

The Indonesian Ulema Council's contribution in developing Islamic religious education for the Asahan Regency community

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ABSTRACT

Islamic religious education is a transformation for the muslim community from ignorance and leads them to become a better society that is in accordance with the teachings of Islam. However, this has not yet become a reality because there are still many muslim communities who have not received islamic religious education, therefor the MUI has a very important role in providing islamic religious education for the community. This study aims to find out how the roles, programs and obstacles felt by the Asahan Regency MUI in an effort to improve Islamic religious education for people in Asahan district. This study uses qualitative research with descriptive analysis methods with the stages of data collection, data reduction, data display dan drawing conclusions then described in writing. The data collection techniques used in this study were observation, interviews, literature studies and Focus Group Discussions. This research focused on : what is the role of the MUI in improving islamic religious education for the people in Asahan district; what is MUI's program in improving islamic religious education for people in Asahan district and what are MUI's obstacles in improving islamic religious education for people in Asahan district. The result of this research are that the MUI of Asahan district has a very important role in improving Islamic religious education for the people of Asahan district trough existing commissions such as the fatwa commission, education commission, da'wah commission, etc, as well as trough programs implemented such as the cadre formation of preachers, regular deliberations, routine studies and the deployment Quran teachers to remote areas, but this has not been felt by the majority of society, especially in rural areas.

Abstrak

Pendidikan agama Islam adalah sebuah transformasi bagi masyarakat untuk menjadikannya menjadi masyarakat yang lebih baik lagi, tetapi hal tersebut masih belum menjadi kenyataan dikarenakan masyarakat masih belum mendapatkan pendidikan agama Islam, maka dari itu penting dalam memberikan pendidikan agama Islam bagi masyarakat. Mengetahui bagaimana peran, program dan hambatan yang dirangsang upaya meningkatkan pendidikan agama Islam bagi masyarakat menggunakan penelitian jenis kualitatif dengan metode pengumpulan data, reduksi data, display data dan penarikan kesimpulan. Teknik pengumpulan data yang digunakan dalam penelitian studi literatur dan Focus Group Discussion. Penelitian ini berfokus pada meningkatkan pendidikan agama Islam bagi masyarakat di Kabupaten MUI dalam meningkatkan pendidikan agama Islam bagi masyarakat di Kabupaten MUI Kabupaten Asahan memiliki peran yang signifikan dalam meningkatkan pendidikan agama Islam bagi masyarakat di Kabupaten Asahan melalui komisi fatwa, komisi pendidikan, komisi dakwah, serta dengan kegiatan seperti kaderisasi muballigh, musyawarah rutin, kajian rutin dan daerah terpencil akan tetapi hal tersebut belum dirasakan oleh seluruh daerah pedesaan.

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INTRODUCTION

Education plays a pivotal part in several facets of human existence, rendering it imperative for individuals to acquire knowledge and cultivate self-awareness regarding their areas of ignorance¹. Education has a transformative role in the human experience, analogous to guiding individuals from a state of ignorance to enlightenment. In the absence of education, humans are metaphorically akin to individuals lacking sight, while education serves as the catalyst that enables them to perceive and comprehend the world around them. Education encompasses all facets of life as it is important for acquiring knowledge and skills in various domains. Its significance is constant and

¹ Mokh Firmansyah, Iman, "Pendidikan Agama Islam: Pengertian, Tujuan, Dasar Dan Fungsi," *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Islam* 17, no. 2 (2019): 79–90.

imperative at all times². Education has been seen to result in improved behaviors compared to previous circumstances³⁴.

Education has a crucial role in facilitating the pursuit of a religious lifestyle, even within the realm of religious practices⁵. Indonesia is a nation characterized by a predominantly Muslim population. The Islamic faith assigns significant importance to education, with Allah and His Messenger urging their followers to continually expand their knowledge in both religious and secular domains.

Education plays a crucial role within the Islamic faith, encompassing both theoretical knowledge and practical application in religious contexts⁶⁷. There is an expectation that via the acquisition of education, individuals who identify as Muslims will attain a comprehensive understanding of the principles and practices associated with leading a devout and spiritually-oriented existence. The profound significance of Islamic religious education is shown in its longstanding presence, predating Indonesia's independence. During this period, students and ulama not only pursued the study of Islamic teachings but also actively sought emancipation from colonial powers⁸. Many scholars argue that engaging in devotion without possessing knowledge will ultimately prove to be futile. The significance of education is underscored by the words of Abu Bakar Ash-Siddiq RA, who stated that "Charity is rendered futile without knowledge, just as knowledge is rendered futile without charity." Consequently, education plays a crucial role within the Islamic faith, serving as an essential component for the betterment of the surrounding community.

² Mustika Khoirunnisa Kholillah, Yayang Furi Furnamasari, and Dinie Anggraeni Dewi, "Peran Pendidikan Dalam Menghadapi Arus Globalisasi," *Edumaspul: Jurnal Pendidikan* 6, no. 1 (2022): 515–18, <https://doi.org/10.33487/edumaspul.v6i1.2508>.

³ Istiana Malikatin Nafi'ah and Ali Anwar, "Etika Berbusana Mahasiswa Pendidikan Agama Islam Perspektif Kode Etik IAIN Kediri," *Tribakti: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman* 31, no. 2 (2020): 293–306, <https://doi.org/10.33367/tribakti.v31i2.1099>.

⁴ Ida Farida and Aslimatun Ana Kamalia, "KONSEP MANAJEMEN PENDIDIKAN KARAKTER DALAM MEMBENTUK AKHLAKUL KARIMAH DI MTs MA'ARIF NU KEMIRI," *MANAGERE : Indonesian Journal of Educational Management* 2, no. 1 (2020): 9–19, <https://doi.org/10.52627/ijeam.v2i1.2>.

⁵ Zulkifli Lubis and Dewi Anggraeni, "Paradigma Pendidikan Agama Islam Di Era Globalisasi Menuju Pendidik Profesional," *Jurnal Online Studi Al-Qur'an* 15, no. 1 (2019): 133–53, <https://doi.org/10.21009/jsq.015.1.07>.

⁶ ani dkk Jailani, "PERAN PENDIDIKAN AGAMA ISLAM DALAM MEMBENTUK KARAKTER JUJUR PADA SISWA Ani Jailani 1 , Chaerul Rochman 2 , Dan Nina Nurmila 3," *Al-Tadzkiyyah* 10, no. 2 (2019): 257–64.

⁷ Amirul Mu'minin, "Editorial Team," *Fisberies : Jurnal Perikanan Dan Ilmu Kelautan* 1, no. 2 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.30649/fisberies.v1i2.23>.

⁸ D I Pesantren, Salafiyah Kapurejo, and Pagu Kabupaten, "Nailal M, M. Erlin S, Nur R: Pendidikan Karakter Kebangsaan Berbasis Syi'ir Lokal Di Pesantren Salafiyah Kapurejo Pagu Kediri" 7, no. 2 (2021): 266–82.

Islamic Religious Education (IRE) is an educational framework that draws its principles from the Al-Quran and Sunnah. Its primary objective is to equip students with both secular knowledge to foster their intellectual growth and religious knowledge and attitudes, which can be practically applied in their lives to attain happiness in both the present life and the hereafter.

The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) serves as a religious institution that operates with the objective of guiding and offering Islamic religious education to the local community. It fulfills this role through various initiatives, including the establishment of missionary safari programs, the formation of cadres, and other endeavors aimed at enhancing Islamic religious education within the community. The location of interest is situated in Asahan Regency. The establishment of this organization was motivated by the formulation of this objective, which has persisted as the primary aim to be attained to this day. The MUI comprises individuals who possess sufficient knowledge and demonstrate mutual concern for one another, with the purpose of facilitating the attainment of the institution's objectives⁹. The Indonesian Ulema Council is recognized as a collective of individuals who possess significant expertise in comprehending the Islamic faith and serve as the successors of the prophets in disseminating Islam and promoting benevolence throughout society.

Recognizing the significance of Islamic religious education within the community and the perceived lack of influence exerted by the Asahan Regency MUI in rural areas, I have developed an interest in investigating this issue through research. This study aims to ascertain the role played by the Asahan Regency MUI, the programs it offers, and the resulting effects and challenges encountered in enhancing Islamic religious education for the community in the Asahan district. The objectives of this research encompass meeting the criteria for the final college assignment and enhancing the author's knowledge. Additionally, it aims to enhance the quality of Islamic religious education within society¹⁰, contribute to the existing literature to promote knowledge dissemination and provide constructive criticism and suggestions to the Indonesian Ulema Council regarding its role in advancing Islamic religious education in the Asahan district community¹¹.

⁹ Ahmad Fachrur and Siti Ngainnur Rohmah, "Eksistensi Fatwa Majelis Ulama Indonesia Dalam Pranata Hukum Islam Di Indonesia," *SALAM: Jurnal Sosial Dan Budaya Syar-I* 6, no. 5 (2019): 459–80, <https://doi.org/10.15408/sjsbs.v6i5.20832>.

¹⁰ Mukhyar Mukhyar and Maskur Rosyid, "Peran Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) Dalam Bidang Pendidikan," *Journal ISTIGHNA* 3, no. 1 (2020): 114–40, <https://doi.org/10.33853/istighna.v3i1.46>.

¹¹ Zainul Hakim, "Peran Fatwa Mui Sebagai Produk Hukum Islam Dalam Masyarakat," *Al'Adalah* 24, no. 2 (2021): 105–17, <https://doi.org/10.35719/aladalah.v24i2.77>.

Prior studies have also examined the MUI, with a specific focus on the involvement of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) in the realm of education. The distinction lies in the fact that the study not only concentrated on the domain of education, but also delved into the sphere of government, while neglecting to address the challenges encountered by the MUI in fulfilling its role within the educational sector. This study addresses the aforementioned gaps by discussing the aforementioned issues.

Methods

This study applies a qualitative research design, specifically using a phenomenological technique. This approach aims to understand and interpret a particular event comprehensively and then document the collected data and research findings in written form. The research employed the data collection technique of observation to assess the religious quality of the community in Asahan Regency, encompassing both urban and rural areas. Additionally, the study involved direct observation of the programs implemented by the Asahan Regency MUI. Primary informants included H. Salman Abdullah Tanjung, MA, who served as the chairman of the Asahan Regency MUI, and Drs. H. Mahmudin Lubis, MM, who served as the secretary. Secondary informants consisted of individuals from urban areas, namely Suprianto Siregar, Saiful Bahri, Alamsyah Tanjung, Ridho Agusming, Hermawan, and Abdul Hasyim. Similarly, individuals from rural communities, namely H. Amiruddin Sitorus, H. Amron Dalimunte, Ahmad Rifai, Fahri Ardiansyah, Azmi Baihaqi, and Ahmad Syarif, were also interviewed. Furthermore, the study incorporated literature reviews from various sources, including the internet, decrees, and other relevant materials. The research employs a descriptive analysis methodology, encompassing data gathering, data reduction, data display, and the derivation of conclusions. The research sites utilized in this study encompassed the MUI Office of Asahan Regency, Kisaran City, and several villages like Rawa Sari and Sengon Sari.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The focus of this discussion pertains to the commissions operating inside the Asahan Regency MUI Institution. One of the objectives of the Indonesian Ulema Council is to ensure that the Muslim community possesses adequate religious knowledge. As an institution responsible for guiding and fostering the development of Muslims within their jurisdiction, the Indonesian Ulema Council of Asahan Regency is entrusted with the responsibility of cultivating an Islamic community. The residents of Asahan Regency have developed into a community that places great emphasis on religious practices, particularly in relation to the Islamic faith. They possess a commendable level of understanding and familiarity with the principles and teachings of Islam. The primary objective of education in this region is to

cultivate individuals who are deeply committed to Allah as the Supreme Being and who actively contribute to the well-being of their fellow human beings. The significance of the Indonesian Ulema Council lies in its authoritative composition of individuals possessing religious expertise, enabling them to devise policies and initiatives aimed at enhancing Islamic religious instruction within the community.

Based on the outcomes of interviews conducted with main informants and an examination of the organizational structure of the Asahan Regency MUI, it can be observed that the institution is comprised of multiple sections or commissions, which serve to streamline and actualize its societal function. The aforementioned commissions are: *First*, The Fatwa Commission is an authoritative body responsible for issuing religious rulings in accordance with Islamic law. The Fatwa Commission is a regulatory body responsible for issuing legal opinions on situations that lack explicit legal rules. These legal provisions typically emerge in response to the emergence of novel phenomena in individuals' lives. *Second*, The Commission for Da'wah and Community Development is an organization dedicated to promoting and facilitating the spread of Islamic teachings and the development of Muslim communities. The Missionary and Community Development Commission is a commission that functions with the objective of disseminating religious knowledge to the public, with the aim of enhancing the Islamic society's understanding and awareness of religion.

Third, The Education Commission is an institutional body responsible for overseeing and guiding educational policies and practices. The education commission in question is tasked with the provision and oversight of Islamic religious education within the community, catering to individuals of all age groups, including children and adults. The primary objective of this commission is to foster the development of individuals who actively contribute to their nation, exhibit compassion towards others, possess the requisite knowledge and skills, and cultivate a sense of devotion towards their creator. *Fourth*, The Commission for Islamic Brotherhood and Religious Harmony is an organization dedicated to fostering unity and understanding among individuals of different religious backgrounds, with a particular focus on promoting harmony within the Islamic community. The primary objective of this commission is to foster harmonious relations between individuals adhering to the Islamic faith and those who do not, within the context of their daily interactions. The concept of *ukhuwah Islamiyah* is anticipated to serve as a mechanism for fostering harmony among religious communities, with the ultimate goal of enhancing the well-being of both the local community and the nation as a whole.

Fifth, The Community Economic Empowerment Commission (CEEC) is an organization dedicated to promoting economic empowerment

within communities. The Community Economic Empowerment Commission is a governing body that examines and actively contributes to the enhancement of the economic capabilities of the community, with the ultimate goal of bolstering the local economy. This objective aligns with the principles and doctrines of the Islamic faith. *Sixth*, The Assessment and Research Commission is an organizational body responsible for evaluating and investigating various aspects within a given context. The aforementioned study and research commission is responsible for conducting comprehensive research on societal phenomena and identifying any discrepancies with the principles and teachings of the Islamic faith. Subsequently, the commission undertakes a rigorous analysis based on the data collected, and *Seventh*, The Social and Disaster Commission is a governmental body responsible for addressing issues related to social welfare and disaster management. The socioeconomic and Disaster Commission is a governmental body that focuses on monitoring and addressing the prevailing socioeconomic problems within society. Additionally, it plays a crucial role in the allocation and provision of aid to communities who have been adversely impacted by various catastrophes.

The Indonesian Ulama Council has implemented a system of establishing multiple commissions in diverse fields, aiming to facilitate the execution of its responsibilities. This research has yielded various transitory conclusions from the aforementioned commissions. The Indonesian Ulama Council actively engages in several domains with the primary objective of enhancing the religious standards within society, as delineated by their respective fields. The composition of these commissions is undoubtedly comprised of individuals possessing expertise in their respective domains. In line with the vision of the Indonesian Ulama Council, which aims to establish favorable social, national, and state conditions, and to seek the blessings of Allah SWT in order to foster a high-quality society that upholds the glory of Islam and benefits Muslims within the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, as an embodiment of compassion towards all aspects of existence. The primary objective of the Indonesian Ulama Council is to efficiently mobilize the leadership and institutions of the Muslim community, known as the Ummah. This is achieved by promoting the ulama, who are religious scholars, as exemplary figures. The aim is to empower them to guide and nurture Muslims in the practice and propagation of the Islamic faith, while also ensuring the implementation of Islamic sharia, or religious law.

The Indonesian Ulama Council, being a strategic institution, possesses the capacity to effectively fulfill its job to a greater extent. The individual in question possessed not only a notable capacity to issue fatwas that were comprehensible to the general public, but also shown an aptitude for engaging with practical and viable domains. These fields have the potential to not only

serve the interests of Muslims but also contribute to the overall growth and national interests.

In this particular instance, the MUI (Majelis Ulama Indonesia) serves as a highly anticipated institution among Muslims, functioning as a prominent and unifying force within the Islamic faith. Given that the MUI serves as a platform for ulama to disseminate religious teachings, it is only natural that the implementation of various provisions by the MUI leads to positive transformations within Muslim society. Conversely, individuals also recognize that in order to fully comprehend these teachings, a substantial amount of input and enthusiasm is required. It is worth noting that some individuals still perceive religious education within the workplace as more secure than formal education, which may inadvertently overshadow the role of the MUI. Nevertheless, the prevailing reality is that society continues to rely on the crucial role played by the MUI.

The Asahan Regency MUI Program in the Education Sector, as per the commission's directive, is being restructured to align with academic standards.

A program refers to the practical realization of conceptual ideas, which are afterwards structured and prepared for implementation in accordance with the intended objectives of the program's construction. The Asahan Regency MUI, a religious institution operating within society to enhance the quality of religion, has executed several initiatives to achieve its vision and goal, as a consequence of the establishment of current commissions. The data was acquired using several data gathering methodologies, including direct observation, to observe the implementation of the initiatives firsthand. The implementation of several programs has been seen, which has been substantiated through interviews conducted with primary and secondary informants, as well as by referring to relevant literature. Some examples of these programs include:

1. The Fatwa Commission. This commission is an authoritative body responsible for issuing religious rulings in accordance with Islamic law.

The commission has been assigned with the responsibility of:

First, The objective is to ascertain the legal principles governing societal events, occurrences, or instances in order to render a verdict that informs the public about the applicable law in said case. In addition to the MUI's active pursuit of information pertaining to the case, members of the public occasionally take it upon themselves to proffer relevant information. *Second*, Disseminate the fatwa that has been issued to the general population in order to ensure its wider awareness and understanding. This can be accomplished through the utilization of social media platforms or the deployment of speakers to disseminate information on the subject matter. Considering the significant role of social media as a prominent platform for

information dissemination, it is imperative for the MUI (Majelis Ulama Indonesia) of Asahan Regency to align its information dissemination strategies with the current trends. *Third*, The proposed endeavor involves the compilation of a book comprising a comprehensive assortment of fatwas, with the aim of facilitating access to this knowledge for anyone seeking to enhance their understanding. This initiative seeks to address the prevalent lack of awareness of legal principles and the underlying rationales governing various phenomena. *Fourth*, Hold regular mudzakah sessions. The objective of this initiative is to further enhance the religious knowledge of the community and gather information that can be utilized by various sectors within the MUI. For instance, during mudzakah sessions, if participants present flawed arguments, the MUI of Asahan Regency can identify and address these issues through constructive measures and investigations, and *fifth*, the provision of platforms for public discourse on diverse legal and religious rulings, known as fatwas, within the Islamic faith.



Figure 1: Collection of Books



Figure 2: Mudzakarah with Muslim Students and Scholars

2. Da'wah Commission. The commission has been assigned with the responsibility of: a. Carrying out cadre formation for lecturers in Asahan Regency in order to improve the quality of religious knowledge and provide training to be disseminated to the wider community and to prepare lecturers who have sufficient competence in preaching the teachings of the Islamic religion; b. making sermon books to simplify and enrich the knowledge of preachers. This was made at the request of the public because generally the preachers in many mosques in Asahan Regency still use sermon books that are not up-to-date, so the discussion seems to be the same, so they want an update, so the MUI of Asahan Regency made a book for the preachers; and c. organizing religious activities such as Isra' Mi'raj, the birthday of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, to make people feel less alienated due to existing technological advances and to preserve religious traditions that have positive values, such as increasing people's religious knowledge.
3. Education Commission Establish relationships with schools, madrasas, and universities in Asahan Regency. The commission has been assigned with the responsibility of: a. This program aims to have good relationships

with schools, madrasas, and universities in Asahan Regency. In fact, quite a few members of the Asahan Regency MUI institution have become teachers or lecturers at these educational institutions; b. carrying out religious outreach in schools so that students not only know worldly knowledge but also Islamic knowledge. Because school age is a vulnerable age in forming children's character in the future, the MUI of Asahan Regency is here to guide and provide direction, especially at this time when children are vulnerable to being exposed to promiscuity, drugs, and other crimes; c. oversees Islamic boarding schools in Asahan Regency. This is done to monitor and see the seeds in the Islamic boarding school. Moving from Islamic boarding schools as Islamic educational institutions that have existed for a long time, Islamic boarding schools have now become schools that many parents choose to send their children to in the hope of having sufficient knowledge of the Islamic religion so as not to be contaminated by promiscuity and other crimes. The MUI of Asahan Regency was also present at the event. providing guidance and supervision to Islamic boarding schools in Asahan Regency; d. Provide scholarship recommendations to students with achievements. This aims to ensure that students have the opportunity to continue their education. Such as recommending getting a scholarship created by BAZNAS and the Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia; and e. Providing a religious curriculum created for Islamic boarding schools in Asahan Regency that aims to help create lessons that are in accordance with what is needed and to prevent lessons that are not in accordance with the guidance of Islamic religious teachings.



Figure 3: Mudzakah for the Prevention of Deviant Beliefs

4. Islamic Brotherhood Commissiona. This commission has several duties, as:
a. holding friendships between religious communities in order to establish peaceful and beautiful living relationships. The Indonesian Ulema Council also pays attention to this matter to make people respect differences; b. Conduct studies on religious harmony between groups and between religions so that the people of Asahan Regency can always maintain the harmony that has been formed in society and to detect the existence of sects that are considered heretical. The MUI of Asahan Regency takes part in protecting the community from following or being exposed to teachings that lead to hostility because, in fact, Islam is a religion that loves and brings peace¹².

Obstacles to the Asahan Regency MUI in Improving Islamic Religious Education for the Community in Asahan Regency.

Obstacles come from the original word hindrance, which means something that makes it take longer to reach a goal. Obstacles are usually things that interfere with an activity, and it cannot be denied that these obstacles are often attached to programs or activities, especially when there is a lack of preparation to get to the target. These obstacles usually arise due to two aspects, namely internal and external, which will then make it difficult to implement the program or activity. In carrying out the program that has been created by each commission to realize the hopes that have been stated in the vision and mission of the Indonesian Ulema Council of Asahan Regency, of course there are obstacles and challenges in carrying it out.

These obstacles and challenges are the obstacles for the Indonesian Ulema Council in its efforts to improve Islamic religious education in Asahan Regency. As a result of interviews with primary informants, researchers found several obstacles, namely:

First, Limited operational funds Limited operational funds have hampered the Asahan Regency MUI movement both in creating and implementing its programs. This is very impactful because, in general, the programs used require sufficient funds to form and run a program that is in accordance with what is desired. As we know, in creating and implementing a program, of course, costs are needed for the sustainability and success of the program. Second, Lack of facilities and infrastructure The lack of facilities and infrastructure makes the Indonesian Ulema Council of Asahan Regency utilize limited facilities when creating and implementing its programs. As with costs or funds, facilities and infrastructure are also very much needed in the formation and implementation of a program. Third, Lack of government attention The government's lack of attention to the Indonesian Ulema

¹² Muhamad Basyrul Muvid, "Menjunjung Tinggi Islam Agama Kasih Sayang Dan Cinta Kasih Dalam Dimensi Sufisme," *Reflektika* 16, no. 2 (2021): 145, <https://doi.org/10.28944/reflektika.v16i2.523>.

Council of Asahan Regency also makes it difficult to coordinate in terms of providing attention to the community. With the government's lack of attention to the Asahan Regency MUI institution, the Asahan Regency MUI movement in an effort to improve Islamic religious education for the community was not implemented because quite a few of the programs created were related to the Asahan regional government.

The obstacles that the Asahan Regency MUI has in its efforts to improve Islamic religious education for the community, as stated above, are things that make it a little difficult for them to make movements as needed by the community. Limited operational funds have made the MUI of Asahan Regency think about how to manage existing funds while having to create and run their programs. This will, of course, have an impact both directly and indirectly on carrying out their programs. They have also tried to improve inadequate funds. This is stable by continuing to ask the government and opening up opportunities for people who want to contribute funds to the MUI of Asahan Regency. The lack of facilities and infrastructure also makes the Asahan Regency MUI try to use existing facilities and infrastructure and optimize them. Examples of a lack of facilities and infrastructure include official cars, narrow prayer rooms, combining halls with libraries, etc. The lack of government attention is also a serious obstacle, but it cannot be denied that the government is not only responsible for taking care of the Asahan Regency MUI but also for many other things that the Asahan Regency government must pay attention to. With all the obstacles and limitations that the Asahan Regency MUI has, they still try to maximize their institution as an umbrella for the Muslim community in Asahan Regency.

The Asahan Regency MUI has several commissions, including the Fatwa Commission, Education Commission, and Da'wah Commission. By looking at the existing commissions in the MUI of Asahan Regency, we can be quite sure that the MUI of Asahan Regency can play a big role in improving Islamic religious education for the people of Asahan Regency. In comparison, the commissions in the House of Representatives have quite a number of commissions such as the Defense Commission, Home Affairs Commission, Law Commission and many more which aim to cover many aspects to be considered.

From each commission in the Asahan Regency MUI, they create programs aimed at improving Islamic religious education for the people in Asahan Regency, such as holding routine studies, deliberations, and making fatwas as explained in previous research, but based on the results that researchers found during observations by directly assessing the quality. The religious beliefs of the people in rural areas are relatively low, while the researchers found from the existing literature as well as interviews with the MUI of Asahan Regency with all the existing commissions that made

programs to improve Islamic religious education for the people of Asahan Regency, but the problem is that the program was made by the MUI of the Regency. People in rural areas cannot yet experience Asahan, so their religious quality is still relatively low.

The obstacles felt by the Asahan Regency MUI are obstacles that arise very often and often occur in many institutions, so this should not be a reason to continue carrying out the work that should be done; it just remains how we can manage the obstacles that occur. by maximizing the other things you have. It is clear from the commissions established and the programs developed by the Asahan Regency MUI that the Asahan Regency MUI contributes to improving Islamic religious education for the residents of Asahan Regency. However, when we take a closer look, we find that the Indonesian Ulama Council also plays a role in other facets of community life, such as choosing leaders and representing the views of the people.

CONCLUSION

The Asahan Regency MUI has a very important role in improving Islamic religious education for the people in Asahan Regency, both in urban and rural communities. However, the reality is that it is very unfortunate that there are still many people who have not been able to experience the programs created by the Asahan Regency MUI as an effort to improve Islamic religious education, especially in rural areas. The finding in this research is that it turns out that the Asahan Regency MUI institution only consists of people who live in urban areas without members from people from remote villages. The community did not experience the program that the MUI of Asahan Regency created, which is how the researchers discovered the solution to the problem. Meanwhile, the Asahan Regency MUI continues to create programs as an effort to improve Islamic religious education for the community because the Asahan Regency MUI does not have members who live in rural areas, and it can also be said that it does not publish its programs through mass media or social media, as can be seen.

MUI Asahan Regency does not have official accounts on social media such as Facebook, Instagram, or YouTube, or even an official website, even though this is very much needed for socializing and publicizing MUI Asahan Regency programs and activities, especially in this era of technological development. This research recommends that, regarding the role of the MUI, it requires a change in the current culture, which uses mechanical methods through the use of technological media rather than being present. Therefore, MUI can play a role by expanding its wings through social media, which is growing rapidly. Therefore, every piece of news that comes through social media nowadays easily captures people's hearts, and affordability makes all information included in the realm of Islamic religious education very fast.

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