

## Non-Formal Education of the Indian Muslim Community in Medan at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque

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### ABSTRACT

Mosques serve not only as places of worship but also as centers for community education and development. In multicultural urban areas such as Medan City, mosque-based non-formal education plays an important role in strengthening religious knowledge and social cohesion among minority Muslim communities. However, studies on the management of non-formal education within the Indian Muslim community remain limited, particularly regarding its planning, implementation, and evaluation. This study aims to describe these aspects in educational programs conducted at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and Jamik Mosque in Medan City. This research employed a qualitative approach using a multisite phenomenological design. Data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation involving mosque administrators, foundation managers, community leaders, educators, and participants. Data were analyzed using the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña interactive model, while data validity was ensured through source, method, and time triangulation. The findings indicate that educational programs are systematically planned through deliberation among foundation administrators, mosque management, community leaders, and teaching staff based on community needs. Program activities include regular Islamic studies, conversion guidance, Tahfiz House programs, women's religious gatherings, and monthly recitations. Implementation is carried out through lectures, discussions, worship practices, mentoring, and Qur'anic memorization activities. Evaluation focuses on attendance, Qur'anic literacy and memorization, worship practices, and changes in participants' religious behavior. The study concludes that mosque-based non-formal education contributes significantly to strengthening religious understanding, Islamic brotherhood, and the educational function of mosques. These findings enrich the literature on non-formal Islamic education and provide practical guidance for community-based educational development.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental process in human life that functions to develop the spiritual, intellectual, moral, and social potential of individuals in a sustainable manner. In the Indonesian national context, education is understood as a conscious and planned effort to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential, as affirmed in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System. The law explains that education is carried out through formal, non-formal, and informal channels that complement each other in building the quality of Indonesian human beings [1]. Thus, education does not only take place in school institutions, but also develops in people's lives through various social and religious institutions. From the perspective of Islamic Religious Education, education is not only understood as a process of transferring knowledge, but also as a process of internalizing Islamic values to form human beings who have faith, piety, and noble character. [2] explained that Islamic education aims to form kamil people through comprehensive spiritual, intellectual, and social development. Therefore, Islamic education can take place in various social spaces of society, including through recitation activities, taklim assemblies, and mosque-based coaching [3]. Theoretically, non-formal education can be understood through the theory of community education (*Community Education Theory*) developed by [4].

Study [6] views education as a process of community empowerment through dialogue, participation, and contextual learning that departs from the social reality of students. Non-formal education is seen as able to answer the needs of the community because it is flexible, participatory, and close to the social life of the community. In the context of Islamic education, this theory is relevant to mosque-based educational practices that develop from the needs of worshippers and are implemented in a participatory manner. Study [7] shows that non-formal education has a strategic role in empowering Indonesian society, especially community groups that have not been fully reached by formal education. Non-formal education allows for a more contextual and adaptive learning process to the needs of the community. In addition, the research [8] shows that non-formal education in Indonesia has the characteristics of being flexible, community-based, and able to adapt to the socio-cultural conditions of the local community. This shows that non-formal education is not just complementary education, but is an integral part of human resource development and strengthening community social cohesion.

Juridically, non-formal education has a strong legal basis through Article 26 of Law Number 20 of 2003, which states that non-formal education functions as a substitute, supplement, and complement to formal education and aims to develop the potential of students through the mastery of knowledge and functional skills [9]. In practice, non-formal education is widely organized by community organizations, social institutions, and community-based religious institutions. In the perspective of the sociology of education, the existence of non-formal education can be explained through the theory of structural functionalism [10], who view education as a social institution that functions to maintain social integration, solidarity, and the inheritance of values in society. Mosque-based non-formal education not only transmits religious knowledge but also strengthens the social

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solidarity and collective identity of the Muslim community. Educational activities that take place in mosques function to build social attachment between worshippers while strengthening religious values in people's lives. In the context of Islamic Religious Education, non-formal educational institutions have an important position as a space for the transmission of Islamic values in society. Research [11] shows that non-formal Islamic educational institutions play a role in shaping religious character, strengthening religious understanding, and maintaining the sustainability of Islamic traditions in the midst of social change. Thus, Islamic non-formal education not only functions as a means of religious learning, but also as a medium for the formation of Islamic identity and the strengthening of the solidarity of the ummah.

Mosques in the Islamic tradition have a multidimensional function. Since the time of the Prophet PBUH, mosques have not only been used as a place of ritual worship, but also as a center for education, da'wah, deliberation, and social development of the people. [12] explained that mosques are the center of Islamic civilization, which has an educational and social function in the lives of Muslims. From the perspective of the theory of social function of mosques, mosques are understood as spaces for character formation, strengthening ukhuwah, and empowering communities based on Islamic values. Study [13] shows that mosques have great potential as a community-based Islamic education center because of their proximity to the community and easily accessible to all ages. Through recitation activities, Qur'an learning, and social coaching, the mosque becomes an inclusive and contextual learning space. Research [14] also shows that mosque-based non-formal education contributes significantly to building religiosity and social harmony of Muslim families. The city of Medan has been known as a multiethnic and multicultural area since the colonial era. One of the communities that has an important historical and social contribution is the Muslim community of India. The presence of this community in East Sumatra is related to the migration of the Indian community in the late 19th to early 20th centuries as traders, plantation workers, and Islamic preachers [15]. In its development, the Indian Muslim community built a strong social network and religious institutions in the city of Medan.

In the perspective of Henri Tajfel's theory of social identity, group identity is formed through symbols, values, and social interactions that are carried out repeatedly in the community. In the context of Medan's Muslim Indian community, mosques are a symbol of collective identity as well as a social space to maintain Islamic values and community culture. Through mosque-based non-formal education activities, the religious identity of the Indian Muslim community is maintained in the midst of the cultural plurality of Medan City. Research [15] shows that the Indian Muslim community in North Sumatra is experiencing a process of cultural integration with the Malay community through a pattern of cultural acculturation and assimilation. Nevertheless, Islamic identity remains a major element in their social life. In this context, mosques developed into centers of social, cultural, and educational activities of the Indian Muslim community. The Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque are two mosques that have important historical and sociological values for the Indian Muslim community in the city of Medan. Research [16] shows that the Ghaudiyah Mosque plays a role as a center for the development of the ummah through recitation

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activities, learning the Qur'an, and religious education of the community. Meanwhile, research [17] shows that the Jamik Mosque is a historical symbol of the existence of Muslim India as well as a center of religious learning that has been going on for generations.

Non-formal education that takes place in the two mosques is realized through routine recitation, learning the Qur'an, taklim assembly, moral development, and conversion coaching. These activities show that the mosque functions as a community-based Islamic educational institution that grows from the internal needs of the Muslim Indian community of Medan. In the perspective of Albert Bandura's social learning theory, the educational process takes place through social interaction, example, and behavioral habituation. This can be seen in the practice of non-formal education in mosques, which emphasizes moral development through the example of the ustaz, religious leaders, and social interaction of worshippers. However, based on a preliminary study through an initial interview with the management of the Medan Indian Muslim Foundation, several problems were found in the implementation of non-formal education at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque. Educational activities are still taking place traditionally and have not been systematically documented. In addition, there is no written learning plan and structured program evaluation mechanism.

This condition shows that mosque-based non-formal education develops naturally according to the needs of the community, but has not been fully managed professionally and sustainably. Several previous studies have examined mosque-based non-formal education. [18] found that non-formal education in mosques contributes to the formation of Muslim youth morals in the city of Medan. Asrin (2024: 198) examines the role of the taklim council as an Islamic non-formal educational institution that is adaptive to the needs of the community. [19] explained that the mosque developed into a dynamic non-formal education space in strengthening character and social education. Meanwhile, research [20] emphasizes the aspect of cultural adaptation of the Indian Muslim community with the local Malay culture. Research [3] and [21] only focus on the historical and management aspects of the Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque without discussing the practice of non-formal education in depth.

Previous studies have consistently demonstrated that mosque-based non-formal education contributes to character formation, religious understanding, and social cohesion. Research has also examined the role of Islamic study groups, mosque-based educational institutions, and the cultural adaptation of the Indian Muslim community in North Sumatra. Furthermore, studies on the Ghaudiyah Mosque and Jamik Mosque have primarily focused on their historical significance, organizational development, and cultural functions. While these studies provide valuable insights into mosque institutions and community life, they offer a limited understanding of the educational management processes underlying mosque-based non-formal education. This limitation reveals an important research gap. Existing studies have largely emphasized historical, cultural, and social dimensions of mosque activities, whereas the planning, implementation, and evaluation of non-formal educational programs within the Indian Muslim community remain underexplored. Moreover, empirical evidence regarding how mosque-based educational programs are managed in minority Muslim communities is still limited.

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The novelty of this study lies in its focus on the Indian Muslim community as a distinct minority Muslim group and its comprehensive examination of mosque-based non-formal education through three interconnected dimensions: planning, implementation, and evaluation. Unlike previous studies that focused primarily on historical or cultural aspects, this study investigates educational practices and management processes using a multisite phenomenological approach in two historically significant mosques, namely the Ghaudiyah Mosque and Jamik Mosque. Therefore, this study aims to describe the planning, implementation, and evaluation of non-formal education programs conducted by the Indian Muslim community at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and Jamik Mosque in Medan City. The findings are expected to contribute theoretically to the development of Islamic Religious Education studies, particularly in the field of community-based non-formal education and mosque education. Practically, the results may provide guidance for mosque administrators, community organizations, and policymakers in developing more systematic, sustainable, and community-responsive educational programs.

## **2. METHOD**

This study employed a qualitative approach using a multisite phenomenological design. A qualitative approach was chosen because the study sought to understand the meanings, experiences, and perspectives of participants regarding the implementation of mosque-based non-formal education within the Indian Muslim community of Medan. The phenomenological approach enabled the exploration of participants' lived experiences, while the multisite design facilitated cross-site analysis between two research settings to identify common patterns, contextual differences, and distinctive characteristics of educational practices [22]. The research was conducted at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and Jamik Mosque, both located within the area managed by the Medan Indian Muslim Foundation on Jalan KH. Zainul Arifin No. 200 A, Petisah Village, Medan City, North Sumatra, Indonesia. Data collection was conducted from January 2026 to April 2026. The participants consisted of foundation administrators, mosque administrators, Indian Muslim community leaders, educators, Qur'anic learning participants, members of religious study groups, and converts participating in mosque educational programs. Participants were selected using purposive sampling because they possessed direct experience and knowledge regarding the planning, implementation, and evaluation of non-formal educational activities.

Inclusion criteria included active involvement in educational programs and willingness to participate in the study [23]. The study utilized both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were obtained through interviews and observations involving key participants. Secondary data consisted of organizational documents, educational program archives, activity schedules, photographs, reports, and relevant literature related to non-formal education and the Indian Muslim community in Medan. Data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Observations focused on educational activities such as Qur'anic learning, religious study sessions, conversion guidance, and community interactions within the mosque environment. Semi-structured interviews explored participants' experiences and perceptions regarding educational planning, implementation, and evaluation. Documentation was used to

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complement and verify information obtained from observations and interviews [24]. The primary research instrument was the researcher. Supporting instruments included interview guides, observation protocols, field notes, audio recordings, and documentation checklists. These instruments were designed to ensure systematic and comprehensive data collection across research sites. To ensure trustworthiness, the study applied credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability criteria. Credibility was enhanced through prolonged engagement, triangulation of sources, methods, and time, as well as member checking with selected participants. Transferability was achieved through detailed descriptions of the research context. Dependability was ensured through systematic documentation of research procedures, while confirmability was strengthened through audit trails and data verification processes [25].

Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, consisting of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. Data from interviews, observations, and documentation were coded and categorized according to the study focus, namely, planning, implementation, and evaluation of non-formal education. Cross-site analysis was subsequently conducted to identify similarities, differences, and recurring themes across the two mosque settings [26]. Ethical principles were observed throughout the research process. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and provided voluntary consent prior to participation [27]. Confidentiality and anonymity were maintained by protecting participants' identities and ensuring that collected data were used solely for academic purposes. Participants were also given the right to withdraw from the study at any stage without consequence.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **3.1. Results**

##### **3.1.1 Non-Formal Educational Planning Organized by the Medan Muslim Indian Community at the Ghauadiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque**

The findings indicate that the planning of non-formal education in the Ghauadiyah Mosque and Jamik Mosque is conducted through a participatory process involving the administrators of the Medan Indian Muslim Foundation (YASIMM), mosque management, community leaders, and teaching staff. Educational programs are designed based on the religious and social needs of the Indian Muslim community and are implemented through structured activities such as Qur'anic learning, Tahfiz programs, religious study sessions, women's religious gatherings, and conversion guidance programs. In addition, the educational objectives, activity schedules, and selection of educators are systematically organized to ensure program continuity. Interview data from key informants further strengthen these findings. One of the mosque administrators from the Medan Indian Muslim Foundation (YASIMM) stated, *"Every educational program in the mosque is planned together with the management and community representatives. We discuss what the community needs most, especially for children, youth, and new converts. From there, we decide the schedule and the teachers involved."*

This statement confirms that educational planning is not conducted unilaterally, but through collective deliberation involving multiple stakeholders, thereby reinforcing the

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participatory nature of program design. Similarly, one of the religious educators explained, *“We do not only teach Qur’an reading, but also adjust the learning materials based on the students’ level. Some are beginners, some are already advanced. That is why planning is important so the teaching process can run smoothly.”* This illustrates that the planning process is adaptive and learner-centered, ensuring that instructional activities are aligned with participants’ diverse abilities and learning needs. A community member participating in women’s religious gatherings also added, *“The activities are very helpful for us. We are informed in advance about the schedule, and the topics are always related to our daily life as Muslim women.”* This highlights that the educational programs are relevant and contextual, reflecting the everyday experiences and needs of participants, particularly women in the community.

Meanwhile, a convert participant in the guidance program stated, *“As a new Muslim, I received special guidance. The teachers and community helped me step by step, and everything was arranged in a structured way so I could learn gradually.”* This statement supports the finding that conversion guidance programs are systematically integrated into mosque-based educational planning to accommodate the specific needs of new converts.

These interview findings collectively reinforce that mosque-based non-formal education in both the Ghaudiyah Mosque and Jamik Mosque is characterized by participatory decision-making, structured organization, and contextual learning design grounded in community needs. Thus, educational planning is not merely an administrative activity but a socially embedded process shaped by collective commitment and shared religious values. Consequently, these findings suggest that mosque-based non-formal education is not merely an incidental religious activity but a deliberately planned educational system. The participatory planning process reflects the community-oriented nature of non-formal education, where educational programs emerge from the needs and expectations of community members. Such a process enables educational activities to remain relevant, accessible, and responsive to diverse groups, including children, youth, adults, and converts.

The existence of annual schedules, regular learning activities, and designated teaching personnel further demonstrates the presence of organizational management practices that support the sustainability of educational programs. The findings also support previous studies that identify mosques as important centers of community-based Islamic education. Earlier research has shown that mosque-based educational activities contribute to strengthening religious understanding, moral development, and social cohesion among Muslim communities. Studies on the Ghaudiyah Mosque and Jamik Mosque have similarly highlighted their role in preserving Islamic values and fostering community engagement. However, while previous studies primarily focused on the historical, cultural, and social functions of mosques, the present study extends existing knowledge by demonstrating how educational programs are systematically planned through collaborative decision-making and needs-based program development.

From a theoretical perspective, the findings are consistent with Community Education Theory, which views education as a participatory process rooted in community needs and social realities. The educational programs implemented in both mosques emerged from collective deliberation and were designed to address the specific needs of the Indian

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Muslim community in Medan. Furthermore, the findings support the social function theory of mosques, which conceptualizes mosques as institutions that facilitate not only worship but also education, social integration, and community development. The learner-centered characteristics observed in program planning also reflect humanistic educational principles, whereby educational activities are adapted to participants' backgrounds, abilities, and learning needs. An interesting finding is that educational planning remains largely community-driven despite the absence of highly formalized administrative procedures. Unlike many formal educational institutions that rely on extensive bureaucratic planning mechanisms, educational programs in these mosques continue to operate effectively through collective commitment, community participation, and shared religious values. This finding suggests that social capital and community trust play an important role in sustaining non-formal educational activities within minority Muslim communities.

The findings have several implications. Theoretically, they contribute to the literature on community-based Islamic education by demonstrating how participatory planning supports the sustainability of mosque-based non-formal education. Practically, the findings may serve as a model for mosque administrators and community organizations seeking to develop educational programs that are responsive to local needs. From a policy perspective, the results highlight the importance of supporting community-based religious educational institutions as complementary components of lifelong learning and social development. Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. The research was conducted only within two mosques affiliated with the Indian Muslim community in Medan, which may limit the transferability of the findings to other socio-cultural contexts. In addition, the study focused primarily on educational management processes and did not examine the long-term educational outcomes experienced by participants. Future studies may explore the effectiveness of mosque-based non-formal education in shaping religious behavior, social cohesion, and community empowerment across different ethnic and religious communities. Comparative studies involving multiple mosque-based educational institutions in different regions may also provide a broader understanding of the sustainability and impact of community-based Islamic education.

### **3.1.2 Implementation of Non-Formal Education Organized by the Indian Muslim Community of Medan at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque**

This section presents the findings of the study on the implementation of non-formal education at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque. The findings describe the implementation process of educational programs, learning activities, participant involvement, instructional methods, supporting facilities, and implementation challenges based on interviews, observations, and documentation. The implementation of non-formal education in both mosques involves diverse groups of participants, including children, adolescents, adults, and converts. The programs implemented include Qur'anic learning (Rumah Tahfiz), public religious studies (recitation), conversion guidance programs, and women's religious gatherings (wiritan). Each program is designed according to participant characteristics. Children focus on basic Qur'anic reading and moral education, adolescents receive structured religious instruction, adults participate in thematic religious discussions,

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while converts receive gradual foundational Islamic guidance. Overall, the implementation of non-formal education is conducted regularly and systematically. The learning activities are scheduled as follows.

The implementation of non-formal education at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque is carried out on a regular and structured basis through various scheduled activities. Weekly recitation sessions are held on Tuesday nights at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and Thursday nights at the Jamik Mosque, while the Rumah Tahfiz program operates from Monday to Thursday with a focus on Qur'anic learning and memorization. In addition, women's religious gatherings (*wiritan*) are conducted every Saturday and Sunday in a relaxed learning atmosphere, and monthly community religious study programs are organized to address broader religious and social issues. Furthermore, the management also arranges annual schedules for religious roles, such as the assignment of khatib and muadzin, to ensure continuity and orderly implementation of mosque-based educational and religious activities throughout the year.

The implementation of non-formal education is characterized by strong community involvement through the Medan Indian Muslim Foundation (YASIMM), mosque administrators, and community leaders. As stated by one administrator, "*We want the mosque not only to be crowded during prayers, but also to live with religious learning activities, children's development, women's recitation, and activities for converts.*" This indicates that mosque-based education functions as a community-driven educational system rather than a purely religious ritual space. The learning process in public recitations emphasizes interaction and participation. Congregants are encouraged to ask questions and discuss real-life religious issues. An informant stated, "*If there are things that we do not understand, the ustaz immediately explains in easy-to-understand language.*" This reflects the application of *andragogical principles*, where adult learners are actively involved in learning based on experience and practical needs.

The conversion guidance program is implemented in stages, including the declaration of faith, basic worship instruction, Qur'anic reading, and gradual religious mentoring. The process is highly individualized, as stated by a convert participant, "*We are guided slowly... the important thing is that we are comfortable learning Islam first.*" This indicates a humanistic educational approach emphasizing emotional comfort, empathy, and personalized guidance. Rumah Tahfiz programs are conducted regularly from Monday to Thursday and focus on Qur'anic literacy, memorization, and character development. Teaching methods include repetition, memorization drills, individual mentoring, and group learning. One teacher stated, "*Children are not only told to memorize, but also guided to read correctly and are trained in discipline.*" In addition, contextual learning activities such as *tadabbur alam* are used to connect religious understanding with real-life experiences.

Women's religious gatherings are conducted weekly in a relaxed setting, combining religious learning, dhikr, and social interaction. A participant stated, "*We are happy to participate because we not only learn religion but also strengthen friendship.*" This indicates that mosque-based education also functions as a medium for strengthening social solidarity. The success of program implementation is supported by the availability of adequate mosque facilities as learning spaces, the existence of dedicated Tahfiz learning centers, the use of

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teaching media such as the Qur'an, Iqra' books, and audio systems, as well as strong community participation in educational activities. However, several challenges were also identified, including limited human resources, irregular participant attendance, and time constraints in teaching activities. To address these issues, the management implements several strategies, such as flexible scheduling, rotation of teachers, and the application of adaptive teaching methods in accordance with participants' conditions and learning needs.

Overall, the implementation of non-formal education at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque is structured and continuous, community-based and participatory, adaptive to learner characteristics, and supported by interactive and humanistic teaching approaches. In addition, the educational activities are oriented toward the development of religious understanding, social awareness, and character building among participants. Thus, the mosque functions not only as a place of worship but also as a comprehensive center for community-based Islamic education that plays an important role in supporting the educational and social needs of the Indian Muslim community in Medan.

### **3.1.3 Evaluation of Non-Formal Education Organized by the Indian Muslim Community of Medan at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque**

This section presents the findings related to the evaluation of non-formal education programs implemented at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque. The evaluation findings are based on interviews, observations, and documentation conducted to assess program effectiveness, participant development, and implementation challenges. The evaluation process involves stakeholders of the Indian Muslim Foundation of South Sumatra (YASIMM), mosque administrators, educators, and community members. The evaluated programs include Qur'anic learning (Rumah Tahfiz), public recitation activities, conversion guidance programs, and women's religious gatherings. Participants consist of children, adolescents, adults, and converts from the Indian Muslim community in Medan.

The evaluation of non-formal education is conducted in a simple and continuous manner through observation and informal reflection. The main indicators used include attendance levels, participant engagement, understanding of religious material, and changes in religious behavior in daily life. Evaluation is not based on formal examinations but on behavioral and participatory indicators observed during learning activities. The evaluation results show that program success is primarily assessed through behavioral changes and participant engagement rather than formal academic achievement. As stated by a YASIMM administrator, *"We see the development of the congregation from their presence, their enthusiasm for participating in the study, and how they apply worship in their daily lives."*

This indicates that evaluation emphasizes practical religious behavior and community participation. Evaluation in recitation activities occurs continuously during the learning process. Participants who actively engage in discussions and ask questions are considered to demonstrate effective learning outcomes. This reflects formative evaluation practices embedded in daily activities rather than separate formal testing systems. In the Rumah Tahfiz program, evaluation is conducted more systematically through Qur'an memorization deposits. Assessment criteria include fluency of recitation, accuracy of tajweed, and memorization consistency. As stated by an educator, *"Children are assessed*

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*from their memorization deposits. If it is not correct, we repeat it until they are able to master it.*” This indicates the use of authentic assessment based on real performance rather than written tests. Evaluation in conversion guidance programs is carried out individually and periodically. The development of converts is assessed through an understanding of Islamic teachings, worship practices, and Qur’anic literacy. One administrator explained, “*We usually evaluate converts every three months together with the ustaz to see their development and challenges.*” This demonstrates participatory and deliberative evaluation involving multiple stakeholders. The evaluation system, although functional, remains largely informal and experience-based, with two main challenges identified, namely the absence of standardized evaluation instruments and the lack of systematic documentation of evaluation results, which further contributes to irregular participant attendance that affects the continuity of assessment.

These conditions limit the consistency and objectivity of evaluation outcomes; however, program sustainability is still maintained through continuous monitoring, flexible rescheduling of activities, and personalized mentoring approaches that allow educators to adapt evaluation and guidance to the varying conditions of participants. Three main themes emerge from the evaluation findings, namely behavior-based assessment as the primary indicator of success, continuous formative evaluation embedded in daily learning activities, and a participatory and individualized evaluation approach. These themes indicate that the evaluation process is more developmental in nature, focusing on ongoing improvement and participant growth rather than summative or standardized assessment outcomes. Overall, the evaluation of non-formal education at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque is characterized by a flexible, behavior-oriented, and participatory system. Although the evaluation is still simple and lacks standardized instruments, it effectively supports continuous program improvement and contributes to sustaining mosque-based educational activities within the Indian Muslim community in Medan.

## **3.2 Discussion**

### **3.2.1 Non-Formal Educational Planning Organized by the Medan Muslim Indian Community at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque**

The findings of this study indicate that non-formal educational planning in the Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque is conducted through a participatory and needs-based process involving the Medan Indian Muslim Foundation (YASIMM), mosque administrators, community leaders, and teaching staff. The planning process produces structured educational programs such as Qur’anic learning, Tahfiz programs, women’s religious gatherings, conversion guidance, and routine religious studies. These programs are systematically organized through scheduled activities, defined learning objectives, and the assignment of qualified educators to ensure continuity and sustainability. The statement shows that the planning process is carried out in a participatory manner and based on the needs of the community. These findings are in accordance with the theory of non-formal education planning, which states that planning is the process of setting goals, preparing programs, organizing resources, and determining strategies to achieve educational goals effectively and efficiently [28]. From an education management perspective, [29] explains

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that planning is a basic management function that determines the direction of the organization through the determination of goals and implementation steps. This theory can be seen in the preparation of study programs, conversion coaching, Rumah Tahfiz, wiritan of women, and the recitation of the Indian Muslim community which is prepared on a scheduled and continuous basis. The results show that mosque-based non-formal education in both locations is not an incidental religious activity but a structured educational system developed through collective deliberation. The participatory planning mechanism reflects how educational programs are directly derived from the real needs of the Indian Muslim community in Medan, including children, youth, adults, and converts.

This participatory model enhances relevance and accessibility because it allows educational content to be adjusted according to learners' backgrounds and levels of understanding. The structured scheduling system (daily, weekly, and monthly activities) further indicates that the educational programs are intentionally designed to ensure continuity and long-term community engagement. Thus, the non-formal education planning carried out by YASIMM is a form of actualization of the function of the mosque as a center for the development of the Islamic community as a whole. The findings of this study are in line with the research [30], which states that the Ghaudiyah Mosque has an important role as a center of Islamic education for the Indian Muslim community in the city of Medan through various religious activities that function to internalize Islamic values in the community. Research [14] It also explained that mosques have a strategic function as a community-based non-formal education center because they are able to reach various levels of society flexibly and inclusively. In addition, the research [9] shows that mosque-based non-formal education contributes to building religious values and strengthening the social solidarity of Muslim communities.

However, this study has novelty because it not only discusses the function of mosques as a center for internalizing Islamic values, but also examines in depth the process of non-formal education planning carried out in a systematic, participatory, and sustainable manner in the Indian Muslim community in the city of Medan. These findings are consistent with previous research that highlights mosques as centers of Islamic non-formal education, contributing to religious understanding and social cohesion. Studies have shown that mosque-based learning activities play an important role in strengthening Islamic values and community engagement. However, this study extends previous research by demonstrating that mosque-based education is not only functional in terms of religious transmission but also systematically planned through participatory governance involving multiple stakeholders. Unlike earlier studies that focused mainly on the cultural or social role of mosques, this research provides deeper insight into the planning mechanism as an organized educational management system. The findings show that learning planning is carried out by considering the psychological conditions and abilities of students. If associated with humanistic learning theory [31] The ongoing learning process shows an approach *learner centered*, which is learning that is centered on the needs and experiences of students.

Teachers not only deliver material in general, but also adapt learning methods to the participants' backgrounds. Therefore, non-formal education at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque shows a humanistic, flexible, and contextual learning character. The

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findings are strongly aligned with Community Education Theory, which emphasizes that education should emerge from community needs and collective participation. The planning process in both mosques reflects this principle, as programs are designed based on deliberation and contextual community demands. In addition, the findings support the social function theory of mosques, which positions mosques not only as places of worship but also as centers for education, social integration, and community development. Furthermore, the learner-centered approach observed in the planning process reflects humanistic education theory, where learning is adapted to the learners' needs, abilities, and experiences.

These findings are also supported by research [19], which explains that Islamic non-formal education, such as taklim assemblies and mosque recitation, is adaptive to the social conditions of the community and is able to be an effective medium of religious development for various age groups. Research [32] in the city of Medan also shows that mosque-based non-formal education has a great contribution in shaping morals and improving the religious understanding of the community, especially the younger generation. The purpose of non-formal education in the two mosques is also clearly formulated, namely to revive the function of the mosque as a center of religious activities, increase public understanding of Islamic teachings, foster worship practices, and form the character of society based on Islamic values. An interesting finding is that despite the absence of highly formalized bureaucratic systems, educational planning remains effective and sustainable. This may be explained by the strong presence of social capital, religious commitment, and community trust within the Indian Muslim community in Medan.

The effectiveness of informal coordination mechanisms suggests that collective values and shared religious identity can function as strong organizational drivers, compensating for limited administrative formalization. The statement shows that non-formal education in both mosques is not only oriented to the cognitive aspect, but also to the affective and psychomotor aspects. In the perspective of Islamic education, the purpose of education is not only to transfer knowledge but also to form morals, foster spirituality, and accustom students to practice Islamic values in daily life. In addition, non-formal education planning is also seen in the systematic preparation of activity schedules, ranging from daily, weekly, to monthly activities. The Rumah Tahfiz programme is carried out daily, routine recitation and conversion development is carried out weekly, while the Indian Muslim community study is carried out monthly.

The schedule of the khatib and muadzin is even arranged for a full year. This condition shows that there is a fairly good organizational management in supporting the sustainability of educational activities and community development. In the aspect of educators, planning is carried out by involving ustaz and community leaders who have religious competence. Teachers of conversion coaching and general studies are carried out alternately so that participants get a variety of materials and learning approaches. Meanwhile, Rumah Tahfiz has special teaching staff who guide participants intensively. These findings are in accordance with the theory of non-formal education management, which emphasizes the importance of the competence of educators as the main factor for the success of educational programs. Overall, the planning of non-formal education in the

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Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque shows that there is a management system that is quite mature, participatory, and based on the needs of the community.

The planning carried out is not only administrative, but also reflects real efforts in building an inclusive, contextual, and sustainable mosque-based Islamic education system. Thus, the non-formal education that is held not only serves to increase the understanding of the community's religion, but also contributes to building the social and spiritual life of the Indian Muslim community in the city of Medan. This study is limited to two mosques within the Indian Muslim community in Medan. Therefore, the findings may not fully represent other mosque-based educational systems in different socio-cultural or geographical contexts. In addition, the study focuses on planning processes and does not examine long-term learning outcomes or behavioral impacts on participants. Future research is recommended to examine the effectiveness and impact of mosque-based non-formal education on participants' religious behavior, social cohesion, and community empowerment. Comparative studies across different ethnic or regional mosque communities would also enrich understanding of how participatory educational planning functions in diverse contexts. In addition, quantitative or mixed-method studies could be conducted to measure learning outcomes and program effectiveness more comprehensively.

### **3.2.2 Implementation of Non-Formal Education Organized by the Indian Muslim Community of Medan at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque**

The findings of this study show that the implementation of non-formal education at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque is conducted in a structured, participatory, and continuous manner. The educational programs covering Qur'anic learning, Rumah Tahfiz, conversion guidance, women's religious gatherings, and public recitation are implemented through community-based management involving YASIMM, mosque administrators, educators, and community members. These programs function not only as religious instruction but also as a means of spiritual development, social interaction, and character building within the Indian Muslim community in Medan. The implementation of non-formal education in these two mosques is in line with the theory of non-formal education put forward by [33] that non-formal education is any educational activity that is organized outside the formal school system, that aims to meet the learning needs of certain communities.

In the context of this study, educational activities at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque show that there is a flexible, open, and adaptable learning process to the needs of the Indian Muslim community in Medan City. Education is not limited by the age, level of education, or social background of students, but takes place comprehensively for children, adolescents, adults, and converts. The results indicate that mosque-based education functions as a comprehensive community learning system rather than a conventional religious activity. The participatory implementation reflects strong community ownership, where educational activities emerge from collective needs and shared religious values. The flexibility of learning arrangements accommodating children, youth, adults, and converts demonstrates that non-formal education in this context is responsive to diverse learner characteristics. This effectiveness is largely driven by strong social cohesion, religious commitment, and trust

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within the community, which allows educational programs to operate even without rigid bureaucratic structures. The interactive learning process in recitations and individualized mentoring for converts further shows that education is designed to be contextual, empathetic, and learner-centered.

The statement shows that the implementation of non-formal education is directed to revive the function of the mosque as a center for the development of the people. These findings are in line with research [34], which explains that mosques in Indonesia have developed into non-formal educational spaces that are dynamic in shaping religious character and strengthening the social life of the community. In public recitation activities, the implementation of learning takes place regularly every Tuesday night at the Ghadiyah Mosque and Thursday night at the Jamik Mosque. The material presented includes faith, fiqh, morals, and daily life issues related to Islamic values. In its implementation, the lecture method is the main method, but it is combined with discussions, questions and answers so that the learning process takes place more interactively. The implementation of the study shows the application of the principles of adult education (*Andragogy*) developed by Malcolm Knowles. Knowles explains that adults learn based on experience, practical needs, and active involvement in the learning process.

These findings are consistent with previous studies, which state that mosques function as centers of Islamic education and social development. Earlier research has emphasized the role of mosques in strengthening religious understanding and community cohesion. However, this study extends previous findings by showing that mosque-based education is not only functional but also systematically organized through participatory governance and structured educational planning. Unlike earlier studies that mainly highlight the cultural or symbolic role of mosques, this research provides empirical evidence of how educational programs are operationalized through scheduled activities, differentiated learning models, and multi-stakeholder involvement. This condition shows that the implementation of non-formal education in both mosques emphasizes a communicative approach rather than a formal one-way learning. These findings reinforce the research [17], which states that mosques have a strategic function as a non-formal education center that is able to build social interaction and religious development of the community in a sustainable manner.

However, this study shows novelty in the form of participatory and contextual educational interaction between teachers and worshippers. In the conversion development program, the implementation of non-formal education takes place through several stages, starting from the administrative process, the pronunciation of the shahada, and further coaching on the basics of Islamic teachings. The material taught includes faith, worship practices, reading the Qur'an, and a basic understanding of the life of a Muslim. The implementation of conversion coaching shows that there is a humanist and individualized approach to education. Teachers not only act as material presenters but also as spiritual and social companions for converts. The approach is in accordance with Carl Rogers' humanistic education theory, which emphasizes the importance of emotional comfort, empathy, and interpersonal relationships in the learning process.

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The findings strongly support Non-Formal Education Theory, which emphasizes flexible, community-based learning outside formal schooling systems. The implementation also aligns with Community Education Theory, where education emerges from local needs and collective participation. Furthermore, the role of mosques as educational centers supports Azyumardi Azra's theory of mosque functions, which conceptualizes mosques as institutions for worship, education, and social transformation. The learner-centered approach observed in teaching practices also reflects humanistic education theory (Carl Rogers), particularly in conversion guidance programs where empathy, emotional support, and individualized mentoring are emphasized. These findings reinforce the research [15], which explains that religious activities at the Ghadiyah Mosque play a role in internalizing Islamic values. However, this study shows that the internalization of Islamic values is also carried out through a continuous process of social and spiritual assistance to converts.

On the other hand, the implementation of Rumah Tahfiz activities shows that non-formal education in both mosques is also oriented towards fostering the younger generation. This activity is carried out every Monday to Thursday, with the main focus on learning to read and memorize the Qur'an. Learning is carried out in stages, starting from the introduction of hijaiyah letters, tahsin, to the memorization of the Qur'an.

The implementation of Rumah Tahfiz activities shows the application of varied and student-centered learning methods. Teachers use memorization methods, repetition of readings, hands-on practice, and individual and small group guidance. This approach shows that learning is not only oriented to the number of memorization, but also to the quality of reading and the development of students' abilities. A notable finding is that despite limited formal administrative structures and resource constraints, the educational programs remain stable and sustainable. This can be explained by the strong presence of social capital, religious motivation, and community trust, which substitute for formal institutional mechanisms. Another interesting finding is the effectiveness of informal coordination in maintaining program continuity. This suggests that in community-based religious education, relational governance can be as effective as formal organizational systems in ensuring sustainability. The findings are in accordance with the concept of Islamic education [35], which states that Islamic education not only aims to transfer knowledge but also to shape the manners and character of students. In this context, the activities of the Tahfiz House not only form the ability to read and memorize the Qur'an, but also build discipline, responsibility, and love for the Qur'an. In addition to classroom learning, additional activities such as *Tadabbur Alam*. It is also carried out as part of the educational process. Children are invited to understand the greatness of Allah through direct observation of the surrounding environment. This approach shows the integration between textual learning and contextual experiences in everyday life. These findings reinforce the research [14], which states that mosque-based education has an important role in community empowerment and the development of the younger generation. However, this study shows that empowerment is carried out through a religious, contextual, and social experience-based learning approach of students.

Meanwhile, the implementation of wiritan and women's recitation shows that non-formal education in both mosques also targets women's groups as an important part of

community development. This activity is carried out regularly every Saturday afternoon and Sunday with a relaxed and family atmosphere. This study provides several implications theoretically, it enriches non-formal education theory by demonstrating how participatory and faith-based community structures sustain educational continuity in minority Muslim communities; practically, mosque administrators can adopt structured participatory planning and learner-centered approaches to enhance program effectiveness and inclusivity; and from a policy perspective, local governments and religious authorities are encouraged to recognize mosque-based education as an integral part of lifelong learning and to provide institutional support to ensure its sustainability. This condition shows that mosque-based non-formal education not only functions as a means of knowledge transfer, but also as a medium to strengthen community social solidarity. If associated with Émile Durkheim's theory of functionalism, educational activities in mosques function to maintain social integration, solidarity, and the inheritance of collective values in society. In addition to the implementation of these programs, the success of non-formal education at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque is also supported by adequate facilities and infrastructure.

The mosque functions as a learning center, while the Tahfiz House is used specifically for the development of children. The use of learning media such as the Qur'an, Iqra' books, whiteboards, and *sound systems* also helps the learning process run smoothly. However, in its implementation, there are still several obstacles, such as limited human resources, instability of participant attendance, and limited teaching time. Nevertheless, the management still strives to maintain the continuity of activities through flexible scheduling, change of ustaz, and adjustment of learning methods according to the conditions of students. Overall, the implementation of non-formal education at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque shows that there is a religious coaching system that runs quite well, is structured, and sustainable. The activities carried out not only function as a means of delivering religious knowledge, but also as a medium for social, spiritual, and strengthening the Islamic identity of the Indian Muslim community in the city of Medan. Thus, the mosque really functions as a community-based Islamic education center that is able to answer the religious and social needs of the community at large.

This study is limited to two mosques within the Indian Muslim community in Medan, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other cultural or religious contexts. In addition, the study focuses primarily on implementation processes and does not measure long-term educational outcomes such as behavioral change or academic achievement of participants. Future research should examine the long-term impact of mosque-based non-formal education on religious behavior, social cohesion, and community empowerment. Comparative studies across different ethnic and regional mosque communities are also needed to deepen understanding of how socio-cultural context influences non-formal education systems. In addition, quantitative or mixed-method approaches could be used to measure learning effectiveness and program impact more comprehensively.

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### **3.2.3 Evaluation of Non-Formal Education Organized by the Indian Muslim Community of Medan at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque**

Evaluation is an important component in the implementation of non-formal education because it serves to determine the success rate of the program, identify obstacles, and formulate follow-up improvements. In the context of non-formal education at the Ghaudiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque, the evaluation was carried out as a reflection process on the implementation of educational programs organized by the Indian Muslim Foundation of South Sumatra (YASIMM). Although the evaluation carried out is still simple and based on field experience, the process still has a strategic role in maintaining the sustainability of mosque-based education programs. Based on the results of the research, the evaluation was carried out through direct observation of the implementation of activities and the development of students. The indicators used include the level of attendance, congregation participation, material understanding, and changes in religious behavior in daily life. These findings are in line with the concept of non-formal education evaluation put forward by [36] that evaluation in non-formal education is not only oriented to cognitive learning outcomes, but also to changes in the attitudes, skills, and behaviors of participants in real life.

In addition, [37] The training evaluation model also emphasizes four levels of evaluation, namely reaction, learning, behavior, and result, where, in the context of this research, it is more dominant at the behavior level. In routine recitation activities, evaluation is carried out through observation of the activeness of the congregation's activity in participating in activities. Pilgrims who actively ask questions and discuss show that the learning process is effective. The results of the observations show that the pilgrims are not only passive, but also begin to implement the values learned in their daily lives. This indicates that formative evaluation takes place naturally during the learning process. If associated with the theory of learning evaluation, this condition is in accordance with the formative evaluation proposed by Scriven, which is an evaluation carried out during the learning process to improve and improve the quality of the program. Evaluation in non-formal education tends to be flexible and not tied to formal test standards as in school education. In the Rumah Tahfiz program, evaluation is carried out in a more structured manner through the deposit of memorization of the Qur'an.

The teacher assesses the participants' abilities based on the fluency of reading, the accuracy of tajweed, and the consistency of memorization. According to [35], Islamic education emphasizes the formation of adab and praxis skills, so that evaluation must reflect the real abilities of students. In the conversion coaching program, evaluation is carried out personally and continuously. The teacher assesses the development of converts based on basic understanding of Islam, worship practices, and the ability to read the Qur'an. This shows that evaluation is carried out in a participatory and deliberation-based manner. This model is in line with participatory management theory, which emphasizes the involvement of various parties in the evaluation process to produce more objective decisions. However, the results of the study show that the evaluation system still has some limitations, such as the absence of a standard evaluation instrument and the systematic documentation of

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evaluation results. This condition causes evaluation to still be traditional and based on teacher experience.

These findings are in line with research [38], which states that one of the main challenges of non-formal education is the weak evaluation system and the limitation of human resources in conducting systematic program assessments. In addition, [7] It also emphasized that non-formal education often faces obstacles in terms of management and evaluation due to its flexible and community-based nature. In addition to the limitations of the evaluation system, the instability of the presence of participants is also a challenge in the evaluation process, especially in the conversion program and public recitation. Work, economy, and distance factors are the causes of inconsistent attendance. This has an impact on the difficulty of measuring participants' development in an ongoing manner.

Nevertheless, the manager still follows up through a personal coaching approach, repetition of materials, and rescheduling activities. In the perspective of the theory of the controlling function in education management, according to George R. Terry, these actions show that there are continuous monitoring and improvement efforts to maintain the effectiveness of the program. Overall, the evaluation of non-formal education at the Ghadiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque shows that although it is still simple, the evaluation process is still ongoing and oriented towards program improvement. Evaluation is carried out through observation, mentoring, and deliberation involving administrators, teachers, and the community. Thus, the evaluation contributes to maintaining the sustainability of mosque-based non-formal education as a means of religious development and strengthening the character of the Indian Muslim community in Medan City.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

This study aimed to explore the implementation of mosque-based non-formal education within the Indian Muslim community in Medan City, focusing on how planning, implementation, and evaluation processes are organized within community-based educational settings. The objective was to understand how mosques function as educational institutions in strengthening religious and social development at the local level. The findings reveal that non-formal education in the Ghadiyah Mosque and the Jamik Mosque is implemented through a structured yet flexible system involving participatory planning, community-based implementation, and continuous but informal evaluation. The educational programs, including Qur'anic learning, conversion guidance, women's religious gatherings, and Tahfiz activities, are designed based on community needs and carried out through collaborative engagement between YASIMM, mosque administrators, educators, and community members. In relation to the research question, the study confirms that mosque-based non-formal education plays a significant role in strengthening religious understanding, social cohesion, and community identity among the Indian Muslim population in Medan.

The mosque functions not only as a place of worship but also as a sustainable center for education and community development. From a theoretical perspective, the study contributes to Community Education Theory and non-formal education literature by demonstrating how participatory, faith-based educational systems can operate effectively outside formal institutional structures. It also reinforces the concept of mosques as

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multifunctional institutions that integrate religious, educational, and social functions within society. Practically, the findings suggest that mosque administrators and community leaders can strengthen educational outcomes by applying participatory planning, learner-centered approaches, and flexible program management. At the policy level, the study highlights the importance of recognizing mosque-based education as part of lifelong learning systems that deserve institutional support. However, this study is limited to two mosques in Medan and relies primarily on qualitative descriptive data, which limits the generalizability and does not include quantitative measurement of program effectiveness. Therefore, future research is encouraged to expand the geographical scope and employ mixed-method approaches to provide more comprehensive and measurable evaluations of mosque-based non-formal education.

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