

Mosque Management in Urban City: Bargaining between the Sacred and the Social Challenges

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Abstract: A mosque is a pivotal element in the structure of a Muslim community. The function of a mosque extends beyond its religious capacity as a place for worship, playing a vital role in addressing the social problems that the community faces. To explore this, the present study focuses on the strategy employed by Masjid Raya Bandung to manage and overcome various social problems around its vicinity. The present study uses a descriptive-analytical approach to depict the existing social phenomena around Masjid Raya Bandung (The Grand Mosque of Bandung) in the Province of West Java, Indonesia, with specific research variables. Non-documentary data is obtained through participant observation and in-depth interviews. Located in the city's heart, across the city hall, a place of public gathering, the Grand Mosque of Bandung operates within a business and materialistic environment. The faced challenges include sanitation issues, unregulated street vendors tied to an informal economy, prevalent crime, covert prostitution in the vicinity, and escalating consumerism from nearby shopping centres. The study underscores the mosque as a spiritual oasis and a socio-religious institution actively providing solutions for various social issues within its urban setting. It is confirmed that the mosque's function is not only for ritual things but also for social activities in urban Islamic societies, particularly in managing and overcoming various social problems that surround the mosque.

Keywords: Masjid Raya Bandung; Urban Islamic Society; Social Problems; Solutions.

Abstrak: Sebuah masjid berperan sebagai elemen penting dalam struktur komunitas Muslim. Fungsi masjid melampaui kapasitas keagamaannya sebagai tempat ibadah, memainkan peran penting dalam mengatasi masalah sosial yang dihadapi oleh komunitasnya. Untuk mengeksplorasi hal ini, studi ini berfokus pada strategi yang digunakan oleh pengurus Dewan Kemakmuran Masjid (DKM) Masjid Raya Bandung untuk mengelola dan mengatasi berbagai masalah sosial di sekitarnya. Dengan menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif-analitis, studi ini bertujuan untuk menggambarkan fenomena sosial yang ada di sekitar Masjid Raya Bandung di Provinsi Jawa Barat, Indonesia, dengan variabel penelitian tertentu. Data non-dokumenter diperoleh melalui observasi partisipatif dan wawancara mendalam. Terletak di pusat kota, di seberang pendopo kota, sebagai tempat berkumpul masyarakat, Masjid Raya Bandung beroperasi dalam lingkungan bisnis yang cenderung konsumeristik dan materialistik. Tantangan yang dihadapi DKM Masjid Raya Bandung termasuk masalah sanitasi, pedagang kaki lima yang tidak teratur terkait dengan ekonomi informal, kejahatan yang merajalela, prostitusi terselubung di sekitarnya, dan konsumerisme yang meningkat dari pusat perbelanjaan terdekat. Studi ini menekankan masjid bukan hanya sebagai oasis spiritual, tetapi juga sebagai lembaga sosio-agama yang aktif berpartisipasi dalam memberikan solusi untuk berbagai masalah sosial dalam konteks perkotaan. Ini menegaskan bahwa masjid tidak hanya berperan dalam urusan ritual semata-mata tetapi juga dalam aktivitas sosial dalam masyarakat Islam perkotaan, khususnya dalam mengelola dan mengatasi berbagai masalah sosial yang mengelilingi masjid.

Kata Kunci: Masjid Raya Bandung; Masyarakat Islam perkotaan; Masalah sosial; Solusi.

1. Introduction

Over the past two decades, Indonesia, along with countries like the United Kingdom, has witnessed a surge in mosque construction, reflecting the vivacity of Muslim spiritual life. Despite representing only 6% of the overall population in the UK, Muslims have constructed a significant number of mosques throughout cities and towns (UK Parliament, 2023). The United Kingdom is home to a significant number of mosques. Mosques are places of worship for Muslims and serve as community centers for prayer, education, and social gatherings (Mendoza, 2015). This proliferation prompts the question of how effectively these mosques meet the spiritual needs of urban Muslim communities, particularly in addressing solutions for various social issues in their surrounding areas.

Mosques play a significant role as places of worship, community centers, and hubs for social, cultural, and educational activities for Muslims. Here are some key aspects of the role of mosques: First, worship: Mosques are primarily places of worship for Muslims, providing a space for congregational prayers, including the Friday congregational prayer (*Jumu'ah*) and daily prayers (*Salat*). Mosques provide an environment for Muslims to connect with their faith, perform religious rituals, and seek spiritual guidance.

Second, community services: Mosques serve as community centers, offering various services and support to Muslims and the wider community. These services may include counseling, marriage ceremonies, funeral services, and religious education. Mosques often have dedicated staff or volunteers who assist community members with their needs.

Third, education and learning: Many mosques provide Islamic education programs, including Quranic studies, Arabic language classes, and Islamic history lessons. These educational activities aim to enhance the religious knowledge and understanding of individuals within the Muslim community.

Fourth, social and cultural activities: Mosques organise social and cultural events to foster community cohesion and celebrate Islamic festivals. These events may include community iftars during Ramadan, Eid celebrations, lectures by scholars, interfaith dialogues, and charity initiatives. Mosques often act as a gathering place for Muslims to connect, share experiences, and build relationships. Fifth, Interfaith Engagement: Mosques play a crucial role in promoting interfaith dialogue and understanding between Muslims and people of other faiths. Many mosques actively engage with local interfaith groups, organising events and discussions to foster mutual respect, tolerance, and cooperation.

Sixth, civic engagement: Mosques encourage civic participation among Muslims and provide a platform for political discussions and community activism. They may host talks by political representatives, encourage voter registration drives, and engage in community initiatives addressing social issues.

Seventh, outreach and support: Mosques often offer support and assistance to new Muslims, recent immigrants, and individuals facing challenges. They provide a welcoming space where individuals can seek guidance, find community networks, and receive practical help to integrate into British society. It's important to note that the specific roles and activities of mosques can vary depending on their size, location, and the needs of the local Muslim community.

In many communities, mosques are perceived primarily as places for Muslims to perform *salat*, daily prayers, with limited engagement in broader community, political, economic, or cultural activities. Some Muslim scholars deem non-worship activities within mosques as haram, religiously prohibited, contributing to this narrow perception. As a result, the increase in the number of mosques does not correspond with a decrease in societal poverty or social tensions; reducing the importance of a mosque to nothing more than a formal building that fails to 'call' the people around it (Rasdi, 2014).

This constrained view of the function of mosques may stem from a lack of understanding within Muslim communities, including those managing mosques, regarding the broader role mosques can play. Mosques should serve as platforms that inspire and facilitate social cohesion. Rituals such as gathering before and after *salat* can serve as a means to foster close relations and social intimacy among community members. This, in turn, can lead to greater social cohesion and contribute to societal development among Muslims (Kamil & Darajat, 2019).

A mosque should serve as the epicentre of social activities, promoting social harmony (Al-Makassary, 2013). Historically, aside from being a place for worship, mosques functioned as cultural, knowledge, and information centre, as well as hubs for grassroots economic development, strategy development during times of conflict and peace, and general human resources training and development. In short, mosques have traditionally been agents of social transformation (Laugu, 2007).

The potential for these strategic roles is rooted in the egalitarian nature of mosques, which do not acknowledge social classes. The social ethics within mosques discourage selfish acts that cause disharmony. Instead, these ethics inspire the process of unification to develop more functional social structures. This is because theologically, Muslim society understands a mosque to be a sacred place for people to communicate with their Creator, transcendently recite their prayers, and to find the meaning of humanity through social interaction (Hasan & Sulaeman, 2019). Furthermore, a mosque serves as a place for other social activities, such as education, mentoring, consultation, discussion, conferences, and social services (Usman, 2020).

The Grand Mosque of Bandung, located in the heart of West Java, Indonesia, epitomises the challenges and opportunities of this broader role. Operating within an environment influenced by urban issues such as waste management, unregulated street vending, crime, clandestine prostitution, and consumerism from neighbouring shopping centres, a transformative approach to the role of the mosque is essential to addressing these issues effectively.

This paper proposes a paradigm shift, envisioning mosques not only as spiritual centres but also as robust social institutions actively involved in solving local societal issues. Such a perspective empowers mosques to catalyse positive social transformations within society, rooted in religious values. Social transformation is a humanitarian movement based on religious values that will result in nurturing awareness, compassion, and solidarity for other people (Hamid et al., 2012).

The ultimate objective is to augment the mosque's potential to contribute positively to societal transformation, fostering equitable social lives rooted in Islamic principles (Dahalan, Zakaria, Azizan, & Abdullah, 2015). During this time, the mosque is also known as a centre for the development of Islamic society through the inculcation of religious values, as well as a centre for the development of Islamic moderation values (Safei, 2021). These social roles of the mosque are highly possible because the mosque is also a social institution born and grown among the people (Fahmi, 2018). Mosques are inseparable from the social problems occurring in the society where they belong. On the contrary, there is a tendency among Muslims to leave the mosque because they do not find that the mosque provides direct benefits in solving their complex social problems. This is viable because a mosque is a social institution born and grown among the people. A mosque is intimately connected to the societal problems occurring within the society where it is located. However, there is a tendency among Muslims to disengage from the mosque, perceiving a lack of direct benefits in addressing their complex social problems (Utama, Fitrandasari, Arifin, & Muhtadi, 2018).

In examining the Grand Mosque of Bandung's efforts to navigate these urban issues, this article reveals the potential of mosques to bridge the gap between spiritual fulfillment and social activism. This study highlights the need to reintegrate the mosque into the fabric of everyday urban life. In doing so, we hope to inspire mosque management and Muslim societies to renew their understanding of the mosque's function, reviving its potential as a driving force for positive change.

This study employs a descriptive-analytical approach to examine social phenomena existing and occurring around the Grand Mosque of Bandung in the Province of West Java, with specified research variables. Non-documentary data are obtained through participative observation and in-depth interviews. The collected data are then analysed and interpreted using a qualitative descriptive analysis technique.

2. More than a Ritual Space: Understanding Roles of Mosques in Indonesian Community

In general, the literature concerning mosques highlights two predominant themes: mosques as the House of God and as centres of social development. The first idea emphasises that a mosque is the

centre of worship rituals for Muslims. The mosque is the primary place for performing *salat*, especially the rituals of Friday *salat* and Eid *salat* (Mahfud, 2014). Furthermore, it is also the place for performing certain religious activities, such as preaching Islam and *Majelis Ta'lim* (religious gathering) (Safei, 2016a).

The second predominant theme asserts that the mosque is the centre for the development of Muslim society. In this context, the mosque serves as a centre for economic (Subhan, 2019), social, educational (Syamsir, 2015), and cultural activities (Tharaba & Noviyanti, 2022). Therefore, the mosque acts both as a marker of identity and as a centre of Muslim society (Green, 2014).

Regarding these two big ideas, there are various studies investigating the position and function of mosques in Muslim society, both as the centre of ritualistic worship and as the centre of social development. Dalmeri investigates the revitalisation of the mosque's functions as an economic development centre and a hub for multicultural Islamic teachings. His study shows that a mosque is not only the centre for worship rituals but also the centre for spreading Islam and the socio-economic activities of Muslims. Dalmeri concludes that spreading Islam by orienting too much on its ritualistic aspects ignores an important dimension, i.e. the holistic development and empowerment of Muslims (Dalmeri, 2014).

In line with this, Puji Astari (2014) investigates the role of the mosque as the centre of social activities in her study. From a historical perspective, Puji Astari shows that since the time of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, the mosque has been positioned as the centre for social activities, including for the development of strategies during wartime. It is concluded that the mosque is not only a place for worship but also a centre for developing the economic, political, and cultural potentials of the people.

Meanwhile, Muhammad M. Said and Mahmuddin (2015) investigate the micro business community in Indonesia as one of the models for mosque-based social development in their study. This study shows that a mosque can serve as a centre for the economic development of Muslim society.

Andri Soemitra (2014) investigates various social development strategies through the mosque in his study. The result shows that in Indonesia, there are not many social development programmes or agendas through religion and its institution, such as the mosque, as the thinking paradigm and instrument. This finding confirms the thesis that the mosque as a religious social institution of Islam has great potential if it functions as the instrument of social development and poverty alleviation.

Studies on mosques are also conducted in other countries, such as Malaysia. Abdul Rahman bin Ahmad Dahalan et al. (2015) investigate the transformation of the mosque as the centre of economic development for Muslim society in their study. This study, conducted in Sabah, Malaysia, is not too different from the studies in Indonesia; it investigates the role of the mosque as the centre of economic development and empowerment of Muslim society. Through the implementation of the economy through the E-Halal on Stop Centre (E-HOSC), the mosques in the Sabah area contribute to improving the economic prosperity of rural societies. It is interesting that the E-HOSC programme is supervised by the National Mosque of Malaysia, and will be integrated into all mosques in the nation. This programme will indirectly bring Muslims closer to the mosques, which will enrich and extend the roles of mosques in society. It will become not only a centre for religious rituals but also a centre for various activities oriented to improving the welfare of Muslim society.

Zaidan (2020) investigated the relationship between Masjid Raya Bandung and shopping centers. The results of this research showed that the mosque was not only seen as a place of worship but also as a capital space. The formation of this capital space can be seen from the relationship between the grand mosque of Bandung with the shopping places around it and the relations of the activities of visitors who presuppose these two spaces: the mosque and the shopping centers.

These studies, including one conducted by Mufidah (2016), generally focus on the aspect of a mosque's function as the centre for the development of public potential. However, these studies primarily focus strategy employed by Masjid Raya Bandung to manage and overcome various social problems around its vicinity. There has been no study that specifically investigates how mosques respond to various social problems existing and occurring in their surroundings, especially in urban areas.

As such, one of the important contributions of the present study is to provide an empirical reconstruction of the roles of the mosque as a problem solver for various social problems in Muslim society (Hamid et al., 2012). Meanwhile, at the same time, Muslim society will also become an integral and inseparable part of the mosque itself. Without this kind of practice, mosques will remain as only sacred places, devoid of any meaningful contribution towards solving social problems of Muslim communities or the wider society. Mosques should actively participate in solving social problems. On the other hand, Muslim society may need to adapt towards the development mission and function of the mosque.

From the perspective of structuration theory developed by Giddens (2007), the relationship between the mosque (and its management) and Muslim society (including Muslim traders) can be viewed as a relationship between structure and institution. These two elements, structure and institution, are not in contrast with each other. Giddens (2007) believes that they are inseparable pairs that complement each other. The focus of this theory is on the activities of the people, the conceptualisation of interaction and relationship with institutions, and the practical comprehension of social analysis. In the context of structural theory, the modernisation of urban areas has caused social transformation as well as many social problems.

3. Mosque Management and Empowerment: Encountering between Worship and Social Disruption

Since the close of 2014, the Grand Mosque of Bandung in the Province of West Java has been ushering in a new era with the official opening of City Hall Park by the then-Mayor of Bandung, Ridwan Kamil (see Figure 1). The establishment of two main gates on either side of the mosque, aptly named Faith and Piety, serve as symbolic affirmations of the government's intent to cultivate an ambiance of serenity, joy, friendliness, and spirituality within the vicinity. Now, the mosque faces a challenge: to assert its grandeur and maintain its elegance amid the vibrant public space of City Hall Park.

Located in the heart of the city and serving as the Provincial Mosque under government supervision, the Grand Mosque of Bandung holds a central and monumental role in local development. Inaugurated by Bandung Governor HR Nuriana on 4 June 2003, the mosque has since grown into a powerful symbol of the religious fervour of the West Java populace, particularly in Bandung.

The Grand Mosque of Bandung has long been a silent witness to the unfolding history of Bandung City, including one of the most significant events in the annals of Bandung and Indonesian history; the 1955 Asia Africa Conference. Held at Gedung Merdeka, situated just across from the mosque, the leaders of Asian and African countries performed *salat* in the Grand Mosque of Bandung during the conference.

Fast forward to April 2015, the Grand Mosque once again served as a venue of global significance, when the Heads of Nations and delegates participating in the 60th Commemoration of Asia Africa Conference performed the Friday *salat* there. The Grand Mosque of Bandung is also often identified as a symbol of religious harmony in the city of Bandung, the capital of West Java province (Safei, 2016b).

Given its sociological and historical significance, the Grand Mosque of Bandung holds a prominent position as one of the main attractions of Bandung City and the Province of West Java. Since it is located right in the heart of Bandung City, the mosque is at the epicentre of various urban social challenges, resonating with the hustle and bustle of city life. Owing to its strategic location, the Grand Mosque and the City Hall around it have become the bustling centre of activities for the local community.



Figure 1 The Grand Mosque of Bandung in a new face. Source: Safei (2015)

Before the mosque's renovation and inauguration by the Mayor of Bandung at the close of 2014, the current Governor of West Java, on 11 January 2007, officially designated a new name for the area – Plaza Masjid Raya Jawa Barat or Plaza Alun-Alun Bandung. Since 2013, under the administration of Governor Ahmad Heryawan, the management of the Grand Mosque of Bandung has been placed under the coordination and control of the BPIC (Islamic Centre Management Board) of the Provincial Government. This shift transformed the mosque into an asset of the provincial government, alongside several other mosques, such as Masjid Nurul Quran LPTQ, Masjid Pusdai, and Masjid At-Ta'awun Bogor (Safei, 2015).

Since the official opening of City Hall Park, the public has had broader access to the main building of the Grand Mosque of Bandung (see Figure 2). Nowadays, the Grand Mosque is closely intertwined with the beautiful City Hall Park in Bandung. Both the physical structure of the Grand Mosque and its activities are open to the public. The people of Bandung City can witness everything that takes place in the mosque. In a recent interview, Tjetje Soebrata, the head of the management board of Masjid Raya Bandung, mentioned that since the official opening of City Hall Park in late 2014, there has been a significant increase in the number of people performing *salat* in the Grand Mosque (interview, June 15, 2022).



Figure 2 The plaza of the Grand Mosque of Bandung as a public space. Source: Safei (2015)

With such accessibility, it has become easier for the public to enter the mosque. In addition, City Hall Park has become a bustling and vibrant place. This increased activity directly impacts the Grand Mosque of Bandung, making it busier and livelier (see Figure 3). Consequently, various social problems

in the surrounding area affect the management of the mosque. As a public property, any mosque is open for use by anyone, which can bring about various challenges for the mosque.

Due to its central location in the city, the Grand Mosque of Bandung faces a range of urban challenges, including issues related to environmental cleanliness, hidden prostitution around the mosque, street vendors with connections to illicit networks, and other social welfare problems such as homeless people and beggars who often sleep on the mosque's terrace.

Among these issues, the management of the Grand Mosque of Bandung places great importance on addressing the presence of street vendors who operate within the mosque area; including its terrace. The presence of these street vendors contributes to a complex social problem that proves challenging to resolve. The concern is not solely focused on their livelihoods, but rather the untidiness they create, which significantly impacts the overall aesthetics and orderliness of the city as well as the mosque's reputation. The issue of street vendors presents a multifaceted challenge that requires careful consideration and solutions.

Based on empirical evidence, street vendors in the vicinity of the City Hall and the Grand Mosque of Bandung consistently contribute to traffic congestion in the area. Moreover, shop and store owners in the nearby shopping district frequently express their grievances about street vendors setting up stalls directly in front of their establishments, obstructing access and resulting in financial losses. Efforts have been made to address this issue by relocating the street vendors, which have yielded successful outcomes in certain areas but have complicated the problem in others.

Some relocation attempts have even led to conflicts and legal disputes. For instance, the 2004 relocation of street vendors in seven spots of Oto Iskandar Dinata (Otista) Street and the city hall area resulted in significant failure. Furthermore, there were instances of corruption where government-provided budgets for the development of relocation areas were misused.



Figure 3 The Grand Mosque of Bandung at night. Source: Safei (2015)

The presence of street vendors around the city hall and the Grand Mosque represents one of the most serious problems in the city of Bandung. The management of the Grand Mosque of Bandung identifies one of the underlying causes of this complex issue as the involvement of a shadow government that exploits such conditions for personal gain. What is meant by shadow government is a group of thugs (or *preman* in the Indonesian language), who control certain areas, such as the Bandung Square area where the Grand Mosque is located. The street vendors conducting business on the terrace of the mosque are supported by this shadow government, comprising street hoodlums who instil fear in the street vendors, surpassing any fear they may have of the official government authorities. A street vendor who sells around the Grand Mosque stated,

I know that selling here is prohibited by regulations, including by the management of the mosque here. However, I dare to sell here because I have also paid security fees to the people who control

this area. If I didn't sell here, I don't know where I would be selling. This is a compulsion (Interview, June 20, 2022).

In addition to the social problem of street vendors selling their goods on the mosque's terrace, another prevalent issue is the high rate of criminal activities. Unfortunately, visitors often lose their belongings such as wallets, purses, bags, and cell phones while performing *salat* in the Grand Mosque of Bandung. Numerous tourists from other cities have lodged complaints with the management, seeking reimbursement or donations to help them return home after experiencing such losses. Moreover, due to the large crowds in the surrounding area, it is not uncommon for parents to lose sight of their children, particularly during weekends when City Hall Park and the Grand Mosque of Bandung are at their busiest.

Another social problem revolves around the presence of beggars and homeless individuals who utilise the area of the Grand Mosque of Bandung as their place of operation. Additionally, it has been observed that some prostitutes choose City Hall Park and the Grand Mosque as their place of operation during the evening. These longstanding social problems have posed challenges for the Grand Mosque of Bandung for many years.

A Mosque Prosperity Council official (DKM-Dewan Kemakmuran Masjid) stated, "The problem of beggars and vagrants has been an old problem that is difficult to eradicate. The DKM has collaborated with the civil service police many times to control the existence of these vagrants and beggars. However, it seems the problem is recurring. Maybe we have to work together with the City Government's Social Service (Interview, June 20, 2022).

Given its status as a government (provincial) mosque, in the past two years, the management of the Grand Mosque of Bandung has collaborated with the Provincial Government of West Java and the Regional Government of Bandung City. Considering the complexity and extensive nature of the street vendor problem, an integrative approach is necessary to address it effectively. The management of the Grand Mosque of Bandung, in coordination with the government, has implemented at least three approaches to tackle these challenges.

The first approach is the juridical approach. Based on Regional Law No. 4/2011, which prohibits the selling of goods in certain spots, street vendors are relocated and organised. They are then relocated to the basement of the city hall, which also serves as the parking lot for visitors to the Grand Mosque of Bandung. The Civil Service Police Unit, in collaboration with the Special Task Force Team, is empowered with the authority to organise the street vendors, particularly those operating around the Grand Mosque of Bandung. It is crucial for the authorities, including the Civil Service Police Unit, local government apparatus, the management of the Grand Mosque of Bandung, and the officials of the Bandung City Government, to strictly enforce the law. In managing street vendors, strict adherence to regulations is paramount. The government actively participates in these efforts by upholding laws and regulations. Failing to enforce strict measures will exacerbate the problem. The government often encountered challenges posed by the street vendors' 'mafia' (shadow government) who would go to great lengths to secure their business spots. The high economic turnover in the area further motivates some street vendors to persist stubbornly in their locations, despite the illegality of their operations.

One significant challenge in addressing the issue of street vendors is the inconsistent enforcement of laws. To address this concern in the long term, the Mayor of Bandung proposes the formation of a disciplinary force within the management of the Grand Mosque of Bandung. In response to this suggestion, the management of the Grand Mosque of Bandung established a security Force called AMAR (Asykar Masjid Raya or Security Force of Great Mosque). Working in collaboration with the Civil Service Police Unit, AMAR ensures the consistent enforcement of rules and regulations on street vendors, including the prohibition of selling goods in specific areas such as the city hall and places of worship, as outlined in the Regional Law of Bandung City No 4/2011. Through the joint efforts of AMAR and the Civil Service Police Unit, there is a concerted commitment to maintaining consistent adherence to these regulations.

In addition, the Management of the Grand Mosque can engage in advocacy efforts to address systemic social problems. By raising awareness about issues, promoting dialogue, and influencing

public policies, mosques can work towards bringing positive changes at the societal level. This can involve partnering with other organisations, participating in community forums, and engaging in grassroots activism.

Furthermore, in dealing with the perpetrators, the security forces, both from the government and the Grand Mosque of Bandung, are proactive in apprehending lawbreakers and bringing them to the police for legal action. These security forces frequently conduct raids in the vicinity of the mosque to counteract and address the issue of prostitution. Any prostitutes apprehended in these operations are taken to the social service office for rehabilitation, where they receive support and skills training aimed at facilitating their reintegration into society and preventing a return to engaging in prostitution.

The second approach employed by the management of the Grand Mosque of Bandung is the theological approach. Through this method, the mosque management seeks to raise awareness among street vendors operating on the mosque's terrace. They distribute pamphlets containing quotes from the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ emphasising his prohibition of conducting business transactions within mosques. For street vendors, the mosque management utilises Islamic normative references, such as hadiths, to discourage their activities. It is worth noting that these theological measures are generally met with little resistance from street vendors.

The third approach is the sociological approach. The management of the mosque engages in persuasive and gentle reprimands to discourage street vendors from conducting business within the mosque area. Utilising the Sundanese local wisdom, they employ a cultural approach to address the street vendors. This same approach is also applied to beggars or homeless individuals found sleeping in the mosque or its surroundings.

During the holy month of Ramadan, the management of the Grand Mosque of Bandung routinely provides thousands of *iftar* (fast-breaking) packages every day for the mosque's visitors, including those facing social welfare problems such as beggars, homeless individuals, and street vendors who often operate within the vicinity of the mosque. Through cooperation with the government, businesses, and industries, the management of the Grand Mosque of Bandung distributes thousands of food packages every day during Ramadan, demonstrating social solidarity and responsibility towards the less fortunate individuals in the surrounding area.

In addition, on Eid-ul-Adha, a festival where Muslims perform Qurbani (sacrifice) of livestock, the management of the Grand Mosque of Bandung prepares thousands of meat parcels for distribution to the mosque's visitors, particularly those who are economically disadvantaged. These efforts aim to alleviate the difficulties faced by vulnerable individuals and foster a sense of community support and inclusivity.

In this regard, the Grand Mosque of Bandung often prioritises community engagement as a core strategy. By actively engaging with the local community, the mosque can foster positive relationships and build trust. This can be achieved through open houses, interfaith dialogues, community service projects, and inviting non-Muslims to participate in mosque activities. By promoting understanding and harmony, mosques can address social problems through collaboration and cooperation. In addition, the Grand Mosque of Bandung frequently initiates community empowerment programs to address specific social issues. These programs may focus on poverty alleviation, healthcare access, education, vocational training, and skill development. By empowering individuals and communities through these initiatives, the Grand Mosque of Bandung aims to reduce social inequality and improve the overall well-being of the community.

Regarding this matter, a mosque administrator stated "We from DKM, to provide more optimal social and religious services to the community and congregation, are opening and providing free family, legal, and psychological consultation services. DKM also incidentally provides services in the health sector by collaborating with the Health Service. Apart from that, DKM provides ambulances that can be accessed by people who need them. For educational purposes, DKM also provides education for young children, apart from providing special skills education in entrepreneurship." (Interview, July 5, 2022)

Through a social approach, the Grand Mosque of Bandung established social service programs to directly address social problems in their communities. These programs may include food drives, clothing distribution, healthcare initiatives, counseling services, and support for vulnerable groups such as the homeless, refugees, or those struggling with addiction. By providing practical assistance, the Grand Mosque of Bandung can alleviate the effects of social problems and create a positive impact. As for controlling homeless people, including prostitutes who like to hang out around the area, DKM collaborates with the police to routinely control and raise awareness for them. A homeless person who often sleeps in the corner of the Grand Mosque stated, "I don't have a place to live, so at night I like to sleep in the corner of this mosque. If there is an order I leave, and look for another place to take shelter. Because I also know that the mosque is not a place for sleep." (Personal communication, July 25, 2022).

4. Mosque for Structural and Social Transformation

From the perspective of the structural theory proposed by Giddens (Giddens, 2007), the relationship and interaction between the management of the mosque (structure) and the Muslim society, including beggars or street vendors in the surrounding area of the mosque and the city hall, are founded on strong social capital. This social capital encompasses togetherness, solidarity, and a shared belief in the sacred nature of the mosque that should be respected. These social capital resources are utilised to address the issue of street vendors selling their goods on the mosque's terrace and in the city hall area. The mosque's management (structure) combines these social capital resources with Sundanese local wisdom to effectively tackle the social problems of Muslim society, particularly the street vendors (institution). Moreover, this approach aims to foster consensus and activate people's subconscious to address the fundamental challenges of daily life within Muslim society.

Furthermore, the relationship between the mosque management and Muslim society, especially the street vendors and socially disadvantaged individuals operating within the mosque area, is characterised by emotional intimacy, social closeness, and shared faith. Elements that foster a sense of responsibility to collectively address social problems together and in a humane manner. In this context, the mosque serves as a central hub for the social transformation of Muslim society, including positive impacts that transcend it (Al-Krenawi, 2016).

The mosque and the Muslims are integral; they make a strong and resilient Muslim society. From this perspective, an agreement or understanding is reached between the structure, the management board of the mosque and the institution, the Muslim society that the mosque serves, including street vendors and socially disadvantaged individuals. This understanding leads to a shift in people's perspectives, attitudes, and behaviours. The mosque is no longer viewed solely as a place for worship, but also as a space where various social issues can be peacefully addressed and resolved. This mutual recognition and collaboration contribute to the development of a harmonious and empowered Muslim community.

5. Conclusion

The Grand Mosque of Bandung of the Province of West Java serves as a prominent symbol and centre of social transformation for the Muslim society in the area. Being located in the heart of the city and facing urban challenges, the mosque, and its management are closely intertwined with the social dynamics and problems faced by the Muslim community.

The Grand Mosque of Bandung is actively involved in managing and overcoming social problems that surround the mosque so that the mosque does not only function as a place of worship but also as a platform for social solutions. Through various approaches such as juridical, theological, and sociological, the management of the mosque tackles issues such as street vendors, criminality, and social welfare problems. They employ a combination of strict law enforcement, cultural and religious teachings, as well as social initiatives during Ramadan and Eid-ul-Adha to foster a sense of community support and inclusivity.

The mosque's involvement in solving social problems is essential in reshaping the perspectives, attitudes, and behaviours of the Muslim society it serves. It functions as a catalyst for positive change,

actively contributing to the well-being and development of the community. With the cooperation of the management, religious figures, and government officials, the mosque continues to play a crucial role in deconstructing traditional understandings and actively participating in the transformation and empowerment of Muslim society. Ultimately, the Grand Mosque of Bandung stands as a beacon of hope, actively engaging in the deconstruction of societal challenges and offering solutions for the betterment of the Muslim community it serves.

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