

Campus Mosques as Non-Formal Educational Spaces: A Systematic Review of Indonesia & Brunei

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Abstract: This article presents a systematic literature review of campus mosques as spaces for nonformal education in Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam, grounded in the civilizational heritage of the Malay-Nusantara Islamic tradition. The review maps key practices— mentoring/ḥalaqah, Qur'anic literacy (tadabbur/khatam), character and leadership formation, as well as civic and religious moderation. Thematic analysis yields five core insights: (1) small group models consistently nurture worship habits, integrity, and soft skills; (2) institutional integration of Islamic values (e.g., HEI values in technology universities) through modular nonformal curricula with rubric-based assessment; (3) governance by mosque boards and academic units, supported by campus policy, determines program sustainability; (4) campus mosques increasingly function as hubs of socio-intellectual collaboration across disciplines and communities; and (5) in Brunei, the Melayu Islam Beraja (MIB) framework, Islamic education policies, and lifelong learning practices sustain university-mosque-based learning. The article recommends standardized outcome indicators, longitudinal multi-campus documentation, and Indonesia–Brunei networking for replicating effective practices.

Keywords: campus mosque; nonformal education; mentoring/ḥalaqah; Qur'anic literacy; Indonesia–Brunei.



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Introduction

The campus mosque is essentially a learning space that transcends the boundaries of the formal curriculum: it brings together ritual, knowledge, and culture in an ecosystem that is familiar to the pulse of student life. Within the horizon of Tamadun Islam Nusantara, the mosque functions as a hub of civilization that weaves together knowledge and manners, as well as a medium for internalizing values through down-to-earth social practices (Qomar 2015). In the Malay region, the relationship between religion and culture takes the form of creative assimilation: Islamic values interact with local wisdom without losing their moral core (Ishak n.d.). This framework helps us understand the role of campus mosques in the modern context, where character building, Qur'anic literacy, and student leadership need to be designed in harmony with academic culture and institutional structures. In a comparison between Indonesia and Brunei, civilization variables—particularly the philosophy of Malay Islam Beraja (MIB) and the SPN21 policy—provide a normative basis for university mosque-based learning (MOE Brunei 2013; Mail 2019). Thus, the campus mosque is not merely a place of worship, but a public space for scholarship that mediates values, knowledge, and shared practices.

The Indonesian context reveals a rich variety of practices. A study at the Salman Mosque at the Bandung Institute of Technology (ITB) confirms the significance of space: the layout of the porch, courtyard, and reading room encourages spontaneous encounters, discussions, and cross-disciplinary collaborative work—so that non-formal learning blends with the rhythm of campus life (Puteri et al. 2012). Institutionally, tiered regeneration with mentor training, standard modules, and simple evaluations maintains the continuity and quality of interactions (Najamunnisa et al. 2017). The integration of mosque da'wah strategies with the PAI curriculum adds a character achievement section, so that non-formal activities resonate with academic goals (Sarbini et al. 2025). Findings at the Al-Furqan Mosque at UPI show a correlation between the strengthening of PAI and student discipline, communication, and teamwork (Maulana 2022). In Yogyakarta, the dynamics of the "campus mosque revival" recorded a shift from exclusivity to an inclusive-deliberative pattern that emphasized national education and religious moderation (Djunaidi 2016; Budutomo et al. 2022). In Brunei Darussalam, the role of university mosques is closely intertwined with the MIB philosophy and the history of the institutionalization of Islamic education that oversees practices on campus (Mail 2019). The SPN21 document emphasizes the integration of knowledge, skills, and values, creating a policy window to link academic units with non-formal mosque programs (MOE Brunei 2013). The literature on mosque-based lifelong learning shows scaffolding from tahsin to thematic tadabbur and life skills for the academic community—providing an adaptive, sustainable model for the developmental phases of students (Shamsu 2022). Recent policy analysis notes the strengthening of the promotion of Islamic education in public spaces, including campuses (Dullah 2024). Interestingly, a mature Islamic education ecosystem also has a coexistent impact on non-Muslims, as long as it is formulated as a dialogue of shared values (Asiyah 2014). Thus, university mosques in Brunei serve as an extension of the campus-state in nurturing manners and social cohesion.

As non-formal education, practices at campus mosques rely on voluntary participation, small groups (mentoring—*ḥalaqah*), and intense peer-to-peer relationships. Cross-campus evidence shows that this model consistently fosters habits of worship, Qur'anic literacy, self-regulation, and collaborative soft skills (Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025b). At the institutional level, a modular non-formal curriculum that links institutional values—such as HEI (Harmony, Excellence, Integrity)—helps formalize participation, reflection, and service rubrics (Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025a). In religious faculties, Islamic mentoring strengthens academic integrity, resilience, and service leadership (Ihsan et al. 2023). Networking with mosques around the campus expands the arena of service learning, bridging the campus and community so that character building can be tested in the field (Rosyidin and Nuryanta 2024). Within the framework of the golden generation, this ecosystem prepares graduates to be civilized, collaborative, and resilient (Usman 2023).

Although there are many case studies, systematic comparative reviews of Indonesia–Brunei campus mosques are still limited. Research often focuses on a single institution, city, or dimension (spatial design, cadre development, or curriculum), so that the relationship between variables—programs, governance, and outcomes—has not been fully explored (Puteri et al. 2012; Najamunnisa et

al. 2017; Sarbini et al. 2025; Maulana 2022). On the other hand, Brunei's literature is strong on historical, philosophical, and policy aspects, but rarely links the structure of university mosques with micro-level student outcome indicators (Mail 2019; Lubis, Mustapha, and Lampoh 2009). Indonesia's sociological background—including Islamic boarding schools as the basis of civil society—adds variables that need to be considered in interpreting the role of campus mosques (Assa'idi 2021). Therefore, this study presents a systematic literature review to map the variety of programs, governance—partnerships, working mechanisms, and coaching outcomes; while also identifying commonalities and differences between the two national contexts.

This article contributes on three levels. Descriptive—it presents a map of campus mosque-based nonformal programs, actors, and the policy context in Indonesia and Brunei. Analytical—explaining why the small group model is effective through the mechanisms of role modeling, habit formation, peer accountability, and space—curriculum synergy. Normative—proposing light but informative achievement indicators (Qur'anic literacy; character—leadership; civic—moderation; social cohesion) so that campuses can conduct continuous evaluation. By emphasizing the anchoring values of Islam Nusantara and MIB/SPN21, the recommendations are directed towards functional adaptation rather than institutional uniformity—absorbing values and mechanisms, not merely formats. Ultimately, campus mosques are seen as laboratories of civilization that translate sacred texts into social and academic cultural practices (Qomar 2015; MOE Brunei 2013; Shamsu 2022; Dullah 2024; Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025a).

Research Method

This study uses a systematic literature review design to describe the role of campus mosques as non-formal educational spaces in Indonesia and Brunei Darussalam. Sources were searched on Google Scholar, DOAJ, ERIC, Garuda, Nelite, university repositories, and institutional websites. The keywords used were: "campus mosque"/"university mosque", "tadabbur/khatam", "character/leadership education", "non-formal", along with "mentoring/halaqah", and the context markers "Indonesia/Brunei/UBD/UTB/UNISSA". Manuscripts are accepted in Indonesian, English, or Malay, in the form of journal articles/proceedings, institutional reports, and policy documents that describe non-formal education programs or policies on campus. Screening is conducted in layers: removal of duplicates, screening of titles and abstracts, then review of the full text based on relevance to the topic, clarity of the campus context, and the existence of program descriptions.

Data was extracted using a simple template containing: source identity, context (country/campus), program type (mentoring/halaqah, Qur'anic literacy, leadership training, social services), objectives, governance—partnerships, implementation mechanisms, and main outputs (Qur'anic literacy, character—leadership, civic—moderation, social cohesion). The quality of the sources was assessed based on clarity of objectives, adequacy of description, transparency of procedures, and transferability of findings. To maintain credibility, cross-source triangulation and priority were given to up-to-date/verified manuscripts. Synthesis was conducted thematically and presented narratively; selection figures were not displayed. Academic consistency was maintained using the Chicago Author—Date reference style in the manuscript, and all sources were referenced from publicly accessible full-text files.

Results and Discussion

Map of Non-Formal Education Programs at Campus Mosques

Campus mosques in Indonesia offer a spectrum of layered non-formal educational programs: weekly thematic halaqah, tiered mentoring for new students, Qur'anic literacy classes (tahsin, tadabbur, khatam), leadership training, academic clinics, and citizenship forums. The non-formal nature is evident in its voluntary nature, contextualization to the academic rhythm, and reliance on small communities that enable close pedagogical relationships between mentors and mentees. At the Salman Mosque at ITB, for example, the design of public spaces and the sociology of interaction in the mosque area serve as "triggers" for learning: students meet, discuss, absorb examples, and initiate socio-

scientific projects that resonate with the formal curriculum (Puteri et al. 2012). At the same time, various campus mosques organize Qur'anic literacy modules that combine cognitive, affective, and practical aspects through a cycle of repeated *tadabbur-khatam* () so that worship practices become part of the academic habitus. This experience shows that campus mosques are not merely venues for rituals, but learning ecosystems that integrate knowledge, manners, and service. At UPI, for example, the program to strengthen Islamic Education through campus mosques has proven to enrich discipline, communication, and teamwork—expressions of the expected graduate competencies (Maulana 2022). In other words, these various non-formal programs move from the space of worship to the space of character building and civic virtue (Puteri et al. 2012; Maulana 2022).

The mentoring-halqah model is the backbone of guidance, especially in the early years of college. At Salman ITB, regeneration is designed in stages with clear objectives, materials, and evaluations; mentors are prepared through training, standardized modules, and supervision to maintain continuity and quality across generations (Najamunnisa et al. 2017). In the context of campus technology mosques, the integration of institutional values—such as HEI (Harmony, Excellence, Integrity)—appears in the form of a modular non-formal curriculum with assessment rubrics for participation, reflection, and service practices, so that character outcomes are measurable without eliminating the warmth of the mentoring relationship (Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025a). Synthesis research on the role of campus mosques also shows that small group patterns encourage worship habits, Qur'anic literacy, and project leadership relevant to the campus world (Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025b). Cross-faculty findings reinforce these results: Islamic mentoring contributes to academic integrity, resilience, and social sensitivity—connecting personal character with learning performance and inter-student relationships (Ihsan et al. 2023). Thus, mentoring-halaqah is the "engine" that drives various other programs in campus mosques (Najamunnisa et al. 2017; Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025a; Ihsan et al. 2023).

In Yogyakarta, the dynamics of the "revival of campus mosques" show a transition from an exclusive model to a more inclusive and collaborative pattern with a diverse campus community. A cross-campus study in this city describes how thematic recitations, national forums, and socio-scientific activities are designed to foster civic values and religious moderation, so that mosques become safe spaces for learning the value of diversity (Budiutomo et al. 2022). Historical and analytical records show that this inclusivity did not happen automatically; it arose from an evaluation of exclusivist tendencies and the reformulation of a more dialogical development agenda (Djunaidi 2016). At the micro level, student da'wah communication—including message composition, media, and role models—forms a hidden curriculum that fosters collaborative habits across study programs and organizations (Tahir 2015). With this configuration, various non-formal programs enter the realm of "campus citizenship": public issue discussions, volunteer work, and interdisciplinary projects become mediums for the internalization of values of civility and nationality that are relevant to the higher education ecosystem (Budiutomo et al. 2022; Djunaidi 2016; Tahir 2015).

In the context of Brunei Darussalam, various university mosque programs are linked to the Malay Islamic Beraja (MIB) ecosystem and national education policies that emphasize 21st-century competencies as well as Islamic values. Literature on Islamic Lifelong Learning shows that mosques serve as centers for continuous learning: Qur'anic classes, *tadabbur*, thematic *halaqah*, and life skills enhancement activities designed to be inclusive and progressive (Shamsu 2022). Contemporary policy analysis indicates that the strengthening of religious institutions and the latest regulations provide space for campuses to promote Islamic education in public spaces, including university mosques (Dullah 2024). In line with this, the SPN21 document emphasizes the integration of values and competencies, opening a policy window to synergize academic units with mosque-based non-formal programs (MOE Brunei 2013). Although specific academic studies highlighting "campus mosques" in Brunei are still developing, evidence of the mosque-based learning culture—characteristic of MIB—provides a strong foundation that various non-formal programs in university mosques can be positioned as an extension of campuses in nurturing manners, knowledge, and social cohesion (Shamsu 2022; Dullah 2024; MOE Brunei 2013).

Governance, Partnerships, and Infrastructure

The sustainability of non-formal programs in campus mosques depends on governance: an accountable takmir structure, integration with academic units, and clear cadre management. Salman ITB's experience shows the importance of cadre SOPs, a phased curriculum, and mentor training that leads to steady leadership regeneration (Najamunnisa et al. 2017). In vocational campuses, the integration of mosque da'wah strategies with the Islamic Education curriculum provides assessment rubrics and character achievement indicators, so that non-formal activities do not stop at ceremonies but lead to measurable learning objectives (Sarbini et al. 2025). Both show that good governance integrates spirituality, academics, and social services into a consistent development design. Thus, the role of campus mosque administrators is not merely to manage worship schedules, but to serve as managers of a learning ecosystem that connects campus policies, student needs, and community networks (Najamunnisa et al. 2017; Sarbini et al. 2025).

In addition to organization, spatial infrastructure influences participation and the quality of interaction. A sociological study of the Salman Mosque at ITB shows that the layout of public areas—corridors, courtyards, reading rooms, halls—encourages spontaneous meetings, discussions, and collaborative work that blurs the boundaries between worship and learning (Puteri et al. 2012). Community-friendly designs strengthen a sense of belonging and facilitate project-based learning, from academic clinics to social entrepreneurship activities. When the space is supportive, non-formal curricula are easier to execute: small groups can meet regularly, mentors can easily monitor, and activities are more inclusive for students across majors and backgrounds (Puteri et al. 2012). In the case of UPI, the use of mosques to strengthen PAI shows how infrastructure functions as a character laboratory—directing habits of discipline, effective communication, and teamwork through a consistent rhythm of activities (Maulana 2022). In other words, good governance requires educational architecture (Puteri et al. 2012; Maulana 2022).

Effective governance is supported by partnerships between mosque administrators, academic programs, student affairs units, and community networks around the campus. The integration of mosque outreach with the Islamic Education curriculum demonstrates how achievement indicators can be negotiated across units so that non-formal programs have an impact on academic culture (Sarbini et al. 2025). On the other hand, the experience of mosques located near campuses shows synergy with the surrounding community through religious literacy programs, social services, and dialogue spaces that bring together the academic community and residents (Rosyidin and Nuryanta 2024). At the micro level, structured mentoring—with training and supervision—becomes a binding device that ensures the quality of interaction and consistency of objectives (Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025a). If this partnership runs well, campus mosques have the potential to become hubs that drive cross-study program initiatives while fostering alumni networks to support program sustainability (Sarbini et al. 2025; Rosyidin and Nuryanta 2024; Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025a).

In Brunei Darussalam, governance utilizes the MIB and SPN21 philosophies as references for values and competencies. The history of the institutionalization of Islamic education shows how state policy has shaped a mosque-based learning culture that is integrated with formal institutions (Mail 2019). The SPN21 document emphasizes a balance between knowledge, skills, and values—creating a policy context conducive to synergizing non-formal university mosque programs with the curriculum agenda (MOE Brunei 2013). Contemporary policy analysis shows the strengthening of the promotion of Islamic education in the public space of campuses, so that university mosques operate not only as places of worship but also as centers of Qur'anic literacy and lifelong learning (Dullah 2024). In this configuration, effective governance requires close collaboration between religious units, faculties, and student organizations so that achievement indicators—adab, integrity, moderation—can be managed and measured consistently (Mail 2019; Brunei MOE 2013; Dullah 2024).

Character Building, Leadership, and Soft Skills

In the campus mosque ecosystem, character building is not merely the instillation of doctrine, but rather a pedagogical process that combines worship discipline, self-reflection, and targeted social practices. The small group-based mentoring—halaqah model enables close pedagogical relationships (

), peer scaffolding, and healthy accountability among members. Cross-campus research shows that this pattern consistently fosters habits of congregational prayer, regular recitation of the Qur'an, and an ethos of independent learning that influences academic self-confidence (Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025b). At the institutional level, the Syamsul Ulum Mosque (Telkom University) practices tiered mentoring with a modular curriculum that links HEI values (Harmony, Excellence, Integrity) to behavioral achievement indicators, so that character is not vague but has benchmarks (Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025a). In the context of religious faculties, similar findings emerge: Islamic mentoring strengthens academic integrity and resilience, particularly through reflective assignments and exemplary guidance (Ihsan et al. 2023). Interestingly, character outcomes—trustworthiness, discipline, empathy—do not stop at the personal realm, but are manifested in social awareness and the ability to work across study programs, an important prerequisite for inclusive campus leadership (Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025b; Ihsan et al. 2023).

The question is, how are these characteristics formed? The mechanism is combinative: (a) the example set by mentors as role models who present behavioral standards; (b) the design of regular meetings that break down the material into small, easy-to-learn units; (c) an assessment rubric that weighs participation, service projects, and reflective notes; and (d) layered supervision to maintain the consistency of facilitator quality (Najamunnisa et al. 2017; Sarbini et al. 2025). At Salman ITB, systematic regeneration connects Islamic, leadership, and service modules, so that students experience a cycle of "learning-serving-reflecting" in a measured rhythm (Najamunnisa et al. 2017). The integration of mosque da'wah strategies with the PAI curriculum in vocational education even formalizes character rubrics, bridging non-formal pathways with academic achievement (Sarbini et al. 2025). In practice, the rubrics provide a common language for takmir, lecturers, and students: what is meant by "amanah", how to prove it in team projects, and when coaching intervention is needed. This design narrows the gap between ideal character and everyday behavior (Najamunnisa et al. 2017; Sarbini et al. 2025).

The leadership dimension grows from a "mentee-to-mentor pipeline" pattern: new students are mentored as mentees, then—after undergoing training—move up to become co-mentors/mentors who facilitate the next group. This cycle creates continuous regeneration and ownership of the program, while expanding cross-generational collaboration networks (Najamunnisa et al. 2017; Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025a). The physical environment of the mosque—the courtyard, porch, hall—reinforces this process by providing spaces for spontaneous interaction that stimulate project initiatives: Qur'anic literacy classes, academic clinics, and campus cleanliness campaigns (Puteri et al. 2012). In the framework of student da'wah communication, the ability to compose messages, use media, and build cross-community relationships has become soft skills that are highly sought after in the world of work—effective communication, teamwork, and problem solving (Tahir 2015). In Yogyakarta, the orchestration of national activities shows that leadership born out of campus mosques tends to be inclusive and deliberative, as it is forged through dialogue on public issues and cross-departmental social work (Budiyutomo et al. 2022; Djunaidi 2016).

In Brunei Darussalam, character building and leadership are intertwined with the Malay Islamic Beraja (MIB) philosophy, which places manners at the core of learning. The history of the development of Islamic education from home schooling to modern institutions has created a culture of compliance with values and respect for moral authority that is conducive to mosque-based university development (Mail 2019). The SPN21 document emphasizes the balance of knowledge, skills, and values, opening up opportunities to formulate character indicators that can be recognized by the formal curriculum (MOE Brunei 2013). Studies on mosque-based lifelong learning show that Qur'anic classes, tadabbur, and life skills improvement activities target a spectrum of ages and social roles, forming a leadership of service that is relevant to the campus community (Shamsu 2022). A recent policy analysis shows the strengthening of the promotion of Islamic education in public spaces, including campuses, so that university mosques become a vehicle for the measurable and sustainable cultivation of virtues (Dullah 2024; MOE Brunei 2013; Shamsu 2022).

Qur'anic Literacy and Lifelong Learning

Qur'anic literacy in campus mosques does not stop at technical reading skills (tahsin), but moves in a spiral towards tadabbur (contemplation of meaning), khatam (the habit of completion), and tathbiq (application). In Indonesia, this practice internalizes academic habits: students are trained to manage their time, set goals, and link Qur'anic values to their learning ethos—for example, integrity in assignments, discussion etiquette, and empathy in teamwork (Maulana 2022). On some campuses, Qur'anic literacy becomes the axis of guidance that is integrated with mentoring; small group sessions analyze thematic verses relevant to student problems (motivation, time management, cross-cultural interaction), followed by simple projects so that meaning is transformed into action (Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025a). National studies in Yogyakarta add a civic dimension: taklim that links verses on morals with the discourse of diversity and nationality fosters mature civic awareness (Budiutomo et al. 2022). Thus, Qur'anic literacy in campus mosques forms an epistemic bridge between sacred texts, academic culture, and the social reality of students (Maulana 2022; Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025a; Budiutomo et al. 2022).

Pedagogically, the success of Qur'anic literacy depends on a dynamic learning design: a structured cycle of recitation, reflection, and completion, combined with reflection rubrics and peer feedback in ḥalaqah groups (Najamunnisa et al. 2017; Sarbini et al. 2025). Thematic modules—such as "academic ethics," "trustworthiness and productivity," and "interdisciplinary ta'āruf"—help students connect meaning with the context of their studies and campus life. At Telkom University, the application of the HEI rubric encourages written reflection and commitment to action, so that the strengthening of Qur'anic literacy is reflected in time discipline, self-regulation, and service learning habits (Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025a). Spatial infrastructure is also important: mosque layouts that provide informal meeting points facilitate extended discussions outside formal sessions (Puteri et al. 2012). The combination of curriculum structure, space support, and mentor guidance makes Qur'anic literacy not an incidental activity, but a pattern of learning life (Najamunnisa et al. 2017; Sarbini et al. 2025; Puteri et al. 2012).

In Brunei Darussalam, Qur'anic literacy is growing within the framework of lifelong learning based on MIB. Studies of mosque-based Muslimah classes show a gradual scaffolding from tahsin to thematic tadabbur, with institutional support that ensures the continuity and quality of facilitators (Shamsu 2022). SPN21 provides a reference for the integration of Islamic values and 21st-century competencies, so that Qur'anic literacy is not isolated from life skills such as communication, collaboration, and basic digital literacy (MOE Brunei 2013). A recent policy analysis indicates a conducive environment for expanding the program to the campus space—intensive classes, thematic tadabbur, and khatam activities—orchestrated as a value-nurturing strategy for the academic community (Dullah 2024). With the historical support of Islamic educational institutions (Mail 2019), Qur'anic literacy at Brunei's university mosques functions as a continuum from primary to adult education, in line with the country's moral mandate and modern competency requirements (Shamsu 2022; MOE Brunei 2013; Dullah 2024; Mail 2019).

From a civilizational perspective, Qur'anic literacy becomes the axis of religious-cultural integration. In the horizon of Islam Nusantara, Qur'anic values are interpreted through local wisdom and social practices that emphasize hospitality and benefit (Qomar 2015). In the Malay region, the creative assimilation process between Islam and culture has formed a familiar pedagogical language, facilitating the internalization of meaning in diverse campus communities (Ishak n.d.). Cross-context evidence shows that Qur'anic literacy also strengthens social cohesion: even for non-Muslim populations, a mature Islamic education ecosystem contributes to peaceful coexistence, especially when formulated as a dialogue of shared values (Asiyah 2014). In campus mosques, this integration is evident in the encounter between academic disciplines and values of adab—forming campus citizens who are not only intelligent, but also have personality, are open-minded, and service-oriented. Thus, Qur'anic literacy is a practice of cultivating knowledge that bridges sacred texts to social practices in the university space (Qomar 2015; Ishak n.d.; Asiyah 2014).

Civic Engagement, Religious Moderation, and Social Cohesion

The campus mosque serves as a forum for civic learning—a safe space for to practice dialogue,

collaboration, and social awareness within a framework of friendly Islamic values. Findings in Yogyakarta show a transformation from an exclusive pattern to an inclusive-deliberative pattern, where national religious instruction, interdisciplinary discussions, and volunteer work are orchestrated as a non-formal curriculum that fosters civic values (Budiutomo et al. 2022). This transition was not a spontaneous process; it arose from a critical evaluation of cultural segregation and a reformulation of the campus mosque's mandate as a hub for academic dialogue (Djunaidi 2016). In practice, student da'wah communication—how to compose messages, choose media, and set examples—becomes a hidden curriculum that shapes a culture of respectful conversation (Tahir 2015). When conversation and social action go hand in hand, students learn to balance their Islamic identity with their role as campus citizens: ready to engage in dialogue, comfortable with differences, and service-oriented. Thus, campus mosques not only teach "what is right," but also "how to do good" in a diverse public space—a civic competency that is highly relevant for college graduates (Budiutomo et al. 2022; Djunaidi 2016; Tahir 2015).

Epistemically, the horizon of Islam Nusantara provides a pedagogical language to bridge Qur'anic values with local wisdom—emphasizing that religious moderation is not a compromise of values, but rather a refinement of manners in encountering others (Qomar 2015). At the regional level, studies of Islam and the Malay world reveal a framework of creative assimilation: religion permeates culture without losing its moral core, while culture provides a familiar medium of expression (Ishak n.d.). In the campus ecosystem, this framework facilitates the design of study themes, communication strategies, and a service ethos that "lands" on the experiences of students from diverse backgrounds. Cross-cultural competence—managing differences, arguing without aggression, and building consensus—is formed through a cycle of activities that combine text study, thematic dialogue, and socio-scientific projects. In Indonesia, the experience of Islamic educational communities that grew out of Islamic boarding schools and student organizations confirms the importance of a civil society base for social cohesion on campus (Assa'idi 2021). Therefore, religious moderation in campus mosques is not just a slogan, but a methodology for cultivating manners—clear thinking, polite speech, and beneficial actions—that are relevant to the modern public sphere (Qomar 2015; Ishak n.d.; Assa'idi 2021).

In Brunei Darussalam, the framework of Malay Islamic Beraja (MIB) philosophy provides a normative basis for university mosque-based citizenship practices. The history of the institutionalization of Islamic education shows a close relationship between value learning and community formation, making mosques socially recognized educational spaces (Mail 2019). The SPN21 document emphasizes the integration of knowledge, skills, and values, creating a policy window to align university mosque activities with the national curriculum agenda (MOE Brunei 2013). Recent policy analysis shows the strengthening of Islamic education promotion in the public space of campuses—reinforcing the function of mosques as centers of Qur'anic literacy as well as hubs of citizenship learning (Dullah 2024). Even among non-Muslim populations, a mature Islamic education ecosystem contributes to peaceful coexistence when structured as a dialogue of shared values (Asiyah 2014). Thus, university mosques in Brunei function as laboratories of social cohesion: fostering civic-mindedness through communal worship practices, values classes, and structured community services (MOE Brunei 2013; Mail 2019; Dullah 2024; Asiyah 2014).

Social cohesion grows stronger when campus mosques connect with the surrounding community. Studies on mosques near campuses show a two-way synergy: the campus community contributes through religious literacy and social services; local residents provide context, networks, and real-life problems as learning materials (Rosyidin and Nuryanta 2024). This collaboration enables service learning—cleanliness, literacy, and youth projects—that instills social empathy while honing soft skills such as project management and public communication. In the horizon of developing the golden generation, campus mosques become a vehicle for cultivating excellent character that is tested through real work, not just rhetoric (Usman 2023). When deliberative culture, careful communication of religious teachings, and community networking work in tandem, campuses obtain prototypes of citizens who are spiritually, socially, and intellectually mature. This is the unique contribution of campus mosques to social cohesion in Indonesia and Brunei: combining worship, knowledge, and service into a living citizenship curriculum (Rosyidin and Nuryanta 2024; Usman 2023).

Cross-Country Comparison: Indonesia - Brunei (MIB)

A comparison between Indonesia and Brunei reveals a shared core in campus mosque non-formal education: small group models (mentoring–ḥalaqah), Qur'anic literacy (tahsin–tadabbur–khatam), and an orientation towards manners and leadership in service. In Indonesia, this pattern is supported by a modular curriculum and a mentee-to-mentor pipeline—manifested in the practices of Telkom University and the technology campus cadre network (Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025a; 2025b; Najamunnisa et al. 2017). The Al-Furqan Mosque at UPI shows how the habit of worship and teamwork resonates with the learning ethos (Maulana 2022). In Brunei, mosque-based lifelong learning shows a gradual structure from tahsin to tadabbur with strong institutional support (Shamsu 2022). Thus, in both contexts, campus mosques become engines of culture that combine spiritual discipline, academic habits, and social skills—three mutually reinforcing elements (Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025a; 2025b; Shamsu 2022).

The difference lies in policy architecture and governance. In Brunei, the MIB and SPN21 philosophies provide a normative and operational compass: Islamic values are explicitly integrated into the national curriculum and flow into the campus space, making university mosques a kind of "extension" of the state in the cultivation of manners (MOE Brunei 2013; Mail 2019). Recent policy analysis shows the strengthening of the regulatory framework and promotion of Islamic education in the public space of campuses (Dullah 2024). In Indonesia, the variation is wider: governance is influenced by campus culture, takmir networks, and space design; the example of Salman ITB shows how spatial architecture triggers interaction and initiative, while the dynamics in Yogyakarta mark a shift from exclusive to inclusive through internal evaluation (Puteri et al. 2012; Djunaidi 2016). These differences are important for understanding why similar practices—ḥalaqah, tadabbur, services—result in different policy constellations in each country (MOE Brunei 2013; Puteri et al. 2012; Djunaidi 2016; Dullah 2024).

The transferability of practices requires cultural sensitivity. In Indonesia, the horizon of Islam Nusantara—which emphasizes cultural hospitality and public welfare—provides principles of adaptation to avoid uniformity that impoverishes diversity (Qomar 2015). In the Malay region, the framework of creative assimilation shows that values can be embodied in local cultural mediums without losing their moral substance (Ishak n.d.). In this comparison, Brunei's practices based on MIB and SPN21 can be adopted functionally—for example, standardizing indicators of adab and Qur'anic literacy—without copying their institutional forms. Conversely, Salman ITB's design of spaces and cadre pipelines inspires Brunei campuses to enrich learning environments that facilitate informal interactions and social projects (Puteri et al. 2012; Najamunnisa et al. 2017). The principle is: absorb the values and mechanisms, not merely the institutional format (Qomar 2015; Ishak n.d.).

To strengthen regional partnerships, this article recommends a set of comparative indicators: (1) Qur'anic literacy (tahsin–tadabbur–khatam) evaluated through a reflection rubric; (2) character–leadership (trustworthiness, discipline, collaboration) assessed through project portfolios; (3) civic moderation, measured through public dialogue engagement and service learning; and (4) social cohesion, measured through cross-group perceptions, including non-Muslims (Asiyah 2014). Implementation of these indicators requires an Indonesia–Brunei network for module exchange, mentor training, and joint longitudinal research. Synergy with mosques around campuses expands the impact to the community (Rosyidin and Nuryanta 2024). In turn, comparisons based on shared indicators enable policymakers and mosque administrators to evaluate what works and why it works in each context—without negating cultural and governance uniqueness (Asiyah 2014; Rosyidin and Nuryanta 2024).

Mechanism of Action: Why the Small Group Model is Effective

The effectiveness of the small group model (mentoring–ḥalaqah) relies on three mutually reinforcing mechanisms: role modeling, habit formation, and peer accountability. Role modeling is present through the figure of the mentor—a senior or mosque administrator—who displays standards of behavior and a learning ethos; intense and repeated interactions provide a faster path to imitation than mass contact. Habits are formed because the material is broken down into small, manageable

units: daily recitation, thematic reflection, completion targets, and service tasks; all move at the rhythm of the campus so that they do not "compete" with studies, but flow alongside them (Najamunnisa et al. 2017; Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025a). Peer accountability works through reflection notes and brief reports—"what has been done, what is difficult, what are next week's commitments"—which are assessed using a simple rubric; this fosters honesty and sensitivity among members (Sarbini et al. 2025; Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025b). At this point, small groups become a safe space for character building: discipline, trustworthiness, communication, and teamwork are not just discourse, but measurable routines that train moral resilience (Ihsan et al. 2023).

The second mechanism is the bridging of space and curriculum. The architecture and layout of the campus mosque—the porch, courtyard, reading room, hall—create a "third space" between classrooms and dormitories: a place for spontaneous meetings, casual discussions, and the formation of cross-disciplinary networks. When the ḥalaqah meetings are over, conversations often continue at these points; ideas for social projects, academic clinics, or thematic studies emerge from fluid, informal interactions (Puteri et al. 2012). On the curriculum side, the integration of mosque da'wah strategies with PAI presents a list of achievements that provides a "common language" for takmir—lecturers—students: what are the indicators of trustworthiness, how to assess teamwork, and to what extent is self-reflection considered adequate (Sarbini et al. 2025). The mentor pipeline ensures the reproduction of facilitation competencies; students who have advanced in their roles carry "institutional memory" and strengthen program continuity (Najamunnisa et al. 2017). The synergy between educational spaces and non-formal rubric-based curricula is what makes the small group model work in the long term (Puteri et al. 2012; Sarbini et al. 2025).

The third mechanism is cultural value coherence. In Indonesia, the horizon of Islam Nusantara provides a familiar cultural framework for students from diverse backgrounds—enabling the internalization of Qur'anic values without feeling alienated from their culture and nationality (Qomar 2015). At the Malay regional level, the creative assimilation process between Islam and culture provides a natural medium of expression: discussions, arts, and social activities become "containers" for moral learning (Ishak n.d.). In Brunei Darussalam, the Malay Islamic Beraja (MIB) philosophy and SPN21 policy harmonize knowledge, skills, and values; this creates a policy window for universities to mandate non-formal learning in mosques as a means of cultural education (MOE Brunei 2013; Mail 2019; Dullah 2024). Thus, small groups are effective not only because of their pedagogical design, but because they are embedded in a value ecology that is coherent with the identity of the campus and the country (Qomar 2015; MOE Brunei 2013).

Finally, the feedback loop mechanism reinforces all of the above elements. Reflection notes, project portfolios, and periodic mentor evaluations provide minimal but sufficient data for continuous improvement; simple indicators—regularity of recitation, participation in discussions, quality of service tasks—are more effective than complex metrics that are difficult to maintain. At Telkom University, the HEI rubric clarifies expectations and normalizes the practice of reflection; the results are evident in the consistency of worship habits and the courage to lead small projects (Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025a; 2025b). At the religious faculty level, Islamic mentoring narrows the gap between "ideal character" and daily behavior, especially when exemplary guidance is combined with practical tasks (Ihsan et al. 2023). This mechanism is compatible with service learning and the synergy of the community around the campus, so that character does not stop at discourse—it is nurtured, measured, and repeated in a real context (Rosyidin and Nuryanta 2024; Usman 2023).

Development Agenda and Recommendations

We propose four sets of indicators that are simple yet informative to strengthen the quality of coaching: (1) Qur'anic literacy—regular recitation, thematic reflection, and completion cycles, accompanied by a brief reflection section; (2) Character—Leadership—trustworthiness, discipline, collaboration, and facilitation skills, assessed through project portfolios; (3) Civic—Moderation—public dialogue engagement, cross-program collaboration, and community service; (4) Social Cohesion—cross-group perceptions (including non-Muslims) of the comfort, openness, and usefulness of campus mosques (Asiyah 2014). The indicators are designed to be modular so that they can be adopted by

campuses of various sizes; what is important is consistency in measurement, not the complexity of the instruments. In the Indonesian context, the indicators need to embody the values of Islam Nusantara, which emphasizes public welfare; in Brunei, the indicators are linked to MIB and SPN21 as references for values and competencies (Qomar 2015; MOE Brunei 2013). With the same matrix, cross-campus comparisons become more meaningful and fair.

For sustainability, governance needs to be strengthened at three nodes: takmir—academic units—student organizations. First, takmir plays the role of learning ecosystem manager: compiling SOPs for cadre development, halaqah schedules, modular curricula, and mentor recruitment standards (Najamunnisa et al. 2017). Second, academic units align non-formal rubrics with PAI achievements and co-curricular activities (Sarbini et al. 2025). Third, student organizations act as the driving force, ensuring the mentee→mentor pipeline runs smoothly. The design of spaces—porches, courtyards, reading rooms—must be maintained as third spaces that spark interaction (Puteri et al. 2012). In Brunei, alignment with SPN21 facilitates formal recognition of non-formal practices and expands policy support (MOE Brunei 2013; Dullah 2024). Cohesive governance will reduce dependence on key figures and increase institutional resilience.

We encourage the Indonesia–Brunei network to exchange modules, mentor training, and joint longitudinal research. This exchange follows the principle of functional adaptation: absorbing mechanisms that work—reflection rubrics, cadre pipelines, space design—with rigidly copying institutional forms. Brunei's strong practice in value policies (MIB, SPN21) can inspire the standardization of adab indicators; while Indonesia's rich model of space architecture and community engagement provides inspiration for strengthening the learning environment in university mosques (MOE Brunei 2013; Puteri et al. 2012; Rosyidin and Nuryanta 2024). For research, a panel of shared indicators—Qur'anic literacy, character-leadership, civic, cohesion—can be measured each semester, producing a development curve that is useful for mosque administrators and campus leaders (Asiyah 2014; Usman 2023).

Finally, we recommend a five-year agenda: Year 1—program mapping and indicator testing; Year 2—regional mentor training and alignment of rubrics with PAI; Year 3—implementation of cross-campus service learning; Year 4—colloquium on good practices and comparative publications; Year 5—minimum standards for internal accreditation. The normative framework of Islam Nusantara and Melayu Islam Beraja serves as an ethical anchor to ensure that innovation remains rooted in manners and public welfare (Qomar 2015; Ishak n.d.). Thus, campus mosques continue to move from being venues for ritual to laboratories of civilization: places where knowledge and virtue are woven into habit, measured simply, and shared across communities (MOE Brunei 2013; Mail 2019). The synergy of policy, space, and community will ensure this model's sustainability—not because of slogans, but because of the mechanisms at work (Najamunnisa et al. 2017; Hadi, Nugraha, and Nurmawan 2025a).

Conclusion

Campus mosques have proven to function as non-formal educational spaces that combine ritual, intellectual, social, and cultural dimensions. The most effective model is small groups (mentoring—halaqah) that run regularly, are role model-oriented, and are supported by simple rubrics for reflection and participation assessment. This ecosystem strengthens Qur'anic literacy (tahsin—tadabbur—khatam), character and leadership in service, as well as civic mindedness and religious moderation. In Indonesia, success is largely supported by the orderly management of takmir—academic units—student organizations, a modular non-formal curriculum, and mosque architecture that encourages interaction and collaboration across study programs. In Brunei Darussalam, the Malay Islamic Beraja (MIB) philosophy and SPN21 policy create a normative-operational foundation for university mosque-based lifelong learning. A comparison of the two contexts reveals common core elements (adab-ilmu-maslahat) as well as differences in policy and institutional architecture.

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