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ORIGINAL RESEARCH ARTICLE

Revitalizing a Village Madrasah for Children's Religious Education

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative case study examines the inactivity of a village madrasah diniyah in Sendangrejo and considers locally proposed routes to reopening it. The manuscript reports observation of an unused building, interviews with a former teacher, neighborhood leader, parent, and child, and review of remaining village and madrasah records. The former teacher recalled approximately 40–50 children attending after the afternoon prayer during the madrasah's active period. The source links its gradual closure to the loss of teachers without successors, weak organizational continuity, declining community funds, and the absence of a dedicated village budget allocation. A parent described difficulty sustaining Qur'anic instruction at home, while a child expressed interest in returning to group learning. The proposed response combines a new management group, supervised recruitment of local teaching successors, a feasible schedule and participatory methods, and discussion of transparent funding with village stakeholders. These are recommendations drawn from one case; the study does not show that the proposed program has been implemented or that children's religious outcomes have changed as a direct consequence of closure.

Keywords: Madrasah Diniyah; Rural Religious Education; Community Participation; Teacher Succession; Revitalization



ABSTRAK

Studi kasus kualitatif ini mengkaji kevakuman madrasah diniyah di Desa Sendangrejo dan usulan setempat untuk menghidupkannya kembali. Naskah melaporkan observasi terhadap bangunan yang tidak digunakan, wawancara mantan guru, ketua lingkungan, orang tua, dan seorang anak, serta telaah arsip desa dan madrasah yang tersisa. Mantan guru mengingat sekitar 40–50 anak mengikuti kegiatan selepas Asar ketika madrasah masih aktif. Kevakuman bertahap dikaitkan dengan berhentinya pengajar tanpa penerus, lemahnya kesinambungan pengurus, berkurangnya dukungan swadaya, dan belum adanya alokasi anggaran khusus dari desa. Seorang orang tua menjelaskan kesulitannya mendampingi anak mengaji secara konsisten di rumah, sementara seorang anak ingin kembali belajar bersama. Usulan revitalisasi mencakup pembentukan pengurus, pendampingan calon pengajar lokal, jadwal yang sesuai, metode partisipatif, serta pembahasan pendanaan yang transparan bersama pemangku kepentingan desa. Usulan tersebut belum dilaksanakan atau diuji dalam penelitian ini; perubahan capaian keagamaan anak akibat kevakuman juga tidak diukur secara kausal.

Kata kunci: Madrasah Diniyah; Pendidikan Agama Pedesaan; Partisipasi Masyarakat; Kaderisasi Pengajar; Revitalisasi

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1. INTRODUCTION

Village madrasah diniyah can provide children with structured religious learning outside formal school hours and offer families a place to share responsibility for Qur'anic reading, worship, and moral education. Their ability to continue depends on teachers, local leadership, space, parental participation, and resources. Community participation can support the quality of religious education, but it must be organized rather than assumed (Jannah & Diana, 2022; Thoha, 2022).

The madrasah in Sendangrejo reportedly stopped its regular teaching after an earlier active period. Its building remains, yet the management structure has not been updated and scheduled lessons no longer take place. A closed building therefore understates the issue: the loss is also of an organized group of teachers, students, and supporting residents. Research on community-based institutions suggests that organizational continuity and shared ownership matter for long-term resilience (Muzayyanah et al., 2025; Ostrom, 1990).

The source describes a former teacher's concern about successors, a neighborhood leader's account of the lack of a dedicated village allocation, and a parent's difficulty teaching regularly at home. These perspectives offer a grounded account of why the madrasah weakened and what it had contributed. Changes in children's routines, including more time on devices, are mentioned by participants, although they cannot be attributed to closure alone (Odgers & Jensen, 2020).

This article describes the madrasah's reported decline, the educational opportunities lost, and an implementable sequence of locally proposed revitalization steps. It separates observed conditions and participant statements from recommendations that have not yet been tested. The goal is to inform a village conversation about restoring a durable educational setting, not to claim an evaluated intervention.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

The research used a qualitative single-case design in Sendangrejo. Participants were selected purposively from people familiar with the madrasah's former activities and present condition: religious and village figures, a former teacher, parents, and children. The source records identifiable accounts of former teacher Karyono, a neighborhood leader, parent Sumiatun, and child Ammar; its methods section does not specify a total sample size or complete fieldwork period. Interview references give 19 September 2026 as a date for these four accounts (Yin, 2018).

Data collection was reported as observation of the building and activities, semistructured interviews, and review of village archives and surviving madrasah records. Observation found a standing but unused building, no organized lesson at the former meeting time, and an outdated management board. The records were said to indicate decreasing enrolment before the closure, but the source does not present a dated series or the underlying register.

The manuscript describes iterative data reduction, thematic display, and conclusion drawing with source and method triangulation (Miles et al., 2019). The article groups available evidence under organizational decline, educational gaps, and revitalization proposals. A reported count of 40–50 learners during the active period comes from a teacher's recollection and should not be mistaken for a verified enrollment statistic.

Credibility here rests on comparing the described interviews, observation, and remaining documents, while recognizing that the source supplies no full transcript, detailed sampling log, or longitudinal child measures (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The proposed strategy is thus an analytical synthesis of local suggestions and related literature. Its feasibility and effects remain to be assessed after implementation (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

3. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Former teacher Karyono recalled that the madrasah was active for about two years and attracted roughly 40–50 children after the Asr prayer. The source describes instruction in Qur'anic reading, faith and ethics, Fiqh, and Islamic history. A present observation found the building still standing but not prepared for lessons, an outdated management display, and no teaching activity during its former time slot. The contrast shows an interruption of both teaching and organizational operation.

Karyono said the senior teachers ceased teaching without a prepared group of successors. Younger residents had reportedly been approached, but work or study outside the village made a regular commitment difficult. A neighborhood leader said no dedicated line had been allocated to the madrasah in the village budget, while support from voluntary community contributions had weakened. The source presents remaining records as consistent with a gradual decline in student numbers before complete inactivity, though the figures and dates are unavailable.

Parent Sumiatun described trying to continue Qur'anic learning at home but struggling to do so regularly after work. She associated the closure with less regular worship and reading in her household, while also mentioning more device use in children's free time. Child Ammar described playing with peers and using a phone after school, yet said that shared Qur'anic study would appeal

to him if restored. These accounts identify an absent learning venue and a possible source of motivation without measuring changes across all village children.

Local proposals center on four linked actions: reconstitute management, recruit and mentor dependable teachers, agree on a schedule and engaging methods while preserving core religious content, and discuss diverse funding with the community and village leaders. Karyono expressed willingness to help and suggested games or songs, while the parent asked for a schedule that would not collide with other lessons. The neighborhood leader suggested discussing support at a village meeting. No renewed program or budget approval is documented.

4. DISCUSSION

The evidence suggests that closure followed a cumulative process rather than a single event. A building remained available, but leadership renewal, teaching succession, and community financial support did not continue together. Institutional resilience requires more than physical assets: responsibilities, records, relationships, and a workable source of support must be renewed (Muzayyanah et al., 2025; Thoha, 2022). The partial enrollment records suggest decline, although their absence prevents a dated reconstruction.

The shortage of successors is a concrete point of vulnerability. Karyono's account says young adults were approached but could not commit regularly because many worked or studied elsewhere. Evidence from teacher development in another community Qur'anic program suggests that supervised youth preparation can help rebuild capacity (Toyibah, 2025). Sendangrejo would still need to confirm candidates' availability, preparation, safeguarding, and ongoing mentoring before assigning teaching duties.

The lack of a dedicated village allocation, reported by the neighborhood leader, makes dependence on voluntary contributions more visible. This report should not be read as proof that a particular funding source is legally available to the madrasah. Village leaders and residents can discuss the proposal through established planning processes and document any decision transparently. Community control and clear records help prevent a restart from depending on informal commitments that may fade (Ostrom, 1990; Thoha, 2022).

Parents may find it difficult to replace a regular shared class on their own. Sumiatun's account connects employment demands with inconsistent home instruction; it describes her situation rather than every household. The school-family literature indicates that access to a dependable community learning setting can complement, rather than displace, a family's role (Epstein, 2018; Hill & Tyson, 2009). Parent input on timing and a manageable home practice could help children participate without treating families as unpaid substitutes for teachers.

Ammar's willingness to return challenges an assumption that children have uniformly lost interest. His account identifies peers and shared learning as attractive features. Participatory methods could make Qur'anic learning welcoming while preserving the religious material requested by adults. A local trial could compare attendance and engagement across agreed activities, but the source study provides no evidence that games or digital resources have already improved learning in Sendangrejo (Biggs & Tang, 2011; Toyibah, 2025).

More device use during the former madrasah hours appears in participant accounts and observations. That temporal association does not establish that closing the madrasah caused problematic digital use or diminished worship. Children's media experiences vary by content, social context, and family guidance (Odgers & Jensen, 2020). Restoring a reliable after-school group may create an additional option for children; later evaluation should observe their time use and learning directly before drawing stronger conclusions.

The proposed sequence should begin with a recorded management agreement and a small teacher team, then a negotiated schedule and modest pilot classes. Once regularity is established, leaders could present attendance, staffing, costs, and parent feedback to a village meeting. This sequence joins leadership, human resources, teaching, and funding without assuming that any one action is sufficient (Subiyantoro, 2022; Thoha, 2022). It remains a proposed plan, not a result already achieved.

This single case contains several useful perspectives, but most numerical claims depend on recollection and the source lacks a dated enrollment register, complete interview transcripts, and measures of religious learning. It therefore supports a contextual explanation of inactivity and locally acceptable options, not a causal estimate of loss or proof of a revitalization model. A participatory follow-up could record baseline enrollment, attendance, teacher retention, parent input, and children's demonstrated learning over time (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Yin, 2018).

5. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The Sendangrejo madrasah diniyah has an unused building and no regular teaching. Interviews and observation link its gradual closure to the absence of teacher successors and active management, shrinking community contributions, and limited institutional support. A parent described the difficulty of continuing instruction at home, while a child expressed interest in learning again with peers. The case does not establish that closure alone caused changes in worship or device use.

Residents' proposals point to an orderly restart: agree on management responsibilities, prepare teachers and successors, negotiate a workable schedule and engaging methods, and seek transparent support through village discussion. The proposal should be piloted and evaluated with documented participation and learning before its effectiveness is claimed.

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