

Strengthening Disaster Literacy through Islamic Religious Education (IRE) in higher education

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Abstract

Religious people see disaster as a calamity and destiny that must be faced patiently. The belief that disaster is destiny rules out the possibility of a disaster that can be prevented and minimize its impact. The writing of this article describes the Islamic concept of disaster literacy through a literature study. It also represents its strengthening through the Islamic Religious Education Course, which is a subject that all Muslim students must follow in higher education. By modifying the Islamic and Environmental Concepts material, students are expected to recognize their environment and identify disasters that are prone to occur so that actions can be anticipated to prevent and minimize their impacts.

Keywords:

Disaster Literacy; Environmental; Islamic Religious Education.

Abstrak

Umat beragama memandang bencana sebagai musibah dan takdir yang harus dihadapi dengan sabar. Keyakinan bahwa bencana adalah takdir seolah mengesampingkan kemungkinan terjadinya bencana yang bisa dicegah dan diminimalisir dampaknya. Penulisan artikel ini mendeskripsikan konsep Islam tentang literasi bencana melalui studi literatur. Penguatannya juga diwakilkan melalui mata kuliah Pendidikan Agama Islam yang merupakan mata pelajaran yang wajib diikuti oleh seluruh pelajar muslim di perguruan tinggi. Melalui modifikasi materi konsep Islam dan Lingkungan, mahasiswa diharapkan dapat mengenali lingkungannya dan mengidentifikasi bencana yang rawan terjadi sehingga dapat diantisipasi tindakan untuk mencegah dan meminimalisir dampaknya.

Kata Kunci:

Literasi Bencana; Lingkungan; Pendidikan Agama Islam.

Introduction

Indonesia has tremendous potential for natural disasters, mainly geological, tectonic, hydrometeorological, and hydrometeorological disasters. This potential arises from the process of the formation of the Indonesian archipelago. Interestingly, Indonesia has abundant natural resources. Significant natural resources are derived from biological processes that can create natural disasters. One of the causes of catastrophe is climate change, which can be seen in changing rainfall, unstable temperatures, erratic wind patterns, and other things (Sheila Nurul Fajar & Dede Lilis Chaerowati, 2022). Climate change in Indonesia causes hydrometeorological disasters such as floods, tornadoes, and landslides (Rosyidie, 2013). In Jakarta, high rainfall caused floods, which disrupted daily activities (Sulaiman et al., 2020). Based on BNPB data in 2020, Indonesia was hit by 2,939 natural disasters. If converted, Indonesia is hit by eight disasters daily, 56 in one week and 240 in one month (CNN, 2021)

The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 24 of 2007, concerning disaster management, stated that a disaster is defined as an event or series of events that threaten and disrupt people's lives and livelihoods. It is caused by natural and non-natural factors and human factors, resulting in human casualties, environmental damage, property losses, and psychological impacts. Anticipate the effect; it is necessary to strengthen disaster literacy to minimize the impact of disasters.

Increased awareness of disaster literacy is carried out in various forms of education. One of them is done in Islamic boarding schools. The number of Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia based on the database <http://pbsb.ditpdpontren.kemenag.go.id> is 25,938, with 392,700 students. Many Islamic boarding schools are in disaster-prone locations. Vulnerability is increasing because most students are still young and lack physical and emotional stability as adults. The threat also increases if the infrastructure is not adequate. With qualified disaster literacy, Islamic boarding schools have a disaster preparedness system so that the function of Pesantren as an educational institution continues and does not have a significant impact if a disaster occurs at any time (Nur Aulia et al., 2019)

Increasing disaster awareness can be done through various institutions. Several previous studies show that strengthening disaster awareness has been done through schools, Islamic boarding schools, and communities. Research on disaster literacy in schools shows that optimizing disaster literacy awareness movements increases students' understanding of disaster preparedness and can reduce the risk of disasters that will cause material and non-material losses. The Implementing strategies and patterns of school literacy movements include habituation, development, and learning activities (Triyanto et al., 2021). On the other hand, Rihlah's research in Lamongan shows that forming an environmentally caring character at the Lamongan Islamic Boarding School is carried out through Islamic boarding school policies, curriculum, and extracurricular activities, which enable students to gain direct experience in environmental education (Nur Aulia et al., 2020). Meanwhile, the internalization of disaster awareness in the community, as shown in the article by Sari Narulita and the team that internalized disaster mitigation in flood-prone sub-districts, shows that awareness in understanding, anticipating, and dealing with disasters should also be carried out so people can adapt and make peace with existing disasters (Narulita et al., 2023).

Strengthening disaster literacy can also be done through a religious approach. Even though Indonesia is not a religion-based country, it is a religious society. In a study in 2020, Indonesia still occupies the position as the most religious country, beating other countries. 98% of Indonesian respondents still believe Religion is significant in their lives. In the range 2007 – 2019, the concept of Religion making a person more moral is widely thought by 96 – 98 percent of respondents from Indonesia, making Indonesia always occupy the top position as a country with a religious community (Pew Research Center, 2020). Religion is essential in all Muslim life aspects (Hadiyanto et al., 2020).

Religious people's understanding of disasters will direct them to certain behaviors. There are still many holy people who think that disaster is destiny and has implications for the belief that disaster is a provision that must be faced so that it seems that it cannot be anticipated. Religious institutions have the potential to have an essential role in disaster management. They often contribute to the response and recovery phases of disasters. However, it is still considered lacking in participation in preparedness and mitigation efforts, which are part of the disaster cycle (Sheikhi et al., 2021). Religion is an essential cultural element in many disaster-prone areas and should be carefully considered in planning (Chester, 2005). Through this article, the authors want to analyze the concept of Disaster in Islamic Studies to strengthen Disaster Literacy through Islamic Religious Education Courses as a compulsory subject in Higher Education. One of the materials for Islamic religious education is related to the relationship between humans and nature. A good Muslim should be able to maintain the balance of nature as part of his duties as caliph on earth. But to what extent is the material discussed? Is it discussed further regarding the impact of human inability to manage nature and how to anticipate it? This is what we want to study further in this article.

Methods

This research aims to describe Islamic teachings related to disasters, students' perceptions regarding disasters, and the extent to which disaster literacy is studied in Islamic religious education courses. The data sources in the research are various references related to the concept of disaster in Islamic teachings, especially regarding whether disaster is understood as fate or negligence because it is related to the impact of this understanding. Another data source is students, primarily related to students' perceptions of understanding disasters and their identification of disasters around them, accompanied by correlations about their attitudes in responding to disasters. Meanwhile, the final data source is documentation related to the Islamic religious education learning curriculum at public universities and textbooks used in learning Islamic religious education at public universities.

Data was collected by document study, primarily related to various articles that reviewed Islamic concepts of disasters and documents related to the Islamic Religious Education curriculum in Higher Education issued by the Ministry of Religion and related textbooks. Data collection was also completed with questionnaires and observations. Questionnaires were used to explore student perceptions regarding disasters. Researchers distributed questionnaires to 128 students to dig deeper into their understanding of the meaning of disaster, their ability to identify disasters in their environment, and the implications of responding to disasters. Meanwhile, observations were carried out to see the learning process of Islamic religious education in the classroom, especially in Islamic and environmental material.

The data was analyzed using Miles and Huberman's theory, namely through 1) Data reduction, namely by grouping the data according to its classification; in this case, it is the Islamic concept of disasters, students' perceptions of disasters and disaster material in learning Islamic religious education in public universities. 2) display data from findings through discussion results, and 3) conclusions.

Results

The Islamic concept of disaster

Humans are mandated to be the Caliph on earth, tasked with prospering the world. In the holy book of Muslims, the Koran, in surah al Baqarah verses 30 - 31, it appears that Allah - the Creator - the Creator and His angels are discussing the appointment of humans as Caliphs, Allah's messengers on earth. Angels try to describe human potential in destroying the planet. Allah then gave knowledge and knowledge to Adam, as the first Khalifa, until Adam had the provisions to manage the earth and its surroundings.

Human negligence as a Caliph in guarding the earth has caused earth damage. Human failure that results in disasters can be seen from the increase in human activities that exploit natural

resources without being accompanied by ecological competence and intelligence as a basis for implementing these activities, thus causing climate change that brings disasters (Watsiqotul et al., 2018)

The Qur'an describes the earth damage caused by human negligence, as shown in Surah Ar-Rum: 41. In this verse, it is interpreted that Allah gives calamities as a deterrent effect on human actions. On that basis, disaster is understood as evidence of human negligence. Humans exploit nature without being accompanied by efforts to balance spirit so that the existing ecosystem runs dynamically (Hakim, 2013). This verse and the previous verse have a strong connection. Human negligence to cause earth damage should be anticipated if humans can use their intellect and knowledge.

However, Surah al-Hadid verse 22 talks about the power of God by describing that all calamities that occur on earth have been predetermined. Through this verse, Muslims understand that the disaster that exists is destiny. Quraish Shihab revealed that the word 'Musibah' or disaster in the Koran is found in 76 verses. Based on the understanding of these verses, it can be concluded that 1) Disasters occur due to human negligence; 2) Disasters happen because of Allah's permission; 3) Disasters aim to forge humans into better people. In several other verses, the word 'bala' is also interpreted as a disaster as a test to see the level of faith. The word 'bala' as the equivalent of this disaster has several meanings, namely 1) a necessity of life; 2) has two kinds, either pleasant or unpleasant; 3) the medium of forgiveness of sins for those who experience it. On the other hand, the word slander in the Quran is also understood as a form of calamity; this has implications because those who get slander or disaster are innocent people (Shihab, 2006)

Student perceptions about disasters

One step to ensure the urgency of disaster literacy in higher education is to conduct a simple survey related to student perceptions of disasters. This survey was conducted in October as a questionnaire and distributed to 128 Jabodetabek students (students living in Jakarta, Bogor, Depok, Tangerang, and Bekasi). This survey measures their general understanding of disasters, potential disasters around them, and their steps to anticipate disasters.

Related to the perception of the disaster, 30.2% of respondents think that the disaster is destiny and humans can only surrender. Conversely, 34.9% of respondents believe that disasters are evidence of human negligence that should be avoided, and 34.9% answered with various answers. It includes many statements such as that disaster is destiny, but humans can use their knowledge to anticipate; disaster is destiny when it comes suddenly, but it can also happen due to human negligence; disaster comes because Allah wills; disaster is destiny, and humans must be patient to face and so on.

Related to the potential for disasters in their area, the respondents are very aware of the condition of the site. 68.9% of respondents think that flooding is their area's most significant potential disaster, especially during the current rainy season. 24.6% of respondents believe their site has the potential for fire because houses in the Greater Jakarta area are generally very close. At the same time, the remaining 6.5% have a variety of answers, including theft, air pollution, or drought, and even a tiny number claim that the area is safe from disasters.

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Interestingly, when asked what has been done to anticipate disasters, the majority answer is to clean the environment and put security in one place. Other responses are related to actions to predict disasters and are also related to attitudes; for example, they must be diligent in worship, not commit immorality, and so on.

Disaster Literacy through Islamic Religious Education Course

Islamic education is one of the compulsory subjects that Muslim students must study in higher education. The management and implementation of religious education in Indonesia refer to the Minister of Religion Number 5 of 2020. It focuses on two things. First is that every student in higher education has the right to receive religious education by the Religion he adheres to, so universities are obliged to provide religious education; and the second is that the implementation of religious education must be capable of forming human beings who are faithful, devoted, and have a noble character, and love the homeland, and are loyal to the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia.

Through Religious Learning, several values can be internalized, including those related to disaster literacy. In the Islamic Religious Education curriculum in higher education, accessible to lecturers and students since 2016, an explicit environmental theme has not been found. Ditbelmawa DIKTI sets this textbook. Information about the book can be found at <https://lldikti11.ristekdikti.go.id/berita/155/>

Meanwhile, the Ministry of Religion curriculum for Islamic Religious Education in Higher Education contains a particular piece related to Islam and the environment. The curriculum can be seen in the IRE textbook writing guide at Public Universities dated July 16, 2019, on the pendis.kemenag.go.id page. Each campus is welcome to prepare its respective textbooks concerning the predetermined CLO (Course Learning Outcomes) even though the Ministry of Religion, through the directorate of Islamic education, plans to launch IRE textbooks compiled and discussed by IRE lecturers from several Universities in 2022.

Referring to the PAI book based on the curriculum of the Ministry of Religion, discussions related to Islam and the environment are still widespread. Students only learn general information about the environment. Learning on the theme of Islamic concepts and the environment aims to make students able to 1) mention the position of nature and the environment according to Islam, 2) explain environmental damage and its impacts, 3) mention the elements of environmental conservation in Religion, and 4) mentioning the role of humans in environmental conservation. (Hadiyanto et al., 2020).

The material above can be strengthened by strengthening disaster literacy. Students are asked to understand the concept of Islam and the environment in general and make students more active in identifying potential disasters in their area and taking action to prevent and minimize the impact of disasters in their area. In October, researchers implemented the theme of Islam and the environment by including disaster literacy content through discussion, and students can understand Islamic concepts related to disaster and disaster mitigation. Through a religious approach, students are expected to become more aware of managing environmental balance.

Discussion

Islamic Concept of Disaster

The understanding that the word calamity or disaster has many meanings shows that disaster can occur due to many things. Disasters can occur as a form of punishment for human negligence, but on the other hand, they can be a test and a trial to increase human faith. Understanding disaster as a form of punishment will make humans more active in maintaining the balance of the natural ecosystem. If all efforts have been made to the maximum, then it can be understood that the existing calamity is a form of tests and trials that aim to increase human faith.

Through a balanced understanding of the meaning of disaster, a person can be active in identifying and anticipating potential disasters. This shows that the role of humans in mitigating Disasters are very significant. However, when a disaster occurs, he does not decline. However, the awareness that he has tried should create a sense of optimism that what happened was fate, which makes him able to be patient and recover quickly to organize himself and his environment better than before.

Student perceptions about disasters

The Islamic concept of disaster meaning aligns with the student's perception of the meaning of disaster. 30.2% of respondents considered disasters to be fate, and humans could only surrender. On the other hand, 34.9% of respondents thought disasters were evidence of human negligence that should be avoided, and 34.9% answered with mixed answers. In it, there are many statements such as that disasters are fate, but humans can use their knowledge to anticipate; Disaster is a fate that comes suddenly but can also occur due to human negligence; disasters come because of God's will; Disasters are fate, and humans must be patient in facing them and so on.

The survey results also show that most students generally understand the potential disaster in their area; however, to anticipate disasters, not all can guide concrete actions. Most are still focused on minimizing the impact of disasters and not preventing the possibility of a disaster occurring. Anticipating disasters can be done in three ways. The first is before a disaster, which includes Prevention and mitigation. Prevention can be done by preventing potential disasters, and comfort is more about anticipating the impact of disasters. The second is during a disaster, namely, directions on what to do when a disaster occurs. The third is post-disaster, which can be done to anticipate the impact after a disaster occurs.

The role of religion in the post-disaster period has been recognized; however, its contribution to the pre-disaster phase has yet to be studied extensively. Many Muslims better understand that the relationship between religion and nature is more in a post-disaster context. This can be seen in the stories of natural disasters in the Quran and the importance of praying for Allah's protection. The socialized narrative is more about the message that disaster is destiny. (Adiyoso & Kanegae, 2013). Islamic teachings direct its followers to take a leading role in efforts to avoid the effects of natural disasters or minimize them. Before a natural disaster, during the emergency response period, until recovery, and return to everyday life. This is because disasters are something that cannot be separated from life. Therefore, disasters must be managed comprehensively before, during, and after a disaster. (Iskandar, 2019)

Disaster Literacy through Islamic Religious Education

As one of the mandatory subjects that Muslim students must study in tertiary institutions, Islamic Religious Education is the entry point for internalizing values, especially those related to disaster literacy. The Ministry of Religion's curriculum for Islamic Religious Education in Higher Education contains a special section on Islam and the environment. Students are expected to be able to state the position of nature and the environment according to Islam, explain environmental damage and its impacts, mention the elements of ecological conservation in religion, and say the role of humans in preserving the environment. (Hadiyanto et al., 2020)

This material can be strengthened by emphasizing disaster literacy. Students are asked to understand Islamic and environmental concepts in general and make students more active in identifying potential disasters in their area and taking action to prevent and minimize the impact of disasters. Through a religious approach, students are expected to become more aware of managing environmental balance. People who understand disasters only as fate will increase their fatalistic attitudes and make them ignore efforts to reduce the risk of disasters. Islam views disasters as a test from God. Islamic teachings direct Muslims to use knowledge in reducing disaster risk by emphasizing learning (*al ilm*), effort (*ikhtiyar*), and submission to God (*tawakku*). (Aksa, 2020). This is in line with the concept of an Islamic education curriculum based on disaster resilience, which is carried out by developing material on fiqh *imaratul ardh*, or fiqh in building the earth, where traditional perspectives on monotheism, trust, and the hereafter can be extended to nature conservation, which is realized by saving water in ablution. and consume food or drink in moderation without overdoing it. (Purnomo & Solikhah, 2021). Lecturers have a significant role in providing enrichment related to Islamic and environmental concepts by strengthening disaster literacy so that students can be more aware and able to anticipate possible disasters in the

surrounding environment and make peace with disasters that have occurred. This makes Islamic studies more relevant to everyday life.

Conclusion

The research results show that Islamic teachings emphasize human duties as caliphs, guardians of the earth from damage caused by fellow humans. Damage to the world in the form of disasters is proof of human negligence in protecting the environment. Although on the other hand, Allah has the power to bring misfortune to humans. Whether considered as evidence of failure or fate, disasters aim to make humans better than before. By understanding tragedy as a form of negligence, humans are expected to be more careful, and by understanding disaster as fate, humans are expected to be more patient. This view can only be obtained when someone is willing to think and develop their understanding.

Intellect can only be optimal if it is sharpened with new understanding and knowledge. Without this, the human mind would think that the flood could only be considered a disaster and fate, so no efforts were made to anticipate it. A lack of disaster literacy can also cause low human awareness, so they need help understanding how to deal with this problem. Disaster and climate literacy enable people to understand the causes of floods and anticipate and adapt to existing conditions (Luthfia, 2019)

Internalizing disaster literacy through a religious approach can be quite a practical approach. Strengthening disaster literacy in universities can be done through Islamic Religious Education Lectures, which are a mandatory subject. Through the theme of Islamic Concepts and the Environment, students not only understand standard Islamic concepts about the environment but can also understand Islamic concepts about disasters and disaster mitigation to identify potential disasters in their area and take active actions to prevent and minimize the impact of disasters. Understanding disasters is directed at the desire to manage nature in a balanced manner and prevent disasters from occurring. If the efforts are optimal, disasters can be interpreted as a test and trial to increase faith.

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