

Family Responsibility of *Tabligh Jamaat* in Medan, North Sumatra

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Abstract: *Tabligh Jamaat* in the city of Medan is one of the groups, different from any other groups, conducting specific Islamic preaching or *da'wah* by enticing Muslims to reside around a mosque for congregational prayers. This activity is one of the implementations of *khuruj* teachings they refer to. By practicing *khuruj*, they leave their family for days, weeks and even months, and consequently pass their family unnoticed and abandoned. This study is focused on tracking the real understanding of *Tabligh Jamaat* on family responsibility. The purpose of this study was to assess and explain the understanding of *Tabligh Jamaat* Islamic Law on family responsibility in Medan. The research result shows that the *Tabligh Jamaat* have an understanding that providing a living is obligatory for a husband. In the understanding of *Tabligh Jamaat* a living is divided into two: the first is *Jahir* living in the forms of clothing, food and shelter. The second is mental living covering religious values of monotheism, jurisprudence, morality and some other points having the nature of uplifting the family.

1 INTRODUCTION

The rise of religious activities in Medan lately is a social phenomenon quite interesting to observe, as most of the religious organizations are enthused by various communities, showing enthusiasm in spreading the mission of Islam. This phenomenon is easy to spot because of their physical performance in religious symbolization, commonly different from most of the Islamic societies in general.

Along with the dynamics of society and the continual growing demands of the times, preaching, as an effort of socialization and internalization of Islamic teachings, is also progressing in matters of method, strategy and model. Historically, the development of preaching in Medan is performed by religious social organizations, such as Al-Washliyah, Muhammadiyah, Nahdlatul Ulama, al-Ittihadiyah, the Muslim Brotherhood, Salafi, Hizbut Tahrir (HTI), Majelis Tafsir of the Qur'an (MTA) and the Jamaat Tabligh (JT). The styles of the religious movements are diverse. Some are oriented to political struggle, purification and revivalism, the interpretation of the Qur'an, social, religion and education, some others to unisex preaching movement such as *Tabligh Jamaat*.

Based on the fact found by the researchers, some families left in time of *khuruj* do not have enough

money to support their livings. Some families of *Tablighi Jamaat* have to take loans to meet their livings and even some of the children have got some hindrances in schools as they do not have enough attention from their parents. All of this is caused by the lack of money left by the husbands in time of *khuruj* (Abu Muhammad and Ahmad Abduh, 2008; Ali Mubarak, 1374). The same idea is proposed by some religious scholars stating that many families are abandoned and unnoticed because of this problem. The main issue is the money left is not enough to meet all the needs. The consequences go around the same circle that they have no enough money to support all the needs of the families when the husbands are away for *khuruj* (Cholid Narbuko and Abu Achmadi, 2009; Moegni, 1979; Departemen Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan, 1996).

On the other hand, everyone should understand that it is not easy to be a husband having such a big responsibility to support the family. All the needs, such as those of physics and spirituality, are to be fulfilled proportionally.

Allah says in Surah an-Nisa ': 34;

Meaning: Men are in charge of women because Allah has preferred some of them (men) on some others (female) and because they (men) have spent out of their possessions.

The above verse shows that husband is the person in charge to provide a living. Therefore, this

verse is put into the point of obligation that to make a living must be borne by a husband to his wife and family (Ibnu Katsir, 2006).

In the conception of *Tablighi Jamaat*, a person will be considered a follower of *Tablighi Jamaat*, if he has already participated in *khuruj*. *Khuruj* for *Jamaah Tabligh* is an obligation and is the culmination of the teachings (Salehuddin, 2015). In this regard, the practice of *khuruj* conducted by *Tablighi Jamaat* of Medan tends to leave most of the obligations, and this is not in accordance with Islamic law understanding on the necessity of providing a living by a husband to the family left.

Based on the previous illustrations, it is certainly interesting to do a research related to the understanding of *Tablighi Jamaat* Islamic law on the family responsibility in Medan because, so far, the problem of family negligence in most of the families of *Tablighi Jamaat* is a well-known practice, but no special study as well as boon on this problem has ever been carried out or written.

2 RESEARCH METHOD

This is a field research, giving a focus on observation and data collection from the field. The source of data consists of two parts. The first is primary data taken directly from the objects in the field by directly taking the data as the main source of information to be obtained. The primary data is decisive in this research because the writers are much inclined to the data such as important documents of *Tablighi Jamaat*, books made as the guidelines of *Tablighi Jamaat*, and bulletin released by *Tablighi Jamaat*. The key informants are the leaders (*syura*) of *Tablighi Jamaat* of Medan. The second is the secondary data, taken from other parties, those which are not taken directly from the research objects. The secondary data are books written by the third parties related to *Tablighi Jamaat*, viewpoints of the relatives, and neighbours of *Tablighi Jamaat* and also religious leaders.

In this study the writers used descriptive analytical method and the analytical process begins by analyzing all available data from various sources, such as interviews, documentation and data obtained from literature. Data reduction is done, that is the data obtained in the field are summarized by selecting related issues systematically into the data that are specifically related to the issues discussed (Komariah, 2001). Analytic descriptive describes the implementation, in this case focused on the

understanding the *Tablighi Jamaat* Islamic law on family responsibility in Medan.

3 DEFINITIONS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Responsibility, according to General Indonesian Dictionary, is a state of obligation to bear everything; obliged to bear any form of obligation or to give responsibility and take the consequence of responsibility (Komariah, 2001).

Various types of responsibilities are as follows:

1. Responsibility and Individual
2. Responsibility and freedom
3. Social Responsibility
4. Responsibility towards others.
5. Responsibility and risk.

4 RESPONSIBILITY OF HUSBAND IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF ISLAMIC LAW

The *mahzab* scholars agree that there are three forms of living that are mandatory for a husband to fulfill: food, clothing and shelter. They also agree that the size of living depends on the state of both parties. If the husband and wife are financially strong then the livings are to be adjusted according to their strong finance, and if they are poor, the livings should be adjusted according to their financial standing. Basically, a living must be provided by a husband to his wife. It is based on the *Koran*, *hadith* and *ijma* (agreement of scholars or ulama). To clarify the legal basis of this, the writers will present some verses, *hadith* and *ijma* as follows:

- a. The commandments of Allah SWT in the *Koran* are:

Meaning: men are the leaders of women, because Allah has preferred some of them (men) on some others (female), and because they (men) have spent out of their possessions. Therefore, the virtuous woman must be obedient to God, and take care of her chastity when the husband is away because God has kept (them) women whom you fear of their disobedience (faithless), therefore you must admonish them and send them to their beds and beat them. Then if they obey you, seek not a

way against them. Allah is Most High, Most Great. (Q.S. An-Nisa': 34).

In the above verse, the scholars agree that *al-mas'ul* (object) that is intended on living is the obligation of the husband. Therefore, this verse becomes an obligatory rule that the living for the wife and family is to be the responsibility of the husband.

b. Words of the Prophet, such as:

In a story narrated by Imam Muslim from the source of the companion Jabir bin Abdullah, the Prophet said:

Meaning: The Messenger of Allah said: "*Dinar* (treasure) which ye spend in the way of Allah and *dinar* (treasure) which ye give to a female slave, and the *dinar* which you donate to the poor and the *dinar* you spend to your family; so, the greatest reward is the one you spend for your family. " (Muslim No.1661) (Muammal Hamidi, 1993).

In another narration narrated by many hadith narrators from 'Aisha r.a., Messenger of Allah said:

Meaning: "From 'Aisha: Hind actually said: Messenger of Allah: Abu Sufyan (her husband) is stingy. He did not provide enough income for me and my son, unless I take from him without his knowledge. Then he answered: Take what is sufficient for you and your child in a way that is *ma'ruf*" (as enough as possible). (HR. Al Jama'ah).

Imam Ash-Syaukaniy in his book *al-Authar Nail* explained that the above hadith becomes a rule, the obligation for the husband to provide his wife and children (his family), and this is already a consensus among the Mujtahid (the law experts).

The livings to be provided by the husband are as follows:

1. Food and Clothing
2. Dwelling Place
3. Education of Children
4. Medical Treatment Cost
5. Spiritual Living
6. Spiritual needs.

5 **TABLIGHI JAMAAT PROFILE IN MEDAN**

Tablighi Jamaat is a group of Muslims who look exclusive, dressed like the tradition of the Arabs

with long cassock (mostly white), white hat called *lobe* wear and lengthened beard.

They usually stay in the mosque they visit for four days or more for preaching. They conduct *jaulah*, visit Muslim houses located around the mosque and invite the Muslims around the mosque to pray in congregation. After the congregational prayers, one of them would give lectures and mostly the lecturer is not free, but bound to reading a book, named *Himpunan Fadillah* by Maulana Muhammad Zakariyya Al-Kandahlawi that has been translated into Indonesian. During their stay in the mosque, they perform religious activities, namely *zikir* or remembrance, *tahajud*, and read *Koran* and others to get closer to Allah swt.

Their activities are very intense in the mosque, and they almost spend 70% of their time to convey knowledge to other people. In additions, they also hold nightly astral conjunction or *Ijtima* (gathering), where the *Ijtima* will be filled with *Bayan* (religious services) by religious teachers or *ulama* or guests from abroad who are doing *khuruj* there, and *also ta'lim wa ta'alum*. They usually invite preachers outside of the area to give lectures at the mosque during the congregation activities.

For the members of *Tablighi* who happen to be working in an institution and bound to time, still *khuruj* cannot be ignored. The point is they have to be sincere or *ikhlas*. Sincerity is embedded among the members of *Tabligh Jamaat*. For those who happen to be bound by the work time, they can conduct the *khuruj* three days a month. For instance, they leave on Friday afternoon after the work till Monday morning and they do not have to be back home; they could directly go to their work. By this way, they do not have to forget their work. They are active in managing their time in this matter.

They never neglect the *khuruj* though some of them work as employees and are tied to work time. But any time they have got some free time, they would do *their khuruj*. *Tablighi Jamaat* do not matter the congregation; the essence is they are loyal in carrying out the congregational activities.

Transnational Islamic missionary movement proposed by Muhammad Ilyas, founded in 1926 is the first entrance to the city of Medan in 1970 brought directly by the Indians to the mosque of Islamiyah Hidayatul on Jalan Gajah located in Medan. The mosque is the center of *Tablighi Jamaat's* coordination area of Medan and North Sumatra. Here, in the mosque, the members of *Tablighi Jamaat* who come from various areas in North Sumatra and even from outside Sumatra, for example, from Papua, Aceh and others are

gathering. Ustaz H. Badruddin Amir, the *Amir* or *Syura* also resides next to the mosque. Under his coordination, members of *Tablighi Jamaat* will go to foreign countries like India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and others.

Tablighi Jamaat in Medan city do not have an organizational structure like other groups, however, their activities do not walk alone, but there is someone, the elder and considered more experienced to coordinate the activities and he is referred to as *Amir* or *Syura*. That is why their numbers cannot be known with certainty but the number is quite a lot in Medan city, and perhaps the number has reached to hundreds.

Tablighi Jamaat in the city of Medan are not bound by any streams or specific schools. *Tablighi Jamaat* accept anyone who is willing to join the preaching or *dakwah* and invite people to the path of God. In addition to the Quranic verse or Hadith asking to preach, they also have certain teachings known teachings of six points (six teachings) and one of the teachings is preaching or *dakwah*, which is obligatory (asking and informing) (Komariah, 2001) and this is done by conducting *khuruj* (going out) from the place where a person resides.

6 TERMS TO CONDUCT *KHURUJ*

According to the teachings of *Tablighi Jamaat*, one is obliged to do *khuruj* (going out) to preach out for four months once in a lifetime, 40 days in each year, three days every month, or twice around each week to settle from one mosque to another in different areas. To do *khuruj* every member of *Tablighi Jamaat* should meet the following terms.

1. Righteous intention

Tablighi Jamaat members who want to do *khuruj* must install the righteous intention; meaning to have sincere intention merely a wish to seek the blessing of Allah SWT. Righteous intention and being sincere to preach and help the religion of Allah will help a person to be facilitated by God in all his affairs. They cite Quranic verse,

Meaning: O ye who believe, if you strive to defend Islam, Allah will help you and affirm your steps. (Qs. Muhammad: 7)

If someone has already got a genuine intention to preach or convey religious messages, then all the family matters are to be submitted to Allah SWT; it is Allah SWT who will keep and

maintain his family. This refers to the events of Prophet Ibrahim who left his wife Siti Hajar with her child Ishmael in the barren desert (Mecca) and he returned after her son got adult. The Word of God:

Meaning: O Our God, indeed I had put parts of my offspring in a valley that has no plants near your houses (Baitullah) the one respected, Oh our God (as such) that they establish the prayer, then make the hearts of some people tend to them and give them living of fruits, hopefully they are grateful (Qs. Ibrahim: 37). Although the natural conditions at the time was not conducive to human life, but it is Allah who helped to the survival of Siti Hajar with her son Ishmael as (oocities.org, 2013). *Tablighi Jamaat* members of Medan do a lot of *khuruj* to preach on *fi sabilillah* (in the cause of Allah) for weeks and some even leave their families for months. The practice done by *Tablighi Jamaat* is identical to what was once done by the Prophet. With nine wives, children and grandchildren, but the family did not prevent him from spreading the religion. The same thing ever conducted by the companions of the Prophet who left the family for months to do Islamiyah preaching.

2. Having sufficient funds for travel destination and living for the family, wives and children left.

Readiness for all the budgets should be told transparently before *Syura* or *Amir*. Points to be asked by *Amir* or *Syura* will be around the funds to be used for the travelling and the family left. All should be adjusted to the travelling condition covering the duration and destination. If the budget is not enough, the person concerned would be given to another place according to the budget. This is based on the view that the family is not to be neglected as giving a living to the family is mandatory and if not will be considered sinful. Some other questions to be given by *Amir* are about the jobs and family.

3. Readiness costs and funds held for *khuruj* of *Tablighi Jamaat* which will be delivered openly and in detail in the presence of *Shura* or *Amir*.

Things asked by *Amir* or *Shura* is about *Amwal* (*assets*) related to the issue of costs, covering those during the trip and to the families left. All were adjusted to the length for which he would go out and areas that will be addressed. If funds are insufficient for the areas that will be

addressed, he will look for other areas corresponding to the amount of funds available. This is done to anticipate that families left are not neglected because they consider obligatory to provide the needs of the families left. Besides, they also consider that it is a mistake and considered a sin if they do not provide their living needs. Another thing asked by the *Shura* is *ahwal* (condition) of *Tablighi Jamaat* related to family, work and others associated with the pilgrims who will perform *khuruj*. In the implementation of this *khuruj*, *Tablighi* group will form *tafaqqud*, a team whose task is to monitor the families of *Tablighi Jamaat* doing *khuruj*. The team will visit to the homes of members of *Tablighi Jamaat* doing *khuruj*. If the *khuruj* is done for 40 days or months, the *tafaqqud* team will make a visit once a week. The Team will come with their wives. The men will not enter the houses of the members doing the *khuruj* so that they bring their wives to know more about the family members left. To visit is to know the condition of the family left and if the fund given is not enough, the financial needs of the family left will be given by the team. The members will usually help one another. The team will also see the health condition, security and some other things of the family left for *khuruj*. The visit aims to find out whether the living cost left is still sufficient or has run out. This is done as a manifestation of solidarity and mutual help among members of *Jamaah Tablighi*. *Tafaqqud* team see the state of the bereaved family, health problems, security and others.

4. Sometime, the family members of *Tablighi Jamaat* are displaced when the husband is away for *khuruj*. This unexpected incident may happen, if the husband does not adhere to the rules to be attended by those who wish to do *khuruj*.
The *jamaah* does not tell the real things to *Amir*; probably he is ashamed, or his desire to do *khuruj* is higher than his capability, and finally he gives up everything to Allah SWT. This means that the husband does not do any coordination with *Amir* (Interview with *Amir* on 25 October 2015).
5. A member of *Tablighi Jamaat* who wants to do *khuruj* should ask permission from his wife. If there is a sign of objection from the wife, the husband should give a good understanding that

khuruj is obligatory and also a demand of religion that must be fully supported.

As a matter of fact, the wives of members of *Tablighi Jamaat* give permission to their husbands and even some urge their husbands to do *khuruf* to preach on religious matters.

7 LAW UNDERSTANDING OF *TABLIGHI JAMAAT* ON FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY

7.1 Responsibilities of Husband in *Zahir* Livelihood Issues

As has been described above that a husband who would do *da'wah* (*khuruj*) has to leave a living for his wife and children. They argue that providing a living for the family left in order to preach is obligatory. It means that if he does not provide a living to the family members left, he has made a mistake. Based on the interviews done by the researchers, it is stated that according to *Tablighi Jamaat*, providing a living is mandatory and is the responsibility of the husband.

The same information is also obtained from *Syuro* or *Amir* who states that providing a living consisting of wife and children is obligatory and all should be adjusted to the needs of the family, and because of this any member of the *Jamaat* is not allowed to do *khuruj* if he cannot provide a living to his family.

However, the researchers observed that some members of *Tablighi Jamaat* give priority to inner living, and it does not mean leaving the obligation to provide a living of *Jahir* at all, but they are trying to gain ascetic life in which they work merely for the needs. This ascetic attitude is to follow and imitate the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. The asceticism of Prophet and the companions are an epitome to attend.

7.2 Responsibilities of Husband in *Inner* Livelihood Issues

The inner living according to the understanding of *Tablighi Jamaat* is a spiritual living form of understanding religious values that should be given to the wife and children. Religious values are cultivating the values of faith (*tauhid*), theology and *sharia* (laws) relating to obligatory things, optional obligation, prohibition, optionality or permissibility. The inner living according to the understanding of

the *Tablighi Jamaat* is more important than the livings of *Jahir*, i.e. those in the form of clothing, food and other outward nature (Interview with Gazali, Wandu, Mansur on 17 and 24 October 2015; Malik on 28 October 2015 and Kliwon on 16 November 2015).

If this inner living is not met, this is the cause of a household clutter and the house will be away from the blessings of Allah SWT. The Word of Allah SWT:

Meaning: "O ye who believe, guard yourselves and your families from a Fire of Hell (Qs. At-Tahrim: 6).

During the revelation of the verse above, Umar bin Khattab asked Rasulullah Saw, The Messenger of God, O Rasulullah we have kept ourselves, how to maintain our family? The Prophet said: "You prevent it from those prohibited by Allah and tell them, to do what is commanded by Allah. That would prevent them from the fire of hell (Resume of Speech of Mr. M. Nasir on 1 November 2015).

The biological relationship problems (*jima'*) to the wife is not an obligation. They argue that doing *jima'* to the wife is not an obligation. Husband could do *jima'* whenever he wants and has the opportunity and ability. If the husband does not have the ability or do not have the opportunity to do so, the wife is required to be patient. Here lies the role of the values of faith that must be imparted to the wife. The Prophet says sourced from Aby Zar:

It means: "do *jima'* to your wife is charity. (H.R. Muslim).

Some members of *Tablighi Jamaat* in the city of Medan have been impressed to leave family responsibilities for months. Based on the researchers' observation, the members of *Tablighi Jamaat* consider that it is a normative doctrine. It means that it is as a result of the influence of the norms of Islamic law that is still inherent but, in its practice unconsciously influenced by reason (creativity), emotion (feeling) and will (intention) are quite high and excessive. If the excessive influence of these three things are big, it will cause people's judgment of religion to be unreasonable. Excessive actions that have been done by *Tablighi Jamaat* to leave the family resulting the negligence of other obligations, such as children's education and compassion do not get any impression. Even this action may cause them lose their job which constitutes the source of economic support. However, it is found that some *Tablighi Jamaat* willingly quit his job in order to do *khuruj*. This happens since they are of the view that the inner

living inner takes precedence over the *Jahir* livelihood.

Jamaah Tabligh in the city of Medan is a portrait of *Tablighi Jamaat* in Indonesia whose roles keep developing, and whose number does growing more and more. The existence of *Tablighi Jamaat* in the city of Medan has a significant role to encourage Muslims to pray in congregation at the mosque. They do not feel offended if some invited do not want to follow them or even some give blasphemous remarks because they consider that they carry an obligation that must be carried out.

8 CONCLUSION

Tablighi Jamaat in the city of Medan is a portrait of *Tablighi Jamaat* in Indonesia coming to Medan in 1970, and directly going to the mosque of Hidayatul Islamiyah on Jalan Gajah. They have the understanding that every member of *Tablighi Jamaat* should do *khuruj* to leave the family. However, they still leave a living for the family, because they are of the view that giving a living to the family is obligatory. However, the inner living form of religious values is more important than the *Jahir* living; in the form of food and clothing.

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