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Mass Prayer as a Means of Community Religious Traditions in Welcoming the Month of Ramadan: A Case Study of Al-Idrus Mosque Dukuh Kauman

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ABSTRACT

Mass ruwahan is a Javanese Islamic tradition held in *Sha'ban* to welcome Ramadan by praying collectively for deceased community members. Amid purification discourses that question the textual basis of such rituals, its meanings and the ways communities sustain it remain underexplored, particularly when the commemoration addresses all deceased residents rather than a single religious figure. This study analyzes the implementation process, the symbolic meanings and values, and the role of community leaders in sustaining *mass ruwahan* at Al-Idrus Mosque, Dukuh Kauman. This qualitative single case study collected data through participant observation during *Sha'ban* 1447 H (January to February 2026), in depth interviews with purposively selected informants (mosque administrators, religious leaders, neighborhood heads, women's groups, and mosque youth), and documentation, which were analyzed through interactive data condensation, display, and conclusion drawing guided by Clifford Geertz's interpretive theory of religion as a cultural system. The findings show four sequential rites: the recitation of the names of deceased residents (*pembacaan arwah*), *khotmil Qur'an*, communal *kenduri* with food distribution, and *tahlil* with collective prayer. These rites embody three values: spiritual (connecting the living with God and the deceased), religious (internalizing Islamic teachings through collective worship and *tausiyah*), and solidarity (mutual cooperation across neighborhood units and generations). Community leaders sustain the tradition by organizing name collection, funding, and task sharing between generations. Thus, *mass ruwahan* functions as a collective *slametan* for all deceased residents, serving as both a model of and a model for communal Islamic life before Ramadan.

INTRODUCTION

Across Muslim societies, Islam is practiced not only as a body of normative texts but also as a lived tradition expressed through local rituals, foods, calendars, and forms of sociability.

Studies of lived Islam show that ordinary believers combine scriptural norms with inherited local practices, producing vernacular forms of piety that remain recognizably Islamic (Reinhart, 2020). At the same time, modern reformist and purification movements in many Muslim regions question rituals that are not explicitly prescribed in the Qur'an and Hadith, labeling some of them as *bid'ah* (unwarranted innovation) (Jahroni, 2018; Rosadi et al., 2024). This global tension between textual purification and local religious practice makes community rituals an important site for understanding how Muslims negotiate authenticity, belonging, and continuity in a changing world (Mukhibat et al., 2025).

Indonesia offers a clear example of this dynamic. Religious traditions in Indonesian society vary across regions because Islamic norms have long interacted with local cultures (Anwar & Muhsin, 2025; Mukhibat et al., 2025). In Java, the month of *Sha'ban* is known as *Ruwah*, a name associated with *arwah* (the spirits of the deceased), and it is commonly marked by rituals of remembrance before Ramadan (Buhori & Lessy, 2025). One of these rituals is *mass ruwahan*, a collective commemoration in which a community prays for all of its deceased members. The ritual usually combines several elements: *haul* (an annual commemoration of the dead), *khotmil Qur'an* (the collective completion of the recitation of the whole Qur'an), *tahlil* (the recitation of *lā ilāha illallāh* and selected verses for the deceased), *kenduri* (a communal feast with shared food), and collective prayer. In this study, *mass ruwahan* refers to the whole series of these rites held for all deceased residents of one hamlet. The tradition is therefore not only an act of worship but also a means of building social solidarity and preserving cultural practices that carry religious values.

Although *ruwahan* takes different forms across regions, its core orientation toward prayer for the deceased and spiritual preparation for Ramadan remains similar. This study focuses on the *mass ruwahan* held at Al-Idrus Mosque in Dukuh Kauman, [village], [sub-district], [regency], Central Java. The hamlet consists of [number] neighborhood units (RT) within [number] community units (RW) with approximately [number] households. According to the mosque administrators (*takmir*), the mass format has been held annually since [year], replacing separate household commemorations. The event is organized by a committee formed by the *takmir* together with the heads of all RT, and it involves religious leaders, mosque youth (*remaja masjid*), women's groups, and residents. Field observation in 1447 H recorded approximately [number] participants. Most residents identify with the Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) tradition, as indicated by the routine practice of *tahlil* and *yasinan* in the hamlet, which was confirmed by the *takmir* (I1) and the religious leader (I2). Similar annual commemorations have been found to function as social spaces that strengthen *ukhuwah Islamiyah* (Islamic brotherhood) and *hablum minannas* (good relations among people) (Ainina & Alimi, 2026; Azizah, 2026).

However, amid globalization, modernization, and the growing influence of purification oriented religious understanding, local traditions such as *ruwahan* face questions about the legitimacy of their origins. Salafi oriented preachers and part of the modernist Muslim public regard rituals such as *tahlilan*, *slametan*, and prayers for the deceased as lacking a strong textual basis, whereas traditionalist Muslims argue that these practices are grounded in Islamic teachings and do not contradict the *sharia* (Jahroni, 2018; Rosadi et al., 2024). These positions are not a

simple binary, because many Muslims selectively adopt, modify, or reinterpret such rituals (Nasir, 2019). In Dukuh Kauman, this debate is present mainly in an indirect form. Informants reported that some younger residents encountered online sermons questioning *tahlil* and that a few households now attend only the *khotmil Qur'an* or the *kenduri* rather than the whole series (I3, I6). This situation shows a dynamic dialectic between normative texts and the socioreligious practices of the community, and it raises the question of how the tradition is given meaning and sustained by its leaders, which this study addresses.

This research uses Clifford Geertz's interpretive theory of religion. Geertz defines religion as a system of symbols that establishes powerful and long lasting moods and motivations by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence (Geertz, 2017). Three concepts guide the analysis. First, symbols and rites are treated as public vehicles of meaning that can be observed and described through thick description. Second, every ritual symbol is read as both a *model of* reality, which expresses how the community understands life, death, and God, and a *model for* reality, which shapes how members should act toward one another. Third, the Javanese *slametan*, the communal meal that Geertz placed at the center of Javanese religion, is used as a comparative lens for collective prayer and food sharing (Geertz, 2017; Nasir, 2019). Recent studies confirm the usefulness of this framework for analyzing Indonesian Muslim rituals and religious identity (Ainina & Alimi, 2026; Haq et al., 2026). Accordingly, this study examines three research questions: (1) how the sequence of *mass ruwahan* rites is carried out at Al-Idrus Mosque as a community religious tradition in welcoming Ramadan; (2) what symbols and meanings are present in these rites; and (3) how community leaders maintain the sustainability of the tradition amid social change.

Several previous studies are directly relevant. Anwar and Muhsin (2025) described *ruwahan* in Langensari, Surakarta, as an acculturation of Javanese and Islamic culture, but the study was mainly descriptive and did not analyze ritual symbols. Buhori and Lessy (2025) examined food symbolism in *ruwahan* in Krandon, Yogyakarta, and showed that the communal *ambeng* meal expresses equality and solidarity, yet the analysis focused on food rather than on the full sequence of rites. Ainina and Alimi (2026) applied Geertz's symbolic perspective to the *haul* of Kyai Gede Ceper in Pekalongan and found that the ritual transmits spiritual and social morality, while Mahmudi and Rizal (2025) analyzed the *haul* of KH. R. As'ad Syamsul Arifin as a source of character education. Azizah (2026) demonstrated that *tahlil akbar* strengthens social cohesion through Durkheim's framework. These studies share two limitations: most *haul* studies center on a single revered figure, and studies of *ruwahan* rarely connect the symbolic analysis of each rite with the question of how local leaders sustain the tradition. This study addresses that gap by examining a mass commemoration for all deceased residents of a hamlet and interpreting its full ritual sequence through Geertz's concepts.

The urgency of this research lies in three aspects. First, academically, it enriches Islamic studies of the archipelago by offering an analytical account of a commemoration in which the object of prayer is not a religious figure but the entire community of the deceased, which positions *mass ruwahan* as a collective *slametan* rather than a figure centered *haul*. Second, socially, it

documents how the tradition operates as a mechanism of social cohesion at a time when participation patterns are changing. Third, practically, it records an intangible religious heritage whose procedures, such as the collection and recitation of the names of the deceased, are transmitted orally and may be lost if they are not documented.

Based on this background, the objectives of this study correspond directly to the three research questions: (1) to describe the sequence and implementation of *mass ruwahan* at Al-Idrus Mosque; (2) to interpret the symbols, meanings, and values embodied in each rite using Geertz's framework; and (3) to analyze the role of community leaders in sustaining the tradition amid social change. Theoretically, the study contributes to the anthropology of religion and to studies of Islam in the archipelago by extending Geertz's analysis of *slametan* to a collective commemoration of all deceased residents. Practically, the findings can be used by mosque administrators and religious leaders to document and manage the tradition, by local government to recognize it as intangible cultural heritage, and by religious educators as a model of moral and religious education based on the community. The study is expected to inform discussions on local Islamic traditions, community cohesion, and preservation practices without claiming effects beyond the case examined.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a single case study design (Yin, 2018). The case is the *mass ruwahan* ritual cycle at Al-Idrus Mosque, Dukuh Kauman, which was selected because it commemorates all deceased residents of the hamlet rather than a single figure. A case study design is appropriate because the research questions ask how and why a contemporary practice takes place in its real life context, and the study adopts an interpretive orientation that aims to produce a thick description of ritual meanings (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Geertz, 2017). Primary data were obtained from participant observation, in depth interviews, and documentation, while scholarly literature served only as secondary data for comparison and theoretical interpretation.

Research Location and Subjects

The research was conducted at Al-Idrus Mosque, Dukuh Kauman, [full address], during *Sha'ban* 1447 H (January to February 2026), covering the preparation and implementation of the whole ritual cycle. The unit of analysis is the ritual cycle and its participants. Informants were selected purposively on the basis of their roles in organizing or leading the rites, and additional informants were identified through snowball sampling. Their characteristics are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of Informants

Code	Role in the tradition	Gender	Age
I1	Chair of the mosque administrators (*takmir*)	Male	[age]
I2	Local religious leader (*kyai*) who leads *tahlil* and prayer	Male	[age]
I3	Head of the *mass ruwahan* committee	Male	[age]
I4	Head of a neighborhood unit (RT)	Male	[age]
I5	Coordinator of the women's group (*muslimat* or PKK)	Female	[age]
I6	Member of the mosque youth (*remaja masjid*)	Male	[age]

Source: Researchers' field data, 2026

Research Instruments and Data Collection

The researchers acted as the key instrument, supported by an observation guide, a semi structured interview guide, field notes, and a camera. Participant observation covered the four rites, including the preparation of the *kenduri*, and recorded time, place, actors, sequence, symbols, and interactions. In depth interviews lasted 30 to 60 minutes each and were conducted in Javanese and Indonesian, then transcribed and translated into English by the researchers. Documentation included the committee's schedule and division of tasks, the list of names of the deceased submitted through each RT, and photographs of the rites.

Data Analysis and Validity

Data were analyzed using the interactive model of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification (Miles et al., 2020). Field notes and transcripts were coded into three initial categories that follow the research questions: ritual sequence, symbols and meanings, and roles of community leaders. Geertz's interpretive procedure was then applied by identifying the main ritual symbols, describing their use in context, distinguishing the participants' own interpretations from the researchers' analytical reading, and interpreting each symbol as a *model of* and a *model for* community life (Geertz, 2017). Credibility was ensured through source and method triangulation, member checking with key informants, and an audit trail of field notes. Ethical procedures included permission from the mosque administrators, verbal informed consent from all informants, the use of informant codes instead of names, and consent from identifiable persons who appear in the photographs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The process of implementing mass *ruwahan*

Observation was conducted at Al-Idrus Mosque during *Sha'ban* 1447 H, with the main events held on [date] from after the *subuh* prayer until after the *isya* prayer. Attendance was recorded by the researchers through direct observation and the committee's attendance notes, showing approximately [number] participants consisting of elders, adults, youth, and children. The event was centered at the mosque and organized by a committee under the coordination of the *takmir*. The *mass ruwahan* consists of four sequential rites:

1. Recitation of the names of the deceased residents of Dukuh Kauman (*pembacaan arwah*)
2. *Khotmil Qur'an* (collective completion of the recitation of the Qur'an)
3. Communal *kenduri* and food distribution
4. *Tahlil* and collective prayer

Table 2. Sequence of the Mass Ruwahan Rites at Al-Idrus Mosque

Rite	Time	Main actors	Participants
Recitation of the names of the deceased	After *subuh* until [time]	Religious leader and committee	[number] residents
Khotmil Qur'an	[time] until [time]	[number] Qur'an reciters	Residents who wish to join

Rite	Time	Main actors	Participants
Preparation and distribution of *kenduri*	[time] until [time]	Men (slaughter and cutting), women (spices and cooking), youth (packing)	All RT through their representatives
Tahlil and collective prayer	After *isya*	*Kyai* (I2) and *takmir*	[number] residents

Source: Researchers' observation, 2026

Values in the Mass Ruwahan Tradition

The results show that *mass ruwahan* contains three main values:

1. Spiritual Values
   Participants interpret *ruwahan* as a moment to pray for their deceased relatives and to prepare themselves spiritually before Ramadan. The *takmir* (I1) explained that residents regard sending prayers to their parents as a form of *birrul walidain* (devotion to parents) that continues after death, while the committee head (I3) stated that many residents feel incomplete entering Ramadan before the names of their parents have been read. Joint prayer and *tahlil* are therefore understood by participants as acts of devotion to deceased parents and ancestors.
2. Religious values
   A short *tausiyah* (religious advice) was delivered by the local religious leader (I2) after the *khotmil Qur'an* and before the *tahlil*. Its content, recorded in the field notes, invited the congregation to perform *muhasabah* (self evaluation), to restore relations with God and with fellow residents, and to prepare for fasting by settling disputes and debts. Through this message, participants link *ruwahan* with collective *muhasabah* before Ramadan.
3. The Value of Solidarity and *Ukhuwah Islamiyah*
   Solidarity is observable in the preparation and implementation of the event. Each RT collected names and contributions from its households, [number] volunteers took part in preparing the *kenduri*, men handled the slaughter and cutting of the buffalo, women prepared spices and cooked, and youth packed the food into *besek* (woven bamboo containers) for distribution to every household. Informants described the preparation as a time when residents who rarely meet work together, which they associated with a family atmosphere and *ukhuwah*.

The Role of Community Leaders

Community leaders play distinct roles in sustaining the tradition. The *takmir* (I1) forms the committee and sets the date, the *kyai* (I2) leads the *tahlil* and prayer and gives religious justification for the practice when it is questioned, the RT heads (I4) collect the names of the deceased and household contributions, and the women's group coordinator (I5) organizes cooking. To respond to declining participation of youth, the committee has assigned the mosque youth to the documentation, packing, and distribution of *besek* since [year] (I3, I6).

Discussion

The Ritual Sequence of Mass Ruwahan as Cultural Performance

For Geertz, rituals are cultural performances in which the meanings held by a community are enacted and made visible (Geertz, 2017). Read in this way, the four rites of *mass ruwahan* move from remembering the dead, to sanctifying time through the Qur'an, to sharing food among the living, and finally to collective supplication. This order answers the first research question and shows that the sequence is not merely a technical program but a structured passage from the world of the deceased to the moral life of the community before Ramadan.

1. Recitation of the Names of the Deceased (*Pembacaan Arwah*)

   The recitation of the names of the deceased is the opening rite and the most distinctive element of *mass ruwahan*. Before the event, each RT head collected the names of the deceased from every household together with a voluntary contribution (*shodaqoh*). The contributions were handed to the committee and used to buy the buffalo and other *kenduri* needs, while the names were compiled into one list of approximately [number] names that was read aloud by the religious leader. Residents understand the contribution as *shodaqoh jariyah* given by the heirs on behalf of the deceased (*ahli kubur*), so that the donation for organizing the event and the prayer for the deceased are distinct but connected acts. Informants grounded this practice in the following hadith:

   "When a man dies, his acts come to an end, but three, recurring charity, or knowledge (by which people) benefit, or a pious son, who prays for him (for the deceased)." (Muslim, *Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim*, Book of Bequests, Hadith No. 1631, trans. A. H. Siddiqui)

   The reading of the names begins after the *subuh* prayer and lasts until approximately [time]. Symbolically, placing every deceased resident in one list read in one mosque expresses the conviction that the community of the living and the dead is a single moral community. Unlike the *ruwahan* in Langensari, where commemoration is organized mainly by families (Anwar & Muhsin, 2025), and unlike *haul* traditions that honor a single figure (Ainina & Alimi, 2026; Mahmudi & Rizal, 2025), the Kauman practice gives every deceased resident equal standing. In Geertz's terms, the list functions as a *model of* communal unity and as a *model for* mutual obligation, because each household contributes and each name is prayed for collectively, as shown in Figure 1.

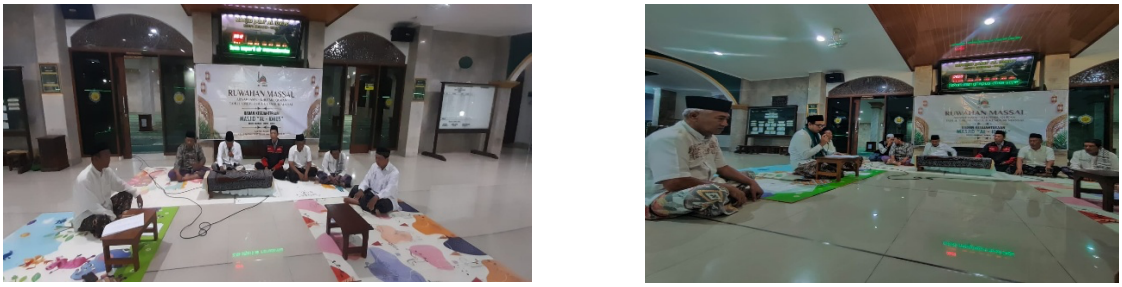


Figure 1. The Recitation of the Names of the Deceased in Dukuh Kauman
Source: Researchers' documentation, 2026

2. *Khotmil Qur'an*

Khotmil Qur'an is the collective recitation of the whole Qur'an in order, from *Sūrat al-Fātiḥah* to *Sūrat an-Nās*, covering all 30 *juz*. It follows the recitation of the names of the deceased and is held in the main hall of Al-Idrus Mosque. The committee invited [number] reciters from the local Qur'anic memorizers association (*jam'iyyah huffāẓ*) and divided the 30 *juz* among them so that the recitation was completed within [duration] (I3; committee document). Attendance is voluntary, and residents who join say they seek *barokah* (blessing). Completing the Qur'an immediately before Ramadan, the month in which the Qur'an was revealed, symbolizes the purification of time and prepares participants for the intensified recitation during fasting. Similar *khataman* traditions in Indonesia are understood as expressions of reverence for the Qur'an and as communal rituals that bind participants together (Akbar & Albustomi, 2025; Ulfah & Farid, 2023), while in funerary contexts the recitation is believed to benefit the deceased (Khodijah & Monang, 2025). The process is shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2. The Implementation of *Khotmil Qur'an* at Al-Idrus Mosque, Dukuh Kauman
Source: Researchers' documentation, 2026

3. Communal *Kenduri* and Food Distribution

In general, *kenduri* is a socioreligious tradition of Javanese Muslims in which food is shared as an expression of gratitude and charity (Susanti & Rumondor, 2022). At Al-Idrus Mosque, the *kenduri* has a specific organization. The buffalo is bought by the committee from

the residents' contributions collected through each RT. After slaughter by men in the mosque yard, the meat is cleaned and divided, women prepare the spices and cook in the yard, and the youth pack the meals into approximately [number] *besek*, which are distributed to every household in Dukuh Kauman, including households that did not contribute (I3, I5). The division of labor follows customary gender roles, but its main meaning lies in cooperation: every household gives and every household receives. In Geertz's analysis, the *slametan* symbolizes the mystical and social unity of those who take part in it, temporarily setting aside differences among them (Geertz, 2017; Nasir, 2019). The shared buffalo meat and the identical *besek* received by every household enact this equality, as also found in the *ambeng* meal of *ruwahan* in Krandon (Buhori & Lessy, 2025). The preparation is shown in Figure 3.



Figure 3. The Preparation of the Communal *Kenduri* at Al-Idrus Mosque, Dukuh Kauman
Source: Researchers' documentation, 2026

Informants described the *kenduri* preparation as the moment when residents from different RT work side by side. The RT head (I4) noted that the cooking involves households that rarely interact in daily life, and the women's coordinator (I5) observed that newcomers to the hamlet are usually first involved through the cooking team. These accounts indicate that the *kenduri* is perceived as strengthening cooperation, although this study did not measure its long term effects on social relations.

4. *Tahlil* and Collective Prayer

Tahlil and collective prayer form the culmination of *mass ruwahan*. The rite begins with *tawasul* (opening prayers addressed through the Prophet and pious predecessors), followed by *qirā'ah* (Qur'an recitation), the *tahlil* formula, and a closing prayer. It is led by the local *kyai* (I2), while the *takmir* (I1) opens the event and announces the total contributions and the number of names read. For participants, *tawasul* connects the gathering with the chain of Islamic authority, *tahlil* affirms the unity of God, and the closing prayer gathers all the names read in the morning into one supplication. The rite thus closes the cycle that was opened by the recitation of names. Comparable *tahlil akbar* gatherings have been shown to strengthen social cohesion (Azizah, 2026); in Kauman, the evidence supports a role in strengthening bonds within the community, while claims about interreligious tolerance are beyond the scope of these data. The rite is shown in Figure 4.



Figure 4. The Implementation of *Tahlil* and Collective Prayer at Al-Idrus Mosque, Dukuh Kauman
Source: Researchers' documentation, 2026

Community Leaders and the Sustainability of the Tradition

The findings on leadership answer the third research question. The tradition survives because authority is distributed: the *kyai* provides religious legitimacy, the *takmir* provides organization, the RT heads link the mosque to every household, and the women's group and youth provide labor. This distribution allows the community to respond to purification discourses without open conflict, because the *kyai* explains the textual basis of the rites, while practical involvement gives younger residents a stake in the event. A similar shift has been observed in Aceh, where

younger participants reinterpret funerary *khataman* critically yet take active roles as readers and coordinators (Khodijah & Monang, 2025). Debates over ritual legitimacy in Indonesia often become negotiations of authority in the public sphere (Jahroni, 2018), and in Kauman this negotiation is managed locally through role sharing rather than through doctrinal confrontation.

Symbols, Meanings, and Values in Mass Ruwahan

The tradition of *mass ruwahan* has a strategic position in transmitting the values embedded in its rites. Following Geertz, religion functions as a system of symbols that both expresses a community's view of reality (*model of*) and directs its conduct (*model for*), thereby producing durable moods and motivations (Geertz, 2017). Table 3 summarizes how each ritual symbol observed in Kauman carries meanings that correspond to the three values identified in this study. The distinction between participants' interpretations and the researchers' reading is maintained: the meanings in the second column are based on informant statements, while the social functions in the last column are the researchers' analytical interpretation.

Table 3. Symbols, Meanings, Values, and Social Functions in Mass Ruwahan

Symbol	Meaning for participants	Value	Social function (analysis)
Timing in *Sha'ban* (*Ruwah*)	Preparing the soul before Ramadan	Spiritual	Marks a shared ritual calendar
List of names of all deceased residents	Every deceased member is remembered and prayed for	Spiritual	Model of the community of the living and the dead
Shodaqoh collected through each RT	Charity on behalf of the deceased	Religious	Model for mutual obligation among households
Khotmil Qur'an	Seeking blessing and sanctifying time	Religious	Affirms the centrality of the Qur'an in local life
Buffalo meat and *besek*	Sharing sustenance equally	Solidarity	Enacts equality as in the *slametan*
Tawasul, *tahlil*, and closing prayer	Uniting all prayers for the deceased	Spiritual and religious	Closes the cycle and reaffirms collective identity

Source: Researchers' analysis of field data, 2026

1. Spiritual value

   Spiritual value concerns the relationship between the individual, God, and the unseen world. In Kauman, it is expressed concretely in the act of submitting the names of deceased parents and hearing them read aloud, which informants described as continuing their devotion after death. A comparable spiritual dimension appears in the *nugal padi* tradition in Jambi, where collective ritual connects agricultural work with gratitude to God (Lestari et al., 2025); the comparison is relevant because both cases show how a communal ritual turns private faith into a shared spiritual experience, although the Kauman case is oriented toward the deceased rather than toward the harvest.

2. Religious values

   Religious value differs from spiritual value in that it refers to the internalization of Islamic teachings and practices, such as Qur'an recitation, charity, and the content of the *tausiyah*. In *mass ruwahan*, these teachings are learned through participation rather than

through formal instruction. Children accompanied their parents during the *tahlil* and the youth took part in the *khotmil Qur'an* and the distribution of *besek* (I6). Similar living Qur'an traditions combine local values with Islamic values and serve as spaces where younger generations learn religious practices (Husna & Layyinah, 2025). However, this study did not examine how far these values are internalized by young participants, so this function should be understood as potential.

3. The value of solidarity

   Solidarity value refers to the bonds that make community members feel responsible for one another. The Kauman data show bonding within the community: contributions from every RT, a shared list of names, and joint cooking produce what Durkheim would call mechanical solidarity based on shared beliefs and practices, a framework also applied to *tahlil akbar* (Azizah, 2026). Local traditions in other Indonesian communities likewise function as adaptive mechanisms that preserve solidarity amid modernization (Parawangsa et al., 2025). Informants acknowledged that modernization has changed participation, as some youth who work outside the hamlet attend only the *kenduri* (I3, I6). The tradition therefore persists not because it is unchanged but because its organization has adapted.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the *mass ruwahan* at Al-Idrus Mosque, Dukuh Kauman, integrates Islamic teachings with Javanese local wisdom through a structured ritual cycle. Regarding the first research question, the tradition consists of four sequential rites: the recitation of the names of the deceased, *khotmil Qur'an*, communal *kenduri* with food distribution, and *tahlil* with collective prayer. Regarding the second question, these rites operate as a system of symbols in Geertz's sense, expressing spiritual, religious, and solidarity values and serving as both a model of and a model for communal life before Ramadan. Regarding the third question, community leaders sustain the tradition by distributing roles among the *kyai*, the *takmir*, RT heads, women's groups, and youth. Theoretically, the study shows that *mass ruwahan* can be understood as a collective *slametan* for all deceased residents, which extends Geertz's analysis beyond household rituals and figure centered *haul*. This study is limited to a single site, one ritual cycle, and a small number of informants, so its findings cannot be generalized. Mosque administrators are advised to document the list of names, procedures, and funding of the tradition, and to continue involving youth in its organization. Future research could compare several hamlets and examine how younger generations interpret and participate in the tradition over time.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that this research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Muhammad Khoiril Anam contributed to the conceptualization, research design, data collection, and manuscript drafting. Amir Awaludin contributed to the supervision, analysis, and interpretation of the research findings. Salsa Zahrul Anam contributed to the literature review, data collection, and manuscript writing. Muhammad Lutfi Fadli contributed to the literature review, manuscript drafting, and final editing. All authors have reviewed and approved the final version of this manuscript.

GENERATIVE AI STATEMENT

The authors declare that generative artificial intelligence (AI) was used in the preparation of this manuscript to help improve language clarity, grammatical structure, and academic writing. The use of AI was limited to supporting the writing and editing process. All content, research findings, interpretations, and references have been reviewed and verified by the authors. The authors take full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, integrity, and final content of this manuscript.

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