

Strengthening The Understanding Of Prospering The Mosque Through Ramadan Lectures

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Abstract

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This community engagement program aimed to support the strengthening of the mosque's functions as a center for worship, education, and community development through continuous and thematic kultum sessions during Ramadan. The program was conducted at Jami' Bulurejo Mosque, Jombang Regency, during Ramadan 1447 AH (2026), using a participatory field-action approach involving the congregation and mosque administrators (takmir) as community partners. A total of 50 participants participated in 12 kultum sessions, with each session lasting approximately 7–10 minutes. The materials were organized thematically and contextually, focusing on imaratul masjid, etiquette and discipline in congregational prayer, and shared responsibility for maintaining mosque cleanliness and facilities. The program was evaluated using attendance records, structured behavioral observation sheets, and field notes by comparing baseline and endline conditions. The findings showed that the average number of Tarawih worshippers increased from 35 in the first week to 50 in the final week, representing an increase of 42.9%. The proportion of congregants who arranged and filled the prayer rows (saf) before the iqamah increased from 58% to 89%, while the proportion arriving before the prayer began increased from 61% to 84%. Field notes also indicated that the atmosphere during the kultum sessions became more conducive toward the end of the program. These findings indicate observable positive changes in congregational participation and discipline during the program period. However, the changes

cannot be attributed solely to the kultum intervention because the program was conducted within the broader context of Ramadan, did not involve a comparison group, and was not followed by a post-Ramadan assessment. Therefore, continuous and thematic kultum shows potential as a mosque-based educational approach, while further evaluation is needed to determine whether the observed behavioral changes are sustained beyond Ramadan.

Abstrak

Kata kunci:

Memakmurkan Masjid,
Kultum Ramadan.

Kegiatan pengabdian kepada masyarakat ini bertujuan mendukung penguatan fungsi masjid sebagai pusat ibadah, pendidikan, dan pembinaan masyarakat melalui pelaksanaan kultum tematik dan berkelanjutan selama Ramadan. Program dilaksanakan di Masjid Jami' Bulurejo, Kabupaten Jombang, selama Ramadan 1447 H (2026) dengan menggunakan pendekatan aksi lapangan partisipatif yang melibatkan jamaah dan pengurus takmir sebagai mitra pelaksana. Sebanyak 50 peserta terlibat dalam 12 sesi kultum dengan durasi 7–10 menit setiap sesi. Materi disusun secara tematik dan kontekstual dengan fokus pada konsep imaratul masjid, adab dan kedisiplinan salat berjamaah, serta tanggung jawab bersama dalam menjaga kebersihan dan fasilitas masjid. Evaluasi dilakukan melalui rekapitulasi kehadiran, lembar observasi perilaku terstruktur, dan catatan lapangan dengan membandingkan kondisi baseline dan endline. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa rata-rata jumlah jamaah salat Tarawih meningkat dari 35 orang pada minggu pertama menjadi 50 orang pada minggu terakhir, atau sebesar 42,9%. Kerapian dan keterisian saf sebelum iqamah meningkat dari 58% menjadi 89%, sedangkan proporsi jamaah yang hadir sebelum salat dimulai meningkat dari 61% menjadi 84%. Catatan lapangan juga menunjukkan bahwa suasana selama kultum pada akhir program cenderung lebih kondusif. Temuan ini menunjukkan adanya perubahan positif yang teramati pada aspek partisipasi dan kedisiplinan jamaah selama program berlangsung. Namun, perubahan tersebut tidak dapat sepenuhnya diatribusikan kepada intervensi kultum karena program berlangsung dalam konteks Ramadan, tidak menggunakan kelompok pembandingan, dan belum disertai evaluasi pasca-Ramadan. Dengan demikian, kultum tematik dan berkelanjutan menunjukkan potensi sebagai pendekatan edukatif berbasis masjid, sementara evaluasi lanjutan diperlukan untuk mengetahui keberlanjutan perubahan perilaku jamaah.

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Introduction

Mosques constitute the center of Islamic civilization and community development, playing a highly strategic role in the life of the Muslim community.¹ Conceptually and historically, the function of the mosque extends far beyond serving as a place for the

¹ Muhammad Syafii Murad Daulay dkk., "Manajemen Kesejahteraan Umat: Peran Masjid Sebagai Pusat Ekonomi Kerakyatan," *JURNAL SYIAR-SYIAR* 3, no. 2 (2023): 46–57, <https://doi.org/10.36490/syiar.v3i2.1075>.

performance of mahdhah (*ritual*) worship, such as prayer,² social development,³ pembinaan sosial,⁴ and the resolution of various community issues.⁵ Therefore, a comprehensive understanding of the concept of *imaratul masjid* (prospering the mosque) should continue to be cultivated within society so that the mosque can fulfill its ideal role optimally, not only in terms of its physical maintenance but also through the development of diverse activities that contribute to the welfare and empowerment of the Muslim community.

In the context of community education and community engagement, Ramadan represents a highly strategic period for educational and religious outreach activities. During this month, community participation in mosque-based activities increases significantly through congregational prayers, *Tarawih* prayers, Qur'anic recitation (*tadarus*), and various other religious programs.⁶ One of the most common educational and *da'wah* traditions conducted during Ramadan is the Kultum (Seven-Minute Religious Lecture), which is typically delivered before the Tarawih prayer or after the Subuh prayer. ScienceDirect Topics. Owing to its brief, concise, and communicative format, kulum serves as an effective medium for disseminating religious messages and reaching a broad congregation.

Previous mosque-based community engagement programs have demonstrated that mosques can serve as an effective medium for enhancing the religious understanding of local communities.⁷ These programs have generally focused on improving Islamic literacy, strengthening worship practices, promoting Qur'anic reading and writing skills, and delivering religious teachings through sermons and regular study circles. However, most of these initiatives continue to position congregants as passive recipients of information and place greater emphasis on the ritual dimensions of religious practice. Community engagement studies and programs that specifically emphasize the concept of *imaratul masjid* as the primary theme of community education remain relatively limited. Moreover, the approaches employed have generally not integrated a structured, thematic, and participatory learning design capable of encouraging the active involvement of congregants in understanding and implementing the values of mosque prosperity.

The above conditions indicate the need for an educational model that not only focuses on delivering religious knowledge but also fosters community awareness and participation in the mosque's prosperity. In response to this need, the present community engagement program developed a thematic-participatory educational approach through Ramadan kulum (Seven-Minute Religious Lectures). Unlike conventional kulum, which

² Ahlan Ahlan, "Peran Masjid Sebagai Basis Peradaban Islam," *An-Natiq Jurnal Kajian Islam Interdisipliner* 2, no. 2 (2022): 154–65, <https://doi.org/10.33474/an-natiq.v2i2.16066>.

³ Ely Suryawati, "Pemberdayaan Masjid Sebagai Pusat Pendidikan Islam," *Al-Rabwah* 15, no. 02 (2021): 60–69, <https://doi.org/10.55799/jalr.v15i02.124>.

⁴ Dalmeri Dalmeri, "Revitalisasi Fungsi Masjid Sebagai Pusat Ekonomi Dan Dakwah Multikultural," *Walisongo: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 22, no. 2 (2014): 321–50, <https://doi.org/10.21580/ws.22.2.269>.

⁵ Mustain Mustain, "Dinamika Fungsi Masjid Di Indonesia: Dari Lokus Pengajaran Islam Ke Pemberdayaan Sosial Ekonomi Umat," *eL-HIKMAH: Jurnal Kajian Dan Penelitian Pendidikan Islam* 17, no. 2 (2023): 109–21, <https://doi.org/10.20414/elhikmah.v17i2.8998>.

⁶ Hadi Samanto dkk., "Optimalisasi Peran Remaja Masjid Dalam Meningkatkan Kegiatan Sosial Dan Keagamaan Di Masjid Desa Kismoyoso," *BUDIMAS: JURNAL PENGABDIAN MASYARAKAT* 6, no. 2 (2024), <https://www.jurnal.stie-aas.ac.id/index.php/JAIM/article/view/14413>.

⁷ Aina Oktaviani dan Toto Andri Puspito, "Pengabdian Masyarakat Dalam Digitalisasi Masjid: Implementasi Website Untuk Meningkatkan Akses Informasi," *Abdiformatika: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat Informatika* 5, no. 1 (2025): 1–7, <https://doi.org/10.59395/abdiformatika.v5i1.257>.

often presents isolated and disconnected topics, this program systematically organized its materials into interconnected themes centered on the concept of imaratul masjid. Each session was designed to gradually develop the congregation's understanding of the mosque as a center of worship, education, social development, and community empowerment. Furthermore, the program encouraged the active involvement of both congregants and mosque administrators (*takmir*) through reflection and the strengthening of a shared commitment to prospering the mosque.

This opportunity was particularly relevant to Jami' Bulurejo Mosque in Jombang Regency. As one of the primary centers of religious activities within the local community, the mosque serves a large, active, and diverse congregation. Its strategic position makes it not only a place of worship but also a focal point for religious and social activities. The substantial increase in congregational attendance during Ramadan represents valuable social capital that can be utilized to strengthen collective awareness of the importance of imaratul masjid.

Based on preliminary observations and discussions with the mosque's *takmir*, it was found that the congregation's understanding of imaratul masjid remained relatively limited. Most congregants perceived mosque prosperity primarily in terms of physical development or high attendance at religious activities. In contrast, the broader dimensions of imaratul masjid including spiritual development, education, social responsibility, and community economic empowerment had not yet been comprehensively understood. At the same time, there was a clear need for a more innovative and systematically structured educational program capable of sustaining congregational engagement beyond the Ramadan period.

In response to these identified needs, the community service team implemented the program entitled "Strengthening the Understanding of Imaratul Masjid through Ramadan Kultum at Jami' Bulurejo Mosque, Jombang." The novelty of this program lies not in the use of kultum as a medium of Islamic preaching, but in the application of a thematic-participatory educational design that systematically integrates the concept of imaratul masjid into a series of Ramadan kultum sessions. Through this approach, congregants were expected not only to develop a conceptual understanding of mosque prosperity but also to reflect upon and apply its values in community life. Consequently, the program seeks to promote more active and sustainable community participation in prospering the mosque as a center of worship, education, social empowerment, and Islamic civilization.

Method

This community engagement program employed a participatory field-action approach involving the congregation and mosque administrators (*takmir*) of Jami' Bulurejo Mosque, Jombang Regency. The participants consisted of mosque congregants who attended religious activities during Ramadan, while the *takmir* served as community partners in planning, coordinating, and implementing the program. A total of 50 participants were involved in the educational activities, consisting of male and female congregants, adolescents, and children. The program was conducted during Ramadan 1447 AH (2026) through a series of kultum sessions, with each session lasting approximately 7–10 minutes. The activities were facilitated by three members of the community service team who served as both speakers and facilitators. To ensure systematic implementation and alignment with the intended educational objectives, the program was organized into three interrelated stages: preparation, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.

The first stage, preparation, focused on needs identification, coordination, and technical planning. The process began with participatory observation and discussions with the takmir of Jami' Bulurejo Mosque to identify the characteristics of the congregation, their initial understanding of imaratul masjid, and the schedule of religious activities during Ramadan. Based on the results of these discussions, the community service team developed a thematic framework for the kultum sessions. The themes were arranged systematically and sequentially to provide a comprehensive understanding of imaratul masjid, including the definition and principles of imaratul masjid, the mosque as a center of worship, the mosque as a center of education, the mosque as a center of social concern, community empowerment, and congregational participation. The preparation stage also included coordinating the speakers, determining the activity schedule, preparing educational materials, and adjusting the kultum sessions to the mosque's regular worship schedule, particularly before the Tarawih prayer or after the Subuh prayer.

The second stage, implementation, constituted the core of the community engagement intervention. Educational activities were delivered directly to the congregation through a series of thematically structured kultum sessions. Each session was conducted according to a predetermined theme using an interactive and participatory communication approach. The congregation was not positioned merely as passive recipients of religious messages but was encouraged to relate the materials presented to their own experiences and the actual conditions of mosque life. Religious messages were delivered using accessible, inclusive, and contextual language adapted to the diverse characteristics of the congregation. Each session combined conceptual explanations, practical examples, question-and-answer activities, and discussions of everyday issues related to mosque management and community participation. Through this approach, participants were expected not only to understand the concept of imaratul masjid but also to identify practical forms of participation that could be implemented in the mosque and the wider community.

The third stage, monitoring and evaluation, was conducted to assess the extent to which the program achieved its intended educational objectives. The evaluation employed several complementary instruments rather than relying solely on informal observation. First, participants' understanding of imaratul masjid was assessed through pre-tests and post-tests covering the main aspects of the concept, including its religious, educational, social, and community empowerment dimensions. The results obtained before and after the program were compared to identify changes in participants' levels of knowledge and understanding. Second, a structured observation sheet was used to record participants' attendance, attention, interaction, and participation during the kultum sessions. Third, semi-structured interviews and focused discussions were conducted with selected takmir members and community representatives to obtain qualitative information regarding participants' responses and perceived changes following the implementation of the program.

Program achievement was assessed based on several predetermined indicators: (1) improvement in participants' understanding of the concept of imaratul masjid; (2) participants' ability to identify the spiritual, educational, social, and community empowerment dimensions of mosque revitalization; (3) active participant engagement during the kultum sessions; and (4) participants' willingness or initial involvement in activities aimed at strengthening the functions and vitality of the mosque. The combined use of knowledge assessments, structured observations, and qualitative feedback was

intended to provide a more comprehensive description of changes in participants' knowledge and participation. The evaluation findings were subsequently used as a basis for formulating recommendations for the continuation of mosque-based educational and community empowerment activities after the Ramadan program ended.

Results And Discussion

Results

Implementation of Educational Activities

The community service program was implemented at Jami' Bulurejo Mosque, Jombang Regency, during Ramadan 1447 AH (February–March 2026). The main activity consisted of delivering kulum (seven-minute religious lectures), which were conducted regularly in 12 sessions, with one session held after the congregational Tarawih prayer. Each session was attended by approximately 30–50 participants, including men, women, adolescents, and children. The implementation of the program also received active support from the mosque's takmir as a partner in organizing the activities.

The kulum materials were systematically developed using a thematic approach, with each topic connected to the preceding material to build a continuous understanding of the concept of imaratul masjid, or efforts to enliven and prosper the mosque. The themes addressed included: (1) the importance of prospering the mosque as a center of worship and education; (2) etiquette and discipline in congregational prayer; and (3) shared responsibility for maintaining the cleanliness and facilities of the mosque. The thematic and sequential organization of the materials was intended to ensure that participants not only received religious messages incidentally but also developed an understanding that could be connected to their everyday practices within the mosque environment.

During the implementation, the community service team employed a dialogical communication approach using simple, communicative, and contextual language. The materials were presented by relating religious messages to situations encountered in the daily lives of the Bulurejo community. Following each kulum session, participants were given opportunities to share questions, experiences, and responses related to religious practices and social life within the mosque community. This approach enabled participants to function not merely as recipients of information but also as actively engaged participants in the learning process.

Program implementation was evaluated using three instruments: congregational attendance records, a structured behavioral observation sheet, and field notes prepared by the community service team in collaboration with the mosque's takmir. Attendance records were used to monitor changes in congregational participation, while the observation sheet was used to identify observable behavioral changes during the activities. Comparisons were made between the conditions observed during the first week as the baseline and those observed during the final week as the endline. Thus, the findings were not based solely on the general impressions of the community service team but also on attendance data and field observations.

Changes in Congregational Participation

One of the results identified during the implementation of the program was an increase in congregational participation in the Tarawih prayer. Based on attendance records maintained by the mosque's takmir in collaboration with the community service team, the average number of participants during the first week was 35, while this number increased to 50 participants during the final week. Thus, the average attendance increased by 15 participants, or approximately 42.9%.

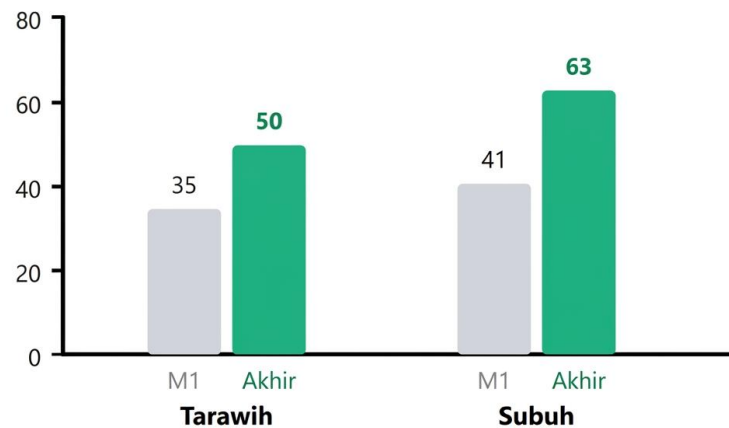


Figure 1. Changes in the Average Number of Participants Attending the Tarawih Prayer

The increase indicates that congregational participation at the end of the program was higher than at the beginning. This finding suggests that regular religious activities accompanied by thematic *kultum* sessions may have contributed to maintaining congregational engagement throughout Ramadan. Nevertheless, the increase in attendance cannot be directly attributed solely to the *kultum* activities, as other factors may also have influenced congregational attendance, including the atmosphere of Ramadan, other mosque activities, and the social conditions of the community. Therefore, the finding is more appropriately understood as a change in participation that occurred alongside the implementation of the program rather than as evidence of a definitive causal relationship.

Field observations also indicated that some participants attended the activities repeatedly from one session to another. The continuity of the thematic materials was one aspect that received positive responses from participants. One male participant stated:

“Usually, I only come for Tarawih, but because each *kultum* discusses a different topic and the topics are connected, I became curious and wanted to attend the next session.” (Male participant, 42 years old).

This statement suggests that the variety and continuity of the *kultum* themes may have encouraged participants to attend the activities more consistently. Thus, the function of *kultum* in this program extended beyond the delivery of religious messages and served as an educational medium that encouraged continued participation in mosque activities.

Behavioral Changes in Congregational Discipline

In addition to changes in participation, the community service program also identified changes in participants' behavior during congregational worship. Observations were conducted using a structured observation sheet based on three indicators: (1) the neatness and filling of prayer rows (*saf*) before the *iqamah*; (2) participants' punctuality in arriving before the prayer began; and (3) the level of quietness during the *kultum* sessions.

Table 1. Comparison of Baseline and Endline Conditions

No.	Behavioral Indicator	Baseline	Endline
1.	Neatness and filling of prayer rows (<i>saf</i>) before the <i>iqamah</i>	58%	89%
2.	Participants arriving before the prayer began	61%	84%
3.	Conversations during the <i>kultum</i>	Frequent disturbances	More conducive

The observations showed positive changes in the indicator of prayer-row discipline. At the baseline stage, approximately 58% of the observed participants had filled and arranged the prayer rows before the *iqamah*. At the endline stage, this proportion increased to 89%. This change indicates an improvement in participants' awareness of arranging and filling the prayer rows before the congregational prayer began.

The change was also reflected in the reduced need for direct instructions from the mosque's *takmir*. One *takmir* representative explained:

"Previously, we almost every night had to remind the congregation through the loudspeaker to close the gaps between the prayer rows. Toward the end of Ramadan, participants began filling the front rows on their own without being reminded." (*Takmir* representative).

This statement supports the quantitative observation regarding changes in prayer-row discipline. However, the statement is treated as qualitative evidence reflecting the experience and perception of the *takmir*, whereas the figures of 58% and 89% represent observations recorded using the structured observation instrument.

Regarding the level of quietness during the *kultum*, field notes indicated that the atmosphere during the final sessions tended to be more conducive than during the initial sessions. Participants appeared to pay greater attention to the delivery of the materials and engaged less frequently in conversations unrelated to the activity. A female participant stated:

"The material about etiquette in the mosque made us realize that maintaining quietness and respecting the concentration of other worshippers is also part of worship." (Female participant, 36 years old).

This statement indicates that the material on mosque etiquette was perceived by participants as directly relevant to their behavior while in the mosque. Thus, the messages delivered through the *kultum* were not limited to religious understanding but were also connected to behavioral practices during congregational worship.

Overall, the observations indicate changes in both congregational participation and discipline during the implementation of the program. The increase in average attendance from 35 to 50 participants, together with the increase in prayer-row organization from 58% to 89%, provides quantitative evidence of the observed changes. Meanwhile, statements from participants and the *takmir* provide qualitative evidence that helps explain how these changes were perceived by those involved in the program.

These findings indicate that thematic *kultum* sessions conducted regularly, contextually, and continuously have the potential to support the development of positive behavior in congregational worship. Nevertheless, these changes should be interpreted cautiously because the program was conducted within the specific context of Ramadan and did not involve a comparison group. Therefore, the findings are more appropriately understood as indications of behavioral changes observed during the program, rather

than as causal evidence that all observed changes were solely attributable to the *kultum* activities.

Discussion

The findings of this community service program indicate positive changes in both congregational participation and worship discipline following the implementation of thematic and continuous *kultum* sessions during Ramadan. The average number of participants attending Tarawih increased from 35 in the first week to 50 in the final week, representing an increase of approximately 42.9%. In addition, the proportion of congregants who arranged and filled the prayer rows (*saf*) before the iqamah increased from 58% to 89%, while the proportion of congregants arriving before the prayer began increased from 61% to 84%. Field observations also indicated that the atmosphere during the *kultum* sessions became more conducive toward the end of the program. These findings suggest that the program was associated with changes not only in congregational participation but also in observable patterns of worship-related behavior.⁸

These behavioral changes can be critically interpreted through Bandura's Social Learning Theory. Bandura explains that learning can occur through observation and the interaction between behavioral, cognitive, and environmental factors. In the context of this program, *kultum* functioned not merely as a medium for transmitting religious information but also as a repeated learning stimulus that introduced concrete examples of appropriate behavior in the mosque. The messages concerning orderly prayer rows, punctuality, maintaining quietness, and respecting other worshippers were repeatedly delivered within the actual environment in which these behaviors were expected to occur. This situation provided opportunities for congregants to observe, understand, and practice the recommended behaviors. The increase in prayer-row organization from 58% at baseline to 89% at endline provides observable evidence of behavioral change that is consistent with the learning process described.⁹

The qualitative evidence also supports this interpretation. The *takmir* representative reported that congregants increasingly filled the front rows independently and required fewer reminders from the mosque administrators. From the perspective of Social Learning Theory, this change may indicate a movement from behavior that was initially externally directed toward behavior that was increasingly performed through individual awareness and social learning. However, this interpretation should remain cautious because the program did not directly measure the psychological processes of observation, imitation, or internalization. The quantitative data demonstrate observable behavioral changes, while the theoretical framework provides an analytical explanation for how such changes may have occurred.

The communication process can further be understood through Hovland's perspective on communication and persuasion. Hovland, Janis, and Kelley emphasize that the effects of persuasive communication are related to factors within the communication process, including the communicator, the message, and the audience.¹⁰ In this program, the effectiveness of the *kultum* was supported by several characteristics of the communication process. First, religious messages were delivered using simple and contextual language. Second, the content was connected to concrete situations experienced by the Bulurejo community. Third, the materials were delivered

⁸ Sugiyanto dan Lilik Wahyuni, *Pendidikan Orang Dewasa (Andragogi)* (Universitas Brawijaya Press, 2020).

⁹ Albert Bandura, *Social Learning Theory* (Prentice Hall, 1977).

¹⁰ Carl Iver Hovland dkk., *Communication and Persuasion: Psychological Studies of Opinion Change* (Yale University Press, 1953).

continuously across 12 sessions rather than as isolated lectures. These characteristics potentially increased the relevance and comprehensibility of the messages for the congregation.

The participant's statement that the different but interconnected kultum topics encouraged him to attend subsequent sessions illustrates the relevance of the communication process. The participant stated that he initially came mainly for Tarawih but became interested in attending subsequent sessions because the kultum topics were different yet interconnected. This response suggests that the continuity and relevance of the message may have strengthened participants' interest in the educational activities. In Hovland's framework, persuasive communication is not simply a matter of delivering information; the characteristics of the message and its relationship to the audience are important in determining its potential effects.¹¹

The two theoretical perspectives therefore complement each other in explaining the observed changes. Hovland's perspective helps explain the communication mechanism, namely how the characteristics of the kultum message and its delivery may have increased participants' attention and engagement. Bandura's Social Learning Theory helps explain the behavioral mechanism, namely how repeated exposure to behavioral messages within the mosque environment may have been followed by observable changes in congregational practices. The relationship can therefore be conceptualized as follows: contextual and continuous religious communication increased engagement and attention repeated exposure to behavioral models and messages opportunities for practice observable changes in congregational behavior.

The increase in congregational attendance from 35 to 50 participants should nevertheless be interpreted cautiously. Although the data demonstrate a clear difference between the baseline and endline conditions, they do not establish that the kultum program alone caused the increase. Attendance during Ramadan may also be influenced by religious motivation, other mosque activities, family circumstances, and the broader social atmosphere of Ramadan. Therefore, the contribution of the program is more appropriately understood as a potential supporting factor in sustaining congregational participation rather than as the sole cause of the increase. This cautious interpretation is particularly important because the program did not employ a control or comparison group.

The findings are broadly consistent with previous community engagement studies that have positioned mosques as important spaces for religious education, worship, and community participation. Previous mosque-based programs have demonstrated that structured religious activities during Ramadan can encourage participation in congregational worship and strengthen community involvement. However, the present program differs in its specific emphasis on thematic continuity and behavioral orientation. Rather than treating kultum as a series of independent religious lectures, the program organized the materials into a connected sequence focusing on *imaratul masjid*, including the importance of the mosque as a center of worship and education, etiquette and discipline in congregational prayer, and shared responsibility for maintaining mosque facilities.

This thematic structure represents an important contribution of the program. The educational content was not separated from the behavioral context in which it was expected to be practiced. Messages concerning prayer-row discipline, punctuality, and

¹¹ Hovland dkk., *Communication and Persuasion: Psychological Studies of Opinion Change*.

mosque etiquette were delivered in the same environment in which the behaviors were subsequently observed. This connection between message, learning environment, and behavioral practice distinguishes the program from community service activities that primarily emphasize the delivery of religious information without systematically observing changes in participants' behavior.

The quantitative and qualitative evidence provides complementary support for this interpretation. The increase in prayer-row organization from 58% to 89% and punctual attendance from 61% to 84% provides measurable evidence of observed behavioral change. Meanwhile, statements from the takmir and participants help explain how the educational process was experienced by those involved. The takmir representative's observation that congregants increasingly organized the prayer rows without reminders suggests a possible shift toward more self-directed behavior. Similarly, the participant's statement concerning the continuity of kulum themes indicates that the thematic structure helped maintain interest in the program.

The findings also suggest that the educational value of kulum lies not primarily in the duration of the lecture but in its continuity, contextual relevance, and connection to everyday practice. This interpretation is consistent with Hovland et al.,¹² who emphasize the importance of communication factors in influencing audiences, and with Bandura, who explains learning as a process that can occur through observation and interaction with the environment. In the present program, the short duration of each kulum was compensated for by its repeated delivery, thematic continuity, contextual examples, and connection with actual congregational practices.¹³

Nevertheless, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the program was conducted during Ramadan, a period naturally characterized by increased religious activity and participation. This makes it difficult to separate the effect of the intervention from the broader Ramadan effect. Second, the program involved only one mosque and did not include a comparison group. Third, the behavioral indicator concerning the atmosphere during the kulum was assessed qualitatively and was not measured using a standardized numerical scale. Future community service programs could strengthen the evaluation by involving a larger number of participants, extending observation beyond Ramadan, using validated behavioral instruments, and conducting follow-up measurements to determine whether the observed changes are sustained after the intervention.

Overall, the findings indicate that a thematic, continuous, contextual, and participatory kulum model has potential as a practical approach to strengthening the educational and social functions of the mosque. The combination of persuasive communication and repeated learning experiences provides a plausible mechanism linking religious messages to observable congregational practices. Hovland's perspective helps explain how the characteristics of the message and communication process may foster audience engagement, while Bandura's Social Learning Theory helps explain how repeated exposure within the social environment may contribute to behavioral learning. Thus, the principal contribution of this program lies not simply in the use of kulum, but in its transformation into a structured, continuous, thematic, and behavior-oriented community education process that connects religious understanding with practical forms of imaratul masjid.

¹² Hovland dkk., *Communication and Persuasion: Psychological Studies of Opinion Change*.

¹³ Bandura, *Social Learning Theory*; Bandura, *Social Learning Theory*.

Conclusion

The community service program at Jami' Bulurejo Mosque, Jombang, implemented through thematic and continuous kulum sessions during Ramadan 1447 AH, was accompanied by observable changes in congregational participation and worship-related behavior. The documented attendance records showed an increase in the average number of Tarawih participants from 35 in the first week to 50 in the final week, representing an increase of approximately 42.9%. In addition, structured observations indicated an increase in the proportion of congregants who arranged and filled the prayer rows (saf) before the iqamah, from 58% at baseline to 89% at endline, while the proportion of congregants arriving before the prayer began increased from 61% to 84%. Field notes also indicated that the atmosphere during the kulum sessions became more conducive toward the end of the program.

These findings indicate that the implementation of regular, thematic, contextual, and participatory kulum was accompanied by positive changes in several observed aspects of congregational participation and discipline during Ramadan. The contribution of the program can particularly be seen in the integration of short religious lectures with continuous thematic materials and opportunities for interaction with participants. This approach provided a structured learning experience that connected religious messages concerning imaratul masjid with everyday practices in the mosque.

However, the findings should be interpreted within the limitations of the evaluation design. The program was conducted at a single mosque, during Ramadan, without a control or comparison group. Therefore, the observed increases in attendance and changes in congregational behavior cannot be attributed solely or conclusively to the kulum intervention. Other factors, including the religious atmosphere of Ramadan, other mosque activities, and social conditions within the community, may also have contributed to the observed changes. Furthermore, the evaluation focused primarily on changes during the implementation period and did not assess whether these behavioral changes continued after Ramadan.

Future community service programs should therefore include post-Ramadan follow-up assessments to determine the sustainability of the observed behavioral changes. Longer observation periods, comparison groups where feasible, and more standardized behavioral measurement instruments would also strengthen the evidence regarding the contribution of thematic kulum to sustained changes in congregational participation and mosque-related behavior. Thus, the present program is best understood as providing documented indications of positive changes during the intervention period, rather than definitive evidence of a causal or long-term behavioral transformation.

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Ethical Statement

This community engagement program was conducted with due consideration of ethical principles in community-based activities, including respect for participants, privacy, confidentiality, and responsible use of information obtained during the program. Information derived from observations, interviews, discussions, and field activities was used solely for academic and community engagement purposes. Participants' personal identities were not disclosed in the reporting of the program findings.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Statement

The authors used artificial intelligence (AI) tools only for limited language-editing purposes, including improving grammatical accuracy, clarity, and readability of the manuscript. AI was not used to generate or manipulate program data, conduct data analysis, interpret the findings, or formulate the conclusions. All AI-assisted outputs were reviewed and verified by the authors, who take full responsibility for the accuracy, integrity, and scholarly content of the manuscript.

Author Contributions

Sunardi contributed to the conceptualization, planning and implementation of the community engagement program, data collection, analysis, and preparation of the initial manuscript. Moh. Kholik contributed to the conceptualization, methodology, program coordination, interpretation of the findings, and critical review of the manuscript. Zainul Mustafa contributed to program implementation, data collection, observation, analysis, and manuscript revision. M. Basyir Baick contributed to the literature review, data organization, interpretation of the findings, and manuscript revision. Muhammad Husnur Rofiq contributed to supervision, validation, theoretical analysis, critical review, and refinement of the manuscript. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there are no financial, professional, institutional, or personal conflicts of interest that could have influenced the implementation, interpretation, or publication of this community engagement program..

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