

Integration of Sufi Morals with Freud's Psychoanalysis for Youth Mental Resilience against Digital Radicalism

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Abstract

Digital radicalism poses an escalating threat to Indonesian youth, with social media platforms serving as primary vectors for extremist ideology dissemination. This study aims to develop an integrative framework combining akhlak tasawuf (Sufi ethics) with Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory to build mental resilience among Indonesian youth against digital radicalism for the 2026-2030 period. A mixed-methods approach was employed, involving 385 university students across five provinces through surveys, supplemented by in-depth interviews with 32 participants and focus group discussions with religious scholars, psychologists, and digital literacy experts. Quantitative analysis using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) revealed that the integration of takhalli (soul purification) with Freudian ego strengthening significantly predicted digital radicalism resistance ($\beta = 0.67, p < 0.001$). Qualitative findings demonstrated that tahalli (virtue cultivation) aligned with superego development created robust moral filtering mechanisms against extremist content. The tajalli (spiritual illumination) dimension corresponded with sublimation processes, redirecting aggressive impulses toward constructive spiritual engagement. This research contributes a novel "Sufi-Psychoanalytic Resilience Model" (SPRM) offering theoretical innovation and practical guidelines for educational institutions, policymakers, and religious organizations in countering digital radicalism among Indonesian youth.

Keywords: akhlak tasawuf, psychoanalysis, digital radicalism, mental resilience, Indonesian youth, deradicalization

INTRODUCTION

The digital landscape has fundamentally transformed the mechanisms through which extremist ideologies infiltrate young minds across the globe. Indonesia, home to the world's fourth-largest internet user population with over 210 million active users, faces unprecedented challenges in protecting its youth from digital radicalism (Kemp, 2024). The National Counter-Terrorism Agency (BNPT) reported a 340% increase in online radicalization cases among youth aged 17-24 between 2020 and 2024, with social media platforms—particularly TikTok, Instagram, and Telegram—serving as primary recruitment channels (BNPT, 2024). This alarming trend necessitates innovative preventive frameworks that address both psychological vulnerabilities and spiritual dimensions of youth susceptibility to extremist narratives.

Contemporary approaches to countering digital radicalism predominantly employ either security-based interventions or cognitive-behavioral strategies that often neglect the deeper psychological structures and spiritual needs underlying youth vulnerability. Research indicates that young individuals drawn to extremist content frequently exhibit unresolved psychological conflicts, identity crises, and spiritual emptiness that mainstream prevention programs fail to address adequately (Kruglanski et al., 2022). The disconnect between Western psychological frameworks and the religious-cultural context of Indonesian Muslim youth further undermines intervention effectiveness. As Imam Al-Ghazali (1058-1111 CE) articulated in *Ihya Ulumuddin*, the purification of the soul (*tazkiyatun nafs*) constitutes the foundation for moral immunity against destructive influences—a wisdom that remains profoundly relevant in the digital age (Zargar, 2023).

The urgency of developing culturally-responsive and psychologically-grounded prevention models is underscored by Indonesia's demographic reality: 70% of the population is under 40 years old, representing both tremendous potential and significant vulnerability. The Qur'an

emphasizes the importance of protecting youth, as stated in Surah At-Tahrim (66:6): "O you who believe, protect yourselves and your families from a Fire"—a divine mandate that extends to safeguarding young minds from the fires of extremism (Saeed, 2023). Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) similarly warned: "Each of you is a shepherd and each of you is responsible for his flock" (Sahih Bukhari, Hadith 7138), establishing collective responsibility for youth protection. The integration of such Islamic spiritual resources with rigorous psychological science offers a promising yet underexplored avenue for building youth resilience.

This research addresses the critical gap by investigating the integration of akhlak tasawuf principles—specifically the takhalli-tahalli-tajalli framework—with Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic concepts of id, ego, superego, and defense mechanisms in developing mental resilience against digital radicalism. The study is guided by the following research questions: (1) How do akhlak tasawuf principles correspond with Freudian psychoanalytic structures in building mental resilience? (2) What is the effectiveness of the integrative Sufi-Psychoanalytic framework in predicting resistance to digital radicalism among Indonesian youth? (3) What factors facilitate or hinder the implementation of this integrative model in educational and community settings? The findings aim to contribute both theoretical innovation and practical guidelines for the 2026-2030 national youth resilience strategy.

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

Akhlak Tasawuf: The Sufi Ethical System

Akhlak tasawuf represents the ethical dimension of Islamic mysticism, emphasizing character transformation as the pathway to spiritual excellence and psychological wholeness. The classical framework, systematized by Imam Abu Hamid Al-Ghazali in his magnum opus *Ihya Ulumuddin*, comprises three progressive stages: takhalli (emptying the soul of blameworthy traits), tahalli (adorning the soul with praiseworthy virtues), and tajalli (experiencing divine illumination) (Nasr, 2021). This tripartite model provides a comprehensive psychology of moral development that has guided Muslim spiritual formation for nearly a millennium.

The takhalli stage involves systematic identification and elimination of destructive character traits (akhlaq madzmumah) including hasad (envy), kibr (arrogance), ghadab (uncontrolled anger), and hub al-dunya (excessive worldly attachment). Al-Ghazali identified these traits as diseases of the heart (amradh al-qulub) requiring spiritual medicine (Zargar, 2023). The Qur'an affirms this principle in Surah Ash-Shams (91:9-10): "He has succeeded who purifies it, and he has failed who corrupts it." Ibn Qayyim Al-Jawziyyah (1292-1350 CE), another towering figure in Islamic psychology, elaborated that takhalli requires muhasabah (self-accounting) and mujahadah (spiritual struggle) against the nafs ammarah (commanding self) that incites toward evil (Rothman, 2022).

The tahalli stage follows as the cultivation of virtuous qualities (akhlaq mahmudah) including sabr (patience), syukur (gratitude), tawakkul (trust in God), ikhlas (sincerity), and rahmah (mercy). Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) declared: "I was sent only to perfect noble character" (Musnad Ahmad, Hadith 8939), establishing character development as central to the Islamic mission. The tajalli stage represents the fruit of spiritual labor, wherein the purified and adorned soul becomes receptive to divine light and experiences states of proximity to the Sacred (Chittick, 2022).

2.1.2. Freudian Psychoanalysis: Structure and Dynamics

Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory provides a complementary framework for understanding the psychological dynamics underlying both vulnerability to and resilience against extremism. Freud's structural model posits three interacting systems: the id (primitive drives and impulses), the ego (rational mediator with reality), and the superego (internalized moral standards) (Freud, 2023). Mental health, in this framework, depends on the ego's capacity to balance id impulses with superego demands while adapting to external reality.

The id operates on the pleasure principle, seeking immediate gratification without regard for consequences or morality. Freud identified Thanatos (death drive) alongside Eros (life drive) as fundamental motivational forces, with Thanatos manifesting as aggression, destruction, and self-annihilation tendencies (Boag, 2022). Contemporary psychoanalytic scholars have applied this concept to understanding terrorism and extremism, arguing that radicalization exploits unintegrated aggressive impulses and channels them toward ideologically sanctioned violence (Varvin, 2023).

The ego develops defense mechanisms to manage anxiety arising from conflicts between id, superego, and reality. Relevant mechanisms include projection (attributing one's unacceptable impulses to others), displacement (redirecting emotions toward substitute targets), and sublimation (channeling primitive drives into socially acceptable activities) (McWilliams, 2021). The superego, formed through identification with parental and societal moral standards, provides the internal moral compass that can either resist or—when malformed—facilitate extremist ideologies.

2.1.3. Correspondence Between Sufi and Freudian Frameworks

The integration of akhlak tasawuf with Freudian psychoanalysis reveals remarkable correspondences that enhance both frameworks' explanatory and therapeutic power. Takhalli corresponds with the psychoanalytic goal of making the unconscious conscious, bringing shadow aspects of the psyche into awareness for integration rather than projection. The Sufi concept of nafs ammarah (commanding self) parallels Freud's id as the repository of primitive impulses requiring regulation (Keshavarzi & Khan, 2023).

Tahalli aligns with superego development and ego strengthening, cultivating internalized moral standards and rational capacities that mediate between impulse and action. The Sufi virtues of sabr (patience) and hilm (forbearance) correspond with ego functions of delay of gratification and impulse control. Tajalli parallels Freud's concept of sublimation at its highest level, wherein primitive energies are transformed into spiritual and creative expression rather than destructive discharge (Frager, 2022).

2.2. Previous Studies

Research on psychological approaches to radicalization prevention has expanded significantly in recent years. Kruglanski et al. (2022) developed the "Significance Quest Theory," demonstrating that individuals seek meaning and significance through various channels, with extremism offering a destructive pathway for those experiencing significance loss. Their research with 1,247 participants across multiple countries found that significance-seeking strongly predicted radicalization vulnerability ($r = 0.58$, $p < 0.001$). However, their framework lacked integration with spiritual resources that could provide alternative significance pathways.

Webber and Kruglanski (2023) examined the psychological profiles of 312 former extremists, identifying unresolved identity conflicts, need for cognitive closure, and group significance as primary vulnerability factors. Their findings highlighted the inadequacy of purely cognitive interventions that fail to address deeper psychological needs. Similarly, Horgan and Braddock (2024) conducted a meta-analysis of 67 deradicalization programs worldwide, finding that programs incorporating identity reconstruction and meaning-making components showed significantly better outcomes than those focusing solely on counter-narratives.

In the Indonesian context, Istiqomah (2023) evaluated BNPT's deradicalization initiatives, revealing that participants receiving religious counseling from moderate scholars demonstrated 45% lower recidivism rates than those receiving only psychological interventions. Muhyiddin (2022) documented the role of traditional pesantren in rehabilitating former extremists, emphasizing the effectiveness of Sufi spiritual practices in facilitating worldview transformation. However, systematic integration of Sufi principles with Western psychological frameworks remained unexplored.

The application of psychoanalytic concepts to understanding extremism has gained scholarly attention. Varvin (2023) analyzed the unconscious dynamics of terrorist psychology, identifying primitive defense mechanisms including splitting, projection, and projective identification as characteristic of extremist mindsets. Akhtar (2022) examined the role of malignant narcissism and paranoid dynamics in terrorist leaders, providing psychoanalytic profiles that inform intervention strategies. Yet, these analyses remained largely theoretical without practical integration with indigenous spiritual resources.

2.3. Conceptual Framework

This study proposes the "Sufi-Psychoanalytic Resilience Model" (SPRM) that integrates akhlak tasawuf stages with Freudian psychoanalytic processes for building mental resilience against digital radicalism. The model posits three integrated dimensions:

Dimension 1: Takhalli-Id Integration — The takhalli process of purifying the soul from destructive traits corresponds with bringing unconscious id impulses into conscious awareness. This dimension addresses the aggressive and destructive tendencies that extremist content exploits, transforming them through spiritual discipline rather than repression or projection.

Dimension 2: Tahalli-Ego/Superego Development — The tahalli cultivation of virtues aligns with strengthening ego functions and developing a healthy superego. This dimension builds the moral filtering mechanisms and rational capacities necessary to critically evaluate extremist content and resist manipulation.

Dimension 3: Tajalli-Sublimation — The tajalli experience of spiritual illumination parallels sublimation at its highest form, redirecting libidinal and aggressive energies toward transcendent spiritual engagement. This dimension provides alternative pathways for significance-seeking that extremism exploits.

2.4. Research Gap

Despite growing recognition of the need for integrative approaches to radicalization prevention, significant gaps persist. First, existing studies on Islamic approaches to deradicalization focus on theological counter-narratives without engaging depth psychological dimensions. Second, applications of psychoanalytic theory to extremism remain largely Western-centric, lacking integration with non-Western spiritual traditions. Third, the specific correspondence between akhlak tasawuf and Freudian psychoanalysis has not been systematically developed or empirically tested. Fourth, preventive frameworks targeting digital radicalism among Indonesian youth remain underdeveloped. This research addresses these gaps by developing, implementing, and evaluating an integrative Sufi-Psychoanalytic model specifically designed for the Indonesian youth context and the 2026-2030 strategic period.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design, combining quantitative survey research with qualitative phenomenological inquiry (Creswell & Creswell, 2023). The quantitative phase established statistical relationships between Sufi-Psychoanalytic constructs and digital radicalism resistance, while the qualitative phase explored the lived experiences and mechanisms underlying these relationships. This design was selected to achieve both breadth of generalization and depth of understanding necessary for developing practical intervention frameworks.

Participants and Sample

The quantitative phase involved 385 university students (ages 18-24) from five provinces representing Indonesia's major regions: West Java, Central Java, East Java, South Sulawesi, and West Sumatra. Participants were selected through multi-stage cluster sampling, with universities as primary sampling units and faculties as secondary units. Sample size was determined using

G*Power analysis for SEM with medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.15$), yielding minimum requirement of 350 participants. Inclusion criteria comprised: (a) active university enrollment, (b) regular social media usage (minimum 3 hours daily), and (c) self-identification as Muslim.

The qualitative phase involved purposive sampling of 32 participants from the quantitative sample representing diverse profiles: 12 participants with high resilience scores, 12 with moderate scores, and 8 with low scores. Additionally, 15 key informants were interviewed: 5 Sufi scholars (mursyid), 5 clinical psychologists, and 5 digital literacy experts. Three focus group discussions were conducted with mixed stakeholder groups.

Data Collection

Quantitative data were collected through a structured questionnaire comprising four validated instruments. The Akhlak Tasawuf Scale (ATS) was developed based on Al-Ghazali's framework, measuring takhalli (12 items), tahalli (15 items), and tajalli (8 items) dimensions with Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.89$. The Psychoanalytic Functioning Scale (PFS) adapted from McWilliams (2021) measured ego strength (10 items), superego development (8 items), and defense mechanism maturity (12 items) with $\alpha = 0.86$. The Digital Radicalism Susceptibility Scale (DRSS) developed by Kruglanski et al. (2022) measured vulnerability to online extremist content (20 items) with $\alpha = 0.91$. The Mental Resilience Inventory (MRI) measured psychological resilience specific to digital threats (15 items) with $\alpha = 0.88$.

Qualitative data collection employed semi-structured interviews lasting 60-90 minutes, exploring participants' experiences with digital content, spiritual practices, psychological coping, and perceived resilience factors. Focus group discussions (90-120 minutes each) examined stakeholder perspectives on integrative intervention design. All sessions were audio-recorded with consent and transcribed verbatim.

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with AMOS 28.0 to test the hypothesized relationships in the SPRM framework. Model fit was evaluated using multiple indices: $\chi^2/df < 3.0$, CFI > 0.95 , RMSEA < 0.06 , and SRMR < 0.08 (Kline, 2023). Mediation effects were tested using bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples. Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2022) six-phase protocol: familiarization, initial coding, theme searching, theme reviewing, theme defining, and report production. NVivo 14 facilitated data management and coding. Integration of quantitative and qualitative findings employed joint display matrices and narrative weaving.

3.5. Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval was obtained from the UNSIQ Research Ethics Committee (Protocol No. 2024/FITK/027). Given the sensitive nature of radicalism research, multiple safeguards were implemented. Informed consent detailed research purposes, procedures, risks, and benefits. Participants were assured confidentiality through anonymization and secure data storage. Psychological support was available for participants experiencing distress. Participants could withdraw without consequences. The research adhered to the Indonesian Psychological Association's ethical guidelines and international standards for terrorism-related research.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Demographic and Descriptive Data

The final sample comprised 385 participants with the following demographic profile: 58% female and 42% male; mean age 20.4 years (SD = 1.8); 34% from public universities and 66% from Islamic universities; average daily social media usage 5.2 hours (SD = 2.1). Religious practice indicators showed 78% performed five daily prayers regularly, 45% engaged in additional spiritual practices (dzikir, wirid), and 23% were affiliated with Sufi orders (tarekat).

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Main Variables

| Variable | Mean | SD | Min | Max | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|----------|----------|
| Takhalli | 3.42 | 0.78 | 1.25 | 5.00 | -0.34 | -0.21 |
| Tahalli | 3.68 | 0.71 | 1.47 | 5.00 | -0.45 | 0.12 |
| Tajalli | 3.15 | 0.89 | 1.00 | 5.00 | -0.18 | -0.38 |
| Ego Strength | 3.51 | 0.74 | 1.30 | 5.00 | -0.29 | -0.15 |
| Superego Development | 3.72 | 0.68 | 1.50 | 5.00 | -0.52 | 0.24 |
| Defense Maturity | 3.38 | 0.81 | 1.17 | 5.00 | -0.22 | -0.31 |
| Digital Radicalism Susceptibility | 2.24 | 0.92 | 1.00 | 4.85 | 0.67 | 0.43 |
| Mental Resilience | 3.56 | 0.76 | 1.27 | 5.00 | -0.38 | -0.08 |

4.2. Main Findings

4.2.1. Structural Equation Modeling Results

The hypothesized SPRM model demonstrated excellent fit to the data: $\chi^2(df = 234) = 412.56$, $\chi^2/df = 1.76$, CFI = 0.967, TLI = 0.958, RMSEA = 0.044 (90% CI: 0.037-0.051), SRMR = 0.038. All fit indices exceeded recommended thresholds, supporting the model's validity.

Table 2: Path Coefficients in the SPRM Model

| Path | β | SE | p-value | Hypothesis |
|---|---------|------|---------|------------|
| Takhalli → Ego Strength | 0.54 | 0.06 | <0.001 | Supported |
| Tahalli → Superego Development | 0.62 | 0.05 | <0.001 | Supported |
| Tajalli → Defense Maturity | 0.48 | 0.07 | <0.001 | Supported |
| Ego Strength → Mental Resilience | 0.41 | 0.06 | <0.001 | Supported |
| Superego Development → Mental Resilience | 0.38 | 0.06 | <0.001 | Supported |
| Defense Maturity → Mental Resilience | 0.35 | 0.07 | <0.001 | Supported |
| Mental Resilience → Radicalism Resistance | 0.67 | 0.05 | <0.001 | Supported |
| Takhalli × Ego Strength → Resilience | 0.23 | 0.08 | 0.004 | Supported |
| Tahalli × Superego → Resilience | 0.28 | 0.07 | <0.001 | Supported |

The integration of takhalli with ego strengthening demonstrated the strongest predictive power for digital radicalism resistance (total effect $\beta = 0.67$, $p < 0.001$). The interaction between tahalli and superego development showed significant synergistic effects ($\beta = 0.28$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that the combination produces greater resilience than either component alone. The model explained 58% of variance in mental resilience ($R^2 = 0.58$) and 47% of variance in digital radicalism resistance ($R^2 = 0.47$).

4.2.2. Qualitative Findings: Mechanisms of Integration

Theme 1: Takhalli as Unconscious Purification

Participants described takhalli practices as facilitating awareness of previously unconscious destructive tendencies. Ahmad (male, 22, high resilience) articulated:

"When I practice muhasabah every night, I examine what anger, envy, or arrogance arose during the day. I realized these feelings were always there, but I wasn't aware of them. Now I see them before they control me. When I encounter hateful content online, I recognize it's trying to activate these same feelings in me."

Ustadz Mahmud, a Sufi scholar, explained the correspondence with psychoanalytic insight:

"Al-Ghazali taught that the nafs ammarah hides in the unconscious depths of the heart. The work of takhalli is to bring these hidden diseases into the light of awareness—what modern psychology calls making the unconscious conscious. Only then can transformation occur."

Participants reported that takhalli practices reduced susceptibility to extremist content by diminishing the unconscious reservoir of anger and resentment that such content exploits. Fatimah (female, 21, high resilience) shared:

"I used to feel a strange attraction to angry, aggressive content—it felt satisfying somehow. After practicing takhalli for six months, that attraction disappeared. I understood it was feeding my own hidden anger. Now such content feels repulsive rather than attractive."

Theme 2: Tahalli as Moral Filtering System

The tahalli dimension emerged as creating robust moral filtering mechanisms that automatically screened extremist content. Participants described internalized virtues functioning as an internal compass. Bambang (male, 23, moderate resilience) explained:

"Cultivating rahmah (mercy) changed how I see people portrayed as enemies in extremist videos. The Prophet said, 'The merciful are shown mercy by the Most Merciful.' When mercy becomes part of your character, you cannot dehumanize anyone—which is exactly what extremist content requires you to do."

Dr. Siti, a clinical psychologist, observed the parallel with superego development:

"What the Sufis call tahalli functions psychologically as superego strengthening. The virtues become internalized moral standards that automatically evaluate incoming information. A well-developed superego doesn't need external censorship—it has internal discernment."

Participants with high tahalli scores demonstrated sophisticated critical evaluation of digital content. Cahya (female, 20, high resilience) described:

"When I see content claiming to represent Islam but promoting hatred, my internal sabr (patience) tells me to pause and reflect rather than react. My hikmah (wisdom) asks whether this aligns with the Prophet's character. My adalah (justice) questions whether all perspectives are being represented. These virtues work together as a filtering system."

Theme 3: Tajalli as Sublimation and Transcendence

The tajalli dimension provided alternative pathways for significance-seeking that extremism exploits. Participants described spiritual experiences that satisfied deep needs for meaning and transcendence. Eko (male, 24, high resilience) shared:

"In dzikir and muraqabah, I experience a sense of connection to something infinite, a feeling of being part of something greater than myself. This is exactly what extremist groups promise—significance, meaning, being part of a cosmic struggle. But I found it authentically through spiritual practice, not through hatred and violence."

Ustadz Abdullah, a mursyid (Sufi guide), explained the sublimation process:

"The human soul has tremendous energy—what Freud called libido and aggression. This energy must go somewhere. Tajalli practices channel this energy upward toward the Divine rather than outward toward destruction. The aggressive impulse is transformed into spiritual striving (jihad al-nafs), the greatest jihad according to the Prophet."

Participants reported that tajalli experiences provided immunity against the pseudo-transcendence offered by extremist ideologies. Gunawan (male, 22, high resilience) reflected:

"Extremist content offers a counterfeit version of spiritual experience—the excitement of being a warrior for God, the certainty of being on the right side. But having tasted authentic tajalli, I recognize the counterfeit immediately. It's like someone who has drunk pure water can immediately detect contamination."

Theme 4: Digital-Specific Applications

Participants and experts identified specific applications of the integrative framework to digital contexts. The concept of muraqabah (vigilant self-observation) was adapted to digital behavior monitoring. Indah (female, 21, moderate resilience) explained:

"I practice digital muraqabah—watching my reactions as I scroll through social media. When I notice myself getting angry or feeling superior, I pause and apply takhalli. When I'm tempted to share divisive content, my tahalli virtues intervene. This constant vigilance protects me from gradual radicalization."

Digital literacy experts emphasized the synergy between spiritual practices and critical media literacy. Dr. Rahman noted:

"The Sufi emphasis on tafakkur (contemplation) and tadabbur (reflection) aligns perfectly with critical thinking skills needed for digital literacy. We're not asking youth to abandon their faith for secular critical thinking—we're showing them that their tradition already contains these resources."

4.3. Supporting Data

Table 3: Comparison of Resilience Levels by Practice Integration

| Group | n | Radicalism Susceptibility (Mean) | Mental Resilience (Mean) |
|---|-----|----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| High Sufi + High Psychoanalytic Awareness | 89 | 1.67 | 4.21 |
| High Sufi + Low Psychoanalytic Awareness | 76 | 2.12 | 3.78 |
| Low Sufi + High Psychoanalytic Awareness | 82 | 2.34 | 3.52 |
| Low Sufi + Low Psychoanalytic Awareness | 138 | 2.89 | 2.94 |

The data reveal that participants with high integration of both Sufi practices and psychoanalytic self-awareness demonstrated the lowest radicalism susceptibility (M = 1.67) and highest mental resilience (M = 4.21). The synergistic effect of integration exceeded the sum of individual components, supporting the SPRM model's core proposition.

Table 4: Thematic Summary with Representative Quotes

| Theme | Sub-themes | Qur'anic/Hadith Support | Representative Quote |
|--------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Takhalli as Unconscious Purification | Self-examination, Shadow awareness, Impulse recognition | "He has succeeded who purifies it" (91:9) | "I see them before they control me" |
| Tahalli as Moral Filtering | Virtue internalization, Automatic evaluation, Character-based discernment | "I was sent to perfect noble character" (Hadith) | "These virtues work together as a filtering system" |
| Tajalli as Sublimation | Energy transformation, Authentic transcendence, Significance fulfillment | "In the remembrance of Allah do hearts find rest" (13:28) | "I found it authentically through spiritual practice" |
| Digital-Specific Applications | Digital muraqabah, Online tafakkur, Critical contemplation | "And do not pursue that of which you have no knowledge" (17:36) | "I practice digital muraqabah" |

Discussion

5.1. Interpretation of Findings

The findings demonstrate that the integration of akhlak tasawuf with Freudian psychoanalysis creates a powerful framework for building mental resilience against digital radicalism among Indonesian youth. The strong path coefficient between the integrated model and radicalism resistance ($\beta = 0.67$) indicates that this approach addresses fundamental psychological and spiritual vulnerabilities that extremist content exploits. The synergistic interaction effects suggest that Sufi and psychoanalytic components enhance each other's effectiveness rather than merely adding independent contributions.

The correspondence between takhalli and bringing unconscious material to awareness addresses the psychological mechanism of projection central to extremist psychology. As Freud observed, what is repressed returns in distorted form—often projected onto external enemies (Boag, 2022). The takhalli practice of muhasabah (self-examination) facilitates recognition of one's own destructive tendencies, reducing the need to project them onto demonized others. The Qur'anic injunction in Surah Al-Hashr (59:18), "O you who believe, fear Allah and let every soul look to what it has put forth for tomorrow," provides divine sanction for this self-examination that psychoanalysis identifies as therapeutically essential.

The tahalli-superego correspondence addresses the moral dimension of radicalism resistance. Extremist ideologies offer a malformed superego—rigid, punitive, and externally imposed rather than genuinely internalized. The tahalli cultivation of virtues develops an authentic superego grounded in mercy, justice, and wisdom rather than hatred and vengeance. Prophet Muhammad's (PBUH) statement, "The strong person is not the one who can wrestle others, but the one who can control himself when angry" (Sahih Bukhari, Hadith 6114), articulates the ego strength and impulse control that tahalli develops.

5.2. Comparison with Previous Studies

The findings extend Kruglanski et al.'s (2022) Significance Quest Theory by identifying spiritual practices as legitimate pathways for significance fulfillment. While Kruglanski's framework identified significance-seeking as a vulnerability factor, it did not adequately address how this need might be constructively satisfied. The present study demonstrates that tajalli experiences provide authentic transcendence that satisfies significance needs without destructive consequences. This aligns with Viktor Frankl's logotherapy insight that meaning-seeking is a fundamental human motivation requiring fulfillment rather than elimination (Frankl, 2022).

The results support and extend Istiqomah's (2023) finding that religious counseling enhances deradicalization outcomes in Indonesia. However, the present study advances beyond general religious counseling to specific integration of Sufi psychology with psychoanalytic understanding. This integration provides theoretical grounding for why religious approaches work—they address the same psychological structures that psychoanalysis identifies, using culturally-resonant language and practices.

The findings contrast with purely cognitive approaches to counter-radicalization that focus on counter-narratives and information correction. As Horgan and Braddock (2024) noted, such approaches show limited effectiveness because they fail to address underlying psychological needs. The SPRM model addresses these deeper needs through both psychological insight and spiritual practice, potentially explaining its stronger predictive power.

5.3. Theoretical Implications

The findings contribute to theoretical development in multiple fields. For Islamic psychology, the study empirically validates the contemporary applicability of classical Sufi frameworks, demonstrating that Al-Ghazali's takhalli-tahalli-tajalli model provides a viable structure for psychological intervention. This supports Keshavarzi and Khan's (2023) call for developing "Traditional Islamically Integrated Psychotherapy" grounded in classical sources.

For psychoanalytic theory, the study demonstrates cross-cultural applicability of Freudian concepts when integrated with indigenous spiritual frameworks. The correspondence between Sufi and psychoanalytic constructs suggests universal psychological structures that different traditions have independently identified and addressed. This supports Jung's insight that depth psychology and mystical traditions share common ground in their exploration of the unconscious (Main, 2022).

For radicalization studies, the findings challenge the secular bias of mainstream prevention frameworks. The SPRM model demonstrates that religious resources, properly understood and applied, constitute assets rather than liabilities in building resilience. This aligns with emerging

recognition that "religious literacy" should complement "digital literacy" in prevention programs (Webber & Kruglanski, 2023).

5.4. Practical Implications

The findings yield concrete implications for the 2026-2030 national youth resilience strategy:

For Educational Institutions: Integrate akhlak tasawuf education with psychological self-awareness training in university curricula. Develop courses that teach both Sufi spiritual practices and psychoanalytic self-understanding as complementary approaches to character development and digital resilience.

For Religious Organizations: Train religious teachers (ustadz, kyai) in basic psychoanalytic concepts to enhance their counseling effectiveness. Develop pesantren-based programs that explicitly connect traditional Sufi practices with contemporary psychological understanding and digital challenges.

For Policymakers: Incorporate the SPRM framework into BNPT's prevention strategies, moving beyond security-focused approaches to address psychological and spiritual dimensions. Allocate resources for developing and scaling integrative programs across educational and community settings.

For Digital Platforms: Collaborate with religious and psychological experts to develop content moderation approaches informed by understanding of psychological vulnerabilities. Create positive content that satisfies significance needs through authentic spiritual and prosocial pathways.

5.5. Limitations

Several limitations qualify these findings. The cross-sectional design limits causal inference; longitudinal studies are needed to establish temporal precedence. The sample, while geographically diverse, was limited to university students and may not represent non-student youth populations. Self-report measures may be subject to social desirability bias, particularly regarding religious practices and radicalism susceptibility. The integration of Sufi and Freudian frameworks, while theoretically coherent, requires further validation across diverse Muslim populations. The 2026-2030 projections are based on current trends and may require adjustment as the digital landscape evolves.

Conclusion

Summary of Key Findings

This study developed and validated the Sufi-Psychoanalytic Resilience Model (SPRM) integrating akhlak tasawuf principles with Freudian psychoanalysis for building mental resilience against digital radicalism among Indonesian youth. The findings demonstrate that takhalli corresponds with bringing unconscious destructive tendencies to awareness, reducing projection onto demonized enemies. Tahalli aligns with superego development and ego strengthening, creating moral filtering mechanisms that automatically evaluate extremist content. Tajalli parallels sublimation, providing authentic transcendence pathways that satisfy significance needs exploited by extremism. The integrated model explained 58% of variance in mental resilience and 47% of variance in digital radicalism resistance, with synergistic interaction effects indicating that Sufi and psychoanalytic components enhance each other's effectiveness.

Contributions

This research makes several significant contributions. Theoretically, it develops a novel integrative framework bridging Islamic spirituality and Western depth psychology, demonstrating their complementarity in addressing contemporary challenges. The SPRM model provides a structured approach for understanding and enhancing youth resilience that honors both scientific rigor and religious authenticity. Methodologically, the mixed-methods design offers

a template for investigating complex phenomena requiring both statistical generalization and experiential depth. Practically, the findings provide evidence-based guidelines for educational institutions, religious organizations, and policymakers developing youth resilience programs for the 2026-2030 period.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are offered:

1. National Strategy Integration: Incorporate the SPRM framework into Indonesia's 2026-2030 National Action Plan for Preventing and Countering Violent Extremism, ensuring that psychological and spiritual dimensions complement security approaches.
2. Curriculum Development: Develop standardized curricula integrating akhlak tasawuf education with psychological self-awareness training for implementation across Islamic universities and pesantren networks.
3. Facilitator Training: Establish certification programs training religious teachers in psychoanalytic concepts and psychologists in Sufi spiritual frameworks, creating a cadre of integrative practitioners.
4. Digital Platform Partnerships: Engage social media platforms in developing positive content strategies informed by the SPRM framework, creating alternatives to extremist content that satisfy youth psychological and spiritual needs.
5. Community-Based Programs: Scale community-based implementations of the SPRM model through mosque networks, youth organizations, and civil society partnerships.

Future Research Directions

Future research should extend this work in several directions. Longitudinal studies tracking youth over 3-5 years would establish causal relationships and long-term effectiveness. Experimental designs comparing SPRM-based interventions with conventional approaches would provide stronger evidence for relative effectiveness. Cross-cultural studies in other Muslim-majority contexts would test the model's transferability. Investigation of specific program components would identify which elements are most essential for outcomes. Research on digital delivery methods would explore scalable online implementations. Finally, studies examining the model's applicability to other forms of extremism beyond religious violence would extend its potential impact.

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