

The economic vibrancy of muslims during ramadan

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ABSTRACT The month of Ramadan, which is a holy month for Muslims, has a significant impact on the economy in various countries with large Muslim populations. During this month, Muslims observe fasting from sunrise to sunset. These changes in routine and spiritual focus create several distinctive economic trends that recur every year. Several important aspects of economic activity in the month of Ramadan include food and beverage consumption, increased sales of food and clothing, the food service sector, changes in working hours, e-commerce, hospitality and food services, entrepreneurial innovation, etc. All of these aspects greatly influence the economy for the perpetrators. Ramadan brings complex changes in the economy from increased personal consumption to changes in social and commercial activities. Despite challenges such as reduced productivity in some sectors, this month also offers many economic opportunities, especially in retail, food and tourism. The atmosphere of the month of Ramadan seems to be the same because it is present every year, but if you examine it, there are always different phenomena. The unique phenomenon every Ramadan will bring out the creativity of business people. Several places around the world have prepared their routine agendas to welcome the holy month of Ramadan. But there are also those that are surprising. This means that business activities only occur in the month of Ramadan and will close after Ramadan is over. The economic impact on the communities and areas where entrepreneurs trade is that there is quite a large circulation of money and exchange of goods. Therefore, it is very interesting to research in more depth using qualitative methods, in order to obtain in-depth data. In fact, it is alleged that there has been an extraordinary increase as a result of the exchange and circulation of money.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Discussing the economy, especially during the month of Ramadan, inevitably involves conversations about business actors, business objects, Muslims, and potential commodities. Business actors will prepare all aspects related to business objects and needs, as well as all the materials that will be utilized. Furthermore, Ramadan, a month filled with blessings for Muslims worldwide, not only has deep spiritual dimensions but also significantly impacts various aspects of life, including economic activities. Amidst the spirituality and reflection that dominate this month, economic activities also undergo transformations that capture attention (Adinugraha et al., 2018). (Adinugraha, at al., 2018)

As the holy month in Islam, Ramadan is marked by fasting from dawn until sunset. However, besides the spiritual obligations, Ramadan is also a moment for the Muslim community to gather, share, and enhance religious and social activities. Behind these religious and communal dimensions, Ramadan also has a significant impact on economic activities, both at the individual and societal levels.

During Ramadan, shopping and consumption patterns change noticeably (Jalil et al., 2023). With limited time to eat and drink during the fasting period, there are adjustments in consumption patterns, including increased purchases of special foods for iftar (breaking the fast) and suhoor (pre-dawn meal). This creates unique business opportunities, such as bustling food and beverage markets in the evening. Additionally, there is an increase in shopping activities related to preparations for celebrating Eid al-Fitr, including the purchase of new clothes, gifts, and other necessities.

Moreover, Ramadan is also a time for business actors to enhance the marketing and sales of their products (Ramadan & Fatchiya, 2021). Special Ramadan promotional campaigns are often launched to attract consumers, offering discounts, special packages, or products specifically designed for this season. This creates a dynamic and competitive business environment during Ramadan, with companies vying for greater consumer attention.

Besides consumption and trade aspects, Ramadan also encourages individuals to focus more on charity and donations. People often increase their charitable and philan-

thropic activities during this month, either by giving alms to those in need or participating in social aid programs organized by charitable organizations. Thus, Ramadan is not only a time for worship and spiritual introspection but also an important period in the economic dynamics of society. Changes in consumption patterns, increased business activities, and heightened charitable activities create a unique economic environment during this holy month. Therefore, understanding and responding to the economic dynamics of Ramadan becomes crucial for business actors, governments, and society as a whole.

2. METHOD

The approach and type of research used in this study are descriptive qualitative, which is a research procedure that relies on qualitative observations of the object studied and produces descriptive data, in the form of written words or oral information from observed people and behaviors. The qualitative research aims to understand phenomena about what is experienced by research subjects, such as behavior, perception, motivation, actions, and others holistically (completely), and by describing them in words and language, in a specific natural context.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Traditions During the Ramadan

Some unique traditions during the month of Ramadan in various regions of Indonesia are: megengan, malamang, Grave Visits

Megengan Tradition in Surabaya In Surabaya, people hold the Megengan tradition to mark the arrival of the fasting month. This is a small ceremonial gathering usually held in mosques, prayer rooms, or other communal places. The menu served during Megengan varies, but one essential item is the apem cake. According to belief, the apem cake symbolizes self-purification before entering Ramadan. It is said that the word "apem" comes from the Arabic word "afwan," meaning "forgiveness."

Nyadran Tradition in Central Java In Central Java, there is a tradition called Nyadran, which is conducted before Ramadan. During this time, many people visit graves, clean villages or cemeteries, hold communal feasts, eat together, and give charity to the earth. Nyadran is also practiced in Yogyakarta, several areas of East Java, and Lampung.

Dugderan Tradition in Semarang In Semarang, Central Java, there is another unique tradition called Dugderan. Dugderan is a public festival involving all community members, including officials and the general public. This tradition has been around since 1881 and continues to be regularly celebrated. The event is lively with a night market, Warak Ngendok toys, and various types of culinary delights.

Malamang Tradition in West Sumatra In West Sumatra, the Minang people have a tradition of welcoming the month of Ramadan called Malamang, or making lelang. Malamang is not just a cooking process but also a part of the social and cultural life of the Minang community.

3.2 Traditions to Welcome Ramadan

Some traditions to welcome Ramadan commonly practiced by the people of South Sulawesi, according to Arifin Manggau, a cultural expert from Makassar State University (UNM), and Rahmat Muhammad, a sociologist from

Hasanuddin University (Unhas): Barzanji, Songkolo Patang Rupa Making, and Sweet Food Dishes The people of South Sulawesi.

Barzanji is a tradition frequently practiced by the people of South Sulawesi to welcome Ramadan. Besides being typically performed during the Prophet Muhammad's birthday (Maulid), this tradition involves the recitation of a literary book that contains the history of the Prophet, from his birth to his death. It is chanted with a specific rhythm or melody and recited together.

"Barzanji can be presented by the people of South Sulawesi. Because the content of Barzanji includes Asmaul Husna (the 99 names of Allah). That's why Barzanji is commonly recited," said Arifin.

Making songkolo patang rupa is a practice still commonly found among the people of South Sulawesi in welcoming Ramadan. This traditional glutinous rice dish is considered a symbol of unity among people. Patang rupa means four colors. Typically, the colors used are black, white, yellow, and red. People then pray to Allah for blessings and safety. "They pray that through this ritual they may be granted safety throughout Ramadan and hope to meet again in the coming year," explained Arifin.

Sweet Food Dishes. The people of South Sulawesi also typically welcome Ramadan by preparing sweet food dishes. These dishes, made with brown sugar, symbolize the hope of experiencing the sweetness of Ramadan.

"At the beginning of the fast, they always cook and serve sweet dishes made from brown sugar. The sweetness is meant to make the holy month of Ramadan enjoyable," said Arifin.

Grave Visits. Visiting graves is another tradition among the people of South Sulawesi that is not missed before Ramadan. Many people visit the graves of family members who can no longer join them in observing Ramadan.

"Visiting ancestors or anyone who has passed away before and after Ramadan is a part of the community's rituals," said Rahmat.

First Day of Fasting with Family Observing the first day of Ramadan fasting with family has become a customary practice. The people of South Sulawesi view spending the first day of fasting with family as a special joy. Many people who are living away from home take the time to return to their hometowns for a few days. Gathering with family has even become a tradition for the people of South Sulawesi.

"It's common for some to come home for the first day of fasting. Then they return to their activities during the holy month of Ramadan and come back home again before Eid," said Rahmat.

Visiting Tourist Attractions Strengthening relationships with family and relatives is usually done by visiting tourist attractions before the start of Ramadan. For the people of South Sulawesi, this has become a mandatory tradition to schedule.

"This is typically optimized with the consideration that during Ramadan, there's no need to go anywhere, allowing them to focus on fasting," explained Rahmat.

3.3 Welcoming Ramadan with the Marpangir Tradition

Marpangir is a traditional herbal bath performed by the Mandailing people in North Sumatra before the month of Ramadan. This tradition, a cultural heritage from their ancestors, is still preserved today. It aims to cleanse and fragrance the body as a way to welcome the holy month with both physical and spiritual purity.

In the article "Ziarah Kubur, Marpangir, Mangan Fajar: Tradisi Masyarakat Angkola dan Mandailing Menyambut Bulan Ramadhan dan 'Idul Fitri,'" published in the *Journal of History and Cultural Heritage*, Muhammad Andre Syahbana Siregar explains on page 12 that the ingredients used in Marpangir are quite varied. These include fragrant lemongrass leaves, kaffir lime leaves, pandan leaves, patchouli leaves, areca nut flowers, usar roots, sitanggis roots, and kaffir limes. The process of gathering these ingredients is usually done together with the family.

Marpangir is a legacy of the Angkola and Mandailing Natal tribes, originally used as a substitute for soap, which was not known in the past. The ritual involves mixing all these ingredients, boiling them with water, and then using the mixture for bathing all family members before Ramadan arrives. This tradition is usually performed in rivers or public baths, where the community gathers to bathe and help each other.

Besides cleansing the body, Marpangir also holds symbolic meaning. Symbolically, bathing before the Ramadan fast is interpreted as an effort to cleanse oneself from major and minor impurities, as well as to purify from all dirt and uncleanness. This symbolizes purity and readiness to enter the holy month of Ramadan with a clean and pure heart.

Spiritually, bathing before the Ramadan fast is believed to enhance devotion in worship. By physically cleansing oneself, it is hoped that the heart and mind will also become clean and focused in observing the fast. Additionally, bathing before Ramadan can provide a feeling of freshness and enthusiasm to begin fasting the next day.

Meanwhile, Ernita Daulay and Tasnim Lubis, in their journal titled "The Revitalization of Mandi Marpangir Tradition in Matondang Village, Padang Lawas Regency," on page 47, state that the Marpangir tradition is commonly practiced by the community before the holy month of Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr. This practice boosts confidence among the community as they observe a month-long fast. The people of Matondang Village, Padang Lawas, who were the subjects of the study, believe that this is a form of care for the preservation and continuity of cultural heritage, as long as it does not contradict religious teachings. The community in this region of North Sumatra believes that times are constantly changing, but there should not be a cultural crisis, as this nation is born from traditions handed down by ancestors that must be respected to this day.

3.4 The Economic Activity of the Muslim Community During Ramadan

Increase in Clothing Sales: Ramadan is also a time when many Muslims buy new clothes for themselves and their families, especially in preparation for Eid al-Fitr, the holiday marking the end of Ramadan. This leads to an increase in sales in the retail sector, with stores and shopping centers offering various promotions and discounts.

Food Service Sector: Restaurants and cafes usually experience a shift in consumption patterns, with peak hours moving to the evening. Many offer special iftar packages or "buka bersama" (breaking the fast together), attracting large groups, including special rates for groups or buffets.

Tourism and Travel: Some countries see an increase in domestic tourism activity during Ramadan, especially as many families take advantage of the period before Eid al-Fitr to go on vacation or return to their hometowns. On the other hand, the international tourism sector might experience a decline, as many Muslims choose not to travel far from home during the fasting month.

Charitable and Social Activities: Ramadan is a month heavily focused on religious values and charity. This leads to a significant increase in charitable activities, with many individuals and companies donating a portion of their profits to social causes or directly to those in need.

Changes in Working Hours: In many Muslim-majority countries, working hours are reduced during Ramadan to accommodate the religious and physical needs of fasting workers. This can impact overall productivity in the economy but also creates opportunities for businesses that adjust their services to meet these changed schedules.

E-commerce: The advancement of technology and the internet has also changed shopping habits during Ramadan, with many consumers turning to e-commerce to meet their Ramadan needs, from groceries to clothing and other items.

Overall, Ramadan creates a unique economic dynamic that combines increased consumption with spirituality and social activities, presenting both opportunities and challenges for businesses and consumers.

Special Foods Only Available During Ramadan from Medan City: (1) Lemang Pulut, (2) Bubur Pedas, (3) Pakat, (4) Toge Penyabungan, (5) Mi Gomak, (6) Anyang, and (7) Kolak Pisang Medan.

Special Foods Only Available During Ramadan from Palopo City. According to one of the vendors, Dakaraeng, a variety of foods are available in this area, such as bitter melon stew (sayur Pare or paria), tapa fish, banana heart salad (Lawa jantung pisang), fern salad (Lawa pakis), and various other dishes like Kapurung and honey-grilled chicken. "Every evening, it's crowded here with visitors buying food, usually from the beginning of Ramadan to the end, looking for meals for iftar, dinner, and suhoor," said Dakaraeng.

In Lagota, there are also various fried foods such as spring rolls (Lumpia), jalangkote, vegetable fritters (Bakwan), and more. Additionally, traditional Palopo cakes like pasau, Bolu peca, Katiri Sallang, Katiri Mandi, Lopis, Bingka, Buroncong, Barongko, and various other cakes are also

available. "The prices are quite affordable, depending on what the buyer wants—five thousand, ten thousand—it depends on their needs," said Dakaraeng. **Special Foods Only Available During Ramadan from Penyabungan North Sumatera:** (1)Toge Panyabungan, (2) Kue Bongko, (3) Kue Bika Tutung, and (4) Pakkat.

After taking place from March 16 to April 4, 2024, the XVIII Ramadhan Fair was officially closed by the Mayor of Medan, Bobby Nasution, at Sri Deli Park, Medan Kota District, on Thursday (4/4/2024).

This annual event, organized by the Medan City Government every holy month of Ramadan, brings its own blessings to culinary MSME entrepreneurs. It was recorded that from the two locations of the Ramadhan Fair, namely

Sri Deli Park and Rengas Pulau Field in Medan Marelan District, culinary MSME entrepreneurs were able to earn revenues of over 2 billion.

The Head of the Medan City Education and Culture Office, Benny Sinomba Siregar, stated that during the XVIII Ramadhan Fair at the two locations, culinary MSME entrepreneurs were able to achieve a total revenue of Rp 2,828,256,700. Specifically, at Sri Deli Park, culinary MSME revenues reached Rp 2,747,062,700, while at Rengas Pulau Field they reached Rp 81,194,000.

Bobby Nasution stated that the Ramadhan Fair is one of the most anticipated events by the people of Medan every year. This event is not just a stage for celebration and entertainment but also serves as a platform to showcase elements of local wisdom to strengthen the bonds of friendship and the values of togetherness within the Medan community from various backgrounds.

3.5 Unique Fruits Sales Spike During Ramadan

When talking about special fruits during Ramadan, dates come to mind. Dates are a traditional starter for breaking the fast. Thus, an impressive number can be observed when we ask date vendors.

Pajak Ikan Lama has long been known as a center for shopping for souvenirs from Mecca and a place for selling Hajj supplies. One of these shops is H. Achmad Achyar's store, located right on the edge of the Railway Station Road. During Ramadan, this store alone reports selling 2 tons of dates. This amount is extraordinary when multiplied by the total number of stores selling dates during Ramadan.

In large supermarkets and grocery stores in Medan, we can find displays of dates with various brands and types in abundance. It is known that some of these supermarkets and grocery stores are owned by non-Muslim entrepreneurs. This indicates that Ramadan brings blessings not only for Muslims but also for non-Muslims. The economic blessings of Ramadan are immense. In terms of Rupiah, the figures have reached trillions. This is truly undeniable evidence of the economic activity during Ramadan.

4. DISCUSSION

From the explanations above, it is important to understand the economic activity of the Muslim community during Ramadan, including the activities conducted and the sales that can trigger increased income for the community. In other words, the economic cycle in several regions experiences a sharp increase during Ramadan.

The city of Medan hosts several routine activities during Ramadan, such as the Ramadan Fair held in two locations. These activities significantly boost the economy of MSMEs. This was directly stated by the Head of the Medan City Education and Culture Office, Benny Sinomba Siregar, who said that during the Ramadan Fair, culinary MSMEs were able to achieve a total revenue of Rp 2,828,256,700. Specifically, at Sri Deli Park, culinary MSME revenues reached Rp 2,747,062,700, while at Rengas Pulau Field they reached Rp 81,194,000.

Meanwhile, in Penyabungan, Mandailing Natal Regency, although there is no concrete data on sales turnover, many activities are carried out in anticipation of the holy month of Ramadan. Most economic activities involve selling the necessities of Ramadan. This activity impacts the income of the community and consequently improves the

community's economy. It is important to note that this increase in income is driven by the community's desire to profit and contribute as Muslims during Ramadan.

In contrast, in Palopo, South Sulawesi, Ramadan activities are marked by the community's hunt for iftar meals. As iftar approaches, people seek various menus and food at the Ramadan culinary center, including the Lagota complex in Palopo, South Sulawesi. Located in front of the Palopo Trade Center, the Lagota complex becomes a culinary and iftar center offering a variety of foods, from traditional Palopo specialties to refreshing drinks at affordable prices.

According to several vendors in the Lagota complex, this Ramadan has brought profits to their culinary businesses. Daily income ranges from 1 million to 2.5 million. This increase is significant for the Muslim residents of Palopo.

Moreover, unique foods available only during Ramadan in Palopo, Penyabungan, and Medan exhibit each region's distinct characteristics. This uniqueness likely draws people, making Ramadan a highly anticipated and vibrant time. Economic activity becomes more challenging for business operators due to the combination of spiritual and business elements.

5. CONCLUSION

The economic activity of the Muslim community during Ramadan experiences a remarkable increase. This increase can be enjoyed by both Muslim and non-Muslim entrepreneurs. The amount of money circulating during Ramadan is evident from the business transactions occurring in almost all sectors, particularly in the culinary sector, which offers unique foods exclusively available during Ramadan.

The blessings of Ramadan are felt both spiritually and materially. Places of worship compete to promote the virtues of fasting and charity, which in turn stimulate the community's business activities, directly driving the local and national economy, and even impacting the global economy.

The economic movement during Ramadan demonstrates that the flow of money is not confined to the beginning of the month but continues daily until the end and post-Ramadan. This has a tremendous impact on all humanity.

A sense of family and brotherhood is fostered and maintained. New opportunities arise to further develop established business and fraternal relationships. These new opportunities will create new enthusiasm and aspirations. They also open the possibility of forming new organizations that impact the recruitment of new members. It is very likely that previously strained relationships will thaw, resulting in a stronger collaborative force than before.

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