

## PALU CITY GOVERNMENT POLICY IN INCREASING STUDENTS' RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE THROUGH THE PALU KANA MAPANDE PROGRAM

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### ABSTRACT

This article discusses the evaluation of the implementation of make-a-match type cooperative learning model to improve learning outcomes of Islamic religious education in a senior high school in Central Sulawesi. The research used a qualitative method with data collection techniques such as direct observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis. The research findings show that Islamic religious education learning by implementing the make-a-match type cooperative learning model at Banawa Senior High School increased students' achievement results. The make-a-match type cooperative learning model are better than conventional learning because the students show enthusiasm in learning process. The make-a-match type cooperative learning model evaluates each presentation of material to maintain retention (memory), increasing motivational effects and new knowledge, and also increasing memory by adding creations that connect students' new ability to previous knowledge.

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### ARTICLE INFORMATION

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Government Policy, Palu City, Religious Knowledge, Students

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### 1. Introduction

Graduates of Madrasah Ibtidaiyyah or elementary Islamic schools can continue their education to junior high school level, and graduates of Madrasah Tsanawiyah or Islamic junior high schools can continue their education to high school or vocational high school level. In this way, students from Madrasah can move schools (transfer) to general education schools of the same level. Even though both types of religious and public schools are equal, in practice, general education still prioritizes general learning

materials. It only provides one religious lesson: Islamic Religious Education and Character Education. Meanwhile, Madrasahs divide religious education material into more specific materials.

Increasing religious knowledge supports the improvement of a person's emotional intelligence (Rusli, Hasyim, & Nurdin, 2021; Rusli & Nurdin, 2022). Good emotional intelligence will support good social behavior as well (Lopes et al., 2004). In the local context, the Palu City Government pays considerable attention to growing the role of religious education as reflected in the vision and mission of the Mayor

of Palu, namely "Palu City, a City of Customary and Cultural Services Based on Faith and Piety." The Regional Regulation described this vision concerning the Local Government's medium-term Development of Palu City.

This vision is implemented through *Palu Kana Mapande* or Smart Palu in Indonesian. The *Palu Kana Mapande* Program is a program that aims to create students who are faithful and devout by providing additional and writing the Qur'an. During the COVID-19 religious study hours for grade 5 elementary school students in the form of teaching reading pandemic, like learning in general, this program was also stopped until the change in leadership for the Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Palu. This also makes the author interested in conducting a study on the *Palu Kana Mapande* program, which can be input for the Palu City government to continue developing programs that can increase the religious knowledge of students in Palu City.

From the initial observations that the writer made, the school admitted that implementing the *Palu Kana Mapande* program through additional hours of religious lessons was very helpful in increasing students' religious knowledge, especially regarding reading and writing the Qur'an (Arif, Nurdin, & Elya, 2023). The Islamic Religious Education teacher acknowledged this. According to one of the teachers, when additional hours of religious instruction were implemented in developing Quran reading and writing, students' abilities generally increased.

When reading and writing the Qur'an was implemented in schools, students' knowledge increased because they had additional hours to study religion. Formally, said Sarini, additional religious lessons through the *Palu Kana Mapande* program can provide students with new experiences to increase their religious knowledge. Other Islamic religious education teachers also admitted that students' knowledge increased after the policy of increasing religious teaching hours. According to these teachers, the *Palu Kana Mapande* program, which is implemented through coaching to read and write the Qu'ran, is very beneficial to students. According to them, when training in reading and writing the Qu'ran is carried out, it directly improves students' pronunciation or makharijul letters and new knowledge about the Qu'ran.

The elementary school teacher also revealed that, in principle, the development of reading and writing the Qur'an, a program from *Palu Kana Mapande*, is beneficial for developing students' reading and writing of the Qur'an. When the program was implemented, the teachers said students were encouraged to increase their knowledge because they would be evaluated and held inter-school competitions at the Palu City level. Therefore, this research will examine the implementation of the *Palu Kana Mapande* policy in improving students' abilities in Islamic religious education, especially their ability to read the Qur'an. It is hoped that this research can provide a good understanding of the impact of regional government policies

on the development of religious education in a region. In this way, other areas can imitate and apply it in their regions.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Religious Knowledge

As stated in the definition of the term, what the author means by religious understanding is the understanding that students have regarding Islamic Religious Education and Character material, which includes faith, worship or jurisprudence, morals, and skills in reading and writing the Qur'an. Islamic religious education aims to improve human honor, dignity, and the quality of human resources in Indonesia (Yamani & Nurdin, 2023).

The implementation of education for the Indonesian people in this era of globalization is significant because, through educational efforts, the success and performance of all desired development can be determined in the form of physical, mental, and spiritual growth. Education is also an absolute requirement for moving towards a just, prosperous society following the goals of national education, as stated in Law Number 20 of 2003 concerning the national education system.

In the National Education System law, it is explained that national education aims to develop the potential of students so that they become human beings who have faith and are devoted to God Almighty, have noble character, are healthy, knowledgeable, capable, creative, independent, become democratic citizens, and responsible (Santoso, Nurdin, & Pettalongi, 2022).

This effort is carried out in harmony with programs such as improving the quality of teaching staff and curriculum updates, which are continuously revised to become perfect.

Education in Islam has a strategic position. With quality education, civilized and moral individuals will be born and created to create a harmonious and moral social life. Islamic education for humanity is a system and way to improve the quality of life in all Islamic fields. Islamic education is directed at improving human honor and dignity and the quality of human resources in religious matters (Nurdin, 2023). Improving the quality of religious education must start with improving the quality of educational personnel, updating the curriculum following developments in science and technology, and providing adequate media.

### 2.2 Understanding Islamic Education

Islamic education in terms of language is *tarbiyah*, *ta'lim*, *ta'rih* and *tahzib* (Kazmi, 2003). The word *Tarbiyah* comes from *rabba*, *yarubbu*, and *rabhan*, which means nurturing, leading, and sharpening (children). This explanation of the word *Tarbiyah* can be understood as repairing, controlling affairs, nurturing, caring for, beautifying, giving sense, owning, managing, and maintaining its sustainability and existence. Thus, the word *tarbiyah* means efforts to nurture, care for, improve, and organize students' lives so that they can survive better. Thus, the word *tarbiyah* includes educational goals.

*Ta'lim* is defined as things related to teaching and training (Huda, Jasmi, Mustari, Basiron, & Sabani, 2017). Meanwhile, Muhammad Rasyid Ridha defines *ta'lim* as transmitting knowledge to individual souls without any specific limitations or provisions. Meanwhile, Quraish Shihab explained the word *gallium* as found in Surah Al Jumuah verse 2, which means teaching, the essence of which is nothing other than filling students' minds with knowledge related to metaphysics and physics.

*Ta'dib* comes from the words *addaba*, *yuaddibu*, and *ta'diban*, which means education (Hussain, 2004). The word *ta'dib* comes from the word *adab*, which means civilized, polite, good manners, etiquette, morals, and ethics. As mentioned above, the word *ta'dib*, in the sense of education, is the word *Naquid Al Attas* chose. In this connection, he defines *ta'dib* as the recognition that is gradually implanted in humans about the proper places of everything in the order of creation, thus leading to the glory and recognition of God's power and majesty. Through this word *ta'dib*, Al Attas wants to make education a means of transforming noble moral values that originate in religious teachings that are created in humans so that it becomes the basis for the process of Islamization of science. According to him, the Islamization of science needs to be carried out to stem the influence of materialism, secularism, and dichotomy in science developed by the West.

*Tahzib* means moral education or purifying oneself from bad morals and being civilized and polite. From this understanding, overall, the word *tahzib* is related to mental, spiritual, and moral

improvement, namely improving someone's mental state, which is not in line with teachings or norms—improving his morals and manners so that he becomes noble. Various activities are included in the field of educational activities. That is why the word *tahzib* also means education.

Islamic education is also considered an educational process that covers all aspects of life needed by God's servants or, from an academic perspective, referred to as students guided by Islamic teachings. Abdul Munir Mulkhan defines Islamic education as a human activity that provides or creates opportunities for actualizing potential intelligence or acquiring new knowledge. Meanwhile, as quoted by Taufiq Abdullah and Sharon Siddique, M Kanal Hasa defines Islamic education as a comprehensive process of developing the human personality, including intellectual, spiritual, emotional, and physical.

Islamic religious education is also understood as an effort in the form of guidance and care for students so that when they finish their education, they can understand and practice the teachings of the Islamic religion and make it a way of life. Islamic religious education can take the form of guidance and care for students so that after completing education, they can understand, appreciate, and practice the religious teachings they believe in thoroughly and make the teachings of the Islamic religion their way of life for the safety and prosperity of life in this world and the afterlife.

Other experts say that Islamic education is all activities a person or

institution carries out to help a person or group of students by instilling teachings and developing Islamic values. According to him, Islamic education is also defined as a phenomenon or event of encounter between two or more people that has an impact on the embedding of teachings and the growth and development of Islamic values in one or several parties. Islamic education underlies all educational programs and activities or Islamic views and values.

### 2.3 Konsep Program *Palu Kana Mapande*

*Palu Kana Mapande* is a Palu City Government program whose operations are carried out by the Palu City Education and Culture Office (Rizal, Pettalongi, Hamka, Adhar, & Deeteng, 2023). In its application in educational units, the *Palu Kana Mapande* program is divided into two. At the elementary school level, it is usually called additional religious lesson hours, while at the junior high level, it is called talent and achievement development. The research conducted by this author focuses on the implementation of the *Palu Kana Mapande* program at the elementary school level, namely, Additional Hours of Religion Lessons.

The *Palu Kana Mapande* program is outlined in Regional Regulation 5 of 2016 concerning the Palu City Regional Medium Term Development Plan for 2016-2021. *Palu Kana Mapande* comes from three syllables in the local language, namely *Kaili*. Palu is a place or area that is the capital of Central Sulawesi Province. Palu or Palu City stretches for 395.06 square kilometers.

Palu is located in a valley at 0-700 meters above sea level. Geographically, to the north, Palu borders Donggala Regency. To the south, it borders Sigi Biromaru District, Sigi Regency. To the east, it borders Parigi Moutong Regency. Meanwhile, to the west, it borders Marawola District, Sigi Regency.

The second word in *Palu Kana Mapande* is *Kana*. *Kana* is a word taken from the Kailinese language, which means right. The term *Kana* can also be interpreted as a must or obligatory. As in the local language sentence, "*Kana patora ia*," which means you have to remember it. The word *Kana* also means to remain, as in the sentence *kana nasaro natetora*: even though you are far away in another country, always remember. The Kailinese Ledo Indonesian-English dictionary states that *~kana* means must or right. Meanwhile, *mapande* comes from the basic word *pande-napande*, which means intelligent, clever, capable, and skilled. The spelling of "mapande" is the basic word *pande* to which the affix *me* is added in the Kaili language. From *pande* to *mapande* means being smart. So *pande* means smart, while *mapande* means being smart.

Based on this understanding, the author concludes that the *Palu Kana Mapande* program is a program of the Palu City Government in education, which means that the City of Palu must honestly and truly be smart, capable, skilled, and resourceful. *Palu Kana Mapande*, as a program, supports policy directions, strategies, development goals, and objectives. In its implementation, the *Palu Kana Mapande* program has four forms of activities, namely.

1. Scholarships for underprivileged students
2. Development of a local culture-based content curriculum
3. Read and write the Qur'an
4. Establish an art studio at the junior high school level

This research focuses on the *Palu Kana Mapande* program's third type of activity, namely reading and writing the Qur'an. The Qur'an reading and writing activities in the *Palu Kana Mapande* program are implemented outside of school hours at the elementary school level where the target of this program is to improve religious and cultural education in community institutions with performance indicators, namely the percentage of schools that implement religious education outside of school hours for grade 5 elementary school.

Legally, the *Palu Kana Mapande* program has been stipulated in the Regional Regulation concerning the 2016-2021 Palu City Regional Medium Term Development Plan. This regional regulation is in line with the mandate of Law Number 25 of 2004 concerning the National Development Planning System and Law Number 23 of 2014 concerning Regional Government, which states that in administering Government, Regional Governments are obliged to prepare regional development plans as a unified national development planning system.

Regional development planning includes the Regional Long Term Development Plan for 20 years, the Regional Medium Term Development Plan for five years, and the Strategic Plan for Regional Work Units for one year. To increase synergy, synchronization, and integration of

regional development, a development plan that can guide all stakeholders in contributing to regional development in Palu City within five years is needed. The Local Government medium-term Development 2016-2021 document realizes the development plan.

The *Palu Kana Mapande* program in Islamic religious learning fosters and strengthens the ability to read and write the Qur'an, provides guidance in worship practice, and fosters noble morals specifically for class V elementary school level students within the Palu City Education Office. The main aim of this program is to form students who can read and write the Qur'an and make it their primary reading, appreciate it and practice it, and make it a guideline in their individual, social, and community lives in a civilized manner based on faith and piety to Allah SWT.

### 3. Methodology

This study used qualitative multy case study method. A qualitative research method is a naturalistic research method that is conducted in natural settings (Nurdin, Scheepers, & Stockdale, 2022; Yin, 2011). Qualitative methods will produce descriptive data, then analyze and interpret it with a thematic approach (Nurdin & Pettalongi, 2022). This study was carried out in Palu City which include the Palu Mayor's Office, especially the Legal section, to find out the legal basis for the local government policies in increasing students' religious understanding. Then, at the Palu City Education and Culture Office. The author's presence at the Palu City Education and Culture Office is essential because the technical regional apparatus organization that

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implements Palu City government policies in increasing understanding in the field of education is the Palu City Education and Culture Office. The authors also visited four elementary schools which have implemented the *Palu Kana Mapande* program.

Data was gathered through direct observation, in-depth interviews, and written document analysis. In-depth interviews involved ten local government staff. We also interviewed ten teachers within the schools to get more insight from their perspectives. Meanwhile, written document analysis includes the content of the curriculum within the local government education departemnt to understand the implementation of Palu Mapandre program. Data analysis in this study was carried out by thematic data analysis as suggested by Corbin and Strauss (1990). The thematic analysis referred to in this study is by finding themes in data from observations, in-depth interviews, and written document analysis. The data analysis process was completed if no new themes were found in the data (Rusli et al., 2021; Rusli & Nurdin, 2021). Data verification was carried out by comparing data from three sources: observation, in-depth interviews, and written document analysis.

## 4. Result and Discussion

### 4.1 Palu Kana Mapande Policy (2017-2021)

This policy is the policy of the Palu City Government under the leadership of the Mayor of Palu from 2017 to 2021. The government is aware of the need to pay more attention to education in Palu City. This attention is implemented in the *Palu Kana Mapande* program. In its

implementation, this program aims to give birth to a generation of faith and piety as the government's responsibility to realize education with morals, culture, and character.

The introduction to the student handbook for the *Palu Kana Mapande* program explains that the program manifests the Palu City government's responsibility to improve the quality of education in Palu City. Philosophically, Hidayat also explained his reasons for making the *Palu Kana Mapande* policy. Hidayat explained that this program adopted what the famous cleric Habib Idrus bin Salim Aljufri or Gutu Tua had done.

The *Palu Kana Mapande* program aims to increase students' religious knowledge in Palu City. There is a shift in education, which is increasingly moving away from religion. Therefore, there needs to be regional government intervention to pay more attention to religious education. The presence of the *Palu Kana Mapande* program has a solid philosophical basis. Ansyar said that the Mayor of Palu at that time had a noble goal to advance education and increase students' religious knowledge in Palu City. As the government's flagship program, *Palu Kana Mapande* was the government's tactical step to promote education in Palu City. So, *Palu Kana Mapande* is based on religion and culture.

The mayor often said that religious education when they were at school was minimal. There are also evening schools that support religious education, such as Madrasah Diniyah, but they are not formalized, so there is no emphasis on

attending evening studies for religious education.

Based on this explanation, Islamic religious education was given formally in schools, and a policy of additional hours of religious instruction was implemented, even given an assessment of Islamic religious subjects. So, every year, there is a graduation for students in grade 5. We hope no elementary school children or graduates cannot read and write the Qur'an. We received several reports at that time that children from our state schools were competing with children from Islamic boarding schools. Several times, they can become champions.

The *Palu Kana Mapande* program policy is a direct government intervention in education. Even without the government's touch, Ansyar said that school teaching and learning would still be done well. The presence of the government is necessary to provide intervention so that education becomes more advanced, leaves an impression, and has an impact. According to him, the *Palu Kana Mapande* policy was very successful in its implementation in an intervention effort to bring religion closer to students. The presence of the *Palu Kana Mapande* program has succeeded in educating at least 1000 students while graduating those who were declared worthy and received certificates.

Education is carried out by focusing on reading and writing the Qur'an. Whether he admits it or not, Ansyar emphasized that the *Palu Kana Mapande* Program increased students' knowledge of Qur'an reading and writing. This intervention differentiates

the Al-Quran Learning Center from the *Palu Kana Mapande* program, the implementation of which is centered in schools. Intervention cannot be carried out so that all students attend the Al-Quran Learning Center every afternoon. However, with *Palu Kana Mapande*, students are indirectly forced to attend so they can learn religion from an early age. This program is to fortify children so that they already have the foundation to write and read the Qur'an before leaving elementary school.

In supervising the implementation of the *Palu Kana Mapande* program, Ansyar explained that the Palu City Government, through the Education Office, is also very serious. All government offices actively monitor and select students. To motivate students' interest in learning, a competition was also held during the graduation ceremony to encourage students. While this program lasted from 2017 to 2021, the impact was evident. Firstly, there is an increase in students' faith and piety because religious content is increasingly brought closer to them through interventions at school. Technically, the Head of Elementary School Development, Yabidi, explained that only some regions are willing to implement this policy. According to him, this policy adds to the busyness of the Education Department amidst so much routine work during this time.

With the *Palu Kana Mapande* policy, his party supervised it from the start. Starting from preparing a student handbook to coordinating with related parties. While compiling student handbook materials, his party recruited teaching staff to read and write the

Qur'an. After the teaching staff are recruited, they are distributed to all Palu City elementary schools. As implementation progresses, evaluations continue to be carried out to improve it.

Initially, Yabidi explained that the *Palu Kana Mapande* program experienced many obstacles. Obstacles include dealing with students' parents. At that time, not all parents were ready to support the success of this activity. This is because it was carried out in the afternoon at the beginning of its implementation. This means that children go home first and then return to school. Then, parents take their children back to school when it is near the time of Asar prayers. At that time, children could pray Asr prayers in the congregation; however, after we carried out an implementation evaluation for two or three months. We changed to continuing after formal activities at school.

By setting hours like this, parents and children can better participate and prepare themselves by bringing packed meals when the *Palu Kana Mapande* program is implemented. After parents understood this activity, the Education Department made completion certificates for students participating in the *Palu Kana Mapande* program. This certificate becomes required to continue education at the junior high school level.

The *Palu Kana Mapande* program material also continues to develop occasionally. From initially only emphasizing reading and writing the Qur'an, in 2019, the material was expanded to include Thaharah material, memorizing short suras, Islamic history material, and the history of the Prophet.

The addition of material does not increase class hours. It's up to the Qur'an reading and writing teacher to control it. Enter the lesson, pray first. Recite for a moment and start memorization, then go to learning. Before closing, there are materials about Islamic stories and fiqh.

The school very well received the addition of this material, as well as reading and writing the Qur'an teachers. In one program, besides being taught about reading and writing the Qur'an, students are also given basic knowledge about aqidah and fiqh. Understanding simple jurisprudence, performing light purification, completing large hadas, taking the correct ablution water, and the proper prayer rules (Yamani & Nurdin, 2023). Even though it may be taught in a formal position, we want it to be practiced directly.

The student's parents consider it very important for government intervention in such religious programs. He explained that he had also been a Qur'an teacher. When you are a Qur'an teacher, it is tough to control the presence of children. Even though the Qur'an teacher has communicated with parents, there are still children who are reluctant to attend to study. However, in this program, interventions are carried out so that it is more controlled. Student attendance was much higher because of this intervention.

Government intervention through schools, school intervention through teachers, and teachers inviting communication with students' parents (Bishop, 2014). It is a requirement to enter junior high school, there is a kind of push from the government so that the religious education program, which is

implemented in the form of reading and writing the Qur'an, provides additional hours of religious study for fifth-grade elementary school students. Apart from providing Al-Quran teaching material, there is supplementary material such as practical fiqh, daily prayers, and others. In short, this program wants to revive religious traditions in the 1970s.

#### 4.2 Results of the *Palu Kana Mapande* Program

The results of the *Palu Kana Mapande* program cannot be measured with numbers because the assessment differs from the assessment of Islamic Religious Education subjects at school. However, implementing this program has significantly impacted increasing religious knowledge, especially the ability to write and read the Qur'an among students in Palu City.

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The *Palu Kana Mapande* Program produces many benefits in developing human resources who are faithful and devout. This program has also increased the religious knowledge of students in Palu City.

Alumni of Palu 24 State Elementary School, Anafisyah Wardani, said that the Al-Qur'an Reading and Writing implementation, which she participated in in grade 5, was beneficial for improving religious knowledge, especially the skills of reading and writing the Qur'an. Anafisyah, who was met at Palu 1 Junior High School, said her ability to read the Qur'an became stronger by participating in the Al-Qur'an Reading and Writing program.

"Learning is more enthusiastic because you are together with friends," Anafisyah explained that learning at school feels more straight forward to understand and can be accepted than learning outside school. Even during the Al-Qur'an Reading and Writing learning program, he said, they were taught to write Surah Alfatihah and Al-Ikhlas and could do it. "Writing is tested one by one. So you can write and read the Qur'an."

Fisyah, her nickname, explained that what she experienced in elementary school made a big impression because it was the first time she had done it. Previously, Fisyah explained that she also attended the Al-Quran Learning Center to learn to recite the Qur'an. It's just that she said the learning process is different. What distinguishes the most is the learning process for the students of the Al-Quran Learning Center who are reciting the Qur'an to come forward one by one and present their reading to the Ustaz.

If it goes smoothly, move to the next page. Meanwhile, if it's not fluent, stay on that page to make reading on that page even smoother. Meanwhile, the learning methods for reading and writing the Quran are different. A module is given to all class V students participating in the Al-Qur'an Reading and Writing program at school. Learning is not monotonous; you progress individually and present the reading every day.

Fisyah said the module contains short readings that are different from the Iqra. So that some of his friends who cannot recite the Qur'an can quickly recognize the hijaiyyah letters and read

them in cursive. With this abbreviated material, Fisya explains how to learn to read the Qur'an, which feels different from the one in the Al-Quran Learning Center, making it more interesting.

"There were also those who didn't join the Al-Quran Learning Center at that time but were able to recite the Qur'an after studying," he explained.

In line with Anafisyah, Riyu Bintang explained that studying in the Al-Qur'an Reading and Writing program differs from studying at the Al-Quran Learning Center. If Fisyah felt more of a difference in learning more effectively and efficiently, Riyu said his enthusiasm for learning in the Al-Qur'an Reading and Writing program was higher than studying at the Al-Quran Learning Center.

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## 5. Conclusion

The *Palu Kana Mapande* Program is a policy of the Palu City Government in education. In its implementation, one of the derivatives of the *Palu Kana Mapande* program is Reading and Writing the Qur'an. Technically, reading and writing the Qur'an is done three times weekly for class V in all public and private elementary schools. This Al-Qur'an Reading and Writing Program is a form of government intervention in bringing religious values closer to students. With this intervention, the government is present to improve the ability of the younger generation to read and write the Qur'an. The *Palu Kana Mapande* program was successfully implemented well. It starts from recruiting Al-Qur'an

Reading and Writing teachers to its implementation in schools.

The main goal of implementing Al-Qur'an Reading and Writing is so all students can read and write the Al-Qur'an before graduating from elementary school. Apart from achieving the primary target so that students can read and write the Qur'an, in its development, the Al-Qur'an Reading and Writing program also teaches religious material content such as aqidah, jurisprudence, morals, and history. With the *Palu Kana Mapande* program, students' religious knowledge has increased. This improvement can be clearly seen in the increased ability to read the Qur'an. The ability to write the Qur'an is increasingly being felt, as well as an understanding of religious knowledge through the materials presented by the Al-Qur'an Reading and Writing instructor.]

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