

THE DYNAMICS OF JAMAAH TABLIGH'S METHODS: AN EXAMINATION OF SPIRITUAL AND SOCIAL IMPACT IN PAROMPONG WEST BANDUNG

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ABSTRACT

There are several interesting things about the Jamaah Tabligh movement (JT), especially in Indonesia. These interesting phenomena include, first: the method of da'wah. JT's da'wah method is considered unique and contradictory. In its da'wah method it requires to leave the family for a certain time. So that, this method requires its members to leave work and family. This of course has an impact on family livelihood and productivity. Meanwhile, earning a living for the family is considered an obligation in sharia. This is the first contradictory and unique condition. But on the other hand, this contradictory condition is followed by another condition. This condition of spiritual change certainly cannot be done by individuals or other pious organizations. This event only exists among the JT tradition. This article discusses the movement and influence of Jamaah Tabligh in Parongpong, West Bandung.

Keywords: Da'wah, Jamaah Tabligh, Parongpong, Khuruj, Sharia

ABSTRAK

Ada beberapa hal menarik dari gerakan Jamaah Tabligh (JT) khususnya di Indonesia. Fenomena menarik tersebut antara lain, pertama: metode dakwah. Metode dakwah JT dinilai unik dan kontradiktif. Dalam metode dakwahnya mengharuskan meninggalkan keluarga untuk jangka waktu tertentu. Sehingga, cara ini mengharuskan anggotanya meninggalkan pekerjaan dan keluarga. Hal ini tentu saja berdampak pada kehidupan dan produktivitas keluarga. Sedangkan mencari nafkah untuk keluarga dianggap sebagai kewajiban dalam syariah. Inilah kondisi pertama yang kontradiktif dan unik. Namun di sisi lain, kondisi yang kontradiktif ini diikuti oleh kondisi yang lain. Kondisi perubahan spiritual ini tentu tidak bisa dilakukan oleh individu atau organisasi alim lainnya. Acara ini hanya ada di kalangan tradisi JT. Artikel ini membahas tentang pergerakan dan pengaruh Jamaah Tabligh di Parongpong, Bandung Barat.

Kata kunci: Da'wah, Jamaah Tabligh, Parongpong, Khuruj, Sharia

INTRODUCTION

Jamaah Tabligh, an Islamic proselytizing movement, is believed to have first entered Indonesia in the early 1950s (Noor, 2012). Its introduction most likely came through Indian and Pakistani traders and preachers who visited Indonesian ports (Azra, 2006). During this early period, the movement began to take root, especially in urban areas, especially in Jakarta which emerges as the initial center of Jamaah Tabligh activities in Indonesia.

In the 1960s and 1970s, the movement began to gain traction and slowly expanded its influence. As it grew, Jamaah Tabligh began to attract followers from various backgrounds, including some influential figures in Indonesian society. This period laid the foundation for more significant growth in the following decades (Aziz, 2004). The 1980s and 1990s marked a period of substantial expansion of Jamaah Tabligh across various Indonesia. The movement established a stronger presence in major cities such as Surabaya, Medan and Makassar, spreading its message and practices to a wider audience.

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This expansion phase was crucial in solidifying Jamaah Tabligh's position in the religious landscape of Indonesia (Hasan, 2006).

By the 2000s, Jamaah Tabligh had become more visible in Indonesian society. Regular *Ijtima* began to be held, attracting thousands of participants and raising the movement's profile. However, this increased visibility also brought scrutiny, and the movement occasionally faced resistance from other Islamic organizations and local communities unfamiliar with their practices (Aziz, 2004).

The phenomenon of Jamaah Tablig (JT), is very interesting to study because there are several things that are considered contradictory to the understanding of ordinary people. First, in their da'wah movement, they have to leave their families and jobs (*khuruf*) even though from a shar'i perspective earning a living is a shara'i obligation. Secondly, JT's method of da'wah, however polemical, can in fact change the behavior of individuals and society quickly (Bustamam-Ahmad, 2004). On the other hand, conventional methods practiced by ustadz and *kiyai* are not as fast as those practiced by JT. In addition, individual change is done in congregation. Third, JT always conducts its da'wah in congregation, although conventional da'wah is often carried out when in *maqomi* (own territory). Therefore, from this phenomenon, this research will discuss the role and the impact of Jamaah Tabligh in Parongpong, West Bandung.

METHOD

This research uses the historical research method which consists of four stages: heuristics, criticism, interpretation, and historiography. Heuristics is the stage of collecting sources, which are conventionally divided into two types: primary and secondary. In this research, primary data was obtained from Jamaah Tabligh members, either through oral interviews or written documents (Kuntowijoyo, 2013). The criticism stage consists of internal and external criticism, with the main focus on criticizing the oral sources. During the free interview process, many different sources were found but with similar themes. There were often differences in the perpetrators and content of the stories between sources. To overcome this, the researchers conducted selection, logically and empirically to find the opinion that is closest to certainty (Sjamsuddin, 2012). Furthermore, the interpretation stage involves interpreting data or facts. At this stage, fragmentary data is organized into a logical and interrelated narrative, supported by empirical facts (Gottschalk, 1985). Finally, historiography is the stage of writing a research report in a sequential and structured manner, producing a comprehensive historical narrative (Herlina, 2020).

The Origin of Jamaah Tablig in Parongpong, West Bandung (1985-2000)

The arrival of Jamaah Tabligh (JT) to Parongpong did not happen simultaneously, but at different times. Based on oral sources from JT members, the researchers identify three villages that became the forerunners of JT in Parongpong. The first village is Cihideung Caringin. Husin Warsa, a traveling merchant of eyeglasses and garden decorations, is recorded as the first JT member in this area. To his credit, he visited India, Pakistan and Bangladesh in 1987, making him the first Parongpong person to travel to these countries. Given JT's conventional rule of requiring members to preach for four months domestically before going abroad, it is estimated that Husin joined JT around 1985. This year coincided with JT's entry into Bandung, specifically the Antapani area.

In Antapani, a figure named Muzakir, who came from Aceh and owned a pharmacy on Jalan Purwakarta, became an important figure in the development of Jamaah Tabligh (JT) in Bandung. The JT headquarters was once located in H. Muzakir's



mahalla, precisely in the Pancasila Mosque, which is now opposite the Hajj dormitory and Muhammadiyah office. Husin joined JT through the Pakistan Jamaah. However, because he was still alone, he did not immediately practice the JT da'wah method in his village. What he was able to do was to do *ikram* (respect and serve) to the people, especially the congregation of the Nurul Huda Cihideung Mosque. Among the first *tasykilan* (members) recruited by Husin were Erin Suhendi, Ajay, Abu Khoer, Ruswendi, and several others. They became the first generation of JT's karkun (proselytizing workers) in Cihideung Parongpong. Of this early generation, Erin Suhendi and Wawan are still active today.

In the 1990s, when Husin was praying Dzuhur at the Parongpong Kavaleri Mosque, he met Wahyudin, a young contractor. From their conversation, it was revealed that Wahyudin had done *khuruj* (going out to preach) in Jakarta around 1986, when he was still in junior high school. The *khuruj* was carried out at the Kebon Jeruk Headquarters, Jakarta. This meeting brought its own wisdom, namely the re-activity of Wahyudin in Jamaah Tabligh (JT) da'wah activities. The second *mahalla* (community) after Cihideung is Barunagri village, which administratively is now included in Sukajaya village, Lembang sub-district. However, in its da'wah, Barunagri still follows the *halaqah* (circle) of Parongpong, West Bandung, because it is closer to Parongpong than to Lembang. Meanwhile, according to Asa (interview, 2003), JT entered Barunagri in 1987. JT's first pioneers there included: Ustadz Dadang, a farmer of vegetables and cut flowers; Ustadz Didin, a businessman of yogurt and processed food from milk; Abang Iming who later became known as Abah Salim; Asa, originally Ustadz Didin's worker and now a construction worker; Nanang, a trader at Curug Cimahi tourist spot, who is now an ornamental fish trader.

Jamaah Tabligh (JT) who entered Barunagri came from Cimahi. From Barunagri, JT's preaching then spread to Cibodas Maribaya Lembang before the 2000s. As a result, the people of Cibodas have great respect for the people of Barunagri, even recognizing them as teachers (interview, 2005). This recognition as teachers is not only in the context of da'wah, but also has a political dimension. Starting from this common party affiliation, their relationship was established and later developed into a Tabligh da'wah movement (interview Ustadz Didin and Iming, 2005).

According to Ustadz Didin and Iming, JT Barunagri experienced rapid growth in the 1990s. The Jami Barunagri Mosque was no longer able to accommodate the congregation for the five daily prayers, so the congregational prayers had to be divided into two shifts. This led to the expansion of the mosque. This development was caused by the strong influence of the Tabligh preaching movement in the region. At that time, the progress of JT Barunagri reached its peak with the number of members reaching 70 people. There was even an issue that Barunagri Village would be used as JT's headquarters in Bandung. Currently, there are only three JT members still active in Barunagri: Ustadz Didin, Asa, and Bah Iming, plus Nanang. The new generation includes Indra, Dede Abdurrahman, and Usman from Babakan Barunagri village.

The third *mahalla* is Karyawangi. *Mahalla*, a term derived from Urdu, means the village where a karkun (proselytizing worker) lives. This term probably comes from the Arabic word "mahalun" which means place. In the context of Jamaah Tabligh (JT), the meaning narrows down to a village that has JT members and a mosque. In the mosque, a *karkun* must perform several deeds, including da'wah *ilallah* (preaching to Allah), ta'lim wa ta'alum (teaching and learning), dhikr-worship, and khidmat (service). These four deeds are carried out through five means: daily deliberation, two and a half hours, ta'lim, the first jaulah and the second jaulah, and a three-day nishab. While it is difficult to

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implement all five of these perfectly, at least one of the five must be done for a place to be called a mahalla.

The following mahalla is of Karyawangi. The sources of information in this section are primary sources obtained through observation and free talk. It is called primary because it comes from the direct observation of a JT member. JT entered Karyawangi, precisely RW 05 RT 01 Kampung Panyairan, Karyawangi Village, West Bandung, around 2000. At that time, a group of worshipers from Majalengka numbering about 10 people came during the fasting month. Some of them were school teachers.

The Impact of Jamaah Tablig Movement in Parongpong (2013-2023)

Between 2013-2023 marks a decade of Islamic education inspired by the spirit of Jamaah Tabligh (JT). Interestingly, JT's concept of education is different from the understanding of modern education in general. Education in the JT perspective is rooted in the tradition of the Prophet's companions, which began in the 7th century A.H. The center of this education was the Prophet's Mosque, which then spread to the homes of Muslims (Metcalf, 2002). In the JT concept, the practice at the mosque must be in line with the practice at home. There are four main practices of the Prophet's Mosque that must also be carried out in the homes of the companions (Masud, 2000). First, *da'wah*. The essence of this *da'wah* includes three main aspects: *takbirat*, *risalat*, and the hereafter. *Takbirat* means always glorifying the greatness and oneness of Allah. The goal is to instill the greatness of Allah in the heart while removing the greatness of the world (Ali, 2012). then, *risalat*: Emphasizes the greatness of Islam. The point is to understand the value of a deed, as stated in the Quran. This concept of expecting reward is a core obligation in JT, in contrast to the Sufi concept which emphasizes *taqarrub* and love (Jailani, 2008). And finally, the afterlife: Always talking about the afterlife. According to Imam Ghazali, the afterlife includes events from death to heaven and hell (Ghazali, 2011).

Second, *ta'lim*, which is the core of the teaching-learning process in the Jamaah Tabligh (JT) tradition. The main content of *ta'lim* focuses on two aspects: the words of Allah (Al-Quran) and the words of the Prophet Muhammad peace be upon him (Hadith). According to Maulana Muhammad Zakariya Kandhalawi in his work *Fadhilah Amal*, the main purpose of *ta'lim* is to infuse the *nur* (light) of Allah's words and the Prophet's words into the hearts of followers, thus fostering enthusiasm in practicing religious teachings (Al-Kandahlawi, 2001). *Ta'lim* in JT falls into two main categories: *fadha'il* and *masa'il*. *Fadha'il* is knowledge about the value or virtue of a deed, as mentioned earlier. Meanwhile, *masa'il* relates to the knowledge of the correct way of doing charity in accordance with the sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (Masud, 2000). According to the history of the JT movement, the practice of *ta'lim* has been carried out since the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW and his companions, which was initially centered in the mosque and then spread to the homes of the companions (Ali, 2012). This *ta'lim* method reflects a traditional Islamic educational approach that emphasizes the transmission of religious knowledge and its practical application in daily life. This approach is in line with the concept of *tarbiyah* in Islam, which aims to shape the character and personality of a complete Muslim (Sikand, 2002)

Third, *dhikr*. According to Imam Al-Nawawi in his book *Al-Adzkar*, *dhikr* is divided into two: narrow and general (Nawawi, 2004). In the context of Jamaah Tabligh (JT), *dhikr* is meant in the narrow sense, including two main things: *dhikr* of *tasbihat* and recitation of the Qur'an. In JT circles, there is an obligation to recite *tasbihat* every morning and evening. This includes reciting "subhanallah, alhamdulillah, laa ilaha illallah, allahu akbar," and "la hawla wa la quwwata illa billah" 100 times. In addition, reciting



shalawat on the Prophet is also part of the daily dhikr ritual. And there is also an obligation to read one juz of the Qur'an every day.

The last mosque and house practice is khidmat. This khidmat is serving Allah's people and creatures without asking for anything in return. The highest khidmat, the khidmat of the Prophet, is to repay evil with good. In the JT mudzakarah, it is said that the fruit of khidmat is noble character (Hakim, 2011). While the fruit of true da'wah is tawhid, the disappearance of shirk. The effect of *ta'lim* is correctness and righteousness in deeds. Meanwhile, the effect of correct dhikr is doing good deeds in the presence of Allah (ikhlas). The end result of this practice is the life of religious deeds in the homes of the Companions. Concretely, the scholars, the hafidz and hafidzah, the men are ready to go out in the way of Allah and the women cover the aurat perfectly. So this is the aspect of education in JT.

There are three aspects of education in JT: *madrasah tahfidz*, *madrasah ilmu* and *madrasah intiqoli*. These three aspects are at once the syllabus and curriculum of JT everywhere. Madrasah Tahfiz produces memorizers of the Qur'an; Madrasah ilmu, which produces scholars; Madrasah Intikoli, which produces students who are ready to go out to spread the faith. The fruit of intikoli is the formation of faith and strength for religious deeds (Hakim, 2011).

Meanwhile, the establishment of the pesantren in Parongpong began with an order or recommendation from the world headquarters of JT, in this case Maulana Sa'ad, to open tahfidz and 'alim huts in every village or village. The aim is that in every village or mosque there is at least one imam who is a hafidz and at the same time an alim who understands religion. Since then, tahfidz/'alim huts have sprung up that utilize mosques as their facilities. Then JT deliberations were held even though it was not an official forum. Then a pesantren was built.

In Parongpong, precisely at Pesantren Madinatul Ulum, the establishment of the school coincided with the pesantren. Because indeed the basis of this school is a pesantren. As mentioned above, this school was established in 2013, precisely on May 1, 2013. The establishment of this school is unique to JT Parongpong. It is called unique, because there is no tradition of schools in the JT environment, at least in Bandung. All JT-affiliated education does not favor schools in the modern sense. Although schools in the JT environment are not prohibited, the fact is that they are less appreciative of schools. They prefer boarding schools with hafiz and alim programs. They say that this is closer to the sunnah, namely education in the style of the Prophet and his companions. Only a small number of JT members send their children to public schools, and even then it is not because their parents want them to but because they want them to. This is actually contrary to the principles of the *masyaikh*s in India Pakistan who encouraged Karkun not to give up school and work. In fact, according to reliable sources, Maulana Sa'ad was surrounded by 20 professors as his advisors.

The impact of JT in Karyawangi Parongpong can be seen in at least two ways: religious and economic impact. First, the religious impact. This impact can be seen in the students and their parents. Another impact is on the population. For the students, it is clear from the daily life of the students. There are 80 students who come from various religious backgrounds, from abangan groups, *priyai* (elite) to *santri* (Student) (Geertz, 2020). There are one or two parents, and of course their children, who have santri and priyai cultures. But most of the parents are abangan. However, when they enter the hut and school they are accustomed to religious customs. Such as congregational prayer at dzuhur and ashur prayers and other religious events. And the religion of the santri, whether junior high school or elementary school, has little effect on the religious behavior

of parents. It is a fact that some parents become diligent in going to the mosque because they are often invited by their children and grandchildren who go to IT elementary and junior high schools.

The religious impact of JT on the community, especially in Karyawangi, is the rise of this membership includes the rise of congregational prayer at all times. For example, before the da'wah, the dawn prayer was only attended by five to three people, then after the da'wah it increased to 25 people. Maghrib prayer, which was originally only 10 people, increased to 4 shap, about 70 people. Some people who never went to the mosque except for Jumatan, they became diligent in praying five times in congregation. Before the tablig effort, there was no regular mu'adzin. But after the dakawah effort, there were two mu'adzin, Mang Agud and Bah Aca. Even Bah Aca, according to parents' sources, was an activist of a banned organization in Indonesia. But thanks to Tablig's efforts, he became diligent in worship and became a regular mu'adzin. Elsewhere in Parongpong, for example in Barunagri there are over 70 people who have been tasykil. This of course has a strong effect on the prosperity of the mosque. Likewise, a screen-printing businessman from Central Java. He lives in Gudangkahuripan and is a driving force in da'wah. In the village of Cihideung Parongpong, there are many thugs who later became insyaf. There are quite a few of them, more than anywhere else in Parongpong. But after joining the tablig effort, they became the driving force in proselytizing the mosques in their villages. Most of them, according to their confessions, had smoked marijuana and other drugs. When it came to drinking alcohol, they had all done it. By joining the tablig effort, they repented and became mosque members. This constancy tends to be permanent. Unless they separate from the tablig effort and quit. There is also a third type of preaching. They sometimes attend the mosque regularly, but sometimes not. Although some of them have participated in three days of the tablig effort. Because they are separated from the congregation, their religion is no longer maintained. This is the importance of not being separated from the congregation, so that the religious atmosphere is maintained.

The second is the economic impact. Starting from Tablig activities, then establishing formal and informal educational institutions. From this education many people trade and gather. This gathering of people became the center of economic activity. This is what happened in Parongpong, West Bandung. The Nur Al-Hidayah Foundation established educational institutions from kindergarten to high school. At times, the Sabili High School even organizes distance classes every week. In this place there are no less than 600 students and santri as well as their parents. Of course, this constant crowd is an economic source for the residents of Karyawangi in particular and Parongpong in general.

The agents who utilize this economic resource consist of natives and migrants. For the natives, for example, there are four large and small shops that supply the needs of the santri. Among others, Fikrijaya shop. This shop is quite complete with competitive prices. This shop is the largest for the Karyawangi area and its surroundings. In Karyawangi, at present, this shop is the most complete and large after Mulya shop. This shop is where the needs of the cottage are supplied every day except for vegetables. Mang Ita's vegetable stall also supplies some of the cottage's vegetables and fish when the kitchen runs out of stock. In addition to these two stalls, there are also culinary stalls, namely Warung Ibu Baso, Warung Agus, Warung Teti and Warung Noneng. These stalls come alive with the presence of santri. However, when the santris return home, they generally close temporarily.

The second type comes from outside Panyairan village. They come from around Parongpong or further away. They are culinary and children's toy peddlers. There are about 30 of them who hang out around the pesantren school every day. Such is the daily



life at the Madinatul Ulum Islamic boarding school which is not only a religious center but also an economic center for the people.

CONCLUSION

The Parongpong's Jama'ah Tabligh has a uniqueness that is not shared by other *halakohs*, especially in Bandung. That uniqueness is, starting from the da'wah movement penetrating into the world of modern education. Namely an education system based on pesantren. So that starting from the da'wah base, then establishing pesantren and formal schools, in this case elementary, junior high and high schools. Jamaah Tablig Parongpong, besides being correlated with the establishment of education, also penetrates into other fields, namely aspects of community religious life and the economy of the people. Thus, Jamaah Tablig Parongpong has participated in giving color to Islamic education and the economy of the people. From this da'wah movement, which began only taking care of matters of faith and alakhirat charity, it developed towards modern and planned education. Then from this education also gave birth to a positive dimension to religious life and economic prosperity. In economic prosperity, at least it can be seen in the reduction of unemployment and the more crowded, the traders in everyday life. Unemployment, for example, the Foundation employs a permanent logistics department of 3 people and 5 daily employees in the building. This fact is clearly more or less overcoming the unemployment of the population. Not to mention other jobs that are not permanent. And this clearly improves the community's standard of living. In addition, the most obvious thing is that the crowds of merchants who make a profit and provide the needs of the students, have contributed to increasing the prosperity of the community.

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