīn, ʿayn al-yaqīn,* and *ḥaqq al-yaqīn* (Affandi, 2002; Muttaqien, 2014). The true stage of Islam is when the servant is constantly on a journey with Allah (Armstrong, 2000).

The key to spirituality in Shaṭṭāriyah is to be obedient to Wasiṭah as the only representative and successor of the Prophet Muhammad (Affandi, 2002; Muttaqien, 2014), who knows God and His Will (Interview with Wasiṭah, October 01, 2021). Obedience to the Apostle/Wasiṭah is a command of Allah in the Qur'ān 4:59, 5:35, 49:7, 2:143,238, 16:43, 21:7, etc. This is in addition to the command of the Prophet: *"ʿalaikum bi sunnatī wa sunnati khulafāʾ al-rāshidīn al-mahdiyyḍn,* which means "You must stick to my sunnah and those of my representatives who provide guidance" (Ahmad, 2013).

The development of spirituality under the guidance of Wasiṭah through *mujāhadah* by combining the goodness of *Sharīʿa* and *Ḥaqīqa. Mujāhadah* in Shaṭṭāriyah is the act of increasing worship through ṣalāt, fasting, getting rid of bad characters, paying zakat, *kifarat (kaffārah),* ṣadaqah *jariyah* (monthly alms), and easing human burdens through tolerance towards other religions (Rahmat, 2016; Fahrudin et al., 2022). It also recommends daily *mujāhadah* in the family through Maghrib, and evening prayers, *ʿishā,* religious dialogue assuming there are at least two Shaṭṭāriyah students. Also, a weekly joint *mujāhadah* at the branch, and for those who can afford it once a year, follow the central *path* with Wasiṭah. The obligatory prayer in Shaṭṭāriyah is twice the obligatory prayer for Muslims in general, namely the *farḍ* also known as maghrib, *ʿishā, ṣubuḥ, dhuhur,* and *ʿaṣr.* This is followed by the circumcision prayers accompanied by the obligatory and night prayers, culminating in seventy-three *rakaʿāts.* Prayers like this are Allah's commands in the Qur'ān (2:238) "*hāfiẓhū ʿala al-ṣalawāti wa al-ṣalāti al-wusṭā,* meaning Keep all

your ṣalāts by conducting five daily prayers and ṣalāt *wusṭā*, which are the prayers prescribed by *Wasiṭah*."

The Relationship between Zuhd and 'Uzlah with Professionals

Zuhd and *'uzlah* are two terms related to the professional attitude of Sufism practitioners in the modern world. Shaykh Abu Nasr al-Sarraj (Simuh, 1996) stated that there are seven stations of Sufis in conducting spirituality, namely repentance, *wara'*, *zuhd*, *faqr*, patience, *tawakkul*, and pleasure. These seven stations are heart purification stations, which enables it to be completely clear and not polluted by things of the world (Nicholson, 2007). Sufis use *''uzlah* in boarding Sufism stations, especially *Zuhd* stations, which were also undergone by Imam Al-Ghazali (1997).

Imam Al-Ghazali recounted the experience of *''uzlah*, in the summary: "I left Baghdad and distributed the wealth I had, without reducing it except for necessities, such as food for the children. Finally, I arrived at the land of Sham, and stayed there for almost two years. Over there, the only thing I did was *''uzlah*, seclusion, *rāḍiya*, *mujāhadah*, and *zuhd* by trying to purify the soul, directing morals, and clearing the heart to *dhikr* to Allah SWT, as I got from the Science of Sufism "(Al-Ghazali, 1997).

Shaykh Al-Jilani (1988) explained that ascetic people will eat and dress outwardly as humans, while their hearts are full of *zuhd* practices inside and outside. He further explained as follows:

> There was a man who had the world in his hands but did not like it. He had the world but does not love it, which later becomes the enemy behind him. He later separated from the world and because indeed his heart is true to Allah and not damaged because of wealth (Al-Jilani, 1988).

Subsequently, Shaykh Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani stated the following: "This world or treasure can be in hand or pocket for good intentions, however, do not take it to heart" (Al-Jilani, 1988).

According to Imam Al-Ghazali (1997), there are three levels of *zuhd*. The first is a person who strives for asceticism towards the world and struggles to leave the lusts and desires known as a *mutazahhid*. Efforts like this still have shortcomings, and when people continue to strive for it then they will reach the stage of asceticism. The second is the voluntary efforts associated with

the world compared to the hereafter. This is like the difficulty one faces when opting for two dirhams without getting one. The possibility of leaving one to get two still has shortcomings. The third is being happy irrespective of what the world thinks without conflict because the world had nothing to do with the afterlife.

Imam al-Ghazali in his well-known book *Iḥyāʾ ʿUlūm al-Dīn* stated six virtues of living in isolation from the hustle and bustle of life (*ʿuzlah*). The first is with *ʿuzlah, which* enables one to get plenty of time to worship Allah and think (*tafakkur*) about omnipotence and majesty. The second is it enables someone to be free from sin in association with society. The third is it can make someone free from quarrels, and disputes, and save themselves from useless talks (Al-Ghazali, 2016).

In Shaṭṭāriyah repentance, waraʿ, *zuhd*, faqr, patience, *tawakkul*, and pleasure are not Sufi maqāmat. Instead, *faqr*, precisely *al-faqīr*, is the main attitude of the Shaṭṭāriyah people. There are five characteristics of *al-faqīr* servants first, is accusing people of committing the most sins and mistakes to enable *taubāt* (repentance). The second is the feeling of *mujāhadah*, which enables them to improve continually. Third is realizing that one is despicable and cannot do anything without God's mercy. Fourth is the need to improve one's quality, known as *taubāt*. The fifth characteristic is *al-faqīr* which is associated with being humble without arrogance (Fahrudin et al., 2022). Every daily action must be fought for repentance, *zuhd* (including *waraʿ*), patience, *tawakkul*, and pleasure.

Zuhd in Shaṭṭāriyah is "*tapa in saktengahing Praja*", which is a Javanese word for "*Praja*" which means environment, society, nation, and state. *Praja* is a place for additional worship and charitable deeds in processing oneself to get closer to Allah. However, the feeling of Allah's heart is "*tapa*", which means people remember and live only for God. This implies, Allah enables government advancement by creating useful buildings, which are not the form of buildings. However, it is the work of grateful hearts to "want" to build to avoid the disaster of charitable deeds, such as arrogance, *riyāʾ*, *sumʿah*, and *ʿujb*, because worship and charitable deeds must be sincere (Affandi, 2002; Muttaqien, 2014).

As for *ʿuzlah*, it is "*nyingkrih ana ing sak ing tengahing kalangan*" in Javanese, which means the heart is alone in circles. Therefore, it is important to try hard to advance and be professional in preparing oneself as a human

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resource to achieve maximum benefit for the advancement of *Praja*. Unlike most humans on this earth, those in this category are not determined to have fun, show off, or be proud of their wealth, honour, and self-esteem, let alone indulge in lust. Instead, they are determined to be able to worship and do virtuous deeds accelerated by the pace of the journey of conscience, spirit, and feeling closer to Allah (Affandi, 1990; Affandi, 2002; Muttaqien, 2014).

Materials and Methods

Research in Sufism is clearly different from that one in *Sharīʿa*. According to Simuh, an expert on Indonesian Sufism, researchers must master its language and terms to have a clear view of Islamic teachings. Sufism research uses a qualitative approach, case studies, and grounded analysis (Simuh, 1996). Its dissertation on Shaykh Muhyi's thought was written by Yahya (2007) from 31st Wasiṭah, 1690-1718 AD. Fahrudin (2013) studied the *ʿārif bi Allāh* education at SMA Pomosda (Pondok Sufi Shaṭṭāriyah), and Rahmat (2010) on *insān kāmil* Shaṭṭāriyah perspective. Furthermore, two articles were published on Sufism in indexed international journals (Rahmat et al., 2016; Rahmat & Yahya, 2021) with data collected from Sufism lecturers, researchers and active Wasiṭah students.

The qualitative paradigm interprets the views and behavior of humans in certain situations (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). This is a case study where researchers try to observe people in the respondent's environment, interact, and understand their language (Nasution, 1992). This study examines the spiritual and professional motivation of academics entering ṭarīqa Shaṭṭāriyah. The term Berger (1985) was used to describe the services of anthropology to become citizens of Shaṭṭāriyah who foreigners are still. This is in addition to using the services of sociology, which is being a stranger in one's community.

Data were collected from eight lecturers in Bandung who entered ṭarīqa Shaṭṭāriyah Jogomerto (Nganjuk, East Java) led by Kiai Muhammad Anwar Muttaqien. De Poy and Gitlin (2015) stated that the respondents must be people with experience and deep knowledge about Shaṭṭāriyah. Most of these respondents had joined ṭarīqa for about, 10-15 years, except for two who only joined for, 1-4 years.

Table 1: Characteristics of research respondents

Name Initials & title	Gender	Age (years)	Enter the Shaṭṭāriyah	University
1. Prof. Dr. EM	Male	64	2008	Indonesia University of Education
2. Dr. FM	Male	38	2008	Widyatama University
3. GM, Master of Techniques	Male	36	2008	Bandung State Polytechnic
4. Prof. Dr. NN	Female	60	2008	Indonesia University of Education
5. Dr. BW	Male	60	2005	Indonesia University of Education
6. HW, Master of Management	Female	60	2018	Indonesia University of Education
7. Dr. FB	Male	62	2009	Indonesia University of Education
8. JS, Master of Science	Male	56	2021	Padjadjaran University

Table 1 shows that five of the eight respondents hold academic degrees as Professors and Doctors (71%), while the remaining are master's degrees holders (29%). Furthermore, it comprises six male and two female lecturers in percentages of 79% and, 21%. Five respondents were 60 years and above, one in fifties and two in their thirties in percentages of 63%, 13%, and 25%.

Incidentally, the research team has known the respondents for decades, although data were collected from May 2021 to April 2022 through observation and in-depth interviews with Wasiṭah. These included studying *Wāsiṭah's* (current) and previous writings (48th Wasiṭah).

Case Studies/Results

The following case study answers the main research question:

a. What is the spiritual motivation of academics to enter Shaṭṭāriyah?
b. How did their religious conversion enter Shaṭṭāriyah?
c. How do they interpret *zuhd* and *'uzlah* with their professional development?

The results were sorted by non-responders as shown in Table 1.

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Spiritual Motivation

In the respondents' opinion, the key to spirituality is to be obedient to Wasiṭah. As for spiritual improvement through maximum *mujāhadah* under the guidance of Wasiṭah. Each respondent aspires to attain the highest spirituality, al-Shaṭṭār.

Respondents, 1,2,3 are one family.
Prof.Dr.EM (Respondent, 1) has conducted religious conversions several times. He was born into a *santri* family that is diligent in prayer, fasting, deepening religious knowledge, and being able to read the Qur'ān. The prof's father was the leader of Muhammadiyah, hence his primary to secondary education was at the Muhammadiyah Educational Institution. Studying at a Salafi-leaning Islamic University further strengthened his Salafi beliefs. After becoming a lecturer, Prof. Dr. BW studied Shi'a and became a follower and leader of the Shi'a school. At the age of forty, two questions arose that were of great concern to him, namely, (1) Why is Islam different? and (2) Why didn't God bring in another scholar who, 100% understood the Prophet's Islam? which encouraged him to study Sufism. In, 2004, EM's friend introduced him the book *Risalah Shaṭṭāriyah – The Way to God*, written by Wasiṭah Kiai Muhammad Munawwar Affandi, which introduced him to `Ilmu Shaṭṭāriyah. Although he doubted his friend's credibility, EM still reads the book. Another friend invited him to practice practical Sufism by entering ṭarīqa Qādiriyya wa Naqshabandiyya (TQN). Prof.Dr.EM later became an active TQN practitioner until he bathed and prayed from midnight to early morning for forty consecutive nights. His spirituality remained restless because those two questions were still bothering him in, 2008 Prof.Dr.EM invited his wife and two eldest children (Respondents, 2-3) to discuss the Risalah Shaṭṭāriyah earlier. Finally, Prof. Dr. EM went to Wasiṭah to study Shaṭṭāriyah Science and was then blessed by Kiai Muhammad Munawwar Affandi.

When his father entered Shaṭṭāriyah and told him about his new spiritual experience, a week later, Dr.FM (Respondent, 2) came to Wasiṭah and asked for a blessing. A month later, GM (Respondent 3) and his mother were also blessed.

Regarding the spiritual motivation for entering Shaṭṭāriyah, the respondents explained:

Prof.Dr.EM: "[...] In, 2008 I visited the Pondok Sufi Shaṭṭāriyah. There is a Wasiṭah student to me that it is good to know God. I asked him if God could be recognized. He replied, "Yes, He can!" "I mean, is God's Essence recognizable?" I asked again. He replied, "Yes, it is!" He went ahead to tell me to verify with the experts. When I was about going to Pa Kiai's house, he then pulled my hand, "That's not the way, there is etiquette!" [...] I was awake for, 24 hours while remembering and feeling God's presence, which Wasiṭah whispered. [...] In, 2012 Kiai Muhammad Munawwar Affandi died and then I blessed Wasiṭah and his successor, Kiai Muhammad Anwar Muttaqien" (Interview with Prof. Dr. EM).

Dr.FM: "[...] After my father went to Pondok Sufi I regretted not following him, Hence I prepared myself through fasting and was blessed. [...] After Kiai Muhammad Munawwar Affandi died, I gave blessings to Kiai Muhammad Anwar Muttaqien." (Interview with Dr. EM).

GM: "[...] My father and brother's new spiritual experience encouraged me to seek blessings. Therefore, a month after my father, I went to Pondok Sufi Shaṭṭāriyah with my mother and my mother's friend (Respondent 4), and we were all blessed. [...] After Kiai Muhammad Munawwar Affandi died, I gave blessings to Kiai Muhammad Anwar Muttaqien." (Interview with GM).

Prof. Dr. EM's family is religious, and, in this family, there are only six poor brothers, all were sent to school. Most of Prof. Dr. EM's brothers also entered Shaṭṭāriyah, which encouraged the family to always conduct *mujāhadah* together at home. Similarly, Dr.FM and GM conducted *mujāhadah*, at the homes of Respondents, 1-2 by praying seventy-three *raka'āts* every day and night. Both families also paid *kifarat* and *jariyah* as a form of obedience to Wasiṭah, at least 5-6 times a year by meeting Wasiṭah and following the central *mujāhadah*. Every month of Ramadan, they followed a special *mujāhadah* at the center, which is a characteristic of *muṭmainnah* lust. This implies that they are at the level of *mutawassiṭ* spirituality and the stage of *muṭmainnah* lust. Respondents, 1-2 already have the characteristics of *rāḍiya* because they received severe tests repeatedly and are still happy. In addition, they are very tolerant of other religions/madhhabs. For example, Prof.Dr.EM respects relatives' opinions to practice their beliefs while living in his house. GM also venerated his wife's brother, a Catholic to stay at his house.

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<u>Respondent 4,</u> Prof. Dr. NN conducted many religious conversions. Born into a *santri* family, NN searched for the best spiritual means, which made him switch to madhhab with numerous contributions towards charity. He was also interested in Salafism and enrolled his second daughter in the educational institution. NN's daughter wore a veil and always asked her mother to leave ṭarīqa Shaṭṭāriyah because Salafism is usually anti-Sufism. Finally, before joining Shaṭṭāriyah, the respondent joined HTI (Hizb al-Tahrir Indonesia) an organization that aspires to establish an Islamic caliphate and held the position of Chairwoman at the Provincial level. However, respondents were always worried about their spirituality, as stated by a customer of beauty salon SR. After the treatment, in, 2008, Prof. Dr. NN promised to return the following week but failed because he was in Sufi lodge in East Java. Several questions were asked on Shaṭṭāriyah and Wasiṭah, all of which were answered by SR. Respondents were then loaned the book *Risalah Shaṭṭāriyah*, and three days later, SR came to Sufi lodge.

Regarding the spiritual motivation for entering Shaṭṭāriyah, the respondents explained:

"[...] During that time I was not sure of the truth regarding my religion, therefore, I often switched from one belief to another. I never realized what I was looking for till SR explained ṭarīqa Shaṭṭāriyah and Wasiṭah, and I became extremely interested. Apparently, what I was looking for all this time was a teacher who acted as the Prophet. In, 2008, I was blessed and in, 2012, Kiai Muhammad Munawwar Affandi died, leaving Kiai Muhammad Anwar Muttaqien as the successor" (Interview with Prof. Dr. NN).

Prof. Dr. NN's family is religious, and those who joined ṭarīqa were the only respondents. Her husband and daughters were not interested in ṭarīqa though they respected her beliefs. However, one of the profs veiled daughters always asks her to return to the original belief. But the respondent is firm with her new spirituality and prays seventy-three *rakaʿāts* per day, fasts diligently, and gives a lot of charity. Every month she pays *kifarat* and *jariyah* and was also diligent in following the branch *mujāhadah*. As a form of obedience to Wasiṭah, at least once a year NN meets Wasiṭah and participates in the central *mujāhadah*, which means that she is already at the level of *mutawassiṭ* spirituality, the stage of *muṭmainnah* lust. In addition, NN fosters a harmonious life with her husband, children, and people of different religions.

<u>Respondents 5 and 6</u> are spouses.

Dr. BW (Respondent 5) has conducted religious conversions many times. He was born into an ordinary Muslim family but was just doing the obligatory prayers and fasting without reading the Qur'ān. Dr. BW is known to be happy to help ease the burden on his relatives and friends. When he was a student in the, 1980s, he became interested in urban Muslims leaning towards Muhammadiyah. However, after becoming a lecturer in the late, 1990s, he read a lot of Shi'a books, then joined and practiced it till early, 2002, when a friend introduced ṭarīqa Shaṭṭāriyah through the book *Risalah Shaṭṭāriyah*. He is more focused on studying the lineage of Wasiṭah, which the Shi'a Imams continue. Dr. BW longed to meet Imam Mahdi, but this was impossible because the Imam is unseen. Finally, Dr. BW concluded that the occult Imam Mahdi is only one of several opinions because he longed to meet Imam Mahdi and asked for the blessing of the Shaṭṭāriyah Knowledge.

HW (Respondent 6) is a Chinese and a practicing Catholic. She, like her husband, is happy to help lighten the burden of others. In, 1986, she converted to Islam and was then married to Dr.BW (Respondent 5), who is a practicing urban Muslim. When her husband entered Shi`a, he, Shaṭṭāriyah he read Shi`a, *Risalah Shaṭṭāriyah* and *Bimbingan untuk Mencapai Derajat Muqarrabien* books but he was not interested in any of them. In, 2018, HW's husband was restless with his spirituality because he worshipped an unrecognized God. Then he entered Shaṭṭāriyah.

Regarding the spiritual motivation for entering Shaṭṭāriyah, the respondents explained:

> Dr.BW: "[...] I want to meet Imam Mahdi, according to Shi'a, twelve who is a great prophet. After asking questions and reading books about Imam Mahdi, it turns out that his occultation is just one of several opinions, which made me doubtful of Islam. [...] From the genealogy of Wasiṭah, I realized that after Imam Mahdi was Imam Abu Yazīd al-Busṭāmi and others. I believed this, and in, 2005 I was blessed, and in, 2012, I blessed the current Wasiṭah" (Interview with Dr. BW).

> HW: "[...] Initially, I was a Catholic because I followed the beliefs of my parents, as well as my extended family, all of whom are Catholic. After making friends with devout Muslims, I was interested in learning it, and in, 1986 I converted to Islam. [...] After getting married to BW, I became more intensive in studying Islam. I practice it like most Muslims, and when my husband entered Shi'a and Shaṭṭāriyah, we studied it but were

not interested afterwards. [...] In, 2018, I was anxious to worship a God that I could see, and when Wasiṭah came to Bandung, I was blessed" (Interview with HW).

Dr.BW is an ordinary Muslim who married HW, a Catholic. In, 1986 HW converted to Islam, and they are firm with their new spirituality. They pray seventy-three *raka'āts* per day, pay *kifarat* and *jariyah* every month, and are diligent in helping other people's difficulties. Even though they are remarkably busy guiding these, they often take part in branch *mujāhadah*. Furthermore, as a form of obedience to *Wasiṭah*, they attend the central *mujāhadah* once a year. It implies they are at the level of *mutawassiṭ* spirituality, the stage of *muṭmainnah* lust. Respondent five has the characteristics of *rāḍiya* lust because he received heavy tests repeatedly and is still happy. Additionally, they are very tolerant of other religions because they believe in living in harmony with their brothers and sisters.

Respondent 7, Dr. FB.
Dr. FB, a religious expert, born into a family of students, has conducted many religious conversions with other colleagues. He was originally a follower of NU before developing an interest in *Salafism* and the teachings of *Wahhābism*. FB search for religion led him to keep asking questions to satisfy his spirituality. When Respondent, one introduced him to Shaṭṭāriyah, he was against it until, 2009, when he asked for the blessing of this knowledge.
Regarding the spiritual motivation for entering Shaṭṭāriyah, the respondents explained:

Dr. FB: "[...] For days I thought about the existence of the Prophet's successor Wasiṭah before I decided to ask for the blessing of knowledge. [...] I was accompanied by Prof.Dr.EM (Respondent, 1) in, 2009 to be blessed by Kiai Muhammad Munawwar Affandi. A week after his death in, 2012, I asked Kiai Muhammad Anwar Muttaqien to acknowledge me as his disciple."

Dr. FB's family is deeply religious, and they conduct *mujāhadah* every day. Once a week they pray seventy-three *raka'āts* every day and night along with pay *kifarat* and *jariyah* monthly. As a form of obedience to Wasiṭah, at least 3-to 4 times a year, they meet and follow the central *mujāhadah*. Almost every month of Ramadan, they adhere to a special

mujāhadah at the center. FB is already at the level of *mutawassiṭ* spirituality, the stage of *muṭmainnah* lust. Additionally, he is very tolerant of other religions/madhhabs and was once the head of the Department of General Education. He is currently a permanent lecturer on Christianity, even though the previous leaders accepted this position.

Respondent 8, JS.

JS, who was born into a family of students, has conducted numerous religious conversions along with his wife, who is also from a *santri* family. Their thirst for religious knowledge made them move the Quran from one *taklim* assembly to another. However, these quests did not satisfy his spirituality. When CW, an old classmate studying at Padjadjaran University, came to visit, JS was so happy. After chatting, spouses asked if the Islam they practiced was like that of the Prophet. CW introduced Shaṭṭāriyah and Wasiṭah to them, and it did not take long for JS to wish to meet Wasiṭah. After two days of fasting, JS and wife left and, in the afternoon, they were blessed.

Regarding the spiritual motivation for entering Shaṭṭāriyah, the respondents explained the following:

JS: "[...] I wished to find a Prophet capable of introducing God and the teachings of Islam correctly based on God's instructions, and not the result of ijtihad. It turned out that there was Wasiṭah as the representative of the Prophet, and without hesitation, I asked for the blessing of knowledge and became a follower of Shaṭṭāriyah." (Interview with JS).

JS and his wife, who is from a *santri* family used to pray in the congregation, fast for circumcision, and diligently study religious knowledge for a long time. After entering Shaṭṭāriyah they continued their good tradition with an increase in the number of prayers to seventy-three *raka'āts*. JS house became one of the branches of *mujāhadah*, which made him pay *kifarat*, *jariyah*, and give alms every month. JS also regularly listens to Wasiṭah recitation recordings. Presently, he is at the level of *mutawassiṭ* spirituality, the stage of *muṭmainnah* lust and tolerant of different schools of thought. He invites his children to believe in his different religiosity.

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Professional Motivation

Respondents assessed that Shaṭṭāriyah encourages professional improvement. The concept of *zuhd*, in their view, should provide great benefits to institutions and society as a form of worship and virtuous deeds. The forms of *zuhd* include increasing education and positions from Master to Doctor, as well as from Head Lector to Professor. They are diligent workers and never missed any teaching schedule. When lessons clashed, they changed the schedule to the time agreed by the students. Furthermore, they always prioritized guiding theses and dissertations while maintaining quality. The implementation of ʿ *ʿuzlah* on respondents is as follows:

> Prof.Dr.EM: "[...] In, 2009 I sought Wasiṭah permission to discontinue my wife's doctoral education and focus on paying for the children's education, because the requirements for lecturers were sufficient for master's. Wasiṭah advised me to let her finish the degree because a Shaṭṭāriyah must be professional. [...] In, 2020, I asked Wasiṭah if I needed to prepare for professorship requirements or retire? Wasiṭah advised me to provide greater benefits to the university."

> Dr. FM: "[...] In 2015, four friends and I were selected as lecturers. At that time, the Chancellor required us to take doctoral education, either with or without a scholarship, which I did in, 2016 after making payment [...]Alhamdulillah, it turns out that God gave me sustenance from an unexpected direction. [...] In, 2020, I managed to publish four articles in indexed international journals and earned a Doctorate, while four friends were dismissed as lecturers" (Interview with Dr.FM).

> HW: "[...] I originally intended to retire. But Wasiṭah emphasized the need for professionals to stay and assist students. That is why I am studying at S3, and after graduation will apply for a professorship. Whether I succeed or fail to achieve a Doctorate and Professorship, either way, it is good for me. But I worked hard by reading a lot of books, doing assignments, and writing articles." (Interview with HW).

The respondent's perspective is only an excuse of the heart, i.e., the intention is to be alone only to add worship and charitable deeds as Wasiṭah ordered. The form of action is the same as other professional lecturers, such as HW, FB and BW, who prepared for professors' requirements. The successor's failure to achieve the position of Professor is a good thing. Similarly, GM

did not study at S3 to obey his superiors, who asked him to occupy the position of head of the study program and was promoted.

Discussion and Conclusion

Respondents interpret religion by being submissive to Wasiṭah as the representative of the Prophet Muhammad, in accordance with al-Shaykh *al-kāmil mukammil*. This view is in line with ṭarīqa, who places the Murshīd (Shaykh of ṭarīqa) *al-kāmil mukammil* as the successor of Prophet Muhammad, though not every Murshīd has that position (Thohir, 2022). Examples of Murshīd *kāmil mukammil* from a perspective of Sufism are Abū Bakr Qalandar Rūmī in the Golden Horde in the XIV century AD (Shamsimukhametova, 2018), Zainullah bin Habibullah bin Rasul in Siberia and Kazakhstan, the Urals, and the center of the Russian Empire in the early XX century AD (Khamidov & Khamidova, 2019), and Shaykh Ahmad Shohibul Wafa Tajul Arifin in Indonesia (Ridwan, 2015). The Murshid as the Prophet's successor through the previous Murshid is only in *talking* (whispering) *dhikr* to the murīd who asks for it (Yahya & Rahmat, 2020) and not in the overall reference to Islam. Meanwhile, as for the Shaṭṭāriyah every Wasiṭah is *al-kāmil mukammil* (Rahmat, 2016). Theoretically, the Qur'ān stated that among the people, there is always an Apostle, *Ulī l-Amr, Al-Hādī or Wasiṭah*: "*How can you be disbelievers, even though Allah's verses are read to you, and His Messenger is also in your midst?*" (Qur'ān 3:101), "Obey Allah, obey the Messenger and *Ulī al-Amr*" (Qur'ān 4:59), "*Know that among you there is an Apostle*" (Qur'ān 49:7), "*In every people there is a Had (Rasul/guider)*" (Qur'ān, 13:7), "*Seek al-Wasīlata* (Wasāṭah) that you may reach Him (Qur'ān 5:35, 2:143).

The spiritual motivation of respondents to enter ṭarīqa Shaṭṭāriyah because they want to improve *mujāhadah* with Wasiṭah guidance is achieved through the combination of *Sharīʿa* and *Ḥaqīqa* to reach the highest level of spirituality (al-Shaṭṭār). All respondents reached the *mutawassiṭ* (intermediate), *muṭmainnah,* and *rāḍiya* stages and were very tolerant of other religions. Rahmat (2016) stated that the *mubtadī* level of spirituality is far above most Shaṭṭāriyah residents. The relationship between spirituality and religious tolerance is in line with preliminary, intolerant studies (Hughes, 2013; Rizal & Rahmat, 2019; Yahya & Rahmat, 2021; Rahmat & Yahya, 2022).

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All the respondents entered Shaṭṭāriyah in a happy state after previously conducting several religious conversions. This finding is in line with Williams and O'Dwyer (2016) research that the more often a person converts to religion, the greater their new belief. The motivation for the respondent's religious conversion is because they seek a spirituality that makes them happier. This contrasts with Australian women who converted to Islam due to social justice factors and the desire better to understand their partner's religion (Boz, 2011).

Regarding the professional implementation of the attitude of *zuhd* and *ʿuzlah*. *Zuhd* was interpreted as providing great benefits for institutions and society as a form of worship and virtuous deeds. This contrasts with Shaykh Al-Jilani (1988), who associated it with attitudes toward property ownership and *ʿuzlah* as a heart. Imam Al-Ghazali (2016) called *ʿuzlah* an exile as well as the worship of charitable deeds. Respondents showed a prominent level of professionalism. For example, HW who is approaching retirement enters S3 because the lecturer must have a doctoral education instead of their friends.

The motivation for entering *ṭarīqa* is not like religious conversion in general but the belief in happiness. After entering Shaṭṭāriyah, the respondents were motivated to increase their spirituality to the highest level. According to Latifa et al. (2019), the highest level in Sufism is *maʿrifa* after *Sharīʿa* and *ṭarīqa*. In Shaṭṭāriyah, the peak of spirituality is al-Shaṭṭār (*insān kāmil*), while *Sharīʿa*, *ṭarīqa*, and *Ḥaqīqa* are not levels but worship of the body, heart, and spirit that must be conducted simultaneously. Meanwhile, *maʿrifa* is achieved before or at the time of death, with *zuhd* is not related to property ownership but worship in the form of providing great benefits through professionalism. *Uzlah* is not exile but heart accomplished like other professionals with the addition to worship and virtuous deeds.

This study limits the respondents to academics in the city of Bandung; therefore, subsequent studies need to expand to all academics in big cities in Indonesia. It is also necessary to conduct the same research on other followers of *ṭarīqa*.

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