



THE ROLE OF MOSQUE CARETAKERS' SOCIAL WELFARE IN MAINTAINING MOSQUE CLEANLINESS: A CASE STUDY IN SAYUR- MATINGGI VILLAGE

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ABSTRACT

The role of mosque custodians (marbot) is crucial in maintaining the cleanliness and security of the mosque environment. Despite its importance, the social welfare of marbots is often suboptimal, particularly in terms of salary. This study explores the social welfare of marbots in managing mosque cleanliness, with a focus on salary, work facilities, and recognition of their contributions. The research was conducted at Ar-Rahman Grand Mosque in Sayurmatinggi Village using descriptive techniques and a qualitative approach. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation in February 2024. Data triangulation was employed to ensure the reliability and validity of the findings. The results indicate that the social welfare of marbots in managing mosque cleanliness is still suboptimal, especially concerning salaries. The role of marbots extends beyond physical cleanliness to include significant social interactions with congregants, contributing to a positive atmosphere in the mosque. Enhancing the social welfare of marbots through better salaries, adequate work facilities, and recognition of their contributions is essential for increasing their motivation and commitment to maintaining mosque cleanliness.

Keywords: Social Welfare, Mosque Custodian, Maintaining Cleanliness

ABSTRAK

Peran marbot sangat penting dalam menjaga kebersihan dan keamanan lingkungan masjid. Meskipun penting, kesejahteraan sosial marbot seringkali tidak optimal, terutama dalam hal gaji. Penelitian ini mengeksplorasi kesejahteraan sosial marbot dalam mengelola kebersihan masjid, dengan fokus pada gaji, fasilitas kerja, dan pengakuan atas kontribusinya. Penelitian ini dilakukan di Masjid Raya Ar-Rahman di Desa Sayurmatinggi dengan menggunakan teknik deskriptif dan pendekatan kualitatif. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi pada bulan Februari 2024. Triangulasi data digunakan untuk memastikan keandalan dan validitas temuan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa kesejahteraan sosial marbot dalam mengelola kebersihan masjid masih belum optimal, terutama terkait gaji. Peran marbot tidak hanya terbatas pada kebersihan fisik, tetapi juga interaksi sosial yang signifikan dengan jamaah, yang berkontribusi pada suasana positif di masjid. Meningkatkan kesejahteraan sosial marbot melalui gaji yang lebih baik, fasilitas kerja yang memadai, dan pengakuan atas kontribusi mereka sangat penting untuk meningkatkan motivasi dan komitmen mereka dalam menjaga kebersihan masjid.

Kata Kunci: Kesejahteraan Sosial, Pengurus Masjid, Menjaga Kebersihan



INTRODUCTION

A “marbot” is an individual responsible for managing a mosque, primarily focusing on maintaining cleanliness and ensuring user comfort. This role includes tasks such as calling the adhan, acting as a substitute imam, and overseeing various aspects of mosque maintenance (Rahmayani & Hidir, 2020). Despite their crucial role, marbots are often overlooked. However, their contributions are highly valued in Islamic tradition, with Prophet Muhammad PBUH recognizing the importance of those who keep mosques clean.

The duties of a marbot extend beyond basic maintenance; they are tasked with ensuring the mosque remains a sanctified place, including handling cleanliness, maintaining ablution areas, and safeguarding mosque property. The continuous presence of marbots in the mosque underscores their dedication, compared to other mosque officials who are only present at specific times (Putra, 2019). Therefore, it is crucial for mosque management to adequately support marbots to enhance their performance and dedication.

Given the fundamental role marbots play in mosque management, it is essential for them to be agile and progressive individuals. Besides religious knowledge, marbots require basic maintenance skills such as mopping, painting, plumbing, and electrical knowledge. Despite the critical nature of their work, the low wages and high dedication required deter many from becoming marbots, leading to limited opportunities for them to engage in common social activities (Fanny Prima, Akhmad, et al., n.d.).

Fatimah highlights the importance of cleanliness, noting that cleanliness is loved by Allah SWT, is essential for health and strength, beauty, and fostering human relationships. Therefore, community cooperation with marbots is vital in maintaining the cleanliness of mosque facilities, thereby promoting a healthy and clean environment conducive to religious activities (Fatimah, 2022).

The concept of cleanliness, as linguistically defined, relates to being free from dirt and sin, whereas being clean means keeping oneself and one's environment free from all forms of dirt (Yasyin, 1995). For Muslims, cleanliness is an obligation, and a comprehensive approach to cleanliness is believed to result in a protected, vibrant, and prosperous community (Bahar, 2012). Poor sanitation in mosque offices and inadequate disinfection practices can lead to the spread of diseases, creating an uncondusive climate for workers (AILSA et al., 2021).

The mosque is a sacred place where Muslims fulfill their religious obligations, particularly prayer. Therefore, the mosque must remain uncontaminated by actions such as littering, graffiti, or spitting (Muzayyanah et al., 2020). Given the frequent use of mosques for various religious activities, it is crucial to maintain their cleanliness at all times. All Muslims are responsible for ensuring that their places of worship remain clean and hygienic. Essential steps to maintain mosque cleanliness include regularly sweeping and mopping floors, cleaning toilets and ablution areas, dusting and organizing Quran reading areas, and washing prayer clothes weekly (Handoko, 2023).

In the village of Sayurmatangi, the role of marbots in ensuring mosque cleanliness is crucial to providing a comfortable worship environment. Understanding the social welfare of marbots is vital to ensuring the smooth running of religious activities in the mosque. Marbots typically receive salaries or allowances from local donations and gifts, though often inconsistently. They may also receive occasional financial assistance during community events or religious holidays as a token of appreciation (Patriawan, 2024).

The Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia defines welfare as overall safety, security, and well-being, while Indonesian law explains social welfare as a state of material and spiritual well-being that allows individuals to meet their physical, spiritual, and social needs (Husna, 2014). When related to marbots, their welfare can be assessed by their ability to lead a decent life, particularly in meeting basic human needs. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, this includes fulfilling physical and safety needs, love and esteem needs, and self-actualization (Dama, n.d.).

Indonesian Government Regulation No. 39 of 2012 on Social Welfare highlights the importance of material needs in achieving social welfare. Therefore, mosque administrators must ensure fair compensation for mosque staff to meet their material needs. Adequate wages are linked to better performance, indicating that fair compensation can enhance mosque staff performance (Hurairah & Suri, 2021).

Previous research, such as that conducted by Baasithurahim and Zaki, shows that fulfilling the basic needs of mosque staff, including marbots, is crucial. Although

religious needs are often met, there is a need for improvement in areas such as food, education, lineage protection, and wealth management. For instance, mosques in Surabaya have met the basic needs of marbots, but there is still room for improvement in their overall welfare (Baasithurahim & Zaki, 2020). Similarly, Wajdi's research indicates that marbots should maintain transparency with the community regarding mosque plans and finances to encourage effective task execution (Wajdi, 2022). Furthermore, Dedah's research highlights issues such as inadequate financial management and lack of compensation for mosque administrators, which impact effective mosque management (Jannah, 2019). Abdul Aziz's research supports the notion that paying marbots is justified as it compensates for their contributions in maintaining the mosque (Aziz, 2023).

While these studies provide valuable insights, further investigation is needed to understand the social welfare conditions of marbots in managing mosque cleanliness. Factors influencing their social conditions and performance must be examined in depth.

Understanding the social, economic, and other factors affecting marbot welfare is crucial. For instance, raising community awareness and coordinating efforts for marbot and mosque welfare, as well as improving mosque management and community involvement, are essential (Kirom et al., 2024). By gaining a comprehensive understanding, we can seek ways to improve their welfare, enabling them to perform their duties more effectively. This can positively impact the cleanliness and comfort of the mosque and strengthen the social

bonds between marbots, congregants, and the surrounding community.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study was conducted at the Ar-Rahman Grand Mosque located in the village of Sayurmatangi. A qualitative approach was employed, with data collected in February 2024 through observation, interviews, and documentation. Observations were made by closely examining daily activities at the mosque, involving both mosque administrators and members of the surrounding community. The observation method included the use of all senses to gather rich and in-depth data about the research subjects.

Interviews were conducted directly with two or more informants who possess knowledge and experience relevant to the research topic. These interviews aimed to delve deeper into information and gain insights into the behaviors and perceptions of the informants. Documentation was utilized as a complementary method to verify and enhance the data obtained from observations and interviews by collecting documents related to mosque activities.

Data analysis was carried out through a triangulation procedure, involving three critical stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. During the data reduction stage, irrelevant data were filtered out to focus on significant information. The data presentation stage involved organizing the data in an easily comprehensible format, while the conclusion drawing stage entailed interpreting the data to identify significant patterns and relationships.

The presence of the researcher in the field was crucial in this qualitative study, as direct interaction with the research environment allowed the researcher to understand the context and dynamics at play. The researcher's presence in the field facilitated the acquisition of more accurate data and enhanced the validity of the research findings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on interviews and research findings at the Ar-Rahman Grand Mosque in Sayurmatangi regarding the social welfare of mosque caretakers (marbots) responsible for maintaining the mosque's cleanliness, it was found that the social welfare of mosque marbots remains suboptimal. This observation can be noted across various indicators such as salary, working facilities, and recognition of a mosque marbot's contributions.

The social welfare of mosque marbots, who are responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of the mosque, plays a crucial role in ensuring a clean and comfortable worship area. In this context, mosque marbots are not only tasked with maintaining physical cleanliness but also play a significant social role in fostering a positive atmosphere among the congregation.

Mosque marbots contribute directly to the physical cleanliness of the mosque. Mr. Salman, a mosque marbot, mentioned that the mosque is cleaned once a day before the Maghrib prayer. The tasks of the marbots at the Ar-Rahman Grand Mosque include, firstly, cleaning the mosque environment both inside and outside, secondly, cleaning the prayer rugs using a vacuum cleaner, and thirdly, cleaning the ablution area and ensuring all

facilities are functioning properly. This physical cleanliness not only provides a pure and orderly appearance but also creates a healthy and comfortable environment for the congregation. This is crucial for enhancing both worship and comfort within and outside the mosque.

Given that cleanliness can have a positive impact, especially in worship, it is important to maintain the cleanliness of the mosque so that we do not have to worry or even fear that our worship will not be accepted. Moreover, Allah praises those who are pure and clean.

This is also in accordance with the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH):

عَنْ أَبِي مَالِكٍ الْأَشْعَرِيِّ قَالَ قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ الظُّهُورُ شَطْرُ الْإِيمَانِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ تَنَالُ الْمِيزَانَ وَسُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ تَنَالُنِ أَوْ تَنَالُ مَا بَيْنَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَالصَّلَاةُ نُورٌ وَالصَّدَقَةُ بُرْهَانٌ وَالصَّبْرُ ضِيَاءٌ وَالْقُرْآنُ حُجَّةٌ لَكَ أَوْ عَلَيْكَ كُلُّ النَّاسِ يَغْدُو فَبَايَعُ نَفْسَهُ فَمُعْتَقُهَا أَوْ مُوبِقُهَا (رواه مسلم)

“From Abu Malik al-Ash’ari, he said: The Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said, ‘Cleanliness is paramount for self-confidence. Reciting ‘Alhamdulillah’ (praise be to Allah) can significantly amplify the magnitude of good deeds, while saying ‘Subhanallah walhamdulillah’ (glory be to Allah and praise be to Allah) earns rewards as vast as the heavens and the earth. Prayer is a source of illumination, charity is an act of devotion, patience is a form of radiance, and the Qur’an will either serve as an ally or an adversary.” (Al-Bugha & Mistu, 2017).

“Throughout their lives, humans work either towards their salvation or their ruin.” As highlighted in the aforementioned hadith, “Tidiness is crucial for self-confidence,” which, in this context, trains individuals to maintain tidiness in all situations, whether it be in nature, living spaces, toilets, or elsewhere. This practice makes individuals feel comfortable while offering their prayers. A fragrant mosque also contributes to the comfort of its congregation, protecting them from unpleasant odors. Consequently, the congregation can pray at the mosque at any time due to the comfort they experience (Fadhlan, 2019).

Beyond physical tasks, mosque caretakers (marbots) also have social roles that involve direct interactions with the congregation. The role of mosque caretakers within the Muslim community extends beyond mere religious aspects. Marbots are not only responsible for maintaining cleanliness, but their responsibilities also encompass academic and social dimensions, making them integral members of the mosque community. By positively interacting with the congregation, marbots help foster a familial and communal atmosphere among them, thereby enhancing social well-being.

However, it is important to note that the social well-being of mosque caretakers also depends on factors such as salary, work facilities, and recognition of their roles. Improvements in financial well-being, adequate facilities, and recognition of their contributions can also enhance the motivation and performance of marbots in maintaining the cleanliness and overall environment of the mosque.”

There are several factors that need to be reviewed to promote the social well-being of mosque caretakers (marbots). First, wages are a crucial factor. In Islam, wages refer to the term “al-ujrah,” which denotes compensation received for performing work. According to the consensus (ijma’) of scholars regarding “ujrah,” there is no scholar who disputes this consensus, although some differing opinions are not taken into account. Mosques serve as focal points for major religious events, and workers are responsible for cleaning, maintaining, managing, and overseeing the well-being of the mosque. Although a mosque is a place to honor and draw closer to the Creator, it also employs many individuals whose services should be rewarded. Therefore, mosques must fulfill their obligations towards their employees, including providing them with wages. Despite their contributions of time, energy, and services, these workers are entitled to appropriate compensation. For instance, marbots at the Ar-Rahman Grand Mosque receive approximately Rp. 600,000 every two months, which may not be sufficient for their prosperity. However, this does not hinder them from performing their duties, as many have served for nearly 10 years. Their lives are sufficient because they also have side jobs, and for mosque caretakers, sustenance and well-being are measured by the peace of mind gained from being close to the Islamic house of worship.

Second, providing adequate facilities is essential. The social well-being of marbots can be enhanced by providing complete and high-quality cleaning equipment, fans, and other amenities. This ensures comfort for both the congregation and the marbots

themselves. Physical comfort in all human activities includes auditory comfort, lighting, and ventilation, which are crucial for being engrossed in prayer. If the mosque space does not promote genuine comfort for devotion, it will be challenging to achieve. Physical comfort encompasses spatial, visual, auditory, and internal comfort, the latter being influenced by air temperature. With good working facilities, marbots can work efficiently and comfortably, enhancing their motivation and work quality. Their duties include preparing everything needed during worship, such as providing water for ablution and prayer mats for comfort, which are part of their presentation. The working facilities at the Ar-Rahman Grand Mosque are considered adequate, as damaged equipment is promptly replaced, and community members often help provide cleaning equipment.

Third, recognizing the contributions of marbots in maintaining mosque cleanliness is vital for their social well-being. Recognition can come from mosque administrators and the surrounding community or through award programs. Without such recognition, there might be concerns about turnover intention, which is the desire to leave the job for a better one. Therefore, it is crucial to show appreciation and pride towards marbots for their contributions. Marbots can exchange information, interact with the community, and build good relationships with the congregation and local residents, expanding their network and mutually benefiting from established cooperation. This strengthens the community’s social capital, fulfilling the social life of marbots as expected. Mr. Qomaruddin, a local resident, stated that the performance of

the marbots at the Ar-Rahman Grand Mosque has been commendable, especially since they have served for a long time. The community should appreciate their performance, as it motivates and commits them to maintaining the mosque's cleanliness, positively impacting the mosque's image and the congregation's comfort during worship.

CONCLUSION

Based on the interviews and research conducted at the Ar-Rahman Grand Mosque in Sayurmatangi Village, it was found that the social welfare of the mosque caretakers (marbots) responsible for the cleanliness of the mosque has not been fully optimized. This is evident from aspects such as their salary, work facilities, and recognition of their contributions. Marbots play a crucial role in maintaining both the physical cleanliness and the social atmosphere of the mosque. Their duties include cleaning the interior and exterior areas of the mosque, vacuuming carpets, and ensuring that other facilities such as electricity, microphones, and fans are functioning properly. This cleanliness not only creates a comfortable and healthy environment for worshippers but also enhances the quality of worship.

The social welfare of the marbots is influenced by several key factors. First, salary: The marbots at Ar-Rahman Grand Mosque receive a salary of only around Rp 600,000 every two months, which is deemed insufficient to achieve adequate financial well-being. Second, adequate facilities: Comprehensive and high-quality cleaning equipment is essential for the comfort and efficiency of the marbots' work. Good facilities also positively impact the comfort of the worshippers. Third, recognition of contributions: Recognition and appreciation from mosque management and

the community are crucial to enhancing the motivation and social welfare of the marbots. Such recognition can inspire them to remain enthusiastic about maintaining the cleanliness of the mosque.

Therefore, by improving the social welfare of the marbots through adequate salaries, sufficient work facilities, and recognition of their contributions, it is hoped that the marbots will be more motivated to maintain cleanliness and, in turn, achieve better social welfare.

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