



## Perceived Seriousness and Perceived Benefit of Worshiping Behavior Among Muslims During the Covid-19 Pandemic in Central Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara

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### ABSTRACT

**Background:** Through the Ministry of Religion, the Indonesian government appealed to all Muslims to worship at home during the Holy Month of Ramadan. The government aims to minimize the risk of transmitting the SARS-CoV-2 virus that causes Covid-19. The rise in the Covid-19 cases and the government's appeal in this regard has provided a variety of perceptions within society.

**Purpose:** This study was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic to see the relationship between perceived seriousness and benefits with Muslim worship behaviors.

**Methods:** This study used a cross-sectional survey and conducted in Central Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara. A total of 43 Muslims was selected using convenience sampling. The independent variables were perceived as seriousness and benefit. The dependent variable was worship behavior. Data were collected using a questionnaire. The data were analyzed using Chi-Square.

**Results:** In Central Lombok, a total of 43 Muslims had perceived seriousness (83.37%) and perceived benefit (86.05%). During the Covid-19 pandemic, a total of 36 people (83.72%) were self-reported worship at home. The perceived seriousness was not statistically related to worship behavior at home during the Covid-19 pandemic ( $p = 0.811$ ), while the perception of benefit was statistically associated with worship behavior at home during the Covid-19 pandemic ( $p < 0.001$ ).

**Conclusion:** Perceived benefit relate to the Muslims' decision to worship at home during the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Keywords:** Perceived seriousness, perceived benefits, worship, muslims, covid-19

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### BACKGROUND

Arnout et al. (2020) said the spread of Coronavirus (Covid-19) as a result of its rapid spread and the rise in the number of infections and the number of deaths in all countries of the world was among the events witnessed in 2020. As a result, the Director-General of the World Health Organization declared on 11 March 2020 that Covid-19 represents pandemic. Given the severity of the Corona Pandemic (Covid-19) outcome, countries had to step up their efforts to deal with this pandemic and put plans to handle the crisis to resolve its severe economic, health, educational, and social implications.

The pandemic is not the government's fault. It is a global catastrophe. It is clear how religious groups have a preventive commitment through public religious education.



Compared to other public places, places of worship are less likely to become epicenters of the transmission of the virus. The Covid-19 pandemic has brought huge costs to communities across the globe. A pandemic of this magnitude could potentially change our society for years to come, particularly if it affects our entrenched values and beliefs. It could have influenced ideals such as populism, nationalism, etc. (Coyle & Holt, 2020).

The Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) has real potential to form narratives that enable Islamic communities in Indonesia to obey those protection 'dakwah' (imperatives). At a time of peril when 'social isolation' has been promoted and sounded like an act against norms, MUI has tried to implement new imperatives aimed at alleviating the spread of Covid-19. The MUI Fatwa Board issued fatwa No. 14 of 2020 clarified the introduction of worship in the pandemic situation of Covid-19 to ensure protection and prevent the spread of disease among Muslims. MUI further bans acts that cause fear or harm to the public, such as buying up and storing necessities, including protective masks. The MUI fatwa also notes that people who have been exposed to SARS-CoV2 must be quarantined so that they do not affect others. Those who have been exposed to the virus will replace Friday Prayers with Zuhr prayers in their respective residences. For the control of bodies exposed to Covid-19, the MUI stipulates that bathing and caving must comply with the medical guidelines and be carried out by the competent authorities with due regard to the requirements of the Shari'a. In the meantime, burials need to meet regular procedures (MUI, 2020). This study was conducted during the Covid-19 pandemic to see the relationship between perceived seriousness and benefits with Muslim worship behaviors.

## SUBJECT AND METHOD

### Study Design

This was a cross-sectional survey study conducted in Central Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara. 43 Muslim people included using convince sampling. In this cross-sectional survey, a self-administrated questionnaire was distributed in Central Lombok Regency. The questionnaire was distributed using Google Form.

### Study Variables

The independent variables were perceived as seriousness and benefit. The dependent variable was worship behavior.

### Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using univariate and bivariate with the Chi-square test. The perceived seriousness and benefit were provided with a positive and negative outcome, and worship behavior was defined by inside or outside the house.

### Research Ethics

Research ethics includes the approval sheet, anonymity, confidentiality, and ethical eligibility. Ethical feasibility in this study comes from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Medicine, Al-Azhar Islamic University Mataram, number: 18 / EC / FK-06 / UNIZAR / V / 2020.

## RESULTS

The total number of study subjects was 43. Most of the subjects were female (67.44%) had positively perceived severity (65.19%), had positive perceived behaviors (71.69%), and worship behavior outside the home (53.56%) (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Study Subject Characteristics

Characteristics	n	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	14	32.56
Female	29	67.44
<b>Perceived Severity</b>		
Negative	134	34.81
Positive	251	65.19
<b>Perceived Benefits</b>		
Negative	109	28.31
Positive	276	71.69
<b>Worship Behavior</b>		
At home	168	42.64
Outside	217	53.36

**Table 2.** The Results of Bivariate Analysis

Table 2: The Results of Bivariate Analysis							
Variables	Category	Worship Behavior				OR	p-value
		At home		Outside			
		n	%	n	%		
Perceived Seriousness	Negative	1	20.00	4	80.00	0.05	0.811
	Positive	6	15.79	32	84.21		

**Table 3.** The Results of Bivariate Analysis

Table 3: The Results of Bivariate Analysis							
Variables	Category	Worship Behavior				OR	p-value
		At home		Outside			
		n	%	n	%		
Perceived Benefits	Negative	4	66.67	2	33.33	12.98	<0.001
	Positive	3	8.11	34	91.89		

The results of the Chi-square test (Table 2) showed a none significant relationship between the perceived seriousness and worship behavior (OR= 0.05; p=0.811). While in Table 3, the study reported that a significant benefit between the perceived seriousness and worship behavior (OR= 12.98; <0.001).



## DISCUSSION

The health belief model assumes that positive factors increase pro-health activity while negative factors reduce or hinder pro-health behaviors (Grosser, 1982). Thus, to adopt a health care behavior and/or avoid risks to diseases, individuals must: (1) believe that they are susceptible to the disease; (2) believe that the disease will have a negative impact, at least moderately, on their lives; (3) believe that the adoption of certain behaviors is indeed beneficial in reducing their susceptibility or, if they already have it, their severity; (4) overlap important psychological barriers (Kim et al., 2012; Rosenstock, 1974; Sayegh & Knight, 2013).

Perceived benefits of Covid-19 activities linked to public understanding of advantages such as safe adherence to quarantine through spending time with family members, or quality time spent alone to maintain hobby or habits and also considering to pray inside the home rather than prayer outside (Mukhtar, 2020). The presence of religious leaders and officials in Covid-19 is contradictory and unequal. Some people indicated that although religious leaders were engaged initially, this has decreased after the introduction of the necessary and crucial restrictions of Covid-19 (Coyle & Holt, 2020).

Muslim people in West Nusa Tenggara need to reduce the perceived barriers. Exploring ways to reduce or remove perceived barriers helps to overcome human, professional, cultural, financial, and vocational barriers (Mukhtar, 2020). Islamic advice and finding care are not viewed as being at odds with each other. People agree that physicians should be consulted on the prevention and treatment of Covid-19. However, most, if not all, claim that the virus does not have a simple medical "cure" is proof that Covid-19 is a punishment sent by Allah to test them and their piety (Coyle & Holt, 2020).

All participants expressed the significance of being able to maintain the religious observance of Ramadan and Eid as important, as many feel that their ability to fulfill their religious obligations at this period affects their susceptibility to the virus. However, the majority of consultations identified that the current restrictions would impact their ability to observe these practices as normal, with some being more open to necessary alteration than others. In a study, Coyle & Holt (2020) reported the same problem, Muslims people said that being unable to comply with their religious responsibilities during Ramadan and Eid completely would be a big source of stress for the group.

Governments at various levels should plan and manage their crisis and risk communication policy by predicting not only the proliferation of information in social media but also the development of a mechanism in which pro-government and anti-government hoaxes can be minimized. Transparency is crucial to controlling the pandemic as it provides an environment in which infected individuals can be easily diagnosed and handled promptly. Central and local governments must build an integrated plan for crisis and risk communication (Seeger, 2006) that allows people to be aware of their worship behavior to reduce the spread of the Covid-19 virus.

## CONCLUSION

The government's goal is to reduce the risk of transmission of the SARS-CoV-2 virus triggered by Covid-19. The increase in the Covid-19 cases and the government's appeal in this regard have given rise to a variety of perceptions within Muslim society. This study concludes that perceived benefit relates to the Muslims' decision to worship at home during the Covid-19 pandemic.



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## **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

There is no conflict of interest in this study.

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