

From Mosque to Society: Grounding Islamic Teachings and Social Ethos Within The Framework of Indonesian Nationalism

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This research intends to investigate the role of mosques in embedding Islamic teachings and establishing a social ethos that aligns with the principles of unity, justice, and tolerance in the national and state life in Indonesia. **Method:** This research uses a qualitative approach in the form of a literature review (literature study) by reviewing books, scientific articles, and documents related to the role of mosques in community development and religious moderation. **Results:** The results show mosques have a significant opportunity to be agents of social change through inclusive and modular da'wa (Islamic proselytizing) activities, education, and empowerment. Furthermore, mosques can serve as links between religious doctrines and national values in the participative and contextual design of their programs. **Novelty:** This research proposes the implementation of optimizing mosques as national parameters for religious moderation, social cohesion, and national integration. Collaboration between leaders, citizens, and their institutions is necessary to ensure that mosque activities are sustainable, inclusive, and able to respond to local community needs.

INTRODUCTION

The mosque is a central institution in the Islamic tradition, which from the time of Prophet Muhammad SAW not only serves as a ritual worship place, but also an education centers, social and community development. Fifth, The Prophet's Mosque History | a space for the formation of social ethics that strengthens solidarity and public decision making among Muslims. In this sense the mosque can be seen as representing a continuum of the intersection between Islam's spiritual and social aspects. Modern Islamic thinkers stress the need for Islam to progress beyond the normative-theological realm into implementation, translating its values and teachings into concrete social realities [1], [2], [3].

Mosques have a strategic space to plant Islam to be rahmatan lilalamin (rahma for the universe) in Indonesia as a nation that has diversity of religion, culture and ethnicity. The dialogical and historical relations of Islam and nationality in Indonesia imply that Islamic values also shape a national ethos as justice, brotherhood, and the principle of mutual cooperation. Azyumardi Azra who is the prominent Indonesian intellectual points out that Islam in Indonesia has evolved as a result of creative adaptation to the realities of local socio culture which give rise to a moderate and inclusive pattern [4] In this context, mosques also have the opportunity to become strategic spaces for the affirmation of Islamic and national values.

Nonetheless, the mosque system has serious challenges in optimizing its role within new socio-political fabrics. Not a few mosques are still stuck in ceremonial functions and even become a medium that spread an exclusive religious understanding not in the spirit of nationalism. This dissonance demonstrates a disconnect between Islamic teachings with a healthy social ethos to what is practiced at the community level. Thus, we need both conceptual and practical efforts to re-empower the function of mosques as an agent of social transformation that can instill Islamic teachings contextual (gelar) and are able to STRENGTHEN socio-religious ethos and national commitment in social life or state [5], [6].

The mosque is fundamental from an Islamic perspective, with profound theological and social significance. Based on etymology, the term mosque is derived from the root word *sajada* which means to submit and prostrate so that mosque can be understood as a place of servanthood of human beings in front of Allah SWT. However, in the overall form Islamic teachings, mosque is not only interpreted as an arena ritual but also a central formation values of efficacy community and civilization. The Qur'an explains that the purpose of a mosque is closely linked to piety and social welfare, in which this can be found through the commandment to prosper the mosque with faith, good deeds and social concern (QS. At-Taubah [9]: 18) [2].

First, the Prophet's Mosque, as the first mosque built in Islam, is an ultimate and very practical reference for an integrated mosque. In the time of the Prophet Muhammad, the mosque was at once a center for worship, education, deliberation and even managing social and political affairs. Here indeed in this mosque are the true seeds of *ukhuwwah* brotherhood, justice and social responsibility sown into the life of the Medina people. This also is a historical fact, according to *Madjid*, that the mosque as a religious public space which are open and inclusive toward improvement of society in general [1].

Complementary to this, modern Islamic thought views mosques as strategic institutions in the construction of society's ethos. Islamic values, including social justice (*al-'adl*), mutual assistance (*ta'āwun*) and concern for the weak, are at the core of the mosque's mission. Yusuf al-Qardhawi stressed that Islamic preaching must be directed to social priorities, in which the mosque serves as a medium of educating the community so that Islamic teachings can present itself as solution to the problems of poverty, inequality and moral decadence [6]. It means that mosque is a medium in internalizing Islamic values which have implications for directly affecting the social activity in the society.

In a modern society and nation state such as Indonesia, the Islamic perspective on mosques calls for a contextualization of mosque function in order to remain relevant with social dynamics. The mosque is inseparable from the reality of pluralism, nationhood and globalization. Hence, in an ideal world the mosque must be an institution of education where moderate and inclusive Islam is learnt – a space for national Islamic perspective. This is in line with the concept of *Islam rahmatan lil 'alamin*, so that the mosque becomes a dynamic center for sowing the values of peace, tolerance and social responsibility in community life and national life [4], [5].

Social ethos are thus placed between faith and acting upon the religious teachings in Islam. Islam never governs only the human–God relationship (*ḥabl min Allāh*), it also organizes human relationships (*ḥabl min al-nās*) with rules. Justice (*al-'adl*), brotherhood (*ukhuwwah*), social concern (*ta'āwun*) up to collective responsibility (*mas'uliyah ijtima'iyah*) are the fundamental values that can be found in the Qur'an and hadith, both explicitly or implicitly. These numbers are a philosophy that the foundation of civilization and justice society part of the common good [1].

The diskur of justice (*al-'adl*) in Islam has high social dimension and cannot be confined to formal law but either economic, political and socio-justice. AL-MA'IDAH: 8)The Qur'an posits justice as a universal law that must be maintained without discrimination against by religion or social group (QS. Al-Mā'idah [5]: 8). Justice according to M. Quraish Shihab is a moral value and social demand in Islam that obliged them to be committed to the truth and protect those who are exploited. Therefore, the principle of justice is an essential element in building a prosperous and civilized social life [2].

Besides justice, Islamic teachings are also concerned with brotherhood (*ukhuwwah*) and social care (*ta'āwun*). Brotherhood as an aspect in Islam is not limited only to the people alone (*ukhuwwah islāmiyyah*), But human brotherhood (*ukhuwwah insāniyyah*) also part of this God said: The principle of "taawun" (mutual assistance in goodness and piety) encourages Muslims to actively participate in the resolution of social issues such as poverty, inequality, and social marginalization. Social concern, he stressed, is a true expression of faith in such a way that Islamic teaching can never be removed from the commitment to justice and social solidarity [6].

Moreover, Islamic teachings also highlight collective responsibility (*mas'uliyah ijtima'iyah*) in community life. Within the Muslim faith, society is understood to have its own moral characteristics and requires that every person be morally aware and responsible for holding social standards and not allowing for decay of such values. The idea of *amar ma'ruf nahi munkar* is a solid manifestation of collective responsibility and the principle of social ethos. In relation to the modern world, nation state and society itself, this Islamic social ethos can play an important role in fortifying social cohesion, national solidarity and promoting religious moderation. Hence, the key to shaping a just, inclusive and civilized society is by internalizing Islamic values that are based on social ethos [4], [5].

There is a unique and historical character in the relationship between Islam and nationality in Indonesia. To be sure, Islam took root and developed in the archipelago along a peaceful, dialogical path, and an accommodation of local cultures. This process formed a relatively moderate religious pattern that was receptive to varied social circumstances. In this regard, Islam was not placed as the counter (antithesis) of nationality in Indonesian history, but became the source of moral values and social ethics that became the glue for national identity. One of them is reflected in the participation of Muslim figures in both the fight for independence as well as in laying down the base of State [1].

In terms of concepts, the meeting between Islam and nationality in Indonesia is rooted on universal values such as justice, unity, deliberation and humanity. These values are in accordance with the common law that is Pancasila and 1945 Law. According to Azyumardi Azra, the development of Indonesian Islam is a creative negotiation between normative teachings of Islam with socio political context of the nation which give birth an Islamic tradition does not conflict with the nation -state. Under this paradigm Islam, as a source of public ethics, supports social cohesion and national integration [4].

From the perspective of contemporary political and social dynamics, Islam and nationality in Indonesia hold a dialectical notion that has its own complexity. Transnational religious consciousness, the politicization of religion, and identity exclusivism narratives could lead to tensions between Islamic/ national loyalty. This challenge requires us to re-articulate the fact that (Muslim) religion and (Turkmen) nationality are not competing forces. The idea of the fusion between Islam and state in Indonesia, Bahtiar Effendy stated that it must be understood substantively so that Islamic values will become the moral inspiration of national life rather than a political tool domination [5].

As a result, strengthening national Islamic insight is one of the important agenda in Socio-religious life within Indonesia. National Islam is echoed by the realization that a true religious system must be in harmony with the commitment to continue to maintain Unity, Tolerance and Social Justice within the framework of the Unitary State of Republic of Indonesia. Religious institutions, including mosques, play a strategic role in this context as place of internalization for Islamic values with national perspectives. In this way Islam could still intervene in a constructive manner in the formation of Indonesian values, which are peaceful, inclusive and civilized [1], [2].

RESEARCH METHOD

This study deployed qualitative research because it seeks to gain in-depth understanding about the concept, meaning and relations of mosques, religious teachings of Islam, social ethos and nationality in Indonesia. In this way, researchers try to explore the ideas, thoughts and theoretical constructs of scientists and authoritative sources related to research theme. The literature method permits researchers to explore, compare, and synthesize scientific variety about the social function of mosques and the integration of Islamic values with nationality [7], [8], [9].

The methodology used to collect data for this study includes primary and secondary sources. The primary data include classical and contemporary books on Islam, mosques, social ethos, and nationality while the secondary data comprise articles from scientific journals, policy documents and other pertinent writing. Literature inventory, critical reading and thematic recording were used to carry out data collection techniques. This data were analyzed descriptively-analytically, specifically systematically describing the data and afterwards analyzing it to seek conceptual connections between Islamic teachings and national social practices. It is hoped that through this method, it will

generate a holistic insight into the function of mosques as a vehicle for anchoring Islamic teachings and revitalizing social strength in the context of Indonesian nationality [10].

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Mosques as Agents of Social Transformation

They are trained on to understand data-based mosques in Islam as institutions that play a strategic role in constructing the social order of society. From the time of its establishment, the mosque has also been promoted as a site not only for ritual worship but for moral, social, and community development. In terms of history, mosques as an institution have also proven to be successful means for transforming society through the internalisation of values such as justice, equity and social solidarity within Islam. The mosque at that time was also a public space which fostered growing collective awareness among the people, removed social stratification and in - forming a society based on foundations of brotherhood and shared responsibility" see Madjid [1].

In the capacity of da'wah, mosque serves as an educational and social enlightenment center for the society. Through sermons, religious study groups and religious discourse mosques have a strategic function to theologise the context from textual faith to more contextual and solution-oriented interpretation of faith. Da`wah menuju perubahan sosial mengedepankan ajaran agama Islam sebagai pedoman etika untuk menanggapi persoalan kemiskinan, keperdayaan dan dekadensi moral. The role of mosques is a reinforcing factor in building the social ethos of society that builds honesty, works hard, cares about social care and public civility [2].

In addition to this educational purpose, the mosque serves a function in social and economic empowerment of the community. With the arrangement of the mosque zakat, infaq and alms can be significantly as a breath of fresh air to overcome social inequality and improve community welfare. Concern for the poor and vulnerable groups is an integral part of faith in Islam, hence requiring mosques to be actively involved in addressing socio-economic problems affecting the society. According to Yusuf al-Qardhawi, religious institutions need to be focused on social issues and mosques have to play the role of locomotive for solidarity and social justice [6].

Indonesia as a pluralistic and multicultural society must realize that mosques as agents of social transformation also have the duty to strengthening the values of tolerance and nationalism among congregations. Mosques should, ideally, be open spaces that indicate how we can live peacefully together despite our different faiths and cultural and political views. According to Azyumardi Azra, the face of Indonesian Islam is shaped by a process of dialogue and adaptation with the social reality of this nation so that mosques strategically participate in rooting it as a moderate, tolerant and nationally united Islam [4].

However, the maximum role of mosques as agents of social change still faces various challenges such as limited human resources, unprofessional mosque management and absorbing exclusive religious ideologies which have the potential to reduce the social function of mosques. Nonetheless, mosque revitalization efforts must

be carried out by improving the governance of mosques, enhancing the capacity of preachers and mosque administrators as well as working together with other elements in society and the state. With visionary governance in the spirit of public service, mosques have a strategic position as social change agents that strengthen civility, justice, and unity within the borders of Indonesian nationality [5], [11].

Grounding Islamic Teachings in Community Life

It means that all Islamic teaching must be grounded, it is inherently an exercise to externalise in a dynamic way an ideal set of normative values of Islam. Islam was not sent down as a personal belief system only; it is a life guide, the sole religion in which human relations with God and between people are governed. As a result it requires Islamic faith to be combined with social piety, as religiosity in Islam must involve the direct relationship between personal piety and social piety. Islam does not only teach the dogma of faith, but Islamic teachings must be reflected in social behavior that is idealistic and great [1], [12].

The peculiar nature of da'wah, the need for context, communication and response to social issues demands deep-rootedness in Islamic teachings. Da'wah is not just limited to normative textual delivery, but must be able to translate Islamic messages into concrete solutions for natural problems that are related to poverty, inequality, social vulnerability and moral crisis. If Islamic teachings are mere theory and not presented as an ethical force to touch on the realities of community life, then Islamic teachings are powerless to change. M. Quraish Shihab Hence, Islamic da'wah should ideally be transformational and inspires social changes towards a more just and civilized orders [2].

Through the reinforcement of a social ethos that embodies honesty, hard work, caring and collective responsibility also reflect the application of Islamic teachings in society. The basic principles of Islamic teachings that directly relates to the quality of social life are these values. As a faith, Islam calls on its followers to contribute substantially towards fostering collective welfare by promoting mutual aid (ta'āwun) and social solidarity. Qardhawi 845 for instance insisted that genuine religiosity is how much Islam and its teachings are able to realize social justice, and safety for weak groups in society [6].

In plural and multicultural Indonesia, thus grounding the teachings of Islam means to strengthen tolerance values, moderation, and national commitment. Islam lives and grows in a pluralistic social space; therefore, its practice must align with the pillars of peaceful coexistence. According to Azyumardi Azra, Indonesian Islam developed through a process of dialogue and adjustment with local socio-cultural realities that led to the birth of religious traditions inclusive and moderate. In this context, the act of grounding Islam holds that Islamic teachings should be a source of public ethics that solidify national unity and social cohesion [4], [13].

On the contrary, there are many problems in an attempt to place Islamic teachings into modern contexts such as the formalisation of religion towards a rigid institution that separates humanity, exclusivism and misunderstandings of religious meaning and globalization which does not necessary that will preserve society's values. This challenge

calls for the reinforcement of substance-based Islamic literacy. Thus, the synergy between religious institutions, religious leaders and the community in navigating Islamic teachings better-contextualized and sustained. With this radical approach, so Islam still be a moral force that held the life of the people reached just, peaceful and civilized social order based on Indonesian nationality [5], [14].

Islamic Social Ethos in the Framework of Indonesian Nationalism

Islamic social ethos: is an ethical value that comes from Islamic teachings which act as a moral foundation in the life of society. Fundamental concepts like justice (al-'adl), brotherhood (ukhuwwah), social concern (ta'āwun) and collective responsibility (mas'uliyah ijtimaiyyah) lie at the heart of Islamic teachings. This civic ethos draws out the implications of practice beyond individual-ritual dimensions to social practices embodying civility, solidarity, and shared prosperity. The Islamic social ethos, therefore, is of direct relevance for constructing a just and humane order for national life [1], [12].

Significantly, in the Indonesian context the Islamic social ethos has an intrinsic relationship with national values enshrined in Pancasila and 1945 Constitution. Social justice, unity, deliberation, humanity – the principles reflect the linkage between what Islam teaches and what we yearn for as a nation. Here, Islam does not play the role of an adversarial ideology to the state but a source of public ethics that enhances national life. Nurcholish Madjid explains that Islam must have a substantive relationship with nationality, i.e. Islam as the moral inspiration of the public without having to formalize it in the form of a religious state [1].

The implementation of the social ethos of Islam in a national framework is also seen by strengthening values of brotherhood across identities. According to Islamic definition, ukhuwwah is not limited only to brotherhood between Muslims (ukhuwwah islāmiyyah), but extends even to national brotherhood (ukhuwwah waṭaniyyah) and human brotherhood (ukhuwwah insāniyyah). In Indonesia's religiously, ethnically and culturally diverse setting, buttressing this spirit of brotherhood is an essential precursor to sustaining social cohesion and national harmony. Azyumardi Azra illustrates how the character of Indonesian Islam was born from dialogue and adaptation to socio-national reality, resulting in a moderate, inclusive, and nationalist-oriented religious tradition [4], [15].

In addition Islam social ethos requires a kalima that actively addressing the issue of poverty and job security, social inequality, intolerance and structural injustice. Social Justice is one of the principles in Islam that motivates people to be part of a holistic and sustainable development. So, Islamic teachings serve as the social ethics which guides collective behavior among people to align with national and human interest. According to M. Quraish Shihab, Islamic values will have a meaning in national life when they are realized in the attitudes of social life that upholds justice, tolerance and responsibility [2].

The embodiment of Islamic social ethos in the context of national integration in Indonesian identity, however, is still experiencing challenges, among others religious exclusivism and politicization of identity as well as weakening social solidarity influenced by changes and globalization social. In this context, This challenge calls for

strengthening the understanding of Islam with an eye on the essence of teachings rather than religious symbolisms. So an effective role be given to religious institutions, religious figures, educational institutions and civil society to embed an Islamic social ethos compatible with national values. In this perspective, Islamic social ethos would become a moral force that can support national unity, social justice, and the integrity of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia [5], [13], [14].

Challenges and Opportunities

Mosques are expected to ground Islamic teachings that strengthen the social ethos of nationalism in this country but there is a structural and cultural challenge which is not an easy task. These challenges are limited human resource capacity of mosque managers, weak institutional governance, and continuing dominance of ritualistic orientation neglecting social function of mosques. Moreover, the infiltration of exclusivist and transnational forces of faith along with a politicization of religion in mosques can transform their role from centers of moral and social flourishing to sites of identity conflict. This situation does not escape from the gap between ideality of mosque as social transformation agent and reality on religious practices at local level [5], [11].

However, mosques have a great potential to emerge as vibrant social institutions serving effectively in national life. The large number of mosques, their proximity to local communities, and the high level of public trust in them render those places a valuable social capital. The evolution of digital technology, the consolidation of moderate Islamic discourse, collaboration opportunities with educational institutions and governmental and civil society organizations provide new avenues for strengthening mosques' social role. Azyumardi Azra stated that fortifying the moderation-based religious institutions is one of the main gemstones for social harmony and national integration. Managed professionally and inclusively as well as with the public interest in mind, mosques have opportunities to become key engines for social transformation that strengthen civility, solidarity and unity" [15], [16].

CONCLUSION

Fundamental Finding: Mosques are strategically positioned as religious and social institutions that play a crucial role in casting Islamic values and molding the social ethos of society. They function as educational facilities, preachers for transformation, and socio-economic development institutions, embodying Islamic values like justice, brotherhood, social concern, and collective responsibility. In Indonesia's pluralistic context, mosques have the potential to internalize moderate Islamic teachings, contributing significantly to social cohesion and public civility. **Implication:** The correlation between Islamic principles and national culture highlights that religiosity and nationality are complementary, reinforcing each other. Mosques have the capacity to instill values of unity, tolerance, and social justice in the context of the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, thereby strengthening national integration and displaying Islam as a constructive moral force in social and national life. **Limitation:** The study does not explore the specific challenges or barriers mosques face in fully

optimizing their role as agents of social change, nor does it address the regional differences in mosque functions and effectiveness across Indonesia. **Future Research:** Future studies could focus on the professional management and contextual Islamic literacy within mosques, exploring how these elements contribute to the promotion of religious moderation. Additionally, research could investigate the practical steps needed to rehabilitate the mosque's role in social change and integration within diverse communities.

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