



A Dynamic Hajj Fiqh for Elderly: A Study of Indonesian Pilgrims

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Abstract

Hajj, one of the pillars of Islam, requires physical and mental capability, making it more suitable for healthy individuals. Recognizing the strong desire of older Muslims to perform Hajj, several countries have implemented "Elderly Friendly Hajj" programs. These initiatives aim to ensure senior citizens can participate in Hajj with greater comfort, reflecting Islam's inclusive values and ease of worship. This research investigates the 2023 Elderly Friendly Hajj Program to provide an evaluation for the Indonesian government to enhance the following year's Hajj organization. The study employs a narrative literature review model, comparing data on Hajj and Fiqh for senior citizens, observations of pilgrims, and literature on Hajj policies and regulations. Additionally, interviews with Hajj officers and pilgrims were conducted to gather firsthand insights. The data was analyzed using descriptive analysis. The findings reveal that the government is continuously improving the Hajj system and management, focusing on prioritizing elderly pilgrims. Significant emphasis is placed on providing senior citizens maximum comfort and worship opportunities through enhanced infrastructure, tailored services, and adjustments in Fiqh laws to accommodate their needs. This study underscores the importance of inclusive practices in religious observances, ensuring senior citizens can fulfil their spiritual obligations with dignity and ease. The evaluation aims to assist the Indonesian government in making informed decisions to improve Hajj services for the elderly further in the future.

Keywords *Elderly Friendly Hajj 2023; Indonesian Pilgrims; Senior Citizens; Hajj Fiqh; Fiqh Laws for Senior Citizens*

INTRODUCTION

The Hajj pilgrimage requires rigorous physical effort, making it more suitable for those in good health. Recognizing the strong desire among senior Muslims to perform Hajj, several nations have created "Elderly Friendly Hajj" programs to accommodate their needs. These initiatives provide amenities such as wheelchair-accessible transportation, senior-friendly lodging, and special support throughout the pilgrimage. This aligns with Islam's principle of "*rukhsah*" which allows leniency in worship to ensure every Muslim, including the elderly, can practice their faith (Adnan & Uyuni, 2021; Hamid & Uyuni, 2023).

This study focuses on the Elderly Friendly Hajj 2023 program organized by the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs. It aims to evaluate this program and provide recommendations for future improvements. The research includes a literature review on Hajj and Fiqh for senior citizens, direct observations during the Hajj, and interviews with Hajj officers and elderly pilgrims. Key sources include documents from the Indonesian Hajj program, such as *Buku Manasik Haji dan Umrah Bagi Lansia* (Book of Hajj and Umrah Manasik for the Elderly) and *Layanan Haji Ramah Lansia* (Elderly Friendly Hajj Services) (Directorate General of Hajj and Umrah Organization, 2023a; 2023b).

Previous research has primarily focused on general Hajj management, legal requirements, and financial considerations. However, there is a gap in the literature regarding the specific needs of elderly pilgrims and the effectiveness of programs designed for them. This study seeks to address

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this gap by examining the organization of transportation and accommodations tailored to elderly pilgrims, the availability and effectiveness of medical services, adjustments in the pace of worship, and the provision of accessible facilities and emergency support (Quaium et al., 2023; Caidi, 2019; Seise, 2019).

The study underscores the flexibility of Fiqh in accommodating the elderly, allowing for modifications in rituals to respect their physical limitations. By addressing these aspects, the research aims to provide practical recommendations to enhance the elderly-friendly Hajj program, ensuring that elderly pilgrims can perform their religious duties with dignity and comfort. This focused examination will contribute new insights and improvements in Hajj services for elderly pilgrims, highlighting the importance of inclusive and considerate Hajj practices (Hamzani et al., 2018; Huda & Haeba, 2021; Syatar & Rahman, 2019; Alfiyanti et al., 2019; Ali, 2018; Palangkey et al., 2021; Kamaruding et al., 2017).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Elderly Fiqh

Ageing, beginning around age 55, involves a decline in bodily functions and marks a stage of spiritual maturity where individuals find deeper religious significance (Mutaqin, 2017; Choli, 2018). Each person's needs are unique, so tailored approaches are essential in supporting elderly individuals (Hadi & Uyuni, 2021). Religious tolerance and moderation are vital in Indonesia, especially in accommodating elderly pilgrims during Hajj. Fiqh of tolerance emphasizes cohabitation and respect for differences, offering guidance on adapting worship rituals to suit elderly individuals' physical limitations (Thalib, 2018; Mohamed & Oferinger, 2015; Sulandari et al., 2017). For instance, elderly pilgrims may perform prayers sitting or lying down if unable to stand or pay fidyah instead of fasting if health conditions prevent it.

The Elderly Friendly Hajj program in Indonesia integrates fiqh principles to ensure the pilgrimage is accessible and meaningful for older adults. This includes providing wheelchair-accessible transportation, senior-friendly lodging, and special support services (Azzarqa & Widyarini, 2016). The program embodies the values of compassion, inclusivity, and mutual respect, aligned with the principle of "*Rahmatan Lil Alamin*", which promotes compassion and peace for all beings (Ali, 2018; Sarkingobir et al., 2022; Arif, 2021). According to Muhyiddin and Badi'ati (2020), key fiqh considerations for the elderly include:

1. Obligation of worship: Older adults must still worship, with concessions based on health conditions.
2. Fasting: Exemptions are allowed for health reasons, with alternatives like fidyah.
3. Zakat: Obligatory if wealth reaches the nisab, with assistance allowed for calculation and payment.
4. Hajj: Required if physically and financially capable, with alternatives like delegating the Hajj to someone else if unable to travel.
5. Health care: Flexibility in worship practices to accommodate health conditions.

By applying these principles, the Hajj pilgrimage becomes a religious duty and a demonstration of compassion and respect for the elderly, enhancing their spiritual journey and overall well-being.

Hajj

The annual Hajj pilgrimage significantly impacts Indonesian social and religious settings, fostering cultural exchange and understanding between Indonesians and Middle Easterners. For

Indonesian Muslims, Hajj is not only a religious obligation but also a deeply spiritual journey to strengthen faith and seek forgiveness. The Indonesian government facilitates this pilgrimage, ensuring participants meet health and financial criteria and securing local permissions. The government collaborates with Saudi Arabia on logistics, such as travel and accommodation, reinforcing bonds within the global Islamic community (Syaikhu, 2020; Lücking, 2021, Abidin et al., 2022).

In 2023, Indonesia's Hajj quota includes 203,320 regular pilgrims, 17,680 special pilgrims, and 4,200 officers, which is 46% of the usual allocation. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, there were no quotas in 2020 and 2021, and Saudi Arabia implemented a 20% reduction. This year's agreement includes policies for aircraft landings in Jeddah and Medina and lifts previous age restrictions on pilgrims (under 65) imposed in 2022 due to the pandemic. Every year, Indonesia gets a quota for hajj departures from the Government of Saudi Arabia, with the amounts of Indonesian pilgrims presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Indonesian Hajj Quota Year by Year

Year	Amount of Indonesia Pilgrims
2023	221.000
2022	100.051
2021	Covid-19
2020	Covid-19
2019	231.000
2018	221.000
2017	221.000
2016	168.800
2015	168.800

Source: [IndonesiaBaik.id \(2022\)](#) and [Hadian \(2023\)](#)

The evolution of pilgrimages in Islam, particularly Hajj and Umrah, underscores the interplay of religious practices with political, economic, and global relations. These pilgrimages have grown from local endeavours to vast international events, necessitating reforms in management. Inclusivity is a key focus, addressing accessibility, affordability, and accommodation for diverse pilgrims. Advances in transportation and communication offer opportunities to streamline the pilgrimage experience (Bianchi, 2017; Uyuni, 2021; Jumali, 2020).

Current challenges in pilgrimage management, such as rising death tolls, corruption, and inefficiency, highlight the need for effective security measures and crowd management. Equitable distribution of resources and support, especially in countries with high pilgrim numbers and fatalities, is crucial. Indonesia's fluctuating Hajj quotas and policies, influenced by external factors like the COVID-19 pandemic, illustrate the dynamic nature of pilgrimage arrangements (Nur, 2020). The lifting of age restrictions in 2023 underscores the need for flexibility in pilgrimage management. Reform efforts must prioritize pilgrims' safety, well-being, and inclusivity while addressing systemic challenges. Collaboration between governments, religious authorities, and

stakeholders is essential to create a sustainable and equitable pilgrimage experience for Muslims worldwide (Huda & Haeba, 2021; Quaium et al., 2023; Hamzani et al., 2018; Syauckani, 2009).

Elderly Hajj

The Elderly-Friendly Hajj program focuses on enhancing the pilgrimage experience for elderly Muslims through specialized facilities and support services. This includes accessible transportation, elderly-friendly accommodations, and assistance throughout the journey to ensure comfort and safety. According to Islamic guidance, Hajj is obligatory upon those who are physically and financially capable, with a stronger emphasis once a person reaches the age of 60 (Indonesian Council of Ulama, 2020).

In 2023, 62,879 pilgrims over 65 years old were categorized by age groups ranging from 65 to over 95 years (NU Online, 2023). Research by Qois (2022) highlights the importance of pre-pilgrimage education provided by local religious authorities to ensure elderly pilgrims are well-prepared and safe during Hajj. However, recent policy changes by the Ministry of Religious Affairs have removed the requirement for companions for elderly and mahram pilgrims, aiming to streamline the organization and prevent fraud (Directorate General of Hajj and Umrah Organization, 2023b).

Kholilurrahman's (2017) research underscores the need for psychological support and guidance tailored to the unique challenges faced by elderly pilgrims, drawing on concepts such as unconditional positive regard and psychological theories like Maslow's self-actualization and Erikson's psychosocial stages (Majrashi, 2018). This study aims to fill gaps in understanding the development and implementation of the Elderly-Friendly Hajj program in 2023, focusing on policies related to flexibility in Hajj rituals (*rukhsah*) to accommodate elderly needs.

RESEARCH METHOD

The sources and databases that were used to gather data for this study's data on elderly persons' Hajj and Fiqh are numerous. Academic papers, books, journal articles, and religious texts that explore the meaning of the Hajj journey for the elderly are among these sources. Through firsthand observations made during the Hajj, researchers gained important insights into senior persons' distinct experiences and difficulties. A plethora of material on Hajj laws and regulations was also examined, with a particular emphasis on governance and senior citizen issues.

Senior citizens who have completed the Hajj and Hajj officials were questioned in semi-structured or structured interviews to get their firsthand stories and viewpoints. This study highlights a particular setting within the larger Hajj pilgrimage, focusing on data from the Indonesia Hajj 2023 program. The conclusions may only apply to the Indonesia Hajj 2023 program and might not have wider ramifications for other Hajj pilgrimages or senior citizen groups. Furthermore, the review's comprehensiveness may be limited by potential biases in interviews and observations resulting from participant and researcher viewpoints, as well as variations in the accessibility to pertinent literature, policies, and regulations. The Sources of Primary Literature Review regarding The Elderly-Friendly Hajj program 2023 of the Indonesian Government is presented in the Table 2 below.

Table 2. Primary Literature Review

Title	Author
Book of Hajj and Umrah Manasik for the Elderly (<i>Buku Manasik Haji dan Umrah bagi Lansia</i>)	Directorate General of Hajj and Umrah Organization (2023a)

Title	Author
Elderly Friendly Hajj Services (<i>Layanan Haji Ramah Lansia</i>)	Directorate General of Hajj and Umrah Organization (2023b)
SOP for Elderly Friendly Hajj Pilgrim Services. Implementation in Indonesia and Saudi Arabia Waves 1 & 2 (<i>SOP Layanan Jamaah Haji Ramah Lansia. Penyelenggaraan di Indonesia dan Arab Saudi Gelombang 1 & 2</i>)	Directorate General of Hajj and Umrah Organization (2023c)

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The departure of the Indonesian pilgrimage process takes place from May 24 to June 25, 2023. Of the total national quota of 229,000 people, the realization of absorption reached 228,093 pilgrims. The Ministry of Religious Affairs has launched the tagline "Elderly Friendly Hajj" in the organization of the 1444 H/2023 M hajj pilgrimage. This is because, in the organization of the Hajj, there are many pilgrims aged 65 years and over. Even the World Health Organization defines the elderly as 60 years and above. However, the Ministry of Religious Affairs determined the priority of the elderly this year to be pilgrims aged 65 years and over ([Directorate General of Hajj and Umrah Organization, 2023b](#)).

By 2023, the population of elderly pilgrims reach more than 30%, along with high-risk category pilgrims and people with disabilities. Of the 203,320 people who were regular hajj pilgrims, 17,680 were special pilgrims, and 64 thousand were categorized as elderly. The 2023 Hajj is also the first time it has been carried out with a regular quota after the Covid-19 pandemic hit the world ([kumparanNEWS, 2023a](#)).

Moreover, the Indonesian government decided there would be no departure for elderly companions. As with the number of elderly reaching 67 thousand, it is unfair to send companions, which means cutting the queue of other regular pilgrims. It can be handled with an approach between pilgrims from the homeland so the congregation can care for each other. Also, there is a need to build familiarity with Indonesia so that it can become a prominent family in the holy land. So that the elderly do not feel foreign. PPIH (the Hajj Pilgrimage Organizers) also prepares worship patterns that greatly relieve the elderly, primarily related to congregation services in Arafat, Muzdalifah, and Mina (Armuzna). At the peak of Hajj, especially in the Mina phase, pilgrims must walk to Jamarat to throw jumrah. The closest distance between the tents to Jamarat is about 3 km. PPIH prepares elderly service officers who are placed at each point. They will be equipped with some devices, including 100 wheelchairs.

Moreover, while in Mina, the Masyarik will prepare 15 golf carts for elderly services, as well as for high-risk pilgrims and people with disabilities ([Directorate General of Hajj and Umrah Organization, 2023b](#)). Badal Hajj is also performed by someone on behalf of another person who is obliged to perform Hajj. Several efforts have been made in order to realize efforts to optimize services to all Hajj pilgrims, including those who fall into the elderly category:

Table 3. The Ministry of Religious Affairs Elderly Friendly Hajj program

Involving geriatric experts from the University of Indonesia to formulate service concepts, operational procedures, and health supervision of elderly pilgrims.

Compiling an Elderly Friendly Hajj Manasik guidebook that has been socialized since it was still in the country.

Prepare elderly-friendly transportation facilities.

Provide special waiting rooms and develop a scheme for placing elderly pilgrims in hotels.

Reducing ceremonial activities at embarkation so that elderly pilgrims are not exhausted. Organizing technical guidance with an emphasis on the spirit of Elderly Friendly Hajj.

Educate elderly pilgrims not to overexert themselves and provide an understanding of various alternative conveniences in the Hajj pilgrimage.

Involving other Hajj pilgrims to raise awareness of the elderly.

Providing wheelchairs to support the mobility of the elderly during the Hajj pilgrimage.

Source: [Directorate General of Hajj and Umrah Organization \(2023b\)](#)

As a strategy, the government already arrange some plans:

1. The government has involved geriatric experts from the University of Indonesia in formulating service concepts and operational procedures, as well as in monitoring and supervising the health of elderly pilgrims during operations.
2. The Indonesian religious Ministry socialized the elderly-friendly service through the pilgrims' Hajj rituals process at the District Religious Affairs Office (KUA) and the District / City Office of the Ministry of Religion. The manasic process for pilgrims on the island of Java is carried out eight times. Meanwhile, hajj manasiks outside Java Island are carried out ten times. The composition is carried out at the Regency / City Office of the Ministry of Religion; the rest is done at the KUA.
3. To realize an elderly-friendly hajj to prepare transportation facilities, especially the shawat bus that takes pilgrims from the hotel to the Grand Mosque round-trip, which is easily accessible and elderly-friendly. PPIH has prepared 450 fleets for the Shalawat Bus service. There are three terminal stops: Ajyad, Mahbas Jin, and Shib Amir.
4. The fourth effort in realizing an elderly-friendly Hajj is to provide a particular waiting room and arrange a scheme for placing elderly pilgrims in hotels. PPIH, he said, has compiled service procedures at the congregation's hotel, including preparing an elderly priority lobby and elevator. Several stickers containing information about the elderly are also placed at many points in the pilgrims' hotels.
5. The efforts made to realize an elderly-friendly Hajj are to reduce ceremonial activities at embarkation. The congregation must not be exhausted by merely ceremonial activities.
6. Holding technical guidance for Hajj Organizing Officers (PPIH), emphasizing the spirit of Elderly Friendly Hajj. Officer guidance is an activity that is routinely carried out as part of the preparation stage. In addition to instilling values, the technical guidance is also filled with practical training on handling elderly and high-risk pilgrims, both from health, protection, and others.
7. Elderly pilgrims should be educated not to overextend themselves and provided with an understanding of the various alternatives to ease the pilgrimage. The first aspect is carried out directly (online) in various worship guidance activities in hotels conducted by consultants and indirectly through various social media content. The second aspect is that the Ministry of Religious Affairs has developed an open Hajj manasik for the elderly. This

information content is made in various forms so that it is easily accessible and understood by pilgrims and their families.

8. Involving other pilgrims to increase care for the elderly. Care among the congregation is critical. This is because the pilgrims directly contact the elderly during their daily activities.
9. Cross-party synergy should be established when providing wheelchairs. Wheelchairs are an essential tool for the elderly. It is because one of the main challenges for the elderly is mobility. Not infrequently, officers have to carry them to walk from one place to another ([kumparanNEWS, 2023b](#)).

By implementing the Elderly Friendly Hajj Program in 2023, the Indonesian government can showcase its commitment to inclusivity and compassion in serving its elderly citizens during the pilgrimage. The program's success will not only benefit the elderly pilgrims but will also demonstrate Indonesia's adherence to Islamic principles in accommodating the needs of all Muslims, regardless of their age or physical condition, during this significant religious journey. Furthermore, to facilitate and maximize the service of elderly pilgrims, the Hajj committee provides pilgrim signs with red and yellow colours. Criteria for pilgrims who need special attention (must be accompanied and assisted): Those marked in red are elderly and non-elderly pilgrims. The elderly are highly dependent on others for activities (pilgrims with wheelchairs), and those marked in yellow are elderly and non-elderly Hajj pilgrims who require assistance. Elderly who require assistance during daily activities outside the building (taking the elevator/stairs/escalator, taking the bus, going to the toilet) ([Directorate General of Hajj and Umrah Organization, 2023b](#))

Discussion

Islamic law, based on the Al-Quran and hadith, always develops under the demands of the times, especially in the order of practice, which is directly related to all human actions such as worship and muamalah. Islam pays special attention to the circumstances and conditions of its people ([Muhajarah & Soebahar, 2024](#)). Imam Jalaluddin al-Suyuthi mentioned seven reasons for the emergence of *rukhsah*: (1) travelling, (2) sickness, (3) forced, (4) forgetting, (5) ignorance, (6) unavoidable hardship, (7) weakness. Imam as-Syatibi also stated that the law of *rukhsah* is permissible ([As-Syatibi, 2003](#)). Imam Syatibi argued that the *rukhsah* is a relief and flexibility given in difficulty, so there is a choice between using *azimah* or *rukhsah*, so this is *mubah* ([Directorate General of Hajj and Umrah Organization, 2023a](#)). The existence of *rukhsah* in every excuse and *masyaqqah* aims to realize *maqasid al-syariah* to maintain five fundamental aspects of human life: religion, soul, mind, offspring, and property ([Qardhawi, 2003](#)).

Various *rukhsahs* or waivers of worship need to be applied to elderly and high-risk Hajj pilgrims to prevent harm and provide convenience for pilgrims. Ahead of the peak of Hajj, elderly, infirm, and disabled pilgrims must anticipate by not forcing themselves to perform draining *sunnah* services. All of these *rukhsahs* or reliefs show that the rules that exist in Islam are not to make it difficult for the people. The central aspect of all worship is the soul's safety ([Directorate General of Hajj and Umrah Organization, 2023a](#)).

The management of elderly pilgrims during the peak of Hajj is essential. There is a strong correlation between elderly pilgrims and high mortality rates. All officials and pilgrims must ensure they are fully fit when undergoing *wukuf* until the peak of Hajj is completed. One of the concerns that cannot be changed is the hot temperature. Hajj pilgrims are asked to bring personal protective equipment, drink enough, and reduce unnecessary activities. Elderly pilgrims need much attention.

A comprehensive and multi-faceted approach will be necessary to assess the long-term effects of the Elderly Friendly Hajj Program. This assessment will incorporate both quantitative and subjective strategies. Broad overviews and feedback will be conducted with elderly pilgrims

immediately after Hajj and at standard interims post-Hajj to gauge their significant experience, fulfilment, and any challenges they confronted. Well-being measurements will be analyzed to survey the physical well-being of elderly pilgrims sometime recently, during, and after Hajj, with a centre on the number of medical occurrences, hospitalizations, and health advancements or deteriorations. Monitoring the utilization of elderly-friendly administrations such as transportation, extraordinary housing, and restorative offices will assist in getting their adequacy and distinguishing any gaps. In-depth interviews and centre bunches with elderly pilgrims, their families, and Hajj organizers will give detailed insights into the program's effect and ranges for advancement. A comparative examination will be conducted to compare the encounters and results of elderly pilgrims sometime recently and after the implementation of the Elderly Friendly Hajj Program to recognize noteworthy changes and patterns. Also, longitudinal studies will be conducted to track the long-term well-being and well-being of elderly pilgrims over several Hajj seasons to maintain the program's effect. This comprehensive assessment will provide an intensive understanding of the program's adequacy and direct future changes.

Strategic collaborations and organizations essentially support the success of the Elderly Friendly Hajj Program. Collaborating with institutions like the University of Indonesia enhances healthcare delivery by providing expert therapeutic counsel, training healthcare staff, and accessing advanced medical facilities, while partnerships with transportation providers ensure that all transportation services are equipped to meet the needs of elderly leaders, including specialized vehicles and dedicated transport routes. Working with inns and other settlement suppliers makes a difference in creating and executing plans that prioritize the consolation and comfort of elderly pilgrims, such as ensuring the vicinity of restorative offices and simply getting to Hajj destinations. Engaging with devout organizations guarantees that the otherworldly needs of elderly travellers are met in a strong and available way. Planning with universal Hajj committees encourages sharing the best hones, assets, and methodologies for supporting elderly pilgrims over distinctive nations. These partnerships contribute to the initiative's victory by pooling resources, mastery, and endeavours to form a comprehensive and strong environment for all pilgrims, guaranteeing that elderly pilgrims get the care and back they require.

Whereas the current Elderly Friendly Hajj Program has made incredible advances, a few areas require further consideration. The comprehensive scope must be guaranteed so that all elderly pilgrims, including those from farther or underserved locales, are satisfactorily secured. Progressing transportation administrations and portability help are fundamental to guaranteeing ease of development of overall Hajj destinations. Enhancing the preparation and support for volunteers is additionally vital to guarantee they can viably help elderly travellers with sympathy and understanding. Furthermore, expanding open mindfulness and instruction to meet the particular needs of elderly pioneers is fundamental to cultivating a more steady environment among all Hajj participants. Tending to these regions will improve the program's adequacy and guarantee that all elderly pilgrims have a secure and satisfying Hajj encounter.

The Elderly Friendly Hajj Program for the year 2023 aims to cater to the needs and requirements of elderly pilgrims during the Hajj pilgrimage. The program ensures that elderly pilgrims can perform their religious duties comfortably and safely, considering their physical limitations and health conditions. The program's successful implementation will be crucial for evaluating the following year's Hajj organization by the Indonesian government in serving pilgrims, as it demonstrates the country's commitment to inclusivity and caring for its elderly citizens during this significant religious event.

Table 4. The Rukhsah or Relief for Elderly Hajj in Performing Manasik Hajj

Kind of Manasik (worship)	The Rukhsah or relief for Elderly Hajj
<i>Wudhu (ablution)</i>	For elderly or sick pilgrims who cannot use water for fear of adding mudharat to the limbs or have difficulty walking to the place of ablution, purification can be carried out by means of tayamum.
<i>The intention of Ihram isytirat</i>	The intention of Ihram isytirat is the intention of Ihram accompanied by the condition that one will enter ihram for Hajj or 'Umrah when hindered by a masyaqqah or difficulty. Ibn Qudamah, in al-Mughni, mentions two benefits of isytirat ihram as follows: "There are two benefits that accrue from isytirat ihram. Firstly, if the pilgrim who is in ihraam is prevented from doing so by an enemy, or illness, or loss of provisions and wealth, or the like, then he can exit ihraam. Secondly, when he exits ihraam while in isytirat, he does not have to offer a compensatory sacrifice or fast."
<i>Thawaf</i>	If the pilgrim is sick and unable to perform tawaf on his own, he can be assisted by being carried or carried. It is permissible to use a wheelchair or other device if one cannot walk or has other problems while performing Sa'i.
<i>Sa'i</i>	Older people may choose to do Sa'i by walking or riding in a wheelchair, depending on the situation and condition. Older people also need to consider Imam al-Nawawi's tips, which state that finding a quiet time for sa'i is preferable. If the atmosphere is very crowded and crowded, it is better to take care of oneself so as not to be pushed or hurt by not to be pushed or hurt by others. If the pilgrims cannot walk quickly due to crowded conditions, it is recommended that they move.
<i>Stoning the jumroh</i>	If a pilgrim cannot stone the jumroh for any reason, he may be represented by someone else who has already done so.
<i>Wukuf</i>	Indonesian Hajj pilgrims who are sick are also dispatched to Arafat to undergo the pillar of Hajj that must be followed, namely wukuf. However, they wukuf on a vehicle called Safari Wukuf. Pilgrims who meet the criteria are safariwukufized. Meanwhile, pilgrims who still need to meet the criteria for safari wukuf are represented.
<i>Daimul haddast</i>	The one who is daimul haddas because he cannot control his urine and other impurities, his impurity is forgiven. This does not prevent him from doing tawaaf.
<i>Umrah wajib</i>	Upon arrival in Makkah, elderly pilgrims are asked to extend their rest time at the hotel before leaving for the obligatory Umrah.
<i>Prayer in Masjid Al-Haram or</i>	Elderly pilgrims who are always in the hotel and do not have time to pray at the Grand Mosque due to sickness also still have the virtue of following

Kind of Manasik (worship)	The Rukhsah or relief for Elderly Hajj
Arbain in Masjid Nabawi	the Prophet's sunnah, which is that while waiting for Hajj, he never approached the Kaaba. Pilgrims who are elderly, sick, or in a weak condition should perform prayers at the hotel according to their ability. Pilgrims do not need to force themselves to perform arba'in because performing the arba'in is sunnah and not related to the validity of the Hajj.
Nafar awal	pilgrims who want to quickly return to Makkah while in Mina (before the 13th of dhulhijjah) may leave earlier, namely on the 12th of Dhulhijjah (<i>nafar awal</i>).
Dam for hajj tamattu' or qiran	Hajj <i>tamattu'</i> or <i>qiran</i> pilgrims who are unable to pay the dam may replace it with fasting for 10 days (3 days while on Hajj and 7 days in their homeland).
Jama' and qashar	Prayers may be made up <i>-jama' and qashar-</i> while performing Hajj or Umrah.
Tahallul	For elderly pilgrims for whom stoning the Jamrah is represented, then haircutting can be done before or after the stoning of Jamrah aqabah by the person who represents it. However, it still needs to determine the status of the initial parallel before obtaining information about the certainty of information that the stoning of the Jamrah Aqaba has been performed.

Source: [Directorate General of Hajj and Umrah Organization \(2023a\)](#)

These points are examples of the ease in Islam shown to the elderly. However, it is essential to note that in each specific situation, the advice of a competent ulama or religious scholar is indispensable to provide proper guidance based on deep religious knowledge and understanding. According to information from the Coordinates Hajj Data and Computerization System (known as SISKOHAT) of the Service of Religious Affairs, 234 Indonesian pilgrims passed on in Saudi Arabia by the 43rd day of Hajj in 2024. Of these, 213 were classified as high-risk (*Risti*) pilgrims, and 21 were not. The passing happened in Makkah, Madinah, Arafah, Mina, and Jeddah. As The number of deaths in 2024 has essentially decreased compared to 2023, when 773 pilgrims passed on, marking the most elevated number in six years. In contrast, 2022 saw the most reduced number of deaths at 89. The decrease in 2024 proposes enhancements within the administration and care of high-risk pilgrims ([Muhammad, 2024](#); [Rachmad et al., 2024](#)).

The high number of deaths in 2023 can be ascribed to more loose approaches for elderly pilgrims. These approaches likely permitted more high-risk elderly people to take an interest in Hajj without adequate medical supervision and planning, expanding their defenselessness. Moreover, the infrastructure and restorative offices in 2023 may not have been adequate to handle the desires of high-risk elderly pilgrims, counting open transportation, fast get to restorative care, and sufficient medical staff. Besides, there may have been a need for instruction and mindfulness to maintain well-being during Hajj among elderly pilgrims, driving to deficient preventive measures. Healthcare reports demonstrate that debilitated or swooning pilgrims got quick

treatment and were referred to the closest health facilities. Progressing endeavours to extend restorative staff and improve the well-being of offices is essential to decrease the hazard of pioneer passings in the future. The lessons from 2023 underscore the importance of stringent policies, improved facilities, and enhanced health education to ensure the safety and well-being of all Hajj pilgrims.

The management of elderly pilgrims during the peak of Hajj is essential. There is a strong correlation between elderly pilgrims and high mortality rates (Rustika et al., 2020). All officials and pilgrims must ensure they are fully fit when undergoing wukuf until the peak of Hajj is completed. One of the concerns that cannot be changed is the hot temperature. Hajj pilgrims are asked to bring personal protective equipment, drink enough, and reduce unnecessary activities. Greater care and improved handling are essential for elderly pilgrims.

Indeed, worship does not intend to burden man and does not aim to make it a punishment for him, but rather to provide spiritual enrichment and spiritual benefits for him. Therefore, in the implementation of religious orders, including worship, several principles are regulated in sharia provisions in order to maintain the realization of the benefits that are the purpose of religion. This must align with the principles in worship, namely the principle of convenience, the principle according to ability, the principle of not causing harm, and the principle according to the teachings of the Prophet Saw.

CONCLUSIONS

Services for elderly pilgrims are a significant concern in organizing the 2023 Hajj. Several improvements have been made to serve the elderly better. The government continues to try to improve the Hajj system and management and make the elderly a priority for Hajj services. Hajj pilgrims can perform worship under Sharia provisions, understand the sequence of implementation of the Hajj journey, and become independent pilgrims and not depend on other parties. Pilgrims can take legal solutions that provide convenience and relief for the elderly and high-risk people with disabilities. Sharia certainly provides solutions to the conditions that occur so that the Hajj can be carried out properly, not bringing madharat, let alone endangering lives, especially for elderly and high-risk pilgrims.

It is important to note that this program may change yearly. Therefore, for prospective elderly pilgrims, following the latest information issued by the Ministry of Religious Affairs or related institutions is advisable to determine the applicable requirements and procedures for evaluating the following Hajj implementation. They guided elderly and high-risk pilgrims in understanding the rituals and high risk in understanding the hajj manasik Hajj correctly and perfectly, providing convenience to get the Mabrur Hajj and health and soul.

This study tries to reveal the elderly-friendly Hajj 2023 program that has just taken place. Other studies on elderly-friendly Hajj need to describe the activities of the elderly-friendly Hajj 2023, which improves existing Hajj programs and policies. It is hoped that this study will prompt the government to give greater consideration to enhancing and continually improving Hajj services.

Recommendation

To enhance the Indonesian government's elderly-friendly Hajj program, consider the following steps:

1. Continuous Improvement: Regularly review and evaluate the program based on feedback from elderly pilgrims, families, and caregivers to identify areas for enhancement.
2. Research and Data Gathering: Conduct thorough research on the specific needs of elderly pilgrims, collaborating with experts in gerontology, healthcare, and religious studies for informed program development.

3. Interagency Collaboration: Foster partnerships between government agencies, religious authorities, NGOs, and other stakeholders to create a cohesive and comprehensive program.
4. Communication and Information: Ensure clear dissemination of program details well in advance, providing comprehensive instructions and contact information for assistance.
5. Companionship and Social Support: Offer social support and companionship through group activities, support networks, and counselling services, especially for elderly pilgrims travelling alone.
6. Religious Guidance: Provide tailored religious guidance considering the physical abilities of elderly pilgrims, accommodating prayer times and offering alternatives for rituals as needed.
7. Inclusivity and Participation: Involve elderly pilgrims in decision-making to reflect their preferences and ensure active participation in program planning.
8. Public Awareness Campaign: Educate the public about the importance of supporting elderly pilgrims during Hajj, promoting empathy and solidarity.
9. International Collaboration: Learn from successful practices in other countries and collaborate internationally to enhance services and share best practices.
10. These steps aim to improve the elderly-friendly Hajj program, ensuring a supportive and inclusive experience for elderly pilgrims in Indonesia.

LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

Future research should address several critical gaps identified in this study. Firstly, studies should incorporate primary data collection methods such as surveys and direct observations of elderly pilgrims during Hajj. This would provide a more nuanced understanding of their needs and the effectiveness of programs like the Elderly-Friendly Hajj. Secondly, there is a need to explore the psychological and emotional challenges experienced by elderly travellers, which are crucial aspects of their overall well-being during the pilgrimage. Comparative studies between different countries' Elderly-Friendly Hajj programs can highlight best practices and areas for improvement. Lastly, longitudinal studies tracking elderly pilgrims before, during, and after Hajj could offer valuable insights into the long-term impacts of the journey on their physical and mental health. By addressing these gaps, future research can build upon and refine the findings of this study, contributing to a comprehensive approach to supporting elderly pilgrims during Hajj.

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