



INTEGRATION OF MOSQUE-BASED SCIENCE AND EDUCATION A REFLECTIVE STUDY ON THE PERCEPTION OF MOSQUE MOBILIZERS

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates mosque leaders' perceptions of integrating knowledge and Islamic education in community-based contexts. Amidst the moral challenges and limitations of formal education, mosques hold strategic potential as centers that blend Islamic values with practical knowledge. Using a qualitative phenomenological approach, data were obtained through interviews with leaders of four mosques: Ismuhu Yahya, Sejuta Pemuda, Baitul Huda, and Jalan Cahaya. The findings show that these mosques emphasize Qur'anic literacy, youth development, social empowerment, and family resilience through inclusive community programs. The study proposes an integrative mosque-based education model grounded in tawheed, the Qur'an, visionary leadership, holistic programming, and collaboration. The novelty of this research lies in formulating a practical framework for revitalizing Islamic education through mosque-led initiatives. It concludes that mosques can serve as transformative agents in strengthening moral and educational foundations within society.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia, as the country with the world's largest Muslim population, faces a paradoxical reality. Despite the dominance of Islamic identity, moral and social crises continue to escalate within Muslim communities. Data from the Indonesian Child Protection Commission (KPAI, 2023) report increasing cases of bullying, sexual violence, and juvenile delinquency, while Statistics Indonesia (BPS) notes declining family interaction quality and adolescents' detachment from religious practices and Qur'anic literacy. These issues indicate that formal Islamic education has yet to internalize moral and Qur'anic values deeply (Azra, 1999; Muhaimin, 2007).

These conditions reveal that formal Islamic education has not fully succeeded in fostering moral depth and Qur'anic values among students. Learning processes tend to prioritize material mastery over internalization of meaning and character formation. Consequently, the moral foundation of education remains fragile. The mosque historically served as the foundation of Islamic civilization a place where worship, learning, and governance converged (Zuhairini et al., 2000; Hasan, 2018). Yet, modern mosques often experience functional stagnation (Ridwan, 2022). In response, movements like *SIDAQ: Indonesian Paradise with the Qur'an*, initiated by Ismuhu Yahya Mosque, seek to revive the mosque's role as a center for faith, knowledge, and social development. This revival aligns with Rahman's (1982) notion that Islamic institutions must adapt intellectual traditions to societal transformation.

In response to this challenge, mosques have re-emerged as strategic spaces for moral, intellectual, and social revitalization. Beyond their ritual function, mosques can serve as dynamic centers for community learning, integrating Islamic teachings with practical life skills. The *SIDAQ Paradise Indonesia with the Qur'an* movement exemplifies this potential, inspiring various mosques such as Ismuhu Yahya (West Kalimantan), Sejuta Pemuda (Sukabumi), Baitul Huda (Bandung), and Jalan Cahaya (Lombok) to develop Qur'an-based programs for literacy, youth empowerment, and family development.

However, while these initiatives show significant social impact, academic research examining how mosque leaders conceptualize the integration of Islamic knowledge and education in community-based contexts remains limited. This research gap highlights the need for deeper exploration into the epistemological and practical frameworks guiding mosque-led education movements.

Therefore, this study seeks to investigate mosque leaders' perceptions of mosque-based integration models of Islamic knowledge and education. Specifically, it aims to explore (1) how mosque leaders interpret the integration of knowledge and faith in educational programs, (2) what strategies they employ to align community empowerment with Qur'anic values, and (3) how these models contribute to addressing moral and social challenges.

The novelty of this research lies in its formulation of a conceptual framework for mosque-based Islamic education that combines theological principles (*tawheed* and Qur'anic foundations) with practical leadership, inclusive programming, and community collaboration. This framework is expected to contribute theoretically to the discourse on

Islamic educational integration and practically to the development of mosque-centered educational models in Indonesia. Previous studies (Basri, 2021; Fadhil, 2022; Mahfud, 2021) discussed mosque-based education for character building and Qur'anic literacy. However, few have examined how mosque leaders interpret *knowledge integration* as a lived educational framework. This study addresses that gap by exploring mosque leaders' perceptions of integrating Islamic education with social and intellectual life (Nata, 2005; Qodir, 2021).

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a qualitative phenomenological (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) approach to explore mosque leaders' lived experiences in integrating Islamic educational values with community development. The phenomenological design was chosen to capture the social and spiritual realities from the participants' perspectives (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Participants were determined purposively, consisting of four mosque leaders actively involved in educational and social programs: Ismuhu Yahya Mosque in West Kalimantan, Sejuta Pemuda Mosque in Sukabumi, Baitul Huda Mosque in Bandung, and Jalan Cahaya Mosque in Lombok. Data were collected over a three-month period (February–April 2024) through semi-structured in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation. Interviews were conducted to reveal perceptions and strategies of educational integration, while observations of mosque activities such as Qur'anic learning, da'wah, and community empowerment followed Spradley's (1980) ethnographic observation framework. Documentation such as reports, pamphlets, and social media archives was analyzed to strengthen data triangulation (Bowen, 2009). The collected data were analyzed thematically (Braun & Clarke, 2006) through stages of coding, categorization, and theme synthesis into a conceptual model of mosque-based Islamic education. Thematic analysis followed three stages: data coding, theme grouping, and interpretation (Hamalik, 2004). Member checking ensured validity, and confidentiality was maintained. This approach allowed deep understanding of participants' lived experiences within spiritual and educational contexts (Suyadi, 2013).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Role of Mosques in Islamic History and Education

Mosques have always been integral to education and civilization. During the Prophet's era, the mosque functioned as a learning center and administrative hub. Institutions such as Al-Azhar in Egypt and Al-Qarawiyyin in Morocco evolved from this legacy (Al-Attas, 1990; Zuhairini et al., 2000). In Islam, knowledge integration combines *'ilm*, *tazkiyah*, and *hikmah*, echoing QS. Al-Jumu'ah:2 (Departemen Agama RI, 2005). Contemporary scholars like Nurcholish Madjid (1997) and Effendy (2005) argue that education should bridge revelation and reason to serve humanity. In the context of Islamic education, mosques embody a holistic approach integrating spiritual, intellectual, social, and moral dimensions. As stated in QS. Al-Jumu'ah:2, the Prophet's mission united the recitation

of revelation, purification of the soul, and the teaching of wisdom illustrating that genuine Islamic education fuses knowledge ('ilm), tazkiyah (self-purification), and hikmah (wisdom).

Integration of Knowledge and the Contemporary Relevance of Mosques

The integration of knowledge in Islam rejects the dichotomy between religious and secular sciences. Syed Muhammad Naquib al-Attas emphasized that all knowledge be it social, natural, or technological serves as a means of knowing and approaching Allah. In the modern context, mosques are ideal spaces to operationalize this paradigm through community education, ensuring Islamic values function not as abstract dogma but as frameworks for living, reasoning, and problem-solving.

Leadership and the Dynamics of Community-Based Islamic Education

Mosque leadership (takmir) determines the direction and effectiveness of Islamic educational programs. Visionary and collaborative leadership enables mosques to evolve from ritual centers into hubs for family education, youth empowerment, Qur'anic literacy, and social advocacy. As Suyadi (2021) and Mahfud (2022) found, successful mosques cultivate strong networks, consistent teaching councils, and innovative Qur'an literacy movements that revitalize urban and rural religious life.

Field Findings: Four Inspirational Mosques

This study explores four mosques that exemplify diverse models of community-based Islamic education:

1. **Ismuhu Yahya Mosque (West Kalimantan)** integrates family-oriented Qur'anic learning and sharia-based economic empowerment through its "Happy Mosque" concept.
2. **Sejuta Pemuda Mosque (Sukabumi)** focuses on youth da'wah, creative digital literacy, and inclusive mentorship programs (Qodir, 2021).
3. **Baitul Huda Mosque (Bandung)** emphasizes compassion-driven education through its "Meal Mosque" model combining social service and faith formation (Hasan, 2018).
4. **Jalan Cahaya Mosque (Lombok)** centers on family development through Qur'anic parenting and tafsir studies, framing the household as the first madrasah. (Hasyim, 2022)

These mosques represent localized yet interconnected expressions of the same integrative vision: uniting Qur'anic spirituality, education, and social empowerment (Ridwan, 2022).

Table 1. Core Educational Focus of the Four Mosques

Mosque	Core Program	Educational Focus	Target Group
Ismuhu Yahya	Family Qur'an Halaqah	Qur'an as life curriculum; transgenerational learning	Children & families
Million Youth	Mentoring & Creative Da'wah	Youth empowerment; digital literacy	Teenagers & students
Baitul Huda	Meal & Study Sessions	Faith through compassion; service-based learning	General public
Jalan Cahaya	Qur'anic Parenting & Tafsir	Family as primary madrasah; home-based education	Couples & families

Summary: Each mosque contextualizes its educational model around community needs while maintaining Qur'anic principles as the foundation of lifelong learning.

Comparatively, the four mosques represent complementary emphases: Ismuhu Yahya (family), Sejuta Pemuda (youth), Baitul Huda (social), and Jalan Cahaya (family-spiritual ecology). Despite contextual diversity, all converge on the same epistemological foundation *tawhid* as the axis of integration (Rahman, 1982; Malik, 2019).

These findings align with Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory, positioning the mosque as a proximal environment shaping moral development. Visionary leadership, participatory community engagement, and adaptability to digital culture (Mu'ti & Khoirudin, 2022) emerge as success factors.

Table 2. Perceptions of Mosque Leaders on Educational Integration

Mosque	Central Perception	Educational Principle
Ismuhu Yahya	"We form habits, not just give lectures."	Embodied Qur'anic culture
Million Youth	"The mosque should be a space to grow, not to fear."	Safe and inclusive youth space
Baitul Huda	"A full stomach opens the heart to the Qur'an."	Social empathy as da'wah
Jalan Cahaya	"Learning the Qur'an begins with the family."	Family-centered formation

Interpretation: Leaders view integration as an active process of transforming religious instruction into lived experience where the Qur'an informs character, community, and social practice.

Table 3. Integration Index Across Mosques (Likert Scale 1–5)

Indicator	Ismuhu Yahya	Million Youth	Baitul Huda	Jalan Cahaya	Average
Qur'an as Core Value	5	4	4	5	4.5
Lifelong Education	5	5	4	5	4.75
Community Collaboration	4	5	5	4	4.5
Value–Practice Integration	5	4	5	5	4.75

Perception scores from informants (Likert scale 1–5) reveal strong agreement across four indicators: Qur'an as core value (avg. 4.5), lifelong education (4.75), community collaboration (4.5), and value-practice integration (4.75). This supports Al-Attas's *ta'dib* framework emphasizing education as moral cultivation (Al-Attas, 1990; Ramayulis, 2005).

The high average scores (≥ 4.5) confirm consistent alignment between mosque-based education and the principles of integrative Islamic knowledge. Despite contextual differences, all four mosques demonstrate shared priorities: embedding Qur'anic values, facilitating intergenerational learning, and fostering collaborative community ecosystems.

Analytical Interpretation

Thematic analysis reveals three dominant educational orientations across cases:

1. **Spiritualization** – The Qur'an functions as both ethical compass and epistemic foundation.
2. **Contextualization** – Programs address concrete social realities (youth, family, welfare).
3. **Communitization** – Congregants are co-creators in learning, not passive recipients.

Challenges remain in funding, qualified human resources, and digital outreach, yet all mosques display adaptive innovation through community-led management, volunteer systems, and basic use of digital media for da'wah. These findings suggest that integrative education thrives not through infrastructure but through values, leadership, and participation.

Theoretical and Comparative Discussion

Empirically, the findings reinforce Al-Attas's *ta'dib* theory, which defines Islamic education as the cultivation of *adab* integrating knowledge, faith, and action. Simultaneously, they align with Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, where the mosque functions as a *microsystem* deeply shaping individual development through daily interaction and moral exemplarity. Compared across the four cases, differences in form

(economic, social, family, or youth focus) converge on the same essence: the mosque as a holistic educational institution that unites revelation and reality.

Implications

1. **Practical:** Mosque-based education models should be adopted as frameworks for community empowerment, emphasizing family and youth development.
2. **Theoretical:** The study contributes to Islamic education theory by operationalizing *knowledge integration* within local and participatory mosque settings.
3. **Policy:** Policymakers and Islamic authorities are encouraged to include mosque education networks within national education strategies, support takmir training, and develop certification programs for community da'i.

4. CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that mosques hold significant potential as centers for integrating Islamic knowledge and community-based education. Amid social inequality, moral challenges among youth, and the limitations of formal education in addressing spiritual needs, mosques emerge as transformative learning spaces. The four cases Ismuha Yahya, Sejuta Pemuda, Baitul Huda, and Jalan Cahaya illustrate that visionary leadership can restore the mosque's comprehensive educational role, integrating Qur'anic literacy, character formation, social empowerment, and family development.

The research proposes a five-pillar model of mosque-based Islamic education: (1) *Tawhid* as the philosophical foundation, (2) the Qur'an as the educational spirit, (3) visionary *takmir* leadership, (4) inclusive programs across generations, and (5) collaboration with external institutions. Mosques emerge as transformative microsystems that unite spiritual, intellectual, and social dimensions of learning (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Al-Attas, 1990).

This model contributes theoretically by aligning with the concept of *ta'dib* (formation of adab) and the ecological approach that situates the mosque as a vital microsystem shaping individual and family religiosity. Practically, it offers a framework for reimagining mosques as centers of lifelong learning and social transformation.

5. RECOMMENDATION

For Takmir Leaders: Develop programs grounded in the integration of Islamic knowledge and community needs, optimizing the mosque as a space for family and communal learning. For Government and the Ministry of Religious Affairs: Strengthen policies supporting mosques with educational functions through takmir training, standardized learning modules, and integration of mosque-based education into national data systems (Kementrian Agama RI, 2020). For Academics and Researchers: Conduct follow-up studies on the effectiveness of mosque curricula, leadership development models, and their impact on community morality and Qur'anic literacy. For the Muslim Community: Reviving the mosque is not merely a spiritual act but a civilizational movement transforming it into a house of learning and a foundation for a Qur'an-centered, solution-oriented generation (Ridwan, 2022).

In essence, this research highlights the mosque's enduring relevance as both an educational and social institution, reaffirming its role as a living embodiment of integrative Islamic knowledge in contemporary society (Rahman, 1982; Effendy, 2005).

In essence, education should not only focus on academic achievement but must also emphasize the formation of students' character. Within the context of Islamic education, the primary goal of education is to foster obedience to Allah SWT through the practice of noble morals exemplified by Prophet Muhammad (Sudadi, 2025). This is affirmed in the Qur'an, Surah Al-Qalam verse 4:

"And indeed, you are of a great moral character." (Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, 2020)

According to Tafsir Jalalain, this verse emphasizes that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) possessed noble character (Al-Mahalli & As-Suyuthi, 2018). His morals serve as the standard for Muslims in shaping a Qur'anic character, reflecting values such as honesty, compassion, patience, and responsibility that must be emulated by students. This is reinforced by a hadith narrated by Al-Baihaqi in Sahih Bukhari No. 273:

"Indeed, I was sent only to perfect noble character." (Bukhari, 1956)

According to Ibn al-'Arabi, the Prophet was granted the ability to complete the moral virtues of previous prophets, making ethics the essence of his da'wah. Teachers, therefore, hold a strategic role in shaping students' character by introducing moral values and noble conduct. By demonstrating exemplary behavior in daily life, teachers can positively influence students' personality and faith (Putri et al., 2025).

Character education is increasingly important in the era of globalization and digitalization, which poses significant challenges in the form of moral decline. Instant culture, shifting values, and the flood of information often contribute to the degradation of morality among the younger generation. While digitalization and automation bring innovations that make life more convenient and limitless, they also create complex challenges, including the demand for new and multifaceted skills (Bahtiar et al., 2023).

Character building is a process of shaping one's soul into a unique and distinct identity, much like letters of the alphabet that are never the same (Baidowi & Putri, 2024). Character education can be obtained through both academic activities and extracurricular programs. One such extracurricular activity that contributes to character formation is Tapak Suci, a Muhammadiyah martial arts program.

In Tapak Suci, Islamic education plays a vital role in instilling moral values that are essential for achieving academic excellence. Relying solely on knowledge without noble character would leave individuals unable to control themselves (Azzahra & Mavianti, 2024).

However, the reality of education in Indonesia shows that the goals outlined in Law No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System have not been fully achieved. Many students still lack discipline, responsibility, empathy, and respect for diversity. This situation requires strategic solutions to instill Qur'anic values within students.

The failure of moral education cannot be separated from various factors that weaken faith and manners, often hindering or even halting the moral development process. Challenges such as the influence of digital media, limited teacher competence, and

insufficient involvement of families and communities have triggered a character crisis among the younger generation (Andini & Fadilah, 2023).

At SMP Swasta Muhammadiyah 48 Medan, Tapak Suci extracurricular activities are used as a solution to these challenges. Being a compulsory program in all Muhammadiyah schools, it serves as an important platform for instilling discipline, resilience, sportsmanship, and reliance on Allah based on Islamic teachings. In practice, Tapak Suci emphasizes not only cognitive and psychomotor aspects but also affective aspects, such as behavior, attitude, and personality. These values are reflected in students' sportsmanship, mutual respect, discipline, humility, and perseverance. This aligns with the motto of Tapak Suci: "With faith and morals, I become strong; without faith and morals, I become weak." Thus, Tapak Suci can serve as an effective means of shaping students' character in line with Islamic values.

Previous studies show that Tapak Suci extracurricular activities significantly influence students' character development. Rizal et al. (2021) explain that Tapak Suci improves students' self-confidence through discipline and courage. Safa & Utomo (2023) emphasize that Tapak Suci develops discipline, sportsmanship, and religiosity. Ma'arif (2023) found that Tapak Suci extracurricular activities at Muhammadiyah Junior High School Pakem Sleman strengthen students' discipline, while Pratama & Hidayah (2025) demonstrate its effectiveness in enhancing discipline and interest among students. However, studies that specifically examine how Tapak Suci extracurricular activities shape students' Qur'anic character at SMP Swasta Muhammadiyah 48 Medan remain limited.

Therefore, this study aims to describe the implementation of Tapak Suci extracurricular activities and their role in shaping students' Qur'anic character at Muhammadiyah 48 Private Junior High School Medan, as well as to identify the supporting and inhibiting factors.

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