

The Role of an Islamic Forum (Majelis Taklim) Al-Hidayah to Improve Communities' Religious Comprehension

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Abstract. *The background of this research is the lack of religion understanding and the practice of religious is not perfect enough. This study aims to describe the role of Majelis Taklim Al-Hidayah to increase religious understanding the which is hold every Friday afternoon. This study uses a qualitative approach because the data which is processed and explained by the description. The data is got by observation, interviews, and documentation method. The sources of this data are primary data sources as the results of interviews to the coaches, administrators, and several members of the Al-Hidayah Majelis Taklim, and secondary data sources derived from activity documentation. The research findings are: (1) After Constructing the congregation's faith, Majelis Taklim the member feels that there is increasing of their faith. (2) Fostering families to realizing a Sakinah family through routine recitation activities every Friday (3) Empowering the poor people by holding compensation activities for orphans every Ramadan month. (4) Improvement of the household economy because the member are pilgrims participating in the recitation and selling something. 5. The forum is a place to study religion that can increase religious understanding. 6. Fostering harmony among the people by Silaturrahim.*

Keywords: Islamic Forum; Religious Comprehension

Introduction

Humans need education as the basis for lives. Through education, humans can develop their full potential so that human are able to solve problems that arise in the lives. Education can make humans to socialize, communicate and interact well one another. Thus, humans raise their

standard of living both economically and socially. Education is not only able to raise human glory to the other humans but also to Allah SWT. Education includes the interaction of educators and students to achieve the vision of education such formal and non-formal educational institutions. The purpose of education is to provide guidance so that students can live independently to continue and preserve traditions such as values that develop in society. Through well-managed and intensive education programmed, the optimum point for educational endeavors will be realized. Education is successful if it can change human behavior in a positive direction¹.

Learning is an obligation for every Muslim. Allah will exalt the degree of those who believe and those who are given knowledge according to His word Q.S. Mujadillah verse 11 which means:

“O you who have believed, when you are told, “Space yourselves” in assemblies, then make space; Allah will make space for you. And when you are told, “Arise,” then arise; Allah will raise those who have believed among you and those who were given knowledge, by degrees. And Allah is Acquainted with what you do”

In addition, the Prophet also ordered to deepen the religious knowledge "Whoever Allah wills to be given goodness, that person deepens the religion of Islam" (HR. Bukhari-Muslim)². It shows that studying in Islam is a process without end or what is known as long life education which is in line with the principles set by Allah SWT and His Messenger.

Demanding knowledge is not only done by children but also parents. Parents who are preoccupied to work certainly cannot get the knowledge that expect from formal educational institutions. Therefore, the age and time factors are not possible, they will also rethink the financial factors that parent have, most of them will choose to meet the daily needs. To deal those problems parents will look for other alternative ways to be able to gain knowledge and deepen religious knowledge. Parents can not only get education through formal education, but also can get it through non-formal education. One of the non-formal educations that still exists

¹ Badrus Zaman. Pendidikan Akhlak pada Anak Jalanan di Surakarta (Jurnal Inspirasi Vol. 2 No. 2 Undaris Ungaran, 2018) hlm.130.

² Nur Apriliya Rochimah & Badrus Zaman. Pendidikan Moral Anak Jalanan (Yogyakarta: Trussmedia Grafika, 2018) hlm. 31.

today is Majelis Taklim. The Majelis Taklim is not only for parents but is also open to the public, including youth who wish to gain knowledge through this non-formal education

Islam is a religion that guides humans individually and in groups to become good, moral, and virtuous human beings. To achieve religious goals, a dynamic called da'wah is needed. Da'wah is an appeal or teaching that is carried out by a preacher to Mad'u either through oral, written or deed to do what Allah SWT commands and stay away from His prohibitions.

The presence of da'wah as a coaching, educational and directing activity has given new prospect to educate and enlighten society efforts, especially in the religious and social. One of the da'wah program or educational institutions around the community is the Majelis Taklim. Therefore, the Majelis Taklim does not only function as a da'wah forum, but also plays a role to develop and foster Islamic and religious knowledge in the community. The main purpose of forming Majelis Taklim is to spread Islamic da'wah and save the people from adversity, therefore Majelis Taklim have grown rapidly in Indonesia, which are attended by teenagers and parents. The beginning of the formation of this Majelis Taklim was an attempt by Muslims to spread Islamic da'wah through mosques, but nowadays da'wah is hold not only in mosques but also hold many places, not even only verbally but through social media such as Youtube, Facebook, Whatshap and others.

Based on the history, the Majelis Taklim is the oldest educational institution in Islam because it has been implemented since the time of the Prophet Muhammad SAW which took place clandestinely in the house of Arqam Ibn Abu al-Arqam.³ However, preaching in secret ways did not last long after Allah's command to carry out preaching openly contained in Q.S. Al-Hijr verse 94 means:

“Therefore, expound openly what thou art commanded, and turn away from those who join false gods with Allah.”

There are many Majelis Taklim during society in Indonesia where most of the population is Muslim. One of the taklim assemblies that is growing rapidly is at the Al-Hidayah Majelis Taklim, Curup Village, North Curup District. Majelis Taklim, which is in RT 07/RW 03, Dusun Curup

³Hussein Bahreisj, Hadits Shahih Al-Jamius Shahih Buhari-Muslim. (Surabaya: CV Karya Utama T.th.) hlm. 31.

sub-district, Curup Utara District, is followed by dozens of congregations every routine Friday afternoon Taklim Assembly. The study in this taklim assembly is a study of tahsin and tahfidz. based on the importance of increasing religious understanding for everyone, a person's desire to join the taklim assembly that is around his environment will arise.

Based on the description above, further research is needed regarding the role of the Majelis Taklim in increasing religious understanding. The purpose of this study is to describe the role of the al-hidayah Majelis Taklim in increasing religious understanding⁴. The contribution of this research is to develop the treasures of knowledge, especially about religion and provide benefits for religious taklim assemblies so that they are more consistent in practicing religious teachings.

The method used in this study is a qualitative approach. According to Sugiyono, a qualitative research method is a research method used to examine natural object conditions, where the researcher is the key instrument. Data analysis is a step for systematically searching and compiling data obtained from interviews, observations, and documentation by organizing data into categories, choosing which ones are important and will be studied so that they are easily understood by oneself or others⁵. The analysis in this study uses the Miles and Huberman model such as data reduction (data reduction), data display (data presentation, and conclusion/verification).

Results and Discussion

The role of the Majelis Taklim Al-Hidayah to improve religious understanding

The Majelis Taklim as a non-formal educational institution has a very big role for the congregation. In religious matters, the Majelis Taklim makes a very large contribution to society, because the main purpose of the Majelis Taklim is to prohibit religious knowledge. Therefore, the existence of this Majelis Taklim is very helpful to the community in meeting their spiritual needs.

⁴ Musthafa As-Siba'i, Sirah Nabawiyah Pelajaran dari Kehidupan Nabi. (Solo: Era Adicitra Intermedia, 2011) hlm. 38.

⁵ Sugiyono. Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D. (Bandung: Alfabeta,2018) hlm. 9.

The existence in the life of the community, the Majelis Taklim has a role in which its existence is needed by the community. Majelis Taklim is a forum for the community to always get knowledge, especially knowledge about Islam. So that the Majelis Taklim means always optimizing its functional role in society. The Majelis Taklim every Friday which is held in the Dusun Curup sub-district gets a good response from the congregation, as evidenced by the enthusiasm of the people who take part in the Majelis Taklim, the increasing number of congregations and the large number of people who donate to this Islamic boarding school. Seeing the enthusiasm and positive response from the congregation, the Majelis Taklim every Friday always tries to optimize its role and existence to coach the ummah to increase religious understanding for its congregation⁶.

Majlis taklim is a community-based educational institution characterized by Islamic values which in its implementation has the principles of education with an open system and a lifelong process. Through the Majlis taklim hoped that the community can learn religious knowledge, so that from the results of the educational process it is expected to be able to make a contribution that is quite influential in the formation of a superior Islamic generation, a generation that is faithful and pious, has noble character, fosters a sakinah family so that it can support and realize the nation's hopes towards a state that fair and prosperous.

The existence of Majlis Taklim in society has brought benefits to the people, especially those who are members. As parents, they should need knowledge to educate their children, but many of them have low education, lack of knowledge and insight caused by minimal economic conditions, which hinders them from obtaining the knowledge they need. Furthermore, Majlis taklim come to make a big contribution and give beneficial to society. By participating of Majelis Taklim, the majority of whom are parents, will be able to add insight both in terms of religious knowledge and other general knowledge. The roles or contributions of the Majlis taklim Al-Hidayah Council of the Dusun Curup sub-district are:

⁶ MK. Muhsin. *Manajemen Majelis Ta'lim, Petunjuk Praktis Pengelolaan dan Pembentukannya*. (Jakarta: Pustaka Intermedia, 2009) hlm. 256.

a. Faith Development

The role of the Majelis Taklim which has been quite dominant so far has been in fostering the soul and spiritual mentality of the congregation, so that many of them become more obedient in worship, have strong faith, and are active in preaching. It caused by Majelis Taklim which are always related to issues of religion, faith, and piety which is carried out intensively, routinely, and continuously, and attended by all congregations and the Majelis Taklim administrators. The congregation of the Majelis Taklim Al-Hidayah Council of the Curup also get the benefits such fostering and spiritual soul so that, it can develop the faith of the member.

Majelis Taklim plays a role to fostering the faith of the congregation by explanations given by the speaker of the congregation every Friday, it can increase the religious understanding of the congregation. The Majelis Taklim also has an impact on the spirituality of its congregation so that the psychology of the Majelis Taklim every Friday, add peace of mind to the congregation, increase the faith of the congregation. The cases are same to the aim of the Curup Majelis Taklim al-hidayah such as guide people to carry out worship that accordance to Islamic religious teachings contained in the Al-Qur'an and As-Sunnah.

It can view that Majelis Taklim every Friday has a real impact on its congregation. The role needs to be maintained properly in the activities carried out by Majelis Taklim, moreover Majelis Taklim is one of the pillars of da'wah in society which has a strategic position to fortifying the people's faith from various influences that can undermine their faith. This will be more suitable to this era because challenges and disturbances of faith are increasingly, besides of that there is also an increase in polytheism, disobedience in people's lives in the world which can no longer be controlled. Base on the explanation the Majelis Taklim has a very strategic role because of its direct presence in the community. Furthermore, the Majelis Taklim has great potential and strength to overcoming various challenges and obstacles to the faith of the people so that the activities carried out by Majelis Taklim can truly fortify the faith and strengthen. By sticking to the Qur'an and Sunnah, life will be directed.

As we know that, one of the functions of the Qur'an is to guide human life. By being guided by the Al-Qur'an, every people will be able to lead a more directed life. However, on the reality people cannot understand the Qur'an because the content is too global, so it requires more deeper understanding to understand the contents of the Qur'an.

Based on the problem about, an interpretation study is needed. One of Majelis Taklim that uses interpretation as their study material is at the Majelis Taklim Al-Hidayah.

The main material presented at the Majelis Taklim is the study of *tahsin* and the practice of worship, and a question-and-answer session. As an effort to increase religious understanding for the members of the Majelis Taklim al-Hidayah Dusun Curup, this material is presented as innovation to help the congregation to be able to understand contents of the Qur'an.

It is hoped that after participating in the Majelis Taklim Al-Hidayah Dusun Curup, the community will increasingly understand the Al-Qur'an, so that they can adhere to the Islamic teachings contained in the Al-Qur'an. By increased understanding of the contents of the Qur'an, it is hoped that the faith of the members of the Majelis Taklim will also increase in the routine recitation activities every Friday afternoon.

b. Education of Sakinah in the Family

Become a *Sakinah* in the family is the what the married couple and family hoped, moreover a *sakinah* in the family is a process and goal of a marriage in Islam, Allah SWT said in Q.S. Ar-Rum verse 21 which means that:

*“And one of His signs is that He created for you spouses from among yourselves so that you may find comfort in them. And He has placed between you compassion and mercy. Surely in this are signs for people who reflect.”*⁷

The *Sakinah* in the family is not only reflected to the scope of internal social relations among family members in a household but also reflected in his association of neighbors, relatives, and the whole family, both far and near family. Thus, education is very necessary in fostering a *Sakinah* in the family. Majelis Taklim Al-Hidayah Dusun Curup can play a big to solve problems and difficulties in family life, especially those faced by the congregation of Majelis Taklim members in social life and in forming and building a *sakinah, mawadah and warohmah* family.⁸

⁷ <https://quran.com/ar-rum/21>

⁸ Muhammad Yusuf Pulungan. “Peran Majelis Taklim dalam Membina Keluarga Sakinah Masyarakat Muslim di Kota Padangsidempuan”. (Tazkir: Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial dan Keislaman. Vol. 9, No. 1.2014) hlm. 130.

Based on the explanation above, the Majelis Taklim is held every Friday as routine recitation activities and questions and answers about religion. This question-and-answer activity give an opportunity for the congregation to ask questions about what material they do not understand. Many members ask problems in family life because most of the worshipers were those who were already married. Majelis Taklim contributes through recitation activities to help to solve daily problems so that it is hoped that it can become a vehicle for family education to become a *Sakinah* of the family. By recitation activity or question and answer activity, congregations who do not understand or for congregations who have problems about religion, or the family also could learn more deeply.

c. Empowerment of the *Dhuafa*

Islam teach people to have concern for the fate each other, especially for this poor people, as what Allah SWT said in Q.S. Al-Baqarah verse 83 which means:

“And ‘remember’ when We took a covenant from the children of Israel ‘stating’, ‘Worship none but Allah; be kind to parents, relatives, orphans and the needy; speak kindly to people; establish prayer; and pay alms-tax.’ But you ‘Israelites’ turned away—except for a few of you—and were indifferent.”⁹

It supposed that Muslims who are able to help those who are less/not able to ease the burden of the lives of the poor in meeting their daily needs. The activities that can be carried out by the Majelis Taklim such as Sponsorship, care, and education for orphans. Compensation and social assistance to the poor and displaced people. Provision of food and medical assistance to people experiencing disaster. Collecting *zakat*, *infaq*, and alms that are benefit of the poor.

The function of the Majelis Taklim is not only as a place to gain religious knowledge but also as a place to carry out social activities for the community. As is done by the Majelis Taklim every Friday. In this Majelis Taklim also carry out social activities, one of which is sponsorship activities for orphans in the month of Muharram. The month of *Muharram* is a noble month, a special month. The month of *Muharram* is also commonly referred to as the orphans' Eid which is used as a moment to

⁹ <https://quran.com/ar-rum/21>

share with orphans. The month of *Muharram* has many virtues as contained in Q.S. An-Nisa verse 36 means that:

*“Worship Allah ‘alone’ and associate none with Him. And be kind to parents, relatives, orphans, the poor, near and distant neighbours, close friends, ‘needy’ travellers, and those ‘bondspeople’ in your possession. Surely Allah does not like whoever is arrogant, boastful—.”*¹⁰

Based on the verse above contains instructions that Allah forbids people being arrogant and proud of what people have because everything that is deposit from *Allah*. To avoid this arrogant attitude, God commands to do good to others, especially to orphans and to the poor.

Based on explanation above, the Majelis Taklim every Friday has a big role for the poor in providing social assistance and improving the economy of the poor themselves. As for the activities carried out by the Majelis Taklim every Friday in empowering the poor by providing compensation that comes purely from the members of the Majelis Taklim congregation and is given in the month of *Muharram*, a month full of glory. In addition to compensation activities as a form of social activity carried out by the Majelis Taklim, there are also activities to aid people who get disasters by collecting alms from congregations which will then be given to people affected by the disaster. There are also spiritual coaching activities for people who are sick.

Its prof that many who ask for prayer through the activities of this Majelis Taklim, one of which is for those who are sick. Thus, the Majelis Taklim plays a role to fostering the congregation to always set aside their wealth to help others such as compensation for orphans, charity for those in need and spiritual guidance for people who are sick by praying together.

d. Improvement Economy of Household

The Majelis Taklim should play a bigger role in improving the congregation's household economy. However, most of the Majelis Taklim have not played a maximum role in this matter and seem to have burdened the congregation's economy with various consumptive activities. For example, the uniforms used by the Majelis Taklim members who change every year and make pilgrimages that require a lot of money.

¹⁰ <https://quran.com/4?startingVerse=36>

Therefore, Majelis Taklim needs to form and organize economic activities so that it is hoped that it can improve the congregation's economy, even though they have not been able to provide substantial assistance. However, the case is different with the Majelis Taklim Al-Hidayah of the Curup that is not too burdensome for the economy of the congregation, because in this Majelis Taklim they do not use uniforms in their activities because the member is too many. It means that this Majelis Taklim is general for all people. Although in the annual program of this Majelis Taklim it is always held the pilgrimage of the *auliya'* but does not force the congregation to follow it.

Based on the explanation above, it can be seen that the Majelis Taklim every Friday is not only used as a place to gain knowledge but also plays a role to improve the economy of the congregation by selling, earning the money, and follow the learning about Koran. It is not on the contrary, burdening the economy of the congregation. In the Majelis Taklim are the are many strata of society so that economic turnover occurs of the palce.

e. The Place to Study Religion

There is no doubt that every Muslim must receive religious guidance so that the spirit does not thirst for Islamic values so that they can control themselves and become individuals who are in accordance with the guidance of Islamic teachings. Religious guidance cannot be ignored to create a generation that is mentally strong spiritually, character and faith. Majelis Taklim which built by Muslims must be used optimally to support all activities of their religious life.

Human qualities are needed in the future to face increasingly fierce competition in the outside world. Therefore, it is necessary to provide quality education. One of the places where education is held that can help realize this is the Majelis Taklim. The Majelis Taklim is an alternative institution for congregations (especially parents) who do not have enough energy, time, money, and opportunities to gain religious knowledge through formal education. Reach the knowledge is an obligation for Muslims, the existence of the Majelis Taklim is an alternative that allows its existence for all age levels and social strata to study and study religion.

Based on the results of interviews above, it can conclude that the main goal of the congregation to attend the Majelis Taklim every Friday is

to gain religious knowledge for every people because studying religion is very important.

f. The harmony of the community

Majelis Taklim as one of way fostering Muslims must become a unifying forum for Muslims. The existence of a Majelis Taklim in the community is aimed to increase knowledge and religious beliefs which will encourage the experience of religious teachings as a gathering place to members of the community, as well as fostering and developing religious life in forming a society that fears Allah SWT. Thus, it can be said that the functional role of the Majelis Taklim is to strengthen the foundation of human life, especially in the mental-spiritual of religion and to improve the quality of life integrally, outwardly, and inwardly, worldly and hereafter¹¹.

Based on the explanation of the interviews results, the congregation of the Majelis Taklim, many members follow the forum to study religion and maintaining friendship. Thus, the Majelis Taklim al-Hidayah Curup is expected to become a forum of *ukhwah* through *silaturrahmi* so that relationship is established between Muslims fellow, and indirectly can build society in an Islamic life order. To face Islamic life order, it cannot be separated from the religious understanding possessed by everyone. Religious understanding has a very important role for adherents of the religion, understanding the meaning of teaching religious will guide a person to a deep religious appreciation so that the life will be directed. A person's who lack of understanding of teachings religious will less enthusiastic and less focused in carrying out his life, so the strategy is needed to increase the religious understanding of congregations who participate Majelis Taklim.

Individual religious understanding is different each period of development. These differences are reflected the thinking and behavior that are influenced by internal, external, or a combination. In childhood, children internalize religious values through observation and imitation of behavior shown by their parents or their closest environment¹².

¹¹ Ahmad S. Rustan. "Peranan Majelis Taklim Anas bin Malik dalam Membina Silaturrahim Masyarakat di Kabupaten Pare-Pare". (Al-Khitabah. Vol. 4, No. 1. 2018) hlm. 88.

¹² Kholifah. "Penyelenggaraan Pengajian Majelis Taklim Amanah dalam Meningkatkan Pemahaman Keagamaan Jamaah di Perumahan Griya Pandana

Increasing religious understanding can be seen from how much the religious dimension is applied in the life of each individual. According to Glock and Stark in Kholifah (2018:58-60), there are five religious' dimensions (religiosity). Meanwhile, based on the theory of the religious dimension, it follows:

1) Religious Practice (The Ritualistic Dimension)

Religious Ractice is the degree of a person carries out ritual obligations in his religion. Elements in this dimension include worship, culture, and things that show a person's commitment to the religion adheres to. The practice dimension in Islam can be done by carrying out worship such as prayer, zakat, fasting, pilgrimage, and so on. This dimension is the dimension of worship practice. In this dimension congregations who have attended this Majelis Taklim should show the commitment of worship, for example being obedient in praying or other worship.

Based on the answers of the analysis that described above, it show that Majelis Taklim al-hidayah in the Dusun Curup activities is related to the theory of increasing religious understanding to increase religious practice by participating in this Majelis Taklim.

2) Religious Belief (The Ideology Dimension)

Religious belief is called the dimension of belief which is the degree of how far the person accepts things that are dogmatic in his religious teachings. For example, beliefs about God, Angels, Heaven and others that are dogmatic. Basically, every religion wants an element of obedience for every follower, so the most important thing is the willingness to comply to the rules that apply in the teachings of the religion that adhere to. The Majelis Taklim guide to increase religious understanding of the congregation that always comply to the rules of the Islamic religion itself.

3) Religious Knowledge (The Intellectual Dimension)

Religious knowledge or the dimension of religious knowledge is a dimension that explains how far a person knows about the teachings of his religion, especially those in the

scriptures and others. At least someone who is religious must know the main things regarding the basics of belief, scriptures, and traditions. This Islamic dimension shows the level of knowledge and understanding of Muslims towards the main teachings of their religion as contained of the Qur'an. This makes a person going by understanding of the contents of the Qur'an.

4) Religious Feeling (The Experiential Dimension)

Religious Feeling is a dimension consisting of feelings and religious experiences that have been felt and experienced. For example, feeling close to their God, feeling their prayers answered by God, and other spiritual experiences. In Islam, this dimension can be manifested by build the feeling close and trust to Allah, praying solemnity, gratitude, getting a warning or help from Allah SWT. Based on the speech of narrative of the congregation of the Majelis Taklim every Friday which states that after participating in this Majelis Taklim, the congregation feel that have more gratitude to Allah SWT for the gifts that God has given them. Thus, making every human being calmer and more sincere in carrying out worship to Allah SWT.

5) Religious Effect (The Consequential Dimension)

Religious Effect, the dimension that measures the extent to which a person's behavior is consistent to the teachings of his religion in everyday life. This dimension measures the extent to which a person's behavior is motivated by religious teachings in social life. This dimension concerns human relationships with other humans. For example, by helping people who are in trouble, donating their wealth, visiting neighbors who are sick and so on.

It conclude from the narrative of the informants, in the Majelis Taklim Al-Hidayah Dusun Curup, it also guides congregation to always donate their wealth to help people who are in trouble. Thus, it can be understood that the Majelis Taklim every Friday teach the congregation to increase the religious understanding to increase member social life which concerns the relationship between one another.

Conclusion

Based on the discussion and analysis of the data presented above, it can be concluded that the Majelis Taklim al-hidayah has an important role to increase the religious understanding of the congregation who attends it. The results of the study are as follows: The role of the Majelis Taklim al-hidayah Curup, Curup Utara sub-district increase religious understanding such Fostering the faith of the congregation. Participating in the Majelis Taklim every Friday make the congregation feels increasing of faith, fostering a family realizing a family *Sakinah* through recitation activities every Friday, empowering the poor people by holding compensation activities for orphans every month of Ramadan, improving the household economy by selling something in the time they have meeting, as a place to study religious knowledge, the place to increase religious understanding, guide a harmony among the fellow by *silaturrahim*.

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