

The Legitimacy of 'Urf in Minangkabau *Khataman* al-Qur'an and *Tahlilan* Traditions Following Death

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the legitimacy of 'urf concerning the Minangkabau traditions of *khataman al-Qur'an* and *tahlilan* following death in Nagari Lubuak Gadang Timur, Sangir Subdistrict, South Solok Regency, and to identify the factors influencing their continuity. This study employs field research with a qualitative approach. Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation and analyzed descriptively and analytically using the theory of 'urf as the primary analytical framework. The findings indicate that *khataman al-Qur'an* and *tahlilan* following death are practiced as forms of prayer for the deceased, expressions of respect, mechanisms for strengthening social solidarity, and means of preserving Minangkabau religious and cultural values. Their continuity is influenced by community beliefs regarding the spiritual benefits of prayer for the deceased, the involvement of religious and traditional leaders, the culture of mutual cooperation, and efforts to preserve local cultural identity. The study concludes that these traditions can be categorized as 'urf *shahih* because their practices contain public benefits, do not contradict fundamental principles of Islamic law, and contribute to social harmony. The academic contribution of this study lies in strengthening 'urf-based Islamic legal scholarship by providing an empirical account of how Islamic legal principles interact with Minangkabau *adat* and local religious traditions. It also demonstrates that culturally embedded religious practices can be evaluated through Islamic legal frameworks without disregarding their social and cultural functions, thereby enriching discussions on the dynamic relationship between Sharia, *adat*, and community religious practices.

Keywords: 'Urf Legitimacy, Islamic Law, Minangkabau Traditions, Tahlilan Tradition, Qur'anic Recitation

1. Introduction

The traditions of *khataman Al-Qur'an* and post-death *tahlilan* remain deeply embedded in the religious and social life of many Muslim communities in Indonesia, including Nagari Lubuak Gadang Timur, Sangir Subdistrict, South Solok Regency. These practices are not merely religious rituals but also function as mechanisms for strengthening social solidarity, maintaining communal relationships, expressing respect for deceased family members, and transmitting religious values across generations. In local practice, *khataman Al-Qur'an* is commonly associated with collective Qur'anic recitation and completion, while *tahlilan* involves communal prayers, remembrance, and supplication for deceased persons. Their continued implementation demonstrates the interaction between Islamic teachings and locally established customs. Nevertheless, the persistence of these practices also raises questions concerning their legal legitimacy from the perspective of Islamic law. Not every customary practice can automatically be regarded as legally acceptable. Islamic jurisprudence recognizes custom ('urf) as a consideration in determining legal rulings under specific conditions, particularly when the custom does not contradict authoritative Islamic principles. Therefore, examining the relationship between these local traditions and Islamic legal norms is important for understanding how religious practices acquire legitimacy within Muslim communities.

Previous studies have examined 'urf from various perspectives, including its theoretical position in Islamic jurisprudence, its application in family law, and its relationship with local traditions and cultural practices.

Several studies have demonstrated that customary practices may obtain legal recognition when they are widely accepted, consistently practiced, beneficial to society, and compatible with Islamic principles. Other research has discussed religious traditions such as communal Qur'anic recitation, *tahlilan*, *yasinan*, and other forms of collective remembrance, generally focusing on their theological foundations, social functions, or community acceptance.¹ However, the existing literature still reveals several limitations. First, studies frequently discuss 'urf at a conceptual level without examining in detail how its legal requirements are manifested in particular local traditions.² Second, research on *tahlilan* and Qur'anic completion rituals often emphasizes their social and religious dimensions rather than systematically assessing their legal classification as 'urf *shahih* or 'urf *fasid*.³ Third, relatively limited attention has been given to the specific interaction between customary religious practices and Islamic legal reasoning in rural Minangkabau communities.⁴ These limitations indicate the need for a more contextually grounded investigation.⁵

An evaluation of previous studies indicates that the legitimacy of customary religious traditions cannot be determined solely by their popularity or long-standing presence within a community. The legal status of 'urf requires an examination of its substance, social acceptance, consistency,⁶ and compatibility with Islamic legal principles.⁷ Previous scholarship provides important conceptual foundations for understanding the relationship between custom and Islamic law, but it does not sufficiently explain how these criteria operate in the everyday religious practices of Nagari Lubuak Gadang Timur. The present study therefore positions itself at the intersection of Islamic legal analysis, customary practice, and local religious life. Rather than merely describing the existence of *khataman Al-Qur'an* and post-death *tahlilan*, this study evaluates the extent to which these traditions satisfy the characteristics of legally recognized 'urf. The Minangkabau social context is particularly relevant because customary values and Islamic teachings have historically interacted in shaping communal norms and religious practices. By examining the practices, meanings, social acceptance, and normative foundations of the traditions, this study seeks to contribute an empirical dimension to the discussion of 'urf and demonstrate how Islamic legal concepts can be applied to contemporary local religious customs.

This study addresses two central questions: how are the traditions of *khataman Al-Qur'an* and post-death *tahlilan* practiced and understood by the community of Nagari Lubuak Gadang Timur, and how can their legitimacy be assessed according to the concept of 'urf in Islamic law? These questions are intended to clarify both the empirical characteristics of the traditions and their normative status within Islamic jurisprudence. The study argues that the existence of a customary religious practice does not by itself establish its legal legitimacy; rather, legitimacy depends on whether the practice fulfills the conditions required for valid 'urf. The analysis therefore examines whether the traditions reflect genuine social acceptance, provide legitimate benefits, avoid prohibited elements, and remain consistent with fundamental Islamic principles. Based on this argument, the study seeks to determine whether *khataman Al-Qur'an* and post-death *tahlilan* can be categorized as 'urf *shahih* or should be considered 'urf *fasid*. The study ultimately aims to demonstrate how Islamic legal reasoning can engage constructively with locally rooted religious traditions while maintaining the normative boundaries established by Islamic law.

¹ H Efendi et al., "Power Relations Urang Pandai and Candidate on Regional Head Election in West Sumatra, Indonesia," *International Journal of Sustainable Development and Planning* 17, no. 5 (2022): 1659–65, <https://doi.org/10.18280/ijstdp.170532>.

² I B Juhari, K Kasman, and F Umam, "Negotiating Javanese and Muslim Identities: Cultural and Religious Construction Among Indonesian Migrants in Bangkok," *Identities*, 2026, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2026.2718677>.

³ V Uctuvia and D Nirmala, "Harmonization Among Religion, Culture, and Nature in Selametan Khitanan Tradition in Demak," in *E3S Web of Conferences*, ed. Soeprbowati T.R., Warsito W., and Triadi Putranto T., vol. 317 (Department of Linguistics, Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University, Semarang, Indonesia: EDP Sciences, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.1051/e3sconf/202131701046>.

⁴ A Zalmansyah et al., "The Cultural Identity of Minangkabau and Dayak Kanayatn: An Anthropolinguistic Study," *Eurasian Journal of Applied Linguistics* 9, no. 2 (2023): 151–62, <https://doi.org/10.32601/ejal.902013>.

⁵ Efendi et al., "Power Relations Urang Pandai and Candidate on Regional Head Election in West Sumatra, Indonesia."

⁶ Zalmansyah et al., "The Cultural Identity of Minangkabau and Dayak Kanayatn: An Anthropolinguistic Study."

⁷ J Benbenishty, M Bennun, and R Lind, "Qualitative Analysis of European and Middle Eastern Intensive Care Unit Nursing Death Rituals," *Nursing in Critical Care* 25, no. 5 (2020): 284–90, <https://doi.org/10.1111/nicc.12478>.

2. Method

This study employed a field-based descriptive qualitative approach to examine the legitimacy of the *'urf* reflected in the traditions of *khataman Al-Qur'an* and post-death *tahlilan* practiced by the community of Nagari Lubuak Gadang Timur, Sangir Subdistrict, South Solok Regency. The qualitative approach was selected because the study sought to understand the meanings, values, motivations, and religious perspectives underlying the continuation of these traditions within their social context. The research participants consisted of religious leaders, community elders, families who practice *khataman Al-Qur'an* and *tahlilan*, and community members directly involved in these practices. Informants were selected through purposive sampling based on their knowledge, experience, and direct involvement in the traditions under investigation. The study used primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from field observations and in-depth interviews, while secondary data were collected from books, scholarly articles, theses, and other relevant literature concerning *'urf*, Islamic law, and religious traditions in Muslim communities. The research was conducted in Nagari Lubuak Gadang Timur during the designated fieldwork period.

Data collection was conducted through three complementary techniques: observation, semi-structured in-depth interviews, and documentation. Observation was undertaken to examine directly the implementation, sequence, participants, and social context of *khataman Al-Qur'an* and post-death *tahlilan*. The researcher observed how these traditions were performed and how community members participated in and interpreted them. In-depth interviews were conducted with selected informants to obtain detailed explanations regarding the origins, purposes, religious meanings, perceived benefits, and customary norms associated with the traditions. The interviews also explored community perceptions concerning whether the practices were consistent with Islamic teachings and local customary values. Documentation was used to strengthen the primary findings by examining relevant written materials, community records, photographs, and other available documents related to the traditions. The researcher served as the principal instrument in collecting and interpreting qualitative data, supported by interview guides, observation notes, recording devices, and documentation instruments. Data collection procedures involved identifying relevant informants, obtaining information through observation and interviews, recording the findings systematically, organizing the collected materials, and cross-checking information obtained from different sources to improve the completeness and consistency of the data.

The collected data were analyzed descriptively and analytically through systematic stages of data reduction, organization, interpretation, and conclusion drawing. Interview transcripts, observation notes, and documentary materials were first edited and organized according to the main themes emerging from the research questions. The analysis subsequently identified patterns concerning the forms, purposes, meanings, and community acceptance of *khataman Al-Qur'an* and post-death *tahlilan*. An inductive approach was applied to develop general findings from empirical observations and statements provided by informants, whereas a deductive approach was employed to examine these findings through the concept of *'urf* in Islamic law. Particular attention was given to the requirements distinguishing *'urf shahih* from *'urf fasid*, including compatibility with Islamic principles, absence of contradiction with explicit religious texts, social acceptance, and the realization of legitimate benefit. To ensure methodological rigor, the credibility of the findings was strengthened through source triangulation by comparing information from religious leaders, community elders, practitioners, and other community members, as well as methodological triangulation through observation, interviews, and documentation. The analytical process therefore connected empirical evidence with Islamic legal theory to determine the legitimacy and legal status of the traditions under study.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1. The Practice and Social Manifestation of *Khataman Al-Qur'an* and *Tahlilan* Following Death

The traditions of *tahlilan* and *khataman Al-Qur'an* following death remain actively practiced by the community of Nagari Lubuak Gadang Timur, Sangir Subdistrict, South Solok Regency. Field observations indicate that these traditions function simultaneously as religious practices, expressions of respect for the deceased, and mechanisms of communal solidarity. *Tahlilan* is generally conducted at the bereaved family's residence on several customary occasions, including the third day (*manigo hari*), seventh day (*manujuah hari*), fourteenth day (*ma ampek baleh*), fortieth day (*ma ampek puluah hari*), and hundredth day (*manyaratuiah hari*). During these gatherings, community members collectively recite Surah Yasin, *tahlil*, *istighfar*, *zikir*, and prayers, with the intention of dedicating the spiritual benefits to the deceased. On particular occasions, *Dala'il al-Khairat* is also recited as an expression of *salawat* for the Prophet Muhammad. Jasrial Imam explained that these activities have become an established part of community life and are transmitted across generations. Participation therefore represents not only involvement in collective worship but also empathy, moral support, and social recognition for the bereaved family.

Alongside *tahlilan*, the community practices *khataman Al-Qur'an* after the funeral. The activity involves students and teachers from the Bustanul Huda Islamic Boarding School who collectively recite the Qur'an at or around the cemetery until the entire Qur'an has been completed. In some cases, the activity continues for several days and may extend to approximately seven days, depending on the circumstances and the completion of the recitation. The bereaved family provides accommodation and meals for the reciters as an expression of respect and hospitality. Tengku Sahibul Kahfi explained that community members understand the practice as a spiritual effort to convey the reward of Qur'anic recitation to the deceased and as an expression of respect for the person who has passed away. The practice is generally performed voluntarily and is accompanied by mutual assistance among community members. Thus, *khataman Al-Qur'an* is not practiced solely as an individual devotional activity but has become a collective religious event involving students, religious teachers, family members, and members of the wider community.

The two traditions demonstrate that death is understood by the community not exclusively as an individual or family event but as a collective socio-religious occasion.⁸ Community members participate by attending the ceremonies, reciting prayers,⁹ assisting the bereaved family,¹⁰ and contributing food or other forms of support.¹¹ The practices therefore combine religious devotion with social interaction and customary obligations.¹² Their continued existence is closely associated with the Minangkabau principle *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah*, through which customary life and Islamic values are understood as mutually related. The empirical findings further indicate that the traditions are not static rituals but adaptive social practices whose forms are maintained through repeated participation and communal recognition. Their religious content, particularly Qur'anic recitation, *zikir*, prayer, and *salawat*, provides a spiritual dimension, while collective attendance and mutual assistance create a social dimension. Consequently, the manifestations of *tahlilan* and *khataman Al-Qur'an* reveal an integrated relationship between religious practice, customary continuity, family support, and communal solidarity in Nagari Lubuak Gadang Timur.

⁸ U Saidi, "Agonya Neiko Mfanha Uyu? Of Death and Funerals: A Semiotic Exploration of the Shona Funeral Ritual in Zimbabwe," *African Identities* 15, no. 4 (2017): 353–66, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14725843.2017.1319758>.

⁹ M Shohet, "Two Deaths and a Funeral: Ritual Inscriptions' Affordances for Mourning and Moral Personhood in Vietnam," *American Ethnologist* 45, no. 1 (2018): 60–73, <https://doi.org/10.1111/amet.12599>.

¹⁰ M A Fitryansyah and F N Fauziah, "Bridging Tradition and Technology: AI in the Interpretation of Nusantara Religious Manuscripts," *Jurnal Lektur Keagamaan* 22, no. 2 (2024): 317–46, <https://doi.org/10.31291/jlka.v22i2.1247>.

¹¹ M L Jørgensen et al., "Stillbirth – Transitions and Rituals When Birth Brings Death: Data from a Danish National Cohort Seen Through an Anthropological Lens," *Scandinavian Journal of Caring Sciences* 36, no. 1 (2022): 100–108, <https://doi.org/10.1111/scs.12967>.

¹² Y van der Pijl, "Death in the Family Revisited: Ritual Expression and Controversy in a Creole Transnational Mortuary Sphere," *Ethnography* 17, no. 2 (2016): 147–67, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1466138116647226>.

3.2. Factors and Transformative Implications of the Continuation of the Traditions

The continuation of *tahlilan* and *khataman Al-Qur'an* is influenced by several interconnected factors. First, cultural inheritance constitutes a major factor because the practices have been transmitted from previous generations and have become embedded in the community's customary expectations. Angku Samsurijal Pono Alam explained that recitation and communal prayer have accompanied death-related events since earlier generations, leading the present community to regard their continuation as normal and socially accepted. Second, religious belief strengthens the practice because community members understand Qur'anic recitation, *zikir*, *tahlil*, and prayer as virtuous activities that can be performed for the deceased. Ustadz Mukhtar emphasized that these practices are motivated by the community's intention to pray for those who have passed away. Third, social solidarity reinforces their continuity because community members gather to provide emotional, practical, and material support to bereaved families. This participation includes attendance, assistance with preparations, and contributions of food and other necessities. These findings demonstrate that the traditions survive not because of a single factor but because religious conviction, customary inheritance, and social participation mutually reinforce one another.

Psychological considerations also contribute to the continuation of these practices. Fatmawati explained that families experience a sense of peace and relief after participating in *khataman Al-Qur'an* and *tahlilan* because they feel that they have made a meaningful religious effort for their deceased relatives. The practices therefore provide emotional support during bereavement and help families manage grief through collective religious activity. In addition, respect for customary expectations encourages families to maintain the traditions because non-participation may be perceived as distancing oneself from established community practices. The involvement of imams, *tengkus*, *ustadz*, and traditional leaders further strengthens their legitimacy because religious and customary authorities participate directly in the ceremonies. At the same time, field observations reveal potential burdens. Families with limited economic resources may experience pressure to provide food and refreshments, while social expectations may transform voluntary participation into an implicit obligation. The findings consequently indicate that the transformative implications of these traditions are ambivalent: they strengthen solidarity, religiosity, and psychological resilience, but they may also generate economic pressure and social conformity when practiced excessively.

The empirical findings further demonstrate that the traditions have implications beyond their immediate ritual functions. *Tahlilan* creates repeated opportunities for interaction among community members, while *khataman Al-Qur'an* mobilizes students, religious teachers, families, and residents around a shared religious activity.¹³ These practices consequently contribute to the transmission of religious knowledge, preservation of customary identity, and reproduction of communal solidarity across generations. However, the positive social function depends on how the practices are implemented. When participation remains voluntary,¹⁴ religiously oriented,¹⁵ and economically proportionate, the traditions can function as mechanisms of community welfare and mutual assistance. Conversely, when ceremonies become associated with prestige,¹⁶ excessive expenditure, or compulsory social expectations, their original spiritual and communal purposes may be weakened. The findings therefore suggest that the continued existence of these traditions should not be assessed only according to whether they survive, but also according to the social and religious quality of their implementation. Their sustainability depends on

¹³ M A Al Humaidy et al., "Acculturation of Islamic Values in Local Wisdom in the Ter-Ater Tradition in Madura, Indonesia," *International Journal of Interdisciplinary Social and Community Studies* 21, no. 2 (2026): 201–23, <https://doi.org/10.18848/2324-7576/CGP/A289>.

¹⁴ M A Z Mughal, "Exchange Relations and Social Change in Rural Pakistan: Rituals and Ceremonies of Childbirth, Marriage and Death," *South Asia Research* 38, no. 2 (2018): 177–94, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0262728018768137>.

¹⁵ F B Yahya et al., "Quality of Life: The Spirituality and Spiritual Well-Being of the Elderly in Malaysia," *Jurnal Ilmiah Ilmu Terapan Universitas Jambi* 8, no. 2 (2024): 773–83, <https://doi.org/10.22437/jiituj.v8i2.34273>.

¹⁶ Juhari, Kasman, and Umam, "Negotiating Javanese and Muslim Identities: Cultural and Religious Construction Among Indonesian Migrants in Bangkok."

maintaining the balance between religious devotion, customary identity, social solidarity, and the protection of families from unnecessary burdens.

3.3. 'Urf Legitimacy, Social Continuity, and Maslahah in Tahlilan and Khataman Al-Qur'an Traditions

The findings demonstrate that *tahlilan* and *khataman Al-Qur'an* following death have become established socio-religious practices in Nagari Lubuak Gadang Timur. *Tahlilan* is conducted on several customary occasions and consists primarily of Qur'anic recitation, *tahlil*, *zikir*, *istighfar*, *salawat*, and prayer for the deceased. *Khataman Al-Qur'an* involves collective Qur'anic recitation conducted by students and teachers until completion, while the bereaved family provides accommodation and meals. Both practices involve broad community participation and function as mechanisms of religious expression, emotional support, and social solidarity. The continuation of these traditions is supported by cultural inheritance, religious conviction, social cohesion, psychological needs, respect for customary expectations, and the participation of religious and customary leaders. At the same time, the findings identify potential economic and social pressures, particularly when families feel obligated to provide substantial food or maintain customary expectations despite limited resources. These findings show that the traditions have both religious and social dimensions and that their contemporary significance lies not simply in ritual continuity but in their ability to connect religious devotion with communal support during bereavement.

The persistence of these traditions can be explained through the interaction between customary transmission and religious interpretation.¹⁷ Cultural inheritance provides continuity because community members learn the practices through repeated participation and observation of previous generations. Religious belief then gives these practices normative meaning by connecting Qur'anic recitation, *zikir*, and prayer with the community's understanding of benefit for the deceased.¹⁸ Social participation further reinforces continuity because attending the ceremonies demonstrates empathy and fulfills expectations of mutual assistance.¹⁹ This process illustrates how a customary practice can become embedded within the normative structure of community life without necessarily being perceived as a formal religious obligation.²⁰ The Minangkabau principle *adat basandi syarak, syarak basandi Kitabullah* provides an important cultural context for this interaction because it encourages the community to understand customary practices through Islamic values. Nevertheless, the same mechanism can create social pressure when repeated practice becomes interpreted as an expected obligation. Therefore, the continuation of *tahlilan* and *khataman Al-Qur'an* results from a dynamic interaction between religious meaning, inherited custom, collective identity, and social expectations rather than from theological considerations alone.²¹

The effects of these practices are consequently multidimensional.²² At the religious level, they provide opportunities for Qur'anic recitation, remembrance of Allah,²³ prayer, and spiritual reflection.²⁴ At the social level, they mobilize community members to support bereaved families and reinforce interpersonal

¹⁷ Y Endi, F A Ranubaya, and C Watu, "Pesaguan Dayak Kanjan Serayong Custom: The Relationship between Catholic Faith and Culture," *Millah: Journal of Religious Studies* 23, no. 2 (2024): 505–50, <https://doi.org/10.20885/millah.vol23.iss2.art1>.

¹⁸ R Saehu and I H Muchtar, "Religious Pluralism and Harmony among Buddhist-Muslim Communities Living in East Lampung, Indonesia," *Journal of Islamic Thought and Civilization* 13, no. 1 (2023): 245–56, <https://doi.org/10.32350/jitc.131.17>.

¹⁹ Y Z Muarif and A Aziz, "Islamic Law Reform: Achieving Grace through Tahlil & Tawasul," *Prophetic Law Review* 6, no. 2 (2024): 241–62, <https://doi.org/10.20885/PLR.vol6.iss2.art5>.

²⁰ Uctuvia and Nirmala, "Harmonization Among Religion, Culture, and Nature in Selamatan Khitanan Tradition in Demak."

²¹ S Sobhan, M Ritonga, and K Kholidah, "Reconciling Two Contradictory Understandings about the Law of Tahlilan on Social Media Indonesia," *Information Sciences Letters* 12, no. 3 (2023): 1739–48, <https://doi.org/10.18576/isl/120357>.

²² Z Zubir and K Bustamam-Ahmad, "The Dialectics of Islam and Custom in the Kenduri La'ot Tradition of the Coastal Muslim Community of East Aceh," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 10, no. 3 (2022): 905–28, <https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v10i3.778>.

²³ S F Dewi et al., "Strengthening Social Cohesion Through the Manyanda Tradition in Minangkabau Customary Society: A Cultural Insight from West Sumatra, Indonesia," *Journal of Infrastructure, Policy and Development* 8, no. 13 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.24294/jipd9344>.

²⁴ M Pribadi and N Nurdin, "The Practice of Salawat Nariyah in Rural Javanese Society Indonesia: Religiosity or Sociality?," *Review of International Geographical Education Online* 11, no. 5 (2021): 2545–55, <https://doi.org/10.48047/rigeo.11.05.152>.

relationships.²⁵ At the psychological level,²⁶ collective prayer and participation can provide families with emotional reassurance during the grieving process.²⁷ These functions demonstrate the transformative capacity of religious traditions when they operate as mechanisms of social integration and mutual assistance.²⁸ However, the findings also reveal that the same traditions can produce unintended consequences when their implementation exceeds the principle of moderation.²⁹ Economic expenditure on food and hospitality may burden families, while expectations concerning attendance and ceremonial arrangements may create social pressure.³⁰ From the perspective of *maslahah*, therefore, the value of these practices should be evaluated not solely through their religious content but also through their consequences for the welfare of the community.³¹ Their beneficial character is strongest when the practices preserve spiritual objectives, strengthen solidarity, and provide comfort without producing financial hardship,³² coercion, or competition in social status.

The findings complement previous studies that describe communal mourning ceremonies as expressions of the interaction between religious teachings and local culture. Previous research emphasizes the role of these ceremonies in strengthening social relationships and demonstrating processes of cultural adaptation.³³ Similarly, studies of customary practices have argued that established traditions may receive social recognition when they are widely accepted and do not conflict with fundamental ethical principles.³⁴ The present study extends these findings by demonstrating empirically how customary norms operate within a specific local community.³⁵ Rather than treating the existence of a tradition as sufficient evidence of its legitimacy,³⁶ the findings indicate that its acceptance depends on its content, purpose,³⁷ social consequences,³⁸ and manner of implementation.³⁹ The study also distinguishes between the substantive values underlying these practices and their socially constructed

²⁵ N A Gumelar and K Saddhono, "The Oral Tradition of Syahadat Kures: Core and Initial Foundations of Surakarta Kasunanan Palace Rule, Central Java, Indonesia," *Multidisciplinary Reviews* 7, no. 8 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.31893/multirev.2024169>.

²⁶ J Cesari, *We God's People: Christianity, Islam and Hinduism in the World of Nations*, *We God's People: Christianity, Islam and Hinduism in the World of Nations* (Georgetown University's, Berkley Center on Religion, Peace and World Affairs, Harvard Divinity School, United States: Cambridge University Press, 2021), <https://doi.org/10.1017/9781108554466>.

²⁷ L Alam et al., "The Rise of the Urban Piety Movement: Jamaah Maiyah as an Urban Spiritualism and Emerging Religiosity in the Public Sphere," *Jurnal Ilmiah Peuradeun* 10, no. 3 (2022): 747–64, <https://doi.org/10.26811/peuradeun.v10i3.711>.

²⁸ D F Pramadhanti, F Aritonang, and K Saddhono, "Encouraging Humanism in the 'Ponggol' Alms Distribution Procession of the Sacred Temple," *KARSA* 30, no. 2 (2022): 364–88, <https://doi.org/10.19105/karsa.v30i2.7276>.

²⁹ D Toyibah et al., "Being Tolerant in Diaspora: Indonesian Islamic Religiosity, Islamism, and Attitude Towards Other Groups Among Indonesian Community in Australia," *Islamic Guidance and Counseling Journal* 8, no. 1 (2025), <https://doi.org/10.25217/0020258564000>.

³⁰ M A Nasir, "Revisiting the Javanese Muslim Slametan: Islam, Local Tradition, Honor, and Symbolic Communication," *Al-Jami'ah* 57, no. 2 (2019): 329–58, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2019.572.329-358>.

³¹ R A Imron et al., "Grassroots Actors and the Cultural Response to Urban Marginalization in Indonesia," *Sociologia y Tecnociencia* 16, no. 1 (2026): 194–212, <https://doi.org/10.24197/t5bgvg85>.

³² A Widhi Nirwansyah, S Demirdag, and A F Daulai, "Batu Qulhu—The Stone of Death: Harmonizing Traditional Funerals in the Mandailing Community of North Sumatra," *Heliyon* 10, no. 13 (2024), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.heliyon.2024.e33363>.

³³ C Seise, "Dying a Good Death: Indonesian Rituals and Negotiations About the End of Life," *International Journal of Islam in Asia* 1, no. 2 (2021): 168–90, <https://doi.org/10.1163/25899996-bja10014>.

³⁴ K Hess, "Ritual Power: Illuminating the Blind Spot of Births, Deaths, and Marriages in News Media Research," *Journalism* 17, no. 4 (2016): 511–26, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884915570419>.

³⁵ Y P Mabunda and E Ross, "Experiences of Black South African Widows Regarding Mourning Rituals Following the Death of Their Spouses: Upholding Cultural Practices or Violating Human Rights?," *Death Studies* 47, no. 3 (2023): 328–38, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07481187.2022.2065708>.

³⁶ A A Adu et al., "Death, Funeral Rituals, and Stigma: Perspectives from Mortuary Workers and Bereaved Families," *Pastoral Psychology* 72, no. 2 (2023): 305–16, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11089-022-01053-9>.

³⁷ I Aksoz-Efe, O Erdur-Baker, and H Servaty-Seib, "Death Rituals, Religious Beliefs, and Grief of Turkish Women," *Death Studies* 42, no. 9 (2018): 579–92, <https://doi.org/10.1080/07481187.2017.1407379>.

³⁸ B Ghosh and A BK, "From Ritual Mourning to Solitary Grief: Reinterpretation of Hindu Death Rituals in India," *Omega (United States)* 89, no. 2 (2024): 759–76, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00302228221085175>.

³⁹ D G Balmer et al., "A Place to Live and to Die: A Qualitative Exploration of the Social Practices and Rituals of Death in Residential Aged Care," *Omega (United States)* 85, no. 1 (2022): 38–58, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0030222820935217>.

ceremonial forms.⁴⁰ Expressions of remembrance,⁴¹ collective reflection,⁴² and mutual support may serve important social functions,⁴³ whereas the designation of particular days and expectations regarding communal participation belong more directly to customary practice.⁴⁴ This distinction provides a more nuanced basis for assessing the legitimacy of local traditions while recognizing the need to establish limits when social or economic harm emerges.⁴⁵

Conceptually, the findings suggest that the assessment of *tahlilan* and *khataman Al-Qur'an* should integrate the categories of *'urf*, *maslahah*, and the principle of avoiding harm rather than relying exclusively on the question of whether a particular ceremonial form was explicitly practiced by earlier Muslim generations.⁴⁶ Methodologically, future research should compare similar traditions across different Minangkabau communities to determine whether the same patterns of religious legitimacy, social solidarity, and economic pressure occur elsewhere. More systematic interviews with religious authorities representing different legal perspectives would also strengthen understanding of disagreements concerning *bid'ah*, *'urf*, and the transmission of religious merit to the deceased. From a policy and community perspective, religious and customary leaders should encourage voluntary participation, moderate expenditure,⁴⁷ and clear differentiation between religious obligations and local customs. Families should not be socially compelled to conduct elaborate ceremonies, particularly when doing so creates financial hardship. In this way, the traditions can continue to function as expressions of religious devotion and communal solidarity while remaining consistent with the principles of *maslahah*, moderation, and prevention of harm.

4. Conclusion

The study concludes that the traditions of *tahlilan* and *khataman Al-Qur'an* following death in Nagari Lubuak Gadang Timur represent religiously meaningful and socially embedded practices that continue to function within the local Muslim community. The traditions are maintained through a combination of religious understanding, cultural inheritance, social solidarity, respect for customary values, and the involvement of religious and community leaders. *Tahlilan* is generally conducted on several customary occasions following a death, while *khataman Al-Qur'an* involves Quranic recitation dedicated to the deceased. From the perspective of *'urf*, these practices can be categorized as *'urf 'amali* and *'urf khas* because they constitute repeated collective practices within a particular community. Their legitimacy is not determined solely by their customary status but by their conformity with Islamic principles. The findings indicate that these traditions may be regarded as *'urf shahih* when they strengthen social solidarity, facilitate prayer and remembrance of Allah, and do not contain elements of *shirk*, coercion, excessive expenditure, or beliefs that contradict Islamic teachings.

The study contributes conceptually to the understanding of *'urf* as a dynamic instrument for assessing the relationship between Islamic law and locally established religious traditions. Rather than treating customary practices as automatically legitimate or illegitimate, the findings demonstrate the importance

⁴⁰ Q Gao, O Woods, and L Kong, "The Political Ecology of Death: Chinese Religion and The Affective Tensions of Secularised Burial Rituals in Singapore," *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space* 6, no. 1 (2023): 537–55, <https://doi.org/10.1177/25148486211068475>.

⁴¹ G Gabay and M Tarabeih, "Death From COVID-19, Muslim Death Rituals and Disenfranchised Grief – A Patient-Centered Care Perspective," *Omega (United States)* 89, no. 4 (2024): 1492–1513, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00302228221095717>.

⁴² D Brooten et al., "Death Rituals Reported by White, Black, and Hispanic Parents Following the ICU Death of an Infant or Child," *Journal of Pediatric Nursing* 31, no. 2 (2016): 132–40, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pedn.2015.10.017>.

⁴³ D Pavlovic et al., "Rituals of life and death: Dynamics of the interaction between the Tawantinsuyu and local populations in the Maipo-Mapocho basin, Central Chile," *Estudios Atacamenos*, no. 63 (2019): 43–80, <https://doi.org/10.22199/issn.0718-1043-2019-0022>.

⁴⁴ E Gabbay and J J Fins, "Go in Peace: Brain Death, Reasonable Accommodation and Jewish Mourning Rituals," *Journal of Religion and Health* 58, no. 5 (2019): 1672–86, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-019-00874-y>.

⁴⁵ S Mondal, "Living in a Limbo: A Sociological Study of Missing Funerals, Death Rituals, and Complicated Grief in COVID-19," *Illness Crisis and Loss* 32, no. 2 (2024): 228–43, <https://doi.org/10.1177/10541373221131760>.

⁴⁶ I Mandala, D Witro, and A J Kurdi, "Qur'anic Recitation in the Procession of Analyzing Seven Days of Death: The Case Study of Living Qur'an-Hadith in Koto Padang Village," *AlBayan* 23, no. 2 (2025): 189–212, <https://doi.org/10.1163/22321969-20250171>.

⁴⁷ A R Hidayat, "The Ontological Meanings of Dhunnya: Principles of Socio-Religious Harmony in the Lives of Madurese Migrants in Malaysia," *Teosofi: Jurnal Tasawuf Dan Pemikiran Islam* 14, no. 2 (2024): 119–42, <https://doi.org/10.15642/teosofi.2024.14.2.119-142>.

of evaluating their substance, social consequences, and compatibility with Islamic legal principles. The principle *al-'adah muhakkamah* provides a relevant analytical foundation, but its application requires consideration of *maslahah*, prevention of harm, and the fundamental objectives of Islamic law. In this context, *tahlilan* and *khataman Al-Qur'an* demonstrate how Islamic values can interact with Minangkabau cultural practices without necessarily producing a conflict between religion and tradition. Methodologically, the study also demonstrates the value of combining field observations, interviews, and normative analysis to examine living Islamic legal practices. The study therefore contributes to contemporary Islamic family and social law scholarship by presenting a contextual approach that recognizes cultural diversity while maintaining substantive Islamic legal standards.

This study has several limitations that should be considered in interpreting its findings. First, the research focuses specifically on Nagari Lubuak Gadang Timur in Sangir Subdistrict, South Solok Regency, so the findings should not be generalized to all communities practicing *tahlilan* and *khataman Al-Qur'an* in West Sumatra or other Indonesian regions. Second, the study relies primarily on qualitative observations, interviews, and documentary materials, which provide detailed contextual understanding but do not quantitatively measure the frequency, economic consequences, or broader social effects of these traditions. Third, differences in religious interpretation among community members may require deeper examination, particularly concerning the boundaries between '*urf shahih*', '*urf fasid*', '*bid'ah*', and *maslahah*. Future research could therefore compare several Minangkabau communities with different customary and religious configurations and examine how these practices are negotiated across generations. Comparative studies involving religious courts, Islamic educational institutions, and other community organizations may also provide broader insight into how '*urf*' operates as a mechanism for negotiating Islamic norms, local customs, social solidarity, and contemporary religious change.

Declarations

Author Contribution Statement

Taufik Ismail contributed to the conception, research design, data analysis, and writing of the manuscript. Nunu Burhanuddin contributed to the research design, critical revision, and final approval of the manuscript. Both authors contributed equally to the manuscript and approved the final version.

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Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. No publicly archived datasets were used or generated during the current research.

Declaration of Interests Statement

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

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