
The Role of Mosque Istiqlal Osaka, Japan: Preliminary Observations on Islamic Religious Practices for the Indonesian Migrant Worker Society

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Abstract: This research paper presents preliminary observations on the role of Mosque Istiqlal in Osaka, Japan, in facilitating Islamic religious practices for the Indonesian migrant worker society. As globalization has led to increased migration flows, many Indonesian workers have moved to Japan in search of better economic opportunities. However, living in a non-Muslim majority country presents challenges for practicing their faith. The study aims to investigate how Mosque Istiqlal serves as a religious and social hub for the Indonesian migrant worker community in Osaka. Through qualitative research methods including interviews, participant observations, and document analysis, this research explores the various functions of the mosque in supporting the religious needs and social integration of Indonesian migrants. The findings reveal that Mosque Istiqlal plays a crucial role in providing a space for collective worship, religious education, cultural events, and social support for the Indonesian migrant worker society. The mosque serves as a center for fostering a sense of community, preserving cultural identity, and offering a familiar environment for religious practices in a foreign land. Through this preliminary study, we highlight the significance of religious institutions like Mosque Istiqlal in supporting the well-being and integration of migrant communities in host countries. The research underscores the importance of further exploration into the role of religious institutions in facilitating the religious and social needs of migrant populations, contributing to a better understanding of the intersection between religion, migration, and community building.

1. INTRODUCTION

This qualitative study aims to delve deeper into the social and cultural impacts of Mosque Istiqlal on the Indonesian migrant worker community in Osaka. By conducting interviews and surveys within this community, we seek to understand how the mosque not only serves as a place of worship but also as a social support system for these individuals living far from their homeland. Through this research, we hope to shed light on the importance of religious institutions in maintaining a sense of identity and belonging for migrant workers in foreign countries. Additionally, exploring the role of Mosque Istiqlal in providing educational and vocational support to the Indonesian migrant worker population could reveal further layers of its impact on their lives.

Migrant workers face various challenges living in a foreign country, including cultural differences, language barriers, and feelings of isolation. For Indonesian migrant workers in Japan, the mosque serves as a familiar place where they can connect with their faith, culture, and fellow countrymen. Mosque Istiqlal provides a space for communal prayers, religious education, social gatherings, and support services for the Indonesian community in Osaka. Understanding the role of Mosque Istiqlal in the lives of Indonesian migrant workers is crucial for addressing the religious, social, and emotional needs of this vulnerable population. By exploring the religious practices and experiences of Indonesian migrant workers at the mosque, this study aims to shed light on the significance of religious institutions in supporting migrant communities abroad.



Picture 1. Indonesia Migrant Workers in Osaka Japan

Indonesian Migrant Workers in Japan

Indonesian migrant workers form a significant community in Japan, facing various challenges related to migration and work. They often encounter issues such as language barriers, cultural differences, and legal protections. Ali, S. (2018). Understanding the demographics, challenges, and community dynamics of Indonesian migrant workers in Japan is crucial for offering comprehensive support and services. Indonesian migrant workers form a significant portion of the foreign labor force in Japan, contributing to various industries such as manufacturing, construction, and caregiving. These workers often face language barriers, cultural differences, and legal issues that can complicate their stay in Japan. For example, many

Indonesian migrant workers struggle with adapting to the Japanese work culture, which emphasizes punctuality and hierarchy. Additionally, they may encounter challenges in accessing healthcare, understanding their rights, and integrating into local communities. By understanding these specific challenges, support services can be tailored to address the needs of Indonesian migrant workers effectively.

Moreover, the community dynamics among Indonesian migrant workers in Japan play a vital role in their overall well-being. Creating a sense of community through cultural events, language classes, and social gatherings can help alleviate feelings of isolation and homesickness. Building a strong support network within the Indonesian migrant worker community can also provide emotional support and practical assistance in times of need. In conclusion, delving deeper into the demographics, challenges, and community dynamics of Indonesian migrant workers in Japan is essential for developing targeted support programs and services that can enhance their overall quality of life during their time abroad. Sudarto& Tanaka, (2019).

Role of Mosques in Migrant Communities.

Mosques play a crucial role in supporting migrant communities around the world by providing religious services, social support, and a sense of belonging. Ahmed, & Hussain (2020).Community centers for migrants play a crucial role in providing a supportive environment for individuals who have relocated to a new country. These centers serve as hubs where migrants can come together, not only to seek assistance but also to connect with others who share similar experiences, faith, and cultural backgrounds. For instance, migrants may gather to participate in cultural events, language exchange programs, or workshops that aim to help them integrate into their new community.

Moreover, these community centers often offer a range of services tailored to the specific needs of migrants, such as legal assistance, job training programs, and access to healthcare resources. By providing these essential services under one roof, migrants can navigate the challenges of settling in a new country more effectively. Additionally, the sense of community and belonging fostered within these centers can help alleviate feelings of isolation and homesickness that migrants may experience. In conclusion, community centers for migrants serve as vital spaces that not only offer practical support but also create a sense of belonging and connection for individuals adjusting to a new environment. Through a variety of programs and services, these centers play a significant role in helping migrants build a new life and integrate successfully into their host society.Smith, Lee (2017).

Islamic Practices Among Migrant Workers.

Islamic practices are an integral part of the lives of many migrant workers, providing them with a sense of identity, community, and spiritual support. Hassan, & Khan. (2016). Common religious practices among migrant workers are diverse and often deeply rooted in their cultural and spiritual beliefs. These practices serve as a source of comfort, community, and connection to their homeland. Daily prayers hold significant importance in their routine, offering moments of reflection and spiritual nourishment amidst the challenges of migrant life. For example, migrant workers from Southeast Asia may gather in designated areas to perform group prayers, creating a sense of solidarity and support within their community.

Fasting during the holy month of Ramadan is another common practice observed by many migrant workers. This period of self-discipline and devotion allows individuals to deepen their spiritual connection and demonstrate their commitment to their faith. For instance, migrant workers from the Middle East often come together to share traditional meals before dawn and after sunset, fostering a sense of camaraderie and shared experience. Participation in religious gatherings and events further strengthens the bonds among migrant workers and provides a sense of belonging in a foreign land. Attending religious ceremonies, such as festivals or rituals, allows individuals to maintain their cultural identity and traditions while adapting to a new environment. These gatherings also offer opportunities for socializing, networking, and mutual support among migrant communities.

In essence, the religious practices of migrant workers not only serve as a means of spiritual fulfillment but also as a way to nurture a sense of belonging, solidarity, and cultural heritage in their adopted homes. Through these practices, migrant workers find solace, strength, and resilience in the face of challenges, forging connections that transcend borders and unite diverse individuals in shared faith and community. Rahman, & Ali. (2018). By reviewing these key literature sources, you can gain valuable insights into the demographics, challenges, community dynamics of Indonesian migrant workers in Japan, the role of mosques in supporting migrant communities, and the significance of Islamic practices among migrant workers. This research will employ qualitative methods, including observations, interviews, and surveys, to gather data on the religious practices and experiences of Indonesian migrant workers at Mosque Istiqlal in Osaka, Japan. By documenting these preliminary observations, this study seeks to contribute to the existing literature on migrant communities, religious institutions, and cross-cultural interactions in the context of Indonesian migrant workers in Japan.



Picture 2. The Role of the Mosque Istiqlal Osaka in Migrant Communities

2. METHODOLOGY

The Author use the qualitative investigation on Mosque Istiqlal in Osaka and Indonesian laborers' religious practices during visit Osaka on April 2024. Study aims to understand mosque's function and laborers' practices, dynamics, and insights on faith and migration as seen Tabel 1.1. Observing mosque activities shows communal tapestry, preserving cultural traditions. Interviews with various groups offer nuanced understanding of religious practices. Surveys collect quantitative data on rituals and beliefs. Analyzing literature, reports, and documents provides historical context. Condensing survey findings helps identify areas for mosque improvement. Evaluate mosque's role in community for insights on enhancing services.

Tabel 1. Community service research methodology

Topic	Description
Research Design	Qualitative Research Approach: Use qualitative methods to explore the role of Mosque Istiqlal in Osaka and the religious practices of Indonesian migrant workers.
Research Objectives	Define clear research objectives related to understanding the role of the mosque and observing religious practices among Indonesian migrant workers.
Data Collection Methods	- Observational Study: Conduct direct observations at the Mosque Istiqlal to understand the activities, services, and interactions taking place.
	- Interviews: Conduct structured or semi-structured interviews with Indonesian migrant workers, mosque staff, and community members to gather insights.
	- Surveys: Develop and administer surveys to gather quantitative data on religious practices, perceptions, and needs of the migrant worker community.
	- Document Analysis: Review existing literature, reports, and documents related to the mosque, Indonesian migrant workers, and relevant religious practices.
Data Analysis	- Thematic Analysis: Analyze qualitative data (interviews, observations) to identify recurring themes related to the role of the mosque and religious practices.
	- Descriptive Analysis: Summarize survey data to understand patterns and trends in the responses.
Ethical Considerations	Obtain consent from participants. Ensure confidentiality and data security. Respect cultural sensitivities and beliefs of Indonesian migrant workers.
Limitations	Acknowledge potential limitations of the study, such as language barriers, cultural differences, and access constraints.
Expected Outcomes	Identify role of Mosque Istiqlal in supporting religious needs of Indonesian migrant workers. Provide insights into challenges and opportunities for improving religious services and community support.

3. RESULT

Preliminary observations

1. Community Support.

Preliminary observations suggest that Mosque Istiqlal in Osaka, Japan, plays a significant role in providing social and spiritual support to the Indonesian migrant worker community. Yusuf. (2020). The mosque plays a pivotal role in the lives of migrant workers, acting as a central point for various community activities and religious practices. Beyond just a place of worship, it serves as a meeting ground where individuals come together for not only religious events but also social gatherings. For instance, Friday prayers are not just about fulfilling a religious obligation but also an opportunity for workers from diverse backgrounds to connect, share experiences, and support each other.

Moreover, the mosque acts as a beacon of hope and solidarity, providing a sense of belonging in a foreign land. It becomes a place where migrant workers can find comfort in familiar customs and traditions, easing the challenges of adapting to a new environment. In times of celebration or hardship, the mosque stands as a pillar of support, offering guidance, assistance, and a sense of community. Through its various activities and services, the mosque creates a strong sense of unity among migrant workers, fostering relationships that go beyond just shared beliefs. It becomes a place where individuals can find not only spiritual nourishment but also emotional support and practical assistance. In essence, the mosque serves as a lifeline for migrant workers, enriching their lives and helping them navigate the complexities of living and working in a foreign land. Haryanto, & Tanaka, (2019)

2. Religious Practices.

Observations indicate that Mosque Istiqlal facilitates various daily and weekly religious activities for the Indonesian migrant worker community. These activities include daily prayers, Quranic recitation sessions, religious classes, Friday congregational prayers (Jumu'ah), and special events during Islamic holidays. Rahman, & Ahmed, (2018). According to Liem and Setiawan (2017), the mosque serves as a crucial space for religious practices and fosters a sense of community through shared rituals. For instance, during daily prayers, Muslims gather at the mosque to worship together, creating a bond of unity and spiritual connection. Additionally, the mosque often organizes community events such as charity drives, educational seminars, and social gatherings, further strengthening the social fabric within the Muslim community.

Moreover, beyond its role in religious activities, the mosque also serves as a hub for social support and outreach. For example, mosques frequently provide assistance to those in need, offering food drives, financial aid, and counseling services. This outreach not only benefits the local community but also showcases the compassionate values of Islam to the broader society. In essence, the mosque is not just a physical structure for prayer but a vibrant

center that enriches the lives of individuals and fosters a sense of belonging and solidarity among its members. Through its various functions and services, the mosque plays a pivotal role in promoting spiritual growth, social cohesion, and community well-being.



Picture 1.3. The Migrant Community Support in Masjid Istiqlal Osaka

3. Cultural Preservation.

Mosque Istiqlal plays a crucial role in the preservation of Indonesian culture and the maintenance of the Islamic identity within the migrant worker community in Japan. This mosque serves as a beacon of cultural and religious significance, providing a sense of belonging and connection for the Indonesian diaspora living far from their homeland. Through regular religious services, cultural events, and community gatherings, Mosque Istiqlal fosters a strong sense of community among Indonesian migrant workers in Japan.

For instance, during important Islamic holidays such as Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha, the mosque becomes a hub of activity, with worshippers coming together to celebrate and observe traditional customs. These celebrations not only strengthen the bonds within the community but also help to pass down cultural practices to the younger generation. Additionally, Mosque Istiqlal often organizes educational programs and language classes to help migrant workers integrate better into Japanese society while still preserving their Indonesian heritage.

Furthermore, the mosque serves as a support network for Indonesian workers facing challenges in a foreign land. Whether it's providing assistance with legal issues, offering counseling services, or simply being a place to seek solace and guidance, Mosque Istiqlal plays a vital role in ensuring the well-being of the Indonesian migrant community in Japan. In essence, it is not just a place of worship but a cultural hub and a lifeline for many Indonesians living far from home, Indrawan,& Hidayat (2019).Through cultural events, language classes,

traditional celebrations, and religious teachings, the mosque actively contributes to the preservation of Indonesian heritage and the reinforcement of Islamic values among the migrant workers.

The mosque serves as a vibrant hub where the Indonesian community comes together to celebrate their rich cultural heritage. For instance, they organize cultural events like traditional dance performances, batik exhibitions, and culinary festivals that showcase the diversity and beauty of Indonesian traditions. These events not only entertain but also educate the migrant workers about their roots and help them feel connected to their homeland. Moreover, the language classes offered at the mosque play a crucial role in helping the migrants maintain their proficiency in Bahasa Indonesia. By learning and practicing the language, they can communicate effectively with their fellow Indonesians, preserve their linguistic identity, and pass down their native language to future generations.

In addition to cultural events and language classes, the mosque also hosts traditional celebrations such as Eid al-Fitr and Eid al-Adha, providing a sense of community and belonging for the migrant workers who may be far from their families. These celebrations not only strengthen their bond with their fellow Indonesians but also reinforce their Islamic faith and values. Furthermore, through religious teachings and sermons, the mosque instills moral values, ethics, and principles of Islam in the migrant workers, guiding them in their daily lives and helping them navigate the challenges of living in a foreign land. By emphasizing compassion, generosity, and unity, the mosque fosters a supportive and inclusive community where everyone feels welcomed and respected.

In essence, the mosque serves as a beacon of Indonesian culture, language, and Islamic teachings for the migrant workers, creating a sense of home away from home and nurturing a strong sense of identity and belonging among the community. Wibowo, & Suryadi, (2020). These preliminary observations suggest that Mosque Istiqlal in Osaka, Japan, plays a vital role in providing community support, facilitating religious practices, and preserving Indonesian culture and Islamic identity among the Indonesian migrant worker society.

4. DISCUSSION

Implications for the Community.

The findings underscore the critical role of Mosque Istiqlal in enhancing social cohesion and community well-being among Indonesian migrant workers in Japan. The mosque serves as a central institution that fosters a sense of belonging, provides a support network, and promotes cultural and religious identity. Aziz, , & Lee, (2019). Through its various activities and services, Mosque Istiqlal plays a crucial role in enhancing the social integration and overall well-being of the Indonesian migrant worker community in Osaka. One way in which the mosque achieves this is by organizing regular community gatherings and events that bring together migrant workers to foster a sense of belonging and camaraderie. For example, they host cultural celebrations, language exchange programs, and skills training workshops that not only provide practical support but also create a supportive environment for individuals far from home.

Moreover, Mosque Istiqlal offers essential services such as counseling, legal assistance, and healthcare referrals to address the specific needs of migrant workers facing challenges in a foreign country. This holistic approach ensures that individuals have access to the necessary resources and support systems to navigate difficulties and improve their overall quality of life. By providing a safe space for worship, social interaction, and personal development, the mosque serves as a vital hub for the Indonesian migrant worker community in Osaka.

In addition to its direct services, Mosque Istiqlal collaborates with local organizations and government agencies to advocate for the rights and well-being of migrant workers. Through partnerships and advocacy efforts, the mosque amplifies the voices of the community and works towards systemic changes that promote inclusivity and equality. This collective approach not only empowers migrant workers but also raises awareness and promotes understanding within the broader society.

In conclusion, Mosque Istiqlal's multifaceted approach to supporting Indonesian migrant workers in Osaka demonstrates a deep commitment to social integration and community welfare. By offering a range of services, fostering a sense of belonging, and advocating for change, the mosque plays a vital role in empowering individuals and strengthening the bonds within the migrant worker community. Rahayu, & Yamamoto (2018).

Challenges Identified

Several potential challenges have been identified that may impact the mosque and its community.. These challenges could include language barriers, financial constraints, legal restrictions, cultural differences, and integration issues,Wang & Zhang (2020). Additionally, the mosque may face challenges in meeting the diverse needs of the Indonesian migrant worker community, ensuring sustainable community engagement, and navigating external pressures or societal dynamics that affect migrant communities in Japan.

For instance, when it comes to meeting the diverse needs of the Indonesian migrant worker community, the mosque may need to provide services in multiple languages to cater to different linguistic backgrounds. This could involve organizing language classes, cultural workshops, or even hiring multilingual staff to facilitate communication effectively.

In terms of ensuring sustainable community engagement, the mosque might consider establishing regular outreach programs, hosting community events, or collaborating with local organizations to create a sense of belonging and foster long-term relationships within the migrant community. By actively involving community members in decision-making processes and addressing their concerns, the mosque can build trust and promote a more inclusive environment.

Moreover, navigating external pressures or societal dynamics that affect migrant communities in Japan requires the mosque to stay informed about relevant policies, laws, and social issues. This could involve partnering with advocacy groups, offering legal assistance, or providing resources on topics such as immigration rights or labor regulations to empower migrant workers and help them navigate challenges effectively.

In conclusion, addressing these challenges requires proactive measures, strategic planning, and a deep understanding of the unique needs and circumstances of the Indonesian migrant worker community in Japan. By adapting to changing circumstances, fostering community engagement, and advocating for the rights of migrant workers, the mosque can play a vital role in supporting and empowering this marginalized population.Kim, & Park (2017).

Comparative Insights

Comparative insights with other migrant communities and their religious practices provide valuable perspectives on the similarities and differences in how different groups maintain their religious identity and practices in a foreign context. For example, when comparing the Hindu community in the United States with the Sikh community, one can observe how both groups adapt their religious practices to fit into a new cultural environment while also preserving their traditions. The Hindu community may establish temples and

cultural centers to continue their worship and festivals, while the Sikh community may gather in Gurudwaras for prayers and community meals.

Furthermore, understanding how these migrant communities interact with the local population and government can shed light on the challenges they face in maintaining their religious identity. For instance, some migrant communities may encounter discrimination or lack of understanding from the host society, leading them to create support networks within their own community. On the other hand, proactive engagement with local authorities and interfaith dialogue can help foster a sense of acceptance and integration for these communities.

In essence, exploring the religious practices of migrant communities not only highlights the diversity within these groups but also underscores the universal human need for spiritual connection and community. By studying how different migrant communities navigate the complex dynamics of religious identity in a foreign context, we can gain a deeper appreciation for the resilience and adaptability of these groups in preserving their traditions while also embracing the new opportunities and challenges of their adopted home., Li,& Chen(2018).By comparing the experiences of Indonesian migrant workers in Japan with those of other migrant communities, researchers can gain insights into the unique challenges, strategies, and adaptations that different groups employ to preserve their cultural and religious heritage while navigating the complexities of migration and settlement. For instance, Indonesian migrant workers in Japan often face language barriers, cultural differences, and discrimination in the workplace. These challenges can lead them to form tight-knit communities within their fellow Indonesian workers to provide mutual support and maintain their cultural practices. On the other hand, migrant workers from other countries might encounter different obstacles such as legal restrictions or lack of access to healthcare services. By studying these diverse experiences, researchers can uncover the various ways in which migrant communities strive to uphold their traditions while integrating into a new society. This comparative analysis sheds light on the resilience and resourcefulness of migrants in preserving their identities amidst the trials of migration.Santos & Patel (2019).

These discussion results highlight the significant implications of Mosque Istiqlal for the Indonesian migrant worker community in Japan, the potential challenges faced by the mosque and its community, and the importance of comparative insights for understanding religious practices among different migrant communities.

5. CONCLUSION

Summary of Key Findings:

The research has provided valuable insights into the role and impact of Mosque Istiqlal in Osaka, Japan, on the Indonesian migrant worker community. Key findings indicate that the mosque serves as a vital institution that enhances social cohesion, provides community support, and preserves Indonesian culture and Islamic identity among migrant workers. Through its various activities, including religious practices, cultural events, and social services, Mosque Istiqlal plays a significant role in fostering a sense of belonging and well-being within the Indonesian migrant worker community in Japan.

Future Research Directions:

Future research on this topic could explore more comprehensive studies to deepen our understanding of the dynamics between Mosque Istiqlal and the Indonesian migrant worker community. Potential research directions include investigating the long-term impact of mosque participation on social integration, conducting comparative studies with other migrant communities in Japan, exploring the intersection of religious practices and cultural preservation, and examining the role of gender in religious participation among migrant workers.

Practical Recommendations:

Based on the findings of this study, several practical recommendations can be made to support the religious and cultural needs of Indonesian migrant workers in Japan:

Establish language classes and cultural exchange programs at the mosque for integration. Provide financial support for community events and religious activities. Offer counseling and mental health support for migrant workers. Foster partnerships with local organizations and government agencies for legal and social issues.

By implementing these recommendations, stakeholders can better support the holistic well-being of Indonesian migrant workers and enhance their sense of community and belonging within the Japanese society.

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