

Original Article

## Mosque-Based Qur'anic Learning and Youth Moral Socialization in Rural Indonesia

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## ABSTRACT

Religious institutions play an important role in shaping moral values and social behavior in rural Muslim communities. However, rapid social change, technological development, and shifting youth lifestyles have created new challenges for adolescent moral development. While many studies focus on character education in formal schools, the role of community-based religious learning in fostering youth moral socialization remains underexplored. This study examines how mosque-based Qur'anic learning activities contribute to the moral socialization of adolescents in a rural community in Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia. This research employed a qualitative descriptive design conducted in Mabolu Village, Muna Regency. Participants were selected through purposive sampling and included religious instructors, administrators of the Qur'anic learning institution, adolescent participants, and community members involved in the program. Data were collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The collected data were analyzed using an inductive qualitative approach following the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion verification. The findings show that mosque-based Qur'anic learning programs function not only as spaces for religious instruction but also as important arenas for moral socialization among adolescents. Through activities such as Qur'anic recitation, communal religious gatherings, and youth-led religious events, participants internalize values such as discipline, respect for elders, responsibility, and social solidarity. Educational strategies including storytelling, religious advice (*mauidzali*), lectures, and interactive discussions play a key role in facilitating the internalization of these values. Furthermore, youth involvement in organizing religious activities provides opportunities for leadership development and strengthens their sense of community belonging. Despite these contributions, the program faces challenges including declining youth participation, limited parental involvement, and the growing influence of digital technology on adolescents' daily lives. This study highlights the importance of community-based Islamic education as an informal mechanism of moral socialization in rural societies and underscores the need for stronger collaboration between religious institutions, families, and local communities to support youth moral development.



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## INTRODUCTION

Adolescents represent an important social group in the process of societal development because they will become the future generation responsible for shaping the direction of social, cultural, and national progress. However, adolescence is also recognized as a critical developmental stage characterized by psychological transition, identity exploration, and increased vulnerability to external influences (Santrock, 2018). During this period, adolescents often face various social pressures that may influence their attitudes, behaviors, and moral orientation.

In recent decades, rapid technological advancement, globalization, and the expansion of digital media have significantly transformed the lifestyles and social interactions of adolescents worldwide, including in Indonesia. While these developments offer broader opportunities for learning and social connectivity, they

also introduce new challenges related to moral behavior. Several studies have indicated that increased exposure to digital media and global cultural influences may contribute to declining social etiquette, greater exposure to inappropriate content, and the emergence of risky social behaviors among young people ([Arnett, 2015](#); [Livingstone & Smith, 2014](#)). These conditions highlight the increasing importance of strengthening moral education and value formation among adolescents.

Moral development is not formed automatically but is shaped through continuous socialization processes within various social institutions, including families, schools, religious institutions, and community organizations. According to [Kohlberg's](#) theory of moral development, individuals gradually develop moral reasoning through social experiences and ethical learning processes that influence their understanding of right and wrong ([Kohlberg, 1981](#)). In this context, religious education is often considered an important mechanism for fostering moral awareness, ethical behavior, and character development among young people.

Within Muslim communities, Qur'anic learning institutions and mosque-based religious education programs play a significant role in transmitting religious knowledge and moral teachings. These institutions function not only as places for learning Qur'anic recitation but also as community-based platforms for moral socialization and character formation. Previous research has shown that religious education can contribute to the development of discipline, moral awareness, and social responsibility among adolescents by encouraging the internalization of religious values in daily life ([Berglund, 2015](#); [Halstead, 2010](#)). Empirical research conducted in an Indonesian rural context also demonstrates that mosque-based Qur'anic learning institutions can play a meaningful role in guiding adolescents' moral behavior through structured religious activities such as Qur'anic recitation, religious discussions, and communal worship practices. These activities provide opportunities for adolescents to internalize religious values while strengthening their engagement with the local community ([Saputri et al., 2025](#)).

Despite the potential role of religious institutions in shaping adolescent morality, many social challenges remain evident, particularly in rural communities. Several studies have highlighted that adolescents in rural areas often face complex social influences, including peer pressure, changing cultural norms, and increasing exposure to digital technology, which may affect their behavioral patterns and moral values ([Benson et al., 2012](#)). These conditions require the presence of community-based educational institutions that are capable of providing moral guidance and strengthening ethical values among young people.

However, most previous studies on religious education and moral development have primarily focused on formal educational institutions such as schools or have relied on conceptual or literature-based analyses. Empirical studies examining the role of community-based religious learning institutions-particularly Qur'anic study groups in rural village contexts-remain relatively limited. Consequently, there is still a lack of empirical understanding regarding how such institutions operate, what educational approaches they employ, and what challenges they face in fostering adolescent moral development within local community settings.

This research therefore seeks to address this gap by examining the role of a mosque-based Qur'anic learning institution in fostering moral development among adolescents in Mabolu Village, Lohia District, Muna Regency, Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia. The village has experienced several social concerns related to adolescent behavior, including declining respect for elders, involvement in risky behaviors, excessive engagement in online gaming, and late-night social activities among youth. These conditions have raised concerns among community members regarding the moral development of adolescents and the effectiveness of existing community-based educational institutions in addressing these challenges.

Through an exploration of the institution's activities, educational strategies, and challenges, this study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how mosque-based Qur'anic learning institutions contribute to the

moral development of adolescents in rural Muslim communities. Academically, this research contributes in two main ways. First, it expands the literature on adolescent moral development by highlighting the role of community-based religious institutions as important spaces for moral socialization. Second, it provides empirical evidence regarding the practices, educational methods, and institutional challenges involved in fostering moral values among adolescents in the context of rural Islamic communities.

## METHOD

This study employed a qualitative descriptive research design to explore the role of Qur'anic learning institutions in fostering moral development among adolescents in rural communities. A qualitative approach was selected because it allows researchers to gain a deeper understanding of social phenomena within their natural context and to interpret the meanings individuals assign to their experiences ([Creswell & Clark, 2011](#)). Qualitative research emphasizes the exploration of complex social processes, interactions, and meanings that cannot be adequately captured through quantitative measurement.

The descriptive qualitative approach was considered appropriate for this research because the study aims to describe and interpret the practices, educational strategies, and challenges faced by Qur'anic learning institutions in guiding adolescents' moral development. Rather than focusing on numerical generalization, qualitative descriptive research focuses on providing a comprehensive and contextualized understanding of a particular social phenomenon ([Merriam & Tisdell, 2016](#)). In this study, the phenomenon under investigation is the role of mosque-based Qur'anic learning activities in shaping the moral behavior of adolescents within a rural Muslim community. Within qualitative research, the researcher acts as the primary instrument for data collection and interpretation. This allows the researcher to interact directly with participants, observe social interactions, and interpret meanings embedded within community practices. The research process therefore emphasizes flexibility, contextual sensitivity, and inductive reasoning.

The research was conducted in Mabolu Village, Lohia District, Muna Regency, Southeast Sulawesi, Indonesia. This location was selected purposively because the village has an active mosque-based Qur'anic learning institution that organizes regular religious activities for children and adolescents. The village represents a typical rural Muslim community where religious institutions play an important role in community life. In recent years, community leaders have expressed concerns regarding several social issues affecting adolescents, including declining respect toward elders, increased exposure to digital media, excessive engagement in online gaming, and reduced participation in community-based religious activities. These concerns have encouraged local leaders to strengthen religious education through mosque-based Qur'anic learning programs. The presence of this institution provides a relevant context for examining how community-based religious education contributes to adolescent moral development and how such programs respond to contemporary social challenges.

Participants in this study were selected using purposive sampling, a common strategy in qualitative research in which participants are chosen based on their relevance to the research objectives ([Patton, 2015](#)). The study involved individuals who were directly involved in the activities of the Qur'anic learning institution. The participants included: leaders or administrators of the Qur'anic learning institution; religious instructors or teachers responsible for guiding the learning activities; adolescents who regularly participate in the Qur'anic learning programs; and Community members who are familiar with the activities of the institution. These participants were selected because they possess first-hand knowledge and experience regarding the implementation of the learning programs and their influence on adolescent behavior.

Data were collected through three main techniques: observation, interviews, and documentation. The use of multiple techniques allowed the researcher to obtain comprehensive information and enhance the credibility of the findings through data triangulation. Following the data collection stage, the collected data

were analyzed using an inductive qualitative analysis approach in order to identify patterns and themes emerging from the field data. The analysis process followed the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing as proposed by [Miles and Huberman \(Miles & Huberman, 2005\)](#). These analytical procedures enabled the researcher to organize the data systematically and interpret the role of the Qur'anic learning institution in fostering adolescent moral development. The stages of the data analysis process are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Data Analysis Procedure in Research**

<b>Data Analysis Stage</b>	<b>Activities Conducted by the Researcher</b>	<b>Analysis Objectives</b>
Data Reduction	The researcher organized and selected relevant data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation. Irrelevant information was removed while important data related to the research focus were categorized.	To simplify and focus the dataset in order to facilitate systematic analysis.
Data Display	The reduced data were organized into descriptive narratives and thematic categories that represent key findings related to the role of the Qur'anic learning institution.	To enable the researcher to identify patterns, relationships, and themes within the data.
Conclusion Drawing and Verification	The researcher interpreted the data and drew conclusions regarding the institution's role in fostering adolescent moral development. The findings were verified through comparison across multiple data sources.	To ensure the validity and reliability of the research findings. Based on these data analysis stages, the analysis process in this study was conducted continuously, from data collection to conclusion drawing. Through data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion verification, the researchers attempted to identify patterns of social change and forms of cultural resilience developing within the multicultural society in the Durenseribu area.

*Sumber:* Diadaptasi dari tahap analisis data oleh [Miles and Huberman](#).

The analytical stages presented in Table 1 were applied iteratively throughout the research process. By continuously reducing, organizing, and interpreting the data, the researcher was able to identify meaningful patterns related to the educational activities, moral guidance strategies, and challenges faced by the Qur'anic learning institution. This systematic analysis allowed the study to generate an in-depth understanding of the institution's role in fostering adolescents' moral development within the local community.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Community Context and the Emergence of the Qur'anic Learning Initiative**

Indonesia is widely recognized as a pluralistic society characterized by extensive cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity. As an archipelagic nation consisting of thousands of islands and numerous ethnic groups, Indonesia maintains a complex social structure in which religious institutions often play a crucial role in sustaining social harmony and moral order. In such a context, religion functions not merely as a spiritual belief system but also as a social mechanism that regulates behavior and reinforces shared values within communities. Previous studies have highlighted how religion in Indonesia often intersects with social institutions, shaping patterns of social interaction and collective identity ([Geertz, 1973](#); [Hefner, 2000](#)). However, while these studies emphasize the macro-level influence of religion in Indonesian society, relatively fewer studies explore how community-based religious initiatives operate at the village level to address specific social challenges, particularly those related to youth moral development.

Within many rural areas of Indonesia, mosques serve as important centers for both religious practice and social interaction. These institutions frequently become spaces where religious education, moral guidance,

and youth engagement activities are organized. From the perspective of the sociology of religion, religious institutions function as mediating structures that connect individual behavior with broader moral norms and collective values within society. Classical sociological perspectives argue that religion contributes to social cohesion by establishing moral frameworks that guide everyday interactions and community life ([Durkheim, 1933](#); [Gofman, 2014](#)). Nevertheless, contemporary scholars have pointed out that the effectiveness of religious institutions in shaping moral behavior varies significantly depending on the level of community participation and institutional organization ([Putnam & Campbell, 2010](#)). This observation suggests that the role of local religious institutions in fostering moral development cannot be assumed uniformly but must be examined within specific socio-cultural contexts.

This study focuses on the village of Maabholu, located in Muna Regency, Southeast Sulawesi. The village covers approximately 3.75 square kilometers and is predominantly inhabited by Muslim communities whose livelihoods include farming, small-scale entrepreneurship, civil service, and construction work. Like many rural communities experiencing social change, Maabholu faces several challenges related to youth development, particularly in relation to adolescent behavior and the influence of modernization. Sociological studies on rural transformation indicate that modernization processes often reshape traditional community structures, including patterns of authority, socialization, and moral regulation ([Inglehart & Baker, 2000](#)). In many cases, such transformations create new tensions between traditional values and contemporary social influences, particularly among younger generations.

Field observations and interviews conducted with community members indicate that adolescent delinquency in the village is categorized at a moderate level. Several contributing factors were identified, including peer influence, the rapid development of digital technology, limited access to higher education, and exposure to negative social behaviors such as smoking and alcohol consumption. These findings resonate with broader discussions on youth vulnerability in rapidly changing societies. Scholars have argued that globalization and digital media exposure significantly reshape adolescents' social environments, often weakening traditional moral guidance structures while simultaneously introducing new behavioral influences ([Arnett, 2002](#)). However, while these studies largely focus on urban contexts, there remains a notable gap in understanding how rural communities respond to similar challenges through locally driven social initiatives.

From a sociological standpoint, such concerns reflect broader anxieties associated with social transformation. As communities undergo modernization, traditional mechanisms of social control often weaken, creating a need for alternative institutions that can reinforce moral norms. Social theorists have long emphasized that communities develop adaptive mechanisms to maintain social order when existing structures face pressures of change ([Berger & Luckmann, 1966](#)). In rural societies, one such adaptive strategy often involves strengthening religious institutions as spaces for moral education and collective identity formation. Nevertheless, empirical research examining how such initiatives emerge from grassroots community responses remains relatively limited, particularly within the context of village-level religious organizations in Indonesia.

In response to these concerns, community leaders and youth activists in Maabholu initiated the establishment of a religious learning group aimed at strengthening the moral character of adolescents. The initiative was realized through the formation of the Remaja Islam Masjid (RISMA) Al-Akbar, a youth-based religious learning institution centered at Al-Akbar Mosque. Established on December 17, 2017, the program initially consisted of only fifteen participants. However, despite the limited participation at the beginning, the institution gradually gained support from community members and eventually expanded its activities to include a wider range of educational and social programs. The emergence of RISMA Al-Akbar illustrates how community-based religious initiatives can function as locally grounded responses to social

change, reinforcing moral values while simultaneously strengthening social cohesion within rural communities.

### **Religious Education as a Strategy for Moral Development**

One of the main objectives of the Qur'anic learning program organized by RISMA Al-Akbar is to cultivate *akhlakul karimah*, or noble character, among adolescents. The concept of *akhlak* in Islamic teachings refers to moral conduct that reflects virtues such as honesty, humility, respect, responsibility, and compassion toward others. Within the context of Islamic education, the formation of moral character is considered inseparable from the process of religious learning.

From the perspective of moral development theory, the internalization of ethical values occurs through continuous interaction between individuals and their social environment. [Lawrence Kohlberg's](#) theory of moral development suggests that moral reasoning evolves through stages in which individuals gradually develop the capacity to understand ethical principles and apply them in social contexts. Religious education programs such as Qur'anic learning circles provide a structured environment where adolescents can encounter moral narratives, ethical discussions, and role models that shape their moral reasoning. Similarly, Thomas Lickona emphasizes that character education requires three interconnected components: moral knowledge, moral feeling, and moral action. In the context of the RISMA Al-Akbar program, these components are reflected in various educational activities that combine religious instruction with practical social engagement. Adolescents are not only taught religious concepts but are also encouraged to practice ethical behavior in their daily interactions.

The findings of this study indicate that regular participation in religious learning activities contributes to the development of discipline, social responsibility, and empathy among adolescents. Participants reported that the program helped them develop greater awareness of religious obligations, particularly in relation to prayer, respect for elders, and responsible social behavior. Furthermore, the mosque functions as a social space where adolescents can form supportive peer networks. Sociologically, this environment contributes to the process of moral socialization, whereby community norms are transmitted through shared rituals, collective activities, and interpersonal relationships. As [Emile Durkheim](#) argued, religious gatherings reinforce collective consciousness by bringing individuals together around shared moral values and symbolic practices.

### **Expansion of Religious Activities and Community Participation**

As the program developed, participation in the Qur'anic learning activities gradually increased. The number of participants expanded from the initial fifteen members to approximately one hundred individuals, including children, adolescents, and adults from the surrounding community. This growth reflects the increasing acceptance of the program as a meaningful social and educational initiative within the village. Community-based religious programs often gain legitimacy when they demonstrate tangible benefits for social cohesion and moral guidance. Studies on grassroots religious initiatives suggest that community participation tends to expand when religious activities are perceived not only as spiritual obligations but also as spaces for social interaction and collective learning ([Hefner, 2000](#)). In the context of Maabholu Village, the rapid increase in participation indicates that the Qur'anic learning program has gradually evolved into a community-supported institution rather than remaining a small youth initiative.

To accommodate the growing number of participants, the organizers introduced multiple schedules for Qur'anic recitation sessions, including morning and afternoon classes. The diversification of learning schedules reflects an adaptive strategy commonly found in community-based religious education systems, where institutional flexibility becomes essential for maintaining participant engagement. Previous studies on informal Islamic education in Indonesia have shown that community-driven learning initiatives often

rely on flexible organizational structures that allow them to respond effectively to the needs of local participants (Azra et al., 2007). Such flexibility enables religious learning institutions to remain accessible to individuals from diverse age groups and occupational backgrounds, particularly in rural communities where daily economic activities often shape patterns of participation.

In addition to these educational activities, the program also expanded to include communal religious gatherings such as yasinan, tahlilan, and sholawat recitations, typically held on Thursday evenings after the night prayer. These activities illustrate how religious learning initiatives frequently extend beyond formal instructional settings and become integrated into broader communal religious practices. Anthropological studies of Indonesian Islam have long emphasized that communal rituals such as tahlilan and yasinan function not only as expressions of religious devotion but also as mechanisms for maintaining social cohesion and reinforcing shared cultural traditions (Beatty, 2003; Geertz, 1960). In this sense, the integration of such practices within the Qur'anic learning initiative reflects the blending of religious education with local socio-cultural traditions.

These activities serve not only as religious rituals but also as mechanisms for strengthening social bonds within the community. From the perspective of the sociology of religion, collective religious practices function as symbolic expressions of shared beliefs that reinforce social solidarity and group identity (Durkheim, 1933). Through repeated participation in these gatherings, adolescents gradually become integrated into the moral and cultural traditions of their community. However, scholars have also noted that the effectiveness of religious rituals in shaping moral behavior depends on the degree to which participants actively engage with the underlying values rather than merely performing ritualistic actions (Putnam & Campbell, 2010). In the case of Maabholu Village, the combination of religious instruction and communal rituals appears to create a learning environment where moral values are both taught and socially practiced.

Moreover, these activities provide opportunities for adolescents to develop leadership skills and organizational experience. During religious events and celebrations such as Islamic holiday commemorations, youth participants are often assigned responsibilities as event organizers, speakers, or coordinators. This involvement encourages a sense of ownership and accountability, which contributes to the formation of civic and moral responsibility. Research on youth participation in community organizations suggests that active involvement in collective activities can significantly enhance adolescents' social competence, leadership abilities, and sense of civic engagement (Youniss & Yates, 1997). Nevertheless, while many studies highlight the role of formal educational institutions in fostering youth leadership, relatively limited attention has been given to how community-based religious organizations function as training grounds for social responsibility and leadership development. The experience of RISMA Al-Akbar in Maabholu Village therefore provides valuable insights into how grassroots religious institutions can simultaneously function as spaces for moral education, community participation, and youth empowerment.

### **Educational Methods in Moral Formation**

The success of the RISMA Al-Akbar program can also be attributed to the educational approaches employed by teachers and mentors within the institution. Several teaching methods are commonly used to convey moral lessons and religious knowledge. One of the most frequently used methods is storytelling, particularly narratives derived from the Qur'an and the life of Prophet Muhammad. These stories provide concrete examples of moral behavior and ethical dilemmas, allowing adolescents to reflect on the consequences of actions and the importance of virtuous conduct. Narrative-based learning is particularly effective because it engages emotional as well as cognitive dimensions of moral development.

Another commonly used method is *mauidzah*, or the practice of offering advice and moral reminders. Teachers regularly provide guidance regarding appropriate behavior, emphasizing respect toward parents, honesty in daily interactions, and responsibility toward the community. Repetition of moral advice is considered important because adolescents often face conflicting influences from peers and media environments. In addition, the program incorporates lecture-based instruction and interactive discussions. During these sessions, teachers explain religious teachings while encouraging participants to ask questions and share their perspectives. The use of dialogue-based learning allows adolescents to critically engage with moral concepts rather than passively receiving information. From an educational perspective, these teaching strategies reflect a combination of traditional Islamic pedagogical practices and participatory learning approaches. Such integration enhances students' engagement while simultaneously reinforcing the moral values embedded in religious teachings.

### **Supporting and Inhibiting Factors**

Although the program has demonstrated positive outcomes, several challenges continue to influence its implementation.

#### *Supporting Factors*

The sustainability of the RISMA Al-Akbar program is supported by several factors. First, the commitment of religious teachers and community leaders plays a crucial role in maintaining program continuity. Their dedication provides adolescents with consistent mentorship and moral guidance. Second, the diversity of activities offered by the program contributes to sustained participation. In addition to religious learning, the organizers frequently arrange social activities such as educational trips, community service programs, and youth gatherings. These activities make the program more attractive to adolescents while strengthening social cohesion among participants. Third, support from local community members and village authorities has facilitated the institutionalization of the program as an integral part of community life.

#### *Inhibiting Factors*

Despite these strengths, several obstacles remain. One of the primary challenges is the limited motivation among some adolescents, particularly during the early stages of the program. Many teenagers initially showed little interest in participating in religious activities due to competing interests such as entertainment and social media. Another significant challenge is the influence of digital technology and smartphones, which often distract participants during learning sessions. Teachers reported that some adolescents tend to use their mobile devices during lessons, reducing their focus and engagement. Additionally, insufficient parental involvement has been identified as a barrier to consistent participation. From a sociological perspective, family support is an essential component of moral development because parents serve as primary agents of socialization. Without reinforcement from the family environment, the impact of religious education programs may be limited.

### **Critical Discussion: Religious Institutions and Moral Socialization**

The findings of this study highlight the broader significance of community-based religious institutions in addressing challenges related to adolescent moral development. In contemporary societies characterized by rapid social change and technological advancement, traditional mechanisms of moral regulation often become weakened. As a result, communities increasingly rely on religious institutions to reinforce ethical values and social responsibility among younger generations.

From the perspective of the sociology of religion, the activities conducted within the RISMA Al-Akbar program can be understood as a form of collective moral socialization. Through shared rituals, educational programs, and social interactions, adolescents gradually internalize the moral norms upheld by their

community. [Peter Berger's](#) concept of the sacred canopy provides a useful framework for interpreting this phenomenon. [Berger](#) argues that religious institutions create symbolic structures that provide meaning and order within social life. In the case of the RISMA Al-Akbar program, religious teachings and communal practices function as a moral framework that guides adolescents in navigating social challenges.

At the same time, the program demonstrates how religious education can adapt to contemporary contexts. Rather than focusing solely on doctrinal instruction, the program integrates social activities, leadership training, and community engagement. This approach reflects an understanding that moral development is not limited to cognitive learning but also involves emotional attachment and social participation. However, it is important to critically acknowledge that religious education alone cannot fully address the complex social factors influencing adolescent behavior. Issues such as digital media exposure, economic pressures, and educational inequality continue to shape the experiences of young people in rural communities. Therefore, effective youth development strategies require collaboration between religious institutions, families, schools, and local governments.

Nevertheless, the RISMA Al-Akbar program illustrates how grassroots initiatives can contribute to strengthening moral resilience among adolescents. By providing a supportive environment for religious learning, social interaction, and leadership development, the program offers an alternative pathway for youth engagement in communities undergoing social transformation.

## CONCLUSION

This study highlights the important role of Qur'anic learning institutions in shaping children's moral development in Mabolu Village, Southeast Sulawesi. The findings demonstrate that these institutions function not only as centers for learning to read the Qur'an but also as community-based spaces for transmitting moral and religious values. Through structured religious learning activities, routine practices, and the guidance of teachers, children internalize values such as discipline, respect, responsibility, and social awareness. The study also reveals that the effectiveness of Qur'anic learning institutions in fostering children's moral development is supported by the interaction between religious education, family involvement, and community norms. These institutions serve as a socialization arena where moral values are not only taught but also practiced through daily interactions and collective religious activities. In this sense, Qur'anic learning institutions contribute to strengthening moral character while simultaneously reinforcing social cohesion within the community. This research contributes to the literature on community-based religious education by demonstrating how local Qur'anic learning institutions operate as informal yet influential systems of moral education in rural Indonesian society. Strengthening such institutions through community support and educational initiatives may therefore represent an important strategy for promoting children's moral development. Future studies are encouraged to explore similar institutions in different socio-cultural contexts to broaden the understanding of their role in character education.

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