THE INTERNALIZATION OF RELIGIOUS VALUES IN BUMI SIKEREI: IMPROVING THE WORSHIP AREAS FOR THE YOUNGER GENERATION OF SIPUISILAM

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Abstract: Sipuisilam is a term that refers to a group of Bumi Sikerei residents who embrace Islam. Previous studies show that Sipuisilam people are having dilemmas in carrying out their obligations as Muslims. This community service activity aims to increase the knowledge and understanding of the young generation of Sipuisilam people related to Islamic values and to carry out Islamic teachings. This community service activity uses the Community Based Research Model, which is reduced to 5 stages: questionnaire, interviewing, Focus Group Discussion, implementation, and evaluation of service activity. Based on the model, it is determined that (1) the subject of empowerment is the youth segment, (2) the religious practices area is focused, (3) the service activity form of expository lectures/discussions and practices, and (4) Yayasan Aksi Peduli Bangsa of Muntei village and Islamic Studies teachers as partners. The training was conducted for 6 tutors and 32 students from junior and senior high school/vocational school. The evaluation results showed that 55.6% of Sipuisilam residents had a very good level of understanding regarding thaharah and 33,12% of Sipuisilam people had a very good level of understanding regarding to shalat (Moslems’ praying). It means that the achievement of this community service for the cognitive domain has exceeded the target. However, the affective and psychomotor domains are still dominated at a good level. The findings indicate that assistance is needed to internalize Islamic values in social interaction and everyday life.

Keywords: Sipuisilam younger generation, internalization of religious values, Bumi Sikerei

Introduction

The term sipuisilam emerged after the official entry of Islam into Bumi Sikerei. The term sipuisilam refers to groups or communities that are embracing Islam (Delfi, 2012). This definition is confirmed by Wirman et al. (2022) which states that sipuisilam are reverts (mualaf) who
previously believed in the local tradition of *arat sabulungan* as their religion and culture. The term mualaf in this context is better understood as the people of Bumi Sikerei who initially embraced *arat sabulungan* but then reverted to Islam or those who are recently reverted to Islam.

*Bumi Sikerei* is the other name for the Mentawai Islands, one of the entities in the administrative area of West Sumatra Province. Even though West Sumatra is historically famous and well known as Minangkabau as its cultural entity, but this does not apply to the cultural entities in Mentawai Islands. Culturally, Mentawai culture is not a part of Minangkabau culture (Delfi, 2013; Wirman et al., 2021). In the context of religious anthropology, the existence and the connectivity of a theological belief is correlated with the supporters of a culture, and even becomes the identity of the ethnic supporters. In another formulation, the existence of a religion or belief is closely related to the historical course of an ethnic entity.

Ethnic groups of Bumi Sikerei have long had their own theological beliefs (Delfi, 2013; Nelmaya, 2021; Wirman et al., 2021) like any other ethnic group worldwide. The characteristics of theological beliefs that prioritize local values have become the ethnic identity of Bumi Sikerei; known as the Mentawai ethnic group. Their belief is integrated, internalized, and passed down from generation to generation in a very long-time dimension.

Historically, the Mentawai ethnic group was a virgin from the influence of theological beliefs before the Dutch colonials controlled Minangkabau. Even though during the Dutch colonial period Christianity came to Mentawai, it was not on a missionary mission. Practically, the values of the Mentawai locality have been maintained for a very long time, as a form of identity and integrative values of the Mentawai people. This is also because the Mentawai Islands are isolate are considered as a remote area in terms of physical development for quite a long time in Indonesia (Hakim, 2016; Hidayat, 2010, Isniati, 2013; Malayanti & Pakpahan, 2016).

After Indonesian independence, numerous external parties began to enter *Bumi Sikerei*. In the name of “advancing underdeveloped communities” (Wirman et al., 2021), the Indonesian government began to open the access to Mentawai Islands which had resulted the dialectic to develop into an ethnic group with varied religions. Following the previous studies, Delfi (2012, 2013); Nelmaya (2021); Wirman et al., (2021) mentioned that embracing a religion is not yet fully functional in Mentawai. Thus, Mentawai people practice a local belief called *arat sabulungan*.

*Arat sabulungan* is an embodiment of knowledge, beliefs, and traditions related to the natural, social, and cultural environment which regulate all human relations with nature (Aulia, 2009; Pujiraharjo, 2014; Zakaria, 2018; Glosanto, 2019). In fact, it is more extreme to say that the *arat sabulungan* regulates humans’ relationship with humans, their environment, and the spiritual entities that control the universe (Tresno, 2017).

The mobility to change religions occurs frequently and is very dynamic, for example, from Islam to non-Islam and non-Islam to Islam and so on. For the Mentawai ethnic group, especially the older generation, this mobility occurs because of the socialization process (da’wah) which tends to reduce their pride in their cultural identity (Wirman et al., 2021). The communalistic dialectic of local traditions had brought a dilemma to the social and religious life of sipuisilam. On
the one hand, they have embraced Islam, but on the other hand, they also still carry out the tradition of *arat sabulungan* (Aulia, 2009; Hidayat, 2010; Pujiraharjo, 2014). They still believe in a life that is closely related to nature (Sari, 2016). In fact, they believe that animate and inanimate objects have a spirit or soul as a spiritual entity (Andriani & Nurhasanah, 2012; Susilowati, 2018). All these practices, in principle, indicated that *sipuisilam* as Muslim’s are still practicing *arat sabulungan* in many aspects of life, even though those that are is prohibited or deviated from Islamic teachings as seen in the findings of Zakaria (2018), Zalman (2018), and Wirman & Ilham (2019).

In accordance with the findings of Wirman & Ilham (2019), there are at least three basic things that are reflected in the daily life activities of *sipuisilam*: 1) they have recited the *shahada* but they find it difficult to break away from their initial traditions; 2) they have the will to practice Islamic teachings but are still practicing the *arat sabulungan* rituals; and 3) they are still at the level of carrying out their initial belief rituals and are considering Islam as a choice to the extend where some are still practicing as *sikerei*. These three conditions are the actual conditions of *sipuisilam in Bumi Sikerei* which are also problems and challenges in developing *sipuisilam* which is a minority group in *Bumi Sikerei*.

Based on these conditions, the community service program in Bumi Sikerei, Siberut Islands, as the ‘origin’ ethnic group and custodian of Mentawai culture was realized. The purpose of this service is so that the *sipuisilams* have knowledge and the understanding of Islamic values and Islamic teachings and so they can practice them in their daily lives and are able to solemnly carry out Islamic teachings.

**Method**

*Sipuisilam* problems in Bumi Sikerei are resolved using the Community-Based Research (CBR) method, a method conducted based on community commitment by providing support, strength, resources and involvement to produce activities that are beneficial to the community and the activity organizers (Banks, 2012). In this community service activity, the CBR Method is reduced to five work stages which can be seen in Figure 1.

![Figure 1. Stages of the Community Service Activities](image-url)
The first stage utilizes a questionnaire technique to collect data which includes information related to personal identity of sipuisilam, their knowledge, their understanding and their social perceptions regarding socio-cultural phenomena and religious values. The assessment is measured by using a Likert scale (Sugiyono, 2019) to avoid the central tendency effect. The questionnaire was distributed to students by considering 3 aspects, namely: age, social and spatial. The age aspect is divided into older generation sipuisilam and younger generation sipuisilam. Social aspects are defined as aspects of diversity which include their social status, social roles, social interests, and social mobilities. The spatial aspect is used to represent the characteristics of the areas on Siberut Island, i.e.: 1) Matotonan, 2) Muntei, 3) Rogdog, 4) Pei Pei, 5) Saliguma, 6) Salappa, 7) Sarusau, and 8) Sagulubbek. The second stage was conducted through interview techniques to follow up on the data and information obtained from the questionnaire. From interviews it was found that the younger generation has more awareness and desire to increase their knowledge and understanding of religious values. The younger generation also lack knowledge and experience regarding the arat sabulungan tradition. The third stage applies the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) technique to map problems and analyze the needs of sipuisilam. The FGD involved representative participants from both segments by involving Islamic religious elites and NGO representatives as an effort to jointly formulate a service program design. The forms and steps for implementing the community service design agreed upon the FGD are: 1) coaching for sipuisilam younger generation, 2) focused on worship, e.g., thaharah and ibadah; 3) conducted at the National Action Care Foundation (Yayasan Aksi Peduli Bangsa – APB) command post as an NGO concerned with empowering sipuisilam; 4) conducted in early October 2022 and then controlled and evaluated by tutors in the second and third weeks of October 2022; and 5) providing the training to 6 tutors who will provide tutorials (focused on the assistance as well as elaboration/enrichment of material following the spatial conditions) considering that geographical distance does not allow the team to supervise and to assist on the daily basis. The fourth stage was conducted through community service which has been designed on the FGD. The fifth stage is an evaluation to determine the effectiveness of community service activities in addition to controlling the daily life of sipuisilam. Evaluation is the final stage of this community service program. Evaluation is categorized into plan evaluation, process evaluation, and results evaluation. These three types of evaluation influence the choice of methods and data collection tools used. Data collection techniques for evaluation are carried out by observation (in the form of a checklist) and interviews.

Result and Discussion

The implementation of this community service program was fully designed in the FGD activity. The FGD activity began with the presentation of data and information obtained from questionnaires and interviews, in addition to several considerations related to the community service priority scale by the service team leader. Furthermore, all participants were given the
opportunity by the facilitator to provide input, either in the form of views, suggestions or criticism. The implementation of the FGD can be seen in Figure 2 below.

**Figure 2.** A brief speech from the team leader of the community service teams

**Pre-Training Mastery Level of Sipuisilam**

In accordance with the aim of this community service as improving the quality of worship for sipuisilam on Bumi Sikerei, this section begins with an explanation of the level of mastery of sipuisilam regarding pre-training and pre-mentoring worship. The level of mastery of sipuisilam is obtained from initial data collection as a basis or starting point for implementing community service as stated in the introduction. The level of mastery obtained through the questionnaire prior to the community service is conducted as a form of mapping of the objective conditions of the mastery of sipuisilam as the subject assistance in worshiping. This activity includes cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects. The levels of mastery are seen from the aspects of knowledge, attitudes, and practices of sipuisilam through the Islamic values which are presented in Table 1 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worshiping Type</th>
<th>Aspects</th>
<th>Level of Mastery</th>
<th>Dominant Result</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thaharah</strong></td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>0 %</td>
<td>66,70 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>9,50 %</td>
<td>47,60 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychomotoric</td>
<td>45,24 %</td>
<td>40,48 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Salat</strong></td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>65,08 %</td>
<td>23,81 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>59,52 %</td>
<td>28,58 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychomotoric</td>
<td>61,91 %</td>
<td>33,33 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1 indicates that the level of mastery of sipuisilam in worshiping (ibadah) is still at poor and fair levels. This means that the majority of sipuisilam do not have sufficient knowledge and understanding that has a big impact on their worshiping practice. These results are strengthening the reason why this community service program is important for sipuisilam.
The Implementation of Community Service Program: Training and Mentoring

This community service program was conducted in three stages: a) training for tutors, b) training for sipuisilam, and c) assistance for sipuisilam. The training activity was conducted by the community service team in Muntei which involved 2 speakers, 2 facilitators, 6 tutors, 25 female sipaisilam, and 11 male sipuisilam. The assistance activities for sipuisilam were implemented by tutors who have received training, both during the training period and after the training period. The tutors are of Islamic studies teacher, dormitory coaches, and/or volunteers who are concerned in empowering sipuisilam in Bumi Sikerei.

Training for tutors

In accordance with the recommendations of the volunteers, the training was first given to the tutors. Training for tutors is intended as an effort to prepare workers who act as motivators and companions of Sipuisilam in increasing knowledge, understanding, and practice of Islamic values, especially in worship. In other words, the tutors will carry out the stages of monitoring and ensure the implementation of the sustainability of Islamic values given during the training, as a form of internalization. The implementation of the training activities can be seen in Figure 3. The keynote speakers of the training section are Prof. Dr. Eka Putra Wirman, M.A. and Dr. Sri Aisyiah, S.H.I., M.H. The facilitators are Dra. Hetti Waluati Triana, M.Pd., Ph.D. and M. Ilham, S.Ag, M.Hum. The six tutors are: 1) Awal Dzul Islah, 2) Dewi Purnama, 3) Anita Rahayuningsih, 4) Latifah, 5) Emil Salim Sakoubo, and 6) Ronal Erikyani H. The techniques and steps of the training work carried out for the tutor are:

1) The facilitator explains the training techniques.
2) The facilitator introduces the training curriculum to the tutor, including: RPS, Module, and Power Point.
3) The facilitator also provides an explanation related to the purpose of service and achievement targets.
4) The keynote speakers provide material and demonstrate so that the practice can be evaluated correctly.
5) The keynote speakers asked the tutor to explain the material concisely and demonstrate the material that is practical.
6) The facilitator provides an opportunity for the tutor to discuss with the resource person related to the material.
7) Tutors demonstrate the practice according to the direction of the keynote speakers.

Training for Sipuisilam

Training for Sipuisilam was conducted separately for sipuisilam women and men. The separation was done for the special treatment to sipuisilam women, in training materials, in demonstrating, and in terms of practice that specific for women. The training technical is as follows:

1) The facilitators explain the training techniques to the participants.
2) The facilitators provide an explanation related to the purpose of community service program and target achievement of the program.
3) The keynote speakers provide material and demonstrate so that the practice can be mastered properly.

4) The resource person asked participants to recite and demonstrate practical material.

5) The facilitators provide opportunities for participants to discuss with resource persons related to the material.

6) The tutors accompanied the participants to demonstrate according to the directions of the keynote speakers.

Figure 3. Direction speech by the facilitators

The keynote speaker for sipuisilam men was Prof. Dr. Eka Putra Wirman, M.A. and the facilitator is M. Ilham, S.Ag., M. Hum. The training was attended by 11 participants of the students from grade VIII to grade XI (junior highs, high schools, and vocational schools). The training can be seen in Figure 4.

Figure 4. The keynote speaker is explaining the materials

The keynote speaker for the sipuisilam women is Dr. Sri Aisyah, S.H.I., M.H. and the facilitator is Dra. Hetti Waluati Triana, M.Pd., Ph.D. The training was attended by 25 participants of the students from grade VII to grade XII (junior highs, high schools, and vocational schools).
The 25 participants are students who are basically still in their adolescence during the transition and are seeking identities. The training can be seen in Figure 5.

![Figure 5. Demonstration of one of the participants](image)

The training materials include *thaharah* and *shalat*. The material of *thaharah* consists of its definition, types, and tools for *thaharah*, various kinds of *najis* dan the procedure of *thaharah* (*wudhu* and *tayamum*). The material for *shalat* consists of mandatory *shalat* five times a day, times for mandatory *shalat*, requirements for *shalat*, pillars of *shalat*, *sunnah in shalat*, *makhruh in shalat*, procedures of *shalat*. Before providing the material, the facilitator initially provides opportunities for participants to convey the difficulties or problems they experienced before so that the explanation given is more targeted to the needs of *sipuisilam*. In accordance with the needs of *sipuisilam*, the practice becomes an integrated training of the two materials, in addition to the philosophy and values contained in each aspect of the discussion. After the training, the male participants had a photo session with the keynote speakers, fasilitators, and tutors as seen in Figure 6.

![Figure 6. Photo session (keynote speakers, fasilitators, tutors, dan male participants)](image)

Although training activities with speakers have been completed, the tutors (Islamic Religious Education Teachers and Dormitory Trustees) continue the assistance activities. Assistance activities are realized through periodic evaluation as a control of the implementation
of the worshipping values of sipuisilam. In addition, the assistance activities by the tutor are also intended as an effort to encourage the younger generation of sipuisilam to act with awareness and motivate them to always increase knowledge, understanding, and practice Islamic values, especially in worshipping (ibadah).

**The Evaluation of the Community Service Program**

In principle, the evaluation of the community service program was conducted to improve the quality of the process and to determine whether the program should be continued or not. Thus, the objectives details of the evaluation process are:

a. To ensure the benefits of the program for the people of Bumi Sikerei.

b. To identify the weaknesses and strengths of the implementation of the program.

c. To identify the achievements of the program.

**The results of the interview**

Interviews were conducted for evaluation purposes: a) to ensure the benefits of the program for the people of Bumi Sikerei and b) to identify the weaknesses and strengths of the implementation of the program. The interviews were conducted by the team with tutors and dormitory supervisors. From the evaluation results within the interviews and semi-formal discussions with tutors and dormitory coaches, it can be concluded that the younger generation responded positively to training activities which gave them insight and the opportunity to ask questions about things they had previously doubted, both general and personal, especially for female participants.

The results of the interviews also showed that the training carried out had a significant impact on sipuisilam in improving the quality of worship, especially for female sipuisilam. The positive impacts include:

a. The younger generation is starting to take the initiative to confirm whether their prayer movements (shalat) or ablution (thaharah) methods are correct or not with the dormitory supervisor/tutor.

b. The younger generation is starting to have a great desire to be able to carry out their mandatory prayers on time.

c. The younger generation has the motivation to continue their education in the religious field, especially at the Islamic State University (UIN).

d. There is an increase in memorization (prayers and prayer verses).

e. Supervisors, dormitory supervisors, and Islamic education teachers find it helpful in controlling the obligatory and mandatory worships of the younger generation.

f. Supervisors, dormitory supervisors, and NGOs asked for plans for further activities for the younger generation so that they can provide opportunities and opportunities to increase the devotion of the younger generation in Bumi Sikerei. The sustainable training programs can strengthen the understanding and implementation of Islamic values among the younger generation. In fact, in the long term, they can become role models for the next generation of young people.
Field observation results

Field observations were carried out with the aim of the 3rd evaluation (identifying program achievements). Observations are made by tutors and submitted to the team in the form of a checklist evaluation sheet. This evaluation sheet contains achievement indicators that are developed in accordance with the training material and practice points. An evaluation regarding the achievement of service targets was carried out on October 18, 2022. The evaluation was carried out on participants who lived in the APB dormitory.

Based on the data on the evaluation sheets, the achievement of the cognitive aspects of the two themes of the community service program was 55.6% and 61.25% of the participants had very good scores. The percentages indicate that the basic concepts of worship, especially in thaharah and shalat, have been well understood by most of the younger generation of sipuisilam in South Siberut. The recap can be seen in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Aspect</th>
<th>Fair</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Very Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thaharah</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>8,8%</td>
<td>40,6%</td>
<td>55,6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>7,5%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>32,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychomotoric</td>
<td>2,5%</td>
<td>47,5%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shalat</td>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>5,63%</td>
<td>61,25%</td>
<td>33,12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>57,5%</td>
<td>37,5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychomotoric</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>52,5%</td>
<td>47,5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In compared with the results of the questionnaire before the training was conducted (in table 1), it can be concluded that there was a significant increase in understanding. In other words, the level of achievement of this training is high, ranging between good and very good levels. The increase in sipuisilam understanding of the taharah can be seen in Diagram 1.

Diagram 1. The Increasing of the Sipuisilam Understanding on Thaharah

The increase in sipuisilam understanding of shalat is also very significant, as can be seen in Diagram 2 below.
The data in Diagram 1 and Diagram 2 indicate that the training is a significant empowerment program for increasing understanding of Islamic values for sipuisilam on Bumi Sikerei. The previous data in Diagram 1 and Diagram 2 above shows that some of the younger generation of sipuisilam are still at the level of shada anand make Ise Islam their religion of choice. On the other hand, Diagram 1 and Diagram 2 also show an increase in understanding of puisilam which indicates that the young generation of sipuisilam has the will to learn and practice Islamic teachings as stated by Wirman & Ilham (2019). These results also prove the achievements of the second stage as part of community service in Bumi rei.

Given the high mobility, the opportunities for the young Sipuisilam generation to experience wider and unlimited contact. Therefore, mentoring as a follow-up step to this community service program is an urgency in making it easier and stronger for them to implement Islamic sharia in their family environment, some of whom are still non-Muslim, in addition to mingling with Muslims in their neighborhood and school. As a minority group, sipuisilam who are reverts to Islam are still vulnerable in carrying out their social and religious life. The same thing was also stated by Herman Peri, Assistant II for Economic Development and People's Welfare for the Padang City in Indrawati (2018) at the opening of religious training and guidance, stating that training for reverts needs to be improved, otherwise we are worried that converts will return to their old beliefs. This is in line the real situation in Bumi Sikerei where religions are not yet functional as the main ethnic identities (Delfi, 2012 & 2013; Nelmaya, 2021; Wirman et al., 2021). The results of implementing such community service are also recommendations by A’yun & Anan (2019) in the activities of instilling Islamic values carried out among Chinese converts at PITI Surabaya which include the values of faith (iman), worships (ibadah) and morals (akhlak).

The above formulation is in line with the statement put forward by Sulaiman (2020) that religious guidance for converts needs to be carried out as has been implemented at the Darul Ulum Islamic boarding school in fostering the religion of the Sikakap village community by sending Ramadhan taraweh prayer imams to various mosques and prayer rooms throughout the Mentawai Islands. The need for assistance to the Mentawai community as a follow-up to training was also stated by Erwin (2015). The need for mentoring systematically, consistently,
and disciplined in sipuisilam is also a recommendation for research results from Riskiyah, Ike & Muzammil (2020) by emphasizing the importance of supervision and guidance from teachers and or dormitory coaches as efforts to continue to the tahalli stage (filling soul which has been emptied) and turn to the goodness and fear of the punishment of Allah SWT.

The increasing understanding of Islamic values has increased the sipuisilam awareness in the practicing daily worships, especially in carrying out mandatory prayers five times a day. The awareness indicator can be proven through the results of the evaluation conducted by the tutors related to the implementation of prayer where the sipuisilam has often performed prayers on time and that sipuisilam conveyed regret for their negligence. Most of the younger generation of sipuisilam that take part in training and the assistance have made mandatory prayers a priority in their daily activities. This is in line with the meaning of the value mentioned by Mulyana (2004) who mentions that the value is a belief that makes a person act based on one choice.

Conclusion
This community service program is very meaningful for young generation of sipuisilam. Through this program, the knowledge and the understanding of sipuisilam can be increased from fair to good, even in the cognitive domain has reached very good. In accordance with the evaluation results, both the theme of Thaharah and Shalat, the achievement of sipuisilam can be classified into three groups: 1) groups that are still in the conceptual recognition stage (fair category); 2) groups that begin to understand (good category); and 3) groups in stages begin to enrich insight (very good category). Nevertheless, as a minority group in Bumi Sikerei, sipuisilam really needs sustainable training and assistance in increasing knowledge and understanding and practice of Islamic teachings to live their future lives on Bumi Sikerei.

Acknowledgment
We are sincere thanks to all informants and partners, especially to the tutors and assisted subjects, who have been pleased together to map and design the activities of devotion to carry out religious and community life in Bumi Sikerei. Thank you to the Chancellor through the Research and Community Service Institute of UIN Imam Bonjol who has given us trust and budget to conduct the community service so that it can enrich and inspire the team's moral responsibilities as academicians with religious cores.

References


