

Optimizing the Role of Mosques in Empowering the Muslim Economy in the Metaverse Era: A Case Study in Makassar City

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Abstract

This research explores the economic potential of mosques in Makassar, focusing on their role in community empowerment through business development, social welfare, education, and digital integration. Mosques, as central hubs within their communities, provide opportunities for entrepreneurial ventures such as halal food businesses, souvenir shops, and religious education centers. These businesses cater to the needs of worshippers and the surrounding community, offering products and services that align with Islamic values. In addition to economic activities, mosques play a pivotal role in social welfare by organizing charitable events, health services, and educational programs that support the well-being of the community. The study also highlights the increasing potential of digital technologies, such as the metaverse, to enhance mosque-based economic empowerment. By utilizing virtual platforms, mosques can expand their outreach, offering online training, promoting sharia-compliant e-commerce, and facilitating discussions on economic management, reaching a broader audience beyond physical limitations. The research further emphasizes the importance of effective management, training, and mentorship for mosque administrators to ensure the sustainability of these programs. Ultimately, this research demonstrates how mosques in Makassar can leverage their economic, social, and educational functions to empower their communities, creating sustainable development opportunities that align with Islamic values. The findings provide practical insights for utilizing digital platforms in mosque activities, with the potential to replicate these models in other regions, contributing to broader social and economic progress.

Keywords: Mosque; Empowerment; Community.

Introduction

Mosques play a vital role in Muslim society, serving as foundational institutions for both spiritual and social development. Historically, they have been more than mere places of worship, functioning as centers for education, governance, and community interaction. This multifaceted role underscores the significance of mosques as hubs that unite people and address diverse aspects of communal life (Kristiono, 2022). During the time of Prophet Muhammad, the mosque in Medina exemplified this comprehensive role. It was not only a place for prayer but also a center where people gathered to learn, resolve disputes, and discuss matters of governance. The mosque brought together individuals from various tribal and social backgrounds, fostering a sense of unity

and shared purpose. This historical precedent highlights the mosque's capacity to serve as a dynamic institution for community empowerment (Kristiono, 2022).

The legacy of the mosque as a multifunctional institution remains relevant today. By building on this historical foundation, mosques can continue to address contemporary challenges faced by Muslim communities. Through education, social support, and economic empowerment, mosques can play a transformative role in fostering unity and enhancing the well-being of society (Kristiono, 2022). In contemporary times, the role of mosques has become predominantly centered around spiritual functions, such as serving as places for prayer and religious gatherings. While these activities remain fundamental, they often overshadow the broader potential that mosques hold for addressing the socio-economic challenges faced by Muslim communities. Many mosques focus solely on ritualistic practices, neglecting their historical role as hubs for education, governance, and social development. This narrowing of purpose limits the mosque's ability to act as a catalyst for positive change in society, leaving significant opportunities for community empowerment untapped (Suryanto & Saepulloh, 2016).

The potential of mosques to contribute to economic and social development is immense but remains underutilized. For instance, mosques could act as platforms for education by organizing vocational training, financial literacy workshops, and entrepreneurship programs tailored to the needs of their local communities. These initiatives not only align with Islamic values but also provide tangible solutions to issues such as unemployment and poverty. Additionally, mosques can foster social cohesion by serving as neutral spaces where diverse groups within the community can collaborate on projects aimed at improving collective welfare. By integrating these activities into their operations, mosques can expand their role beyond spiritual domains to become comprehensive centers of community development (Suryanto & Saepulloh, 2016).

Repositioning mosques as dynamic centers of community empowerment requires a shift in mindset among mosque leaders and congregants. It involves recognizing the mosque's historical legacy as a multifaceted institution and adapting its functions to address contemporary challenges. For example, mosques can partner with local governments, non-governmental organizations, and private sectors to implement initiatives aimed at improving education, healthcare, and economic opportunities. Moreover, leveraging modern technologies, such as digital platforms and the metaverse, can enable mosques to reach broader audiences and provide innovative solutions for community development. By embracing these roles, mosques can not only fulfill their spiritual mission but also contribute meaningfully to the holistic well-being of the Muslim ummah (Suryanto & Saepulloh, 2016).

The city of Makassar, a prominent urban hub in Indonesia, grapples with pressing socio-economic issues, with poverty standing out as a significant concern. Despite its status as a thriving metropolis endowed with vast resources and economic potential, Makassar holds the distinction of having the second-highest poverty rate in South Sulawesi. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2022, the city recorded 71,830 residents living below the poverty line. This figure reflects a worrying trend of steady increases in poverty levels over the past few years, highlighting the deep-rooted challenges faced by the local population (BPS, 2022).

Contributing factors to this issue include limited access to stable employment opportunities, particularly in sectors that could provide sustainable income for the lower-income demographic. Furthermore, many residents face the compounded challenge of earning low wages while contending with the high cost of living in an urban environment. This mismatch between income and expenditure creates a vicious cycle of poverty that is difficult to break without targeted interventions. The lack of equitable access to economic resources further perpetuates disparities and hampers the socio-economic mobility of marginalized groups.

Addressing these challenges requires innovative and inclusive approaches that go beyond traditional economic development models. Institutions such as mosques, deeply embedded in the social fabric of Makassar, hold untapped potential to play a pivotal role in alleviating poverty. By leveraging their influence and connection to local communities, mosques can spearhead initiatives in areas such as skills training, microfinance, and community-driven economic projects. This can empower individuals and families, fostering self-reliance and contributing to the city's broader development goals.

Makassar is home to over 1,200 mosques, making it an ideal location for leveraging the power of these institutions to address pressing community challenges. This vast network of mosques forms a crucial part of the city's social and cultural fabric, with deep connections to local communities. The trust that mosques command among the people gives them a unique position to drive initiatives that can significantly impact socio-economic conditions. Their established role as places of worship and spiritual guidance can be extended to include tangible support for economic development, helping to reduce poverty and improve the well-being of marginalized populations.

Given their influence and close relationships with the community, mosques have the potential to lead and mobilize efforts focused on economic stability and empowerment. For example, they could offer vocational training programs, organize financial literacy workshops, and provide resources for small-scale business development. By aligning with Islamic values of fairness, charity, and mutual support, mosques could help promote entrepreneurship and economic resilience, particularly among vulnerable groups. The strategic location of these mosques across Makassar provides an extensive network that can ensure outreach and support reach even the most remote or underserved communities (Saputra, 2023).

This situation underscores the need to reimagine the role of mosques beyond their traditional spiritual functions. To maximize their impact, it is crucial to explore innovative ways of integrating economic empowerment and social welfare initiatives into their operations. By adopting a more proactive approach, mosques can become powerful agents of change, helping to break the cycle of poverty and promoting sustainable development in the city. These efforts can also serve as models for other cities, demonstrating how religious institutions can play an active role in addressing broader socio-economic issues while staying true to their core mission of service to the community (Saputra, 2023).

The emergence of the metaverse and other advanced technologies has revolutionized the way communities can engage and develop, presenting unprecedented opportunities for institutions like mosques to broaden their impact. The metaverse, with its immersive virtual environments, allows individuals to interact, learn, and conduct business

without the limitations of physical space. This shift in how people connect opens up new avenues for community building and empowerment, and mosques, with their deep-rooted influence in the lives of Muslims, are in an ideal position to capitalize on these advancements. By embracing these technologies, mosques can extend their reach beyond their physical boundaries and create virtual spaces that offer both spiritual guidance and practical resources for economic and social development.

For example, mosques can host virtual entrepreneurship workshops that teach Islamic principles of business ethics, including fairness, honesty, and the avoidance of interest-based transactions. These workshops could help individuals develop skills necessary for launching small businesses or improving existing ventures. Additionally, mosques can establish e-commerce platforms that facilitate the buying and selling of goods in a manner that aligns with Islamic values, such as promoting halal products or supporting fair trade. Through these initiatives, mosques can encourage economic self-sufficiency and foster an entrepreneurial mindset among their congregants, addressing poverty and promoting economic stability in the community (Rosana, 2022).

Moreover, the metaverse provides opportunities for mosques to offer remote access to educational resources, allowing individuals from diverse backgrounds to engage in learning without geographical constraints. Virtual study groups, Quranic courses, and even online counseling services can be made available, providing support in spiritual, educational, and socio-economic matters. By integrating these digital tools into their operations, mosques can not only enhance their traditional functions but also become modern hubs for empowerment, bridging the gap between religious guidance and real-world solutions for community development (Rosana, 2022).

Islamic teachings strongly emphasize the values of self-reliance, justice, and the welfare of the community, all of which align closely with the objectives of economic empowerment. Self-reliance encourages individuals to take responsibility for their own well-being, while justice ensures that resources and opportunities are distributed fairly, benefiting the entire community. Furthermore, the concept of community welfare, or *ummah*, underscores the collective responsibility to support one another, particularly those in need. These fundamental principles create a solid foundation for initiatives aimed at uplifting individuals and communities, making economic empowerment a natural extension of Islamic values.

Mosques, as custodians of these essential teachings, are uniquely positioned to bridge the gap between spiritual guidance and practical solutions to economic challenges. The mosque's role in Islamic society extends beyond spiritual leadership to include the promotion of social justice, equitable wealth distribution, and the empowerment of individuals to thrive economically. By integrating these values into their programs and initiatives, mosques can address economic issues such as poverty, unemployment, and inequality. They can foster self-reliance through initiatives like skills training, microfinance, and entrepreneurship development while ensuring that these efforts are rooted in the principles of fairness and ethical conduct (Kristiono, 2022).

Moreover, mosques have the potential to act as a community's central hub for both spiritual growth and practical solutions. By offering programs that address both immediate economic needs and long-term empowerment, mosques can become key players in breaking

the cycle of poverty and fostering sustainable development. Through a balanced approach that incorporates both the spiritual and material aspects of life, mosques can offer a holistic model for economic development that is in harmony with Islamic teachings. This approach not only benefits individuals but also strengthens the community as a whole, creating a more just and prosperous society (Kristiono, 2022).

One of the most significant ways mosques can contribute to community development is by supporting micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). In Indonesia, MSMEs are the backbone of the economy, providing employment and contributing to the country's overall economic growth. However, many of these small businesses struggle with limited access to resources, such as capital, training, and networks that could help them grow and succeed. This gap in support creates barriers for aspiring entrepreneurs, particularly those from low-income backgrounds, who may lack the necessary guidance and tools to scale their ventures.

Mosques, with their deep connections to local communities and their trusted position within society, are uniquely positioned to address these gaps. They can provide essential resources such as business training, mentorship, and networking opportunities for MSME owners and entrepreneurs. By leveraging their existing influence, mosques can connect individuals with experts in various fields, offering valuable insights on business management, marketing, and financial planning. These initiatives can empower entrepreneurs to build stronger, more sustainable businesses, ultimately contributing to the local economy and reducing poverty.

Additionally, mosques can partner with local governments, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector to facilitate access to funding and markets for MSMEs. Such partnerships can provide financial support, whether through micro-loans, grants, or crowdfunding initiatives, allowing entrepreneurs to overcome the financial barriers that often limit their growth. Moreover, mosques can serve as platforms for promoting local products, connecting small businesses with consumers both within the community and beyond. By facilitating access to both resources and markets, mosques can play a pivotal role in fostering economic stability and self-reliance within their communities (Suryanto & Saepulloh, 2016).

In addition to supporting MSMEs, mosques can play a significant role in tackling unemployment by offering vocational training and skill-building programs that are specifically tailored to the needs of local communities. These programs can focus on practical skills that align with market demands, such as carpentry, tailoring, computer programming, digital marketing, and other trades. By providing such training, mosques can empower individuals with the tools they need to secure stable employment or start their own businesses, contributing to both personal and community economic development. The programs can be designed to cater to various skill levels, from beginners to those seeking to enhance existing expertise, ensuring inclusivity for all members of the community.

One of the advantages of mosques in offering these programs is their ability to deliver training both physically and virtually, expanding their reach beyond geographic boundaries. This flexibility ensures that even individuals from remote or underserved areas can benefit from vocational education and skill-building opportunities. Virtual platforms, supported by the metaverse and other digital tools, can provide remote access to

workshops, webinars, and online courses, ensuring that the knowledge and resources are available to anyone, regardless of location. By embracing technology, mosques can break down barriers to education and support individuals in acquiring the necessary skills to compete in an ever-evolving job market (BPS, 2022).

Equipping individuals with market-relevant skills not only reduces dependency but also fosters a sense of economic independence and self-reliance among community members. With increased access to training and skill development, individuals are better positioned to pursue career opportunities or entrepreneurial ventures, ultimately contributing to poverty reduction and economic stability. This approach aligns with Islamic principles of self-sufficiency and community welfare, as it empowers individuals to take control of their economic futures while strengthening the overall well-being of the community. By incorporating vocational training into their roles, mosques can become key players in alleviating unemployment and fostering sustainable economic development (BPS, 2022).

The role of mosques in fostering financial literacy is crucial, particularly in underserved communities where access to financial education is limited. Many individuals, especially in low-income or marginalized groups, lack awareness of basic financial management, budgeting, and planning. This knowledge gap often leads to poor financial decisions, which can perpetuate cycles of poverty and economic instability. However, mosques, as trusted community institutions, can bridge this gap by organizing educational programs that focus on practical financial skills and Islamic finance principles. These programs can cover essential topics such as budgeting, saving, investing, and managing debt, helping individuals build a strong foundation for sound financial decision-making.

Workshops and seminars on Islamic finance, for example, can provide valuable insight into how financial practices can align with Islamic values, such as avoiding interest-based transactions (*riba*) and promoting ethical investment. Through these programs, mosques can introduce their congregants to alternative financial models, such as microfinancing or cooperative savings groups, which are not only compliant with Islamic teachings but also effective in promoting sustainable financial independence. By empowering individuals with the knowledge of managing their finances according to both practical and religious principles, mosques can help community members achieve long-term financial stability, reduce dependence on external assistance, and improve their overall quality of life (Saputra, 2023).

Moreover, financial literacy initiatives by mosques can also encourage a culture of savings and investment, which are critical components of economic security. By creating safe spaces for learning about financial products and services that align with Islamic principles, mosques can help community members avoid exploitative lending practices and make informed decisions about where to invest or save their money. In this way, mosques can contribute to building resilient and financially empowered communities, aligning with broader goals of economic development and poverty reduction. Financial literacy, when effectively taught within the mosque setting, can become a key tool in transforming lives and creating sustainable financial futures for individuals and families (Saputra, 2023).

The potential of mosques to drive economic empowerment remains largely untapped, despite their central role in Muslim communities. While mosques have

traditionally served as spiritual centers, they are also uniquely positioned to contribute to broader socio-economic development. By leveraging modern technologies, such as the metaverse, and aligning their initiatives with Islamic values, mosques in Makassar and beyond have the opportunity to become powerful agents of change. These technologies offer new ways for mosques to expand their outreach, connect with diverse groups, and provide accessible resources for education, entrepreneurship, and financial empowerment. Integrating such tools can help mosques become more than places of worship; they can transform into comprehensive community hubs that address both spiritual and material needs.

Aligning mosque-led initiatives with Islamic values ensures that the economic empowerment programs remain rooted in ethical and just practices. By promoting self-reliance, justice, and welfare through a faith-based lens, these programs can resonate deeply with the community and inspire long-term change. The ability of mosques to act as trusted institutions, deeply embedded in the fabric of local society, makes them ideally situated to lead efforts in reducing poverty, supporting small businesses, and fostering economic resilience. Through initiatives such as financial literacy workshops, vocational training, and microfinance opportunities, mosques can help break the cycle of poverty and provide the tools necessary for individuals to achieve financial independence.

This study aims to explore these opportunities for economic empowerment through mosques in Makassar, focusing on how modern technologies and Islamic values can be integrated to address poverty and build community resilience. By identifying the challenges and opportunities for mosques to play a more proactive role in socio-economic development, the study will provide actionable recommendations to optimize their impact. The findings of this research could serve as a model for other regions, demonstrating how mosques can transform into key players in driving sustainable development and addressing socio-economic disparities in Indonesia and beyond.

Method

This research employs a qualitative approach with field research techniques. The first step in the research is mapping the potential of mosques in the city of Makassar. This mapping is carried out by collecting primary data through interviews with mosque administrators, field observations, and relevant document studies to identify mosques that have the potential for community economic empowerment. This data will be used to determine which mosques are suitable as research objects, considering the mosque's capacity to manage economic empowerment programs and the potential economic drivers within the mosque community.

Following the mapping, the research will focus on providing training and outreach to selected mosque administrators and congregants. This process will involve presenting material and discussions on mosque-based economic empowerment, as well as how mosques can utilize modern technologies, including the metaverse, to expand the impact and effectiveness of their economic activities. The metaverse, as a digital platform that allows virtual interaction, can be used to host training, introduce sharia-compliant e-commerce, and provide discussion spaces on economic management, reaching congregants beyond the geographical limitations of physical mosques.

The final stage of this research involves mentoring and evaluation. Mentoring is carried out to ensure that mosque administrators can implement economic empowerment programs effectively and sustainably. Meanwhile, an evaluation will be conducted to assess the extent to which the training and mentoring provided impact the development of community-based economies. By leveraging metaverse technology, this research aims to demonstrate how mosques in Makassar can play a more significant role in empowering the economy of their communities, while also providing practical recommendations for utilizing digital technology in mosque activities.

Literatur Review

The Role of Mosques

A mosque is a place of worship for Muslims that plays a strategic role in the advancement of Islamic civilization. History has demonstrated the multifaceted role of mosques. Mosques are not only places of worship but also centers for education, religious studies, military activities, and other socio-economic functions. Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) himself illustrated the multifunctionality of mosques in fostering and managing the interests of the community, including economic, political, social, educational, and military affairs (Syamsudin & Hindasah, 2021).

Linguistically, the word "masjid" is derived from "sajada," which means to prostrate only to Allah (SWT), to be obedient, submissive, humble, and dedicated. Therefore, a mosque is considered a sacred place to draw closer to God, free from any worldly interests except seeking His goodness and fostering a community of believers (Saprina, 2021). When the Prophet migrated from Mecca to Medina, his first step upon arrival was to build a mosque. Historians highlight that this move was a sophisticated strategic maneuver. Through the mosque, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) influenced many individuals who later became his followers. According to Didin Hafidhuddin (2002), during the time of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), the framework of mosques consisted of activists in various areas of life. Some became successful entrepreneurs who dominated the market; respected soldiers feared by enemies; trusted and compassionate bureaucrats; researchers and disseminators of information; entrepreneurs and employees with high work spirit and ethics; and relentless Islamic preachers.

Based on the mosque's overall significance and its historical reality, Yusuf Qardhawi roughly divides the operation of mosques into two parts: 1) as a sacred place of worship to build piety towards Allah and to express the values of righteousness through its social mission. In addition to being used for prayer and remembrance of Allah, 2) mosques should also function as a facility for the acquisition of knowledge in various fields (tafaqquh fi al-din) to strengthen the character of the ummah and consolidate community economy through the development of zakat, charity, and solidarity institutions (ukhuwwah islamiyyah), and others.

Mosques play an essential role in the life of the Muslim community. They are spiritual and social centers, providing various services and benefits to the community. The primary role of a mosque is as a place for performing worship, including the five daily prayers, Friday prayers, and Taraweh prayers during Ramadan. It is where Muslims gather to worship Allah. Mosques also provide religious education, where individuals can learn

about Islam, the Quran, Hadith, Fiqh (Islamic law), and other religious aspects. This includes lessons for children, youth, and adults. The mosque is a place of peace and tranquility where individuals can pray, reflect, and seek spiritual solace. Many mosques conduct religious studies, lectures, and discussions that address religious and social issues, which help in enhancing religious understanding and social awareness. The mosque also serves as a social hub in the Muslim community where people meet, interact, and build social relationships. Mosques can organize various social events, such as weddings, marriage contracts, and religious celebrations.

Some mosques provide social assistance to those in need, such as food distribution, financial aid, and healthcare services. Mosques can play a role in the economic empowerment of the community by supporting small businesses, entrepreneurship training, and promoting Islamic economic principles. Some mosques offer mental health support services, including counseling and psychological assistance. In addition to religious education, some mosques also provide general education or tutoring to help children and teenagers achieve good academic performance.

Some mosques encourage active participation in mosque management and decision-making that affects their community, reflecting the democratic values in Islam. Mosques can also be places where people seek support during personal crises or social problems, with guidance and support services being offered. The role of mosques in the Muslim community is broad and varied, often becoming the center of social, cultural, and religious life. It is also a place where moral values, ethics, and social responsibility in Islam are applied and reinforced.

The Concept of Empowerment

The concept of mosque empowerment in the time of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) includes several aspects, among which are:

1. Empowerment of the Spiritual Aspect

The empowerment of the spiritual aspect began when the Prophet was in Makkah, where he successfully formed a small community of Muslims who later became pioneers of the Islamic mission in Madinah alongside the Prophet. When the Muslims faced pressure from the Quraysh and were in a very difficult position to practice their faith, Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) decided to migrate to Madinah. The migration was initiated by the companions, with some emigrating before the second oath of Aqabah, while most followed after the second pledge. The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) followed two months later. In the 14th year of his life, he left his house on the night of the 27th of Safar, accompanied by Abu Bakr. He managed to deceive the Quraysh who had surrounded his house all day.

Taking an unusual route, the Prophet successfully escaped from the enemy's pursuit and stopped at the cave of Mount Thawr. After three nights in the cave under the guidance of a guide named Abdullah bin Uraiqith, the Prophet (PBUH) proceeded to Yathrib. After about seven months, the Prophet settled in the house of Abu Ayub, located in front of a plot of land owned by two orphans (Sahl and Suhail), which was later used

for building a mosque. This mosque was known as the Prophet's Mosque (Masjid Nabawi).

When the mosque was completed, and adjacent to it, the Prophet's house was also built in a very simple manner. The Prophet (PBUH) participated directly in the construction of the mosque by carrying bricks and stones, accompanied by his companions from among the Muhajirun and Ansar. After the Prophet established the mosque and called Bilal bin Rabah to lead prayers at the prescribed times, the Muslims found peace and freedom to practice their worship, something they could not experience in Makkah for ten years.

2. Empowerment of the Social Aspect

The Prophet's Mosque, built as a center of worship and community activities for the Muslims, managed to eliminate all the weaknesses in Arab society (tribal fanaticism, prolonged conflicts, etc.). The Prophet (PBUH) ordered, taught, and guided the Muslims in purifying their souls. Some of the Prophet's efforts to build the social character of the Muslim community included:

- a) Spiritual experiences at the mosque, such as congregational prayers,
- b) Through the education provided at the Prophet's Mosque and the role model of the Prophet (PBUH), who consistently instilled how to convey the verses of the Quran and Hadith, particularly the Quranic verses that speak about the equality of human beings and equality in Islam, such as in Surah Al-Hujurat: 13, which stresses the importance of brotherhood and cooperation between men and women in spreading and advancing goodness,
- c) On every occasion, the Prophet gave equal treatment and opportunities to all Muslims, whether Ansar or Muhajirin.

Empowering the spiritual aspect is a process aimed at strengthening and developing an individual's or group's spiritual dimension. This includes beliefs, values, the meaning of life, and connections with something greater than oneself, such as God, the universe, or other spiritual forces. Empowering the spiritual aspect is an important part of self-development and personal growth. Empowering the spiritual aspect in Islam is a process aimed at strengthening a person's spiritual dimension within the framework of Islamic teachings. Spirituality in Islam involves connection with Allah, moral character development, and the achievement of inner peace. One of the primary ways to strengthen spiritual aspects in Islam is through regular worship practices like prayer, fasting, reading the Quran, and dhikr (remembrance of Allah). These acts of worship help individuals remain connected to Allah and deepen their faith.

Reading the Quran with deep understanding and reflecting on its messages is a good way to strengthen spiritual aspects in Islam. Regular dhikr (remembrance of Allah) and prayer also help maintain a spiritual connection with Allah. Following the Sunnah (actions and teachings) of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) is an essential part of spiritual empowerment in Islam. Imitating his behavior and actions can help individuals improve their moral character and faith. Islam places significant

emphasis on good character and ethics. Strengthening positive traits such as patience, humility, and compassion is a key aspect of empowering the spiritual dimension. Helping those in need and contributing to the welfare of the community is also a part of spiritual empowerment in Islam. Islam encourages goodness towards others. Learning more about Islam, its history, and its teachings is a way to deepen one's spiritual understanding.

For Muslims who have the opportunity, performing pilgrimage (Hajj) to sacred places like Makkah and Madinah can strengthen the spiritual aspect by fostering a closer connection with Allah. Seeking a mentor or experienced spiritual teacher can also aid in understanding and strengthening one's spiritual aspects. Continuously evaluating oneself, recognizing mistakes, and repenting are vital steps in spiritual empowerment in Islam. These allow for spiritual growth and personal improvement. Empowering the spiritual aspect in Islam is a continuous journey requiring patience, dedication, and adherence to religious teachings. It helps individuals feel closer to Allah, achieve inner peace, and face life's challenges with tranquility and confidence.

3. *Empowerment of the Educational Aspect*

The Prophet gave authority to education. Starting in Makkah, the Prophet called the Quraysh to teach and guide the Muslims through the Quranic teachings in a dialogical manner. The Prophet (PBUH) desired Islam to be accepted with high faith and awareness based on knowledge and belief. During the early days in Makkah, the Muslims received intensive guidance and spiritual development through the Prophet, in the house of Arqam bin Abi Arqam. In Madinah, Islamic education was centralized at the Prophet's Mosque. Both boys and girls were given equal opportunities to participate in education. The curriculum involved the teaching of Quranic values, recited publicly, and in gatherings (halaqah) around the Prophet during and after the obligatory prayers. This was also evident in every encounter and journey with the Prophet. In the case of women, some asked the Prophet directly about issues, while others conveyed it through the Prophet's wives. The use of the term "Masjid as Baitul Tarbiyah" refers to the concept of education, formation, and spiritual development in Islam. Baitul Tarbiyah can be defined as a place where Muslims learn, educate, and develop themselves spiritually and morally. It extends the concept of the mosque as "Baitullah" (House of Allah), where Muslims strengthen their spiritual connection with Allah.

The mosque as Baitul Tarbiyah is the primary place for learning about Islam. This includes teaching the Quran, Hadith, Tafsir, and other religious aspects. It also focuses on character and moral development, involving training in traits such as patience, humility, sincerity, and other virtues. The mosque organizes group studies, lectures, and lessons aimed at increasing the understanding of Islam and fostering spiritual growth. Baitul Tarbiyah also serves as a training ground for community leaders, involving education on leadership based on Islamic values. The mosque as Baitul Tarbiyah also plays a role in community empowerment. This

includes social programs, assistance for the needy, and efforts to improve the community's well-being. Helping youth and the younger generation in their holistic self-development is an essential goal of this concept. The mosque organizes special programs for youth, focusing on character building, education, and training. One important aspect of Baitul Tarbiyah is promoting social values in Islam, including justice, compassion, and peace. This involves participating in social efforts aimed at improving the lives of others. In addition to education and character development, the mosque as Baitul Tarbiyah also hosts various religious activities such as congregational prayers, Quran studies, and dhikr to strengthen the connection with Allah.

4. *Empowerment of the Economic Aspect*

The Arab society was known for being successful merchants or traders in the Arabian Peninsula. Some of them were also known for their good ethics, such as helping those in need with their wealth. However, their financial practices were often seen as "usury" (additional profit in paying off debts). The practice of usury had led to a wealthy elite obsessed with luxury on one hand, and a weak group caught in debt on the other. The Prophet saw the Jews controlling the markets in Madinah, often engaging in fraudulent activities. The Prophet (PBUH) saw this and took measures to improve financial behavior in society. To strengthen an economy based on the mosque in the Prophet's mission, the focus in Madinah was placed on three things:

- a. Strengthening Islamic business ethics that Muslims must apply in transactions, such as prohibiting fraud, usury, etc.
- b. Building brotherhood between the Muhajirun and Ansar. With the help of the Ansar, the economically weaker Muhajirun slowly began to rebuild their economy. Some started trading in markets, like Abdurrahman bin Auf. With the provision of land, some began farming, and so on.
- c. Establishing a marketplace around the Prophet's Mosque. Establishing a marketplace for Muslims was an initial step in strengthening the Muslim economy, providing an Islamic economic system, and applying it in practice. In this market, the Prophet prohibited fraud in transactions and also forbade the collection of taxes, as was commonly done by the Jews. The Jami' Al-Ittihad Mosque has community empowerment programs in the economic field, such as Baitul Mal and Rumah Zakat.

The concept of the mosque as Baitul Mal (house of wealth) is a distinct approach to mosque management in Islam. The term "Baitul Mal" refers to a "house of wealth" or "financial office" responsible for collecting, managing, and distributing funds and resources for the benefit of Muslims and the community. This concept has historical roots in early Islam, focusing on the mosque as a center for finance and social assistance. The mosque serves as a place to collect funds and resources donated by Muslims, which can include zakat (mandatory or voluntary), charity, or

other contributions. The mosque as Baitul Mal is responsible for managing funds carefully, involving proper recording and oversight of financial transactions.

One of the main functions of Baitul Mal is to provide assistance to those in need within the community. This can include aid for the poor, orphans, or those facing difficulties. The funds collected in the mosque can also be used to finance beneficial community projects, such as building schools, hospitals, or other social facilities. The mosque as Baitul Mal can manage social programs such as providing food for the poor, distributing clothing, and offering healthcare services. It can also contribute to the advancement of the Muslim economy by offering interest-free loans or capital for small businesses. Transparency and accountability in the use of funds are crucial in the concept of Baitul Mal. Muslims have the right to know how the collected funds are used. In addition to managing funds, the mosque can provide financial education to Muslims to help them manage their personal finances wisely. The role of the mosque as Baitul Mal emphasizes the importance of wealth and resource distribution based on justice and Islamic law. This concept reflects the social and justice values in Islam

Result and Analysis

Mosque Profile in South Sulawesi

a. Al-Markaz Al-Islami Mosque

Managed by the Islamic Center Foundation, Al-Markaz Al-Islami Mosque is the grandest and largest mosque in the central eastern region of Indonesia, located in Makassar, South Sulawesi Province. This monumental mosque stands as a center for Islamic civilization and studies, symbolizing the pride and identity of the religious, cultured, and Islam-inspired people of South Sulawesi. This majestic mosque was designed by Ir. Ahmad Nu'man, an architect renowned for his work on various prominent mosques. Its architecture draws inspiration from the Grand Mosque (Masjidil Haram) in Mecca and the Prophet's Mosque (Masjid Nabawi) in Medina, while incorporating traditional South Sulawesi architectural elements. This is evident in its four-sided pointed roof design, inspired by Katangka Mosque in Gowa (the oldest mosque in South Sulawesi) and the typical Bugis-Makassar houses.

The mosque's foundation is extraordinarily strong, supported by 450 piles driven 21 meters deep. Its roof is made of copper or tegola, an Italian product. The first-floor walls are clad with ceramic, while the second and third floors use granite. The mihrab walls, which serve as the mosque's visual centerpiece, are crafted from black granite adorned with rectangular copper-colored calligraphy. These inscriptions include several Quranic verses and phrases, such as "There is no god but Allah, Muhammad is the

Messenger of Allah." Above the mihrab is inscribed Surah Al-Baqarah: 144, which states, "So turn your face toward Al-Masjid Al-Haram."



Figure 1 Al-Markaz Al-Islami Mosque

The mosque also features an 84-meter-tall minaret with a 3 x 3-meter base. This minaret is only 1 meter shorter than the minaret of Masjid Nabawi. At a height of 17 meters, the minaret houses a 30 m³ water tank. Another unique aspect of the mosque lies in its name. In late December 2005, during a meeting of the Islamic Center Foundation in Jakarta, it was decided to rename the mosque Al-Markaz Al-Islami Jenderal M. Jusuf. This name honors the late General M. Jusuf, former chairman of the State Audit Board (BPK), who initiated the mosque complex and Islamic education center.

However, at the time, General M. Jusuf requested that his name only be associated with the mosque "when the time is right." This was interpreted by the foundation as a request to wait until after his passing. As a temporary measure, the mosque was named Al-Markaz Al-Islami (Islamic Center Mosque). The mosque, located on the former campus of Hasanuddin University, was officially established as the center for Islamic worship and culture in Makassar. To this day, the name Al-Markaz Al-Islami remains, with plans to eventually include the name of its initiator and founder, making its full title Al-Markaz Al-Islami Jenderal M. Jusuf Mosque.

b. Muhammad Cheng Hoo Mosque

The Muhammad Cheng Hoo Mosque stands as a familiar landmark for many Muslim residents of Makassar and its surrounding areas. Behind the mosque known as "Cheng Hoo Mosque" lies a rich history rooted in the contributions of the Chinese Muslim community in Makassar, organized under the Cheng Hoo Mosque Foundation. The mosque was established by the foundation, which also built Cheng Hoo Mosques in

several locations across Indonesia. One of these mosques is located on Tun Abdul Razak Street in Gowa Regency, to the north of Makassar City, South Sulawesi. The architecture of this mosque stands out significantly, differing from the typical mosque designs commonly found in Indonesia.

Muhammad Yunus, the Rawatib Imam of the Cheng Hoo Mosque, explained that the Cheng Hoo Mosque Foundation operates in various cities across Indonesia, with its central headquarters located in Surabaya. The first Cheng Hoo Mosque was built in Surabaya, serving as the starting point for the expansion of the foundation's work to Makassar and other regions. The foundation in Makassar acts as a center for gathering Chinese Muslim converts and as a place for educational activities for the Chinese Muslim community. The Cheng Hoo Mosque on Tun Abdul Razak Street reflects the collaborative spirit of South Sulawesi's diverse communities. Its construction involved contributions from the local community, including non-Muslim residents, demonstrating a remarkable example of inclusivity. The mosque was not solely built by the Chinese Muslim community but also received support from local residents of various backgrounds. This inclusivity aims to ensure the mosque serves people from all walks of life, making its facilities accessible to everyone.



Figure 2 Muhammad Cheng Hoo Mosque

The Cheng Hoo Mosque is uniquely characterized by its blend of Chinese and Bugis ethnic influences. Its minaret is designed in the shape of a pagoda, creating a distinct aesthetic that attracts worshippers and visitors. The architectural style integrates elements from both cultures, with the Bugis contributing the Sulapa' Appa' philosophy, while Chinese influences are reflected in the predominant red color and the pagoda-shaped minaret. Construction of the Cheng Hoo Mosque in Gowa began on November

11, 2011. The project took approximately two years to complete, allowing the mosque to function at full capacity. Today, the mosque stands as a testament to cultural harmony and collective effort, serving as a place of worship and community engagement for all.

c. The Profile of the 99 Domes Mosque

Makassar is a city full of charm that never ceases to amaze visitors. From its renowned beaches to its stunning natural scenery, the city has always been a magnet for tourists. Adding to its allure is a new architectural wonder—an extraordinary mosque that has become a new icon of Makassar. Located in the Center Point of Indonesia area, the mosque, known as the 99 Domes Mosque, stands out with its distinctive and captivating design. The number 99 is inspired by Asmaul Husna, the 99 beautiful names of Allah, which imbues the mosque with both grandeur and spiritual significance. Its magnificent architecture has earned it a place among the 30 most unique mosques in the world and one of the 10 most unique mosques in Indonesia. It is also the largest mosque in Sulawesi.

The construction of the mosque required substantial resources. Reports indicate that the vibrant and multicolored mosque cost approximately IDR 182 billion. Its intricate and detailed design also meant that its construction took considerable time to complete. The idea for the mosque came from Ridwan Kamil, the current governor of West Java and a renowned architect. Known for his innovative mosque designs, such as the Al Irsyad Mosque in Padalarang, which defied traditional architectural norms by omitting the dome, Ridwan Kamil envisioned the 99 Domes Mosque as an equally unique and stunning structure. Collaborating with local architect Mursif, Ridwan Kamil developed a design that integrated Asmaul Husna into the architectural concept, creating a strikingly artistic result.

Construction of the mosque began in 2017. With a building area of 72 by 45 meters, the mosque is both expansive and energy-efficient. It incorporates natural lighting and ventilation, acoustic materials for its ceiling and walls, and eco-friendly systems for waste and rainwater management. Built on reclaimed land near Losari Beach, the mosque features two floors and a semi-basement. The basement houses facilities for ablution, administrative offices, and a gallery, while the first floor serves male worshippers and includes spaces for Islamic books and Muslim fashion. The second floor is reserved for female worshippers and offers a breathtaking waterfront view.

The mosque's defining feature is its 99 domes, symbolizing the Asmaul Husna. The domes are arranged in tiers, with smaller domes encircling a large central dome. Their vibrant hues of orange, yellow, and red give the mosque a distinctive and visually striking appearance. The mosque also includes a sacred courtyard reminiscent of the Grand Mosque in Mecca and can accommodate up to 10,000 worshippers. Set against the backdrop of Losari Beach, the mosque offers a spectacular panorama, especially during sunset when the structure is bathed in golden light, blending harmoniously with the reddish hues of the sky. At night, the domes are illuminated by strategically placed lights, adding to their visual appeal. Visitors can also enjoy a fountain show located in front of the mosque after the Maghrib prayer, which lasts for about 30 minutes.

The 99 Domes Mosque serves not only as a place of worship but also as a popular destination for religious tourism. Its stunning architecture and picturesque location make it a favored spot for photography, especially during sunset. Even during the day, the bright colors of the domes against the blue sky create a breathtaking visual. This iconic mosque has garnered widespread admiration, becoming a source of pride for the people of Makassar and Sulawesi Selatan. Its artistic design and the substantial investment in its construction signify its importance as a landmark. The mosque's unique beauty and strategic location near Losari Beach make it a must-visit destination for anyone traveling to Makassar. It stands as a testament to the city's ability to blend spiritual devotion with architectural excellence, offering an unforgettable experience to worshippers and visitors alike.

Economic Potential Around Mosques

Mosques hold significant economic potential, including in cities like Makassar. This potential can be harnessed in various ways:

1. Business Development

Mosques often serve as social and religious hubs within local communities. This creates business opportunities around mosques, such as restaurants, souvenir shops, accommodations, or bookstores specializing in religious literature. Developing businesses around mosques is one way to tap into the economic potential of the area. However, business development must be sensitive to religious values, ethics, and social norms upheld within the community. For example, opening a restaurant or café that serves halal food near a mosque can be a great business opportunity, especially for serving worshippers coming to pray. Offering delicious, high-quality food in a comfortable setting can attract many customers.

Shops selling local souvenirs or specialty items can thrive since many visitors or worshippers might want to take home mementos after visiting a mosque. Other possibilities include opening a laundry service or car wash strategically located near the mosque, allowing people to drop off their laundry or cars for cleaning while they pray. Additionally, establishing a shop selling religious books, prayer accessories like mukena and prayer rugs, or other religious items can provide a stable source of income. If you have skills in Arabic or religious knowledge, you might consider offering Arabic language courses or religious education near the mosque.

If the mosque is located in an area frequently visited by tourists or worshippers from other cities, building accommodations or hotels nearby can be a lucrative business. Moreover, if the mosque has a large enough space, it can be rented out for various events, such as weddings, conferences, or business meetings. It's essential to run these businesses transparently, adhering to ethical principles, and considering the potential social and environmental impacts. Additionally, communicating with mosque management and the local community to gain support and ensure the business aligns with the mosque's religious and social objectives is crucial.

2. Social and Welfare Activities

Mosques often organize various social and charitable activities, such as fundraising for those in need or other community-focused initiatives. These efforts mobilize the community to contribute money or goods that can be used to assist vulnerable individuals. Mosques play a vital role in promoting social and welfare aspects within Muslim communities. Regular activities like Friday prayers (Jumu'ah) not only serve as a platform for communal worship but also foster social connections among worshippers. Many mosques offer religious education programs for children and adults, including Quranic studies, tafsir (interpretation), hadith, and lessons on Islamic morals and ethics.

Some mosques also provide Arabic language classes to help individuals better understand Islamic texts in their original form. Family guidance programs are commonly conducted to address parenting, financial management, and marital issues. Welfare activities include distributing food and clothing to those in need or organizing fundraising campaigns for disaster victims. Additionally, mosques often serve as community centers where support is extended to the most vulnerable through acts of charity and kindness.

In terms of health and education, some mosques host health centers offering medical check-ups, vaccinations, and health education programs. Discussions and forums on contemporary Islamic issues are frequently held, providing a space for deeper understanding and dialogue. To engage the youth, mosques organize activities such as sports events, social gatherings, and charitable projects. These initiatives help build a sense of belonging among young people and strengthen their connection to the community.

Mosques also provide services like funeral management, offering emotional support to bereaved families. For those seeking advanced religious knowledge, many mosques conduct in-depth studies of the Quran and hadith. They also serve as hubs for raising funds for various causes, including development projects, humanitarian aid, and education. In some cases, counseling services are available to assist individuals and families in addressing personal or social challenges. These activities not only provide spiritual benefits but also strengthen the community and contribute positively to societal well-being.

In the investment sector, smart contracts are used to facilitate Sharia-compliant financing, such as sukuk (Islamic bonds). The United Arab Emirates, for example, has begun utilizing blockchain to issue sukuk supported by smart contracts. These contracts ensure that coupon payments to sukuk holders are automatically executed on a predetermined schedule, reducing the risk of delays or errors. Additionally, this mechanism ensures that funds raised through sukuk are allocated exclusively to Sharia-compliant projects, such as infrastructure development or investments in green energy.

3. Education and Training

Many mosques serve as centers for education and training, offering various programs such as Arabic language courses, religious studies, and practical life skills. These programs not only enrich the knowledge and skills of the Muslim community but can also serve as a source of income through registration fees or voluntary donations. Education

and training in mosques play a crucial role in strengthening religious knowledge, morality, and the overall competencies of Muslims. One of the most common activities in mosques is Quranic studies, which encompass learning to read the Quran with proper tajweed, memorizing it, and understanding its meanings through tafsir. Additionally, mosques often host hadith studies, where participants can learn about the teachings and examples from the life of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). To help Muslims comprehend the Quran and hadith in their original language, Arabic classes are frequently organized, while other religious studies delve into aspects like faith (aqidah), worship (ibadah), ethics, and Islamic law (fiqh).

Mosques also contribute to strengthening family and societal values through marriage and family courses, which educate couples about their rights, duties, and responsibilities in marriage, and provide guidance on fostering Islamic family life. Beyond religious education, many mosques offer practical skills training, including job skills, personal financial management, and even computer programming, enabling participants to improve their competencies in various fields. For children, mosques provide educational programs tailored to instill Islamic values, ethics, and religious knowledge appropriate for their age. Modern mosques often extend their reach through online Islamic education, allowing Muslims to gain religious knowledge from the comfort of their homes.

Furthermore, mosques act as hubs for intellectual engagement, hosting Islamic discussions and dialogues on pressing religious and social issues. They may also offer courses in languages like Arabic, Urdu, or other relevant languages to help participants understand religious texts in their original forms. Leadership training programs are another significant aspect, equipping community members with the skills necessary to manage social and religious activities effectively. Through these diverse educational and training initiatives, mosques not only enhance the knowledge and understanding of Islam but also promote ethical values and foster the personal and professional growth of the Muslim community.

4. Health and Social Services Center

Some mosques integrate health and social service centers that provide basic medical care and mental health services to the community. These centers may be funded through donations or service fees and serve as a vital resource for meeting the health and welfare needs of the Muslim community and surrounding society in a familiar and comfortable environment. Health centers at mosques often offer basic health screenings, such as blood pressure checks, blood sugar testing, eye exams, and dental check-ups, facilitating the early detection of diseases or health issues. Additionally, these centers may organize vaccination programs to protect community members from infectious diseases such as influenza, pneumonia, or other conditions requiring specific immunizations.

Mental health, a critical aspect of overall well-being, is also addressed in these centers. Mosques can offer mental health counseling services provided by trained professionals to support individuals dealing with mental health challenges. Workshops and seminars on health-related topics, including healthy eating, exercise, stress management, and self-care,

may also be conducted to promote awareness and proactive health management. Furthermore, these centers can provide nutritional information and support access to healthy food for those in need. Beyond healthcare, mosque-based centers often extend social services, offering financial aid, clothing, and food to the underprivileged. They may also host programs to help individuals overcome harmful habits, such as smoking or substance abuse.

Some mosques collaborate with blood banks or establish their own blood donation centers to organize blood drives and encourage community participation in lifesaving initiatives. Services related to pregnancy, such as fetal monitoring and reproductive health education, may also be provided. In emergencies, mosque health centers can act as first-aid stations, offering immediate assistance and emergency facilities. By reducing barriers to accessing healthcare and social services, mosque-based health centers play a significant role in improving the quality of life for both Muslim and non-Muslim communities in their vicinity. These centers exemplify how mosques can serve as broader community welfare hubs, fostering well-being and strengthening the bonds within the society they serve.

5. Halal Trade Center

Providing halal food and products presents a lucrative business opportunity for mosques, particularly if they have their own kitchens or shops. The halal market is growing rapidly, with strong demand both in Indonesia and globally. Establishing halal trade businesses around mosques is an initiative that can meet the needs of the Muslim community while creating economic opportunities for individuals and enterprises. This approach also promotes Islamic values within the context of commerce.

One prominent type of business is halal cafeterias or dining facilities, which can provide meals prepared in accordance with Islamic guidelines. These include food that excludes pork and alcohol, prepared with halal-certified ingredients. Additionally, mosques can support halal retail stores that sell food, beverages, and other items certified as halal. Other possible businesses include vendors offering books, Islamic clothing, jewelry, or cultural items related to Islam and the Muslim lifestyle. Travel agencies that organize umrah and hajj pilgrimages or Islamic funeral services are also essential business ventures. Mosques often have educational facilities, creating a demand for businesses that provide textbooks, stationery, and other educational supplies to support the learning community.

Healthcare centers practicing medicine aligned with Islamic ethical and legal principles can serve both Muslims and the broader community. Similarly, halal restaurants catering to Muslims and non-Muslims alike can provide meals that meet Islamic dietary laws. Financial services following sharia principles, such as Islamic banking or halal investment products, can also thrive in such environments. Businesses producing or selling Islamic-compliant clothing – such as modest attire covering the aurat and free from inappropriate imagery or wording – can cater to the community's needs. Halal cosmetics and skincare products that are safe and permissible for Muslims offer

another viable business opportunity. Services like cleaning and maintenance for homes, offices, or mosques, adhering to Islamic hygiene standards, are also in demand.

Additionally, technology companies that develop apps or services supporting the Muslim community, such as prayer schedules, Islamic education tools, or Quran learning platforms, can play a significant role in enriching the lives of Muslims. It is crucial to maintain high ethical standards and integrity when operating halal trade businesses around mosques. Entrepreneurs must ensure that their products and services genuinely adhere to halal standards and align with Islamic values. Beyond business objectives, they can actively contribute to the well-being and development of the Muslim community and the broader society, creating a positive impact through their initiatives.

6. Room Rentals

Room rentals in mosques offer a valuable opportunity to generate additional income while serving the needs of the community. Mosques often have large spaces, such as the main hall, meeting rooms, classrooms, or sports facilities, that can be rented for events like weddings, conferences, and exhibitions. To successfully manage room rentals, it is essential to identify suitable spaces, determine rental rates based on room type and duration, and establish clear policies for usage, including permissible activities and operational hours. An efficient booking system, whether online or offline, ensures a smooth reservation process, while formal rental contracts protect both the mosque and renters by detailing terms such as fees, dates, and conditions of use.

Promoting the rental services through social media, websites, and community networks can help attract more bookings, and maintaining the spaces in excellent condition ensures a positive experience for renters. Security and safety protocols should be enforced, and insurance coverage can provide protection against potential damages or unforeseen incidents. Offering responsive and friendly customer service further enhances satisfaction. Additionally, mosques should define the purpose of the rental income, whether it supports mosque maintenance, social programs, or other initiatives. Periodic evaluations of the rental business allow for adjustments in pricing, policies, and offerings to meet changing needs. By adopting these practices, mosques can create a sustainable and community-oriented rental service that not only generates revenue but also strengthens ties within the community.

7. Religious Tourism

The city of Makassar has a rich history as a center of religion and culture in Indonesia. Its historic mosques hold great potential to attract tourists interested in learning about the region's Islamic history and cultural heritage. Developing mosques as religious tourism destinations not only promotes Islamic values, culture, and history but also provides significant economic benefits for local communities. To achieve this, efforts must focus on ensuring the preservation and restoration of these sacred sites, maintaining them in excellent condition to retain their historical and artistic significance. Restoration projects can rejuvenate historic Islamic architecture and art, while providing sufficient information for visitors about the mosques' histories, Islamic values, and religious practices can

enhance their cultural and spiritual experience. Informative materials such as plaques, brochures, or guided tours led by knowledgeable individuals can be instrumental in enriching this educational journey.

Furthermore, offering structured programs such as guided tours by historians or trained guides can provide in-depth insights into the mosque's historical and cultural context. Organizing art and cultural exhibitions within the mosque, particularly if it houses historic artifacts, can further engage tourists and foster appreciation for Islamic artistic heritage. Educational programs, including lectures, workshops, or short courses on Islam, can open opportunities for people to deepen their understanding of the religion and its principles. Additionally, festivals and special events celebrating Islamic culture and traditions—such as Eid al-Fitr celebrations or Islamic art showcases—can attract a broader audience and make the experience more memorable for visitors.

To complement these efforts, the development of supporting facilities and services is crucial. Providing clean restrooms, adequate parking spaces, and comfortable resting areas ensures a pleasant visitor experience. Establishing shops around the mosque that sell Islamic merchandise, clothing, books, and souvenirs can create additional revenue streams while promoting local artisans. For further convenience, offering halal food and beverages aligns with Islamic principles and caters to visitors' dietary needs. Collaborative efforts with local governments, travel agencies, and tourism organizations can strengthen promotional efforts, ensuring the mosque reaches a wider audience as a religious tourism destination.

Lastly, it is vital to comply with all relevant regulations and obtain the necessary permits to operate tourism activities within mosques. Effective marketing strategies, leveraging social media, websites, and other platforms, can play a key role in promoting mosques as iconic tourist attractions. Establishing donation programs allows visitors to contribute directly to the maintenance and development of the mosques, creating a sustainable funding model. The development of mosques as religious tourism destinations can bring tremendous benefits, including economic empowerment for local communities, the promotion of Islamic culture and history, and improved understanding of Islam among non-Muslims. All these initiatives must be carried out with the utmost respect for Islamic values, religious practices, and local norms to ensure the sanctity of the mosques is preserved while fostering harmony and cultural exchange.

Conclusion

In conclusion, mosques hold immense economic potential, both in terms of business development, social activities, and educational advancement. By developing businesses that align with religious values, such as halal restaurants, religious bookstores, and accommodations near mosques, entrepreneurs can capitalize on local opportunities while maintaining social harmony. Additionally, mosques play a crucial role in community welfare by organizing various charitable activities, family training programs, health services, and other initiatives that positively impact the community. As centers for social engagement, mosques enable individuals to participate in activities that not only focus on worship but also enhance the overall quality of life and well-being of the community.

On the other hand, mosques also serve as important centers for education and training, strengthening religious knowledge, life skills, and professional competencies for the Muslim community. Educational programs offered in mosques, including Quran studies, Arabic courses, and practical skills training, can significantly contribute to individual empowerment and community development. These initiatives can also create sustainable business opportunities that support local economic growth. Furthermore, mosques have the potential to evolve as religious tourism destinations by leveraging their historical, cultural, and Islamic values to attract visitors, creating a substantial economic impact for surrounding communities. Therefore, mosques are not only places of worship but also integral centers for economic, educational, and social development that contribute to the prosperity of the community.

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