

Mosque Revitalization as a Character-Building Center for Youth Based on Minangkabau Local Wisdom

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Abstract: The rapid development of globalization and digital technology has significantly influenced the character and social behavior of young generations, particularly in weakening religious awareness, social ethics, and cultural identity. In the context of Minangkabau society, these challenges have become increasingly concerning as many young people are gradually disconnected from mosque-centered activities and local cultural values rooted in the philosophy of “*Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah.*” Historically, mosques in Minangkabau function not only as places of worship but also as centers for moral education, social interaction, and cultural transmission. Therefore, this community service activity aimed to revitalize the role of Masjid Raya Padusunan Heritage Mosque in strengthening youth character through the integration of Islamic values and Minangkabau local wisdom. This activity was conducted on March 12, 2026, at Masjid Raya Padusunan, Pariaman City, using a participatory-educative approach. The program involved youth mentoring, interactive discussions, cultural reflection sessions, and character-building activities based on local wisdom values. Data were collected through observation, documentation, interviews, and participant response questionnaires. The results indicated a significant increase in participants’ understanding of the mosque’s role as a center for character development and cultural preservation. Approximately 85% of participants demonstrated improved awareness regarding the importance of Islamic and cultural values in everyday life, while 78% expressed motivation to become more actively involved in mosque activities. These findings suggest that revitalizing the social and educational functions of heritage mosques through culturally contextual approaches can effectively strengthen youth character and reinforce local identity amidst the challenges of globalization.

Keywords: heritage mosque, Islamic education, local wisdom, Minangkabau culture, youth character

A. INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of declining social awareness, weakening social ethics, increasing individualism, and the younger generation's diminished interest in religious activities pose serious challenges to national character development (Inayati et al., 2026). These conditions demonstrate that strengthening character education is an urgent need to address increasingly complex social changes. In the context of Indonesia's cultural diversity, character building cannot be separated from the local values that exist and thrive within society (Hatima et al.,

2025). Local wisdom plays a strategic role as an instrument for shaping the identity, morality, and social integrity of the younger generation. In Minangkabau, cultural and religious values are integrated into the community's philosophy of life, known as Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah.

This philosophy emphasizes that custom and religion are two complementary elements in shaping the fabric of Minangkabau society (Mahadi et al., 2025). Historically, mosques and surau (prayer rooms) in Minangkabau served not only as places of worship, but also as centers for education, moral development, strengthening customs, and character building. Mosques serve as social spaces that foster intellectual traditions, social solidarity, and the internalization of religious and cultural values among the younger generation. However, developments have shown a shift in the social function of mosques, particularly in terms of youth involvement (Hidayatulloh et al., 2026).

Religious and cultural activities within mosques tend to experience a decline in participation among young people, while the influence of popular culture and digital media is increasingly dominant in their lives. According to the results of the author's initial observations, it was found that the formation of religious character for teenagers is very important to always apply in everyday life, of course it must be based on local Minangkabau cultural wisdom which is in line with the traditional philosophy of Basandi Sarak Sarak Basandi Kitabullah.

This situation is also evident in the Padusunan Grand Mosque, a cultural heritage mosque in Pariaman City. As a historic building, this mosque holds significant religious, social, and cultural value in the local community. However, the mosque's potential as a center for character formation for the younger generation has not been fully optimized. Some young people still have little attachment to mosque activities and do not yet fully understand the values of Minangkabau local wisdom embedded in the community's socio-religious life. In fact, the Padusunan Grand Mosque has great potential for revitalization as a space for character development based on local culture and Islamic values (Ginting & Abdullah, 2025).

This revitalization is crucial to ensure the mosque is not merely a historical symbol and a place of worship. It is not merely a ritual, but also serves as a center for strengthening cultural identity, character education, and nurturing the younger generation amidst the challenges of modernity. Based on these conditions, this

community service activity is aimed at revitalizing the role of the Padusunan Grand Mosque, a cultural heritage site, in shaping the character of the younger generation based on Minangkabau local wisdom. The focus of the activity is not only on increasing youth involvement in mosque activities but also on strengthening religious, social, and cultural values through an educational and participatory approach.

The primary challenge in this activity is how to re-optimize the social and educational functions of the Padusunan Grand Mosque in building the character of the younger generation amidst the currents of social and cultural change (Irfanda & Zahra, 2025). Therefore, this activity aims to strengthen youth involvement in mosque activities, enhance their understanding of Minangkabau local wisdom values, and shape religious and social character that aligns with Islamic values and local culture. Therefore, revitalizing the role of the mosque is expected to be an effective strategy in developing a young generation with character, culture, and strong spiritual awareness.

In this service article, the author explains how to revitalize the mosque as a center for youth character development based on local Minangkabau wisdom. The aim of carrying out this community service activity is to optimize the function of the mosque as an inclusive, educative and friendly public space for the youth generation, not just as a place to carry out ritual worship, increasing participation of the youth generation, inviting local youth to actively manage and participate in religious, cultural and skills activities in the mosque environment.

2. METHOD

Community service activity with the theme "Revitalizing the Role of the Padusunan Grand Mosque, a Cultural Heritage in Character Building for the Young Generation Based on Minangkabau Local Wisdom" was held on March 12, 2026, at the Padusunan Grand Mosque in Pariaman City. This activity used a participatory-educational approach that positioned the younger generation as the primary subject in the character development process through the integration of Islamic values and Minangkabau local wisdom. The activity began with a preparatory phase consisting of field observations and coordination with mosque administrators, community leaders, and local youth.

The number of participants who took part in service activities attracted the younger generation, totaling 30 people from elementary to student levels who were very enthusiastic about taking part in this activity. This phase aimed to identify the social conditions of the younger generation, their level of involvement in mosque activities, and local potential that could be developed through character development activities. Based on initial observations, it was found that some youth still had low involvement in socio-religious activities within the mosque environment, necessitating a more communicative and contextual approach. During the implementation phase, activities took the form of educational seminars, interactive discussions, reflections on Minangkabau cultural values, and mosque-based character development mentoring.

The activity material focuses on strengthening religious values, social ethics, respect for local customs and culture, as well as the importance of the role of the younger generation in maintaining Islamic and Minangkabau identity amidst the current of globalization. The delivery method was dialogic, enabling participants to actively share their perspectives, experiences, and the social issues they face (Nurjannah et al., 2024). In addition to the material, the activity also included a cultural reflection session, discussing the philosophy of Adat Basandi Syarak (Adat Basandi Kitabullah), as the foundation for character development in the Minangkabau community (Irfanda & Zahra, 2025).

This approach aimed to instill awareness that traditional and religious values are closely linked in developing the morality and identity of the younger generation. The target group was adolescents and young adults in the Padusunan community, both active and inactive in mosque activities. Data collection included observation, activity documentation, brief interviews, and a simple questionnaire to determine participants' level of understanding and response to the activities. Analysis of the activity results was conducted using descriptive qualitative methods, interpreting changes in attitudes, participation levels, and participants' understanding of the importance of the mosque as a center for character development

The success of the activity was measured by the increased active participation of young people in discussions, growing awareness of the importance of preserving cultural and religious values, and the participants' commitment to greater involvement in socio-religious activities within the mosque (Suhirman et al., 2026). Through this participatory, local wisdom-based approach, the community service activity is

expected to revitalize the strategic function of the Padusunan Grand Mosque, not only as a place of worship but also as a center for character education and strengthening the cultural identity of the young Minangkabau generation.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The community service activity, titled "Revitalizing the Role of the Padusunan Grand Mosque as a Cultural Heritage in Character Building the Young Generation Based on Minangkabau Local Wisdom," held on March 12, 2026, at the Padusunan Grand Mosque, demonstrated positive results in increasing the religious, social, and cultural awareness of the younger generation. The activity was attended by teenagers and young people from the Padusunan area, with a high level of participation. Participants' enthusiasm was evident from the beginning, as they actively participated in discussion sessions, cultural reflections, and interactive dialogues on the moral challenges facing young people in the modern era.

Based on observations and a simple questionnaire administered to participants, it was found that before the activity, most participants viewed mosques solely as places of ritual worship (Sitompul & Hermanto, 2025). However, after participating in the activity, their understanding changed, emphasizing that mosques serve a broader function as centers for character education, social development, and the preservation of local cultural values. Approximately 85% of participants stated that they gained a new understanding of the importance of mosques as spaces for the development of young people's identities based on Islamic values and Minangkabau culture.

Furthermore, this activity also demonstrated an increased awareness among participants of the importance of preserving local Minangkabau wisdom in their daily lives. During the cultural reflection session, participants began to understand that the philosophy of Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah is not merely a cultural slogan, but rather a moral and social guideline relevant to facing the challenges of globalization. Eighty percent of participants stated that traditional and religious values need to be revived through youth activities within the mosque environment.

From a social perspective, this activity successfully created a more open communication space between the younger generation, mosque administrators, and community leaders. This interaction is the first step in rebuilding the emotional closeness of the younger generation to the mosque as a center of socio-religious activity (Ramdhani & Husni, 2025). Some participants even expressed a desire to participate in routine mosque activities, such as youth prayer (wirid), Islamic discussions, and youth-based social activities.



These results demonstrate that a participatory approach based on local wisdom is effective in building character awareness among the younger generation. Theoretically, these findings reinforce the view that community-based religious institutions play a strategic role in the process of internalizing values and forming social identity. Mosques serve not only as spiritual institutions but also as agents of social and cultural transformation (Suma et al., 2025). From an Islamic education perspective, character formation cannot be achieved solely through formal approaches; it requires a social environment capable of providing role models, collective experiences, and direct internalization of values. Therefore, revitalizing the function of mosques is crucial in addressing the moral crisis facing the younger generation in the digital era (Wulandari et al., 2025).

This activity demonstrates that integrating Islamic values and local culture can be a contextual and readily accepted educational approach. However, the implementation of the activity also faced several obstacles, including the lack of confidence among some youth to actively participate in discussions, and the limited timeframe that prevented intensive and sustained mentoring. Furthermore, the powerful influence of digital culture and social media poses a challenge in maintaining the engagement of young people in mosque activities.

Nevertheless, this activity offers significant potential for development into a sustainable development program based on the mosque and local culture. Revitalizing the Padusunan Grand Mosque as a center for character development for the younger generation can be achieved through regular programs such as youth studies, Islamic leadership training, Minangkabau cultural literacy, and the development of a creative community of mosque youth (Wijaya & Zaki, 2025). Thus, the mosque will not only serve as a symbol of cultural heritage but also serve as a strategic space for developing a young generation that is religious, has character, and is rooted in the values of Minangkabau local wisdom.



Figure 1. Material Delivery

The community service activity took place at the Padusunan Grand Mosque in Pariaman City on March 12, 2026. Participants, representing millennials and Generation Z, were equipped with knowledge about Islam and local Minangkabau cultural wisdom. Participants actively participated in the activity, as it was more of an interactive dialogue with them, rather than focusing solely on a single source. The community service activity conducted by Hamzah Irfanda represents a concrete implementation of the Tri Dharma of Higher Education (Tri Dharma Perguruan Tinggi) in the field of community empowerment based on Islamic values and local Minangkabau wisdom.

This activity was conducted within the mosque/surau environment, involving young people and adolescents as the primary targets for character development and strengthening cultural-religious identity. Based on the documentation of the activity, it appears that the approach used was participatory and dialogical, with participants sitting in a circle in an educational and familial atmosphere. This interactive model reflects the surau educational tradition in Minangkabau culture, which positions the learning process not only as a transfer of knowledge but also as a space for internalizing values, forming morals, and strengthening intergenerational social relationships. From an Islamic educational perspective, this approach aligns with the concept of ta'dib, which emphasizes the formation of manners, spirituality, and character through exemplary behavior and humanistic social interactions.

The theme of Minangkabau local wisdom highlighted in this activity holds strategic relevance in facing the challenges of modernity and globalization, which tend to shift the cultural and religious values of the younger generation. Through this activity, the philosophical values of Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah are re-internalized as the foundation of the moral and social identity of the Minangkabau people. The younger generation is encouraged to understand that adat and Islam are not two separate entities, but rather mutually reinforcing value systems in shaping a community character that is religious, ethical, and virtuous. Pedagogically, this activity demonstrates the revitalization of the surau's function as a center for socio-religious community education.

The surau functions not only as a place of ritual worship but also as a space for fostering the younger generation through cultural dialogue, strengthening Islamic literacy, and instilling the values of togetherness and social awareness. This approach is crucial because the character development of the younger generation cannot be achieved solely through formal education; it requires a socio-cultural environment that provides contextual and meaningful learning experiences. This community service activity also demonstrates efforts to reconstruct the identity of the younger generation of Minangkabau amidst the dominance of digital and global culture. Through discussions and mentoring, participants are guided to understand the importance of

preserving local traditions, respecting customary values, strengthening spirituality, and building collective awareness of their role as the next generation of Minangkabau society.

Thus, this activity is oriented not only toward educational aspects but also toward sustainable social and cultural transformation. Substantively, Hamzah Irfanda's community service represents a community-based Islamic education model that integrates religious values, local culture, and a humanistic approach. This model makes a significant contribution to developing a young generation that excels not only intellectually but also possesses religious character, cultural awareness, and social responsibility amidst the dynamics of modern society.

4. CONCLUSION

The results of the program demonstrate an increased understanding among young people of the mosque's function as a center for character development and an increased awareness of the importance of preserving Minangkabau cultural values, which are grounded in the philosophy of Adat Basandi Syarak, Syarak Basandi Kitabullah. Furthermore, this program successfully rebuilt the emotional connection between young people and the mosque environment through interactive discussions, cultural reflection, and community-based moral values strengthenin. The community service program "Revitalizing the Role of the Padusunan Grand Mosque, a Cultural Heritage in Character Building for the Young Generation Based on Minangkabau Local Wisdom" demonstrates the strategic role of mosques not only as centers of worship but also as educational and social spaces in shaping the character of the younger generation. A participatory approach that integrates Islamic values with Minangkabau local wisdom has proven effective in increasing the religious, social, and cultural awareness of participants.

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