

How to Combat Covid-19 Global Impacts

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ABSTRACT

Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali's thinking on the directions of Sufism needs to be examined in the middle of society not limited to his students but also to general public, educators, government officials, lecturers and others in order to combat Covid-19 global impacts. The study uses qualitative research methods through two approaches namely Historical approach and Islamic theory approach. In terms of Islamic theory approach, the author reveal the relevance of Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali's thinking on the concept of Sufi in the twenty first century, whether there is a new theory presented or just the development of the concept of classical scholars that already exist, or compare it with contemporary scholarly figures. The ultimate aim is to study and examine what are the factors lead to Covid-19 global impacts, with the objective to analyse and identify the role of thinking on the directions of Sufism as a way to combat Covid-19 global impacts. From the research the findings it can be seen that Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali's thinking and practice on the directions of Sufism did managed to combat Covid-19 global impacts. This study had also mentioned his contribution not only to combat Covid-19 global impacts but also to combat extremist, terrorist and others using the concept of Sufi itself.

Keywords: Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali, Sufism, Tasawwuf, Covid-19 pandemic, global impacts.

Introduction



And I did not create the jinn and mankind except to worship Me. (51:56)

Let us start this humble discourse with the acknowledgement of the purpose of our existence. This is the stance that we take throughout this article, and as we navigate our lives in this temporary world.

As a Muslim, we are guided by the Quran, the Sunna of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and ijma ulama (the consensus or agreement of Islamic scholars on a point of Islamic law) in embracing Islam as a way of life and as a main reference to all of life's trials and tribulations encountered on all levels, be it individual, family, or the ummah. The Covid-19 pandemic that struck the world circa December 2019 until this point of writing (October 2021) is no different. Let us ponder this verse,

And We will surely test you with something of fear and hunger and a loss of wealth and lives and fruits, but give good tidings to the patient, who, when disaster strikes them, say, "Indeed we belong to Allah, and indeed to Him we will return." (2:155-156)

Covid-19 is a test of our conviction. 'To Allah do we belong' should prod us to think that whatever has been sacrificed for God has in fact attained its legitimate end, for all things truly belong to the One. 'And it is to Him that we are destined to return' serves to remind us that man will not stay forever in this world and will return, sooner or later, to God. It is a reminder in our pursuit of self-aggrandizement and then meeting death either by sickness or other decreed means.

In facing the pandemic, Muslims especially should take it in their stride, think positively, uphold their iman to serve as a shield against the pandemonium, and get close to Allah in the hope of receiving His blessings and mercy in this world and the hereafter.

Those who have striven and have been blessed with knowledge of themselves and their Lord will have a higher rank. With such knowledge, one understands that the practices of religion are the form of wisdom, and that by accepting the form one realises the substance. The ways and means of realizing the substance within the form make up what is called *Sufism*.

Conceptual Framework

This study consists of five chapters as follows:

Chapter One is an introduction describing the ways of writing a study as the basis of a research that includes the introduction, background of the study, research problems, research objectives, research questions, importance of the study, research terms and research methodology.

Chapter Two is about literature review, research framework and conclusion. In this chapter also discusses his narration or genealogy as a figure whose thoughts and influences became the main study in the writing of this study through previous studies. The importance of understanding his biography which is divided into genealogy, education, teachers, titles, occupations, scholars' view on him, contributions and works and appreciation given are also displayed.

Chapter Three is the concept of Sufi Thought in which this chapter the author discusses the Sufi thought itself, the perspective and direction of Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali confidence in the method of conveying Sufi thought in this twenty first century. This discussion is a must and also acts as the essence of the study in looking

at his Sufi thoughts and concepts to combat Covid-19 global impacts as the title of the study.

Chapter Four discusses how to combat Covid-19 global impacts. The acceptance of the Muslim community in the twenty first century and the effects and methods of delivery of Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali in delivering Sufi Thought and Practice in order to combat Covid-19 global impacts. This discussion is important to know the extent of the concept of thinking of Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali and his role in rejecting the notion in answering the objectives of the study, research questions as well as research problems.

Chapter Five in conclusion to this study. The author presents some conclusions and suggestions that are useful to the Muslim community, especially in Malaysia. Similarly some suggestions to further enhance the appreciation of the Sufi concept in the twenty first century which is the most important element in the formation of the Muslim personality as well as to combat the stress of COVID-19 and is also the main source to get closer to Allah SWT.

Research Background

The way to realize his truth is through his pleasure. When you do deeds for his sake which meet his approval, you come close to his truth[1] Good deeds are the mother that bears the child of truth: the conscious life of a true human being. If one acts and exists for anything but Allah's sake alone, one is putting others in the place of Allah. The unforgivable sin that sooner or later destroys one. When one reaches the state of sanctity (fana') one receives eternal purity and becomes one of the companions of the garden, therein to dwell (forever) (7:42). But one needs a great deal of patience, and Allah is with those who patiently persevere (8:66).

Literature Review

These are the writings made by [1] himself and also other authoritative researchers on the concept of Sufism in the twenty first century:

Manuscript (2011), Overview of [1]i which contains his biography, name, age, occupation, address and education. In writing this manuscript, [1] presents his origins as well as his struggles, the experiences of associating and preaching as well as his passion to seek religious knowledge from his teachers during his life.

The summary mentioned the moments when he started his da'wah activities at the age of 15 years old until he was appointed as sheikh tariqat An-Naqsabandiah Kholidiah, Al-Ghazaliah and As-Syazaliah.

Such are the ones who believe (in the message of the Prophet) and whose hearts find rest in the remembrance of Allah. Surely in Allah's remembrance do hearts find rest. (13:28)

Aside from the obligatory daily prayers and supererogatory ones, the most important Sufi practice is undoubtedly the remembrance of Allah (dhikr) by recitation of Allah's names found in the Quran in silence or spoken aloud.[2]

As with the supererogatory prayers, dhikr aimed at interiorizing the Quran and its contents, in order to obtain closeness to Allah. As meditations, these practices aimed to empty the heart of anything but Allah and to begin to establish the qualities of the divine in the human being.

(O Prophet), recite the Book that has been revealed to you and establish Prayer. Surely Prayer forbids indecency and evil. And Allah's remembrance is of even greater merit. Allah knows all that you do. (29:45)

Treatises like *The Key to Salvation* by Sheikh Ibnu Atha'illah (d. 1309) described in detail the psychological and existential results to be obtained from multiple repetitions of particular names of Allah. The parallelism between repetition of the divine names and Islamic theology is significant; in Ash'ari theology, the divine names are

the attributes of Allah, and are the faculties through which the divine essence interacts with the created world. Recitation of the divine names thus reinforced the Islamic cosmology of Sufism. The mystical psychology that accompanied these practices articulated different levels of the heart and soul, which are further differentiated in terms of multiple spiritual states (ahwal) and stations (maqamat).

And when My servants ask you, [O Muḥammad], concerning Me - indeed I am near. I respond to the invocation of the supplicant when he calls upon Me. So let them respond to Me [by obedience] and believe in Me that they may be [rightly] guided. (2:186)

The Prophet SAW said, *'The best declaration of remembrance is the one which I and all the prophets before me recite. It is the divine phrase Lā ilāha illā Llāh "there is no god but Allah".'*

Remembrance pronounced in words is but a declaration that the heart has not forgotten Allah. The inward silent remembrance is a movement of the emotions. The remembrance of the heart is through feeling in oneself the manifestation of Allah's might and beauty, while the remembrance of the soul is through the enlightenment of the divine light generated by Allah's might and beauty. How far the remembrance penetrates, the level it reaches, depends solely on the extent to which Allah in His bounty has guided one.

Over and above anything you do, the material being in you must follow the straight path. That is only possible through preserving and following the shari'ah. To do this, one has to be conscious, to remember Allah, night and day, inwardly and outwardly, continuously.

...those who remember Allah standing and sitting and lying on their sides, and who reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth. Our Lord, Thou hast not created this in vain! (3:191)

Words of purity safeguard the tongue from heedless words. The tongue is a beautiful instrument to praise the Lord, to repeat His beautiful names, to form His Unity. Allah warns against heedless talk[3]

Secure indeed are the believers who are humble in their prayers and who shun vain talk. (23:1-3)

Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali believes that religion is the way of life that befits human nature. Socio-psychology issues that are infecting modern societies globally are a result of chaotic argumentative reasonings about the truth that humanity has lost its view of the purpose of life. The solution is to love one another and to help humanity out of the state of confusion and heedlessness by cleansing the heart from egoistic and egotistical attributes. The Prophet Muhammad SAW says, "Beware! There is a piece of flesh in the body if it becomes good (reformed) the whole body becomes good but if it gets spoilt the whole body gets spoilt and that is the heart.[4]" It is not the blindness of the eyes, but the blindness of the heart that prevents one from seeing the light of truth. Allah says:

So have they not traveled through the earth and have hearts by which to reason and ears by which to hear? For indeed, it is not eyes that are blinded, but blinded are the hearts which are within the breasts. (22:46)

The only cause of the heart becoming blind is heedlessness, which makes one forget the Almighty Creator and one's function and purpose in life. The cause of heedlessness is ignorance of the reality of the divine laws and orders. What keeps one in ignorance is a darkness of the inner being in the forms of arrogance, pride, envy, miserliness, vengeance, lying, gossiping, backbiting and other detestable traits.

Ridding oneself of these evils requires cleansing of the heart done by acquiring knowledge, acting upon this knowledge by effort and valour, fighting against one's ego and multiplicity of being to get close to Allah. This struggle will continue depending on how far one has lost himself in the low desires of his flesh and ego. Eventually, the attainment of one's goal is not like arriving at a material place, nor like knowledge leading one to a thing known, or like reasoning that comes to a rationale. Rather, this

attainment is a becoming; the realisation that everything is temporary except the Essence of Allah.

Every soul will taste death, and you will only be given your [full] compensation on the Day of Resurrection. So he who is drawn away from the Fire and admitted to Paradise has attained [his desire]. And what is the life of this world except the enjoyment of delusion. (3:185)

and do not invoke any god beside Allah. There is no god but He. All will perish but He. To Him belongs the command and to Him shall all of you return (28:88)

Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali sees that the acquisition of knowledge begins ever since humans are created and it will continue to be their quest throughout their existence. This is reflected in the Quran when having brought Adam a.s into existence, Allah SWT imparts the knowledge of all things to Adam a.s in order to clarify the supremacy of humankind and the wisdom in their being created and made vicegerent on the earth.

Then Allah taught Adam the names of all things.. (2:31) And Allah says, Read! In the name of your Lord who created (96:1)

Thus, in fulfilling the role of vicegerent, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said, "Seeking knowledge is a duty upon every Muslim and that the world[5], with all that it contains, is accursed except for the remembrance of Allah (dhikr) that which pleases Allah, and the religious schools and seekers of knowledge[6]. He who goes out in search of knowledge is in Allah's cause until he returns[7]. Whoever takes a path upon which to obtain knowledge, Allah makes the path to Paradise easy for him.[8]

This implies that when humankind fail to fulfil their duty on earth, when people lack (religious) knowledge, they will lead a life without wisdom (understanding of the knowledge of Quran)[9], their hearts become heedless of Allah's anger and retribution and despondent of Allah's Mercy, resulting in them being deprived of eternal blessings for Allah does not respond to a supplication from the heart of one heedless and occupied by play[10]. Then there will remain ignorant people who, when consulted, will give verdicts according to their opinions whereby they will mislead others and go astray[3]

Methodology

In this research, the author use qualitative research methods, through two approaches namely historical approach and Islamic theory approach.

The author use interview techniques, participatory research, observation and library research. The Data collection technique were utilised. This enable to describe the Sufi teachings in the twenty first century by Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali in Malaysia. In addition, the technique strengthen the data that has been obtained from various parties that may provide information in the form of more concrete and actual data.

(1) Resources and Data Collection Techniques

The source of data in qualitative research is the action or word that is natural and the author divides the source of data into two parts, namely:

(i) Primary data sources covering all magazines, newspapers, documents, archives, journals, reports, electronic media (internet) and all writings related to Sufi thinking in twenty first century by Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali.

(ii) Secondary data sources that include various studies or thesis to achieve academic degrees as well as books written and related to the title of this study.

(2) Approaches in Qualitative research

The selection of this approach aims to ensure that the research entitled How to combat Covid-19 global impacts can be studied in depth. First, in the form of historical approach, is a method used by researchers to understand various reality events or past events. In this approach the author analyze the history of life as a form of implementation of the thoughts of Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali in this twenty first century, many who acknowledge and accept the existence of Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali's thoughts on Sufi which of course requires an objective attitude and far from the subjective attitude of a priori funds in providing assessment. Apart from that, it needs to reveal about the history of the development of Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali's thinking in Malaysia. For this survey, the literature studies, but also required the availability of field studies related to the involvement of some figures as surviving sources.

Second, in terms of Islamic theory approach, the author reveal the relevance of Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali's thinking on the concept of Sufi in the twenty first century, whether there is a new theory presented or just the development of the concept of classical scholars that already exist, or compare it with contemporary scholarly figures. In addition to the above two approaches, researchers also use comparative methods that compare the thinking of Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali with other scholars. The comparative approach seeks to compare by revealing the similarities, differences and relationships between the objects of the study. This comparison is done to make conclusions or decisions fairly on some of the data obtained so that the decisions or conclusions made are accurate correct and transparent, especially in assessing whether or not the influence of Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali's thinking exist in twenty first century.

Result and Discussion

Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali is one of the many thought leaders on the concept of Sufis in the twenty first century that has a lot of influence on the Muslim community in Malaysia. This study is to provide solution on how to combat Covid-19 global impacts and also to clarify the colour of Islamic thought in Malaysia to avoid misunderstandings about the concept of Sufi itself. In addition, this study can benefit researchers, thinkers, preachers, lecturers at the University who have attention in the field of Sufism or Sufism in terms of theory and the concept of practitioners. The result of the study is to act as one of the contributions of theory and the concept of practitioners. The result of the study is to act as one of the contributions of thought in expanding knowledge treasures, especially those related to the thinking of figures about the concept of Sufis in the twenty first century.

Conclusion

Human conscious or subconsciously desires to seek for better knowledge and everyone hopes to find the right source that can guide them in decision-making, and motivates learning crucial for healthy body, mind and soul development. Curiosity is a basic element of our cognition; we spend much of our time seeking and consuming information from various sources.

This study had examined Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali's thought on Sufism in twenty first century. This study had also analysed and identified Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali's role of thinking on the directions of Sufism as an important tool to combat Covid-19 global impacts.

This study had also mentioned his contribution not only to combat Covid-19 global impacts but also to combat extremist, terrorist and others using the concept of Sufi itself. Sheikh Lokeman Hazli Azali had contributed as Professional Teacher not limited to education but also against subversive action in such as terrorism in Malaysia. He

had preached Islam for almost 21 years at the same time contribute in developing Islamic studies Schools as well as Government Security as Consultant of Home Ministry.

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