MOSQUES AND LITERACY READING OF THE QURAN: EMPOWERING MOSQUES AS EDUCATIONAL CENTERS DURING COVID-19 OUTBREAK

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Abstract

There are differences in the mosques performed before and during the Covid-19 pandemic, but these differences do not hinder the mosque's goals. This study aims to find out how the role of mosques in fostering reading the Qur'an during the Covid-19 pandemic and the inhibiting and supporting factors. Research on the involvement of mosques in the development of reading the Koran during the pandemic has been explored using a qualitative case study approach. The data collected was obtained using field research methods and literature studies. The findings in this study explain that the power of mosques as educational centers continues during the Covid-19 pandemic. The spirit of reading the Koran during the pandemic encountered several obstacles. This study provides distribution in theory and practice for Muslims during the Covid-19 pandemic for empowering mosques as an educational center.

INTRODUCTION

Since the Covid-19 pandemic began, various habits of people in the world have changed. One of the changes that can be felt is the limited implementation of Muslim religious activities. Due to the precarious condition of the world facing the problems caused by Covid-19, various state leaders have taken multiple policies. In dealing with these problems, Malaysia issued two different approaches to the implementation of religious activities. Namely, the Movement Control Order (MCO), which requires mosques as places of worship...
to be closed first, and the Recovery Control Movement Order (RMCO), which permits to carrying out of religious activities again (Abd Wahil et al., 2021). This policy is adjusted to the positive confirmed cases of Covid-19.

Another thing that happened in Turkey, they decided to keep mosques open, but visitors were required not to pray in the congregation (Idris et al., 2021). The total closure of mosque functions occurred in Palestine and Kuwait. Whereas in that country, the mosque is also used to collect social assistance and education for Palestinian children (Alhouti, 2020; Hamad et al., 2020). Several mosques in India have been converted into places of isolation for Covid-19 patients due to the spike in cases in the country (Anonim, 2021). The function of the mosque underwent drastic changes during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The mosque's function in Indonesia is to adjust the color of a zone that indicates the status of the Covid-19 infection. In the red area, mosques are closed, and in the green zone, they can open access to worship while still complying with health protocols, respectively (Dahlan et al., 2021). The mosque, initially a place of worship and an educational center, has changed its function to support the health sector during the Covid-19 pandemic. KH Hasyim Ashari Mosque is used as a place of isolation in Jakarta (Nafian, 2020). In addition, charitable activities in mosques have also changed their targets, which initially only focused on the public sector. However, during the pandemic, many infaq funds are earmarked for helping Covid-19 victims, such as necessities, disinfectant fluids, vitamins, infection prevention socialization, and so on (Kasri & Ramli, 2019; Munawaroh & Setiartiti, 2021; Suryani et al., 2020). Mosques as educational centers in various regions of Indonesia in the green zone are still being carried out. This activity is carried out by implementing health protocols such as the implementation of physical distancing. The educational development activities include recitation, taklim assemblies, hadroh development, qasidah, and al-Qur'an reading development (Mahmuddin et al., 2020). There are several differences between before and during the pandemic in the activities of cultivating the Qur'an.

The development of reading the Qur'an has a very noble goal, namely to make someone understand the holy book and become the main activity for Muslims (Palufi & Syahid, 2020). Mosques as places of worship and facilities for studying religion must adapt and innovate with the Covid-19 pandemic. This religious activity must continue without violating the rules imposed by the government. This, of course, presents its challenges for mosque managers and the Islamic community. Therefore, this study was conducted to determine the role of mosques in fostering reading the Qur'an during the Covid-19 pandemic. To enrich the information, this study also intends to summarize the obstacles and supporters of this program during the outbreak. This research is still rarely done, so it becomes essential in providing theoretical and practical implications. In summary, this research contributes to the discourse on managing and optimizing mosque functions during the Covid-19 pandemic by the government, community, and mosque managers.
LITERATURE REVIEW
The Role of the Mosque in the Qur'an

The existence of a mosque in the Muslim community has a significant role. All plans should start from the mosque, whether it be matters of religion, economy, politics, and all life problems, as the previous people used the mosque as a means to solve all problems (Harahap, 2018). History has proven that when the Prophet Muhammad SAW built a mosque in Quba, be it in Medina. The mosque was not only used as a place of worship. Even more than that, the learning process for generations of Islam, deliberation, marriage implementation saves the state treasury and cultural development. The use of the mosque as in the time of the Prophet also continued until the time of Khulafaur Rashidun after the death of the Prophet Muhammad. Based on the description above, it can be concluded that the use of mosques during the time of the Prophet Muhammad and Khulafaur Rashidun afterward was not only a place to perform obligatory prayers. But mosques are also used to organize all social problems based on Islamic religious guidance (Purwaningrum, 2021). The existence of mosques is currently easy to find in urban and rural areas by maintaining the function of the mosque.

The management and utilization of mosque functions include activities recommended by the Prophet Muhammad. Therefore, all Muslims have a role in carrying out this task, individually and socially as a whole society, as a form of faith and piety to Allah SWT (A. Kadim, Nardi Sunardi, Rosa Lesmana, 2019). The function of the mosque has so many scopes; in addition to functioning as a place to carry out various kinds of worship obligations, it also has an educational function, the function of forming the character of the people, and a social function. The mosque's position, which is very strategic in the view of Islam, is used as a separate benchmark to improve the quality of the form of the building and its prosperity (Suryorini, 2019). Utilization of the mosque's position is the treatment of previous people during the time of the Prophet Muhammad. The mosque is used as a place for Islamic education and teaching, such as forming the character of the people as great and noble individuals. Furthermore, the mosque has a fundamental role among Muslims, namely, growing physical strength and mental strength (Khairuni & Widyanto, 2018). Shared goals and achievements are the primary basis for policy-making and mosque management to optimally improve the function and role of mosques (Taufiq, 2020).

The symbol that is very attached to the existence of Muslims can be seen from the mosque because it reflects the Islamic relationship and brotherhood. All worship that Allah SWT has made obligatory for humans is done in mosques. In this place, Islam also performs social worship that is closer to human problems. So it is not surprising that the Messenger of Allah first arrived in Yathrib (Madinah). The first thing he did was to build a mosque as a means of physical and spiritual education for Muslims, a tool of discussion, a place of teaching, and a place for training soldiers for war. So the words of the Syrian scholar and scientist Muhammad Said Ramadhan al-Buthi are exact. The
mosque is the primary basis that is very important for the process of growing an Islamic generation. Sticking with the right aqidah and living a life according to Islamic teachings can make people disciplined and have a noble character. These good qualities will grow and develop with enthusiasm for the prosperity of the mosque (Haidi, 2019). In managing a mosque, common goals become the essential foundation for increasing the role of the mosque.

In a good way, the mosque management system is part of the activities for prospering the mosque. Because one of the activities to grow the mosque is the obligation of Muslim believers. Allah SWT says in QS. At-Taubah verse 18 which means: "Only those who prosper the mosques of Allah are those who believe in Allah and the Last Day and continue to pray, pay zakat and do not fear (of anyone) other than Allah, then they are the ones who people who are expected to be included in the group of people who receive instructions" (Sriyono, Dewi Komala Sari, Rizky Eka Febriansah, 2019). The regulatory system used by a group of people towards the mosque dramatically affects the comfort of its congregation. This can generate sensitivity and concern for the community in managing and playing an active role in prospering the mosque so that the function of the mosque is realized as a place to carry out worship such as a place for studying Islamic lessons, a place of Itikaf, and various other types of prayer (Saefudin, Surya Darma Batu Bara, Khaerul Wahidin, 2020). Different Islamic learning and educational activities are significant for Muslims of all ages.

The application of the religious sciences that have been studied must be practiced every day, starting from the knowledge of aqidah, adab, and worship. Worship is an obligation of a Muslim, such as praying and reading the Qur'an. Prayer is evidence of human submission to Allah, and reading the Qur'an as an effort by creatures to explore information written in the Qur'an as a guidance that can save in this world and the hereafter (Aminah et al., 2018). The process of learning religious knowledge, especially the development of reading the Qur'an, is not solely borne by formal schools such as elementary schools or higher, but the role of parents, places of Islamic education in the community, such as Al-Qur'an Education Centers (TPA). /TPQ. Al-Qur'an learning places fostered by the Mosque Welfare Council (DKM) and mosque youth have a very active role in teaching Islamic subjects. This indicates that the part and function of mosques in Indonesia is not only used for worship obligatory such as prayer but mosques are also used as a means to spread Islamic knowledge, such as fostering reading of the Qur'an (Iskandar & Amirullah, 2020).

METHOD

This research uses the type of field research or field research using a qualitative approach. The qualitative approach is a research process that is useful for knowing various human and social phenomena that function to produce clear and detailed information that can be compiled into words—providing complex perspectives sourced from several informants and arranged in a natural setting (Awasthy, 2019). The data collection method used in this study uses interviews and observations so that the data obtained is the actual
data from the research object (Moorley & Cathala, 2019). Qualitative descriptive data analysis focuses on data processing to produce data as needed in research (Alalwan et al., 2016). This study uses a deductive-inductive data processing method, which can provide a comprehensive analysis of existing data (Azungah, 2018).

RESULT

This research was carried out in the Orang Kayo Hitam Village, precisely at the Yusrein mosque. Yusrein Mosque was built in 1972, with an age of 49 years. In 2015 this mosque underwent a total change from a physical point of view, which was initially a tiny plank building to a magnificent and more comprehensive 2-story building with a capacity to accommodate worshipers of approximately 50-60 people. This building has brick walls painted white with a height of roughly 15 meters. The Yusrein Mosque has undergone at least two physical changes to suit the community’s needs by not eliminating its primary role. The location of the Yusrein mosque is not too far from the Magat Sari Grand Mosque, namely in the Orang Kayo Hitam village, Pasar sub-district, Jambi. The Yusrein Mosque is also not that wide when compared to the Great Mosque. Right in the courtyard of the mosque is the main road for the community and not far from the market center so that almost every time the congregation prays this mosque quite a lot. With a reasonably strategic location, the Yusrein mosque is easy to find, and this has an impact on taking pictures that have problems, as shown in Figure 1.1 and Figure 1.2 below.

Building a mosque basically requires knowledge of how to manage a mosque. The modern management process that is widely used today is a beneficial tool in the mosque development process and is implemented by mosque administrators (Mannuhung & Tenrigau, 2018). For the mosque to benefit the surrounding community, the role and function of the mosque must be carried out. This will not work unless there is excellent and regular management. To maximize the process of building the mosque, Masjid Welfare Council (DKM) must focus on three aspects, including management aspects (idarah), fostering the prosperity of the mosque (Imarah), the maintenance

Figure 1.1. The front of the Yusrein Mosque

Figure 1.2. Indoor of the Yusrein Mosque
of the mosque (riayah) (Novryaldy et al., 2018). Quality mosque organization can be seen from the programs carried out by mosque administrators in an orderly and organized manner. Part of the management of ijarah is administration. There are several critical administrative programs, namely mosque financial bookkeeping, mosque financial reports, daily activity lists, congregational records and others. The aspect of fostering the prosperity of the mosque (imarah) can be seen from the role of the mosque in empowering the people. Furthermore, aspects of mosque maintenance (riayah) which can be known in terms of physical form and infrastructure are always considered and improved for the better.

The maintenance of all mosque facilities is no less critical in the mosque development process. The existing facilities are maintained and can be better and used as a management process, the needs of the congregation and the needs of other Muslims. Maintenance of all mosque facilities is an activity that is mandatory for Muslims, from maintaining cleanliness to caring for the environment around the mosque (Qism et al., 2019). Carrying out maintenance can have a positive effect, increasing the longevity of an item's use so that it saves expenses. In addition, the cleanliness of the mosque and its surroundings can also provide comfort to visitors in worshiping and carrying out activities at the mosque. The Yusrein Mosque is also inseparable from maintenance activities. Mosque administrators always routinely clean the mosque so that it is kept clean, especially during the Covid-19 pandemic.

**The Guidance of Reading the Qur'an at the Mosque**

Yusrein Mosque continues to carry out various religious activities during the Covid-19 pandemic, one of which is the guidance of reading the Qur'an. Based on Figure 2, the Covid-19 pandemic has caused many changes. The guidance for reading the Qur'an has new challenges, starting from the application of health protocols, quality assurance, dealing with the impact of the pandemic on the guidance of reading the Qur'an, and the support of parents. In a joint decision of the Minister of Home Affairs and the Minister of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia Number 128 of 1982/44 A 82 which states that it is essential to increase the ability to read and write the Qur'an for Muslims to grow experience and appreciation in everyday life. The existence of this joint decision was further strengthened by the instruction of the Minister of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia No. 3 of 1990 concerning Activities to Improve the Quality of Reading and Writing of the Qur'an. Based on the decision above that it is crucial for Muslims to improve their ability to read the Qur'an and understand it, it is essential to develop Qur'an reading development (Sudarmono et al., 2020). Especially with the Covid-19 pandemic, which is uncertain when it will end, mosque administrators and related agencies can provide directions and solutions on how the guidance of reading the Qur'an can still be carried out. Guidance for reading the Qur'an is a program that focuses on children from the age of 3-12 years.
During the Covid-19 pandemic, the Yusrein mosque management continued to guide on reading the Qur'an. The advice for reading the Qur'an was carried out with a fixed location inside the Yusrein mosque. The implementation of the guidance for reading the Qur'an has certainly undergone several changes due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In adjusting to the pandemic situation, the Yusrein mosque administrator carried out health protocols such as physical distancing, routinely cleaning the mosque every day, providing a place for washing hands complete with soap, and spraying disinfectants regularly. Physical distancing must be carried out at a distance of 1 meter. Spraying of disinfectants is carried out especially in most frequently touched areas, such as door handles, windows, tables, bathroom surfaces, toilets, and faucets. Washing hands is also the right step in breaking the chain of the spread of Covid-19 (Anonim, 2020). In addition, the Yusrein mosque also has good air ventilation so that air exchange occurs from the outside into the mosque. Good air ventilation can reduce the risk of spreading the virus compared to being in a room with poor ventilation (Emaputra et al., 2021).

In the implementation of the guidance on reading the Qur'an at the Yusrein mosque, the administrators took another policy, namely reducing the duration of learning to 45 minutes starting from before sunset until the time for the Isha prayer. The reduction in period is expected to help reduce the risk of spreading the virus and implement the health protocols that mosque administrators have carried out. During the pandemic, the implementation of the Qur'an reading training experienced a reduction in the number of
participants by 50% of the total number of participants. The mosque management also appealed to mosque visitors, especially participants in the guidance to read the Qur'an, wash their hands, and wear masks while in the mosque. The use of shows when worshiping in mosques can reduce the risk of contracting the Covid-19 virus, the policy of using masks is not only enforced in Indonesian mosques but also in other countries, such as Malaysia and Turkey (Hasibuan et al., 2021; Ridho, 2020; Syah et al., 2020).

Implementation of guidance on reading the Qur'an in carrying out health protocols uses mosque cash and receiving assistance from the village government. Mosque administrators do not collect donations or charge fees for the guidance given to read the Qur'an. This guidance for reading the Qur'an is an effort so that children can read the Qur'an with the correct reading from an early age and become one of the places to study religion (Az-Zanurji, 2019). Therefore, it is essential to evaluate to improve the coaching program in the future. One of the evaluation efforts carried out by the implementing party is to measure the success of the Qur'an reading coaching program through the recitation of coaching participants. However, it is regrettable that the participants of the training to read the Qur'an rarely participate in competitions between sub-districts and higher levels due to the lack of enthusiasm of the people in the Yusrein mosque environment.

Teachers who teach reading the Qur'an at the Yusrein mosque are given salaries by the local government or use the mosque's treasury. The government gives teachers a stipend for local area teachers who have been registered at the Between Magrib and Isya Study (PAMI). PAMI itself is an official program regulated in Jambi Mayor Regulation, Number 12 of 2016, as part of the symbols of Islam (Anonim, 2016). The program is also very intensive in educating children to understand the Qur'an from an early age to prepare children for socializing in society (Muftitama., 2017). Teachers who are registered at PAMI are paid a Rapel system every 2 or 3 months. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the coaching program will continue to be implemented despite a significant reduction in the study duration and the number of participants.

Inhibiting and Supporting Factors

The implementation of the guidance on reading the Qur'an at the Yusrein mosque faced internal and external obstacles. The inner barrier is the lack of the performance of the advice on reading the Qur'an. At the same time, the outer block is related to granting permission from the participants' parents to take part in the training. The duration of the implementation of the coaching, which has been reduced, causes the teaching and learning process to be less conducive. This condition is compounded by parents who do not give permission for participants to take part in the implementation of coaching due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Some people still limit their children's activities during the Covid-19 pandemic, causing a reduction in the number of participants for reading the Qur'an. In addition to the factors that hinder the
implementation of the guidance for reading the Qur'an, there are supporting factors that strengthen the reasons for continuing to hold coaching activities during the pandemic. Supporting factors are the full support of the local government in the implementation of guidance and assistance from the government related to the performance of health protocols in mosques. The local government, both the RT and the Lurah, gave full permission for the implementation of the guidance to read the Qur'an during the pandemic.

CONCLUSION

Guidance for reading the Qur'an at the Yusrein mosque will continue to be carried out during the Covid-19 pandemic. The implementation of the advice will continue to be held at the mosque by reducing the duration of learning and continuing to implement health protocols. The Yusrein mosque uses cash and gets assistance from the village government to implement the health protocol. In the implementation of the guidance to read the Qur'an, of course, various obstacles are starting from the less duration of learning time and parental permission. In addition, the support from the head of the mosque management in ensuring the implementation of the guidance of reading the Qur'an is a supporting factor in its performance.

REFERENCE


