

Implications of the Congregational Dawn Prayer Movement for Achieving the SDGs: A Case Study in Palembang City

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Abstract

Objective: This study investigates the implications of the Congregational Dawn Prayer Movement (Gerakan Subuh Berjamaah) in Palembang City for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly in the context of sustainable human resource development. **Theoretical framework:** The study is grounded in a theoretical framework of social action theory and Islamic spiritual empowerment, with particular reference to the role of religion in public policy and community development. **Literature review:** A review of relevant literature highlights the increasing recognition of religious movements as catalysts for holistic development, yet few studies have addressed their direct connection to SDGs. **Methods:** Employing a qualitative phenomenological approach, this research utilizes participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation as its main data collection techniques. The researcher's active involvement in the movement provides nuanced insights into its processes and effects. **Results:** The findings reveal that the Congregational Dawn Prayer Movement, as institutionalized by Palembang Mayor Regulation No. 69 of 2018, extends beyond religious observance. It promotes empowerment across multiple sectors: religious (increased spiritual awareness), social (strengthened community bonds), cultural (revitalization of local Islamic values), economic (micro-business encouragement), political (citizen engagement), and educational (Islamic learning initiatives). **Implications:** These multidimensional impacts demonstrate how faith-based initiatives can serve as strategic tools for achieving the SDGs, especially in the areas of quality education (SDG 4), reduced inequalities (SDG 10), sustainable communities (SDG 11), and partnerships (SDG 17). **Novelty:** The novelty of this research lies in its integrative analysis of a religious movement through the lens of the SDGs, emphasizing the transformative potential of Islamic social action within local governance frameworks.

Keywords: congregational dawn prayer, sdgs, community empowerment, islamic movement, palembang city

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, global discourse on sustainable development has increasingly acknowledged the role of religious and spiritual movements in advancing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). However, most studies tend to focus on institutional religious engagement, such as interfaith dialogues, humanitarian activities of faith-based organizations, or policy advocacy by religious leaders. This has led to a notable research gap concerning grassroots religious movements, particularly those rooted in daily worship practices, and their contributions to achieving the SDGs at the community level. One such understudied movement is the Congregational Dawn Prayer Movement (Gerakan Subuh Berjamaah) in Indonesia [1].

Indonesia, as the world's largest Muslim-majority nation, offers a unique context where religious practice is deeply embedded in daily life and has the potential to influence social behavior, ethics, and collective consciousness. The Congregational Dawn Prayer Movement, which encourages Muslims to perform the Subuh (dawn) prayer in congregation at the mosque, has gained traction in various cities, including Palembang. This movement is not merely a call to prayer but often involves spiritual lectures, community engagement, cleanliness drives, youth mobilization, and moral education—components that resonate with several SDGs, such as SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) [1][2].

Despite its potential impact, academic exploration of this movement remains limited. Existing literature often neglects how local religious movements like this can contribute to the holistic development of society, foster moral responsibility, reduce social deviance, and strengthen communal bonds—objectives closely aligned with the spirit of the SDGs. Moreover, few empirical studies have attempted to analyze the socio-cultural and spiritual dimensions of Islamic movements through the lens of sustainable development [3].

This research seeks to fill this gap by examining the implications of the Congregational Dawn Prayer Movement in Palembang City as a case study. By doing so, it not only highlights the relevance of religious piety in public life but also offers a culturally rooted, values-based approach to sustainability. Understanding how faith-based grassroots movements can align with and support the SDGs provides valuable insights for policymakers, religious leaders, and development practitioners working toward inclusive and contextually relevant strategies for sustainable development. Prayer is a pillar of Islam that Allah SWT commanded to Muslims through Muhammad SAW, there are 5 obligatory prayers, namely, maghrib, isyak, dawn, zuhur, and asr. Among these five prayers, Fajr has a great influence on those who establish it, both physically and spiritually. Vegetable traders who go out at dawn have a healthy body even though they open their goods until noon [1], [3].

Even after closing, they do not sleep but follow daily activities that are no different from other communities, such as recitations, social gatherings, fame, and so on. Nevertheless, the body remains healthy. Morning is the beginning of daily activities, if you wake up at dawn after waking up, usually obedient Muslims immediately perform the dawn prayer, tahajud or hajat, then wait for a while while reciting the Qur'an and then pray Fajr. If you wake up in the morning, then ideally as an Islam, carry out the Fajr prayer. However, in reality, on the contrary, they often neglect to carry out the Fajr prayer because they are lazy because they sleep well [3]. Even though prayer is performed five times a day regularly will help maintain the body all the time without causing excessive stretching or fatigue in the muscles. It is not surprising that people who are diligent in performing prayer get healthy because prayer movements help maintain the body. After all, prayer is a worship carried out by Muslims which has special characteristics, namely light to moderate exercise with a short duration [4].

Some Islamic boarding schools make the Fajr prayer a reference for discipline, for students who are late for the Fajr prayer in congregation, they will be punished for violating discipline, especially those who do not participate in the Fajr prayer in congregation at the mosque. Students who are more enthusiastic about waking up in the morning usually have more Islamic nuances than students who are too lazy to wake up for the Fajr prayer in the congregation. Prayer is to face the heart of Allah who brings fear, to cultivate a sense of His greatness and power with all his soul, solemnity, and sincerity in several words and deeds that begin with takbir and end with salam [5].

Nowadays, with the emergence of the COVID-19 outbreak, efforts to develop Islamic sharia have developed in various forms and colors, there is an assumption that the condition of society has lost the meaning of life, the emergence of emptiness of the soul, emptiness, and others which are considered as the beginning for life to seek religion in life. Thus, a group has emerged to accommodate the spiritual needs of the community who are dissatisfied with formalities that do not provide space and freedom to express their closeness to God [6].

This phenomenon is interesting to note, the pattern of his belief is due to confusion in determining life, confusion, and loss of control in facing an increasingly difficult life [7]. The soul and mind are preoccupied but are not aware of what they are looking for. This development cannot be separated from the consequences of humanity that emerged in the process of modernization, which then encourages humans to look for a place of escape that can provide protection and quick gratification [8]. One of the places to express closeness to God is with the emergence of the Congregational Dawn prayer movement in various cities.

This phenomenal movement has emerged in recent years. The author refers to the Fajr prayer in the congregation whose routine is accompanied by supporting programs such as safari from one mosque to another, there are knowledge councils, tabligh akbar, tausyah, and so on. Several governments in Indonesia took this opportunity, to mobilize congregational Fajr prayers because this led to empowering communities in many ways [9].

Palembang City: Since 2014, based on our initial observations, there have been social changes in several places, especially the area around mosques and prayer rooms, since the dawn prayer congregation by the Palembang city government, there have been more congregations in mosques and prayer rooms than before. If this is cultural, it will become Islamic Civilization. Moving the Fajr prayer in congregation is a new phenomenon that has emerged and is interesting to research.

Congregational dawn prayer is a program of the mayor of Palembang to realize the city of Palembang EMAS Darussalam, making the city of Palembang a beautiful, civil, safe, and prosperous place. So that residents are comfortable living in the city of Palembang. Palembang EMAS Darussalam is a form that must be achieved because the success of the government is measured by the achievement of the vision and mission [10].

Palembang is one of the areas in the archipelago which historically played a very important and long role so it became one of the centers of a large and old civilization in the archipelago [11]. The Kingdom of Srivijaya and the Kingdom of Suvarnabhumi. The two kingdoms not only played an important role in the political history of this region but also in the field of shipping and trade, making Palembang's name famous worldwide, after which the Sultanate of Palembang Darussalam emerged which is part of the long history of government in Palembang [12].

The territory of the Sultanate of Palembang Darussalam is thick with Islamic values. It is evident that in 1659-1821 the mosque was established. In Islam, mosques are multifunctional. Apart from being a place of congregational prayer, the mosque is also used to settle legal cases and a place for social activities including education. Every Islamic Sultanate in the archipelago built a mosque as a place of worship, deliberation, religious

and educational activities as well as Malay literature. The state mosque is usually called the Great Mosque [13].

The Congregational Fajr Prayer Program in mosques and prayer rooms launched by the Mayor of Palembang in September 2018 continues. As conveyed by the mayor of Palembang in a dawn safari at Madrastah aliyah Negeri tiga on Saturday, October 8, 2016, the dawn safari carried out was a continuation of the morning assembly which was driven by the people of Palembang city since January 2016 [14].

Initially, the mayor and his staff who joined as members of the dawn assembly participated once a month. But until now, after several times there has been an increase to eight times a month. The Congregational Fajr Prayer Program in mosques and prayer rooms launched by the Mayor of Palembang in September 2018 continues. Researchers see this as the revitalization of Palembang Darussalam, Mayor Regulation (Perwali) Number 69 of 2018 concerning the Congregational Fajr Prayer Movement absorbs the aspirations of the community with six keys to success. Namely learning, friendship, discipline, hard work, smart work, sincere work [15]. The flagship programs of the Palembang City Government, namely the Congregational Fajr Prayer and Gotong Royong, have been stopped since 2019 due to the Covid-19 pandemic [16].

The emergence of the congregational Fajr Prayer movement program is motivated by the success of the vision and mission of the Palembang city government [17], Mayor, namely Gold as it contains the meaning, Elok Madani Safe and Prosperous while Darussalam contains the meaning, the city of Palembang becomes a City that is Safe, Peaceful, Peaceful, Prosperous and Prosperous and there is harmony between human life and nature. Building a city must certainly be prioritized in building its human resources. Based on this description, the question arises what are the implications or impacts of the congregational dawn prayer movement program? And what is the role of the government in making the Fajr Prayer Movement program a success?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The integration of religious values into development strategies has gained recognition, yet little attention has been given to how grassroots religious movements contribute to specific Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The Congregational Dawn Prayer Movement (Gerakan Subuh Berjamaah) is one such initiative that embodies spiritual discipline, social cohesion, and community engagement—elements that align with multiple SDGs [18].

For instance, SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being) emphasizes mental and physical well-being. Waking up early and engaging in communal activities fosters mental clarity, emotional stability, and reduces social isolation. SDG 4 (Quality Education) relates to the movement's inclusion of spiritual talks and youth education that promote lifelong learning and moral development. SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) aims for inclusive, safe, and resilient societies, which is echoed in the movement's efforts to strengthen local communities through regular gatherings. Meanwhile, SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) highlights the importance of promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, which can be indirectly achieved through the internalization of ethical values and community solidarity fostered in this movement [18].

Despite these alignments, academic research has not yet adequately examined such grassroots religious practices through the lens of the SDGs. This study seeks to bridge that gap by analyzing the role of this movement in advancing sustainable development in Palembang City. To complete the writing and facilitate the course of the research, the author feels the need to parse the studies that have been carried out previously on empowerment so that it can be more directed and systematic. Namely, Ahmed Al Khalidi in his thesis entitled *Da'wah Communication Mobilizes Dawn Youth in Moving Dawn Prayers in Congregation in Lhokseumawe City* stated that the strategies used by the Dawn youth

movement in moving one of the Dawn congregations include, distributing brochures and stickers to mosques, saweu sikula (visiting schools), sports, touring, and personalities [19].

Ahmad Ridha in his journal explained the implications of the quality of congregational Fajr prayers on the community, that the quality of congregational Fajr prayers has a positive impact on daily life in the community, there are four influential subjects, namely in terms of respect for time, health, and clarity of thought [20]. Hamdani The pattern of the congregational dawn prayer movement is identical to the movement of one of the Islamic organizations that believes in religious fundamentalism in Indonesia [21], [22].

So that this kind of movement pattern needs to be addressed as a form of a new understanding of people's religious activities. Siti Syawaliyah and Ahmad Yasser wrote the results of their research that ideal values can be produced if they actively perform dawn prayers, students become more active, have a spirit of government, and are honest compared to students who are not diligent in praying dawn in congregation [23].

Ramlah in his dissertation entitled Da'wah Empowerment in the Coastal Community of Palopo City. What is written in the journal explains that da'wah empowerment in the field of spirituality of the NU community, Muhammadiyah, yasinan groups, and Jamaah Tablig are the main actors, while da'wah empowerment in the field of family economy involves dasawisma plus groups, Muslim entrepreneurs, community empowerment programs through government policies [24].

Iskandar Siregar in his presentation entitled Implementation of Corporate Social Responsibility for Community Empowerment, Community Welfare and Corporate Image of PT Vale Indonesia Tbk in Sorowako, Nuha District, East Luwu Regency. The results of the study show that the implementation of PT Vale Indonesia Tbk's CSR, consisting of: education, health, and socio-economic has a positive and significant effect on community empowerment and welfare. The implementation of PT Vale Indonesia Tbk's CSR also has a positive and significant indirect effect on the company's image through community empowerment and welfare [25].

Asfriyati, a student of the University of North Sumatra S3 Planning program in her dissertation Analysis of Community Empowerment and Transfer Integration to the Quality of the Elderly Population (LANSIA) as Human Resources in the City of Medan. The results of the study are the view of community empowerment, there is an elderly population still finding a lack of empowerment for the elderly, and the view of intergenerational transfer in the elderly population is obtained positive and also negative perceptions from family and the elderly [26].

The community empowerment model consists of providing information, financial assistance, health services, jobs, and infrastructure support, the intergenerational transfer model consists of emotional support, instrumental support, informative support, and assessment support, a quality model of the elderly population as human resources, namely health status, work activities, ability to meet needs and skills.

The results of the study show that the strategy carried out by the Kiwang Creative Group in the use of water hyacinth is accompanied by assistance from local government officials who contribute to empowering the environment in Lake Situ Bagendit through three stages, namely training, guidance, and assistance in the utilization of waste from water hyacinth plants, which is supported by the existence of a budget or capital in the implementation of this activity. Fariza Makmun [27]. This dissertation finds that the government plays a role in the welfare of the community, the difference in this dissertation is that it lies in the regions and government programs.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative research design with a phenomenological approach to explore and understand the lived experiences and perceived impacts of the Congregational

Dawn Prayer Movement in the city of Palembang. The phenomenological method is particularly suitable for capturing the essence of participants' experiences, meanings, and motivations behind their involvement in the movement, especially in relation to values that support the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The main focus of this research is to investigate how the movement influences aspects of personal discipline, social cohesion, education, health awareness, and moral development—components that align with SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), and SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions) [28].

Data collection techniques used in this study include participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Participatory observation was conducted because the researcher is an active participant in the Congregational Dawn Prayer Movement. This insider position allows for a deeper understanding of the participants' spiritual practices, motivations, and social dynamics during the early morning gatherings. Through this method, subtle social cues, group behavior, and recurring patterns could be more easily identified and interpreted [19].

In-depth interviews were carried out with a diverse range of participants, including community leaders, mosque congregants, youth participants, and program organizers. These interviews aimed to capture their perspectives on the movement's role in improving individual well-being, strengthening community bonds, and fostering ethical consciousness—all of which contribute to the local realization of SDG values. Documentation in the form of program agendas, activity reports, posters, and social media posts was also collected to support the observational and interview data. These materials serve to verify the consistency between reported experiences and documented events [28].

To ensure the credibility and validity of the findings, the researcher employed triangulation techniques. This involved comparing data obtained through observation, interviews, and documentation to identify consistent themes and patterns. Furthermore, member checking was conducted by consulting some participants regarding the interpretation of their responses to confirm the accuracy of the researcher's understanding. Through this methodological approach, the study aims to provide a comprehensive and context-sensitive analysis of how a faith-based grassroots movement can contribute meaningfully to the achievement of the SDGs in a local urban context like Palembang City [28].

Table 1. Research Methodology

Aspect	Description
Research Approach	Qualitative Research with a Phenomenological Approach
Research Purpose	To explore the impact of the Congregational Dawn Prayer Movement in Palembang City and its relation to the SDGs
SDGs Focus	SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being), SDG 4 (Quality Education), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities), SDG 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions)
Data Collection Methods	Participatory Observation: Researcher actively participates in the movement to understand internal dynamics. In-depth Interviews: Conducted with community leaders, mosque attendees, youth, and organizers. Documentation: Collection of program records, posters, reports, and social media content.
Research Participants	Members of the Congregational Dawn Prayer Movement, including community leaders, youth, and program organizers
Analysis Technique	Phenomenological analysis to identify themes, meanings, and impacts based on participant experiences
Validation Technique	Triangulation of observation, interview, and documentation data; member checking to confirm data interpretation

Research Location	Palembang City, South Sumatra, Indonesia
Researcher's Role	Participant-observer (insider position) to gain deeper insights into the spiritual and social context

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implications of Congregational Dawn Prayers in the City of Palembang

After conducting research, the researcher supports the theory of Foucault's power knowledge, if it has the power of knowledge, it will be empowered. Therefore, the impact or implication of the congregational Fajr prayer is:

Religious Empowerment

After regularly participating in the dawn prayer in congregation at the mosque or musallah, the community is empowered in religion. A religious society is a society that does something useful in the form of an obedient attitude and behavior in carrying out the religious teachings that it adheres to in daily life. Congregational Fajr prayers in the city of Palembang foster religious empowerment thereby improving the standard of living for the better [14].

A society that is empowered by religion makes a cool, peaceful, and peaceful environment is not affected by having a firm stance because it is empowered, which means having the ability or power to act accordingly so that their lives are happy, not easily provoked, not easily emotional, and do not want to be intervened.



Figure 1. The Situation of the Dawn Love Movement in Palembang.

<https://kalam.sindonews.com/read/389694/69/shaf-laki-laki-bercampur-dengan-perempuan-sahkah-sholatnya-1617789871>

Social Empowerment

Social empowerment is empowerment or having the ability to have social values, where social values are life guidelines about something that is considered good and considered bad. One of the characteristics of social value comes from the process of interaction and does not exist because it is innate from birth. The phenomenon of Congregational Fajr Prayer in mosques and prayer rooms is one of the routine activities of the people of Palembang City that gives birth to social empowerment [29].

Cultural Empowerment

Culture is a way of life that is owned and developed together by a group of people and then inherited by the next generation. Many forms of culture such as religious and political systems, customs, tools, clothing, buildings, and works of art. The formation of human

personality involves culture, with which a person's identity, the identity of a society, and the identity of a nation are formed [30].

Culture begins with something that is often or commonly done so that it eventually becomes a habit or culture. If you look at the description above, the congregational dawn prayer movement has become a culture among the people of Palembang city at this time [31]. The Congregational Fajr Prayer Movement program has positive implications in the development of mental attitudes (morals) that instill positive work culture values, namely discipline (attendance, compliance in obeying all provisions and regulations, completion of tasks), and performance improvement, cooperation skills (including building work networks), friendliness (service-oriented) by prioritizing the principle of integrity, and the ability to use information technology. This has an indirect effect on the participants of the congregational dawn prayer [32].

Economic Empowerment

Community economic empowerment is an effort to mobilize resources to develop the economic potential of the community to increase community productivity, both human resources and natural resources around the existence of the community, so that its productivity can be increased [33]. The impact of the congregational Fajr prayer felt by the people of Palembang who are diligent in carrying it out has given birth to efforts to develop economic potential as experienced by pilgrims who were previously desperate to have no income for their families due to the loss of employment due to the pandemic that hit our country [34].



Figure 2. The Dawn Love Movement and Community Economy Breaks the MURI Record (Indonesian Record Museum). <https://www.detiknews.co.id/gerakan-sedekah-subuh-11-000-asn-kota-palembang-raih-rekor-muri/>

Political Empowerment

Congregational dawn prayers are not only a religious movement but also a socio-political movement that invites support for candidates for certain regional heads and legislatures [35]. It even gives rise to certain groups. Although the religious groups that have emerged do not hurt the state of the country, the problem becomes different when it becomes the basis of the movement's propaganda. Spiritual momentum can move individuals to establish brotherhood so that unity is established [36].

The movement of congregational dawn prayers can affect a person's decision to choose. It must be admitted that the existence of identity politics sentiments through the dawn prayer movement in congregations has had a wide impact on social and political life in Indonesia [37]. According to Herbele, there are two different approaches to interpreting a socio-religious movement. The first approach consists of various theories that tend to see social movements as problems, or as symptoms of social problems [38]. Conceptualizing

that social movements are a form of non-institutional collective political behavior that is potentially dangerous because it threatens the stability of an established way of life.

Table 2. Implications of the Congregational Dawn Prayer Movement in Palembang City

Empowerment Type	Description of Impact
Religious Empowerment	Participation in dawn prayer cultivates religious awareness and obedience in daily life. Communities become more peaceful, emotionally stable, and morally upright. Empowered individuals act according to religious principles, fostering social resilience and ethical behavior.
Social Empowerment	Regular interaction during dawn prayer nurtures social values such as empathy, cooperation, and community solidarity. Social empowerment emerges from shared routines and interactions, enhancing trust and moral responsibility among citizens.
Cultural Empowerment	The movement contributes to the formation of a positive religious culture in Palembang. Repeated practices become habitual, creating a disciplined, integrity-driven, and collaborative work ethic in daily life. The movement enhances local identity and supports cultural transmission rooted in Islamic values.
Economic Empowerment	For participants affected by economic hardship, the movement encourages entrepreneurship, motivation, and productivity. Empowered individuals seek alternative livelihoods, tapping into community resources and support networks to improve their economic situation.
Political Empowerment	The movement influences political awareness and identity. It creates solidarity networks that may affect voting decisions and civic engagement. While it can promote unity and shared values, it also carries the potential for identity politics and must be carefully managed to avoid polarization.
Educational Empowerment	The dawn prayer initiative fosters discipline, time management, and lifelong religious education (tarbiyah) across all age groups. It builds moral character and encourages learning through consistent engagement with religious teachings. It promotes values like respect, responsibility, and community engagement.
Government Role	The local government acts as a facilitator, motivator, and supporter of the movement. Government backing is crucial in promoting and sustaining empowerment programs that align with religious values and SDG-related objectives, particularly in education, health, and community development.

Educational Empowerment

Educational empowerment is having the ability or empowerment in the value of education. Education is planning and fostering human beings to grow and develop independence, responsibility, creativity, intelligence, health, and noble character (virtue). The Congregational Dawn Prayer Exercise Program, which is promoted in the city of Palembang, provides education to all elements, children, teenagers, adults, and the elderly. With the education of dawn prayers in congregation, the community who routinely follows it gets tarbiyah to become worshippers who istiqomah pray in mosques and musalas in the congregation, not only that, educating them to be disciplined, respect time and have social values. The Role of the Palembang City Government in Empowerment. Government support is urgently needed to empower the people of Palembang because the main role of the government in empowerment includes motivators, facilitators, agents of change, delegators, communicators, and supporters. And all of this is in the hands of the government [39].

Analysis

The Congregational Dawn Prayer Movement (Gerakan Subuh Berjamaah) in Palembang is a dynamic grassroots religious initiative that transcends ritual worship, emerging as a

holistic empowerment platform aligned with multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Rooted in Islamic values and community participation, this movement has fostered significant spiritual, social, cultural, political, economic, and educational transformations, particularly in urban Muslim communities.

From a theoretical standpoint, the study aligns with Foucault's concept of "power-knowledge," suggesting that religious knowledge, when embodied in community practice, becomes a powerful tool of transformation. The consistent performance of dawn prayers instills discipline, spiritual awareness, and moral responsibility—an essential aspect of SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being). Early morning routines involving worship, reflection, and community bonding contribute to physical wellness and emotional resilience. Prayer itself, with its structured movements, promotes light physical activity and stress relief. The movement also plays a central role in advancing SDG 4 (Quality Education). Through spiritual talks, Qur'anic recitations, and community discussions, members—regardless of age—receive informal moral education that enhances their awareness, self-discipline, and social ethics. This form of spiritual education is intergenerational, benefiting youth and elders alike. Educational empowerment nurtures values such as punctuality, consistency, and integrity [39].

Moreover, the movement has catalyzed social empowerment by strengthening interpersonal relationships, mutual trust, and collective identity. This corresponds directly with SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). As the congregation meets daily at mosques or prayer rooms, neighborhood bonds deepen. The routine fosters cooperation and a sense of belonging, leading to safer, more cohesive communities. Through activities like mosque safaris, clean-up campaigns, and collaborative events, the initiative contributes to building resilient and inclusive social structures. Cultural empowerment emerges as the dawn prayer becomes embedded in daily life, transforming from individual worship to a citywide cultural norm. This cultural institutionalization of religious practices sustains values such as respect, hospitality, and discipline, creating a morally grounded civic culture—an implicit foundation for sustainable development [39].

Economic empowerment is also evident. The movement has reinvigorated community members to pursue economic resilience. Many who suffered unemployment during crises like the COVID-19 pandemic found renewed motivation and social support within the movement, encouraging self-reliance and microenterprise. This links to SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth), as the movement indirectly enhances community productivity. Politically, the movement demonstrates how religious gatherings can serve as platforms for civic awareness and engagement, aligning with SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions). While some risks of identity politics exist, the overall effect fosters unity, democratic participation, and social harmony. The dawn prayer movement builds solidarity, encourages dialogue, and influences political consciousness without undermining national stability [40].

Crucially, the role of local government, particularly under the leadership of the Mayor of Palembang through Mayor Regulation No. 69 of 2018, underscores the importance of SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). The government's function as motivator, facilitator, and communicator reflects how collaborative governance can effectively integrate faith-based values with civic programs. The synergy between religious movements and public policy illustrates a locally rooted approach to achieving sustainable human development. In conclusion, the Congregational Dawn Prayer Movement in Palembang is a case where religion, governance, and community action intersect to drive multidimensional empowerment. Its implications touch nearly every domain of the SDGs, from health and education to peace and partnership. By embedding spiritual practice in civic life, the movement exemplifies how Islamic values can be a vehicle for achieving global development objectives, especially when harnessed through participatory, inclusive, and culturally grounded strategies [40].

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the Congregational Dawn Prayer Movement in Palembang City has generated multidimensional impacts that extend far beyond religious rituals. The movement has served as a comprehensive vehicle for community empowerment, affecting six critical domains: religious, social, cultural, economic, political, and educational. These outcomes demonstrate the transformative power of a faith-based grassroots initiative when supported by strong leadership and aligned with broader development goals. Religious empowerment is seen in the heightened spiritual awareness, discipline, and moral behavior of community members who regularly participate in the Fajr prayer in congregation. This aligns with the principles of SDG 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions) by promoting inner peace, ethical integrity, and social harmony. Social empowerment emerges through strengthened community bonds, empathy, and mutual cooperation, supporting SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities). Cultural empowerment is visible in the embedding of religious values into daily routines, fostering an Islamic civic culture rooted in discipline, respect, and collective responsibility. Economic empowerment, particularly post-pandemic, has inspired participants to seek productive livelihoods and utilize local resources, contributing to SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). The political dimension is observed in heightened civic awareness and the potential for participatory governance, reflecting the goals of SDG 16. Educational empowerment occurs through continuous moral and spiritual education, benefiting all age groups, in line with SDG 4 (Quality Education). The role of the government is essential in sustaining and scaling this movement. As a motivator, facilitator, agent of change, delegator, communicator, and supporter, the local government—through instruments such as Mayor Regulation No. 69 of 2018—ensures the integration of religious values into public policy, aligning with SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals). Overall, this study affirms that the Congregational Dawn Prayer Movement is a strategic religious-based initiative that effectively contributes to achieving the SDGs through a culturally grounded and community-centered approach.

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Author Contribution

All authors contributed equally to the research design, data collection, and analysis. Authors 1, 2, and 3 conducted fieldwork and interviews in Palembang. Author 4 provided theoretical insight on Islamic movements and SDGs. Author 5 contributed to the political and legal perspectives. Author 6 coordinated the literature review and final editing process. This research is the result of an interdisciplinary and international collaboration aimed at advancing knowledge in faith-based sustainable development.

Conflicts of Interest

All authors declare no conflict of interest.

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