


# The Role of the Mosque as a Center for Islamic Religious Education in Developing Youth with Religious Character in Barangka Village, Buton Regency

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## A B S T R A C T

This study aims to examine and analyze the role of the mosque as a center for Islamic religious education in developing the religious character of youth in Barangka Village, Buton Regency. In rural communities, the mosque functions not only as a place of worship but also as a non-formal educational institution with significant potential in shaping the morals and personality of the younger generation. In the face of globalization and the rapid development of information technology, which influence youth lifestyles and mindsets, character education based on Islamic values becomes increasingly crucial and relevant. This research employs a qualitative descriptive approach, using data collection methods such as observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation of religious activities conducted at the mosque. The informants include religious leaders, youth, mosque youth organization members, and the surrounding community. The findings reveal that the mosque in Barangka Village organizes a variety of structured religious education activities, including regular study sessions, Qur'an reading lessons, religious discussions, and community-based Islamic events aimed at reinforcing religious values among the youth. Youth involvement in these activities significantly contributes to the development of their religious character, as evidenced by increased devotion to worship, polite behavior, social responsibility, and active participation in community life. Despite several challenges, such as limited facilities, a shortage of qualified religious educators, and negative influences from digital media, the mosque remains a vital moral foundation for the youth—supported by religious figures, families, and the broader community. This study concludes that the mosque plays a strategic role in educating and nurturing religiously grounded youth, and with institutional strengthening and cross-sector collaboration, this role can be further optimized to meet the demands of modern character education.

**Keywords:** *Mosque, Islamic Religious Education, Youth, Religious Character, Barangka Village*

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is an effort to help humans achieve a meaningful life, so that happiness in life is obtained both individually and in groups. As a process, education requires a programmed and robust system, as well as clear goals so that the direction is easily achieved. Education is a design of the activity process that has a solid foundation, and a clear direction as the goal to be achieved

Responding to the importance of Islamic religious education for the younger generation, especially the young generation of Islam, it is very necessary to have activities outside of learning at school to foster and increase the religious insight of the generation of teenagers and society so that they have the quality of faith and devotion which can be fundamental values in the formation of adolescent character and morals. Activities such as youth recitation with the characteristics of recitation (specifically Islam) who realize the importance of additional religious education for the children of the younger generation in efforts to develop Islamic education in the community.

Along with the times, the role of mosques has developed. The mosque now functions not only as a place of worship, but also as a center for education and social activities. Modern mosques today offer more structured religious education programs, skills training, and social services for the community. In addition, mosques must also face the challenges of globalization and the influence of technology that affects society. Mosques as religious institutions, have long functioned not only as places of worship, but also as centers of religious education.

However, in the midst of technological developments and globalization, teenagers are often faced with various challenges that can affect the formation of their character. Rapidly developing information technology, foreign cultural influences, and social dynamics can be challenges for religious education in shaping the character of youth. Therefore, it is important to assess how mosques can respond to these challenges and take advantage of opportunities to provide relevant and effective education. In addition, mosques also face new challenges in the digital era and globalization, such as the influence of foreign cultures and shifting societal values. To overcome these challenges, mosques must adapt to the times while still maintaining the core values of Islam.

As seen and found by researchers at the Al-Ikhlas mosque, researchers found that the Jami Al-Ikhlas mosque since its establishment until now is not only used as a place of worship but also as a place to carry out various activities such as TPQ activities, a place for coaching, ta'lim assemblies, I'tikaf, mabit, commemoration of Islamic holidays, namely the commemoration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday and the commemoration of Isra Mi'raj, Competitions that involve youth to be directly involved in order to build awareness and willingness of youth which aims to shape the character of these youth

## METHOD

The data research method is an important step in conducting research, because the collected data will be used as analysis material in research. The methods used in this qualitative research are divided into two ways, including the following:

### *Observation*

Observation is the collection of data through systematic observation of recording data on the phenomenon being researched, both directly and indirectly.

According to psychology, observation or often referred to as observation, includes the activity of strengthening attention to an object by using all five senses. Observing can be done through sight, smell, and taste. Thus, observational research can be carried out with image recordings and sound recordings. Observation can be conducted in two ways: non-systematic observation, where the observer does not use any specific instruments, and systematic observation, where the observer uses structured guidelines or tools. In both types, the researcher carries out the observation directly by coordinating with the source of information to agree on the time, location, and tools needed for the observation process.

### *Interview*

An interview is a conversational process with the intention of constructing people, events, organizations, motivations, feelings and so on that are done by certain parties, namely asking questions with the interviewee.<sup>1</sup> The conversation is conducted by both parties, namely the interviewer who asks the question and the interviewee who provides the answer to this question Interviewing is not an easy job.

In terms of interviewers, they must be able to create a relaxed but serious atmosphere, meaning that the interview is done seriously, not playfully and not pretentious. This atmosphere is important to maintain so that respondents want to answer whatever the interviewer wants honestly. Therefore, this job is difficult, so before conducting an interview,

you must be trained first. With practice, the interviewer knows how to introduce himself, behave, conduct interview steps and so on.

This method will be used as evidence to the originality and data equipment that has been obtained in this method. The tools used by researchers in receiving information from informants are recording devices and stationery. So, researchers can find out about "The Role of Mosque as a Center for Islamic Religious Education in Developing Youth with Religious Character in Barangka Village, Buton Regency".

The interview is also to check other data that has been obtained in the past. An in-depth interview requires interview guidelines. The interview guidelines used by the researcher are unstructured interview guidelines because the interview guidelines only contain an outline that will be asked so that the researcher's creativity is needed because the results of interviews with this type of guideline are more dependent on the interview.

#### *Documentation*

Documentation is a record of events that have passed, documents can be in the form of writings, drawings, or monumental works of a person. Documents in written form, such as diaries, life *histories*, stories, biographies, regulations and policies. Documents in the form of pictures such as photos, living images, sketches and others.

Documentation is a data collection technique that is carried out by collecting documents related to the process of religious development of children which is carried out through various religious activities and activities located at the Al-Ikhlâs Mosque of Batu Banawa Hamlet.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Findings

#### *Islamic Religious Education Activities Organized by Mosques*

Based on the results of observations and interviews, the mosque in Barangka Village carries out various forms of Islamic religious education activities that are informal but consistent. These activities include:

#### *Non-Formal Madrasah Diniyah*

Held every afternoon for children and teenagers. The material includes the reading and writing of the Qur'an (BTQ), beliefs, basic fiqh, and memorization of short letters. This activity was guided by local ustaz and ustazah from alumni of Islamic boarding schools and universities.

#### *Adolescent Studies and Book Studies*

Religious activities are held every Friday and Sunday night with varied themes such as respect for parents, the dangers of promiscuity, the importance of congregational prayer, and the morals of the younger generation, and are actively attended by local youth who are members of the Mosque Youth (Remas). In addition, Religious Practice Activities (Amaliyah Diniyah) such as Friday sermon training, adhan, and serving as prayer imams are conducted to equip youth with practical religious skills applicable in community life. The Commemoration of Islamic Holidays (PHBI), including the Prophet's Birthday, Isra' Mi'raj, Nuzulul Qur'an, and the Hijri New Year, is also celebrated with various Islamic competitions—such as lectures, recitations, calligraphy, and Islamic knowledge contests—which aim to nurture religious potential and foster a positive competitive spirit among youth.

#### *The Role of Mosques in the Formation of Youth Religious Character*

The results of the interviews showed that the active involvement of youth in mosque activities had a direct impact on the development of their character. A developing religious character includes several indicators:

#### *Worship Commitment*

Youth showed an increase in the *istiqamah* of performing the five-time prayer, especially in congregation at the mosque, and began to fill their free time by reading the Qur'an.

*Attitude of Responsibility and Leadership*

Youth who are members of the Mosque Youth organization are responsible for the implementation of religious and social activities. This trains their leadership, time management, and communication skills.

*Increased Social Awareness*

Activities such as social service, mutual cooperation in cleaning mosques, and fundraising for sick residents increase empathy and social solidarity among youth.

*Ethics and Morality in Associations*

Routine coaching activities provide an understanding of the boundaries of association in accordance with Islamic law, so that youth are more directed in interacting and protecting themselves from negative influences.

**Discussion**

The mosque in Barangka Village has a central role in carrying out the function of Islamic religious education which is informal but consistent. Various religious activities organized by the mosque management have become an important forum for youth to deepen their understanding of Islam and strengthen their religious character. Activities such as routine recitation, Qur'an reading training, and Islamic discussions not only provide religious knowledge, but also become an effective means of moral development. The active involvement of youth in these activities shows that mosques are able to create an environment conducive to the process of internalizing religious values in a sustainable manner.

From the results of in-depth interviews conducted with youth, religious leaders, and the surrounding community, it is known that mosques play a role as a space for character development based on Islamic spirituality. Youth who are active in mosque activities show an increase in their commitment to carrying out worship, speaking politely, and staying away from deviant behaviors such as promiscuity and consumption of digital information that is not educational. This change in attitudes and behaviors shows that mosques have become centers of social transformation based on religious values. This is proof that religious education does not always require formal institutions, but can grow through the social role of mosques that are carried out consistently.

However, the success of the role of mosques in shaping the religious character of youth is inseparable from a number of challenges faced. Some of the main obstacles include the limitations of educational support facilities such as learning rooms, libraries, and modern learning media. In addition, the lack of educators who have a strong Islamic education background is also an obstacle in optimizing the coaching process. There are also some young people who are less motivated to participate in mosque activities due to the influence of the social environment and social media which are hedonistic and less religious.

Despite these obstacles, the spirit of community mutual cooperation and the concern of religious leaders are important factors that support the sustainability of religious development activities in mosques. The activeness of mosque youth (Remas) as a driver of youth activities is an indicator that mosques can continue to be strengthened as a community-based Islamic education center. By developing innovative programs that appeal to youth and establishing partnerships with religious institutions and village governments, the role of mosques can be further enhanced. Therefore, it is important for all elements of society to see mosques not only as places of worship, but as a center for education and sustainable religious character development for the younger generation.

**CONCLUSION**

The mosque in Barangka Village, Buton Regency, plays a vital role in Islamic religious education for youth by serving as a center for spiritual, moral, and social development through structured and regular activities such as recitations, Qur'an reading training, adhan and sermon practice, and the commemoration of Islamic holidays. Observations and interviews indicate that young people actively involved in these mosque programs exhibit more religious, responsible, and respectful behavior in both worship and daily social

interactions, reflecting increased religious awareness, improved attitudes toward parents and society, and stronger social cohesion. However, challenges such as limited facilities, lack of professional educators, and the negative impact of the digital environment hinder optimal outcomes, highlighting the urgent need for enhanced mosque management, capacity building, and broader community and government support. The involvement of religious leaders, parents, and the wider community is crucial in reinforcing religious character formation, emphasizing that this is a collective responsibility. Therefore, the mosque holds great potential as a center of Islamic education, and moving forward, it must be supported with innovative and adaptive religious programs, improved infrastructure, and active youth participation to ensure its sustainability and relevance in shaping a spiritually and socially strong generation.

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