

Professional Training Model for Prospective Mutawif among Youth Delegates

Aminatul Ummah*, Mutrofin, Bobby Rachman Santoso, Salma Sayidatul Ula, Shofi Salsabila, Rohmatul Hadi, Rizky Setiawan. Moch. Irgi Fahlevi, Akbar Abdul Latifef, Chusnul Chotimah

Universitas Islam Negeri Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung, East Java, Indonesia

Email: aminatulummah@uinsatu.ac.id

ABSTRACT

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*Corresponding Author

The implementation of Hajj and Umrah rituals requires professional guidance due to the procedural complexity of *manasik* and the increasingly diverse socio-demographic backgrounds of Indonesian pilgrims. This community service project therefore aims to strengthen the professional capacity of prospective *mutawifs* among East Java youth representatives through a structured and participatory training model. The program employed a Participatory Action Research (PAR) approach, engaging participants as active collaborators in needs assessment, training design, implementation, and evaluation. Data were collected through pre- and post-training assessments, observation during *manasik* simulations, reflective discussions, and performance evaluations. The findings indicate a significant improvement in participants' mastery of *fiqh al-manasik* and ritual procedures. Participants also demonstrated enhanced communication competence in guiding elderly pilgrims and managing group dynamics. Conflict resolution and crisis-response skills improved through scenario-based simulations. Moreover, the training strengthened ethical awareness, service orientation, and spiritual responsibility as *mutawifs*. Participants reported increased self-confidence and readiness to serve in real pilgrimage contexts. This program contributes a replicable youth-based *mutawif* capacity-building model that integrates technical, interpersonal, and spiritual competencies. It is recommended that religious institutions and Hajj service providers adopt sustainable, competency-based training frameworks to prepare future professional *mutawifs*.

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INTRODUCTION

The obligation of Hajj for financially and physically capable Muslims represents one of the most complex ritual practices in Islam. In practice, the increasing number of Indonesian pilgrims each year is accompanied by diverse socio-demographic characteristics, including differences in age, education, health conditions, and religious literacy (Fallah & Muhajarah, 2024). These complexities demand professional religious guidance to ensure that rituals are performed correctly and safely (Alabdulhadi & Alkandari, 2024; Dewi & Zaenurrosyid, 2023; Huda et al., 2022). Ideally, *mutawifs* are expected to possess comprehensive knowledge of *fiqh al-manasik*, leadership capacity, crisis management skills, and strong spiritual integrity (Subhan et al., 2023; Zulfikarijah & Santi, 2024). However, empirical realities indicate a mismatch between normative expectations and field conditions, particularly in the limited availability of well-trained young *mutawifs* in several regions of Indonesia, including East Java. Travel agencies frequently report difficulties in recruiting competent youth-based *mutawifs* despite the growing demand for guidance services.

Scholarly literature consistently emphasizes that effective Hajj and Umrah management requires professional religious assistance supported by standardized competencies (Saleh et al., 2022; Showail, 2022). Studies on pilgrimage management highlight that ritual complexity, crowd dynamics, and cross-cultural interaction necessitate trained facilitators who are not only knowledgeable but also emotionally intelligent and service-oriented (Maliha & Rahayu, 2024; Mursalat & Asy'ari, 2025; Sahrir et al., 2021). Theoretical frameworks in religious service management stress competency-based training, certification mechanisms, and ethical supervision as core elements of professionalization (Mahbob et al., 2025; Mahmad et al., 2021). In addition, research in Islamic education underscores the integration of spiritual mentoring with technical guidance as a holistic approach to religious facilitation (Faiz et al., 2023; Ridlo & Yanti, 2024; Zuhdi et al., 2024). Despite these conceptual advancements, many training models remain sporadic, short-term, and not specifically designed for youth empowerment.

East Java represents one of Indonesia's major contributors to Hajj and Umrah pilgrims, making it a strategic region for *mutawif* development initiatives. The province hosts numerous Islamic educational institutions and travel agencies, yet structured regeneration of professional *mutawifs* among youth remains limited. Considering that pilgrimage guidance requires physical endurance and adaptive leadership, youth involvement becomes both a necessity and a strategic investment. This study therefore focuses on empowering youth representatives from various districts in East Java through a structured *mutawif* training program.

The complexity of ritual implementation and the need for structured guidance systems (Ilias et al., 2022; Ishak et al., 2025; Jamaludin et al., 2022). The strategic role of *mutawifs* in ensuring ritual compliance and logistical coordination (Fatmawatie & Endri, 2022; Hasnawati et al., 2021; Hikmah et al., 2025). Fallah and Muhajarah (2024) analyzed the spiritual mentoring function of *mutawifs* as motivators and mediators during pilgrimage. Faiza (2025) identified communication competence and interpersonal skills as key determinants of effective guidance. Baharum and Husin (2024) documented cases of ritual errors caused by inadequate assistance. Aini and Ardiansyah (2025) explored training simulations as tools for improving practical readiness. Adnan et al. (2024) argued for sustainable and competency-based certification models in *mutawif* development. While these studies provide valuable insights into professionalism, training methods, and service challenges, most of them focus on general institutional frameworks rather than youth-specific empowerment models.

Although previous studies underline the importance of professionalism and certification, they rarely address how youth-based capacity building can systematically bridge the competence gap in *mutawif* services. The theoretical discourse assumes the availability of qualified human resources, yet empirical realities reveal limited structured pathways for young candidates to enter the profession. Furthermore, most training initiatives emphasize short-term workshops rather than participatory and reflective learning models. The novelty lies in integrating technical, interpersonal, and spiritual competencies within a single structured empowerment model tailored to regional conditions in East Java.

This study seeks to examine the effectiveness of structured *mutawif* training for youth representatives in East Java. The central research questions are how can a participatory and competency-based training model be implemented to prepare youth as professional *mutawifs*?. The study focuses on exploring improvements in *fiqh* mastery, communication skills, conflict management ability, and service-oriented character. By framing the inquiry in question form, the research establishes a clear analytical direction. Ultimately, the objective is to assess whether structured youth empowerment can effectively address the shortage of professional *mutawifs*. Therefore, the research problem centers on the relationship between training design and professional readiness.

This study argues that sustainable regeneration of professional *mutawifs* requires structured youth empowerment grounded in participatory and competency-based approaches. The temporary hypothesis proposes that integrating technical instruction, simulation practice, and reflective mentoring within a PAR framework will significantly enhance youth readiness as professional *mutawifs*. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to religious service management literature and practically to training institutions and travel agencies. Moreover, the model offers policy implications for long-term human resource planning in Hajj and Umrah services. By strengthening youth

capacity, the study supports the continuity and quality assurance of pilgrimage guidance in Indonesia. Therefore, this research positions youth-based *mutawif* training not merely as an educational initiative but as a strategic investment in the future of professional religious services.

METHOD

This community engagement research consisted of youth representatives from various districts in East Java who participated in the prospective *mutawif* training program. These participants were selected based on their active involvement in Islamic organizations, prior exposure to religious activities, and interest in serving as Hajj and Umrah guides. This study employed a Participatory Action Research (PAR) design as its primary methodological framework. PAR was selected because it integrates participation, action, and research into a cyclical process aimed at generating both knowledge and practical transformation (Cornish et al., 2023). The approach positioned youth participants as co-researchers who were actively involved in identifying problems, designing training modules, implementing activities, and reflecting on outcomes. The research followed iterative cycles consisting of problem identification, planning, action, observation, evaluation, and reflection (see Table 1).

Data were obtained from primary and secondary sources. Primary data were collected directly from youth participants through pre- and post-training assessments, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), observation during simulation exercises, and reflective journals. Secondary data were gathered from institutional documents, training curricula, certification standards, and relevant policy guidelines concerning Hajj and Umrah services. Data collection techniques emphasized participatory engagement, allowing participants to articulate their experiences and self-assess competency growth. Observational instruments were used to measure practical performance during *manasik* simulations, while structured questionnaires assessed cognitive and affective improvements (Oliveira, 2023).

Table 1. Data Collection Matrix

Research Stage	Data Source	Technique	Instrument	Expected Output
Problem Identification	Youth participants	FGD, Interview	Interview guide	Identification of competency gaps
Planning	Participants & Trainers	Collaborative workshop	Planning notes	Structured training design
Implementation	Youth participants	Observation, Simulation	Observation checklist	Performance assessment
Evaluation	Participants	Pre-post test	Structured questionnaire	Competency improvement data
Reflection	Participants & Researchers	Reflective discussion	Reflection sheet	Program refinement insights

Data analysis was conducted using a qualitative-descriptive approach combined with simple quantitative comparison for pre- and post-test results. Qualitative data from interviews, FGDs, and reflections were analyzed through thematic coding to identify patterns related to competency development, challenges, and empowerment outcomes. Observational data were interpreted using performance indicators aligned with professional mutawif standards. Quantitative assessment scores were compared to measure cognitive and technical improvement after the intervention. Triangulation across multiple data sources enhanced credibility and minimized bias. The analysis process remained collaborative, as preliminary findings were discussed with participants to validate interpretations. Through this systematic analytical procedure, the study ensured that conclusions reflected both empirical evidence and participatory consensus.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Mutawif Training Activities

The first major activity in the community engagement program titled “Prospective Hajj and Umrah Mutawif Training for East Java Youth Representatives” was the Supporting Professional Session. This session was conducted from 09:30 to 10:30 a.m. and was delivered by Mrs. Nyai H. Nonik Chudaifah Aini Qoriroh, an experienced owner of a Hajj and Umrah travel bureau who has guided thousands of pilgrims from various regions of Indonesia. Her extensive professional background provided practical insights that enriched the training process.



Figure 1. Professional Support Materials

In her presentation in Figure 1, Mrs. Nyai Aini emphasized the importance of comprehensive competency for prospective mutawifs, covering not only religious knowledge but also administrative, managerial, and service-related aspects. She began by inviting participants to understand that the profession of Hajj and Umrah guidance carries both high spiritual value and significant social responsibility. She stated, “A mutawif is not merely a ritual guide but also an

ambassador of da'wah entrusted with the responsibility to provide the best service to pilgrims." This statement underscored the moral and professional dimensions embedded in the role.

She further elaborated that mastery of fiqh al-hajj and umrah constitutes the fundamental foundation for professional guidance. According to her explanation, a mutawif must thoroughly understand the pillars (arkan) and obligatory acts (wajibat) of Hajj, the prohibitions during ihram, and the detailed procedures of ritual implementation. She stressed that even minor errors in guidance could affect the validity and spiritual completeness of pilgrims' worship.

In addition to religious mastery, Mrs. Nyai Aini highlighted the importance of understanding regulatory frameworks and licensing requirements. She explained that professional mutawifs should be familiar with the legal basis governing pilgrimage services, including Law Number 8 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of Hajj and Umrah. She noted, "Legal knowledge enables mutawifs to confidently and professionally explain policies to pilgrims." This regulatory awareness strengthens institutional credibility and ensures compliance with national standards.

Operational management was another critical component addressed in the session. She described the need for mutawifs to coordinate transportation, accommodation, catering, and communication with relevant stakeholders in Saudi Arabia, including airlines, hotels, and Muassasah authorities. Effective coordination, she explained, ensures smooth, safe, and organized pilgrimage experiences. Beyond technical arrangements, she emphasized the importance of service excellence, empathy, patience, and effective communication when dealing with pilgrims of diverse backgrounds. As she wisely expressed, "The key to a successful mutawif lies in a patient heart and gentle speech. Pilgrims who are served with compassion will always remember their guide."

Moreover, Mrs. Nyai Aini addressed the evolving business and marketing dimensions of the pilgrimage industry. She encouraged prospective mutawifs to understand digital transformation, including the strategic use of social media and online marketing platforms to reach broader communities. She concluded by asserting that mutawif professionalism is measured not solely by knowledge but by moral character, responsibility, adaptability to technological advancements, and responsiveness to the dynamics of modern pilgrims.

The training atmosphere was highly interactive and engaging. Youth representatives from East Java actively took notes and raised practical questions related to real-life field challenges, such as assisting elderly pilgrims, managing travel schedules, and handling emergency situations in the Holy Land. The Supporting Professional Session significantly enhanced participants' understanding of the professional landscape of mutawif services. The session not only expanded their theoretical knowledge but also provided inspiration and role modeling from an experienced practitioner. Ultimately, the activity

strengthened participants' awareness that becoming a mutawif requires not only technical competence but also ethical integrity, emotional intelligence, and the ability to serve pilgrims with sincerity and compassion.

Pilgrim Service Skills Development

The Pilgrim Service Skills session was conducted as a continuation of the previous Supporting Professional Session within the community engagement program titled "Prospective Hajj and Umrah Mutawif Training for East Java Youth Representatives." The session took place at PT. Menara Kamilah Tours & Travel Tulungagung from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., facilitated by the same speaker, Mrs. Nyai H. Nonik Chudaifah Aini Qoriroh, an experienced Hajj and Umrah travel bureau owner who has accompanied thousands of pilgrims from various regions..

In this session, affectionately known as Ummi Aini, she delivered material entitled "Basic Pilgrim Service Skills: Professional, Communicative, and Humanistic." She emphasized that a *mutawif* is not merely a logistical guide but also a spiritual companion responsible for maintaining the pilgrims' *tranquility*, devotion, and comfort throughout the pilgrimage journey. According to her, service to pilgrims is not simply a technical duty but also an act of da'wah that embodies sincerity, patience, and exemplary conduct. This perspective framed service delivery as both a professional responsibility and a moral-spiritual mission.

Ummi Aini explained that effective communication is the primary determinant of successful pilgrim service. A *mutawif* must adapt communication styles, use polite and easily understood language, and pay attention to facial expressions and body language during interactions. She stressed the importance of understanding pilgrims' diverse backgrounds, as each individual possesses different levels of comprehension, emotional needs, and expectations. A competent *mutawif*, she noted, does not merely provide instructions but also becomes a patient listener and mediator when conflicts arise among group members.

Ummi Aini shared her extensive field experience accompanying pilgrims in the Holy Land. She recounted situations involving physically exhausted pilgrims, individuals panicking after being separated from their group, and others exhibiting stubborn behaviour during stressful moments. These real-life narratives are delivered in a light-hearted and sometimes humorous manner, creating a warm and engaging training atmosphere. The youth representatives from East Java demonstrated high enthusiasm, actively taking notes and asking practical questions about potential field scenarios they might encounter.

Observational findings indicated that participants developed a deeper understanding of empathy, patience, and interpersonal communication as core elements of pilgrim service. The end-of-session evaluation showed measurable improvement in participants' awareness of the ethical and professional

dimensions of *mutawif* responsibilities. Participants increasingly recognized that service excellence requires emotional intelligence alongside technical mastery (see Table 2). The session therefore functioned as a critical complement to the previous professional material, strengthening the affective and behavioral dimensions of competency development.

Table 2. Core Competencies Developed in the Pilgrim Service Skills Session

Competency Area	Learning Focus	Practical Application	Observed Outcome
Professional Ethics	Service as da'wah and moral responsibility	Maintaining sincerity and integrity	Increased awareness of ethical accountability
Communication Skills	Verbal clarity, tone adaptation, body language	Guiding diverse pilgrims effectively	Improved interpersonal confidence
Emotional Intelligence	Empathy and patience	Assisting elderly, anxious, or tired pilgrims	Greater emotional sensitivity
Conflict Mediation	Active listening and problem-solving	Handling misunderstandings within groups	Enhanced mediation readiness
Service Orientation	Humanistic and compassionate care	Ensuring pilgrims' comfort and tranquility	Stronger service commitment

The Pilgrim Service Skills session successfully strengthened the humanistic and communicative competencies of the youth representatives. The training not only transferred knowledge but also shaped character formation, reinforcing the understanding that professional *mutawif* service requires compassion, adaptability, and ethical integrity. As a result, participants demonstrated improved readiness to serve as capable, courteous, and da'wah-oriented pilgrimage guides.

Religious Formation and Hajj–Umrah Ritual Practicum

The Religious and *Manasik* Hajj–Umrah session featured *Ustadz* Dzulhaq Reza Syahranni'am as the main facilitator in Figure 2. This session aimed to strengthen both the theological understanding and practical competence of East Java youth representatives as prospective *mutawifs*. The activity combined structured explanation of ritual jurisprudence with direct simulation exercises to ensure integrative learning outcomes. The primary objective was to equip participants with systematic knowledge of Hajj and Umrah rituals while preparing them to guide pilgrims effectively in real field situations.

Ustadz Reza provided a comprehensive explanation of the pillars (*arkan*), obligatory acts (*wajibat*), and recommended practices (*sunnah*) of Hajj and Umrah. He also elaborated on the spiritual meanings underlying each ritual act. Tawaf, he explained, symbolizes total submission and the centering of life around Allah; sa'i represents perseverance and continuous effort; and the stoning of the

jamarat signifies resistance against temptation and negative desires. Through systematic and inspirational delivery, participants came to understand that Hajj and Umrah are not merely ritual performances but profound spiritual journeys that cultivate patience, sincerity, and discipline.



Figure 2. Religious Session

The program proceeded with a structured *manasik* simulation. Participants were divided into ten small groups, and each group received a case scenario reflecting real-life situations commonly faced by *mutawif*s in the field. Sample cases included calming a pilgrim who had lost valuable belongings, assisting an elderly pilgrim experiencing fatigue during tawaf, and mediating minor conflicts among group members. Each group was given approximately 30 minutes to discuss and prepare a short role-play performance demonstrating appropriate responses and service strategies.

The simulation session was conducted from 2:45 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., during which each group performed their assigned scenario. The dramatizations depicted various contexts, such as pre-departure briefings at hotels, pilgrims becoming separated from the group, and emotionally distressed pilgrims due to exhaustion. Although presented with light *humor*, each performance maintained strong educational value and demonstrated communication skills, empathy, leadership, and problem-solving ability. Participants who were not performing actively observed and provided supportive feedback, creating an interactive and collaborative learning environment.

After each presentation, Ustadz Reza provided direct evaluative feedback, assessing aspects such as clarity of speech, emotional control, assertiveness, leadership presence, and ability to calm and guide pilgrims effectively. He emphasized that service excellence requires empathy, patience, and emotional intelligence, as pilgrims come from diverse backgrounds and possess varying psychological conditions. His feedback reinforced the integration of technical ritual knowledge with moral character and professional demeanor.

Observational findings indicated high levels of enthusiasm and adaptive capacity among participants. The simulation exercises significantly enhanced their confidence, discipline, and sense of responsibility. Many participants

reported that the practicum allowed them to apply classroom-based knowledge in realistic contexts, transforming theoretical understanding into practical competence. The session also fostered deeper appreciation of spiritual values underlying ritual guidance, strengthening internal motivation and ethical awareness.

The Religious and *Manasik* Hajj–Umrah session generated substantial positive impact. Participants gained systematic comprehension of ritual structures, improved their ability to articulate spiritual meanings to pilgrims, and developed practical skills in guidance and crisis management. The concluding reflection session reaffirmed the importance of integrity (*akhlaqul karimah*), responsibility, and moral leadership for *mutawifs*. Consequently, this training program not only enhanced technical proficiency but also cultivated spiritual maturity and professional readiness, laying a strong foundation for the emergence of knowledgeable, resilient, and ethically grounded prospective *mutawifs* committed to serving the ummah with integrity.

Discussion

The comprehensive competency development is central to the professionalization of prospective *mutawifs*. The emphasis on integrating religious mastery with administrative, managerial, and ethical responsibilities confirms that *mutawif* professionalism extends beyond ritual knowledge. This aligns with prior research stating that pilgrimage guidance requires multidimensional competence, including legal awareness and operational management (Abu et al., 2025). The speaker's assertion that a *mutawif* is "an ambassador of da'wah" reinforces the conceptualization of religious service as both spiritual duty and public responsibility. Such findings support the argument that professional religious guidance must combine technical precision with moral accountability (Mahbob et al., 2025). Therefore, the first training component effectively addressed the theoretical–practical gap in *mutawif* preparation.

Concerning pilgrim service skills, highlights the importance of interpersonal communication and emotional intelligence in managing diverse pilgrim characteristics. Effective communication, empathy, and conflict mediation were identified as core competencies necessary for ensuring pilgrims' comfort and spiritual focus. This supports previous studies indicating that service quality in Hajj and Umrah management significantly influences pilgrims' overall experience and satisfaction (Hasnawati et al., 2021). The framing of service as da'wah through compassion also resonates with research emphasizing ethical and humanistic dimensions in Islamic service professions (Mursalat & Asy'ari, 2025). The interactive and experience-based approach used in this session demonstrates that soft skills training can substantially strengthen youth readiness for real-life field challenges.

The Religious and *Manasik* Hajj–Umrah practicum, illustrates the effectiveness of experiential learning in strengthening both cognitive understanding and practical performance. The integration of theological explanation with simulation-based role-play enabled participants to internalize not only procedural accuracy but also spiritual meaning. The simulation exercises also fostered leadership, confidence, and crisis-response capacity among participants. Such practical engagement supports the view that competency-based religious training should include scenario-based learning models to enhance field preparedness (Amirah et al., 2025; Nufus et al., 2023). Thus, the combination of doctrinal instruction and applied simulation proved to be pedagogically effective.

Across the three findings, a consistent pattern emerges: professional mutawif formation requires integration of technical, interpersonal, and spiritual competencies. The training program’s structure reflects a holistic capacity-building model that aligns with participatory empowerment principles. Previous research has noted that fragmented or short-term training often fails to produce sustainable professional outcomes (Maghfirah et al., 2023). In contrast, this program’s structured design—combining lectures, case discussions, simulations, and reflective evaluation—illustrates a comprehensive approach to youth regeneration in religious services. The participatory elements also strengthened ownership and internal motivation among participants, which are critical factors in long-term professional commitment.

The findings contribute to the discourse on religious service management by demonstrating that youth empowerment can function as a strategic solution to competency shortages. The integration of moral character formation with technical proficiency confirms that professionalism in Islamic contexts cannot be separated from ethical integrity. This supports the broader argument that religious leadership development must be value-driven and community-oriented (Marzuki, 2023). Consequently, the study extends existing literature by presenting an applied and youth-centered professionalization model.

The implications of this research are significant for higher education institutions, Hajj and Umrah travel agencies, and policymakers. The positive outcomes suggest that structured, simulation-based, and participatory training programs should be institutionalized as part of sustainable mutawif regeneration strategies. Policymakers may consider integrating youth-focused competency development into certification pathways to ensure long-term service quality improvement (Sahrir et al., 2021; Subhan et al., 2023). Furthermore, travel agencies can collaborate with universities to create continuous mentorship ecosystems that bridge academic knowledge and field practice. Ultimately, this study implies that strengthening youth capacity is not merely a training initiative but a strategic investment in ensuring the professionalism, ethical integrity, and sustainability of Hajj and Umrah guidance services in Indonesia.

CONCLUSION

The most important finding of this study is that the professional development of prospective mutawifs requires an integrated model combining mastery of fiqh al-manasik, communication skills, emotional intelligence, and spiritual integrity within a participatory training framework. The key lesson is that structured simulations, experiential learning, and reflective evaluation significantly enhance youth readiness, confidence, and ethical responsibility as future pilgrimage guides. This study contributes by updating perspectives on youth-centered religious service management and integrating cognitive, affective, and behavioral competencies. It also bridges community engagement methodologies with professional religious training.

Nevertheless, this study is limited to a specific regional context (East Java) with a relatively small and less diverse participant group in terms of gender, age, and background. The research primarily employed a qualitative participatory design without large-scale survey validation. Therefore, future studies should involve broader demographic representation and apply mixed-method or survey-based approaches to produce more comprehensive evidence that can inform more targeted and effective policy development in Hajj and Umrah service management.

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