

# Walimatus Safar: Strengthening Mental and Spiritual Readiness for Prospective Hajj Pilgrims

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## Abstract:

This study aims to analyze the impact of the Walimatus Safar tradition on the mental and spiritual readiness of prospective Hajj pilgrims before their departure for the Holy Land. This tradition is a deeply rooted socio-religious practice in Muslim society and is often understood as a form of prayer, support, and gratitude before the Hajj pilgrimage. This study seeks to explore the meaning directly experienced by prospective pilgrims and assess the tradition's contribution to strengthening their psychological and spiritual readiness. The study used a qualitative, phenomenological approach to understand participants' subjective experiences. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, direct observation of the Walimatus Safar ceremony, and reflections on the researcher's experiences. Analysis was conducted by interpreting these experiences to identify key themes related to mental and spiritual readiness. The results show that Walimatus Safar plays a significant role in enhancing the mental readiness of prospective Hajj pilgrims. Social support from family, relatives, and the community provides emotional reinforcement that can reduce anxiety, foster a sense of calm, and increase self-confidence as one faces the long and challenging pilgrimage. Furthermore, the atmosphere of togetherness created also strengthens the pilgrims' psychological resilience. From a spiritual perspective, this tradition serves as a reflective moment that encourages the internalization of the values of sincerity, humility, and an awareness of the meaning of the Hajj pilgrimage as a divine calling. The *Walimatus Safar* (preparation for the journey) helps prospective pilgrims affirm their intentions, deepen their religious awareness, and strengthen their commitment to carrying out the pilgrimage earnestly. Thus, this tradition is not merely ceremonial but serves an essential psychological and spiritual function in the Hajj preparation process.

**Keywords:** Hajj; local tradition; mental readiness; spiritual readiness.

## INTRODUCTION

The Hajj pilgrimage occupies a crucial position in the structure of Islamic teachings, as the fifth pillar of Islam. This obligation is imposed on every Muslim who meets the necessary requirements (*istita'ah*), including physical health, mental readiness, and financial sufficiency. Therefore, performing the Hajj requires not only material readiness but also psychological and spiritual maturity. From a theological and sociological perspective, the Hajj is understood not merely as a symbolic annual ritual or a religious formality. More than that, it is a profound religious

experience with the potential to bring about significant changes in one's life. This pilgrimage is the culmination of a Muslim's devotion to Allah SWT and a moment for self-reflection and renewal of religious commitment. Through the series of rituals (*manasik*) performed, pilgrims internalize the values of patience, sincerity, brotherhood, and total submission to God. Various studies show that the Hajj is a multidimensional form of worship, integrating physical, social, psychological, and spiritual dimensions into a single, intense, and comprehensive experience (Kisworo, 2017; Savinca et al., 2023).

Performing the Hajj requires pilgrims to undertake a long journey to Mecca, the location of the Kaaba, the spiritual center of Muslims worldwide. However, the meaning of this journey is not solely about physical relocation; it also involves a profound spiritual journey. The Hajj presents an existential experience that tests the steadfastness of faith, sincerity of intention, and readiness to face the various dynamics of the journey in the Holy Land. During the process, pilgrims face various challenges, including dense crowds of millions of people from diverse cultural backgrounds, extreme weather conditions, physical exhaustion, and the risk of health problems. These situations demand patience, the ability to control emotions, and strong physical and mental endurance. Therefore, the Hajj is often understood as a "journey of the soul" that tests not only physical strength but also psychological maturity and spiritual integrity. Therefore, mental and spiritual readiness are key requirements for each series of rituals to be carried out devoutly, orderly, and with full awareness of the meaning of the worship undertaken (Syamsuddin et al., 2024).

The Hajj pilgrimage, from entering the state of *ihram* (standing still in Arafah), staying overnight in Muzdalifah, and stoning the devils in Mina, requires strong mental resilience. The crowded and dynamic environment often creates psychological stress, especially for elderly pilgrims or those traveling internationally for the first time. In this context, comprehensive preparation is crucial. This includes not only technical guidance on the rituals but also mental and spiritual development that fosters inner peace, self-control, and a clear orientation of intentions. Good spiritual preparedness correlates with a pilgrim's ability to manage stress during the Hajj (Savinca et al., 2023). From a sociological perspective, Hajj is also understood as a social event with a broad impact on post-Hajj life. Many studies have shown that the Hajj experience contributes to attitudinal changes, increased religious discipline, and strengthened moral commitment in daily life (Kisworo, 2017). Therefore, pre-departure preparation not only ensures a smooth technical journey but also lays the foundation for developing the qualities of an accepted Hajj, with long-term impacts.

In Indonesia, particularly in Java, preparations for the Hajj pilgrimage are inseparable from cultural traditions that have developed over generations. One practice that remains preserved to this day is the *Walimatus Safar* (prayer gathering). This tradition is held by the extended family and the surrounding community as an expression of gratitude and a means of offering prayers for prospective pilgrims departing for the Holy Land. The activity typically involves prayers, *dhikr* (remembrance of God), and religious advice, fostering a sense of religious atmosphere and togetherness. *Walimatus Safar* is not simply a formal farewell ceremony, but rather a collective forum that provides moral, emotional, and spiritual support to prospective pilgrims. Through this togetherness, a sense of social solidarity is fostered, strengthening the bond between individuals and their communities. Support provided by family and community is believed to foster inner peace and strengthen readiness for the challenging journey of pilgrimage. Research by Ultra et al. on Hajj departure traditions in Central Java indicates that this practice has profound social and religious significance and plays a crucial role in building prospective pilgrims' psychological readiness before performing the pilgrimage (Ultra et al., 2022).

This research focuses on the implementation of the *Walimatus Safar* tradition in Getas Hamlet, Nongkosawit Village, Gunungpati District, Semarang City, which continues to maintain and sustainably practice this tradition. This area represents a community that still combines religious values with local culture in the process of preparing for Hajj departure. During the ceremony, the extended family and local residents gather to hold a thanksgiving, pray together, and accompany prospective pilgrims to the Hajj dormitory as a form of respect and support. These activities reflect the strong social bonds and emotional closeness between individuals and their communities. This tradition not only demonstrates a religious dimension but also strengthens social solidarity and a sense of community togetherness. *Walimatus Safar* has become part of a living social structure and has been passed down from generation to generation. Ritually, this procession generally includes an opening, prayer recitation, recitation of the Prophet's salawat, recitation of Barzanji (*ashraqa*), Quranic recitation, and collective *dhikr* (remembrance of God), creating a solemn and spiritually meaningful atmosphere (Syuhudi, 2019a).

These practices reflect the community's religious expression, emphasizing a collective spiritual dimension. The community believes that solemnly performing these rituals will bring blessings and divine protection to prospective pilgrims during their Hajj pilgrimage. More than just a ceremony, the *Walimatus Safar* has profound social significance. This tradition demonstrates how religion is practiced within a local cultural context, creating a space for interaction between normative Islamic teachings and community traditions. The social support provided through

prayer and togetherness is believed to strengthen prospective pilgrims' mental well-being, reduce anxiety, and increase self-confidence before facing the long journey. From a psychology of religion perspective, religious social support has been shown to play a significant role in improving individual psychological well-being. Although the *Walimatus Safar* tradition has been passed down through generations, academic studies specifically examining its impact on the mental and spiritual preparedness of prospective pilgrims are still relatively limited. Rohaeti et al. noted that most research on the Hajj focuses more on the management of the organization, the health of the congregation, or the fiqh aspects of worship, while the local cultural dimension has not been explored in depth (Rohaeti et al., 2025).

The limitations of existing studies demonstrate the continued potential for relevant and urgent research development. To date, studies on the Hajj have tended to focus on managerial aspects, pilgrim health, or Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*), while the local cultural dimensions that accompany the departure preparation process have received little in-depth study. Yet, the *Walimatus Safar* tradition holds great potential to foster mental and spiritual readiness among prospective pilgrims. It embodies the values of sincerity, social solidarity, collective prayer, and strengthening religious identity, which are believed to influence an individual's inner state before performing the Hajj. Using a phenomenological approach, this study explores the subjective experiences of prospective pilgrims participating in the *Walimatus Safar* tradition. The focus is not only on the visible form of the ritual but also on the meaning felt, internalized, and reflected upon by those involved in the tradition. By exploring these lived experiences, this study seeks to understand how social interactions, the religious atmosphere, and the prayers and advice provided within the tradition contribute to strengthening inner readiness before departure for the Holy Land.

Conceptually, the background of this research rests on two main realities. First, the importance of mental and spiritual preparation in performing the Hajj pilgrimage, which is not only a physical journey, but also a spiritual one fraught with trials. Second, the existence of the *Walimatus Safar* as a local cultural-religious practice believed to have a significant influence on the comprehensive preparation of prospective pilgrims. Therefore, this research is expected to enrich the study of the Hajj from the perspective of the sociology of religion and Islamic anthropology, while also providing a practical contribution to the guidance and mentoring of prospective pilgrims in Indonesia to better prepare them physically and mentally.

The Hajj is the fifth pillar of Islam and is obligatory for every Muslim who meets the physical, mental, and financial requirements (*istita'ah*). This obligation emphasizes that the Hajj is not merely a symbolic ritual, but rather a comprehensive spiritual experience filled with trials. Pilgrims face various challenges, ranging from cultural differences, mass crowds, extreme weather in Mecca, to the complexity of the rituals around the Kaaba. Therefore, mental and spiritual readiness are key prerequisites for performing the pilgrimage devoutly, calmly, and in accordance with religious guidance (Hafid, 2024). Conceptually, mental readiness is understood as a psychological state reflecting emotional stability, the ability to manage stress, self-confidence, and readiness to face environmental changes and pressures. In the context of the Hajj, mental readiness is particularly relevant because pilgrims are in situations different from their daily lives. Mental readiness is an adaptive capital that enables individuals to adjust to new environments (Utami & Khotimah, 2025). This perspective is in line with coping theory in psychology which states that individuals with good emotional regulation tend to be better able to manage stress and anxiety.

Empirical studies on the mental health of Hajj pilgrims have shown that psychological factors play a significant role in the successful performance of the pilgrimage. A study in the *Journal of Religion and Health* confirmed that social support and spirituality contribute to an individual's psychological resilience in the context of major pilgrimages such as the Hajj (Koenig et al., 2012). This finding strengthens the argument that mental preparedness does not stand alone but is intertwined with social and religious factors. In addition to mental preparedness, spiritual preparedness is an equally important dimension. Spiritual preparedness refers to an inner state based on sincere intentions, patience, trust in God, and a deep awareness of the meaning of worship. Billah states that spirituality plays a role in building inner peace and resilience, especially when facing difficult situations (Billah, 2022). This perspective aligns with research in *Mental Health, Religion & Culture*, which confirms that religious practices and spiritual experiences have a positive correlation with psychological well-being (Pargament & Park, 1995). In the context of the Hajj, spirituality is practiced not only through formal rituals but also through reflection on meaning and renewal of intentions. The quality of worship is largely determined by the sincerity and spiritual awareness of the pilgrim (Saputra & Wahid, 2023). This aligns with the Islamic theological approach, which holds that intention (*al-niyyah*) is the foundation for the validity and value of worship. Therefore, spiritual readiness is the primary foundation for achieving a *mabrur hajj*, an accepted hajj that results in post-performance moral transformation.

From a sociological perspective, religious practices are always intertwined with the surrounding social and cultural realities. In Indonesia, particularly in Java, the tradition of the *Walimatus Safar* (parting ceremony) is known,

held prior to the departure for the Hajj pilgrimage. This tradition takes the form of a thanksgiving and communal prayer involving family, relatives, religious leaders, and the surrounding community. The series of activities includes the recitation of prayers, *dhikr* (remembrance of God), *salawat* (prayer), the recitation of Quranic verses, and the delivery of religious advice. Through this practice, religious values are not only understood individually but also internalized within the social space of the community. When viewed through Émile Durkheim's functionalist theory, collective rituals such as the Walimatus Safar have a significant social function, namely strengthening solidarity and community cohesion. Durkheim referred to "collective effervescence," a shared emotional outpouring that emerges during the ritual and strengthens bonds among community members. Thus, the Walimatus Safar is not merely a farewell ceremony but also serves as a social mechanism that provides moral and psychological support for prospective Hajj pilgrims before they embark on their spiritual journey.

The social support fostered through this tradition has direct implications for mental preparedness. Social support is a protective factor in reducing stress and increasing emotional stability (Anda et al., 2024). The presence of family and community members at the Walimatus Safar provides a sense of security, acceptance, and care, thereby reducing pre-departure anxiety. The Walimatus Safar also contributes to strengthening spiritual preparedness. Collective prayer and a religious atmosphere create a reflective space for prospective pilgrims to affirm their intentions and deepen their understanding of the Hajj as a divine calling. This practice can be understood through the theory of value internalization, where religious values are absorbed through meaningful social experiences. In other words, the Walimatus Safar serves as a contextual medium for spiritual learning.

Previous studies on the Hajj generally focused on the management of the pilgrimage, pilgrim health, or aspects of Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*). However, research on local cultural dimensions such as the walimatus safar (preparation for pilgrimage) remains relatively limited. However, the anthropology of religion approach demonstrates that local practices play a significant role in shaping an individual's religious experience. Based on this literature review, it can be concluded that mental and spiritual readiness are two complementary dimensions in the implementation of the Hajj. Mental readiness relates to emotional stability and adaptability, while spiritual readiness relates to the depth of religious intention and awareness. The walimatus safar tradition plays a strategic role in integrating these two dimensions through social support and religious reinforcement. Thus, the walimatus safar can be understood as a socio-religious practice with multidimensional functions: strengthening social solidarity, reducing anxiety, strengthening self-confidence, and affirming the intentions and sincerity of prospective pilgrims. This tradition not only preserves local culture but also serves as an effective instrument in preparing pilgrims physically and mentally for the Hajj. This study emphasizes the importance of an interdisciplinary approach combining psychology, sociology, and theology to comprehensively understand the role of tradition in shaping the mental and spiritual readiness of prospective Hajj pilgrims.

## METHOD

Research on the Walimatus Safar tradition as a means of strengthening the mental and spiritual readiness of prospective Hajj pilgrims was conducted using a qualitative phenomenological approach. This approach was chosen because the research is not only oriented toward describing the tradition's external form but also seeks to understand the subjective meaning directly experienced by participants, especially prospective pilgrims involved in the procession. The main focus is to explore the inner experiences, religious values, and symbolism inherent in the series of Walimatus Safar practices (Mahmudi et al., 2024). The phenomenological approach allows researchers to place individual experiences at the center of analysis, so that the meanings that emerge are derived from the participants' own awareness and reflection. According to Creswell, phenomenological research is oriented towards an in-depth understanding of individuals' lived experiences of a particular phenomenon from their own perspectives (Creswell & Clark, 2018). Thus, phenomenology does not simply collect descriptive data but also interprets the essence of the experiences felt by the research subjects. This approach is relevant in the study of Walimatus Safar because mental and spiritual readiness are inner dimensions that are not always visible but are experienced personally through social, emotional, and spiritual interactions. Through this framework, researchers attempt to uncover how these traditions are understood and interpreted by prospective pilgrims as part of the Hajj preparation process (Kuswanto, 2019).

Methodologically, phenomenology also allows researchers to engage in the phenomenological reduction (*epoché*), which involves suspending personal biases to authentically capture informants' experiences. This is crucial to ensure that the resulting interpretation truly represents the participants' awareness, not the researcher's assumptions. Therefore, this approach supports the research objective of interpreting how the Walimatus Safar (traveling together for the pilgrimage) contributes to mental preparedness, such as calmness and self-confidence,

and spiritual preparedness, such as strengthening intentions and sincerity, before departing for the Hajj. Data collection techniques in this study included in-depth interviews, participant observation, and the author's reflection on his experiences. The in-depth interviews were conducted using semi-structured guidelines to maintain a focused yet flexible dialogue. This model allowed informants to freely express their experiences and interpretations, while also providing the researcher with exploratory space to delve deeper into specific aspects that emerged during the conversation (Luthfiyah, 2017). The questions focused on emotional experiences, religious perceptions, and inner changes experienced after participating in the Walimatus Safar tradition.

Participatory observation was conducted with the researcher's direct presence during the walimatus safar (traditional gathering) activities. Through this technique, the researcher was able to observe the process of carrying out the tradition, the religious symbols used, the emotional expressions of the participants, and the patterns of social interaction that occurred between prospective pilgrims, their families, and the community. Observations not only recorded ritual activities but also captured the spiritual nuances and dynamics of togetherness that emerged during the procession. This approach strengthened the validity of the data because the researcher relied not only on verbal narratives but also on empirical realities directly observed. Furthermore, the author's reflections on his experiences involved in the walimatus safar tradition were used as supporting data to enrich the phenomenological interpretation. These reflections were not used as the primary data source, but rather as instruments for understanding the context and inner dynamics that may not be fully revealed in interviews. In phenomenological research, the researcher's reflections can aid the interpretation process as long as they maintain the principles of objectivity and prejudice reduction. Through a combination of in-depth interviews, participant observation, and reflections on experiences, this study sought to obtain a comprehensive picture of the meaning of walimatus safar as it strengthens the mental and spiritual readiness of prospective pilgrims. The phenomenological approach allows for in-depth exploration of subjective experiences, so that the research results are expected to be able to provide a complete understanding of the psychological and spiritual dimensions in this tradition.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In Indonesia, the tradition of sending off Hajj pilgrims before their departure for the Holy Land is a socio-religious expression rich in spiritual and cultural significance. This practice has grown and developed in various regions as a form of collective community participation in guiding prospective pilgrims towards the fulfillment of the fifth pillar of Islam. This tradition is generally packaged in the form of a thanksgiving or thanksgiving ceremony, filled with prayers for safety, chanting salawat, and reciting Barzanji (ashraaq) (Syuhudi, 2019b). Through this series of activities, the community not only conveys prayers and hopes but also creates a deeply religious atmosphere for prospective pilgrims. This tradition is usually carried out several days or even the day before departure for the Hajj dormitory. These activities involve extended family, neighbors, local religious leaders, and the surrounding community. The presence of various community elements demonstrates that departure for Hajj is seen not as merely a personal matter, but as a social event with a collective dimension. Prospective pilgrims are not sent off as isolated individuals, but as part of a community that shares a sense of belonging and responsibility, both morally and spiritually.

In a social context, the tradition of sending off Hajj pilgrims demonstrates the strong values of togetherness and solidarity among Indonesians. This moment serves as a forum for fostering friendship, forging mutual forgiveness, and strengthening relationships among residents. It is not uncommon for prospective pilgrims to apologize to their families and communities as a form of self-purification before departing. This act carries symbolic significance, emphasizing that the Hajj is not only a physical journey, but also an inner journey that demands moral and spiritual preparation. More than a formal ceremony, this sending off tradition is interpreted as a spiritual departure ritual. The community collectively accompanies prospective pilgrims on their journey to the highest form of worship in Islam with prayers and best wishes. The prayers convey hopes for safety during the journey, health during the rituals, and forgiveness upon returning home. In this solemn and emotional atmosphere, prospective pilgrims feel emotional support that strengthens their faith and inner peace. The recitation of the Barzanji or ashraaq in this tradition also has a profound symbolic dimension. These chants of praise to the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) are chanted. It creates a sacred atmosphere while also serving as a medium for internalizing exemplary values. By presenting stories and praise of the Prophet, the community reminds prospective pilgrims to emulate the Prophet's morals in carrying out their worship. This element demonstrates that local traditions are not separate from the normative framework of Islamic teachings but serve as a means of actualizing these values within the local cultural context.

Furthermore, the tradition of sending off Hajj pilgrims also carries the meaning of social transition. Departure for Hajj is often seen as a moment of change in one's religious status. Upon returning from the Holy Land, a pilgrim typically receives greater social respect for having completed the pilgrimage. Therefore, the sending off ceremony marks the beginning of this change in status. Society symbolically acknowledges and legitimizes the transformation process that prospective pilgrims will undergo. Thus, the tradition of sending off Hajj pilgrims in Indonesia is not merely a routine ceremonial activity, but rather a meaningful socio-religious practice. It embodies the values of solidarity, collective prayer, self-purification, spiritual strengthening, and social legitimacy. This tradition demonstrates how religion and culture interact harmoniously in community life. Through this sending off ritual, prospective pilgrims are prepared not only administratively and physically, but also mentally and spiritually, so that their departure for the Holy Land is truly understood as a sacred journey that encompasses all dimensions of life.

### **Walimatus Safar Tradition**

The Walimatus Safar tradition has existed since the Dutch colonial era as a form of farewell for prospective Hajj pilgrims who will undertake the Hajj pilgrimage (Luthfi, 2022). Etymologically, Walimatus Sadar comes from the Arabic, namely walimah (banquet/thanksgiving) and safar (journey), so Walimatus Safar can be interpreted as a thanksgiving activity and a joint prayer held before departure. The history of this tradition still exists today because it has become a community custom, and demonstrates a harmonious acculturation between Islamic teachings and local cultures in various regions. Each region has different traditions but still contain the same spiritual meaning such as Manjalang in Minangkabau, Mappaci in Bugis, and Walimatus Safar in Java. These differences prove that Islamic teachings are able to adapt without losing their religious values (Syuhudi, 2019b).

In particular, the Muslim community in Java combines Islamic values with local wisdom, where this procession is carried out with prayer and thanksgiving to ask for protection during the long journey. In Getas Hamlet, the Walimatus Safar tradition is a long-standing socio-religious practice used as a form of respect and community friendship for prospective pilgrims who will undertake the pilgrimage. This tradition includes several stages such as a welcome from the host, in which the host expresses gratitude for the presence of the guests. This welcome has a deep meaning as a form of respect for the guests who attend. In addition, this opening also provides an opportunity for the host to express his hope that the guests or community will pray for the smooth departure of the Hajj. One of the core of Walimatus Safar is the recitation of verses from the Quran. This recitation aims to ask for blessings, protection, and smoothness from Allah SWT, for prospective pilgrims. This ritual is also a means to remind all those present to always prioritize spiritual values in their daily lives (Mastanah et al., 2024). The main purpose of this tradition in Getas Hamlet is to pray for safety for prospective Hajj pilgrims, increase steadfastness, and strengthen mental and spiritual readiness before undertaking the Hajj pilgrimage.

The Walimatus Safar tradition is usually held several days before the official departure, taking place at the home of the prospective Hajj pilgrim. Participating parties include the prospective pilgrim, their families, the local community, and local religious leaders. Preparations include catering, arranging the venue, and other supporting facilities. In Getas Hamlet, there are no specific restrictions to consider when carrying out this tradition. Prospective pilgrims believe that this tradition also embodies their submission to God and their hope for a smooth Hajj pilgrimage. This tradition symbolizes unity, with the presence of the community offering prayers and blessings to prospective pilgrims. The Walimatus Safar tradition serves not only as a traditional practice but also as a form of spiritual strengthening that helps prospective pilgrims undertake their pilgrimage with greater mental preparedness (Choliq, 2018). In addition to its social and spiritual significance, this tradition has a tafaulan dimension, or hope for goodness for the community, as they hope to follow in the footsteps of the pilgrims who are currently experiencing the blessings inherent in future Hajj pilgrims. This tradition is also seen as a form of observing the blessings inherent in the Hajj pilgrims, and tafaulan serves as a religious motivation to improve the quality of faith. This belief developed from the understanding of the Prophet and scholars, with the hope and blessings being a strong reason why this tradition continues to be practiced (Muslimah et al., 2024).

### **The Role of Walimatus Safar in Improving the Mental Readiness of Prospective Pilgrims**

Mental readiness, in the context of individual psychology, is understood as a condition characterized by emotional stability, the ability to manage stress, self-confidence, and a harmonious mental function that enables a person to face various life challenges calmly and responsibly. Good mental readiness fosters responsibility. Individuals with good mental readiness are able to control anxiety, manage emotions, and maintain an optimistic attitude. The Hajj pilgrimage is crucial because mental readiness requires pilgrims to face strenuous physical activity, a diverse social and cultural environment, and psychological pressure during the pilgrimage (Yuningsih et al., 2022).

The Walimatus Safar tradition during the Hajj pilgrimage plays a crucial role in helping to mentally prepare prospective pilgrims. Through this tradition, prospective pilgrims receive psychological support that is useful in facing various challenges during the Hajj pilgrimage. Support from family and community also fosters awareness that the Hajj pilgrimage is not undertaken alone, but rather accompanied by prayer, attention, and togetherness from the surrounding community, so that prospective pilgrims feel calmer and mentally prepared (Hak et al., 2022). The mental readiness of prospective pilgrims can be understood through five main indicators: the ability to control anxiety, emotional composure, self-confidence, readiness to face change and challenges, and finally, an optimistic attitude in carrying out the pilgrimage. These indicators are relevant to the busy Hajj pilgrimage and different socio-cultural situations. This is consistent with the results of direct observations, field documentation, and interviews conducted by researchers with informants, namely prospective pilgrims who will perform the pilgrimage, including:

Mr. Zaedun, a Hajj pilgrim and the first informant, believes that the Walimatus Safar (gathering for pilgrims) has a significant influence on the pilgrims' mental readiness before departing for Hajj. This tradition serves as a means of psychological strengthening because pilgrims receive social support such as prayers, advice, and blessings from family and community. This support contributes to better mental readiness and self-confidence in facing the Hajj. In addition, the Walimatus Safar plays a role in reducing the fear, anxiety, and worry that usually arise before departure for Hajj, such as anxiety about air travel, health conditions, and adaptation in the holy land. Through social interaction and communal prayer, pilgrims gain inner peace that encourages an optimistic attitude. Prayers and support from families in this activity have a positive impact on the pilgrims' emotional state. The enthusiasm of the community in attendance can become motivation, fostering enthusiasm to perform the Hajj with full sincerity and mental readiness.

Mr. Ikhsanudin, a pilgrim and the second informant, stated that the Walimatus Safar (prayer gathering) had a significant impact on my mental state before my Hajj departure. Through this tradition, I invited my family, children, relatives, and the surrounding community to pray together for the safety and smoothness of my upcoming Hajj journey. The presence of many people at the event fostered a strong sense of togetherness and social support, gradually reducing the fear, anxiety, and worry that arose regarding the long journey, conditions in the Holy Land, and my ability to carry out the Hajj rituals. The prayers offered together, advice from family and religious leaders, and expressions of well-wishes extended to me provided me with inner peace and confidence that I would not be undertaking this journey alone. This emotional support made me feel calmer, more reassured, and mentally prepared, as I felt a sense of confidence and determination stemming from the attention, prayers, and blessings of my family and community who accompanied me on my journey to Hajj.

Subjective experiences of informants indicate that the Walimatus Safar tradition can provide tangible emotional support directly felt by prospective Hajj pilgrims. This emotional support plays a crucial role in reducing anxiety levels and increasing inner peace before departure. The mental preparedness fostered through the Walimatus Safar tradition serves as a key asset for prospective pilgrims in facing the various demands of support from family and community. Prospective pilgrims feel more prepared, confident, and confident in undertaking the Hajj rituals, physically, mentally, and spiritually (Sholichah et al., 2023).

The social support present in the Walimatus Safar tradition, as well as traditions such as Manjalang Haji and Mappaci, has a direct impact on the mental state of prospective pilgrims. The presence of the community in these traditions creates an atmosphere of togetherness that makes prospective pilgrims feel cared for, appreciated, and not alone in facing the long and challenging pilgrimage (Syuhudi, 2019b). Collective prayer provides positive energy that fosters a sense of security and self-confidence, thereby enabling prospective pilgrims to reduce fear, anxiety, and worry about the various possibilities they will face. The atmosphere of togetherness and social solidarity also serves as an emotional buffer that maintains the mental stability of prospective pilgrims. Thus, the Walimatus Safar tradition functions not only as a socio-religious ritual, but also an important and integral part of the overall process of developing the Hajj pilgrimage, particularly in strengthening the mental and emotional aspects of prospective pilgrims (Barkah, 2024).

### **The Contribution of Tradition in Increasing the Spiritual Readiness of Prospective Pilgrims**

Spiritual readiness is a person's inner state that reflects sincerity in worship. Spirituality is understood as an awareness of one's relationship with God, which can be reflected in an attitude of trust, patience, and humility. Spiritual readiness is crucial for the Hajj pilgrimage. Pilgrims must have sincere intentions, patience, and a spiritual readiness to face various trials during the journey and the implementation of the pilgrimage. Good spiritual readiness will help pilgrims undergo the pilgrimage with greater calm and patience, recognizing that each series of worship is a form of approaching Allah SWT. The tradition of walimatus safar plays a crucial role in building spiritual

readiness before undertaking the pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Through this tradition, prospective pilgrims participate in communal prayers and receive religious advice from local religious leaders and family members, creating an atmosphere of emotion, reverence, and togetherness. This activity helps prospective pilgrims calm their hearts, strengthen their intentions, and realize that the Hajj pilgrimage is not just an ordinary journey, but a sacred calling from Allah (Syuhudi, 2019a). In an atmosphere filled with prayer and support, the travel advisor fosters a sense of sincerity, humility, and inner readiness to undertake the Hajj rituals. This tradition serves as a means of drawing closer to God. This is consistent with the results of interviews with prospective pilgrims, including:

Mr. Sutarno explained that the walimatus safar (holiday gathering) helped him feel a profound sense of inner peace and happiness due to the many prayers, support, and advice offered by friends, relatives, and the surrounding community. These prayers indirectly helped strengthen my intention and sincerity in performing the Hajj, as I increasingly realized that the Hajj is not just a physical journey, but rather a spiritual calling to fulfill the pillars of Islam with full sincerity and dedication solely for the sake of Allah. Furthermore, the religious atmosphere created during the walimatus safar fostered a sense of trust (relief), in which I completely surrendered my safety, a smooth journey, and my ability to perform the Hajj to Allah SWT. The collective support from those around me transformed my initially anxious and fearful heart into a calmer and more reassuring one, as I felt I was not traveling alone, but rather carrying the hopes and prayers of many others. After attending the walimatus safar, I gained a stronger sense of spiritual peace, self-confidence, and inner happiness, making me feel more mentally and spiritually prepared to face the Hajj rituals with an open heart and full of faith.

Mrs. Kodriyah explained that during the walimatus safar (holiday gathering) she felt the immense enthusiasm of family, relatives, and the community who came to pray for her, which indirectly strengthened my intention and sincerity to perform the Hajj. The prayers offered made me increasingly aware that this Hajj journey is not just a physical journey, but a calling to worship that must be undertaken with a sincere heart for the sake of Allah. Initially, I felt afraid and worried, especially because I would be far from my family and considering the various possibilities while in the Holy Land, such as the fear of being confused about carrying out the rituals. However, through the walimatus safar, I learned to be more trusting in Allah and surrender all matters to Allah, because I felt I was not traveling alone, but accompanied by the prayers and support of many people. This feeling fostered my confidence that Allah would always help and guide me throughout my journey. After attending the walimatus safar, I felt a deep spiritual calm, my anxiety gradually diminished and was replaced by peace of mind, inner readiness, and the belief that, God willing, this Hajj journey would be smooth, safe, and full of blessings.

The Walimatus Safar (holiday gathering) demonstrates that moral support and blessings from family and the surrounding community have a very positive influence on prospective Hajj pilgrims. This support not only fosters inner peace but also serves as spiritual energy, strengthening their commitment to worship and enabling prospective pilgrims to let go of worldly attachments and focus more on Hajj preparations. In the Javanese cultural context, the walimatus safar serves as a space for religious togetherness that aligns with spiritual and social values. This tradition creates an atmosphere of togetherness, filled with prayer, advice, and good wishes, indirectly reminding prospective pilgrims of the Hajj's primary purpose: purification of the soul and drawing closer to Allah SWT. This atmosphere also contributes to increased psychological well-being, as prospective pilgrims feel supported, cared for, and prayed for by those around them (Andini et al., 2021). Functionally, the spiritual experience born of the walimatus safar shares similarities with the practices of dhikr and prayer in Islamic psychotherapy, where peace of mind, a sense of security, and inner confidence are fostered through a spiritual approach (Rosyidi & Dulwahab, 2020).

The positive aspects of the community's sincere prayers serve as a source of spiritual motivation that remains with and is remembered by the pilgrims throughout their pilgrimage in the Holy Land, strengthening their faith and sense of moral responsibility to maintain their intentions, behavior, and sincerity in their worship. This experience aligns with various pre-departure traditions for the Hajj in other regions, such as Gorontalo, which aim to pray for health, ease of travel, and the hope of obtaining an accepted Hajj (Syuhudi, 2019a). Overall, the interviews confirmed that the Walimatus Safar tradition plays a significant role in enhancing the religiosity and spiritual readiness of prospective pilgrims by strengthening their intentions, sincerity, trust in God, and inner conviction. Thus, this tradition is not only part of the culture but also serves as a spiritual foundation that brings blessings, mental readiness, and hope for the benefits of the Hajj for pilgrims, their families, and the community.

Moral support from the surrounding community provides positive energy that strengthens the commitment to worship. Interviews also revealed that community prayers serve as a reminder that, during the Hajj, people feel supported and receive indirect positive encouragement. Ultimately, this contribution makes tradition a foundation for blessings during the Hajj (Yuliani, 2023). The Walimatus Safar tradition closely aligns with the mental and spiritual

readiness of prospective Hajj pilgrims. Inner peace arises from communal prayer and social support not only to reduce anxiety but also to strengthen an attitude of trust and sincerity in worship. Mental readiness formed through self-confidence and emotional calm can go hand in hand with spiritual readiness in the form of an awareness of the meaning of the Hajj. Walimatus Safar serves as a means of uniting mental and spiritual strengthening, so that prospective Hajj pilgrims are better prepared physically and mentally to carry out the series of Hajj rituals in the Holy Land of Mecca.

The findings of this study confirm that the walimatus safar tradition cannot be understood merely as a ceremonial practice before the Hajj, but rather as a socio-religious mechanism with significant psychological and spiritual functions. Analysis of the research findings shows that this tradition operates through two main dimensions: collective social support and the internalization of religious values. These two dimensions simultaneously shape mental and spiritual readiness. In this context, the research findings align with several classical and contemporary theories in the sociology of religion, anthropology, and social psychology.

First, from the perspective of the sociology of religion, these findings can be explained through the concept of social solidarity proposed by Émile Durkheim. In his work *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, Durkheim asserted that collective rituals serve to strengthen solidarity and renew collective conscience. The Walimatus Safar (traditional Islamic pilgrimage) in Getas Hamlet exemplifies these characteristics. The presence of the community, the communal prayer, and the escort of prospective pilgrims creates what Durkheim calls "collective effervescence," a shared emotional experience that strengthens social bonds. The results of this study align with Durkheim's thesis that religion is not only a belief system but also a system of social solidarity that unites communities. However, this study goes beyond Durkheim's framework by demonstrating that the effects of rituals extend beyond collective solidarity and directly impact individual mental well-being. While Durkheim emphasized the social function of religion, these findings add a more personal psychological dimension. In this regard, social support theory in social psychology becomes relevant. The emotional and instrumental support received by prospective pilgrims has been shown to act as a stress buffer. Several psychological studies have shown that social support can reduce anxiety levels and increase individual resilience in the face of transitional situations or life stress. Therefore, the results of this study are consistent with previous empirical findings that suggest that religious communities can be an effective source of coping mechanisms (Yuningsih et al., 2022)

Second, from a symbolic anthropological perspective, the practice of walimatus safar can be analyzed through the theory of transition rituals (rites of passage) introduced by Arnold van Gennep. Van Gennep explained that every process of social status change typically goes through three stages: separation, liminality, and incorporation. Walimatus safar represents the separation stage, where prospective pilgrims are symbolically released from everyday life and prepared to enter the liminal phase during the Hajj pilgrimage. This tradition marks a shift in one's social and religious identity before departing for the Holy Land. This analysis is strengthened by Victor Turner's development of liminality theory, which emphasizes that the liminal phase is often marked by the experience of community. In walimatus safar, the experience of community is reflected in the spiritual togetherness between prospective pilgrims and their community. This tradition creates a temporary egalitarian space, where all members of society gather without rigid social barriers. The results of this study align with Turner's understanding that transition rituals serve to strengthen solidarity and provide social legitimacy to changes in individual status. However, this research also shows that the community in the Walimatus Safar is not merely temporary, but has a long-term impact on the psychological condition of prospective pilgrims.

Third, from the perspective of the social construction of reality, these findings can be analyzed through the theory developed by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann in *The Social Construction of Reality*. They assert that social reality is formed through the processes of externalization, objectivation, and internalization. Walimatus safar is a form of externalization of the community's religious values, which are then objectified in the form of a collective ritual. Through active participation, prospective pilgrims internalize these values, thus forming a deeper religious awareness. The results of the study indicate that the meaning perceived by prospective pilgrims does not emerge spontaneously, but rather through a process of symbolic interaction that is continuously passed down from generation to generation. This finding supports Berger and Luckmann's theory that local religious practices play a crucial role in building and maintaining the structure of meaning in society. However, this study also adds that this internalization process has a direct impact on the mental and spiritual readiness of individuals, not simply strengthening the social legitimacy of tradition.

Fourth, from the perspective of the psychology of religion, the spiritual strengthening experienced by prospective pilgrims can be explained through the concept of intrinsic religiosity developed by Gordon W. Allport. Allport distinguished between intrinsic religiosity (religion as a life orientation) and extrinsic religiosity (religion as a

means of social interests). Research shows that the Walimatus Safar (traveling ceremony) tends to strengthen this intrinsic orientation because prospective pilgrims interpret the Hajj as a divine calling and a process of self-purification. Collective prayer, Quranic recitation, and dhikr (remembrance of God) create a reflective atmosphere that encourages sincerity and trust in God. These findings align with studies in the psychology of religion that suggest that collective ritual practices can enhance spiritual well-being and a sense of meaning in life. However, this study provides an additional contribution by demonstrating that strengthening intrinsic religiosity impacts not only spiritual satisfaction but also emotional stability before facing the arduous physical journey.

Fifth, in the context of Islam Nusantara, the results of this study support the view that acculturation between Islamic teachings and local culture is not a form of deviation, but rather a mechanism of creative adaptation. Several studies on local pre-Hajj traditions in various regions, such as Manjalang in Minangkabau and Mappaci in Bugis, have shown similar functions as social legitimacy and spiritual strengthening. Thus, the walimatus safar (traditional Islamic holiday) in Getas Hamlet exhibits a pattern consistent with broader phenomena in Indonesia. This tradition confirms that Islam in Indonesia develops through dialogue with local culture without losing its normative essence. However, there is a possibility of differing interpretations compared to puritanical approaches that tend to view cultural-religious practices as heretical or additions lacking a direct textual basis. This study shows that although walimatus safar is not explicitly mentioned in normative sources, the values it embodies, such as prayer, silaturahmi (silaturahmi), and almsgiving, have strong legitimacy in Islamic teachings. Therefore, the differences in views are more about form, rather than substance (Ultra et al., 2022).

Integratively, this analysis demonstrates that the Walimatus Safar (traditional Islamic gathering) serves as an effective spiritual transition mechanism. This tradition connects social, psychological, and religious dimensions into a unified experience. Social support strengthens mental resilience, while internalization of religious values strengthens spiritual orientation. The combination of the two results in comprehensive preparedness before departure for the Hajj. The results of this study expand the literature on Hajj studies, which has previously focused on managerial, health, and Islamic jurisprudence (fiqh). By incorporating a phenomenological perspective, this study demonstrates the importance of subjective experience in understanding the effectiveness of local traditions. Theoretically, these findings confirm the relevance of Durkheim's theory of solidarity, Van Gennep and Turner's transition rituals, Berger and Luckmann's social constructionism, and Allport's intrinsic religiosity. Empirically, this study demonstrates that local cultural practices can be a means of fostering authentic and contextual mental and spiritual readiness. Thus, the Walimatus Safar is not simply a traditional heritage, but a socio-religious institution that plays a strategic role in preparing prospective Hajj pilgrims. This tradition demonstrates that religious experience is shaped not only by doctrine but also by social interactions and cultural symbols that exist within the community. Integration between social solidarity and spiritual strengthening is the main key in building physical and spiritual readiness before undertaking the Hajj pilgrimage.

## CONCLUSION

This research confirms that the Walimatus Safar tradition plays a significant role in the preparation process for prospective Hajj pilgrims, both mentally and spiritually. This tradition is not merely a pre-departure ceremony, but rather a socio-religious mechanism that provides tangible psychological, emotional, and religious reinforcement. Through collective prayer, religious advice, and moral support from family, community, and religious leaders, prospective pilgrims gain inner peace that helps them face the pilgrimage with greater preparedness and confidence. Mentally, the Walimatus Safar serves as a space for social affirmation that fosters a sense of security and acceptance. The togetherness created by this tradition can reduce anxiety, diminish fear of uncertain situations, and strengthen self-confidence in facing the physical and emotional challenges during the Hajj. The collective support provided is not merely symbolic, but also serves as a source of psychological energy that strengthens the emotional stability of prospective pilgrims. Meanwhile, from a spiritual perspective, the Walimatus Safar serves as a reflective moment to strengthen intentions, deepen sincerity, and foster an attitude of trust in Allah SWT. This tradition helps prospective pilgrims realize that the Hajj pilgrimage is a sacred calling that demands physical and spiritual preparation. The religious experience fostered through communal prayer and remembrance serves as a source of spiritual motivation that remains imbued throughout their stay in the Holy Land. Furthermore, the blessings received foster a sense of moral responsibility to carry out the pilgrimage earnestly. Thus, the Walimatus Safar (traveling together for the Hajj) not only forms part of a local cultural heritage passed down through generations, but also serves as a mental and spiritual foundation that provides blessings and a more mature preparation for worship. This tradition provides lasting benefits not only for the pilgrims but also for the families and communities involved.

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