



COMMUNICATION PATTERNS OF THE INDONESIAN ULEMA COUNCIL'S FATWA ON FRIDAY PRAYERS VIRTUALLY

Aulia Laila Safitri

Universitas Islam Negeri K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, Indonesia
lia944715@gmail.com

Fitri Fadlilah

Universitas Islam Negeri K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, Indonesia
fitripl45@gmail.com

Indy Fathina Izza

Universitas Islam Negeri K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, Indonesia
indyfathinaizza@gmail.com

Ahmada Ghina Ghoniah

Universitas Islam Negeri K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, Indonesia
ahmadaghina@gmail.com

Alyah Dwi Soraya

Universitas Islam Negeri K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, Indonesia
xorayaa08@gmail.com

Naila Zakiyatun Nafsiyah

Universitas Islam Negeri K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, Indonesia
nailazakiyatun25@gmail.com

Naura Zahrania

Universitas Islam Negeri K.H. Abdurrahman Wahid Pekalongan, Indonesia
zahrانياura@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The covid 19 pandemic that hit Indonesia caused several impacts on Indonesian society that had not happened before. one them, the phenomenon of Juma'at prayers that are carried out virtually. This study aims to examine the pattern of mass communication in harmonizing the MUI (Indonesian Ulema Council) fatwa on virtual Friday prayers, its effectiveness in building public understanding, and its influence on the implementation of the fatwa during the pandemic. Qualitative studies in the form of literature studies that collect and analyze literature sources. The results show that MUI (Indonesian Ulema Council) fatwa has three broad communication functions, namely helping to maintain religious values and norms in society, as legal guidelines and social tools that influence people's behavior, and showing unique changes in devotional practices in the digital era. MUI (Indonesian Ulema Council) fatwas show an important role in disseminating religious guidance and maintaining social cohesion in the midst of change. This study strengthens the theory of mass communication as an instrument of social influence in religious contexts by focusing solely on communication patterns and community responses to fatwas.

Keyword: Mass Communication, MUI Fatwa, Friday Prayers, Virtual

A. Introduction

The phenomenon of virtual Friday prayers has become a debate about its law, especially when the COVID-19 pandemic hit. Community organizations including Muhammadiyah have issued a ruling on the guidance of Friday prayers, Muhammadiyah states the provisions for the implementation of all compulsory prayers including Friday prayers to be held at home which are then replaced by the four-raka'at zhuhur prayer. The reason is because virtual Friday prayers are not in accordance with the guidance of Friday prayers, especially regarding the unity of real places, not virtual, the continuity of the congregation, the position of the imam and the congregation and some of the virtues of congregational prayer. According to Prof. Wawan Gunawan Abdul Wahid, a small part of theummah who are not can accept with various reasons regarding virtual Friday prayers, the first, leaving Friday prayers three times results in the culprit being a disbeliever. Second, the reason for the coronavirus pandemic is a subjective reason where each mosque has a different situation (Syahida et al., 2023). According to MUI, the pros and cons of Fatwa Number 14 of 2020 are because people are not confused by the fatwa, and are prejudiced against the fatwa, so people need to understand that what is prohibited is that it is not allowed to pray in congregation in public places for people exposed to the Corona virus. It does not mean not to pray, as said by the Secretary of the MUI Fatwa Board: "What needs to be understood is that there are that affect the community and customs that affect the region." A person who is positive for the Covid-19 virus is not allowed to pray in public. "Someone who is positive for the Covid-19 virus should not be in public places, including praying in congregation, this does not prevent worship. But to protect the interests and not contaminate others" (Anam et al., 2021).

Religious authorities still play a significant role in a religious society. Religious authorities are actively responding to the Covid-19 pandemic situation in various ways. From various religious figures, clerics such as from the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI), NU and Muhammadiyah, responded to the Covid-19 pandemic such as Abdullah Gymnastiar, Ustad Abdul Somad, Ustad Adi Hidayat. Two Islamic religious authorities, namely new religious authorities and old religions. Responding to Covid-19 with various activities through virtual. The goal is to stop the spread of Covid-19 (Arrobi, n.d.). COVID-19 that has hit the world has caused obstacles to the implementation of worship for all human beings, including Friday prayers which are usually held in congregation at the mosque. Therefore, with social media as a tool to stop the spread of the virus, the proposal to hold virtual Friday prayers brings together community members on the same platform. However, it is controversial regarding the validity of virtual Friday prayers because one of the conditions for validity is that community members are present in the same meeting.

This study aims to understand the position of Islamic law on the practice of Friday prayers performed virtually, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic which limits physical meetings. By examining this fatwa, it is hoped that it can provide insight into the legal and social meanings of performing worship in a virtual format. The research method used in this study is a qualitative approach with document analysis. This research will collect and analyze data from various sources. As the main document referred to in this research, this fatwa explains that the virtual Friday prayer is not valid because it does not meet the requirements of *ittihad al-makan* (unity of place) and *ittishal* (physically connected) between the imam and the congregation. Examining the views of scholars and jurists regarding the implementation of worship in the digital era, as well as the social impact of virtual Friday prayer practices. Conducting interviews with religious and community leaders involved in organizing virtual Friday prayers to get a direct perspective on the acceptance and challenges faced. This study is expected to contribute to the understanding of Islamic law in the modern context, and become a reference for Muslims in carrying out worship in accordance with sharia provisions.

In this study, the objective is to analyze and seek the 2021 fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) regarding the implementation of virtual Friday prayers. This research adopts the approach taken by which emphasizes the importance of fatwa institutions in responding to contemporary legal issues, including in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic which has affected the way Muslims perform worship. In this research, the methods used include a review of Islamic legal thought products as well as fatwas issued by MUI (Ishak, 2015). Explains the steps taken by the Indonesian government in implementing large-scale social restrictions and their impact on worship activities. They explain the MUI's fatwa number 14 of 2020 which recommends that Muslims not attend Friday prayers in congregation and replace them with Zuhur prayers at home. The research shows that such measures not only aim to protect public health, but are also in line with Islamic fiqh principles that emphasize the importance of maintaining the safety and health of the ummah. Overall, the analysis of how fatwas and policies issued by MUI and the government attempt to balance between the performance of worship and the protection of health amidst the pandemic situation. This creates room for further discussion regarding the law of organizing virtual Friday prayers in the context of established fatwas.

In 2020, the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) issued a fatwa regarding the implementation of Friday prayers in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic which limits physical encounters. In MUI Fatwa Number 14 of 2020 concerning the Implementation of Worship in a COVID-19 Outbreak Situation, it is stated that for Muslims who are in areas with high transmission rates or red zones, it is permissible to replace Friday prayers with Dhuhr prayers in their respective homes as a measure to prevent the spread of the virus. MUI emphasizes that Friday

prayer is an act of worship that must be performed in congregation and cannot be replaced through virtual media such as Zoom because the requirement for the validity of Friday prayer is a direct physical meeting in one place or mosque. This fatwa reflects MUI's view that physical presence in one place is the essence of the Friday prayer, in contrast to other worship services that may be held online under certain conditions (Indonesia, 2020).

The implementation of virtual Friday prayers follows the same principles as offline Friday prayers. The only difference is that implementation space takes place virtually. At the beginning of the virtual Friday prayer, the takmil begins by welcoming both male and female worshipers. The presence of female worshipers in virtual Friday prayers is unique, because there are usually no female worshipers in traditional Friday prayers. Only certain Islamic groups or sects allow female worshipers to join the prayer. Friday prayers, such as the Ahmadi community. Since virtual Friday prayers are conducted in a digital space, one of the obstacles in organizing virtual Friday prayers is signal interference. Internet network stability is the most important thing that must be considered by both the congregation and the imam. they took the initiative to provide a means of stabilizing the network to support the imam. since then, virtual Friday prayers have been running well (Elvinaro et al., 2022).

B. The Social Function of Implementing Virtual Friday Prayers

Maintaining community connectedness, virtual Friday prayers allow worshipers to stay connected despite being physically separated. This can create a sense of community in worshipers who may not be able to attend the mosque due to social restrictions, Friday prayer is an obligatory prayer in addition to the five daily prayers, for all Muslims who have reached puberty, especially men who are sensible and healthy. During the COVID 19 pandemic, the public is urged to comply with regulations and health related to the prevention and handling of COVID-19 (Ali & Wardi, 2024). In this context technology acts as a bridge to maintain and spiritual interactions in the midst of difficult situations.

1. Conveying moral and social messages, sermons delivered in virtual Friday prayers often cover important themes such as social justice, the environment, and other contemporary issues. This can provide scope for the congregation to discuss and reflect on relevant issues in their daily lives that may not be easily accessible in a regular sermon.
2. Accessibility of worship, the virtual Friday prayer allows more people to participate in this worship without having to face the limitations of distance or physical condition. This can help those with disabilities or who live far from a mosque to be able to attend Friday prayers together.
3. Adaptation to emergency situations, the virtual Friday prayer can demonstrate the ability of Muslims to adapt to circumstances without neglecting their

worship obligations, reflecting that religious practice can be adapted to the social and health conditions of the community (Basri, 2023).

4. Overall, holding Friday prayers in the midst of the pandemic not only fulfills a spiritual need for Muslims but can also strengthen social networks and can provide a platform for discussions on important issues in society.

Friday prayers serve an important function in building correlations between worshippers and religious leaders and strengthening relationships with the wider community. Traditionally, physical presence in a mosque allows worshippers to interact directly with religious leaders, reinforcing a sense of community and spiritual responsibility. In a virtual context, while the digital space limits physical interaction, online Friday prayers still play a role in maintaining this correlation. Through technology, religious leaders can deliver sermons and moral messages that still reach the congregation, so the bond between the two is not completely severed. However, the social dynamics between worshippers, such as direct greetings or conversations after the prayer, are changing. Significant because of the missing face-to-face interaction. Although it is not common, of course MUI fatwa gives the result of deliberation decision that is processed strictly through certain stages in the process of legal istinbath. As a result, Muslims gradually adapted to these modified worship patterns, implementing new routines in their religious practices without more general resistance or dissent (Abdullah et al., 2023). The issuance of fatwa can happen because there is a change in the legal'illat or because of the context of needs of the times that encourage fuqaha or mufti to respond to the dynamics and new religious issues that arise in society such as in the case of virtual Friday prayers. Further analysis is needed to understand how virtual Friday prayers affect the intensity of social interactions between worshipers, as well as how communities can adapt to continue strengthening spiritual relationships in this more flexible format (Muttakin et al., 2024).

During the covid-19 epidemic. The practice of worship at the mosque has changed. Both in terms of intensity and the number of worshippers present. Although the implementation is still carried out at the usual time, the attendance of the is limited. Even a few months ago, when the Large-Scale Social Restrictions (PSBB) policy was issued, Friday prayers were temporarily suspended in response to an appeal from the government to temporarily close places of worship. In reality, gathering in places of worship in reality, gathering in places of worship such as Friday prayers carries the risk of transmitting Covid-19 to many people, possibly from one case spreading to other people (Yezli & Khan, 2021). Such as Friday prayers carries the risk of transmitting Covid-19 to many people, possibly from one case spreading to other people. The appeal directed that Friday prayers be temporarily suspended in areas classified as red zones with a high level of Covid-19 spread. The practice of worship, which is now not all done directly in

places of worship, has emphasized that under certain conditions religion and technology are very compatible. The use of technology in worship activities will help prevent the spread of the virus while making it easier for religious people to carry out their worship during a pandemic like today. Although basically not all worship activities can be carried out with an online system. In Islamic jurisprudence, the principle of emergency is allowed to take unusual steps to maintain the safety of life. The Covid-19 pandemic can be categorized as an emergency condition, which makes the direct implementation of worship restricted.

During the COVID-19 outbreak, changes in mosque worship practices demonstrate the adaptive function of social transmission in the face of physical limitations. Muslims are expected to maintain the health and safety of themselves and others in this pandemic situation. Alternatives such as praying at home or praying in congregation virtually can be a safer option. In addition, it is also important to continue to adhere to health protocols such as wearing masks, maintaining distance, and washing hands, in order to prevent the spread of the virus (Ariyanto, 2021). Restrictions on the number of worshipers and the suspension of Friday prayers in red zones created new challenges for religious believers to stay connected to their religious practices. In this situation, technology becomes a vital tool that allows people to follow worship activities virtually, thus maintaining social and spiritual relationships despite not being able to gather physically. This confirms that under certain conditions, technology and religion can collaborate to facilitate worship, while reducing the risk of spreading the virus. While not all forms of worship can be conducted online, the use of technology in this context demonstrates the flexibility of transmitting religious values and maintaining solidarity within communities, even in the midst of a crisis (Jubba, 2021).

Perceptions from various circles are bound to happen so that they take a stance sometimes contrary to the government which has repeatedly conveyed that they still follow health protocols, wherever the sector is, especially in the religious sector, new habits have been issued by the government and MUI to strengthen the policy of complying with the protocol, religious people should have made religion as it should be.

As a determinant of the direction of life during the Covid-19 pandemic, religion plays a very important role, religion is one of the mediums that can be used as a basis for each individual's life in eliminating life problems such as the case of the spread of Covid-19 which is currently increasingly worrying, to overcome this concern Endang Turmudi said: "the history of Muslims virus outbreaks has occurred and can be avoided through science and doing several things such as having to be calm, and not being afraid, Turmudi said Covid-19 in the perspective of Muslims can be seen as a disaster or punishment.

Performing Friday prayers via Zoom, as discussed in the 2020 MUI (Majelis Ulama Indonesia) Fatwa, reflects a significant intersection between Islamic law and technological developments. This fatwa came in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, emphasizing the need to maintain health while adhering to religious obligations. The following section explores the conceptual framework surrounding this issue. MUI Fatwa No. 14/2020 promotes praying at home to avoid harm, in line with the Islamic principle of *maslahah mursalah*, which prioritizes public welfare (Risdianto, 2021). The use of technology, such as Zoom, is seen as a means to fulfill religious duties while ensuring safety, demonstrating the progressive adaptation of Islamic practice to contemporary challenges (Sholeh, 2020). Despite its benefits, challenges such as technical issues and limited internet access hinder effective participation in virtual services (Asriadi & Kusnadi, 2024). The fatwa also addresses the need for religious leaders to adapt their roles, moving from traditional settings to digital platforms, which may change community dynamics (Sholeh, 2020)]. The integration of technology in religious practice raises questions about the permanence of such adaptations post-pandemic, potentially reshaping Islamic worship in the future. While the fatwa supports virtual gatherings, it also invites debate on the authenticity and communal aspects of worship, demonstrating the need for a balance between tradition and innovation. Religious authorities must adapt to new media so that *da'wah* activities can be modernized while maintaining their essence. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic that is spreading throughout the world has increasingly encouraged religious leaders to use information technology and the internet in their *da'wah* activities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, religious worship clearly faces challenges, especially in Indonesia, because the country has a majority Muslim population. Therefore, many priests and religious officials routinely carry out religious ceremonies online (Ikhwan, 2022).

With the advancement of technology, many aspects of life have changed, including the way we worship. One interesting thing is the emergence of virtual Friday prayers as a response to the limitations that people face, especially in crisis situations like the pandemic. Muslims around the world can communicate with each other through technology. However, the implementation of virtual Friday prayers has drawn pros and cons in the community. The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) then paid special attention to this issue. In addition, MUI issued a fatwa on the use of virtual Friday prayers. In the fatwa, MUI emphasized that Friday prayers have conditions that cannot be fulfilled through virtual media. The main requirement of Friday prayer is the same place and time among the congregation, as well as physical presence that allows the formation of neat rows. Therefore, MUI recommends that Muslims continue to perform Friday prayers with strict health protocols or replace them with *dhuhur* prayers at home. The fatwa points out that, although technology can bring people much closer, being present in person is still

important in certain worship services, such as Friday prayers. This shows the importance of having a proper understanding of the religious principles for following the development of modern technology. According to what was mentioned earlier, the online performance of Friday prayers is a new phenomenon that deserves attention, especially from the perspective of Islamic law. This is because, officially, the performance of Friday prayers must fulfill legal requirements, as indicated by the Prophet Muhammad and formulated by mujtahid scholars. If the requirements are met, the Friday prayers will be delivered to the desired Shariah destination. The question then arises whether Friday prayers performed online fulfill the requirements of Friday prayers in accordance with Islam? In conclusion, the Qur'an and hadith serve as the basis for the principles of devotion and internal guidance. Therefore, it is imperative to continuously study them in order to create principles of service and guidance in muamalah (Idris et al., 2021).

Imam Malik was of the opinion that the difference in place between the imam and the congregation does not prevent the validity of the congregational prayer. The existence of a barrier, whether a river, a road, or a wall does not prevent the validity of the congregation, as long as the congregation is aware of the imam's movements, either by seeing or hearing. In addition, it is not required that the rows be continuous, except for Friday prayers. If the congregation follows the imam praying Friday prayers in his house which is adjacent to the mosque, then the prayer is invalid. Imam Malik did not imply that it must be in the same place, the important thing is to hear the imam's voice, then the congregation is valid, but it raises concerns, virtual congregational prayer is the imam praying following the movements of the imam who is in a separate location through television or zoom application, for example, a power outage or signal interference, of course the internet will be disrupted too, that way, the congregation will be left behind, while the conditions of congregation, the congregation must not lag behind two pillars of fi'il simultaneously according to no excuse, intentionally and the congregation understands about the prohibition of lagging, then the prayer is canceled, because there is no similarity between the imam and the congregation. It is not permissible for the praying person to do ijtihaad when this happens, assuming that the imam has moved from one pillar to another, because in acts of worship what is considered is conjecture and the true nature (Syarbini, 2022).

C. Literacy Construction of Fatwa Majelis Ulama Indonesia Communication on The Law of Friday Prayer Virtually

The social correlation function can be seen through the appeal and fatwa issued by MUI regarding the effectiveness of virtual Friday prayers. This fatwa is not only MUI provides practical guidance but also serves to bridge the differences of opinion among the people regarding the validity or invalidity of the

implementation of Friday prayers performed online, thus MUI helps to create a more comprehensive understanding among the people regarding the practice of this virtual Friday prayer. then on the function of social transmission is seen in the way MUI conveys the guidelines for organizing virtual Friday prayers to the public through various mass communication channels. MUI strives to educate the people about the procedures and ethics in performing virtual Friday prayers so that they can maintain the essence of worship even though it is done. Thus, MUI does not only act as a fatwa institution but also as a link between Islamic teachings and the growing social reality.

1. The Function of Social Supervision Towards Empirical Problems in Society

Social surveillance plays a crucial role in maintaining norms and values in society, especially in religious matters. One controversial issue that stands out is the virtual Friday prayers that emerged during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) considers several aspects, one of which is stating that Friday prayers must be performed physically and in congregation at the mosque, so online implementation is not valid. The public opposes the MUI's fatwa because they believe that Friday prayers are obligatory and if they do not perform 3 consecutive times then they are *fasiqs*. However, this policy raises polemics in society which is divided between compliance with religious fatwas and the need to maintain public health. On the one hand, social control serves to uphold religious norms and maintain the sanctity of worship. But on the other hand, urgent empirical situations such as the pandemic demand flexibility that triggers a debate between tradition and technological innovation in worship, challenging the effectiveness of social control in accommodating the dynamic needs of the people (Muhayati et al., 2022).

The context of virtual Friday prayers lies in how religious norms deal with technological realities and emergency conditions in society. Another debate that arises is the question in society about the law of organizing virtual Friday prayers where fatwas and scholarly views are needed to navigate the intersection between the essence of worship and public safety. Religious messages conveyed through technological devices result in the demystification of rituals that remove the sacredness of worship. This peculiarity reflects how society and religious authorities are trying to find a balance point in interpreting religious teachings amidst rapid changes and real threats to health (Elvinaro et al., 2022). In societies that still have inequality in access to technology, the implementation of virtual Friday prayers can be problematic. Not everyone has sufficient devices or internet access to participate in online Friday prayers. Social supervision in this case can include efforts to educate the community about the importance of engaging in worship in person and providing solutions for those who do not have access to virtual participation. With the spread of the Covid-19 virus, the government has

issued an appeal to remind mosque administrators. Interrupting for a moment the program of running Friday prayers in congregation and all related activities. The form of warning that involves many congregants, this then causes a little disagreement among the community. In this situation, the Covid-19 outbreak is a collective-objective *Uzur* that can spread the disease to anyone at large. That is why, from the point of view of the *As-Shafi'i* school of thought, the obligation of Friday prayer during an outbreak is waived. Among the obstacles currently being faced is the question of the importance of maintaining distance. The congregation and the Friday prayer line are spared the impact of Covid-19. The problem is that as the appeal of the MUI Fatwa responded to the affirmation of the PBNU LBM decision and the appeal from the Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia is to stop the implementation of Friday prayers in areas affected by the Covid-19 red zone. If there are leaders in mosques who are firm their stance to hold *Jumaat* prayers, then they are advised to continue to obey medical instructions including the distance between worshipers and the distance between *shaf* to minimize the risk (Wahid, 2020).

The fatwa from the Indonesian Ulema Council regarding the implementation of worship in the midst of the COVID-19 outbreak, as well as the guidelines issued by Nahdlatul Ulama to prevent the spread of COVID-19, are in accordance with the principles of Islamic law that encourage public awareness to take care of themselves and be vigilant against the outbreak by reducing the risk of transmission. The fatwa encourages people to avoid crowds when praying, for example by replacing Friday prayers with *Zuhr* prayers in red zone areas. For medical personnel treating COVID-19 patients, it is permitted to perform *Tayamum* and *jama'* prayers with health protocols regulated in the fatwa. The spread of COVID-19 in Indonesia has affected the Muslims Friday prayers in the new era. In ordinary situations, the government and ulemas have implemented regulations that allow Friday prayers to be performed in regional mosques or areas where the situation is. The spread of the virus has been controlled by the requirement of maintaining the distance between the rows during prayer (physical) and maintaining a distance of one meter to prevent the transmission of the disease of the Covid-19 spread chain. Likewise, the MUI which is stated in its fatwa in this case is that in order to break the chain of the spread of covid-19, all communities rely heavily on existing technology (Asmara, 2022).

In conclusion, social supervision in the context of the implementation of worship, especially Friday prayers, amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Social surveillance has an important role in maintaining religious norms and values, but the pandemic has raised new challenges related to the implementation of worship, such as the implementation of virtual Friday prayers. The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) insists that Friday prayers must be performed physically and in congregation at a mosque, leading to the rejection of online Friday prayers.

However, this policy has sparked controversy in the community, especially among those who feel obliged to perform Friday prayers without exception. On the other hand, public health policies to prevent the spread of COVID-19 demand flexibility, so that social surveillance should be balancing between maintaining religious norms and protecting life safety. MUI's fatwa allows Friday prayers to be replaced by Zuhur prayers in red zone areas, while alternatives such as tayamum for medical personnel are also regulated to accommodate emergency conditions. The COVID-19 pandemic challenges the effectiveness of social control in accommodating the rapidly changing conditions and dynamic needs of the people. In the midst of inequality in access to technology, the implementation of virtual Friday prayers is a problem for some people who do not have adequate devices or internet access. Social supervision in this case needs to focus on education and solutions for those who cannot participate in online prayers. The COVID-19 outbreak itself is considered a collective-objective excuse that causes the Friday prayer obligation to be waived, especially in the As-Shafi'i school of thought. Overall, social control in the context of worship during the pandemic focuses on striking a balance between maintaining the sanctity of worship and prioritizing public safety, taking into account the diverse health, technology, and access conditions of the community.

2. The Function of Social Correlation in Fatwa Success Related to Fatwa Effectiveness

The presence of Covid-19 throughout the world for religious people certainly prioritizes the values of religiosity and spirituality, with religion and at the same time as a religious person, the Covid-19 outbreak must be seen as signs of Allah's greatness in the universe, as stated in the Qur'an surah Fushsilat [41]: 53, as follows: which means "We will show them Our signs (greatness) in all directions and on themselves so that it will be clear to them that (the Qur'an) is true. Is it not enough for you that your Lord is witness to everything?" At the time of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him), the verses that this verse promises to show include the events that occurred at that time, such as the victories achieved by the Prophet (peace be upon him) in his battles in many areas and the death of the leaders of the polytheists, and after his death the victory of Islam was achieved by the Muslims (Shihab, 2002). The above verse is proof of Allah's power is very relevant to Covid-19 which is also proof of Allah's power, but there are differences of opinion, some say Covid-19 is an unscrupulous biological weapon to reduce the population, to paralyze the resilience system of certain countries so that they can be controlled by countries or groups incorporated in the conspiracy as Allah's punishment for human disobedience, as a way of nature cleaning itself once a hundred years, and various other stories specifically for Indonesia, for example Covid-19 is used as a political game from certain people or groups to paralyze the strength of the largest majority population in this country.

Followers of strict religious teachings from all religions consider that the Corona virus is generally considered a curse from God for humans who no longer recognize God or an order of life that no longer follows and beautifies religious teachings. Religious transformation that displays a burning spirit in religion can apparently have implications for the neglect and indifference to broader human health and safety, especially when it will feel the impact of government regulations for Muslims who will undergo worship, of course there will be responses and reactions from the people. Religion, especially Islam, because the series of congregational worship involves a fairly large crowd (M. A. Abdullah, 2020).

In the context of fatwa effectiveness, the function of social correlation is very important to understand. Fatwas issued by the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) not only function as legal guidelines, but also as social instruments that can influence people's behavior. However, the effectiveness of fatwas is often hampered by various social factors, such as different religious understandings among the public, lack of socialization of fatwas, and unstable political situations (Ansori, 2022).

A study shows that many people are unaware of certain fatwas or do not understand their content and implications, so they tend to ignore them (Muslimin et al., 2022).²³ In addition, varying religious understanding can lead to different attitudes towards fatwas, where some people may feel free to choose whether to follow a fatwa or not. , to improve the effectiveness of fatwas, further efforts are needed in socialization and public education regarding the importance of complying with fatwas as part of religious law. Thus, fatwas can function optimally in guiding the behavior of Muslims and creating collective awareness about the importance of compliance with religious law in daily life.

In conclusion, the function of social correlation in the effectiveness of the fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) is very important, especially in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The fatwa issued by MUI not only functions as a legal guideline, but also as an instrument that influences people's behavior. However, the effectiveness of fatwas is often hampered by various social factors, such as differences in religious understanding among the public, lack of socialization of fatwas, and unstable political situations. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way many people view the values of religiosity and spirituality. Many followers of religious teachings consider this virus as God's curse on humanity who no longer recognize it. This creates challenges for MUI in delivering relevant and effective fatwas, especially since congregational worship involves large congregations, which goes against health protocols. Research shows that many people do not know or understand the content of certain fatwas, so they tend to ignore them. To improve the effectiveness of fatwas, further efforts are needed in socialization and public education regarding the importance of compliance with fatwas as part of religious law. Thus, fatwas can function optimally in guiding the

behavior of Muslims and creating collective awareness about compliance with religious law in daily life.

3. Social Transmission Function in the Guidelines for Organizing Virtual Friday Prayers

In society, performing Friday prayers online raises many complex issues. One of the main challenges is maintaining a sacred ceremony in a context that is different from its tradition. There are concerns regarding the legitimacy of fiqh laws, differences in community views, and technological limitations that can disrupt the continuity of the ceremony. This poses difficulties, especially in meeting the spiritual needs of people in a crisis such as a pandemic, which limits physical activity in mosques. According to several studies, experts point out two important things. First, the COVID pandemic is a situation where social order continues. This change is enjoyed so that society (including religious society) also faces changes in its behavior, including in worship. Second, religion is often used as a means of justifying various actions, even harmful ones. Because leaving religious rules is considered as "disobedience" to religion itself. There is a dilemma when there are two interests that must be considered simultaneously. There are strict orders to obey all religious teachings at all costs, while there are conditions that can actually be bad for the followers of their own religion if they do so. However, there is one important thing that can be considered in worship, namely the existence of various leniencies in religious teachings. For example, congregational worship, including Friday prayers for Muslim men, is a must and is performed in the mosque. However, when an emergency occurs, this obligation no longer applies. The COVID-19 pandemic is one of the "causes" of the miscarriage of this necessary law. In this case, the role of religion that always provides options or solutions to its adherents becomes more evident, so that whatever religious orders are always carried out even in unfavorable environmental conditions (Jubba, 2021).

However, practicing Friday prayers virtually is unique as a form of social transmission function in religion. It is an innovation that allows people to stay spiritually connected even if they are physically separated. With the help of technology, religious messages can be delivered in new ways that allow more people to engage and are more interesting. This guideline also emphasizes the spirit of sharia adaptation that is relevant to the digital era, as well as a space for learning and reflection for the congregation to maintain the solemnity of worship in the midst of changing times. The practice of worship that is not entirely done manually by coming directly to the place of worship emphasizes that religion and technology are very compatible in certain situations. In fact, worship that is usually done in the community and gathered together, may involve more communities with online worship facilities. However, not all worship can be done through an

online system, such as prayer for Muslims. However, the use of technology in worship is not only an effort to prevent the spread of the virus, but also used as a means of supporting the implementation of worship so as to facilitate religious people.

The virtual implementation of worship is generally welcomed by Muslims, if the worship is included in the category of horizontal relations with fellow humans (ghair mahdah). As Muslims we have an obligation to pray. Prayer is the foundation for Muslims, so it can be said that a building can stand firmly because there is a foundation in it. In the context of performing Jumu'ah prayers virtually, it is important to understand that this act of worship still has deep value and meaning even though it is performed in a different way. The Fatwa of the Indonesian Ulema Council emphasizes that in emergency situations, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, Muslims are allowed to perform Friday prayers at home while still following the established procedures. This is in line with the principle in Islam that prioritizes the safety and health of the people, as stated in the verse of the Qur'an which prohibits throwing oneself into destruction (QS. Al-Baqarah [2]: 195). Thus, the virtual implementation of Friday prayers is not only an alternative, but also a form of wise adaptation to existing conditions (Elvinaro et al., 2022).

Furthermore, the virtual implementation of Friday prayers also reflects the flexibility in worship taught in Islam. In the hadith narrated by Abdullah bin Abbas, there is an example of how the Prophet SAW gave his people a concession not to perform Friday prayers outside the mosque during bad weather conditions. This shows that Islam not only strictly regulates worship, but also provides space for its people to worship in a way that suits the circumstances. Therefore, this fatwa is an important guideline for Muslims to still be able to perform Friday prayers in a safe and Shariah-compliant manner. The point is that the pandemic is an emergency condition so that the implementation of Friday prayers in the mosque cannot be carried out, and therefore it can be done by praying Friday online as a substitute that does not make it difficult. emergency situations become an excuse for the permissibility of many things, because of the situation according to which it is difficult. For example, the story of a blind person who is allowed to pray at home when it rains or the night is dark. Wawan also quoted the view of a Moroccan scholar, Abul Fayd Ahmad bin Muhammad bin ash- Siddiq in *al-Iqna' bi Shibhati Shalat al-Jumu'ah fil Manzili Khalfal Midzya'* (Affirming the Validity of Friday Prayers at Home in Front of the Radio) written decades ago (Achmad et al., 2021).

In conclusion, the online performance of Friday prayers during the COVID-19 pandemic has raised various challenges and included among the Muslim community. One of the main issues is the legal legitimacy of this practice, with the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) stating that virtual Friday prayers are not valid as they do not fulfill the requirement of *al-Ittishol al-Makaani*, where the imam and the congregation must be in the same place. The pandemic has forced religious

communities to adapt to emergency situations, where many people feel the need to stay spiritually connected despite not being able to gather at the mosque. In this context, some Muslim communities are trying to conduct virtual Friday prayers as an alternative to maintaining social and spiritual ties. However, this poses a dilemma between religious obligation and public health, where many argue that abandoning religious rules could be considered disobedience. Although there are droughts in religious teachings that allow the implementation of Friday prayers with Zuhur prayers in emergencies, the implementation of online Friday prayers is still seen as a controversial solution. Some scholars have even noted that while technology can help in the delivery of religious messages, not all aspects of worship can be conducted virtually. On the other hand, there is a more progressive view that the use of technology in worship can widen access and engagement. However, technical challenges such as the stability of the internet and digital devices are also a major concern in the implementation of online worship as a whole, although the implementation of online Friday prayers provides an alternative in emergency situations, it still requires deep legal and spiritual considerations so as not to reduce the value and meaning of the worship itself.

D. Conclusion

The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) in its fatwa No 28 of 2021 ruled that virtual Friday prayers are invalid. This decision has some important theoretical implications and recommendations. This fatwa emphasizes the importance of adherence to Islamic law in the practice of worship, especially the Friday prayer, which is considered a *maḥḍah* act of worship. It shows that innovations in the practice of worship must remain grounded in the provisions laid down by the Prophet Muhammad, leaving no room for interpretations that deviate from the basic tenets of the *shari'ah*. The *Jumu'ah* prayer requires a physical unity of place between the imam and the congregation, which cannot be fulfilled in a virtual context. This shows that the physical and social aspects of congregational worship have a deep meaning in Islamic tradition. The rejection of online Friday prayers also reflects the social and psychological impact of isolation during the pandemic. People are expected to maintain social ties through physical presence at the mosque, which serves not only as a place of worship but also as a community center. This study has limitations in terms of time coverage and context, which only covers the COVID-19 pandemic situation. In addition, this research cannot cover all the views of the ulama and the community regarding the virtual Friday prayers, who may have different arguments based on their respective contexts.

References

- Abdullah, I., Tang, M., Nurhakim, P. R., Suprianto, B., & Fernando, H. (2023). Religion of Pandemic: Delegitimization of Authority During the Covid-19 Era. *Al-Albab*, 12(2), 293–314. <https://doi.org/10.24260/alalbab.v12i2.2926>
- Abdullah, M. A. (2020). Mendialogkan Nalar Agama dan Sains Modern di Tengah Pandemi Covid-19. *Maarif*, 15(1), 11–39. <https://doi.org/10.47651/mrf.v15i1.75>
- Ali, M., & Wardi, M. M. (2024). *Sosialisasi Fiqih Shalat Jum ' at Pra -Pelaksanaan Shalat Jum ' at*. 4(1), 1–20
- Ansori. (2022). Position of fatwa in Islamic law: the effectiveness of MUI, NU, and Muhammadiyah fatwas. *Ijtihad: Jurnal Wacana Hukum Islam Dan Kemanusiaan*, 22(1), 53–71. <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijtihad.v22i1.53-71>
- Ariyanto, P. P. (2021). Podcast Sebagai Media Dakwah Era Pandemi. *Academic Journal of Da'wa and Communication*, 2(1), 105–120. <https://doi.org/10.22515/ajdc.v1i1.3286>
- Asmara, M. (2022). Komparasi Fatwa Ulama Indonesia dalam Menyikapi Pandemi Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19). *Al-Manahij: Jurnal Kajian Hukum Islam*, 16(1), 29–44. <https://doi.org/10.24090/mnh.v16i1.6192>
- Asrorun Ni'Am Sholeh, M. (2020). Towards a Progressive Fatwa: MUI's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic. *Ahkam: Jurnal Ilmu Syariah*, 20(2), 281–298. <https://doi.org/10.15408/ajis.v20i2.17391>
- Bahrul Muttakin, & Abd. Hadi. (2024). Analisis Fatwa Ulama Indonesia dalam Menyikapi Pandemi Corona Virus 2019. *JOSH: Journal of Sharia*, 3(02), 97–109. <https://doi.org/10.55352/josh.v3i02.924>
- Basri, M. R. (2023). Fenomena Cyber Mosque Dalam Ritual Salat Jumat Di Masa Pandemi Covid-19. *Wahana Akademika: Jurnal Studi Dan Sosial*, Volume 9,(October). <https://doi.org/10.21580/wa.v9i2.12615>
- Elvinaro, Q., Syarif, D., & Rohmana, J. A. (2022). Sakralitas Virtual: Makna Sakral Dalam Ibadah Salat Jumat Virtual Di Indonesia. *Sosioglobal: Jurnal Pemikiran Dan Penelitian Sosiologi*, 6(2), 150. <https://doi.org/10.24198/jsg.v6i2.38890>
- Fakhrizal Idris, Muhammad Yusram, & Azwar Iskandar. (2021). Salat Jumat Daring dalam Perspektif Hukum Islam. *BUSTANUL FUQAHA: Jurnal Bidang Hukum Islam*, 2(1), 110–129. <https://doi.org/10.36701/bustanul.v2i1.326>
- Hudzaifah Achmad Qotadah, A. D. A. (2021). *Covid-19 Phenomenon on Performing Jumu ' Ah Prayers Through Broadcast and Live Streaming: An Analysis* Hudzaifah Achmad Qotadah 1 Adang Darmawan Achmad 2. 129–140.
- Ikhwan, S. (2022). Covid-19, Media Baru Dan Ritual Agama Online. *Qawwam : The Leader's Writing*, 3(2), 61–70. <https://doi.org/10.32939/qawwam.v3i2.168>
- Indonesia, M. U. (n.d.). *Panduan Penyelenggaraan Ibadah Ramadan dan Idul Fitri/ 1443*

- Irfan Wahid, M. (2020). Dari Tradisional Menuju Digital: Adopsi Internet Oleh Nahdlatul Ulama Selama Pandemi Covid-19. *Jurnal Studi Agama Dan Masyarakat*, 16(1), 73–84. <https://doi.org/10.23971/jsam.v16i1.1745>
- Ishak, A. (2015). Daya serap lembaga-lembaga fatwa di indonesia terhadap masalah hukum kontemporer. *Al-Mizan*, 11, 102–118
- Jubba, H. (2021). *Religious: Jurnal Studi Agama-Agama dan Lintas Budaya Beradaptasi dengan Bencana : Strategi Beribadah Umat Islam dan Kristen di Tengah*. 7249, 1–14
- Khairul Anam, Ahmad Saiful Bahri, Suharjo Nugroho, A. S. (2021). *Strategi Komunikasi Mui Dalam Mensosialisasikan Fatwa No. 14 Tahun 2020 Tentang Penyelenggaraan Ibadah Dalam Situasi Terjadi Wabah Covid-19*. 14
- Mohammad Zaki Arrobi, A. N. (n.d.). *Otoritas Agama di Era Korona: Dari Fragmentasi Ke Konvergensi?* 197–215
- Muhayati, S., Triningtyas, D. A., & Prawirosastro, C. L. (2022). Problematika Sholat Jumat Selama Pandemi Covid 19. *Syntax Literate ; Jurnal Ilmiah Indonesia*, 7(1), 435. <https://doi.org/10.36418/syntax-literate.v7i1.6031>
- Muslimin, M., Bintang, B., Susanto, E. H., Agusti, F., & Arwanto, A. D. (2022). Efektivitas Khes dan Fatwa DSN-MUI terhadap Penegakan Hukum Ekonomi Syariah di Indonesia. *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, 6(2), 8617–8631. <https://www.jptam.org/index.php/jptam/article/view/3723/3149>
- Risdianto. (2021). Masalah Mursalah al-Ghazali Sebagai Dasar Hukum Fatwa MUI No . 14 Tahun 2020 Tentang Penyelenggaraan Ibadah Dalam Situasi Terjadi Wabah Covid 19. *Misykat Al-Anwar: Jurnal Kajian Islam Dan Masyarakat*, 4(1), 75–96. <https://doi.org/10.24853/ma.4.1>
- Shihab, M. Q. (2002). TAFSIR AL-MISHBAH. In *Lentera Hati* (Vol. 12). http://scioteca.caf.com/bitstream/handle/123456789/1091/RED2017-Eng-8ene.pdf?sequence=12&isAllowed=y%0Ahttp://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.regsciurbeco.2008.06.005%0Ahttps://www.researchgate.net/publication/305320484_SISTEM_PEMBETUNGAN_TERPUSAT_STRATEGI_MELESTARI
- Syahida, L. S., Sari, Y. D. P., & Bayhaqi, M. I. (2023). Hukum Shalat Jumat Secara Daring Pada Masa Pandemi Covid-19 Menurut Prof. Wawan Gunawan Dan Hasil Fatwa Majelis Tarjih Wa Tajdid Muhammadiyah. *Komparatif: Jurnal Perbandingan Hukum Dan Pemikiran Islam*, 3(1), 68–97. <https://doi.org/10.15642/komparatif.v3i1.1935>
- Syarbini, I. (2022). Pandangan Fiqh tentang Shalat Berjamaah Secara Virtual. *AL-ADILLAH :JURNAL HUKUM ISLAM*, 2(2). http://scioteca.caf.com/bitstream/handle/123456789/1091/RED2017-Eng-8ene.pdf?sequence=12&isAllowed=y%0Ahttp://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.regsciurbeco.2008.06.005%0Ahttps://www.researchgate.net/publication/305320484_SISTEM_PEMBETUNGAN_TERPUSAT_STRATEGI_MELESTARI
- Yezli, S., & Khan, A. (2021). *COVID-19 pandemic : it is time to temporarily close places of worship and to suspend religious gatherings*. April 2020, 1–2. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jtm/taaa065>