



THE IMPACT OF *MASTURAH* PROGRAM ON THE FAMILIES OF TABLIGHI JAMAAT AT TEMBORO VILLAGE IN INDONESIA

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Abstract

Islam sets the roles and relationship between husband and wife in the family in a balanced manner to create *sakinah*, *mawadah*, and *rahmah* (peaceful, loving, and compassionate) family. A lot of people often underestimate the role of a wife in a family. This paper examined the *Masturah* (rather than putting Arabic words, it would be better to write the meaning of the *Masturah*) as the education program for wife in the family of Tablighi Jamaat in Temboro village, Magetan, East Java, Indonesia. This research used a qualitative approach where the data were collected, applying interviews with various family members of the Tablighi Jamaat. The research results show that the *Masturah* is a closed and private education strategy for a wife (the *Masturah*) in the families of Tablighi Jamaat, which is performed in the house with religious training and practice. Second, the purpose of the *Masturah* is to prepare the role of wife as *mu'allimah* and *muta'alimah*, *daiyah*, and *a'bidah* (teacher and student, preacher, and worshiper). Third, the *Masturah* helps to increase *Iman* (the belief in Allah (the practice in worship, appreciation in practicing Islamic religion, improving the knowledge in Islamic teaching, and the increase of motivation in religion and preaching. This research has implications for the importance of religious education for wives to support their husbands' *da'wah* activities and children's education at home.

Keywords: *Masturah*, *Tablighi Jamaat*, *Temboro*, *Religiosity*

INTRODUCTION

The Tablighi Jamaat is a transnational Islamic movement that is operative in 165 countries¹. The Tablighi Jamaat was initiated in the late 1920s by Maulana Muhammad Ilyas bin Muhammad Ismail al-Hanafī ad-Diyubandi al-Jisti al-Kahdahlawi (1885-1944), a Sufi scholar trained in Deobond madrasa (a traditional Islamic education institution) in 1927 in Mewat, South Delhi, India²³. The establishment of this Jamaat was preceded by a reform

¹ Yoginder Sikand, *The Origins and Development of the Tablighi-Jama'at (1920-2000): A Cross Country Comparative Study* (Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2002).

² Barbara D Metcalf, "Traditionalist Islamic Activism: Deoband, Tablighis, and Talibs," n.d., <http://essays.ssrc.org/sept11/essays/metcalf.htm>.

movement in Mewat, which was inhabited by many Meo people who were experiencing moral and religious decline and a mixture of Islamic and Hindu traditions⁴. Thus, the purpose of the Tablighi Jamaat is seen as a process of ‘making Muslim good Muslim’⁵. Besides, the movement focuses on the effort of preaching. It is known with the slogan of *da’wah ‘ala Minhaj an-Nubunwah* (preaching based on Prophet Muhammad’s instruction)⁶. Tablighi Jamaat became a worldwide Islamic movement after being led by Maulana Ilyas's son, namely Maulana M. Yusuf (1917-1965)⁷, and later followed by Maulana In'amul Hasan⁸.

Preaching efforts of the Tablighi Jamaat is seen as noble worship as it follows the Prophet’s legacy of *dawah* work⁹. It is also believed by Tablighi followers to revive such work of the Prophet¹⁰. This preaching effort will help women to reflect the learnings from the life of the Prophet Muhammad’s in their lives, treat the home as the companion of the Prophet’s home, see a mosque as the mosque of Nabawi, and the see their hometown as like Medina¹¹. The implementation of this preaching is realized with *khuruj fi sabilillah*¹².

The Tablighi Jamaat entered Indonesia around 1952. This movement showed its intensive preaching around 1974 at the Kebon Jeruk Mosque in Central Jakarta. The mission of this movement is to train and invite Muslims to implement Islamic teachings by imitating the behavior of the Prophet and his companions¹³. Initially, the arrival of the Tablighi Jamaat in Indonesia did not receive any attention from the people. To popularize the Tablighi activities in Indonesia, the preachers of the Tablighi Jamaat from Pakistan came to Indonesia in 1959. Finally, the Tablighi Jamaat was formed in Palembang in 1964¹⁴. Around 1000 Jamaat came to the Kebon Jeruk mosque to hold a conference (*ijtema*) from several countries, namely Indonesia, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Thailand, Malaysia, and the Philippines in 1996¹⁵.

³ Kamaruzzaman Bustamam-Ahmad, “The History of Jama’ah Tabligh in Southeast Asia: The Role of Islamic Sufism in Islamic Revival,” *Al-Jami’ah: Journal of Islamic Studies* 46, no. 2 (December 26, 2008): 353–400, <https://doi.org/10.14421/ajis.2008.462.353-400>.

⁴ Syid Abu Hassan Ali An-Nadwi, *Sejarah Maulana Ilyas Menggerakkan Jamaah Tabligh Mempelopori Khuruj Fi Sabilillah*, (Terj.) Maulana Afif Abdillab (Bandung: Pustaka Ramadhan, 2009), 27–34.

⁵ Muhammad Khalid Masud, *Introduction. in Travellers in Faith: Studies of the Tablighi Jama’at as a Transnational Islamic Movement for Faith Renewal*, Ed. Muhammad Khalid Masud, Xiii–Ix. (Leiden: Brill, 2000).

⁶ Zainal Arifin and Lailatu Rohmah, “The Concept of Leadership of the Transnational Islamic Ideology Perspective and Responses to Democracy Practices in Indonesia,” *AKADEMIKA: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 24, no. 1 (October 21, 2019): 213–32, <https://doi.org/10.32332/akademika.v24i1.1474>.

⁷ An-Nadwi, *Sejarah Maulana Ilyas Menggerakkan Jamaah Tabligh Mempelopori Khuruj Fi Sabilillah*, (Terj.) Maulana Afif Abdillab, 121.

⁸ John L. Esposito (ed.), “Tablighi Jama’at” on *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World*, vol. 4 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 165.

⁹ Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya al-Kandahlawi, *Kitab Fadilah A’mal* (Terj.) Tim Penerjemah Masjid Jami’ Kebon Jeruk Jakarta (Jakarta: Pustaka Ramadhan, 2011).

¹⁰ Maulana Muhammad Yusuf Al-Kandahlawi, *Muntakhab Ahadis Dalil-Dalil Pilihan Enam Sifat Utama, Cetakan II*, (Terj.) Ustadz Ali Mahfudzji (Yogyakarta: Ash-Shaff, 2007).

¹¹ Abdurrahman Ahmad As-Sirbuny, *Mudzakarab Masturat* (Cirebon: Pustaka Nabawi, 2009).

¹² Afif Rifai, “Dakwah Islam Dan Dampaknya Terhadap Mobilitas Jama’ah Tabligh Sleman Yogyakarta,” *Penagama Jurnal Penelitian Dan Pengembangan Ilmu-Ilmu Agama, Lembaga Penelitian UIN SunanKalijaga Yogyakarta* 19, no. 2 (2010): 299.

¹³ Abdul Aziz, “The Jamaah Tabligh Movement in Indonesia: Peaceful Fundamentalist,” *Studia Islamika* 11, no. 3 (2004), <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v11i3.596>.

¹⁴ Ahmad Mujtabah, “Isbal Dalam Perspektif Gerakan Jamaah Tabligh,” *Jurnal Studi Ilmu-Ilmu Al-Qur’an Dan Hadis* 10, no. 2 (2009): 321.

¹⁵ Mundzier Suparta, *Perubahan Orientasi Pondok Pesantren Salafiyah Terhadap Perilaku Keagamaan Masyarakat* (Jakarta: Asta Buana Sejahtera, 2009), 223.

The Tablighi Jamaat sees family as the center in nurturing religiosity following the Prophet Muhammad's instruction. One of the Tablighi Jamaat's key strategies is to imitate the practices and style of the Prophet Muhammad¹⁶. Apart from this, the Tablighi Jamaat is also criticized by many people from the non-Tablighi community, referring that husbands generally left the family without appropriate resources while they go for *dawah* activities referred to as *kburuj fi sabilillah* (get out in the way of Allah). It refers to the activity 'out in Allah's way' to preach to the people in a certain time (3 days, 7 days, 40 days, 4 months), both inside the country and abroad. Siyami and Musawwamah's research reported that a problem of *kburuj* in the Tablighi Jamaat is the lack of coordination and evaluation of the management, internal family commitment, and concern between families, and the spirit of preaching¹⁷.

Tablighi Jamaat community has a doctrine when they are preaching outside, leaving their family. The Tablighi Jamaat followers also believe that they should not be disturbed by any worldly affairs during their *dawah* journey because the affairs of Allah are their utmost highest priority¹⁸. In contrast to this view, Tablighi Jamaat leaders also emphasize that members should not go out for their *dawah* journey without ensuring sufficient resources for their family members¹⁹. Therefore, the Tablighi Jamaat wants to build a peaceful family even though they go out for preaching for many days. However, by introducing the *Masturah* program, the Tablighi Jamaat, develops a *sakinah* (peaceful) family to educate the children, strengthen beliefs, implement *kburuj* for husband and *Masturah* for wife on a regular basis²⁰.

Under this backdrop, the paper aimed to provide a better understanding of (1) the concept of *Masturah* as an education program for the women of the Tablighi Jamaat family, (2) the development of the Tablighi guided role for the women in a family through *Masturah*, and (3) the impact of *Masturah* program on the religious character building. This research analyzed *Masturah* as an essential element of the Tablighi Jamaat ideology among Tablighi Jamaat families in Temboro's. This is a unique characteristic of the Tablighi Jamaat where other Islamic organizations such as Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama (NU), Hidayatullah, Salafi, Wahabi, and others do not have such strategic activities.

The gender relation of the family of Tablighi Jamaat in Temboro is neo-traditionalist (gender complimentary). They distinguish between equality and support the equality concept of men and women, but it doesn't mean absolute abolishment of hierarchy within the family structure. The idea of the *sakinah* family is supported by the participation in Tablighi Jamaat²¹. Besides, the ideal concept of family in the Tablighi Jamaat is based on the example of the Prophet Muhammad where peace, love, and mercy from Allah are the key elements.

¹⁶ B. Siddiqi, *Becoming 'Good Muslim'* (Singapore: Springer, 2018).

¹⁷ Faiqoh Bahjah Lailatus Siyami and Siti Musawwamah, "Problem Praktik Khuruj Bagi Anggota Jama'ah Tabligh Di Madura," *Al-Ihkam: Jurnal Hukum Dan Pranata Sosial* 10, no. 1 (July 5, 2015): 145–68, <https://doi.org/10.19105/al-ihkam.v10i1.593>.

¹⁸ Umdatul Hasanah, "Keberadaan Kelompok Jamaah Tabligh Dan Reaksi Masyarakat (Perspektif Teori Penyebaran Informasi Dan Pengaruh)," *JURNAL INDO-ISLAMIKA* 4, no. 1 (June 20, 2014): 21–44, <https://doi.org/10.1548/idi.v4i1.1559>.

¹⁹ Siddiqi, *Becoming 'Good Muslim.'*

²⁰ Wirdatuz Zahro' Afifah Ridwan, "Sakinah Family Concept Based on Jama'ah Tabligh Perspective (Jaulah) in Indonesia," *JURISDICTIE* 6, no. 2 (March 13, 2017): 145–63, <https://doi.org/10.18860/j.v6i2.4106>.

²¹ Anis Hidayatul Imtihanah, *Relasi Gender Keluarga Jama'ah Tabligh (Studi Relasi Suami Istri Pengikut Jamaah Tabligh Temboro)*, Tesis (Yogyakarta: Program Pascasarjana UIN Sunan Kalijaga, 2011), vi.

Furthermore, the wife in a Tablighi family plays a significant role in preaching within the family, educating children, and worshipping Allah²².

To analyze the dimensions of religiosity in the *Masturah* program, we use Stark and Glock's religious concept (in Robertson), which includes five dimensions such as (1) beliefs (ideology) on the truth of theological doctrine, (2) ritualistic practice of the religion, (3) experiential elements of religious perception, feelings and sensation, (4) intellectual ability and knowledge of their religion, and (5) practices (consequence) of religious beliefs.²³ Subandi relates these dimensions with Islamic perspectives such as (1) religious belief associated with the Islamic pillars of faith, (2) religious practice related to pillars of Islam, (3) religious feeling associated with *tasawuf* (spiritual), (4) religious knowledge associated with religious science, and (5) religious effect related to the motivation of religious practice.²⁴

METHOD

This research adopted a qualitative approach where interviews were conducted among the families of Tablighi Jamaat in Temboro, Magetan, East Java, Indonesia. We interviewed 12 Tablighi Jamaat families. The research was conducted in July-August 2018. The respondents were selected using a purposive method²⁵ considering that respondents are the families of Tablighi Jamaat who experienced the *Masturah* programs for a period between 3 days to 40 days both in the country and abroad. The data analysis method uses Miles and Huberman's interactive analysis, including data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification²⁶. The research was conducted in Temboro, Magetan, which host the famous Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School that act as the biggest center of the Tablighi Jamaat in East Java of Indonesia²⁷. Because of such tradition, most of the people of Temboro practice and uphold the Tablighi Jamaat ideology.

Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School has been playing important roles in disseminating Tablighi Jamaat ideology among its students. The school carries out its activities through learning activities and *preaching* among the students, community, and the Tablighi Jamaat's followers²⁸. Al Fatah Islamic Boarding School emphasized the idea of (*ikram al-Muslimin*) of the Tablighi Jamaat that acted as one of the key elements in popularizing the Tablighi Jamaat

²² Sukron Ma'mun, "Konsep Keluarga dan Perempuan dalam Perspektif Jamaah Tabligh: Analisa Normatif-Sosiologis," *MISYKAT: Jurnal Ilmu-ilmu Al-Quran, Hadist, Syari'ah dan Tarbiyah* 4, no. 1 (June 13, 2019): 55–78, <https://doi.org/10.33511/misykat.v4n1.55-78>.

²³ Robertson (ed.) Roland, *Agama: Dalam Analisa Dan Interpretasi Sosiologis* (Jakarta: Grafindo Persada, 1993), 295–97.

²⁴ M.A Subandi, *Psikologi Agama & Kesehatan Mental* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2013), 88–90.

²⁵ Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Pendidikan Pendekatan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, Dan R&D*. (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2010), 300.

²⁶ Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis A Sourcesbook of New Methods* (London New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1984), 21.

²⁷ Zainal Arifin, "The Authority of Spiritual Leadership at Pesantren Temboro Based on Jamaah Tabligh Ideology," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 6, no. 2 (December 27, 2017): 265–92, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jpi.2017.62.265-292>.

²⁸ Irwan Abdullah, dkk, *Agama, Pendidikan Islam Dan Tanggung Jawab Sosial Pesantren* (Yogyakarta: Sekolah Pascasarjana UGM, 2008), 57.

in the area. This principle helps them to adapt to the environment and preach to create a religious community²⁹.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

THE CONCEPT OF *MASTURAH* IN THE TABLIGHI JAMAAT TRADITION

The *Masturah* is defined as women in hijab (veil)³⁰ because the *Masturah* program is carried out in private (veiled) space, for example, inside the house. *Masturah*, as a preaching activity among women, has the purpose of bringing the environment of religiosity inside the house. On the other hand, the preaching program for men is centered in mosques. According to Maulana Muhammad Manshur, *Masturah* means enliven religious practice in a house to function as the mosque for the family members. The form of religious practice in the house are (a) revitalize the non-formal Islamic education *Fadhailul A'mal* (doing good deeds) for wives and children to bring the religion in the home, (b) every housewife has to perform the obligatory (*fardhu*) prayer five times a day, remembrance to Allah and recite from the Qur'an, (c) hold a discussion on beliefs and good deeds, (d) live a simple life, and (e) support the husband for performing *Khuruj fi sabilillah*³¹.

Tablighi Jamaat followers see the normative foundation of *Masturah* program in verse 9: 71, which explains that men and women who are religious have the same role in kindness and preventing evil and abide by the command of Allah and his Prophet. The responsibility in preaching *amar ma'ruf* (enjoining good) and *nahi munkar* (forbidding wrong) is also explained in verse 3: 110 in the Qur'an. According to Maulana Muhammad Manshur, every woman should practice Islamic instructions so that all family members understand the value of it and practice all aspects of Islam³².

The *Masturah* program of the Tablighi Jamaat mechanized for both husbands and wives to increase and improve the religious knowledge and practice for which they could imitate the teachings and learnings from the lives of Prophet Muhammad. The engagement of women in Tablighi Jamaat preaching has the purpose of supporting husbands on their preaching and building a family based on the guidance of Prophet Muhammad³³. It is because women are treated as the essential vehicle for Islamic education for children at home. Besides, women can easily motivate other women in the neighborhood to join and convene *ta'lim* sessions in their locality, which have a huge impact on preaching among the women³⁴. The *Masturah* program usually carries out privately (veiled) to revitalize the religion at home. The example is the implementation of *majlis taklim* (non-formal Islamic education) and practicing obligatory tasks and *sunnah*.

The *Masturah* is a specific Tablighi Jamaat program that targets Muslim women to convene *dawah* with their husbands for a particular time. The requirements to join the Tablighi

²⁹ Moh Yusuf, "Prinsip Ikram Al-Muslim Gerakan Dakwah Jamaah Tabligh Dalam Membangun Masyarakat Religius Di Temboro Magetan," *ISLAMICA: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 10, no. 2 (March 1, 2016): 299–324, <https://doi.org/10.15642/islamica.2016.10.2.299-324>.

³⁰ As-Sirbuny, *Mudzakarah Masturat*, 84.

³¹ Maulana Muhammad Manshur, *Keutamaan Masturoh Usaba Da'wah Di Kalangan Wanita Sesuai Contoh Rasul, Shahabat & Shahabiyah* (Bandung: Pustaka Ramadhan, 2010), 5.

³² Manshur, 10.

³³ Siddiqi, *Becoming 'Good Muslim.'*

³⁴ Siddiqi.

Jamaat should be assisted with the husbands for 3 days, 10 days, 15 days, 40 days, or 2 months based on a consultation with their husbands, as one respondent mentioned. In this context, a Tablighi family who went for *Masturah* program mentioned that women must be accompanied by their husband or *mahram* (family) who is experienced in preaching.

According to the respondents, women can only travel with their husbands or sons in *Masturah* program. The participants of the *Masturah* program should preach in the way of Allah (*kbhuruj fi sabilillah*). The *Masturah* is performed by women in the house of a dedicated Tablighi Jamaat follower while *kbhuruj* for husbands is performed in a neighboring mosque during a *Masturah dawah* journey. In this context, a male Tablighi Jamaat follower mentioned, "... woman who is performing *Masturah*, stays in one of the homes of a Tablighi Jamaat follower, while their husband stays in the mosque to do *itikaf*".

Detailed instruction about convening *Masturah* program is mentioned by Maulana Yusuf (Maulana Ilyas's son) in a Tablighi book, "the *Masturah's* work will be weakened, it will even get weaker if women who do not follow *pardah*. Don't even bring women in *Masturah* to the annual congregation (*ijtema*) of the Tablighi Jamaat. The women can be gathered in a private place to attend non-formal Islamic educational programs (*ta'lim*). Every woman should be assisted by their husband or their families (*mahram*), with appropriate veiling. They will stay in a private house while their husband stays in a mosque"³⁵.

THE PURPOSE OF *MASTURAH* AS EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR WIVES IN THE FAMILIES OF TABLIGHI JAMAAT

The *Masturah* program of the Tablighi Jamaat as a method of educating and improving the preaching for the women in the family has multiple purposes. *Masturah* aims to inspire women to practice and revive the religion in the house and support their husbands to revive the religion outside the house through preaching. It has specific purposes for women to act such as (a) *Da'iyah*, who responsible for the establishment of religion and continuing the work of Prophet Muhammad, (b) *Abidah* who devout worship in the house and make it becomes a mosque, and (c) *Muta'allimah* who is available to revive teaching and learning process in the house³⁶.

These purposes were evident in the *Masturah* program among Tablighi Jamaat in Temboro, Magetan. Field data shows the following pattern:

Mu'allimah wa Muta'allimah (Teacher and Student): The purpose of participating in *Masturah* program is to create a religious atmosphere at home and collaborate in carrying and preaching the religion. A female respondent mentioned in this context that 'a wife can learn (to be a student/ *muta'allimah*). Islamic religious knowledge about *muamalah* (social interaction), *mu'asyarah* (society), and educating children in an Islamic way. Based on this opinion, *Masturah's* goal was to form a wife to become *Mu'allimah wa Muta'allimah (Teacher and Student)*'.

³⁵ Syaikh Maulana M. Ilyas al-Kandhalawi dkk, *Maljuzhat Tiga Hadratji, (Terj.) Oleh A. Abdurrahman Ahmad As-Sirbuny* (Cirebon: Pustaka Nabawi, 2012), 122.

³⁶ Manshur, *Kentamaan Masturoh Usaha Da'wah Di Kalangan Wanita Sesuai Contoh Rasul, Shahabat & Shahabiyah*, 10.

Da'iyah (Responsibility of Preaching): While talking about *Da'iyah*, a female respondent who is a Tablighi Jamaat follower mentioned that “if only husbands (men) learn religion, it means that the religious knowledge will not come into the home” is a reason for wives to participate in *Masturah*. Women have a significant role in the religious struggle because humans are formed from their womb and upbringing. The *Masturah* program aims to propagate religion into the home so that all members understand religion better. In this case, the wife has the role of *Da'iyah* (responsibility to preach) in the family.

Abidah (Expert in Worship): Respondents shared that the *Masturah* in Tablighi Jamaat aims to encourage wives to perform their obligatory prayer in time, recite the Qur'an, educate children in an Islamic way, revive the preaching atmosphere at home, serve and support the husband in preaching outside the house through Allah's guidance (*kbhuruj fi sabilillah*). The entire purpose is to bring religious practice into the everyday lives of women in a family, as another female Tablighi follower mentioned. In this case, a wife has the role of *Abidah* (worship expert) who is sincere in practicing Islamic norms and values at home and serving (*kbhidmah*) to the husband.

Based on these interview data, it can be concluded that the *Masturah* program aims to improve the role of women in learning, disseminating and preaching various Islamic teachings in the family, among other women in society and creating an enabling environment for a male counterpart to continue with Tablighi activities. Besides, the entire process helps to develop and nurture an Islamic environment inside the home.

The women in the Tablighi Jamaat follows the following four main doctrines that should be practiced every day, such as (1) *da'wah ila Allah* (2) *ta'lim* and *ta'allum* (3) *zikir* and worship, and (4) *kbhidmah*. These practices are also called 'practices of mosque' that should be revived in mosques or home³⁷. In this context, the followers of the Tablighi Jamaat refers to the seven promises of Allah for people who follow the “practice of mosque”, would receive the divine blessings, such as (a) blessing from unexpected sources, (b) wealth, home, and the village will be protected by Allah as Allah protects *Kaaba*, (c) wife and children will be protected by Allah as Allah protects Prophet Ibrahim as wife and children, (d) win the truth and destroy the vanity, (e) a person will be the cause of guidance descent, (f) soften the heart to obey Allah, and (g) protection from big terror slander, the coming of *Dajjal*.³⁸

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that *Masturah* as a learning process for women is seen with utmost importance among the Tablighi families as the outcome of such a program helps them to educate children and nurture an Islamic environment at home. Besides, it also helps to create a positive attitude of the Tablighi preaching among the women that subsequently help the men counterpart to carry out the regular Tablighi preaching in various places during their *dawah* journey. Siddiqi, in his work in Bangladesh, shows a similar result³⁹. Besides, Aguswara et al.'s research show that the Tablighi Jamaat followers build their families according to religious aspects, including the education

³⁷ Al-Kandahlawi, *Muntakhab Abadis Dalil-Dalil Pilihan Enam Sifat Utama, Cetakan II, (Terj.) Ustadz Ali Mahfudzqi*, 88–94.

³⁸ Anonim, *Mudzakarab Da'wah Usaba Rasulullah* (Magetan: Pustaka al-Barokah, tt.), 22.

³⁹ Siddiqi, *Becoming 'Good Muslim.'*

and relation between families⁴⁰. The household becomes an important tool for the wives of the Tablighi Jamaat to involve in strengthening family beliefs⁴¹.

THE IMPACT OF *MASTURAH* IN RELIGIOUS CHARACTER BUILDING

The *Masturah* program is not only an activity of recitation or Islamic religious practice but also a process of educating women based on Tablighi Jamaat ideology. In the program, women are motivated to be involved in preaching, especially in the family and among other Muslim women in the neighborhood. Findings of the field research show that the majority of Temboro society is following Tablighi Jamaat ideology because of the existence of Al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School. To analyze the impact of the *Masturah* program in religious character building, Stark and Glock's dimension of diversity theory was very useful in this research. Their religious concept which includes five dimensions such as beliefs (ideology), religious practice (ritualistic), religious experience, intellectual and consequence of religious beliefs, will be discussed in the following section.

Analysis of the interviews among Tablighi families who attended the *Masturah* program shows several impacts of the program on religiosity.

Increasing Faith: Religious belief relates to someone's faith in the fundamental pillars of Islam. M. Quraish Shihab defines faith/belief as "justification that was conveyed by God's messenger"⁴². In contrast, M Nursamad Kamba interprets faith as "belief that provides security and inner peace to the soul"⁴³. Based on this, faith is a belief and justification for what was conveyed by Prophet Muhammad, both through the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*. Our study findings show that the *Masturah* program positively impacts increasing faith (belief) towards basic Islamic teachings and Allah's instructions. In this connection, a respondent mentioned that participating in *Masturah* program strengthens the belief that everything comes from Allah. Another respondent mentioned that the *Masturah* program strengthened the belief of many women. This opinion is corresponding with the Tablighi Jamaat ideology to preach faith and belief. According to Maulana Manshur, the aims of preaching are (1) instilling the true faith on the phrase *La ilaha illallah wa Muhammadur Rasulallah*, and (2) perform all the commands from Allah from top to toe in accordance to the *sunnah* of the Prophet⁴⁴.

Increasing faith in *Masturah* is associated with the primary purpose of the Tablighi Jamaat, which is known as *tabrik al-iman/faith movement* (Anwarul as cited in Kamaruazzaman)⁴⁵. Tablighi Jamaat consciously aims to instil the desired characteristics of the Prophet's companions, which is an important area of the Tablighi Jamaat's teaching. The

⁴⁰ Winda Wirasti Aguswara, Hapidin Toha, and Fasli Jalal, "Parenting: Tablighi Jamaat Point of View," *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding* 5, no. 5 (August 2, 2018): 156–63, <https://doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v5i5.354>.

⁴¹ Ambreen Agha, "Religious Discourse in Tablighi Jama'at: A Challenge to Female Sexuality?," *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding* 2, no. 3 (June 8, 2015): 1–16, <https://doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v2i3.5>.

⁴² Muhammad Quraish Shihab, *Islam Yang Saya Anut Dasar-Dasar Ajaran Islam* (Tangerang: PT Lentera Hati, 2017), 121.

⁴³ Muhammad Nursamad Kamba, *Kids Zaman Now Menemukan Kembali Islam* (Bandung: Pustaka IIMaN, 2018), 23.

⁴⁴ Manshur, *Kentamaan Masturob Usaba Da'wah Di Kalangan Wanita Sesuai Contob Rasul, Shababat & Shababiyah*, 10.

⁴⁵ Bustamam-Ahmad, "The History of Jama'ah Tabligh in Southeast Asia," 357.

ultimate submission and belief in Allah can be achieved by preaching, praying, and forming groups to discuss faith and belief⁴⁶. In the *Masturah* program, wives of the Tablighi Jamaat are trained for preaching, practicing, discussing, and praying to increase the religiosity in the family (*halaqah*). In this case, faith is not only believed but also discussed, preached, and practiced so that there has to be a balance in *Masturah* between theory and practice.

Increasing Religious Practice: Tablighi Jamaat followers see religious practice is the proof of someone's belief and faith through the action of carrying out Allah's orders and staying away from Allah's prohibitions. Religious practice is included in the Islamic dimension that covers *syahadat*, *shalat* (prayer), *puasa* (fasting), *zakat*, *hajj*, and other worships. *The Masturah* program also motivates women to increase their religious practices. As a result of their repeated Islamic activities, they will get better as they go along. A respondent mentioned in this context:

Worship practices in *Masturah* program for husbands are *zikir* (pray), learning (*ta'lim*), socialization, serving (*khidmah*), and preaching. On the other hand, the purpose of the *Masturah* programs for wives are learning (*ta'lim*), worship, *zikir* (pray), learning through memorization (*mudzakarah*) and serving (*khidmah*). (A female Tablighi Jamaat follower)

The activities in the *Masturah* program are very rigorous and strict in nature. Besides, the schedule is very tight with their rich content. In this context, another Tablighi Jamaat follower shared his experience. As he mentioned:

The practice of *Masturah* begins at 03.00 AM for *tahajud* prayer, preparation for *Shubuh* prayer, *zikir*, reciting Surah Yasin and '*Ayat Hirzi*' (practice of *zikir* which is compiled by *Kiai* of al-Fatah Islamic Boarding School). Then continued with *mudzakarah* (discussion where each other reminds and speaks up in the discussion about daily culture or *fiqh*). There is also a *mulaqat* program (meeting with husband to report the practices that have been carried out in a day). It continues until the breakfast, then we have to do the *ta'lim* (learning Islamic knowledge). We get a break for the preparation for *dhuhur* prayer. After the *ashar* prayer we have to do the *ta'lim* again followed by preaching, which is attended by the women who participate in *Masturah* (A male Tablighi follower).

Another female respondent expressed a similar opinion. As she mentioned:

The practices performed in *Masturah* are on-time obligatory prayers, *zikir* (remembrance of Allah) and Sunnah prayers, *mudzakarah* of faith and belief as well as *mudzakarah* related to belief and etiquette of worship/social interaction (*muamalah*), *ta'lim* or learning Islamic knowledge about the importance of charity (*fadhilah amal*), story of Prophet Muhammad's companions and their six characterizations, reciting the Qur'an. (A female Tablighi Jamaat follower)

The *Masturah* program increases the practice and trains someone to be *istiqomah* (consistent) in practicing *sunnah*, which is often forgotten in daily activities. The program can be an alternative to improve the way of reciting the Qur'an correctly. Our research findings show that *Masturah* program is very effective among Tablighi Jamaat followers to improve

⁴⁶ Ba'duth Thulab, *Mudzakarah Enam Sifat & Doa Hidayah* (Magetan: Pustaka al-Barokah, tt), 2–5.

daily Islamic practices because the program allows the women to learn and practice Islam together with their husbands. During the *Masturah dawab* journey, the participants are pushed to perform practices determined by their husbands in *Mulaqat*. It is a program where the wives are given time to meet with their husband to report the practices that they have performed in a day.

There are 10 *maqami* practices for women when practicing *Masturah* at home, such as (1) revive *ta'lim wa ta'alum* at home, (2) live with simple life, (3) revive the *sunnah* of the Prophet, (4) *istiqomah* (consistent) in *zikir* and reciting from the Qur'an, (5) having behavior following the guidelines of the Prophet, (6) revive preaching atmosphere for 24 hours, (7) simplify the household affairs, (8) educate children in accordance with *sunnah*, (9) revive the atmosphere and learn to solve the problems with Islamic practice (prayer, charity, etc.), and (10) revive daily discussion to fulfill the need of religion (*takaḥḥu*)⁴⁷.

Live Up Religious Practice: The experience and appreciation of Islamic values are included in *ibsan* or perfection, emphasising morality or behavior (*akhlak* or *dẓauq*). The practice of *ibsan* usually forms in *tasawwuf* or *tarekat* (psychological) practice. According to Kamba, a dimension of *ibsan* in Islam is the sharpness of religious intuition which is formed by a consistent ritual that is performed over a long period. It is also accompanied by an instructor (Mursyid), especially psychic and spiritual. The Prophet defined *ibsan* as “..you worship (interpreted as alive) as if you see God if you do not see Him (but) He saw you.”⁴⁸ *Ibsan* is related to the rank of devotion to Allah, which can only be obtained by wise (*arif*) people. According to Shihab ad-Din Abu al-Abbas al-Mursy (cited in Shihab) the ranks are achieved by Muslim based on *Jibril's hadith*, they are (a) Islam, the rank of devotion and practice of worship prescribed by Allah, (b) Iman, a rank of knowledge about nature/substance of *shari'a* and knowledge about things related to *'ubudiyah*/self-inhibition to Allah, and (c) *ibsan*, a rank of “heart witnessing” to Allah⁴⁹.

The Masturah program also impacts the families of the Tablighi Jamaat to experience and appreciate direct practices (worship). It will grow the stability in religion as a respondent mentioned:

Masturah helps develop stability in performing religious practice, improving the consistency and *imaniyah*, *'ubudiyah*, *mu'amalah*, and *mu'asyaroh*. (A female Tablighi follower).

Another respondent talked about the importance of *ta'lim* at home. As she mentioned:

Before participating in the *Masturah* program, it was hard to perform *ta'lim* at home. However, after participating in this program, the spirit in fulfilling those actions is increasing. There are many friends by which we enrich the knowledge and become wiser in facing any characters of people (A female Tablighi follower).

Participation in a *Masturah dawab* significantly increases the tendency of religious practice among women. It also creates and holds desires for nurturing the religiosity of women at home. As a respondent justified her position in this context:

There is increased spirit in performing religious practice after participating in *Masturah* program. There is also a feeling of happiness and a desire to be consistent.

⁴⁷ Anonim, *Mudẓakarab Da'wah Usaha Rasulullah*, 82–83.

⁴⁸ Kamba, *Kids Zaman Now Menemukan Kembali Islam*, 29.

⁴⁹ Muhammad Quraish Shihab, *Yang Hilang Dari Kita: Akhlak* (Tangerang: Lentera Hati, 2016), 103.

The program also brings changes in daily life, especially in *imaniyah*, *'ubudiyah*, *mu'amalah*, and *mu'asyaroh*.

Respondents also talked about other impacts of *Masturah*, such as the improvement of *khusyu'* (concentrate) and *khudhu'* (orderly) in prayer and improvement of etiquette while performing worship supporting preaching effort. All of these help them to continue with regular religious practices.

Enrich Islamic Religious Knowledge and Motivation of Practices: The *Masturah* program encourages the Tablighi Jamaat family to support each other in deepening and adding insight into Islamic knowledge. While talking about the impact of *Masturah dawah*, a respondent stated that the *Masturah* knowledge is an enrichment in her life. As she continued:

The knowledge about the Islamic religion has increased. The consistency is also improved in terms of *ta'lim*, correctly reciting the Qur'an, and practicing the action in accordance to *sunnah* (A female Tablighi follower).

In the increasing nature of religious knowledge, a male Tablighi follower explained that participation in the *Masturah dawah* journey increases religious knowledge. As he mentioned:

Participating in *Masturah* program improves the knowledge of *sunnah* prayers, obligatory prayer, educating children in Islamic perspective, covering *awrah* (a body that should not be exposed), obeying husband, and learning the behavior that the Prophet advised for women (A male Tablighi follower).

Besides, *Masturah* has become a space for Islamic practice for women, which acts as motivation in performing and following various Islamic practices actively. *Masturah* improves the motivation to perform Islamic practices and follow Islamic norms actively. Increased religious motivation is an impact of *Masturah* that has been evident in our field research. A respondent mentioned in this context:

The impact of *Masturah* is the improvement of the spirit in learning Islamic religion, with a vision of sacrifice for faith, improving the practice, and motivates for *targhiban* (trigger of interest in goodness) from each *Masturah* participant. It also encourages them to follow and conduct *ta'lim* and *tasykil* (A female Tablighi follower)

Another respondent talked about how it improved her understanding of religious practices and Islamic knowledge. As she mentioned:

Masturah motivates the participants to be more spirited in practicing worshipping, giving more understanding to the Islamic knowledge and understanding of charity's primacy that drives its spirit. The program also improves the belief in Allah that everything depends on Allah's will that will make us believe in Allah (A female Tablighi follower).

This statement shows an ultimate submission towards Allah, which is a key message that the Tablighi Jamaat followers keep reminding themselves every time. In a similar manner, they emphasized it for their female counterparts to believe, practice and follow.

CONCLUSION

Masturah in Tablighi Jamaat ideology is a program where women at home are being targeted, which is no different in the families of the Tablighi Jamaat in Temboro, Magetan, Indonesia. It is carried out privately in one of Jamaat's houses. *Masturah* aims to prepare the wives to be able to take the role as *mu'allimah wa muta'allimah* (teacher and student), *daiyah* (preacher), and *'abidah* (worshiper). *Masturah* program impacts improving the religious character of the wives, increasing faith in Allah, appreciation in Islamic knowledge, enriching the Islamic knowledge, and increasing the motivation to practice and preaching Islam. This research has implications for the importance of religious education for wives to support their husbands' *da'wah* activities and children's education at home. Thus, we argue that the entire process of *Masturah dawab* activities aims to instil the Tablighi learning among the women to bring the Islamic practices in the home, in the neighborhoods through the peers of the women and to create a consciousness to support their male counterparts (husbands). However, the impact of such practices on their gender norms and roles were not very clear in this research, which would be the future scope for research in this area. Besides, there remains a sense of limitation of this research that the researchers were not involved in *Masturah* practice. Thus, the researchers could not observe the practice of *Masturah* empirically as it was strictly private and accessible only to the women. However, this research opens up an avenue to further research to understand the broader gender relations of the Tablighi Jamaat in Temboro and what changes such practice brings in their lives would be worth considering.

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