

EXPERIENCES AND MOTIVATION IN HIZIB TARIQA RITUAL IN SASAK TRIBE LOMBOK INDONESIA

Abdul Rasyad

Lecturer Department: History Education
College/University: Universitas Hamzanwadi
rasyad.iis@hamzanwadi.ac.id
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9552-1567>

Ahmad Tohri

Lecturer Department: Sociology Education
College/University: Universitas Hamzanwadi
tohri@hamzanwadi.ac.id
<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4649-9719>

Abdul Latif

Lecturer Department: Sociology Education
College/University: Universitas Hamzanwadi
latif.hamzanwadi@gmail.com
<https://orcid.org/0009-0005-0672-2252>

Hasanuddin Chaer

Lecturer Department: Indonesian language and literature education
College/University: Universitas Hamzanwadi
hasanuddin_chaer@unram.ac.id
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8057-2137>

Hasan Basri

Lecturer University: Universitas Hamzanwadi
hasanbasri@hamzanwadi.ac.id
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2402-2795>

Isyaku Hassan

Lecturer University: Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin
isyakuhassan@unisza.edu.my
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8260-2894>

ABSTRACT

The role of the Tariqa in Islam propagation is highly significant, particularly in Lombok Island, West Nusa Tenggara, Indonesia. Sufism teaching is also known as tariqa teachings in Lombok Island. Hizib Tariqa is the largest Tariqa in the Sasak tribe Lombok. The role of the Hizib tariqa is gigantic in religious and social changes. This research aims to fathom the ritual experience gained by Hizib Tariqa followers and the motivation driven the Tariqa to stay afloat until today. The research method employed is qualitative, using phenomenological and ethnographical approaches. This study's result obtains Hizib tariqa ritual experience for the followers to feel a peaceful heart and mind, strengthen kinship and fraternity ties among the Lombok community in general, and as a forum or media to explore religious knowledge through congregation or lectures by Ustaz or Tuan Guru. Also, the most important motivation is getting closer to Allah SWT and increasing faith and piety. Therefore, this combination of experience and motivation has continued the Hizib tariqa rituals.

Keyword : Tariqa; Hizib; Experiences; motivation; Sasak Tribe



INTRODUCTION

West Nusa Tenggara province has two main islands. The two islands are Lombok and Sumbawa. The Sasak tribe community is the majority inhabitant of Lombok Island and follows Islam teachings (Kumbara, 2008). The history of the propagation of Islam teachings on Lombok Island has been estimated in the 15th and 16th centuries AD. Islam entered Lombok brought by *Sunan Prapen* (Budiarto et al., 2016). The entry of Islam into Lombok society through da'wah and Sufism or tariqa media is perceived as the practice of teaching the indigenous mystical field (Smith, 2021). Da'wah and tariqa media tend to follow the culture as religion is one of its dimensions of it (Kukić, 2023; Solagberu, 2012). Sufi links to spirituality and minds (Ahmad, 2019; Alyona et al., 2016; Harel et al., 2021; Kurniawan et al., 2021), which purposely connects to the local customs of the Lombok people so that Islam is easily embraced (Irawan, 2017; Irawan, 2022).

The other da'wah media is through commerce or trade. Many Ulama or Tuan Guru widely use this trading practice in disseminating Islam in Lombok. Direct contact and communication made the relationship between the Lombok people and Islamic propagators well-received and developed until now (Sunderlin et al., 2001; Suwito et al., 2022). Tariqa teachings widely influence transformation, social-religious (Saeed et al., 2021), social-politics (Hassanali, 2010), and particularly Lombok society. Sasak tribe people commonly call Sufism-practicing people with tariqa followers. The role of Sufism teachings is highly influential on the socio-religious life of the island in particular and Indonesia in general (Irawan and Nurjannah, 2016). Several studies on Tariqa have been conducted in Indonesia, including the origins of tariqa teachings (Van Brunessen, 1994), the role of Tariqa in the rise of the Indonesian state (Howell, 2001), tariqa teachings' kinds or models from Muhammadiyah personage (Biyanto, 2017), and research on tariqa teachings from Tuan Guru on social change on Lombok island (Fahrorrozi, 2018). Also, there is research related to tariqa teachings in religious and cultural dialectics phenomenon of the Muslim communities in Lombok and the role of community elites in socio-religious change (Mutawali, 2016; Burhanudin, 2012; Jamaluddin, 2011).

One may gain spiritual experience by performing religious rituals. Religious tourism activities provide a significant spiritual experience in the tourism process or afterwards. Pilgrimage to sacred places can offer a religious experience (Griffiths,



2011). Visiting religious tourism sites provides a unique impression for pilgrims. Religious tourists are usually looking for sacred places to visit. They are coming to a holy place to achieve serenity and experience that they can live on and comprehend. In addition to religious experience influence, religious tourism activities can affect economic, cultural, and spiritual aspects (Moufahim & Lichrou, 2019). The interaction among pilgrims to sacred or religious places provides a memorable experience. People who visit these locations have the same intention and desire to visit holy or religious sites. The similarity of purpose and mission creates the proximity between religious tourism visitors (Oslen, 2010). Many studies have discussed motivation in visiting holy places and performing ritual activities. The holy places tourists, apart from visiting holy sites, also perform sacred rituals. This sacred ritual is motivated by each visitor's religious motivation or belief (Cohen, 2003; Finney, 2009). There are also visitors to holy or sacred places inspired to travel or to sightsee to enjoy the scenery. Usually, the motivation only for travelling is secular people. Likewise, visitors unsure about the merit or privilege of a sacred place typically go for a stroll and eliminate their worries (Fleischer, 2000). Some types of visitors to holy places include differences in visitor behaviour due to their motivations, changes in behaviour before and after visiting sacred sites, and differences in experiences gained in visiting holy places. (Hughes, 2013; Collins-Kreiner, 2018)

The Sasak tribe is the largest tribe on Lombok Island. This tribe is predominantly Muslim and is the most significant part of the Nahdatul Wathan Diniyah Islamiyah organizational group (NWDI) founded by Hamzanwadi (Bahtiar et al., 2020). The NWDI organization has a congregation known as the Hizib Tariqa, which is very interesting to study. Since ancient times, this Tariqa has been recited once a week or once a month by its followers and the Sasak people. Research on experience and motivation in performing Hizib tariqa ritual activities is highly interesting. Thus, this research wants to examine the experience of participating in the Hizib tariqa ritual and the participants' or followers' motivation so that it can continue until now.

METHOD

Research design

This research of Hizib Tariqa Nahdlatul Wathan is qualitative research with an ethnographic-phenomenological approach. Phenomenological studies generally



examine how individuals or groups subjectively experience their own lives. This study explains the precise essence of a social phenomenon and how meaning is explained in individual and group experiences, such as the experience of reciting Hizib Nahdlatul Wathan and the motivation for its engagement. Ethnography is a socio-cultural method that can help reveal the facts of the rare phenomenon of ritual experience Hizib Tariqa Nahdlatul Wathan lasted for almost a century on Lombok Island, West Nusa Tenggara. Phenomenology is a method of explaining phenomena and their meaning for individuals by conducting interviews with several participants. The phenomenological database clarifies natural phenomena originating from real everyday life. This ethnographic-phenomenological study aims to explore the deepest awareness of subjects about an event of the congregation's experience reciting the Hizib Tariqa Nahdlatul Wathan, how the meaning of reading Hizib Nahdlatul Wathan for them, and their motivation to follow collective religious rituals.

Participants and data collection

This study recruited six informants using purposive sampling to answer the research questions. The selection of informants is purposive, meaning that data representation can be accounted for because informants are people who fully understand the phenomenon of Hizib Tariqa Nahdlatul Wathan, experience the ritual of reading Hizib Tariqa Nahdlatul Wathan and can decipher the motivations that drive them to be involved. An informant is a piece of purposive information provided because not everyone understands the phenomenon under study clearly and in detail. A total of three congregations were randomly selected to represent the Hizib Tariqa Nahdlatul wathan congregation, who would tell the experience of reading Hizib Nahdlatul wathan and their motivations for engaging in the religious ritual. Next, three people are chosen from the Tuan Guru—the one who teaches the essence of Hizib Tariqa Nahdlatul Wathan; One of them is the Coordinator of Hizib Tariqa Nahdlatul Wathan.

This research was conducted on Sasak Muslim organizations on the island of Lombok, West Nusa Tenggara province. This study conducted several stages in data collection. First, we conducted observation-participants at the activities and ritual locations of the Hizib Tariqa to see firsthand how the congregation procession participated in the ritual of reading the Hizib Tariqa Nahdlatul Wathan. Second, we conducted in-depth interviews with several Hizib Tariqa figures, such as *Ustaz* (AS),



Tuan Guru (TG), followers (FL), and people involved in the ritual process of the Hizib Tariqa as well as focus group discussions with the congregation of Hizib Tariqa Nahdlatul Wathan. Third, this study documents the routine of ritual activities from beginning to end and examines documents of Hizib Tariqa Nahdlatul Wathan ritual activities since its establishment. Documentation in the form of images and recordings following research needs. This phenomenological study took data directly from people involved in such activities (Gall et al., 2003; Miles et al., 2014). To record verbal data from the informants' accounts, a smartphone recording and a list of questions were prepared. The interviews were conducted for an average of 30 minutes, with informants to be transcribed as finding data.

Data Analysis

The phenomenological method is applied to help the analysis process in this study. Once data is collected from all sources, we analyze the data thoroughly. At this stage, the data is encrypted according to the formulation of the problem statement. This research is on how to analyze experiences and motivations in Hizib Tariqa Nahdlatul wathan ritual activities. Then, we group the data according to the research formulation by providing a coding process. We conduct thorough examination and analysis of data from various sources; Tuan Guru, Ustaz, congregation and documents relevant to the ritual activities of Hizib Tariqa Nahdlatul Wathan. The data from the recording are told textually and descriptively. The images are edited and narrated, assisted by the Master Teachers to interpret the meaning of the images according to the context of the event with the object of study.

The study was done by four academics in collaboration across universities; three from Universitas Padjajaran and one from Universitas Hamzanwadi. The first author is the chairman responsible for conducting the research, preparing research plans and keeping contact with informants, as the research location is the domicile of the first researcher. The first and second authors are fully responsible for preparing instruments such as constructing blueprints for research questions and writing the results of the final research report with the other two authors. The third author is tasked with leading interviews about the experience of reciting Hizib Tariqa Nahdlatul Wathan and the congregation's motivation to participate in the ritual, analyzing photos of documents assisted by informants and making important summaries the results of



focus group discussions with Hizib Tariqa Nahdaltul Wathan congregations. To avoid bias, the third and fourth authors coded to categorize the data and reduce unimportant data to record. In writing articles, the first, second, and third authors agreed to compile a writing framework from the results of data studies analyzed together, including checking the coding process, data reduction, data display, and correction of records that are not relevant to the research focus. The fourth author is responsible for preparing research administration, including choosing a publication venue, documenting research activities and assisting the translation process from the source language, Indonesian, to the target language, English.

Results and Discussions

The Hizib tariqa ritual is performed by the tariqa followers or Sasak Lombok residents in general. The time for carrying out the Hizib tariqa ritual is routinely once or twice a week, corresponding to people's agreement. The ritual activities of the Hizib congregation consist of reciting du'a' (invocation) and dhikr (remembrance). This du'a' and dhikr originate from Islamic teachings such as the Al-Qur'an, Al-hadith, and the prayers of scholars and pious people. Men attend this Hizib ritual activity, as shown in Figure 1, and women or female congregations, as shown in Figure 2 below. This activity can be done at any location or place, such as at home, the mosque, school/madrasah, or a meeting place, as shown in Figure 3. The experience and motivation behind the Hizib tariqa ritual are as a medium for fathoming religious knowledge, strengthening kinship and fraternity ties, and reassuring the heart and mind, as shown in Figure 4 below:





Figure 1. Hizib tariqa ritual activities from male congregations



Figure 2. Hizib tariqa ritual activities from female or women congregations



Figure 3. Place of Hizib tariqa ritual activities in the mosque

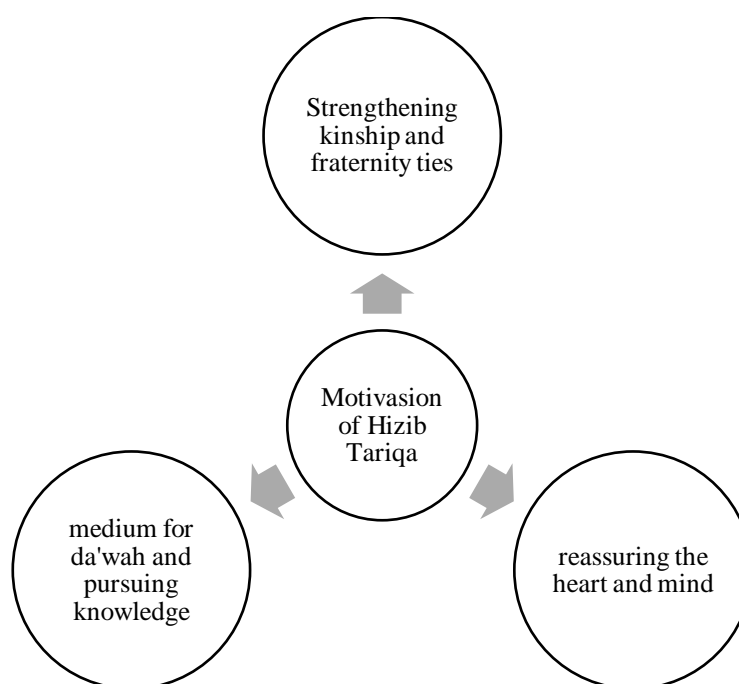


Figure 4. Hizib Tariqa ritual experience and motivation

1. MEDIUM FOR DA'WAH AND PURSUING KNOWLEDGE

Islam teaching obligates da'wah activity wherever and whenever they are. Da'wah is obligatory for every Muslim, both men and women. Da'wah's function is to educate people with Islam teaching and understanding. Proselytizing or da'wah activity

is regularly carried out amongst Nahdatul Wathan Diniyah Islamiah (NWDI) members. In Hizib tariqa ritual activities, proselytizing or da'wah activities are often carried out after or before Hizib recitation activities. As expressed by TG1:

"Hizib recitation activities are usually accompanied by lecture or da'wah activities. This lecture or preaching activity is to increase public understanding of Islam teachings. The lecture process can be more lively and unified by congregating NWDI members and the surrounding community in one place."

The community around the village or NWDI members unite to make the recitation process more lively and unified. This lecture usually addresses material that is commonly practised by the local community. Among the standard material is related to salah, zakat, hajj pilgrimage, fasting, and so on. These basic Islamic materials are constantly reminded to the public to be understood and practised. As expressed by TG2:

"This routine lecture congregation is usually inserted with Hizib recitation activities. The lecture material is commonly taught about basic teachings in Islam. Among others are salah, zakat, hajj pilgrimage, fasting, Thoharah, and other Fiqh pieces of knowledge. The material addressed is thematic or conforms to the latest theme encountered by people."

The Hizib committee usually selects the lecturer. The chosen speaker is Ustaz or Tuan Guru, with experience and expertise in delivering a speech. The favoured Tuan Guru is meant that the Hizib participants or congregation can enjoy the sermon or lecture in a pleasant and happy atmosphere. As expressed by the TG3:

"People here are delighted and enjoy when they attend the lecture. It is because, with this lecture, their knowledge becomes enlightened. They are free to ask a question about their problems in religion. The committee brought Ustaz or Tuan Guru as the preacher or lecturer with good experience and expertise in Islam. Thus, people attending this lecture activity may improve their understanding of religion after leaving Hizib and the lecture activity."

2. STRENGTHENING KINSHIP AND FRATERNITY TIES

This Hizib recitation activity invites all people around the village, generally and notably the citizens or members of the Nahdatul Wathan Diniyah Islamiah organization. This invitation is usually addressed in every praying room or mosque after the obligatory salah. Sometimes, they address invitations right after the previous Hizib activity. The community is enthusiastic and lively about attending Hizib training



because it is a gathering or meeting event among community or village residents. They would meet among residents and share various information, problems, and solutions in everyday life. As stated by US1:

"This Hizib recitation is a useful activity. With this activity, people can meet each other once a week or once a month. They can exchange thoughts, exchange information, and bring up solutions to their daily problems. So that, the solidarity and fraternity ties are always strong between them, they maintain their bonds."

Hizib recitation activities usually occur in prayer rooms, mosques, or houses of residents who held the event. The custom at the Hizib recitation event is to serve dishes, snacks, and meals for lunch/dinner. Food dishes are prepared by residents or hosts where the event takes place. This food dish is one of the main attractions for residents participating in the Hizib recitation event. When people eat the snacks together, they establish solidarity by chatting and discussing warmly among the residents. These fraternity ties will naturally be bonded when they talk to each other while eating snacks and drinking coffee. As stated by US2 follows:

"The interesting aspect of the Hizib recitation activity is that they serve food dishes. The food served for the congregation is a kind of starter snack and coffee drink before the Hizib recitation agenda and a meal after finishing reciting the Hizib. While they eat and drink coffee, the congregation or residents will enjoy friendship and solidarity among themselves. They would break the ice and fraternity during the event, before, and after the Hizib recitation."

Many community members rarely meet fellow citizens or neighbours because they have busy lives. This Hizib recitation activity is an opportunity to meet with neighbours and community members in a village. Hizib recitation activities are also often part of family events that hold the activity, such as ceremonial feasts. The ceremonial feast or thanksgiving activities include child circumcision, child aqiqah, wedding ceremony, hajj pilgrimage, etc. With this ceremonial feast, the community members and families gather for the ceremony and combine it with the Hizib recitation. As stated by US3:

"Hizib recitation is often a series of ceremonial feast activities to address gratitude to Allah for the community. The ceremonial feast activities celebrated are wedding ceremonies, aqiqah, circumcision, etc. Assembling Hizib recitation in ceremonial feasts serves as a medium or Wasilah for meeting neighbours, family, and residents around the same village. So that the atmosphere of solidarity and kinship continues".



3. REASSURING THE HEART AND MIND

The heart and mind are gifts and grace from the Supreme Creator of Allah SWT. This heart and mind will feel happiness, joy, sorrow, disappointment, etc. Heart and mind make life full of peace and serenity. A person's mind and heart will be calm when he does good deeds and is righteous. This is an incomparable blessing in human life. Conversely, if human behaviour is filled with wrong thoughts and behaviour, the heart and mind will be chaotic and continue to be restless. Among the ways that can be used to get rid of a restless mind and heart is by performing dhikr or remembering Allah SWT. Hizib recitation activity is a form of dhikr so that the heart's mind remains calm. As expressed by TG4:

"This Hizib recitation activity is a form of dhikr or remembering Allah the Creator. Because in Hizib recitals, many du'a' and practices calm the heart and mind. Feelings of worry and anxiety in daily life can be removed in one way, that is, by reciting this Hizib. This is one of the promises of Allah SWT (the most Glorified and Exalted) that whoever remembers Allah SWT. Then in his heart will be given peace and tranquillity".

In addition to reassuring the heart and mind, the Hizib recital also contains du'a' and dhikr recitation to make life easier. Apart from ease and fluency in carrying out life, reciting Hizib has many invocations for health, patience, sincerity, honesty, and endeavouring for truth. And the most important thing is to uphold the Islamic teachings of *Ahlussunnah Waljamaah* through the NWDI organization. As expressed by FL1:

"The essence of Hizib recitation is that we humbly ask Allah the Creator to keep us healthy; all matters in daily life are made easy for us. We always say the invocation in Hizib is to continue to uphold the Islamic teachings of Ahlussunnah Wal Jamaah through NWDI. And the top of our invocation is to remain faithful and pious Muslims wherever we are."

Hizib recitation activities have a blessing impact on life for reciters and those who practice their contents. With the blessings of this life, the heart and mind will be more serene and peaceful. The word blessing has the meaning of *al-Barakah*, which means an increase in goodness. This blessing is marked by an increased sense of kinship, a sense of togetherness, an increased sense of affection by giving food to fellow residents, providing each other with information and solutions to life's problems, and so on. As expressed by FL2:



"My experience in reciting Hizib is that it brings blessing in life both in life and especially hereafter. There are many kinds of blessings one can perceive by practising Hizib. Among others is an increased sense of kinship, adding more fraternity ties, increasing sustenance, and, most importantly, increasing faith and piety. This blessing in life is the key to a happy life in this world and hereafter for Muslims in general, particularly for NWDI followers."

The religious ritual activity moulds the visitors' spiritual experience (Collin, 2014). Whitehouse (2002) says the visitors' impression of religious ritual is a sense of belonging in performing such activities. Woosnam et al. (2009) have revealed the concept of shared faith in performing religious ritual activities. This shared faith moulding experience in carrying out the moral truth. A high level of faith has a crucial role for visitors. With shared faith, religious rituals can continue to be practised (Aleshinloye et al., 2018).

The visitors in sacred rituals meet and greet each other. The visitors' experience has the same ties to their belief in ritual events so that they instantly become familiar with and blend in. This shared faith increased solidarity among visitors (Maruyama et al., 2016). The shared faith gives the visitors the experience of togetherness. The experience of togetherness is accompanied by religious enthusiasm for visiting religious places and their ritual events (Lee et al., 2020).

4. MOTIVATION FOR RECITING HIZIB TARIQA

The motivation for conducting the Hizib tariqa recitation activity is to obtain the grace of Allah SWT. One way to derive Allah SWT's grace is by performing an *Ihsan* deed or excellence. The act of *Ihsan* is performing worship to Allah SWT perfectly and feeling that Allah SWT always watches them wherever and whenever they do. As expressed in the word of Allah SWT in *Surah Al-A'raf* [7]:56: *"And cause not corruption upon the earth after its reformation. And invoke Him in fear (of not being accepted) and aspiration (being granted). Indeed, the mercy of Allah is near to the doers of good."*. The Hizib tariqa recitation contains many du'a' taken from the Al-Qur'an, Al-hadith, the prayers of the Prophet's companions, and pious Ulema. As stated by FL3:

"Hizib recitation activities are a form of getting the Grace and Rida (Approval) of Allah SWT. Another goal is the attainment of mercy or compassion among fellow citizens by giving each other food or Sadaqah. Residents can help between the poor and the rich, advise each other in kindness, strengthen fraternity and kinship ties, impart comprehension, or share knowledge in



lectures or da'wah. This is a form of Hizib tariqa recitation activity which can bring the grace of Allah SWT".

Hizib tariqa recitation activities are mostly filled with prayers and dhikr. The activity of invocation to Allah SWT by doing *Tawassul* through the names of Allah SWT. *Tawassul* means a prayer invocation through a *Wasilah* or intermediary. The tradition of Indonesian people calls prayer requests with *Tawasulan*. Meanwhile, according to Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), *Tawassul* is an activity to get closer to the Creator. *Tawassul* can also be interpreted as a form of du'a' or prayer to Allah SWT through the intermediary of a *Wali* Allah or a pious person who has died and is close to Allah SWT. As stated by FL4:

"Hizib tariqa recitation contains largely about du'a' and dhikr that we say through the process of Tawassul. We carry out the Tawassul process through the founders of NWDI and the pious Wali or Sage of Allah SWT. With this Tawassul process, it is hoped that all wishes or invocations of the host can be granted. And the most important Tawasul is to the noble Prophet and Companions. This is one form of motivation in reading Hizib tariqa".

Every Muslim performing God's command is a form of getting closer to the Creator. One of the ways is to recite the Hizib tariqa recitation routine. By bringing oneself closer to Him, it will be easy to reach His love. Love for Him is to be a servant who always prays and asks Him. As contained in Surah Ali Imran [03]:31: "Say: "If ye do love Allah, Follow me: Allah will love you and forgive you your sins: For Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful."

"One form of worship that Allah likes is du'a' and dhikr. Prayers and remembrance are mostly done when reciting Hizib tariqa. Therefore, this Hizib reading activity motivated me to get closer to Allah SWT. The more one does many dhikr and prayer, and he will be loved. Because we are loved, all the deeds of worship can be our provision later in the afterlife."

The tradition of reciting the Hizib tariqa is long-practised in the NWDI organization. The founder of the NWDI organization has carried out this tradition since its establishment. The Hizib tariqa recitation contains many prayers and remembrances. Prayers and dhikr are invoked so that all wishes and prayers are granted through *Tawassul* to the Prophets, Companions of the Prophet, and God's Sages. The primary motivation in this tradition is to get closer to Allah SWT, hoping for the mercy and blessing of Allah SWT. The influence of motivation greatly determines the continuity of a tribal tradition, religious or cultural activity. Preserving local culture with strong motivation can increase the love for cultural traditions (Iswatiningsih, 2019). The religious reason is strongly related to how to follow the habits of the Prophet with noble morals in educating the public through religious activities and instilling morality



starting to be taught in and outside of school from the very beginning (Ismail, 2020). Religious motivation influences society's moral and ethical behaviour, as conveyed by Anriani et al. (2022). His research findings indicate that the relationship between religious motivation and mental health dramatically influences people's behaviour.

Research on motivation and character building in the tradition of sowing coins in the Sasak tribe has been reported by Subki (2022). This tradition of sowing coins is a series of Aqiqah events or baby birth celebrations. The research result explains that the primary motivation in the sowing coins tradition is a form of gratitude from parents to the Creator for the birth of the baby or offspring. Meanwhile, the character values built are hard work, sharing, and strengthening kinship, especially among the Sasak people in Lombok. This character value and motivation makes the tradition of sowing coins continue today. The motivation for visiting sacred graves on Lombok Island has been reviewed by Sobry and Tety (2021). The Lombok Sasak community has performed the tradition of visiting the holy tomb since long ago. Generally, they pilgrimage to the sacred tomb before and after the hajj pilgrimage. Among the motivations is gratitude to Allah SWT because they were given the chance and opportunity to perform the hajj pilgrimage. One tradition of the Sasak community giving names to a newborn baby is the *Peraq Api* tradition, as studied by Nuruddin (2022). This tradition protects the developing baby and the mother from danger and disaster. This ritual is motivated to preserve cultural heritage and religion while giving the name to a newborn baby.

CONCLUSION

Hizib tariqa recitation is a routine ritual held by the Muslim community on Lombok Island. This common activity has been carried out since the establishment of the NWDI organization today. This Hizib tariqa ritual activity is regularly performed when residents hold a ceremonial feast/thanksgiving or an event. All people with various backgrounds may attend this activity, from students to ordinary people. Ustaz, Tuan Guru, and et cetera. The host may utilize any place to host the activity, such as a school or madrasah, meeting building, etc. The research result indicates that the experience and motivation that makes Hizib tariqa exist today. The knowledge gained in performing the Hizib tariqa ritual is reassuring the heart and mind of the followers of Hizib tariqa, strengthening kinship and fraternity ties between Hizib tariqa members



and Lombok people, and most importantly, they gain knowledge through a lecture by Ustaz or Tuan Guru before and after conducting Hizib ritual. And the primary motivation in making the Hizib tariqa ritual continue to be practised is to get closer to Allah SWT and *Wasilah* to fasten du'a' being granted and increase faith and piety for Hizib tariqa followers.

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