

DYNAMICS OF SHIFT IN THE FUNCTIONS OF THE RELIGIOUS TAKLIM ASSEMBLY IN THE WOMEN COMMUNITY IN PALEMBANG CITY

Kms Badaruddin¹, Siti Zailia², Rr Rina Antasari³

Abstract: *The existence of the Taklim Council as a religious institution with distinctive Indonesian characteristics, with a fairly large number of female congregants and growing almost evenly throughout Indonesia, has received attention and appreciation from many parties. The State has even acknowledged the existence and role of the Taklim Council as stated in the National Education System Law, where the Taklim Council is a form of non-formal educational institution. As well as its important role in cultivating faith and devotion. Its quite populist existence is not only known in rural areas but also in urban areas. However, many people still view its existence as merely a routine activity as an alternative activity for women to utilize their free time and remaining years. Therefore, most of the congregation is a group of housewives aged 30 years and over and also elderly. In fact, the activities of the Taklim Council are only considered as part of compensation activities for the various life problems faced by women, especially in domestic life.*

Keywords: *Taklim Council, Women, Religious Forum.*

The Introduction

In various discussions on social media in several regions of Indonesia, groups and movements were found that wanted to return women to their homes. They try to limit women's access to public spaces, including religious public places such as mosques and prayer rooms. It was even found that it was prohibited for women to participate in congregational fardlu prayers in mosques and hold recitations in prayer rooms and mosques. According to this group, prayer for women is more important at home. Even women's recitations that were previously held in mosques and prayer rooms were returned to special women's assemblies, separate from men's, with the aim of protecting them from slander. This movement was carried out structurally through the control of DKM-DKM in several housing complexes (Hasanah, 2010).

One of the unique and distinctive aspects of the da'wah process in Indonesia is the emergence of a model of da'wah which is also an educational institution in the form of the Taklim Council. Currently it is so widespread, not only in rural communities, but also in urban communities. It exists in almost every layer and social structure of society. What is even more interesting is that the development of the taklim assembly is currently in the hands of women, and it has even become the identity of a women's religious group. Such conditions cannot be separated from socio-political developments and changes and the modernization process occurring in society.

¹Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah, Email:kmsbadaruddin_uin@radenfatah.ac.id

² Fakultas Syariah dan Hukum Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah,Email: sitizailia_uin@radenfatah.ac.id

³ Fakultas Syariah dan Hukum Universitas Islam Negeri Raden Fatah,Email: rrrinaantasari_uin@radenfatah.ac.id

In the current era, the life of women's taklim assemblies is increasingly mushrooming, but most of the women are still limited to congregants. Likewise, teaching assemblies of taklim in many places are still dominated by men. Many female Taklim Councils have the ability to translate ideas by making various breakthroughs and changes in an effort to optimize the role of the Taklim Council for religious, economic, social and educational empowerment of women and society (Anitasari & Al, 2009).

The Taklim Council is often positioned as an extension of mainstream Islamic understanding both in socio-religious views and practices. Apart from that, the Taklim Council is considered a supporter of the women's domestication movement, especially regarding its teaching materials which emphasize the role of women as housewives. Women must be good at taking care of children, taking care of themselves and their husbands so that the family is harmonious (Bakti, 2012). However, behind all this, if we examine it further, the taklim assembly movement is not only limited to providing teaching to women, but has also become a way for women to take a wider role in social life and national development, including the establishment of the Taklim Assembly Contact Body (BKMT). can be separated from the policy framework of the New Order Government in increasing Women's Emancipation (Winn, 2012).

The educational and da'wah institution, Majlis Taklim, has a big role in broadcasting Islamic teachings in public spaces, either through traditional public institutions such as mosques and prayer rooms, or through public media. The rise of Islam in Indonesia is not only marked by the large quantity of adherents, the emergence of various religious understandings and groups, and high public interest in studying religion. Apart from that, the spirit of religious socialization and transformation is widespread among the public, marked by the emergence of various missionary institutions or organizations on a local, national and transnational scale. Johan Meuleman calls it a striking development during the twentieth century. These developments include the emergence of many organizations or institutions that are present and operating in the name of da'wah, both those born in Indonesia and those originating from international networks, as well as the increasing response of the wider community to deepen the teachings of Islam (Meuleman, 2011).

The taklim assembly is also part of various organizations, because it is a wing of the organization, the taklim assembly under its guidance becomes a representation of the struggle of its parent organization. For example, Muhammadiyah fights for modernization in the social, economic and educational fields. Apart from also purifying monotheism as the main principle of religion (Noer, 1992).

The religious messages that are transformed through the taklim assembly space cannot be separated from this goal. Likewise, the taklim assembly under the guidance of Nahdhatul Ulama (NU), with a religious style that is accommodating to tradition, even one of the reasons behind its birth was as a reaction to the wave of modernization, carried out by Muhammadiyah. Religious views are then translated by individuals and organizational groups who are seen as having authority. Muhammadiyah and NU are among these authorities. The taklim assembly currently exists not only as a forum for religious education and da'wah, but also as an

organizational and political extension. To become a space for social interaction among the community, as a forum that unites communities, whether based on living environment, profession or primordial, tribal or regional ties. It is oriented towards deepening religion with the strength of unity and social unity of the community, so that many RT, RW, Subdistrict and other taklim assemblies are born. Talim Assembly also then becomes a social space to get to know each other, meet and share with each other in their respective environments.

The Taklim Council has a different paradigm and often even contradicts the thinking of Feminists, even though they have the same goal of creating a just life between men and women with a different paradigm. The taklim assembly movement makes religious understanding the basis of its struggle, the understanding it believes in is as understood and studied by authoritative ulama and is part of the majority ideology. Equality and justice are in accordance with the concept of Islamic teachings as understood from a mainstream Islamic perspective. He rejects excessive concepts of equality and justice, as is the advice always conveyed by Tutty Alawiyah as a female figure who founded the Taklim Council. (Alawiyah, 2012).

Not a few Taklim Councils simply carry out routine activities of teaching religious knowledge. This dynamic is what attracted the author's interest in conducting an academic study regarding the Dynamics of Shifting Functions of Religious Taklim Councils in the Women's Community, especially in the City of Palembang.

Discussion and Result

Taklim Council for Women in Palembang

History records that special taklim assemblies for women existed during the time of Rasulullah SAW. The main basis for the formation of this taklim assembly is the need of female friends (*shahābiyyāt*) for religious knowledge like male friends. They asked the Prophet to provide special time for women because they felt that the Prophet's attention to men was greater than to them. This shared desire to learn in turn makes female friends have a kind of community together. The name of Asma' bint Yazid, an intelligent female friend who was appointed spokesperson for the *shahābiyyāt*, was recorded. Once in front of male friends, Rasulullah SAW praised Asma's abilities. Again, the theme that was raised and brought praise to the Prophet was regarding the equal rights of women and men in pursuing religious knowledge. Apart from that, seeking knowledge is an obligation for every Muslim and Muslim woman, as per the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad: "Seeking knowledge is an obligation for every Muslim and Muslim woman." The Asma' question asked to Rasulullah SAW on every occasion he visited the Prophet's *maelis ta'lim* was a collective problem gathered from the results of his meetings with other women. The *shahābiyyāt* used to ask questions and complain about their problems in the mosque or in an open forum. This is one way the *shahābiyyāt* convey their aspirations. Another way is to directly ask Rasulullah SAW personally. Sometimes also through his wives. Direct questions to Rasulullah SAW are generally carried out by *shahābiyyāt* if the issue is specific, such as *istihādlah* or concerns the relationship between husband and wife.

Conveying aspirations, whether fighting for women's rights or finding out about religious teachings, is a tradition that thrives among female friends, especially among the Ansar. It is not surprising that Umm al-Mu'minin Aisyah RA praised the attitude of Ansar women who were not hampered by feeling shy in deepening their religion. Imam Bukhari immortalized Aisyah's praise as the title of a chapter in one of the discussions about knowledge in his book Sahih Bukhari. Thus, history has recorded that taklim assemblies for women existed during the time of Rasulullah SAW. The existence of this taklim assembly is a need for Muslim women to have religious knowledge like male friends. Women during the first generation of Islam should be used as examples by the current generation. Ghirah and enthusiasm in gaining religious knowledge is a separate note that women also have a responsibility in carrying out Islamic da'wah. From this we can understand that women also have a spirit that is unbeatable by men in gaining knowledge. As told by friend Abu Said al-Khudri, the Prophet SAW determined special days to teach women, after they complained to him because they had been "defeated" by men, so they could not attend the recitation properly. Therefore, Rasulullah SAW gave certain days to teach religion to women.

This common desire to learn in turn made Muslim women in the time of the Prophet to have a kind of shared community. Communities like this then developed into later times. In fact, this chain continues to develop until now, which we know as the taklim assembly. This is a brief description of the existence of a taklim assembly where women in the early period of Islam could gain religious knowledge. In fact, the taklim assembly carried out by Rasulullah SAW was not only limited to mosques, but was also held in several other places deemed appropriate.

In history, Muslims fought for Indonesian independence against colonial oppression (Bakti, n.d.). The ulama formed religious organizations to provide the spirit of jihad to carry out the revolution (Kuntowijoyo, 1998). Here the taklim assembly has a very important role in uniting the strength of the ummah. It is normal for the Indonesian government to have a policy based on its state principle Pancasila to provide support so that religious teachings can become the spirit of every teaching and learning activity in all educational activities in society (Yahya, 2007). Apart from that, the strengthening of the taklim assembly as a place for community learning and non-formal education, was also confirmed by the government in the National Education System Law, number 20 of 2003, PP no. 19 of 2007. This government policy proves that religious learning provides a solution to various problems. problems of social life.

The taklim assembly is actually an alternative education. So far, the formal education sector still leaves many spaces that are inaccessible to women. The formal education materials that are related to women's needs and receive less attention include; religious belief education, reading and writing the Koran, women's reproductive health, trafficking, domestic violence, women's discrimination, women's rights and jurisprudence and so on. The formal education system also cannot access those who are elderly because there is an age limit when someone wants to enter school. Therefore, alternative education is very important. One type of alternative education is the taklim assembly. As we know, the economic cycle is actually centered in

the hands of women. Women or housewives who manage family finances. They can do two economic jobs at once, as producers and as consumers. This can be seen in their every presence at the taklim assembly; The taklim assembly is not only used as a place for them to learn to gain knowledge, but also as a business center. They offer a variety of snacks, groceries and services. In the taklim assembly there are all social strata of society, and women's business turnover occurs here so that it becomes the right target for the people's business economy.

The above opinion is reinforced by Tarmizi Taher who emphasizes that the success of Islamic community education can be felt if there is a change (changing situation) in a better direction (Jadidah, 2016). Therefore, in essence, the aim of Islamic da'wah is to lead the ummah to become a quality society (khoir al-ummah). 45 To achieve this goal requires maximum persistent struggle which must be carried out by the entire Islamic ummah.

Every Muslim is given the task of carrying out the mission of da'wah which takes place in all walks of life. This effort requires strengthening the five pillars of da'wah which include: *dā'ir*, *mad'ū*, materials, methods, and media or means of da'wah (Ismail, 2006). The five pillars must still be supported by an important element referred to from communication theory, namely effects (Rakhmat, 1997). These six components must be strengthened with funding support (Latif, n.d.). The activities of the taklim assembly are not only limited to the routine of teaching about how to worship in vertical relationships, but must also be able to immerse themselves in horizontal social relations which are required to be able to improve morals, welfare and happiness. For this reason, efforts must be made to improve continuously so that all the elements of da'wah above can be implemented properly and correctly in holistic human development, namely based on equal rights that are just, balanced, harmonious and harmonious. Based on this consideration, the Islamic legal system establishes standard standards called *al-kulliyah al-khams* (five basic principles of religion), namely protection of religion, safety of the soul, reason, honor and continuity of descendants, and property. The only way to obtain the right to a perfect life is to practice Islamic teachings *kāffah*. As stated by Quraish Shihab and Toto Tasmara, Muslims are obliged to practice the teachings of the Qur'an in their daily lives by always referring to the preaching journey of the Prophet Muhammad as a pattern of struggle in achieving the goals and ideals of Islam (Jadidah, 2016; Lestari, 2019).

The Taklim Council is a religious institution that is very typical of Indonesia and is synonymous with women, although the male Taklim Council group is still active and there are quite a lot of them in mosques and prayer rooms in Palembang. The existence of the Taklim Council colors Islamic diversity in Indonesia, both in rural and urban areas (Winn, 2012). Juridically, the taklim assembly is included in one of the non-formal educational institutions as stated in Law no. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System.

The Ministry of Religion is committed to paying more attention to the taklim assembly. One of them is by issuing Minister of Religion Regulation (PMA) No 29 of 2019 concerning the Taklim Council. Director of Islamic Religious Information, Directorate General of Islamic Guidance, Ministry of Religion, Juraidi, said that the government, even all components of the

nation, should pay attention to the existence of the taklim assembly. According to him, there are at least two reasons why it is important to pay this attention. First, this institution that grew out of society has contributed a lot to making the nation and state smarter. "Mothers who cannot access the world of formal education through schools and madrasas, are supported by the majlis taklim," "Similarly, fathers who are busy working until they retire, so they have not had time to study religion, are accommodated by the majlis talim. Children who drop out of school are taught religion at majlis taklim. "In fact, I once taught the Koran to household assistants through majlis taklim,". The second reason, continued Juraidi, is that as a regulation, Law No. 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System regulates religious education. This regulation was then described in PP No. 55 of 2007 concerning Religious and Religious Education which stated explicitly that majlis taklim is a non-formal educational institution. Thus, the taklim assembly is also entitled to the education function budget, the allocation of which reaches 20% of the state budget. "The taklim assembly actually carries out religious education to people who are unreached and untouched by the world of formal education. Therefore, the taklim assembly needs to be given attention, assisted in improving its management so that it can increasingly empower the surrounding community (Sidik, 2019).

Through PMA No. 29 of 2019, the Ministry of Religion wants to strengthen the existence of taklim councils. Strengthening is carried out comprehensively covering the five pillars of the taklim assembly, namely: congregation, ustadz/ah, administrators, place and taklim materials. This PMA does not require taklim assemblies to register. Article 6 paragraph (1) of the PMA regulates that the taklim assembly must be registered with the Ministry of Religion office. In article 6, the registration of the taklim assembly will make it easier for the Ministry of Religion to carry out guidance. There is a lot of coaching that can be done, for example: workshops and dialogues about the management of taklim assemblies and preaching materials, strengthening the organization, increasing the competency of administrators, and empowering the congregation. Including providing government assistance, both through the APBN and APBD. "This PMA can be used as a basis or legal umbrella," he explained.

Table 1: Data from the Taklim Council in South Sumatra

NO	KAB/KOTA	Jumlah	Tahun Berdiri
1	PALEMBANG	825	1970 s/d 2017
2	BANYUASIN	87	1980 s/d 2017
3	OGAN ILIR	42	1970 s/d 2010
4	OKI	3	1980 s/d 2016
5	PRABUMULIH	42	2010 s/d 2018
6	MUSI BANYUASIN	124	1993 s/d 2016
7	MUSI RAWAS	54	1988 s/d 2017
8	MUARA ENIM	337	1970 s/d 2017
9	OKU	204	
10	LUBUK LINGGAU	143	1970 s/d 2015
11	PAGAR ALAM	51	1970 s/d 2017
12	OKU TIMUR	575	2011 s/d 2017
13	LAHAT	120	1970 s/d 2016
14	OKU SELATAN	60	1970 s/d 2017
15	EMPAT LAWANG	221	2008 s/d 2018
16	PALI	182	1982 s/d 2018
17	MUSI RAWAS UTARA	119	1970 s/d 2008
	JUMLAH	3.168	

In terms of data and numbers, there are 3,108 taklim assemblies in South Sumatra. Meanwhile, the Palembang area with the most is 825 (Kanwil Kemenag Sumsel, 2019). Meanwhile, the formal religious institution that is closely related to the Taklim Council is the Madrasah. The madrasa data in Palembang City is that there are 230 Madrasas consisting of RA, MI, MTs and MA with a total of 223 private madrasas and 7 public madrasas.

Conclusion

The women's ta'lim assembly as a non-formal educational institution in society has great potential and role if it can be empowered optimally. The Taklim Council is a religious teaching institution for adults that is unique to Indonesia, because its development is so rapid among women that the Taklim Council is now synonymous with women. Its current existence has experienced a shift not only as a religious educational institution, but also as a facility for developing women's public roles, especially in the socio-religious field. The role of the Taklim Council towards women is not only to provide strengthening of traditional roles in the domestic sphere but also with public religious roles which are the needs of contemporary urban society. From a management perspective, empowerment does not only concern institutions, but also personal and relationships between members. Therefore, the empowerment of women's ta'lim assemblies can be implemented comprehensively by touching on the personal aspects of managers, preachers and members involved in women's ta'lim assemblies. Institutionally, the women's ta'lim assembly can improve its activity program and social and political role so that it can overcome various humanitarian problems that often befall women.

The Taklim Assembly can be analogous to a gate which has three functions, namely entrance, exit and guard or security post. As an entry point, the Taklim Council functions to strengthen the role of women in the domestic space and family institutions, with this role the Taklim Council has become part of strengthening the ideology of Familialism. As a way out, the Taklim Council encourages women to be involved in nation building with a broader public role, in this case the Taklim Council has become part of the strategy to break down gender hierarchies. As a guard and security post, the Taklim Council strengthens the religious values, culture and traditions of society, and rejects all forms of cultural penetration that are not in accordance with religious teachings and norms, thus the Taklim Council has become part of the defense barricade. The meeting between continuity and shift in the Taklim Council not only gave birth to the concept of role balance, but also gave it a double face.

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