

Implementation of Health Protocols at Mosques during the Covid-19 Pandemic in the city of Bukittinggi

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Abstract

Mosques are centres of religious and worship activities that are important for Muslims. Activities at mosques are generally carried out in groups both indoors and outdoors, so there is a potential for transmitting the Covid-19 virus (Flores & Chang, 2020; Kotani, Tamura, & Nejima, 2021). Implementation of health protocols is a shared responsibility between mosque managers and the community to suppress the transmission of COVID-19. Do mosque managers implement health protocols according to applicable standards and regulations? How is public awareness in implementing health protocols in the mosque environment? The study used a qualitative descriptive method with data collection through interviews and direct surveys to the field. Implementation of health protocols from the three mosque objects studied that the mosque management facilities are by health protocol standards. However, technically it still requires a level of awareness from the community to carry out the health protocol while in the mosque environment. The pros and cons of the community against the health protocol rules that are applied have caused some regulations to be relaxed a little. To measure and educate public awareness in implementing health protocols, further research is needed.

Keywords

Mosque, Health Protocol, covid-19, Bukittinggi.

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Introduction

Prevention of the transmission of the Covid-19 virus in the mosque environment is a shared responsibility between mosque managers and the community (Kotani et al., 2021) through the implementation of health protocols by the MUI Fatwa (Indonesian Ulema Council) no. 14 of 2020. The content of the fatwa is the Implementation of Internal Worship The Situation of the Covid-19 Outbreak, The health protocol applied to mosques at this time is that worshipers are encouraged to perform ablution in their respective homes, check body temperature when entering the mosque, worshipers are residents, wear masks, bring their prayer rugs and prayer tools, the prayer rows are stretched, placing a portable hand washing place near the entrance of the mosque, and the congregation is not allowed to make physical contact (Eyongndi, 2020; FATWA COMMISSION, 2020). The implementation of the health protocol in the mosque needs to be monitored and evaluated whether it is by the standards and rules determined by the government and the Indonesian Ulema Council. Supervision and evaluation are preventive actions in preventing the spread of the Covid-19 virus in the mosque environment (Al-Astewani, 2021; Hornung, 2020). Mosques in the city of Bukittinggi have an essential role in preventing the increase in the spread of the Covid-19 virus in West Sumatra. How is implementing the health protocol at the Jami' Birugo Mosque, Jami' AurKuning Mosque, and Hanif Mosque? These three mosques, as public facilities, play a role in preventing and reducing the spread of the Covid-19 virus (Mahdi et al., 2021).

Research Methods

This study evaluates the implementation of health protocols applied to three selected mosque objects using a qualitative descriptive method. The qualitative approach collects data in facts and existing conditions in the field physically and non-physically. Qualitative descriptive way explains the findings and a new understanding of the phenomenon (Anggito & Setiawan, 2018). The selection of three research objects with the criteria of mosques located in Bukit Tinggi City with mosque boundaries situated at the sub-district and city levels, with a mosque capacity that can accommodate 500-1000 worshipers. Data collection was carried out by interviewing techniques to obtain data from the mosque manager and surveys at the site to acquire existing data on the implementation of health protocols and receive data on how people think about the performance of health protocols in mosques. The analysis and discussion are described from the data from interviews and surveys and cross-checked whether it is according to applicable standards and regulations through tables and explanations. From this comparison, new information is obtained regarding applying health protocols applied to the objects studied.

Results and Discussion

The city of Bukittinggi, one of the cities in West Sumatra, is famous for its majority Muslim population, who are devout worshipers (Harsritanto, Nugroho, & Dewanta, 2020). The mosque for the people of Bukittinggi City does not only function as a place of worship but as a place for the development of Islamic teachings and a place to learn the Al-Qur'an. All activities at the mosque were closed and became the pros and cons of the community. After the mosque was re-opened for worship activities by implementing health protocols, it also raised the pros and cons of a group of groups in society (Shah, 2020). The discussion of the three mosque objects will be explained as follows:



Figure 1. The Facade of the Jami' Aur Kuning Mosque, Handwashing Area, a Mandatory Sign of Wearing a Mask, and Prayer Area

Jami' Aur Kuning Mosque is located on Prof. M. Yamin, Aur Kuning Village. This mosque was built in 1920. The mosque was rebuilt in 2016. The building consists of 2 floors, with a building area of 625 m² which can accommodate 1000 worshipers. The congregation of this mosque is generally the community of the Aur Kuning village, Tabek Gadang, Agam Regency (Devianti & Michael, 2021). The survey results found that the prayer mats at this mosque had been held, as usual. Namely, the carpets were spread to the back of the prayer area so that the number of people who brought their prayer mats from home began to decrease (Dahlan et al., 2021). Congregations performing ablution from their respective homes are still being applied to this day. In some places, some signs read "MANDATORY TO USE MASK", but the awareness of the use of masks when worshipping is still less noticed by the congregation, so there are still worshipers who do not use masks. At the beginning of the pandemic, those who did not wear masks were told to look for covers first, but the current condition of using masks depends on each individual. At the front gate of the mosque, there is a portable handwashing area. All worshipers must wash their hands before entering the mosque area (Vyborny, Junaid, & Khan, 2020). The distance between worshipers is approximately 0.5 – 1 meter; for now, congregational prayers are carried out without spacing the prayer rows, and body temperature checks are no longer available even though it is during the PPKM (Community Activity Restriction Program) period because the congregation is not willing to check his temperature (Ikhmal, Azman, & Rusdi, 2020).



Figure 2. The Facade of the Jami' Birugo Mosque, Handwashing area, a Mandatory Sign of Wearing a Mask, and Prayer Area

Jami' Birugo Mosque is located on Sudirman Street, Birugo Village, Agam Regency, built in 1956. The mosque building area is 1800m² (Abderrahmani, 2020). This mosque is often visited by tourists who have just entered the city of Bukittinggi. Therefore, the health protocol at this mosque is stricter than mosques in the city. The survey results found that the mosque's congregation are residents who live around the mosque (Rangga et al., 2020). The use of prayer mats used only for the 2 top rows shows that the congregation continues to bring prayer mats from their respective homes. The prayer rows during prayer are spaced. The pulpit is spaced with the top row (Wibisono, Firmansyah, & Palupi, 2018). The congregation performs ablution from their respective homes, but some perform ablution in the mosque. Not all worshipers wear masks, even though an appeal reads "areas must wear masks". At the mosque gate, there is a portable handwashing area facilitated by the government for all mosques in Bukittinggi City (Rašidagić & Hesova, 2020; Sari, 2021).



Figure 3. Facade of Al-Hanif Mosque, Directions for Wearing a Mask, Prayer Area
 Al-Hanif Mosque is located on UripSumoharjo-Sapiran street, AurBirugoTigoBaleh District. This mosque is situated near the Kodim dormitory and the Wirabraja field, often used by the community to exercise. The building area of this mosque is 600m², with a capacity of 700 worshipers (Siregar, 2021). The survey results found that the mosque congregations were residents and visitors to the Wirabraja field. On the inside of the prayer, a mat is used only for one leading

row and the prayer row is stretched by being marked using black duct tape (Febriansyah, 2021; Redjeki, Narimawati, & Priadana, 2021). Congregants from around the mosque perform ablution from their respective homes, but pilgrims from outside the area perform ablution at the mosque. Although the mayor has required the public to wear masks and information through billboards containing instructions for wearing masks in the mosque area, not all worshipers wear masks (Cardiah, Firmansyah, & Sudarisman, 2019).

Implementing the health protocols for mosques in Bukittinggi City uses the Bukittinggi City government's rules. The rules set are (1) Congregants of the mosque or prayer room are residents, (2) Pay attention to air circulation in the mosque or prayer room, (3) do not roll out mats, (4) the rows are stretched, (5) The pulpit is shifted backwards so that it is far from the rows in front of it, (6) The duration of the sermon is shortened, (7) Congregants are advised to perform ablution in their respective homes, wear masks, and bring their prayer mats, (8) the city government carries out disinfection of mosques, places portable hand washing stations, and inspection facilities body temperature (thermal gun). Based on the survey data and interview data, it can be concluded as follows:

Table 1. Table of Direct Survey Results

No.	Protocol Health	Mosque Jami' Aur Kuning	Mosque Jami' Birugo	Mosque Al-Hanif
1.	The congregation are residents.	v	v	v
2.	Good air circulation.	v	v	v
3.	Don't roll out the mat.	-	v	v
4.	The prayer rows are stretched	-	-	v
5.	The pulpit is shifted back.	-	v	v
6.	Short sermons.	v	v	v
7.	The congregation performs ablution from home.	v	v	v
8.	Disinfection.	v	v	v
9.	Portable hand wash.	v	v	-
10.	Body temperature check	-	-	-

From the table above, it can be concluded that not all mosques in Bukittinggi fully implement the Bukittinggi City government's health protocols. Implementing the health protocol is only part of the rules/stipulations and standards that are implemented. The provisions that are not applied are:

1. Do not roll out prayer mats. The mosques that held their prayer mats were due to many worshipers who did not bring their prayer mats from their homes.
2. The prayer rows are stretched. Mosques that do not apply this provision are because the congregation feels unfocused when praying, and the opinions of some groups regarding congregational prayers must be straight and tight rows. In dealing with this, the Jami' Aur Kuning mosque separates worshipers who wear masks and those who do not, which is expected to reduce the transmission of the COVID-19 virus (Rosidin & Samidi, 2021).
3. The pulpit slides back. This provision exists because the pulpit where the Friday sermon is located is close to the front row of the congregation. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, the preacher must wear a mask when delivering the speech. Jami' Aur Kuning Mosque does not move its pulpit because the pulpit is located above and away from the front row (Makmun, 2020).

4. There is a portable handwashing area. At the Al-Hanif mosque, there is no mobile handwashing area because the mosque does not have a gate, and the ablution area is outside the mosque. Although other mosques have portable handwashing stations, not many worshipers use these facilities, so this handwashing area looks unkempt (Sadiah et al., 2020).

5. Body temperature check. This provision is no longer applied in the mosques of Bukittinggi because many worshipers avoid having their body temperature measured, and there are no more administrators who want to check the body temperature of the congregation (Akmal, 2021). Based on the information above, the application of health protocols at mosques in Bukittinggi City is not entirely by the provisions set by the government. Inappropriate application is caused by people who do not follow the health protocols applied and the lack of strict supervision by mosque administrators (Ansoriyah et al., 2020). Implementing the health protocol will be by the provisions if there is self-awareness in the community about the dangers of COVID-19 (Echegaray, 2020). In reality, many people do not obey the government's rules and underestimate the existence of this covid-19 virus (Ridgeon, 2020). Therefore, the public still needs to be educated about the dangers of this virus. All health provisions and protocols regulated by the government can stop the spread of the covid-19 virus (Timol, 2020).

Conclusion

Each mosque takes a relatively similar action in implementing health protocols for worshipers (Ali & Hassan, 2020). The health protocol is implemented in every mosque in Bukittinggi, which is expected to suppress the spread of COVID-19 cases in the city of Bukittinggi. This study found that not all people participated in the implementation of health protocols in mosques. This is a record of how all parties can suppress the Covid-19 (Ridgeon, 2020) case in Indonesia. In addition, from this study, it can be concluded that the application of health protocols in each mosque is by the MUI fatwa no. 14 but adapted to the habits of the local community (Bara & Pradesyah, 2021).

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