

The Role of Islamic Counselor in Guiding the Religious Life of Prisoners at the Purbalingga State Detention Center

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Abstract: The purpose of this article is to discuss the role of the Islamic Counselor in integrating religious life within the Rumah Tahanan Negara kelas IIB Purbalingga. This study employs a qualitative approach using case study methodology, focusing on the experiences of prisoners and religious counselors. The results of the research show that religious counseling through habituation to worship and studying the Qur'an, as well as advice (*mauizah khasanah*) has a significant impact in increasing the religious and moral understanding of inmates, as well as helping their rehabilitation process to society. The research conclude that prisoners who receive religious counseling might improve their morality and behavior, reestablish their humanity, and prepare for society by redefining their identity. In order to properly educate criminal convicts through religion counseling so that they become citizens and are well accepted by society, this research offers useful knowledge for religious counselors, policy makers, and community leaders.

Keywords: Islamic Religious Counselor, Religious Life, Inmates, Detention Center, Prisoners.

Introduction

According to Decree of the Minister of Religion (KMA) Number 79 of 1985, "Religious counselors have a role as community guides, role models, and liaisons with government duties." The three responsibilities of religious educators are frequently referred to as a "trilogy": offering advice and information, advocating, and advocating (Jaya, 2017).

The Religious Instructor's functional role and credit amount are established by the Minister of Coordination and Research and Development's Decree No. 54/KEP/MK.WASPAN/9/1999. Additional rules are outlined in the Joint Decree of the Minister of Religion and the Head of the State Civil Service Agency Numbers 574 and 178 of 1999. In light of these rules, religious counselors are civil servants who have been assigned full-time tasks, responsibilities, and authority by authorized authorities to conduct development counseling and religious advice in religious languages (Kalimantan Selatan, 2017).

In addition, religious leaders provide the community with inspiration and direction to live a better life in line with religious teachings, even in the face of a variety of issues like drug abuse (Ria, 2021), young marriages (Srifinora, 2023), developing the community's spiritual mindset (Sukron Mazid, Rumawi, Wahyu Prabowo, 2021), and other social issues.

Sukron Mazid asserts that the role of religious educators is to advise, educate, and guide the people in matters of faith and society (Sukron Mazid, Rumawi, Wahyu Prabowo, 2021). Islamic Religious Counselors play a key role in the spiritual growth of prisoners in detention centers within the framework of Correctional Institutions (LP). In order to aid in the rehabilitation and social reintegration of inmates, religious formation is crucial.

According to Personality Development Manager Agus Budhyawan, there are 159 convicts at the Class II B Purbalingga State Detention Center, with 114 of them being criminal prisoners and 45 being non-criminal prisoners. The cases

involving inmates/detainees include: Drug abuse, theft, corruption, and immorality. Nine women are incarcerated or detained; eight of them identify as Muslims and one as a Buddhist. Four non-Muslim inmates are being held, three of them are Christians and one is a Buddhist (interviews on Friday, September 10, 2021, and Saturday, September 11, 2011).

Life behind bars is not easy. Prisoners encounter serious emotional, social, and spiritual difficulties when incarcerated (Kurniati, 2023). Correctional Institutions (LP), on the other hand, are tools used by inmates to transform into better versions of themselves. Prisoners receive training to prepare them for reintegration into society after serving their time.

Imprisonment or correctional services according to Article 2 of Law no. 22 of 2022 concerning Corrections, aims to improve the quality of personality and independence of inmates, so that they can realize their mistakes, improve themselves, and not repeat criminal acts. They are accepted back into society, live normally as good, law-abiding, responsible citizens and can actively participate in development. The correctional system also aims to protect society from the possibility of correctional inmates making the same mistakes (Zulharman, 2023).

Religious advice is one technique that might assist convicts in finding purpose in their life. Prisoners may be inspired and motivated to alter their behavior, strengthen their relationship with God, and discover a new purpose in life by the morals, values, and spiritual guidance that religion offers. Actually, the morals and conduct of the kids who are helped by kids in the Banda Aceh Special Children's Prison have improved thanks to regular religious instruction. What used to be a common theft habit has evolved into a sharing pleasure (Safriani, 2023).

Scholars have done a number of research on the function of religious counselors. One of them discusses how religious instructors at the Bale Reyang Art Studio, where they serve in educational, informational, and advisory capacities, help youth become more aware of religion (Azizah, 2022).

Second, studies on how Kampar Regency's religious counselors are able to lower the incidence of young marriage. A significant part of the decline in the number of young weddings is played by KUA Bangkinang's use of religious counselors. Extension agents has the skills and drive necessary to complete scientific and material extension activities (Srifinora, 2023).

In the context of prisons, Ria Janna researched the role of religious counselors in restoring the social functioning of drug victims at the Class IIA Cipinang Narcotics Correctional Institution, East Jakarta. Religious counselors have the ability to help and support the social activities of drug victims (Ria, 2021).

Amaliah conducted research on the role religious counselors play in helping juvenile offenders at Palembang Prison acquire morality. To help juvenile offenders grow, mau'idzah, or guidance, qishah, or storytelling, and uswah, or example, are employed. Children's behavior significantly improves as a result (Amaliyah, Setiawan, & Rahman, 2023).

Unlike the numerous studies previously mentioned, the purpose of this paper is to investigate the function of Islamic Religious Counselors at the Purbalingga Class II B State Detention Center and how it affects the inmates' religious lives. This article is the result of field research, using a qualitative approach, namely the researcher determines the research focus, selects informants to use as data sources, collects data, assesses the quality of the data, analyzes the data, interprets the data, and finally makes conclusions (Lexy J. Moleong, 2005), (Sugiyono, 2020).

This research was conducted at the Class IIB Detention Center, Purbalingga, Central Java using interview and observation methods. The author observed the Purbalingga Class IIB detention center, how the religious formation program was carried out by religious instructors, and how this had an impact on the inmates. Apart from that, the data collection method uses interviews. The author interviewed inmates, officers and religious counselors at the class IIB Purbalingga detention center about responses to the religious guidance program and religious counselors about the implementation of religious guidance. Techniques

for data analysis include data reduction, data display, and conclusion formulation.

Results

The Purbalingga Regency Ministry of Religion Office is one of the Vertical Agencies of the Ministry of Religion Offices in the district/city area which is under the auspices of the Regional Office of the Ministry of Religion of Central Java Province. As a concrete manifestation of the implementation of duties and functions as mentioned in article 8 (point b and point h) above, the Purbalingga Regency Ministry of Religion Office has tried to build a new breakthrough, namely establishing a cooperative relationship with the Head of the Purbalingga class II B State Detention Center (Rutan). This collaboration is outlined in an MoU which has been signed by both parties. This collaboration is closely related to the duties of the Purbalingga Regency Ministry of Religion in matters of fostering religious life. This religious life development is packaged in the form of an activity program, namely: "Friday Morning Routine Recitation" as well as providing sermons and leading Friday prayers which are held at the Purbalingga Rutan Mosque complex. The recitation and filling of sermons and Friday prayers are carried out by Islamic religious instructors, both functional Islamic religious instructors and non-civil servant religious instructors. This activity program is aimed at inmates at the Class II B Detention Center in Purbalingga, especially those who are Muslim.

There are 159 inmates in the Class II B Purbalingga State Detention Center (WBP) as of August 2021, according to records. They include the following details: 1) There are 124 WBPs for general criminal offenses (mostly theft and crimes involving the protection of women and children); 2) There are 29 WBPs for specific drug crimes; and 3) There are six WBPs for specific crimes involving corruption. This indicates that there is currently excess capacity at the Purbalingga Detention Center.

In reference to the Purbalingga detention center's inmate population, Agus Budhyawan, S.

Pd., the Personality Development Manager, reports that as of right now, the Purbalingga Class II B State Detention Center (WBP) is home to 159 individuals. Four non-Muslim convicts or detainees make up the religious component of the group: three are Christians and one is a Buddhist. The other people are Muslims. (Interviews scheduled for September 10, 2021, Friday, and September 11, 2011).

Religious counselors from the Purbalingga Ministry of Religion lead the religious life development activities for the Class II B Detention Residents in Purbalingga. These activities come in different packages and include: Taklim Council, Khotib and Friday Prayer Imam; Recital; Hadrah (Tambourine); Ramadhan Islamic Boarding School (Islamic boarding school) during the month of Ramadan; Tarawih Prayer Imam; Imam of Eid prayers (Eid al-Adha and Eid al-Fitr).

According to Sutrisno, Islamic Religious Counselors have been assisting the prisoners in Purbalingga Prison in developing their religious lives for a considerable amount of time. Furthermore, the Ministry of Religion and the Purbalingga Detention Center just signed an agreement in 2018.

Religious counselors provide prisoners with a range of religious mental development activities, including:

Assesment of the degree of religious adherence among prisoners

When conducting religious life development, religious educators will assess the target residents' level of possession of the fundamentals of religion. The fundamental religions of the prisoners in correctional facilities differ; there are those who are simply ordinary, those who are religious laymen (e.g., incapable of reading and writing the Quran, never praying), and those who already possess strong religious foundations (e.g., muazin, proficient in reading the Quran). Those who have the ability to call people to prayer typically work as muezzins at the At-Taubah Mosque (remand mosque).

The Purbalingga Prison has a basic goal and purpose for being so concerned with encouraging its inmates' religious lives. The previous head of

the Purbalingga Class II Detention Center, Luni Prabowo, Bc.IP, S.SOS, was adamant that "whoever enters (becomes an inmate) Purbalingga Class II Detention Center, when you leave, you have to memorize the prayer readings and their meanings and you have to be able to read the Koran." According to Yudha Indrajati, head of the Management Sub-Section, the religious development program was implemented. The purpose of the religious formation program is to prepare prisoners for reintegration into society after they are released from the correctional facility (Interview with Yudha Indrajati, Thursday, September 9 2021).

The goal of religious (Islamic) development in prisons is generally to enable prisoners to read the Quran. The prisoners also need to commit the prayer passages and their meanings to memory. IQRA pass holders will receive a certificate.

Taklim or Regular Recitation as a Means of Good Advice

Two Islamic religious teachers, both PAIF and non-civil servants, are typically sent by the Purbalingga Ministry of Religion every Friday to fill the taklim and serve as the preachers and imams during Friday prayers. Religious educators provide lesson plans that are flexible and tailored to the current situation. For instance, in August, the lesson plan may focus on "love of the homeland". It is about the "command to perform prayers" and other things during Isra Mi'raj. Islamic religious educators must be able to use "class control" and a "persuasive approach" when presenting content. Question-and-answer sessions and lectures are common teaching strategies.



Figure 1. At the At-Taubah Mosque, Class II Detention Center, Religious Counselor (M. Mift. Fikri, S. Kom.I) is providing Taklim.

In addition to receiving religious instruction, prisoners also greatly benefit from therapy because they often face a variety of issues, including stress brought on by their wife's demands for a divorce, a loss of family, a decline in self-esteem, and other issues. There is a serious need to investigate this. That's the main point. Prison inmates actually require motivation, basic religious direction, and mujahadah. In reference to this issue, Yuyu Yuniawati stated that, in reality, the Purbalingga prison no longer has a counseling guidance program in place, nor does it now employ PAIF counselors (Interview with Yuyu Yuniawati, Tuesday 14 September 2021).

Hadrah Creativity as a Cultivator of Socio-Cultural Solidarity with Religious Breath

Hadrah Art is one of the arts and culture development initiatives. The Regent of Purbalingga (Dyah Hayuning Pratiwi) has expressed tremendous appreciation for the Hadrah art at the Purbalingga Detention Center, specifically mentioning the provision of Hadrah uniforms. Hadrah is a popular art form during the Commemoration of Islamic Holidays (PHBI), which include the Prophet's Birthday, Isra Mi'raj, and the August 17 Ceremony. This is especially true when the Regent of Purbalingga is giving prisoners their remissions (Interview with Indrajati, on Thursday, September 9 2021).

The Religious (Islamic) Guidance Schedule consists of: (a) Monday – Thursday (10.00 – 11.30 WIB followed by 13.00 – 14.30 WIB) in the form of: IQRA, Juz Ama memorization and prayer memorization, which are guided by officers from the detention center in turn, consisting of: Mardi Waluyo, Agus Budhyawan and Accompanying Prisoners (Tamping); (b) Friday, in the form of: Taklim (09.00 – 11.00 WIB) followed by a Khutbah and Friday Prayer Imam which is carried out every Friday by 2 officers from the Islamic Religious Extension Ministry of Religion of the District. Purbalingga; (c) Saturday in the form of guidance on the art of Hadrah by Islamic religious instructors from the Purbalingga Ministry of Religion (10.00 to 11.30 WIB).

Table 1. Weekly Schedule for religious and arts development at the Purbalingga Detention Center.

| Schedule | Day | Coach |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| Iqra, Juz'amma, prayer memorization | Monday - Thursday (10.00 – 11.30) and (13.00 – 14.30) | Mardi Waluyo, Agus Budhyawan |
| Taklim | Friday (09.00 – 11.00) | Islamic Religious Counselor Ministry Religion of Purbalingga |
| Khutbah and Friday Prayer | Friday (11.45 – 12.30) | |
| The Art of Hadrah | Saturday (10.00 – 11.30) | Islamic Religious Counselor Ministry Religion of Purbalingga |

The method applied by Mr. Agus Budhyawan in religious formation is the rote deposit method. For those who do not make a memorized deposit, they will be subject to the following laws: Respect, Gymnastics, etc. Meanwhile, those who pass the Iqra will receive a certificate and those who memorize Juz Ama will receive a prize in the form of a Qur'an.

According to a September 11, 2011 interview with Agus Budhyawan, S. Pd., the manager of personality development, the goal of the detention center is to truly serve as a place of development for inmates, helping them grow into better people and preventing them from returning.

Table 1. Schedule for religious guidance on Ramadhan.

| Schedule | Day | Coach |
|--|---|---|
| Ramadhan Islamic Boarding (Pesantren Kilat) | Monday - Friday | Islamic Religious Counselor Ministry Religion of Purbalingga |
| Tausiyah (Good Advice) Recitation of Qur'an | (09.00 – 11.00) and (13.00 – 14.30) | |
| Khutbah and Friday Prayer | Friday (11.45 – 12.30) | Islamic Religious Counselor Ministry Religion of Purbalingga |
| Prayer Taraweh and Id Fithr | month of Ramadhan Holy of Eid Al Fithr | Islamic Religious Counselor Ministry Religion of Purbalingga |

Inhibiting and supporting factors in the implementation of religious life development in detention centers. Inhibiting factors consist of: 1) low human resources for the inmates (on average they only have elementary school graduates and come from disadvantaged families); 2) Lack of enthusiasm from the Inmates; 3) The sometimes unstable mood of the Inmates; 4) There is excess capacity in the detention center, which was supposed to only be 98 prisoners but had to be filled with around 160 people.

The supporting factors are: 1) Availability of facilities and infrastructure; 2) There is attention from the local government; 3) There are grants

from the Regional Government and BRI in the form of Hadrah Musical Instruments and uniforms; and 4) There is a Security Guarantee.

Religious life development activities carried out by the detention center and Islamic religious instructors at the Ministry of Religion of the District. Purbalingga has received a positive response from the inmates. The inmates feel they have become more devoted to worship, apart from that they are also able to memorize short letters and their meanings, and can read the Koran. As for art, it can also be channeled through hadrah groups.

Table 1. Prisoners' Reactions to Becoming Religious.

| Initial | Age | Case | Religious Activities | Out Put |
|---------|--------------|--------------------|---|--|
| Jasmine | 46 years old | corruption | praying 5 times, duha, Recitation of Qur'an, Hadrah, Sunnah fasting | The worship performed, especially prayer, is felt to be more solemn. This is because he has now memorized the prayer readings and their meanings. Melati's hopes after leaving prison: Jasmine wants to remain steadfast and be successful in the world and hereafter. |
| Rose | 27 years old | drugs | Praying 5 times, duha, Recitation of Qur'an, Performs sunnah fasting Monday – Thursday Hadrah | Rose sensed a marked increase in the fervor and intensity of his worship. Mawar said that she had never read Koran and had never prayed five times a day before entering prison. Rose hopes after leaving the detention center: remain steadfast, the knowledge gained while in detention can be useful, she wants to open a TPQ and Hadrah Group. |
| Rendy | 38 years old | corruption | praying 5 times hadrah | Their worship now becomes more solemn and of higher quality. They also have the same hope, namely that they will remain steadfast until the end of their lives. |
| Tony | 30 years old | women and children | praying, hadrah | Tony said that everything that happened because of God's will. Allah loves him very much. God wants to make him a better person. |

According to Ali Wafa, the basis of moral development cannot be separated from the Al-Quran and Al-Hadith which give insight and refer to the life of this world, so the basis should be given to Islamic education. Islam encourages people to always think positively and emulate the behavior of the Messenger of God, because in him there is a good role model, the basis of Islamic morals based on the Qur'an.(Et.al, 2021)

Numerous psychological characteristics, such as those related to athletics, muscle relaxation, sensory awareness, meditation, autosuggestion, and catharsis, are constantly present when we pray. There are other advantages to prayer beyond its use as a stress-relieving mental therapy. From a psychological perspective, for instance, it is important to constantly instill in Muslims the values of self-discipline, respect for time, obedience to the clock, hard work, and much more, as praying does a lot that can invigorate the body and ease daily worries.(Renaldi, 2023). Indeed, the prayer that we offer is on in essence, it is an ocean of pearls that educates spiritual. Prayer shows

attitude inner self to gain strength, self-confidence, and courage to stand tall in real world life through clear, focused behavior and having an impact on the environment.(Syafrihsyah, 2013).

The explanation above makes it clear that all acts of worship that are performed in accordance with Islamic law, such as prayers and other rituals, will also include other psychologically beneficial aspects of meditation, such as autosuggestion and catharsis, which are useful as decorations for a better life. These activities help to form people who are always upbeat and optimistic about facing life's challenges and the future, as well as people who have an understanding of success in this world and the next.(Syafrihsyah, 2013).

Apart from practicing worship, getting tausiyah through taklim and reading the Koran, prisoners also get access to learning hadrah. Hadrah Arts' Place in Both Formal and Informal Education Formally, Hadrah is a significant part of holistic education, which covers spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual, and social facets of learning. Non-formal, fostering moral and religious

principles in society, lowering bad behavior, and developing virtue. Hadrah art improves the moral and social aspects of society, teaches ethics, discipline and good social interaction, and forms ethical individuals who have a positive impact on the surrounding environment. (Nurdin, 2024).

This is in line with the views of Sayed Hossen Nasr. According to Nasr, humanity were lost by the idea of evolution, which led to an escape from the spiritual realm and fed their inner cravings. However, art can restore permanent nature (fitrah). Humans are accidental and outward beings, but they are also internally and spiritually formed, and it is this component of the soul that needs to be educated to receive God's spiritual light in order to achieve perfection as a first step towards life's certainty. (Nasr, 1993)

In Islam, worship and art can be used as tools to build character. Regular worship teaches discipline, submission and respect for authority (Allah). On the other hand, art (in this case hadrah) helps develop creativity that does not conflict with religious ethics, while at the same time instilling noble values in the daily lives of prisoners. The theory of Islamic worship and art for character formation is rooted in the understanding that worship is not only a ritual, but also moral and spiritual formation. While Islamic art is an expression of beauty that instills noble values. Both support each other to form a character that has a balance between piety, aesthetics and ethics. It is therefore envisaged that the integration of Islamic art and ritual worship would assist prisoners in turning their lives around so they can be accepted by society once they are released from jail.

Conclusions

This study found that residents in detention centers are accustomed to worship, namely praying five times a day, studying the Koran (memorization), and giving good advice. Apart from that, through Islamic art, hadrah is also used to facilitate and increase the creativity of inmates. The author discovered notable behavioral improvements in the prisoners, including an optimistic outlook for their future and a

willingness to engage in constructive activities (community empowerment).

Based on these findings, the author draws the conclusion that religious teachings push people in the direction of goodness so that they will be more aware of goodness and compassionate in their daily lives. Religious counseling can assist convicts in detention in improving their morality and behavior as well as reconstructing their human identities in order to prepare them for social interactions. The mentoring of Muslim convicts is the exclusive focus of this study. The evolution of non-Islamic religions, such as Buddhist, Christian, or Catholic, are ideas for future study.

Conflicts of Interest: "The authors declare no conflict of interest."

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