

## Review of Islamic Law on the Practice of *Tahlilan* in Indonesia

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### Abstract

The emergence of various forms of complex problems among Muslims is a challenge that must be passed. In order to overcome the emergence of various forms of problems that occur in the global era, it is very possible for people from different continents and countries to be able to interact. Thus, efforts are needed to understand Islamic law in terms of various aspects that accompany problems in this global era. This research consists of 2 (two) issues, namely the implementation of *Tahlilan* in Indonesia for Muslims and a review of Islamic law on *Tahlilan* to manifest grace for the ummah. This research method uses a juridical-normative approach with primary, secondary and tertiary legal sources which are analyzed using a descriptive-analytical approach. The results of the study explain that *Tahlilan* is a form of religious practice that has roots but is inseparable from controversy, namely *Tahlilan* activities in Indonesia. Originally, *Tahlilan* was only carried out after someone's death, but now it has become a religious activity that colors almost all community activities. *Tahlilan* in terms of Islamic law states that a study is not only based on the arguments of the Al-Qur'an and hadith texts, but also seriously considers customs for drawing conclusions. The issue of whether or not a law, such as *Tahlilan*, does not only use naqliyah arguments, but can be strengthened by local wisdom values as a basis for legal reference that is polite, gentle, right on target, easy to accept and apply in their lives.

**Keywords:** Islamic Law, Local Wisdom, Ijtihad, *Tahlilan*.

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### INTRODUCTION

*Tahlilan* is one of the many religious activities which legally (Pomalingo *et al.*, 1973) is still being debated by a small number of scholars. This religious activity is an activity of of communal Dzikir (Islamic Prayer) that is unique as it is only exists in Indonesia and is carried out not only for the aftermath of the death of a pious person or figure, but also for every person who is Muslim in general. Even now, in almost every routine community activity that is religious in nature, *Tahlilan* is always held, whether at home, mosque or anywhere else.

The law of *Tahlilan* is not free from the pros and cons that have existed from the past until now. For those who allow, of course, the legitimacy of the law is based on the arguments originating from the Qur'an or al-Hadith (Khazali & Mahmoud, 2018), to the conclusion, this is a permissible or recommended practice (Al-Harbi & Mohammed, 2019). Likewise, those who do not allow the use of arguments from the same source conclude that this is an act of futility and heresy (Abdul, 2020). Apart from that debate, there is one thing that needs to be known that the diff: the

scholars' differences of opinionincerity and earnestness will result in convenience and mercy (Rahman, 2021) for mankind.

Not only is *Tahlilan* for the Indonesian people a recommended practice in Islam, but it has also become a hereditary tradition for the community as a religious activity that includes reciting the Koran, remembrance, and prayers (Mutairi *et al.*, 2017) which should have been sufficient in terms of the *naqli* alone. However, because this activity is being debated, it is very necessary to strengthen the existing arguments by looking at it from the point of view of local wisdom. Thus, the legal conclusions of these activities will become clearer in line with the arguments for *naqli* and *urf* which have taken root and have become the most important part of the historical habit of the Indonesian people (Saeed & Hanadi, 2021).

Many local values in Indonesia do not conflict with religious rules. This is part of the richness of the nation's customs which are the values of the essence of religion (Bahar, 2022), of which local wisdom is the basis. Because of this, *Tahlilan* activities are rooted in a

tradition that is spread throughout the archipelago from time to time (Amoudi, 2022).

*Tahlilan* activities carried out after death has become part of the traditions of the Indonesian people in particular, and the Malay community in general (Nawawi, *et al.*, 2022). That is, *Tahlilan* which contains readings of the Qur'an, dhikr, and prayers to Allah so that those who die will receive reward and forgiveness (Al-Hasani, 2019). If you look closely, all of these practices do not conflict with Islamic law (Baghdad & Muhammad, 2021). And finally, *Tahlilan* activities developed, not only carried out after death but also held in other religious activities, such as *Istighatsah* and *Haul*.

Based on the explanation above, the purpose of this study is to provide an in-depth overview of Islamic law regarding *Tahlilan* as a collective and social activity. *Tahlilan* activities, apart from aiming to get closer to Allah, are also a way of manifesting love and compassion by helping each other (Seyhoud, 2019) in prayer for relatives who have preceded them. By using a local wisdom approach, *Tahlilan* will be felt as a means of strengthening the relationship between the servant and his God and between the servant and his fellow human beings (Shamam, 2020). It is hoped that this discussion will produce a clear conclusion that can be used as a guide and guide for the implementation of *Tahlilan*.

Based on the background above, the authors are interested in conducting research titled "*Review Of Islamic Law On The Practice Of Tahlilan In Indonesia*". Therefore, the authors raise 2 (two) main issues as follows:

1. How is the implementation of *Tahlilan* for Muslims in Indonesia?
2. What is the review of Islamic Law regarding *Tahlilan* to Realize Grace for the Ummah?

## METHOD OF RESEARCH

This study uses a legal research approach. Taking the context of Indonesia, This research uses normative legal methods with analytical descriptive based on library research (Suteki & Taufani, 2018).

This research uses descriptive-analytical research. Analytical descriptive research is a type of descriptive research that seeks to describe and find answers on a fundamental basis regarding cause and effect by analyzing the factors that cause the occurrence or emergence of a certain phenomenon or event.

Sources of data used include Primary Data and Secondary Data. Primary data is data obtained from field observations and interviews with informants. While Secondary Data is data consisting of:

1. Primary legal materials are binding legal materials in the form of applicable laws and regulations and have something to do with the issues discussed, among others in the form of Legislation relating to the practice of medicine and health.
2. Secondary legal materials are legal materials that explain primary legal materials.
3. Tertiary legal materials are legal materials that provide further information on primary legal materials and secondary legal materials.

Research related to the socio-legal approach, namely research that analyzes problems is carried out by combining legal materials (which are secondary data) with primary data obtained in the field. Supported by secondary legal materials, in the form of writings by experts and legal policies.

## RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### 1. The Implementation of *Tahlilan* for Muslims in Indonesia

*Tahlilan* is one concrete example of a religious tradition that still exists and develops among Indonesian people, especially on the island of Java. Awa Island is the birthplace of a major Islamic organization in Indonesia, namely Nahdhatul Ulama' (NU). NU is a mass organization that culturally carries out and practices the *Tahlilan* tradition and makes it a part of its religious tradition. The religious tradition which later became the hallmark of mass organization.

As a tradition, the existence of *Tahlilan* always encounters a process of change that occurs in the patterns of people's lives. With the changing times, now *Tahlilan* is not only carried out by the Nahdhiyyin (NU) community, but the Muhammadiyah community who do not recognize the tradition of *Tahlilan* because it is considered a bid'ah1, can now accept and implement it. *Tahlilan* is considered a medium to strengthen balance in society and create a harmonious atmosphere (Riskasari, 2019).

*Tahlilan* comes from the root word "*tahlil*" which is then added to Indonesian with the ending "*an*". *Tahlil* usually represents the word "*hallala, yuhallilu, tahlil*" which means saying the phrase for Allah. The word "*tahlil*" which is added with the ending "*an*" has a slightly shifted meaning. The word *Tahlilan* no longer only means saying the phrase la ilaha illallah, but rather the name of an event in which verses of the Koran are recited and other thayyibah sentences are recited as well as prayers for the deceased. Or in another language, *Tahlilan*, is a reading whose composition consists of several verses of the Qur'an, blessings, *tahlil*, *tasbih* and *tahmid*, whose rewards are awarded to people who have died, with reading processions that are more often carried out collectively (in congregation), especially in certain days after the death of a Muslim. It is said

*Tahlilan*, because the portion of the sentence *la ilaha illallah* is read more than the other readings (Mas'ari, 2017).

The *Tahlilan* tradition comes from Arabic which has the meaning of declaring Allah as God through the words *Laa ilaaha illallah*. In Indonesia, *Tahlilan* has become a noble culture that is filled with praying to Allah. Not only for religious benefits, *Tahlilan* is also useful as a means of praying for the ancestors who have been called by Allah SWT (NU, 2022).

*Tahlilan* activities are not only attended by men. Muslim mothers and teenagers also joined in the activity.

## 2. Review of Islamic Law on *Tahlilan* to Realize Grace for the Ummah

In carrying out religious duties, sometimes a person has to deal with local customs (Salman, 2019). Sometimes these traditions conflict and some do not conflict with religion. Customs that conflict with religion have very clear laws and must be abandoned. However, some customs do not conflict with religion their existence is integrated with religious practice. So, it is very clear that this is not prohibited and can even be considered as part of a religious way to support the carrying out of religious duties which are all hoped to be maintained. So it is said that the best habits are those that are in accordance with religion and the easiest way to be religious is those that are in accordance with habits. The concern of someone who is alive for someone who has died in the hope that something good can be conveyed is natural and even a sign of the perfection of faith (Samih, 2019).

Like *Tahlilan* which is called in the language of fiqh as '*ihdaa ats-tsawab*' which means giving a reward to someone who has died. The purpose of this amaliah is to care for people who have died and try to benefit them. And concern for fellow human beings is natural (Mohammad *et al.*, 2022), a normal human being and that is very universal across religions. That is, any religion as long as its adherents are humans will certainly understand what humanity means (Yahya, 2022). So the effort to give kindness to humans who have died is part of this awareness of humanity.

Likewise, if we pay attention to *Tahlilan*, it contains practices such as reciting the Qur'an, remembrance, and prayer. However, the way it is implemented meets the customs of the Indonesian people who usually gather when there is a death. So the conclusion appears while there is an argument that the community gathers to read the Koran, recite the Koran, and pray as a sign of concern for people who have died. So from here, we will be illustrated at a glance the meeting of religious practices and community habits.

The book *The Beauty of Understanding the Differences of Ulama* definitively stated that the word '*Tahlilan*' literally means people reading '*La ilaha illallah*' which means '*there is no god but Allah*'. Of course, reading *la ilaha illa* is not something to be confused about. However, what is at issue is *Tahlilan* as a term or practice carried out by Muslims in Indonesia. Usually the *Tahlilan* is done by reading the letter Yasin, then reading the letter Al-Ikhlās, *Mu'awwidzatain*, verse Chair, then the end of the letter Al-Baqarah, plus reading *La ilaha illallah*, blessings, tasbih, tahmid, takbir, and so on and ends with a prayer the contents are to present the reward of all the readings to people who have died.

In addition to the problems above, a further question arises which is disputed by some scholars, namely, *is it possible for the reward of reading to reach people who have died?* In this context, Ibn Taimiyah (Mahal & Daoud, 2021) explains that this practice is not heresy and the reward goes to those who have died. Presenting the reward of sunnah prayers, reading the Qur'an and fasting can provide benefits to people who have passed away. This opinion of Ibn Taimiyah is by the Hambali, Hanafi, and some scholars of the Shafi'i school of thought. In another discussion, Ibn Taimiyah confirmed that 70,000 *Tahlilans*, whether read more or less than that number, will still benefit people who have died; this is an opinion and not a hadith.

In this opinion, there is no prohibition in carrying out *Tahlilan*, more than that there are statements and other narrations that support this opinion. Besides that, there are problems related to the problem of counting days such as the 3rd, 7th, 40th day, and so on. The calculation is not a requirement and is not a requirement for the validity of tahlil. However, it is a matter of social custom. In matters of days, one is free to choose the 3rd, 10th, 15th, and so on, without having to relate it to days that coincide with the customs of people outside of Islam. Indeed, people who hold events on the 3rd day or something else never crossed their minds that they were imitating the customs of Hindus and Buddhists. In fact, it is even unknown if there are other religions holding events on that day as that is just coincides in terms of time and day of execution.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research described by the author on *Review of Islamic Law on the Practice of Tahlilan in Indonesia*, a conclusion can be drawn as follows:

1. *Tahlilan* is a concrete example of a religious tradition that persists and develops among Indonesian people, especially Java Island. The *Tahlilan* tradition comes from Arabic which has the meaning of declaring Allah as God through the words *Laa ilaaha illallah*. In

Indonesia, *Tahlilan* has become a noble culture which is filled with praying to Allah. Not only for religious benefits, *Tahlilan* is also useful as a means of praying for the ancestors who have been called by Allah SWT.

2. In order to broaden the horizons of Islamic law in Indonesia, it is necessary to use the *urf* (customs) approach in deciding a legal product and then one of the practices of worship in the Islamic religion of Indonesian society is the practice of *Tahlilan*. Since ancient times, this practice of worship has been integrated into the tradition of post-mortem ceremonies, where after someone dies at night the community gathers *takziyah* to strengthen the psychology and increase the motivation of the person left behind to be patient, sincere and steadfast. At the same time, recitation of the verses of the Qur'an, remembrance and prayer are carried out accompanied by *Tahlilan* beforehand. Many things besides *Tahlilan* that occur in our society are formed from local culture combined with religious practices, such as cleaning the village, Istigosah, Tasyakuran and so on. It is hoped that by internalizing local wisdom which is part of the uniqueness in the way of internal religious worship, especially for Muslims, ukhuwah Islamiyah will be maintained and ukhuwah wathaniyah will make the realization of grace for the people and the people of Indonesia.

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