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An Innovative Community-Based Model of Flexible Qur'an Memorization in Rural Indonesia

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Education extends beyond formal institutions, with non-formal programs playing a key role in skill and character development. This study aims to explore how an innovative, community-based Qur'an memorization program, the "Qur'an Memorization House" in Dusun Legenan, Lumajang, Indonesia, is designed and implemented to foster a genuine love for the Qur'an among young people. Operated by a local mother without a formal curriculum or fees, a qualitative case study was conducted with purposively selected participants, using observation, interviews, and documentation analyzed thematically. Findings indicate that flexible schedules, turn-taking, and peer mentoring enhance participation, motivation, and consistency. The collaborative and socially engaging environment fosters independence, responsibility, and intrinsic motivation, demonstrating that community-driven initiatives can cultivate a love for the Qur'an even with limited resources. This study highlights the potential of adaptive, community-based non-formal education as an effective model for religious learning in rural contexts, providing insights for similar initiatives in comparable settings.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the context of modern society, education has become an indispensable part of human life (Mendrofa et al., 2023). Its role goes beyond serving as a means of learning in schools (Irsal & Yunita, 2022; Nashiratunnisa & Anwar, 2023); it also functions as a social force that shapes the direction of societal change. Knowledge obtained through formal schooling or higher education has limitations in keeping pace with rapid developments in science and technology (Mildawati & Tangngareng, 2023). Therefore, nonformal education plays a crucial role as a complementary learning space that addresses these limitations. Through nonformal channels, communities can broaden their knowledge, enhance skills, and develop character through various activities outside of school, including courses, social communities, religious study groups, or other community-based initiatives.



In practice, educational innovation does not always emerge from academic institutions or formal organizations (Hidayati, 2019; Susanto et al., 2023); it can also develop within communities, leveraging local wisdom and available resources. One such example exists in Legenan Hamlet, Nguter Village, Pasirian District, Lumajang Regency. In this rural setting, a Qur'an memorization learning space was initiated and managed by a housewife. Its uniqueness lies in its entirely nonformal nature: it has no official name, does not follow a standard curriculum, charges no fees, and lacks a formal institutional structure. Nevertheless, the program has been consistently implemented and effective. Local children voluntarily attend to memorize Qur'anic verses, and as of 2025, the program remains active (Haryani & Sholeh, 2019; M, 2021). In addition to children from Legenan, students from neighboring villages also participate in Qur'an recitation and memorization at this Qur'an Memorization House.

In this study, the learning space is analytically referred to as the "Qur'an Memorization House." This term is used to describe its function without implying the existence of a formal institution. This phenomenon is compelling to examine from a nonformal education perspective (Nafisah et al., 2023; Wintarso et al., 2023). Coombs and Ahmed define nonformal education as encompassing various intentional and organized activities outside the formal education framework, aimed at providing learning experiences to specific community groups (Mildawati & Tangngareng, 2023). The case in Legenan fully aligns with these characteristics, as Qur'an memorization activities are flexible, community-based, and oriented toward the actual needs of society. The absence of formal administration, fees, or institutional structure does not hinder the program (Eneng Sumarni & Siti Qomariyah, 2023; Fadilah et al., 2022), as religious motivation and a spirit of togetherness serve as the main driving forces sustaining its continuity.

This educational innovation can also be understood as a form of community-based education, in which the community acts as initiator, implementer, and beneficiary (Aziz et al., 2023). The success of a housewife, who began learning to recite the Qur'an as an adult, in becoming the main facilitator demonstrates that educational innovation does not necessarily require substantial financial resources or complex structural support (Arfandi et al., 2023; M. Asep Fathur Rozi & Ismah Fakhrunnisa, 2022). Instead, the key factors are religious motivation, gratitude, and socially internalized care on the part of the facilitator.

Furthermore, the existence of this learning space presents an alternative model for Qur'an education in rural communities (Erlina et al., 2022; Ismail et al., 2023). This phenomenon illustrates that limitations are not obstacles, as community involvement and individual initiative enable religious learning to thrive and make a meaningful contribution to societal education (Ikhwanuddin & Hashim, 2014; Sari, 2021).

This case offers significant contributions to contemporary Islamic education discourse. First, it demonstrates that Qur'an education can transform into a social movement originating from personal awareness. Second, it affirms that Qur'an memorization is not exclusively tied to large pesantren or formal institutions but can also develop in simple homes managed by individuals despite their constraints. Third, it highlights the strategic role of rural housewives as agents of change in religious education, especially when spiritual motivation is combined with social concern.

Therefore, the Qur'an Memorization House in Legenan Hamlet functions not only as a space for religious development but also introduces an innovative Qur'an memorization learning model distinct from conventional formal approaches. This study aims to explore how this innovation is designed and implemented to effectively foster young generations' love for the Qur'an.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design conducted in Legenan Hamlet, Nguter Village, Pasirian District, Lumajang Regency. Participants included the Qur'an Memorization House facilitator, children, and their parents, who were purposively selected due to their direct involvement in the activities. Data were collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. To ensure participant confidentiality, all names were replaced with pseudonyms or initials; for instance, the facilitator of the Qur'an Memorization House is referred to as Ms. T. The collected data were securely stored and used solely for research and academic publication purposes, without disclosing participants' real identities.

2.1 Research Design

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's approach to identify patterns and meanings within the collected information. (Nurhaliza et al., 2025). Refer to Figure 1 for more details.



Figure 1: Six Steps of Thematic Analysis

Prior to data collection, the researcher determined the focus and boundaries of the case. The research flow begins with Phase I, Orientation and Case Introduction, which involves initial observation at the location, a literature review to position the case within the study of non-formal *Tahfidz* (e.g., research by Azizah & Fitriyah, 2023), and the preparation of the initial research protocol. Once the case was identified as a unique *instrumental case*, the research proceeded to Phase II, In-Depth Data Collection, which was achieved through method triangulation (interviews, observation, and documentation), as outlined by Sugiyono (2023). Phase III is Data Analysis and Interpretation, where the data is coded and reduced to identify key themes that naturally emerged, such as *scheduling flexibility* and *social roles*. The flow concludes with Phase IV, Conclusion Drawing and Verification, where findings are connected back to the relevant literature to generate analytical generalizations regarding the potential of community-based *Tahfidz* models in rural contexts (Creswell, 2022).

2.2 Data Collection

Data collection methods in this study employed three main complementary techniques to achieve data triangulation: Participant Observation, In-Depth Interviews, and Document Study. Participant Observation was conducted indirectly, where the researcher observed interactions and the Qur'an learning process during memorization sessions, focusing on participant behavior, *turn-taking* dynamics, and *peer mentoring* mechanisms that emerged naturally outside of formal structures. The researcher noted nonverbal responses and the collaborative atmosphere that supported motivation (Moleong, 2021). Meanwhile, In-Depth Interviews were carried out semi-structurally with research subjects, including the program manager (the initiating mother), several students showing high consistency and motivation, and representatives of community leaders or parents, to explore their perspectives on the program design, the impact of flexibility, and the program's role in fostering a love for the Qur'an. The interview questions were developed based on a pre-prepared guide, but remained adaptive to emerging responses (Herdiansyah, 2024). Finally, the Documentation Study involved collecting secondary data, such as student attendance records, informal organizational structures, and activity photographs that provided empirical evidence of the program's consistency and social context. The combination of these three methods ensures the credibility of the findings by cross-verifying information from various sources and perspectives, consistent with the principles of qualitative rigor (Flick, 2020).

2.3 Data Analysis

Data analysis in this qualitative case study adopted a Thematic Analysis approach, modified from the Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña method (2020), which involves three interactive and continuous streams of activity: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. Data Reduction began immediately after data collection, where raw data (interview transcripts, observation notes) were selected, focused, simplified, and transformed, prioritizing information relevant to the research questions regarding innovative design, flexibility, and the formation of intrinsic motivation. All data were inductively coded to identify recurring patterns and the emergence of core thematic categories, such as 'Adaptive Schedule Capability' and 'Social Role in Consistency'. After data reduction, Data Display was performed in the form of descriptive narratives supported by direct quotes (*verbatim*) from interviews, as well as visual descriptions from observations, to present findings systematically and in an organized manner. The final stage, Conclusion Drawing/Verification, involved re-checking and confirming the meaning of the identified themes, comparing them with related literature (e.g., findings on religious education in rural contexts by Hidayatullah & Khairunnisa, 2023) to ensure the validity and relevance of the findings. This analysis process is iterative, where the researcher constantly moves back and forth between the data and the conceptual framework to produce robust and tested conclusions.

2.4 Research Instruments

The main instrument in this qualitative research is the researcher herself (*human instrument*), who functions as the data collector, analyst, interpreter, and reporter, according to case study guidelines (Denzin & Lincoln, 2020). However, to ensure focus and consistency in data collection, the researcher was assisted by supporting instruments, including an Interview Guide, Observation Sheet, and Documentation Study Protocol. The interview guide was semi-structured, consisting of approximately 15–20 open-ended questions grouped by research dimensions, such as *program design*, *flexibility*, and *motivational impact*, directed at the managing mother and key students. The observation sheet served to systematically record events, social interactions, and time allocation during the learning process, focusing on indicators such as 'frequency of turn-

taking' and 'response to memorization errors'. The documentation study protocol guided the researcher in collecting and analyzing non-written records such as audio/visual recordings and attendance logs. To clarify the scope of the instruments, Table 1 below summarizes the details of the instruments used, covering aspects such as dimensions, indicators, subjects, and the focus of their location of collection. This serves as a methodological roadmap to ensure that all aspects of the research are comprehensively covered.

2.5 Validity and Reliability

Within the framework of qualitative research, the concepts of validity and reliability are translated into Credibility, Transferability, Dependability, and Confirmability, collectively referred to as the criteria for *trustworthiness* (Lincoln & Guba, 2021). To achieve Credibility, this study applied the techniques of Source Triangulation and Method Triangulation, which involved comparing data obtained from observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation from various subjects (managers, students, and the community). Furthermore, Member Checking was conducted by confirming interpretations and summaries of findings with research subjects, especially the program manager, to ensure that the findings accurately represent their perspectives. Dependability was achieved through the preparation of an Audit Trail, which is a detailed documentation of the entire research process, from design to raw data collection, coding process, and analysis, so that others can review and assess the consistency of the procedures. Confirmability was ensured by maintaining researcher objectivity and neutrality, where findings are based only on the data collected and not personal bias (Sugiyono, 2023), thus allowing this research to be claimed as a credible study in the context of non-formal *Tahfidz* models (e.g., a similar study by Wahid et al., 2024 on innovation in Qur'an learning).

2.6 Research Subjects and Location

The location of this research is specifically focused on the "Rumah Tahfidz" located in Dusun Legenan, Village X, District Y, Lumajang Regency, East Java, Indonesia. This location was chosen because it is the single site where an innovative community-based Qur'an learning model—characterized by a flexible curriculum, no fees, and community initiation—operates sustainably, making it an *instrumental case* rich in information for study. Research subjects were selected using the Purposive Sampling technique, which involves selecting key informants deemed most knowledgeable and capable of providing in-depth information related to the study's focus. The primary subjects are the Program Manager/Initiator Mother (as the key source of information regarding the program's philosophy, design, and challenges) and Consistent Students (students who participate actively and regularly, to understand their experiences, motivations, and perceptions of scheduling flexibility). Additionally, several representatives of Student Parents and Community Leaders were also interviewed to gain insight into community support and the social impact of the program. This focused selection ensures that the collected data has maximum depth and relevance to the research objectives, and can uncover hidden aspects of this learning model, which is characteristic of qualitative case study research (Creswell, 2022).

Before presenting the table, it is essential to understand that each research question has been designed to directly refer to the key elements within this community's Qur'an learning model, connecting them with the most suitable type of analysis for excavating in-depth, qualitative data. This link between the question and the type of analysis ensures that the resulting findings are coherent and specifically address the study's objectives, particularly in the non-formal, rural

context.

Table 1 presents the Research Questions and the relevant Types of Analysis for this case study.

No.	Research Question	Types of Analysis
1	How is the innovative design and implementation of the flexible community-based Qur'an memorization model carried out in Dusun Legenan?	Descriptive and Thematic Analysis (Focus: Structure, Rules, <i>Turn-Taking</i> Mechanism, Community Involvement).
2	What is the impact of flexible scheduling, <i>turn-taking</i> , and <i>peer mentoring</i> on increasing student participation, motivation, and consistency?	Qualitative Explanatory Analysis (Focus: Link between Flexibility and Intrinsic Motivation, Role of <i>Peer Mentoring</i> on Consistency).
3	How does this program foster a genuine love for the Qur'an and the character of independence/responsibility in the students?	

3. Result & Findings

Based on thematic analysis of interviews, observations, and documentation, this study highlights several key findings as follows:

a. Implementation of the Flexible Community Model

The Qur'an Memorization House managed by Ms. T implements a system that accommodates limitations in both time and space. Since Ms. T works, the learning schedule is adjusted accordingly: the first session takes place after Dhuhr, followed by a second session after Asr, with a break in between. Children take turns based on arrival order; those who arrive earlier receive earlier numbers and study first. This system ensures that all children have a fair opportunity to participate, even though there is only one instructor.

b. Participant Responses and Social Experiences

The children exhibited positive responses, enjoying both Qur'an recitation and memorization because they had opportunities to socialize with peers, play near the fields, or ride bicycles while waiting for their turn. Interviews and observations indicated that the social aspects of the activities significantly contributed to their motivation. Parents also perceived benefits from the program, as some used the waiting time to interact and converse with other parents, particularly when their children were in the same session group.

c. Innovative Aspects of the Model

The primary innovation of this Qur'an Memorization House lies in Ms. T's ability to manage recitation and memorization activities despite limited time and resources. The learning schedule is adapted to the instructor's daily routine (Nurlaila, 2020; Sabiq, 2021; Ugur & Osmanoglu, 2020), beginning after Dhuhr and continuing after Asr, allowing children to participate according to the number they draw. This queuing system ensures that each participant has a fair turn without disrupting the routines of either the instructor or the students (Aryati et al., 2020; Hashim, 2015; Rosyad & Pratisara, 2023).

Beyond schedule flexibility, the memorization house stands out for its collaborative

learning approach (Hidayah et al., 2022; Nik Md Saiful Azizi et al., 2021). Senior peers who are proficient in recitation are given the opportunity to assist younger children, creating a supportive learning environment that fosters independence. This approach not only reduces reliance on a single instructor but also instills a sense of responsibility and active engagement among participants.

The social aspect also constitutes an innovative feature of the model. Children can play and socialize while waiting for their turn, such as riding bicycles or playing near the fields, making the learning experience enjoyable. Parents waiting for their children also utilize this time to interact with one another, forming a strong social support network within the community.

Effective management with limited resources is another hallmark of this model. Ms. T successfully runs all activities smoothly, leveraging the queuing system, session division, and assistance from senior peers to maintain learning continuity. Support from like-minded friends in providing Qur'ans and learning materials, as well as helping with routine events such as end-of-year celebrations, ensures program sustainability without imposing additional burdens on parents. The combination of schedule flexibility, collaboration, social support, and effective management makes this Qur'an Memorization House truly innovative and serves as a model for adaptive Qur'an learning in rural communities.

d. Impact on Motivation and Consistency

Over time, the number of participants increased, including children from outside the village. The children enjoyed learning because they had opportunities to socialize, as reflected in their use of numbered tokens and group play while waiting for their turn. The annual end-of-year celebration, funded voluntarily by local donors and Ms. T's friends, further strengthened participants' motivation and consistency without imposing any financial burden on their parents.

e. Challenges and Obstacles

At the initial stage, the Qur'an Memorization House faced some community resistance; for example, the local neighborhood leader inquired about the reason for gathering many children in one place. After explaining the purpose of the activities, the community began to understand and accept the program. Currently, the activities are well-received, and parents voluntarily send their children to participate in Qur'an recitation and memorization at this site.

4. Discussion

a. Implementation of a Flexible Community Model

The findings indicate that Ms. T's Qur'an Memorization House applies a flexible learning system that adjusts the recitation schedule according to the instructor's limited availability. Learning sessions are divided into two: after Dzuhur and after Ashar, with a queuing system ensuring that each child takes their turn fairly. This system allows children to participate even when there is only one instructor.

This approach aligns with Adaptive Learning Theory, which defines adaptive learning as an approach that adjusts the learning process to the needs, pace, and preferences of each participant (Rachmad, 2022). At the Qur'an Memorization House, this principle is implemented through several mechanisms: children who arrive early start learning first, while those who arrive later wait their turn according to the queue number. Dividing sessions after Dzuhur and Ashar matches the instructor's availability, maintaining effective learning despite limited resources. Additionally, guidance from senior children to their juniors reflects adaptation of learning methods based on individual ability. More proficient children help slower ones, creating a collaborative and adaptive learning environment. This demonstrates that adaptive learning does not necessarily require advanced technology; the main principle is adjusting strategies, methods, and schedules to participants' needs.

From the perspective of organizational learning theory, this model also demonstrates effective resource management (Pudjiarti, 2023). Managing a single instructor with minimal community support and guidance from senior children creates a structured and fair learning environment. This aligns with Kolb's experiential learning theory, where practical experience is an essential part of the learning process for both participants and instructors (Riska et al., 2024).

Moreover, the flexibility of this model allows learning continuity, ensuring the learning process runs continuously and regularly, which supports successful outcomes (Mulyani et al., 2024). Adaptive scheduling not only maintains program continuity but also enhances long-term learning effectiveness. Partial continuity in learning has been shown to significantly affect learning outcomes (Mulyani et al., 2024).

Overall, the implementation of this flexible community model demonstrates that adaptive and contextual learning strategies can overcome resource limitations, maximize participant engagement, and build a fair and effective learning structure. This flexibility is the core of the innovation at the Qur'an Memorization House and provides empirical evidence that adaptive approaches are highly relevant for rural Qur'an education.

b. Participant Response and Social Experience

The findings show that children participating in the Qur'an Memorization House respond very positively to the learning activities. They enjoy reciting and memorizing the Qur'an because they can socialize with peers, play around the rice fields, or ride bicycles while waiting their turn. This social aspect is an important factor that enhances their motivation and engagement. Parents also benefit, as they can interact with other parents while waiting, forming a mutually supportive social network.

From the perspective of Vygotsky's social constructivism, learning occurs not

individually but through social interaction, allowing children to collaboratively build new knowledge and skills (Hidayat, 2025). A learning environment that enables positive peer interaction supports the internalization of knowledge and social values. This aligns with Karina et al., who argue that social interaction benefits academic achievement and increases participant engagement because children learn not only from instructors but also from their social environment (Karina et al., 2024).

The social aspects of the Qur'an Memorization House can also be linked to self-determination theory, which emphasizes that intrinsic motivation grows through the fulfillment of basic psychological needs: competence, autonomy, and social relatedness (Priyoaji, 2023). In this context, children feel competent when they recite according to the queue, autonomous as they can wait and socialize freely, and socially related through peer interaction. These factors collectively strengthen intrinsic motivation, leading to consistent and sustained participation.

Additionally, the social experience emphasizes learning by doing, in line with contextual learning theory, where learning requires active engagement beyond passive reception, enabling mastery and practical application of knowledge (Robani et al., 2021). At the Qur'an Memorization House, children not only listen or memorize but also experience the learning process in a real context: waiting their turn, playing with peers, and learning from senior children. This makes learning enjoyable, relevant, and memorable, encouraging regular participation.

Overall, positive and collaborative social experiences are not merely supplementary but essential components of this learning model. Social aspects help build intrinsic motivation, strengthen engagement, and create a learning environment that holistically develops children's competence and character.

c. Innovative Aspects of the Model

The study identified several innovative aspects that distinguish Ms. T's Qur'an Memorization House from traditional learning models. The main innovation lies in managing recitation and memorization activities with limited resources through flexible scheduling, peer collaboration, and effective management. Children follow sessions according to a queuing system, which addresses resource constraints. Additionally, senior children assist juniors, fostering collaborative learning that emphasizes independence and responsibility.

This approach aligns with peer-assisted learning (PAL), where knowledge acquisition occurs through interactions with peers at the same level (Andriani et al., 2017). Involving senior participants in guiding their peers enhances understanding, reduces reliance on a single instructor, and ensures the model functions effectively even with only Ms. T managing it. This is particularly important in rural community-based education, where teacher shortages are common.

From the experiential learning theory perspective, this innovation provides contextual learning experiences. Children actively engage, teach each other, and participate in the queuing system, promoting responsibility, discipline, cooperation, and cognitive and social skill development simultaneously.

Effective resource management is also an innovative aspect. Support from Ms. T's friends in providing Qur'ans, learning materials, and routine activities like tasyakuran

demonstrates that community collaboration is key to program sustainability. This aligns with social capital theory, which emphasizes leveraging networks and relationships to achieve shared goals and benefits (Safii & Anom, 2021). Active community involvement is a significant factor in developing student character and ethics (Sokib & A'yun, 2024).

Social innovation also creates a positive learning environment, where children can play while waiting their turn, building bonds among participants and parents. Literature shows that a positive learning environment, combined with discipline and intrinsic motivation, simultaneously affects learning outcomes (Ummat et al., 2024).

Thus, the innovative model integrates flexible scheduling, peer collaboration, community support, effective management, and social aspects, creating an adaptive and sustainable Qur'an learning model that instills social values, responsibility, and intrinsic motivation. This provides empirical evidence that simple, contextual, and collaborative innovations can effectively support rural community-based education.

d. Impact on Motivation and Consistency

The findings indicate that Ms. T's Qur'an Memorization House not only implements flexible recitation activities successfully but also significantly impacts participants' motivation and consistency. Children show high enthusiasm, evidenced by adherence to the queuing system and enjoyment while waiting through games and social interaction. The growing number of participants, including those from outside the village, confirms that the model can sustainably attract and maintain children's interest.

According to self-determination theory, intrinsic motivation develops through the fulfillment of three basic psychological needs: competence, social relatedness, and autonomy (Priyoaji, 2023). Competence arises when children follow the queue system, social relatedness through interaction with peers and senior children, and autonomy as they wait and enjoy learning freely. Meeting these needs strengthens intrinsic motivation and encourages consistent participation without external pressure or financial burden on parents.

A pleasant learning environment also supports consistency. Children can play by the rice fields, ride bicycles, or socialize while waiting, linking learning with enjoyment. This aligns with Lisman, emphasizing that a conducive and enjoyable environment reduces participant boredom (Lisman et al., 2023).

Voluntary support from parents and Ms. T's friends further ensures smooth program operation without burdening participants or the instructor. Overall, motivation and consistency result from flexible learning strategies, positive social interactions, community support, and enjoyable learning experiences. Ms. T's Qur'an Memorization House effectively fosters intrinsic motivation, maintains learning consistency, and supports holistic character development.

e. Challenges and Obstacles

The study shows that at the initial stage, Ms. T's Qur'an Memorization House faced several challenges, including resistance from the local community. For example,

community leaders such as the village head (Pak RT) questioned why so many children were gathering. After explaining the purpose and benefits, the community gradually understood and supported the program, highlighting the importance of effective communication and stakeholder engagement in community-based initiatives.

According to the diffusion of innovation theory, innovations spread within a social system through communication among individuals or groups until they are adopted and accepted by the system's members (Sugiono, 2024). Therefore, initial resistance is a normal reaction. The success of adoption often depends on the facilitator's ability to explain benefits, address concerns, and build trust with stakeholders.

Operational challenges also arose due to limited resources, including having only one instructor while participant numbers increased. Adaptive management strategies, such as the queuing system, session division, and assistance from senior children, ensured smooth operations.

Thus, challenges were not only operational or resource-related but also involved social acceptance and community participation. Ms. T's Qur'an Memorization House successfully overcame these obstacles through effective communication, adaptive management, and leveraging community support. This emphasizes that the success of community-based programs depends on both the facilitator's adaptive capacity and active community engagement.

5. Conclusion

This study highlights that the Qur'an Memorization House managed by Ms. T exemplifies an adaptive and innovative learning model capable of operating effectively despite limited instructors and resources. The flexible scheduling and queuing system ensure equitable learning opportunities for all participants, while peer-assisted guidance fosters collaborative learning, independence, and responsibility. Participants demonstrate high motivation, positive engagement, and consistent attendance, largely influenced by the supportive and socially interactive learning environment.

These findings underscore that learning strategies tailored to the needs, pace, and abilities of participants can enhance both program effectiveness and sustainability. The model offers a viable reference for developing similar community-based Qur'an memorization programs in rural contexts, where resource limitations and staffing constraints are common challenges.

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