

RESEARCH ARTICLE

EMPOWERING MOSQUE MANAGEMENT THROUGH CONGREGATIONAL ENGAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY: A STUDY OF MOSQUES MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL PROGRAMS

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ABSTRACT - This article discusses the role of mosques as centres of worship, education, and catalysts for community well-being through a holistic management approach. The focus is on the implementation of mosque management programs by assessing the challenges, effectiveness, and suggestions for strengthening the program. This study emphasizes the aspects of technological needs in mosque management, the involvement of congregations as a strategic asset, and an inclusive socio-religious approach. A qualitative approach is used for an in-depth examination of the practices, challenges, and outcomes associated with the research topic. Data obtained from secondary sources and literature studies show that the use of technology, such as the Anak Kariah portal and mosque management applications, has the potential to improve the effectiveness of mosque operations. In addition, the involvement of congregational members in mosque activities not only strengthens community brotherhood but also provides added value to community development. The results of this study also found that there are five main elements in the empowerment of mosque management, namely systematic program management, the use of data profiles of congregational members, collaborative networks with government and private agencies, the implementation of non-formal education programs, and the integration of technology in mosque activities. This study recommends that mosques continue to play a proactive role in addressing the challenges of management by focusing on infrastructure development, religious programs, and strategic collaboration. In conclusion, mosques have the potential to become superior institutions that not only fulfil spiritual needs but also contribute to the social well-being of society.

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INTRODUCTION

This article discusses the development of mosques, which is closely related to the population. The majority of the population consists of Malays, followed by Chinese, Indians, and a few aborigines (Orang Asli). This demographic composition is a major factor in determining the needs, program variations, and activities of mosques. The diversity of ethnic backgrounds influences the strategy and management of mosques, which need to be planned more inclusively to meet the needs of the local community. The growth of this multicultural population also reflects the need for mosques to remain relevant in connecting the community, in addition to strengthening their role as religious and social centers. The rapid population growth, as a result of economic progress, migration from other districts and states, marriages, births, and other factors, has had a significant impact on the development of mosques in this area. This dynamic population growth not only affects the social needs but also the religious needs of the local community. Along with these changes, mosques need to continue to grow to meet the needs of the diverse community. This increase in population also reflects the need for mosques to expand their functions and activities, ensuring that they remain relevant as religious and social centers that are able to meet the needs of the growing community. Good road infrastructure facilities are crucial to the development of mosques in the area. Efficient infrastructure facilitates access for local and external communities, making mosques more accessible to various groups of worshippers. These facilities also contribute to the increasing function of mosques as centres for religious and social activities that are expanding in addition, a strategic location as an important route for trade and economic activities also has a great influence on the development of mosques. With a population composition consisting of 44.5% urban residents and 55.5% rural residents, the needs of the community towards mosques vary according to their backgrounds. These differences influence the form of mosque programs and activities, ensuring that they are relevant to meet the needs of urban and rural residents in a balanced manner.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A deep understanding of mosque management is the main basis for its implementation. According to Muhammad Saiful Anuar Yusoff (2021), understanding congregational prayers does not necessarily depend on the completeness of the mosque's infrastructure, but rather on the filling of da'wah and human capital development. Khairul Muna emphasized that various dakwah approaches such as dakwah bilhikmah, bilmauizah hasanah, and bil mujadalah can increase community awareness and understanding. This also has a positive impact on the formation of adolescent morals, especially when mosques and suraus play a role as centers for education and development of the young generation. According to Saharizah (2019), the level of adolescent awareness of Islamic values is closely related to the type and level of activity organized by the mosque. Meanwhile, Wirakusumah (2021) stated that traditional studies in mosques, such as pondok studies, have long been an effective educational medium in shaping the morals of the young generation.

Mosques also play an important role in welfare aspects through various forms of assistance, especially to the asnaf group. A study by Khairul Azhar Meerangani (2022) on Zakat Board shows the effectiveness of economic programs designed specifically for the asnaf. Programs like this help them become independent, build their potential, and escape poverty. In addition, other assistance such as capital injections, provision of equipment, and education schemes are also provided. This assistance not only targets individuals but also institutions, such as mosques, in an effort to develop infrastructure and services. Zakat Management also provides assistance for the maintenance of kariah mosques and educational zakat, which directly helps enhance the local community's quality of life and standard of living. Overall, initiatives such as this strengthen the function of mosques as centers of social and economic development of the community.

The development of information technology (ICT) has accelerated the transition from manual methods to computerized systems, especially in mosque administration and management. One of the proposed solutions is the development of the Anak Kariah Portal, which functions as an interactive database to increase effectiveness and efficiency in various administrative matters. This portal facilitates bookings, user communication, and structured data management.

- The Anak Kariah Portal includes modules such as:
- Death Charity Management
- Mosque Activity Announcement (for example, Maghrib Lectures, Subuh Lectures, First Lectures, Muslimah Lectures, Qiyamulail, Qurban Program, etc.)
- Records and Finance Management Module
- Waqf and Infak Module

According to Hamid (2021), various da'wah activities such as lectures and talks require systematic announcements to ensure that information reaches the community quickly and clearly. With this portal, mosques can utilize technology to convey information and carry out administration more efficiently. This portal management system was developed based on the System Development Life Cycle (SDLC), which goes through the analysis, design, trial, and testing stages. In the context of welfare, geographic information systems (GIS) are also applied to distribute aid to the poor more quickly and accurately, including displaying the location of the recipient's home to facilitate delivery. Efficient mosque governance involves the implementation of basic management functions, including financial, facility, supervision, and administrative aspects. By implementing the principle of rahmatan lil alamin, mosque management needs to ensure that the facilities and environment of the mosque reflect inclusive Islamic values, thus attracting the community to be closer to the mosque. One of the special features of a mosque is its ability to prioritize congregations and treat them with love.

According to Sofuan (2020), a mosque should be a "community-friendly mosque", which welcomes all groups of society regardless of age, background, or status. This includes children, teenagers, seniors, people with disabilities, travelers, homeless people, transgenders, and non-Muslims, so that they all feel comfortable attending the mosque. Two main signs that a mosque prioritizes congregations are the availability of appropriate infrastructure facilities and the provision of inclusive programs, which can be participated in by all levels of society. Although there are various challenges in providing facilities that include all groups, this should not be an obstacle for the mosque to continue to strive to prosper and flourish the mosque. The mosque can be a model of a "community-friendly mosque" that not only functions as a place of worship, but also as a community center that unites various levels of society.

For example, Alasmari Saad Ali (2020) in a study on the administration of mosque leadership in the Grand Mosque and the Prophet's Mosque, presented the importance of good management in improving the quality of services to visitors. This kind of leadership concept can be applied to other mosques to improve the comfort of the congregation and the effectiveness of the programs carried out. The role of the mosque in caring for the congregation with love is important to strengthen brotherhood and unity among the community. Various community activities can be planned, including the physical maintenance of the mosque, the conservation and prosperity of the old mosque and surau, the repair of infrastructure such as damaged bridges, and assistance to congregations in need. This is because the mosque is not only a place of worship but also a community center that unites the community. The congregation of the mosque also has an important role in the community, especially when they contribute their expertise and skills to make the activities organized by the mosque a success. Therefore, the congregation is not only an active contributor to the mosque.

RESEARCH PROBLEM

The research identifies several key problems related to mosque management and welfare implementation. Firstly, a significant portion of the community lacks a comprehensive understanding of the importance of congregational prayers and the broader role of mosques in promoting community welfare. Effective planning and execution of charity activities is further hampered by poor record-keeping, particularly when using the Anak Kariah Portal. The connection between record keeping and the Anak Kariah Portal lies in the portal's function as a platform for managing community data and information, including records related to charitable activities. If record keeping in this portal is weak, for example through incomplete, disorganized, or difficult to access information, it can affect the efficiency of planning and implementing charitable activities. The Anak Kariah Portal should serve as a support system that helps manage data better, but weaknesses in its use can be a barrier to the effectiveness of community efforts.

Governance challenges are another issue, with mosque management found to be less competent and insufficiently focused on utilizing the congregation as a key resource, thus limiting the mosque's potential to serve its community effectively. Furthermore, the scope of charitable assistance provided by mosques is often limited, making it difficult to address the diverse needs of the community. In rural areas, resistance to change and the slow adoption of innovative practices add to the challenges of modernizing mosque management and services. Finally, resource constraints, including limited financial, technical, and human resources, further impede the ability of mosque.

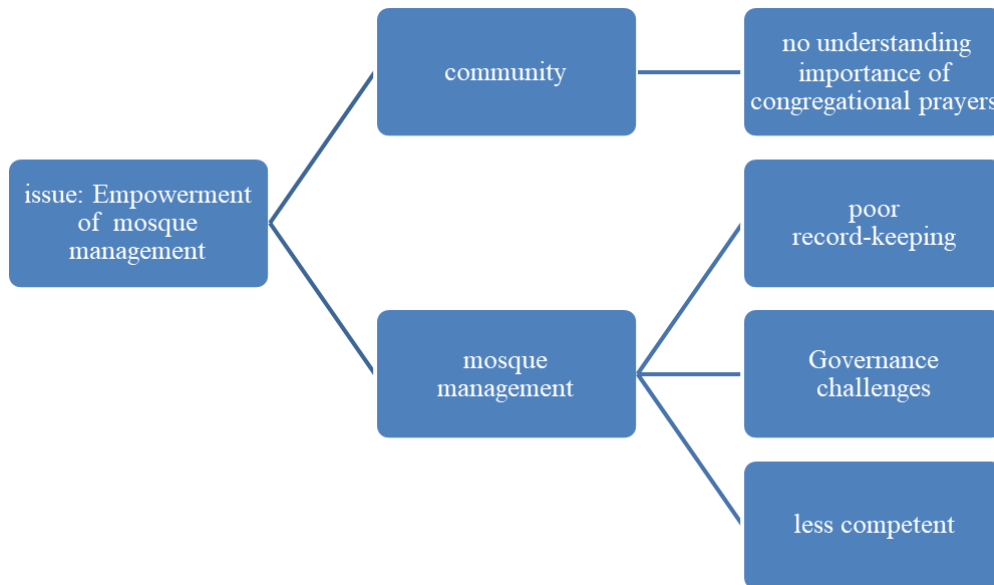


Figure 1. Problem of the research

This problem arises from the community's lack of understanding of congregational prayers. Many do not realize its value and significance. Raising awareness of its spiritual and communal benefits is essential. Taking this into account, the current study decided to make three objectives and three research questions.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This study is guided by the following three objectives:

- 1) To examine the role of mosques as centers of worship, education, and catalysts for community well-being through a holistic management approach.
- 2) To evaluate the implementation of mosque management programs by focusing on challenges, effectiveness, and recommendations to strengthen the program.
- 3) To analyze the key aspects of mosque management, including technological needs, congregational engagement as a strategic asset, and an inclusive socio-religious approach.

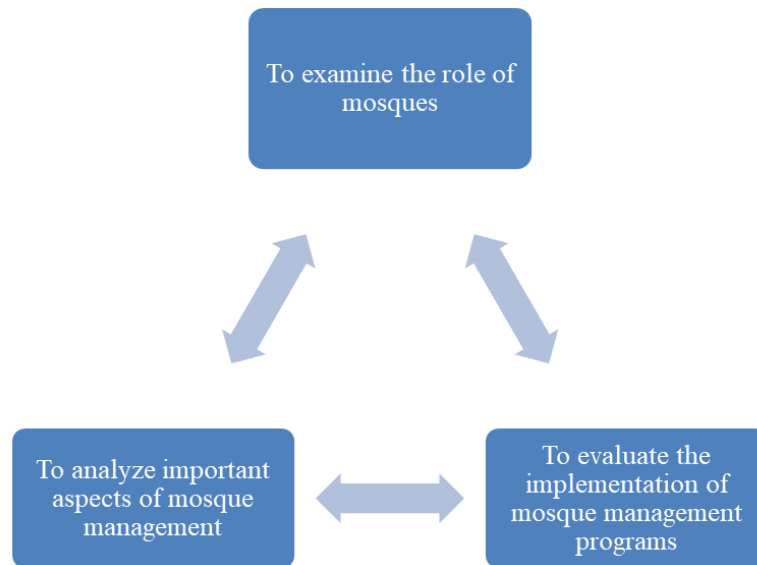


Figure 2. Research objectives

The study tried to answer the following research questions.

- 1) What is the role of mosques as centers of worship, education, and catalysts for community well-being based on a holistic management approach?
- 2) How can the implementation of mosque management programs be assessed in terms of challenges, effectiveness, and recommendations for the empowerment of the program?
- 3) What are the key aspects of mosque management that should be analyzed that include technological needs, congregational involvement as a strategic asset, and an inclusive socio-religious approach?

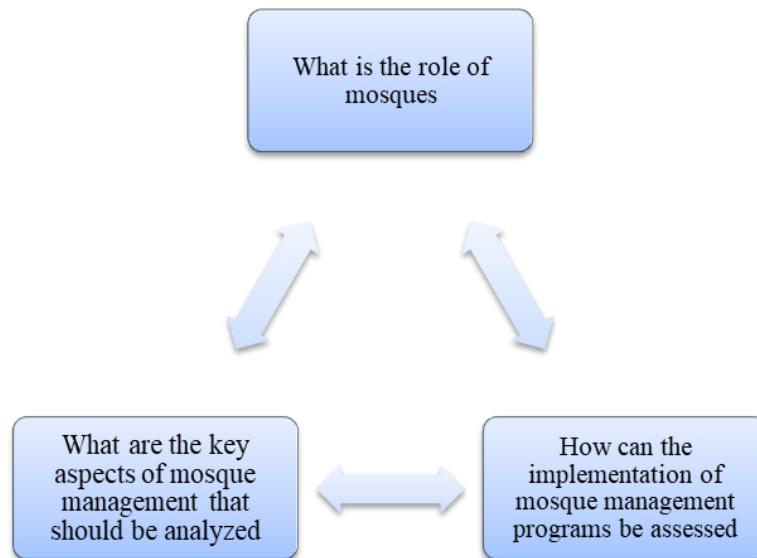


Figure 3. Research questions

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative research design to explore the complex dynamics of mosque management, congregational engagement, and the integration of technology in social programs. A qualitative approach is deemed ideal as it allows for an in-depth examination of the practices, challenges, and outcomes associated with the research topic. By adopting this approach, the study aims to thoroughly investigate the intricate processes involved in mosque management, the active participation of congregants, and the role of technology in enhancing social programs. This method is particularly suited for capturing the nuances and complexities inherent in the subject matter.

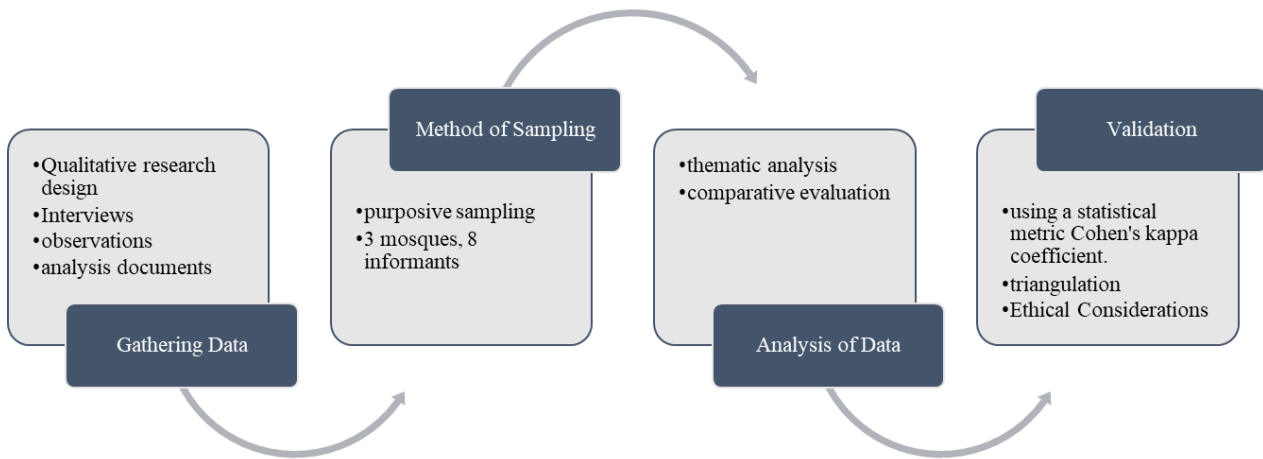


Figure 4. Research methodology

This study used a variety of data collection techniques in order to obtain thorough insights about mosque administration and its social programs:

1) Interviews

Key stakeholders, such as community leaders, mosque management, and members of the congregation, participated in semi-structured interviews. Numerous viewpoints on contemporary issues and activities were recorded in these interviews. In order to ensure representation across gender, age, and socioeconomic backgrounds, a sample size of 8 individuals was chosen from three mosques represented as M1, M2 and M3 as shown in the diagram below.

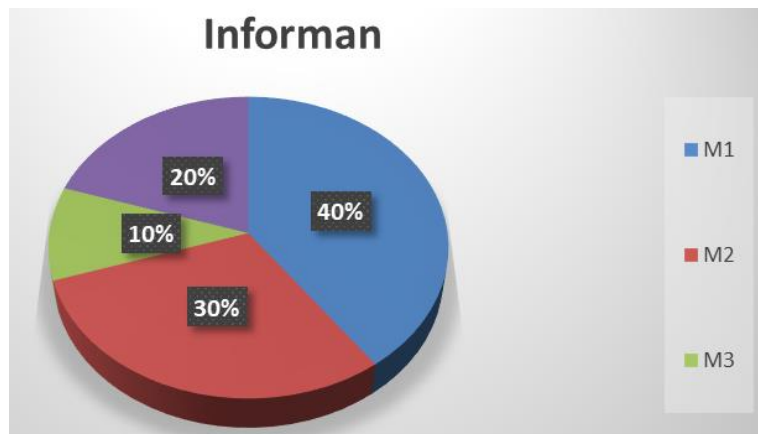


Figure 5. sample size of 8 individuals from three mosques represented as M1, M2 and M3

2) Concentration Groups

Congregation members participated in focus groups to learn more about their opinions on mosque administration and the success of social initiatives. These conversations generated creative ideas and pointed out possible areas for development.

3) Observation

In order to directly assess mosque operations and the implementation of social programs, on-site observations were conducted. By using this method, the researcher was able to see directly how technology and congregations were incorporated into mosque administration procedures.

4) Analysis of Documents

Records of technology use, social program reports, and mosque policies were among the pertinent papers examined. In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the results, this analysis triangulated, and complemented data gathered from observations and interviews.

Method of Sampling

The important criteria for selecting mosques as samples for the study include their ability to provide financial assistance, deliver social services, offer diverse community-focused programs, collaborate with NGOs or professional bodies, and extend various other forms of support to the community.

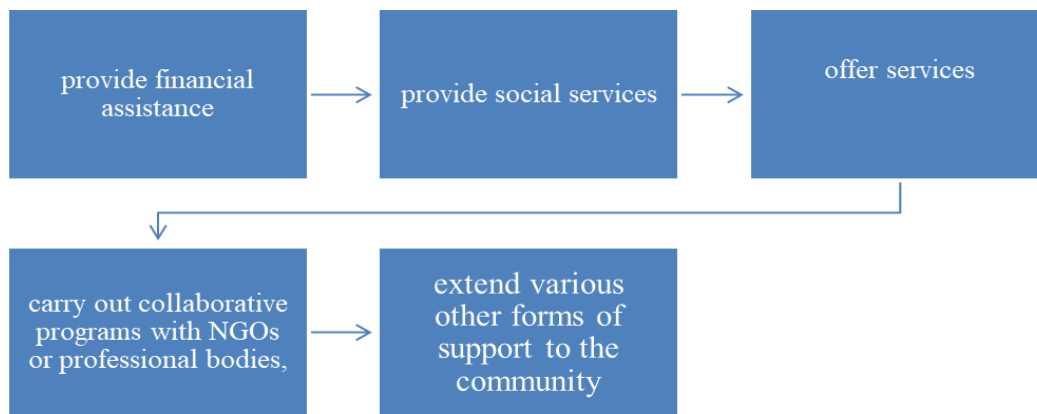


Figure 6. Important criteria on choosing mosque as sample of the study

Analysis of Data

To guarantee a thorough comprehension of the results, the gathered data was analyzed using two main techniques: primary and secondary analysis. Primary analysis is the direct examination of data collected by the researcher. This includes examining raw data from surveys, focus groups, interviews, observations, and experiments. Primary analysis seeks to derive insights directly from the original data source to guarantee that the findings are closely tied to the specific research objectives. Secondary analysis is the process of looking at and assessing information that has already been collected, documented, or published by another individual. One approach to achieve this is to look at previously published papers, documents, datasets, or research initiatives. The goal of secondary analysis is to explore new perspectives obtained from previously collected material or to confirm or validate primary research findings using data that already exists. The two methods work together to provide a deeper and more complex understanding of the research issue.

Thematic Analysis

Thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring patterns, challenges, and best practices within the data. This approach allowed the researcher to uncover key themes that provided insights into the dynamics of mosque management and social programs. Manual thematic analysis is used. The primary themes that emerged included the outcomes of social programs, the level of community engagement, and the integration of technology within mosque operations.

Comparative Evaluation

A comparative evaluation was conducted to analyze the practices and outcomes between mosques with varying levels of congregational participation and technology adoption. This method provided a nuanced understanding of how these factors influenced the effectiveness of mosque management. By comparing mosques with high and low engagement levels, the study was able to identify key elements that contribute to successful program execution and efficient management practices.

Ethical Considerations

Together, these analytical methods ensured a robust exploration of the data, offering valuable insights into the factors that enhance the functionality and impact of mosque operations and social initiatives. The study adhered to rigorous ethical guidelines to ensure the integrity and ethical soundness of the research process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, ensuring that they fully understood the purpose of the study and their role in it. Measures were taken to maintain the anonymity and confidentiality of participant data, safeguarding their privacy throughout the research. Furthermore, approval was secured from the relevant ethical review boards, guaranteeing that the study complied with established ethical standards.

Validation Techniques

Several validation techniques were used to guarantee the reliability and validity of the study findings. The dependability of qualitative categorical data was assessed using a statistical metric called Cohen's kappa coefficient. To increase the consistency and resilience of the findings, triangulation was used to cross-verify data gathered from observations, interviews, and document analysis. In order to enable participants to verify and evaluate the interpretations and conclusions, preliminary findings were shared with them as part of the member verification process. In order to ensure objectivity and reduce potential biases, independent researchers also took part in a peer review process to assess the methodology and results. Together, these validation methods and ethical concerns improved the study's legitimacy, dependability, and trustworthiness while guaranteeing that ethical research standards were followed.

RESEARCH FINDING

Criteria on choosing Mosque as sample

In this context, the study identifies five key themes related to the implementation and challenges faced in mosque management: understanding the core purpose of mosques, providing effective assistance, utilizing the Anak Kariah Portal for better engagement, ensuring efficient governance, and recognizing the congregation as a vital asset of the mosque.

Table 1. Criteria on choosing Mosque as sample

Item	M1	M2	M3
Provide financial assistance	9	9	9
Provide social services	10	10	7
Offer services	9	8	4
Carry out collaborative programs with NGOs or professional bodies	9	9	5
Extend various other forms of support to the community	7	5	2

Source: Field study of selected mosques

DISCUSSION

The data in Table 1 highlights the evaluation of three mosques (M1, M2, and M3) based on five key criteria to determine their suitability as samples for the study. These criteria emphasize the role of mosques in providing financial and social support, as well as their collaboration with external organizations.

1) Provision of Financial Assistance

All three mosques (M1, M2, and M3) scored consistently high (9 out of 10) in providing financial assistance. This suggests that financial support is a well-prioritized function across the sampled mosques, indicating their commitment to helping individuals or communities in need.

2) Provision of Social Services

M1 and M2 excel in providing social services, with both scoring the maximum rating of 10. M3, however, scored lower (7), indicating room for improvement in its capacity to deliver social services. This disparity might stem from differences in available resources or management priorities among the mosques.

3) Offering Services

M1 and M2 again show strong performance with scores of 9 and 8, respectively, while M3 scores significantly lower (4). This result points to potential challenges faced by M3 in maintaining or offering diverse services to its community, which could limit its ability to serve as a comprehensive community centre.

4) Collaborative Programs with NGOs or Professional Bodies

M1 and M2 scored equally high (9), reflecting their active engagement in partnerships with NGOs or professional organizations. M3, however, scored only 5, indicating that its collaborative efforts are less developed compared to the other mosques. Strengthening such partnerships could enhance M3's overall impact on the community.

5) Other Forms of Community Support

In this category, M1 performed moderately well with a score of 7, while M2 and M3 scored 5 and 2, respectively. This suggests that M3, in particular, faces significant challenges in extending diverse forms of assistance to its community, potentially limiting its reach and influence.

Overall Analysis

The findings reveal that M1 and M2 consistently perform well across most criteria, making them strong candidates for the study. On the other hand, M3 shows lower performance in several areas, particularly in offering services, collaborating with external organizations, and providing various forms of community support. These differences may reflect variations in resource availability, leadership strategies, or community needs. The table underscores the importance of evaluating mosques based on multiple criteria to ensure they align with the study's objectives. While M1 and M2 demonstrate exemplary practices, M3's lower scores highlight the need for targeted interventions to strengthen its role as a community hub. These findings provide a foundation for future research on mosque management and its role in community development.

Involvement of Congregational Members in Mosque Activities

These themes provide a comprehensive framework for analyzing and addressing the issues that arise, paving the way for more effective and sustainable mosque management practices.

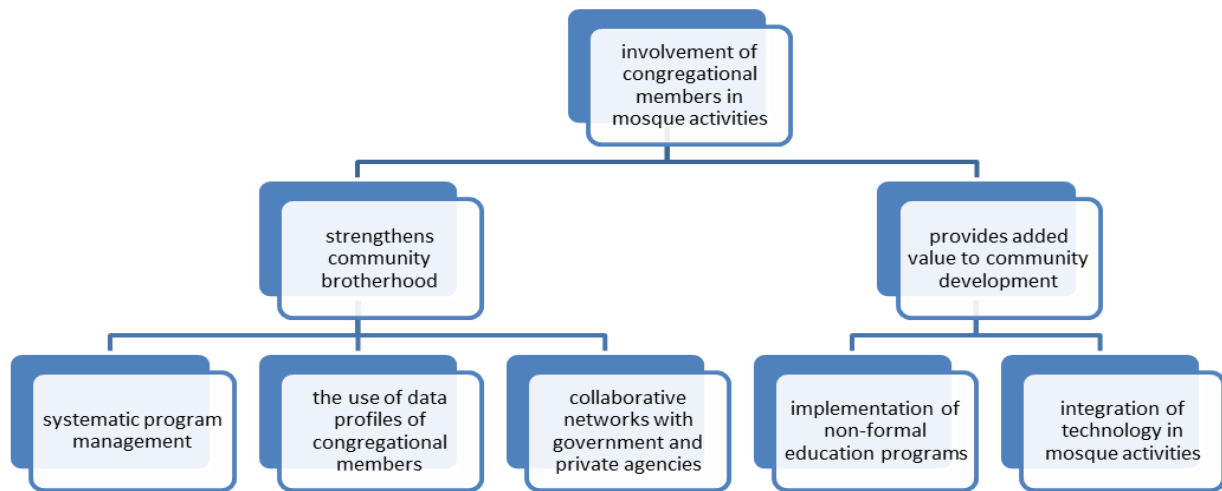


Figure 7. Involvement of Congregational Members in Mosque Activities

Based on the findings of this study, mosques play a very important role in society, not only as centers of worship, but also as social and welfare center that unite the community. The concept of mosque management needs to be viewed holistically, covering religious, social, economic, and political aspects. Active involvement of the congregation and the empowerment of facilities and programs that are inclusive of all groups of society are the keys to success in mosque management. This study also emphasizes the importance of technology in mosque management. The use of computerized systems and databases, such as the Anak Kariah Portal, can improve the effectiveness of management and facilitate communication between mosque management and congregations. The use of this technology also helps in program management and the delivery of information to the community. Although mosques face various challenges, such as issues of lack of facilities and ineffective management, this study suggests several steps to overcome these problems. Among them, improving the management of mosque programs, strengthening the involvement of congregations, and establishing cooperation with government and private agencies.



Overall, this study shows that with a more systematic and inclusive approach, mosques can play a greater role in strengthening Islamic brotherhood and improving the social well-being of the community. Mosques should not only function as places of worship, but also as social institutions that benefit all levels of society

Table 2. Empowering mosque management

Item	M1	M2	M3
Understanding	8	7	5
Assistance	7	8	6
Anak Kariah Portal	7	7	6
Efficient Governance	9	9	8
Congregation as an Asset of Mosque	6	8	4

Source: Field study of selected mosques

Discussion of Findings from Table 2: Empowering Mosque Management

The data presented in Table 2 highlights key aspects of empowering mosque management across three selected mosques (M1, M2, M3). The findings emphasize varying levels of performance and focus on areas critical to effective mosque administration.

1) Understanding

M1 achieved the highest score (8), indicating a relatively strong grasp of management principles. M2 scored moderately (7), while M3 lagged (5), suggesting the need for targeted training or knowledge enhancement in mosque management for M3.

2) Assistance

Assistance provided by the mosque management shows similar patterns, with M2 scoring the highest (8), reflecting active support for the community. M1 (7) performed slightly lower, while M3 (6) indicates room for improvement in delivering assistance effectively.

3) Anak Kariah Portal

The adoption of the Anak Kariah portal—a digital tool to engage and manage community members—was consistent for M1 and M2 (both 7), indicating moderate utilization. M3 (6) scored lower, which suggests a potential gap in digital literacy or resource allocation for digital engagement.

4) Efficient Governance

Governance practices were consistently strong across the three mosques, with M1 and M2 both scoring 9 and M3 following closely at 8. This consistency suggests a commendable level of management efficiency overall, with minor gaps for M3 to address.

5) Congregation as an Asset of the Mosque

The role of the congregation as a strategic asset is an area with significant variability. M2 performed the best (8), showing a strong emphasis on engaging and valuing the congregation. M1 scored lower (6), while M3 (4) revealed minimal focus, underscoring the need to prioritize congregational involvement in mosque programs. Key Insights:

The table underscores several strengths, particularly in governance and assistance, across all mosques. However, areas such as understanding, the use of digital tools (Anak Kariah Portal), and engaging the congregation as an asset show disparity, particularly for M3. This indicates a need for tailored interventions to standardize and strengthen mosque management practices across all institutions. Training programs, resource allocation, and improved technology adoption are potential strategies to address these gaps.

A number of calculated actions can be taken to improve the effectiveness of mosque governance.

1) Management of Finances

Cost-cutting measures must be put in place because mosques are mostly supported by donations from the community. This covers actions like maximizing the use of other resources and saving electricity. Additionally, preserving the community's trust depends on transparent and organized financial management. Effective and responsible resource allocation is ensured by proper record-keeping and accountability in financial affairs.

2) Technological Integration

The introduction of technology has greatly simplified mosque operations. Computerized technology can be used more methodically to handle financial records, donations, and mosque expenses. In addition to increasing the accuracy and transparency of financial transactions, this enhances the overall efficacy of mosque operations. Effective financial management and transparency are critical. To guarantee that resources are handled properly, clear supervision procedures are required.

Focusing on a few crucial areas will help mosque governance become more effective. These areas will not only improve the mosque's overall performance but also make it more competitive in providing community services. Mosques can increase their influence and relevance in the quickly changing world of today by addressing these issues. Leadership development is one of the fundamental aspects that needs to be improved. Mosque leaders, including imams and management committees, can greatly improve their administrative, communication, and leadership abilities by investing in training. Mosques can encourage cooperation and consensus-building within their community by creating an atmosphere that supports inclusive leadership, guaranteeing that choices represent the needs and goals of all of its members. To improve mosque governance, engaging with the community is key. It's important to encourage active participation from all groups, including women and young people. By organizing activities that meet the specific needs of different groups, mosques can create an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and involved in decision-making.

Technology integration is revolutionizing mosques in a world that is becoming more and more digital. Operations can be streamlined by utilizing technology for administrative tasks including correspondence, event planning, and online fundraising. Furthermore, providing instructional materials and virtual services guarantees that the mosque is always open

to everyone, whether they are engaging virtually or in person, which promotes a stronger feeling of community. Religious and educational initiatives are essential to enhancing mosque governance in addition to the administrative duties. By planning frequent lectures, workshops, and study groups, the congregation's practical skills and spiritual knowledge are improved. By fusing Islamic teachings with real-world skills like leadership development, community service, or financial literacy, mosques can enable their members to develop into well-rounded people who benefit the mosque and society as a whole. Effective mosque governance also requires the construction and upkeep of facilities. The whole experience is improved when the mosque is kept up properly, made accessible, and made comfortable for all guests. Mosques can maintain their relevance as hubs of social and spiritual activity by enlarging their facilities to suit a rising community. Examples of such expansions include adding areas for social events, counselling, and educational activities.

Another crucial strategy is forming partnerships and cooperating. By working together with local companies, institutions, and governmental bodies, mosques can expand their social impact and gain access to more resources. Collaborating with other mosques to share best practices can strengthen community ties and improve mosque governance's overall effectiveness. Last but not least, a mosque's prosperity depends on its social and cultural integration. The mosque will continue to be a place of togetherness if it cultivates an inclusive environment that accepts individuals from a variety of backgrounds. The mosque can increase its involvement in the society and strengthen its social influence by creating initiatives that cater to more general social welfare requirements, including charitable giving or assistance for underprivileged populations. Mosques can strengthen their governance frameworks and increase their capacity to meet community needs by concentrating on these areas. These initiatives will help build a more cohesive, well-supported, and spiritually rich community in addition to enhancing the mosque's place in society.

CONCLUSION

The research titled "Empowering Mosque Management Through Congregational Engagement and Technology: A Study of Mosques Management and Social Programs" concludes that integrating congregational engagement and technology plays a critical role in improving the efficiency, transparency, and accountability of mosque management. This integration enables better organization of resources and activities while enhancing the planning, execution, and monitoring of social programs through effective use of digital platforms and management tools. By actively involving the congregation in decision-making and social initiatives, a sense of belonging and shared responsibility is fostered, strengthening the relationship between mosque administrators and the community. However, the study also identifies challenges such as limited technical expertise, resistance to change, and resource constraints, which must be addressed through capacity-building, training, and support mechanisms. Looking forward, the research highlights the importance of continuously adapting to technological advancements and fostering collaboration between mosque management, congregational members, and external stakeholders. Overall, empowering mosque management through these strategies is a transformative approach that enhances the role of mosques as centres of spiritual, social, and community development.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflicts of interest in the preparation of the results of this study.

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