
Governing the Responsible Pilgrim: Da'wah, Surveillance, and Islamic Governmentality in the Prevention of Illegal Hajj

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Abstract

This study examines the mechanisms for preventing illegal hajj pilgrimages at the Ministry of Religious Affairs Regional Office in East Java through a Foucauldian governmentality framework. Using a qualitative case study methodology, data were collected through in-depth interviews with 15 ministry officials, direct observation of regulatory practices over 6 months, and documentary analysis of ministerial regulations, standard operating procedures, and enforcement records from 2023 to 2025. Data were systematically coded to identify governmental rationalities (e.g., risk management, spiritual welfare protection), technologies of power (e.g., registration databases, site inspections), and subject positions (e.g., "responsible pilgrim," "compliant travel agency"). Findings reveal three distinct governmentality modalities comprising disciplinary mechanisms through registration systems and surveillance, sovereign interventions via legal sanctions and permit revocations, and neoliberal techniques emphasizing self-regulation, operating not as separable analytical categories but as mutually constitutive tensions in which each modality conditions the effectiveness and limits of the others. Critically, the findings reveal that these governance mechanisms are constitutively implicated in reproducing the structural conditions of quota scarcity and extended waiting periods that generate illegal market demand in the first place. This study contributes to governmentality scholarship by demonstrating that the framework requires modification in Islamic bureaucratic governance contexts: pastoral rationalities here have not been secularized but Islamicized, collective religious obligation replaces liberal individualism as the normative anchor of subjectification, and the tripartite schema functions as an assemblage of productive tensions rather than a descriptive typology, extending the framework's analytical purchase beyond the Western liberal democratic contexts in which it was originally developed.

Keywords

governmentality, illegal hajj, religious governance, Ministry of Religious Affairs, Indonesia

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1. INTRODUCTION

The hajj pilgrimage represents one of Islam's fundamental pillars, constituting both a profound spiritual obligation and a complex logistical challenge for Muslim-majority nations. Indonesia, hosting the world's largest Muslim population with approximately 231 million adherents, faces persistent



governance challenges in managing hajj administration amid overwhelming demand vastly exceeding available quotas (Krismono et al., 2025). The Ministry of Religious Affairs, through its regional offices, including the East Java branch, confronts recurring issues of illegal hajj operations that circumvent official channels, exploit vulnerable pilgrims, and cause substantial financial losses while undermining the state's authority over religious mobility. Recent corruption scandals involving quota manipulation and travel agency collusion have intensified scrutiny on ministerial governance practices, revealing deeper questions about how state power operates within religious domains (Nadirisyah Hosen, 2025).

Traditional scholarship on hajj administration predominantly examines regulatory frameworks, economic dimensions, or logistical coordination between Indonesia and Saudi Arabia (Alfiyanti et al., 2019; Samsudin et al., 2023). However, limited attention is paid to the underlying rationalities and power mechanisms through which states govern religious conduct, particularly in the context of illegal pilgrimage prevention. Existing literature tends to conceptualize state intervention in religious affairs through straightforward enforcement paradigms, overlooking the subtle governmental technologies that shape believer behavior beyond mere legal prohibition. Studies by Alfitri (2018) examining state intervention in Islamic administration acknowledge constitutional tensions but inadequately theorize the power relations embedded within religious bureaucracies. Similarly, research on hajj fraud cases emphasizes criminal justice responses without interrogating the broader governmental rationalities informing prevention strategies (Subhan et al., 2023). This analytical gap necessitates theoretical frameworks capable of unpacking how power circulates through religious governance institutions, molding conduct rather than simply constraining actions.

Michel Foucault's concept of governmentality offers analytical leverage for understanding contemporary religious governance beyond conventional state-centric approaches. Governmentality, conceptualized as the conduct of conduct, examines how authorities shape population behavior through calculated techniques, rationalities, and knowledge systems rather than through sovereign command alone (Foucault, 1977; Mitchell Dean, 2010; Russel, 2022). As Mitchell Dean (2010) articulates, governmentality encompasses the mentalities, rationalities, and techniques through which subjects become governed, emphasizing dispersed power mechanisms operating across institutional fields. Recent scholarship has demonstrated governmentality's applicability to non-Western and religious contexts, with researchers like Ladwig (2021a) exploring Buddhist monasticism and Ghatak & Abel (2013) examining faith-based organizations through governmental lenses. The framework is particularly well-suited to the Indonesian hajj governance context because it directs analytical attention toward precisely the dimensions that enforcement-focused approaches neglect: the logics through which religious conduct becomes problematized as requiring state management, the technologies through which populations are rendered visible and calculable, and the processes through which individuals are constituted as responsible or deviant religious subjects. However, governmentality analysis remains underutilized in studies of Islamic governance institutions in Southeast Asia, particularly in examining state management of religious obligations, such as the hajj pilgrimage, within Indonesia's complex constitutional landscape (Senay et al., 2025).

The Ministry of Religious Affairs occupies a distinctive position within Indonesian governance, simultaneously embodying state bureaucracy and religious authority. Established in 1946 as a compromise between Islamic and secular nationalist factions, the ministry wields extensive discretionary powers over religious life, including hajj administration, halal certification, religious education, and interfaith relations (Bruinessen, 2020; Crouch, 2013). Sezgin & Künkler (2014) characterize Indonesia's approach as the bureaucratization of religion, contrasting with India's

judicialization model, wherein religious questions become administrative matters managed through ministerial apparatuses rather than judicial interpretation. This bureaucratic orientation has generated both protective oversight and discriminatory regulations affecting religious minorities (Bahri et al., 2025). Within hajj governance specifically, the ministry determines quotas, accredits travel agencies, establishes procedural requirements, and sanctions violations through permit revocations and legal prosecutions (Siddiq et al., 2024). The East Java regional office, serving one of Indonesia's most populous provinces with significant Muslim communities facing decades-long waiting periods, confronts heightened pressure to manage illegal pilgrimage schemes that promise expedited access through irregular channels.

Illegal hajj operations in Indonesia appear in multiple forms. These include fraudulent visa arrangements, unregistered travel agencies, quota manipulation, and false documentation. The 2017 First Travel scandal showed catastrophic fraud. Tens of thousands of prospective pilgrims lost investments totaling more than 1.2 trillion rupiah when the company collapsed and failed to fulfill its pilgrimage commitments. More recently, the 2024 quota corruption controversy revealed systematic irregularities in the distribution of additional hajj allocations. Ministerial decisions allegedly favored special pilgrimage categories beyond legal limits, prompting investigations by the Corruption Eradication Commission (Nadirsyah Hosen, 2025). These high-profile cases highlight governance failures. They also reveal the interplay among ministerial authority, travel agency interests, and pilgrim aspirations within quota constraints and 30- to 40-year waiting periods in some provinces. Understanding prevention requires examining not just policy content, but also the governmental rationalities behind enforcement and the tools used to regulate conduct.

Despite extensive regulatory frameworks, such as Law No. 8 of 2019 on the Implementation of Hajj and Umrah and ministerial regulations, illegal hajj activities persist. This suggests that formal legal structures do not fully capture governance dynamics. The governmentality framework shows how power operates beyond legal boundaries through mechanisms like knowledge production, subject formation, and self-regulation (Rose et al., 2006). As Collier & Whitehead (2023) note, advanced liberal governance shapes freedoms rather than exerting direct control. It encourages subjects to govern themselves in accordance with norms internalized through expert discourses and administrative practices. In hajj governance, this means examining how the ministry shapes responsible religious subjects, uses surveillance technologies, mobilizes expertise, and manages risks through actions beyond legal sanctions.

The research gap this study addresses is the insufficient theoretical engagement with mechanisms of governmental power within Indonesian religious administration, particularly regarding illegal hajj prevention strategies. While corruption and fraud dominate public discourse, systematic analysis of the underlying governance rationalities, the technologies that operationalize state power, and how subjects navigate or resist governmental ambitions remains limited (Pamungkas & Munawir, 2025). Furthermore, governmentality scholarship has inadequately explored religious governance in Muslim-majority contexts, with studies concentrating on Christian or Buddhist traditions or on secular liberal democracies (Ladwig, 2021a). Indonesia's hybrid constitutional arrangements and bureaucratized religious governance provide fertile ground for extending governmentality analysis to Islamic institutional contexts (Hefner, 2021; Pangalangan, 2020; Shah, 2017). This study addresses this dual gap – empirical and theoretical – by demonstrating that governmentality analysis applied to an Islamic bureaucratic context not only illuminates the specific mechanics of illegal hajj prevention in East Java but generates broader insights into how the framework must be modified to accommodate

governance rationalities organized around collective religious obligation, pastoral authority, and postcolonial institutional arrangements that differ fundamentally from the Western liberal democratic contexts in which governmentality scholarship was originally developed.

Guided by this analytical framework, this study addresses three research questions specific to the East Java Regional Office case: (RQ1) What governmental rationalities underpin illegal hajj prevention strategies deployed by ministerial officials, and how do these rationalities problematize illegal pilgrimage as an object requiring intervention? (RQ2) Through which specific technologies of power—surveillance mechanisms, documentation systems, agency accreditation processes, inter-agency coordination networks—does the regional office attempt to govern religious mobility, and how do these technologies render pilgrimage conduct visible, calculable, and subject to intervention? (RQ3) How does the prevention apparatus shape subject formation among travel agencies, ministerial officials, and prospective pilgrims, constituting them as responsible versus deviant religious actors through processes of categorization, moralization, and self-regulation? Operationally, this research defines governmental “rationalities” as the explicit and implicit logics articulated in policy documents and official interviews that frame illegal hajj as a problem requiring state intervention, “technologies” as the specific instruments and practices observed in regulatory sites, and “subject formation” as the positioning and self-understanding of actors as evident in interviews and interactions.

Analytically, the governmentality framework structures interpretation in the following specific and consequential ways throughout this study. Governmental rationalities are identified by examining what problems ministerial discourse constructs as inherently requiring state intervention—what logics make certain responses appear self-evident while rendering alternative framings invisible—rather than by accepting state-defined problem formulations at face value. Technologies of power are analyzed not merely for their functional regulatory effects but for how they constitute subjects and render populations knowable and calculable, following Foucault’s (2007) foundational insight that governing technologies are productive rather than merely restrictive: they do not respond to pre-existing populations but actively constitute those populations as specific objects of governance. Subject formation is traced by attending to the positions made available to actors within the governance field—how compliance and deviance are normatively constructed through administrative categories—and to the ways actors inhabit, negotiate, or resist those positions in practice. This explicit operationalization ensures that the governmentality framework functions throughout the analysis as an active interpretive apparatus rather than a descriptive vocabulary applied retrospectively to governance data already analyzed through other means.

This research pursues three interconnected objectives. First, to identify and analyze the governmental rationalities underpinning illegal hajj prevention strategies within the East Java Ministry of Religious Affairs Regional Office, examining the logics, calculations, and problematizations informing intervention approaches. Second, to examine the technologies of power deployed in preventing illegal hajj operations, including surveillance mechanisms, documentation systems, agency accreditation processes, and coordination networks with immigration authorities and law enforcement. Third, to investigate how governmentality shapes subject formation among travel agencies, ministerial officials, and prospective pilgrims, analyzing processes through which individuals become constructed as either responsible or deviant religious actors requiring governmental intervention. In pursuing these objectives, the study makes three interrelated contributions: it extends governmentality scholarship empirically to Islamic bureaucratic governance in Southeast Asia; it demonstrates that the framework’s tripartite rationalities function as mutually constitutive tensions rather than separable analytical

categories; and it advances a critical argument that governance mechanisms in this context are constitutively implicated in the structural conditions generating the very problems they purport to resolve. By pursuing these objectives, this research illuminates the microphysics of power within religious bureaucracies, contributing to both governmentality scholarship and the practical understanding of hajj governance challenges in contemporary Indonesia.

2. METHODS

This research employed a qualitative case study methodology to investigate illegal hajj prevention mechanisms at the Ministry of Religious Affairs Regional Office in East Java. A case study design was selected because the research questions concern governmental rationalities, technologies of power, and subject-formation processes embedded in particular institutional contexts that cannot be adequately examined with survey instruments or comparative designs, thereby sacrificing contextual depth for breadth. As Yin (2018) argues, case study methodology is particularly suited to how and why questions concerning contemporary phenomena within real-life contexts. The single-site design enables intensive examination of governance assemblages in their full institutional complexity, generating theoretically grounded insights that more extensive but shallower designs would obscure. The East Java regional office was designated a strategic research site given the province's substantial Muslim population, lengthy hajj waiting periods of up to 25 years, and the office's active enforcement role within ministerial governance structures. Data collection occurred between March 2024 and February 2025.

Furthermore, qualitative case study methodology is privileged over alternative designs for reasons directly tied to the epistemological demands of the governmentality framework and the research questions it addresses. An ethnographic design, while offering richer participant immersion, would prioritize the lived experience of individual actors over the systemic analysis of institutional rationalities that the governmentality framework demands. A comparative multi-site design would enable variation analysis across regional offices but at the cost of the institutional depth necessary to trace how specific technologies of power operate within a single governance assemblage—a depth that Foucauldian analysis requires, given its attention to discursive formations, micro-institutional routines, and subject-constituting practices (Dean, 2010). A quantitative survey design, conversely, would render visible aggregate regularities but could not access the underlying rationalities, mentalities, and knowledge-power configurations that constitute the central analytical objects of governmentality inquiry—objects that are by definition unavailable to variable-based statistical methods. The single-site case study thus represents not a methodological limitation but the design most epistemologically aligned with the study's analytical objectives, selected because it enables the kind of sustained institutional engagement through which governmental rationalities, technologies, and subject formations become analyzable in their full complexity.

Primary data were gathered through in-depth semi-structured interviews with 15 purposively selected informants. Sampling employed maximum variation logic to capture diverse perspectives: 6 ministerial officials comprising directorate-level supervisors, registration personnel, and legal affairs officers; 4 surveillance team members, including airport monitors and field investigators; 3 accredited travel agency representatives selected for varying compliance histories; and 2 recovered victims of illegal hajj fraud recruited through victim advocacy networks. Recruitment proceeded through institutional gatekeepers for official categories and snowball referrals for victims. Saturation was assessed iteratively: after the 12th interview, subsequent sessions yielded diminishing novel insights, though the final three interviews proved essential for capturing subjectification processes from non-

official standpoints. Each interview lasted 60 to 90 minutes, was conducted in Indonesian, was audio-recorded with informed consent, and was transcribed verbatim for analysis.

Participant observation complemented interviews through 23 discrete sessions across three primary sites over six months: 8 monitoring shifts at Juanda International Airport observing document verification and watch-list screening protocols; 7 travel agency accreditation review meetings documenting compliance assessment discussions; and 8 field inspection accompaniments to suspected unlicensed premises observing evidence collection and inter-agency coordination dynamics. Documentary analysis constituted the third data stream, examining 127 documents, including 127 national legislative acts, 12 ministerial regulations, 18 internal standard operating procedures, 34 monthly enforcement summaries, 22 travel agency licensing dossiers, and 8 prosecution case files from East Java district courts. Documents were analyzed both for substantive policy content and as governmental technologies constituting power mechanisms that render populations knowable and authorize interventions (Jessen, 2024; Miller & Rose, 1990, 2014).

Data analysis followed iterative thematic procedures informed by principles of Foucauldian discourse analysis, and the combination of these two approaches requires epistemological clarification. Foucauldian discourse analysis operates on the premise that language and institutional practices actively constitute subjects, objects, and relations of power, directing analytical attention to taken-for-granted assumptions and knowledge-power configurations embedded in seemingly neutral administrative practices. Thematic coding provides the systematic procedural apparatus through which these discursive formations are identified and organized across large bodies of empirical material. The two approaches are therefore complementary: thematic coding operationalizes Foucauldian analytical sensibilities into a reproducible procedure, ensuring that theoretical insights are grounded in systematic engagement with the full empirical corpus rather than selectively derived from illustrative examples.

Analysis proceeded through three stages. Stage 1 descriptive coding identified manifest themes through open coding of transcripts, field notes, and documents, generating 87 initial codes. Stage 2 interpretive coding reorganized these into Foucault's analytic categories: governmental rationalities, such as spiritual welfare protection and security risk management; technologies of power, such as biometric registration databases and accreditation scoring rubrics; and subject positions, such as responsible pilgrim, compliant agency, and fraudulent operator. Stage 3 synthesis mapped coded materials onto the disciplinary, sovereign, and neoliberal governmentality framework, identifying patterns, contradictions, and hybridities. The constant comparative method across data sources refined codes through iterative memo-writing, interrogating how rationalities, technologies, and subject positions interconnected.

The development of Stage 2 analytical categories warrants explicit specification to clarify how interpretations were systematically derived and to establish the study's analytical reproducibility. Categories were not imposed deductively from Foucault's theoretical schema; rather, their development followed an abductive logic wherein descriptive codes from Stage 1 were brought into systematic dialogue with theoretical concepts through iterative memo-writing. A descriptive code was reorganized into a theoretical category only when sustained interrogation of the data revealed that its analytical significance exceeded its descriptive content—specifically, when the practice or discourse in question exhibited structural features distinctive to governmentality analysis (normalization, subject constitution, visibility production, conduct shaping at a distance) rather than to regulatory analysis more generally. As an illustration of this procedure: initial descriptive codes capturing documentary requirements in the registration process were reorganized under 'technologies of visibility' not because

documentation is straightforwardly about visibility in its administrative function, but because iterative memo-writing revealed that its analytical significance lay in how it actively constituted the pilgrim population as an enumerable, classifiable, and calculable object of governance—a theoretical specification that transforms a regulatory observation into a governmentality argument. This abductive procedure, applied systematically across all 87 initial codes, ensured that theoretical categories remained anchored in empirical specificity. Interpretations were subsequently cross-validated against the full empirical corpus through the constant comparative method and subjected to negative case analysis to prevent over-determination, thereby establishing a transparent and reproducible analytical path from raw data to theoretical conclusion.

Triangulation across interviews, observations, and documents enhanced rigor by testing whether rationalities articulated in policy texts were enacted in observed practices and corroborated across multiple informant accounts. Discrepancies between official rhetoric and implementation realities were treated as analytically generative rather than problems requiring resolution. Negative case analysis systematically searched for counter-instances to prevent over-deterministic interpretation. Member checking with 5 key informants validated preliminary interpretations in August 2024, though the analysis retained interpretive distance: participant validation confirmed empirical accuracy without requiring agreement on theoretical interpretation of power mechanisms that participants may not consciously recognize. Ethical protocols were observed throughout, including institutional research permissions, informed consent, and confidentiality protections, ensuring no informant identities were disclosed in research outputs.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Disciplinary Rationalities and Surveillance Technologies in Hajj Registration Systems

The Ministry of Religious Affairs Regional Office in East Java operationalizes illegal hajj prevention primarily through comprehensive registration and documentation systems that render prospective pilgrims visible, calculable, and subject to continuous monitoring throughout extended waiting periods. Registration constitutes the foundational technology through which individuals become legible to governmental authorities, transforming abstract populations into documented subjects with assigned identities, waiting list positions, and regulatory statuses (Foucault, 2007; Mitchell Dean, 2010). As one senior registration officer explained during interviews, the computerized hajj management information system functions as the ministry's central nervous system, enabling real-time tracking of approximately 847,000 registered East Java residents currently awaiting hajj opportunities across various provincial regencies with differentiated waiting durations (figure retrieved from internal Hajj Management Information System dashboard, accessed July 2024 with official permission).

One senior official in the Hajj Registration Section articulated the surveillance logic: *"Sistem SISKOHAT kami ini adalah mata dan telinga Kemenag. Tanpa sistem ini, kami tidak tahu siapa saja yang mendaftar, berapa lama mereka menunggu, apakah mereka masih layak berangkat atau tidak. Setiap calon jemaah harus tercatat dengan lengkap, meliputi KTP, KK, surat keterangan sehat, dan bukti setoran dana. Kalau ada yang tidak lengkap, mereka tidak bisa masuk sistem, berarti tidak bisa berangkat"* (The SISKOHAT system is the Ministry's eyes and ears.) Without this system, we do not know who has registered, how long they have waited, or whether they are still eligible to depart. Every prospective pilgrim must have a complete identity card, family card, health certificate, and proof of deposit. If something is incomplete, they cannot enter the system, meaning they cannot depart.

This registration apparatus operates through meticulous documentary requirements, including

national identification cards, proof of Islamic faith verified through community religious leaders, health certificates, financial deposit confirmations, and biometric data capture. Documentary completeness determines eligibility while generating permanent records that link individuals to specific waiting list cohorts, organized chronologically and geographically. Field observations at registration centers revealed how applicants undergo structured intake processes resembling Foucault's examination technique, in which individuals are simultaneously individualized through unique registration numbers and aggregated into statistical populations subject to demographic analysis (Foucault, 2007). Ministry officials regularly produce reports detailing registration trends, cohort characteristics, dropout rates, and projected fulfillment timelines, demonstrating how quantification renders hajj populations governable through calculated interventions.

Surveillance technologies extend beyond initial registration through ongoing monitoring systems designed to detect irregular activities suggesting illegal pilgrimage attempts. The regional office maintains dedicated surveillance teams that conduct periodic travel agency inspections, monitor airports during peak departure seasons, and scan social media for suspicious hajj service advertisements. Interview data revealed that surveillance operates through tip-offs from community members, coordination with immigration authorities flagging unusual visa applications, and analysis of financial transactions suggesting payments to unlicensed operators. One surveillance team leader described the challenge of monitoring over 200 entities claiming hajj service provision (internal surveillance database count, August 2024) despite only 89 holding valid ministerial accreditation as of July 2024 (verified against public accreditation registry on Ministry website), necessitating continuous vigilance against fraudulent operators exploiting information asymmetries and desperate pilgrim aspirations.

A surveillance coordinator vividly described operational challenges: *"Kami harus memantau ratusan travel yang mengaku bisa berangkatkan haji. Banyak yang ilegal tapi pintar menyamar. Mereka pakai nama yang mirip dengan travel resmi, buat website yang kelihatan profesional, bahkan ada yang punya kantor bagus. Tapi begitu kami memeriksa izin, ternyata palsu atau sudah kedaluwarsa. Yang paling sulit adalah ketika mereka beroperasi lewat media sosial atau grup WhatsApp. Kami tidak bisa memantau semuanya"* (We must monitor hundreds of travel agencies claiming to be able to send pilgrims for hajj. Many are illegal but clever at disguising themselves. They use names similar to official agencies, create professional-looking websites, and some even have nice offices. But once we check their permits, they turn out to be fake or expired. The most difficult is when they operate through social media or WhatsApp groups. We cannot monitor everything.

Documentary analysis of internal surveillance protocols revealed sophisticated risk-assessment frameworks that categorize travel agencies based on compliance histories, financial stability indicators, and operational capacity evaluations. High-risk entities face intensified scrutiny, including unannounced inspections, financial audits, and passenger manifest verifications before departure authorizations. This risk-based approach reflects neoliberal governmental rationalities emphasizing proactive prevention through continuous assessment rather than reactive punishment after violations occur (Rose et al., 2006). As the ministerial guidance documents stated, effective hajj governance requires anticipating potential irregularities through systematic intelligence gathering and preemptive interventions targeting vulnerabilities before they are exploited.

The disciplinary dimension manifests through normalization processes wherein travel agencies and prospective pilgrims internalize regulatory expectations through repeated encounters with bureaucratic requirements. Training programs mandated for accredited agencies instruct operators on proper

documentation procedures, ministerial reporting obligations, and ethical service standards, functioning as pedagogical technologies transmitting governmental norms (Mitchell Dean, 2010). Similarly, prospective pilgrims receive educational materials warning against illegal operators, explaining legitimate channels, and emphasizing individual responsibility for verifying agency credentials. These educational interventions aim to cultivate self-regulating subjects who recognize their duty to avoid irregular schemes and report suspicious activities, demonstrating how governmentality operates through shaping conduct at subjective levels beyond external enforcement (Rose, 1999).

The analytical force of the governmentality framework is directly visible in this finding and requires explicit articulation to distinguish its theoretical contribution from a purely descriptive account of ministry programming. A conventional regulatory analysis would characterize these educational interventions as information provision programs designed to reduce information asymmetry between the ministry and prospective pilgrims—an accurate but theoretically thin characterization. A governmentality reading, informed specifically by Dean's (2010) concept of technologies of the self, reveals instead that the educational apparatus functions not merely to inform but to produce a particular kind of religious subject whose conduct becomes self-directing rather than externally compelled. The distinction carries analytical weight: where regulatory analysis identifies compliance as the endpoint of governance, governmentality analysis demonstrates that the ultimate target is the constitution of an interior disposition—patience, bureaucratic diligence, institutional trust—that aligns religious subjectivity with administrative imperatives. This theoretical specification transforms the empirical observation from a policy description into an argument about how governmental power operates through, rather than against, religious interiority—a dynamic that enforcement-focused and regulatory accounts of hajj administration systematically cannot access.

Interviewees acknowledged surveillance limitations given resource constraints, sophisticated fraud techniques, and corruption vulnerabilities within enforcement networks. Several informants described how determined illegal operators adapt to surveillance by using encrypted communication, offshore banking, and deceptive branding mimicking legitimate agencies. The ministry's reactive capacity remains challenged by delayed detection, enabling schemes to victimize dozens before interventions occur. Nevertheless, surveillance discourse persists as central governmental rationality, with officials advocating enhanced technological capabilities, including artificial intelligence monitoring and blockchain verification systems. This technological optimism reflects governmental faith in surveillance as a rational solution to governance challenges, characteristic of advanced liberal rationalities emphasizing knowledge-based intervention (Lemke, 2001).

Observation of airport monitoring operations illuminated the embodied practices through which surveillance materializes. Ministry teams stationed at departure terminals scrutinize passenger documentation, cross-reference manifest lists against registration databases, and interrogate travelers exhibiting irregularities, such as possessing visit visas rather than hajj visas. These checkpoint encounters constitute power exercises that render subjects visible to authority while demonstrating the state's capacity to scrutinize and, potentially, obstruct movement. Several intercepted cases involved prospective pilgrims misled by agents who promised expedited hajj through work or tourism visas, revealing how illegal operators exploit regulatory complexity and information gaps. Interception at airports prevents departure but often leaves victims suffering financial losses, with no effective recourse given the operator's disappearance.

The disciplinary rationality underpinning registration and surveillance systems constructs illegal hajj as fundamentally a problem of deviance requiring identification, correction, and normalization.

Ministry discourse frames illegal operators as criminal deviants exploiting vulnerable believers while characterizing deceived pilgrims as victims requiring protection through governmental oversight. This victimization narrative justifies expansive surveillance while constructing ministerial authority as a benevolent guardian of religious welfare rather than a restrictive bureaucracy. However, critical analysis suggests that this framing obscures how ministerial quota management and the duration of waiting periods themselves generate demand for irregular alternatives, raising questions about whose interests registration systems ultimately serve.

3.2 Sovereign Power and Legal Sanctions in Travel Agency Regulation

Alongside disciplinary surveillance, the ministry deploys sovereign power modalities through legal sanctions against illegal hajj operators, demonstrating governmental capacity to prohibit, punish, and exclude deviant actors from legitimate hajj service markets. Sovereign interventions operate through permit revocations, license suspensions, administrative fines, travel bans, and criminal prosecutions coordinated with law enforcement authorities (Foucault, 2007). Documentary analysis revealed that since 2020, the East Java regional office initiated 37 permit revocation procedures against accredited agencies violating operational standards (compiled from monthly enforcement reports January 2020–December 2024, accessed through ministerial records) and forwarded 12 cases for criminal investigation involving fraud, embezzlement, or systematic quota manipulation (confirmed via legal affairs division case tracking database, July 2024). These punitive measures exemplify Foucault's characterization of sovereign power as top-down command backed by sanctions for noncompliance.

The legal foundation for sovereign interventions is Law No. 8 of 2019, which stipulates criminal penalties, including imprisonment of up to 8 years and fines of up to 800 million rupiah, for organizing hajj services without proper authorization or for employing deceptive practices. Ministerial regulations further specify administrative sanctions, including warnings, temporary suspensions, and permanent revocations, depending on the severity of the violation and the agency's compliance history (Rofiqi et al., 2025; Siddiq et al., 2024). Interview data indicated that legal affairs officers maintain extensive case documentation supporting enforcement actions, demonstrating bureaucratic rationalities that value procedural correctness and evidentiary sufficiency before sanctions are applied. One legal officer emphasized that enforcement must withstand judicial scrutiny, given agencies' frequent legal challenges to ministerial decisions, which necessitate meticulous documentation practices.

A senior legal affairs officer explained the enforcement philosophy: *"Kami tidak main-main dengan sanksi. Setiap pencabutan izin atau tuntutan pidana harus berdasarkan bukti yang kuat dan prosedur yang benar. Travel yang melanggar akan kami proses sesuai hukum—mulai dari teguran, pembekuan sementara, sampai pencabutan permanen. Kalau kasusnya berat, seperti penipuan dengan kerugian miliaran rupiah, kami berkoordinasi dengan kepolisian untuk proses pidana. Ini efek jera bagi yang lain"* (We are serious about sanctions.) Every license revocation or criminal prosecution must be based on strong evidence and proper procedures. Travel agencies that violate the law will be processed accordingly, from warnings to temporary suspension to permanent revocation. If the case is severe, such as fraud resulting in losses of billions of rupiah, we coordinate with the police on criminal proceedings. This is a deterrent effect for others.

Observations of agency accreditation review processes revealed how sovereign power operates through licensing regimes controlling market entry and participation. Prospective hajj travel agencies must satisfy stringent requirements, including minimum capitalization thresholds, bonded financial guarantees, professional management credentials, operational facility standards, and demonstrated

technical capacity. These entry barriers function as gatekeeping mechanisms restricting hajj service provision to entities deemed financially viable and technically competent by ministerial evaluation (Alfitri, 2018). During review sessions, officials interrogated applicants about business plans, risk management strategies, and ethical commitments, exercising discretion in determining who received market access authorization. This gatekeeping authority constitutes a sovereign prerogative, determining which economic actors are legitimate versus illegitimate within religious service sectors.

The most dramatic sovereign intervention involves permanent license revocations, effectively terminating agency operations and barring individuals from future involvement in hajj services. Revocation procedures documented in case files followed formalized stages, including preliminary investigations, show-cause hearings affording agencies due process, deliberative reviews by ministerial committees, and final decisions communicated through official decrees. Interview informants described revocation decisions as serious undertakings, given the economic consequences for agencies and the potential impacts on pilgrims if revocations occur mid-service period. Nevertheless, officials asserted that decisive action against serious violations demonstrates the government's commitment to protecting the public interest and maintaining the integrity of hajj services, thereby justifying disruptive interventions.

Criminal prosecutions represent the ultimate sovereign sanction, in which ministerial authorities refer cases to the police for investigation, potentially leading to imprisonment. Analysis of prosecution files revealed that cases typically involved substantial financial fraud, multiple victims, and evidence suggesting systematic rather than isolated misconduct. The 2023 case of PPIU PT. Bakkah Berkah Mulia Surabaya exemplified prosecution dynamics, in which the agency accepted deposits from 178 prospective pilgrims totaling 4.2 billion rupiah without possessing ministerial accreditation or the financial capacity to fulfill commitments (Surabaya District Court Decision No. 456/Pid.Sus/2023/PN.Sby, accessed via the public judicial archive in October 2024). Police investigations documented fraudulent advertising, forged ministry endorsements, and the director's absconding with funds after victims complained. The director eventually received a six-year prison sentence, and the case was publicized as a deterrent against illegal operations.

A victim of illegal hajj fraud recounted devastating experiences: *"Saya dan keluarga menabung bertahun-tahun untuk bisa naik haji. Kami percaya sama travel itu karena kantornya bagus dan pemiliknya mengaku punya koneksi di Kemenag. Ternyata bohong semua. Setelah kami setor uang 180 juta, travel itu hilang. Pemiliknya kabur; kantor ditutup. Sampai sekarang uang kami tidak kembali. Impian naik haji hancur"* (My family and I saved for years to be able to perform hajj. We trusted that travel agency because its office was nice and the owner claimed to have connections at the Ministry. It turned out to be all lies. After we deposited 180 million rupiah, the agency disappeared. The owner fled, and the office was closed. Until now, our money has not been returned. Our dream of performing the hajj was destroyed.

However, sovereign enforcement faces significant implementation challenges, limiting deterrent effectiveness. Multiple interviewees acknowledged that resource constraints prevent comprehensive monitoring of all suspected illegal operators, enabling many to operate undetected for extended periods. Corruption vulnerabilities within enforcement networks sometimes enable operators to evade sanctions through bribery or political connections, undermining ministerial authority. Legal complexity and procedural requirements slow enforcement responses, allowing violations to continue during investigation periods. Furthermore, punishment after victimization provides limited recourse for financial recovery, given an operator's insolvency or asset concealment, leaving victims bearing losses despite successful prosecutions.

The discourse surrounding sovereign sanctions reveals governmental rationalities emphasizing deterrence, retribution, and market discipline. Ministry officials justify punitive measures as necessary to establish credible enforcement threats that discourage potential violations and signal the government's seriousness about protecting hajj integrity. The publicity accompanying high-profile prosecutions aims to broadcast enforcement capacity while warning prospective pilgrims against illegal operators. This deterrence logic assumes rational actor subjects who calculate the risks of violating potential gains, reflecting governmental faith in punishment's disciplinary effects (Lemke, 2001). However, the persistence of illegal operations despite well-publicized enforcement actions suggests that deterrence is limited when underlying demand pressures and profit opportunities remain substantial.

The governmentality framework provides analytical traction here that purely juridical or deterrence frameworks cannot generate. Measured against the standard metric of deterrence—reduction in violation frequency—the ministerial enforcement record is demonstrably limited, as the persistence of illegal operations despite well-publicized prosecutions confirms. Yet framing this as a governance failure misses the specific and theoretically significant function that sovereign power performs within the governmentality assemblage. Following Lemke's (2001) analysis of governmental spectacle, high-profile prosecutions function less to prevent illegal activity than to enact the ministry's claim to authoritative interpretation of the boundary between legitimate and deviant religious entrepreneurship. The theoretical implication—systematically missed by enforcement-focused analyses—is that the ministry invests in spectacular prosecutions not primarily because deterrence works but because the performative assertion of interpretive authority over the religious domain is itself a governance objective irreducible to any deterrence metric. This distinction between the instrumental function of sovereign sanctions (deterrence) and their constitutive function (boundary-making) is only accessible through the governmentality analytical lens, and it explains why enforcement intensity has not diminished despite demonstrably limited preventive effects.

Sovereign interventions also construct particular subject positions, distinguishing legitimate from illegitimate market actors and responsible from deviant religious entrepreneurs. Accreditation systems create binary categories of authorized versus unauthorized operators, with ministerial certification functioning as a marker of governmental trust and market legitimacy. This categorical distinction enables differential treatment, with accredited agencies receiving promotional support and regulatory protection, while unlicensed operators face prosecution and exclusion. However, this binary obscures gray zones in which marginally compliant accredited agencies sometimes engage in questionable practices, while some unlicensed operators may provide competent services despite lacking formal authorization. The governmental imperative for clear categorization thus simplifies messy realities to enable administrative action.

3.3 Neoliberal Rationalities and Self-Regulation Among Religious Subjects

Beyond disciplinary surveillance and sovereign sanctions, the East Java regional office increasingly emphasizes neoliberal governmental rationalities that promote self-regulation, individual responsibility, and market-based coordination in hajj governance. This approach reflects broader shifts toward advanced liberal governance, in which authorities govern at a distance by shaping conduct by enabling subjects to govern themselves according to internalized norms rather than through direct state control (Nikolas Rose, 1999; Rose et al., 2006). Interview data revealed ministry efforts to cultivate responsible travel agency conduct through professional associations, ethical codes, reputation mechanisms, and market incentives that reward compliance and impose penalties for deviation.

The formation of the East Java Hajj Travel Agency Association exemplifies neoliberal governance strategies mobilizing industry self-regulation. The association, established with ministerial encouragement, develops professional standards, provides peer training, facilitates information sharing, and establishes grievance-resolution mechanisms among its members. One association executive described their role as fostering ethical business cultures in which agencies recognize long-term reputation benefits from honest practices rather than short-term gains from deceptive schemes. This self-regulatory emphasis shifts governance responsibility partially onto industry actors themselves, with the ministry positioning itself as facilitator and monitor rather than sole enforcer (Miller & Rose, 1990). The association functions as an intermediary, translating governmental objectives into industry norms, while providing feedback channels that inform ministerial policy.

An association executive articulated the self-regulation philosophy: *“Kami sadar bahwa reputasi travel haji bergantung pada kepercayaan jemaah. Kalau satu travel berbuat curang, semua travel kena dampaknya. Makanya kami membuat kode etik bersama dan saling mengawasi. Travel yang bagus akan dapat jemaah lebih banyak; yang bermasalah akan ditinggalkan pasar. Pemerintah tidak perlu mengatur semuanya kalau industri bisa mengatur dirinya sendiri”* (We realize that the reputation of hajj travel agencies depends on pilgrim trust). If one agency cheats, all agencies are affected. That is why we create a shared code of ethics and monitor each other. Good agencies will get more pilgrims, problematic ones will be abandoned by the market. The government does not need to regulate everything if the industry can regulate itself.

Ministry initiatives promoting financial transparency and consumer disclosure reflect neoliberal rationalities that emphasize information provision, enabling informed consumer choices. Regulations requiring agencies to publish detailed cost breakdowns, service specifications, and complaint procedures aim to empower prospective pilgrims as discerning consumers capable of evaluating provider quality (Subhan et al., 2023). The ministry maintains public registries of accredited agencies with compliance ratings, encouraging market competition wherein superior service quality attracts customers while poor performance triggers reputational penalties. This information disclosure strategy assumes subjects as rational decision-makers who, when properly informed, will select legitimate providers over fraudulent operators, reducing demand for illegal services through market mechanisms.

Educational campaigns targeting prospective pilgrims exemplify technologies of self-formation, in which individuals become responsible for their own protection by acquiring knowledge and exercising judgment. Ministry publications, social media content, and community outreach programs warn against illegal operators, explain verification procedures, and emphasize individual accountability for agency selection decisions (Alfiyanti et al., 2019). These materials frequently employ cautionary narratives about victims suffering from poor choices, implicitly suggesting that adequate diligence would have prevented victimization. One education officer explained their messaging strategy: empowering pilgrims with knowledge tools to protect themselves rather than relying solely on governmental protection. This emphasis on individual responsibility reflects neoliberal subjectification, in which citizens become enterprising, self-managing actors responsible for navigating complex regulatory environments (Rose, 1999).

The ministry's risk-based supervision approach further demonstrates neoliberal rationalities, emphasizing proportionate intervention calibrated to assessed risk levels rather than uniform enforcement. High-performing agencies with strong compliance records receive reduced oversight and expedited approvals, effectively rewarding good conduct with regulatory relief. Conversely, problematic agencies face intensified scrutiny and restrictive conditions that limit their operational scope until performance improves. This differentiated treatment creates incentive structures that

encourage agencies to maintain compliance to access regulatory advantages, functioning as a market-like mechanism in which regulatory favor becomes a commodity that agencies pursue through demonstrated responsibility (Lemke, 2001). Interviews with informants within well-regarded agencies appreciated reduced bureaucratic burdens as tangible compliance benefits, confirming the government's intentions to shape conduct through calibrated incentives.

However, neoliberal self-regulation strategies face limitations given power asymmetries, information deficits, and structural vulnerabilities affecting prospective pilgrims. Despite educational initiatives, many prospective pilgrims lack the sophistication to evaluate the legitimacy of agencies, particularly given fraudulent operators' skilled deception techniques. Desperate individuals facing decades-long waiting periods may knowingly accept excessive risks rather than out of ignorance, undermining assumptions about rational, informed choice. Furthermore, the association's self-regulatory capacity remains constrained by limited enforcement authority over non-members and conflicts of interest when investigating fellow agencies. Critical analysis suggests that neoliberal responsabilization strategies may function to deflect governmental accountability by individualizing problems structurally rooted in quota scarcity and ministerial governance challenges (Pamungkas & Munawir, 2025).

The governmentality framework's critical potential is fully activated at this analytical juncture in a way that existing Indonesian religious governance scholarship has not previously mobilized. Rose's (2009) concept of governing at a distance captures the ministry's strategy of distributing governance responsibilities onto industry associations and individual pilgrims, but the East Java case extends this concept in an analytically consequential direction: governing at a distance in this religious governance context simultaneously redistributes responsibility and conceals the structural origin of the problem being governed. Responsibilization is not merely an administrative technique; it is a political rationality that produces specific visibility effects—foregrounding individual conduct as the primary site of intervention while rendering the structural condition of administered quota scarcity analytically and practically invisible. Crucially, this concealment is constitutive rather than incidental: the responsabilization apparatus can only function by presupposing that the problem it addresses originates in individual information deficit and choice failure rather than in structural supply constraints that the ministry itself administers. The theoretical implication is that neoliberal rationalities within Islamic bureaucratic governance cannot be read as neutral administrative techniques but must be analyzed as political rationalities that distribute accountability in ways that systematically protect the institutional arrangements generating the conditions for illegal market demand in the first place.

The construction of the responsible religious subject through these neoliberal technologies reveals governmental attempts to shape Islamic subjectivity itself. Ideal pilgrims, from a governmental perspective, exercise patience, accepting lengthy waiting periods, diligently verify agency credentials, report suspicious activities, and recognize hajj fulfillment as requiring governmental mediation rather than pursuing independent, irregular paths. This subject position aligns religious obligation with bureaucratic compliance, effectively sacralizing registration systems and regulatory procedures as proper Islamic conduct. Conversely, those pursuing illegal alternatives become constructed not merely as rule violators but as irresponsible Muslims whose impatience and corner-cutting betray authentic religious devotion's patient virtue. This moralization of compliance transforms administrative requirements into religious duties, demonstrating how governmentality penetrates subjectivity by aligning regulatory norms with spiritual identities (Foucault, 2010).

DISCUSSION

The empirical findings from East Java's Ministry of Religious Affairs reveal that illegal hajj prevention does not operate through any single governmental logic but through a hybrid assemblage in which disciplinary, sovereign, and neoliberal rationalities simultaneously reinforce and contradict one another. This assemblage structure itself constitutes a significant theoretical observation: rather than confirming Foucault's tripartite schema as a neat typology, the East Java case demonstrates that these modalities function as mutually constitutive tensions rather than sequential historical stages or separable analytical categories. As Mitchell Dean (2010) cautions, governmentality analysis risks analytical flattening when it treats these rationalities as merely coexistent; the empirical data here reveal instead that each modality actively conditions both the effectiveness and the limits of the others, producing a governance formation whose internal tensions are constitutive rather than incidental.

Registration surveillance generates the visibility of the population upon which both legal sanctions and self-regulation initiatives fundamentally depend, while the credibility of neoliberal incentive structures rests on the sovereign threat operating behind voluntary compliance. Neither modality, in other words, functions independently: disciplinary mechanisms create the legible subjects that sovereign interventions target, and self-regulatory technologies operate within a field of possibility structured by surveillance capacities and sanction credibilities. This co-constitutive dynamic suggests that religious governance in Muslim-majority postcolonial states cannot be adequately theorized through any single governmental rationality in isolation. The analytical task is therefore not to identify which rationality predominates but to examine how their interaction produces governance effects irreducible to any single logic, an insight with significant implications for how scholars approach religious administration comparatively.

This finding stands in productive tension with adjacent scholarship on religious governance and warrants explicit comparative positioning within existing debates. Ghatak & Abel (2013), in their governmentality analysis of faith-based organizations, identify a tendency toward rationality dominance in which one modality characteristically organizes the others as supplementary resources. Ladwig's (2021a) analysis of Buddhist monasticism similarly documents the historical predominance of disciplinary technologies in Theravada institutional governance, with pastoral and neoliberal logics entering as partial and later modifications. The East Java case complicates both characterizations: rather than discovering rationality dominance or historical supersession, the analysis reveals constitutive co-dependency among modalities that prevents any single logic from operating effectively in isolation. Disciplinary registration cannot produce legible subjects without the sovereign threat that gives its requirements compulsory force; sovereign sanctions cannot claim legitimacy without the pastoral discourse that the disciplinary apparatus generates; and neoliberal self-regulation cannot function without the surveillance infrastructure that makes agency performance assessable and sanction credible. This productive interdependence advances a more dynamic model of governmentality's internal relations than existing comparative religious governance scholarship has offered, suggesting that Islamic bureaucratic governance may exhibit modality integration patterns that differ systematically from those documented in Buddhist and Christian institutional contexts—a claim that warrants further comparative investigation across Muslim-majority administrative settings.

The registration and surveillance apparatus documented in East Java exemplifies what Rose (2009) calls technologies of visibility: mechanisms that render populations knowable and therefore amenable to calculated intervention. The SSKOHAT system does not merely record prospective pilgrims but actively produces them as a particular kind of governmental subject, enumerable, classifiable, and positioned within chronological queues that the state claims the authority to manage.

This productive dimension of disciplinary power distinguishes it from simple oversight and aligns with Foucault's (2007) broader argument that modern governance operates through subject constitution rather than mere constraint. The registration apparatus does not respond to an already-existing pilgrim population; it constitutes that population as a specific object of governance requiring continuous management, classification, and calculated intervention across extended temporal horizons.

Yet the empirical data complicate a straightforwardly Foucauldian reading of this disciplinary apparatus. The surveillance gaps acknowledged by ministerial officials, including encrypted communication by illegal operators, social media-based recruitment, and the ministry's explicit admission of monitoring limitations, reveal what O'Malley et al. (1997) term the incoherence inherent to governmentality: the structural impossibility of governance fully achieving its own rationalizing ambitions. Crucially, this is not merely an implementation deficit attributable to resource constraints. The very technologies that render the pilgrim population legible simultaneously generate new illegibilities: the more formalized and digitized the registration system becomes, the more sophisticated the evasion strategies it provokes. Governance rationalization and governance evasion thus develop in a relationship of mutual intensification rather than progressive resolution.

Illegal operators in the East Java case did not operate entirely outside the governmental field of visibility; rather, they actively mimicked its semiotic infrastructure, including professional websites, plausible office fronts, and names that echoed those of accredited agencies, demonstrating that disciplinary surveillance does not eliminate deviance but reshapes its form. This finding extends existing governmentality scholarship in an analytically significant direction. Where most studies emphasize surveillance's productive effects upon compliant subjects, the East Java case illustrates that the same productive dynamics apply equally to those who strategically exploit the visual and institutional language of governmental legitimacy. The microphysics of governance compliance and governance evasion are therefore not opposites but expressions of the same disciplinary field, each shaped by and responsive to the other's techniques and vulnerabilities.

This finding has broader theoretical implications for how governmentality scholarship conceptualizes non-compliant actors—implications that existing literature has not adequately developed. The dominant strand of governmentality scholarship, exemplified by Miller & Rose's (1990) foundational framework and its elaborations, has primarily theorized the productive effects of disciplinary technologies upon compliant subjects: those who internalize norms, develop self-regulatory capacities, and govern themselves in alignment with governmental expectations. The East Java case reveals an analytically neglected dimension: the same productive dynamics apply equally to those who strategically exploit the visual and institutional language of governmental legitimacy. Deviant operators are not positioned outside the governmental field; they are constituted by and responsive to it, adapting their evasion strategies in direct relation to surveillance upgrading, accreditation scoring, and enforcement publicity. This finding suggests that comprehensive governmentality analyses require systematic attention to what might be termed counter-governmental subjects—actors who become expert at inhabiting the appearance of compliance precisely because the governance field has made that appearance a condition of market access and social legitimacy. Existing scholarship on hajj fraud (Subhan et al., 2023) documents these operators as criminal actors; governmentality analysis reveals them as a theoretically significant category of governmental subject whose formation is inseparable from the disciplinary field's own productive operations.

The ministry's resort to permit revocation, administrative sanction, and criminal prosecution reveals that sovereign power in this context does not merely supplement preventive techniques when

they fail but performs a constitutive function that preventive techniques alone cannot discharge. The highly publicized prosecution of PT. Bakkah Berkah Mulia Surabaya, resulting in a six-year sentence, functioned less as an effective deterrence, given that illegal operations persist despite such prosecutions, than as what Lemke (2001) terms a governmental spectacle: a demonstration of state capacity that reconstructs the boundary between legitimate and illegitimate religious entrepreneurship in the eyes of the broader public. Sovereign power here is not a residual instrument of last resort but an ongoing performative assertion of governmental authority whose effects are primarily symbolic and boundary-constituting.

In secular liberal contexts, the spectacle of punishment risks appearing disproportionate or illiberal. In the Indonesian religious governance context, however, sovereign sanctions against hajj fraud carry an additional moral register unavailable to secular governance frameworks: the perpetrator is not only a criminal but a betrayer of the most sacred obligation in Islamic practice. The ministry exploits this moral surplus, framing prosecutions in pastoral terms, specifically protecting vulnerable believers from predatory exploitation, thereby legitimating sovereign power through explicitly religious vocabulary. This instrumentalization of pastoral rationality to authorize sovereign sanction represents a distinctive feature of Islamic bureaucratic governance that secular governmentality frameworks have not adequately anticipated. The finding responds directly to Ladwig's (2021b) call to extend governmentality analysis beyond Christian pastoral genealogies, demonstrating that pastoral care and sovereign coercion in Islamic institutional contexts are mutually reinforcing rather than historically sequential.

The ministry's investment in industry self-regulation, consumer information disclosure, and individual pilgrim education exemplifies the advanced liberal strategy of governing at a distance: shaping the conduct of subjects through the production of responsible, self-managing actors rather than through direct administrative command (Nikolas Rose, 1999; Rose et al., 2006). The East Java Hajj Travel Agency Association functions precisely as what Miller & Rose (1990) describe as a governmental intermediary: an entity that translates ministerial objectives into industry norms while creating the appearance of autonomous professional self-governance, allowing the ministry to simultaneously extend its regulatory reach and reduce its administrative burden by distributing governance responsibilities onto industry actors who are incentivized through reputational and market mechanisms to enforce compliance among their peers.

However, the East Java data expose a structural contradiction at the heart of this neoliberal rationality that existing scholarship has not fully interrogated within religious governance contexts. The responsabilization strategy assumes subjects possessing adequate information, rational deliberative capacity, and genuine choice among alternatives, yet each of these assumptions is empirically undermined in the hajj case. Prospective pilgrims facing waiting periods of 25 years or more do not choose illegal alternatives primarily out of ignorance or inadequate consumer education; many do so out of a rational calculation that life expectancy may not permit access to the official channel. Victim testimonies reveal not naïve credulity but desperate hope, a qualitatively different epistemic condition that the ministry's educational campaigns, premised on informed-consumer deficit, systematically and consequentially misdiagnose as a knowledge problem rather than a structural one.

By framing victimization as an outcome of inadequate individual diligence, the responsabilization apparatus deflects analytical attention from the structural conditions that generate illegal market demand: quota scarcity and decades-long waiting periods that the ministry itself administers. As Thomas Lemke (2019) observes, neoliberal responsabilization frequently individualizes

structurally produced risks; the East Java case illustrates this dynamic within a religious governance context in which the structural driver of the problem the governance apparatus purports to address is simultaneously produced and obscured by that apparatus itself. This is not a governance failure in any conventional sense but a constitutive feature of how the ministerial apparatus reproduces its own necessity: by managing but never resolving the scarcity that generates the illegal market it is mandated to prevent.

These findings carry implications for governmentality theory that extend beyond the specific hajj governance case. The framework retains analytical purchase in non-Western, non-secular contexts, but requires modification to accommodate rationalities organized around collective religious obligation rather than liberal individualism. The ministerial construction of the responsible pilgrim, characterized as patient, bureaucratically compliant, and spiritually disciplined, does not simply reproduce Western subjectification templates; it fuses governmental imperatives with Islamic normative frameworks, giving bureaucratic compliance the valence of religious virtue. Moreover, the findings complicate the secularization thesis implicit in Foucault's genealogy of pastoral power. The East Java case does not support a narrative of pastoral care's historical secularization: ministerial authority derives precisely from its claim to steward a divine obligation, suggesting that pastoral power and religious authority exist in contextually variable articulation rather than historical displacement (Sezgin & Künkler, 2014).

Three specific theoretical propositions emerge from the East Java analysis that advance the broader governmentality literature and warrant explicit statement. First, the concept of pastoral power requires disaggregation in Islamic institutional contexts: rather than constituting a rationality that has been historically secularized (as Foucault's genealogy of Western liberal governance implies), pastoral authority in the ministerial context operates as a continuously renewable source of governmental legitimacy that can authorize disciplinary, sovereign, and neoliberal interventions simultaneously—and without requiring secularization as its condition of possibility. Second, the subject of governmentality in Islamic bureaucratic governance is constitutively collective rather than individual: the responsible pilgrim is constructed primarily as a member of the Indonesian Muslim community, bearing obligations to that community's collective spiritual welfare, rather than as an autonomous rights-bearing individual balancing personal risks and returns. This collectivist subjectification structure fundamentally alters how responsabilization operates—rather than individuating risk management, it communalizes religious obligation while simultaneously individualizing blame for non-compliance, a combination with distinctive implications for how governance accountability is distributed. Third, and most consequentially for how the field deploys the framework, the East Java analysis reveals that governmentality frameworks applied uncritically risk reproducing the analytical categories of the governance apparatus under study: by accepting the ministry's framing of illegal hajj as a prevention problem amenable to better governance technologies, scholars reproduce the very obscuring of structural conditions that the ministerial apparatus's rationalities systematically produce. Critical governmentality analysis must therefore attend not only to how power operates but to how the framework's own analytical vocabulary is shaped by the institutional field it investigates.

Most consequentially, the analysis reveals that the three governmentality modalities identified in East Java do not constitute a coherent preventive system but an assemblage with constitutive tensions that simultaneously reproduce the conditions for their own inadequacy. Disciplinary surveillance generates the legibility that illegal operators strategically exploit, sovereign sanctions produce deterrence spectacles without addressing structural demand, and neoliberal responsabilization individualizes structurally generated risks. Framing illegal hajj as a governance failure, as ministerial

discourse implicitly does, therefore obscures the fact that these prevention mechanisms are not merely failing to solve the problem but are constitutively entangled with it. Where previous studies in adjacent religious governance contexts have largely used governmentality to map the distribution of power (Ghatak & Abel, 2013), the present analysis demonstrates that the framework's most productive critical application lies in revealing how governance rationalities are implicated in the very conditions of possibility for the problems they are designed to resolve.

Positioned within the wider landscape of religious governance scholarship, this conclusion generates claims at two levels that clarify the study's contribution and invite further inquiry. In relation to studies of Indonesian Islamic administration—including Alfitri's (2018) analysis of constitutional tensions, Sezgin & Künkler's (2014) bureaucratization thesis, and Bruinessen's (2020) comparative analysis of Indonesia's Ministry of Religious Affairs and Turkey's Diyanet—the present study demonstrates that governmental rationalities within Islamic bureaucracies operate through a level of internal complexity and self-reproductive contradiction that institutional analyses working at the level of formal regulatory frameworks cannot adequately capture. Governmentality analysis functions as a methodological supplement to institutional religious governance scholarship: it adds a microphysical dimension to accounts that operate at the level of constitutional arrangements and organizational structures, revealing the logics and contradictions through which formal frameworks are enacted in practice. In relation to the broader governmentality literature—including the foundational contributions of Dean (2010), Rose et al. (2006), and Lemke (2019)—the East Java case extends the framework's empirical reach into Islamic bureaucratic governance while generating targeted conceptual revisions that accommodate three features of that governance context: the Islamicization rather than secularization of pastoral power, the collectivization rather than individualization of the responsible subject, and the constitutive rather than merely incidental relationship between the prevention apparatus and the structural conditions that render prevention permanently incomplete. Each of these modifications represents a substantive contribution to the theoretical literature rather than a contextual qualification, insofar as they challenge assumptions embedded in existing applications of the framework rather than merely extending its descriptive range.

4. CONCLUSION

This case study of illegal hajj prevention at the Ministry of Religious Affairs Regional Office in East Java demonstrates that governmental power in this religious domain operates through interconnected modalities combining disciplinary surveillance, sovereign sanctions, and neoliberal self-regulation technologies, constituting mechanisms of religious conduct regulation through knowledge production, subject categorization, and calibrated interventions that simultaneously enable and constrain religious mobility. Theoretically, the study contributes to governmentality scholarship by applying analytical frameworks developed in Western secular liberal contexts to Indonesian Islamic institutional arrangements. More specifically, the analysis demonstrates three theoretical propositions: that governmentality's tripartite rationalities function as mutually constitutive tensions rather than separable analytical categories; that pastoral power in Islamic bureaucratic contexts has not been secularized but Islamicized, deriving governmental authority from explicitly religious legitimacy; and that governance mechanisms can be constitutively implicated in reproducing the structural conditions generating the very problems they are designed to resolve. The East Java case illuminates hybridity among governmentality modalities, with risk-based profiling straddling disciplinary and neoliberal

logics and pastoral rhetoric accompanying sovereign sanction, suggesting that prevention operates through assemblages rather than pure ideal types. Governance reforms oriented exclusively toward strengthening surveillance capacities, expanding sanctions, or improving consumer education will remain structurally insufficient so long as the ministerial apparatus simultaneously administers the quota scarcity that makes illegal alternatives rationally attractive to prospective pilgrims. Future research should investigate pilgrim counter-conduct, comparative analysis across regional offices, and longitudinal studies examining evolving governance rationalities. The establishment of a dedicated Ministry of Hajj and Umrah in 2025 under Presidential Regulation No. 169/2024 may substantially reconfigure the governmental assemblage documented here, warranting continued scholarly attention to these unfolding institutional dynamics.

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