

Editorial

Humanitarian Aid from the Islamic Mass Organizations in Indonesia to Palestine

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Abstract

The editorial in this issue highlights how humanitarian aid to Palestine has become a symbol of solidarity among Indonesians. It examines two major Islamic mass organizations in Indonesia, Nahdhatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, and how they mobilize their resources and members to support Palestinian relief. The two organizations show a strong commitment to supporting the Palestinian cause before the current war on Gaza, which started in October 2023. This commitment to helping the Palestinian struggle is also in line with the position of the Indonesian government and academics.

Keywords: Humanitarian Aid; Indonesia; Israeli-Palestinian Conflict; Muhammadiyah; Nahdhatul Ulama; Palestine

Indonesians are known for being generous, as reported by the Charities Aid Foundation (2024) in the World Giving Index 2024. The report ranked Indonesia first with a score of 74 points. Indonesia maintained this ranking for seven consecutive years, initially surpassing Myanmar in 2017. With this generosity in mind and the fact that Indonesians are Muslim majority, it would be very appropriate if the Indonesian people also contributed a lot to Palestine, both during the current conflict and in the past. This commitment to helping the Palestinian struggle is also in line with the

position of the Indonesian government and its academics (Andriansyah, 2024).

As the two largest Islamic mass organizations in Indonesia, or even in the world, Nahdhatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah have contributed to Palestinian relief using their charity bodies. NUCare-LAZISNU is an autonomous body in Nahdhatul Ulama that deals with humanitarian aid and other social activities. In the emergence of the war on Gaza, this autonomous body made some efforts to consolidate support from Nahdhiyin, a common call for Nahdhatul Ulama members, to Palestine. Through its official website, <https://nucare.id/program/pedulipalestina>, the donation is collected using online payments. LAZISMU is an autonomous body in Muhammadiyah that provides humanitarian aid. Using website, <https://lazismu.org/bantupalestina>, LAZISMU also collected supports from Muhammadiyah members to support the struggle of Palestinians.

The use of websites for crowdfunding for Palestine, as carried out by Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, is one strategy that is relevant to Indonesian society. People tend to provide assistance more easily through websites managed by trusted institutions (Aulia & Pimada, 2023; Hakim & Setyaningsih, 2022). Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, the two largest Islamic mass organizations in Indonesia, have proven to gain a lot of public trust in various crowdfunding activities for humanity, disasters, and others. From here on, it is natural that the fundraising activities for Palestine by these two organizations also receive a lot of support from Indonesian people.

In distributing humanitarian aid to Palestine, Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah collaborate with a number of institutions accustomed to sending aid directly to Gaza or the West Bank. Nahdlatul Ulama has collaborated with the Althoure-Silwan Women

Center (AWC) to distribute food supplies (NU Care-LAZISNU, 2024), and Muhammadiyah has collaborated with Gazze Destek Derneği (GDD) in distributing medicines (LAZISMU, 2024). Cooperating with a number of international institutions, as stated by Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, is a strategic choice, considering the field conditions in conflict areas that require special expertise. Moreover, humanitarian aid to Palestine, especially Gaza, has several complexities, as found in previous research (Farhat et al., 2023; Feldman, 2009; Qarmout & B-land, 2012).

This Issue

This issue featured 15 articles by authors from abroad: Australia, Brunei Darussalam, Italy, Jordan, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia, Türkiye, and Yemen. The editorial team expanded to include scholars from France, Libya, and Türkiye. This addition is expected to maintain and improve the quality of the journal publications. The topics covered in this issue include Islamic, Catholic, Christianity, and other religious studies.

The first study explores the relationship between Catholic faith and Kanjan Serayong culture within the Pesaguan Dayak community. By examining how these religious and cultural elements interact, particularly in funeral rituals, this research reveals how both traditions foster communal solidarity and cultural resilience. Through qualitative methods, including interviews with indigenous leaders, participant observations, and a literature analysis, the findings highlight the deep integration of Catholic and indigenous practices. The research also emphasizes the importance of involving local communities in preserving their cultural heritage, while encouraging further study on the inculturation of religion within indigenous cultures.

The second study examines the collection of speeches by Sheikh Abdul Lathif Syakur, a prominent scholar of the mid-20th century who used hadith to address the socio-religious context of Minangkabau society. His speech reflected a thematic approach to interpreting social realities through hadith, focusing on renewal, community integrity, moderation, and the role of women in public life. By applying a descriptive-historical method and thematic analysis, this research highlights SALS's progressive outlook and ability to adapt to the needs of his time. This portrayal challenges the rigid stereotype of hadith scholars and emphasizes his inclusive and forward-thinking approach.

The third study explores how the habitus of interreligious harmony is cultivated in Nalen, a small village in Central Java. The village's diversity fosters social, cultural, and religious cohesion, which contrasts with conflicts that can often arise from such differences. Using in-depth interviews and observations, this research analyzes this peaceful habitus through Bourdieu's theoretical framework, focusing on the role of social and cultural capital in shaping community harmony. The findings reveal that this harmony develops organically, driven by the community's collective autonomy, and influenced by historical and societal factors, without external coercion.

The fourth study offers a biblical and orthodox anthropological perspective, which challenges the materialistic view of humanity. It argues that human existence goes beyond the physical body, involving the body, soul, and spirit, all created in God's image and destined for a divine communion (theosis). By analyzing New Testament terms like natural, carnal, and spiritual man through Patristic thought, particularly Gregory Palamas and Philokalia, this study reveals the transformative journey from natural to spiritual man. This approach contrasts with materialism, enriching the

understanding of human nature and bridging biblical theology with contemporary philosophies.

The fifth study analyzes the approaches used in School-Based Management (SBM) training programs for Islamic elementary schools in Magelang Regency conducted by the Institute for Research and Community Development Studies. Through observation, interviews, and document analysis, this research reveals that a leadership enculturation approach was employed to strengthen school leadership during and after SBM training. This approach was adapted to different stages of training, including partnership leadership for follow-up planning, mentoring collaborative leadership for implementation, and evaluative leadership for assessing training outcomes. This enculturation process ensures the effective implementation of SBM in post-training schools.

The sixth study examines the state of cash waqf literacy in journal publications in Indonesia and Malaysia from 2018 to 2023, focusing on the low public understanding of cash waqf. Using bibliometric mapping with data from Google Scholar, this study analyzed 106 journal articles from Indonesia and 40 from Malaysia, revealing a limited number of publications on this subject. It highlights the growing potential of cash waqf but notes that studies on productive waqf are still scarce and mainly focus on sukuk and micro-enterprises. The findings suggest that the lack of adequate literacy products may contribute to the low public understanding of cash waqf in both countries.

The seventh study explores the evolution of religious pluralism in NTT (Bumi Flobamora), Indonesia, which is recognized as the most tolerant province in the country, despite ongoing religious conflicts. While traditional pluralism, rooted in local wisdom and supported by government policies, has historically maintained harmony, it no longer aligns with modern demands for universal human rights due

to the unequal treatment of different religions. The research suggests a shift towards modern pluralism, which emphasizes equality and addresses the limitations of communitarianism, where inclusivity is often restricted to one's own spiritual community. To sustain religious unity in Bumi Flobamora, modern pluralism must replace traditional pluralism guided by the principles of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* and *Pancasila*.

The eighth study investigates public interest in the 2020 gubernatorial election in Central Kalimantan, held during the Covid-19 pandemic, through religious and cultural approaches. Despite concerns about low voter engagement during the pandemic, this research highlights the influential role of traditional and religious leaders, who are respected as role models in the region. Through interviews and document analysis, this study found that socialization efforts using cultural traditions and religious platforms, such as speeches in churches and other places of worship, effectively increased public participation. These efforts by community leaders contributed significantly to the public's interest in the election.

The ninth article addresses the common misconception that Islam instills fear by emphasizing eternal punishment in the afterlife, a belief that has led some young people to distance themselves from their faith. The study aims to dispel these prejudices by encouraging deeper exploration of Islamic teachings, which highlight the human potential for happiness through personal choices and behaviors aligned with God's attributes. By examining the balance of mercy and justice in Islamic theology, this article argues that Islam does not rely on fear but encourages understanding and reflection, with divine mercy being a central and eternal attribute. The discussion also critiques interpretations that focus solely on punishment, stressing the importance of aligning views with the compassionate spirit of the Quran and the Hadith.

The tenth study explores the rise of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in Brunei Darussalam dedicated to the care and rescue of stray animals, addressing a gap in public policy and sociocultural challenges. Despite a lack of government financial support, these NGOs operate with autonomous resources and informal networks to manage their efforts. They collaborated with the public and other NGOs to sustain resources, handle daily operations, and address health concerns related to stray animals. This research highlights how these organizations have emerged to fill the void left by unclear government regulations and cultural values regarding stray animal care.

The eleventh study explores the Third-Person Effect (TPE) theory, which suggests that individuals believe media impacts others more than themselves, in relation to Islamic religiosity and perceptions of moral and non-moral issues on social networking sites (SNS) among students at the International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM). Using a quantitative design with 357 respondents, the study found that students perceived moral issues on SNS as having a greater influence on others, consistent with TPE, while non-moral issues were seen as affecting both themselves and others. Additionally, Islamic religiosity increases the perceived impact of moral issues on others and non-moral issues. These findings highlight the role of religiosity in shaping perceptions of media influence on moral and non-moral content on SNS.

The twelfth study examined the factors influencing Jordanian university students' motivations for using religious digital media (RDMUM) through a hierarchical regression analysis of 330 participants. The results show that demographic factors, particularly age and gender, significantly impact motivation, with younger males displaying higher engagement, while educational level also plays a role. Interestingly, the type of digital media used did not significantly

affect motivation, although Twitter showed a negative association, suggesting platform-specific influences. This study highlights that prior knowledge and specific interests in Islamic thought and jurisprudence strongly motivate students, providing valuable insights for content creators to develop more engaging and tailored religious digital media.

The thirteenth study critically evaluates the relocation of Indonesia's capital city through the lens of al-maqāṣid, the objectives of Islamic law, as outlined in existing legislation. The research shows that, while relocating capital has historical precedence in Islamic tradition for the public good (maslahah), this move is classified as a secondary need (ḥājiyyāt) rather than an essential necessity (ḍarūriyyāt) for Indonesia. This classification suggests that the development of new capital may face significant challenges as it does not address an urgent need. Therefore, careful planning and consideration are necessary to mitigate potential issues during the relocation process.

The fourteenth study explores the role of Islamic education teachers in mitigating the negative effects of TikTok on teenagers in Lampung, Indonesia. It examines the extent of TikTok usage among adolescents, its associated negative impacts, and the strategies employed by 35 Islamic education teachers to address these issues. Through a qualitative case study involving 455 teenagers, the findings revealed significant negative effects of TikTok, prompting teachers to implement various interventions. This study emphasizes the need for a comprehensive approach to empower adolescents to resist the harmful effects of TikTok and protect their ethical development and well-being.

The fifteenth study examines the balance between local customs (*adat*) and Islamic religious practices within the Muslim community in Jayawijaya, Indonesia. As deeply rooted traditions interact with

Islamic teachings, dynamic negotiation of values and practices often occurs, especially in ceremonies such as initiation, marriage, and funerals. One notable tradition is the communal pig feast, which the author suggests is replaced with halal animals to align with Islamic law. This study highlights the ongoing effort to preserve cultural heritage while fulfilling religious obligations, offering a framework for similar contexts in which religion and tradition intersect.

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