



Manifestation of *Maslahah Mursalah* in Public Transportation: An Analysis of The Socio-Economic Impact of Bus Trans Palu on Community Welfare

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Abstract: Public transportation is a vital instrument for urban mobility and economic efficiency. In Palu, the government launched the Bus Trans Palu (BTP) service as mandated by Law No. 22 of 2009 to provide safe and inclusive transportation. From an Islamic Economic perspective, such provision serves as a form of government obligation to ensure the fulfillment of public needs (*maslahah*). This study aims to explore the socio-economic impacts of the Bus Trans Palu from the users' perspective, analyzed through the lens of Islamic Economics. This research utilizes a qualitative descriptive approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with 20 informants from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, including civil servants, students, and street vendors. The data were analyzed thematically and synthesized using Islamic economic principles, specifically *Maslahah Mursalah* (public interest) and *Tawazun* (balance). The results indicate that Bus Trans Palu provides significant social benefits by enhancing accessibility to education and work centers. It creates an egalitarian social space that fosters community interaction (*ukhuwah*). Economically, the service offers substantial cost efficiency, especially for low-income groups and students, allowing for household savings. Furthermore, the presence of bus stops has stimulated the real sector by creating opportunities for micro-entrepreneurs and informal traders. The implementation of Bus Trans Palu aligns with the concept of *Maslahah Mursalah*, as it reduces economic disparity through equitable access and supports sustainable urban living. This study recommends a single-fare integration system to further optimize economic justice for passengers requiring multiple transfers.

Keywords: Islamic Economics; *maslahah mursalah*; public transportation; socio-economic impact; Trans Palu Bus.

Introduction

Transportation plays a fundamental role in enabling individuals to travel efficiently between locations and to access various social and economic activities. In urban environments, buses are among the most widely used modes of public transportation, alongside private vehicles, due to their affordability and broad service coverage. Over time, bus services have evolved from merely serving mobility needs into becoming a key component of urban development strategies. This shift is driven by the increasing demand for sustainable, inclusive, and efficient public transportation systems that can accommodate growing urban populations. The integration of bus networks within cities supports improved accessibility to public services, employment centers, and educational institutions, while also helping to reduce traffic congestion and

environmental pressures caused by excessive reliance on private vehicles. Consequently, buses are no longer viewed solely as a transportation alternative, but as essential infrastructure that contributes to urban mobility management, social connectivity, and economic productivity, reinforcing their strategic importance in the planning and development of modern urban areas (Anwar, 2020). Nearly all urban areas in various provinces in Indonesia utilize buses to support community mobility. This demonstrates the vital role buses play in supporting urban activities and increasing mobility efficiency.

Palu, as the capital city of Central Sulawesi Province, has undergone significant urban growth over the last six to seven years, particularly in the period following the devastating earthquake on September 28, 2018. This phase of development has been marked by substantial improvements in physical infrastructure, including the expansion and upgrading of primary road networks as well as the construction and rehabilitation of public facilities. These developments reflect broader efforts to restore and strengthen the city's urban resilience and functionality. In addition to physical growth, Palu has experienced a noticeable increase in population inflows from surrounding regions and other parts of Indonesia. This trend is closely associated with national discourse and policy directions concerning the relocation of the national capital to East Kalimantan, which has positioned Palu as a strategically important city within eastern Indonesia. Consequently, Palu's accelerated development highlights its growing role as a regional hub for economic, social, and infrastructural activities (Alexander, 2024). This makes Palu a strategic location in eastern Indonesia, given its relative proximity to the new capital.

Palu, as a developing city and one of the centers of social and economic activity in Central Sulawesi, requires an efficient transportation system to accommodate the mobility needs of its citizens. By observing the social and economic potential in this region, as well as the phenomenon of the increasing public demand for relatively affordable public transportation services, especially for low-income communities or vulnerable groups, the Palu city government was encouraged to establish a policy related to the provision of mass public transportation services as a means of public transportation, namely the operation of the Trans Palu Bus (BPK, 2024). In Palu, this bus is included in the Bus Rapid Transit category (Regional Kotanco.id, 2024), although the implementation of typical BRT elements such as the availability of dedicated lanes (Utami et al., 2021), is adjusted to the existing infrastructure.

The operation of BusTrans Palu by the government is mandated by Law No. 22 of 2009 concerning Traffic and Road Transportation (UUD, 2009), specifically Article 139 paragraph 3, which states that district/city governments are obliged to guarantee the availability of public transportation for the transportation of people and/or goods within the district/city area. The mandate of this law was followed up by the government by issuing regional regulation No. 3 of 2022 concerning the implementation of traffic and road transportation. This regulation regulates various aspects related to traffic and road transportation in the city of Palu (UUD, 2022), including the provision of safe, comfortable and efficient public transportation for the community.

Beginning on October 1, 2024, a total of 26 Trans Palu buses were officially put into operation to support urban mobility within the city. The bus system operates across four distinct corridors, each designed to connect key areas of Palu and enhance accessibility for residents. Corridor 1 serves the route from Pantoloan Harbor to the city center at GOR Park, facilitating connectivity between the port area and the urban core. Corridor 2 links City Hall with Manonda Market, providing essential access to administrative and commercial zones. Corridor 3 connects the city center at GOR Park with the airport, operating through two alternative routes via Jalan M. Yamin and Jalan W. Monginsidi to accommodate traffic flow and coverage. Meanwhile, Corridor 4 operates between the airport and Tipo Terminal, strengthening integration between transportation hubs. The launch of the Trans Palu Bus system immediately drew significant public attention and received a positive response from the wider community. This enthusiasm was largely driven by the government's policy to offer free bus services during a three-month trial period, which lasted until December 31, 2024. Starting January 1, 2025, the service transitioned to a paid system, marking the full implementation of the public transportation

program (Kareba Sulteng, 2025).

During this period, the public truly utilized the service not only as a means of transportation, but also as part of a new experience using modern and comfortable public transportation. In fact, some people from outside Palu specifically came to try this service, which was considered a step forward in the transportation system in the Central Sulawesi region. Thus, the existence of public transportation services such as the Trans Palu Bus represents a government effort aimed at improving mobility and accessibility, reducing the use of private vehicles (Yadjib, 2024), and encouraging regional economic growth. It also symbolizes the city's transformation towards better public transportation management that is more modern, efficient, and inclusive (Zakiah & Fadiyah, 2020).

In general, the Trans Palu Bus is expected to have a social and economic impact on the community, especially its direct users. The user perspective is crucial in understanding the extent to which this public transportation system successfully meets their needs. This includes ease of access, comfort, safety, and perceived economic impacts, such as reduced transportation costs and increased productivity. Therefore, understanding the user experience can provide a concrete picture of the benefits of this public transportation system. In the long term, the existence of this type of public transportation system is expected to contribute to improving the overall welfare of the community. Therefore, it is important to understand the extent to which strategic objectives have been achieved, especially from the user perspective.

Regarding research on the existence of bus transportation, there has been much research, but in-depth studies focusing on the user perspective are still very limited. To date, research specifically discussing how Trans Palu Bus users perceive the social and economic impacts of this transportation mode has been limited. Furthermore, previous research examining public transportation has generally focused on large cities in Indonesia with more advanced infrastructure and social and economic dynamics. Palu City, with its unique local characteristics, requires a contextual analysis to understand the extent to which this public transportation provides relevant socioeconomic impacts. This study aims to fill this gap by providing a more in-depth analysis tailored to the city of Palu.

The author identifies that the majority of earlier studies have primarily focused on the presence of Trans bus systems in terms of their contribution to transportation efficiency and the effectiveness of urban transport management. These studies generally emphasize technical aspects such as service performance, route optimization, travel time reduction, and operational reliability as key indicators of success in public transportation systems. One notable study conducted by Ichwinsyah Azali, Edy Yusuf Agung Gunanto, and Nugroho SBM, entitled *"Consumer Preferences for Public Transportation (Case Study of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in Semarang City)"*, highlights how user preferences are shaped by factors including service quality, affordability, comfort, and accessibility (Azali et al., 2018). Their findings suggest that the decision to use BRT services is largely influenced by practical considerations related to efficiency and convenience rather than broader social or cultural dimensions.

Consequently, much of the existing literature tends to frame Trans bus systems as functional instruments aimed at addressing urban congestion and improving mobility management. However, this dominant focus often overlooks the wider social, economic, and value-based implications of public transportation, particularly in relation to social equity, community interaction, and welfare distribution. Therefore, there remains a research gap that calls for a more comprehensive approach in analyzing public transportation systems beyond efficiency-oriented perspectives, especially within the context of developing urban environments (Yulianto & Yahya, 2018).". This study analyzes consumer preferences in terms of price, comfort, reliability, accessibility and safety towards the possibility of choosing BRT and non-BRT modes. The results of the study indicate that the choice of transportation modes by consumers is more dominated by BRT.

In addition, research related to the social and economic impacts of public transportation is also discussed in the study by Wawan M. Marbun, et al. entitled *"The Social and Economic Impact of the Lack of Public Transportation on the People of Palangkaraya City (Marbun et al., 2023)." This study examines the social and economic impacts of the lack of public transportation on the people of Palangkaraya City. The results of the study indicate that the lack*

of public transportation has led to an increase in the use of private vehicles, which then contributes to traffic congestion and air pollution.

Similar research focusing on the role of transportation technology is found in the study by Larasati Widya Putri and Achmad Room Fitrianto entitled “Social and Economic Impacts of Transportation Changes: The Role of Electric Buses in Creating More Affordable Mobility in Jakarta (Marbun et al., 2023).” Trans Palu Bus is a manifestation of an ideal transportation system that integrates high-quality services with the principle of *maslahah mursalah* through providing inclusive (Halek, 2023) accessibility for all levels of society (Pratistha, 2024). As a *Bus Rapid Transit* (BRT) mode, this service not only increases the efficiency of mobility to public facilities such as schools and economic centers, but also carries out the function of distributive justice in Islamic economics by ensuring affordability (Nur, 2021) for vulnerable groups (Yulianto & Yahya, 2018). Theoretically, this increased accessibility reduces economic and geographical barriers, which in the Islamic view is in line with efforts to optimize public resources for the welfare of the people (*falah*) (Nur, 2021). Furthermore, this infrastructure is transformed into a social space that facilitates reciprocal and spontaneous social interactions, which not only increase physical connectivity but also strengthen the bonds of *brotherhood* in public spaces, creating social harmony through meetings between individuals from various social status backgrounds (Jacky, 2015).

In the perspective of Islamic economics, the provision of Trans Palu Bus by the government is a real form of the implementation of *the maslahah mursalah instrument*, namely the establishment of policies to realize the benefits that are not specifically mentioned in the text, but in line with the spirit of sharia to provide benefits to humans. Imam al-Ghazali emphasized that the essence of benefits is to maintain the objectives of sharia (*Maqashid asy-Syari'ah*), which in the context of mobility includes protection of property (*hifz al-mal*) through efficient transportation costs for the wider community (Al-Ghazali, 1937). The operation of this bus fulfills the requirements of *maslahah ammah* because its benefits are felt collectively by various levels of society from students to workers to support daily economic activities without burdening household finances excessively (Zahrah, 1997). In line with the principles of *Siyasah Syar'iyah*, the Palu City government has a responsibility (*amanah*) to manage public facilities in order to achieve *falah* (welfare), where the presence of affordable modes of transportation is a solution to the economic difficulties of the community (*al-masyaqqah tajlibu at-taysir*), so that a more equitable distribution of access to urban space is created (Chapra, 2016).

Method

This study uses a qualitative approach (Yuliani, 2018) designed descriptively to explain the phenomenon of the social and economic impacts of the Trans Palu Bus in depth. The use of this qualitative method allows researchers to explore the experiences, perceptions, and views of users contextually in Palu City. In analyzing the data, researchers apply the Islamic Economics method as an analytical framework to review the extent to which the existence of this public transportation reflects the principle of *Maslahah Mursalah* (public benefit) and the fulfillment of basic community needs according to the mandate of sharia in public services (Creswell, 2018).

The research data is sourced from primary data obtained through field observations and in-depth interviews, as well as secondary data covering related regulations such as Law No. 22 of 2009 and Palu City Regulation No. 3 of 2022. The determination of informants was carried out purposively by involving 20 Trans Palu Bus users who have diverse backgrounds, ranging from students to state civil servants (ASN). This diversity aims to obtain a complete perspective on fair access for all levels of society (Creswell, 2016).

Data collection involved a combination of structured and semi-structured interviews to explore cost efficiency and the social interactions that occurred. Researchers also conducted direct observations of passenger interactions and microeconomic activities around the stops to assess the real impact on local community well-being (Muhammad, 2008). The data analysis stages follow a thematic analysis pattern that begins with data reduction, data presentation, and ends with drawing conclusions. Data validity is ensured through triangulation techniques of

sources, methods, and time to maintain the consistency and validity of the findings. As a difference from previous research, the analysis in this study synthesizes field findings with the principles of Islamic economics, particularly regarding aspects of distributive justice, protection of vulnerable groups, and optimization of public resources for the welfare of the people (*falah*) (Sugiyono, 2023).

Results and Discussion

This study involved 20 informants who were *purposively selected* based on their experiences as users of the Trans Palu Bus service. The diversity of informants' backgrounds aimed to obtain a comprehensive perspective on the social and economic impacts of the bus's operations. The composition of informants based on gender showed a majority of women (18 people) and 2 men. This phenomenon reflects field conditions where women, especially housewives and informal sector workers, are the dominant users during certain operating hours. Although there is an imbalance in gender representation, this does not reduce the validity of the qualitative data because the research has reached a saturation point, where depth of experience is prioritized over proportionality of numbers (Suadnyani et al., 2023).

In terms of occupation and education, the informants cover a wide range of profiles: 7 Civil Servants (PNS), 4 housewives, 3 private employees, 2 entrepreneurs, 3 students, and 1 pupil, with educational levels ranging from junior high school to postgraduate (S2). This variation enriches the thematic analysis related to mobility, accessibility, social interaction, as well as cost efficiency and user welfare in a more contextual way. Through a triangulation approach involving various age groups and professions, the validity of the findings of this study is maintained to provide an in-depth picture of the transformation of public transportation in Palu City. As a suggestion for future research, the balance of gender representation can be further considered to explore the dynamics of public transportation use more equally (Lucas, 2012).

The analysis of the social impact of Trans Palu Bus focuses on the dynamics of user mobility, which includes the transition of transportation modes and frequency of use. Before the presence of this service, people's mobility choices were dominated by online transportation (60%) and private vehicles (40%), chosen based on flexibility and affordability factors. Interesting findings show that access to app-based transportation has reached young people, as seen in student informants who are accustomed to using online transportation services. Following the operation of the Trans Palu Bus, all informants have adopted this service with varying levels of frequency. As many as 40% of informants have made this bus their daily routine mode of transportation for work and education purposes (Jing et al., 2022). Meanwhile, most other informants use the service incidentally, either during the free trial period or after the implementation of paid fares. For groups of school and university students, the Trans Palu Bus has great potential as a primary mode of transportation because it offers real benefits in the form of cost efficiency and ease of access, which go beyond the mere incentive of free service.

Service Accessibility

Service accessibility is a crucial determinant in optimizing the utilization of Trans Palu Bus, which includes the dimensions of ease of reaching the bus stops, route suitability, and the effectiveness of connectivity to community activity centers. The research findings show variations in informant perceptions influenced by travel distance and mode of access to the bus stops. Quantitatively, the majority of informants (19 out of 20 people) consider the location of the bus stops to be quite strategic and easy to reach. Mobility data details that 11 informants reach the bus stops on foot due to their proximity to their homes, while the other 9 informants still require additional vehicles or delivery. This distance obstacle is predominantly found among housewives, students, and university students who live far from the main route, as confirmed by informant I1 who stated that the relatively long distance to the bus stops requires him to use a motorbike as connecting transportation (Geurs & Wee, 2004). One informant said, "The bus stops are quite far, so I usually get dropped off by motorbike."

Regarding access to destinations, all informants stated that buses helped them reach important locations such as offices, schools, and markets. For example, I20 (a junior high school student) said, "I can now go to school on my own without having to be driven, because the bus passes in front of my school." This shows that the bus route connects users with activity centers. Evaluation of the suitability of routes and schedules shows that the Trans Palu Bus service has effectively met the informants' daily mobility needs by connecting them to various major activity centers. The majority of informants perceive the location of the bus stops as strategic and accessible on foot. However, accessibility is not yet fully equitable because some users still need additional vehicles to reach the nearest bus stop (Daniels & Mulley, 2013). Overall, the accessibility of the Trans Palu Bus is categorized as good because the routes have accommodated primary travel needs, but structural challenges remain in areas that are not directly reached by services and there are limited physical access for vulnerable groups such as students and housewives.

Social Interaction

Public transportation not only serves as a means of mobility, but also transforms into an inclusive social space that enables dynamic interactions between individuals from various backgrounds. The social dynamics that form at bus stops and on the bus reflect the communication patterns, level of openness, and daily interaction culture of the people of Palu City. Based on the results of interviews with 20 informants, the majority of users engage in spontaneous social interactions, both intensively and incidentally. The forms of interactions that occur are very varied, ranging from simply greeting, exchanging information about routes and payment systems, to sharing personal experiences. This confirms that the Trans Palu Bus service plays an important role in creating an open public space, as confirmed by informant I3 who began the interaction through operational questions and answers before finally sharing further stories with fellow passengers (Bissell, 2010). One informant said, "At first I tried to ask about the route, how to pay, then ended up exchanging stories." Similarly, an informant said, "Because chatting with fellow passengers is fun."

With regard to the underlying factors that encourage social interaction, the majority of such interactions were driven by informational needs as well as a desire for social engagement. Many participants indicated that communication with fellow passengers served as a means of obtaining practical information related to routes, schedules, or destinations. At the same time, these interactions fulfilled social purposes, such as fostering a sense of connection during the journey. Several informants explained that engaging in conversation allowed them to establish new relationships, expand their social networks, or become acquainted with unfamiliar individuals. Others viewed these interactions as a way to alleviate boredom and make productive use of travel time. As a result, public transportation spaces functioned not only as mobility facilities but also as informal social environments where interpersonal communication naturally emerged. These findings suggest that everyday travel experiences can facilitate meaningful social exchanges, reinforcing the role of transportation systems as platforms for social interaction and community building within urban contexts (Kroesen, 2014). One such enthusiastically expressed this was I2: *"Because on the bus/bus stop, it's not just us mothers, but also many other people, such as schoolchildren and workers. This helps us strengthen our social relationships by greeting each other, smiling, and talking."*

Based on this account, it can be inferred that the informant views interaction with fellow bus users as an important means of strengthening social relationships. Engaging in conversation is perceived as a way to build familiarity, enhance mutual understanding, and foster a sense of connection among passengers. Nevertheless, not all informants demonstrated the same level of social initiative. Some individuals tended to adopt a more passive approach to interaction, choosing to engage only when approached by others. This attitude is reflected in the statement provided by informant I19, who indicated a willingness to communicate only after being invited to do so. Such variations highlight the diversity of social orientations among public transportation users, shaped by personal comfort levels and individual social preferences (Beirão & Cabral, 2007). These findings suggest that while public transportation can serve as a space that enables social interaction, the extent to which such interaction occurs is largely

dependent on personal disposition and situational factors.

The research findings show that social interactions on the bus and at stops are generally spontaneous and situational. The majority of informants believe that the presence of the Trans Palu Bus is effective in improving social relations between residents because it brings together individuals from various backgrounds, such as housewives, students, and workers. Informant I11 stated that this service significantly strengthens social relations, while informant I20 emphasized the opportunity for sharing experiences and knowledge between passengers. The dynamics of this interaction are triggered by shared goals, physical proximity while in the vehicle, and adequate waiting time at the bus stop. These conditions create space for natural socialization, as conveyed by informant I15 who feels that his social capacity develops through encounters with various human characters. Even informants with introverted personalities (I4) admit that the social atmosphere created remains orderly and comfortable (Chang et al., 2021). Overall, the Trans Palu Bus not only functions as a means of mobility, but also plays a role as an inclusive and conducive public space that is able to build equal and open social relationships across social statuses.

Convenience and Safety with Other Modes of Transportation

Comfort and safety are crucial indicators in evaluating the social impact of Trans Palu Bus services on its users. Comfort encompasses not only the physical condition and facilities of the vehicle but also influences the psychological state of passengers during the trip. Meanwhile, a sense of security reflects users' perceptions of safety, both during the day and at night. This collective experience demonstrates the extent to which public transportation is able to provide a sense of peace of mind and social protection that builds public trust in a professionally managed system. Interview results confirmed that the majority of informants felt highly comfortable thanks to adequate interior facilities, maintained cleanliness, and the presence of supporting features such as air conditioning and Wi-Fi. Informants I2 and I4 specifically praised the quality of the facilities and the calm driving style of the driver, while I8 highlighted the neatness of the bus layout (Lin & Yang, 2019). In addition to technical factors, aspects of the staff service and friendly social interactions on the bus also contributed to the creation of a positive and non-alienating travel atmosphere for passengers.

From a safety perspective, the availability of a CCTV monitoring system constitutes a crucial factor in fostering a sense of security among all informants. The presence of surveillance technology enhances passengers' confidence by providing continuous oversight throughout the journey. Beyond technological measures, the driver's attentive conduct and selective passenger management further reinforce feelings of safety, including during evening and nighttime operations. Although some users perceive nighttime services as relatively limited, the overall safety conditions remain positively evaluated. The combination of adequate physical infrastructure, responsible driver behavior, and an internal monitoring system has contributed to the creation of a travel environment that is perceived as secure and well-managed (Vedel et al., 2017). Consequently, these integrated security features not only ensure passenger protection but also promote comfort and inclusivity, allowing public transportation spaces to function as socially safe environments for diverse users across different times of operation.

The Economic Impact of the Trans Palu Bus from a User Perspective

1. Transportation Cost Efficiency

Cost efficiency in transportation represents the most prominent economic benefit experienced by users of the Trans Palu Bus. Findings from interviews indicate that the majority of informants perceive this service as highly effective in reducing daily transportation expenditures when compared to online ride-hailing services such as Grab or Maxim. The implementation of a subsidized and affordable fare structure IDR 5,000 for the general public and IDR 2,500 for students has generated tangible financial advantages for users across diverse social groups, including housewives (I2) and students (I17, I18, I20). Several informants reported that the savings achieved through the use of this public transportation service exceeded 50 percent relative to the costs associated with online transportation options. This significant reduction in travel expenses enables users to redirect their remaining income toward savings or

to fulfill other essential household needs. Consequently, the Trans Palu Bus not only enhances mobility but also contributes meaningfully to improving household financial efficiency (Karma et al., 2024). These findings suggest that affordable public transportation plays a crucial role in supporting economic resilience, particularly for lower- and middle-income urban residents, by easing the financial burden of daily commuting.

Perceptions of cost efficiency are not uniform and are strongly shaped by route configurations and the number of corridors that must be used during a journey. Several informants, including I5 and I16, noted that transportation expenses may increase or be perceived as less efficient when passengers are required to transfer between corridors or utilize multiple routes, given that the fare system is applied on a per-trip basis. In such cases, cumulative costs can reduce the perceived economic advantage of the service. Despite these challenges associated with route transfers and additional fares, the Trans Palu Bus is still widely regarded as a more affordable and socio-economically inclusive mobility option when compared to alternative transportation modes. The system has effectively encouraged users to shift away from higher-cost transport options, particularly private vehicles and online ride-hailing services (Du et al., 2015). However, this transition is largely dependent on how well the available routes align with users' destinations. When route suitability is ensured, the Trans Palu Bus continues to function as an economically efficient and equitable public transportation solution.

2. *Productivity and Time Management*

Time productivity is a crucial economic indicator in evaluating the impact of the Trans Palu Bus service, which goes beyond simply shortening travel time. Public transportation serves as an in-between space that allows passengers to engage in meaningful parallel activities, such as reading, resting, or completing light tasks. This study specifically explores how users utilize this time flexibility during their journeys, both through mobility efficiency and other productive activities. Based on research data, most informants consider travel time using the Trans Palu Bus to be more efficient than online transportation due to the accuracy of the schedule and the integrated route directly to the destination point. Informants I1 and I2 emphasized that the certainty of bus operations is very helpful in managing their daily travel time. However, critical views still emerged from informants such as I5 and I19 who highlighted the waiting duration and the need to change corridors as obstacles to productivity, especially for individuals with a rushed activity rhythm (Inoue, 2018).

Although perceptions of travel duration varied among users, most informants reported utilizing their time on board for rest and other low-intensity activities. Commonly mentioned activities included resting or relaxing (I20), listening to music or reading materials (I18), as well as engaging in light social interactions with fellow passengers (I11). For certain users, particularly civil servants such as I10, travel time was even used more productively by accessing educational or informational content through digital devices. This practice illustrates how the bus environment has gradually evolved into a functional temporary space that supports informal learning and personal development during daily mobility. Overall, the Trans Palu Bus offers a calmer and less demanding travel atmosphere compared to private vehicle use, which requires continuous concentration and physical alertness. This condition enables urban residents to optimize their daily schedules by reallocating travel time for rest or personal activities. Perceptions of productivity during travel remain subjective and are strongly influenced by individual needs, commuting patterns, and lifestyle preferences (Cooper, 2007). Therefore, public transportation not only reduces transportation costs but also holds the potential to enhance socio-economic efficiency by enabling more effective and meaningful use of time.

3. *Economic Impact Around the Trans Palu Bus Route*

The Trans Palu Bus not only serves as a means of mobility, but also represents an instrument of public welfare (*maslahah*) that impacts individual well-being and strengthens the local economy. From an Islamic economic perspective, welfare (*falah*) is measured by the system's ability to meet basic needs and provide opportunities for improving the quality of life. The resulting transportation cost efficiency allows people to allocate their financial resources to

more pressing household needs or future investments in the form of savings (*al-iddikhar*), which aligns with the principle of wise wealth management in sharia (Santos et al., 2010).

Research data shows a positive correlation between the presence of bus stops and the emergence of microeconomic activity in the real sector. The presence of street vendors and informal service providers around bus stops creates an inclusive economic ecosystem that provides livelihoods for small businesses. This phenomenon reflects the spirit of Islamic economics, which encourages the circulation of wealth beyond a select few and extends to MSMEs, the pillars of the people's economy. As noted by several informants, bus stops have now transformed into hubs of economic interaction, opening up opportunities for many. While the potential for strengthening the local economy is evident, there is a diversity of perceptions among informants regarding the significance of this impact. Some informants reported active trade dynamics, while others did not see any significant economic impacts near the stopover points. These differences in perspective are influenced by the focus of service use and individual travel routes (Salon & Gulyani, 2010). Within an Islamic economic framework, this variation suggests that the distribution of economic benefits from public facilities requires broader policy integration to ensure that their welfare impacts are felt equitably by all levels of society.

From a financial well-being perspective, the significant efficiency of Trans Palu Bus fares provides users with the opportunity to redistribute their household budgets. The savings in travel costs experienced by the majority of informants, particularly civil servants and students, directly increase purchasing power and personal economic resilience. From a sharia economic perspective, savings allocated to savings or supporting productive activities are a strategic step in achieving economic independence, in line with the recommendation to prepare for a better tomorrow through effective income management (Banister, 2011). Overall, the Trans Palu Bus serves as a catalyst for local economic activity and a means of equitable welfare improvement. Although for a small number of informants, the financial impact is indirect or limited to recreational purposes, this service has succeeded in creating added socio-economic value for the urban community. The integration of affordable public mobility with business opportunities in the informal sector demonstrates that public transportation infrastructure development oriented towards the public interest (*maslahah mursalah*) can create a more inclusive and sustainable economic order in Palu City.

4. From Social Mobility to Social Welfare

The Trans Palu Bus service plays a crucial role in improving mobility for city residents, particularly for user groups such as students, housewives, and employees. This is supported by research showing that most informants found this public transportation system helpful because its routes reach many core areas and are central to activity. The presence of well-planned bus corridors is a key factor in making it easier for users to reach educational, work, or other social activities without relying on private vehicles or more expensive online transportation. Within the theoretical framework of transportation accessibility, as proposed by Litman (2011), transportation access is determined not only by speed or travel time, but also by service availability, coverage area, and connectivity between key points within the city (Lownes & Machemehl, 2008). The Trans Palu Bus's fixed routes and strategic stops can bring people closer to public services, educational facilities, and economic centers. This provides more equitable opportunities for access to city resources for groups from various social strata.

The regular and scheduled availability of Trans Palu buses also improves daily travel planning for users. Several informants mentioned that the certainty of bus arrival and departure times is a distinct advantage compared to other modes of transportation that do not have a fixed schedule. This demonstrates that mobility is not only about being able to move from one place to another, but also encompasses certainty and efficiency in organizing daily activities. This supports a more organized lifestyle, especially for students and workers who have fixed schedules. Furthermore, affordable fares are also a factor that strengthens accessibility. For schoolchildren and university students, affordable fares can be a stimulus that encourages them to use this service continuously. This aligns with the principle of equitable access, which states that public transportation should be able to reach those most in need of mobility at a low cost. The results of this study reinforce the view that public transportation plays a role in reducing

inequality in access to urban spaces and public facilities (Putra & Adeswastoto, 2018).

Therefore, from the perspective of sustainable urban development, as currently being pursued by the Palu city government, mobility supported by public transportation services such as the Trans Palu Bus has the potential to reduce public dependence on private vehicles. In addition to supporting space efficiency and reducing emissions, this also creates a more inclusive mobility system. Thus, the Trans Palu Bus serves not only as a mode of transportation but also as a means of more equitable and equitable social and economic development. The Palu City government's policy of providing affordable mass public transportation aligns with the principle of *Maslahah Mursalah*, which mandates public authorities to ensure the availability of basic facilities for the community (Hori et al., 2014). Setting affordable fares, particularly for students and low-income communities, demonstrates an effort to create distributive justice so that economic mobility is not dominated by private vehicle owners.

From an Islamic economic perspective, the emergence of small businesses such as street vendors and beverage vendors around bus stops represents organic economic growth in the real sector. This phenomenon creates livelihood opportunities for MSMEs and strengthens household economic resilience by streamlining transportation spending, which can be allocated to basic needs or savings (*al-iddikhar*) (Al-Ghazali, 1973). Reducing dependence on private vehicles, which has resulted in reduced air pollution in Palu City, reflects humanity's responsibility as *caliphs* to maintain the balance of nature. Socially, the inclusive and safe space inside the bus—supported by CCTV and friendly staff—creates egalitarian and dignified social interactions, strengthening *the bonds* between residents regardless of social status.

The integration of Trans Palu Bus services into the urban ecosystem not only creates technical efficiency, but also strengthens the pillars of the sharia economy through empowering the real sector around bus stops. The phenomenon of the emergence of small traders and MSME units around the bus stops is a form of organic economic growth that provides new jobs, so that the function of public transportation is transformed into a catalyst for inclusive public welfare. Significant savings in transportation costs allow people to redistribute income for more urgent basic needs or allocate it as savings (*al-iddikhar*), which substantially increases family financial resilience and reduces the economic burden on vulnerable groups in Palu City. Conclusively, the existence of the Trans Palu Bus reflects the real implementation of government responsibility within the framework of *maslahah mursalah* and the role of humans as *caliphs* in maintaining environmental balance. Reducing the use of private vehicles directly contributes to reducing exhaust emissions, while the safe bus cabin space and supported by modern facilities create egalitarian social interactions without class barriers (Lange, 2023). Thus, this public transportation has succeeded in synergizing aspects of modern mobility with the noble values of Islamic economics, namely fair access, environmental sustainability, and strengthening *brotherhood* between citizens in order to realize a more just and dignified socio-economic order.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the analysis and discussion presented in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that the operation of the Trans Palu Bus represents more than a mere transportation service; it embodies a comprehensive socio-economic intervention grounded in Islamic ethical principles. From a socio-cultural perspective, the Trans Palu Bus has contributed significantly to improving community mobility and access to public service centers, thereby enhancing the overall quality of social life. This improvement reflects the realization of *maslahah mursalah*, where public policy serves the common good by ensuring safe, inclusive, and accessible facilities for all segments of society. The bus system has also fostered the creation of egalitarian public spaces that enable interaction among individuals of diverse social, professional, and generational backgrounds, strengthening the value of *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) within urban life. The availability of a comfortable and reliable transportation mode further allows community members to utilize their time more efficiently for productive activities and social engagement, contributing to the formation of a more orderly, connected, and socially cohesive urban society. From an economic standpoint, the Trans Palu Bus plays a strategic role in accelerating

community welfare through the application of distributive justice. By implementing affordable fare policies, particularly for students, low-income groups, and vulnerable populations, the service reduces transportation expenditures and enhances individual welfare (*falah*). The resulting savings enable households to reallocate income toward meeting basic needs and long-term financial planning, including savings (*al-iddikhar*). At the macroeconomic level, the presence of bus stops as mobility nodes has stimulated organic growth in the real sector. The emergence of micro, small, and informal economic activities around these nodes demonstrates that public transportation infrastructure can function as a catalyst for local economic development. Consequently, the Trans Palu Bus not only improves accessibility but also expands employment opportunities, supports MSMEs, and promotes a more equitable distribution of economic benefits across communities along its service corridors.

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