

Iskandar Tsani¹, Sufirmansyah²

EVALUATING THE CONTRIBUTION OF MOSQUE PROGRAMS TO MUSLIM RELIGIOSITY IN KEDIRI: A Goal-Free Evaluation of Religious, Social, and Spiritual Outcomes

^{1,2}UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri, Indonesia

Email: iskandartsani64@uinkediri.ac.id¹

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Abstract: *The role of mosques in enhancing community religiosity faces challenges due to the dominance of ritual activities and the growing influence of social media in shaping religious preferences. Previous studies have largely evaluated programmes based on pre-defined objectives and have therefore not fully revealed the actual impacts, including unintended consequences, on religiosity. This study aims to analyse the religiosity of the community in Kediri City, the actual contribution of mosque programmes, and strategies for strengthening them. The research employs a mixed-methods approach with a convergent design based on Goal-Free Evaluation (GFE), which was selected to identify actual outcomes without being constrained by pre-defined programme objectives. Quantitative data were obtained from 399 respondents using Mujani's dimensions of religiosity, whilst qualitative data were obtained through interviews, observation and documentation. The results show that 71.43 per cent of the community exhibit high religiosity, with mosques contributing 40.60 per cent to faith, 62.41 per cent to worship, 61.65 per cent to social capital, and 60.40 per cent to Islamism. Qualitatively, the strengthening of the mosque's role is achieved through programme diversification, the development of institutional units, and adaptation to community needs. This study contributes to the development of outcome-based evaluation in mosque management and the study of religiosity.*

Keywords: *Goal-Free Evaluation; Mosque Management; Muslim Religiosity; Religious Institutions; Kediri City*

INTRODUCTION

Religiousness is one of the key dimensions of life in Muslim societies, as it is not only linked to religious beliefs and practices, but is also reflected in social relationships, values and everyday behaviour (Yang & McPhail, 2023);(Hill & Pargament, 2003);(Saroglou, 2011). Various studies show that religiosity is a multidimensional construct. (Glock & Stark, 1965) For example, identifying religiosity through knowledge, feelings and behaviour. Fukuyama (1961) dividing it into cognitive, cultural, belief-based and contemplative dimensions. (Stark & Glock, 1968) to develop a concept of religiosity that encompasses the dimensions of belief, ritual practice, experience, knowledge and social consequences. Meanwhile, (Al-Menayes, 2016) emphasises the aspects of faith, devotion, community involvement, knowledge and religious orientation. (El-Menouar, 2014) also identifies ideological, ritualistic, contemplative, experiential and consequential dimensions. The diversity of these concepts demonstrates that religiosity cannot be understood solely through the intensity of ritual worship. In the context of Indonesian Muslim society, the concept of religiosity (Mujani, 2007) It is relevant because it operationalises religiosity through four dimensions, namely faith, worship, social capital and Islamism. This framework allows religiosity to be understood as both a religious and a social phenomenon, as well as a behavioural one.

Previous research trends reveal three main trends, namely the measurement of religiosity and the functions of mosques (Botchwey, 2007);(Tarpeh & Hustedde, 2021);(Khafagy, 2020), and digital religious engagement. Research into religiosity has developed various instruments to measure beliefs, practices, experiences, knowledge and social consequences, but generally focuses on the level or characteristics of individual religiosity, rather than on the institutions or programmes that contribute to its formation. In the context of mosques, research shows that mosques ideally function as centres for worship, Islamic education, social interaction and community empowerment (Nurdiana et al., 2022);(Yosepin & Husin, 2018), However, in the city of Kediri, activities still tend to be centred on rituals and ceremonial events (Putri et al., 2024);(Dariyanto, 2024). Meanwhile, developments in social media (Aprillia et al., 2023);(Khoir et al., 2026), As highlighted by the Saff and GP Ansor studies in Kediri City, these initiatives have broadened public access to Islamic studies and enabled people to choose religious content according to their preferences (Alamin, 2020);(Firdaus & Kolil, 2023). This situation places mosques within an increasingly competitive and dynamic religious landscape.

The convergence of these three trends reveals conceptual and empirical gaps. Research on religiosity, mosques and digital religious education (Aprilia & Sufirmansyah, 2025) still tend to operate in isolation, and therefore have not yet shed much light on the actual contribution of mosque programmes to the multidimensional religiosity of urban Muslim communities. In particular, there is a lack of research identifying the extent to which mosque programmes contribute to the dimensions of faith, worship, social capital and Islamism. Consequently, evaluation must go beyond merely assessing the existence of programmes or the achievement of their formal objectives; it must also uncover the actual outcomes experienced by the community, including any unintended impacts. This

perspective is important for understanding the actual effectiveness of mosques in strengthening the community's religious devotion amidst changing patterns of religious practice and increasing access to sources of Islamic learning via digital media.

In addition to conceptual gaps, there are methodological gaps in the evaluation of mosque programmes. Conventional, objective-based evaluations tend to assess success based on the achievement of pre-set targets, thereby potentially overlooking unplanned benefits, indirect impacts, and outcomes arising from community experiences. In fact, mosque programmes can generate broader impacts, such as an increase in religious knowledge, social networks, solidarity and congregational engagement. Therefore, Goal-Free Evaluation (GFE) is relevant as it focuses on identifying the actual outcomes of the programme without limiting the evaluation to pre-defined formal objectives (B. W. Youker et al., 2017). This approach enables the evaluation to capture the outcomes as perceived by the community whilst reducing goal-related tunnel vision. In the context of this study, GFE is integrated with the concept of multidimensional religiosity (Mujani, 2007) to identify the actual contribution of mosque programmes to the dimensions of faith, worship, social capital and Islamism, rather than merely assessing the number of activities, the frequency with which they are held, or the level of congregation participation.

Some previous studies have shown that religiosity contributes to socio-religious behaviour (Aprilia et al., 2022; Suprihati et al., 2021); stakeholder involvement plays a role in strengthening religious knowledge and skills and enhancing religious commitment (Aprilia & Munifah, 2022); (Noviani et al., 2023); (Aprilia, 2025), and mosques play a vital role in improving the welfare and religious life of the community (Hamdan et al., 2024). Nevertheless, these studies have not yet adequately linked multidimensional religiosity to evaluations of the actual outcomes of mosque programmes, particularly in the context of urban communities that have widespread access to various sources of religious learning via digital media. This situation highlights an empirical and contextual gap, particularly in the city of Kediri.

In light of this gap, this study aims to analyse the religiosity of the Muslim community in Kediri City, identify the actual contribution of mosque programmes to the dimensions of faith, worship, social capital and Islamism, and explore strategies for strengthening the role of mosques in enhancing community religiosity. This study makes a contribution in three aspects. Theoretically, the study links the concept of multidimensional religiosity with the evaluation of religious institutions. Methodologically, the study expands the application of the GFE in the evaluation of mosque programmes through the integration of quantitative measures of religiosity and qualitative exploration of community experiences. In practical terms, the research provides an empirical basis for mosque administrators to develop programmes that are more adaptive, inclusive and outcome-oriented, thereby enabling mosques to maintain their relevance as centres for Islamic learning, the strengthening of social life, and the enhancement of community religiosity amidst the transformation of religious practices in urban communities.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a mixed-methods approach using a convergent design (Aprilia et al., 2025);(Creswell, 2014). A descriptive quantitative approach was used to measure the level of religiosity among the Muslim community in Kediri City and the actual contribution of mosque programmes to the dimensions of religiosity, whilst a qualitative approach was used to explore the community's experiences, the outcomes of mosque activities, and strategies for strengthening the role of mosques through interviews, observation and documentation (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The research was conducted at four mosques: the Grand Mosque of Kediri City, the Baiturrahman Mosque in Mojoroto, the Al-Ikhlash Mosque in Dandangan, and the Al-Falah Grand Mosque within an Islamic boarding school complex. The selection of locations was based on their representativeness of the sub-district, the diversity of Islamic activities, and their proximity to residential areas and public facilities. The four mosques served as the units of institutional analysis, whilst the Muslim community of Kediri served as the unit of analysis for religiosity and the actual contribution of the mosque programmes.

The study population comprised 275,285 Muslims (Kediri, 2024) spread across the sub-districts of Mojoroto, Kota and Pesantren. The quantitative sample was determined using proportionate random sampling and calculated using the Slovin formula at a 5 per cent margin of error, resulting in 399 respondents. The sample distribution comprised 160 respondents from Mojoroto Sub-district (40.04 per cent), 114 respondents from Kota Sub-district (28.56 per cent), and 125 respondents from Pesantren Sub-district (31.40 per cent). Quantitative data were collected using a 1–5 Likert-scale questionnaire adapted from the concept of religiosity (Mujani, 2007), comprising four dimensions: faith, worship, social capital, and Islamism. Before use, the instrument was assessed through expert judgement, a construct validity test using item-total correlation, and a reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha. The test results showed that all 14 items of the instrument met the criteria for validity and reliability; consequently, the instrument was deemed suitable for measuring the religiosity of the Muslim community in Kediri City.

Informants were selected using purposive sampling, based on the criteria of being involved in or understanding the management of mosque programmes, having experience of participating in activities, and being willing to provide in-depth information. Informants included committee members/takmir, activity organisers, and worshippers at the four mosques under study. Interviews were conducted in stages until data saturation was achieved. Observations focused on programme implementation, congregational involvement, socio-religious interactions, and factors that support or hinder the mosque's contribution. Documentation covered the management structure, activity schedules, imams and khatibs, work programmes, and the mosque's digital footprint, including activity on YouTube and Instagram.

Table 1. Distribution of Research Samples by Sub-district

No.	District	Sample Size	Proportion
1.	Mojoroto	160	40,04%

2.	Kota	114	28,56%
3.	Pesantren	125	31,40%
Total		399	100%

Qualitative data was collected through in-depth interviews, observation and documentation. Informants were selected on a purposive basis, comprising mosque administrators/caretakers, organisers of religious activities, and members of the community/congregation, based on the following criteria: being involved in or understanding the management of mosque programmes, having experience of participating in activities, and being willing to provide in-depth information. Informants were selected on a purposive basis based on the criteria of being involved in or understanding the management of mosque programmes, having experience of participating in activities, and being willing to provide in-depth information. Informants included mosque committee members, activity organisers, and worshippers at the four mosques under study. Interviews were conducted in stages until data saturation was achieved.

Observations focused on programme implementation, worshipper engagement, socio-religious interactions, and factors that supported or hindered the mosques' contributions. Documentation covered the management structure, activity schedules, imams and khatibs, work programmes, and the mosques' digital footprint, including activity on YouTube and Instagram. Quantitative data were analysed descriptively to characterise religiosity and the actual contributions of the mosques based on the concept (Mujani, 2007);(Creswell, 2014), Meanwhile, qualitative data were analysed using the Miles-Huberman-Saldana interactive model through data condensation, data presentation, and the drawing and verification of conclusions (Miles et al., 2013).

Data integration is carried out at the interpretation stage in accordance with the characteristics of convergent design (Creswell, 2014). The quantitative results were used to demonstrate the level of religiosity and the actual contributions of mosques across the dimensions of faith, worship, social capital and Islamism, whilst the qualitative findings explained why and how these contributions arose. The two sets of findings were compared to identify confirmation, discrepancies or complementary findings. The validity of the qualitative data was examined through inter-method, inter-source and intra-method triangulation by comparing data from interviews, observations and documentation, as well as the perspectives of mosque administrators and the community (Delamont, 2002). Furthermore, the entire analysis process is framed within the Goal-Free Evaluation (GFE) perspective to identify the actual outcomes of the mosque programme without limiting the evaluation to pre-defined formal objectives. Thus, quantitative data provide measurable evidence of the programme's contribution to the dimension of religiosity, whilst qualitative data elucidate the experiences, processes and strategies underpinning the emergence of these outcomes.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Religiosity of the Muslim Community in Kediri City

Religiousness was measured using a Google Forms questionnaire comprising 14 statements on a 1–5 Likert scale, administered to 399 respondents selected proportionally from the Mojoroto sub-district, the city, and Islamic boarding schools. All respondents completed the questionnaire in full. The characteristics of the respondents by place of residence, gender, age, and occupation are presented in the following figure.

Figure 1. Distribution of Respondents' Places of Residence

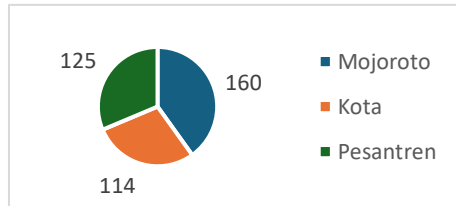


Figure 1 shows that 160 respondents were from Mojoroto Sub-district, 114 from Kota Sub-district, and 125 from Pesantren Sub-district.

Figure 2. Gender of Respondents

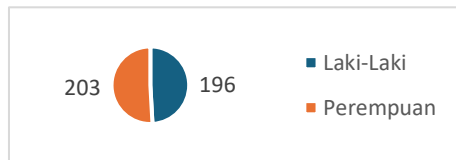


Figure 2 shows that the respondents comprised 196 men and 203 women.

Figure 3. Age Range of Respondents

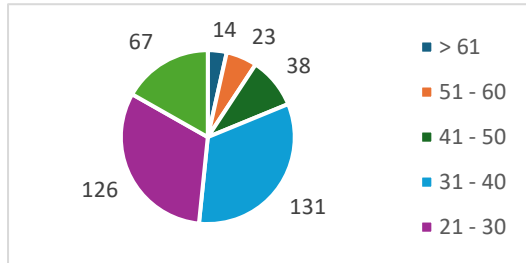


Figure 3 shows that the respondents comprised six age groups, namely those aged under 20 (67 people), 21–30 (126), 31–40 (131), 41–50 (38), 51–60 (23), and over 61 (14).

Figure 4. Respondents' Occupations

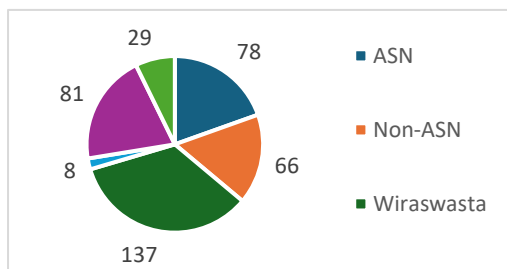


Figure 4 shows that the respondents comprised civil servants (78), non-civil servants (66), self-employed individuals (137), pensioners (8), school pupils and university students (81), and those in other occupations (29).

Religiousness categories are determined based on the following average score intervals.

Table 2. Category: Religiosity

Average	Category
4,21 – 5,00	Very High
3,41 – 4,20	Tall
2,61 – 3,40	Currently
1,81 – 2,60	Low
1,00 – 1,80	Very low

Based on these categories (Table 2), the distribution of religiosity amongst the Muslim community in Kediri City is as follows.

Table 3. The Distribution of Religiosity amongst the Muslim Community in Kediri City

No.	Average	Total	Category	Percentage
1	4,21 – 5,00	81	Very High	20,3%
2	3,41 – 4,20	285	Tall	71,43%
3	2,61 – 3,40	33	Currently	8,27%
4	1,81 – 2,60	0	Low	0%
5	1,00 – 1,80	0	Very low	0%
Total		399		100%

Table 3 shows that 285 respondents (71.43 per cent) had a high level of religiosity, 81 respondents (20.30 per cent) had a very high level, and 33 respondents (8.27 per cent) had a moderate level. There were no respondents in the low or very low categories. These findings indicate that the religiosity of the Muslim community in Kediri City is generally in the high category. This situation can be understood within the context of Kediri's religious environment, which is characterised by the presence of Islamic boarding schools, mosques, religious study groups, and a network of religious leaders who support the process of socialisation and the instilling of religious values (Aprillia et al., 2023);(Salsabila & Negoro, 2025);(Suduro & Nuruddin, 2025). However, religiosity is shaped not only by mosques, but also by the beliefs and commitment of individuals, families, education, Islamic boarding schools, the social environment, and socio-economic conditions (Khoir et al., 2026);(Ningrum et al., 2025);(Bintari, 2022).

From the perspective of Goal-Free Evaluation (GFE), these findings should not simply be interpreted as evidence of the mosque programme's success, but must be viewed in the light of the actual outcomes that emerge in the lives of the community (B. Youker & Ingraham, 2014);(B. W. Youker et al., 2016);(B. W. Youker, 2019);(B. Youker & Ballard, 2024). The results of interviews and observations indicate that the mosque's contribution

is primarily channelled through three mechanisms: the internalisation of religious knowledge, the cultivation of worship practices, and the formation of socio-religious networks. Activities such as religious study sessions, Islamic seminars, dhikr, recitation of the Qur'an, and social activities provide a space for the community to acquire knowledge, interact, and develop religious habits. These findings are consistent with research showing that active mosque management, structured da'wah programmes, and the nurturing of the younger generation can enhance congregational participation, ritual practice, and religious identity (Subakir et al., 2024);(Amatullah & Triatmo, 2023);(Hamdan et al., 2024);(Waluyo & Siswadi, 2025). Thus, the mechanism by which mosques contribute can be understood through the following sequence: religious programmes → learning and interaction → habit formation → internalisation of values → strengthening of religious devotion.

These contributions also extend to the social and psychological spheres. Interactions within mosque activities can strengthen solidarity, compassion, religious identity and the community's social capital, including through the practice of zakat, waqf and social activities (Aprilia & Munifah, 2022);(Suprihati et al., 2021);(Safitri et al., 2024). Religious communities can also be a source of social support and a sense of purpose in life, which are linked to psychological well-being (Subakir et al., 2024);(Lianda & Himawan, 2022);(Nuruddaroini et al., 2024). However, the strengthening of religious identity must be accompanied by the principle of inclusivity so that it does not develop into social exclusivism (Rusmiati, 2023). Furthermore, a high level of religiosity does not imply uniformity in religious practices and understanding, as how people express their faith remain diverse (Isan et al., 2024);(Jayanegara et al., 2023).

Thus, the quantitative result of 71.43 per cent indicating high religiosity, together with the qualitative findings, suggests that mosques contribute by providing spaces for learning, fostering the practice of worship, facilitating social interaction, and strengthening religious identity. However, this contribution is not singular in nature, as religiosity is the result of the interaction of various factors. Within the GFE framework, the success of a mosque cannot, therefore, be adequately measured by the number of activities or the attendance of worshippers, but rather by the actual outcomes experienced by the community, both in terms of faith and worship as well as social capital and religious life (Gemar, 2025);(Presser & Chaves, 2007);(Son, 2024). These findings underscore the importance of adaptive mosque management, diverse programmes and activities that are relevant to the community's needs.

The Actual Contribution of Mosques to the Religiosity of the Muslim Community in Kediri City

From the perspective of Goal-Free Evaluation (GFE), the actual contribution of mosques to the religiosity of the people of Kediri City shows an uneven pattern across the four dimensions of religiosity. Mosques contribute 40.60 per cent to the dimension of faith, 62.41 per cent to worship, 61.65 per cent to social capital, and 60.40 per cent to Islamism. This pattern indicates that mosques are relatively more effective at producing practical and social outcomes than those related to the internalisation and deepening of faith.

Table 4. The Practical Contribution of the Dimension of Faith

No.	Current Score	Total	Category	Percentage
1	8,41 – 10	90	Very High	22,56%
2	6,81 – 8,40	162	Tall	40,60%
3	5,21 – 6,80	145	Currently	36,34%
4	3,61 – 5,20	2	Low	0,5%
5	2 – 3,60	0	Very low	0%
Total		399		100%

The contribution to the faith dimension was relatively low, although the knowledge aspect reached 63.91 per cent and the belief aspect 63.41 per cent.

Table 5. Current Contributions in the Field of Knowledge

No.	Current Score	Total	Category	Persentase
1	4,21 – 5,00	47	Very High	11,78%
2	3,41 – 4,20	255	Tall	63,91%
3	2,61 – 3,40	95	Currently	23,81%
4	1,81 – 2,60	2	Low	0,5%
5	1,00 – 1,80	0	Very low	0%
Total		399		100%

Table 6. The Actual Contribution of the Aspect of Belief

No.	Current Score	Total	Category	Persentase
1	4,21 – 5,00	58	Very High	14,54%
2	3,41 – 4,20	253	Tall	63,41%
3	2,61 – 3,40	86	Currently	21,55%
4	1,81 – 2,60	2	Low	0,5%
5	1,00 – 1,80	0	Very low	0%
Total		399		100%

This discrepancy indicates the existence of a ‘knowledge–internalisation gap’, whereby knowledge and beliefs have been relatively established but have not yet fully developed into a deepening of faith linked to reflection, internalisation and the transformation of

values. One explanation for this is the nature of mosque programmes, which tend to treat education as an activity that supports worship rather than as an ongoing process of faith development. (Basri, 2018) indicates that the educational function of mosques still tends to be dominated by worship activities, whilst more professional management of mosques and the strengthening of academic activities have the potential to deepen the educational and faith dimensions (Fernando et al., 2022). Consequently, a high level of religious knowledge does not automatically lead to the internalisation of faith unless it is accompanied by guidance, reflective dialogue, setting a good example, and the practice of these values in everyday life.

Table 7. The Practical Contribution of the Dimension of Worship

No.	Current Score	Total	Category	Persentase
1	16,81 – 20	104	Very High	26,06%
2	13,61 – 16,80	249	Tall	62,41%
3	10,41 – 13,60	46	Currently	11,53%
4	7,21 – 10,40	0	Low	0%
5	4 – 7,20	0	Very low	0%
Total		399		100%

The contribution of the worship dimension stood at 62.41 per cent, with obligatory acts of worship accounting for 67.67 per cent and recommended acts of worship for 71.43 per cent.

Table 8. Actual Contributions to Compulsory Worship

No.	Current Score	Total	Category	Persentase
1	8,41 – 10	88	Very High	22,06%
2	6,81 – 8,40	270	Tall	67,67%
3	5,21 – 6,80	38	Currently	9,52%
4	3,61 – 5,20	3	Low	0,75%
5	2 – 3,60	0	Very low	0%
Total		399		100%

Table 9. The Practical Benefits of Sunnah Worship

No.	Current Score	Total	Category	Percentage
1	8,41 – 10	75	Very High	18,8%

2	6,81 – 8,40	285	Tall	71,43%
3	5,21 – 6,80	37	Currently	9,27%
4	3,61 – 5,20	2	Low	0,5%
5	2 – 3,60	0	Very low	0%
Total		399		100%

The high level of contribution in the dimension of worship indicates that the outcomes of a mosque are most readily achieved when programmes have a clear structure, routine and norms of participation. Congregational prayer, dhikr, regular study sessions and sunnah acts of worship provide concrete mechanisms for habit formation, making it relatively easy to translate these into behaviour. Effective mosque management can maximise the congregation's worship activities and the supporting facilities (Uya et al., 2024), whereas the interaction between worshippers during ritual activities serves as an effective means of transforming religiosity (Hasyim, 2023). Thus, the repetitive nature of rituals explains why the contribution of worship is greater than that of the internalisation of faith, which requires a longer cognitive, emotional and reflective process.

Table 10. The Actual Contribution of the Social Capital Dimension

No.	Current Score	Total	Category	Percentage
1	16,81 – 20	105	Very High	26,31%
2	13,61 – 16,80	246	Tall	61,65%
3	10,41 – 13,60	48	Currently	12,03%
4	7,21 – 10,40	0	Low	0%
5	4 – 7,20	0	Very low	0%
Total		399		100%

The 61.65 per cent contribution from social capital is underpinned by the religious identity aspect (69.67 per cent) and the socio-religious aspect (70.68 per cent).

Table 11. The Actual Contribution of Religious Identity

No.	Current Score	Total	Category	Percentage
1	8,41 – 10	84	Very High	21,05%
2	6,81 – 8,40	278	Tall	69,67%
3	5,21 – 6,80	34	Currently	8,52%
4	3,61 – 5,20	3	Low	0,75%
5	2 – 3,60	0	Very low	0%
Total		399		100%

Table 12. Current Contributions in the Social and Religious Sphere

No.	Current Score	Total	Category	Percentase
1	8,41 – 10	79	Very High	19,8%
2	6,81 – 8,40	282	Tall	70,68%
3	5,21 – 6,80	34	Currently	8,52%
4	3,61 – 5,20	4	Low	1%
5	2 – 3,60	0	Very low	0%
Total		399		100%

The high level of social capital indicates that mosques function as institutions that foster social networks and religious identity. Regular interaction amongst congregants fosters closeness, a sense of belonging and solidarity, which are more readily formed through shared experiences. These findings are consistent with (Ningtyas et al., 2025), which shows that religious values can serve as social capital in maintaining social networks and the economic resilience of communities. Inclusive mosque activities also have the potential to strengthen social cohesion (Kushidayati & Rosyid, 2025). However, the strengthening of identity must be balanced by openness, so that religious social capital does not turn into exclusivism.

Table 13. The Actual Contribution of the Dimension of Islamism

No.	Current Score	Total	Category	Percentage
1	16,81 – 20	108	Very High	27,07%
2	13,61 – 16,80	241	Tall	60,4%
3	10,41 – 13,60	50	Currently	12,53%
4	7,21 – 10,40	0	Low	0%
5	4 – 7,20	0	Very low	0%
Total		399		100%

The contribution of the Islamism dimension stood at 60.40 per cent, with religious commitment at 68.18 per cent and attitudes towards Islamic law at 66.41 per cent.

Table 14. The Practical Contribution of Religious Commitment

No.	Current Score	Total	Category	Percentage
1	8,41 – 10	78	Very High	19,55%
2	6,81 – 8,40	272	Tall	68,18%

3	5,21 – 6,80	43	Currently	10,78%
4	3,61 – 5,20	6	Low	1, 5%
5	2 – 3,60	0	Very low	0%
Total		399		100%

Table 15. The Actual Contribution of Attitudes towards Islamic Law

No.	Current Score	Total	Category	Percentage
1	8,41 – 10	89	Very High	22,31%
2	6,81 – 8,40	265	Tall	66,41%
3	5,21 – 6,80	42	Currently	10,53%
4	3,61 – 5,20	3	Low	0,75%
5	2 – 3,60	0	Very low	0%
Total		399		100%

The contribution of Islamism, which stands at 60.40 per cent, indicates that mosques are quite effective in shaping religious commitment and practical orientation. This is made possible by the fact that mosque committees hold a strategic position in organising rituals, religious studies and the shaping of the congregation's religious attitudes (Azni et al., 2023). Mosques in urban areas can also serve as spaces for socio-religious innovation that strengthen religious practice (Hadi, 2025). However, such outcomes are more easily achieved through practical programmes than through the process of internalising one's faith, which requires intensive and ongoing guidance.

Overall, the findings reveal a gap between practical religiosity and the internalisation of faith. The contributions of worship (62.41 per cent), social capital (61.65 per cent) and Islamism (60.40 per cent) are significantly higher than those of faith (40.60 per cent). This discrepancy can be explained by the theory of religious socialisation: behaviours shaped through routines, role modelling, interaction and repetition are formed more rapidly than beliefs internalised through reflection and personal experience. Mosques are relatively effective at providing a social environment and religious practices, but do not always provide an educational process that is sufficiently in-depth to link knowledge with spiritual transformation. This reinforces the finding that the function of mosques still tends to be dominated by worship activities rather than community education.

Another factor to consider is the shift in religious learning patterns brought about by digital media and generational change (Munifah et al., 2025). The public, particularly the younger generation, can now access Islamic lectures, studies and discussions via social media in a more flexible way (Hardy et al., 2019);(Elser, 2013). This situation means that mosques are no longer the sole source of religious knowledge. Consequently, enhancing

the mosque's contribution to faith cannot be achieved simply by increasing the number of study sessions; rather, it requires high-quality education, relevant teaching materials, dialogue, mentoring, and the ability to integrate face-to-face learning with the digital ecosystem. In this context, mosques need to move away from an activity model focused on attendance towards one centred on learning, reflection, internalisation and transformation.

Thus, the GFE findings indicate that the main strength of mosques in Kediri City lies in their ability to produce concrete outcomes through worship, social interaction and religious commitment, whilst the main challenge is to deepen the internalisation of faith. Future strengthening can be achieved through thematic studies based on verses and values, religious guidance, faith reflection groups, youth development, capacity building for mosque management committees, and the integration of mosque outreach with digital media. These strategies are essential to ensure that mosques are not merely spaces for ritual practice, but also become institutions of education and spiritual transformation capable of linking religious knowledge with the beliefs, experiences, and behaviour of the community (Fernando et al., 2022);(Ahyyar et al., 2023).

Strategies for Strengthening Religious Devotion in the Community through the Role of Mosques in the City of Kediri

The research findings indicate that the key strategy adopted by the four mosques the Grand Mosque of Kediri City, the Baiturrahman Mosque in Mojoroto, the Al-Ikhlash Mosque in Dandangan, and the Al-Falah Grand Mosque at the Islamic boarding school in strengthening the community's religiosity is not merely to increase the number of religious activities, but to build a religious ecosystem that is inclusive, sustainable and intergenerational. These four mosques provide a combination of religious education, congregational worship, Qur'anic instruction, study circles, youth activities, and social-religious networks. This model demonstrates that the effectiveness of a mosque is primarily determined by the management committee's ability to align programmes with the needs of the congregation, rather than solely by the number of activities organised. This reinforces the view that mosques are multifunctional institutions capable of serving as centres for formal and non-formal education, collective worship, the strengthening of social networks, and community empowerment (Mtd & Soiman, 2023);(Hasyim, 2023).

By comparison, the Grand Mosque of Kediri City demonstrates the most diverse and open approach to management. Its Sunday morning study sessions, Muslimat study groups, Madrasah Diniyah, Qur'an recitation tuition, youth study groups, Islamic library, UPZ, and the use of YouTube and Instagram all reflect a strategy of segmenting the congregation according to age, gender, and religious needs. The presence of more than 1,200 YouTube subscribers and 1,800 Instagram followers also indicates that the mosque is beginning to expand its da'wah outreach from the physical space into the digital realm (Observation, Grand Mosque of Kediri Official YouTube Channel, 31 August 2025; Observation, Kediri City Grand Mosque Instagram Account, 31 August 2025). The key mechanism lies in the diversification of access: the public gains knowledge not only through face-to-face study, but also through digital media, which allows religious messages

to be consumed more flexibly. Thus, the management of the Grand Mosque demonstrates how religious institutions are adapting to changes in the public's learning patterns.

The Baiturrahman Mosque in Mojoroto presents a different model, namely segmentation based on social needs and the depth of religious content. Study groups for rickshaw drivers, the TPQ, retired women, tafsir, hadith, Tarjih, Ngaji UMMI, and thematic study groups demonstrate that programmes are designed according to the characteristics of the target groups. The study for rickshaw drivers, for example, demonstrates a strategy for the inclusion of a group of workers who are often not the primary target of mosque programmes (Suprpto, personal communication, Third Deputy Chairman of the Baiturrahman Mosque Management Committee, Mojoroto, Interview, 7 September 2025). Meanwhile, studies of exegesis and Tarjih demonstrate efforts to improve the quality of religious understanding based on scriptural evidence (Dwi Basuki Widodo, personal communication, First Secretary of the Baiturrahman Mosque Management Committee in Mojoroto, Interview, 22 September 2025; Achmad Mustofa, personal communication, Worship Development Division, Baiturrahman Mosque Mojoroto Management Committee, Interview, 3 September 2025). This model shows that the effectiveness of a programme stems not only from the frequency of activities, but also from the alignment between the programme design, the characteristics of the participants, and the quality of the materials.

Meanwhile, the Al-Ikhlash Mosque in Dandangan places greater emphasis on a strategy of consistency and habit-forming. Friday study sessions, congregational Fajr prayer and study sessions (SBK), KURMA study sessions, brief religious talks after Fajr, and the TPQ demonstrate a relatively routine pattern of activities. The brief religious talks held every day after Fajr prayer show that the internalisation of religious values is built through repeated and continuous exposure (Atmadji, personal communication, Public Relations & Information Section of Al-Ikhlash Mosque, Dandangan, Interview, 16 October 2025). The use of YouTube in KURMA studies also broadens the scope of religious education (Observation, Al-Ikhlash Mosque, Dandangan, 8 October 2025). Thus, the strength of the Al-Ikhlash model lies in routine, continuity and a combination of direct interaction with digital media.

Unlike these three mosques, the Al-Falah Grand Mosque at the Islamic boarding school stands out for the integration of the mosque with the boarding school's ecosystem and educational institutions. The TPQ, general religious study sessions, Muslimat, Yasin-Tahlil, Khotmil Qur'an, Rotib and Sholawatan demonstrate the close relationship between local religious traditions, education and community development. The involvement of young people in Sholawatan demonstrates that religious traditions can serve as a gateway for the younger generation to engage with mosque life (Agus Darmawan, personal communication, Youth Section of the Mosque, Al Falah Grand Mosque, Pesantren, Interview, 25 July 2025). This pesantren-based character serves as an institutional asset, as the mosque draws support from a network of educational institutions, religious scholars, and deeply rooted religious traditions.

This comparison shows that institutional context and leadership style result in different strategies. The Grand Mosque excels in diversification and digital adaptation; Baiturrahman in congregational segmentation and depth of content; Al-Ikhlash in the consistency of habit-forming practices; whilst Al-Falah excels in the integration of the mosque, education and pesantren traditions. These differences indicate that there is no single model for strengthening religiosity. Effectiveness is determined more by the mosque management committee's ability to identify the congregation's needs, develop relevant programmes, foster participation, and ensure the sustainability of the programmes (Azni et al., 2023);(Tandos, 2025).

In theoretical terms, these findings broaden our understanding of the mosque as an agent of religious socialisation. Education, the cultivation of worship practices, social interaction, role modelling and community engagement all work simultaneously to shape religiosity (Waluyo & Siswadi, 2025);(Imron et al., 2023). In practical terms, the best practices that can be replicated include congregational segmentation, intergenerational programmes, the integration of education and worship, the use of digital media, and collaboration with Islamic boarding schools and socio-economic institutions. Therefore, efforts to strengthen the role of mosques in Kediri City should be directed not towards increasing the number of activities, but rather towards the quality of governance, the relevance of programmes, congregational participation, digital innovation, and the evaluation of outcomes. This approach enables mosques to move beyond merely organising religious activities to becoming institutions that strategically bring about sustainable religious and social change (Mtd & Soiman, 2023);(Faizal et al., 2023);(Amrulloh, 2021).

CONCLUSION

A study of 399 respondents showed that the religiosity of the Muslim community in Kediri City falls into the high category (71.43 per cent). However, the Goal-Free Evaluation (GFE) perspective indicates that the actual contribution of mosque programmes varies across dimensions, namely faith (40.60 per cent), worship (62.41 per cent), social capital (61.65 per cent) and Islamism (60.40 per cent). These findings indicate that mosques are relatively more effective in shaping worship practices, socio-religious networks, and commitment to Islam than in the internalisation of faith, although the aspects of knowledge (63.91 per cent) and conviction (63.41 per cent) are classified as high. Theoretically, these findings reinforce the position of the mosque as a multifunctional institution in the formation of religiosity, whilst also highlighting the importance of distinguishing between religious knowledge and the internalisation of values. Methodologically, the application of the GFE within a mixed-methods design offers a new contribution to mosque programme evaluation by identifying actual outcomes experienced by the community, including impacts not articulated in the programme's formal objectives, thereby complementing the limitations of objective-based evaluation.

Consequently, strengthening the role of mosques should not focus solely on the quantity of activities, but must be directed towards the quality of governance, the relevance

of programmes, the depth of religious education, cross-generational engagement, digital innovation, and the evaluation of sustainable outcomes. UIN Syekh Wasil Kediri can strengthen this role through collaborative research, training for mosque administrators, and programme mentoring; local government through policy support and funding; whilst the community can contribute through active participation and the involvement of the younger generation. Further research should develop longitudinal, quasi-experimental, and mixed-methods studies to examine the mechanisms and sustainability of the contribution of mosque programmes to changes in community religiosity.

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