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Indonesian Muslim Tradition during Pandemic COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

Background: The majority of Indonesian are Muslim (87%) scattered in each province. They celebrate Eid al-Fitr at the end of May 2020 along with the pandemic COVID-19 that hasn't ended yet. The tradition of celebrating Eid day is contrary to the COVID-19 transmission prevention efforts which prohibit people from the crowd, to have activities outside the house, and to limit human movement. Even the president has imposed a ban on *mudik lebaran* (coming back to hometown) due to the prediction of massive human migration. **Objective:** This study aims to describe the Indonesian Muslim tradition related to the prevention of transmission of pandemic COVID-19. **Method:** This is a cross-sectional study with online data collection which held a day before Eid day. There are 246 Muslims in Central Java province who involved in this study. The COVID-19 pandemic caused most Indonesia Muslims didn't celebrate Eid as usual. Many Muslims are discouraged to do *mudik*, *silaturahmi* (gathering to apologize each other), and perform Eid prayers in a congregation in the mosque. Even so, some are still trading and selling in the market and claim that it is difficult to keep doing physical distancing while outside the home. **Conclusion:** ???

Keyword: Indonesia, Islam, Muslim, tradition, COVID-19, pandemic, online survey.

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 cases in Indonesia were first identified on 2nd March 2020. By mid-May 2020, COVID-19 cases are still increasing.[1] The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared COVID-19 a global pandemic.[2] The spread of COVID-19 may occur from person to person so that it can have a tremendous impact on society.[3] Its medication has not been found until now.

Until 19th June 2020, the positive confirmed cases in Indonesia were 43.803 cases, after there was an addition of 1.041 new cases. The number of patients recovered to 17,349 after an increase of 551 people. There were 34 additional deaths, bringing the total mortality up to 2.373 people.[4]

In Central Java, there were 2.659 COVID-19 confirmed cases (1.242 people in medical treatment, 1.193 recovered, and 224 could not survive). The number of patients under surveillance (PDP) was

7,621 people (972 people in medical treatment, 5.589 recovered, and 1.060 died). The number of people in monitoring of COVID-19 was 46.062 people, with the number of people who are still under observation as many as 1.230 people.[5]

Health protocol continues to be promoted to break the chain of COVID-19 transmission, but the public encounter difficulties to implement, especially for physical distancing. However, the transmission of COVID-19 will be easier to control if every people obey it.[6] One of the obstacles is due to social and cultural factors in the community, including Central Java citizens.

Javanese culture is inseparable from social life and it is motivated by the habits of the past. Past habits taught people to respect each other and prioritize manners. [7]

Gathering and visiting each other in Java became a challenge in the current

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pandemic era. Muslims are the majority in Central Java Province. Although there have been prohibitions to held gathering and face to face meetings, there is an indication that people would still celebrate the moment of Eid al-Fitr like previous years. Javanese people would have a pleasant feeling when they could visit and gather with their family in their hometown.[7] Indonesian Muslims have traditions called *mudik* (coming back to hometown for celebrating Eid day), *sholat Eid* (gathering for Eid prayer in congregation), and *silaturahmi* (visiting and gathering to apologize to each other).

Every year during Eid al-Fitr, Central Java becomes the highest homecoming destination province in Indonesia.[8] In the context of Javanese culture, the term of *mangan ora mangan sing penting kumpul* which means “the main thing is to gather, whether there is food or not” also reflects Javanese culture that will be troublesome in preventing COVID-19 transmission.[9] Especially for larger families who have not seen each other for a long time, the tradition of coming back home to be able to gather with the family becomes an inevitable phenomenon.

In line with the tradition of visiting each other and gathering, people would also have prepared for serving the snacks, dishes, and souvenirs. To entertain guests and other family members, people require to visit and shop at shopping centers, such as the traditional market and mall, since online shopping is not familiar to some people in Central Java. If people ignore health protocols in COVID-19 prevention, it would tremendously increase the risk of being infected by COVID-19. The handling of the COVID-19 pandemic requires the participation of all parties, including the central government, regional governments, local leaders, the private sector, and the whole community.[10] The aim of this study is to describe the Muslim tradition during Pandemic COVID-19 in Indonesia.

METHOD

This is a cross-sectional study with online data collection by google form. Data were collected only on 23rd May 2020, a day before Muslim Eid Al-Fitr which falls on 24th-25th May 2020. There are 388 people who filled the survey. We

obtained 246 Muslim respondents who lived in Central Java. Respondents have provided written approval for their involvement in the study. [This study has received ethical approval from the Faculty of Public Health Diponegoro University Ethics Committee No: 054/EA/KEPK-FKM/2020.](#)

Variables in this study are respondent characteristics (age, sex, educational level, occupation, and economic level) and Muslim Eid Al-Fitr tradition such as *mudik* tradition, Eid shopping needs, *silaturahmi* tradition, and Eid praying. This study also identified the respondents’ practice in preventing COVID-19 transmission. All variables analyzed descriptively to explain how Muslim conducted their tradition during pandemic COVID-19.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents in this study were women, aged adults (26-45 years), completed undergraduate, working in the private sector, and having wage above the minimum rate. Most of them are unconfirmed COVID-19 when they fill the questionnaire.

Table 1. Respondents’ characteristic

Category	Variable	Frequency	Percentage%
Sex	Female	180	73,2
	Male	66	26,8
Age	Teenager	61	24,8
	Adult	120	48,8
	Elderly	65	26,4
Education level	No education	1	0,4
	Primary school	3	1,2
	Middle school	9	3,7
	High school	75	30,5
	Academy/diploma	16	6,5
	Undergraduate	105	42,7
Occupation	Postgraduate	37	15,0
	Public employee	66	26,8
	Stated enterprise employee	7	2,8
	Private employee	70	28,5
	Entrepreneur	24	9,7
	College student	49	19,9
	No occupation/	30	12,2

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Income level	Below the minimum wage	94	38,2
	Above the minimum wage	152	61,8
Status of COVID-19	Unconfirmed	236	95,9
	In monitoring	10	4,1

People migrate to urban from rural area to get a higher education or to find a respected job, but they return to their hometown for a while to meet their parents or relatives or to show their success.[11] A small number of respondents continue to carry out the tradition of going home to celebrate Eid al-Fitr with their family, even as much as 13.4% stated that there is still the possibility to do *mudik* to their hometown during or after Eid day. Although the government has banned the public from going home and appealed to stay at home during this pandemic, the *mudik* tradition contains the dimensions of spiritual, psychological and social that must be addressed by implementing a cultural heteronomy. *Mudik* tradition can be defined as the deepest expression of homesickness or symbol of spiritual awareness that is triggered by daily routine in the city, that encourages certain people to go back to their origin area in specific time, that is Eid day.[12] There was a regulation from the Minister of Transportation No. 25 Year 2020 which prohibit *mudik* during COVID-19 pandemic. However, this regulation considered controversial due to weak arguments and may cause economical loss. The regulation itself is hard to be understood by the community.[13] However, *mudik* has been considered a heritage tradition that most Javanese people have. The tradition is related to the custom of Javanese farmers to visit their homeland. They visit the tombs of the ancestors to pray for them, as a form of respect and belief in the existence of life afterlife.[14]

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Happiness and joy to be able to gather with friends and family at home becomes the goal of *mudik* tradition for most people. There is no heavy burden in the calculation of economic size or costs incurred for the tradition. The joy and happiness that will be enjoyed with families who are far from their residence removes all social and economic burdens borne by them. They ignored the high costs incurred in carrying out the migratory tradition which was incurred so that the desire to gather could be achieved. These costs are obtained not only from income and savings collected during the year but also by way of debt to the bank or pawnshop or even selling anything of personal value as long as the desire to meet family at Eid day can be done.[15] Based on the calculation of the cost and benefit comparison, some people decide to keep *mudik* during this pandemic with all the possible consequences afterwards.

Muslims perform *sholat Eid* on the day of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. There are those who believe that this prayer law is obligatory to be carried out. There are also those who believe it as *farḍu kifayah* (enough to be done by some people only). However, many Muslims in Indonesia believe that it is *sunnah* (recommended to be carried out but not sinful if left out).[16] Eid prayers can be done alone or in congregation, at the mosque or at home. Towards Eid, the Indonesian Ulema Council or *Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI)* has issued a *fatwa* that concurrent prayer at the mosque can be performed only for those who live in COVID-free areas, by shortening prayer readings and sermons, and always implementing health protocols.[17] Even though almost no region in Indonesia is free from COVID-19, only 61.4% of respondents stated firmly not to have pray at the mosque. The reluctance of Muslims to do *sholat Eid* alone or at home is due to presumption that Eid day is a symbol of the victory of Muslims after a month of fasting. Fasting and prayer are the teachings of Islam and are religious rituals that are part of religious practices. This practice is carried out by adherents in the context of devotion, worship or honor the God they believes. In addition to religious practices, the religious

Table 2. Muslim Tradition in Eid Day during Pandemic COVID-19

Category	Variable	Frequency	Percentage%
Did mudik	Yes	14	5,7
	No	232	94,3
Planning for mudik	Yes	7	2,8
	Perhaps	33	13,4
	No	206	83,7
Planning for Eid praying in mosque	Yes	32	13,0
	Perhaps	63	25,6
No	Yes	151	61,4
	Perhaps	14	5,7
Planning for silaturahmi	Yes	89	36,2
	No	143	58,1
Visiting market	Yes	105	42,7
	No	141	57,3
Eid shopping	Yes	68	27,6

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dimension is seen as sociologically classified as a religious belief system and a religious experiential dimension. Fasting is interpreted as fighting against lust, so that after finishing fighting, the Muslims believe that victory should be celebrated together (in congregation).[18] Having Eid prayer in congregation in the mosque, as is generally done by people in Java, is also one of the symbols of Islam[17] which some people want to continue to be maintained even though the number of COVID-19 cases continues to increase in all regions.

Likewise with the *silaturahmi* tradition, only 58.1% of respondents had the strong intention not to carry out the tradition as in previous years. *Silaturahmi* can enhance the value contained in the Eid al-Fitr as the value of kinship. This value is obtained when meeting and gathering with family. Even *silaturahmi* can bring happiness because it is a catharsis and psychotherapist mechanism both individually and socially.[19] In a big Muslim family, people usually meet up at their village. Meeting with family becomes one of the crucial experiences people seek for. Traditionally, younger family members visit their older relatives.[20], [21] The importance of family meaning for the Muslim community in Java actually provides a valuable opportunity to make an appeal for not returning hometown (*mudik*). The importance of the family and a sense of wanting to protect from danger have the potential to be a simple reminder treatment to discourage those who want to carry out, especially during the current COVID-19 pandemic.[22]

The phenomena of *mudik* is closely connected with production, distribution and consumption for materials and services.[20] Crowded market is a common sight before Eid. It turns out that these conditions are still valid during this pandemic. There were 42.7% of respondents who were still determined to visit the market before Eid day. Most claimed to come to the market to shop for Eid needs such as staples, fashion stuff, and snacks to entertain guests who visited the gathering on Eid day. Eid tradition is very meaningful so that people are willing to continue to be able to celebrate as normal as possible. Only 15% respondent visit the market not to shop but to work as a seller or a health

worker who conducts rapid tests on visitors and sellers in the market.

Table 3. Respondents' practice in preventing transmission COVID-19

Category	Variable	n	Frequency	%Percentage
Always wearing a mask in doing activity outside	Yes	235	4,5	
	No	11	95,5	
Touching face even wearing a mask	Yes	106	43,1	
	No	140	56,9	
Hand washing	Sometimes	3	1,2	
	Often	103	41,9	
	Always	140	56,9	
Physical distancing	Never	1	0,4	
	Sometimes	7	2,8	
	Often	123	50,0	
	Always	115	46,7	

There are 4.5% of respondents who claimed not to always wear masks when outside the home as recommended by the government to wear cloth masks for the general public and surgical masks for health workers. As studies conclude, mask-wearing (surgical or homemade masks) could inhibit the virus growth in aerosol. [23] [24] Even though the majority had complied with the appeal, 43.1% of respondents still often touched their own faces. Almost all respondents stated that they currently wash their hands more often than before the pandemic. Only 46.7% of respondents are still compliant to do physical distancing while doing activities outside the home. While the rest admitted that it was difficult to always implement physical distancing because others around them were not compliant with these recommendations. Often people around them are not empathize with others who have tried to keep their distance when they are outside. Community ignorance is caused by the lack awareness of the COVID-19 seriousness and the perception that they are not susceptible to contracting the virus. People with no illness feeling consider that their body's immunity is in good condition. This is also caused by their presumption that they have carried out healthy living behaviors such as eating nutritious food, exercising

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and getting enough rest. So the virus will not infect them.[25]-[27] This study did not measure those behavior. Meanwhile, people must always be vigilant and obey the governments appeal to break the chain of transmission of COVID-19 despite feeling healthy. Carelessness and disobedience of a person against health protocols implemented during a pandemic may bring fatal consequences for themselves and others.

CONCLUSION

COVID-19 pandemic caused most Muslims not to celebrate Eid as usual. Many Muslims are discouraged to do *mudik*, *silaturahmi* directly, and perform *sholat* Eid in congregation in the mosque. Nevertheless, some are still engaged in buying and selling activities in the market to meet the needs of Eid such as shopping for staples and preparing snacks for guests. They encountered difficulties to keep physical distancing due to people around who did not control physical distancing for themselves.

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by Aditya Kusumawati

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1 ABSTRACT

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Every year during Eid al-Fitr, Central Java becomes the highest homecoming destination province in Indonesia.[8] In the context of Javanese

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In line with the tradition of visiting each other and gathering, people would also have prepared for serving the snacks, dishes, and souvenirs. To entertain guests and other family members, people require to visit and shop at shopping centers, such as the traditional market and mall, since online shopping is not familiar to some people in Central Java. If people ignore health protocols in COVID-19 prevention, it would tremendously increase the risk of being infected by COVID-19. The handling of the COVID-19 pandemic requires the participation of all parties, including the central government, regional governments, local leaders, the private sector, and the whole community.[10] The aim of this study is to describe the Muslim tradition during Pandemic COVID-19 in Indonesia.

METHOD

This is a cross-sectional study with online data collection by google form. Data were collected only on 23rd May 2020, a day before Muslim Eid Al-Fitr which falls on 24th-25th May 2020. There are 388 people who filled the survey. We obtained 246 Muslim respondents who lived in Central Java. Respondents have provided written approval for their involvement in the study. This study has received ethical approval from the Faculty of Public Health Diponegoro University Ethics Committee No: 054/EA/KEPK-FKM/2020.

Variables in this study are respondent characteristics (age, sex, educational level, occupation, and economic level) and Muslim Eid Al-Fitr tradition such as *mudik* tradition, Eid shopping needs, *silaturahmi* tradition, and Eid praying. This study also identified the respondents' practice in preventing COVID-19 transmission. All variables analyzed descriptively to explain how Muslim conducted their tradition during pandemic COVID-19.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents in this study were women, aged adults (26-45 years), completed undergraduate, working in the private sector, and having wage above the minimum rate. Most of them are unconfirmed COVID-19 when they fill the questionnaire.

Table 1. Respondents' characteristic

Cate-gory	Variable	n	%
Sex	Female	180	73,2
	Male	66	26,8
Age	Teenager	61	24,8
	Adult	120	48,8
	Elderly	65	26,4
Education level	No education	1	0,4
	Primary school	3	1,2
	Middle school	9	3,7
	High school	75	30,5
	Academy/diploma	16	6,5
	Undergraduate	105	42,7
Occupation	Postgraduate	37	15,0
	Public employee	66	26,8
	Stated enterprise employee	7	2,8
	Private employee	70	28,5
	Entrepreneur	24	9,7
	College student	49	19,9
	No occupation/ housewives	30	12,2
Income level	Below the minimum wage	94	38,2
	Above the minimum wage	152	61,8
Status of COVID-19	Unconfirmed	236	95,9
	In monitoring	10	4,1

2

People migrate to urban from rural area to get a higher education or to find a respected job, but they return to their hometown for a while to meet their parents or relatives or to show their success.[11] A small number of respondents continue to carry out the tradition of going home to celebrate Eid al-Fitr with their family, even as much as 13.4% stated that there is still the possibility to do *mudik* to their hometown during or after Eid day. Although the government has banned the public from going home and appealed to stay at home during this pandemic, the *mudik* tradition contains the dimensions of spiritual, psychological and social that must be addressed by implementing a cultural heteronomy. *Mudik* tradition can be defined as the deepest expression of homesickness or symbol of spiritual awareness that is triggered by daily routine in the city, that encourages certain people to go back to their origin area in specific time, that is Eid day.[12] There was a regulation from the Minister of Transportation No. 25 Year 2020 which prohibit *mudik* during COVID-19 pandemic. However, this regulation considered controversial due to weak arguments and may cause economical loss. The regulation itself is hard to be understood by the community.[13] However, *mudik* has been considered a heritage tradition that most Javanese people have. The tradition is related to the custom of Javanese farmers to visit their homeland. They visit the tombs of the ancestors to pray for them, as a form of respect and belief in the existence of life afterlife.[14]

Table 2. Muslim Tradition in Eid Day during Pandemic COVID-19

Category	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Did mudik	Yes	14	5,7
	No	232	94,3
Planning for mudik	Yes	7	2,8
	Perhaps	33	13,4
	No	206	83,7
Planning for Eid praying in mosque	Yes	32	13,0
	Perhaps	63	25,6
	No	151	61,4
Planning for silaturahmi	Yes	14	5,7
	Perhaps	89	36,2
	No	143	58,1
Visiting market	Yes	105	42,7
	No	141	57,3
Eid shopping needs	Yes	68	27,6
	No	178	72,4

Happiness and joy to be able to gather with friends and family at home becomes the goal of *mudik* tradition for most people. There is no heavy burden in the calculation of economic size or costs incurred for the tradition. The joy and happiness that will be enjoyed with families who are far from their residence removes all social and economic burdens borne by them. They ignored the high costs incurred in carrying out the migratory tradition which was incurred so that the desire to gather could be achieved. These costs are obtained not only from income and savings collected during the year but also by way of debt to the bank or pawnshop or even selling anything of personal value as long as the desire to meet family at Eid day can be done.[15] Based on the calculation of the cost and benefit comparison, some people decide to keep *mudik* during this pandemic with all the possible consequences afterwards.

Muslims perform *sholat Eid* on the day of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. There are those who believe that this prayer law is obligatory to be carried out. There are also those who believe it as *fardhu kifayah* (enough to be done by some people only). However, many Muslims in Indonesia believe that it is *sunnah* (recommended to be carried out but not sinful if left out).[16] Eid prayers can be done alone or in congregation, at the mosque or at home. Towards Eid, the Indonesian Ulema Council has issued a fatwa that concurrent prayer at the mosque can be performed only for those who live in COVID-free areas, by shortening prayer readings and sermons, and always implementing health protocols.[17] Even though almost no region in Indonesia is free from COVID-19, only 61.4% of respondents stated firmly not to have pray at the mosque. The reluctance of Muslims to do *sholat Eid* alone or at home is due to presumption that Eid day is a symbol of the victory of Muslims after a month of fasting. Fasting and prayer are the teachings of Islam and are religious rituals that are part of religious practices. This practice is carried out by adherents in the context of devotion, worship or honor the God they believes. In addition to religious practices, the religious dimension is seen as sociologically classified as a religious belief system and a religious experiential dimension. Fasting is interpreted as

fighting against lust, so that after finishing fighting, the Muslims believe that victory should be celebrated together (in congregation). [18] Having Eid prayer in congregation in the mosque, as is generally done by people in Java, is also one of the symbols of Islam [17] which some people want to continue to be maintained even though the number of COVID-19 cases continues to increase in all regions.

Likewise with the *silaturahmi* tradition, only 58.1% of respondents had the strong intention not to carry out the tradition as in previous years. *Silaturahmi* can enhance the value contained in the Eid al-Fitr as the value of kinship. This value is obtained when meeting and gathering with family. Even *silaturahmi* can bring happiness because it is a catharsis and psychotherapist mechanism both individually and socially. [19] In a big Muslim family, people usually meet up at their village. Meeting with family becomes one of the crucial experiences people seek for. Traditionally, younger family members visit their older relatives. [20], [21] The importance of family meaning for the Muslim community in Java actually provides a valuable opportunity to make an appeal for not returning hometown (*mudik*). The importance of the family and a sense of wanting to protect from danger have the potential to be a simple reminder treatment to discourage those who want to carry out, especially during the current COVID-19 pandemic. [22]

The phenomena of *mudik* is closely connected with production, distribution and consumption for materials and services. [20] Crowded market is a common sight before Eid. It turns out that these conditions are still valid during this pandemic. There were 42.7% of respondents who were still determined to visit the market before Eid day. Most claimed to come to the market to shop for Eid needs such as staples, fashion stuff, and snacks to entertain guests who visited the gathering on Eid day. Eid tradition is very meaningful so that people are willing to continue to be able to celebrate as normal as possible. Only 15% respondent visit the market not to shop but to work as a seller or a health worker who conducts rapid tests on visitors and sellers in the market.

Table 3. Respondents' practice in preventing COVID-19 transmission

Category	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Always wearing a mask in doing activity outside	Yes	235	4,5
	No	11	95,5
Touching face even wearing a mask	Yes	106	43,1
	No	140	56,9
Hand washing	Sometimes	3	1,2
	Often	103	41,9
	Always	140	56,9
Physical distancing	Never	1	0,4
	Sometimes	7	2,8
	Often	123	50,0
	Always	115	46,7

There are 4.5% of respondents who claimed not to always wear masks when outside the home as recommended by the government to wear cloth masks for the general public and surgical masks for health workers. As studies conclude, mask-wearing (surgical or homemade masks) could inhibit the virus growth in aerosol. [23] [24] Even though the majority had complied with the appeal, 43.1% of respondents still often touched their own faces. Almost all respondents stated that they currently wash their hands more often than before the pandemic. Only 46.7% of respondents are still compliant to do physical distancing while doing activities outside the home. While the rest admitted that it was difficult to always implement physical distancing because others around them were not compliant with these recommendations. Often people around them are not empathize with others who have tried to keep their distance when they are outside. Community ignorance is caused by the lack awareness of the COVID-19 seriousness and the perception that they are not susceptible to contracting the virus. People with no illness feeling consider that their body's immunity is in good condition. This is also caused by their presumption that they have carried out healthy living behaviors such as eating nutritious food, exercising and getting enough rest. So the virus will not infect them. [25]-[27] This study did not measure those behavior. Meanwhile, people must always be vigilant and obey

the governments appeal to break the chain of transmission of COVID-19 despite feeling healthy. Carelessness and disobedience of a person against health protocols implemented during a pandemic may bring fatal consequences for themselves and others.

CONCLUSION

COVID-19 pandemic caused most Muslims not to celebrate Eid as usual. Many Muslims are discouraged to do *mudik*, *silaturahmi* directly, and perform *sholat* Eid in congregation in the mosque. Nevertheless, some are still engaged in buying and selling activities in the market to meet the needs of Eid such as shopping for staples and preparing snacks for guests. They encountered difficulties to keep physical distancing due to people around who did not control physical distancing for themselves.

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Indonesian Muslim Tradition during Pandemic COVID-19

ABSTRACT

Background: The majority of Indonesian are Muslim (87%) scattered in each province. They celebrate Eid al-Fitr at the end of May 2020 along with the pandemic COVID-19 that has not ended yet. The tradition of celebrating Eid day is contrary to the COVID-19 transmission prevention efforts that prohibit people from the crowd, having activities outside the house, and limit human mobilization. Even the president has imposed a ban on *mudik Lebaran* (coming back to hometown) due to the prediction of massive human migration. The handling of the COVID-19 pandemic requires the participation of all parties, including the central government, regional governments, local leaders, the private sector, and the whole community. **Objective:** This study aims to describe the Indonesian Muslim tradition related to the prevention of transmission of pandemic COVID-19. **Method:** This is quantitative research by a cross-sectional design. Data collected a day before Eid day. There are 246 Muslims in Central Java province as respondents. Variables in this study are respondent characteristics (age, sex, educational level, occupation, and economic level) and Muslim Eid Al-Fitr tradition such as *mudik* tradition, Eid shopping needs, *silaturahmi* tradition, and Eid praying. This study also identified the respondents' practice in preventing COVID-19 transmission. All variables are analyzed descriptively to explain how Muslims conducted their tradition during the pandemic COVID-19. **Conclusion:** COVID-19 pandemic caused most Muslims not to celebrate Eid as usual. Most Muslims are discouraged from *mudik*, *silaturahmi*, and perform Eid prayer in a congregation in the mosque. They encountered difficulties to keep physical distancing due to people around who did not control physical distancing for themselves.

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Keyword: COVID-19, Islam, Muslim, pandemic, tradition.

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 cases in Indonesia were first identified on 2nd March 2020. By mid-May 2020, COVID-19 cases are still increasing (Kementerian Kesehatan Republik Indonesia, 2020). The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared COVID-19 a global pandemic (World Health Organization (WHO), 2020). The spread of COVID-19 may occur from person to person so that it can have a tremendous impact on society (Suganthan, 2019; Muhammad Adnan Shereen, Suliman Khan, Abeer Kazmi, Nadia Bashir, 2020). Its medication has not been found until now.

Until 19th June 2020, the positive confirmed cases in Indonesia were 43.803 cases, after there was an addition of 1.041 new cases. The number of patients recovered to 17,349 after an increase of 551 people. There were 34 additional

deaths, bringing the total mortality up to 2.373 people (COVID-19, 2020b).

In Central Java, there were 2.659 COVID-19 confirmed cases (1.242 people in medical treatment, 1.193 recovered, and 224 could not survive). The number of patients under surveillance (PDP) was 7,621 people (972 people in medical treatment, 5.589 recovered, and 1.060 died). The number of people in monitoring of COVID-19 was 46.062 people, with the number of people who are still under observation as many as 1.230 people (Satuan Gugus Tugas Percepatan Penanganan COVID-19, 2020c).

Health protocol continues to be promoted to break the chain of COVID-19 transmission, but the public encounters difficulties to implement, especially for physical distancing. However, the transmission of COVID-19 will be easier to control if every people obey it (COVID-19, 2020a). One of the obstacles is due to

social and cultural factors in the community, including Central Java citizens.

Javanese culture is inseparable from social life and it is motivated by the habits of the past. Past habits taught people to respect each other and prioritize manners (Destareni Belda Puspawuni and Moordiningsih, 2016). Gathering and visiting each other in Java became a challenge in the current pandemic era. Muslims are the majority in Central Java Province. Although there have been prohibitions to held gatherings and face-to-face meetings, there is an indication that people would still celebrate the moment of Eid al-Fitr like in previous years.

Javanese people would have a pleasant feeling when they could visit and gather with their family in their hometown (Destareni Belda Puspawuni and Moordiningsih, 2016). Indonesian Muslims have traditions called *mudik* (coming back to hometown for celebrating Eid day), *Eid* prayer (gathering for Eid prayer in congregation), and *silaturahmi* (visiting and gathering to apologize to each other).

Every year during Eid al-Fitr, Central Java becomes the highest homecoming destination province in Indonesia (Yulianto, 2011). In the context of Javanese culture, the term of *mangan ora mangan sing penting kumpul* which means “the main thing is to gather, whether there is food or not” also reflects Javanese culture that will be troublesome in preventing COVID-19 transmission (Wijayanti, H., & Nurwiantri, 2010). Especially for larger families who have not seen each other for a long time, the tradition of coming back home to be able to gather with the family becomes an inevitable phenomenon.

In line with the tradition of visiting each other and gathering, people would also have prepared for serving the snacks, dishes, and souvenirs. To entertain guests and other family members, people require to visit and shop at shopping centers, such as the traditional market and mall, since online shopping is not familiar to some people in Central Java. If people ignore health protocols in COVID-19 prevention, it would tremendously increase the risk of being infected by COVID-19. The handling of the COVID-19 pandemic requires the participation of all parties, including the

central government, regional governments, local leaders, the private sector, and the whole community (Kementerian Dalam Negeri Republik Indonesia, 2020). The aim of this study is to describe the Muslim tradition during Pandemic COVID-19 in Indonesia.

METHOD

This was a cross-sectional study with online data collection by google form. Data were collected only on 23rd May 2020, a day before Muslim Eid Al-Fitr which falls on 24th-25th May 2020. There were 388 people who filled the survey. We obtained 246 Muslim respondents who lived in Central Java. Respondents had provided written approval for their involvement in the study. This study had received ethical approval from the Faculty of Public Health Diponegoro University Ethics Committee No: 054/EA/KEPK-FKM/2020.

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RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents in this study are women, categorized as adults (26-45 years). Another majority variable of respondents’ consists of completed undergraduate, working in the private sector, and having wage above the minimum rate. Most of them are unconfirmed COVID-19 when they fill the questionnaire.

Table 1. Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<u>Sex</u>		
Female	180	73.2

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Male	66	26.8
Age		
Teenager	61	24.8
Adult	120	48.8
Elderly	65	26.4
Education level		
No education	1	0.4
Primary school		
Middle school	3	1.2
High school		
Academy/diploma	9	3.7
Undergraduate		
Postgraduate	75	30.5
	16	6.5
	105	42.7
	37	15.0
Occupation		
Public employee	66	26.8
Stated enterprise employee		
Private employee	7	2.8
Entrepreneur		
College student		
No occupation/ housewives	70	28.5
	24	9.7
	49	19.9
	30	12.2
Income level		
Below the minimum wage	94	38.2
Above the minimum wage		61.8
	152	
Status of COVID-19		
Unconfirmed	236	95.9
In monitoring	10	4.1

People migrate to urban from the rural area to get a higher education or to find a respected job, but they return to their hometown for a while to meet their parents or relatives or to show their success (Ridho, Fachrizal and Lubis, 2018). A small number of respondents continue to carry out the tradition of *mudik* (going back home) to celebrate Eid al-Fitr with their family, even as much as 13.4% stated that there is still the possibility to do *mudik* to their hometown during or after Eid day.

Although the government has banned the public from going home and appealed to stay at home during this pandemic, the *mudik* tradition contains the dimensions of spiritual, psychological, and social that must be addressed by implementing a cultural heteronomy. *Mudik* tradition can be defined as the deepest expression of homesickness or

symbol of spiritual awareness that is triggered by daily routine in the city, that encourages certain people to go back to their origin area at a specific time. That is Eid day (Majid, 2013).

Research about COVID-19 during Eid Al-Fitr suggests that the government needs to impose clear and law-bound regulations to prevent the spread of COVID-19 during Eid day (Wartoyo, 2020; Handayani, Kusumawati and Indraswari, 2021). There was a regulation from the Minister of Transportation No. 25 Year 2020 which prohibit *mudik* during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, this regulation is considered controversial due to weak arguments and may cause economical loss. The regulation itself is hard to be understood by the community (Ubaidillah and Aji, 2020).

However, *mudik* has been considered a heritage tradition that most Javanese people have. The tradition is related to the custom of Javanese farmers to visit their homeland. They visit the tombs of the ancestors to pray for them, as a form of respect and belief in the existence of the afterlife (Irianto, 2012).

The tradition of visiting the tombs of the ancestors is also maintained by Javanese people. Usually, they visit the tomb as a form of respect to their ancestors, at least once a year, at the moment of Eid Day. The ritual of praying together, cleaning the tomb, and put flowers is still a habit that is often performed by Javanese people.

Table 2. Muslim Tradition in Eid Day during Pandemic COVID-19

Category	Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Did mudik	Yes	14	5.7
	No	232	94.3
Planning for mudik	Yes	7	2.8
	Perhaps	33	13.4
Planning for Eid praying in mosque	No	206	83.7
	Yes	32	13.0
Planning for silaturahmi	Perhaps	63	25.6
	No	151	61.4
Visiting market	Yes	14	5.7
	Perhaps	89	36.2
Eid shopping needs	No	143	58.1
	Yes	105	42.7
Eid shopping needs	No	141	57.3
	Yes	68	27.6
Eid shopping needs	No	178	72.4
	Yes		

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Happiness and joy to be able to gather with friends and family at home become the goal of *mudik* tradition for most people. There is no heavy burden in the calculation of economic size or costs incurred for the tradition. The joy and happiness that will be enjoyed with families who are far from their residence remove all social and economic burdens borne by them. They ignored the high costs incurred in carrying out the migratory tradition which was incurred so that the desire to gather could be achieved.

These costs are obtained not only from income and savings collected during the year but also by way of debt to the bank or pawnshop or even selling anything of personal value as long as the desire to meet the family at Eid day can be done (Soebyakto, 2011). Based on the calculation of the cost and benefit comparison, some people decide to keep *mudik* during this pandemic with all the possible consequences afterward.

Muslims perform *sholat Eid* on the day of Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha. Some believe that this prayer law is obligatory to be carried out. Some also believe it as *farḍhu kifayah* (enough to be done by some people only). However, many Muslims in Indonesia believe that it is *sunnah* (recommended to be carried out but not sinful if left out) (Budiawan, 2014).

Eid prayers can be done alone or in a congregation at the mosque, or at home. Towards Eid, the Indonesian Ulama Council or *Majelis Ulama Indonesia* (MUI) has issued a *fatwa* that concurrent prayer at the mosque can be performed only for those who live in COVID-19-free areas, by shortening prayer readings and sermons, and always implementing health protocols (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, 2020).

This pandemic has caused organized religion, along with adherence to age-old traditions, to re-evaluate itself concerning congregational gatherings, burial rites, pilgrimage, and other established acts of worship (Shah, 2020). Even though almost no region in Indonesia is free from COVID-19, only 61.4% of respondents stated firmly not to have prayed at the mosque.

The reluctance of Muslims to do *sholat Eid* alone or at home is due to the presumption that Eid day is a symbol of

the victory of Muslims after a month of fasting. Fasting and prayer are the teachings of Islam and are religious rituals that are part of religious practices. This practice is carried out by adherents in the context of devotion. worship or honor the God they believe. In addition to religious practices. The religious dimension is seen as sociologically classified as a religious belief system and a religious experiential dimension.

Fasting is interpreted as fighting against lust. Therefore, after finishing the fight, the Muslims believe that victory should be celebrated together (in congregation) (Hamdi, Kholiq and Tahir, 2007). Having Eid prayer in congregation in the mosque, as is generally done by people in Java, is also one of the symbols of Islam (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, 2020). Which some people want to continue to be maintained even though the number of COVID-19 case continues to increase in all regions (Satuan Tugas Penanganan COVID-19, 2020).

Likewise with the *silaturahmi* tradition, only 58.1% of respondents had the strong intention not to carry out the tradition as in previous years. *Silaturahmi* is not limited by any kinds of people's characteristics (Hakam, 2015). It can enhance the value contained in the Eid al-Fitr as the value of kinship. This value is obtained when meeting and gathering with family. Even *silaturahmi* can bring happiness because it is a catharsis and psychotherapist mechanism both individually and socially (Fuad, 2011).

In a big Muslim family, people usually meet up at their village. Meeting with family becomes one of the crucial experiences people seek for. Traditionally, younger family members visit their older relatives (Prasetyo and Warsono, 2018) (Iriany et al., 2019). The importance of family meaning for the Muslim community in Java provides a valuable opportunity to appeal for not returning to hometown (*mudik*). The importance of the family and a sense of wanting to protect from danger have the potential to be a simple reminder treatment to discourage those who want to carry it out. especially during the current COVID-19 pandemic (Prasetyo and Sofyan, 2021).

The phenomena of *mudik* is closely connected with the production, distribution, and consumption of

materials and services (Prasetyo and Warsono, 2018). A crowded market is a common sight before Eid. It turns out that these conditions are still valid during this pandemic. There are 42.7% of respondents who are still determined to visit the market before Eid day. Most claimed to come to the market to shop for Eid needs such as staples food, fashion stuff, and snacks to entertain guests who visit the gathering on Eid day.

Eid tradition is very meaningful so people are willing to continue to be able to celebrate as normal as possible. Only 15% respondents visit the market not to shop but to work as a seller or a health worker who conducts rapid tests on visitors and sellers in the market.

Table 3. Respondents' practice in preventing COVID-19 transmission

Category	Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Always wearing a mask in doing activity outside	Yes	235	4.5
	No	11	95.5
Touching face even wearing a mask	Yes	106	43.1
	No	140	56.9
Hand washing	Sometimes	3	1.2
	Often	103	41.9
	Always	140	56.9
Physical distancing	Never	1	0.4
	Sometimes	7	2.8
	Often	123	50.0
	Always	115	46.7

There are 4.5% of respondents who claimed not to always wear masks when outside the home as recommended by the government to wear cloth masks for the general public and surgical masks for health workers. As studies conclude, mask-wearing (surgical or homemade masks) could inhibit the virus growth in aerosol (Ma, Q-X, Shan, H, Zhang, H-L, Li, G-M, Yang, R-M, Chen, 2020) (Davies A, Thompson KA, Giri K, Kafatos G, Walker J, 2013). Even though the majority had complied with the appeal, 43.1% of respondents still often touched their faces. However, research in China reveals that there were some super-factors associated with COVID-19 transmission.

One of them is touching the cheek, nose, and mouth as of the face's area (Wang *et al.*, 2020).

Almost all respondents stated that they currently wash their hands more often than before the pandemic. However, not all respondents did hand washing in the right steps and ways. Hand washing is considered as one of the ways that has a strong correlation to COVID-19 prevention practice (Alzyood *et al.*, 2020; Haque, 2020). WHO recommended washing hands 11 steps, using running water, and soap for 40 - 60 seconds (World Health Organization (WHO), 2009).

Physical distancing is recommended to be implemented to prevent COVID-19, as it is one of the Indonesian government's appeal (Ihsanuddin, 2020). However, the result of this study shows that there are only 46.7% of respondents who are still compliant to do physical distancing while doing activities outside the home. While the rest admitted that it is difficult to always implement physical distancing because others around them are not compliant with these recommendations. Research in the United States reveals that health information and the awareness of close family members are strongly correlated with the practice of physical distancing (S. Li *et al.*, 2020).

Often people around them do not empathize with others who have tried to keep their distance when they are outside. Community ignorance is caused by the lack of awareness of the COVID-19 seriousness and the perception that they are not susceptible to contracting the virus. People with no illness feeling consider that their body's immunity is in good condition.

Society still did old traditions and cultures, especially when it comes to gathering. They choose to gather despite knowing the risk of COVID-19, rather than getting the threat of receiving discrimination from neighbors and family if they do not join the gathering. In addition, the tradition of eating together when gathering with family would increase the risk of COVID-19 transmission.

This is also caused by their presumption that they have carried out healthy living behaviors such as eating nutritious food, exercising, and getting enough rest. So the virus will not infect them (Khosravi, 2020; R. Li *et al.*, 2020;

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Zegarra, Chino and Ames, 2020). This study did not measure those behaviors.

Meanwhile, people must always be vigilant and obey the government's appeal to break the chain of transmission of COVID-19 despite feeling healthy. Carelessness and disobedience of a person against health protocols implemented during a pandemic may bring fatal consequences for themselves and others.

CONCLUSION

COVID-19 pandemic caused most Muslims not to celebrate Eid as usual. Most Muslims are discouraged from mudik, silaturahmi, and perform Eid prayer in a congregation in the mosque.

Nevertheless, some are still engaged in buying and selling activities in the market to fulfill the needs of Eid, such as shopping for staples and preparing snacks for guests. They encountered difficulties to keep physical distancing due to people around who did not control physical distancing for themselves.

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INDONESIAN MUSLIM TRADITION DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

 Aditya Kusumawati, Ratih Indraswari, Novia Handayani

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ABSTRACT

Background: The majority of Indonesians are Muslim (87%) scattered in each province. They celebrated Eid al-Fitr at the end of May 2020 along with the COVID-19 pandemic that has not ended yet. The tradition of celebrating Eid day is contradictive to the COVID-19 transmission prevention efforts that prohibit people from the crowd, prohibit having activities outside of their houses, and limit human mobilization. Even the president has imposed a ban on mudik Lebaran (coming back to hometown) due to the prediction of massive human migration. The handling of the COVID-19 pandemic requires participation of all parties, including the central government, regional governments, local leaders, the private sector, and the whole community. **Objective:** This study aims to describe the Indonesian Muslim tradition related to the prevention of the transmission of COVID-19 pandemic. **Methods:** This was quantitative research with a cross-sectional design. Data were collected a day before Eid day. There were 246 Muslims in Central Java province as respondents. Variables in this study were respondent characteristics (age, sex, educational level, occupation, and economic level) and Muslim Eid Al-Fitr tradition such as mudik tradition, Eid shopping needs, silaturahmi tradition, and Eid praying. This study also identified the respondents' practice in preventing COVID-19 transmission. All variables were analyzed descriptively to explain how Muslims conducted their tradition during the COVID-19 pandemic. **Results:** COVID-19 pandemic caused most Muslims not to celebrate Eid as usual. They had to be far away from their families. On the other hand, the tradition to visit the tombs of the ancestors was also maintained by Javanese people and had become a habitual culture. Carelessness and disobedience against health protocols during a pandemic might bring fatal consequences to themselves and others. **Conclusion:** Most Muslims were discouraged from mudik, silaturahmi, and performing Eid prayer in a congregation in the mosque. They encountered difficulties to keep physical distancing due to people around did not exercise physical distancing for themselves.

KEYWORDS

Indonesia, Islam, Muslim, tradition, COVID-19, pandemic, online survey

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