

Examining the Religiosity of Bendar Fishermen in Central Java: A Da'wah Perspective

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Abstract

Fishermen are generally stereotyped as a marginalized group characterized by poverty, low levels of education, lack of religious observance, engagement in superstitious rituals, extravagance, alcohol abuse, and other negative behaviors. However, in reality, fishing communities are both relatively prosperous and deeply religious. This study addresses the following research questions: What are the religious connotations associated with fishermen in Bendar Village? What is the reality of their religious practices? How are their religious practices perceived through the lens of Islamic preaching (da'wah)? The research employs a qualitative descriptive approach. The findings reveal that fishermen in Bendar Village, Pati Regency, Central Java Province, actively practice Islamic traditions such as Quranic recitation, *tahlil*, and *manaqib*. Additionally, they are industrious individuals, and many within their families have attained higher education, with several holding university degrees. This phenomenon implies that the religious practices of fishermen can be understood as a culturally grounded approach to Islamic preaching (da'wah), highlighting the integration of local traditions within the broader framework of religious dissemination.

Kata Kunci

Religiusitas nelayan, konotasi, realitas, da'wah

Abstrak

Nelayan secara umum dikategorikan sebagai kelompok masyarakat miskin, berpendidikan rendah, tidak taat beribadah, praktik ritual syirik, boros, mabuk-mabukan, dan tindakan negatif lainnya. Namun realitasnya ada komunitas nelayan yang relatif sejahtera sekaligus religius. Pertanyaan-pertanyaan penelitian ini yaitu bagaimana konotasi beragama nelayan di Desa Bendar? bagaimana realitas beragama nelayan di Desa Bendar? bagaimana praktik beragama nelayan dipandang melalui perspektif dakwah Islam? Metode penelitian menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa nelayan di Desa Bendar, Kabupaten Pati, Provinsi Jawa Tengah mengamalkan tradisi membaca Al Quran, *tahlil*, dan *manaqib*. Selain itu, nelayan di Desa Bendar juga pekerja keras. Tingkat pendidikan keluarga nelayan juga banyak yang menjadi sarjana. Fenomena tersebut mengimplikasikan bahwa

praktik beragama nelayan dipandang sebagai metode dakwah berbasis budaya lokal.

Introduction

Fishermen are people whose main livelihood is fishing in the sea (Branch & Kleiber, 2017). A Fisherman is a person whose livelihood is fishing (Murwanto, 2016). For fishermen, catching fish in the sea is essential, and the result is meeting daily needs. Fish catches are the primary source of income for fishermen, and everyone needs fish; this should be able to bring fishermen's lives to prosper because, in economic theory, "the more people need an item, the more expensive it will be, and make the owner of the production richer" (Damanik & Sasongko, 2015). However, in general, the life of the average fisherman is poor. So it is connoted that all fishing villages have poor lives. This vulnerability in the field of poverty can then become a fertile ground for vulnerability in other areas of life (Kusnadi, 2006).

There are several connotations imposed on the social-religious life of fishing communities, namely (1) lack of understanding of religious teachings, permissiveness, enjoyment of extravagance, drinking alcohol, and being extravagant (Nadjib, 2013). (2) low religious observance (Humaedi, 2017), (3) Very few fast Ramadhan (Hartati & Kartono, 2020). (4) The rituals of prayer, offerings, and alms of the sea are intended to be safe and get blessings from fish catches (Thohir, 1999), which Dhavamony calls this kind of ritual worship as a facitive and pragmatic ritual (Dhavamony, 1995). With some of the characteristics of fishermen's lives mentioned above, the reality is related to the practice of religion is categorized as a separate religion for the fishing community, where fishermen carry out prayers, prayer rituals, and other worship will always be related to culture and tradition (Thohir, 2006). The fishermen do not want to be said to have carried out shirk; therefore, according to Thohir, such a religion is called "fisherman religion" and not the practice of shirk worship (Thohir, 2006). When confronted with a fishing society with the above various characteristics, then in its outline 2 (two) characteristics are the central question in the da'wah in the fishing community, namely, economic questions (*muamalah*) and the question of religion (worship). Economic questions related to "poverty" and religious questions related to the "practice of religious teachings" (Kusnadi, 2000).

Problems related to the economy are explained that the character of fishing communities in the aspect of meeting economic needs is different from the farming community and industrial communities (Syamsir, 2008), Where in the fishing community, the character in making a living to meet the needs of life is harder, and faces more risks, this is due to the influence of the natural conditions of the sea where to make a living to meet the needs of his family. Social and economic demands in working as fishermen face a very high dependence on seasonal conditions and the availability of human resources, marine resources, and fishing gear, resulting in uncertainty of fishermen's catches (Murwanto, 2016). In addition, the demands of work as a fisherman

must be willing to leave family, children, and wives to sail for days or months outside the island to find fish catches. Sometimes, fishermen manage to get the expected fish catch, and sometimes, the results are insufficient or cannot cover the capital they have spent.

The characteristics of such economic life are that the fishing community is more characterized as a society that cannot invest in the future lacks capital, and is synonymous with the cycle of poverty in that these fishermen are the poorest group of fishermen or groups in Indonesia (Nissa' *et al.*, 2023). Fishermen poverty is the condition of fishing communities that cannot meet basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, education, and health. This vulnerability in the field of poverty is then fertile ground for insecurity in other areas of life (Kusnadi, 2006).

In addition to economic problems, as mentioned above, fishing communities are also faced with religious or religious problems. The religiosity of the fishing community is considered that obedience is still lacking; this can be seen from the frequency of prayer both on boats, at home, and in mosques or prayer rooms; it can also be seen how often the fishing community participates in recitation activities, "*yasinan-tahlilan*" in the village, "*istighosah*" in the mosque, community service, mutual assistance, environmental security systems, and others (Darno, 2016).

When carrying out worship, especially the implementation of prayers, most fishermen perform prayers when they reach land, but very few pray in the middle of the sea (Humaedi, 2017). If a storm hits the prahu or their ship, the *adhan* and *iqamah* are chanted without praying in the middle of the sea, and even after arriving on land, they do not pray or perform prayers. However, it is undeniable that fishermen also believe that the sea where they make a living has magical powers that can bring pleasure and sadness simultaneously. For those fishermen, the sea is sometimes a good friend; the waves are calm, and the fishermen can catch abundant fish. However, sometimes the sea is no longer friendly, and big waves accompanied by stormy winds cannot be fully predicted when present. It cannot be ascertained what the consequences will be; it could be that the boat is damaged, gets no results, or even the fisherman sinks with his boat and dies. Therefore, fishermen consider the ocean to have rulers and guardians, including invisible sea inhabitants. They can help and disturb humans, so fishermen carry out a series of symbolic activities, namely rituals (Idaman, 2012).

Ritual is a form of creation or organization of relationships between humans and the unseen, relationships between humans and others, and human relationships with their environment (Thohir, 1999). For example, the ritual in question is carrying out the custom of "*larung sesaji*" (giving gifts to the ocean) feast or sea alms. The purpose of holding sea alms is to help those who control the sea, namely Gusti Allah, Angels, and Prophet Khidir. Fishermen in the southern sea coastal area still believe in the existence of Nyi Roro Kidul, etc. (Darno, 2016).. The form of asking for help is by carrying out traditions, rituals, offerings, and sea alms, things like this are categorized as a separate religion for fishing communities that is different from society in general (Thohir, 1999).

The fishing community conducts offering rituals solely of pragmatic value, where the worship rituals carried out by fishermen, such as Sea alms, reading "*manaqib-berjanjen*" (reading the story of the Prophet Muhammad) on the boat, as well as when fishermen experience losses, then by holding Qur'anic "*khataman*" (Read the Koran in its entirety) events, pilgrimages to the tombs of saints, all of that is to seek blessings, salvation, and get abundant sustenance. According to Dhavamony, the worship ritual is included in the factitive ritual. Namely, it is pragmatic to get abundant fish catches, safety, and blessings of life.

Socioeconomic problems and problems of implementing religious teachings in fishing communities as mentioned above, according to Nadjib, there is a causality relationship, meaning that socioeconomic life is related to fishermen's religiosity. It can be understood that economic deprivation or poverty can also result in the implementation of the teachings of his religion, which is lacking; in a hadith, it is explained that poverty is almost disbelief (HR Anas bin Malik). Likewise, people who observe religious law will better adapt to economic, social, and cultural life in society and family (Jati, 2018).

A person who is obedient to practicing his religion tends to be more responsible in activities to meet the economic needs of his family. This means that religiosity influences people's welfare (Zakariya, 2019). His religion has motivated economic behavior or work ethic to achieve a better family economic life. A good family economic life provides opportunities for his family to carry out worship well, such as carrying out the pillars of faith, Islam, and Islamic behavior or good morality (Jati, 2018).

Some of the theories that have been put forward above, which are more dominant, whether religiosity affects socioeconomic life or vice versa, depart from socioeconomic life that affects religiosity. These theories are equally authentic, only to what conditions of life and profession will be applied. According to Kusnadi, this vulnerability in the field of poverty in fishing communities is what later became the beginning of the development of insecurity in other areas of life, such as crime and low religiosity (Kusnadi, 2012). Therefore, it can be said that a better level of family economic life can make individuals, families, or communities obey the teachings of their religion. In line with this, it was found that the economic condition of fishermen in Bendar Village was the most prosperous fishing village in Indonesia, and the results of the study also showed the fishing community in Bendar Village as a student community and, at the same time, religious.

The religiosity of Bendar fishermen can be understood because most Bendar Village residents are Muslims. In addition, most Bendar Village residents work as fishermen, 55.7% or 849 people from 1,100 households. On average, Fishermen in Bendar Village have boats with a minimum size of 50 to 200 GT (Sukoco, 2022). There are three groups of fishermen in Bendar Village, namely "juragan" fishermen (boat owners), labor fishermen (captains, motorists, boat crews/crews), and individual fishermen (small fishermen). The three groups of fishermen are as follows: The number

of boat owners is 239 people, crew members are 567 people, and traditional fishermen are 43 (Budiyanto, 2023).

The problems of the socioeconomic and religious life of the fishing community, as mentioned above, occur in general in all fishing villages; this is also possible in Bendar fishing village. The fishermen community in Bendar Village connoted as a society that practices "*syirik*" religious and social rituals such as sea alms, seeks "*pesugihan*" on the island of Seprapat Juwana, maintains amulets, rajahs, and blessing water, is poorly educated, disobedient to worship, extravagant, drunk, and plays women. This study wants to prove the connotations circulating about the fishing community in Bendar Village and how the real reality is about the religion of the fishing community in Bendar Village, Juwana District, Pati Regency, Central Java Province (Sekarwangi & Astuti, 2016).

Method

This type of qualitative research is qualitative, and the approach used is descriptive. Case studies are researchers reviewing, understanding, interpreting, and describing data in detail and depth. The locus of research on the fishing community of Bendar Village, Juwana District, Pati Regency, Central Java. The reasons for choosing Bendar Village as a research location are: (1) Bendar Village is the wealthiest fishing village in Indonesia and is known as a fisherman with a prosperous economic level; it can be seen from almost every head of the family has a permanent house and many luxury houses with two floors or more, many residents have luxury cars, and the average boat has more than 100 GT. Some even own more than one boat. (2) The majority of fishing communities in Bendar Village as religious communities where 99.9% of the population are Muslims and have the opportunity to worship to carry out religious rituals because they have never been to the sea, just sit at home even if they work is only a side job, such as opening stalls, shops, ship docks, etc.

Data retrieval techniques use techniques: (1) In-depth interviews were conducted with fishermen, administrators of fishermen's associations, village heads, village officials, religious leaders, and community leaders in Bendar Juwana Pati Village. (2) Observation was carried out to find pictures and conditions of the religious reality of fishing communities. (3) Documentation, carried out by collecting various documents (archives, records, books, newspapers, magazines, and agendas) that have to do with the religious reality of the fishing community in Bendar Village. The research data used is qualitative analysis with inductive techniques. In this analysis technique, data taken from the field is reduced, data display data is verified, and conclusions are drawn.

Results and Discussion

Bendar Village

The place of this research is the Fisherman Community of Bendar Village, Juwana District, Pati Regency. Bendar Village is a coastal village with a population of 3711 people; the majority of the population of this village has livelihoods as fishermen and

pond farmers, both tiger shrimp and milkfish ponds. Bendar Village is located ± 3 km southeast of the Juwana sub-district office, with Pati Regency at 14 Km and Central Java Province at 91 Km, and located in the eastern part of the Juwana River, not far from Juwana port and Bajomulyo Juwana fish auction site. At the same time, the boundaries are north with "Growong" Lor Village, south with Bumirejo Village, west with Silugonggo River and Bajomulya Village, and east with Trimulyo Village.

Bendar Village consists of 15 Neighborhood Pillars (RT) and 05 Neighborhood Pillars (RW); each RW consists of 03 RTs. The population of Bendar Village is 100% Muslim. The village has worship facilities, a mosque, and six prayer rooms. The population of Bendar Village is 3,745 people, men as many as 1,869 people or 49.9% and women as many as 1,876 people or 50.1%. At the same time, the number of heads of families is 1,100 people. The livelihood of most Bendar Village residents is fishermen, with 55.7% or 849 people.

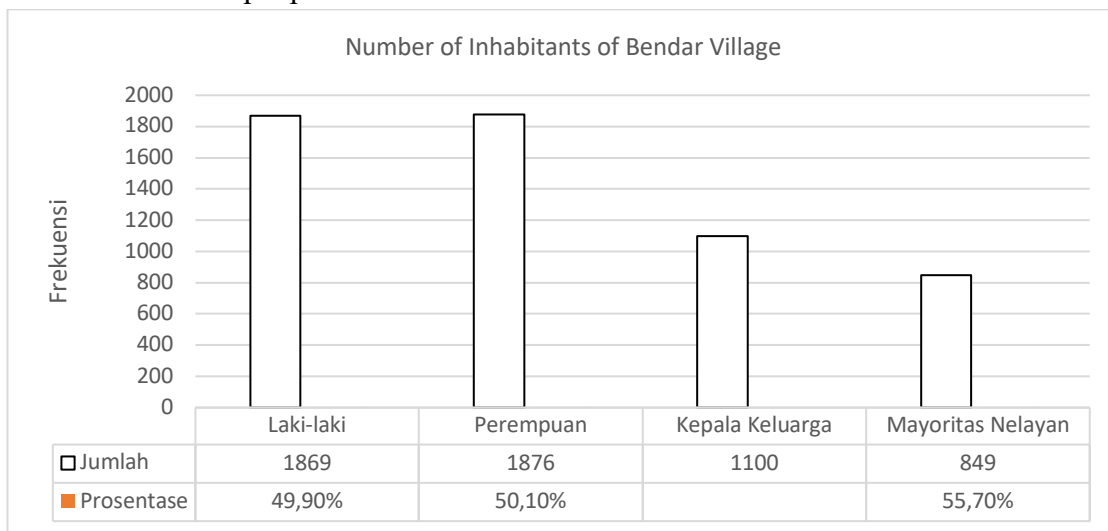


Figure 1. Total Population (Sutopo, 2023)

Source: Field Data processed 2023

The total population of Bendar Village, according to occupation, namely the age of 15 years to 60 years and over, is 1,639 people with various livelihoods. The livelihood of the majority of Bendar Village residents is fishermen, with a total of 849 people or 51.8% because it is located in the coastal area. Details can be seen in the following table.

Table 1 Resident Employment (Sutopo, 2023)

Sector	Data	Percentage
Fishermen	849	51,8 %
Own business	494	30,2 %
Employee	105	6,4 %
Mechanic	81	5%
Civil Servants	7	0,1 %
Service	84	5,1 %

Midwife	2	0,001 %
Carpentry	11	0,7 %
TNI/Polri	2	0,001 %
Traveling Merchants	4	0,002 %
Total	1.639	100 %

Source: Field Data processed 2023

Most Bendar Village people have 26.5% elementary school education, 21.4% junior high school, and 43.9% high school. Details can be seen in the following table.

Table 2 Population Education

Education Level	Man	Woman	Sum	%
Graduated from elementary school/equivalent	287	307	594	26,5 %
Graduated from junior high school/equivalent	231	249	480	21,4 %
High school graduation/equivalent	487	496	983	43,9 %
Completed Diploma one	1	0	1	0,05 %
Diploma completion of one	28	31	59	2,6 %
completed S1	63	52	115	5,1 %
completed S2	2	4	6	0,27 %
completed S3	1	0	1	0,05 %
Total	1.100	1.139	2.239	100 %

Source: Field Data processed 2023

The lives of the fishermen of Bendar village are not individual but in groups. There are several groups of fishermen: fishing groups of "cantrang" boats, purse seine boats, holer boats, and outboard boats. The fishermen group is accommodated in community organizations, namely (1) "Mina Santosa group." and (2) "Purse Seine Rukun Santoso group." (3) "Mitra Nelayan Sejahtera" group, and (4) "AMANAT group (*Amrih Mulyane Anggota Nelayan Tradisional*)." The existence of these associations is intended to help fishermen in the economic and social fields, handling ship papers, borrowing or renting fishing equipment, and capital lending.

Table 3 Fishermen's Association in Bendar Village

No	Group Name	Chairman Name	Number of Members	Number of Ships
1	Mina Santosa	Heri Budiyanto	108	187
2	Purse Seine Rukun Santoso	H. Nuryadi	54	98
3	Mitra Nelayan Sejahtera	H. Eko Budiyono	69	157
4	AMANAT	Askuna	43	43
	Total		274	485

Source: Field Data processed 2023

From the table data mentioned above, it can be explained that Juragan (ship owner) has a ship with a unit size of ship volume of 50 Gross Tonnage/GT and above ("*Cantrang*" Ship 103 pieces, Purse Seine Ship/ring trawl 152 pieces, Fishing Ship/Rawai/holer 87 pieces, with an area of operation up to Papua waters, Masalembo Island waters, sea area

around South Kalimantan, Banjarmasin, Bontang, Samarinda, Balikpapan, and Makassar Strait. Labor (captain, deputy captain of motorists, motorists, and crew/crew) = For *Cantrang* ships, the number of crew is 17 people; for Purse Seine ships, the number of crew is 35 to 40 people in each ship; for fishing boats/ "*Rawai*" the number of crew is 15 people. Traditional fishermen or individuals (small fishermen) who have vessels with a unit size of boat volume ≤ 5 Gross Tonnage/GT, in each small boat, only one person.

Religious Connotations of Bendar Fishermen

In the Big Dictionary Indonesian, connotation is defined as a word with another meaning or something related to the word (Nadjib, 1981). Connotative meaning is an aspect of a word or group of words based on feelings or thoughts that arise or are caused by the author and reader (Suwandi, 2011). There are several connotations of the religious life of the Bendar fishing community, namely as a society that practices shirk-religious social rituals, sea almsgiving, seeking sustenance, maintaining amulets, rajahs, and blessing water, disobeying worship, being extravagant, drunk, and playing women.

a. Connotations of "*Pesugihan*"

"Seprapat" Island is in Bendar Village, Juwana District, Pati Regency. It is said that this small island is a place to take wealth or wealth. It is named the island of "Seprapat" because, according to history, it began with the story of "*Dampo Awang*," who left a quarter of his property on this small island. On the island of "Seprapat," there is the tomb of "Datuk Lodang," where his burial is in a prayer room. It is said that many apes also inhabit this place. According to the story, the monkeys are the embodiment of humans who once took "*pesugihan*" on the island of Seprapat. Their bodies are dead but live in another dimension of nature by becoming slaves or servants of demons who provide wealth (Hartono, 2021).

It is connoted that people who come to "Seprapat" Island want to seek "*pesugihan*" with some rituals carried out, such as burning minyan, reciting mantras, and meditating. Therefore, some rumors developed in the community and went viral that the fishing community in Bendar Village is the most prosperous fisherman in Indonesia, one of which is because some seek *pesugihan* on this sprapat island. Many people visit the island of "Seprapat" to realize their wishes. It is said that if a rich person whose property comes from the island of "Seprapat" when dies, then the person dies as a citizen on the island of "Seprapat" (Jannah, 2021).

b. Connotations of the Existence of Shaman or "*Wong Pinter*"

It is a tradition of the fishing community that if they make prahu, make nets, and even go to sea so that the fish catch is abundant; they ask smart people or shamans. The wise person in question is considered to have the power to imagine the life that someone will experience with good and bad luck (Artanto, 2017).

In Bendar, the tradition is still attached and ingrained. That all fishermen have their ways of performing this ritual. Usually, after cleaning the boat, accompanied by a smart

person or psychic, they burn incense and recite their *wirid*. They assumed that the smoke from the burn would convey their prayers to the sky. The goal is to conjure blessings to produce more results (Sekarwangi, 2016).

In addition to work, asking smart people is also done when fishermen's families are going to carry out celebrations, such as child circumcision and marriage. The fact that the author found about this intelligent person is that fishermen sometimes need to learn whether smart people are brilliant people. Jumbadi, a shipmaster, admits this. As the ship's boss, he often "feels uncomfortable lying" to his men about time at sea, even though he is not wise. However, according to him, fishermen are more easily influenced by people they already trust. Asking smart people (shamans) is expected to get the best results (Reddy, 2020a). However, it is not very good that after going to sea, there are also fishermen who spend their money for fun and consumptive reasons and do not think about tomorrow (saving); this can have many results. Finally, in the famine season, they may fall into debt bondage of ship owners or fish traders (intermediaries), and they can even be entangled in debt to loan sharks (Ullah et al., 2023).

c. Connotation of the "Sedekah Laut"

Sea alms, or what people often call a *Nyadran* tradition, are where people throw or wash offerings (offerings of food and flowers) into the sea or river estuary. This tradition is held every month of Shawwal or one week after Eid al-Fitr and has been carried out since 1953. Although the catch each year differs, people usually still do sea alms. This sea "*sedekah*" tradition is in the form of giving offerings containing seven kinds of flowers, buffalo heads and goat heads, plantains, coconuts, "*leper*," and "*ketupat*" to the sea by being banned or washed away at the mouth of the river or sea. However, not only that, on the previous night, it was common to hold a shadow puppet show before carrying out a sea alms procession the next day (Wahyudi & Sigit, 2011).

The tradition of sea alms has a ceremonial procession that begins with the handing over of a shawl to the caretaker of the beach, which is then followed by a procession or group that walks to the north coast of Java carrying many offerings miniature ships and also buffalo heads and goat heads. The group consisted of the surrounding community, tourists, and people who brought "*jaranan*" art led by someone with the appearance of Anoman carrying a mace hammer (Julianto et al., 2021).

Upon arrival at the beach, village elders recite prayers in Javanese. Furthermore, mountains, dishes, and market snacks are usually placed on miniature fishing boats and do three rounds around the bay. After the procession, the mountains and some offerings are taken to the pier to be washed into the middle of the sea. This sea alms tradition contains several elements of relationship relations, such as human relations with humans, humans with nature, humans with other creatures, and humans with the Creator (Laura Andri & Wulan, 2020).

d. Connotations of Worship

Bendar fishing community in carrying out worship, especially implementing prayers; most fishermen pray when they arrive on land, and very few pray in the middle of the sea. If a storm hits their boat, the *adhan* and *iqomah* are chanted without performing prayers in the middle of the sea. But strangely, after arriving on land, they did not perform prayers, let alone the "*meng-qadha*" prayers they left while fishing for fish. Likewise, in carrying out fasting during Ramadan, very few fishermen, especially crew members, fast in the middle of the sea, and when they arrive on land, they also do not fast (Jannah et al., 2021).

The crew consisting of the captain, deputy captain, motorist, and crew of the *Cantrang* Ship, *Pancing / Rawai / Holer* spent time in the middle of the sea for about 3 to 4 months, even the purse seine ship until 6 months just returned home, with the area of operation reaching the waters of Papua, the waters of Masalembo Island, the sea area around South Kalimantan, Banjarmasin, Bontang, Samarinda, Balikpapan, and Makassar Strait. When the ship docks at the port at the fish auction site outside Java, for example, in "Mbatu licin" city, Tarakan, to sell the catch, spend at least two to four days unloading the fish catch and at the same time replenishing supplies for sea work (*Minyang*), most of the crew (*ABK*) take advantage of the time to have fun after months in the middle of the sea in fishermen's language "looking for herbs ."The intended herbs are drinks and nightlife at a location near the Port (Results of interviews with BP & /fisherman, 2023). Some fishermen who own ships are fish traders, fishermen who shop for marine supplies or "*minyang*," and ship repair. They used to have experience as crew members (*ABK*), so they are more experienced with fishing habits overseas. However, from the above data, the highest religious observance is in fishermen who own boats.

Charitable-giving fishermen who own large practice boats, good prayer rooms, and mosques also care for orphans. However, karaoke goes to nightlife venues and roads when people experience turmoil. Fishermen who own ships or ship owners do not go to sea; they only provide ship capital and supplies while the ship is at sea so that there is time on land or at home for the number of income fishermen who own ships. Hence, they are more likely to be able to carry out the observance of worship, including carrying out the obligation to pray "*fardhu*," but also find the opportunity to visit night entertainment, including the habit of consuming "*khomer*" as entertainment. Bored in their work, some of them have two wives (Pati et al., 2023).

The Religious Reality of Bendar Fishermen

The religious reality of Bendar fishermen in this study is seen in three aspects, namely ideological aspects, ritual aspects of worship, and aspects of social relations. (Darno, 2016).

a. Ideological Aspect (Belief)

Bendar fishermen are successful not because they maintain *tuyul* (ghost) wealth, etc., but because wealth is obtained from hard work and a high work ethic. With hard

work, discipline, and struggle from its citizens, today, people can achieve high incomes. On average, every citizen already has a ship. There are about 500 large and small boats owned by Bendar fishermen. On average, each trip or one can generate 25 million rupiah to 100 million rupiah. Every year, one ship can travel 6 to 7 times—all its citizens partner with banks to achieve success and support its business. With effort and hard work, Bendar Village is finally known as the Richest Fisherman Village in Juwana, Pati Regency, Central Java. In terms of ideology or faith, the fishing community in Bendar Village still believes in the power of nature, the power of the sea, and spirits that guard the ocean, so some fishermen use amulets for safety, "*ngresik prahu*" (cleaning the boat) rituals so that the religion of the fishing community like this can be classified as a belief in spirituality in spiritual syncretism.

The syncretism-spiritual side can be seen from the prayers offered, namely using the Javanese language "*kakang kawah adi ari-ari, jaluk restu marang nabi Khidir barakah pengeran langit bumi*" (In a moment of profound need, he sought assistance not only from the esteemed Prophet Khidir but also from the Lord, the sovereign ruler of the heavens and the earth, reflecting a deep reliance on divine guidance and support in his quest for resolution). This ritual is passed down from the ancestors and is challenging to eliminate because it has become a deep-rooted culture among fishermen. In addition, there is a prayer of burning incense taken from pieces of verses of the Qur'an or *dhikr-dhikr* of Muslims in general. However, regarding the recitation of *dhikr*, it has its own rules. For example, "*bismillah*" is read a hundred times, "*Subhanallah*" is read a hundred times, and so on. Each fisherman has his habits for carrying out this ritual. This ritual can only be shown carelessly to the fisherman's group members. In addition, fishermen believe this makes them suggestive, and their work ethic can improve. If a stormy wind hits the fishing boat and his group, one member of his group not infrequently prays, and others chant the *Adzan* on the boat. This fact shows that, on the one hand, fishermen perform syncretic rituals, but on the other hand, they also remember Allah when danger confronts them. But sometimes, the fishermen forgot to pray when they arrived on land.

The aspect of faith or belief of fishermen related to rituals, traditions, and offerings is interpreted by fishermen as something that is not "*syirik*" (associating partners with God) but is interpreted as an effort to maintain harmony with the supernatural environment. Therefore, such Islam can be said to be "Javanese" or "*Abangan*" (religious observance is lacking), and such a religion can be categorized as its own "religion," so it is not appropriate that their religious behavior is considered a "deviation from Islam." Because of their "religious behavior," they (the fishermen) may not be wrong, or at least they can argumentatively explain that their actions are not spirit and their religion without being associated with laziness or ignoring the pillars of Islam. Fishermen's religion is like that; it is believed in and used as a model for life.

Religious reality is related to the problem of beliefs and beliefs; for Bendar fishermen, there is no problem. But the problem comes from the views of people outside the fishing community, who consider it a matter of heresy "*kurofat, gugon tuhon*"

(superstition, unreasonable) because people outside the fishing community do not understand the beliefs and beliefs of fishermen.

b. Aspects of Worship Rituals

The ritual practice of worship of the fishing community in Bendar Village has the meaning of closeness to the practice of occult science (mysticism). This is the reason that the Bendar fishing community tries to communicate their desires and life expectancy to supernatural powers. Fishermen use this ritual as a source of motivation and enthusiasm for daily life because it contains hope and prayers about the smooth running of work and the safety of their souls. Sacred rituals in the fishing environment, such as sea alms,

Sea Alms is a culture that has always been preserved in Bendar Village for generations. The purpose of holding sea alms is to help those who control the sea, namely Gusti Allah, Angels, and Prophet Khidir. The form of asking for help by carrying out traditions, rituals, offerings, and sea alms is categorized as a separate religion for fishing communities that differ from society. This form of asking for help accommodates Islamic teachings: reading *yasinan*, *tahlil*, and congratulations. (Palmowski & Przybylska, 2022)

Sea alms activities held annually become unique and can be promoted to tourists. After Eid al-Fitr, a week later, Juwana fishermen held sea alms as a ritual activity for all fishing and non-fishing communities. This festival has become a community agenda, an annual activity carried out by the community as an expression of gratitude for the blessings that have been given by the almighty to the Juwana community. The sea alms festival can be used as a place for friendship between fishermen in various fishing villages; information, knowledge, and access to capital are often obtained for the economic progress of the mean itself.

Worship rituals carried out by the fishing community in Bendar Village, in addition to sea alms events, namely rituals before *Minyang* (going to sea), the ritual contains prayers led by intelligent people or religious leaders, usually recited "*manaqib*" (life history) Sheikh Abdul Qadir Jaelani on a boat. If the fisherman's income is "*guyur*" (loss), meaning that between capital and income is a loss, then usually the ship owner will perform a ritual reading or "*khataman*" (perfect reading) of the Qur'an by calling smart people or religious figures and relatives in the ship owner's house, and there are also those who make pilgrimages to "*Mutamakin Kajen*," and the tombs of saints to seek blessings. It was all done so that the boats and families of the fishermen were safe and had abundant sustenance.

This religious behavior expresses human limitations, where fishermen expect safety at sea and fish catch increases. Therefore, this worship ritual is included in the type of ritual factitive, namely, to increase productivity or strength, purification, and protection, or in any other way to improve the material well-being of a group. So, it can be said that religion has pragmatic value in increasing one's economic ownership and stability.

c. Aspects of Social Relations

The social relations of fishermen in Bendar Village are reflected in helping activities through capital borrowers, fishing equipment, and boat rental based on trust in boat owners, captains, motorists, and crews, as well as in traditional fishermen / small fishermen. The ship charter system and the standard financial distribution are balanced profit-sharing systems. A balanced profit-sharing system between ship owners, captains, motorists, and crew. This rental system generally applies to Bendar Village, where all catches are sold at fish auctions. The expense and other costs will be deducted before leaving and returning home. Examples are the cost of groceries, fuel, and medicine, or there may be repairs to a damaged ship. This cost is called the cost of "supplies" by them. After all calculations are completed, the net proceeds will be divided among the shipowner, captain monitors (engine control holders), and crew.

There are several fishermen groups in Bendar Village, namely, "Mina Santosa" Fishermen Association, Purse Seine "Rukun Santosa" Fishermen Association, Prosperous Fishermen Partner Association, and "AMANAT" Traditional Fishermen Association. The existence of fishermen groups in Bendar Village can help improve the welfare of fishing communities and prevent conflicts between fishermen. The existence of the fishermen's association can help members obtain information and manage ship letters, as well as provide capital solutions for ship repair and capital for fishing.

Fishermen who are members of the solidarity group show their economic success to large-scale fishermen, namely those who are members of groups other than traditional fishermen's associations. This is evident in the cooperation in constructing the "Sunan Kalijogo" Mosque in Bendar Village, which spent the land acquisition budget, and its construction reached a nominal value of 3 billion rupiahs. (Mukahar, 'Interview with the Chairman of Takmir Masjid Sunan Kalijogo Bendar Village', 2023). Mukahar further said that the charities "*jariyah infaq*" and "*shodaqoh*" given by fishermen are very diverse, including those presented in the following table.

Table 4. "Sunan Kalijogo" Mosque Development Contributor in Bendar Village
Rp.20,000,000 and above

No	Name	Large Donations
1	H. Mukahar	Rp. 300.000.000
2	Kuntari	Rp. 200.000.000
3	Trisnawati	Rp. 60.000.000
4	H. Umar	Rp. 50.000.000
5	H. Suwondo	Rp. 40.000.000
6	H. Sutar	Rp. 30.000.000
7	Suwadi	Rp. 30.000.000
8	H. Jayadi Rakini	Rp. 25.000.000
9	H. Purnowo	Rp. 20.000.000
10	H. Jasmani	Rp. 20.000.000
dst. Sd Rp. 500.000		

Source: "Sunan Kalijogo" Mosque Document dated March 9, 2022

The amount of charity donations mentioned above shows that the Bendar Village Fishermen community is perfect in their concern for working together to build a mosque as a means of worship. In addition, this shows the reality that the welfare level of the fishing community is excellent and the reality of good religion.

Analysis of Religious Reality

a. The Ideological Aspect (beliefs)

Mentioning the name of God, most of the Bendar fishing community argues that the name of God is called Allah or Gusti Allah. This title is quite popular among the fishing community, both religious fishermen and fishermen who are classified as non-religious. Likewise, God's power is absolute. God has created the heavens, and their contents, including natural events such as earthquakes, tsunamis, and others, are God's dominion or in God's grasp. Man, as a creation, only accepts what he is. Man is only given the right to pray and endeavor, so God decides.

About spirits, most fishing communities believe in the existence of spirits. It's just that these spirits have different names according to the beliefs of the fishing community where they come from. As in the Bendar fishing community, there is a belief in Prophet Khidir as the ruler of the sea, so the fishing community, if going to sea (*minyang*), must be aware of the Prophet Khidir, namely send Fatimah to him first, there also before going to sea *slametan* read "*manaqib*" and "*berjanjen*."

Many fishermen ask for blessings to the tomb of the guardian in Cirebon, namely the tomb of Sunan Gunung Djati. In Central Java, namely in sunan Pandan Arang, kyai Mutamakin. In East Java in Sunan Bonang. They used to make pilgrimages there and offer prayers in front of the Wali's tomb, in which case these saints were believed to be capable of testifying to God Almighty.

Most fishing communities still believe in sacred objects. These sacred objects include *keris*, *iron aji*, *rajab*, and flowers. These sacred objects are in addition to confidence in dealing with spirits in the sea or disasters at sea such as big waves and big winds. Some sacred objects are inserted in the ship's body by drilling and then inserting diagrams.

Fishermen used to use certain talismans when working. The amulet was obtained from an intelligent person, such as a piece of paper inscribed with a bald Qur'an wrapped in white cloth, natural stone, and *keris*. It is also not uncommon for them to get from the results of their pilgrimage to Cirebon, East Java, and Madura. Warmin admitted that these kinds of things usually suggest Bendar fishermen. Several other absurd events are often experienced by fishermen thanks to the talisman. For example, a boat that a wave should have hit, pushed by itself to land, or a fisherman who has drowned can survive, reaching land by holding on to a floating tree—the ability of agate to invite fish. The belief in keeping this talisman indicates that fishermen prefer to use pragmatic methods to improve their work ethic (Palmowski & Przybylska, 2022).

b. The Ritual Aspect of Worship

Rituals are expressions of religious ceremonial systems that reflect man's relationship with the spiritual realm. Ritual is a form of creating or maintaining relationships between humans and the unseen, human relationships with others, and human relationships with their environment. Therefore, rituals have an expressive function and a creative function. The expressive function describes symbolic forms accompanied by key values and cultural orientations of the community concerned. As for its creative function, ritual creates or reformulates categories through the way humans perceive, respond to, and accept the reality of an axiom based on a social structure, natural rules, and moral rules.

The Bendar fishing community carries out the tradition of sea alms as a form of gratitude for the abundance of blessings and sustenance on land and in the middle of the sea to Allah SWT. This tradition acculturates local culture and Islam, which can foster harmonious relations within the community. Some Islamic values contained in sea alms that need to be preserved include friendship, worship, and almsgiving. The functions of sea alms include functions in terms of entertainment, communication, cultural preservation, education, and economy. The benefits of sea alms are the benefit of the community living together, sharing, and helping each other.

During daily worship practices, most fishermen perform daily prayers. If on land, those who perform daily prayers mostly pray in their respective homes, although some pray daily in mosques/masalas. If they are at sea, they pray on small boats with a crew of 1-2 people or large boats with a crew of 15-30 people. The trick is that the boat is propped up towards the Qibla by anchoring so that it remains facing the Qibla. Those who pray on land and at sea are classified as devoutly religious. As for fishermen who are classified as not religious, they sometimes perform their prayers only occasionally. Even if he prays, others may be carried out, like drinking. This is done for the reason of warming the body when going to sea (Mulyasari et al., 2019)

The practice of Friday worship is Friday prayer. Fishermen whose Islam is relatively strong perform Friday prayers by not going to sea or returning home on Friday before prayers are held or if they are forced to go to sea and cannot land. They replace Friday prayers with "*dhuhr*" prayers in the middle of the sea. However, those fishermen whose Islam is not strong do not perform Friday prayers in the position mentioned above; they are mediocre, that is, they do not want to do the "*dhuhr*" prayer as a substitute for Friday prayers. Even for those who do not obey the Religion of Islam, even those on land usually do not perform Friday prayers.

The annual worship practice by fishermen mainly involves performing or carrying out annual prayers, namely Idul Fitri and Eid al-Adha prayers. In two moments of "Eid al-Fitri" and "Eid al-Adha," especially fishermen on holiday do not go to sea enough time; that is, they can not go to sea for 3-7 days. At the moment of Eid al-Adha, fishermen do not go to sea short enough, which is between 1-2 days. They perform Eid al-Fitri and Eid al-Adha prayers, joining the Muslim community in their village mosques.

c. The Social Relations of Fishermen;

Community life takes place in a friendly and intimate manner so that cooperation is easy to implement, for example, in village mutual aid activities. This activity can work well, although not with physical involvement, replacing it with money because men are more in the sea; likewise, other residents will fully assist the sick when they need assistance.

Cooperation and help the fishing community through capital lending, fishing equipment, and boat rental based on trust in boat owners, captains, motorists, crews, and traditional fishermen / small fishermen. The ship charter system and the usual way of financial distribution is a balanced profit-sharing system between ship owners, captains, motorists, and crew.

This rental system generally applies to Bendar Village, where all catches are sold at fish auctions. The expense and other costs will be deducted before leaving and returning home. Examples are the cost of groceries, fuel, and medicine, or there may be repairs to a damaged ship. This cost is called the cost of supplies by them. After the calculation, the net proceeds will be divided among the ship's owner, captain, monitors, and crew (Reddy, 2020).

The distribution of proceeds for each type of ship also varies. For example, for the type of holler or fishing rod, the supplies needed if you do not carry out ship repairs are an average of 110 million. For the sale, it depends on how much fish you get and the price of the fish itself. On average, holler ships earn 210 million for one sea. So, the profit-sharing system carried out 210 million minus 110 million, obtained 100 million, then the amount of 100 million will be divided 45% for ship owners and 55% for captains, motorists, and crew (ABK). Their habit of being in the middle of the sea takes 1-2 months, with the number of crew being between 15-25 people, depending on the type of ship.

Analysis of Da'wah Perspective

The da'wah strategy is carried out by considering the situation and geographical, social, economic, and religious conditions of the fishing community so that the preachers will be in the hearts of the pilgrims and follow all their advice. Considering the situation and condition of these pilgrims, in the language of da'wah known as *da'wah bil hikmah*, it is also necessary to pay attention to the delivery of da'wah with oral or "*mauidhoh hasanah* (Kindness talk)," and to complete it should be added with questions and answers or *Mujadalah*, as in QS. An-Nahl/16: 125.

أَدْخِ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمَةِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ ۗ وَجِدْ لَهُم بِآلَتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ ۚ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ هُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِمَنْ ضَلَّ عَنْ سَبِيلِهِ ۗ وَهُوَ أَعْلَمُ بِالْمُهْتَدِينَ

Invite 'all' to the Way of your Lord with Wisdom and kind advice, and only debate with them in the best manner. Surely your Lord 'alone' knows best who has strayed from His Way and who is 'rightly' guided (YPPA) (Depag RI, 2002).

According to *al-Hikmah*, it means putting things in their place, including justice, truth, patience, and wisdom. From here, the essence of al-hikmah is found: a combination of knowledge, knowledge, and experience that makes a person possess the nature of Wisdom or Wisdom. This Wisdom and Wisdom means that a person is wise in speaking, arguing, and behaving (Fadhullah, 1997).

The word al-Hikmah is defined as something that uses reason, experience, knowledge, intelligence, and wisdom. In this case, that wisdom arises from good morals and behavior (Kadir, 2018). Thus, a da'i, in delivering his recitation or da'wah material to achieve the purpose of da'wah successfully, should be wiser, wise, more patient, firm, fair, and with a smooth and polite character to open the heart of the person he preaches to accept the teachings of Islam. In addition, a da'i also sets a good example for pilgrims and the community in working, worshipping, respecting guests, respecting neighbors, helping people, visiting the sick, and others, as exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad SAW.

A da'i makes it easy and does not make it difficult. For example, regarding the obligation to pray for fishermen who are fishing in the middle of the sea, Islamic teachings provide convenience for them in carrying out the prayer. The form of conveniences such as plural and "*kosher dhuhur*" prayers combined with *asr*, *maghrib* with *isha*, "*dhuhur prayer*" 2 (two) *rakaat*, *ashar* 2 (two) *rakaat*. If it is difficult to pray while standing on a boat, then the implementation of prayer while sitting; if praying in a sitting position is still complex, then the implementation of prayer can be done lying down; this is a form of convenience in Islamic teachings (Idrus & Ridhwan, 2020).

Similarly, in delivering da'wah, a da'i must convey a message quickly and lightly so his audience can accept it. If it has been accepted, any advice will be easily absorbed and carried out by *mad'u* (audience), especially in today's modern era where science and technology are developing rapidly, such as the internet, WhatsApp, Twitter, Facebook, Google, Instagram, YouTube, digital newspapers/magazines, television, and radio. Implementing da'wah by utilizing the development of science and technology will provide strategic benefits for its continuity. Moreover, this shows one of the wise da'wah following the times.

Mauidhoh khasanah or *da'wah bil-lisan* delivered by the *Da'is* should be delivered in pleasant and joyful language and following conscience so that the da'wah can enter the heart with affection and tenderness. When delivering da'wah or advice to others, it must be delivered politely; never be rude or feel the smartest when delivering advice. When preaching, we must also pay attention to the object we will preach, such as the level of education. The level of education of pilgrims must be taken into consideration when delivering da'wah. As in QS Ali Imron/3 verse: 159

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِنَ اللَّهِ لِنْتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانْفَضُّوا مِنْ حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ

It is out of Allah's mercy that you 'O, Prophet', have been lenient with them. Had you been cruel or hard-hearted, they would have indeed abandoned you. So pardon

them, ask Allah's forgiveness, and consult with them. Once you make a decision, put your trust in Allah. Indeed, Allah loves those who trust in Him (YPPA Depag RI, 2002).

In addition to the objects that must be considered, the language we use must be understood according to the intellectual level of the fishing community. The language used when preaching to the fishing community must differ from that used when preaching to the community. As in QS Ibrahim/14: 4

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا بِلِسَانِ قَوْمِهِ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ فَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ ۗ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ

We sent not an apostle except (to teach) in the language of his (own) people, to make (things) clear to them. Now Allah leaves straying those whom He pleases and guides whom He pleases: and He is Exalted in power, full of wisdom. (YPPA Depag RI, 2002)

The difference in language is not without reason because the mispronunciation of the language will be difficult to understand for those who hear it. For example, when a da'i delivers oral da'wah to a fishing community comprised of laypeople but uses high-level intellectual or scientific language, they will need clarification and help understanding it. For this reason, use language that is appropriate to the society faced.

A preacher should pay attention to the local culture. For example, in the Bendar fishing community, there is a culture of *larung sesaji* or *sedekah laut* (provide something valuable to the ruler of the seas, amulets (*rajahan / agate*), pilgrimages to the tombs of saints and others, then a *da'i* should respect their culture while being inserted with Islamic teachings and nuances, for example, the culture of sea alms filled with *khaman al-Qur'an*, *tahlilan*, and *manaqiban*, as well as religious studies. Accepting their culture does not mean eradicating all deviations in society, but it means preaching intelligently by approaching the culture and incorporating Islamic teachings. When it comes to cultural change that contains evil, the job of a *da'i* is to change it, but in a way that must be polite. Suppose a preacher ignores this. In that case, it will be difficult for the congregation to appreciate, and it may even make a *da'i* forbidden to return to preaching in the area.

Da'wah material for fishing communities by prioritizing a substantive approach, namely the teachings of Tawhid as the primary material, while still using elements of local traditions and culture of fishing communities. For example, the event "*nelung ndino*, *mitung ndino* (events three days and seven days after a person's death)" at the death ceremony of relatives in Javanese culture is filled with *tahlil* reading "*kalimah thoyibah* (good words in religion)." The initiative, designed to comfort the bereaved family, exemplifies a material or goal-based approach, serving as a practical tool to achieve meaningful outcomes without diminishing the essence and significance of the teachings imparted

Da'wah bil-hikmah is also carried out by "*da'wah bil lisan* (invite through spoken words)" and is supported by the method of question and answer or *mujadalah* or dialogue is carried out in good ways to touch their scenery and conscience to speak. A *da'i* with his wisdom can show in dialogue about something wrong and then be shown the truth and finally realize the thoughts, and beliefs. Finally, the behavior and actions of the community or congregation will be better and follow the teachings of a religion or religious observance.

In addition, religious studies or *da'wah bil lisan* are pursued to adjust the congregation's situation, conditions, and environment. With the lack of worshippers who attend routine recitations at *taklim* assemblies in mosques and prayer rooms, preachers are clever in taking advantage of specific moments that present many worshippers being filled with religious material.

These particular moments, for example, "*takziah*" (events when there is a death of one of the residents, or there is a celebration (*tahlilan, manaqiban, berjanjen*) when the ship is about to go to sea, and when fishermen experience "*guyur*" (loss) by holding a Qur'an khataman event, a pilgrimage to Kyai Mutamakin and Wali Songo, and at the time towards the end of Ramadan fasting many fishermen return home waiting for the arrival of Eid al-Fitr, sea alms which is held a week after Eid al-Fitr, so many people are present, moments like that can be used to provide material for religious studies, instill faith and piety in the frame of religious observance.

When people have more and more religiosity, their welfare also increases, and vice versa; the less religious a person is, the more he has terrible qualities, and relationships with relatives, neighbors, and work relations are also not good, which ultimately affects the income of the person so that he falls into poverty. An established or prosperous level of economic life will make it more capable of carrying out worship or religious teachings, for example, if in Islam to perform prayers, pay *zakat, infaq, and shodaqoh*, fast, and perform Hajj and Umrah.

Thus, the higher the level of happiness, the higher the level of religious observance, meaning that one is more capable of carrying out religious observance. Therefore, *da'wah* in the economic field is very important to pursue. The provision of capital to the Bendar Fishermen community should be adjusted to the fishing community's needs, such as purchasing boats, nets, diesel engines, fuel oil, etc. However, such business capital must be controlled by the spirit of religion so that there is a good work ethic for fishermen. BRI banking presence, etc. Also, cooperatives should be accessible to any fisherman with easy loan conditions to contribute positively to the dynamics of welfare development for fishermen. A prosperous fishing community can have implications for religious observance and vice versa.

Conclusion

The fishing community in Bendar Village is connoted as a community that practices shirk socio-religious rituals in the sense that there are socio-religious ritual practices such

as asking for safety or sustenance from the sea or supernatural beings, for example, in the sea alms ceremony, looking for "*pesugihan*" (ghost) on the island of Juwana, keeping amulets, *raja*, and blessed water. In addition, the fishing community has connotations of being poorly educated, disobedient to worship, extravagant, drunk, and playing with women. But in reality, the sea alms ritual is filled with Quranic sermons, "*yasinan*", "*tahlilan*," and "*manaqib*" reading. Before going to sea, Fishermen hold a prayer to read the Quran and pray the Prophet. As the wealthiest fishing community in Indonesia, he gets it not from the results of maintaining "*tuyul*" (ghost) as the assumption occurred but from hard work and a high work ethic. The average fisherman's family education has completed high school and even a bachelor's degree, is obedient to worship, does not get drunk, and does not play with women. Wise and empathetic *da'wah* is needed to help them understand Islam so that fishermen can carry out religious rituals in accordance with Islamic values.

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