



**INFORMAL ISLAMIC EDUCATION  
FOR MINORITY MUSLIMS:  
Lessons from Chinese Ethnic Minority Muslims  
in Yogyakarta**

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**Abstract:** The Chinese ethnic minority Muslim community is a cultural entity that represents two social crisis poles. This fact motivates them to practice the informal Islamic education method while keeping their religious, social, and cultural backgrounds in mind. This article aims to comprehend and investigate the method of informal Islamic education in Yogyakarta's Chinese ethnic minority Muslim community. This study is a type of field research using a descriptive-analytical case study method. The primary data sources were the DIY (Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta) Chinese Muslim Association of Indonesia's board of directors, members, and the community. Scientific literature and organizational documents are examples of secondary data sources. This study's data collection uses in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation techniques. According to the findings of this study, education with the vision of Islam as *rahmah li al-'ālamīn* takes place in informal environment settings such as the family, community, and society. This vision is translated into various methods behind informal Islamic education in Yogyakarta's ethnic Chinese Muslim minority community.

**Keywords:** Islamic Education, Muslim Minority, Ethnic Chinese

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## Introduction

INDONESIA is the country with the world's largest Muslim population. The existence of the Chinese Muslim minority cannot be denied amid the hegemony of the indigenous Muslim

community.<sup>1</sup> In this context, the ethnic Chinese Muslim group is regarded as a dual minority group. On the one hand, they are a minority ethnic group among the majority of indigenous Indonesians. In terms of religion, however, they are a minority among ethnic Chinese, who are predominantly non-Muslims.<sup>2</sup>

Chinese Muslims are cultural entities that represent two social crisis polarities. This fact encourages the Chinese Muslim community to put their religious, social, and cultural backgrounds into practice when it comes to Islamic education.<sup>3</sup> They are dispersed throughout Indonesia, and there is no valid national survey, so the number of ethnic Chinese Muslims in Indonesia is still unknown. The Chinese Muslim Association of Indonesia (PITI) serves as the umbrella organization for the Chinese community in Indonesia. The establishment of PITI serves as a forum for Muslim Chinese descendants to preserve religious activities and customs in the blood of their descendants throughout the archipelago.<sup>4</sup>

Muslim minorities are frequently marginalized. Academics and researchers in Indonesia have focused on the majority Muslim

<sup>1</sup> Akh Muzakki, "Ethnic Chinese Muslims in Indonesia: An Unfinished Anti-Discrimination Project," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 30, no. 1 (2010): 81–96, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13602001003650630>.

<sup>2</sup> Muh Aswar, "Eksistensi Muslim Tionghoa Dalam Gerakan Pendidikan Islam Di Makassar," *Inspiratif Pendidikan* 8, no. 1 (2019): 178–94, <https://doi.org/10.24252/ip.v8i1.7813>. For the case of Muslim minority religious education, see, for example, Fransiska Widyawati, "Being a Muslim In a Catholic Family and Vice Versa: Religious Education in Mixed-Faith Families in Flores, Eastern Indonesia," *Ulumuna* 26, no. 2 (December 28, 2022): 337–62, <https://doi.org/10.20414/ujis.v26i2.548>; Muhammad Darwis Dasopang, Hj Sammali Bin Hj Adam, and Ismail Fahmi Arrauf Nasution, "Integration of Religion and Culture in Muslim Minority Communities through Islamic Education," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 8, no. 2 (December 31, 2022): 221–38, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v8i2.19445>.

<sup>3</sup> Winarto Eka Wahyudi, "Social Pedagogy Ethnic Minority Muslim (Counter-Radicalism of Chinese Muslims through Islamic Education)," *Edukasia: Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam* 15, no. 1 (2020): 119, <https://doi.org/10.21043/edukasia.v15i1.7360>.

<sup>4</sup> Choirul Mahfud, "Chinese Muslim Community Development in Contemporary Indonesia: Experiences of Piti in East Java," *Studia Islamika* 25, no. 3 (2018): 471–502, <https://doi.org/10.15408/sdi.v25i3.6755>.

group when it comes to Islamic education.<sup>5</sup> However, several researchers have tried to investigate the dynamics of Islamic education in minority communities. Tayeb believes that minority communities face an endless number of problems in his book "Islamic Education in Indonesia and Malaysia Shaping Minds, Saving Souls." The lack of qualified Islamic religious teachers, poor infrastructure and learning materials, warm support from society at large, and insufficient financial support from state governments are among the major issues confronting Islamic educational institutions in minority communities.<sup>6</sup>

Many factors influence the development of Islamic education in a country, including economics, politics, and culture.<sup>7</sup> In this context, the development of the Muslim population's social and cultural life contributes to determining the content and form of Islamic education.<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile, in order to preserve the existence of Islamic education in minority communities, the educational process must be carried out in an appropriate manner that prioritizes political, economic, social, and cultural approaches. Implementing Islamic education must be capable of accommodating all human resources without regard to ethnicity, race, or religion.<sup>9</sup> Islamic education for Muslim minority groups in Western countries is undoubtedly a popular topic, with a focus on

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<sup>5</sup> I Apriliani and T Justitia, "The Implementation of Islamic Education in Muslim Minority Area," *Nazhruna: Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 4, no. 2 (2021): 150–61.

<sup>6</sup> Azmil Tayeb, *Islamic Education in Indonesia and Malaysia Shaping Minds, Saving Souls* (London and New York: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2018), <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781351116862>.

<sup>7</sup> A M Rosyad, "The Integration of Islamic Education and Multicultural Education in Indonesia," *Al-Afkar, Journal For Islamic Studies* 3, no. 1 (2020): 164–81.

<sup>8</sup> Hussin Mutalib, "Islamic Education in Singapore: Present Trends and Challenges for the Future," *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs* 16, no. 2 (1996): 233–40, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13602009608716340>.

<sup>9</sup> Muhamad Thoif Suryadi Bedjo Sudjanto, "Education Management in Islamic Educational Institutions in Moslem Minority Areas: (Case Study of Islamic Education Foundation in Jayawijaya District)," *International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology* 29, no. 4s (March 19, 2020): 1541–45.

issues surrounding Islamic education in institutions,<sup>10</sup> Islamic education strategy,<sup>11</sup> Islamic education typology,<sup>12</sup> Islamic and liberal worldviews in education,<sup>13</sup> and the phenomenon of Islamophobia.<sup>14</sup>

Previous studies on Islamic education in Muslim minority communities focused on formal Islamic education<sup>15</sup> such as Islamic education models,<sup>16</sup> education in formal schools and Islamic boarding schools,<sup>17</sup> and formal education management.<sup>18</sup> In contrast to the existing literature, this study seeks to investigate the methods of informal Islamic education in minority Muslim communities, a topic that has received little attention. This study is significant because Islamic education in Muslim countries and for Muslim minorities is highly contentious and frequently urgent. This is because their Islamic education is primarily concerned with resources and capacities, just as ideology, theology, ethnicity, and

<sup>10</sup> Muhammad Musharraf and Fatima Nabeel, "Schooling Options for Muslim Children Living in Muslim-Minority Countries--A Thematic Literature Review.," *Online Submission* 3, no. 4 (2015): 29–62.

<sup>11</sup> Susan Douglas L. and Munir A. Shaikh, "Defining Islamic Education," *Current Issues in Comparative Education* 7, no. 1 (2004): 5–18.

<sup>12</sup> Douglas L. and Shaikh.

<sup>13</sup> J. Mark Halstead, "An Islamic Concept of Education," *Comparative Education* 40, no. 4 (2004): 517–29, <https://doi.org/10.1080/0305006042000284510>.

<sup>14</sup> Nathalie Vanparys, Dirk Jacobs, and Corinne Torrekens, "The Impact of Dramatic Events on Public Debate Concerning Accommodation of Islam in Europe," *Ethnicities* 13, no. 2 (2013): 209–28, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796812470899>.

<sup>15</sup> Ismail Suardi Wekke and Sabil Mokodenseho, "Religious Teaching and Learning in Minority Muslim of Manado Indonesia" 149, no. Icest (2017): 187–89, <https://doi.org/10.2991/icest-17.2017.62>.

<sup>16</sup> Muhammad Fahmi, "Islamic Education In A Minority Setting:The Translation of Multicultural Education at a Local Pesantren in Bali , Indonesia," *Epistemé: Jurnal Pengembangan Ilmu Keislaman* 15, no. 2 (2020): 345–64, <https://doi.org/10.21274/epis.2020.15.2.345-364>.

<sup>17</sup> Rahmawati et al., "Chinese Ways of Being Good Muslim: From the Cheng Hoo Mosque to Islamic Education and Media Literacy," *Indonesian Journal of Islam and Muslim Societies* 8, no. 2 (2018): 225–52, <https://doi.org/10.18326/ijims.v8i2.225-252>.

<sup>18</sup> Suryadi Bedjo Sudjanto, "Education Management in Islamic Educational Institutions in Moslem Minority Areas: (Case Study of Islamic Education Foundation in Jayawijaya District)."

culture.<sup>19</sup> The experience of Islamic education in Muslim minorities, particularly in terms of exploring ethnic and religious identities, is frequently a source of serious concern. Therefore, the indirect methods of informal Islamic education will be colored by the religious, social, and cultural backgrounds they bring.<sup>20</sup>

This type of field research employs a descriptive-analytical case study method and aims to comprehend, investigate, and elaborate the methods of informal Islamic education among Yogyakarta's ethnic Chinese minority Muslims. The data were gathered through in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Key informants interviewed for this study included PITI DIY DPW's general chairman, PITI Sleman, the vice chairman of PITI Sleman, community members, and community leaders. Furthermore, technical and source triangulation are used in this study to confirm the accuracy of the data. The Miles and Huberman qualitative analysis model is used to carry out the data analysis technique, which includes steps for data reduction, data display, and concluding.<sup>21</sup>

### **Genealogy of the Chinese Muslim Association of Indonesia (PITI) Yogyakarta**

To comprehend and investigate the practice of informal Islamic education in Yogyakarta's Muslim minority community of ethnic Chinese, it is necessary to examine the genealogy of ethnic Chinese Muslims in Yogyakarta and the Chinese Muslim Association of Indonesia (PITI) Yogyakarta. This is because PITI Yogyakarta is a community that guides and accommodates the activities of Yogyakarta's ethnic Chinese Muslims. Furthermore, the historical context of Chinese Muslims in Yogyakarta can help clarify the picture of informal Islamic education in this research.

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<sup>19</sup> Daun Holger and Reza Arjmand, eds., *Handbook of Islamic Education* (Switzerland: Springer Cham, 2018), [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-64683-1\\_9](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-64683-1_9).

<sup>20</sup> Wahyudi, "Social Pedagogy Ethnic Minority Muslim (Counter-Radicalism of Chinese Muslims through Islamic Education)."

<sup>21</sup> Matthew B. Miles, A. Michael Huberman, and Johnny Saldana, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Methods Sourcebook 4th Edition* (London. UK: Sage Publications, 2018).

As a result, from time to time, this section briefly describes the genealogy of PITI Yogyakarta.

The presence of ethnic Chinese Muslims in Yogyakarta today is inextricably linked to the arrival of Chinese Muslims on the island of Java. According to De Graaf, the entry of ethnic Chinese Muslims to Java began in 1413, when a Ming Dynasty fleet carrying thousands of people stopped in Semarang to repair their damaged ships. At the time, several ethnic Chinese Muslim leaders were praying at Semarang's Hanafi Mosque.<sup>22</sup> According to Qurtuby, the Ming Dynasty's journey to Java was political, economic, and Islamization-oriented. This is demonstrated by placing preachers in every location visited to interact with and spread the Islamic religion. Even for various other reasons, preachers can remain on the island of Java for an extended period.<sup>23</sup>

Muljana notes that the Chinese descendants of Jin Bun (suspected of being Raden Patah) played a role in establishing the first Islamic kingdom on the island of Java after jointly destroying the Majapahit kingdom. Muljana believes that ethnic Chinese contributed significantly to the early spread of Islam in the archipelago.<sup>24</sup> Similarly, they have contributed to the Islamization of various regions on the island of Java, including the Special Region of Yogyakarta (DIY). The views of De Graaf and Muljana became significant about the early signs of the arrival of ethnic Chinese Muslims on the island of Java.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> H. J. de Graaf and M. C. Riclefs, *Cina Muslim: Di Jawa Abad XV Dan XVI; Antara Historisitas Dan Mitos*, Cetakan Ke (Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana Yogya, 2004).

<sup>23</sup> Sumanto Al Qurtuby, *Arus Cina-Islam-Jawa Bongkar Sejarah Atas Peranan Tionghoa Dalam Penyebaran Agama Islam Di Nusantara Abad XV & XVI*, Cet 1 (Yogyakarta: Inspeal Press, 2003).

<sup>24</sup> Slamet Muljana, *Runtuhnya Kerajaan Hindu-Jawa Dan Timbulnya Negara-Negara Islam Di Nusantara*, Cetakan Pe (LKIS Pelangi Aksara, 2005).

<sup>25</sup> Ahmad Maftuh Sujana and Nita Nirmalasari, "Budaya Cina Dan Dinamika Tradisi Jawa," *Tsaqôfah: Jurnal Agama Dan Budaya* 17, no. 2 (2019): 82–97.

According to Peter Carey's note, ethnic Chinese Muslims began to enter DIY before 1755 for economic reasons.<sup>26</sup> In line with this viewpoint, Maulana stated that DIY is one area that attracts many people, including Chinese people, to run the economy. Many Chinese people flocked to Yogyakarta in 1755, the year the Sultanate of Yogyakarta was established. Even the number of Chinese people is increasing over time. As a result, the Dutch authorities chose To In as a symbol of the Chinese community in DIY at the time. Furthermore, To In was appointed captain and was tasked with managing the Chinese settlement in Yogyakarta.<sup>27</sup>

The Yogyakarta Palace provided security guarantees at the time as appreciation for contributing to the city's economic development. This drew more Chinese people to do business in Yogyakarta. They came from various regions, including Semarang, Kedu, and Banyumas, and some came directly from China. The Yogyakarta Palace also praised Tan Jin Sing for bringing significant economic progress to Yogyakarta by appointing him as regent. Tan Jin Sing converted to Islam after this appointment and fought for the advancement of Islam in Yogyakarta.

Over time, the Sultanate of Yogyakarta's population regulations required those who wanted to become subjects of the Sultan to use Islamic and Javanese identities. As long as security is guaranteed and can contribute to the palace, the Chinese people accept it, and many convert to Islam.<sup>28</sup> Being a Muslim is a type of

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<sup>26</sup> Peter Carey, *Orang Jawa & Masyarakat Cina (1755-1825)*, Terj (Jakarta: Pustaka Azet, 1996).

<sup>27</sup> Rezza Maulana, "Pergulatan Identitas Tionghoa Muslim: Pengalaman Yogyakarta," *Kontekstualita* 26, no. 1 (2011): 117–35.

<sup>28</sup> Imam Machali and Faiq Ilham Rosyadi, "Potret Moderasi Beragama Pada Masyarakat Muslim Minoritas Etnis Tionghoa Di Yogyakarta," *Kontekstualita: Jurnal Penelitian Sosial Keagamaan* 35, no. 2 (2020): 103–19, <https://doi.org/10.30631/35.2.102-120>. Currently, religious moderation serves a paradigm in Islamic education in Indonesia. See, for example, Lukmanul Hakim, Aziza Meria, and Sartika Suryadinata, "Religious Moderation in Indonesian Context," *Al-Albab* 12, no. 1 (June 27, 2023): 95–112, <https://doi.org/10.24260/alalbab.v12i1.2619>; Moh Wardi et al., "Implementation of Religious Moderation Values through Strengthening Diversity Tolerance in Madrasah," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 2 (December 28, 2023): 241–54, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v9i2.27952>; Zaitun Syahbudin et al., "Developing

blending practiced by ethnic Chinese. Rezza Maulana, in his study, explains that being a Muslim for the Chinese is not strange. Especially in their native country, Ceng Ho is a proud role model and fights for his religious identity well. However, they have their dynamics in interacting with indigenous peoples in Indonesia, especially during the reformation period 1998.

Various acts of discrimination by the government at the time harmed ethnic Chinese and distorted the image of those who had previously been fine. At the same time, there are no socio-religious organizations in Indonesia that specifically support Chinese Muslims. As a result, they took the initiative to create a forum that could bring them together. The establishment of the Central Chinese Muslim Association of Indonesia (PITI) in 1961 was a breath of fresh air for the Chinese Muslim minority in Indonesia, allowing them to enjoy the benefits and welfare of a free life. PITI's task as a socio-religious organization is to organize various activities to improve the quality of knowledge and experience of Islamic teachings in societal and state life. Furthermore, the goal of PITI is to actualize *Islam as rahmatan lil 'alamin* in order to fully implement Islamic teachings (*kaffah*).

PITI DIY (Yogyakarta Special Region) was founded on September 20, 1970, nearly a decade after PITI Pusat. This is due to the Chinese Muslim population in Yogyakarta's slow political awareness and organization rise. Because of their status as a minority among Chinese, the ethnic Chinese Muslim minority is slow to establish socio-religious organizations.<sup>29</sup> PITI DIY was founded on June 18, 1970, not out of internal political awareness but on the initiative of several figures from the Indonesian Hajj Brotherhood (PDHI), including Prof. H. Kahar Muzakir. The mere existence of PITI DIY is a breath of fresh air in social life. This

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Students' Religious Moderation through Group Counseling at Islamic Higher Education," *Jurnal Pendidikan Islam* 9, no. 1 (June 30, 2023): 15–28, <https://doi.org/10.15575/jpi.v0i0.22977>; Edi Kuswanto et al., "Internalizing Islamic Moderation: A Model Approach for Educational Institutions," *IJoReSH: Indonesian Journal of Religion, Spirituality, and Humanity* 2, no. 1 (June 30, 2023): 93–113, <https://ejournal.uinsalatiga.ac.id/index.php/ijores/article/view/212>.

<sup>29</sup> Maulana, "Pergulatan Identitas Tionghoa Muslim: Pengalaman Yogyakarta."



organization was founded using religious techniques to integrate and bridge the gap between the Chinese ethnic minority and society.<sup>30</sup>

Following the formation of PITI DIY, the expression of Chinese Muslim activities in various fields became more visible. The PITI organization has become much more organized, particularly in the last decade. Various educational activities, such as member development, regular recitations, Ramadhan safaris, and religious lectures, are routinely carried out. Meanwhile, they held a cheap market in the social sector, provided clean water and social services in the Gunung Kidul and Sleman areas, provided free medical treatment, broke fast together, donated to orphans, and repaired and built mosques. One of these educational and social activities is critical to their survival as a minority group in Yogyakarta.<sup>31</sup>

PITI DIY is located in a student city and has a distinct personality from the other PITI Regional Coordinators. Yogyakarta's intellectual climate is more conducive than Jakarta, Surabaya, or Semarang, which have more industrial climates. Many educational institutions and religious communities contribute to this intellectual climate. This intellectual climate serves as a "wetland" for the ethnic Chinese Muslim minority community in Yogyakarta to actualize Islamic religious values.<sup>32</sup>

### **The Methods of Informal Islamic Education in Chinese Muslim Minority Groups in Yogyakarta**

Islamic education can be defined as Islam's physical and spiritual guidance toward forming a complete personality based on Islamic religious parameters. Islamic education experts such as

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<sup>30</sup> Hamada Adzani Mahaswara, "Muslim Tionghoa Sebagai Jembatan Budaya: Studi Tentang Partisipasi Dan Dinamika Organisasi PITI Yogyakarta," *SHAHIH: Journal of Islamicate Multidisciplinary* 2, no. 1 (2017): 79, <https://doi.org/10.22515/shahih.v2i1.704>.

<sup>31</sup> Machali and Rosyadi, "Potret Moderasi Beragama Pada Masyarakat Muslim Minoritas Etnis Tionghoa Di Yogyakarta."

<sup>32</sup> Fahmi Rafika Perdana, "Integrasi Sosial Muslim-Tionghoa Studi Atas Partisipasi PITI DIY Dalam Gerakan Pembauran," *Jurnal Sosiologi Agama* 9, no. 2 (2017): 105, <https://doi.org/10.14421/jsa.2015.092-06>.

al-Abrasyi, Al-Nahlawi, al-Syaibani, and al-Ainani all agree that Islamic education is focused on *ḥablu min al-Lāh* (human relations with Allah), *ḥablu min al-nās* (human relations with humans), and *ḥablu min al-'alam* (human relations with nature).<sup>33</sup> Concerning the first goal, human relationship with Allah, Islamic education should increase one's faith, piety, and devotion to Allah. Education should shape a person with noble character in personal life, society, nation, and state in terms of human relations with humans. Meanwhile, education must direct someone capable of maintaining and caring for the sustainability of the surrounding natural environment about human relations with nature.<sup>34</sup>

Islamic education occurs not only within the framework of formal education but also within the framework of informal education. According to Undang-Undang No. 20 of 2003 on the National Education System, education is delivered through three channels: formal, non-formal, and informal. If formal education is closely related to school education, then non-formal and informal education are closely related to community education.<sup>35</sup> Informal educational settings play a more significant role in internalizing wisdom values that lead to harmony.<sup>36</sup>

Informal education is a lifelong process through which each individual gains attitudes, values, skills, and knowledge through empirical experience.<sup>37</sup> While on the other hand, formal education is a highly institutionalized, chronologically graded, and well-

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<sup>33</sup> Moch Tolehah and Muhammad Afran Mu'ammam, "Islamic Education in The Globalization Era; Challenges, Opportunities, and Contribution of Islamic Education in Indonesia," *Humanities & Social Sciences Reviews* 7, no. 4 (2019): 1031–37.

<sup>34</sup> Ahmad Tafsir, *Ilmu Pendidikan Dalam Perspektif Islam* (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya, 1994).

<sup>35</sup> Elih Sudiapermana, "Pendidikan Informal: Reposisi, Pengakuan Dan Penghargaan," *Jurnal Pendidikan Luar Sekolah* 4, no. 2 (2009).

<sup>36</sup> Julien Biringan, "Internalisasi Nilai Melalui Pendidikan Informal Dalam Prospek Perubahan Sosial," *Jurnal Civic Education: Media Kajian Pancasila Dan Kewarganegaraan* 4, no. 2 (2021): 34, <https://doi.org/10.36412/ce.v4i2.2371>.

<sup>37</sup> Tony Jeffs and Mark K. Smith, "The Education of Informal Educators," *Education Sciences* 11, no. 9 (2021): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci11090488>.

organized education system.<sup>38</sup> Informal education occurs in an unorganized, non-institutional setting and needs a clearly defined goal regarding learning outcomes. Informal education learning occurs in all societal spaces, including family, community activities, and society. The ethnic Chinese Muslim minority group in Yogyakarta conducts Islamic education in the context of informal education.<sup>39</sup>

### **Methods of Informal Islamic Education in Chinese Muslim Minority Family**

The family is a person's first educational institution. The family environment is a person's first point of contact before interacting with the school and community environments. As the first educational institution, the family plays a critical role in developing one's abilities intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually.<sup>40</sup> Similarly, the family is active in Islamic education activities for Yogyakarta's ethnic Chinese minority Muslim community. Internalization of Islamic values and teachings, understanding of obligations and prohibitions as a Muslim, responsibility, and tolerance, among other things, are examples of educational activities. According to one of the study's informants:

"Of course, our primary responsibility as parents is to set a good example for our children. If the parents have acted well, the child can observe and imitate. Furthermore, we give advice for the greater good, and if we make mistakes, we forgive and remind each other" (Interview, Mr. Hendrik, 15 Dec 2021).

"I always instilled Islamic teachings and faith in my family, but I never used force to educate them. I teach slowly, sometimes through advice, sometimes through dialogue" (Interview, Ms. Linda, 15 Dec 2021)

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<sup>38</sup> Kamiz Uddin Ahmed Alam and Mohammad Aman Uddin Muzahid, "Informal Islamic Education and Its Role in Human Resource Development in Society: A Theoretical Evaluation," *IJUC Studies* 3, no. December (2006): 83–92.

<sup>39</sup> Miquel Àngel Essomba et al., "Education for Sustainable Development in Educating Cities: Towards a Transformative Approach from Informal and Non-Formal Education," *Sustainability (Switzerland)* 14, no. 7 (2022), <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14074005>.

<sup>40</sup> Afiful Ikhwan, Oktio Frenki Biantoro, and Ali Rohmad, "The Role of the Family in Internalizing Islamic Values," *Dinamika Ilmu* 19, no. 2 (2019): 323–35, <https://doi.org/10.21093/di.v19i2.1746>.

The exemplary method is the primary method used by the Chinese ethnic minority Muslim community in teaching Islam in the family. They strive to be examples of kindness to teach others kindness. Exemplary is one of the most effective educational techniques.<sup>41</sup> The exemplary method improves a person's habits, behavior, and attitudes. Humans, particularly children, have desired to imitate and identify with other people's behavior since childhood, particularly towards their parents and teachers.<sup>42</sup>

One method used by the ethnic Chinese Muslim minority to educate their family members is the advice and warning method. The advice method encourages family members to follow Islamic teachings and other positive values. Then, the warning method is used to remind people when they make mistakes and to keep family members from doing things that are harmful to themselves or others. According to Abdul Hai, the method of advice and warning is essential in maintaining truth and goodness, so it is obligatory in this case in Islam.<sup>43</sup>

Dialogue, on the other hand, is a method for parents to teach Islam in the Chinese Muslim minority family environment. They use dialogue to instill faith and comprehension of religious teachings. According to Muhammad Azmi, this method is dynamic in which the educational process becomes easier to understand and adapt to the child's circumstances. The dialogue method is essential because it allows parents to know the level of development of their children's thinking about religious values and teachings while also creating a relaxed atmosphere of conversation.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> Azizah Munawwaroh, "Keteladanan Sebagai Metode Pendidikan Karakter," *Jurnal Penelitian Pendidikan Islam* 7, no. 2 (2019): 141, <https://doi.org/10.36667/jppi.v7i2.363>.

<sup>42</sup> Ali Mustofa, "Metode Keteladanan Perspektif Pendidikan Islam," *CENDEKIA: Jurnal Studi Keislaman* 5, no. 1 (2019), <https://doi.org/10.37348/cendekia.v5i1.71>.

<sup>43</sup> Kemas Abdul Hai, "The Islamic Education Methods in Al-Quran," *Ta'dib: Journal of Islamic Education* 22, no. 1 (2017): 48–57.

<sup>44</sup> Muhammad Azmi, *Pembinaan Akhlak Anak Usia Pra Sekolah* (Yogyakarta: Penerbit Belukar, 2006).

This finding is consistent with Zulfikar and Emawati's study, which found that in the context of Muslim minorities, parents use exemplary dialogue and avoid coercion to teach Islam to their children.<sup>45</sup> This study, on the other hand, supports the views of Muslims and Firdausia. They argue that in religious education, various methods such as *wah Hashanah*, advice, warning, and punishment can be used to carry out the educational process.<sup>46</sup>

### **Methods of Informal Islamic Education in the Chinese Ethnic Minority Muslim Community**

The Chinese Muslim minority community in Yogyakarta is represented by the Chinese Muslim Association of Indonesia Special Region of Yogyakarta (PITI DIY). PITI DIY is a community that actively participates in religious, economic, social, and educational activities. In the context of education, PITI DIY is not only a supporter but also an essential tool in the ongoing process of informal education in Yogyakarta's Chinese Muslim minority community.<sup>47</sup> PITI DIY does not support any Islamic groups, including NU and Muhammadiyah, nor is it affiliated with any Islamic sect. This is done in order to keep inter-religious harmony in Yogyakarta. The vision of PITI, as expressed in the Articles of Association of the results of the II National Conference, does not favor one group over another. The vision of PITI is to realize Islam as *rahmatan li al-alamin* through economic, social, cultural, and environmental activities.

In contrast to other Islamic organizations in Indonesia, such as Muhammadiyah and NU, which have institutions or physical buildings for education, PITI DIY's education program is informal.

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<sup>45</sup> Teuku Zulfikar and Emawati, "ISLAMIC EDUCATION AND RELIGIOSITY: Voices of the Indonesian Muslim Communities in Australia," *Ullumuna: Journal of Islamic Studies* 24, no. 1 (2020): 24–56, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1012690207077705.3>.

<sup>46</sup> Ahmad Buchori Muslim and Nury Firdausia, "Religious Education Curriculum in the Family: Islamic Perspective," *AJMIE: Athikam Journal of Multidisciplinary Islamic Education* 2, no. 1 (2021): 49, <https://doi.org/10.32478/ajmie.v2i1.730>.

<sup>47</sup> Machali and Rosyadi, "Potret Moderasi Beragama Pada Masyarakat Muslim Minoritas Etnis Tionghoa Di Yogyakarta."

The DIY PITI community has only informal programs, but they strive to benefit members and the general public. As a result, PITI DIY works with various groups, including academics and practitioners, as well as other organizations that consistently support tolerance, democracy, and an openness to multiculturalism. This is done through Islamic education activities to realize Islam as *rahmatan li al-Alamin*. As stated in the Socio-Cultural and Education Program, there are other specific points: 1) participating in exploring and preserving local culture that is not against Islamic law, 2) Disseminating Islamic culture to Chinese Muslims in particular and society in general, and 3) disseminating Chinese Islamic cultures to Chinese Muslims and Indonesian people.

PITI's vision was then translated into various educational methods. Based on observations and interviews, it is clear that the ethnic Chinese minority Muslim community employs a variety of methods in the process of Islamic education. As Hj Budi stated:

“We are active in carrying out Islamic da'wah (amar ma'ruf nahi munkar), the way is with lectures, to improve the quality of understanding and practicing Islamic teachings in the life of the nation and state. Also involves figures who understand more about religion” (Interview, Ms. Hj Budi, December 2, 2021).

According to the findings of the interview, PITI DIY, a community for ethnic Chinese Muslims, is actively engaged in Islamic da'wah. One type of Islamic education activity is Islamic recitation/da'wah, closely related to efforts to reform Islamic teachings. Da'wah encompasses monotheism, sharia, muamalah, aqidah, and morals in general. In many ways, Muslim society requires not only an Islamic environment but also an understanding of a worldview that acknowledges the existence of a Creator (Allah) in all aspects of life.<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, this religious study aims to raise public religious awareness, both in terms of knowledge and action.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Amjad Hussain, “Islamic Education: Why Is There a Need for It?,” *Journal of Beliefs and Values* 25, no. 3 (2004): 317–23, <https://doi.org/10.1080/1361767042000306130>.

<sup>49</sup> Elva Oktavia and Refika Mastanora, “Manfaat Mengikuti Pengajian Rutin Dalam Meningkatkan Kesadaran Beragama Masyarakat,” *Istinarah: Riset*

Based on the data from the informants, the da'wah activities are meant to foster Chinese Muslims in terms of aqidah, Islamic sharia, and muamalah to foster harmony among Muslims in the neighborhood. The da'wah method, which involves communicating educational material to the larger community through oral narration, is used. According to Syahraini Tambak, the da'wah method is one of the most widely used methods for conveying or inviting others to follow certain teachings.<sup>50</sup>

The Chinese ethnic minority Muslim community gathered at PITI DIY uses the discussion and lecture methods in the education process. This method is used in various tabligh/recitation activities throughout the month. Monthly recitation activities are carried out among Chinese Muslims, specifically by holding recitations that have been going on for decades, namely once a month and attended by approximately 50 people, to increase ukhuwah Islamiyah among Chinese Muslims. Ms. Tio Po Chu stated as follows:

“We frequently hold tabligh events, as well as regular monthly recitations, on various occasions. The recitation has been going on for a very long time, probably 25 to 30 years. Approximately 50 worshipers usually follow. We always set aside time at each tabligh for a question-and-answer session so that the congregation can ask questions about problems they are facing or things they don't understand, particularly about monotheism, sharia, and muamalah in Islam.” (Interview, Ms. Tio Po Chu, December 21, 2021).

PITI DIY has been organizing recitations for about thirty years. This is a long time for a regular monthly religious education activity.<sup>51</sup> Recitation materials are frequently associated with religious holidays, national holidays, Chinese ethnic culture, etc. They frequently employ the question-and-answer method. At the end of each recitation session, there is always time for the congregation to ask questions. According to Kemas Abdul Hai, the question-and-answer method is sometimes helpful in dispelling

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*Keagamaan, Sosial Dan Budaya* 1, no. 2 (2020): 74, <https://doi.org/10.31958/istinarah.v1i2.1816>.

<sup>50</sup> Syahraini Tambak, “Metode Ceramah: Konsep Dan Aplikasi Dalam Pembelajaran Pendidikan Agama Islam,” *Jurnal Tarbiyah* 21, no. 2 (2014): 375–401.

<sup>51</sup> Mahaswara, “Muslim Tionghoa Sebagai Jembatan Budaya: Studi Tentang Partisipasi Dan Dinamika Organisasi PITI Yogyakarta.”

someone's doubts about something. This is because questions can arise as a result of someone's ignorance. Furthermore, the question-and-answer method can aid in developing a person's thought process.<sup>52</sup>

Using Wahyudi's terminology, the portrait of Islamic education in Yogyakarta's ethnic Chinese Muslim community is identical to the term social pedagogy. In general, social pedagogy requires community involvement in educational efforts. According to this point of view, community presence can also be used to intervene more flexibly in education, to foster relationships between individuals and society, and to assist members in avoiding exclusion.<sup>53</sup> Meanwhile, it shares similarities with Asfiati's study on the educational dynamics of the Chinese Muslim community in Padangsidempuan City regarding Islamic education activities in the ethnic Chinese Muslim community in Yogyakarta.<sup>54</sup> According to her, Islamic education can be implemented in ethnic Chinese Muslim minorities through community programs such as recitations/taklim assemblies and knowledge councils.

### **Methods of Informal Islamic Education in Chinese Ethnic Minority Muslim Society**

As stated in the previous sub-chapter, this study investigates the methods of informal Islamic education in the ethnic Chinese minority Muslim community, focusing on membership activities in that community. In this sub-chapter, researchers investigate how their educational methods relate to the larger community. PITI is an open organization and is happy to cooperate with other organizations. This openness obscures PITI's tendency to be an exclusive organization. On several occasions, PITI, along with the Chinese Muslim community, collaborated with organizations such as NU and Muhammadiyah to hold various religious events such

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<sup>52</sup> Hai, "The Islamic Education Methods in Al-Quran."

<sup>53</sup> Wahyudi, "Social Pedagogy Ethnic Minority Muslim (Counter-Radicalism of Chinese Muslims through Islamic Education)."

<sup>54</sup> Asfiati Asfiati, "Dinamika Penyelenggaraan Pendidikan Keagamaan Islam Etnis Tionghoa Muslim Di Kota Padangsidempuan," *Jurnal Konseling Dan Pendidikan* 7, no. 2 (2019): 62, <https://doi.org/10.29210/138200>.



as monthly recitations, joint Chinese New Year recitations, and commemoration of the joint sacrifice day. This indicates that they are open to various schools of thought in order to create a harmonious life. They understand the different understandings that develop amid their religious life.

As a minority group, PITI DIY and the Chinese Muslim community in Yogyakarta take a unique method of Islamic education. One method is to mix traditional Chinese culture with regional variations. Culture results from human creation and labor in the form of norms, values, beliefs, and behaviors held by members of a specific society. In a broad sense, culture can take the form of ideals such as ideas, values, and patterned human behavior in society.<sup>55</sup>

"So far, we do not see Chinese New Year as a specific *aqidah*/belief, but rather as a cultural identity that we use for *syiar* and education." (Interview, Ms. Tio Po Chu, December 21, 2021).

Based on the findings of these interviews, it is clear that ethnic Chinese Muslims in Yogyakarta prioritize their culture when it comes to Islamic education. According to Kadir and Hidayat, the contextual method is the educational method used by Yogyakarta's ethnic Chinese Muslim minority. This is evident in their educational process, which connects it to the context of everyday life, particularly their personal, social, and cultural environment.<sup>56,57</sup> After all, culture has a set of values/local wisdom that can be used to teach someone.<sup>58</sup>

"For example, there were approximately 13 Chinese associations in Yogyakarta during the cultural week, which was held in collaboration with other Chinese associations. We see this as a field of education and friendship, with the goal of strengthening brotherhood among Chinese

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<sup>55</sup> Eva Iryani, "Mankna Budaya Dalam Pendidikan," *Jurnal Ilmiah Universitas Batanghari Jambi* 14, no. 3 (2014): 129–34.

<sup>56</sup> Abdul Kadir, "Konsep Pembelajaran Kontekstual Di Sekolah," *Dinamika Ilmu* 13, no. 1 (2013): 17–38.

<sup>57</sup> Muhtar S. Hidayat, "Pendekatan Kontekstual Dalam Pembelajaran," *INSANIA: Jurnal Pemikiran Alternatif Kependidikan* 17, no. 2 (2012): 231–47.

<sup>58</sup> Ariffiana Zelfi, "Proses Pembentukan Nilai-Nilai Agama Pada Anak Usia Dini Dalam Keluarga Di Kampung Gambiran Pandeyan Umbulharjo Yogyakarta," *Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini* edisi 1 (2017): 5–9.

Muslims and ethnic Chinese in general." (Interview, Bambang Bergen, 21 December 2021).

Islamic education in Chinese Muslims cannot be understood solely through normative reasoning or knowledge transfer. In contrast, Islamic education can transmit social values and preserve cultural traditions among Chinese Muslims. This approach demonstrates that implementing Islamic education for Chinese Muslims can also be an acculturation process (enculturation). Acculturation is a social process that arises when a certain culture is confronted with elements from a foreign culture in such a way that the elements of the foreign culture are gradually accepted without causing the loss of the original culture. This study supports the findings of Ismail Suardi Wekke, who uses culture to educate the Muslim minority community in Pattani. According to Ismail Suardi Wekke et al., the Muslim minority in Pattani attempted to integrate ethnic and religious elements into their education system. They carry out educational practices consistent with their ethnic and cultural identities.<sup>59</sup>

In addition to cultural education, Yogyakarta's ethnic Chinese Muslim minority community empowers mosques as centers of Islamic education. They use the mosque to learn and teach, particularly Islamic sciences. The mosque is also designated as a place to foster faith, piety, and faith in Yogyakarta's ethnic Chinese Muslim minority group. According to the findings of the interviews, the Chinese Muslim minority community empowers mosques in various activities, such as Chinese New Year commemorations and da'wah safaris. As stated by Ms. Tio Po Chu:

"If our fellow Muslims collaborate, such as through an educational program, it is similar to recitation in collaboration with other Islamic organizations. Moving from one mosque to another while reciting Chinese New Year. Then there is the da'wah safari, which takes place during Ramadan and involves visiting different mosques." (Interview, Tio Po Chu, December 21, 2021).

The Chinese New Year celebrations were initially held at the Syuhada Mosque, an old mosque in Yogyakarta's Kota Baru

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<sup>59</sup> Ismail Suardi Wekke, Siddin Siddin, and Sukree Langputeh, "Islamic Education in Thailand Pattani Muslim Minority: What Are the Institutional Continuity and Change?," *Tadris: Jurnal Keguruan Dan Ilmu Tarbiyah* 4, no. 1 (2019): 127–34, <https://doi.org/10.24042/tadris.v4i1.3753>.

neighborhood. The following year, Chinese New Year celebrations were carried out guerrilla-style from mosque to mosque. The PITI Yogyakarta management used the momentum of Chinese New Year to promote the Chinese Muslim community as individuals who adhere to religious teachings without abandoning their culture. In their opinion, Chinese New Year is celebrated in mosques to express gratitude and demonstrate that Chinese New Year is part of the Chinese ancestral heritage that can be celebrated by all groups and religions, regardless of specific religious rituals.<sup>60</sup>

Another example of mosque empowerment can be found in the activities of the Chinese Muslim community during Ramadan. Members of PITI Yogyakarta are required to take part in the propaganda safari agenda in order to fill the Ramadan tarawih cult and dawn lectures. The tarawih cult and dawn lectures alternate between Yogyakarta mosques. In this case, PITI DIY is persistently attempting to "bridge" Chinese and Islam through mosques in and around Yogyakarta. Furthermore, the mosque serves as a "dawah laboratory" where people of Chinese descent are studied.

The ethnic Chinese minority community in Yogyakarta's empowerment of mosques is similar to that of ethnic Chinese Muslims in North Sumatra. They strengthen the mosque as a place of worship, gathering, and deepening Islamic teachings. Furthermore, they empower the mosque as a means of communicating to the larger community that Islam is one of China's ancestral religions. Therefore, Islam is not a novel religion among Chinese Indonesians.<sup>61</sup> Through these activities, it can be seen that the Chinese-ethnic Muslim community is not an exclusive group. They can socialize with various elements of society in Islamic education activities.

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<sup>60</sup> Mahaswara, "Muslim Tionghoa Sebagai Jembatan Budaya: Studi Tentang Partisipasi Dan Dinamika Organisasi PITI Yogyakarta."

<sup>61</sup> Nurdiana et al., "Penguatan Ukhuwah Islamiyah Di Kalangan Masyarakat Tionghoa Di Masjid Cheng Ho Sriwijaya Sumatera Selatan," *Sosial Budaya* 19, no. 1 (2022).

Mosque empowerment in Islamic education is thought to have contributed to bridging cultural differences that emerged in the effort to form Muslim unity. Mosques, as Muslims are aware, serve several functions and can serve as hubs of activity, including educational, social, and cultural activities. As previously stated, the mosque's role is similar to that of the mosque at the beginning of the spread of Islam in Mecca and Medina. At the time, the mosque became a place of "change," with many social activities related to people's problems, such as worship, deliberation, discussion, the study of Islamic religious knowledge, and so on.<sup>62</sup>

### Conclusions

As a group of multiple minorities, the Chinese Muslim community in Yogyakarta sometimes has to take a different approach to informal Islamic education. They educate in informal settings such as family, community, and society by not favoring any one group or ideology. This is done to spread Islam as *rahmatan li al-Alamin*. They translated Islam's *rahmatan li al-Alamin* vision into various methods of informal Islamic education. In the family environment, the methods of *uswah hasanah*, advice and warning, and dialogue are all options in the educational process. In the Chinese Ethnic Minority Muslim Community environment, the educational process is carried out through the Islamic *da'wah*, discussion, and question-and-answer methods. Meanwhile, in the community environment, the contextual method and empowerment of mosques as centers of Islamic education are driving forces in the process of Islamic education in Yogyakarta's ethnic Chinese Muslim minority community. This study contributes to developing educational praxis among minorities, particularly Muslim minorities, in various regions. However, the number of participants in this study could be increased.

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<sup>62</sup> Anna Triayudha et al., "Relations Between Mosque and Social History of Islamic Education," *HUNafa: Jurnal Studia Islamika* 16, no. 1 (2019): 142–53, <https://doi.org/10.24239/jsi.v16i1.531.142-153>.

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