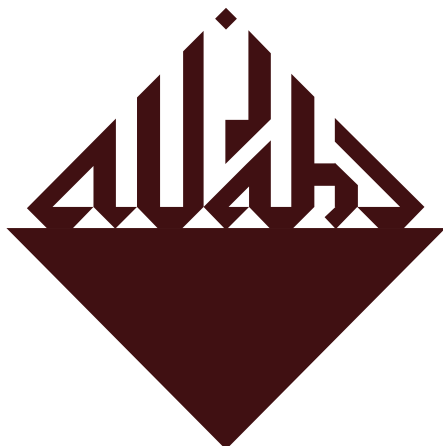


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Document

Survey Report:
A Portrait of Muslims' Socio-Religious Attitudes
in Java

Jajat Burhanudin

This report is based on two surveys, a baseline and an impact one, conducted by the PPIM in the framework of gauging the impact of the Islam and Development Program of The Asia Foundation in Jakarta. The first (baseline) survey was carried out in July 2008, just before the program started, while the second one was made after the program had ended in August 2009.

Designed to measure the impact of the program, there were two categories of survey respondents: program participants (500 in each survey), who were randomly selected from the list of the names of those who participated in the program. They were interviewed before (July 2008) and after having attended the program (August 2009). As a control group, another 500 respondents were also interviewed in each survey. They had been randomly selected from the Muslim population all over Java.

The questions posed during the surveys were related to the contents of the program, and were intended to illicit respondents' views on such contemporary issues as civic values, democracy, socio-political and religious tolerance, pluralism, gender equity, and Islamism. Muslim responses to these ideas were analyzed in a comparative perspective between the baseline and impact surveys, and between program participants and non-participants. With this perspective, the survey was directed to discover the extent to which the program was able to

contribute to the strengthening of the contemporary ideas mentioned above and of democracy in Indonesian socio-political spheres.

Some Survey Findings

In the survey, democracy was formulated in various questions intended to measure the extent to which Muslims in Java support ideas such as that democracy is the best system of government to be applied in Indonesia, political freedom and expression, and minority rights. Data from the survey reveals that support to the notion of democracy is high, around 80% until 90%, in almost every item questioned. The same level of support is also revealed in an index. Measured on a scale between 1 as the lowest to 5 as the highest, average support measured 3,58. Democracy is, therefore, accepted by the majority of the Muslims under survey, and by Indonesian Muslims in general. This high support is consistent in both the baseline and the impact survey.

A rather different picture emerges with regard to the idea of [religious] pluralism, which is formulated here as attitudes of openness to diversity of religious and ideological outlooks, including religious minority groups like the Ahmadiyah. Unlike in the case of democracy, support to the idea of pluralism is relatively low, and average support is around 50% in both the baseline and the impact survey. Almost all the respondents agreed to the idea that Islam (their religion) is superior to other religions. It seems that in certain cases Javanese Muslims do not agree with ideas of pluralism.

The survey found that respondents' tolerance was significantly higher concerning socio-political issues. In the baseline survey, 90,4% of the respondents raised objections when opponent groups delivered speeches in their living surroundings. However, in the impact survey this number decreases dramatically to 55.5%. The case was similar in respondents' opinion toward parades conducted by these groups. Around 93.6% of the respondents of the baseline survey expressed their objections when opponent groups conducted street parades. Nevertheless, this number went down to 56.4% in the impact-survey. In addition, 71% of the baseline survey respondents indicated their unhappiness when members of opponent groups became governance officials, but only 49.8% of the impact survey respondent expressed the same feeling.

This survey found that respondents' religious tolerance was relatively low. From the baseline survey data, 40.2% of Muslim respondents

expressed their unhappiness when non-Muslims became public officers. That number did not change significantly in the impact survey as around 37.9% of these respondents indicated the same feelings. In terms of religious ritual practices, both baseline survey and impact survey respondents expressed their objection when followers of other religions practiced their rituals in respondents' living surroundings. As a result, around 41.2% of the baseline survey and 43.3% of the impact survey respondents were very unhappy with the construction of new places of non-Muslim religious worship in the vicinity of their residences.

Discussion and Analysis

Several questions may be raised from the impacts of the program; does the Islam and Development Program have a positive impact in changing the attitude of targeted groups in their socio-political and religious tolerance. If yes, how can these changes be explained? In order to answer these questions, we subjected the findings to a statistical test. The test is useful to measure the level of significance and to measure changes of levels of significance before and after the program. As a result, we know whether the levels increased or remained constant, and whether the program had a positive impact on the changes in the attitude of the participants.

We tested the relationship between the program and all the variables above. The result shows that the program has a significant relationship to most of these variables. In the case of democracy, the level of significance is 0.047. This indicates that the average score of participants' support to notions of democracy after the program was higher than that before the program. Similarly, in socio-political tolerance our statistical test shows that the level of significance is 0.000, which means that the program had a positive impact on the socio-political tolerance of the participants. However, this is not the case in religious tolerance and pluralism, as the test indicates insignificance levels of 0.331 and 0.035 respectively.

In addition, we compared the survey data we obtained from respondents who had been participants in the program with that of respondents who did not participate (control groups). This comparison is important because it would reveal whether the level of significance

from participant respondents' data was similar to that of non-participant respondents.

From this comparison, we found that, in general, the level of significance obtained from participant respondents was higher than that from non-participant respondents. For example, on the issue of democracy, our statistical test shows that the relationship between the program and participant respondents' notions of democracy is significant as its level of significance is 0.047. Meanwhile, the level of significance for non-participant respondents is 0.949, which means that there is a significant relationship between the program and non-participant respondents' ideas of democracy. Similar figures can be seen in socio-political tolerance as the level of significance of participant respondents for this variable is 0.000, while the level of significance is insignificant for non-participant respondents.

Based on this statistical comparison, we may conclude that the number of variables of participant respondents that has a significant relationship with the program of is higher than that of non-participant respondents. This means that the program had a positive impact in changing the attitude of participants in issues of democracy and socio-political tolerance.

Jajat Burhanudin is the Executive Director of PPIM UIN Jakarta