Community Transformation through Quranic Education: An Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the Smart Learning Al-Quran Program

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ABSTRACT

Community-based Quranic education has emerged as a strategic approach to addressing adult learning needs in a contextual and inclusive manner, particularly within the framework of contemporary Islamic education in Malaysia. This study evaluates the effectiveness of the Smart Learning al-Quran Program in terms of participants' mastery of tajwid and their perceptions of the program's implementation. A descriptive quantitative design was employed, with data collected through pre- and post-program surveys involving 120 adult participants. Descriptive analyses, including means and score comparisons, were used to assess changes. The results show that average scores went up for all tajwid indicators, with the biggest improvement in understanding recitation rules (+1.14), followed by learning experience (+1.11) and pronunciation points (makhraj al-huruf, +1.06). Participants also reported high levels of satisfaction with the instructors and program content. These improvements reflect the promising potential of structured pedagogical strategies for enhancing adult tajwid proficiency. However, the absence of inferential statistical testing and qualitative triangulation limits the generalizability of the findings to the context of this study alone. It is suggested that future studies use a combination of methods, including real assessment tools, and look at long-term effects to help create a better, more lasting, and value-focused approach to teaching adults about the Quran.

Keywords: Adult Quranic education, Tajwid mastery, program effectiveness evaluation, structured pedagogical strategies, Smart Learning al-Quran Program

INTRODUCTION

Islamic education plays a vital role in shaping a society that is balanced in its spiritual, ethical, and social dimensions. In the Malaysian context, Quranic education is not only regarded as an individual act of worship but also functions as an integrated vehicle for community development. Community-based educational programs that incorporate Islamic values alongside human development elements can contribute significantly to the formation of strong character and social well-being. Rashidi Abbas (2017) emphasized that human capital development grounded in the values of trust and Islamic ethics must be embedded in educational practices to cultivate a society that is both responsible and principled not only in professional settings but also within broader social domains. Various initiatives have been undertaken in mosques and community institutions to enhance adult education, including Quranic studies.

However, these programs often face challenges related to learning approaches, participant motivation, and long-

term effectiveness. A study by Safinah Ismail (2015) found that the effectiveness of adult education in mosques is influenced by factors such as teaching style, learning environment, and educators' ability to understand the specific needs of adult learners. These findings underscore the need for any Quranic education-based community program to be carefully designed to address the diverse cognitive and spiritual needs of participants from various backgrounds. In response, the Smart Learning al-Quran Program was introduced as a community service initiative through a collaboration between the Academy of Contemporary Islamic Studies, the Islamic Affairs Unit of UiTM Melaka Branch, YADIM Melaka Negeri Sembilan, and Masjid An-Nur, Melekek Dalam, Alor Gajah, Melaka.

This program aims to strengthen participants' mastery of tajwid and enhance their motivation to learn the Quran through a systematic and structured adult learning approach. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of the Smart Learning al-Quran Program by focusing on two main dimensions. The first dimension involves assessing the participants' level of tajwid mastery before and after the program. The second-dimension concerns participant satisfaction with the program's instructional approach and implementation, including their evaluation of the instructors, teaching methods, and overall program effectiveness. The results of this study are expected to help create a better, more inclusive, and lasting model for Islamic community education that aligns with the goals of teaching the Quran in a way that is relevant and suitable for adults.
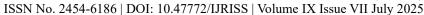
LITERATURE REVIEW

The Role of Quranic Education in Shaping Community Identity

Quranic education is not merely a process of memorization and recitation; it plays a significant role in building the foundational identity of the Muslim community. This identity encompasses spiritual, moral, social, and religious dimensions, contributing not only to individual development but also to collective societal consciousness. Boyle (2004) asserts that systematic Quranic education strengthens memory, discipline, and moral values through continuous spiritual training. In a broader context, Afandi et al. (2022) emphasize that religious values such as trust (*amanah*), perseverance (*istiqamah*), and social empathy (*ihsan*) are cultivated through consistent engagement with the Quran, both in formal and informal educational settings. Furthermore, community-based Quranic education fosters a collective culture grounded in the principles of *tawhid*, *adab*, and *ukhuwah*, positioning it not just as an act of individual worship but as a social mechanism for nurturing a resilient and value-driven society amid the challenges of globalization (Pangeran, Zumaro, & Khusnadin, 2025).

Beyond rote memorization, community-integrated Quranic education now aims to cultivate a holistic Quranic value system. Fikri et al. (2024) highlight that formal, non-formal, and informal Quranic education not only enhances spiritual and moral awareness but also strengthens social cohesion and contributes to a balanced, equitable community culture. Participants are encouraged not only to recite or memorize verses but to internalize the Quran's principles, such as justice, collective responsibility, and spiritual leadership—foundational elements for a harmonious and Islamically grounded society.

In the face of increasing global complexities, Islamic education must be designed to be both relevant and adaptive. Yuliana et al. (2024) stress that Islamic education, including Quranic instruction, serves as a strong moral foundation that fosters a balance between one's relationship with God (*hablum minallah*) and with others (*hablum minannas*). This approach is vital for nurturing communities capable of engaging with modern challenges without compromising core religious values. Similarly, Sawaty (2025) affirms that inclusive Islamic education, which embraces multicultural values, promotes tolerance, mutual understanding, and social harmony within diverse populations.

Therefore, the defense of *ummah* identity against the threat of cultural assimilation necessitates a holistic curriculum grounded in the Quran. In this regard, Moslimany, Otaibi, and Shaikh (2024) argue that spiritual, moral, social, and intellectual values must be cultivated in a balanced manner through Quran-centric education. Such a curriculum should not only address cognitive aspects but also incorporate emotional and social dimensions necessary for navigating global realities. Accordingly, Quranic education within the community context plays a vital role not only in reinforcing core values such as *tawhid*, *adab*, and *ukhuwah* but also in empowering communities with spiritual, intellectual, and social resilience.

Models and Strategies for Community-Based Quranic Education Programs

The community-based Quranic education model positions the local community as the central platform for knowledge transmission, character formation, and the reinforcement of Islamic values. Within this framework, models such as the *Taman Pendidikan al-Quran* (TPA), or Quranic Community Education Park, have become key initiatives in several Muslim-majority countries to nurture a Quran-literate generation not only capable of reciting the Quran but also embodying its teachings in everyday life (Putri, Kamaluddin, & Aziz, 2025). This approach integrates Quranic learning with social and family-based activities, making Quranic education more organic, open, and contextually relevant to local societal realities.

To enhance implementation effectiveness, project-based learning (PBL) has emerged as a core strategy for fostering an active, creative, and collaborative learning culture among community participants. Through this approach, learners engage in projects such as creating *tajwid* rule infographics, organizing Quran-themed community campaigns, or developing digital teaching materials alongside facilitators (Jannah & Jumari, 2024). Such strategies not only stimulate initiative and creativity but also position the Quran as a practical source of values that can be directly applied to everyday social life.

Aligned with this, the curriculum embedded within the model emphasizes a balanced integration of spiritual, intellectual, social, and moral dimensions. Moslimany, Otaibi, and Shaikh (2024) advocate for a holistic curriculum that encompasses recitation, *tadabbur*, internalization of Quranic values, and participation in community service practices. Through a phased and modular approach, Quranic education in the community transcends conventional classroom or *halaqah*-based settings, evolving into a system of value inculcation rooted in comprehensive Quranic culture within society.
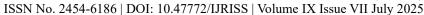
Nevertheless, the success of any program does not rely solely on its curriculum but also heavily on the quality of its human resources. Research by Salleh et al. (2025) highlights that community facilitators must possess strong pedagogical skills, effective communication abilities, and contemporary knowledge, including technological competencies for Quranic instruction. As such, periodic training, mentor-mentee systems, and ongoing professional development are critical for guaranteeing both the effectiveness and sustainability of community-based Quranic education programs.

Furthermore, to ensure that such programs genuinely achieve their objectives, a comprehensive evaluation strategy is essential. The effectiveness of community based Quranic education programs should be assessed across three primary domains: cognitive (knowledge), affective (internalization), and psychomotor (practical application). Supriatna (2025) recommends the use of authentic assessment methods such as portfolios, value-based rubrics, and self-assessment to evaluate spiritual growth and behavioral transformation among participants. These methods offer a more holistic understanding of program impact and serve as critical guides for refining curricula and teaching strategies in alignment with the actual needs of the community.

In conclusion, community-based Quranic education models and strategies are not merely alternatives to formal education but represent a form of social transformation that mainstreams Quranic values in the development of a civil society. Through empowered communities, well-trained facilitators, holistic curricula, and integrated assessment mechanisms, such programs hold significant potential to produce individuals and communities that are not only Quran-literate but also value-driven, resilient, and responsive to contemporary challenges.

Measuring the Effectiveness of Islamic Education Programs: Indicators and Approaches

Evaluating the effectiveness of Islamic education programs should go beyond cognitive aspects such as memorization or textual comprehension of the Quran. This is because Islamic education is not solely about the transmission of knowledge but is fundamentally aimed at nurturing the soul and shaping moral character. Effectiveness measurement must therefore encompass affective dimensions, such as spiritual values and attitudinal change, as well as psychomotor aspects, including the practical application of values in daily life. Fauzi and Asrul Anan (2020) agree that using Bloom's Taxonomy cognitive, affective, and psychomotor areas within Islamic education helps create fairer and more relevant evaluations.

Accordingly, the use of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor indicators has been identified as a comprehensive framework for evaluation. For example, cognitive outcomes can be measured through written tests or pre- and post-program assessments, while affective domains may be assessed using motivational surveys, attitudinal observations, and reflective journaling. Psychomotor indicators include measuring how well someone can recite the Quran, their involvement in community activities, and how they show Islamic values in their daily actions (Pranajaya, S. A., 2023). Such a multidimensional approach ensures that evaluation is not merely academic but reflects authentic internal change in participants.

In line with this, mixed-method approaches combining both quantitative and qualitative methods have emerged as optimal strategies for yielding comprehensive insights. In public program evaluation, Palinkas et al. (2019) emphasized that mixed methods enable evaluators to integrate numerical findings with field-based narratives, thereby offering a deeper understanding of how programs function in real-life contexts. In Quranic education, a study on STEAM-based Quranic modules in Aceh used a mixed-methods design that combined surveys with specific interviews at the same time. This approach yielded more holistic learning outcomes and reinforced students' spiritual engagement within a Quranic mathematical framework (Zulnaidi & Abd Rauf, 2024). Such methodologies allow for a clear distinction between mere literal memorization and meaningful internalization, as reflected in behavioral changes and value-based practices.

Moreover, authentic assessment tools including portfolios, value-based rubrics, and community projects are increasingly recognized in Islamic education program evaluation. These methods enable learners to document their personal growth over time, effectively demonstrating the trajectory of value and character development. Baroroh and Hamani (2022) found that primary school teachers successfully assessed students holistically through portfolios that integrated reading, comprehension, and spiritual reflection. Additionally, Fadlillah and Kauser (2024) demonstrated that the use of electronic portfolios facilitated value-based assessment in more flexible and engaging digital learning environments.

In terms of long-term impact, evaluation should not be limited to program completion. Mustafa (2024) recommends follow-up evaluations within six to twelve months after the program's conclusion to assess sustained behavioral change and value integration. This includes continued community engagement, regular participation in *halaqah* or *usrah* sessions, and ongoing Quran memorization and internalization. Longitudinal assessments are crucial for determining whether the program has had a truly transformative impact on participants' lives.
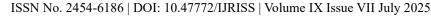
In conclusion, measuring the effectiveness of Islamic education programs requires a systematic, integrated, and values-driven approach. Evaluation must be designed based on the needs of the community, program objectives, and the diverse backgrounds of participants. By combining quantitative, qualitative, and authentic assessment methods, program outcomes can be assessed not only in terms of knowledge acquisition but also in the transformation of attitudes, values, and behaviors. This comprehensive approach will guide continuous improvement of Islamic education curricula and implementation strategies, ultimately making them more meaningful and sustainable.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study employed a quantitative descriptive survey design to evaluate the effectiveness of the *Smart Learning al-Quran* Community Program in enhancing participants' mastery of *tajwid* and their perceptions of the program's implementation. A quantitative approach was chosen because it helps the researcher collect clear, organized, and widely applicable data, following Creswell's (2014) suggestion that this method is good for spotting trends and patterns in larger groups.

The survey method is further supported by Hair et al. (2010) and Neuman (2011), who noted that surveys allow researchers to collect primary data concerning attitudes, perceptions, and knowledge within real-world contexts. In this study, the primary focus was on evaluating participants' levels of *tajwid* proficiency before and after the program, as well as their assessment of the program's overall effectiveness.

Population and Sampling

The study population comprised PLUS Tahfiz students from Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Melaka Branch, who participated in the program held at Masjid An-Nur, Melekek Dalam, Alor Gajah, on 17 May 2025. A total of 120 participants were directly involved in the program, including 67 male and 53 female participants. A purposive sampling method was employed to ensure that the respondents had fully participated in all program sessions and received instruction specifically related to *tajwid* knowledge. Using purposive sampling is in line with what Etikan, Musa, and Alkassim (2016) suggest, as this method is suitable for studies that assess how well interventions work in specific groups.

Data Collection Method

The primary instrument used in this study was a closed-ended questionnaire, adapted from previous studies by Rahman and Yusoff (2022), which evaluated a *tajwid* module, and Ibrahim and Ahmad (2021), which explored Quranic teaching programs in community-based contexts. The questionnaire was structured into five main sections:

- Section A – Participant demographics (gender)

- Section B – Level of *tajwid* mastery before the program

- Section C – Level of *tajwid* mastery after the program

- Section D – Participant evaluation of the speaker and delivery method

- Section E – Overall assessment of program effectiveness

Each item was rated using a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree). The questionnaire was distributed in physical form at the end of the program, and participants were instructed to respond honestly and reflectively based on their actual experiences.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 27. The analysis employed a descriptive approach, focusing on the calculation of means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages for each item in the study. In addition, a comparison of pre- and post-program mean scores was conducted to assess the impact of the intervention on participants' mastery of *tajwid*.

Additionally, the assessment of how the content was delivered, the teaching methods used, and how effective the program was overall was based on the average score for each item, giving a complete picture of how the program affected the participants' learning experience. The interpretation of mean scores followed the guidelines established by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994), Norasmah (2002), and Neuman (2006), as referenced in the interpretation scale presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Mean Score Interpretation Scale

SCALE	LEVEL
1.00 – 2.00	Low
2.01 – 3.00	Moderately Low
3.01 – 4.00	Moderately High
4.01 – 5.00	High

Source: Nunnally dan Bernstein (1994), Norasmah (2002) dan Nueman (2006)

Table 2: Demographic Profile of Respondents

No	Gender	(N) 120	Percentage (%)
1	Male	53	44.2
2	Female	67	55.8

Findings from Table 2 indicate that 67 respondents (55.8%) were female, while 53 respondents (44.2%) were male. This trend suggests a higher level of participation among women in Quranic education for adults. Such a participation pattern reflects a significant shift in gender roles within the landscape of contemporary Islamic education, particularly in mosque-based institutions.

Several critical factors may contribute to this phenomenon. Among them are the relatively more flexible schedules available to women, especially homemakers, and the increasing self-awareness among women regarding the importance of religious education. A study by Razak (2024) found that women's involvement in Islamic education has been expanding, not only as learners but also as instructors particularly in community run Quranic learning institutions. The presence of female facilitators in mosque-based classes, along with the provision of women-friendly learning environments, has also played a pivotal role in driving this trend (Schleimer, S.M., 2020).

Nevertheless, this finding may also signal a possible decline in male participation in certain contexts. Contributing factors may include work-related time constraints, perceptions that mosque-based programs do not adequately meet the intellectual or spiritual needs of adult men, and a shift in preference toward online learning platforms that do not require physical presence. This declining trend warrants further investigation to identify systemic barriers, particularly in terms of program structure and mosque communication strategies.

Overall, these findings call for serious attention from Islamic education policymakers, mosque administrators, and religious curriculum developers. Future program planning should adopt a more gender-responsive approach, considering the socio-cultural realities of local communities. Further sociological and psychological studies are crucial to understanding gendered motivations and designing inclusive participation strategies that benefit both male and female learners in a balanced and effective manner.

Table 3: Level of Tajwid Mastery Before and After the Program

Item	Mean (Before)	Mean (After)	Improvement
Understanding the meaning of *tajwid*	2.37	3.28	+0.91
Tajwid recitation rules	2.17	3.31	+1.14
Articulation points (*makhraj al-huruf*)	2.24	3.30	+1.06
Ability to recite the Qur'an with *tajwid*	2.19	3.15	+0.96
Tajwid learning experience	2.28	3.39	+1.11

Table 3 indicates a notable increase in mean scores across all key aspects of *tajwid* mastery following the program intervention. The highest improvement was recorded in the *tajwid* learning experience (mean = 2.28 to 3.39; +1.11), followed by *tajwid* recitation rules (+1.14), articulation points (*makhraj al-huruf*, +1.06), ability to recite the Qur'an with *tajwid* (+0.96), and understanding of *tajwid* concepts (+0.91). These findings suggest that the program had a positive impact on participants' knowledge, skills, and subjective experience related to *tajwid*.

However, the analysis applied in this study was purely descriptive and was not complemented by inferential methods such as the paired-sample t-test. As a result, although the nominal increases in mean scores are evident, the statistical significance of these differences cannot be verified. Consequently, the reliability of these findings in demonstrating the true effectiveness of the intervention remains limited and would benefit from more robust statistical analysis in future research.

Moreover, the current discussion lacks a detailed explanation of the pedagogical approaches employed throughout the program. For instance, it is unclear whether methods such as guided reading demonstrations, collaborative learning, interactive module usage, or digital applications were incorporated into the *tajwid* instruction. The absence of this information hinders the evaluation of the specific factors that may have contributed to the program's effectiveness. A study by Shaiakhmetov et al. (2025) highlighted that the integration of deep neural network (DNN) technologies in *tajwid* instruction significantly improved the accuracy of rule application, with performance levels exceeding 95%. Although such advanced technologies may not yet be implemented in local community settings, this finding suggests the potential value of innovative teaching methods in enhancing *tajwid* learning outcomes.

Therefore, this study suggests that future programs should include organized teaching methods and be tested with suitable statistical methods to improve the reliability and applicability of the results. Further research should also consider adopting a mixed-method approach to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the cognitive, affective, and psychomotor impacts of adult *tajwid* education.

Table 4: Participants' Evaluation of the Program

Item	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Mean Interpretation
The speaker's delivery was clear and well-structured	3.86	0.395	Sederhana Tinggi
The workshop content was easy to understand	3.80	0.574	Sederhana Tinggi
The materials provided were sufficient	3.86	0.416	Sederhana Tinggi
The speaker demonstrated extensive subject knowledge	3.77	0.546	Sederhana Tinggi
The content of the topic was relevant and informative	3.83	0.374	Sederhana Tinggi

Table 4 shows that participants consistently rated the program implementation at a moderately high level, with mean scores ranging from 3.77 to 3.86. The highest-rated items were *"The speaker's delivery was clear and well-structured"* and *"The materials provided were sufficient"* (M = 3.86), while other aspects such as *"The workshop content was easy to understand"* and *"The speaker demonstrated extensive subject knowledge"* recorded similarly high scores. The relatively low standard deviations (ranging from 0.374 to 0.574) indicate a high level of agreement among participants across all evaluated items. Overall, these evaluations reflect strong participant satisfaction regarding the workshop delivery, facilitator effectiveness, and the appropriateness of the learning materials provided.

However, these evaluations are limited to participants' self-reported perceptions and are based solely on descriptive statistics, without the support of qualitative insights or inferential statistical testing. Athallah and Safana (2024) emphasized that perceptions of effectiveness and satisfaction should be triangulated with actual learning outcomes rather than relying solely on mean scores. In the context of community-based Islamic education, Aris et.al (2023) found that program effectiveness becomes more meaningful when delivery is supported by active learning models and measurable learning outcomes.

Therefore, to strengthen the assessment of similar programs, follow-up studies are encouraged to adopt a mixed-method approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data, along with objective instruments that assess learning achievement such as *tajwid* proficiency tests or performance-based evaluations. This approach not only provides a more accurate reflection of program impact but also contributes meaningfully to the enhancement of Islamic education modules in a holistic and evidence-based manner.

Table 5: Overall Program Evaluation

Item	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Mean Interpretation
The program objectives were clear	4.00	0.000	Sederhana Tinggi

The knowledge provided was sufficient	3.75	0.489	Sederhana Tinggi
The program publicity was satisfactory	3.79	0.500	Sederhana Tinggi
The program venue was appropriate and comfortable	3.42	0.693	Sederhana Tinggi
The overall program was successful and beneficial	3.77	0.439	Sederhana Tinggi

Table 5 shows that participants evaluated the overall implementation of the program at a moderately high level, with mean scores ranging from 3.42 to 4.00. The highest-rated item was "The program objectives were clear" (M = 4.00; SD = 0.000), while the lowest-rated item was "The program venue was appropriate and comfortable" (M = 3.42; SD = 0.693). The relatively high standard deviation in some items such as the venue suggests slight variation in participant perceptions, particularly regarding logistical aspects of the program.

The perfect mean score of 4.00 on program clarity highlights the strength of program structure and communication, indicating that participants felt the objectives were well-defined and effectively conveyed. In contrast, the lower score for venue suitability, despite still being in the "Moderately High" band, signals a potential area for improvement in terms of physical comfort, accessibility, or facilities.

This type of perception-based evaluation provides important insights into participants' overall learning experience. However, as emphasized by Athallah and Safana (2024), the effectiveness of Islamic education programs should be assessed not only through satisfaction levels but also by examining the extent to which they foster behavioral change and deeper understanding. Additionally, Aris et.al (2023) found that community-based Islamic learning models are more effective when supported by reflective learning practices and direct impact assessments on learners.

Therefore, while the overall evaluation scores reflect a positive trend, they should be complemented by additional assessment methods to gain a more holistic picture of actual program effectiveness. These may include reflective instruments, open-ended feedback, and quantitative or qualitative measurements of learning outcomes to validate whether the program truly achieved its intended goals.

CONCLUSION

This study evaluated the implementation of the *Smart Learning al-Quran* Program in terms of participants' *tajwid* mastery and their satisfaction with the program delivery. Descriptive analysis indicated an overall increase in mean scores across all aspects of *tajwid*, particularly in learning experience and understanding of recitation rules. These findings offer preliminary evidence that the program's structured approach holds potential in enhancing *tajwid* proficiency among adult learners. However, the absence of inferential statistical analysis and data triangulation limits the generalizability of the conclusions to the specific context of this program.

Future versions of this study should consider employing inferential statistical methods to enhance the validity of the findings. Incorporating a mixed-methods approach would allow triangulation of quantitative data with qualitative insights such as interviews or participant reflections, enriching the overall analysis. Moreover, providing a detailed description of teaching strategies, facilitator qualifications, and session structures would improve clarity and reproducibility. Evaluating long-term retention or behavioral transformation would also offer a more comprehensive understanding of the program's actual impact. Expanding the study across different demographic or geographic contexts, supported by follow-up studies, could further assess the broader applicability of the Smart Learning al-Quran model.

Participants' evaluations of the facilitator and program materials reflected a high level of satisfaction, although the facilitators' content mastery was identified as an area for improvement, potentially through continuous training and professional development. As such, this study should be viewed as an exploratory effort that paves the way for future research employing mixed method designs and longitudinal impact assessments. Moving forward, efforts should focus on empowering facilitators, utilizing authentic assessment instruments, and fostering ongoing community engagement. Such measures are expected to elevate adult Quranic education into a transformative force for cultivating sustainable Islamic identity and values in contemporary society.

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