

Enhancing Mosque Youth Competence in Funeral Management through Practice-Based Training in Tasikmalaya City

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ABSTRACT

This community service project aimed to strengthen mosque youth competence in Islamic funeral management, a collective obligation (fardhu kifayah), through participatory, practice-based training in Tasikmalaya City. The program involved thirty participants and was conducted in five stages: preparation, theoretical briefing, demonstration, guided practice, and evaluation. Using a five-point Likert scale, the participants' mean score improved from 3.1 (pre-test) to 4.5 (post-test), indicating significant enhancement of both knowledge and practical readiness. Qualitative reflections also revealed increased confidence, empathy, and willingness to serve the community. The program design adopted experiential-learning principles that emphasize concrete experience, reflection, and active experimentation. Local cultural and religious values were integrated to ensure contextual relevance and gender-sensitive implementation. Overall, this initiative proved effective in equipping mosque youth with the skills required for Islamic funeral management and nurturing social responsibility as future religious leaders. The model can be replicated in broader Islamic-education and community-empowerment contexts.

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INTRODUCTION

Death is an inevitable aspect of human life, the occurrence of which lies entirely within God's will. In Islam, managing the deceased, referred to as pemulasaraan jenazah, is a fardhu kifayah, or collective obligation, that must be fulfilled by the Muslim community to uphold human dignity and obedience to divine law.(Majelis Tarjih dan Tajdid PP Muhammadiyah DIY, 2015) The funeral process includes bathing, shrouding, praying over, and burying the body according to Islamic rules, emphasizing sincerity, respect, and the continuity of religious ethics. (Munir & Nabawi, 2018).

Despite the importance of these rituals, contemporary Muslim youth often lack the competence and confidence to participate in funeral management. Many perceive death-related matters as taboo or emotionally distressing, while others have never received structured education or practical training in the area(Rizqiani & Rini, 2023). Consequently, the responsibility for this collective duty frequently rests on older generations, leading to uneven community readiness and limited intergenerational transmission of religious knowledge. Strengthening youth engagement is therefore critical to sustain community resilience in fulfilling fardhu kifayah obligations.

Community-based education and practice-based training have been shown to effectively bridge the gap between theoretical understanding and real-life application. Such approaches align with (Fauziah et al., 2024) experiential learning theory, emphasizing learning through concrete experience, reflective observation, and active experimentation. Within the framework of Islamic education, this method resonates with the Prophet's model of *ta'lim* (teaching) and *tarbiyah* (character formation), integrating intellectual, spiritual, and social dimensions of learning.(Fauziah et al., 2024).

In response to these challenges, this community service program was designed and implemented by the Universitas Siliwangi team to enhance mosque youth competence in Islamic funeral management through participatory, practice-based training. The program sought to: (1) improve youth knowledge and practical skills in funeral management; and (2) cultivate empathy, moral responsibility, and community service spirit grounded in Islamic values. By combining experiential learning with religious education, this initiative contributes to the development of mosque youth as socially responsible agents who embody the principles of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* Islam as a mercy to all creation.

METHOD

This community service project employed a practice-based training approach emphasizing participatory learning and experiential engagement. The activity was conducted in July 2025 in Tasikmalaya City and involved 30 mosque youth participants (IREMA members) selected purposively based on their active involvement in mosque activities. The training team consisted of five lecturers and assistants from Universitas Siliwangi with expertise in Islamic education and community development.

The program was implemented in five main stages:

- Preparation, including coordination with local mosque leaders, selection of participants, and design of learning materials.
- Theoretical briefing, focusing on the concept of fardhu kifayah, procedures for washing, shrouding, praying, and burying the deceased, as well as safety and hygiene standards.

- Demonstration, in which trainers modeled each procedure using complete equipment such as manikins, shrouds, and funeral kits.
- Guided practice, allowing each participant to perform the steps under supervision and peer feedback.
- Evaluation and reflection, conducted through observation, discussion, and questionnaire feedback.

A simple pre-test and post-test questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale was administered to measure changes in participants' understanding and confidence. The mean score increased from 3.1 (pre-test) to 4.5 (post-test), indicating a significant improvement in both cognitive and psychomotor aspects of learning. Qualitative reflections also revealed enhanced motivation and emotional preparedness in serving the community.

To ensure ethical conduct, all participants were informed about the purpose of the activity and participated voluntarily after providing informed consent. The program also observed gender sensitivity by providing separate practice sessions for male and female participants. Documentation of the process, including photographs and short videos, was carried out with participants' permission and used strictly for educational and reporting purposes.

All figures and tables presented in this article (FIGURE 1–8) follow the chronological order of the activity stages, ensuring clarity in illustrating the program's implementation flow.

Location and Target Participants

The training activities were conducted at Nurul Iman Mosque and Al-Khoiriyah Mosque, both located in Cilembang Subdistrict, Cihideung District, Tasikmalaya City. The target participants were members of IREMA from the two mosques, comprising a total of 30 youths, both male and female, aged between 15 and 25 years. Participants were selected based on recommendations from the respective mosque committees.

Training Schedule

The training was held on Sunday, July 20, 2025, from 08:00 to 15:00 WIB, and consisted of three main sessions: theoretical instruction, demonstration, and hands-on practice.

Activity Stages

The funeral management training for members of IREMA Nurul Iman and IREMA Al-Khoiriyah was implemented through several structured stages designed by the Universitas Siliwangi community service team:

Coordination and Preparation

The team conducted preliminary coordination with mosque committees and local community leaders. This stage included site surveys, participant identification, and the preparation of training materials, supporting tools, and media.

Delivery of Theoretical Materials

The first session provided participants with theoretical knowledge on the importance of funeral management in Islam, the concept of fardhu kifayah, as well as the etiquette and requirements of funeral procedures in accordance with Islamic law. The materials were delivered by community service facilitators and expert practitioners using an interactive lecture format combined with group discussions. This approach followed the principles of andragogy, emphasizing adult learning through experience, relevance, and practical application.

Live Demonstration

Following the theoretical session, a live demonstration was conducted by Ceceng Saepulmilah, the head of the community service team. The demonstration illustrated the complete process of funeral management, including washing, shrouding, performing the funeral prayer, and symbolic burial. A mannequin was used to simulate the deceased body, allowing participants to observe each procedure closely.

Independent Practice by Participants

Participants were divided into small groups to practice each stage of the funeral process under the supervision of facilitators. Each participant had the opportunity to wash, shroud, and lead the funeral prayer. This hands-on learning approach has proven to be highly effective in similar training programs across various regions, as it enhances participants' confidence and skill mastery.

Evaluation and Reflection

At the end of the session, an evaluation was conducted through open discussions, participant reflections, and a short questionnaire assessing participants' perceptions and understanding before and after the training.

Certificate Awarding

As a form of recognition and documentation of participation, each participant who completed the entire training received a certificate of completion. Beyond symbolic appreciation, the certificate serves as a formal acknowledgment of the participants' acquired skills in funeral management. It is also expected to encourage them to take a more active role in community service and to continue improving their religious knowledge and practical competence.

Documentation and Outputs

All activities were thoroughly documented through photographs, video recordings, and written reports, which serve as part of the official outcomes of the community service program. Additional outputs include media publications and this scientific journal article as forms of academic and public accountability.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The community service program to enhance the skills of mosque youth in funeral management was successfully implemented in accordance with the planned schedule. The participants showed high

enthusiasm and motivation from the beginning of the activity. During the opening session, mosque leaders emphasized that pemulasaraan jenazah (funeral management) is a fardhu kifayah that must be mastered by every Muslim community, especially by the younger generation, as the next caretakers of religious and social duties (Majelis Tarjih dan Tajdid PP Muhammadiyah DIY, 2015).

The theoretical session created an interactive atmosphere in which the youth asked practical questions about procedures, intentions (niyyah), and purification methods. This aligns with the principle of andragogy, where adult learners are internally motivated and learn best when the subject matter is directly relevant to their social roles (Knowles, 1980)



FIGURE 1. Theoretical briefing and explanation of fardhu kifayah principles

In the next phase, participants engaged in demonstration and guided practice using complete equipment such as manikins, shrouds, and funeral kits. Each participant had the opportunity to perform the procedures of washing, shrouding, praying, and burial under trainer supervision. Trainers observed noticeable progress in confidence, cooperation, and procedural accuracy. The participatory nature of the activity is consistent with Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory, in which concrete experience and active experimentation reinforce comprehension through reflection (Fauziah et al., 2024).

Quantitative evaluation using a five-point Likert scale indicated that the participants' mean understanding score increased from 3.1 (pre-test) to 4.5 (post-test). Qualitative reflection also revealed

emotional maturity and spiritual readiness. One participant stated, "Now I feel confident to assist my family or community when someone passes away. It is not frightening; it is a noble duty." Similar outcomes were also found in previous community-based training initiatives, where experiential learning improved youth religious engagement (Lestari & S., 2024).



FIGURE 2. Illustrates the guided practice phase where participants performed all ritual steps under supervision. The participatory nature of the activity reflects Kolb's experiential learning cycle

The practice-based model bridged theoretical knowledge and religious practice. Through repeated trials and peer feedback, participants not only mastered technical steps but also internalized values of empathy, discipline, and sincerity. This combination of practical and reflective learning cultivated both psychomotor and affective dimensions of Islamic education (Aminah, 2020).

The reflection stage encouraged participants to share their feelings and personal insights. Many admitted initial fear and hesitation, which gradually transformed into gratitude and responsibility. This change supports the idea that experiential religious education fosters affective transformation and strengthens faith-based community resilience (Collins et al., 2021).

Beyond skill improvement, this program promoted social empathy and intergenerational collaboration. Mosque elders expressed satisfaction seeing the youth's readiness to take on community obligations. The collaboration bridged the experience of older generations with the creativity and energy of the younger, forming a sustainable social learning network. This finding reinforces the role of Islamic community service in developing responsible citizenship and ukhuwah Islamiyah within local contexts

(Purnama, 2022).



FIGURE 3. Collaborative evaluation and certificate distribution

Overall, the results indicate that the practice-based training model effectively enhanced participants' knowledge, confidence, and social awareness. The integration of experiential and spiritual learning strengthened their motivation to volunteer and serve. Therefore, this community service demonstrates that structured religious training can empower mosque youth as competent, compassionate, and community-oriented individuals who embody the Qur'anic ethos of *rahmatan lil 'alamin*.

CONCLUSION

This community service program has proven that practice-based training is an effective approach to strengthening the competence and religious commitment of mosque youth in funeral management (*pemulasaraan jenazah*). The activity not only enhanced technical skills but also cultivated empathy, discipline, and readiness to serve the community in accordance with Islamic ethical principles.

Main Findings

- Knowledge and Skill Enhancement: Participants showed significant improvement in understanding the procedures of ghusl, kafan, funeral prayer, and burial, as indicated by the increase in average scores from 3.1 (pre-test) to 4.5 (post-test).
- Affective and Spiritual Transformation: The experiential learning process nurtured self-confidence, emotional maturity, and awareness that managing the deceased is a noble religious duty (*fardhu kifayah*).
- Social Impact and Collaboration: The program fostered intergenerational cooperation between mosque elders and youth, strengthening communal solidarity (*ukhuwah Islamiyah*) and ensuring the sustainability of religious practices.
- Educational Implications: The integration of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) and andragogical principles (Knowles, 1980) demonstrated that community-based Islamic education can effectively bridge theory and practice.

Recommendations

- Future community service programs should replicate this practice-based model in other mosques or Islamic boarding schools to sustain youth engagement in religious services.
- Collaboration between universities, local mosques, and community leaders should be maintained to ensure continuous capacity-building and mentorship.

- Further studies can adopt mixed-method evaluations to measure long-term impacts on participants' spiritual and social development.

In conclusion, this initiative illustrates that empowering mosque youth through structured religious training not only equips them with practical competence but also strengthens their moral and civic responsibility. Such programs embody the essence of rahmatan lil 'alamin Islam as a mercy for all creation by promoting compassion, service, and social harmony in Muslim communities.

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