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KH Khoiron Syu'aib's Da'wah in Supporting the Career Transition of Ex-Costs in the Ex-Localization of Bangunsari Surabaya

Risma Azzah Fatin¹, Ibnu Azka²

¹ State Islamic University Sunan Ampel Surabaya. E-mail: rismaazzah50@gmail.com

² State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga. E-mail: ibnuazka00@gmail.com

Abstract

This research aims to analyze KH Khoiron Syu'aib's da'wah strategy in supporting the career transition of former commercial sex workers (PSK) in the former Bangunsari localization, Surabaya. The government's closure of Bangunsari prostitution localization had a significant impact on former prostitutes who lost their livelihoods. In this context, da'wah plays an important role in providing moral, spiritual, and practical support to help them transition to a more dignified profession. This research uses a qualitative method to explore the da'wah strategy implemented by KH Khoiron Syu'aib. Data was collected through interviews with KH Khoiron Syu'aib, a former prostitute, and local community leaders. Direct observation and documentation were also carried out to complete the data. The results of this research show that KH Khoiron Syu'aib uses a holistic and comprehensive da'wah approach, including spiritual aspects, skills development, economic empowerment, and psychosocial support. Through regular recitations, skills training and economic empowerment programs, KH Khoiron Syu'aib has succeeded in increasing the awareness and ability of former prostitutes to switch to other, more dignified professions. Apart from that, the psychosocial support provided also helps former prostitutes overcome social stigma and increase their self-confidence. This research concludes that KH Khoiron Syu'aib's da'wah strategy is effective in supporting the career transition of former prostitutes in the former Bangunsari localization. A holistic and comprehensive approach is the key to success in changing the lives of former prostitutes and improving their welfare. It is hoped that these findings can become a reference for similar empowerment programs in other regions, as well as contributing to the development of a more effective and sustainable da'wah model in overcoming the social and economic problems faced by former prostitutes in Indonesia.

Keywords: Career transition of prostitutes, Da'wah, Former Bangunsari localization, KH Khoiron Syuaib

1. Introduction

Bangunsari localization in Surabaya was once known as one of the largest prostitution areas in Indonesia (A. Sunarto AS, 2013). However, along with government programs to close localization and eradicate prostitution, this area has experienced significant changes. The local closure not only stops prostitution activities, but also poses a big challenge for commercial sex workers (PSK) who have lost their main source of income (Alissa Ernawati Adisiswanto, 2018).

The career transition process for former prostitutes is an important issue in the social and economic context (Maulana, Siti Komariah, 2023). They are faced with the challenges of finding new jobs, overcoming social stigma, and undergoing psychological rehabilitation (Mazeingia & Negesse, 2020). In this situation, the role of da'wah is very crucial to provide moral, spiritual and practical support to help former prostitutes switch to a more dignified profession (Nor, 2015).

KH Khoiron Syu'aib, a respected religious figure and community leader in Surabaya, is well-known for his impactful work within the Bangunsari community, a former area of prostitution. His unique da'wah approach supports the career transition of former prostitutes in the area (A. Sunarto AS, 2013). The strategy he implements goes beyond religious teachings, encompassing skills development, economic empowerment, and psychosocial support (Noviyanti & Sarmini, 2021).

This research aims to dig deeper into KH Khoiron Syu'aib's da'wah strategy in supporting the career transition of former prostitutes in Bangunsari. Through the da'wah approach used, it is hoped that it can provide new insights for similar programs in other regions that face similar problems. Apart from that, this research also aims to assess the effectiveness of the da'wah approach in changing the lives of former prostitutes and improving their welfare.

There are several studies that are quite relevant to this research. First, research conducted by Ritonga et al regarding Gus Miftah's Da'wah Communication in the Yogyakarta Flower Market Localization, the results of the research show that Gus Miftah uses various methods in his preaching communication, including regular recitations and lectures discussing spiritual topics, repentance and improving life. This lecture is designed to provide motivation and enlightenment to prostitutes, with the hope of inspiring them to start positive changes in their lives. Apart from lectures, Gus Miftah also takes a personal approach through direct guidance and counseling to prostitutes, thus helping them in the process of personal and spiritual change (Ritonga & Sartina, 2020).

Similar research was also conducted by Atik et al regarding the influence of Da'wah on prostitutes in the Sunan Kuning Semarang localization, (Nurfatmawati & Rismanto, 2023) The results of his research revealed several important findings. Da'wah implemented at this location has proven to have a positive impact, helping prostitutes increase their spiritual awareness and providing motivation to look for better and halal work. There is an increase in the participation of prostitutes in religious activities such as recitations and lectures, which strengthen their connection to religious values and motivate them to make life changes. However, this research also shows that there are difficulties in the change process. Some prostitutes face challenges in

integrating da'wah teachings into their daily lives, as well as doubts about the possibility of lasting change. To ensure a successful transition, ongoing support is needed, including skills training, social assistance, and counseling.

Finally, there was research conducted by Zaki et al. regarding the Migration of Prostitution Actors: Study of Changes in Behavior of Former Pimps in the Bangunsari Ex-Localization, Surabaya (Zaki et al., 2020). This research explores the behavioral changes that occurred in SN, a former pimp, after receiving da'wah from Kyai Khoiron, using CEOS theory as an analytical framework. The results show that SN experienced a behavioral transformation through four main stages.

In the first stage, SN diagnosed the problem by realizing that his profession as a pimp made him far from God. This awareness triggered a desire to make changes and laid the foundation for his transformation. In the second stage, SN set a goal of changing his behavior with the determination to dedicate his life completely to Allah, replacing his previous life orientation.

The third stage involves concrete steps in behavior change. SN quit his profession as a pimp and began to be active in various religious activities in his environment, such as giving alms and carrying out ritual worship. These actions demonstrated his commitment to living according to the teachings of his newly adopted religious values.

In the fourth stage, SN succeeded in maintaining stable behavioral changes. He views the changes he made as a desirable way of life and places God as the central value in his existence. This consistent commitment marks the culmination of his transformation process.

This research highlights that the process SN underwent reflects the effective application of CEOS theory. By emphasizing self-awareness, goal setting, change action, and change maintenance, the theory provides a structured framework to understand and facilitate successful behavioral transformation. This demonstrates the critical role of both personal reflection and external guidance in achieving lasting change.

Building on the results of previous studies, this research fills a critical gap by exploring how da'wah not only functions as a spiritual means but also serves as an integral element in the rehabilitation and transformation of the lives of former prostitutes. Unlike earlier studies that primarily focus on the spiritual dimension, this research emphasizes KH Khoiron's da'wah method, which integrates a personal approach and skill development to foster social and economic change. By addressing the practical and psychosocial needs of vulnerable groups, this study offers a unique model that integrates spiritual and practical aspects, providing insights that can be applied in other contexts to address similar social issues.

Through this research, it is hoped that a holistic and comprehensive da'wah model can be found, which not only touches spiritual aspects but also provides real solutions to the social and economic problems faced by former prostitutes. Thus, it is hoped that the results of this research can become a reference for the government, social institutions and religious leaders in

developing more effective and sustainable empowerment programs for former prostitutes in Indonesia.

2. Method

This research adopts a qualitative approach with a case study method to explore in depth KH Khoiron Syu'aib's preaching strategy in supporting the career transition of former prostitutes in the former Bangunsari localization, Surabaya. The qualitative approach was chosen because it enables a detailed exploration of participants' experiences, perceptions, and views. Data collection methods include observation, interviews, and documentation.

The study was conducted in the former Bangunsari localization, Surabaya, which serves as the main location for KH Khoiron Syu'aib's preaching activities and is home to the former prostitutes who are the focus of this research. The subjects of this study include KH Khoiron Syu'aib as the central figure, a former prostitute, and members of the local community.

The selection of Bangunsari as the research location is based on several key considerations. First, Bangunsari's history as one of the largest prostitution areas in Surabaya, and the challenges faced by former prostitutes after the government's closure of the area, make it a relevant setting for studying da'wah and empowerment efforts. Second, KH Khoiron Syu'aib's active role in the area allows for direct observation of his da'wah strategy, which focuses on supporting the career transition of former prostitutes. Third, the socio-economic dynamics of Bangunsari after the cessation of prostitution activities provide rich empirical data on the challenges and opportunities in the career transition process.

The research was conducted over a period of approximately five months, from January 2024 to May 2024.

3. Findings and Discussion

This research reveals that KH Khoiron Syu'aib, a respected religious leader in Surabaya known for his dedication to social transformation, employs a holistic and comprehensive da'wah approach to support the career transition of former commercial sex workers (PSK) in the former Bangunsari localization. His methods extend beyond conventional preaching, such as delivering sermons, and are tailored to the specific needs of individuals.

One of his primary strategies includes engaging with residents through religious study sessions, where he fosters inclusion by encouraging their active participation as part of the congregation. Beyond spiritual guidance, KH Khoiron also focuses on skill-building workshops, economic empowerment programs, and consistent psychosocial support. This multifaceted approach provides a strong foundation for rehabilitation and facilitates the social reintegration of vulnerable groups. Here are some of the main findings from this research:

- a. **Humanist Approach**, KH Khoirun in conveying his preaching always invites prostitutes not to judge them based on their status for their past actions (Azka, 2023). So in this case, KH Khoiron Syu'aib approached his mad'u by considering that they were like humans who were stumbling and falling into sin. This approach is very humanistic, where KH Khoiron Syu'aib sees former prostitutes as individuals who

deserve love, understanding and the opportunity to improve themselves. This approach is supported by the statement of Mrs. Pianah, Chair of the Al-Hidayah Study, who stated that KH Khoiron Syu'aib's approach reflects an attitude of deep compassion and empathy.

The results of the interview with Mrs. Pianah as the head of the Al-Hidayah Study said that:

"KH. Khoiron is a sociable, kind, social and integrated person, his lectures are not monotonous, he can make his congregation laugh so they don't get tense, he never judges the past of former prostitutes, his knowledge is easy to accept because of the language KH uses. Khoiron can accommodate his congregation."

(Ms. Pianah Interview, 8 February 2024, Surabaya)

KH Khoiron Syu'aib, in his preaching, views prostitutes as complete human beings who are not fixated on their shortcomings alone. He emphasized that every human being has weaknesses and strengths. KH Khoiron tried to convey that they did not have to work in localization even though it had many limitations. He explained that every human being has abilities within themselves that can be developed

This was then confirmed by KH Khoiron when interviewed, he said:

"We see him as a whole as a human being. Any human being in any condition. And every human being has their own strengths and weaknesses, but sometimes the bad thing is that people always look only at their bad things even though behind their shortcomings they have more abilities, this is where the role of da'wah is needed to dismantle and repair so that he is on the right and better path and can have more noble and halal work"

(KH Khoiron Interview, 10 February 2024, Surabaya)

The results of the interview above show that KH Khoiron Syu'aib believes that every individual has the potential to change and return to the right path. Therefore, he not only gives religious lectures, but also provides much-needed emotional and moral support to former prostitutes. He understands that their journey to leave their old profession and start a new life is full of challenges, so an understanding and empathetic approach is very important.

Through this inclusive and loving approach, KH Khoiron Syu'aib was able to build trust and strong relationships with former prostitutes. Mad'u feel accepted and appreciated as whole human beings, not just judged based on their past. This motivates them to take part in the da'wah and empowerment programs offered and try hard to improve their lives. This humanist approach also reflects Islamic teachings which prioritize compassion and forgiveness. KH Khoiron Syu'aib gave an example that effective da'wah is da'wah that can touch the hearts and souls of mad'u, giving them hope and motivation to change. Thus, KH Khoiron Syu'aib's

preaching was not only successful in teaching Islamic values, but also in helping former prostitutes rediscover their self-esteem and purpose in life.

KH Khoirun added that when interviewed he said:

"Whatever human sins, even if the sins are heavenly or earthly, as long as humans are willing to repent and repent, Allah will accept their repentance."

(KH Khoirun Interview, 10 February 2024, Surabaya)

The statement above shows that KH Khoirun considers that no matter how big and many sins, it will not prevent them from God's forgiveness. He emphasized that even though the sin is as big as the heavens and the earth, Allah will accept human repentance and regret. The condition is that the person must truly repent wholeheartedly and show sincere regret. Allah is Forgiving and always ready to accept the repentance of His servants who return to Him with sincere intentions and determination not to repeat the same mistakes. In essence, conquer their hearts first and then they will listen to the preaching he conveys. All of this is of course packaged in simple language that is easy for them to understand.

Apart from that, KH Khoirun also did not forget to remind all former prostitutes to always read the Koran, it is believed that this can provide calm and guidance for what has been done in the past, so that they can change themselves for the better in the future. .

As the results of an interview with Mrs. Sutini as a former prostitute at the former Bangunsari Localization, she said that:

"Ladies and gentlemen, some of you will have had the opportunity to recite the Koran, even though you are not yet fluent in reading the Koran, perhaps some of you are already fluent and fluent in reading the Koran. Don't forget it, try opening it and reading it again. There's no harm in reading the holy Qur'an."

(Interview with Mrs. Sutini, Former prostitute at EKS Bangunsari Localization Surabaya, Saturday, 10 February 2024)

He added by saying that:

"When I think back, I was scared too. How long will I work like this. With less living, my family in the village didn't have anything, and I didn't graduate from elementary school. What kind of work do you want? My child, I feed money like this. What will happen in the future? I was afraid that my child would work like me, considering that working like this was not my desire, but rather a requirement of life, but thanks to reading the Koran, my heart little by little remained calm and open to looking for halal work."

(Interview with Mrs. Sutini, Former prostitute at EKS Bangunsari Localization Surabaya, Saturday, 10 February 2024)

The results of the interview reveal that a former prostitute expressed significant fear and anxiety about her future, primarily due to the instability of her job and the harshness of her living conditions. Coming from a poor family background and lacking formal education, she felt trapped in this profession, highlighting the socio-economic factors that limit her opportunities.

Her greatest concern was the future of her children, whom she supports with the income from her work. She feared that her son might follow in her footsteps, a reflection of her internal conflict between her current reality and her aspirations for her children's well-being.

However, she found solace and a sense of direction through reading the Qur'an, which brought peace to her heart and motivated her to seek lawful (halal) employment. This spiritual awakening suggests a significant shift in her mindset, emphasizing the potential for personal transformation through spiritual practice.

The narrative of fear and hope within this interview could be understood through the lens of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, where basic survival needs are met through her current work, but her higher-order need for security and self-actualization is sought through spiritual fulfilment and the desire for a better future.

- b. ***Habitual Approach***, KH Khoiron regularly holds recitations accompanied by *istighotsah*, usually through group dhikr which is held at his Islamic boarding school once a month in the evening. Apart from that, this activity is also carried out on odd nights in the last ten days of Ramadan. Before the *istighotsah* begins, the repentance prayer, *hajat* prayer and *tasbih* prayer are held first. These activities aim to strengthen the faith of female prostitutes and pimps. Even though they are still actively working as prostitutes, they also actively participate in *istighotsah* held at the KH Khoiron Islamic boarding school.

As a result of an interview with Mrs. Sumeh, a former prostitute from Bangunsari Localization, she said:

"Often, I always regularly participate in istighatsah. It feels as if I'm worshipping little by little. "It's cooking to keep committing sins, but yes, to be honest, personally, even though I regularly participate in studies or istighosah activities, for some reason it's still a bit difficult for me to pray, yes, even though I keep praying, there are a lot of doubts."

(Interview with Mrs. Sumeh, Former prostitute at EKS Bangunsari
Localization Surabaya, Saturday 10 February 2024)

The results of the interview with Mrs. Sutini also said the following:

"Here it's not just about religious lectures. There are many other religious activities, such as istighosah activities and group Koran reading. Every Friday and coinciding with the beginning of the month, istighosah activities are always held. I, who was taught to recite and read the Koran as a child, after taking part in this study, found myself at home immediately crying, from here I tried to make time to read and pray. yes, although not every day"

(Interview with Mrs. Sutini, Former prostitute at EKS Bangunsari
Localization Surabaya, Saturday, 10 February 2024)

The results of the interview above show that the activities and habits of carrying out prayers and other forms of worship have many benefits. These two former prostitutes felt the positive impact of participating in religious activities such as istighotsah and recitation of the Koran. Mrs. Sumeh felt a spiritual improvement despite facing difficulties in praying. Meanwhile, Mrs. Sutini experienced deep emotional changes and was motivated to worship more often after taking part in the study.

Despite progress in the spiritual aspect, challenges such as doubts and difficulties in performing prayers are still a problem. This shows that spiritual change is not always easy and requires time and sustained effort.

Regular istighotsah activities and religious studies indirectly provide important moral and spiritual support for former prostitutes. These activities help them feel more connected to religion and provide motivation to improve themselves, even though they still face difficulties in everyday life.

Overall, the results of this interview show that religious activities in the former Bangunsari localization have had a positive impact on former prostitutes in terms of spirituality and motivation. These activities have helped foster a sense of purpose and inner peace, contributing to a shift in their values and mindset. This transformation aligns with **transformative learning theory**, which suggests that individuals can change their perspectives and behaviors through deep reflection on their past experiences, facilitated by new insights or learning experiences.

However, the interview also reveals that these individuals face significant challenges in consistently implementing these changes in their lives. Factors such as limited social support, entrenched socio-economic conditions, and external pressures

present ongoing obstacles. According to **Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory**, their ability to maintain these changes is influenced by their perceived self-efficacy—how confident they feel in their ability to succeed—along with environmental factors that may either support or hinder their efforts.

c. ***Training and Skills Approach***, Apart from the two approaches above, KH Khoiron Syu'aib also initiated a series of skills training programs to support the career transition of former prostitutes in the former Bangunsari Surabaya localization. This program is designed to provide practical and useful skills, enabling them to earn a halal and independent living. The funding for these programs is sourced through a combination of personal funds from KH Khoiron Syu'aib and financial support from various institutions and government initiatives. By leveraging partnerships with local organizations and seeking government grants, the kyai ensures that the training remains accessible and free of charge for participants, further reducing barriers for their successful reintegration into society.

- 1) Sewing training, sewing training program is one of KH Khoiron's main initiatives. In this training, participants are taught various basic to advanced sewing techniques. They learn how to make various types of clothing, from everyday clothes to special clothing. Apart from that, this training also includes an introduction to sewing tools and how to care for them. Participants not only gain technical skills but also an understanding of design and creativity in sewing. Through these skills, they can start their own sewing business or work in the local fashion industry.
- 2) Cooking Training, a cooking training program designed to provide practical and marketable culinary skills. This training covers a variety of cooking techniques, from traditional recipes to modern dishes. Participants learn about kitchen cleanliness, food storage, and attractive serving techniques. This program not only teaches how to cook but also how to manage a food business, such as opening a catering business or food stall. With these skills, former prostitutes can enter the culinary industry which has wide market potential.
- 3) Entrepreneurship Training, entrepreneurship training is aimed at equipping participants with knowledge and skills in starting and managing a business. This program covers various aspects of business, including business planning, financial management, marketing, and business development strategies.

Participants are taught how to create a solid business plan, manage a budget, and attract customers. This training aims to empower former prostitutes with the ability to start their own businesses, enabling them to become successful and independent entrepreneurs.

KH Khoiron in implementing these programs is facilitated by the government, this is a collaborative effort by the government and religious leaders to reduce dependence on work which can be detrimental to former prostitutes, the activities are often at TPI Roudhatul Khair Bangunsari or local community centers. With guidance from experienced instructors, participants receive intensive training designed to meet market needs and facilitate their career transition. The program also provides access to the necessary tools and materials, as well as ongoing support to ensure participants can apply the skills they learn.

The impact of this training program is very significant. Many former prostitutes who previously felt trapped in a difficult situation now have new skills that encourage them to earn a halal and better living. This program not only helps them economically but also increases their self-confidence and dignity. With the skills acquired, they can achieve financial independence and contribute more positively to society.

Overall, KH Khoiron's initiative in holding a skills training program is an important step in supporting the rehabilitation and social integration process of former prostitutes. This program provides them with the tools and opportunities to start a new chapter in their lives with greater confidence and empowerment.

The initiative aligns with the concept of **human capital theory**, which emphasizes the value of education and skill development in improving individuals' economic opportunities and social mobility.

Additionally, it reflects the principles of **social reintegration theory**, which highlights the importance of providing resources and support systems to help marginalized individuals reintegrate into society as productive members. By addressing both economic and social aspects, this program contributes to a holistic approach to rehabilitation and empowerment.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion above, this research concludes several things. First, the preaching carried out by KH Khoirun in the former localization was carried out using three main approaches, namely the humanist approach, habituation and also the training and skills approach. Second, the skills training program initiated by KH Khoiron Syu'aib consists of various fields such as sewing, cooking and entrepreneurship. The program is designed to provide practical training which is very important for former prostitutes. This program aims to expand their skills, so that they have the necessary abilities to earn a living in a halal and sustainable way. This study has several limitations that need to be noted. The scope is limited to former prostitutes in the former Bangunsari Surabaya localization and KH Khoiron Syu'aib's da'wah program, so the results may not fully reflect the conditions of former prostitutes in other locations. The main data was collected through interviews with former prostitutes and KH Khoiron, which may contain subjective bias and limited communication from the parties interviewed. Future research could focus on the long-term impact of da'wah and skills training programs. Studies that monitor former prostitutes for several years after participating in the program will provide deeper insight into the sustainability and long-term effects of the program that has been implemented.

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Interview result :

Interview Results with KH. Khoiron Syu'aib, Founder of TPI Raudatul Khair Surabaya, Saturday, February 10 2024

Results of Interview with Mrs. Pianah, Chair of Al-Hidayah Study, Thursday, 08 February 2024

Results of Interview with Mrs. Sutini, Former Prostitute at EKS Bangunsari Localization Surabaya, Saturday, 10 February 2024

Results of Interview with Mrs. Sumeh, Former Prostitute at EKS Bangunsari Localization Surabaya, Saturday 10 February 2024