

# Community Empowerment Based on Muhammadiyah Mosque in Maros-Pangkep, South Sulawesi

Agusdiwana Suarni, Andi Zulfikar Busri, Sri Wahyuni and Dimas Adi Nugroho

PhD Student in Faculty of Economics and Muamalat (FEM) Universiti Sains Islam Malaysia (USIM)<sup>1</sup>

Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Muhammadiyah Makassar, Indonesia<sup>123</sup>

Center for Muhammadiyah Studies<sup>4</sup>

Email: [andizulfikar137@gmail.com](mailto:andizulfikar137@gmail.com)

## Keywords:

Community  
Empowerment  
Based On  
Muhammadiyah  
Mosque In  
Maros-Pangkep,  
South Sulawesi.

## Abstract

This study explores the strategic role of Muhammadiyah mosques as centers for community empowerment in the districts of Maros and Pangkep, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. Utilizing a qualitative research design, data were gathered through in-depth interviews with 12 mosque administrators across selected Muhammadiyah mosques. The findings demonstrate that these mosques serve beyond their religious function, acting as hubs for socio-economic and educational development. Various empowerment initiatives ranging from entrepreneurship training, zakat and waqf-based programs, to informal education highlight the mosque's expanded role in improving community welfare. Despite these positive impacts, the study identifies key challenges, including limited public engagement, inadequate institutional capacity, and a lack of understanding regarding the mosque's potential as a driver for sustainable development. The research underscores the importance of structured management strategies and leadership training to enhance mosque-based empowerment programs. Furthermore, it emphasizes the integration of Islamic social finance instruments and participatory governance as critical enablers. The results contribute to the broader discourse on faith-based community development and provide a practical framework for policymakers, religious leaders, and NGOs aiming to optimize mosque roles in societal transformation, particularly within the Muhammadiyah movement. This study affirms that mosques, when professionally managed, can function as powerful agents for inclusive and sustainable development.

## 1. Introduction

Indonesia is the country with the largest Muslim population in the world. By the end of 2021, the number of muslim residents was recorded at 234.56 million people or about 86.9% of the total population of 273.32 million people (BPS, 2021). This fact shows that islam plays a central role in the social and cultural dynamics of indonesia. Mosques are an inseparable part of the community's life, serving as places of worship for Muslims in their efforts to draw closer to Allah SWT and as centers of information for the congregation. (Afif Mufti, 2022)

Along with the increasing number of mosque constructions and ethics in Indonesia, the opportunities to maximize the function of mosques in relation to their financial management also grow. The purpose of the welfare mosque is explained in detail both in the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and because this Sunnah has a very positive impact on the wider

community, the welfare mosque urgently requires financial management ethics. To achieve a spesific goal , so that it can benefit many people. (Nurdin Choiriah, 2024)

The mosque is the largest place of worship of the five religions practiced by the indonesian people, especially in South Sulawesi. The mosque is one of the most important institutions in islamic society and has an important role in daily life. One of the first examples of what the prophet Muhammad SAW did when he migrated from Mecca to Medina was to build a mosque. Around the mosque there are universities, hospitals, hotels, and other institutions build around the mosque. (Suarni & Amelia, 2023)

Mosques play a central role in the spiritual, social, and economic life of the Muslim community, not only serving as places of worship but also as centers for community development and empowerment. Effective financial management in these institutions is

crucial for sustaining their activities and ensuring that resources are used for the benefit of the community. Specifically, the management of financial resources in mosques can contribute to broader community empowerment, especially in areas where economic opportunities may be limited. (Suarni Agusdiwana, 2024)

The mosque does not merely have a role and function as a place of worship for its congregation. Mosques have a very broad mission that encompasses the fields of religious education and knowledge, the enhancement of social relationships among congregants, and the improvement of the economic conditions of the congregants, in accordance with the potential possessed by the congregants. The concept of empowerment becomes important because it can provide a positive perspective on the utilization of human resources through the empowerment of the mosque community for the welfare of the Muslim community. (Layyina

Jihan, 2025) This potential will grow even more if managed professionally and participatively.

The Muhammadiyah organization, as a modern Islamic movement in Indonesia, makes mosques the main pillar in its da'wah strategy and social empowerment. Muhammadiyah mosques are not only places of prayer but also centers for education, community economy, and healthcare services. (Suarni Agusdiwana, 2024)

This research aims to examine the role of Muhammadiyah mosques in the Maros and Pangkep regions in community empowerment. With a qualitative approach, this study explores the perceptions of mosque administrators regarding the potential of mosques as centers of empowerment, as well as identifying the challenges and opportunities faced in the implementation of socio-economic programs within the mosque environment.

There are several mosques in South Sulawesi, here is the data on the mosques in South Sulawesi:

### 1.1 Mosque Data in South Sulawesi

| No           | Data Masjid             | Jumlah        |
|--------------|-------------------------|---------------|
| 1            | National Mosque         | 0             |
| 2            | Grand Mosque            | 1             |
| 3            | Grand Mosque            | 24            |
| 4            | Big Mosque              | 275           |
| 5            | Masjid Jami             | 3.647         |
| 6            | Historical Mosque       | 69            |
| 7            | Mosque in Public Places | 8.851         |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |                         | <b>12.867</b> |

*Sumber : simas.kemenag.go.id*

## 2. Literature Review

The philosophy of empowerment is viewed as a process of divesting situations or conditions of impotence, incapacity, loss of exclusion, and vulnerability. Empowerment can be defined as "based on inability as ability," or based on inability, weakness becomes ability/strength. (Zahermanto, 2023)

Community empowerment is a process in which communities, especially those with limited resources, women, and other marginalized groups, are supported to improve their welfare independently. (Jawahir

Muhammad, 2019) The literature review is not limited to theory but also includes relevant empirical evidence. In the context of community empowerment through mosques, several theories and previous research findings that underpin the hypothesis of this study are as follows.

### 2.1 Agency Theory

Agency Theory explains the relationship between shareholders (principal) and managers (agent) in an organization. (Sari Desi Puspita, 2023) In the context of the mosque as a social institution, mosque managers are

expected to use the available resources effectively to empower the congregation. Previous research shows that transparent and accountable management can increase public trust and participation in mosque economic activities. (Busri Andi Zulfikar, 2024)

## 2.2 Signal Theory

Signaling Theory refers to the way in which information is conveyed between parties involved in a relationship. (Hosea Ivan Aldo, 2020) In the context of this study, information about the success of community empowerment programs initiated by mosques will influence community and donor participation. Research conducted by Ajengesti Latifah Sabrinasyah and colleagues shows that mosques that are active in providing social services, such as zakat and

infak, tend to attract more attention and support from the community. (Sabrinasyah Latifa, 2022)

## 3. Research Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach to examine the preferences and perceptions of mosque managers regarding community empowerment. As part of the data collection process, interviews were conducted with managers of 12 mosques located in the Maros and Pangkep areas. The table below lists the names of the mosques, the positions of the managers, and the dates of the interviews that took place between February 16 and 17, 2025. The data is presented in the table below. This data provides deeper insight into community empowerment.

**Tabel 3.1 Informan**

| Name of The Mosque                       | Position | Interview Date   |
|--|----------|------------------|
| Masjid Pusdam                            | Chairman | 16 Februari 2025 |
| Masjid Nurul Muhammadiyah Bonto Sunggu   | Chairman | 16 Februari 2025 |
| Masjid Miftahul Jannah Moncong Bori      | Chairman | 16 Februari 2025 |
| Masjid Darul Arqam Minasatene            | Chairman | 16 Februari 2025 |
| Masjid Da'watul Hak Balanakang           | Chairman | 16 Februari 2025 |
| Masjid Hasdam Labakkang                  | Chairman | 16 Februari 2025 |
| Masjid Tarbiyah Muhammadiyah Sibatua     | Chairman | 16 Februari 2025 |
| Masjid Babussalam Langnga-Langnga        | Chairman | 16 Februari 2025 |
| Masjid Ta'mirul Masajid PDM Maros        | Chairman | 17 Februari 2025 |
| Masjid Baitun Nur Muhammadiyah Salenrang | Chairman | 17 Februari 2025 |
| Masjid Mujahidin Kappang PCM Cenrana     | Chairman | 17 Februari 2025 |
| Masjid Al- Mubarak Barok PCM Camba       | Chairman | 17 ebruari 2025  |

## 4. Results and Discussion

### 4.1 Research Results

This study uses a qualitative approach to examine the preferences and perceptions of mosque managers regarding community empowerment. As part of the data collection process, interviews were conducted with managers of 12 mosques located in the Maros

and Pangkep areas. The table below lists the names of the mosques, the positions of the managers, and the dates of the interviews that took place between February 16 and 17, 2025. The data are presented in the table below. This data provides deeper insights into community empowerment.

**Tabel 1. Interview Age**

| No    | Age   | Interview | Presentase % |
|-------|-------|-----------|--------------|
| 1     | 26-35 | 0         | 0%           |
| 2     | 36-45 | 2         | 4%           |
| 3     | 46-55 | 5         | 48%          |
| 4     | >56   | 5         | 48%          |
| TOTAL |       | 12        | 100%         |

Based on the research results, from a total of 12 informants, the highest percentage was in the 46-55 year age group and the >56 year

group at 48%, followed by the 36-45 year age group at 4% (2) and the 26-35 year age group at 0% (0).

**Tabel 2. Gender of Interview**

| Gender | Interview | Presentase |
|--------|-----------|------------|
| Female | 0         | 0%         |
| Male   | 12        | 100%       |
| Total  | 12        | 100%       |

The results based on the gender table show that all informants are male, totaling 12 people or representing 100% of the total number of informants and no female informants

participated in this study. This shows that this study is focused specifically on male informants only.

**Tabel 3. Education of Interview**

| Last Education     | Interview | Presentase (%) |
|--------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Elementary School  | 0         | 0%             |
| Junior High School | 1         | 2%             |
| Senior High School | 2         | 5%             |
| S1                 | 9         | 93%            |
| S2                 | 0         | 0%             |
| Total              | 12        | 100%           |

The results of the study in the last education table show that from a total of 12 informants, the majority have a Bachelor's degree (S1) of 9 people (93%), followed by high school of 2 people (5%), junior high school of 1

person (2%) and elementary school and S2 graduates of 0 people each (0%). This data shows that the majority of informants have a Bachelor's degree (S1).

**Tabel 4. Employment of Interview**

| No | Job Background       | Interview | Presentase (%) |
|----|----------------------|-----------|----------------|
| 1  | Student              | 0         | 0%             |
| 2  | Imam of the mosque   | 0         | 0%             |
| 3  | Self-Employed        | 2         | 5%             |
| 4  | Farmer               | 4         | 43%            |
| 5  | Government Employees | 5         | 50%            |
| 6  | Retired              | 1         | 2%             |
|    | <b>Total</b>         | <b>12</b> | <b>100%</b>    |

The results of the study on the background of informants' work showed that 12 informants had different backgrounds. The largest group was civil servants (PNS) as many as 5 people (50%), followed by farmers as many as 4 people (43%), self-employed as many as 2

people (5%), Retirees as many as 1 person (2%). Meanwhile, other jobs such as students and priests were each 0 (0%). This data shows that the majority of informants work as civil servants (PNS).

**Tabel 5. Mosque Capacity**

| Capacity of The Congregation | Presentase (%) |
|------------------------------|----------------|
| < 100 Jamaah                 | 0%             |
| 100 – 200 Jamaah             | 0%             |
| < 500 Jamaah                 | 82%            |
| 500 – 1000 Jamaah            | 9%             |
| > 1000 Jamaah                | 9%             |
| Total                        | 100%           |

The majority of mosques have a capacity of less than 500 people (82%), followed by mosques with a capacity of 500-1000 people and more than 1000 people each (9%) and less than 100 people and 100-200 people each 0%. This shows that mosques with a capacity of <500 people dominate according to the needs of the community.

#### 4.2 Research Discussion

This study examines the role of Muhammadiyah mosques in Maros-Pangkep as centers for community empowerment. The results of the analysis show that mosques not only function as places of worship, but also as social institutions that have great potential in improving community welfare. The data shows that the majority of mosques have a capacity of less than 500 worshipers. Creating a more intimate environment and allowing management to better understand the specific needs of the community. With the majority of educational backgrounds at the undergraduate level (S1), mosque administrators have the knowledge and skills needed to design and implement effective empowerment programs. Based on the results of the interview, the empowerment programs carried out by the mosque include organizing Al-Qur'an teaching and regular study sessions to improve the understanding and knowledge of the congregation.

One of the speakers explained, "The role of the mosque is not only as a place of worship but can also be used for learning, preaching or can be used as a place to seek sustenance for the community when we have the Friday market." In addition, a youth development program is also carried out to strengthen their spirituality

and Islam. There are also regular religious studies and meetings that play a role in strengthening the relationship between mosque congregations. However, the main challenge faced is the lack of congregation participation and community understanding regarding the function of the mosque as a center for socio-economic empowerment. One of the mosque administrators said, "Many mosque congregations see the mosque only as a place of worship without realizing its great potential in economic empowerment." This study found the need for a more intensive and structured education program to increase public awareness of the role of mosques in empowerment.

In terms of economy, although some mosques have initiated initiatives such as collecting and distributing zakat, as well as providing humanitarian aid, economic empowerment programs for mosque communities are limited. One of the administrators said, "This mosque has indeed collected zakat, especially in the month of Ramadan, but we have not developed a long-term economic empowerment program." From a financial management perspective, the results of the study showed that most mosque funds are stored in conventional banks, although some are also in Islamic banks. This shows the need for mosque managers to better understand and utilize financial services that are in accordance with Islamic principles, which can support halal and sustainable economic activities.

## 5. Closing

### 5.1 Conclusion

This study highlights the importance of mosques as centers of community





empowerment in the Maros and Pangkep areas of South Sulawesi. From interviews with managers of 12 mosques, it was found that mosques function not only as places of worship, but also as institutions that are able to drive the community's economy. The majority of mosques studied showed a capacity of less than 500 worshipers, reflecting the need for better management to maximize the potential of the congregation in social and economic activities.

From the data collected, the majority of managers have sufficient educational background, with most working as Civil Servants (PNS) and farmers. This shows the potential for good management for more effective empowerment programs. However, there are still challenges in developing education and training programs that can improve the skills of congregation members.

## 5.2 Suggestion

Based on the findings, several suggestions that can be put forward are:

### 1. Increasing Management Capacity

It is important for mosque managers to attend management and community empowerment training to better understand how to manage various programs effectively.

### 2. Sustainable Empowerment Program

Mosque managers should design and implement programs that focus on improving the skills of congregation members, such as entrepreneurship training that can empower the local economy.

### 3. Building a Collaborative Network

Mosques should build partnerships with other organizations, both government and private, to support existing empowerment programs, including in collecting funds and resources.

### 4. Development of the Congregation

Managing information about the congregation can help managers to plan and implement programs that are more targeted and in line with the needs of the community.

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