COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT THROUGH SOCIAL-BUSINESS PROGRAMS IN QURBAN ACTIVITIES IN NORTH SUMATERA

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Abstract. Community service activities, known as Abdimas, are executed through targeted social campaigns directed at Muslims in Singapore, Indonesia, and Malaysia. These individuals actively engage in the qurban program in North Sumatra, adopting the sacrificial entrustment scheme. The primary objective of this community service initiative is to empower local goat breeders and facilitate the equitable distribution of sacrificial meat within various regions of North Sumatra, encompassing Tebing Tinggi, Medan, and Deli Serdang. The employed methodology for this community service endeavor adheres to participatory action research (PAR), emphasizing active involvement from diverse stakeholders to effectively attain communal development objectives. The outcomes of the social campaign revealed the enthusiastic participation of 700 Qurbani performers, with 70% originating from Singapore and the remaining 30% hailing from Malaysia and Indonesia. The sacrificial ritual involved 700 goats, resulting in the production of approximately 7,500 packs of sacrificial meat. The subsequent distribution of qurban proceeds engaged village heads, hamlet heads, and local communities in the Tebing Tinggi, Medan, and Deli Serdang areas. This article sheds light on the positive contributions of Abdimas activities, emphasizing the empowerment of local goat breeders and the fostering of community solidarity through the support of the qurban program.

Keywords: Social Business, Qurban, Participatory Action Research (PAR), North Sumatera


Kata Kunci : Bisnis Sosial, Qurban, Participatory Action Research (PAR), Sumatera Utara
Introduction

Community empowerment initiatives play a pivotal role in fostering sustainable development, particularly in regions where targeted interventions can make a significant impact (Ahmad & Talib, 2015). One such noteworthy endeavor is the community service project, commonly known as Abdimas, which is strategically implemented through social campaigns aimed at Muslims in Singapore, Indonesia, and Malaysia. These campaigns encourage active participation in the qurban program in North Sumatra, characterized by the sacrificial entrustment scheme. This article delves into the multifaceted dimensions of Abdimas activities, focusing on their potential to empower local goat breeders and contribute to community well-being in areas such as Tebing Tinggi, Medan, and Deli Serdang.

The sacrificial entrustment scheme, an integral part of the qurban program, aligns with Islamic principles and legal frameworks. In Islamic law, qurban or sacrificial offerings hold a special significance, as they commemorate the act of Prophet Ibrahim's willingness to sacrifice his son in obedience to God's command (Zikri, 2011). The sacrificial entrustment scheme, guided by Shariah principles, involves entrusting the process of qurban to designated individuals or agencies, allowing them to perform the ritual on behalf of the donor. This mechanism not only facilitates the participation of Muslims from diverse geographical locations but also adheres to the broader Islamic ethos of communal responsibility and equitable distribution of resources (Brata, 2002; Syaikh et al., 2020).

Against this backdrop, the present community service initiative incorporates the participatory action research (PAR) methodology, emphasizing the active involvement of various stakeholders in the developmental process (Gaffney, 2008; MacDonald, 2012). The utilization of PAR ensures that the community's needs and aspirations are considered, creating a collaborative framework for sustainable development. The subsequent sections of this article will delve into the outcomes of the social campaigns, highlighting the enthusiastic participation of 700 Qurbani
performers, with a substantial representation from Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia. Moreover, the article will elucidate the pivotal role of Abdimas in empowering local goat breeders and the equitable distribution of sacrificial meat, thereby contributing to the overall well-being of communities in North Sumatra.

As the qurban program unfolds within the framework of Abdimas, the geographic diversity of participant involvement is particularly striking. With 70% of Qurbani performers originating from Singapore and the remaining 30% from Malaysia and Indonesia, this initiative transcends national boundaries, fostering a sense of unity and shared responsibility among Muslims in the three countries. The collective effort towards qurban reflects a global Islamic community striving to enact positive change and uplift the lives of those in need.

The sacrificial entrustment scheme, deeply rooted in Islamic law, adds a layer of significance to this community service initiative. According to Shariah principles, this approach allows Muslims to fulfill their religious obligations by entrusting qualified individuals or organizations with the responsibility of performing the qurban ritual on their behalf. This not only accommodates the logistical challenges of performing qurban in distant locations but also aligns with the Islamic ethos of ensuring that the benefits of sacrificial offerings are distributed to those who are less fortunate (Jayusman, 2012).

Moving forward, the distribution phase of the qurban proceeds involves the active participation of local leaders, including village heads and hamlet heads in Tebing Tinggi, Medan, and Deli Serdang. This decentralized approach ensures that the benefits of the sacrificial offerings directly reach the intended communities, contributing to social and economic upliftment. By involving key community figures, Abdimas not only addresses the immediate needs of the beneficiaries but also fosters a sense of ownership and inclusivity within the community.

The forthcoming sections of this article will provide a detailed analysis of the impact of Abdimas activities on local goat breeders, shedding light on the
empowerment dynamics that arise from such community-driven initiatives. Through a comprehensive examination of the participatory action research methodology and the outcomes of the social campaigns, this article aims to underscore the broader implications of the sacrificial entrustment scheme within the context of community development and Islamic principles.

The objective of this empowerment initiative activity (Abdimas), specifically within the qurban program employing the sacrificial entrustment scheme, is to uplift local goat breeders economically and ensure the fair distribution of resources within the community. By encouraging active participation in the qurban program, Abdimas establishes a sustainable market for goat breeders, boosting their income and contributing to the economic resilience of the local community. The sacrificial entrustment scheme allows Muslims from different countries to engage in the ritual, fostering inclusivity within the global Muslim community and enabling individuals from diverse geographic locations to contribute to the welfare of North Sumatran communities.

The implementation of Abdimas and the sacrificial entrustment scheme ensures the equitable distribution of sacrificial meat, addressing immediate nutritional needs and enhancing overall community well-being. Local leaders' involvement in the distribution process further strengthens this targeted approach, with village heads and hamlet heads facilitating the direct channeling of qurban benefits to those in need. The participatory action research (PAR) methodology employed in Abdimas underscores a collaborative approach, ensuring active community involvement in decision-making processes and fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility for their development. Together, these elements contribute to a holistic empowerment strategy that encompasses economic, social, and communal dimensions, enhancing the overall quality of life within the community.

**Literature Review**
The tradition of qurban, or sacrificial offerings, in Islam finds its origin deeply rooted in the Abrahamic narrative and the Quranic account of the Prophet Ibrahim (Abraham). The story revolves around Ibrahim's unwavering devotion and obedience to God's command, which included a remarkable test of sacrificing his beloved son, Isma'il (Ishmael). As Ibrahim prepared to carry out this profound act of faith, God intervened by providing a ram to sacrifice in place of his son. This pivotal event symbolizes the ultimate submission to the divine will and serves as the foundational narrative for the Islamic practice of qurban (Ben-Hayil & Crawford-Yellen, 2018; Faridah, 2016).

In Islamic tradition, the observance of qurban is closely linked to the annual pilgrimage, Hajj, one of the Five Pillars of Islam. During the Islamic month of Dhul-Hijjah, which corresponds with the pilgrimage season, Muslims worldwide commemorate Ibrahim's devotion by participating in the ritual of qurban. The act involves the sacrifice of livestock, such as sheep, goats, or cattle, with a significant portion of the meat distributed to those in need, emphasizing principles of charity and compassion (Wheeler, 2022).

The Quran, the holy book of Islam, explicitly mentions the significance of sacrificial offerings in several verses. Surah Al-Hajj (22:34) highlights the essence of the sacrifice, stating that the meat and blood of the sacrificial animals do not reach Allah, but rather, it is the piety and devotion of the believers that are acknowledged. The practice of qurban, therefore, serves as a means for Muslims to express their gratitude, deepen their spiritual connection, and fulfill a religious obligation.

وَلِكُلِِّ اُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا مَنْسَكًا لِِّيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللّٰهِ عَلٰى مَا رَزَقَهُمْ مِِّنْْۢ بَهِيْمَةِ الَْْنْعَامِِۗ فَاِلٰهُكُمْ اِلٰهٌ وَّاحِدٌ فَلَه ٗٓ اَسْلِمُوْاِۗ وَبَشِِّرِ الْمُخْبِتِيْنَ

“For every community, We appointed a rite of sacrifice so that they may pronounce the Name of Allah over the sacrificial animals He has provided for them. For your God is only One God, so submit yourselves to Him ‘alone’. And give good news ‘O Prophet `to the humble”

The tradition of qurban also exemplifies the principles of social justice and communal solidarity within Islam. The distribution of sacrificial meat among the less fortunate underscores the importance of sharing blessings and caring for the marginalized members of society. Through qurban, Muslims are...
reminded of their collective responsibility to contribute to the well-being of the community and uphold the values of compassion, generosity, and empathy—a practice deeply ingrained in the fabric of Islamic teachings. Overall, the origin of Islamic qurban reflects a profound narrative of faith, submission, and community welfare that continues to resonate within the global Muslim community.

Beyond its spiritual and symbolic dimensions, the practice of qurban has practical implications for social and economic dynamics. The distribution of sacrificial meat to the less fortunate underscores the Islamic principle of Zakat (charitable giving) and reinforces the idea of communal support and solidarity. It becomes a means to bridge economic disparities and provide sustenance to those who may be in need, aligning with the broader ethos of social justice embedded in Islamic teachings.

In essence, the origin of Islamic qurban weaves together theological significance, historical narrative, and contemporary socio-economic considerations. This ritual, rooted in the legacy of Prophet Ibrahim, continues to be a vital aspect of Islamic practice, serving as a tangible expression of faith, gratitude, and a commitment to communal welfare. Through the act of qurban, Muslims around the world engage in a timeless tradition that connects them to the core values of their faith, fostering a sense of unity and compassion within the global Muslim community (Jayusman, 2012).

One of the paramount considerations in the context of sacrificial worship pertains to the selection of an optimal sacrificial animal. Commonly utilized animals for this purpose include cows, goats, buffaloes, or sheep, and their suitability relies heavily on factors such as robust health and well-being. Several key criteria should be taken into account when choosing a sacrificial animal to ensure its appropriateness for the ritual (Jayusman, 2012).

Foremost, the sacrificial animal must exhibit signs of good health, discernible through the assessment of sensory organs. Healthy indicators encompass bright, non-cloudy eyes and a wet, clean nose mirror. Additionally,
a physically sound sacrificial animal is characterized by clean and lustrous fur, a lack of thinness, agile movements, and a healthy appetite.

Furthermore, the selected sacrificial animal should not display any form of disability, including absence of blindness, absence of limping, intact horns and earlobes, and completeness of testicles without neutering. Age considerations are also pivotal, varying according to the species. For goats and sheep, the animal should be over one year old, while cows and buffaloes should exceed two years, as indicated by the development of a pair of teeth.

According to a particular perspective, it is posited that a single cow can serve as a sacrificial offering for seven individuals, while an alternative viewpoint, attributed to a minority opinion, suggests that a cow could potentially suffice for up to ten individuals if they collectively partake in the sacrificial ritual. Conversely, the consensus maintains that a single goat is designated for the sacrifice of one individual.

In elucidating this, it is explicated that a cow can adequately fulfill the sacrificial requirements for a group of seven people, provided they jointly participate in the ritual. Conversely, a goat is prescribed for the individual sacrifice of one person. However, a nuanced allowance exists for an individual who opts to divide a goat for personal sacrifice and extends the reward of the act to include family members or associates, wherein such an arrangement is deemed permissible. This perspective is substantiated by Sheikh M. Nawawi Banten, as documented in "Tausyih ala Ibni Qasim" (Beirut, Darul Fikr: 1996 AD/1417 H), first printing, page 270. Additionally, this approach contends that such a participant may receive a distinctive reward in addition to the shared benefits of the sacrificial worship.

The act of entrusting names for sacrificial such as offerings to a cow owner, whose quota of sacrificial obligations has not yet reached the stipulated seven individuals, is permissible. This allowance extends to cases where there
is no familial relationship between the person entrusting the name and the owner of the Qurban's animal. Entrusting names for sacrificial offerings is not restricted to individual cow owners; it can also be extended to encompass companies or institutions that contribute to Qurban's animal for communal sacrifice. In this regard, seeking permission from the qurban's animal owner, if feasible, is recommended, allowing for the fulfillment of any remaining sacrificial quota. This approach aims to ensure that the exceptional sunnah virtue associated with sacrificial worship is not missed in vain.

According to Sheikh Abu Zakariya Al-Ansari, documented in "Asnal Mathalib" (Beirut, Darul Fikr: no year noted), a camel or cow is deemed sufficient for seven individuals. This provision is reminiscent of the historical context during the time of Prophet Muhammad (SAW), particularly during the Hudaibiyyah incident. The companions of the Prophet, while on pilgrimage, slaughtered camels for seven people and cows for seven people. Notably, these individuals did not share a familial connection, highlighting the inclusivity of the practice across diverse groups. This perspective underscores the flexibility in the distribution of sacrificial obligations and emphasizes the communal aspect of the ritual within the Islamic tradition.

**Empowerment Method**

Participatory Action Research (PAR) is a research methodology that emphasizes collaboration and active involvement of the participants in the research process. It goes beyond traditional research approaches, aiming to empower communities, promote social change, and generate practical knowledge that addresses real-world issues. PAR is particularly suited for research in social sciences, education, community development, and other fields where the input and perspectives of participants are crucial.

Implementing Participatory Action Research (PAR) in the "Community Empowerment Through Social-Business Programs in Qurban Activities in
North Sumatra" involves engaging community members, stakeholders, and beneficiaries throughout the research process (MacDonald, 2012). The following is a step-by-step guide on how to implement PAR in this specific empowerment program:

1. **Forming Collaborative Partnerships:** Begin by forming collaborative partnerships with local community leaders, organizations, and participants involved in the qurban activities. Ensure that there is a shared understanding of the goals and objectives of the empowerment program.

2. **Community Involvement in Problem Identification:** Conduct collaborative sessions or workshops to identify and define the specific challenges and opportunities related to qurban activities. Allow community members to voice their concerns and contribute to the problem identification process.

3. **Developing Social-Business Programs:** Involve community members, including local businesses and potential entrepreneurs, in the development of social-business programs related to qurban activities. Seek their input on the types of programs that would be most beneficial for community empowerment.

4. **Action Planning with Stakeholder Input:** Collaboratively develop an action plan that outlines the steps to be taken to implement the social-business programs. Involve stakeholders in the decision-making process, considering their expertise, needs, and aspirations.

5. **Implementation of Social-Business Programs:** Initiate the implementation of the social-business programs, ensuring that community members actively participate. This may include training sessions, capacity-building programs, and support for local businesses involved in qurban activities.

6. **Empowering Local Leaders and Residents:** Empower local leaders and residents to take on leadership roles within social business programs. This could involve training and capacity-building initiatives to ensure sustainable leadership and community ownership.
7. **Sharing Findings and Celebrating Success**: Share research findings, successes, and challenges with the community and relevant stakeholders. Celebrate achievements and acknowledge the collective efforts of the community in the empowerment process.

8. **Sustainable Monitoring and Evaluation**: Establish mechanisms for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of the social-business programs to ensure sustainability. Involve the community in the evaluation process, seeking their input on the long-term impact of the empowerment initiatives.

**Discussion**

This service activity is carried out on a special timeline. Where the stages are divided into nine stages:

1. **Establishment of Collaborative Partnerships**

   The formation of the partnership was carried out two months before entering the Eid al-Adha schedule, namely in April. Where the parties used as partners are goat breeders, village heads, and hamlet heads in North Sumatra. The partner goat breeders are located in two areas, namely Tebing Tinggi and Medan City. Where the places for distributing sacrificial meat in the area; are Bajenis, Padang Hilir, Padang Hulu, Rambutan, Tebing Tinggi Kota, Medan Sunggal, Medan Selayang, and Pantai Labu.

2. **Community Involvement**

   Following the Participatory Action Research (PAR) methodology, in implementing this community service, a collaborative workshop was held where the community was actively involved in identifying and defining challenges and opportunities related to qurban activities. The output includes a summary of community concerns and a determination of the focus of the empowerment program. The workshop here is commanded by each local hamlet head. For the cutting location, 100 volunteers were obtained from residents for the Medan Sunggal area, and 40 for the Tebing Tinggi area.

3. **Development of Social Business Programs**
At this stage, a basic plan is created based on the results of discussions with the field team for program execution. Collected input from regional teams regarding cutting techniques, taking photos as evidence for the sacrificers, and techniques for distributing sacrificial meat to targeted communities classified according to their sub-districts; Bajenis, Padang Hilir, Padang Hulu, Rambutan, Tebing Tinggi Kota, Medan Sunggal, Medan Selayang, and Pantai Labu. 700 people participated in this empowerment activity with a percentage of 70% coming from Singapore, and the other 30% coming from Indonesian citizens.

4. **Action Planning with Input from Stakeholders**

Action plans are developed collaboratively by involving stakeholders. Decisions are taken jointly, considering their expertise, needs, and aspirations, thereby formulating concrete steps to implement the program. In this case, the most prioritized stakeholders are the qurbani who entrust the implementation of their qurbani to the community service team. The results of the input from the dialogue with the sacrificers were that they asked for photographic evidence with their names displayed on the goats sacrificed in the name of the sacrificers. The photo was distributed to the sacrificers as proof of the sacrifice. Plus, the profits from this program are returned to the people, namely distributed in the form of social assistance, scholarships, and Umrah prizes for pilgrims who actively participate in Islamic studies with Sheikh Mohmed Firdaus Bin Masruhen, Lc., M.Hi., M.E., P.hD(Cand).

5. **Implementation of Social Business & Empowerment**

At this stage, all preparations are complete. The sacrificial activities were carried out for three days; 29, 30, and 31 June 2023. Where on the 29th and 30th, slaughter was carried out on a high cliff with a total of 250 goats, and the work was carried out by 40 people. Activities at this location took two days. Likewise regarding the distribution process, where on the first day the slaughter was carried out from 09.00 WIB to 17.00 WIB, and 130 goats were slaughtered with a total of around 1200 packs of meat wrapped. The
packages containing sacrificial meat were distributed to the Ba Jenis, Padang Hilir, and Padang Hulu areas. On June 29, 2023, the slaughtering process continued from 09.00 to 16.00 WIB and reached around 1100 packs of goat meat which were distributed to the Rambutan and Tebing Tinggi Kota areas.

On June 31, sacrificial goat slaughter was carried out in Medan Sunggal with a total of 450 goats. The slaughtering is handled by a team of 10 expert butchers who have been trained by the farm, as well as 90 local volunteers who help with the process of chopping and wrapping the meat. From 450 goats, around 5000 packs were obtained which were distributed to the Medan Sunggal, Medan Selayang, and Pantai Labu areas.

6. **Celebration of the Successful Implementation of Post-activity Empowerment and Social Activities**

Following the completion of the empowerment initiative, a celebratory event was conducted to mark the successful execution of social activities at Ashraf Corner, Bekasi, West Java. The event convened various stakeholders, including Qurbani contributors, members of the event committee, and beneficiaries of social assistance. Sheikh Mohmed Firdaus Bin Masruhen, Lc., M.Hi., M.E., P.hD(Cand), led Islamic studies during the event, presenting compensations for orphans, awarding scholarships, and providing Umrah prizes to participants. Additionally, the outcomes of the sacrificial activities were reported during the event. Noteworthy achievements included compensation for one hundred orphans and the allocation of college scholarships for two semesters to five individuals. Furthermore, Umrah gifts were distributed to five recipients among the audience, enhancing the overall impact of the initiative.

7. **Internal Evaluation**

The final stage of implementing this empowerment activity is an internal evaluation carried out by the implementing committee. Partners still haven't been found, so carrying out this activity requires more time and
energy to find partners such as breeders and locations who are willing to become volunteers and accept the distribution of sacrifices. Plus, because this is the first activity, getting Qurbani to entrust their Qurbani to empower the team is difficult. However, in its implementation, 700 sacrificers were found who left their sacrifices, which was an achievement. Furthermore, promotion of activities needs to be carried out and partnerships need to be extended to facilitate other empowerment processes.

Conclusion

The implementation of the empowerment activity, focusing on community engagement through qurban initiatives in North Sumatira, has showcased both successes and areas for improvement. The key stages, from collaborative partnerships to the internal evaluation, provide valuable insights into the program's effectiveness and challenges. In implementing empowerment through this qurban program, several points need to be considered as an evaluation for further activities, including the following:

1. The establishment of partnerships with goat breeders, village heads, and hamlet heads is a positive step. However, future efforts should explore additional partnerships to enhance the program's reach and impact.

2. The development of a basic plan and the classification of targeted communities show a thoughtful approach. The participation of 700 individuals, with a notable percentage from Singapore, indicates successful outreach.

3. Involving Qurbani contributors in decision-making is commendable. The emphasis on providing photographic evidence and returning profits to the community enhances transparency and stakeholder satisfaction.

4. The completion of sacrificial activities within the planned schedule and the distribution of sacrificial meat to specific areas demonstrates operational efficiency. However, ongoing monitoring and optimization are essential for sustained impact.
5. The internal evaluation reveals the need for continued efforts in finding partners and promoting activities. The challenges in the initial phase, including the difficulty in securing qurbani entrustments, highlight areas for refinement in future iterations.

Otherwise, there is also several suggestions for future empowerment implementation as follows;

1. Explore additional partnerships with local businesses, NGOs, or government agencies to expand the program's reach.
2. Periodically review and adjust the basic plan based on ongoing feedback, and consider diversifying program initiatives.
3. Continue involving qurbani contributors in decision-making, and explore new ways to enhance stakeholder satisfaction.
4. Continuously assess and optimize the efficiency of sacrificial activities, ensuring resource utilization and community involvement are maximized.
5. Strengthen promotional efforts to attract more Qurbani contributors and extend partnerships for smoother implementation.

References


Al-`Adalah, X(4), 435–446.


