

## IMPLEMENTATION OF SPIRITUAL COMMUNICATION IN BUILDING THE MASJID PRENEUR MOVEMENT IN INDONESIA

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### Abstract

This research aims to understand the role of spiritual communication in building the *Masjid Preneur* movement in Indonesia, a movement that integrates Islamic spiritual values into mosque-based entrepreneurship development. A qualitative approach with a case study method was used in this study, with data collected through in-depth interviews, observations, and documentation from several mosques actively involved in entrepreneurial activities. The study highlights how spiritual communication delivered by religious leaders, such as imams and ustaz, has shaped a work ethic based on Islamic values such as honesty, hard work, and responsibility. The results indicate that spiritual communication plays a significant role in motivating the mosque community to engage in economic activities that not only pursue material gain but also social and spiritual well-being. However, several challenges were identified in implementing this movement, including religious leaders' limited knowledge of modern business practices and the generational gap among community members. This research concludes that the sustainability of the *Masjid Preneur* movement depends on the mosque's ability to adapt to the evolving needs of the community, particularly through collaboration with various stakeholders and the application of business practices relevant to current developments without compromising Islamic values. These findings provide insights into the importance of spiritual communication in supporting faith-based entrepreneurship within mosque environments.

**Keywords:** Spiritual communication, *Masjid Preneur*, community-based entrepreneurship

### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memahami peran komunikasi spiritual dalam membangun gerakan *Masjid Preneur* di Indonesia, yaitu sebuah gerakan yang mengintegrasikan nilai-nilai spiritual Islam dalam pengembangan kewirausahaan berbasis masjid. Pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus digunakan dalam penelitian ini, dengan pengumpulan data melalui wawancara mendalam, observasi, dan dokumentasi di beberapa masjid yang aktif dalam kegiatan kewirausahaan. Penelitian ini menyoroti bagaimana komunikasi spiritual yang disampaikan oleh pemimpin agama, seperti imam dan ustaz, mampu membentuk etos kerja yang berlandaskan nilai-nilai Islam, seperti

*kejujuran, kerja keras, dan tanggung jawab. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa komunikasi spiritual berperan signifikan dalam menggerakkan komunitas masjid untuk terlibat dalam kegiatan ekonomi yang tidak hanya mengejar keuntungan material, tetapi juga kesejahteraan sosial dan spiritual. Meskipun demikian, ditemukan beberapa tantangan dalam implementasi gerakan ini, termasuk keterbatasan pengetahuan pemimpin agama tentang praktik bisnis modern dan kesenjangan generasi di antara anggota komunitas. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa keberlanjutan gerakan Masjid Preneur sangat bergantung pada kemampuan masjid untuk beradaptasi dengan kebutuhan komunitas yang terus berkembang, terutama melalui kolaborasi dengan berbagai pihak dan penerapan praktik bisnis yang relevan dengan perkembangan zaman tanpa mengesampingkan nilai-nilai Islam. Temuan ini memberikan wawasan tentang pentingnya komunikasi spiritual dalam mendukung kewirausahaan berbasis nilai-nilai agama di lingkungan masjid.*

**Kata Kunci:** *Komunikasi spiritual, masjid preneur, kewirausahaan berbasis komunitas*

## INTRODUCTION

In this era of globalization, the role of the mosque is not only as a center of worship but also as a hub for community development in various aspects, including the economy. The *Masjid Preneur* movement is one of the initiatives that combines spiritual dimensions with community-based economic empowerment. In Indonesia, with its majority Muslim population, mosques have great potential to become drivers of economic development, particularly in fostering entrepreneurship based on Islamic values (Mohsin, 2023). However, the implementation of this movement is not without challenges, especially concerning how spiritual communication can serve as the foundation for building an entrepreneurial spirit among the Muslim community. Spiritual communication, in this context, refers to communication that focuses not only on material aspects but also on religious values that support morality, honesty, hard work, and responsibility in entrepreneurship. Therefore, it is crucial to understand how spiritual communication is applied in building the *Masjid Preneur* movement in Indonesia (Gregg, 2020).

This research employs the spiritual communication theory approach, focusing on how religious messages and moral values can be conveyed through effective communication to drive social and economic change (Al-Shammari dkk., 2020). Additionally, social entrepreneurship theory is used to explain how entrepreneurial movements can develop in a mosque environment, which is generally motivated by social and spiritual motivations, not merely material gain. In the context of the *Masjid Preneur* movement, spiritual communication plays a key role in creating awareness of social and spiritual responsibility among entrepreneurs. Values such as justice, honesty, and benevolence are the core principles that should be embedded in every entrepreneurial activity initiated by mosques (Selamet, 2022).

Various previous studies have discussed the role of mosques in community development, both socially and economically. For instance, Abdullah's (2019) research shows that mosques have significant potential to foster entrepreneurship through community-based

economic empowerment programs. Meanwhile, Rahman (2020) highlights the importance of leadership based on religious values in encouraging community participation in economic activities. However, research that specifically addresses the implementation of spiritual communication in building the *Masjid Preneur* movement is still very limited. Most studies focus more on the economic aspect alone, without linking it to the spiritual dimension, which should be the main foundation in every activity conducted within the mosque (Kunaifi dkk., 2024).

The main difference between this study and previous ones lies in its focus on combining spiritual communication with entrepreneurship. While previous research primarily discusses the role of the mosque as a center for economic empowerment from a material perspective, this study seeks to delve deeper into how spiritual values conveyed through mosque communication can serve as the main driver in fostering an entrepreneurial spirit among the Muslim community (Sandıkcı, 2020). Moreover, this study attempts to identify the challenges faced in implementing spiritual communication in mosque settings and how these challenges can be addressed through a more holistic approach, involving religious leaders, the community, and entrepreneurs (Ismail dkk., 2023).

The novelty of this research lies in the integration of spiritual communication theory with community-based entrepreneurship in a mosque setting. This study offers a new perspective on how entrepreneurship movements rooted in religious values can have a broader and more sustainable impact on the community. Additionally, this research highlights the importance of the mosque as a center for social innovation that not only relies on economic programs but also strong spiritual values. The urgency of this research is driven by the growing need for community-based economic development in Indonesia, particularly among the Muslim community (Andiyan dkk., 2021). Amid the global economic crisis affecting many countries, an entrepreneurial movement grounded in spiritual values can be an effective solution for building economic resilience in society. Mosques, as the center of Muslim community life, have a strategic role in driving this movement, but there needs to be a more systematic and structured approach to implementing spiritual communication that can motivate the community in entrepreneurship (Birsyada & Permana, 2020).

Moreover, in the context of government policies that continue to encourage community-based economic and entrepreneurial development, this research is highly relevant in providing practical recommendations for mosque administrators and other stakeholders in optimizing the mosque's role in community economic empowerment.

This study aims to:

1. Identify the role of spiritual communication in building the *Masjid Preneur* movement in Indonesia.
2. Analyze the challenges faced in implementing spiritual communication within mosque settings.
3. Explain how spiritual values can be the main driver in entrepreneurial activities within the Muslim community.

4. Provide practical recommendations for mosque administrators on implementing effective spiritual communication to encourage community-based entrepreneurship.

## METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach using a case study method to gain an in-depth understanding of how spiritual communication is implemented in building the *Masjid Preneur* movement in Indonesia. The research focuses on several mosques that have been actively developing community-based entrepreneurship (Jaya, 2020). The selection of mosques was conducted purposively based on specific criteria, namely mosques that have sustainable entrepreneurship programs and consistently integrate spiritual values into their economic activities. Data for this study were collected through in-depth interviews with mosque administrators, imams, and participants of the *Masjid Preneur* movement, as well as direct observation of entrepreneurial activities within the mosque environment. In addition, documentation such as mosque activity records and religious teaching materials related to entrepreneurship were also reviewed to strengthen the analysis. The interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format to allow for flexible and in-depth exploration of how spiritual communication is applied to support mosque-based economic movements.

Data analysis was carried out using thematic analysis techniques, where the collected data were identified and categorized based on key themes such as the role of spiritual communication, challenges in implementation, and the impact of mosque-based entrepreneurship on the community. Subsequently, the interpretation of the data was conducted by referring to the theories of spiritual communication and social entrepreneurship to understand the communication patterns used in raising economic awareness and social responsibility within the Muslim community. The validity of the data in this study was ensured through data triangulation, which involved comparing the results of interviews, observations, and documentation to ensure consistency of information. This research is expected to provide new insights into the strategic role of mosques in economic empowerment through an integrative spiritual approach.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. The Role of Spiritual Communication in Building the Masjid Preneur Movement

Based on the data collected through interviews and observations, it became evident that spiritual communication plays a fundamental role in shaping the entrepreneurial spirit within the mosque community. In the mosques studied, imams and religious leaders consistently conveyed messages that highlighted the importance of honesty, hard work, and responsibility in both personal and professional life. These values, deeply rooted in Islamic teachings, were seen as key drivers in encouraging the community to engage in entrepreneurship. One of the key themes emerging from the interviews was the integration of religious sermons (*khutbah*) and study sessions (*halaqah*) that emphasized the connection between faith and economic activities. Religious leaders often used examples from the life of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his companions, who were known

for their involvement in trade and commerce while maintaining a strong moral and ethical foundation. This form of spiritual communication not only inspired individuals to pursue entrepreneurial ventures but also instilled a sense of purpose that transcended material gain (Tambiah, 2023).

For instance, in one of the mosques in Jakarta, the imam frequently highlighted the concept of *barakah* (blessing) in business, where the focus is not solely on profit but on achieving holistic success that benefits the individual, their family, and the broader community. This spiritual framing of entrepreneurship helped reshape how the community viewed business, shifting it from a purely materialistic pursuit to one aligned with Islamic values. Such messaging encouraged participation in mosque-run entrepreneurial programs, as the community felt a deeper sense of connection to the religious principles that underpinned these efforts.

## **2. Challenges in Implementing Spiritual Communication**

Despite the success of spiritual communication in fostering an entrepreneurial mindset, several challenges were identified in its implementation. First, the capacity of imams and mosque leaders to effectively communicate complex economic concepts in a spiritual context varied significantly. In some cases, religious leaders had limited knowledge of contemporary business practices, which made it difficult for them to bridge the gap between traditional religious teachings and modern economic realities. Interviews revealed that some members of the community felt that the religious messaging lacked practical application (Madore, 2020). While they valued the spiritual guidance provided by the mosque, they expressed a need for more concrete examples and business training that could help them navigate the challenges of entrepreneurship. For example, a participant in the *Masjid Preneur* program in Bandung mentioned that while he was motivated by the religious teachings on ethical business practices, he struggled with the technical aspects of running a business, such as marketing and financial management.

Another challenge identified was the generational divide in the mosque community. Younger members of the community, particularly those more familiar with digital technology and modern business strategies, found it difficult to relate to some of the traditional methods of communication employed by religious leaders. They expressed a desire for more innovative and interactive forms of spiritual communication, such as using social media platforms or organizing workshops that integrate both religious and business expertise.

## **3. The Impact of Spiritual Communication on Community-Based Entrepreneurship**

The data revealed that spiritual communication had a positive impact on fostering community-based entrepreneurship, particularly in terms of building trust and solidarity among mosque members. Participants in the *Masjid Preneur* programs often cited the strong sense of community and mutual support as key factors in their entrepreneurial success. The mosque served as a trusted space where individuals could share ideas, seek advice, and collaborate on business ventures (Rozi dkk., 2024).

For instance, in a mosque in Yogyakarta, the *Masjid Preneur* program encouraged members to form small business collectives, where they could pool resources and knowledge to start joint ventures. The emphasis on Islamic values such as cooperation (*ta'awun*) and mutual support (*ukhuwah*) fostered a sense of shared responsibility and collective success. This communal approach to entrepreneurship not only reduced the risks associated with starting a business but also created a support network that was grounded in spiritual and ethical principles. Moreover, the trust fostered through spiritual communication extended beyond the mosque community itself. Entrepreneurs who participated in the *Masjid Preneur* programs reported that their customers were more likely to trust and support their businesses because of the ethical standards they adhered to. The emphasis on honesty, fairness, and transparency in business dealings, as communicated through mosque sermons and teachings, helped build a positive reputation for these businesses within the wider community.

#### **4. Integrating Modern Business Practices with Spiritual Communication**

One of the key findings from this study is the importance of integrating modern business practices with spiritual communication to ensure the sustainability of the *Masjid Preneur* movement. While spiritual values provide a strong ethical foundation, the practical aspects of running a successful business require knowledge of modern economic practices and technologies. In response to this need, some mosques have started to collaborate with local business experts and educational institutions to offer training programs that combine both spiritual and practical elements (Purwandani, 2022). For example, in a mosque in Surabaya, the *Masjid Preneur* program partnered with a local university to provide business development workshops that covered topics such as digital marketing, financial planning, and product development, all framed within an Islamic ethical context. This approach allowed participants to gain valuable business skills while staying true to their spiritual values.

However, not all mosques have the resources or networks to provide such comprehensive training. Interviews with mosque administrators revealed that financial constraints and a lack of access to qualified trainers were significant barriers to expanding the scope of their entrepreneurial programs. To address this issue, some mosques have started to explore partnerships with government agencies and non-profit organizations that focus on community-based economic development. These partnerships have the potential to provide the necessary support for mosques to enhance their *Masjid Preneur* initiatives.

#### **5. Sustainability of the Masjid Preneur Movement**

The sustainability of the *Masjid Preneur* movement is closely tied to the ability of mosques to continuously adapt to the changing needs of their communities. While spiritual communication has been effective in fostering an ethical approach to entrepreneurship, there is a growing recognition that the movement must evolve to remain relevant in a rapidly changing economic landscape. One of the key factors that will determine the long-term success of the *Masjid Preneur* movement is the ability to engage younger generations. As noted earlier, younger members of the community are often more



familiar with digital technologies and have different expectations regarding how religious and economic guidance should be delivered. Mosques that have embraced digital platforms and social media to disseminate spiritual messages and entrepreneurial advice have seen higher levels of engagement from youth (Ahmad Dahlan dkk., 2022).

In addition, the incorporation of sustainable business practices, such as environmentally friendly production methods and social responsibility initiatives, has become increasingly important for younger entrepreneurs. This aligns with the broader Islamic principle of stewardship (*khalifah*), which emphasizes the responsibility of individuals to care for the Earth and its resources. By integrating these principles into the *Masjid Preneur* movement, mosques can attract and retain the participation of younger generations, ensuring the sustainability of the movement.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that spiritual communication plays a crucial role in building the *Masjid Preneur* movement in Indonesia, where Islamic values conveyed through sermons and religious discussions at mosques serve as a strong moral foundation for encouraging community-based entrepreneurship. Through spiritual communication, mosque administrators and religious leaders successfully integrated values such as honesty, responsibility, and hard work into business practices, thereby transforming the community's perspective on entrepreneurship from merely seeking material profit to striving for holistic well-being in alignment with Islamic teachings.

However, the study also identified several challenges in implementing spiritual communication, particularly related to the limited business knowledge of religious leaders and the generational divide within the mosque community. Despite these challenges, the positive impact of spiritual communication was evident in strengthening solidarity and trust among community members involved in mosque entrepreneurship initiatives. The mosque became a safe space for entrepreneurs to share ideas, collaborate, and build businesses together based on Islamic principles.

This research concludes that the sustainability of the *Masjid Preneur* movement depends on the ability of mosques to continuously adapt to the community's evolving needs, especially by engaging younger generations and integrating modern business practices with spiritual values. Therefore, collaboration between mosques and various stakeholders, such as educational institutions, business experts, and government agencies, is essential to ensure that this movement can continue to grow and provide positive impacts for community-based economic empowerment rooted in Islamic values.

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