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HISTORICAL TRANSFORMATION AND STRATEGY FOR STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF HAJJ AND UMRAH GUIDANCE GROUPS IN HAJJ ORGANIZATION

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Abstract

This study examines the historical transformation, roles, and functions of Indonesia's Hajj and Umrah Guidance Groups (KBIHU) as community-based partners in national Hajj management. Using a qualitative library research approach, the study analyzed secondary sources, including laws, ministerial regulations, academic studies, government reports, and policy documents selected purposively based on relevance and credibility. Data were analyzed through content analysis, thematic coding, and source triangulation. The findings show that KBIHU originated from community-led ritual learning initiatives, was institutionalized through Ministerial Decree No. 374-A/1995, and was later formalized within regulatory frameworks, including KMA No. 371/2002 and Presidential Regulation No. 31/2019. The nomenclature change to KBIHU in 2019 and subsequent technical regulations, including PMA No. 7/2023, expanded its responsibilities to include Umrah guidance, clarified financial boundaries, and introduced accreditation and accountability mechanisms. Functionally, KBIHU supports Hajj management through administrative socialization, pedagogical *manasik* training, guideline development in coordination with the Ministry, in-field assistance in Saudi Arabia, post-Hajj

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mentoring, and coordination with official Hajj agencies. These roles complement rather than replace government functions, particularly by addressing gaps in formal guidance for elderly and health-vulnerable pilgrims and reducing procedural errors and anxiety. Despite broad national coverage, reaching 1,577 units by July 2025, KBIHU continues to face challenges related to uneven service quality, limited counselor competence, and weak monitoring mechanisms. The study concludes that strengthening KBIHU's institutional legitimacy and service quality through standardized training modules, accreditation, separation of financial roles, and indicator-based evaluation is essential to ensure safe, equitable, and spiritually meaningful Hajj services in Indonesia amid rising pilgrim numbers. This study contributes to Hajj management and Islamic public service literature by clarifying the institutional evolution and strategic role of KBIHU in community-based pilgrim guidance.

Keywords: KBIHU; Hajj Management; Pilgrim Guidance; Institutional Legitimacy; Islamic Public Service

INTRODUCTION

The implementation of the Hajj pilgrimage in Indonesia has shown fluctuations and a trend towards increasing numbers of participants following the relaxation of post-pandemic quotas (Albatta, 2025). Official data from the Indonesian Ministry of Religious Affairs reports that the quota and departure of Hajj pilgrims are managed through the Integrated Computerized Hajj System (SISKOHAT), and official records show that the number of registrants and departures reaches hundreds of thousands per year. For example, the Indonesian Hajj Statistics recorded the number of regular Indonesian Hajj pilgrims departing in recent years at around 200,000–230,000 per year (Prasetyo, 2025). This increase in the number of pilgrims puts pressure on the capacity of administrative services, logistics, and accommodations, especially during the post-pandemic adjustment period when queues, waiting times, and quota management are once again volatile.

As the country with the largest Muslim population, Indonesia faces demographic challenges that impact the organization of the Hajj. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the latest census report, and demographic estimates, Indonesia's Muslim population is estimated to be in the hundreds of millions by the mid-2020s; BPS and national religious research institutions regularly publish these figures to support large-scale religious service planning (BPS, 2025 Population Projection). The large number of

prospective pilgrims, combined with the diversity of age, education, health conditions, and socioeconomic backgrounds, requires Hajj organizers to design differentiated coaching approaches to meet the informational, medical, and spiritual needs of each group of pilgrims.

Formal guidance for prospective Hajj pilgrims provided by the Ministry of Religious Affairs, Regency/City Ministry of Religious Affairs offices, and Hajj education units is often general in nature and focuses on administrative procedures, basic ritual management, and technical departure information. Academic evaluations and institutional reports indicate that these formal guidance materials do not fully provide a thorough understanding of the ritual context, variations in local practices, health management during the journey, and psycho-spiritual preparedness—critical needs, especially for elderly pilgrims or pilgrims with comorbidities (Luthfiah & Rosmawati, 2025). This gap contributes to inefficiencies in on-the-ground services and potential issues with pilgrim safety and satisfaction.

Hajj and Umrah Guidance Groups (*Kelompok Bimbingan Ibadah Haji dan Umrah*/KBIHU) emerged as a civil society response to the limitations of formal guidance; the Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia Number 371 of 2002 does recognize the role of KBIHU as one of the providers of guidance and support for prospective Hajj pilgrims that is socio-religious and community in nature. KBIHU provides guidance that is often more contextual (Fasa & Rozaq, 19 C.E.), for example, practical ritual training, tawaf and *sa'i* simulations, Hajj health knowledge, and administrative assistance, which complements government services (Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs No. 371/2002). However, the role of KBIHU also raises the need for quality regulation, accreditation, and formal coordination to ensure uniform guidance standards and integration with national Hajj policy. Policy recommendations from academic publications and Ministry of Religious Affairs reports suggest strengthening KBIHU's capacity through standardized modules, trainer training, and evidence-based evaluation mechanisms.

The historical dynamics and strengthening of the role of the Hajj and Umrah Guidance Group (KBIHU) show that this institution grew from the community's need for more structured guidance on Hajj rituals, then became stronger after formal recognition through Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs No. 374-A of 1995, which positioned KBIHU as a government partner in guiding Hajj pilgrims (Mufattahah, 2019). From a historical perspective, Suci's (2025) research on the development of KBIH confirms that

guidance groups emerged in response to the increasing complexity of Hajj implementation and the need for pre-Hajj and post-Hajj assistance. Hamid's (2020) research in the KBIHU area of Yogyakarta shows that KBIHU has a strategic role as a government partner in helping pilgrims understand Hajj rituals. However, the quality of management still needs to be strengthened through a Total Quality Management approach to ensure services are more professional and better adapted to the needs of pilgrims. In line with this, a study of the KBIHU (Islamic Community Empowerment and Development Group) in Banyumas confirmed that improving the quality of guidance and counseling services is a primary demand amidst competition between KBIHUs, limited competence of some counselors, and diverse levels of understanding among pilgrims (Haidar, 2024)s. Other studies also emphasized the position of KBIH as a working partner of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in guiding prospective Hajj pilgrims, so that strengthening the KBIH institution is not only related to the technical function of the Hajj rituals, but also to its contribution to the smooth running of the Hajj pilgrimage as a whole (Fitri, 2023). Meanwhile, a study of Hajj guidance management indicates that KBIHU is expected to provide the best possible guidance, services, and protection to prospective pilgrims through continuous improvements in systems, management, and service quality (Rizqi, 2025). Thus, these six studies together show that strengthening KBIHU's role as a partner in organizing the Hajj pilgrimage rests on two main factors: historical-institutional legitimacy and improved quality of pilgrim service management.

Several previous studies have shown that KBIH studies tend to focus on management, satisfaction, and loyalty. Research addressing its history, functions, and roles is relatively limited. Therefore, to fill this gap, research on the history, roles, and functions of KBIH is relevant to the institution's development and to increasing public understanding of KBIH.

This article will discuss the history, role, and function of the KBIH institution. The aim is to understand the historical study, role, and function of the KBIH. This study will answer the question: What is the history of KBIH's birth and development in Indonesia? What is the strategic role of KBIH in the national Hajj administration system? What is the institutional function of KBIH in guiding Hajj pilgrims? To answer these questions, the researcher will divide this study into several main discussions. First, the researcher presents an introduction containing the background, urgency, and focus of this study. Second, the researcher explains the history, role, and function of KBIH (Hajj Guidance Group). This

study concludes with a summary of the research findings and recommendations for KBIH in the future.

METHODS

The researchers in this study used a qualitative approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the concept, history, role, and function of the Hajj Guidance Group (KBIH). The qualitative approach was chosen because the study focused on the interpretation, description, and analysis of sociocultural phenomena without relying on statistical or quantification techniques (Moleong, 2014; Sugiyono, 2019). The study was library research, so the research process relied on a review of relevant written sources (Yusuf, 2016).

The research data sources consisted of secondary data, including scientific journal articles, books, reports, policy documents, and laws and regulations related to the KBIHU. The selection of library materials was carried out purposively based on the relevance and credibility of the sources to the research theme. Inclusion criteria included topic suitability, publication quality (peer-reviewed for journals), and relevance to the historical, organizational, or regulatory aspects of the KBIHU. To ensure the breadth of the study, the literature search included national and international academic databases as well as official documents from government and religious institutions (Adlini et al., 2022; Kusumastuti & Khoiron, 2021).

Data collection techniques involved documenting and downloading library sources that met the criteria, then analyzing them using content analysis to identify themes, patterns, and constructions of meaning related to the role and function of the KBIHU. The analysis process included thematic coding, categorization, and source triangulation to increase the validity of the findings (Rosidah et al., 2023). The results of the analysis are presented descriptively and critically, with an emphasis on the relationship between the literature findings and the regulatory framework governing the KBIHU.

RESULTS

History of KBIH

The Dutch colonial government did issue regulations regarding the implementation of the Hajj through the Consular Ordonnantie of 1859; however, the substance of this policy did not include special Hajj passports or guidance programs at ports. Instead, the ordinance contained provisions emphasizing restrictions, supervision, and ideological control over pilgrims (Hindasah & SM, 2018). From this perspective, the Hajj pilgrimage at that time was structured in a fairly systematic, straightforward manner. In the post-independence period, the Hajj pilgrimage became more structured following the issuance of Presidential Decree Number 22 of 1969 (Kepres 1969). This decree stated that the government would further regulate the Hajj pilgrimage. Thus, the 1969 Presidential Decree marked the beginning of modern management of the Hajj pilgrimage in Indonesia (Ulya, 2024).

However, the guidance and regulatory system related to this matter had not been structured; as a result, many prospective pilgrims engaged in independent learning through Islamic scholars (*kyai*s) and Islamic boarding schools (*pondok pesantren*) to understand the jurisprudence of the Hajj. Systematic guidance on Hajj rituals was only realized in 1995 through the Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs Number 374-A concerning the Implementation of Hajj Guidance by the Community. With the introduction of this policy, the organization of the Hajj pilgrimage began to institutionalize, leading to the establishment of the Hajj Guidance Group (KBIH) in Indonesia (Yuhadi et al., 2022). The KBIH, a non-governmental organization, is tasked with guiding prospective pilgrims in the spiritual, technical, and administrative aspects of pilgrimage. The establishment of the KBIH aims to provide pilgrims with a deeper understanding of the procedures for performing the Hajj pilgrimage in the Holy Land.

In 2002, the government issued Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia Number 371 of 2002 concerning the Implementation of the Hajj and Umrah Pilgrimages. This decree emphasized the Hajj Guidance Group's (KBIH) role in organizing the Hajj pilgrimage in Indonesia. Article 1, number 12, states that the Hajj Guidance Group (hereinafter, KBIH) is an Islamic social and religious institution that guides the Hajj pilgrimage (Beben, 2015). Thus, KBIH has been recognized as a civil society social institution, not as a state apparatus.

In 2003, the government revised KMA Number 371 of 2002 by issuing Decree of the Minister of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia Number 396 of 2003. It made several adjustments, one of which related to Article 32, which was supplemented by Article 32a, which regulates the termination or revocation of KBIH permits—a provision not previously explained in KMA Number 371. The period from 2003 to 2019 was a crucial point for KBIH. During this period, many KBIH were indicated to have committed violations. For example, as quoted by 0Kemenag Kalsel (2007), one of the KBIH leaders charged a fee of 100 riyals per congregation to obtain better facilities. Subsequently, the Coordinating Ministry for Human Development and Culture stated that seven KBIHs were suspected of committing violations; this statement refers to an incident reported in 2014 (Wahid & Yarmunida, 2022).

In 2019, the term KBIH was changed to KBIHU (*Kelompok Bimbingan Ibadah Haji dan Umrah*/Hajj and Umrah Guidance Group), as stipulated in Article 1, paragraph 20 of Presidential Regulation Number 31 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of the Hajj and Umrah Pilgrimages. This change in terminology reflects the expansion of the guidance group's function, which is no longer limited to Hajj guidance alone but also includes Umrah guidance. During the transition period and service disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic through 2022, KBIH operations underwent significant adjustments. In late 2022, the Government issued the Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation, later ratified as Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation Number 7 of 2023, concerning Technical Guidelines for the Implementation of the Hajj Pilgrimage, which contains new operational provisions. One important provision is the prohibition on guidance providers from managing, deducting, or taking over pilgrims' living cost funds, in an effort to clarify the separation of guidance and fund management functions and to prevent abuse of authority (Noermalinda, 2024). Other technical provisions emphasize the accreditation, governance, and accountability standards of KBIH, ensuring its implementation is increasingly aligned with applicable laws and regulations.

These changes in nomenclature and technical regulations have a direct impact on the role of KBIHU (Islamic Student Associations) in the Hajj pilgrimage management system in Indonesia. With the regulation of fund management limits and the affirmation of accountability, KBIHU is better positioned as a provider of educational services and manasik guidance, with a focus on the quality of spiritual and technical guidance for the pilgrimage. At the same time, financial functions are delegated to official mechanisms such as the BPIH (Indonesian Islamic Development Bank) and designated financial institutions. Administrative

data as of July 2025 show 1,577 KBIH units across 34 provinces, indicating the extensive reach of the guidance network and the important role of KBIH in facilitating pilgrims' preparation for Hajj departure (Abdumar, 2025). However, challenges remain, including standardizing the quality of guidance across islands, monitoring the implementation of new provisions, and increasing the capacity of guidance resources to ensure more uniform, transparent guidance and to improve the spiritual and administrative readiness of pilgrims.

The Role of KBIH

PMA No. 7 2023 explicitly states that KBIHU (*Kelompok Bimbingan Ibadah Haji dan Umrah*) is an operational partner in the implementation of the Hajj and Umrah pilgrimages, coordinating directly with the Ministry of Religious Affairs. Therefore, the following researchers have compiled several roles of KBIHU in the implementation of the Hajj and Umrah pilgrimages in Indonesia.

1. The role of socializing the Hajj administrative procedures

KBIHU acts as a systematic and continuous information facilitator for prospective Hajj pilgrims, explaining the entire registration process in detail—from administrative requirements (identity documents, proof of vaccination, age and health requirements), the registration process (online/offline registration, file verification, system registration), to the queuing mechanism and payment terms (installment schedule, payment deadlines, consequences of late arrivals). This assistance goes beyond simply transferring information. KBIHU translates often-technical bureaucratic language into practical, easy-to-follow instructions and concrete steps, including facilitating document checks, form-filling simulations, and deadline notifications through meetings or digital communication. This structured approach helps prospective pilgrims anticipate the diverse requirements and potential policy changes, ensuring they are better prepared administratively before departure (Herawaty et al., 2022).

The role of the Hajj Registration Office (KBIHU) is crucial because the Hajj registration process is generally lengthy, multi-layered, and prone to administrative errors that can lead to delays or even cancellation of departure rights. Many prospective pilgrims, especially those from areas with limited access to information or limited digital literacy, are at risk of misunderstanding queue lines, quota priorities, or time-sensitive payment mechanisms.

With intensive support—including repeated checks, clarification of changing regulations, and guidance on health requirements and supporting documents—KBIHU can minimize errors, reduce the psychological burden on prospective pilgrims, and increase compliance with official procedures, making the administrative process more efficient and equitable (Solikha, 2025).

2. Educational role regarding Hajj policies and provisions in Indonesia

KBIHU (*Kelompok Bimbingan Ibadah Haji dan Umrah*/Hajj and Umrah Guidance Group) plays a strategic role as a partner of the Ministry of Religious Affairs in conveying information on Hajj rules and policies directly to prospective pilgrims. Based on Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation Number 7 of 2023, KBIHU has a mandatory duty to guide and accompany regular and special Hajj pilgrims, both in Indonesia and in Saudi Arabia, including by guiding Hajj rituals at least 15 times before departure. Through this outreach, KBIHU explains the rights of pilgrims, such as receiving guidance on rituals, Hajj identity, sharia life insurance, and protection as Indonesian Hajj pilgrims, as well as the obligations of pilgrims, such as registration with the Ministry of Religious Affairs, payment of BPIH to BPSBPIH, and compliance with the provisions of the organization (Rasyid, 2025).

The socialization conducted by KBIHU includes a structured Hajj activity schedule, starting with important stages such as determining the national quota, contracting for accommodation and transportation services, paying Hajj fees, and issuing Hajj visas, with the deadline for the 2026 Hajj being March 20, 2026. KBIHU also periodically releases data on guidance participants, has a structured guidance plan, and supports guidance activities for pilgrims in groups, in accordance with service agreements with pilgrims (Himpuh News, 2025). Through this coordination, pilgrims gain a comprehensive understanding of the Hajj implementation timeline and the technical requirements that must be met.

By providing direct, interactive information, pilgrims gain a better understanding of the Hajj administration system, equipping them with the skills, knowledge, and abilities needed to perform their pilgrimage. KBIHU is the frontline, interacting directly with pilgrims as the Ministry of Religious Affairs' primary stakeholder in ensuring the success of the Hajj (Kalteng Kemenag, 2023). The KBIHU, officially licensed by the Directorate General of Hajj and Umrah, helps strengthen pilgrim guidance services and coordinates pilgrims' well-being throughout the Hajj process.

3. The role of preparing guidance guidelines with the Ministry of Religion

KBIHU plays a strategic role in compiling Hajj guidance materials, such as books or modules, that refer to official government guidelines, particularly within the framework of Law Number 8 of 2019 concerning the Implementation of the Hajj and Umrah Pilgrimages and the Minister of Religious Affairs Regulation regarding KBIHU. By referring to these regulations, KBIHU is enabled and expected to become a government partner in guiding pilgrims, ensuring that the material presented remains in line with Islamic jurisprudence, Hajj governance, and pilgrim service standards (Rahayuningsih, 2025). The manasik guidebook compiled by KBIHU serves as a structural reference for pilgrims to systematically understand the pillars, obligations, and sunnah of Hajj, from administrative preparation to rituals in the Holy Land, while also strengthening the independence of pilgrims in carrying out their pilgrimage.

The presence of the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah (Kemenhaj) further clarifies the direction of formal cooperation between the government and KBIHU, particularly through the launch of the books "Hajj and Umrah Manasik Guidance Package" and "Hajj and Umrah Manasik Guidelines" in January–February 2026 as official guidance materials for pilgrims. The document explicitly states that KBIHU is a partner in implementing manasik guidance, thereby positioning KBIHU no longer as an independent entity competing with the government, but rather as part of an integrated guidance system oriented towards the quality of Hajj and Umrah implementation. This collaborative model aligns with research findings on the implementation of Hajj manasik guidance, which show that standardizing materials through official guidelines improves pilgrims' understanding, ritual discipline, and the spiritual quality of worship (Saribanon et al., 2026).

4. The role of assistance in carrying out the Hajj and Umrah pilgrimages, both in the homeland and in the holy land

KBIHU guides Hajj rituals before departure and provides direct support during the Hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia. In Indonesia, pilgrims receive theoretical and practical training in the rituals. In Saudi Arabia, KBIHU assigns a guide to each group to assist pilgrims in performing the rituals, such as *tawaf* (circumambulation), *sa'i* (circumambulation), *wukuf* (standing still), and stoning the devil. The presence of a guide helps prevent confusion, facilitates coordination, and maintains order and group unity. KBIHU not only guides the implementation of the pillars and obligations of the Hajj, but also guides voluntary worship

so that pilgrims can perform their rituals more perfectly. It includes guidance on Umrah, both before and after the Hajj peak (Shidiq, 2025).

5. The role of post-Hajj guidance

The KBIHU (Islamic Board of Trustees) plays a strategic role in ensuring that the transformative Hajj experience does not end after the pilgrims return home, but continues as an integral part of daily life through mentoring activities such as religious study groups and regular meetings. In this context, religious study groups are not merely religious rituals, but rather educational platforms that strengthen theological and practical understanding of Hajj values—such as sincerity of intention, patience, humility, and social awareness—and provide concrete guidance for applying them in family, work, and community settings (Amri et al., 2025). Regular meetings also serve as a monitoring mechanism. KBIHU facilitators can assess the extent to which pilgrims have internalized the changes, address any errors, and develop follow-up programs tailored to each group's needs.

Furthermore, post-Hajj guidance by KBIHU has the potential to foster sustainable behavioral change through social learning and positive reinforcement. By bringing together pilgrims experiencing similar spiritual journeys, KBIHU creates a mutually reinforcing community that reduces the likelihood of relapse into old behaviors. Concrete examples include the development of small groups to remind each other of routine worship, or joint social service initiatives that translate the values of Hajj into concrete actions. Furthermore, the effectiveness of guidance will be enhanced if KBIHU implements periodic, indicator-based evaluations, enabling adjustments to interventions and ongoing support for pilgrims who need assistance to sustain positive changes (Herawaty dkk, 2022).

6. Coordination role with official Hajj officials

The Hajj and Umrah Guidance Group (KBIHU) plays a strategic role as a government partner in organizing the Hajj pilgrimage, particularly by coordinating pilgrims, providing information, and maintaining order. A study on KBIHU in the Yogyakarta Area, a group that has received permission from the Ministry of Religion and is a very necessary government partner in helping pilgrims learn and deepen their Hajj rituals. The Ministry of Religion officially emphasized that KBIHU is no longer a competitor, but a partner in guidance and coaching of rituals, as mandated in Article 33 paragraph (1) of Law Number 8 of 2019, which states that "in organizing guidance and coaching of regular Hajj rituals, the Minister can involve KBIHU" (Hamid, 2020).

In collaboration with government officials (PPIH), KBIHU performs a coordination function to implement the Hajj in a more orderly and directed manner, in accordance with applicable regulations. Research shows that KBIHU plays an active role in maintaining pilgrims' health, providing counseling, and collaborating with medical personnel and related institutions, thereby indirectly supporting public order. The Ministry of Religious Affairs also emphasized that coordination, synergy, and collaboration in manasik guidance between the government and KBIHU must be improved, as this is a shared responsibility that ensures pilgrims understand the rules for implementing the Hajj and Umrah. With the involvement of standardized KBIHU (operational permits, accreditation, performance evaluation), the implementation of the Hajj is better managed and in accordance with regulations (Oktavia, 2025).

DISCUSSION

Functions of KBIHU

The KBIHU, which coordinates with the Ministry of Religious Affairs, is now coordinating with the Ministry of Hajj and Umrah. It has several functions in supporting the Hajj pilgrimage process in Indonesia. The following researchers cite regulations related to the KBIH in Indonesia:

1. As a government partner in organizing the Hajj

KBIHU does not assume government duties; rather, it serves as an implementing partner within the established regulatory framework. This role emphasizes adherence to official authority: KBIHU follows administrative procedures, adheres to operational guidelines from the ministry and the Hajj committee, and submits final decisions to authorized officials. By defining the boundaries of its responsibilities, KBIHU avoids duplicating functions and potential conflicts of authority, thereby maintaining the legitimacy and security of Hajj services. This approach also strengthens accountability—every KBIHU action is traceable to applicable standards and easily monitored by the relevant authorities (Herawaty, 2022).

In practice, the KBIHU actively coordinates with officials to support the smooth implementation of the Hajj guidance and service program. Coordination includes synchronizing guidance schedules, guide training, managing pilgrim logistics, and reporting mechanisms for any issues encountered in the field. Furthermore, the KBIHU serves as a

channel for policy information to pilgrims—translating technical regulations into easily understandable formats, reminding them of their obligations, and assisting in disseminating procedural changes (Ilyas, 2024). This synergy makes the Hajj implementation more orderly and focused, minimizes errors, and ensures that all activities are carried out in accordance with applicable regulations.

2. Additional guidance providers in the country as a provision

During the briefing phase, KBIHU not only conveys the technical procedures for Hajj rituals but also applies a systematic pedagogical approach to ensure pilgrims' understanding. The material is divided into three levels of need: basic (intention, pillars, and obligations), practical (steps for performing the ritual at the appropriate location), and reinforcement (common mistakes and how to avoid them). Teaching methods vary (such as short lectures, live demonstrations, field simulations, and question-and-answer sessions) so that pilgrims with varying educational backgrounds and abilities can effectively grasp the material. Short evaluations after key sessions are used to gauge understanding and provide opportunities for participants with lingering doubts, thereby reducing the risk of errors during implementation.

In addition to the ritual aspects, the KBIHU training also provides contextual orientation on the physical, social, and cultural conditions in Saudi Arabia to reduce culture shock and mitigate non-theological risks that could disrupt worship. Practical information covers extreme weather, transportation patterns, etiquette in multinational environments, and emergency health procedures and medication management, all designed to ensure the safety and comfort of pilgrims (Mutamakkin et al., 2025). This holistic approach enhances the mental and physical readiness of pilgrims, so they not only know what to do ritually but can also adapt to on-the-ground conditions, ensuring a solemn and smooth worship experience.

3. Field mentoring organizers in Saudi Arabia

The presence of KBIHU, who continue to accompany pilgrims after arriving in Saudi Arabia, has a significant impact on the quality of the Hajj pilgrimage; direct assistance by guides who direct the technical steps of tawaf, sa'i, wukuf in Arafah, overnight stay in Muzdalifah and Mina, and stoning the devil not only ensures adherence to the rituals as prescribed but also reduces pilgrims' anxiety and confusion through real-time instructions, quick solutions to practical obstacles (e.g., routes, times, queues, or minor health issues), and collective emotional support that strengthens the group's sense of security and cohesion—these combined effects enhance pilgrims' spiritual focus, minimize ritual errors, and

potentially improve the overall satisfaction and outcome of the Hajj experience (Lahmuddin, 2026).

4. Hajj services, consultations, and information sources

KBIHU functions as a consultation center that facilitates two-way communication between pilgrims and competent experts or guides, thereby reducing misconceptions and incorrect ritual practices during the Hajj. Using an educational approach consisting of counseling, Q&A sessions, and simulations of procedures, KBIHU strengthens pilgrims' normative and procedural understanding: not simply providing brief answers, but explaining the background of Islamic law, the sequence of rituals, and variations in implementation according to the pilgrim's condition (e.g., health or physical limitations). This approach also allows for the identification of recurring problems experienced by pilgrims, enabling guidance materials to be systematically adjusted to prevent similar errors in subsequent groups.

Furthermore, the KBIHU's consultation services help mitigate operational and emotional risks during the Hajj. Accurate technical explanations, such as detailed schedules, transportation procedures, tawaf (circumambulation), wukuf (circumambulation), and steps for handling health emergencies, reduce anxiety and confusion that can lead to errors or incidents. Furthermore, the case recording function and pilgrim feedback enable continuous improvement of Hajj services: consultation data can be used to refine training modules, coordinate with logistics teams, and formulate practical policies responsive to pilgrims' needs (Rasyid, 2025).

5. Motivator in mastering rituals and perfecting worship

KBIHU encourages pilgrims to study the rituals and perform their worship properly and seriously; the guides remind them of the importance of sincere intentions, discipline in following the rules, and efforts to carry out each series of worship as well as possible, so that with this enthusiasm, it is hoped that pilgrims can perform the Hajj legitimately and more meaningfully.

CONCLUSION

Based on the historical and analytical review in this article, KBIH/KBIHU have evolved from community responses to the complexities of Hajj implementation into state-recognized operational partners with strategic roles in administrative outreach, preparation of Hajj materials, field assistance in Saudi Arabia, post-Hajj guidance, and coordination with

official officials. This transformation underscores two key needs for institutional strengthening—institutional legitimacy and improved service quality—which are interconnected to ensure the safety, ritual understanding, and spiritual experience of pilgrims. Although recent regulations (PMA No. 7/2023 and ministerial technical regulations) clarify functional boundaries and tighten accreditation and fund management, thereby reducing misuse, the reality of implementation reveals remaining challenges: disparities in quality across regions, uneven guide capacity, and the need for indicator-based monitoring and evaluation mechanisms. Therefore, future policies should prioritize standardization of training modules and accreditation of guides, strengthening accountability systems and clear separation of financial functions, and developing a continuous evaluation system involving field data to ensure that KBIHUs can consistently fulfill their pedagogical, administrative, and protective roles—essential steps to ensure that quota increases and demographic dynamics do not compromise the safety and quality of the Indonesian Hajj experience.

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