

The Role of Government in Empowering the Social Welfare of Neglected Elderly People in Blitar District from the Perspective of Maqasid Syariah

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ABSTRACT: Government Empowerment for the welfare of neglected elderly should be a top priority for the government, because the state is responsible for ensuring that the basic rights of the elderly are met. The government needs to formulate policies that not only solve current problems, but also anticipate problems that may arise in the future. Without a comprehensive policy, neglected elderly will continue to be considered a temporary problem, rather than individuals who are empowered to live with dignity. In Blitar Regency, there are still many neglected elderly people, where neglected elderly people include those who do not have a place to live, have a place to live but live alone and depend on others to meet their daily needs. To overcome this problem, within the scope of government, the social service has the task and responsibility to handle various social problems, including providing services to groups in need of assistance. This task includes providing social rehabilitation services, community empowerment, and fulfilling basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter for those in need, which aims to provide proper support and care for the elderly so that they can live better and more dignified which is part of an effort to maintain *hifz al-nafs* (protection of life). The purpose of this study is to understand the role of government in empowering the social welfare of neglected elderly and analyze it from the perspective of *maqasid syariah*. The research method used is qualitative with field research. This research focuses on gaining a deeper understanding of this phenomenon in a social context. The research findings show that the role of government in empowering the welfare of neglected elderly in Blitar Regency reflects the principles of *maqasid syariah*, which emphasizes human rights and individual protection.

KEYWORDS: Maqasid Sharia, Role of Government, Social Welfare of Neglected Elderly

I. INTRODUCTION

The welfare of neglected elderly is an important issue in Blitar Regency, where many individuals do not have a place to live or live alone without family. They often depend on assistance from others to meet their basic daily needs. In this context, the role of the government is very important, especially in efforts to empower the welfare of the elderly in accordance with the principles of *maqasid syariah* which emphasize the protection of human rights and individual welfare. The Blitar Regency Government provides basic services that include clothing, food, and access to health (Hartatik et al., 2022) as part of efforts to maintain *hifz al-nafs* (protection of the soul). This service aims not only to meet the physical needs of the elderly, but also to create an environment that supports their mental and social well-being. One institution that plays an important role in this is the Tresna Werdha Social Home, which provides comprehensive protection and services for the elderly who have lost their families and homes.

At the Panti Sosial Tresna Werdha, the elderly not only get physical care, but also education, mental health support, and social development. Moreover, this shelter offers them the opportunity to develop themselves through productive activities such as sewing and batik. These activities not only help improve skills, but also provide meaning to life, in accordance with the objectives of *maqasid syariah* in maintaining community welfare.

This study aims to examine in depth the role of the government in empowering the social welfare of neglected elderly in Blitar Regency, with a focus on government efforts to meet basic needs, provide protection, and improve the quality of life of the elderly. In addition, this study will also analyze

various initiatives and policies taken by the government in the context of empowering neglected elderly, and assess their suitability with the principles of maqasid sharia which focus on protecting human rights, social welfare, and justice.

The results of this study indicate that the role of the government in empowering the welfare of neglected elderly in Blitar Regency reflects the implementation of the principles of maqasid sharia, which specifically emphasizes the fulfillment of human rights and protection of individuals. This is reflected in the government's efforts to ensure that neglected elderly people obtain their basic rights, such as access to food, health care, housing, and education. In addition, the government also focuses on social protection by providing opportunities for the elderly to participate in activities that can improve their quality of life, such as social activities, self-development, and psychological support. These steps are in line with maqasid sharia which aims to maintain community welfare, respect human dignity, and ensure justice and protection for vulnerable groups, such as the elderly.

II. METHODOLOGY

This research method uses the field research type. The research approach is qualitative. The type of field research is to intensively study a social, individual, group, institution and community related to the phenomena that occur (Izzan & Liyanti, 2022; LJ Moleong, 2014). Where this study describes the role of government in improving the welfare of neglected elderly in Blitar Regency.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The role of the government in empowering the social welfare of neglected elderly people in Blitar Regency

In 2023, there were 135 elderly people who were neglected in Blitar Regency. Of that number, 37 elderly people have received intensive care by being placed in the Tresna Werdha institution, a special service center for neglected elderly people (Rismawati, 2023). This government agency aims to provide proper care and attention to seniors in need, and strives to improve their quality of life.

It should be noted that neglect of the elderly has a negative impact on their development, because the elderly are very vulnerable to physical and psychological problems. In addition, the elderly also need special attention in terms of physical, social, economic, psychological needs, as well as daily needs such as clothing, food, and shelter. At that age, the elderly who are neglected are very dependent on others for their survival. Neglect of the elderly occurs for various reasons, such as there

are elderly who are deliberately neglected by their families or who do not have families and places to live (Pratiwi & Laksana, 2024). In addition, family economic limitations are also a factor, where they have difficulty meeting the daily needs of the elderly, so that the elderly cannot carry out their social functions properly.

Therefore, handling neglected elderly is very important to empower their social welfare. The elderly are a vulnerable group and should be the responsibility of the family, especially children. However, currently many children pay less attention to their parents, focus more on personal matters, or their own families, so they cannot take care of their parents properly, which results in the elderly being neglected and not cared for. Therefore, the role of the government in handling neglected elderly must be maximized so that the number of neglected elderly can be reduced. The elderly should be able to be used as a national asset that is empowered to become healthy and productive elderly.

Within the scope of government, the Social Service has the task and responsibility to handle various social problems, including providing services to groups in need of assistance, such as neglected elderly people, neglected children, people with disabilities, and individuals or families facing economic or social difficulties. This task includes providing social rehabilitation services, community empowerment, and fulfilling basic needs such as food, clothing, and shelter for those in need (Qamariah et al., 2020). Based on the research results, the role of the Blitar Regency Social Service in empowering the welfare of neglected elderly in Blitar Regency is in accordance with Blitar Regent Regulation Number 101 of 2022 concerning the position, composition, organization, duties and functions, and work procedures of the Social Service, Article 2 paragraph (1), namely that the Social Service is an implementing element of regional government affairs in the Social and Assistance Sector (Pratiwi & Laksana, 2024).

Abandoned elderly who will enter the shelter must meet several requirements, such as being in good health, having no history of infectious diseases, and being able to eat and bathe themselves. However, if they get sick while in the shelter, it will not be a problem. In addition to elderly people found on the street, elderly people who live alone and far from their families are also considered abandoned, and the Social Service provides assistance in the form of a free meal program managed by the community groups. The Social Service only supervises the distribution of food assistance, which is given twice a day, by ensuring that the food remains suitable even if consumed in

the afternoon or evening. Elderly people who receive this assistance are those who live alone or have a single family card. The Social Service also holds a social home care program in collaboration with health centers for health checks and medical treatment if necessary (Rismawati, 2023). The role of the Social Service uses Jim Ife's first theory, a facilitative role in which the Blitar Regency Social Service has provided significant benefits for neglected elderly people, such as fulfilling their basic living needs and ease in accessing facilities and services that were previously difficult to obtain. Thus, the Social Service has made great efforts to provide the facilities and infrastructure needed for neglected elderly people.

Secondly, in the educational role, the Blitar Regency Social Service provides health education, awareness raising, and training to increase the knowledge of neglected elderly people and change their mindset to be more positive (Aliyafie, 2023). After being in the shelter, the elderly will be referred to UPT Tresna Werdha, a social institution under the auspices of the Social Service to provide social services for neglected elderly. In this UPT, the elderly are given education related to health, mental, spiritual, and skills to support them to become more independent, active, and useful. Education is carried out in a fun way, such as sunbathing in the morning or after exercise, to maintain their spirits and fitness.

In addition, UPT Tresna Werdha also provides character building to help the elderly develop a strong personality and encourage them to remain productive and healthy. Third, in the representational role, the Social Service interacts with various community institutions for the benefit of neglected elderly. The Social Service provides opportunities for the elderly to develop skills according to their interests and abilities, such as knitting, sewing, batik, and making other crafts. This training aims to provide benefits for the personal development of neglected elderly. The Social Service also supports various other activities, such as gymnastics, and encourages the participation of the elderly in local government activities.

And finally for the technical role, the Social Service collaborates with the UPT Tresna Werdha to ensure that neglected elderly people receive good services and according to their needs. Elderly people who are treated at the UPT or who are returned to their families, if possible, will receive proper attention and care. Many cases of neglected elderly people occur because they are deliberately neglected by their families or because they do not have families and places to live. In this case, the Social Service assists in the handling

process so that neglected elderly people can get a decent place and their living needs are met.

In the various roles that have been explained above, the role of the Social Service in empowering the social welfare of neglected elderly people, the Blitar Regency Service has attempted to fulfill the provisions that have been set by law and the government. However, the handling of neglected elderly people is still not optimal (Tirtariandi et al., 2023). Which is caused by obstacles in improving the social welfare of neglected elderly, such as some elderly are reluctant to leave their homes, so that the Social Service has difficulty in carrying out rehabilitation. In addition, there are also some elderly outside the shelter who have not received social assistance from the Blitar Regency Social Service, this is because the Social Service provides social assistance to an elderly person according to existing data so that it is not evenly distributed.

Maqasid Syariah's View of the Government's Role in Empowering Social Welfare of Neglected Elderly in Blitar Regency

In Maqasid sharia, there are five basic aspects that must be protected and fulfilled in the life of every individual, namely religion (hifz al-din), soul (hifz al-nafs), reason (hifz al-aql), descendants (hifz al-nasl), and property (hifz al-mal) (Hamzah, 2018; Huda et al., 2022; Paryadi, 2021; Sunarto et al., 2022). In the context of neglected elderly in Blitar Regency, the government has a responsibility to ensure that their basic rights are protected in accordance with the principles of maqasid sharia, which include not only fulfilling physical needs, but also their social and psychological well-being.

One aspect that is the main focus is fulfilling the physical needs of the elderly, which includes food, clothing, and access to health services (Dangeubun et al., 2024; Habil & Berlianti, 2023; Khoirunnisa & Nurchayati, 2023; Suryani, 2017). The Blitar Regency Government, through the Tresna Werdha Social Home, has provided basic services in the form of safe housing, nutritious food, and access to health facilities that are greatly needed by the elderly. All of this is in line with the principle of hifz al-nafs in maqasid sharia, which emphasizes the importance of protecting the life and physical well-being of each individual. Furthermore, the provision of food, clothing, and health care assistance is also related to hifz al-mal, namely protection of property.

The government's provision of ready-to-eat meals twice a day reflects an effort to ensure that the basic needs of neglected elderly people are met, without them having to rely on others or being in conditions that threaten their well-being. Likewise,

access to health insurance that is tailored to individual needs, both in terms of prevention, healing, and recovery. However, fulfilling physical needs alone is not enough. Neglected elderly people often experience loneliness, social isolation, and a significant decline in quality of life. The Tresna Werdha Social Home, as a shelter, not only provides physical facilities, but also creates an environment that supports social interaction between residents. Social and psychological guidance in this home is very important to maintain the mental balance of the elderly, reduce feelings of isolation, and strengthen a sense of togetherness.

This approach is closely related to the principle of *hifz al-nasl*, which is the protection of offspring and the maintenance of social relations in society. In the *maqasid sharia*, healthy and inclusive social interactions are essential to form strong social bonds between individuals, which in turn will improve their quality of life. This social and psychological development also reflects *hifz al-aql*, the maintenance of reason, because the feeling of being valued and having a role in society can improve the mental health of the elderly and reduce the risk of depression or anxiety.

The Blitar Regency Government also provides opportunities for the elderly to be involved in productive activities at the Tresna Werdha Social Home. The elderly are given skills training, such as sewing and batik. Involvement in these activities is not only beneficial for improving their skills, but also gives them the opportunity to produce valuable work. This helps the elderly rediscover the meaning of life, feel appreciated, and earn income.

This productive activity is in line with the principle of *hifz al-mal*, which emphasizes the importance of protecting property and the opportunity for individuals to own or earn income. In addition, this activity also supports *hifz al-aql*, which is the maintenance of reason, because this skill can give the elderly a sense of achievement and improve their quality of life, both economically and psychologically.

IV. CONCLUSION

Overall, the efforts of the Blitar Regency government in empowering the social welfare of neglected elderly people show a great commitment to the protection and fulfillment of human rights, in line with the principles of *maqasid sharia*. Fulfilling the physical, social, and psychological needs of neglected elderly people is not only important to maintain their survival, but also to ensure that they continue to have a meaningful role in society. Through basic services, skills empowerment, and attention to their mental well-being, the Blitar

Regency government has endeavored to implement *maqasid sharia* in an effort to protect and maintain the rights of the elderly. The Blitar Regency government has shown that protecting neglected elderly people is not only a social obligation, but also part of an effort to fulfill the noble goals of *maqasid sharia*, namely to maintain the welfare of each individual in a fair and humane manner.

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