



THE ROLE OF CULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN THE RAMADHAN FAIR BAZAR TO PROSPERATE THE GREAT MOSQUE IN MEDAN CITY

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ABSTRACT

This study analyzes the role of cultural communication of the Ramadhan Fair Bazaar in prospering the Medan Grand Mosque, using qualitative methods with descriptive studies, observation, documentation, and direct interviews. The results of the study indicate that this bazaar is significant in increasing the activeness of the congregation and strengthening social interaction, becoming an annual tradition that has been awaited by the people of Medan City for more than 18 years. The Ramadhan Bazaar also supports the local economy by providing opportunities for MSMEs and facilitating entrepreneurship. In addition, this bazaar plays a role in promoting and preserving local culture, including the tradition of sharing spicy porridge at the Al-Mashun Grand Mosque. Comprehensively, this bazaar activity supports the prosperity of the mosque both physically and non-physically, by increasing visits and community participation and providing a forum for religious and social activities.

Keywords: Cultural Communication, Prosperity, Medan Grand Mosque

1. INTRODUCTION

The arrival of the holy month of Ramadan 1446 H presents a momentum that should not be missed by Muslims, in addition to instilling religious values, piety, morals and faith, the holy month of Ramadan becomes very special with a new traditional atmosphere, one of which is the presence of the Ramadan fair bazaar (Satoto, 2023). In order to fill activities in the month of Ramadan 1446 H, the Medan City Government has held a Ramadan fair bazaar for more than 10 consecutive years. The holding of the Ramadan bazaar is a traditional event that is awaited by many people, especially the people of Medan City.

According to KBBI, the bazaar can be used as a fairly dominant brand personality where the holding of the bazaar can attract tourists starting from local tourists who live around the bazaar and become an introduction to the wider community that there is a culinary tourist spot that offers various types of food and drinks that can be enjoyed with family when it is time to break the fast (Ayu, 2022).

The phenomenon of the existence of the Ramadan bazaar shows the element of solidarity in mutualism, one of which is in the fields of finance and economics. In this context, solidarity in mutualism can be understood as a reciprocal relationship between sellers and consumers that is mutually beneficial to both parties. In this case, sellers gain financial benefits from the sales results, while consumers also benefit from merchandise from the seller (Misbah, 2023).

Another phenomenon is the existence of several local conditions while at the Ramadan fair bazaar at the grand mosque, the first is the large number of consumers looking for food and drinks to break their fast during the month of Ramadan, the second is the suitability of the types sold by the sellers with consumer tastes, this has an impact on the economic improvement experienced by the seller, and the last phenomenon is the fact that Medan people have busy activities so they don't have time to prepare food to break their fast.

Intercultural communication is interpersonal communication carried out by those with different cultural backgrounds, basically examining how culture influences communication activities, such as the meaning of messages from verbal and non-verbal communication, what is appropriate to communicate, how to communicate it, and when to communicate it. (Karim, 2015; Dalimunthe, 2022)

Liliweri (2009) states that "intercultural communication is the process of exchanging information between individuals of different cultures, and it is important to understand these differences to avoid misunderstandings and conflicts" (Iman, 2024). The reciprocal relationship between communication and culture is important to understand because with culture people will learn the culture through communication. In short, human communication behavior will be determined by the underlying culture so that culture is the basis of communication that cannot be separated (Sunata, 2023; Harianto et al., 2023).

Prospering the mosque is important for Muslims because theologically prospering the mosque has a deep and broad meaning, not only indicating activities alone. In general, prospering the mosque includes two things, both physically and non-physically. Prospering physically is by building, repairing, cleaning, maintaining, and providing services for the mosque. While non-physically, namely performing the five daily prayers, reading the Koran, dhikr, and i'tikaf in the mosque (Anam, 2022).

Kiyai Ilyas Muslim in his life exemplifies in prospering the mosque by making it a center of da'wah. He did not act alone but involved various parties with the management of the mosque and increased activities in the mosque. (Febrian, 2023). The Al-Mashun Grand Mosque is a legacy of Sultan Ma'moen Al Rasyid Perkasa Alam, the 9th ruler of the Deli Malay Kingdom who ruled from 1873 to 1924. Many people visit this mosque, therefore the Al-Mashun Grand Mosque is included in the international tourist visit agenda. Every Ramadan, the atmosphere is much more lively than on normal days. (Anggraini Silaen, 2024).

2. RESEARCH METHOD

In this study, the researcher used a qualitative method with descriptive studies, observation and documentation and direct tracing at the Medan City Grand Mosque. This is because the researcher wants to produce data in the form of a description of the communication of the Ramadan bazaar culture in prospering the grand mosque in Medan City. According to Bogdan & Biklen: In the view of Bogdan & Biklen (1992), qualitative research produces descriptive data in the form of writing or speech and the behavior of people observed, with the aim of gaining a general understanding of social reality from the perspective of participants. In conducting this study, the research subjects included the organizing committee of the Ramadan fair bazaar, the manager of the Medan Grand Mosque, and several sellers at the bazaar. By conducting this study, the researcher will use direct interview techniques to produce accurate data.

3. RESULT AND ANALYSIS

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted, it can be interpreted that communication in the Ramadan fair bazaar culture at the Medan city grand mosque to increase the prosperity of the mosque, that this activity has a very important role in increasing the prosperity of the mosque.

The Role of Cultural Communication at the Ramadhan Fair Bazaar in Prospering the Medan Grand Mosque

Increase Congregation Activity and Strengthen Social Interaction

The holy month of Ramadhan 1446 H presents a special momentum for Muslims, not only to instill religious values, piety, morals, and faith, but also with a new traditional atmosphere, one of which is the presence of the Ramadhan Fair bazaar. The Ramadhan Fair bazaar has become an annual tradition held by the Medan City Government for more than 18 consecutive years, as stated by Mr. Hamdan as the administrator of the Al-Mashun Medan Grand Mosque.

"I forgot the exact date of the beginning of this Ramadhan bazaar, but as far as I remember since I worked here for about 30 years I have worked as a mosque administrator, this Ramadhan fair bazaar has been going on for approximately 18 years, so I used to work here and then there was this Ramadhan fair bazaar," said Mr. Hamdan.

The existence of this bazaar is highly anticipated by the community, especially the people of Medan City. The direct impact of the presence of this bazaar is an increase in the activity of the congregation performing prayers at the Grand Mosque. More than just a place to buy and sell, the Ramadhan bazaar functions as a vital social interaction space, a place where people can strengthen relationships and create close togetherness.

"Indeed, this grand mosque is visited by many people even on weekdays because this mosque is part of the history of the Deli Sultanate, but when there is a Ramadhan fair, the number of visitors increases, every day it is always crowded, both for traders and for worshipers who want to perform worship at this mosque and break their fast together," said Mr. Hamdan.

Not just ordinary activities, but what makes it interesting is one of the main attractions of the Ramadhan Fair bazaar is the presence of various religious competitions, such as the call to prayer competition, memorization of short letters, religious songs, pildacil (election of young preachers), Quran memorization, and Muslim fashion. These competitions allow individuals with different backgrounds to gather and participate in the same activity.

"Yes, if in the Ramadan fair, the activities carried out there are activities of religious lectures, religious lectures, there are competition activities that are made like that, the impact of this Ramadan fair activity actually has an impact on the congregation, namely the congregation, meaning on certain days and on weekends, well, on weekends and holidays, many people visit the Ramadan fair, the impact of course is that the Al-Mashun Grand Mosque in Medan has increased the congregation," said Mr. Dodi as the project leader of the Ramadan fair bazaar event. This is not just a competition, but also functions as an effective means to spread and strengthen understanding of Islamic culture (Syam et al., 2024; Dalimunthe et al., 2024). This activity also plays an important role in educating visitors about local traditions and cultural richness to the wider community. Cultural communication, in this context, involves the exchange of information and values that are influenced by various aspects of culture such as language, social norms, traditions, and beliefs, not only involving the use of verbal language but also non-verbal cues and symbols that have special meanings in each culture. Edward T. Hall asserts that "Culture is communication and communication is culture," indicating a close reciprocal relationship between the two, where human communication behavior is largely determined by the underlying culture.

Supporting the Economy and Facilitating Entrepreneurship

From an economic aspect, the Ramadhan bazaar contributes significantly to the sustainability of the mosque. This bazaar is a great opportunity for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to promote their products. This also helps the community in meeting their needs, especially the need for food to break the fast and clothing needs such as new clothes for Eid al-Fitr.

"As long as this bazaar has been around from year to year, it has greatly helped the economy of the community here, especially since we here consider every community as a brother so we participate in promoting their merchandise by facilitating tents and the like, those facilities are from the Medan city government," said Mr. Dodi

The presence of the Ramadhan bazaar is not only a form of appreciation for welcoming the holy month, but also a golden opportunity for entrepreneurs to develop an entrepreneurial spirit, train communication and cooperation skills, and learn to take responsibility and develop leadership (Kholil et al., 2024). The availability of a strategic location as well as management and support for facilities from the government are expected to provide optimal benefits for all parties. The Medan city government also participates in appreciating the community who trade around the mosque.

Suggestions for Promotion and Preservation of Local Culture

The Ramadhan Fair Bazaar also functions as an effective means to introduce typical foods from various regions. "Yes, in the Grand Mosque, we have a tradition that is still maintained until now, we have every holy month of Ramadan we cook spicy porridge which is the hallmark of the Grand Mosque, which is a tradition from the time of the sultanate that we maintain until now, namely every holy month of Ramadan at the beginning of Ramadan until the end of Ramadan we make summ porridge, that is one of the traditions that continues to be maintained until now, from the time of the sultanate until now it is still maintained," said Mr. Hamdan as the mosque administrator.

This activity is one of the promotional and cultural aspects that stand out in the Ramadhan Bazaar. The Al-Mashun Grand Mosque, as a legacy of Sultan Ma'moen Al Rasyid Perkasa Alam, is an international tourist attraction that is widely visited by the public. During the month of Ramadan, the atmosphere in this mosque is much livelier than on normal days. The Medan Grand Mosque is famous for its tradition of sharing spicy porridge for breaking the fast, a hereditary tradition that is still maintained until now. Typically, the mosque distributes around 1,000 portions of spicy porridge to residents after Asr prayers before breaking the fast during the month of Ramadan. The existence of this tradition, coupled with the bustling bazaar, further enriches the cultural and religious experience around the mosque.

Prospering the Mosque Physically and Non-Physically

With many people interacting in the mosque environment through various bazaar activities, this directly contributes to efforts to prosper the mosque. From a theological perspective, prospering the mosque has a deep and broad meaning, not only referring to physical activities alone. In general, prospering the mosque includes two main dimensions: physical and non-physical. Prospering physically includes activities such as building, repairing, cleaning, maintaining, and providing optimal services for the mosque.

Meanwhile, prospering non-physically involves various worship and spiritual activities, such as performing the five daily prayers in congregation, reading the Quran, dhikr, and i'tikaf in the mosque. Kiyai Ilyas Muslim, in his life, exemplifies

how to prosper the mosque by making it a center for da'wah, not acting alone but involving various parties in the management of the mosque and increasing activities in the mosque. The Ramadan Bazaar, with all its dynamics and activities, comprehensively supports both aspects of the mosque's prosperity. Both through increasing visits and community participation that can support the physical maintenance of the mosque, as well as by providing a forum for various religious and social activities that directly foster the non-physical and spiritual prosperity of the community.

4. CONCLUSION

The research of Ramadan bazaar is important to be studied because it is seen from many social, economic, and cultural aspects. From a social perspective, the bazaar is not only a buying and selling transaction but also a space for social interaction, as well as a forum to strengthen community relations and create togetherness. From an economic aspect, the Ramadan bazaar provides an opportunity for MSME traders to promote their products, observe the contribution of MSMEs to the Indonesian economy and help the community in meeting their stomach needs during Ramadan. Through the explanation above, it can be summarized that the presence of the Ramadan bazaar provides an understanding of the reflection of the interaction between local culture, religious activities, and economic aspects that support each other and increase the existence of the Medan City Grand Mosque.

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