

ENHANCING COMMUNITY SKILLS: CORPSE PREPARATION TRAINING IN KLEPU HAMLET

Wanda Ria Ristanti¹, Nurul Fathiyah², Thoriq Abdillah³

UIN Sunan Kalijaga, Yogyakarta
121101040064@student.uin-suka.ac.id,

Abstract - *The corpse embalming training in Padukuhan Klepu aims to enhance community knowledge and skills in carrying out fardhu kifayah in accordance with Islamic teachings. A qualitative descriptive method with a phenomenological approach was employed, involving participants aged 40-70 years who were selected by each RT head. The training results showed an increase in participants' understanding and skills in corpse embalming, including the prayers that must be recited and the practice of kafan (shrouding). Group discussions, material presentations, and practical demonstrations by the facilitator were effective in increasing participants' self-confidence. The positive impact of this training was not only felt by individuals but also by the wider community. This study recommends the use of technology and more practical simulations to enhance the learning experience of participants.*

Keywords: *Corpse Embalming, Fardhu Kifayah, Community Training, Skill Improvement, Islamic Teachings.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Every living creature created by Allah will eventually face death, including humans. Death is something that is certain to happen, which means that every living creature, including humans, will die. Death cannot be avoided or delayed when its time has come, without any prior warning. There is no place that can prevent its arrival, even in the strongest fortress. Dying in a state of husnul khotimah or in a good state does not necessarily guarantee heaven, which is something that humans cannot know, only Allah SWT can determine. Humans can strive to guide every sibling who is about to die to recite the two shahadas. (Khozin, 2015). It's not just about guiding someone to recite the two shahadas. Islam also makes it a communal obligation (fardhu kifayah) for living Muslims to take care of the deceased by performing the funeral rites. (Fadila & Solihah, 2022).

Although taking care of the deceased is a collective obligation or fardhu kifayah meaning that if it's done by some people, the obligation is lifted from others religion still encourages widespread participation from the community in various stages of the burial process. As many people as possible are encouraged to participate in the funeral prayer, accompany the deceased to the cemetery, and witness the burial process. This is done to pay their last respects to the deceased, strengthen social bonds, and earn rewards for those who participate (Sukiyanto, Nisa, Maulidah, & Mufidah, 2020).

Corpse embalming is an important process that reflects the religious and cultural values of a society. This process is not merely an obligation for everyone, but also a form of last respect given to a deceased person. In the context of local religion and culture, corpse embalming must be carried out correctly and in accordance with the applicable sharia. This ensures that the corpse is treated with respect and dignity, and provides comfort and peace of mind for the bereaved family. However, in many communities, there is a knowledge and skills gap in carrying out corpse embalming. Many members of the community do not have a sufficient understanding of the correct procedures for washing, shrouding, praying over, and burying the deceased. This gap can lead to the embalming process not being carried out correctly, which can cause discomfort and anxiety for the family and the surrounding community.

To address this gap, a corpse embalming training program was conducted as part of the KKN program activities in Klepu Hamlet, Hargowilis Village, Kokap Subdistrict, Kulon Progo Regency, Yogyakarta Special Region. This program aims to increase the knowledge and skills of residents in conducting corpse embalming. Through this training, it is hoped that residents can understand and master the techniques required to perform corpse embalming correctly and in accordance with local religious and cultural values. Thus, this training not only improves individual abilities but also strengthens solidarity and unity in the community.

2. METHODS

This research employs a qualitative, descriptive, and naturalistic research method by interpreting a situation based on the participants' understanding of their experiences. Qualitative methods can be defined as research methods aimed at describing phenomena from the perspective of informants, exploring various existing realities, and developing a

comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon within a specific context (Hilal & Saleh, 2013). The approach used in this qualitative research is phenomenology. Phenomenology is a scientific study that focuses on the examination and investigation of events experienced by individuals, groups of individuals, or other living beings. These interesting phenomena are considered significant life experiences of the research subjects (Moleong, 2019). In the phenomenological approach, experience is understood as the experience consciously lived by an individual, a group of individuals, or other living beings. Phenomenological research studies human experience by collecting detailed descriptions from the individuals being studied. (Yusanto, 2020).

The research participants are residents nominated by their respective Neighborhood Unit (RT) heads. Each RT was asked to nominate 8 to 9 potential participants. These participants consist of both males and females aged between 40 and 70 years old. The selection of participants was based on the desire to involve residents who were considered to have the potential to learn and re-teach corpse embalming skills to the local community, so that the acquired knowledge can be disseminated and widely applied throughout the entire Padukuhan Klepu area. Data was collected through in-depth interviews with one of the participants who attended the corpse embalming training. In-depth interviews are more flexible, open-ended, unstructured, and informal. Data in this study was collected through observation and interviews, including in-depth interviews. These in-depth interviews were used to gain a detailed understanding of the phenomenon or educational subject being studied. The purpose of these interviews was to uncover information that was not visible or implicit (Helaluddin, 2019).

This community service activity in the form of corpse embalming training was conducted in Padukuhan Klepu, Hargowilis Village, Kokap District, Kulon Progo Regency, Yogyakarta Special Region. The corpse embalming service activity was held twice, on July 17th and 23rd, 2024. This training was held because in Padukuhan Klepu, there are several Neighborhood Units (RT), but in each RT, only a few residents understand the procedures and have the skills in corpse embalming. This condition creates a knowledge and skill gap among residents in handling corpses according to local customs, culture, and beliefs. Therefore, this training aims to improve the understanding and abilities of local people, so that each RT has more skilled people in carrying out the corpse embalming process correctly and in accordance with the regulations.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Caring for the deceased is an obligation that every Muslim must fulfill. In Islamic law, there are several procedures that must be followed when taking care of a deceased person. This obligation falls under the category of *fardhu kifayah*, which means a collective obligation, meaning that if it is carried out by some members of the community, the obligation is fulfilled for other Muslims.

The procedures for caring for the deceased that fall under *fardhu kifayah* include several stages: bathing the deceased, shrouding or wrapping the deceased in a shroud, performing the funeral prayer, and finally burying the deceased. All of these stages must be known by Muslims so that they can carry out this obligation correctly, pay the

deceased the utmost respect, and fulfill the religious requirements in the process of preparing the body for burial (Al-Bugha, 2009).

The participants in this community service activity came from various backgrounds, including both men and women, aged between 40 and 70 years old. Participants in the corpse embalming training were selected based on their potential to learn and re-teach the acquired skills. The corpse embalming training activities began with a discussion session to explore the experiences of several participants who had previously been involved in the process of bathing the deceased. In this discussion, participants shared various joys and sorrows they experienced while carrying out this task. They recounted that one of the main challenges was the readiness to serve whenever needed, including at unexpected times such as midnight. In addition, they had to bathe corpses in special conditions, such as accident victims with severe injuries or corpses that had fallen from a height. These conditions often made the embalming process more physically and emotionally difficult. Some of the common difficulties experienced by participants included difficulty dealing with corpses with incomplete or damaged bodies, concerns about making mistakes during the bathing process, and discomfort in facing situations that could cause fear or trauma. This discussion session helped participants to exchange experiences and find solutions together, so that they were better prepared mentally and emotionally to face various challenges in the corpse embalming process.

In the second session, the training continued with a presentation by Mr. Sadilan. He explained several prayers that must be recited when taking care of a deceased person, such as the prayer for mentalqin (placing the deceased on their right side), the prayer for bathing the deceased, the prayer for performing ablution on the deceased, and the prayer for the funeral prayer. Each prayer was explained in detail, including when and how the prayer should be recited according to Islamic law. In addition to explaining the prayers that need to be recited, Mr. Sadilan also taught practical ways to bathe the deceased, especially if the deceased was in a special condition such as after an accident. He explained the bathing steps that must be carried out carefully to continue to respect the deceased, including how to handle injuries or incomplete body conditions. This explanation is very important for participants to understand the correct techniques and procedures in different situations, so that they are better prepared and skilled in carrying out the task of preparing the body for burial.

In the third session, the training continued with a demonstration of how to shroud a deceased body. This demonstration method is a learning approach that involves directly demonstrating a process, accompanied by verbal explanations and using props (Roni Haryanto, 2020).

The aim is for participants to be able to see and understand each step that must be taken in shrouding a deceased body clearly. The demonstration of shrouding a deceased body began with an explanation of the preparation of the necessary equipment, such as cotton and a shroud approximately 12 meters long. Mr. Sadilan demonstrated the entire process directly in front of the participants, providing a detailed and sequential explanation in accordance with Islamic law. He explained the steps starting from the preparation of the shroud, how to fold and wrap the deceased body, to the prayers that must be recited at each stage. With this demonstration method,

participants not only gained a theoretical understanding but also gained firsthand practical experience in how to shroud a deceased body. Participants could clearly see the correct techniques and procedures, so it was hoped that they would feel more prepared and confident to carry out this task in the future in accordance with Islamic teachings.

The change in participants' knowledge and skills in this corpse embalming training was evident during the question-and-answer sessions held at the end of each session. The participants showed great enthusiasm in asking questions and answering questions posed by the facilitator. This approach was implemented to ensure that participants understood the procedures for corpse embalming in accordance with Islamic law. In addition, participants were also given the opportunity to demonstrate again how to shroud a deceased body correctly. Before the training, many participants felt less confident and did not have adequate knowledge about the process of corpse embalming. However, during the training, they actively participated in practical sessions and discussions, showing a strong interest and commitment to learning. After completing the training, participants felt more confident and ready to be involved in the process of corpse embalming. The participants experienced a significant increase in understanding and technical skills related to corpse embalming, and were able to explain and carry out each stage better and in accordance with religious teachings.

This corpse embalming training was conducted over two days, on July 17th and 23rd, 2024, because Padukuhan Klepu consists of six Neighborhood Units (RT). Considering the fairly large number of RTs, conducting the training in one day would not be feasible to effectively reach all participants. This time allocation allows all participants to receive optimal attention and learning opportunities.



Figure 1. Corpse Embalming Training



Figure 2. Corpse Embalming Training at Al-Ma'ruf Mosque



Figure 3. Corpse Embalming Training at Al-Akbar Mosque

After conducting the corpse embalming training, to find out how the participants responded, members of the KKN Group 49 interviewed one of the residents of Padukuhan Klepu RT. 70, Mr. Tri Wijonarko. During the interview, Mr. Tri Wijonarko explained that at first he was hesitant to attend the corpse embalming training because the topic to be presented for the training was quite sensitive and challenging. This hesitation arose due to the lack of public knowledge about the process of corpse embalming, which often caused fear and uncertainty. The topic of death and the process of corpse embalming is often associated with scary or mystical things, so it is often considered taboo or inappropriate to discuss openly in the community. However, the training provided Mr. Tri with a new perspective on the importance of shrouding the deceased. He realized that shrouding a deceased person has a very deep meaning as a form of last respect for the deceased and as an effort to cover the deceased's aurat for the last time. This action is not merely a ritual, but also symbolizes the simplicity and equality of humans before Allah SWT. Shrouding the deceased is also seen as a symbol of spiritual preparation to meet the Creator again. Practically, the shroud also serves to protect the body of the deceased from disturbance by animals and insects, indicating that this process has important spiritual and physical values.

4. CONCLUSION

The corpse embalming training conducted in Padukuhan Klepu, particularly in RT. 70, revealed significant primary findings in enhancing participants' knowledge and skills. Interviews with Mr. Tri Wijonarko, a training participant, indicated that this training was

effective in building mental and emotional readiness, improving understanding of the prayers recited during the embalming process, and strengthening practical skills in shrouding the corpse. Group discussions, material presentations by Mr. Sadilan, and practical demonstrations proved crucial in boosting participants' self-confidence and preparedness to face various challenges that might arise during the corpse embalming process.

The corpse embalming training has had a positive impact on the participants. They feel more prepared and confident in carrying out this important task and have acquired the necessary knowledge and skills to comply with Islamic teachings. The impact of this training is not limited to individual improvement but also has the potential to make a significant contribution to the wider community. With increased community skills and understanding of corpse embalming, the quality of embalming services in the community can improve, thus providing the deceased with the proper respect according to religious teachings.

The relevance and contribution of this research lie in its ability to assess the effectiveness of corpse embalming training and provide an overview of how this training can be applied to improve individuals' competence in carrying out fardhu kifayah obligations. This research also highlights the importance of training methodologies that include discussions, material presentations, and practical demonstrations in building participants' skills. However, this research has some limitations. The focus of the research is limited to one group of participants in one location, so the results may not fully represent the experiences of participants from other locations. Additionally, this research does not include a long-term evaluation of the application of skills acquired after training.

Further research should explore in more depth the effectiveness of corpse embalming training in various locations and demographic groups. Long-term research examining the application of skills in the field after training will also provide additional insights into the successes and challenges faced by participants in their daily practice. Recommendations for improving future training include expanding the scope of training with more practical simulations and case studies that reflect real-world situations. The integration of technology, such as video tutorials or other visual aids, can also be considered to enhance the participants' learning experience. Additionally, collecting regular feedback from participants can help refine the curriculum and training methods to better suit the needs of the community.

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