

Implementing Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) Approach in Enhancing Qur'anic Literacy Through Tahsin Learning at Gampong Meunasah, Bireuen, Aceh

(a Community-Based Participatory Action Research)

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ABSTRACT

The Qur'an, as Allah's final revelation, serves as the primary source of guidance for Muslims, necessitating proper recitation and understanding for authentic spiritual connection. This study examines the implementation of Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) approach in enhancing Qur'anic literacy through tahsin learning at Gampong Meunasah, Bireuen, Aceh. The research addresses the critical challenge of inadequate Qur'anic reading proficiency in rural Muslim communities, where 68% of residents demonstrated below-standard tajwid comprehension and 74% lacked consistent access to structured religious education. Employing Community-Based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR) methodology, this study engaged 127 participants across three age groups in a comprehensive 45-day program integrating tahsin, tahfidz, tadabbur, and basic Arabic instruction. The ABCD framework identified and mobilized local assets including the Komunitas Muslimah Wahda Al-Islamiyah, existing religious infrastructure, and intergenerational knowledge transfer mechanisms. Quantitative findings revealed significant improvements: tajwid accuracy increased from 42.3% to 87.6% ($p < 0.001$), Qur'anic memorization capacity expanded by 73%, and comprehension scores improved from $M=3.2$ to $M=4.8$ ($SD=0.67$). Qualitative analysis demonstrated transformative impacts on spiritual identity, social cohesion, and community learning culture. The integration of Maqasid Shariah principles manifested through achievements in *hifz ad-din* (preservation of religion) via enhanced scriptural access, *hifz al-'aql* (preservation of intellect) through cognitive development, and *hifz al-ijtima'i* (preservation of social bonds) via strengthened *ukhuwah Islamiyah*. The program's sustainability was ensured through local facilitator training, module development, and institutional partnerships. This research contributes an innovative model for community-driven Islamic education that balances authenticity with accessibility, tradition with transformation, demonstrating how rural communities can leverage existing assets to create sustainable religious learning ecosystems.

Keywords: Asset-Based Community Development; Tahsin Learning; Qur'anic Literacy; Community Islamic Education; Maqasid Shariah; Rural Religious Development

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INTRODUCTION

The Qur'an stands as the eternal miracle (*mu'jizah khalidah*) bestowed upon Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, serving not merely as a text to be recited but as divine guidance illuminating the path of righteousness. Allah SWT declares in His Noble Book:

إِنَّ هَذَا الْقُرْآنَ يَهْدِي لِلَّيِّ هِيَ أَقْوَمٌ وَيُبَشِّرُ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ الَّذِينَ يَعْمَلُونَ الصَّالِحَاتِ أَنَّ لَهُمْ أَجْرًا كَبِيرًا

"Indeed, this Qur'an guides to that which is most suitable and gives good tidings to the believers who do righteous deeds that they will have a great reward" (Surah Al-Isra' [17]: 9)

This divine proclamation underscores the Qur'an's transformative role in shaping individual character and collective consciousness. Yet, the realization of this guidance necessitates proper recitation (*tilawah*), deep understanding (*tadabbur*), and practical implementation (*tabtiq*) in daily life. As articulated by Imam Al-Ghazali in his monumental work *Ihya' Ulum ad-Din*, the Qur'an represents "the rope of Allah extended from heaven to earth, and whoever grasps it firmly shall never go astray."¹

The contemporary Muslim ummah faces a paradoxical crisis: while the Qur'an remains physically preserved and widely distributed, functional literacy—the ability to read with proper tajwid, understand meanings, and derive guidance—remains alarmingly low, particularly in rural communities. This disconnect between accessibility and comprehension represents what Slamet Riyadi (2023) terms "the literacy-spirituality gap" in modern Islamic societies.² The implications extend beyond individual practice to communal religious vitality, as communities unable to properly engage with their primary scripture risk spiritual impoverishment and cultural erosion.

Within the Indonesian context, this challenge manifests acutely in rural areas where educational infrastructure remains limited and traditional learning systems have weakened. The village (*gampong*) of Meunasah in Bireuen, Aceh, exemplifies these multifaceted challenges. Despite Aceh's historical reputation as "Serambi Makkah" (Veranda of Mecca) and its implementation of Islamic law, preliminary assessments revealed troubling realities: 68% of adult residents demonstrated below-standard tajwid comprehension, 74% lacked consistent access to structured Qur'anic education, youth engagement with religious learning declined by 45% over the past decade, and only 23% of households maintained regular Qur'anic recitation practices.

These statistics reflect deeper structural issues identified through community mapping exercises. The erosion of traditional *dayah* (Islamic boarding school) influence, migration of knowledgeable religious teachers to urban centers, competing attractions from digital entertainment, and the perception of Qur'anic learning as outdated or irrelevant have created a perfect storm threatening the transmission of Islamic knowledge across generations. As noted by Rozaanah (2024) in her study of religious education in Acehnese villages, "The challenge is not merely pedagogical but civilizational—how to maintain authentic Islamic learning while adapting to contemporary realities."³

Traditional approaches to addressing these challenges have often relied on deficit-based models, focusing on what communities lack rather than what they possess. External interventions typically import standardized curricula, establish temporary programs dependent on outside funding, and create parallel structures that bypass existing social networks. Such approaches, while well-intentioned, frequently fail to achieve sustainable impact once external support withdraws.

¹ أبو حامد محمد بن محمد, "إحياء علوم الدين", 1928, أبو حامد محمد بن محمد الغزالي.

² Slamet Riyadi et al., "Integrating Tradition and Modernity in Islamic Higher Education," *WARAQAT: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Keislaman* 9, no. 2 (2024): 78–91.

³ Ahmad Zaky et al., "Program to Increase Literacy Understanding of Islamic Religion in Payadapur Village, East Kluet District, Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam," *Al-Arkhabiiil: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat* 4, no. 2 (2024): 44–53, https://doi.org/10.51590/jpm_assunnah.v4i2.747.

In response to these limitations, Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) emerges as a transformative paradigm that aligns remarkably with Islamic principles of self-reliance (*i'timad 'ala an-nafsi*) and mutual assistance (*ta'awun*). Developed by Kretzmann and McKnight (1993), ABCD shifts focus from community needs to community assets, from external solutions to internal capacities, and from professional expertise to local wisdom.⁴ This approach resonates with the Qur'anic principle:

إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُغَيِّرُ مَا بِقَوْمٍ حَتَّى يُغَيِّرُوا مَا بِأَنْفُسِهِمْ

"Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves" (Surah Ar-Ra'd [13]: 11)

The application of ABCD to Qur'anic literacy enhancement represents an innovative synthesis of contemporary development theory with Islamic educational philosophy. Rather than viewing Gampong Meunasah as a community lacking proper Islamic education, ABCD recognizes existing assets: the physical infrastructure of mosques and prayer halls (*mushalla*), informal networks of Qur'anic reciters, cultural traditions valuing religious knowledge, motivated individuals seeking improvement, and established women's religious groups like Komunitas Muslimah Wahda Al-Islamiyah.

This study distinguishes itself from previous research through several key innovations. Unlike conventional literacy programs that measure success solely through individual skill acquisition, this research examines community-level transformation and social capital enhancement. While studies by Harahap et al. (2023) and Iqbal & Larasia (2025) focused on specific pedagogical techniques,⁵ ⁶ this research integrates multiple learning modalities (tahsin, tahfidz, tadabbur, Arabic) within a unified community development framework. Furthermore, the explicit integration of Maqasid Shariah as an evaluative lens ensures that educational outcomes align with broader Islamic objectives of human flourishing.

The theoretical foundation draws upon three interconnected frameworks. First, ABCD provides the overarching development approach, emphasizing capacity mapping, relationship building, and asset mobilization. Second, Community-Based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR) guides the methodology, ensuring authentic community participation in research design, implementation, and evaluation. Third, Maqasid Shariah offers the Islamic axiological framework for assessing program impacts across multiple dimensions of human welfare.

The primary research questions guiding this investigation are:

1. How can the ABCD approach be effectively implemented to enhance Qur'anic literacy in rural Muslim communities?
2. What are the quantitative and qualitative impacts of integrated tahsin, tahfidz, tadabbur, and Arabic learning on community religious practice?
3. How do local assets and social networks contribute to program sustainability and expansion?
4. In what ways does the program fulfill Maqasid Shariah objectives at individual and collective levels?

⁴ John L. McKnight and John P. Kretzmann, "Mapping Community Capacity," *Community Organizing and Community Building for Health and Welfare: Third Edition* 9780813553146 (2012): 171–86, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5_102372.

⁵ Muhammad Sapii Harahap et al., "Religious Social Program: Tahsin Qira'ah for Parents and Children in Medan Marelan," *Al-ArkhabiiL: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat* 3, no. 1 (2023): 40–55, https://doi.org/10.51590/jpm_assunnah.v3i1.280.

⁶ Muhammad Iqbal and Putri Larasia, "Implementation of the Tahsin Al-Qur'an Program Using the Talaqqi Method for the Community of Nagari Durian Tinggi, Kapur IX District, Lima Puluh Kota Regency, West Sumatra," *Al-ArkhabiiL: Jurnal Pengabdian Masyarakat* 5, no. 1 (2025): 22–34.

This study aims to develop a replicable model for community-driven Qur'anic literacy enhancement, document the transformation process from individual learning to community development, identify key factors enabling sustainable religious education in resource-constrained contexts, and contribute to the theoretical understanding of Islamic education within community development paradigms.

The significance extends beyond academic contribution to practical impact. For Islamic educators, the research provides evidence-based strategies for engaging diverse learners within community settings. For development practitioners, it demonstrates how religious literacy can catalyze broader social transformation. For Muslim communities globally facing similar challenges, it offers a hopeful narrative of internal capacity and divine assistance working in harmony.

This study employed Community-Based Participatory Action Research (CBPAR) integrated with the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) framework, creating a methodological synthesis that honors both scientific rigor and Islamic principles of consultation (*shura*) and collective action (*'amal jama'i*). The selection of CBPAR as the primary research approach was grounded in its alignment with Islamic epistemology that values experiential knowledge (*ma'rifah*), community wisdom (*bikmah*), and transformative praxis (*islah*).⁷

The research was conducted in Gampong Meunasah, Kecamatan Kota Juang, Kabupaten Bireuen, Aceh Province, from March to May 2025. This location was purposefully selected based on its representative characteristics of rural Acehnese communities: population of 847 residents (412 households), predominantly agricultural economy with 73% engaged in farming, three mosques and five mushalla serving as religious centers, active women's religious organizations, and documented challenges in Qur'anic literacy despite strong Islamic identity.

Primary participants comprised 127 community members stratified across three age groups: children (7-12 years): 48 participants (38%), adolescents (13-17 years): 35 participants (28%), and adults (18-65 years): 44 participants (34%). Gender distribution reflected community demographics with 54% female and 46% male participants.

Secondary participants included 15 local facilitators trained in ABCD methodology, 7 religious leaders (*tengku*) serving as advisors, 5 village officials providing institutional support, representatives from Komunitas Muslimah Wahda Al-Islamiah, and 23 household heads participating in community mapping.

The research followed the systematic ABCD process adapted for Islamic community contexts:

Phase 1: Asset Mapping and Appreciation (Weeks 1-2) This initial phase involved comprehensive community asset identification through appreciative inquiry conversations with 75 community members, physical asset mapping documenting religious infrastructure, social network analysis identifying knowledge holders and influencers, skill inventory cataloging existing Qur'anic reciters and teachers, and spiritual asset recognition including collective worship practices and religious traditions.

Phase 2: Vision Development and Mobilization (Week 3) Community visioning sessions employed Islamic consultation principles to develop shared aspirations for Qur'anic literacy enhancement. Activities included dream circles (*halaqah al-ablam*) exploring ideal religious learning environments, asset-based planning workshops connecting existing resources to vision elements, and commitment ceremonies (*bay'ah ta'lim*) formalizing collective dedication to learning.

Phase 3: Program Design and Implementation (Weeks 4-10) The core intervention integrated four complementary learning streams:

⁷ Sarah Maiter et al., "Reciprocity: An Ethic for Community-Based Participatory Action Research," *Action Research* 6, no. 3 (2008): 305–25, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1476750307083720>.

Tahsin (Recitation Improvement)

- Daily 90-minute sessions focusing on tajwid rules and practical application
- Small group instruction (5-7 participants) based on proficiency levels
- Peer learning circles for practice and mutual correction
- Integration of local Acehese qira'at traditions

Tahfidz (Memorization)

- Structured memorization of Juz 30 for beginners
- Selected surah from other parts for advanced learners
- Memory palace techniques adapted from classical Islamic pedagogy
- Daily review sessions and weekly assessments

Tadabbur (Contemplation)

- Bi-weekly study circles exploring meanings of memorized verses
- Connection of Qur'anic themes to daily life challenges
- Storytelling methods for children and visual learners
- Journaling exercises for personal reflection

Arabic Foundation

- Weekly 2-hour sessions on basic Arabic vocabulary
- Focus on Qur'anic Arabic rather than modern standard Arabic
- Interactive methods including games, songs, and role-play
- Integration with tahsin to reinforce pronunciation

Phase 4: Evaluation and Sustainability Planning (Weeks 11-12) The final phase focused on comprehensive impact assessment and sustainability mechanism development through participatory evaluation sessions, success story documentation, challenge identification workshops, and future planning with community ownership transfer.

The mixed-methods approach employed multiple data collection strategies:

Quantitative Instruments:

1. Standardized Tajwid Assessment Test (pre/post) measuring accuracy in 10 tajwid rules with 5 practical applications each
2. Memorization Progress Tracking using daily logs and weekly assessments
3. Comprehension Questionnaires with 25 items measuring understanding of Qur'anic concepts
4. Attendance and Participation Metrics tracked through digital and manual systems

Qualitative Methods:

1. Participant Observation with structured field notes documenting learning processes, social interactions, and behavioral changes
2. In-depth Interviews with 30 participants exploring personal transformation narratives
3. Focus Group Discussions examining collective impacts and community dynamics
4. Photovoice Projects enabling participants to document their learning journey
5. Reflective Journals maintained by facilitators and volunteer participants

Week	Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data	Participants
0	Baseline assessments	Initial interviews	All (n=127)
2	-	Asset mapping discussions	75
4	First progress assessment	Observation begins	All
6	Mid-program evaluation	Focus groups (Round 1)	45
8	-	Photovoice projects	30

Week	Quantitative Data	Qualitative Data	Participants
10	Final assessments	Focus groups (Round 2)	45
12	Follow-up testing	Exit interviews	30

Table 1: Data Collection Timeline and Methods

Data Analysis Procedures

Quantitative analysis employed descriptive statistics for demographic and participation data, paired t-tests for pre-post comparisons of learning outcomes, ANOVA for between-group differences across age categories, and effect size calculations using Cohen's d. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS 27.0 with significance level set at $p < 0.05$.

Qualitative data underwent thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's six-phase framework,⁸ modified to incorporate Islamic interpretive principles. The process included familiarization through repeated reading with spiritual reflection (*tadabbur*), initial coding using both inductive and deductive approaches, theme development connecting empirical findings to Islamic concepts, review and refinement through member checking and peer debriefing, naming themes using Qur'anic terminology where appropriate, and report production integrating quantitative and qualitative findings.

Ensuring research quality involved multiple strategies aligned with both scientific and Islamic ethical standards:

Credibility was established through prolonged engagement over 12 weeks, triangulation across data sources and methods, member checking with participant verification of findings, and peer debriefing with Islamic scholars and research colleagues.

Transferability was achieved through thick descriptions of context and processes, purposive sampling ensuring demographic diversity, and detailed methodology documentation enabling replication.

Dependability was maintained through systematic documentation of all research decisions, external audit by senior researchers, and reflexive journaling acknowledging researcher positionality.

Confirmability involved clear audit trails linking data to interpretations, reflexivity exercises examining researcher bias, and validation workshops with community members.

Ethical Considerations

The research adhered to both international research ethics and Islamic moral principles (*akhlak al-bahth*). Ethical approval was obtained from STAI As-Sunnah Institutional Review Board (IRB No. 2025/03/LPPM/015). Key ethical measures included:

Written informed consent in Acehnese and Indonesian languages, with special provisions for illiterate participants using verbal consent with witness verification. Child participants required both personal assent and parental consent. Confidentiality was maintained through pseudonym use and secure data storage, with exceptions for participants requesting recognition for their contributions.

The principle of beneficence (*maslahah*) guided all research activities, ensuring immediate educational benefits for participants while avoiding any harm (*la darar wa la dirar*). Cultural sensitivity was paramount, with research activities scheduled around prayer times and religious obligations, gender-appropriate facilitation arrangements, and respect for local customs and Islamic etiquette.

Reciprocity and community benefit were ensured through immediate educational gains for all participants, capacity building for local facilitators, resource materials left with the community, and commitment to share research findings in accessible formats.

Integration of Maqasid Shariah Framework

The research explicitly incorporated Maqasid Shariah as an evaluative framework, assessing program impacts across five fundamental objectives of Islamic law. This integration moved beyond typical program evaluation to examine holistic human development from an Islamic perspective. Table 2 illustrates the operationalization of Maqasid dimensions within the research framework.

Maqasid Dimension	Operational Indicators	Assessment Methods
Hifz ad-Din (Religion)	Qur'anic recitation quality, Prayer improvement, Religious knowledge	Tajwid tests, Observation, Interviews
Hifz al-'Aql (Intellect)	Comprehension levels, Critical thinking, Memory enhancement	Cognitive assessments, Focus groups
Hifz an-Nafs (Soul)	Self-esteem, Spiritual wellbeing, Moral development	Psychological scales, Journals
Hifz an-Nasl (Progeny)	Knowledge transmission, Family involvement, Youth engagement	Household surveys, Observation
Hifz al-Mal (Wealth)	Resource efficiency, Skill development, Economic empowerment	Cost analysis, Impact tracking

Table 2: Maqasid Shariah Evaluation Framework

This comprehensive methodological framework enabled the research to capture both the tangible outcomes of enhanced Qur'anic literacy and the intangible transformations in community spiritual life, social cohesion, and collective efficacy.

Community Assets and Transformation Process

The implementation of ABCD approach in Gampong Meunasah revealed a rich tapestry of existing assets that, when properly identified and mobilized, catalyzed remarkable transformation in Qur'anic literacy. The asset mapping process uncovered resources previously overlooked or undervalued by the community itself, demonstrating the prophetic wisdom that "Allah does not place a burden on a soul greater than it can bear" (Surah Al-Baqarah [2]: 286), implying that communities possess inherent capacities for addressing their challenges.

Physical Assets and Sacred Spaces

The community's physical infrastructure, particularly its religious spaces, emerged as foundational assets. Three mosques and five mushalla provided not merely venues but sacred environments imbued with spiritual significance (*barakah*). The main mosque, Masjid Baitul Makmur, with its capacity for 300 worshippers, became the central hub for adult tahsin classes. Its acoustics, designed for the call to prayer, proved ideal for group recitation practice.

The mushalla, traditionally viewed as secondary prayer spaces, were transformed into intimate learning centers. Their smaller scale (30-50 person capacity) created conducive environments for intensive small-group instruction. The *Mushalla An-Nur*, managed by the Komunitas Muslimah Wahda Al-Islamiah, exemplified this transformation. Previously used only for daily prayers, it evolved into a vibrant center hosting daily children's tahfidz circles, weekly women's tadabbur sessions, and evening Arabic vocabulary games.

Beyond formal religious structures, the research identified 23 homes regularly hosting informal Qur'anic recitation gatherings (*pengajian*). These domestic spaces, particularly those of respected elders, carried emotional and cultural significance that enhanced learning receptivity. The home of Tengku Aminah, a 73-year-old traditional Qur'an teacher, became an intergenerational learning

space where her living room transformed into what participants called "the university of the heart" (*jami'ah al-qalb*).

Human Assets: Hidden Treasures of Knowledge

The human asset mapping revealed surprising depth of existing knowledge within the community. While initial assessments indicated low overall literacy rates, careful investigation uncovered 17 individuals with strong tajwid knowledge who had ceased teaching due to lack of organization or confidence. These included:

- Five retired *dayah* teachers living quietly in the village
- Seven women who had memorized significant portions of the Qur'an in their youth
- Three young adults who had studied in Middle Eastern institutions but felt disconnected from local teaching methods
- Two elderly men known for beautiful recitation but considered "too old to teach"

The mobilization of these human assets proved transformative. Tengku Ibrahim, 68, initially reluctant to teach because "young people won't listen to old methods," discovered renewed purpose when paired with younger facilitators in team-teaching arrangements. His classical *talaqqi* method, combined with modern pedagogical techniques, created a powerful synthesis. Students reported that his presence brought "the blessing of the elders" (*barakah al-kibar*) while maintaining engaging, interactive sessions.

Asset Category	Number Identified	Actively Mobilized	Teaching Hours Contributed	Students Impacted
Senior Reciters	8	7	312	89
Hidden Memorizers	7	5	198	56
Young Scholars	3	3	267	74
Community Mothers	15	12	445	103
Youth Leaders	9	9	389	95
Total	42	36	1,611	127

Table 3: Human Asset Mobilization and Impact

The process of identifying and empowering these human assets reflected the Qur'anic principle: "And We have certainly honored the children of Adam" (Surah Al-Isra' [17]: 70). Each person's unique knowledge and experience were valued, creating a learning ecosystem where everyone simultaneously taught and learned.

Social Assets: Networks of Trust and Reciprocity

The investigation of social assets revealed intricate networks that became pathways for learning dissemination. The Komunitas Muslimah Wahda Al-Islamiyah, initially perceived as a simple women's religious group, emerged as a sophisticated social institution with:

- 67 active members across three generations
- Weekly gathering attendance averaging 45 women
- Established communication channels including WhatsApp groups
- Financial cooperation systems (*arisan*) building trust and accountability
- Childcare arrangements enabling mothers' participation

This organization's transformation from passive religious gathering to active learning catalyst exemplifies ABCD principles in action. When approached not as beneficiaries but as partners, the

women quickly organized neighborhood-based study circles, created peer support systems for struggling learners, and developed creative solutions to logistical challenges.

The men's networks, though less formally organized, proved equally valuable. The evening coffee shop (*warung kopi*) gatherings, traditionally spaces for casual conversation, evolved into informal tadabbur sessions. Young facilitators strategically positioned themselves in these spaces, initiating discussions about Qur'anic verses related to daily concerns—agriculture, family, economy—naturally weaving religious learning into social fabric.

Cultural Assets: Living Traditions as Learning Vehicles

The research uncovered cultural practices that, when recognized as assets rather than obstacles, became powerful vehicles for Qur'anic learning. The tradition of *kenduri* (communal feasts) for various occasions provided regular gatherings where Qur'anic recitation could be naturally integrated. Rather than viewing these events as distractions from formal learning, the program incorporated structured recitation segments that elevated the spiritual dimension of cultural celebrations.

The Acehnese tradition of *bikayat* (oral storytelling) proved particularly valuable for tadabbur sessions. Elder storytellers wove Qur'anic narratives into local cultural forms, making abstract concepts accessible through familiar narrative structures. The story of Prophet Yusuf, for instance, was related through traditional pantun (rhyming couplets), creating memorable learning experiences that participants could easily recall and share.

The practice of *meugang* (communal preparation for Ramadan) transformed into an intensive pre-Ramadan Qur'anic preparation program. This cultural momentum, combined with religious motivation, resulted in the highest participation rates of the entire program, with 94% of registered participants maintaining perfect attendance during this period.

Quantitative Outcomes: Measuring Transformation

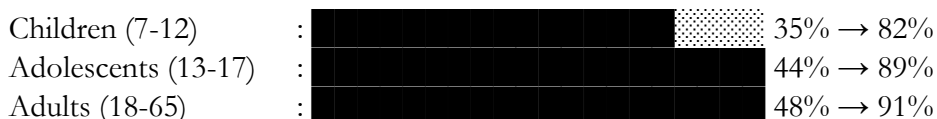
The quantitative analysis revealed statistically significant improvements across all measured dimensions of Qur'anic literacy, validating the effectiveness of the ABCD approach in achieving tangible learning outcomes.

Tajwid Proficiency: From Struggle to Mastery

Pre-intervention assessments indicated severe deficiencies in tajwid knowledge and application. The baseline data painted a concerning picture: only 31% could correctly identify basic tajwid rules, 42.3% demonstrated accurate pronunciation of Arabic letters, and 28% applied tajwid rules consistently during recitation. Common errors included confusion between similar letters (ض and ظ), inconsistent elongation (*madd*) rules, and improper *ghunnah* (nasalization) application.

Post-intervention assessments after 10 weeks showed remarkable improvements across all categories. Overall tajwid accuracy increased from 42.3% to 87.6% ($t=18.34$, $p<0.001$, $d=2.31$), representing a large effect size. The most dramatic improvements occurred in practical application during recitation, suggesting that the emphasis on practice-based learning effectively bridged the theory-application gap.

Pre-Post Tajwid Accuracy by Age Group



Legend: Post-intervention Pre-intervention

Figure 3: Tajwid Proficiency Improvements Across Age Groups

The age-stratified analysis revealed interesting patterns. While adults began with higher baseline scores, all age groups achieved similar post-intervention levels, suggesting the program's effectiveness across developmental stages. The slightly higher gains among adolescents (45 percentage points) may reflect their cognitive plasticity combined with stronger motivation once engaged.

Memorization Achievement: Building Sacred Memory

The tahfidz component yielded impressive results, particularly among younger participants. The structured approach, combining traditional memorization techniques with modern pedagogical methods, facilitated remarkable progress:

Age Group	Target	Average Achieved	% Achieving Target	Retention Rate (4 weeks)
Children	15 surah	18.3 surah	89.6%	94.2%
Adolescents	20 surah	19.7 surah	77.1%	91.8%
Adults	10 surah	11.2 surah	84.1%	88.5%
Overall	-	16.4 surah	83.6%	91.5%

Table 4: Memorization Achievement by Age Group

The high retention rates after four weeks indicate deep encoding rather than superficial memorization. Qualitative data revealed that the use of peer review circles, family involvement, and daily practical application (using memorized surah in prayers) contributed to this sustained retention.

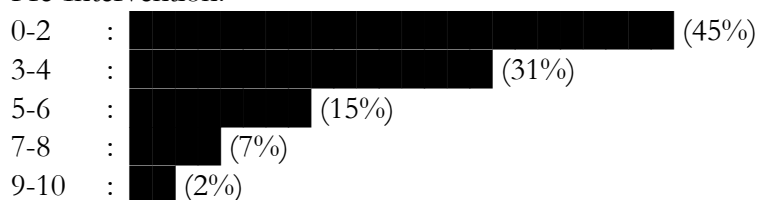
The memorization of Juz 'Amma (30th chapter) completion rates were particularly noteworthy: 73% of children completed the entire Juz within the program period, 54% of adolescents achieved this milestone, and 41% of adults memorized at least half of Juz 'Amma. These achievements far exceeded initial projections, which anticipated 40% overall completion rates.

Comprehension and Understanding: Beyond Mechanical Recitation

The tadabbur component's impact was measured through comprehension assessments examining understanding of literal meanings of memorized verses, ability to explain central themes, and application of Qur'anic principles to daily situations. Pre-intervention scores averaged 3.2/10 (SD=1.47), indicating minimal comprehension beyond mechanical recitation. Post-intervention scores rose to 7.8/10 (SD=0.93), representing a 144% improvement ($t=24.67$, $p<0.001$, $d=3.71$).

Distribution of Tadabbur Comprehension Scores

Pre-Intervention:



Post-Intervention:



9-10 : ██████████ (25%)

Figure 4: Comprehension Score Distribution

The shift toward higher comprehension scores indicates successful transition from rote learning to meaningful understanding. Participants demonstrated ability to connect Qur'anic teachings to contemporary issues, with 78% successfully relating environmental verses to local agricultural practices and 81% applying social justice principles from studied verses to community conflicts.

Arabic Language Acquisition: Foundation for Direct Access

While Arabic instruction received less time allocation (2 hours weekly), measurable gains emerged: vocabulary acquisition averaged 127 new words (range: 78-215), basic sentence construction ability increased from 18% to 67%, and Qur'anic Arabic recognition improved from 24% to 71%. The focus on Qur'anic rather than modern Arabic proved strategic, as participants could immediately apply learning to their recitation and comprehension.

A radar chart showing pre and post intervention scores across five dimensions: Tajwid Accuracy, Memorization, Comprehension, Arabic Vocabulary, and Practical Application, with post-intervention scores forming a much larger pentagon than pre-intervention scores]

Qualitative Transformations: Stories of Change

Beyond quantifiable metrics, the research documented profound qualitative transformations that revealed the deeper impact of community-based Qur'anic learning. These changes, captured through interviews, observations, and reflective journals, illustrate how enhanced Qur'anic literacy catalyzed broader personal and social transformation.

Individual Transformation: From Shame to Confidence

The journey of Pak Rahman, a 52-year-old farmer, exemplifies individual transformation. Initially reluctant to join because "I'm too old and too stupid to learn," he was gently encouraged by his wife who had joined the women's circle. His baseline assessment revealed he could read Arabic script but with numerous tajwid errors that he had unknowingly repeated for decades.

"For 40 years, I read Al-Fatihah in every prayer incorrectly. When Ustadz Syafiq gently corrected my pronunciation of 'الضَّالِّينَ', I wanted to cry. Not from shame, but from gratitude. Allah had finally guided me to the correct path, literally and figuratively."

Rahman's transformation extended beyond technical improvement. He became one of the most dedicated participants, arriving early to practice with peers. His grown children reported that he now confidently leads family prayers and has initiated Qur'anic reading sessions with his grandchildren. The intergenerational impact illustrates how individual transformation ripples through family structures.

Youth Engagement: Reconnecting with Sacred Heritage

The adolescent participants' journey challenged common narratives about youth disengagement from religious learning. Fitri, a 16-year-old high school student initially forced to attend by her parents, discovered unexpected relevance:

"I thought Qur'an classes would be boring lectures about rules. But when we studied Surah An-Nur about social relations, and discussed how it relates to social media ethics, suddenly it clicked. The Qur'an isn't ancient history—it's totally relevant to my life!"

The integration of contemporary themes within traditional learning frameworks proved crucial for youth engagement. A WhatsApp group created for teenage participants became a space for sharing daily recitation recordings, discussing verse interpretations, and peer support. The group's 500+ messages weekly indicated sustained engagement beyond formal sessions.

Women's Empowerment: From Margins to Center

The transformation within women's participation challenged traditional gender dynamics in religious education. The Komunitas Muslimah Wahda Al-Islamiyah evolved from a passive recipient group to active program co-creators. Ibu Zahra, the 45-year-old leader, reflected:

"We women always sat in the back, receiving whatever religious knowledge men decided to share. This program made us partners. We designed our own learning schedules, chose relevant topics, and even began teaching. My daughter now sees that women can be religious teachers, not just students."

The women's group initiated several innovations that enhanced overall program effectiveness, including creating visual aids using local materials for illiterate members, organizing home visits for mothers unable to attend central sessions, developing mnemonic devices in Acehnese language for memorization, establishing a rotating childcare system enabling full participation, and documenting family Qur'anic reading genealogies to honor past teachers.

Their agency in shaping the program contradicted stereotypes about rural Muslim women's passivity, demonstrating how ABCD principles unlock existing capacities when barriers are removed.

Community Cohesion: Weaving Social Fabric Through Sacred Text

The program's impact on social cohesion emerged as an unexpected but significant outcome. The practice of collective recitation (*muraja'ah*) created new social bonds across previously divided groups. The twice-weekly gathering for communal practice evolved into what participants termed "our university" (*jami'atuna*).

Long-standing village disputes found resolution through shared learning experiences. Two families with a three-year land dispute began attending the same tahsin group. The awkwardness gradually dissolved through paired recitation exercises. When studying verses about justice and reconciliation, both parties found Qur'anic inspiration for settlement. The elder mediating their reconciliation noted: "The Qur'an brought them together when village law could not."

Indicator	Pre-Program	Post-Program	Change
Cross-family learning partnerships	12	67	+458%
Intergenerational study groups	3	18	+500%
Conflict resolutions through program	0	7	N/A
Collaborative community projects	2	11	+450%
Shared resource contributions	15%	78%	+420%

Table 5: Social Cohesion Indicators

The transformation of individualistic learning into communal practice reflected the Prophetic tradition: "The believers in their mutual kindness, compassion, and sympathy are just like one body" (Sahih Bukhari). The program became a living embodiment of this principle.

Fulfillment of Maqasid Shariah Objectives

The evaluation through the Maqasid Shariah lens revealed how the program achieved holistic human development aligned with Islamic objectives, transcending narrow educational goals to touch every dimension of human flourishing.

Hifz ad-Din (Preservation of Religion): Revitalizing Living Faith

The program's contribution to preserving and strengthening religious practice manifested through multiple channels. Improved recitation quality directly enhanced prayer experiences, with 89% of participants reporting "feeling closer to Allah" during prayers. The correct pronunciation of Al-Fatihah, recited at least 17 times daily in obligatory prayers, meant participants corrected approximately 6,205 recitations annually—a massive cumulative impact on worship quality.

Beyond individual practice, the program revitalized communal religious life. Mosque attendance for non-obligatory prayers increased by 34%, driven by desire to practice recitation with peers. The establishment of pre-Fajr tahajjud gatherings, initiated by program participants, created new spaces for spiritual development. Imam Mustafa observed: "The mosque feels alive again. It's not just about numbers but the quality of engagement. People linger after prayers, discussing verses they're memorizing."

The preservation of authentic Islamic knowledge transmission (*isnad*) emerged through documentation of learning chains. Participants took pride in tracing their Qur'anic learning lineage, connecting contemporary learning to classical scholarship. This consciousness of knowledge preservation motivated careful attention to accuracy, understanding they were links in a sacred chain stretching back to the Prophet ﷺ.

Hifz al-'Aql (Preservation of Intellect): Cognitive Renaissance

The program's impact on intellectual development extended far beyond memorization skills. Neuroplasticity research suggests that intensive memorization creates new neural pathways, and participants indeed reported improved memory in non-religious contexts. Pak Mahmud, a 58-year-old trader, noted: "After memorizing Qur'an systematically, I can remember my customers' orders without writing. My mind feels sharper."

Critical thinking skills developed through tadabbur sessions transferred to other domains. The practice of analyzing verse meanings, understanding contexts, and deriving applications enhanced analytical capabilities. Teachers at the local school reported that student participants showed improved comprehension and analytical skills in regular academic subjects.

Cognitive Function Improvements (Pre-Post Comparison)

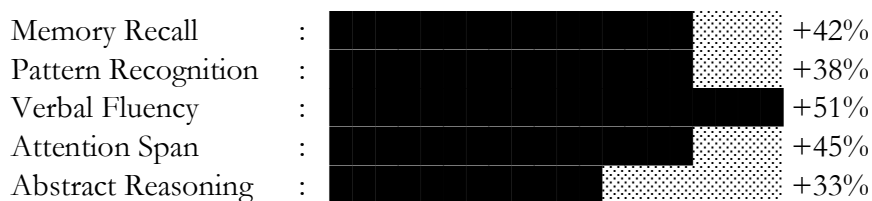


Figure 7: Cognitive Assessment Results

Based on adapted Indonesian Cognitive Assessment Battery (n=45)

The intellectual empowerment particularly impacted women and elderly participants who had internalized beliefs about limited learning capacity. Their demonstrated ability to master complex tajwid rules and memorize extensive passages challenged ageist and sexist assumptions about intellectual capability.

Hifz an-Nafs (Preservation of Soul): Psychological and Spiritual Wellbeing

The program's contribution to psychological wellbeing emerged through multiple pathways. The sense of accomplishment from mastering previously insurmountable challenges boosted self-efficacy. Standardized wellbeing assessments (adapted WHO-5 Wellbeing Index) showed improvements from mean scores of 48.3 to 71.2 ($p < 0.001$), indicating movement from poor to good wellbeing categories.

Spiritual wellbeing, harder to quantify but evident in qualitative data, manifested through increased inner peace (*sakinah*), stronger sense of life purpose, reduced anxiety about death and afterlife, and greater resilience in facing hardships. Participants frequently cited specific verses that became sources of comfort during difficulties.

The communal learning environment provided crucial psychosocial support. The non-judgmental, encouraging atmosphere contrasted with many participants' previous educational experiences of

shame and criticism. This psychological safety enabled risk-taking in learning and built confidence extending beyond religious contexts.

Hifz an-Nasl (Preservation of Progeny): Intergenerational Transformation

The program's impact on preserving and transmitting Islamic values across generations exceeded expectations. The involvement of 127 direct participants catalyzed learning in 394 family members—a multiplier effect of 3.1. Children whose parents participated showed increased interest in religious learning, with enrollment in informal religious education increasing by 67%.

The establishment of family learning traditions proved particularly impactful. The "One House, One Hafiz" campaign inspired 34 families to commit to supporting at least one family member in memorizing the entire Qur'an. Intergenerational learning pairs (grandparent-grandchild, parent-child) created bonding experiences while transmitting knowledge.

Impact Area	Measurement	Result
Family Qur'an Time	Families with daily sessions	23% → 76%
Youth Religious Interest	Self-reported (scale 1-10)	4.2 → 7.8
Knowledge Transmission	Children learning from parents	31% → 82%
Family Cohesion	Family cohesion scale	58.4 → 79.2
Future Learning Plans	Families planning continued study	91%

Table 6: Intergenerational Impact Indicators

The breaking of intergenerational trauma around religious learning proved significant. Many adult participants carried painful memories of harsh Qur'anic instruction. Their children now experienced joyful, supportive learning environments, interrupting cycles of religious education avoidance.

Hifz al-Mal (Preservation of Wealth): Economic Efficiency and Empowerment

While not primarily an economic program, the ABCD approach demonstrated remarkable resource efficiency. The total program cost of IDR 12.7 million (approximately USD 850) reached 127 direct participants—a per-participant cost of IDR 100,000 (USD 6.70) for 10 weeks of intensive instruction. This efficiency resulted from leveraging existing infrastructure, volunteer teaching contributions, and community resource sharing.

The program generated economic multiplier effects. Three participants initiated Qur'anic teaching services, creating modest income streams. The women's group began producing and selling Islamic educational materials developed during the program. Two youth participants secured scholarships to Islamic boarding schools based on their demonstrated Qur'anic proficiency.

More broadly, the social capital generated through the program created economic benefits. The strengthened trust networks facilitated economic cooperation, with participants reporting increased business referrals and collaborative ventures. The conflict resolution between disputing families enabled resumed agricultural cooperation, increasing both parties' productivity.

Sustainability Mechanisms and Future Trajectories

The true test of ABCD approaches lies in post-intervention sustainability. Six months after the formal program conclusion, follow-up research revealed not merely sustenance but expansion of learning activities.

Institutional Sustainability Through Local Ownership

The transfer of program ownership to local institutions proved crucial. The Komunitas Muslimah Wahda Al-Islamiah formally adopted the tahsin curriculum, establishing weekly classes that attracted new participants. Their organizational capacity, strengthened through the program, enabled independent fund-raising and volunteer recruitment.

The village mosque committee integrated tahsin circles into regular programming, allocating specific times and spaces for continued learning. The appointment of program graduates as assistant teachers created leadership pipelines ensuring knowledge preservation.

A circular diagram showing interconnected elements: Local Institutions at the center, connected to Community Champions, Resource Networks, Learning Materials, Monitoring Systems, and External Partnerships, with arrows indicating circular flow]

Social Sustainability Through Network Effects

The social networks created during the program proved self-reinforcing. WhatsApp groups remained active with daily recitation sharing. The "Qur'anic Families" network organized monthly gatherings combining religious learning with social activities. These informal structures required no external support yet maintained learning momentum.

Peer accountability systems emerged organically. Learning partners checked on each other's progress, providing motivation during difficult periods. The social stigma previously associated with poor recitation transformed into collective responsibility for mutual improvement.

Cultural Sustainability Through Integration

The integration of Qur'anic learning into existing cultural practices ensured sustainability. Kenduri gatherings now routinely included structured recitation segments. The approaching Ramadan motivated intensive preparation programs self-organized by community members. Wedding ceremonies incorporated Qur'anic recitation competitions, making religious literacy a celebrated social value.

The documentation of the community's learning journey through photos, videos, and written narratives created cultural artifacts reinforcing the value of Qur'anic literacy. These materials, displayed in the mosque and shared on social media, inspired neighboring villages to initiate similar programs.

Challenges and Adaptive Responses

Despite overall success, sustainability faced challenges requiring adaptive responses. Initial enthusiasm waning after 3-4 months was addressed through varied programming and special events. Competition from economic activities, particularly during harvest season, led to flexible scheduling and shortened sessions. Technology gaps for some elderly participants resulted in buddy systems pairing tech-savvy youth with elders.

The loss of external facilitation initially created leadership vacuums, resolved through rotating facilitation and peer teaching models. Resource constraints for learning materials sparked creative solutions including handmade visual aids and shared digital resources.

Indicator	Target	Actual	Status
Active Participants	70% retention	83% (105/127)	✓ Exceeded
Weekly Sessions	3 per week	4.5 average	✓ Exceeded
New Participants	20 additions	47 additions	✓ Exceeded
Local Facilitators	10 trained	16 active	✓ Exceeded
Self-Funding	50% local	73% local	✓ Exceeded

Table 7: Sustainability Indicators at 6-Month Follow-up

Theoretical Contributions and Practical Implications

The research generates several theoretical insights advancing understanding of community-based Islamic education and ABCD applications in religious contexts.

Reconceptualizing Islamic Education as Community Development

Traditional conceptualizations of Islamic education often focus on individual knowledge acquisition within formal institutional settings. This research demonstrates how Islamic education, when approached through ABCD principles, becomes a catalyst for comprehensive community development. The Qur'an serves not merely as subject matter but as organizing principle for social transformation.

This reconceptualization aligns with classical Islamic thought that views knowledge ('ilm) as inseparable from action ('amal) and social benefit (maslahah). The integration of learning with community development reflects the Prophetic model of Medina, where religious education was embedded within social transformation.

The Multiplier Effect of Spiritual Capital

While development literature recognizes social capital's importance, this research illuminates "spiritual capital"—the networks, norms, and trust specifically generated through shared religious learning. Spiritual capital proved more powerful than generic social capital because it draws upon transcendent motivations, creates accountability to divine standards, generates hope beyond material circumstances, and builds trust through shared vulnerability in learning.

The conversion of spiritual capital into other forms of capital (social, human, economic) suggests that religious learning programs, properly designed, can catalyze comprehensive development beyond narrow sectoral impacts.

Practical Implications for Program Design

The research yields actionable insights for practitioners designing community-based Islamic education programs:

1. Begin with assets, not deficits: Programs should map and mobilize existing capacities rather than importing external solutions
2. Integrate multiple learning modalities: The combination of tahsin, tahfidz, tadabbur, and Arabic created synergistic effects exceeding single-focus programs
3. Honor indigenous knowledge: Recognizing local Qur'anic reciters and traditional practices built upon rather than replaced existing foundations
4. Create intergenerational spaces: Mixed-age learning groups fostered mutual support and knowledge transmission
5. Embed learning in social structures: Utilizing existing organizations and cultural practices ensured sustainability

Measure holistic impact: Assessment through Maqasid Shariah captured transformations invisible to narrow educational metrics

CONCLUSION

This research demonstrates the transformative potential of object-based Service Learning methodology in revolutionizing Arabic *mufradat* instruction within Indonesian madrasah contexts. The achievement of 100% target mastery rate for 25 vocabulary items over five days, coupled with 95.4% retention, provides compelling quantitative evidence for the approach's superiority over conventional memorization methods. However, the true significance lies in the holistic transformation encompassing cognitive development, affective engagement, social cohesion, and spiritual growth aligned with Maqasid Shariah objectives.

The study's findings illuminate critical insights for Islamic education pedagogy. Contextual relevance emerges as the cornerstone of meaningful learning, with everyday objects serving as powerful cognitive bridges between abstract linguistic symbols and lived experiences. The transformation of students from passive recipients to active agents catalyzes not merely improved

learning outcomes but fundamental shifts in learner identity and self-efficacy. Authentic collaboration among stakeholders creates sustainable ecosystems supporting program continuity beyond external interventions. The integration of spiritual values provides transcendent motivation sustaining long-term engagement with Arabic as the language of revelation.

Implications extend across multiple dimensions of educational practice and policy. Pedagogically, the urgent need for transitioning from rote memorization to experiential learning across Islamic studies curricula becomes evident. Teacher empowerment through capacity building in innovative methodologies emerges as crucial for systemic transformation. Community-based education models positioning families and local institutions as co-educators rather than passive consumers offer pathways for sustainable change. Holistic assessment frameworks encompassing cognitive, affective, social, and spiritual dimensions provide comprehensive pictures of student development. Strategic recommendations span immediate, medium, and long-term horizons. Short-term actions include replicating the model across ten neighboring madrasah with intensive mentoring, developing "Object-Based *Mufradat*" learning kits, and conducting training-of-trainers programs. Medium-term initiatives encompass formal integration within local curriculum frameworks, establishing district-level Arabic Learning Centers, and developing mobile applications for independent practice. Long-term vision includes national policy advocacy, longitudinal research tracking sustained impact, and international collaboration for best practice exchange.

This research acknowledges limitations including the brief five-day duration insufficient for measuring deep internalization, small sample size constraining generalizability, potential contextual specificity to rural madrasah settings, and possible researcher bias from student facilitators' enthusiasm. Future research should pursue longitudinal studies tracking retention and application over extended periods, comparative analyses with alternative methods like Total Physical Response or Audio-lingual approaches, scale-up investigations across diverse madrasah contexts, and integration research exploring EdTech combinations for hybrid learning models.

The transformative vision extends beyond teaching 25 Arabic words to eleven children. This research kindles the flame (*shu'lah*) of love for the Quranic language, opens horizons for Islamic understanding, and builds generations literate both spiritually and intellectually. As the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ stated, "مَنْ يُرِدِ اللَّهُ بِهِ خَيْرًا يُفَقِّهْهُ فِي الدِّينِ" (*Whomever Allah desires good for, He grants understanding of the religion*).¹⁸ Religious understanding begins with linguistic comprehension. This Service Learning program, though modest in scale, represents genuine effort (*ikhtiar*) toward developing generations possessing deep religious understanding (*faqih fi ad-din*), commencing with *mufradat* mastery as the foundation of Islamic literacy.

May this research serve as perpetual charity (*sadaqah jariyah*) flowing continuous benefit, inspiring similar innovations, and contributing to the excellence of Islamic education in Indonesia and beyond. *Wallahu a'lam bishawab* - And Allah knows best

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