

## RESPONSES OF PESANTRENS IN MADURA TOWARDS THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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**Abstract:** This study focuses on evaluating the socio-religious response of *pesantren* in Madura towards Covid-19 pandemic. Using qualitative research and analysis based on sociology of religion theory, this study found that *pesantren* in Madura present anticipatory response to curb the spread of Covid-19 by prioritizing aspects of personal safety and risk-avoiding, be it material or non-material. This responsive move is carried out by *pesantren* through a series of actions oriented towards protection and preservation principles. At the practical level, these principles are implemented in two approaches at once, structural and cultural. The structural approach refers to *pesantren* policies implementing health protocols in its vicinity, such as social and physical distancing, using hand sanitizer, temporarily stopping congregational worship activities, and postponing ceremonial religious activities that attract crowds. On the other hand, cultural approach refers to the involvement of *pesantren* in sounding religious calls to the general public to always abide by the health protocols and procedures for carrying out activities of worship amidst the Covid-19 pandemic crisis.

**Keywords:** Covid-19 pandemic, Madura, *pesantren*, structural and cultural approach.

### Introduction

The Coronavirus Disease-2019 pandemic, also known as Covid-19, has now spread to many countries across all continents.<sup>1</sup> This virus

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<sup>1</sup> Adityo Susilo et al., "Coronavirus Disease 2019: Tinjauan Literatur Terkini", *Jurnal Penyakit Dalam Indonesia*, 7, 1 (2020), p. 45; Jie Cui, Fang Li, and Zheng-Li Shi, "Origin and Evolution of Pathogenic Coronaviruses", *Nature Reviews Microbiology*, 17, 3 (2019): pp. 181–92; Muhammad Adnan Shereen et al., "Covid-19 Infection: Origin,

responsible for the pandemic was first discovered in China as it slowly but surely hit no less than 216 countries.<sup>2</sup> In Indonesia, since the first patient was announced on March 2, 2020 until July 2, 2020, the total cases of Covid-19 had reached the count of 60.695, with mortality rate reaching 3.036, while 27.568 people declared as having recovered.<sup>3</sup> The total numbers are scattered throughout 34 provinces and 418 cities in Indonesia.<sup>4</sup> The spread of Covid-19 throughout all provinces in Indonesia has directly and significantly influenced many social aspects such as education, religion, government politics,<sup>5</sup> and even socio-economics which is related to daily life necessities.<sup>6</sup>

At this juncture, whether it is acknowledged or not, the spread of Covid-19 throughout Indonesia poses a serious threat and challenge.<sup>7</sup> Indonesia's topography as a maritime nation becomes a sociological problem that will not only escalate the spread of Covid-19, but also complicate mitigation process.<sup>8</sup> Moreover, as we all understand, not every region in Indonesia has the same capability to perform mitigation, especially regions that have strong traditional cultural roots. In the context of tackling Covid-19, the cultural factor in question is the low awareness and collective commitment of the community to

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Transmission, and Characteristics of Human Coronaviruses", *Journal of Advanced Research*, 24 (2020): pp. 91–98.; Lisa E. Gralinski and Vineet D. Menachery, "Return of the Coronavirus: 2019-NCoV", *Viruses*, 12, 135 (2020): pp. 2–8.

<sup>2</sup> Kiesha Prem et al., "The Effect of Control Strategies to Reduce Social Mixing On Outcomes of the Covid-19 Epidemic in Wuhan, China: A Modelling Study", *The Lancet Public Health* 5, 5 (2020): pp. 261–70.

<sup>3</sup> Covid19.go.id, "Gugus Tugas Percepatan Penanganan Covid-19", covid19.go.id, 7 March 2020, 19, <https://covid19.go.id/>.

<sup>4</sup> Vina Fadhotul Mukaromah, "28.233 Positif, Ini 10 Provinsi dengan Kasus Covid-19 Terbanyak di Indonesia", *Kompas.com*, 6 March 2020, <https://www.kompas.com/tren/read/2020/06/03/202300865/28.233-positif-ini-10-provinsi-dengan-kasus-Covid-19-terbanyak-di-indonesia>.

<sup>5</sup> Syafrida Syafrida, "Bersama Melawan Virus Covid 19 di Indonesia", *SALAM: Jurnal Sosial dan Budaya Syar-i* 7, 6 (2020).

<sup>6</sup> Silpa Hanoatubun, "Dampak Covid - 19 terhadap Perekonomian Indonesia", *EduPsyCoun Journal* 2, 1 (2020), p. 8.

<sup>7</sup> Bayu Brahma, "Oncologists and Covid-19 in Indonesia: What Can We Learn and Must Do?", *Indonesian Journal of Cancer* 14, 1 (2020), p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> Dalinama Telaumbanua, "Urgensi Pembentukan Aturan Terkait Pencegahan Covid-19 di Indonesia", *Qalamuna: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial, dan Agama* 12, 01 (2020): pp. 59–70.

adhere to health protocols.<sup>9</sup> Whereas in regards to religious factors, challenges and problems in tackling the Covid-19 pandemic comes from stringency in religious practices.<sup>10</sup> In this context, the existence of groups of people who have a habit of pitting religion against science, disregarding the role of medical knowledge or experts, technology, and the likes,<sup>11</sup> in turn, becomes a major hindrance to the Covid-19 countermeasure agenda.<sup>12</sup>

Sociologically, the importance of conducting a study on Covid-19 countermeasures, from a religious perspective, is based on the fact that religion enjoys a significant role and influence in building social perception, attitude, and behavior,<sup>13</sup> especially among communities that fanatically uphold religious values and teachings.<sup>14</sup> In Indonesia, there are many areas with such typology, one of which is the island of Madura and its surrounding islands.<sup>15</sup> In this regard, it is found that the religious dimension and its symbolisms plays a significant role and function in building the religious character and identity of Madurese society, including forming their obedience in general. One of the most influential out of the myriad of entities in the religious dimension is *pesantren* (religious boarding school). Such is the influence of *pesantren* in

<sup>9</sup> Imas Novita Juaningsih et al., "Optimalisasi Kebijakan Pemerintah dalam penanganan Covid-19 terhadap Masyarakat Indonesia", *Salam: Jurnal Sosial dan Budaya Syar-i* 7, 6 (2020): pp. 509–17.

<sup>10</sup> Perdanakusuma, "Menyikapi Kontroversi Informasi Ilmiah Covid-19.", *Suara Merdeka News* <https://suaramerdeka.news/menyikapi-kontroversi-informasi-ilmiah-covid-19/>.

<sup>11</sup> Masdar Hilmy, "Sikap Ilmiah Menghadapi Pandemi Covid-19", *Kolom Uinsa*, April 4, 2020, <https://w3.uinsby.ac.id/sikap-ilmiah-menghadapi-pandemi-covid-19/>.

<sup>12</sup> Heru Heru Margianto, "Agama dan Virus Corona", *Kompas.com*, April 26, 2020, <https://www.kompas.com/tren/read/2020/03/26/132410565/agama-dan-virus-corona>.

<sup>13</sup> Haryatmoko, *Dominasi Penuh Muslihat*. (Jakarta: Gramedia, 2010).

<sup>14</sup> Muhammad Latif Fauzi, "Traditional Islam in Javanese Society: The Roles of Kyai and Pesantren in Preserving Islamic Tradition and Negotiating Modernity", *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 6, 1 (2012), p. 125.

<sup>15</sup> Yanwar Pribadi, "The Suramadu Bridge Affair: Un-Bridging the State and the Kiai in New Order Madura", *Studia Islamika* 22, 2 (2 September 2015); see also Muhammad Endy Saputro, "Muslim Localizing Democracy: A Non-Pesantren Village in Madura as a Preliminary Study", *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 1, 2 (2011): pp. 297-316; Ahmad Najib Burhani, "Lessons from Madura: NU, Conservatism and the 2019 Presidential Election", 2019 (2019); Mohammad Hefni, *Islam Madura Kajian Konstruktivisme Strukturalis - Teori Habitus Pierre Bourdieu* (Surabaya: Literasi Nusantara, 2019).

forming the system and culture of Madura that many likened *pesantren* to a lesser kingdom miniature that always incites total respect and recognition of the local community.<sup>16</sup>

Based on a study conducted by Azizah, the existence of *pesantren* in response to Covid-19 shows two different attitudes.<sup>17</sup> The first is closed attitude, which means that the *pesantren* tends not to support Covid-19 countermeasure programs, ignore health protocols issued by the government, and in some situations even pit religion and medical explanation against each other. Hilmy and Niam in their work categorize this closed attitude as a problem of anachronism, which is a cultural and religious perspectives that do not conform with the current reality as they disregard scientific and rational perspectives.<sup>18</sup> The second attitude is open; in the sense that they (*pesantren*) have similar perspective as the government in terms of the Covid-19 countermeasure agenda. In general, this group is represented by non-conservative *pesantren*, which are those that adhere to dynamic and moderate Islamic traditions. Included in this group are Madurese *pesantren* that are affiliated with the Islamic organizations NU (Nahdlatul Ulama') and SI (Sarekat Islam).

This article views the social role of *pesantren* in Madura through two approaches at once, i.e. structural-institutional approach and cultural-religious. Vastly differing from previous studies that examined *pesantren* and the Covid-19 pandemic from a broader perspective,<sup>19</sup> this study focuses on the existence and role of *pesantren*, which are known to be local influential religious institutions and symbol in Madura. Apart from that, the fact that *pesantren* that actively support Covid-19 countermeasure agenda in Madura are dominated by *pesantren* based on NU and SI organization is the intriguing facet in this study that has

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<sup>16</sup> Zamakhsari Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi Tentang Pandangan Hidup Kyai* (Jakarta: LP3ES, 1982), p. 32.

<sup>17</sup> Siti Azizah and Husna Atiya, "Dinamika Pesantren dalam Merespons Pandemi Covid-19 di Madura," *Dinika: Academic Journal of Islamic Studies* 5, 2 (2020), p. 30.

<sup>18</sup> Masdar Hilmy and Khoirun Niam, 'Winning the Battle of Authorities: The Muslim Disputes Over the Covid-19 Pandemic Plague in Contemporary Indonesia', *Qijis Qudus International Journal of Islamic Studies* 8, 2 (2020): pp. 313–21, <https://doi.org/10.210-43/qijis.v8i2.7670>; Hilmy, 'Sikap Ilmiah Menghadapi Pandemi Covid-19'.

<sup>19</sup> Hannan, Azizah, and Atiya, 'Dinamika Pesantren dalam Merespons Pandemi Covid-19 di Madura'; Heny Triyaningsih, 'Efek Pemberitaan Media Massa terhadap Persepsi Masyarakat Pamekasan tentang Virus Corona', *Meyarsa* 1, 1 (2020): p. 21, <http://dx.doi.org/10.19015/meyarsa.v1i1.3222>.

never been discovered in previous studies. Moreover, there has been no research focused on the efforts of depicting the socio-religious role of *pesantren* in relation to the Covid-19 mitigation process in Madura thus far. Through the perspective of religious sociology, this study delves and displays various sociological elements related to the existence, role, and social behavior of *pesantren* community in tackling Covid-19 in Madura.

This is a field research study on the response of the socio-religious role of *pesantren* in the Covid-19 countermeasure process. This study is qualitative in nature. This is based on the main purpose of the research, which is to profoundly, thoroughly, and completely comprehend and explain the main research question.<sup>20</sup> The research questions under discussion are regarding the existence of *pesantren*, their role, and their response to the Covid-19 pandemic in Madura..

This research was conducted in four major *pesantren* in Pamekasan Regency. They are Pesantren Miftahul Ulum Masaran, Pesantren Darul Ulum Banyuwangi, Pesantren al-Ishlah Bringin, and Pesantren as-Salafi Misdad. The selection of the four *pesantren* was based on the consideration of their typology as they represent three major groups of *pesantrens* in Madura. The first group is *pesantren* that are based on the Islamic organization NU which includes Pesantren Miftahul Ulum Masaran. The second group is Sarekat Islam-based *pesantren* represented by Pesantren Darul Ulum Banyuwangi. Last is the third group which consists conservatism-based *pesantren* among which is Pesantren Misdad and Pesantren al-Islah Bringin. By accommodating the three styles of the *pesantren*, the resultant findings will be more comprehensive, as contained therein are the complete conclusions summarized from the diverse characteristics of *pesantren* in Madura.

The data used in this study came from two types of data, primary data and secondary data. Primary data source include data that are obtained by the researchers through activities in the field such as observations and interviews.<sup>21</sup> Observation activities were conducted by visiting the *pesantren* which had been designated as the research sites. To maximize the observation process in the field, the process of collecting data is not done only by visiting the research site, but also by engaging in participatory activities. In such situation, the researcher

<sup>20</sup> Bagong Suyanto, *Metode Penelitian Sosial* (Jakarta: Kencana, 2005), p. 14.

<sup>21</sup> Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif dan Kualitatif Dan R & D* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2010), p. 85.

stayed at the location of the research, performed an in-depth observation on every social symptoms and dynamics that occur there, and conducted in-depth interview with informants. Regarding interview, the process was conducted through unstructured method, while the determination of informants was based on purposive method. The purposive method was carried out through the researchers' subjective consideration on the expertise and capability of the informants in answering the research questions. In this research, the purposive method is used to determine key informants. There are three key informants in this study, who are Rahbini, the caretaker of Pesantren Miftahul Ulum Masaran and the head of MUI (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, Ulema Council of Indonesia) Pamekasan Regency; Khalilurrahman, the First Chair of Pesantren Darul Ulum Banyuanyar; Umar Shinhaji Ali Karrar, the caretaker of Pesantren Misdar; and Ali, caretaker of Pesantren Al-Islah Bringin.

In addition to primary data, this study is also augmented by secondary data in the form of quantitative statistics. According to Moleong, quantitative data in a qualitative research supplements the primary data obtained through interviews and observations in the field.<sup>22</sup> In this study, quantitative data were obtained from a number of regional governmental bodies or institutions such as regional Badan Pusat Statistik (Central Agency of Statistics) and Kementerian Agama (Ministry of Religious Affairs). Additionally, quantitative data were also obtained through the distribution of questionnaires starting from 22 to 25 March 2020 to 150 respondents who are spread across three major *pesantren* in Pamekasan, namely Pesantren Miftahul Ulum, Pesantren Darul Ulum, and Pesantren as-Salafi Misdar. In each *pesantren*, as many as 50 *santri* (students) were chosen whose age ranges from 16 to 34 years old with 69.8% of the population being male and 30,2% female. The respondents consist of people from communities within *pesantren* who are known to have a strong emotional bond with the *pesantren*, namely active administrators of the *pesantren*; *santri* who are active in the *pesantren*, both *santri* who stay at the dorm or those who don't (*santri kealong*); alumnus *santri*, people who have a track record of having previously studied in the *pesantren*; and people within the vicinity of the *pesantren*.

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<sup>22</sup> Lexy J. Moleong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 2006), p. 162.

## Madura and Covid-19

Madura is an archipelago divided into four administrative regions: Bangkalan, Sampang, Pamekasan, and Sumenep. Madura, as an archipelago, has a plethora of small islands, with at least 156 in total, 48 of which are recorded to be inhabited, while the rest are not. However, just because Madura is an archipelago does not imply that its socio-geographic structure is homogeneous. This is clearly demonstrated by the diversity of the locals' social systems and structures, whether in terms of socio-religion, ecological pattern, socio-economics, or culture. This is also one of the reasons why de Jonge divided Madura into two poles in his study: west pole Madura, which included the districts of Bangkalan and Sampang, and east pole Madura, which included the districts of Pamekasan and Sumenep.<sup>23</sup>

Apropos of Covid-19, like most regions in Indonesia in general, Madura has quite a severe Covid-19 situation. This is clearly reflected in the number of Covid-19 cases in the area which number in the thousands. The high count of Covid-19 cases in Madura has attracted the attention of many groups, it is quite regrettable considering the fact that Madura is an archipelago. With such geographic conditions, Covid-19 should be easier to control in the Madura Islands by, for example, tightening access to enter and or exit Madura, be it by land, sea, or air. Not only that, the unmaximized effort by the government in taking an early Covid-19 mitigation process in Madura, in the end, caused uncontrolled spread of Covid-19 which in turn resulted in the high number of Covid-19 cases in the area.<sup>24</sup>

The first patient who tested positive for Covid-19 (patient zero) in Madura was not from either Bangkalan or Sampang, the two regions that are in close proximity to Surabaya even being known as the terraces of Madura that are adjacent to the island of Java. The patient actually came from Pamekasan Regency, a region on the east pole that is known as the region with higher Human Development Index (HDI) than the other three regencies.<sup>25</sup> From the result of investigation, the

<sup>23</sup> Huub de Jonge, *Agama, Kebudayaan, dan Ekonomi: Studi Interdisipliner Tentang Masyarakat Madura* (Jakarta: Rajawali Press, 1989).

<sup>24</sup> See Hannan, Azizah, and Atiya, 'Dinamika Pesantren dalam Merespons Pandemi Covid-19 di Madura'.

<sup>25</sup> Dheri Agriesta, 'Kasus Positif Covid-19 Pertama di Pamekasan, Pasien Telah 10 Hari Meninggal', Kompas.com, 30 March 2020, <https://regional.kompas.com/read/2020/03/30/07075171/update-kasus-positif-covid-19-pertama-di-pamekasan-pasien-telah-10-hari?page=all>.

patient zero was an 11-year-old child who was still in elementary school. Since the discovery of the first case in March 20, 2020 in Pamekasan, the number of patients who tested positive for Covid-19 underwent a drastic rise and spread.<sup>26</sup> One by one the status of green zone in the regions of Madura faded. Based on the count, as of February 7, 2021, there were 5,004 cases with the death toll reaching 306, and recovery rate totaling 3,722 people, while the rest were still active. From the cases count, Sumenep Regency was recorded as having the highest count positive cases, with the total of cases reaching 1,551 (see Table 1).<sup>27</sup>

**Table 1.** Number and Spread of Covid-19 Cases in Madura Based on Regions

Regency	Positive	PUS	PUI	Recovered	Dead
Bangkalan	197	76	1,061	60	30
Pamekasan	108	100	581	21	20
Sampang	97	24	544	28	8
Sumenep	63	16	367	14	2
<b>Total</b>	465	216	2,553	123	60

**Source:** <http://infocovid19.jatimprov.go.id/> accessed on June 20, 2020.

The rapid spread of Covid-19 in Madura is driven by many factors, but in general it can be categorized into two major groups, namely structural factors and cultural factors. In terms of structural factors, the high number of Covid-19 cases is caused by the ineffective role and function of the government that is slow to respond and enforce early prevention efforts such as limiting population mobility, curbing of large crowds, having sufficient medical equipment supplies.<sup>28</sup> While in terms of cultural factors, the rapid spread of Covid-19 in Madura is caused by the mentality and social behavior of the locals. Apropos of this, it must be acknowledged that the high level of mobility and interregional and interprovincial movement of the people, coupled

<sup>26</sup> Koran Madura, 'Kasus Konfirmasi Positif Corona di Pamekasan Bertambah 6 Orang, Salah satunya Bayi', <https://www.koranmadura.com/2020/06/kasus-konfirmasi-positif-corona-di-pamekasan-bertambah-6-orang-salah-satunya-bayi/>.

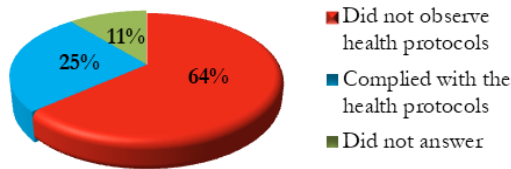
<sup>27</sup> infocovid19, "Jatim Tanggap COVID-19", [infocovid19.jatimprov.go.id](http://infocovid19.jatimprov.go.id/), 27 June 2020, <http://infocovid19.jatimprov.go.id/>.

<sup>28</sup> duta.co, "Hati-Hati Bangkalan! Minim Lab Swab, Jumlah Pasien COVID-19 Terancam Membludak - Duta.Co Berita Harian Terkini", Duta.com, 12 June 2020, <https://duta.co/hati-hati-bangkalan-minim-lab-swab-jumlah-pasien-COVID-19-terancam-membludak>.



with the lack of awareness in adhering to health protocols, becomes a cultural factor responsible for the rapid spread of Covid-19 in Madura.<sup>29</sup> In accordance with the results of field data based on a survey conducted on 150 respondents in Pamekasan, it was found that more than 60 percent of Madurese did not adhere to health protocols such as the use of masks and handsanitizers (See Figure 1).

**Figure 1.** Compliance Level of the Population in Madura with the Health Protocols



Aside from that, a factor that is no less crucial in Covid-19 countermeasure in Madura is the active involvement of all groups who have so far held a strategic position and role in the socio-religious system of the Madurese society. In this regard, the existence and socio-religious role of *pesantren*, as one of the sources of local wisdom in Madura, actually has a strong correlation with the Covid-19 mitigation agenda, be it in the aspect of prevention or countermeasure.<sup>30</sup> The connection between the existence and socio-religious role of *pesantren* in response to Covid-19 in Madura will all be explained in detail and in depth in the following description.

### ***Pesantrens'* Responses**

In many social science studies, Madura is known as an area that is characterized by religiousness.<sup>31</sup> This is represented by the socio-cultural construct of the local community which holds a considerable

<sup>29</sup> Koran Madura, "Polres Sumenep Bubarkan Pengunjung Cafe Tak Patuhi Protokol Kesehatan", <https://www.koranmadura.com/2020/06/polres-sumenep-bubarkan-pengunjung-cafe-tak-patuhi-protokol-kesehatan/>.

<sup>30</sup> Arif Fajar Setiadi, "Kapolda Jatim Gandeng Ulama Madura Agar Warga Patuhi Protokol Covid-19", <https://www.madiunpos.com/kapolda-jatim-gandeng-ulama-madura-agar-warga-patuhi-protokol-covid-19-1047343>.

<sup>31</sup> Mansurnoor Iik, *Islam in an Indonesian World; Ulama of Madura* (Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press, 1990), p. 45.

eneration towards religious symbols.<sup>32</sup> Various religious symbols such as *pesantren* and *kyai* (religious teacher) are a local elite structure that has a strategic role, function, and influence on the life of the people of Madura in every aspects, including education, culture, politics, and especially religion.<sup>33</sup>

**Table 2.** Number of *Pesantren* in Madura 2019

<b>Regency</b>	<b>Number of <i>pesantren</i></b>
Bangkalan	114
Sampang	352
Pamekasan	231
Sumenep	230
<b>Total</b>	<b>927</b>

**Source:** Data from the local religious department in Madura

According to Dhofier, the position of *kyai* and *pesantren* in the culture of Madurese society is akin to a lesser king and his miniature kingdom.<sup>34</sup> As a kingdom, *pesantren* occupies the position as a traditional religious institution that performs multiple functions, including educational, social control, and da'wah functions.<sup>35</sup> Whereas likening *kyai* to a small king means that *kyai* is the highest social class in Madura.<sup>36</sup> In this position, the status of a lesser king not only holds the meaning of his social status as the supreme authority in the *pesantren*, but also of his role and function as an influential local elite in Madura.<sup>37</sup> Statistically, the significance of *pesantren*' influence in Madura can be seen in the large number of *pesantren* throughout many regions in Madura (See Table 2).

An intriguing fact about the existence of *pesantren* in Madura lies on their Islamic characteristics and typology. Based on the data collected

<sup>32</sup> Yanwar Pribadi, *Islam, State and Society in Indonesia; Local Politics in Madura* (New York: Routledge, 2018).

<sup>33</sup> Moh. Ishaq Abd Salam, "Reproduksi Kekuasaan Kyai; Penggunaan Sarana Ideologi Dan Kekuasaan Dalam Pemilikada Bangkalan" (Surabaya: Universitas Airlangga Surabaya, 2015).

<sup>34</sup> Dhofier, *Tradisi Pesantren: Studi Tentang Pandangan Hidup Kyai*, p. 32.

<sup>35</sup> Siddiq, "Madurese Christian In Search of Christian Identity within Muslim Society".

<sup>36</sup> Said Abdullah, *Pesantren, Jati Diri Dan Pencerahan Masyarakat* (Sumenep: Said Abdullah Istitute Publishing, 2007).

<sup>37</sup> Ahmad Zainul Hamdi, "Klaim Religious Authority dalam Konflik Sunni-Syi'i Sampang Madura", *Islamica: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 6, 2 (2012): pp. 215–31.

from the field study, although the religious traditions of the people of Madura have so far been heavily influenced by NU, in reality not all *pesantren* in Madurais affiliated with this organization.<sup>38</sup> Moreover, the two largest *pesantrens* in Pamekasan Madura, *Pesantren Banyuanyar* and *Pesantren Bata-bata*, are known to be leaning towards the organization *Sarekat Islam* (Islamic Union).<sup>39</sup> In addition to the grouping based on organizational affiliation, the characteristics of *pesantren* in Madura can also be grouped based on the religious understandings to which they adhere. In this regard, generally *pesantren* in Madura adhere to *Aswaja* (*Ahl as-Sunnah wa al-Jam'ah 'ala Manhaj as-Salaf as-Salih*).<sup>40</sup> However, if observed more closely, this grouping can still be further specified, that is by differentiating *pesantren* who adhere to conservative *Aswaja* and *pesantren* who adhere to modern *Aswaja* that emphasize moderation.<sup>41</sup> The division of religious understandings among *pesantren* in Madura practically impacts their religious perspective,<sup>42</sup> including also their perspective in responding to the prevention and countermeasure of Covid-19 pandemic.

Nonetheless, despite the fact that Madura is populated by many Islamic mass organizations such as NU, Muhammadiyah, Sarekat Islam, and al-Irsyad, in terms of tackling Covid-19, all of them formally display similar attitude and views, primarily in terms of adherence to health protocols, from the recommendation to eliminate, avoid, and steer clear of crowds to the enforcement of physical-social distancing. Based on field data investigation, the uniformity of their attitude and views in response to the dynamics of Covid-19 in Madura was clearly

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<sup>38</sup> Zakiyah Zakiyah, "Manuscripts in Sumenep Madura; the Legacy of *Pesantren* and Its Ulama", *Heritage of Nusantara: International Journal of Religious Literature and Heritage* 6 (2017), p. 21.

<sup>39</sup> Agus Purnomo, "Politik Hukum Elite Politik Kabupaten Pamekasan Tentang Perda Syariah", *Istinbath: Jurnal Hukum Islam LAIN Mataram* 13, 1 (2014), p. 8.

<sup>40</sup> Zainuddin Syarif, "Pergeseran Perilaku Politik Kiai dan Santri di Pamekasan Madura", *Al-Tabrir: Jurnal Pemikiran Islam* 16, 2 (2016), p. 293.

<sup>41</sup> Yanwar Pribadi, "Islam Madura: Sebuah Studi Konstruktivisme-Strukturalis Tentang Relasi Islam *Pesantren* dan Islam Kampung di Sumenep Madura", *Bjdragen Tot de Taal-, Land- En Volkenkunde / Journal of the Humanities and Social Sciences of Southeast Asia* 176, 2-3 (2020): pp. 429-31.

<sup>42</sup> Abd A'la et al., "Islamism in Madura: From Religious Symbolism to Authoritarianism", *Journal of Indonesian Islam* 12, 2 (2018), p. 159.

recorded in the *Maklumat Bersama* (joint edict).<sup>43</sup> This edict was signed by the leader of every mass organization, from NU, SI, *al-Irsyad*, MUI, and a representative of the regional government which is the Department of Health. In terms of the content, the joint edict consists of the following points: 1) Prohibition on attending places of worship, including mosques, for people who tested positive for Covid-19, PDP (patient under supervision), ODP (people under observation), and ODR (people at risk); 2) Prohibition on attending congregational prayers, be it in mosque or prayer rooms, and encouragement on praying at home; 3) Counsel for those who are ill to perform Zuhr prayer at home in lieu of *jumatan* (Friday prayer); 4) Encouragement on offering up prayers (other than Friday prayer) at home; 5) Discouragement from attending religious activities involving many people; 6) Limitation on the number of people to a maximum of 40 people for various religious activities that attracts crowds or temporary postponement thereof.<sup>44</sup>

If Islamic organizations in Madura have relatively uniformed response towards Covid-19, then it contrasts with *pesantren* groups in Madura. There is a difference in the response of conservative *pesantren* and non-conservative *pesantren*. *Pesantren* that harbor conservative paradigm exhibit attitude and social behavior that tend to be negligent or even apathetic in response to Covid-19.<sup>45</sup> They are unwilling to take heed of the government's counsel, especially if it involves activities that are directly related to religious rituals.<sup>46</sup> In contrast, *pesantren* group that adheres to non-conservative beliefs, such as most *pesantren* affiliated with NU and SI, tend to display open-minded response or stance. Open-minded stance, in this regard, refers to the social behavior that is always adaptable to existing social realities. Their understanding of religion and the practice of religious rituals in the midst of the Covid-

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<sup>43</sup> Abdul Basri, "Ulama Umara Keluarkan Maklumat Bersama," <https://radar-madura.jawapos.com/read/2020/04/20/189944/ulama-umara-keluarkan-maklumat-bersama>.

<sup>44</sup> The Maklumat was signed by the leader of several Islamic organizations. They are Syarikat Islam, Nahdlatul Ulama Pamekasan, Majelis Ulama Indonesia, Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama (FKUB), Hidayatullah, Dewan Masjid Indonesia, al-Irsyad, Persis, and Muhammadiyah.

<sup>45</sup> Sovie Dina, "Tidak Ada Corona di Madura," <https://redaksi.duta.co/tidak-ada-corona-di-madura/>.

<sup>46</sup> Umar Shinhaji, "Respon Ulama/Kyai Madura terhadap Penanggulangan Covid-19 di Madura," 3 March 2021.

19 pandemic is elastic and dynamic. Included in this category are *Pesantren Miftahul Ulum Panyepen*, *Mfithaul Ulum Masaran*, and, *Pesantren Darul Ulum Banyuanyar*. According to this group, religion is always in sync with the spirit of changing time, so that in any situation it must not be ignored, let alone disputed.<sup>47</sup> Similarly, during the Covid-19 pandemic, every effort in preventing and tackling Covid-19 has a strong theological foundation, both textually or in historical context such as the time of the companion Umar bin Khattab's leadership. Therefore, adherence to health protocols issued by the government is a form of *ikhtiyar* (effort) that needs to be followed and carried out to the fullest extent, so that the risk of the spread and transmission of the pandemic can be curbed.<sup>48</sup> Apropos of the topic, Rahbini, as the caretaker of *Pesantren Miftahul Ulum Masaran* and the head of MUI Pamekasan Regency, said:

“Yes, in the language of the book it is known as *tha'un*. So *tha'un* is a plague. It is just at the time it was limited in terms of equipment, so there was no such thing as virus, there was just *tha'un*. In the past, when there was a disease like this, the move that the ulemas took was getting closer to Allah SWT. In Syria, there was a *tha'un* outbreak during Umar's reign to be exact. In Sham, at that time, there were tens of thousands of victims, therefore the local government ordered its people to evacuate and disperse into the mountain, separately breaking away, they were prohibited to flock together, which in current terminology is keeping their distance from each other.”<sup>49</sup>

“A record narrated that there was a companion of the Prophet who went to the mosque to pray, then he got down from his camel and simply threw the rein without tying it. The Prophet then asked him, “Why don't you tie down your camel?” The man replied, “I submit, just like the Messenger's *tawakkal* (reliance)

<sup>47</sup> Interview with Wafi Muhaimin, June 2, 2020.

<sup>48</sup> Interview with Mohmmad Khalilurrahman, February 21, 2021.

<sup>49</sup> The original version in Indonesian says: *Iya, jika dalam bahasa kitab itu kan dikenal dengan istilah Tha'un. Jadi Tha'un ini kan penyakit wabah. Hanya memang waktu dulu kan terbatas dengan alat, jadi tidak ada istilah virus, adanya adalah Tha'un. Dulu memang ketika ada penyakit seperti ini, gerakan para ulama itu adalah mendekatkan diri kepada Allah SWT. Di Syam dulu pernah terjadi penyakit Tha'un, tepatnya pada masa kepemimpinan Umar. Di Syam waktu itu ada puluhan ribu korban, sehingga pada masa itu pemerintah setempat menyuruh masyarakatnya mengungsi dan menyebar ke pegunungan, berpisah-pisah dan berpencar, mereka dilarang berkerumun, dalam bahasa sekarang menjaga jarak itu.*

upon Allah.” The Messenger immediately rebuked him, “No, *tawakkal* is not like that. Tie your camel down first then put your trust in Allah.” So, the effort (on Covid-19 counter measure) is justified by religion, *ikhtiyar* (make an effort) first then *tawakkal*. In the Qur’an there are Allah’s words that read, *faiḥḍaa ‘aḥḍamta fatawakkal ‘ala Allah*. So. there’s *‘aḥḍam* (decision) first then *tawakkal* on Allah.”<sup>50</sup>

Religion and the Covid-19 response do not conflict at all for non-conservative pesantren, as evidenced by the two interview quotes above. Because implementing health protocols is part of *ikhtiyar* in opposing a plague, Islam has a solid foundation or evidence to back it up. Obeying government regulations related to Covid-19 mitigation, such as keeping a safe distance, washing hands, and wearing masks, has been practiced by this group since the Companions' time. The approach and terminology are the only differences.. The infectious disease, which is now known as the Covid-19 pandemic, is akin to the *tha'un* plague, that affected the people of Syria (Sham) during the reign of the companion Umar, in the sense that they are both plagues. Similarly, in terms of the countermeasure strategy, the recommendation or regulation to maintain distance that is enforced by the government in order to break the chain of Covid-19 transmission has the same function as the order to the people of Syria to evacuate and disperse to the mountains. The plan and approach are indeed different, but they contain the same essence, which is maintaining distance and refraining from forming a crowd.

### **The Role of *Pesantren*: from Formal-Structural to Cultural-Religious**

Apart from the two categories above, *pesantrens* in Madura are generally quite responsive to the Covid-19 countermeasure agenda. This is influenced by the reality of the typology of *pesantrens* in Madura, the majority of which are affiliated with NU and SI, and reinforced by

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<sup>50</sup> The original version in Indonesian says: *Sebuah wirayat menceritakan dulu ada sahabat nabi datang ke Mesjid untuk melakukan sholat, lalu dia turun dari unta dan melemparkan tali untanya begitu saja tanpa dia ikat. Nabi bertanya, "kenapa tali untanya tidak ikat?" sahabat tersebut menjawab, "saya pasrah, tawakkal rasul ke Allah." Rasul pun langsung menegurnya, "ya, tawakkal itu tidak seperti itu, ikatkan dulu baru setelah itu tawakkal kepada Allah." Jadi, upaya (penanggulangan covid-19) itu dibenarkan oleh Agama, ikhtiyar dulu baru tawakkal. Kalo dalam al-qur'an itu ada firman allah, 'faiḍa aḥḍamta fatawakkal alallah.' Jadi, ada 'aḥḍam' dulu baru tawakkal kepada Allah.*

the Islamic paradigm of those who adhere to non-conservative beliefs.<sup>51</sup> Included in this circle are a number of *pesantrens* such as Pesantren Miftahul Ulum Panyepen, Pesantren Miftahul Ulum Masaran, and Pesantren Darul Ulum Banyuanyar. Based on field data investigation, the active role of the three *pesantrens* can be classified into two parts, structural role and cultural role. Structural approach indicates direct involvement of the *pesantren* in carrying out various formal regulations and guidelines to combat Covid-19, one of which is the implementation of health standard in the form of social and physical distancing.

Apropos of this research, based on the result of field data investigation, physical and social distancing in a number of *pesantrens* in Madura is implemented in the form of reducing activities or commotions. Various *pesantren* programs that may attract crowds are postponed or even cancelled. One of such activities is the annual *haflatul imtihan* (exam completion celebration) which is usually held in the last two months of the Hijriyyah calendar. Meanwhile, for daily activities related to the rituals of worship, such as congregation prayers, *salawat* recitations, et cetera, *pesantren* imposes physical and social distancing policy.<sup>52</sup> In order to maximize health protocols, *pesantren* builds synergy with government authorities such as *Dandim* (District Military Commander), *Polsek* (Sub-district Police) and *Polres* (District Police), and regional Health Department. *Pesantren* even cooperates with a number of hospital and *Puskemas* (Community Health Center), in which they come to the *pesantren* on a weekly basis to directly check the condition of the *santri*. Regarding this, Muhammad Khalilurrahman, the chief executive of *Pesantren Banyuanyar*, said:

“So, regarding the response of Pesantren Banyuanyar to this pandemic, ever since the Coronavirus entered Indonesia and there was an announcement by the government, pesantren has always been active in building coordination with several authorities such

<sup>51</sup> Ahmad Najib Burhani, "Lessons from Madura: NU, Conservatism and the 2019 Presidential Election", (2019), p. 9.

<sup>52</sup> In many Madurese *pesantrens*, *haflatul imtihan* is an exhibition event and competition for *santris* which always attract the attention of many people. This event is jam-packed with activities, from school-level competitions, art and entertainment exhibition, and grand *tabligh* as the summit. In the grand *tabligh*, *pesantrens* usually invite popular preacher (read: *Da'i*). Therefore, it is common that on a *haflatul imtihan* event, people will flock to attend it so that they can watch their children's performance and establish rapport with the *pesantren* family.

as Polsek and Polres, Dandim, and the Health Department. Here we also work together with medical institutions such as hospitals and Puskesmas. In Puskesmas' case, they even come to the pesantren once a week in order to directly monitor and check the students who are experiencing health problems."<sup>53</sup>

"Yes, speaking of diseases, we always believe the existence of disease, including virus, that we also believe. But there are other things that we don't fully follow and that is every issue spread by irresponsible people. So, generally, all these health protocols we apply it in the area of the pesantren to the maximum extent."<sup>54</sup>

In addition to the structural approach, the socio-religious role of pesantren in the Covid-19 countermeasure process is carried out through the cultural approach. The term cultural, conceptually, has a cultural articulation that is identical to local wisdom values.<sup>55</sup> Furthermore, it can be interpreted as a type of regional creativity based on collective traditional values and norms. Cultural approaches are frequently used as a development strategy due to their local nature, particularly in traditional regions with strong local wisdom values.<sup>56</sup> One of the advantages of cultural approach lies in its closeness to people's lives. It is even in direct contact with their daily activities, be it economic, social, or religious.<sup>57</sup> That is why, regions that have strong

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<sup>53</sup> The original version in Indonesian says: *Jadi begini, terkait dengan respon pesantren Banyuwangi terhadap pandemi ini, semenjak virus corona masuk ke Indonesia dan ada pemberitahuan dari pihak pemerintah, pesantren selalu aktif membangun koordinasi dengan beberapa pihak berwajib seperti Polres, Polsek, Dandim, dan Dinas kesehatan. Kita di sini juga menjalin kerja sama dengan institusi medis seperti rumah sakit dan puskesmas. Bahkan untuk puskesmas ini mereka setiap sekali dalam satu minggu datang ke pesantren, untuk memantau dan mengecek langsung keberadaan santri yang mengalami gangguan kesehatan*

<sup>54</sup> The original version in Indonesian says: *Iya, jadi kalo namanya penyakit itu kami selalu percaya terhadap keberadaan penyakit, termasuk juga virus itu kami percaya. Tapi ada hal-hal lain yang kami tidak mengikuti sepenuhnya setiap isu-isu yang dimunculkan oleh orang tidak bertanggung jawab. Jadi secara umum semua protokol kesehatan terkait pandemi ini, kami trapkan di lingkungan pesantren semaksimal mungkin*

<sup>55</sup> Hasan Alwi, *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia* (Jakarta: Balai Pustaka, 2007).

<sup>56</sup> Yoosik Gong and Wonho Jang, "Culture and Development: Reassessing Cultural Explanations on Asian Economic Development", *Development and Society* 27, 1 (1998): pp. 77–97; Mervyn Claxton and Unesco Sector, "Culture and Development: A Study", [Http://Lst-Iiep.Unesco.Org/Cgi-Bin/Wwwi32.Exe/\[In=epidoc1.in\]/?T2000=004566/\(-100\)](http://Lst-Iiep.Unesco.Org/Cgi-Bin/Wwwi32.Exe/[In=epidoc1.in]/?T2000=004566/(-100)).

<sup>57</sup> Milton J. Bennett, "A Developmental Approach to Training for Intercultural Sensitivity", *Special Issue: Theories and Methods in Cross-Cultural Orientation* 10, 2 (1986): pp. 179–96.



local wisdom tend to have a higher level of obedience, even exceeding their obedience to government policy.<sup>58</sup> In regions based on customs and tradition, cultural approach is a strategic solution to resolve various situations that can't be handled through structural policy.<sup>59</sup>

In relation to this study, the term “cultural” refers to the charisma of *kyai* and *pesantren*, two of the many embodiments of local wisdoms that have so far been the most influential in the social system and structure of the Madurese society.<sup>60</sup> In the context of Covid-19 control in Madura, the cultural role of *kyai* is clearly shown in their active involvement in alerting the dangers of Covid-19 as well as its handling, prevention, and countermeasure. In practice, the cultural role of *kyai* is carried out by raising awareness of the people and providing theological explanation of the necessity to adhere to the guidelines and health protocol regulations issued by the government. To maximize their role, *kyai* utilize the *pesantrens*' network, such as alumni, *santri*, and the community near the vicinity of the *pesantren*. *Kyai* provide explanation and counsel to them in the form of education such as teaching, *tausiyah* (informal da'wah), and then circulate it to the public as a whole, starting from *tausiyah* about the dangers of Covid-19 to the counsel to avoid forming crowds. Aside from that, they also form community movements to strengthen the handling and countermeasure of Covid-19 in Madura. The movement is called Gerakan Kyai dan Santri Memakai Masker (Mask-wearing *Kyai* and *Santri* Movement).<sup>61</sup> In relation to this, Rahbini stated:

“In tackling Covid-19, we, *kyai*, take several steps. The first step is in the of education, admonition, et cetera. Ulemas agree that in tackling Covid-19, we need to adhere to health protocols including always wearing a mask, refraining from flocking, maintaining

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<sup>58</sup> Margherita Pedrana, "Local Economic Development Policies and Tourism; An Approach to Sustainability and Culture", *Regional Science Inquiry Journal* 5, 1 (2013): pp. 91–99.

<sup>59</sup> T Loulanski, "Revising the Concept for Cultural Heritage: The Argument for a Functional Approach.", *International Journal of Cultural Property*, 13, 2 (2006): pp. 2017–2233.

<sup>60</sup> Martin van Bruinessen, "Tarekat and Tarekat Teachers in Madurese Society". In *Across Madura Strait: The Dynamics of an Insular Society*, Edited by Kees van Dijk, Huub de Jonge, and Ely Touwen-Bouwisma (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1995).

<sup>61</sup> Interview with KH. Zainal Abidin, June 2, 2020.

distance, and then washing hands. Yes, that's our counsel."<sup>62</sup> Then, Rahbini continued, "Yes, we are with the government, like yesterday we had a joint movement with the East Java regional police department, along with our government, and the movement is about the countermeasure of this disease, it's called Gerakan Kyai dan Santri Memakai Masker (Mask-wearing Kyai and Santri Movement). We held it a few days ago. There will be masks that we distribute throughout the pesantren. It's because we believe that this disease actually exists, and diseases must be combatted together. Not only the government, but *kyai* and ulemas' role is a must, so that the effort of the government is also striven for by *kyai*, even though it might not be as intense as the government because of several things here."<sup>63</sup>

Pesantren also strengthen their cultural-religious role through a religious edict, in addition to forming a community movement in the form of Gerakan Kyai dan Santri Memakai Masker.. Referring to a Circular No. 0/PC/A.II/L34/IV/2020, one of the edicts issued by Madurese *kyai* and *pesantren* which regards the procedures of performing Friday prayer and congregational prayers amidst the pandemic. The contents of the edict include: 1) In regions not considered a red zone, Friday prayer can still be performed, while keeping in mind adherence to health protocols. However, lest there is a greater *mafsadah* (damage), then Friday prayer can be substituted with Zuhr prayer at home; 2) People belonging in the category of PDP (patient under surveillance), ODP (people under investigation), and ODR (at risk individuals), or those who have just arrived from outside or crossed a red one, are advised to not perform Friday prayer and congregational prayers in mosques; 3) People who tested positive for

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<sup>62</sup> The original version in Indonesian says: *Dalam hal penanggulangan Covid-19 ini, kyai mengambil beberapa langkah, langkah pertama berbentuk edukasi berbentuk pendidikan, tausiyah, dan sebagainya. Ulama sepakat bahwa dalam menanggulangi Covid-19 ini, harus mematuhi protokol kesebetan meliputi harus selalu menggunakan masker, tidak berkerumunan, jaga jarak, lalu cuci tangan. Ya, itu yang kita sarankan*

<sup>63</sup> The original version in Indonesian says: *Ya, kita bersama pemerintah, seperti kemarin itu kita ada gerakan bersama kepolisian dan Polda Jawa Timur, bersama pemerintah kami di sini ada gerakan dalam rangka penanggulangan penyakit ini, yakni 'Gerakan Kyai dan Santri Bermasker'. Ini kita adakan beberapa hari kemarin. Ini nantinya ada masker yang akan kita sebarakan ke pesantren. Karena kita yakin penyakit ini benar-benar ada, dan penyakit itu harus kita atasi secara bersama-sama. Tidak cukup pemerintah saja, namun juga harus ada peran kyai dan ulama, sehingga apa yang diupayakan pemerintah, itu juga upayakan oleh kyai, sekalipun memang tidak segenar gerakan pemerintah, karena terkait dengan beberapa hal di sini.*

Corona or belongs in the PDP category are not allowed to perform Friday prayer and must substitute it with Zuhr prayer at home; 4) The *takmir* (board) of mosques must provide health protocol equipment; 5) The *takmir* of mosques is advised to always coordinate with religious leaders, community leaders, and Covid-19 task force; 6) Distance must be maintained and masks must be worn during Friday prayer; 7) The *khatib* (preacher) are expected to shorten the sermon, and the *imam* (prayer's leader) are to shorten the verses, *wirid* (litany), and prayers recited. 8) After the prayers, all attendees must immediately go back home, and increase good doings and prayers in order to keep the plague away at home.

In terms of Covid-19 countermeasure in Madura, the various edicts issued by several *pesantren* above, from the relocation of religious activities from mosques to homes, the postponement or cancellation of religious rituals that attract crowds such as communal Qur'an studies or marriages to sending *santri* home earlier than normal are all formed upon a clear and solid theological foundation. The relocation of ritual activities from places of worships to homes will not reduce the essence of worship nor will it lower the degree of obedience and adherence as religious individuals. In an emergency, especially if it is mentally or physically threatening, the law of performing certain worships may change. In fact, all forms of rituals which is initially mandatory can be excused, particularly when the situation is directly related with physical rights that include greater risks such as life or physical safety.<sup>64</sup>

Observed from a religious perspective, the theological basis of Covid-19 countermeasure can be found in many sources, one of which is the source of law in *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence).<sup>65</sup> Referring to the explanation by Muhammad at-Tahir bin Ashur in his monumental work, *Maqasid al-Shariah al-Islamiyyah*, there are several things that need to be noted when implementing religious law. One of the things is the aspect of safety (*maslahah*) and malevolence (*madarat*) that may arise

<sup>64</sup> Walaa M Sabry and Adarsh Vohra, "Role of Islam in the Management of Psychiatric Disorders", *Indian Journal of Psychiatry* 55, 2 (2013): pp. 205–14.

<sup>65</sup> Hudzaifah Achmad Qotadah, "Covid-19: Tinjauan Maqasid Al-Shariah Terhadap Penanggulangan Pelaksanaan Ibadah Shalat di Tempat Ibadah; Hifdz al-Nafs Lebih Utama Dari Hifdz al-Din?", *SALAM: Jurnal Sosial Dan Budaya Syar-i* 7, 7 (2020).

when the law is implemented.<sup>66</sup> From the sociology of religion perspective, the concept of putting safety first, in relation to the Covid-19 mitigation process, has the same spirit with the Covid-19 countermeasure process currently implemented. The spirit collectively emphasizes the effort on protection and preservation.<sup>67</sup> The concept of protection is defined as sheltering something making it invisible or imperceptible, the goal of which is to keep it away from anything unwanted for its safety. The concept of preservation has the meaning of supervising or attending to something so as to not cause harm, obtain safety and security, and avoid hardship and losses.<sup>68</sup> At a glance, the definitions of protection and preservation differ, but in practice they have similarities, because essentially, both protection and preservation compel the implementation of social-physical distancing.

Based on this explanation, it can be understood that the various socio-religious roles of *pesantrens* who have been actively involved in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic in Madura, be it through cultural involvement of the role of *kyai* and *pesantren* or through structural means in the form of health protocol implementation, can be seen as an embodiment of the concept of protection and preservation. The goal of all these is to attain safety, both mentally and physically, from threats and harm. These two steps to prioritize physical and mental safety is a form of humane Covid-19 mitigation that reflects in optima forma prevention not only in handling, overcoming, and preventing Covid-19, but also in the implementation of safety principles in Islamic theology. Therefore, limiting movement space in places of worship, relocating worship activities from mosques and other places of worship to home, and cancelling religious activities such as communal Quran readings and grand *tabligh* (preaching) are not only quite rational, but are also legitimized as correct from Islamic perspective.

## Conclusion

*Pesantren* is one of the Islamic social institutions that hold a great influence in the dynamics of the lives of Madurese people, so that its existence can be utilized as a strategy to respond to the pandemic,

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<sup>66</sup> Achmad Faidi, "Reconstruction of the National Legal System: Study the Implementation of the Maqāsid al-Shari'ah Theory", *Al-'Adalah* 15, 2 (2019), p. 307.

<sup>67</sup> Fathorrahman Ghufroon, "Virus Korona dan Teologi Kemaslahatan", <https://www.jawapos.com/opini/18/03/2020/virus-korona-dan-teologi-kemaslahatan/>.

<sup>68</sup> Alwi, *Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia*.

Covid-19. In the case of Covid-19 handling, *pesantren* in Madura responds in line with the health protocols that become the government's policy. The majority of *pesantrens* in Madura choose to implement collective anticipatory move by prioritizing safety principles, both physically and mentally. This anticipatory response is implemented by *pesantren* through a series of actions oriented in protection and preservation of humans' physical and mental state.

In practical level, the two forms of mitigation are performed by *pesantren* through two approaches, structural and cultural. The structural approach refers to the active efforts of *pesantren* in being involved in the enforcement of health standards such as social and physical distancing, cancelling religious activities prone to the forming of crowds, limiting movement space for prayers in places of worship, and providing health facilities such as water reservoirs for hand washing in the vicinity of the *pesantren*. On the other hand, the cultural role is carried out by *pesantren* through the involvement of its community, *kyai*, teacher, and *santri* in promoting religious edicts, wherein the importance of adhering to health protocols and the procedures of performing prayers amid the pandemic are contained. These two approaches in maintaining physical and mental health are mitigation instruments that are not only compliance with legality and rationality, but are also legitimized by the Islam teachings. []

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## Interviewes

Interview with Wafi Muhaimin, June 2, 2020.

Interview with K.H. Zainal Abidin, June 2, 2020.

Interview with Umar Shinhaji, March 3, 2021.

Interview with Mohmmad Khalilurrahman, February 21, 2021.

