Islamic Law Perspective in Viewing the Implementation of Friday Prayer in the Workplace or Not a Mosque When the COVID-19 Pandemic Happened

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Abstract

This research was conducted to see how it is legal to perform Friday prayers in places that are not mosques, such as offices or other workplaces such as halls, prayer rooms, and the field during the Covid-19 pandemic. This research is part of qualitative research that uses descriptive methods using data derived from various research results and previous studies that still have relevance to this research. This study found that the law of carrying out Friday prayers in a place that is not a mosque during a pandemic is permissible. This law refers to various verses of the Qur’an, hadiths, and rules in the science of fiqh to various opinions of scholars. However, if there is a mosque that is still close to and can accommodate the entire congregation after the distance between the prayer rows, it is more advisable to be able to pray in that mosque.

Keywords: Islamic Perspective, Friday Prayer, Covid-19 Pandemic, Mosque.

A. INTRODUCTION

Islam is a religion that is easy to implement for its adherents, as the word of Allah SWT in Qs. al-Ḥajj/22:78, “He has chosen you and has not placed upon you in the religion any difficulty”. Likewise, His word in Qs. al-Baqarah/2:185: “Allāh intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship”. As the Prophet Muhammad SAW said: "Indeed Islam is an easy religion".

This rule certainly greatly influences the implementation of Friday prayers, which are usually attended by many congregations. However, because of the rules for maintaining physical distance, the prayer rows must be stretched, resulting in the mosque being unable to accommodate large congregations. This can then raise questions, namely the law for conducting Friday prayers other than mosques such as offices, prayer rooms and buildings or fields due to Covid-19 conditions (Salin & Darojat, 2019).

The condition of the spread of Covid-19 in Indonesia impacts the worship life of Muslims, such as the implementation of Friday prayers. During the new normal period, the government and ulama have issued rules for the permission to perform Friday prayers at mosques in areas or areas where the virus’s spread is controlled on the condition that the prayer distances (physical distancing) are one meter apart to
break the chain of the spread of Covid-19 (Syahrul et al., 2020). These government and ulama regulations are based on directives from medical experts because they are the ones who know more about the problem of this epidemic or virus (Sarnoto & Hayatina, 2021), as Allah says in Qs. al-Nahl/16:43 “So ask the people of the message [i.e., former scriptures] if you do not know.”

This regulation certainly significantly influences the implementation of Friday prayers, which are usually attended by many congregations. However, because of the rules for maintaining physical distance, the prayer rows must be stretched, resulting in the mosque being unable to accommodate large congregations. This raises questions regarding the law for conducting Friday prayers in halls, prayer rooms, workplaces or offices other than mosques due to the conditions for the spread of Covid-19 (Multajimah et al., 2021).

The writings relevant to this study include a study researched by Eko Misbahuddin and Muhammad Yusram in a journal article entitled, “The Law of Congregational Prayer in a Mosque with Separate Safs Due to the Plague”. This paper describes the law of praying in a congregation with separate rows during the Covid-19 pandemic (Fuqohak & Amiruddin, 2021). The results of this paper indicate that the law of praying in a congregation with tens of thousands of rows apart due to the epidemic is legal, but following the direction of the government and ulama (MUI) to pray at home is more critical during a pandemic (Karyadi et al., 2022).

Writing that is also relevant to this writing, does Ronny Mahmuddin write a journal article titled, “The Law of the Implementation of Two Waves of Friday Prayers in One Mosque in the Covid-19 Pandemic Period”. This writing describes the law of carrying out Friday prayers in two waves in one mosque during the Covid-19 pandemic (Al-Astewani, 2020). The writing results show that it is permissible to carry out Friday prayers in two waves in one mosque during the Covid-19 pandemic because there is an urgent/emergency need to prevent the spread of the virus (Kotani et al., 2022).

Another article relevant to this writing is a journal article entitled “Emergency of Religious Moderation amid the 2019 Corona Virus Disease (Covid-19) Pandemic” written by Abdul Syatar, Muhammad Majdi Amiruddin and Arif Rahman. This paper aims to describe the importance of maintaining moderation in religion/worship during a pandemic. The results of this paper indicate that a moderate priority in religion/worship during the COVID-19 pandemic is a must.

Research carried out by Muh. Hamdan Fathur Rahim entitled “Perception of Religious Figures About Friday Prayers in Two Adjacent Mosques (Case Study of Gilang Village, Ngunut District, Tulungagung Regency)”. This study aims to determine the perception of religious leaders about the law of Friday prayers in two adjacent mosques in the village of Gilang-Tulungagung and to describe the perceptions of fiqh scholars about the law of Friday prayers in two adjacent mosques (Muthalib et al., 2021). The results of this paper indicate that: (1) The perception of community leaders in the village of Gilang about establishing Friday prayers in two adjacent mosques is permissible in the Shari’a, and Friday prayers in the two mosques
are considered valid due to an urgent need, namely between the two parties cannot be gathered or united to establish one Friday prayer in one mosque; (2) The opinion of the majority of scholars says that establishing Friday prayers in two adjacent mosques in one village simultaneously (Ta’addud al-Jumu’ah) is not permissible if no excuse prevents it from being done in one place (village/city) (Kyaw, 2021).

What distinguishes the writings above from other writings in the author’s study is that there has not been single writing that has discussed the law of Friday prayers other than in mosques during the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, the author views that this study is a study that has novelty value and deserves to be investigated more deeply. This writing aims to describe the legal implementation of Friday prayers at work or offices other than mosques during the Covid-19 pandemic based on the arguments of the Qur’an, hadith and fiqh rules, as well as the arguments of the scholars (Choironi, 2021).

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Islamic Law

The definition of Islamic law or Islamic law is a system of rules based on the revelation of Allah SWT and the Sunnah of the Prophet regarding the behavior of the mukallaf (people who can already be burdened with obligations) that are recognized and believed, which are binding on all adherents (Putri et al., 2021). And this refers to what the Apostle has done to carry it out totally. According to the term, Shari’a means the laws ordered by Allah SWT for His people brought by a Prophet, related to belief (aqidah) and amaliyah (Fetraningtyas & Yunanto, 2021).

Islamic law, according to language, means the path through which humankind goes to Allah Ta’ala. And it turns out that Islam is not only a religion that teaches about how to worship God only. The rules or systems of Allah’s provisions regulate human relations with Allah Ta’ala and human relations with each other. These rules are based on Islamic teachings, especially the Al-Quran and Hadith (Ullah et al., 2022).

The definition of Islamic law is shari’a which means rules made by Allah for His people brought by a Prophet SAW, both laws related to belief (aqidah) and laws related to amalayah (deeds) carried out by all Muslims (Arifin, 2020).

Islamic law is not just a theory but also a rule to be applied in the joints of human life. Because many problems are encountered, generally in religion, which often makes Muslims think that they tend to be different. For this reason, sources of Islamic law are needed as a solution (Husna & Thohir, 2020), namely as follows:

a. Al-Quran

The first source of Islamic law is the Al-Quran, a Muslim holy book revealed to the last Prophet, namely the Prophet Muhammad, through the Angel Gabriel. Al-Quran contains contents containing commands, prohibitions, suggestions, Islamic stories, provisions, wisdom, etc. The Qur’an explains in detail how humans should live their lives to create a society with noble character. Therefore, the verses of the Qur’an become the primary basis for establishing a Shari’a (Athiyah & Islam, 2019).
b. Al-Hadith
The second source of Islamic law is Al-Hadith, namely everything based on the Prophet Muhammad. Both in the form of words, behavior, and his silence. In Al-Hadith contained rules that detail all the rules that are still global in the Qur’an. The word hadith has experienced an expansion of meaning so that it is synonymous with sunnah, and it can mean all words (words), deeds, provisions and approvals of the Prophet Muhammad which are made into provisions or Islamic law (Harun et al., 2021).

c. Ijma’
The agreement of all mujtahid scholars at one time after the time of the Prophet on a matter in religion.” And the ijma’ that can be accounted for is what happened at the time of the companions, the tabi’in (after the companions), and the tabi’ut tabi’in (after the tabi’in). Because after their time, the scholars have dispersed, and there are many, and the disputes are increasing, so it is not certain that all the scholars have agreed (Purkon, 2022).

d. Qiyas
The fourth source of Islamic law after the Qur’an, Al-Hadith and Ijma’ is Qiyas. Qiyas means explaining something for which there is no evidence of text in the Qur’an or hadith by comparing something similar to something that is to be known about the law (Zuhri, 2019). This means that if a text has shown the law regarding a case in Islam and it has been known through one method to find out the legal problem, then other cases are the same as the case in which the text is in that case, and then the law of the case is equated with case law with text.

2. Islamic Law in the Implementation of Friday Prayers
According to the consensus of the Muslims, Friday prayers are obligatory based on the word of Allah in Surah Al-Jumuah, verse 9: “O you who have believed, when (the adhān) is called for the prayer on the day of Jumu’ah (Friday), then proceed to the remembrance of Allāh and leave trade”.

According to Imam Syafi’i, someone who is mature, independent and has no excuses when living in a country, it is obligatory for him to perform Friday prayers. If he is afraid that he will be arrested and imprisoned by the authorities without the truth if he goes out on Friday prayers, then it is permissible for him not to attend Friday prayers (Manshur, 2020). But suppose the ruler wants to imprison because of the rights of a Muslim who has been wronged, such as the shedding of blood or the law of hadd. There is no concession for him to leave the Friday prayer unless he hopes that the punishment will be abolished, then, he may leave the Friday prayer (Shahid, 2021).

All scholars agree that the conditions for Friday prayers are the same as those for other prayers, such as purification, covering aurat, and facing the Qibla. And the time from when the sun goes down until the shadow of everything is the same length. It can be erected in a mosque or any other place unless the Maliki school of the law
states that Friday prayers are invalid unless they are performed in the mosque (Bunyamin, 2018). And all scholars have agreed that Friday prayers are obligatory for men only while women are not. And that people who have performed the Friday prayer, then the obligation to pray dhuhr falls. And the Friday prayer is not obligatory for the blind and is not valid except in the congregation.

Regarding the number of worshipers for Friday prayers, there are disagreements. Maliki believes that the Friday prayers are carried out by at least 12 people other than the Imam. Imamiyah has at least four people other than the Imam. Shafi’i and Hambali had at least 40 people besides the priest. Hanafi, five people and some of their other scholars stated seven people (Ismail et al., 2020). They agreed that it is not permissible to travel on Friday for people who are obliged to perform Friday prayers and have fulfilled their conditions after the sun has slipped before he finishes praying the Friday prayers, except for the Hanafi school, they say they are allowed (Sbai, 2019).

C. METHOD

This writing method is to use the library method, which is to browse the primary and secondary literature related to the writing discussed. The writing of this study is qualitative descriptive writing using a legal/normative approach, namely describing syar’i arguments, fiqh rules and opinions of scholars about the law of conducting Friday prayers outside mosques during the Covid-19 pandemic.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Ruling on Friday Prayers Outside the Mosque During the Covid-19 Pandemic

The law of carrying out Friday prayers other than in mosques, such as in workplaces, offices, fields or halls (open spaces), is generally permitted, especially if there is an urgent or emergency need. There is no legal requirement for Friday prayers to be performed in the mosque. What is required for the validity of the Friday prayer is that it is carried out in villages, urban areas or urban outskirts where there are settlements.

Abd. al-Raḥman al-Saʿdiy, in the book Ibhaṣ al-Muʿminin by Abdullah ibn Abd. al-Raḥman al-Jibrin, stated that there are five conditions for the validity of Friday prayers. The five conditions are residents, carried out at the time of Zuhur until before the time of Asr, carried out in a village/city, preceded by two sermons, and the person who carried it out was a free person, not an enslaved person. Al-Saʿdiy’s statement above shows that Friday prayers are not required to be held in mosques because they are not included in the conditions for the validity of Friday prayers.

If the employees perform Friday prayers at the mosque closest to their place of work, then that is more important. Jumhur ulama allow Friday prayers in various places in one village or city if there is an urgent need, such as the mosque’s location, which is very far away or the condition of a small mosque that cannot accommodate many congregations. Moreover, in the current state of Covid-19 in Indonesia, the
Implementation of Friday prayers other than in mosques, such as in offices or the like, is allowed due to emergency conditions or urgent needs. Efforts are made for employees to carry out Friday prayers at the nearest mosque from work if possible. However, suppose it is not possible because the mosque cannot accommodate many congregations due to the stretched position of the prayer rows. In that case, it is permissible for employees or workers to perform Friday prayers in their workplaces.

2. **Argumentative Theorems of the Qur’an:**
   - The word of Allah SWT in Qs. al-Baqarah/2:185
     "Allāh intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship.”
   - Word of Allah SWT in Qs. al-Maidah/5:6
     "Allāh does not intend to make difficulty for you.”
   - The Word of God in Qs. al-Hajj/22:78
     "He has chosen you and has not placed upon you in the religion any difficulty.”

   The verses above clearly show that Allah sent down Islamic law, which is full of ease and does not trouble His servants. Because the purpose of the Shari’a is to benefit humans in this world and the hereafter, even something forbidden during an emergency, something forbidden becomes lawful or chooses something much lighter in harm. As is the case with the research results by Idris, which analyzes the application of the Laa arar walaa irar rule in the medical and medical world, namely taking the lesser harm and avoiding the bigger harm. Therefore, it is permissible to perform Friday prayers other than in mosques, such as in buildings, halls, prayer rooms, and in the field if there is an emergency or an urgent need based on the verses above.

3. **Argumentative Theorems of Hadith**
   - “I was sent with the easy teachings of monotheism”.
   - “Indeed you were sent to make it easy and you were not sent to give trouble to others”

   The hadiths above show that Islam brought by the Prophet SAW is a religion that is easy and does not make it difficult for its people, especially if there are things that are emerging that are difficult, then Islam has provided a solution. As in fasting, Rafi said that the groups who get rukhsah (relief) are the sick, travelers, menstruating or postpartum women, pregnant or breastfeeding women, and the elderly. Likewise, in the implementation of Friday prayers other than the mosque due to an emergency or urgent need, the law is permissible because it aligns with the hadiths above.

4. **Argumentative Fiqh Rules**
   a. **Fiqh Rules: al-Masyaqqah Tajlibu al-Taisir**

   This rule shows that when a person encounters difficulty, then the difficulty becomes a cause of ease, like someone who is sick and cannot be exposed to water, then it is permissible for him not to perform ablution and replace it with tayammum. Therefore, it is necessary to stretch the prayer lines even though it
impacts the implementation of Friday prayers in places other than mosques to prevent the spread of Covid-19.

b. Fiqh Rules: *Dar’u al-Mafasid Muqaddam ala Jalbi al-Masaliḥ*

This rule shows that preventing harm takes precedence over getting the benefit. Because of the magnitude of the harm caused if the Friday prayer is performed in tight rows, this harm must be prevented by stretching the rows. Therefore, it is permissible to perform Friday prayers outside the mosque due to an emergency or an urgent need based on the rule “*Dar’u al-Mafasid Muqaddam ala Jalbi al-Masaliḥ*”.

c. Fiqh Rules: *al-Maisur La Yasqūṭ bi al-Ma’sur*

This rule shows that something that someone can still do should not be abandoned because of difficulty. In connection with the implementation of Friday prayers during the Covid-19 pandemic, it is not permissible to leave Friday prayers as long as they can be performed according to one’s ability, namely praying in a stretched state, which results in Friday prayers being held outside the mosque. This is due to the condition of the mosque that cannot accommodate all congregations at one time unless the government and ulama issue a regulation to close the mosque due to the uncontrolled Covid-19 condition temporarily. So, at that time, it was not allowed to disagree with the rules of the government and the ulama to maintain the unity and integrity of the Muslims, as the fiqh rule reads: “*Hukmu al-Ḥakim fī Masail al-Ijtihad Yarfa ʿu al-Khilaf*” means “The judge’s decision (the government) resolves differences of opinion is among the people”.

Friday prayers must continue to be carried out even though there are difficulties faced, namely the Covid condition, even though Friday prayers must be carried out in other than the mosque. Therefore, the implementation of Friday prayers other than in mosques - in areas where the spread of COVID-19 is controlled as directed by the government and scholars - as long as it can be carried out due to an emergency or urgent need, then the law may be based on the fiqh rules of “*al-Maisur La Yasqūt bi al-Ma’sur*”. Based on this rule, a Muslim is not allowed to leave the Friday prayer as long as there is convenience to carry it out even though there are a few obstacles/difficulties, namely the Friday prayer outside the mosque.

d. Fiqh Rules: *Idza Daqa al-Amru Ittasaʿ*

This rule shows that if a person finds difficulty due to an emergency, it is easy for him to do something forbidden. It is permissible in connection with the implementation of the Friday prayer other than the mosque due to an emergency or an urgent need. Therefore, the implementation of Friday prayers outside the mosque due to an emergency or an urgent need is allowed based on the fiqh rule: *Idza Daqa al-Amru Ittasaʿ* (If an affair is narrow because of an emergency, then the affair becomes broad).
e. Fiqh Rules: *al-Hajah Tunazzal Manzilah al-Darurat mmah Kanat aw Khassah*

This rule shows that hajat (needs) can be equated with an emergency in general or precisely. Regarding the implementation of Friday prayers other than mosques because of an urgent need to avoid crowds of worshipers without physical distancing to avoid the rapid spread of the coronavirus. So, the condition is considered the same as an emergency condition, so that the law is the same as emergency law, namely something that is forbidden because of an emergency. Therefore, implementing Friday prayers other than the mosque due to an urgent need is permissible based on the fiqh rule “*al-Hajah Tunazzal Manzilah al-Darurat mmah Kanat aw Khassah*”.

5. Arguments of the Ulama

The law for carrying out Friday prayers in other than mosques, such as fields, halls, prayer rooms and others during the Covid-19 pandemic, is relevant to the arguments of the scholars who allow the law to carry out Friday prayers in various places in a city or village out of necessity. Below, the author describes the arguments of the scholars regarding the permissibility of Friday prayers in various places in a city/village because of the intention.

The implementation of Friday prayers in various places other than the mosque, because there is an urgent need, is allowed on a figurative basis, that is, it is likened/equated with Friday prayers being allowed to be held in various places in one area or city. Kuwaiti clerics on the website mention that most ulamas allow Friday prayers in several places if the mosque is far away, the mosque is narrow, or fear of disturbance or other excuses.

Ibn Baz mentions a narration that Ali bin Abi Talib was asked during his caliphate that in the city of Kufa, there were weak people who were difficult to go out to perform the Eid prayers in congregation in the Sahara (desert). So, he ordered someone to become an imam to perform Eid prayers in the city with the weak. As for Ali bin Abi Talib performing Eid prayers with the Muslims in the desert. Suppose the implementation of the Eid prayer was allowed in two places during the time of Ali bin Abi Talib because there was an urgent need. In that case, the implementation of the Friday prayer in two places in one city or area is the same as the condition of the Eid prayer being allowed in two places because of difficulties, urgent needs and to provide convenience for the Muslims. Jumhur ulama allow Friday prayers in several places due to an urgent need.

Ibn Qudamah in al-Mugniy said that Friday prayers are prescribed to gather and hear the sermon, so it is permissible to carry it out in several places, such as the Eid prayer. It is authentically reported that Ali bin Abi Talib performed the Eid prayers in the desert (Sahara) during the caliphate and asked Abu Mas‘ud al-Badriy to be the Imam of the Eid prayers for the weak Muslims who were unable to attend the Eid prayers in the Sahara desert. The Prophet Muhammad SAW did not perform Friday prayers twice in one mosque because the companions were eager to perform Friday prayers with the Prophet and wanted to hear his advice because he was the
messenger of Allah who was in charge of conveying the message and law of Allah, even though their homes far from the Prophet’s mosque. As for if there is no urgent need, then Friday prayers are not allowed to be held in various places. The majority of scholars said that the Prophet and his Companions were never reported and that they performed Friday prayers in two or more places because there was no urgent need.

Kuwaiti clerics issued a fatwa, stating that it is permissible for workers in a company to perform Friday prayers in the musalla of their workplace if they cannot perform it in the mosque because the mosque is far from their place of work which takes about half an hour on foot. Jumhur ulama allow Friday prayers in several places if the distance from the mosque is far or the mosque is narrow or afraid of disturbance or other excuses. There is no requirement for the validity of Friday prayers to be carried out in mosques. However, what is required must be implemented in urban areas or on the outskirts of urban or rural areas. Even some scholars allow Friday prayers to be held in Padang Sahara if they are close to residential areas.

Likewise, it is stated that there is nothing wrong with workers or employees in a company carrying out Friday prayers at their workplace if the company forbids them to leave their workplace, and their workplace is in urban or rural areas, because Friday prayers may be performed in all places while in urban or rural areas.

Fatwa al-Lajnah al-Daimah issued a fatwa that Muslims abroad cannot perform Friday prayers in one mosque. This is because the mosque cannot accommodate all the congregation, so it is okay for some of them to look for a place even though it is not a mosque, such as special places, such as parks or public squares that get permission from the local government to be used as a place for Friday prayers. Imam al-Nawawi said: “Friday prayers may be held in several places in all cities with a large population, and it is difficult for them to gather in one place. This is the correct opinion. Al-Imam al-Mawardiy said that this is the opinion chosen by al-Muzaniy.

In the narration of ‘Abd. al-Razzaq mentioned that Ibn Juraij said: “I once asked ‘Ata’ (a tabiin): “What do you think the Jamik Mosque (major mosque) in Basra cannot accommodate all the residents of Basra, what should they do?” ‘Ata’ replied: “Every person who has a mosque can perform Friday prayers in their respective mosques”.

In Rad al-Muḥtar, Ibn’ Abidin (the Hanafi scholar) said: “Friday prayers may be performed in several places in one city without conditions”. It is stated in the book al-Inṣāf: “It is not permissible to offer Friday prayers in more than one place if there is no intention.” The Malikiyah, Syafiiyah and Hanabilah schools and a strong Hanafiyyah history, that it is not permissible to perform Friday prayers in more than one place if there is no intention/need.

The Fatwa Committee of the Great Ulama of Saudi Arabia issued a fatwa that the implementation of Friday prayers twice in one mosque is not justified by sharia. We do not know if this has its origin in Islam. Originally the Friday prayer was held once in one city. It was not allowed to perform the Friday prayer in more than one place unless there was a syar’i excuse such as the distance from the residence of the
mosque or a little mosque so that it could not accommodate all the congregation or other reasons were allowed to perform Friday prayers elsewhere.

From a series of statements by the scholars above, it is shown that it is permissible to perform Friday prayers in various places in a city/village because there are events such as mosques which are very far away so that people find it difficult to gather in one mosque or for other purposes. This can be illustrated by the permissibility of performing Friday prayers for employees/workers at their workplaces if there is an emergency or a vital need, such as the current Covid-19 condition. However, the original law was not required or require a mosque as a place for Friday prayers. What is disputed is the permissibility of performing Friday prayers in several places in a city or area without an acceptable excuse.

Many scholars say it is not permissible to perform Friday prayers in several places in one city or area without a justified excuse. The excuses in question are mosques far from where people live, small mosques that, however, if the employees perform Friday prayers at the mosque closest to their workplace in normal conditions or not in an emergency, then it is better and more important to get out of the differences of opinion of the scholars.

E. CONCLUSION

The author ends this discussion by concluding that it is permissible for employees/workers to perform Friday prayers outside the mosque, such as in their offices, halls or workplaces if there is an emergency or an urgent need. An example of this is the mosque closest to the workplace cannot accommodate the congregation due to the rules for stretching the prayer lines to maintain a safe distance (physical distancing) during this covid-19 pandemic. However, suppose the nearest mosque can accommodate the entire congregation even though it is in a position of tenuous prayer rows. In that case, the employees must perform Friday prayers at the mosque. This is based on the opinion of the Jumhur Ulama, unless there is a need, such as a remote mosque or a small mosque that cannot accommodate a large number of congregations, or for other justified reasons, then Friday prayers are allowed at their workplace.

REFERENCES