

CONGREGANTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE MOSQUE LIBRARY AS A CENTER OF ISLAMIC LITERACY

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates congregants' perceptions of the presence and function of mosque libraries and examines the factors that influence their effectiveness as centers of Islamic literacy. A qualitative research design was employed in three major mosques in South Sulawesi: the 99 Domes Asmaul Husna Mosque in Makassar, the Syekh Yusuf Lakiung Mosque in Gowa, and the Grand Mosque of Maros. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews with eight purposively selected participants, and analysis of library management documentation. The findings reveal that although congregants generally demonstrate strong awareness of mosque libraries, their actual engagement with these facilities remains limited. Some view the library as an important source of religious knowledge, while others rely more heavily on oral learning through sermons. Several factors were identified as barriers to optimal use, including limited accessibility, lack of promotion, unattractive physical environments, and outdated collections. In addition, the absence of qualified librarians hinders effective management and the sustainability of literacy programs. The implications of this study suggest that mosque library management should focus on strengthening community outreach, improving facilities and services, regularly updating collections, and integrating digital resources to attract younger audiences. Overall, the findings highlight the untapped potential of mosque libraries as community-based centers of Islamic literacy that can foster lifelong religious learning, promote a culture of reading among Muslims, and enhance the mosque's educational and social roles within society.

Keywords: *Congregants' Perceptions, Islamic Literacy, Mosque Library*

INTRODUCTION

The mosque is known to serve as a center of worship and congregational prayer, while also playing broader roles in the lives of Muslims (Rifa'i, 2016). Since the time of the Prophet Muhammad, the mosque has served as a multifunctional institution that unites spiritual, social, and intellectual dimensions within a single space. Its existence extends beyond being a place of prostration. It also functions as a center of activities that nurture religious awareness, strengthen communal unity, and shape a solid Islamic civilization. Following the example set by the Prophet, the mosque was not only used for ritual worship such as prayer and Qur'an recitation fulfilled various other roles, including serving as a center of learning, a place for issuing legal opinions (fatwas), a venue for dispute resolution, a reception hall for guests and delegations, a site for marriage contracts, a hub for social services, a location for military training, and even a facility for providing healthcare (Kurniawan, 2014).

During the time of the Prophet Muhammad, the mosque functioned as the heart of Muslim community life (Oktarina et al., 2022). The Companions gathered there to receive his guidance directly, study the verses of the Qur'an, understand the teachings of Islam, and discuss the social and political issues faced by the community. The mosque also served as a venue for making strategic decisions related to the public interest (Hayadi et al., 2023). This historical reality demonstrates that, since its earliest establishment, the mosque has functioned as both a center of learning and a hub of community governance.

The concept of the mosque as a center of civilization carries profound meaning. It represents not merely a religious symbol but also a venue for the growth of knowledge and the dissemination of Islamic values (Hasan & Al Fajar, 2025; Handoyo & Khobir, 2025).

In this regard, the mosque plays a vital role as a center of religious and moral education that contributes positively to maintaining harmony within a pluralistic society (Murdan et al., 2022). This dual function, as a place of worship and a center of community activities, has made the mosque a highly influential institution in shaping the character and identity of Muslims throughout history.

In the modern era, the challenges faced by mosques have become increasingly complex (Qanita et al., 2025). The flow of information now moves rapidly and without boundaries, while social media plays a significant role in shaping public opinion. At the same time, the Muslim community's need for authentic Islamic literacy is becoming ever more urgent. These conditions demand that mosques adapt and reinforce their function as a trusted source of knowledge, capable of providing enlightenment amid the overwhelming influx of information mixed with truth and misinformation (Tami et al., 2024; Hariati et al., 2025).

One strategic step to revitalize the mosque's educational role is by optimizing the function of mosque libraries (Rodin et al., 2025). A mosque library is not merely a repository for books but should serve as a center of Islamic literacy that provides relevant and high-quality collections (Effendi, 2020). These may include books of Qur'anic exegesis, collections of hadith, works of Islamic jurisprudence, histories of Islamic civilization, and popular literature that appeals to diverse segments of society.

A mosque library can be categorized as a type of public library that serves the community in accordance with the religion and beliefs of the local congregation. Its primary purpose is to support the development and guidance of the Muslim community (Zalmi et al., 2019). According to Hidayati and Marintan (2024), mosque libraries are classified as public libraries located within the mosque environment

and managed by bodies under the supervision of the mosque administrators. Their existence contributes to expanding knowledge and fostering reading interest among congregants. Meanwhile, Effendi (2020) offers a different perspective, classifying mosque libraries as a special library that functions as literacy centers to meet the intellectual needs of the surrounding community. The success of such libraries depends greatly on active community involvement, which encompasses three main aspects: the provision of adequate reading collections, effective management, and the utilization of the library as a medium for learning and expanding the knowledge of the *ummah*.

Unfortunately, not all mosque libraries are able to function optimally. Many are poorly managed, attract few visitors, and even become neglected due to the absence of clear programs (Murniyanto, 2023). One of the main causes of this condition is the gap between the services provided and the actual needs of the congregants. In many cases, mosque libraries exist merely as symbolic entities without genuine efforts to transform them into active learning facilities (Muliana et al., 2017).

Darodjat and Wahyudhiana (2014) examined the role of mosques in the lives of Muslims, particularly in the field of education. Their study reveals that mosques function not only as places of worship but also hold a vital role in building and strengthening Islamic civilization. Similarly, Effendi (2020) conducted a study focusing specifically on mosque libraries, discussing their roles, benefits, and management challenges. The study concluded that mosque libraries can function as literacy centers that contribute to enhancing both religious and general knowledge within the community.

The research conducted by Murniyanto (2023) provides a more in-depth analysis of the Al-Jihad Mosque Library. The findings indicate that the library not only serves as an information

provider but also plays strategic roles as a facilitator, mediator, motivator, and non-formal educational institution. Furthermore, the study by Hidayati and Marintan (2024) highlights the efforts of the Grand Mosque Library of the Surakarta Palace in preserving ancient manuscripts that form an integral part of the Islamic cultural heritage.

From these various studies, it can be concluded that mosque libraries hold significant potential in supporting literacy and community education. Nevertheless, numerous challenges remain that hinder their optimal function. Interestingly, although many studies have examined mosque libraries, none has specifically focused on congregants' perceptions of their existence and roles.

Therefore, it is important to conduct a study that focuses on congregants' perceptions of mosque libraries. Such perceptions can reflect the level of knowledge, interest, and concern that congregants hold toward these facilities. Through these perceptions, it can be determined whether congregants truly regard the library as a genuine necessity or merely as an additional feature that holds little relevance to their religious lives.

A deeper understanding of congregants' perceptions will enable mosque administrators, librarians, and other stakeholders to formulate more effective library management strategies. These strategies include planning relevant collections, ensuring professional management, conducting creative promotional activities, and organizing literacy programs that attract public interest. With such efforts, mosque libraries can become vibrant and meaningful spaces for all members of the community.

This study also contributes significantly to the development of Islamic library science and religious literacy in Indonesia. Its findings can serve as a reference for evaluation and policy formulation in revitalizing the role of

mosque libraries, not only as places for reading but also as centers for expanding knowledge and shaping the character of the *ummah* based on Islamic values.

Furthermore, the successful revitalization of mosque libraries will strengthen their position as one of the key pillars in building an intelligent, ethical, and adaptive Muslim society. Amid the complexities of the modern era, well-managed mosque libraries can serve as bastions of literacy, guardians of Islamic values, and spaces of inspiration for the emergence of an excellent generation that contributes positively to the nation.

Literature Review

Concept and Functions of the Mosque

Since the early development of Islam, the mosque has not only been regarded as a place for performing ritual worship such as prayer, remembrance (dhikr), or Qur'an recitation. It has also served as a center of activities that integrate religious, social, and educational dimensions for the Muslim community (Khoiri, 2020). Historical records show that the first mosque built by the Prophet Muhammad SAW in Medina, the Quba Mosque, and subsequently the Nabawi Mosque, functioned far beyond serving as places of worship (Umar, 2022). In these mosques, Muslims not only performed prayers but also studied religious teachings, engaged in community discussions, held consultations, and even carried out administrative and governmental functions. This demonstrates that, since the earliest period of Islam, the mosque was designed as a multidimensional institution encompassing spiritual, intellectual, and social aspects simultaneously (Hasan & Al Fajar, 2025). With this broad role, the mosque has become a key pillar in shaping a strong and influential Islamic civilization.

In the modern era, which is marked by new dynamics and challenges, the

function of the mosque has undergone revitalization to ensure its relevance to the increasingly diverse needs of the *ummah*. In a society characterized by the rapid flow of information, technological advancement, and intensified social interaction, mosques are expected to move beyond their traditional roles and serve as centers for learning and the strengthening of religious literacy (Qanita et al., 2025). One strategic initiative in this renewal process is the establishment of mosque libraries. A library should not merely be viewed as a complementary facility but a literacy-based medium of *da'wah* that disseminates authentic religious knowledge while fostering a culture of reading among congregants. With the presence of libraries, mosques have the potential to play a strategic role in enlightening the *ummah*, broadening religious understanding, and reaffirming their position as dynamic centers of Islamic literacy within society (Izaturahmi et al., 2025).

Mosque Libraries and Islamic Literacy

A mosque library can be defined as an information service unit managed under the mosque administration and designed to provide a range of library materials, both Islamic and general in nature (Rosfiantika & Yusup, 2015; Nasrullah & Mulyadi, 2023). Its collections can be accessed by congregants with the primary purpose of supporting learning activities, expanding knowledge, and facilitating *da'wah*. The Islamic materials include sources derived from the Qur'an, Hadith, and various scholarly works on exegesis, Islamic law, history, and other religious disciplines. In this context, Islamic literacy refers not only the ability to read religious texts but also to the capacity to understand, interpret, and apply Islamic values in everyday life (Dinihari et al., 2024). Accordingly, mosque libraries function as strategic instruments for transmitting religious knowledge to congregants in a

systematic, structured, and sustainable manner.

The role of mosque libraries becomes even more relevant when viewed in relation to the concept of information literacy, which refers to the ability to locate, evaluate, and utilize valid and reliable information sources (Khaddafi & Hasan, 2024). As providers of access to diverse knowledge resources, mosque libraries can offer various collections, including books on Quranic commentaries, hadith compilations, fiqh books, historical accounts on Islamic civilization, and works by classical and contemporary Muslim scholars. These resources contribute to deepening congregants' religious understanding while offering broader perspectives on addressing contemporary challenges. With accessible and relevant collections, congregants can utilize mosque libraries as primary references for comprehensive studies of Islam (Malik et al., 2020).

Within societies where reading culture remains relatively weak, mosque libraries hold strategic importances as bridges connecting the rich treasury of Islamic teachings with the community's need for knowledge that guides and shapes daily lives (Effendi, 2020). Through carefully curated collections and well-structured literacy programs, mosque libraries can stimulate reading interest while cultivating critical and reflective thinking among congregants. This role is especially vital in today's information era, which is heavily saturated with misinformation and hoaxes, where the Muslim community increasingly depends on authentic and credible knowledge sources (Akib et al., 2025).

Thus, the mosque library should not be viewed merely a supplementary facility to worship but as one of the essential pillars in developing the intellectual and spiritual capacity of the Muslim community. Its function extends beyond providing books or documents. It also creates a learning environment that

encourages active engagement among congregants (Kurniasih et al., 2015). When managed professionally, equipped with relevant collections, and integrated with structured educational activities, mosque libraries can evolve into dynamic centers of Islamic literacy. Ultimately, this role will reinforce the position of the mosque as an institution that contributes significantly to education, moral development, and the advancement of Islamic civilization amid the challenges of globalization and rapid technological progress.

Conceptual Framework

In psychological studies, perception is defined as a cognitive process through which individuals interpret stimuli from their environment (Nisa et al., 2023). This process involves receiving information, interpreting meaning, and forming impressions of an object or phenomenon. In the context of mosques, congregants' perceptions of the library reflect how they evaluate its existence, role, benefits, and the quality of services provided. These evaluations are not uniform. They are shaped by various factors, including educational background, reading habits, personal experiences in using library services, and perceptions of service quality.

According to the theory of social perception, an individual's evaluation of an object or service is formed through a combination of acquired information, prior experiences, and the surrounding social environment (Fahmi, 2020). In the context of mosque libraries, effective management, relevant collections, and friendly, communicative service will foster positive perceptions. Such perceptions, in turn, influence congregants' engagement level, both in utilizing the facilities and in supporting the sustainability of the library services.

Conversely, when a mosque library is inactive, its collections outdated, or its existence poorly publicized, congregants may fail to recognize its value and perceive

it as insignificant (Zaharani & Primadesi, 2014). Such conditions can hinder the role of the mosque library as a medium for fostering both religious and general literacy within the community. Therefore, congregants' perceptions are not merely indicators of satisfaction with library services but also reflections of how effectively the mosque library has positioned itself as an integral component of learning and *da'wah* activities within the mosque environment.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach, which is considered the most appropriate method for understanding social phenomena and exploring human experiences in depth. Such an approach allows the researcher not only to capture surface realities but also to uncover the meanings underlying respondents' behaviors, perceptions, and experiences (Judijanto et al., 2024). As explained by Haki and Prahastiwi (2024), the qualitative method enables researchers to collect data directly in natural settings, analyze respondents' narratives comprehensive, and present a holistic understanding of the studied context. In this study, the method was used to obtain descriptive information relevant to the behavior of research subjects, particularly concerning their social interactions, habits, and the utilization of available facilities.

The research was conducted at three mosque libraries in South Sulawesi Province, namely the 99 Asmaul Husna Dome Mosque Library in Makassar City, the Syekh Yusuf Lakiung Mosque Library in Gowa Regency, and the Grand Mosque Library in Maros Regency. The selection of these locations was based on considerations of mosque characteristics, congregational backgrounds, and the varying levels of library development. Although only one mosque was selected in each regency, these sites sufficiently represent congregants' perceptions of

mosque libraries. Fieldwork was carried out over two months, from June to July 2025.

Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was employed to examine daily activities in mosque libraries, including interactions between administrators and congregants. In-depth interviews were conducted with eight informants: three congregants from the 99 Asmaul Husna Dome Mosque Library in Makassar City, two congregants from the Syekh Yusuf Lakiung Mosque Library in Gowa Regency, and three congregants from the Grand Mosque Library in Maros Regency. The informants were purposively selected, consisting of active mosque visitors, both frequent and infrequent library users. Meanwhile, documentation was used to collect archives, photos, and records of past and ongoing library management activities. This multi-method approach was designed not only to produce descriptive data but also to enhance the validity of the findings (Daruhadi & Sopiati, 2024).

Data processing involved several stages, including data reduction to filter relevant information, classification to group findings into thematic categories, verification to test data accuracy and consistency, and conclusion drawing based on analytical results (Erlianti et al., 2024). The data were analyzed using a qualitative descriptive technique, in which information obtained from interviews, field notes, and supporting documents was systematically organized for interpretation. The findings of this study provide both a factual overview of mosque library conditions at the research sites and a detailed account of the challenges faced by the administrators in managing them. The results are expected to serve as a foundation for developing more effective management strategies in the future.

DISCUSSION

Congregants' Perceptions of the Mosque Library

Congregants' Awareness

Field observations indicate that the level of congregants' awareness regarding the existence of mosque libraries is relatively high. Most congregants understand that mosques not only serve as places of worship but also provide library facilities accessible to the public. This awareness generally stems from mosque announcements, notice boards, or personal experiences during visits. However, this awareness does not necessarily translate into active utilization of the facilities. Many congregants are aware that the library's existence but do not regularly use it for learning, expanding knowledge, or deepening religious understanding.

One of the main factors contributing to the low level of utilization is the persistence of inaccurate perceptions regarding the mosque library's functions and roles. Some congregants still regard the library as a facility intended only for specific activities, such as limited study groups, religious gatherings, or administrative documentation managed by mosque committees. This perception indirectly restricts participation from the wider community, particularly among congregants who are not involved in these activities. Such a view may foster an impression of exclusivity, leading congregants to feel that the library is not an open or welcoming space for them. As one informant expressed:

"I know there's a library in this mosque, but frankly, I rarely go there. At first, I thought it was only for certain religious study groups, not the general public. So, I felt uneasy about going in." (MH, 2025).

This finding suggests that although awareness of mosque libraries is relatively high, understanding of their openness and accessibility remains limited. Therefore,

mosque administrators need to implement more effective communication strategies to emphasize that the library is a public facility accessible to all congregants. In addition, efforts should be made to eliminate the impression of exclusivity by organizing inclusive literacy programs, promoting diverse collections, and creating a welcoming atmosphere for all groups. Through these measures, mosque libraries can function more effectively as centers of knowledge and learning that truly benefit the wider community.

The physical appearance of the Sheikh Yusuf Lakiung Mosque Library, presented in Figure 1, provides a contextual illustration of the study's findings regarding congregants' awareness and interaction with existing library facilities.

Figure 1: Sheikh Yusuf Lakiung Mosque Library, Gowa Regency



Source: Research photo documents

The Congregation's Views on the Benefits of Mosque Libraries

For some congregants who actively utilize the mosque library, its existence is perceived as significantly beneficial, particularly in supporting independent religious learning. The available reading materials, ranging from Qur'anic commentaries, hadith collections, fiqh books, the history of the development of Islam, to *da'wah* literature, serve as valuable sources of knowledge that enrich understanding and deepen religious insight. The library provides congregants with opportunities to access learning materials beyond regular study sessions or other formal activities, allowing them to

adjust their study time according to their interests, focus, and needs, without being bound to a fixed schedule. As one informant stated:

"I find this library very helpful. I usually borrow books on tafsir (interpretation of the Prophet's teachings) or sirah (religious texts) and read them at home. It's like participating in a religious study, but independently. We can revisit the readings as needed" (AS, 2025).

However, this positive experience is not shared by all congregants. Some prefer to acquire religious knowledge through more direct methods, such as attending sermons, *khutbahs*, or religious studies led by *ustaz* and preachers at the mosque. For them, this approach is more practical, engaging, and conducive to two-way interaction, something difficult to achieve through reading alone. Listening to oral explanations is also perceived as easier to comprehend than reading and analyzing complex texts in books, which require sustained concentration and time. As one informant explained:

"Personally, I find it more engaging to listen to a preacher's sermon. It feels more in-depth, and there's interaction. Reading a book can sometimes make me sleepy, especially if the language is difficult." (HD, 2025).

These differences in learning preference indicate that fostering a reading-based religious literacy culture within mosques remains a distinct challenge. Mosque administrators and library managers need to recognize that not all congregants share the same reading habits or motivations. Therefore, strategies are required to bridge these differences, such as organizing book reviews, literacy discussions, or integrated learning programs that combine text-based study with oral explanations from resource persons. Such initiatives are expected to cultivate reading interest while preserving the interactivity that many congregants continue to value.

Accessibility and Limitations

Accessibility is a key factor that significantly influences the extent to which congregants utilize mosque libraries. In practice, many mosque libraries operate on limited hours, often opening only during specific activities, religious studies, or after congregational prayers. This policy makes it difficult for some congregants, especially those with busy schedules or limited presence at the mosque during operating hours, to make use of available resources. Consequently, the potential of the library as a learning center cannot be evenly experienced by all community members. As one informant stated:

"The library is only open from midday to afternoon prayers, and even then, it sometimes closes if the staff isn't there. So, those of us who work from morning to evening rarely have time" (HD, 2025).

This limitation in service hours is often exacerbated by a relatively static collection, in which books are rarely updated or replenished. Such conditions reduce congregants' interest in visiting the library, as they feel unable to find new, relevant, or engaging materials. In some mosques, this issue is further compounded by the absence of librarians or dedicated managers responsible for collection development, user services, and promoting the library's presence to the public. As one informant stated:

"If there were dedicated staff, the library would be better managed. Currently, it's sometimes open and sometimes closed, depending on who holds the keys" (UM, 2025).

The lack of professional management directly affects service quality. Collections are often poorly maintained, literacy programs are rarely organized, and promotional activities are minimal or nonexistent. In fact, the presence of proactive librarians or managers can serve as a key driver for revitalizing mosque libraries, expanding their reach, enhancing services, and fostering greater community participation.

This condition demonstrates that although many mosques already possess library facilities, their utilization remains suboptimal in terms of both management and strategic development. Without improvements in accessibility, management, and promotion, the mosque library's role in supporting community literacy will continue to face significant limitations.

The Grand Mosque Library in Maros Regency, presented in Figure 2, provides a visual context illustrating the physical conditions and management setting discussed above, reflecting both the potential and constraints of mosque library facilities.

Figure 2. The Grand Mosque Library in Maros Regency



Source: Research photo documents

Factors Influencing the Utilization of Mosque Libraries

Lack of Socialization

Limited socialization is one of the main factors contributing to the low utilization of mosque libraries. In fact, many congregants have a strong interest in reading or studying various Islamic literature, both to broaden their knowledge and deepen their religious understanding. Unfortunately, some of them are unaware that the mosque provides library facilities that can be freely accessed. This situation is further exacerbated by the lack of promotional efforts, whether conducted verbally through announcements during sermons or in writing via notice boards, banners, or the mosque's social media channels. As a result, the existence of the library often appears "hidden" in the eyes

of the congregants/ As one informant acknowledged:

"I just found out this mosque has a library. There's never been any announcement or notice on the information board. So it's understandable that many congregants don't know about it and rarely use it," (RH, 2025).

Some mosque libraries do not have any scheduled announcements or special activities designed to attract congregants to utilize the facilities. The absence of regular announcements, literacy activities, or educational programs means that only a few people are aware of the available book collections, references, and services. In fact, if the library were utilized optimally, it could serve as a center of literacy, a discussion space, and a highly strategic educational resource within the mosque environment. This potential has not been fully realized due to the limited information reaching the congregants, resulting in the library's function not developing as it should.

Lack of Library Attraction

In addition to promotion, the appeal of the library is a key factor determining whether congregants, especially young people, are interested in utilizing mosque libraries. Unfortunately, the condition of most mosque libraries is far from ideal. Reading spaces are often cramped, lighting is inadequate, and the number of chairs and tables is limited, making it uncomfortable for congregants who wish to spend extended time reading or studying. This situation discourages many young people from visiting, as they prefer more representative places, such as public libraries, literacy cafés, or community centers that offer comfort and a modern atmosphere. Consequently, the limitations of physical facilities directly affect the low rate of visits and utilization of mosque libraries. As one informant stated:

"For me, the library feels uncomfortable. The lighting is dim, making it uncomfortable for extended reading. Young people,

especially, prefer bright, comfortable spaces with digital facilities," (KH, 2025)

Beyond spatial and facility-related issues, another challenge faced by mosque libraries is the limited availability of digital-based services. Most still rely on conventional print collections without innovations such as e-books, online catalogs, or access to electronic resources. In fact, the development of information technology demands more adaptive library services that align with the needs of the digital generation. Today's youth tend to be more familiar with information formats that are interactive, easily accessible, and compatible with personal devices such as smartphones or laptops. If mosque libraries continue to rely solely on physical collections, their role will increasingly be marginalized amid the rapid flow of digital information.

This phenomenon indicates that the appeal of mosque libraries is determined not only by the availability of collections but also by the quality of the space, supporting facilities, and the ability to keep up with technological developments. When reading spaces are comfortable and physical collections are complemented by digital information resources, mosque libraries can create a learning atmosphere that is relevant to the needs of contemporary congregants. Therefore, efforts to improve physical facilities while simultaneously digitalizing services represent a strategic step to ensure that mosque libraries remain attractive, especially to younger generations with dynamic learning styles closely connected to technology.

Improved Facilities and Collections

Efforts to improve facilities and enrich collections represent strategic measures that cannot be overlooked in addressing the various challenges faced by mosque libraries. A fundamental aspect is providing more comfortable physical amenities, such as adding reading tables and chairs with ergonomic designs suited

to users' needs. Reading spaces should also be equipped with bright, evenly distributed lighting to prevent eye strain for congregants who wish to read for extended periods. Additionally, proper ventilation or air conditioning enhances comfort and creates a conducive atmosphere, making the library an inviting space for study and discussion.

Beyond physical aspects, the quality of the collection is also a crucial factor determining the sustainability of mosque library utilization. Book collections should be updated regularly, covering religious themes such as tafsir, hadith, fiqh, and Islamic history, as well as general topics relevant to congregants' needs, including science, technology, children's literacy, and life skills development. The dynamic development of society requires libraries to provide information aligned with contemporary trends, ensuring that congregants' needs are genuinely met. With a more diverse collection, mosque libraries can reach various age groups and interests, from children to adults. As one participant argued:

"I think if the collection were updated frequently, the congregation would be more interested in coming. Most of the books here are old, so they're sometimes less relevant to the congregation's current needs," (MH, 2025)

In addition to enhancing facilities and collections, this renewal process also conveys a symbolic message that the mosque library is an active, responsive, and evolving institution. Continuously updated collections foster the perception that the library pays serious attention to the needs of its users. This, in turn, can encourage more frequent visits, as congregants will feel they always discover something new and beneficial when they come. Therefore, improving facilities and updating collections serve not only as a technical strategy but also as a demonstration of the mosque library's commitment to fulfilling its social and educational role within the community.

The physical improvement of mosque library facilities, as depicted in Figure 3, illustrates the evolving efforts of mosque administrators to create more comfortable and inclusive literacy spaces that accommodate diverse congregational needs.

Figure 3. Dome 99 Asmaul Husna Mosque Library



Source: Research photo documents

CLOSING

This study affirms that mosque libraries play an important role as centers of Islamic literacy and as facilities that strengthen the religious understanding of the *ummah*. Field findings indicate that while congregants' awareness of mosque libraries is relatively high, this awareness has not been accompanied by a comparable level of utilization. Many congregants know of the library's existence but do not actively use it, partly due to the misconception that mosque libraries are intended only for specific groups or activities. This perception of exclusivity limits broader participation and prevents the library from fulfilling its inclusive educational potential.

For congregants who actively use the library, it serves as a valuable source of Islamic knowledge, providing access to reading materials such as Qur'anic exegesis, hadith, fiqh, and the Prophet's biography. These users benefit from self-directed learning experiences that expand their understanding beyond formal study sessions. However, some congregants continue to prefer sermons or direct study

circles, which they perceive as more communicative, interactive, and easier to comprehend. These differences in learning preferences underscore the need for adaptive management strategies that integrate text-based literacy with interactive approaches, such as discussions, book reviews, and study sessions that combine reading with guided explanations.

Accessibility also remains a major challenge. Many mosque libraries are open only during limited hours, rarely update their collections, and lack dedicated librarians. This situation makes it difficult for congregants, particularly those with busy schedules, to access the facilities. Without competent management, mosque libraries risk becoming neglected, with stagnant collections and minimal literacy activities. In contrast, the presence of active and trained librarians or managers has significant potential to enhance service quality, promote engagement, and revitalize literacy programs within the mosque environment.

Overall, the findings of this study demonstrate that the utilization of mosque libraries is influenced by three main aspects: the level of congregants' awareness, their perceptions of the library's benefits, and the accessibility of services. To enhance their role, mosque administrators should enhance outreach efforts that emphasize the library's public and inclusive nature, update collections regularly, and improve physical spaces to ensure comfort and inclusivity. Furthermore, support from the government and Islamic educational institutions is essential, whether through providing collections, librarian training, or organizing collaborative literacy initiatives. Through these integrated efforts, mosque libraries can evolve into relevant, inclusive, and sustainable centers of Islamic literacy that respond to the educational needs of contemporary Muslim communities.

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