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Diversification of Qur'anic Schools in Banjarnegara Regency, Central Java: Comparative Study between Semi-Urban Rural and Remote Rural Settings

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Abstract

This paper describes a comparative study on Qur'anic schools' educational development (changes and reforms) between semi-urban rural and remote rural areas in order to find some evidences of diversification of Qur'anic schools and its learning contents.

Qur'anic school is one of the most popular community-based education institutions in Indonesia as the biggest Muslim populated country of the world, which has important roles in providing non-formal education services for Muslim children particularly.

Qur'anic school is a part of many kinds of Islamic education, which mainly teaches Arabic language and moral education in order to achieve basic goals of Islamic education in nurturing Muslim children to master the Holy Qur'an and to be pious generation.

Recently, socioeconomic background of Qur'anic schools in Indonesia has been changed dramatically due to economic development influence even in rural area. Economic development influence in rural area has thrown up varied households, parents and children in rural area and their demand to education has been diversified.

Inevitably some Qur'anic schools had to face problems and challenges due to above diversifications of demand side, for example lack of in-service teacher trainings, decreasing number of teachers because some of them have to move to other cities for higher education or working, decreasing number of students, no fixed or un-uniformed teaching and learning materials from the government (Ministry of Religion Affairs), very limited learning facilities, and little financial support for educational services. This article tries to discuss how Qur'anic schools are diversified by using internal comparative analysis between semi-urban rural area and remote rural area.

Key words: Qur'anic schools, semi-urban rural area, remote rural area, internal comparative study

1. Background of the Study

Indonesia is the most populous Muslim country where 13% of all Muslims of the world live in. About 88% of the some 240 million populations in the country are avowed Muslims and observing Islamic practices to varying degree. In spite of this,

Indonesia, which was first Islamized by traders from Indian subcontinent in the 16th century; does not have an Islamic system of government, nor it is an Islamic theocracy. Indonesia has its own unique official state ideology of *Pancasila*, which explicitly permits at least 6 religious confessions. Out of 88% of Muslims, other 5% of Indonesians are Protestant, 3% are Roman Catholic, 2% are Hindu, 1% is Buddhist, and 1% observes other religions (Woischnik & Muller, 2013).

Such Muslim overmuch situation brought on unique educational developments in Indonesia. One is that two ministries system. Of course Ministry of National Education (MoNE) conducts and instructs normal education from primary to higher education. On the other hand, Ministry of Religion Affairs (MoRA) is exercising jurisdiction over Islamic education which consist from 37,000 *madrasahs*, 5.7 million *madrasah* students, and more than 10,000 Islamic boarding schools or *pesantrens* (Azra, Afrianty, and Hefner: 2007). Statistical data from the MoRA showed that as of 2012, there are 282,096 Islamic educational institutions, ranging from kindergarten to higher Islamic education, with at least 23,128,221 students were registered in these educational institutions (BPSI, 2012). It means Indonesia has one of the biggest Islamic education systems within the country.

Another one is diversification of Islamic education. It can divide formal and non-formal at first. As presented in Table 1. There are several kinds of Islamic institutions. *Madrasahs*, which belong to formal Islamic education under MoRA, consists of *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* (primary school), *Madrasah Tsanawiyah* (junior secondary school), and *Madrasah Aliyah* (senior secondary school), which can be either state or private. Based on 1989 Law Number 2 on National Education System, *madrasahs* at all three levels are given equal status with the general schools under the Indonesia MoNE. *Madrasahs* apply national curriculum determined by MoNE for general school subjects, in addition to a more intensive course of religious studies set by MoRA.

Twenty-two percent of *pesantrens* in Indonesia are characterized as *salafiyah*. In a sociological term, *salafi pesantren* is a boarding school that teaches only religious sciences course to students. Generally, the science includes the *Qur'an*, *hadith*, *fiqh*, creeds (*aqeedah*), morality, and history of Islam, *faraidh* (science of Islamic inheritance), astronomy, and others. All subject matters use the Arabic language books commonly called the "yellow book" (*kitab kuning*), *kitab gundul*, and the classic books or *turots*. Other non-formal Islamic education, which are usually carried out in *pesantrens*, mosques, and private homes include Qur'anic kindergarten, Qur'anic school, Qur'anic recitation, and *Madrasah Diniyah*. These schools are basically community-based institutions intended to teach children basic Islamic information and Qur'anic memorization, in addition to basic Arabic and Arithmetic.

Qur'anic kindergarten is a pre-primary school education, which aims to develop children's personality through inculcation of Islamic values and nurturing of Islamic behaviour. Qur'anic recitation classes are often run for children during afternoons and evenings by members of local community in a mosque. *Madrasah Diniyah* is a program of religious education generally undertaken in afternoon or evening by students of general schools or *madrasahs* who wish to deepen their understanding of Islamic texts.

Islamic Education Institutions				
Formal	Non-Formal			
Madrasah Ibtidaiyah	Qur'anic Kindergarten			
Madrasah Tsanawiyah	Qur'anic School			
Madrasah Aliyah	Qur'anic Recitation			
Islamic School	Madrasah Diniyah			
	Salafi Pesantren			

Table 1. A position of Qur'anic school in Islamic education institutions

Qur'anic school is different from the other non-formal education institutions due to its uniqueness. Its main goal is to teach children how to read the Holy Qur'an book. It is usually located side by side with a mosque or a small mosque (mushala) in a village. Where there is a mosque, there is a Qur'anic school, too. With permission from the Imam (Islamic priest), a Qur'anic school is usually established by youths, whom belong to a Mosque Youths Association in a village. Activity of the Qur'anic school is carried out after the formal school hour at mosque, in the teacher's house, or in a special building near the mosque, which is independently built by a community. Learning content in Qur'anic school is usually flexible and based on teachers' preference, which is adapted to needs of children (Arabic language literacy and moral education). Moreover, unlike teachers in Qur'anic kindergarten, who normally have legal teaching certificate (diploma degree); those who teach in a Qur'anic school do not have to possess a diploma degree in education. Qur'anic school teachers can be anyone who at least can read the Holy Qur'an book and have Arabic writing skills. Despite this fact, parents always respect Qur'anic school teachers. They are basically social workers and not paid. They teach children voluntarily because their parents trust them to do so, and this makes Qur'anic school serves social

function at strengthening a society bond.

Due to many youths involve as teachers, therefore Qur'anic schools can also serve as a place for educating future (formal) teachers. Through Qur'anic school, senior high and university students in villages usually voluntarily join to be the teachers. With other senior teachers, they directly learn how to develop their teaching skills during serving the children. Thus, Qur'anic school system has changeable character respond toward change of education environment, for example they have flexible management style, changeable contents of education and so on.

2. Development of Qur'anic Schools in Indonesia

By the way, Islamic education refers to religious education, with emphasis on the Holy Qur'an and other basic Islamic teachings and values. In Indonesia, it began as early as around the 13th century in the form of Qur'anic study in village mosques, prayer houses, and private homes of community religious teachers for young children of six to eleven years (Hefner, 2007:59). Qur'anic learning was carried out by people in the community before the modern school system was introduced (Steenbrink, 1987). Qur'anic school, therefore, can be said as the pioneer of Islamic education in Indonesia.

Salahuddin et.al (2013) define Qur'anic school as a non-formal educational institution that teaches reading and writing letters of the Qur'an to children from an early age, as well as instilling *akhlaqul karimah* (good manner) contained in the Holy Qur'an book. *Akhlaqul Karimah* includes morals to the Almighty God, characters of the Apostles and Prophets; morals to parents, teachers and leaders, morals to other Muslims and other human beings who are older, peer, or younger, as well morals to environment or nature.

In the past, the Qur'anic study used a traditional teaching system/method. The first step in learning how to recite the Qur'an is to learn the names of the Arabic letters and the vowel marks. The second step is to learn how to pronounce the Arabic letters. After that, the learners can practice the methods of pronunciation and the recitation of Arabic phrases where the words already contain the vowel marks and also recite the Qur'an with the teacher. One of the peculiarities of Arabic letters is that the form of each letter changes depending on its position in the word. The Arabic language system is quite complicated for children and they need a few years to master reading and recitation of the Qur'an fluently (Nakata, 2009).

In Java, two prominent Islamic scholars, As'ad Humam and Dahlan Salim Zarkasi develop Qur'anic schools and the teaching system as well. The first mentioned scholar and his team established the 'Angkatan Muda Masjid' (AMM) in Yogyakarta city and initiated establishment of a Qur'anic kindergarten on 16 March 1988 and developed Iqro' teaching method. The Iqro' method textbook makes drastic changes to this way of learning. The textbook starts with the pronunciation of Arabic letters and simple words that already contain the vowel marks so that learners can easily learn the recitation of the phrases of the Qur'an. The tools in this textbook enable children to learn how to read and recite the Qur'an more easily. Many children who were around five years old took only about six months to master reading the Qur'an by using the Iqro' method textbook. The dissemination of the Iqro' method textbook has promoted peoples' interests and needs in learning to read and recite the Qur'an (Nakata, 2009).

In 1996, Dahlan Salim Zarkasi, set up a Qur'anic school named 'Raudhatul Mujawwidin' in Semarang city of Central Java, which used the 'Qiroati' teaching method. It is a method in learning reading the Qur'an which directly lets the students practice reading the combination of letters (words) in the Holy Qur'an accordance with the rules of *tajwid* (theory of reading Arabic words). In this lesson, children should not spell but directly read the letter sounds. The learning is pupil-centred where the thoroughness of the textbooks is not determined by the month/year and not classical but individually. Qiro'ati method consists of 6 volumes textbooks and additional including *Tajwid* textbooks.

Over time, different types of Islamic schools came into existence in different parts of Indonesia, such as *pesantren* and *pondok* (both mostly in Java and Kalimantan), *surau* (in West Sumatra), *dayah* (in Aceh), *madrasah* and *sekolah Islam* (Islamic schools), with *pesantren*, *pondok*, *surau*, and *dayah* generally regarded as 'traditional' Islamic educational institutions that have a long history dating from the early introduction of Islam in Indonesia (Azra, 2014: 59-75). The Islamic teaching, as taught in the traditional *pesantrens*, are based on "the Ash'ari doctrine (as mediated especially by Sanusi's works), the Shafi'i *mazhab* (with nominal acceptance of the other three Sunni *mazhabs*), and the ethical and pietistic mysticism of Ghozali and related writers" (Van Bruinessen, 1994: 121-145).

Enrolments in Islamic schools have been increasing since the late 1980s. In 2007 about 5.7 million or 13 percent of the 44 million students in the formal educational system are enrolled in *madrasahs* (Azra / Afrianty / Hefner, 2007: 173).

Islamic schools in Indonesia can be divided into three main types: *pesantrens, madrasahs* and *Sekolah Islams*. Generally, most *pesantrens* are located in the countryside whereas more *madrasahs* and *Sekolah Islams* are found in urban areas in cities such as Jakarta (Hasan 2008: 247). Of the three types of Islamic schools, *Sekolah Islam* is particularly oriented towards modern city life where many middle-class Muslim professionals are keen to send their children to such schools. However, main differences among

the Islamic schools are not so much city/countryside or regional, but rather their educational philosophy and learning contents.

Qur'anic school is expected to give solution for problems and challenges faced by Muslims families in Indonesia, such as decreasing number of ignorance Muslims (especially young people) in reading the Holy Qur'an book as their life guidance. Due to busy parents, children lack of attention in their learning of reading the Holy Qur'an book as well as in moral education. Parents in both sub-urban and remote rural areas mostly work from morning to late evening whether in rice fields cultivating land, at markets, or offices. They have little time to be together with their children so that they cannot control them after the school hour.

Development of game stations centres both in urban and rural areas, for example, make children play much and tend to forget their study including studying Islam in mosques. In addition, general education systems usually limit access to Islamic education in general education schools, which opens the door for seeking knowledge about Islam from sources that may be militant or radical. Qur'anic school gives more chance for children to learn Islam and moral education outside of the formal school. Parents can easily send their children to a Qur'anic school anytime and relatively free of charge.

3. Objectives of the Study

There has been high attention to Islamic education in Indonesia in the past few decades, accompanied by an increase in the number of publications on the subject (Mulyani, 2013). However, research in the field of Islamic non-formal education (Qur'anic schools) remains still very few. We conduct a comparative research to detect Qur'anic schools' educational changes and reforms in semi-urban rural and remote rural areas in order to analyse the characteristics of the Qur'anic schools and the learning contents.

Semi urban rural area in this context has close relation with existence of *pesantrens* that can possibly influence dynamics of the Qur'anic schools. In addition, modern society in semi urban rural area that relatively have better education may have different perspective about development of Qur'anic schools compared with rural area community. Each area is believed to have its unique development style so Islamic faith, management, school, and people demand for it is different. Rural area is often less developed than semi-urban area and this factor may also influence development of Qur'anic schools in the two areas.

4. Methodology

4.1. Participating Schools

Twelve Qur'anic schools in 4 villages, which are located in 3 districts of Banjarnegara Regency in Central Java, have participated in this study. Banjarnegara, which has an area of 106,970,997 hectares, is bordered with Wonosobo regency in the east, Kebumen regency in the south, Banyumas regency in the west, and Pekalongan and Batang regencies in the north. Located in a mountainous area, this regency has total population of 985,000 people (Banjarnegara Regency Government Statistics Centre, 2012).

In term of economy, Banjarnegara is considered as one of middle class regencies in Central Java. Agricultural sector is the largest contributor to GDP reaching to 35.85%, followed by services sector (20.03 %), processing industry (13.15%), and trade/hotel/restaurant (12.68%). The word Banjarnegara comes from *Banjar and Negara*, which means rice fields and city. Historically, this regency has motto "WANI MEMETRI RAHAYUNING PRAJA", which means residents of Banjarnegara determine to preserve emotional and physical prosperity for happiness of people and government (BPSI, 2012)

Banjarnegara is chosen in this research due to its dynamic development of both formal and non-formal education. Data from the Regency Educational Office (2013) shows there are 757 playgroups/kindergartens with 23,381 students, 850 primary schools/ *Madrasah Ibtidaiyah* with 97,670 students, 144 junior high schools/*Madrasah Tsanawiyahs* with 42,614 students, and 50 senior high schools/*Madrasah Aliyahs* with 24,051 students respectively.

There are 266 villages in Banjarnegara regency; and when each village has at least one Qur'anic school, there are 266 Qur'anic schools. Based on information from one of the teachers in Permata Qur'anic school in Tapen village, there are at least 40 registered Qur'anic schools in Banjarnegara regency. Banjarnegara, which is the distance, is not far from Yogyakarta as the birthplace of Muhammadiyah, the largest Muslim organization in Indonesia, accepts the idea of Islamic renewal from Muhammadiyah. It is about in thirties decades, this Muslim organization has spread and grown in all regions of Banjarnegara (Abdul Munir Mulkhan, 2010: 54).

4.2. Research Respondents and Instruments

Data for this research were collected mainly from chief villages and Qur'anic school teachers. Total number of the respondents was 4 chiefs of villages and 32 teachers. To investigate the profile of each village participating in this study, to detect Qur'anic schools' educational development (changes and reforms), and to analyse the characteristics of the Qur'anic schools and

the learning contents, questionnaire for chiefs of village and teachers were made.

The questionnaires for teachers consisted of four parts. Part one assessed their demographic data; part two and part three assessed their perception on the intended and implemented learning contents in their Qur'anic schools; and part four assessed educational development of the Qur'anic schools.

In part two of the questionnaire, teachers were required to respond each statement (29 items) by choosing Yes or No; while in part three of the questionnaire, the teachers responded each statement (29 items) by choosing one of the options in 3 simplified-point Likert scale (often, seldom, and never). In part four of the questionnaire, the teachers answered a number of questions regarding their Qur'anic schools' changes and reforms.

4.3. Description of Research Area

There are 20 districts in Banjarnegara regency. Three districts (Wanadadi, Rakit, and Sigaluh) with similar characteristics, such as they have villages with Qur'anic schools, formal schools, and *pesantrens* were purposely selected for this research.



Adapted from Jariyah, Pramono (2013)

Figure 1. Map of Banjarnegara Regency

Wanadadi district is located in the northern part of Banjarnegara capital city. Total area of this district is 282,741 hectares with total population of 28,549 people. It has 11 villages and 1 *pesantren*. There are 21 kindergartens with 522 students and 103 teachers, 33 primary schools/*Madrasah Ibtidaiyahs* with 2,907 students and 318 teachers, 6 junior high schools with 1,945 students and 80 teachers, and 3 senior high schools/*Madrasah Aliyahs* with 1,347 students and 106 teachers respectively (BPSI, 2013).

Rakit district is situated in the western part of Banjarnegara Regency capital city. Total area of this district is 324,462 hectares with the total population of 49,437 people. It has 11 villages and 2 *pesantrens*. There are 59 kindergartens with 1,831 students and 226 teachers, 53 primary schools/*Madrasah Ibtidaiyahs* with 4,797 students and 478 teachers, 7 junior high schools/*Madrasah Tsanawiyahs* with 2,945 students and 133 teachers, and 2 senior high schools/*Madrasah Aliyahs* with 410 students and 32 teachers (BPSI, 2013).

Sigaluh district is situated in the eastern part of Banjarnegara regency capital city. Total area of this district is 395,595 hectares with total population of 29,234 people. It has 15 villages and 1 *pesantren* in Gembongan village. This district has 41 kindergartens with 1,577 students and 153 teachers, 29 primary schools/*Madrasah Ibtidaiyahs* with 3,015 students and 226 teachers, 4 junior high schools/*Madrasah Tsanawiyahs* with 720 students and 35 teachers, and 3 senior high schools/*Madrasah Aliyahs* with 459 students and 63 teachers (BPSI, 2013).

Table 2. Number of students and teachers in three districts

NO	DISTRICT	KINDERGARTEN		PRIMARY SCHOOL		JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL		SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	
		Students	Teachers	Students	Teachers	Students	Teachers	Students	Teachers
1.	Wanadadi	522	103	2,907	318	1,945	80	1,347	106
2.	Rakit	1,831	226	4,797	478	2,945	133	410	32
3.	Sigaluh	1,577	153	3,015	226	720	35	459	63

Source: Field work, 2014

4.4. Research Framework

In order to get the data; field research was conducted on 8-20 September 2014 in the 4 selected villages in the 3 districts based on the criteria of the distance to the town and *pesantren*.

Sigaluh and Gembongan villages in Sigaluh district were considered as semi-urban rural areas because the areas are either situated geographically "in between" city and countryside, or differ from rural and urban landscapes in configuration, functions, and other characteristics, so that they cannot be called city, nor countryside (Tacoli, 1998). On the contrary, Tapen and Luwung villages in Wanadadi and Rakit districts were classified as rural remote areas due to their geographic areas, which are located outside cities and towns. Collected data from the Qur'anic schools during the field work were comparatively analyzed.

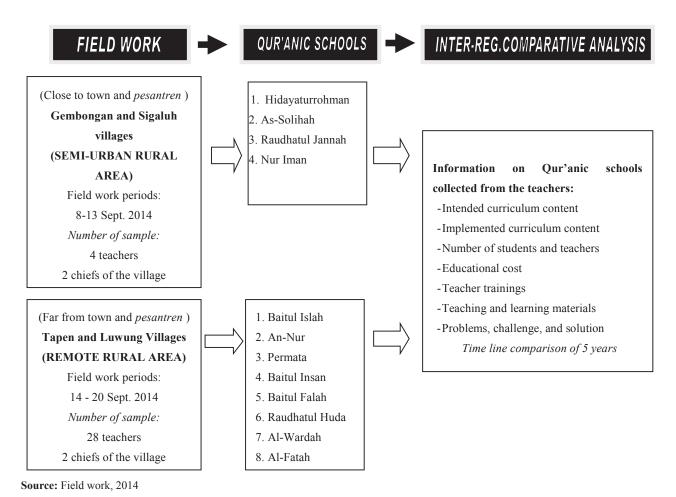


Figure 2. Research Framework

5. Result of the Study

5.1. Qur'anic School Development

a. Semi-urban rural setting

Qur'anic schools in Gembongan and Sigaluh villages in Sigaluh district

Gembongan and Sigaluh are popular villages in Sigaluh district with fruits product called *salak* (snake fruits). With total area of 28,890 hectares, Gembongan village has population of 3,452 people: while Sigaluh village has total area of 99,197 hectares with population of 1,380 people (BPSI, 2013). The villages are adjacent to each other and located near the main road, which connects cities in Central Java so that people living there are easy to travel to capital city of the Regency and other places. Distance of the two villages to the district capital city is only about 500 metres; while the distance of Gembongan and Sigaluh villages to the regency capital city is about 8.5 km. These villages have a close access to Miftahul Solihin *pesantren*, which is located in Gembongan village. Majority of population both in Gembongan (75%) and Sigaluh (60%) work as farmers and all population in Gembongan village is Muslims, while 99.9 % of the population in Sigaluh village is Muslims and 0.1% is Christians.

Gembongan village has a number of schools as presented in Table 3.

Year of Original name of school Remarks establishment 2010 PAUD Gembongan 1 Private nursery school 2010 PAUD Gembongan 2 Private nursery school 1982 TK GUPI Gembongan Public kindergarten 1970 TK Pertiwi Gembongan Public kindergarten 1965 SD Negeri 1 Gembongan Public primary school 1965 SD Negeri 2 Gembongan Public primary school 1997 SMA Negeri 1 Sigaluh Public senior high school 1995 MTs Walisongo Islamic junior high school (Madrasah Tsanawiyah) owned by Miftahul Solihin Pesantren 2002 MA Walisongo Islamic senior high school (Madrasah Aliyah) owned by Miftahul Solihin Pesantren 2007 SMK Miftahul Solihin Islamic vocational senior high school owned by Miftahul Solihin Pesantren 2003 TPQ Hidayaturrohman Qur'anic school

Table 3. Schools in Gembongan village

Source: Field work, 2014

TPQ As-Solihah

2005

Gembongan village has 4 mosques and 10 *mushalas*. There are 2 *majelis ta'lims* where female Muslims regularly learn about Islam. The meeting is merely attended by married women while young Muslim girls attend the Mosque youth association. It is carried out at one of its members' house during 2 hours commences at 13:30 - 15:30. The different priest or *kyai* gives different preaching in each meeting. Before the preaching begins, the female Muslims sing religious songs as the respect to the prophet Muhammad or other reminding songs for Muslims.

Qur'anic school

Meeting for male Muslims is called Yasinan because they read the 36th verse of the Qur'an or Yasin verse. The meeting is usually done at night at one of the Yasinan members' house. After reading the Yasin verse, they pray together led by the *Imam*. Then they decide where the next meeting will be held. The final activity is enjoying food prepared by the host.

Sigaluh village has 1 private nursery school, 1 public kindergarten, and 1 public primary school. For accommodating the Islamic activities, Sigaluh village has 4 mosques and 5 *mushalas*. Islamic activities in this village is also very significant; there are 8 *majelis ta'lims* for mothers and female Muslims, which held their Islamic meeting on Friday afternoon and there are also 8 *majelis ta'lims* for father and male Muslims, that held their religious meeting every Thursday night.

There are 2 Qur'anic schools in each village: Hidayaturrahman and As-Solihah in Gembongan village; and Raudhatul Jannah and Nur Iman in Sigaluh village. Among 4 Qur'anic schools, As-Solihah and Raudhatul Jannah have their own school buildings, while the other 2 Qur'anic schools use space in the mosque as the classroom (Field survey, 2014).

Main goal of Qur'anic schools in these villages is educating children to be aware of Islam as their faith by teaching them the pillars of Islam (rukun Islam and rukun Iman) and the Holy Qur'an reading and writing skills.

In the last five year, average number of the students and teachers in each Qur'anic school is as follows: Hidayaturrohman has 19 students and 2 teachers; As-Solihah has 41 students and 4 teachers; while Raudhatul Jannah has 40 students and 2 teachers, and Nur Iman has 48 students and 3 teachers respectively (Field work, 2014).

Teaching and learning content in the Qur'anic schools in Gembongan and Sigaluh villages are *wudhu* (ablution) practice, *shalat*, daily short prayer and short verses of the Qur'an memorization, reading Qiro'ati and the Holy Qur'an book, and Arabic language. Common text-books used by teachers are Qiro'ati book published by Raudhatul Mujawwidin Semarang and "*Adab dan Akhlak Anak Saleh*" (moral education).

Teachers in the four Qur'anic schools have certificate of bachelor degree in education. They are basically formal teachers (government employees) in public kindergarten and primary school. As Qur'anic school teachers, they received at least four times of in-service teacher trainings.

Hidayaturrohman Qur'anic school does not charge any school fee to parents and the teachers do not mention any annual cost expense for their school. One of the reasons for this is because the teachers almost never spend any money for the Qur'anic school and if there is expenditure; the teachers do not mind using their own money for it. As-Solihah and Raudhatul Jannah charges 3,000 IDR/month school fee; while Nur-Iman charges 5,000 IDR/month school fee.

To summarize the recent condition of Qur'anic schools in semi-urban rural area, it can be said that in relation to management; although the number of students is relatively high and the teachers have sufficient education background, the Qur'anic schools lack of teachers. Almost every year, there is no balance between the number of students and teachers as the consequence of adopting tutorial teaching method.

Qur'anic schools adopts tutorial-based teaching that takes much time; students are taught one by one by the teacher in order that each student is easily observed his/her progress, for example in learning how to read the Arabic alphabets, master the short verses of the Holy Qur'an and steps in conducting the five times daily prayers. The teachers apply this strategy because in one class the students consisted of different grades in mastering the lesson and the number of classroom is insufficient. One of shortcoming of teaching tutorial-based learnings is that after finishing the turn, the student will use the rest time to make joke, play or make noisy. In other side, classical based teaching is not so appropriate for Qur'anic schools because it requires more teachers in a class and time. In fact, the learning period for each meeting is only between 1-1.5 hour.

Furthermore, teachers mainly develop themselves by self-learning due to very few in-service teacher trainings. Unlike teachers at formal schools, who are often offered teaching training by educational bureau in regency or province level, teachers at non-formal schools relatively almost never receive teaching training.

Qur'anic school teachers should have four competencies in teaching the students; pedagogic competency, personality competency, professional competency and social competency; therefore, they need trainings to gain such skills (Indonesia Government Regulation, 2005). There are two kinds of trainings; general Qur'anic school teachers training and Qur'anic *tartil* (how to recite the Qur'an correctly) training. Each training has different stages. For example, the first training talks about the development and problems of teaching Qur'an in Indonesia, ICT (information, communication, and technology) introductory for education, teaching learning materials development, Iqro' teaching method and classroom management. The second training is prepared for the teachers to master reading the Holy Qur'an correctly and to master *tajwid* rules (the Arabic language).

To solve the problem, beside self-learning through reading books or making discussion with other teachers, Qur'anic school teachers search academic activities to attend, like seminars and workshops opened by non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Moreover, school fees in Qur'anic schools are vary and relatively low. Low school fee may attract people to send their children to Qur'anic school. It is so different from the school fee in other non-formal schools like English language or Computer courses schools, which is usually expensive and therefore they give certificate of completion to the students. In fact, Qur'anic schools depend much on the parents' financial support because they almost never receive any supporting budget from government.

In relation to teaching and learning contents, Qur'anic schools in semi-urban rural area mainly teach about "*ibadah*" or prayer practice, Arabic language, and moral education, which is highly connected with the needs of Muslim children to be pious. For Muslim, all daily Islamic prayers practice is conducted by using the Arabic language and they are also obligatory to be able to read the Holy Qur'an book written in Arabic.

b. Remote rural setting

Qur'anic schools in Tapen village in Wanadadi district

Tapen is one of the most popular villages in Wanadadi district because it has Soedirman reservoir, which supplies electricity for West Java and Bali provinces. This dam also irrigates rice fields in many villages. Location of the village is about 5 km to the district capital city and 15 km to the Regency capital city. Total area of the village is 84, 7 hectares with population of 2,337 people.

Most of the population (65%) is farmers; 10% is government employees, and 25% is others. It is noted 99.9% of the population is Muslims and the rest 0.1% is Christians (Field survey, 2014).

Recently, Tapen village has a number of schools as presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Schools in Tapen village

Year of establishment	Original name of the school	Remarks				
2009	PAUD Citra Al-Hikmah	Nursery school funded by the village government				
2007	PAUD Bina Insani	Nursery school funded by an Islamic organization				
1982	TK Pembina	Public kindergarten				
1982	SD Negeri Tapen	Public primary school				
1979	MI Cokroaminoto Tapen	Primary madrasah funded by an Islamic foundation				
1993	SMA Negeri 1 Wanadadi	Public senior high school				
1998	TPQ Al-Islah	Qur'anic school				
2004	TPQ Permata	Qur'anic school				
2005	TPQ An-Nur	Qur'anic school				

Source: Field work, 2014

To accommodate Islamic religious activities, Tapen has 3 mosques and 8 *mushalas*. These places are used by the villagers to conduct five times a day prayers. In addition, male Muslims use the mosque to conduct weekly Friday prayer. Islamic life in Tapen village is very notable. There are 5 *majelis ta'lim* groups initiated by married female Muslims and 2 *majelis ta'lim* groups held by married male Muslims. The female Muslims *majelis ta'lim* meeting is carried out in the afternoon on Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday; while the Male Muslims *majelis ta'lim* meeting is run in the evening on Friday. In the meetings, people listen to the Islamic preaching, recite the Holy Qur'an, and discuss anything important related to their religion and social affair.

Previously, Tapen village has 5 Qur'anic schools: Baitussalam, Permata, An-Nur, Al-Islah, and Al-Huda. Baitussalam is the oldest Qur'anic school. It was established in 2003 by Tapen Mosque Youth Association with permission of the *Imam*, Mr. Durrachman. Teaching and learning processes of Baitussalam Qur'anic school is conducted in Baitussalam *mushala*. However, due to lacking of teachers, this Qur'anic school was not active anymore, just the same as Al-Huda Qur'anic school. Consequently, all students of Baitussalam and Al-Huda move to Permata Qur'anic school, which was established in 2004 by young general senior high school graduates named Mr. Hadiman and his little brother, Mr. Tuhyidin.

For a long time, teaching and learning processes of the Permata Qur'anic school was conducted in Baituttaqwa mosque and since the beginning of 2014, this Qur'anic school has its own building located beside the mosque. Classes are opened on week days from 16.00-17.30. In the last five years, Baitul Islah has in average 47 students with 6 teachers; An-Nur has in average 36 students with 3 teachers, and Permata has in average 73 students with 10 teachers. Most of teachers in Tapen village Qur'anic schools are youths. They are university and high school students or high school graduates. Only one teacher who has two year teaching diploma and every day she works for private formal Islamic primary school as a religion teacher.

Main goal of Qur'anic schools in Tapen village is the same as in semi-urban rural villages, to educate children to be aware of Islam as their faith by teaching them the basic values of Islam and the Holy Qur'an reading and writing skills. Teaching and learning content in the Baitul Islah, An-Nur, and Permata are memorizing *shalat*, daily prayer, short verses of Qur'an, telling stories of the Prophets, writing *Hijaiyah* (Arabic letters), Islamic games and songs, drawing, colouring, reading the Qur'an/Iqro, memorising *Hadith* (the narratives about/sayings of the Prophet), creeds (*Ageedah*), *figh*, Arabic language, and Islamic history.

Textbooks used by teachers in Baitul Islah, An-Nur, and Permata are Iqro book published by AMM Kota Gede Yogyakarta, Gharib/Musyikat published by Yayasan Pendidikan Qur'an Raudhatul Mujawwidin Semarang, *Tajwid* book written by Hasan Musairi-Citra Media, Shalat guidance book, Hadith book, and Games collection book published by Pustaka Marwa. Basically only the teachers used the textbooks, while the students just copied in their notebook the explanation from the teachers. Process of teaching and learning in Qur'anic schools can be seen in Table 5.

Process of teaching and learning

Opening Main Activities Closing

Saying prayer before start learning Writing Arabic Saying prayer after learning

Saying the pledge Guided Al-Qur'an recitation Quiz

Reviewing the previous learning materials Learning the main topic of the day

Table 5. Process of teaching and learning

Source: Field survey, 2014

Although it is not intensive, teachers of Permata Qur'anic schools have ever received in-service training, such as Ta'lim Permata (monthly evaluation meeting) held by the school itself, Juz Amma and Al-Qasimi training held by Banjarnegara Regency Qur'anic School Association and Arabic language training held by Al-Munawaroh *Pesantren* in Banjarnegara City. Meanwhile, teachers in Al-Islah and An-Nur have never got any in-service training.

In relation to educational cost, parents of the students in Permata pay school fee cost 3,000 IDR/month and the school spends the average annual budget cost 3,000,000 IDR. Parents of the students in Al-Islah also pay school fee 3,000 IDR/month, and the school spends the average annual budget cost 1,692,000 IDR. An-Nur Qur'anic school does not charge school fee.

From the description about the Qur'anic schools in Tapen village, it can be summarized that, regarding the school management, 2 Qur'anic schools cannot survive due to lacking of teachers. In early time, these two schools were led by a senior elementary school teacher/headmaster; as they were getting older and not able to find out other persons to replace the teaching position, finally the schools were closed and the students moved to Permata Qur'anic school, which has relatively big number of teachers, who are mostly senior high school students and graduates.

Permata is an example of good Qur'anic school, which regularly conduct monthly progress meeting for the teachers to discuss the efforts for the development of the school and find out solution of problems among the students. The monthly meeting is unique, because it is held in each teacher's house based on the fixed schedule. For food served during the meeting, Permata spends the budget taken from the school fee.

To attract people throughout of the village to send their children to the Qur'anic school, Permata issued pamphlets and letters to be given to families having primary school-aged children. Usually all the students in the Qur'anic school also participate in distributing the pamphlets and letters to the families living near them; and the teachers also come to visit from a house to a house to pass the advertising papers to families. By doing so, the number of children attending Permata Qur'anic School is always stable.

Furthermore, although Permata Qur'anic school charges relatively low school fee, the teachers succeeded in motivating parents and community to collect the charity fund for many years to buy a land for building the Qur'anic school. Beside money, community has donated materials, such as sand, bricks, cement, roof, and the like for the school building construction.

In relation to learning content, besides Islam, children in Tapen village's Qur'anic schools were also introduced to arts (drawing and colouring), which are very important for younger children (grade 1 students of primary schools). The children were more excited to learn about Islam through pictures media. Drawing and colouring activities for younger children are very useful to make them creative while the teachers in the same time are teaching the other older children during the lesson.

Qur'anic schools in Luwung village in Rakit district

Luwung is located in the eastern part of Rakit district. It is 7 km from the district capital city and 20 km from the Regency capital city. This village is quite far from a *pesantren*, which is located in Lengkong village within the same district. Luwung village has total area of 19,621 hectares with population of 2,414 people. All population in this village are Muslims where 65% is farmers, 10% are government employees, and 25% is others (Field survey, 2014).

There are 1 nursery school, 3 kindergartens, 2 public primary schools, and 1 Islamic private primary school established by Cokroaminoto Foundation in Luwung village. The total number of Qur'anic schools is 5 schools. Due to its wide area, the village has at least 6 mosques and 18 *mushalas*. There are 8 *majelis ta'lim* groups initiated by mothers or female Muslims and 13 *majelis ta'lim* groups held by fathers or male Muslims. The female Muslims *majelis ta'lim* meeting is held in the afternoon on Friday and Saturday; while the male Muslims *majelis ta'lim* meeting is held in the evening on Thursday.

Al-Fatah is the oldest Qur'anic school in Luwung village, which was established in 1991. This Qur'anic school is managed by a senior primary school teacher named Mr. Muharto and it has 36 students and 4 teachers. The four teachers have no teaching diploma. Classes are opened from Monday to Sunday at 18:00-19:00 pm.

The second Qur'anic school is Baitul Insan. This school was established in 1992 and it has 25 students and only 2 teachers. The headmaster of this school is Mr. Iskandar and this school opens from Monday to Sunday at 18.00-19.00.

The third Qur'anic school is Al-Wardah, which was established in 2004. Although it has only 2 teachers who are senior high school students, Al-Wardah has 33 students in total and this school opens from Monday to Saturday at 15.00-17.30.

The fourth Qur'anic school is Baitul Falah. This school was established in 2006 and it has 15 students and 6 teachers. The fifth school is Raudhatul Huda, which has 48 students and 5 teachers. The headmaster of this school is Mr. Agus Sapto. Among the 5 Qur'anic schools, only Al-Fatah and Raudhatul Huda have their own building as the place of teaching and learning. Except Mr. Agus Sapto, all teachers in these Qur'anic schools have no teaching diploma. They are basically senior high school graduates.

Main purpose of Qur'anic schools in Luwung village is also to educate children to be aware of Islam as their faith by teaching them the basic values of Islam and the Holy Qur'an reading and writing skills.

During the last five years, in average Al-Fatah has 33 students with 4 teachers; Baitul Insan has 13 students with 2 teachers; Al-Wardah has 34 students with 2 teachers; Baitul Falah has 30 students with 3 teachers; and Raudhatul Huda has 38 students with 5 teachers (Field work, 2014).

Teaching and learning contents in the Qur'anic schools in Luwung village are reading and writing the Arabic characters, prayer and *wudhu* practice, reading Qiro'ati, memorizing short verses of the Qur'an and daily prayers, reading the Holy Qur'an, *aqeedah*, the five pillars of Islam (rukun Islam), *akhlak* (moral education), *Asmaul Husna* (99 beautiful names of Allah), the stories of Prophets (moral education), and *figh*.

Teachers used textbooks, such as *Iqro'* and *Tajwid* books published by AMM Kota Gede Yogyakarta, *Saffinah* textbook, *Fiqh* and *Ibadah* textbook, *Aqeedah akhlak* textbook published by the MoRA, and *Shalat* guidance book published by Toha Putra Semarang.

In-service teacher training, which have been received by teachers of Baitul Falah and Al-Wardah are Teacher Quality Assurance Workshop held by Rakit district Qur'anic Schools Association and Tamyiz training held by MoRA; while teachers in the other three Qur'anic schools in Luwung village have never got any in-service teacher training.

In relation to educational cost, parents of the students in Baitul Falah do not pay any school fee, although the school spends the average annual budget cost 400,000 IDR. Baitul Insan and Al-Wardah do not charge school fee, either. Parents of the students in Al-Fatah and Al-Islah pay school fee cost 3,000 IDR/month.

Formal teachers of elementary schools have big role in managing the Qur'anic schools in Luwung village. Almost all the Qur'anic schools were initiated by the formal teachers; although the rest of teachers are just senior high school students and or graduates.

To sum up the condition of Qur'anic schools in the rural remote area, regarding the school management, the ratio between teachers and students is still problematic as the same as in the semi-urban rural area. Classes with too many students in a Qur'anic school, which actually adopt tutorial-based teaching, are often disrupting to education. Too many students in a class will result in a diverse field of students, with varying degrees of learning ability. In addition, in-service teacher training is also very limited to the teachers. Only few teachers have ever got training.

5.2. Learning Content of Qur'anic Schools

Based on the teachers' choices in the questionnaire, there were five general learning contents in Qur'anic schools: 1. Maintaining good relationship with the Almighty God, 2. Maintaining good relationship with parents, 3. Maintaining good relationship with other people outside of home, 4. Positive attitudes, and 5. Arabic language, Art, and Arithmetic.

Each general learning-content has a number of specific contents, as summarized in Table 6.

Based on data in questionnaire survey; in semi urban rural area Qur'anic schools, among 4 teachers in total: all teachers stated that traditional dancing, music, and Arithmetic were not included in the learning content; while 1 teacher stated drawing and Arabic language were not included in the learning content.

In remote rural area Qur'anic schools, among 28 teachers in total; 1 teacher stated he did not include "obeying the parents' order" and "toughness" as the learning content. One teacher stated that traditional dance is a part of learning contents. Twenty-four teachers stated Arabic language is included in the learning content, and 10 teachers stated that Arithmetic is included, too.

Arithmetic and traditional dance have their place in remote rural area Qur'anic schools; in fact Arithmetic is a part of general school subject. Teachers explained that their students often bring their school homework (Arithmetic subject) to the Qur'anic school and ask the teachers to help in solving the difficult questions. Doing the school homework in a Qur'anic school then become common. A teacher who included traditional dance as part of learning content stated that it is very important for children to learn and master their own region's dance, because the Qur'anic school is sometimes invited to take part in "Art Performance" in celebrating Islamic big events.

No General learning contents Specific learning contents 1. Maintaining good relationship with the Almighty God a. Believe in God and Prophet b. Praying five times a day c. Fasting in Ramadhan month 2. Maintaining good relationship with parents a. Speaking politely b. Knocking the door and greeting before coming in home c. Listening attentively to parents' advice d. Helping the busy parents e. Obeying the parents' order f. Asking for permission for doing something g. Replying the parents' order/call 3. Maintaining good relationship with other people a. Respecting older people b. Helping people in trouble c. Care of friends d. Respecting other people's opinion Positive attitudes 4. a. Honesty b. Empathy c. Patience d. Discipline e. Toughness

Table 6. General and specific Qur'anic school learning contents

Source: Field survey, 2014

Language, Art, and Arithmetic

5.

5.3. Problems and Challenges Faced by the Qur'anic Schools in Semi-Urban Rural and Remote Rural Settings

It is very interesting to point out that among 12 Qur'anic schools, 4 of them (Raudhatul Jannah in Sigaluh village and As-Solihah in Gembongan village-in semi urban area, Al-Fatah and Raudhatul Huda in Luwung village-in rural area) have their own school building which is provided by the village government. Meanwhile, Permata in Tapen village, which belongs to rural area, has successfully built the school building on the land bought from a community with the financial support from the students' parents and other donors.

a. Arabic languageb. Traditional dancec. Drawingd. Musicd. Arithmetic

Although local government in both areas have given support to development of the Qur'anic schools by providing the land for the school building, it is very clear that community in the rural remote area has higher attention than those in the semi urban rural area toward the development of Qur'anic schools. In villages, people have high sensitivity on collaboration; although they relatively cannot support much to the teachers' salary in Qur'anic schools, they feel important for their children to have their own school buildings. Therefore, when the school teachers come to each parent's home and persuade them to donate money, they eagerly do so. The fund rising happens for several years until the amount of money is enough for building the schools.

Problems and challenges faced by Qur'anic schools in the semi-urban and rural areas are relatively similar: the lack of inservice teacher trainings, the decreasing number of the teachers because some of them have to move to other cities for higher education or working, the decreasing number of the students, no fixed or not uniformed teaching and learning materials from the government (MoRA), very limited learning facilities, such as chairs, tables, and students' text-books, as well as the very little fund-support. In addition, 5 Qur'anic schools still have to struggle in having the specified school building because so far the teaching and learning processes are conducted in a mosque or in a teacher's home.

Qur'anic schools, which are located in the rural remote area have a tendency to decrease in number due to lacking of teachers and they almost do not have any connection with pesantren, which can serve as the in-service teacher training centre. On the other hand, Qur'anic schools in the semi urban rural area can survive although the number of the students and teachers is less than those in the rural remote area and to have affiliation with a certain *pesantren* for teacher training program.

6. Commonalities and Differences of Qur'anic Schools in Semi-Urban Rural and Remote Rural Settings

There are some commonalities and differences at Qur'anic schools that keep the characteristics of Qur'anic schools in each area.

Commonalities: (1). Qur'anic schools in both of semi-urban rural and remote rural areas have big roles in providing relatively cheap education services for children to grow to be good Muslim generations; (2). Qur'anic schools can build mutual cooperation with families for sustainable Islamic education in a very basic level and also provide big opportunity to youths who involve as volunteer teachers to directly learn teaching skills, making them more ready to be formal teachers in future. Those demands of parents toward Islamic education are same in two target areas; (3). Learning contents of the Qur'anic schools in both areas are mainly Arabic language and moral education in order to achieve the basic goals of Islamic education in nurturing Muslim children to master the Holy Qur'an and to be pious generation. These commonalities suggest us that the researched Qur'anic schools keep pace their Islamic characters even in economic or societal fluctuations in semi-urban rural area.

Differences: (1). In semi-urban rural setting and remote rural setting, because many rivals compared with those in semi-urban rural area; the Qur'anic schools utilize pamphlets, invitation letters and visit student's parents at their house to attract new students. One of the reasons stated by Permata Qur'anic school, is that since they have already got their own school building with sufficient teaching and learning space, it becomes obligatory for teachers to attract as many children as possible to join their Qur'anic school; (2). Teachers' status degree at semi-urban rural area is more educated while the teachers at remote rural area are graduates from Qur'anic school who have no teacher's certificate. In remote rural area, it was found out a number of formal school teachers with 2-4 year university education background living near mosques; however, they do not have sufficient skills in teaching Arabic or the Holy Qur'an book and as a consequence they are not ready to join as Qur'anic school teachers.

In contrast with commonalities, the differences suggest us that the Qur'anic schools have to respond competitive environment occurred from the growth of other type of schools for protecting their Islamic education.

7. Conclusion

First, one of the new findings based on the above comparative analysis is that diversification of Qur'anic schools are observed not only among regencies but also within one regency. One of the reasons of the new phenomena of diversification is that Qur'anic schools could be used their flexible management which is introduced in section 1 and 5. Qur'anic teachers can teach without any teaching licence, and each Qur'anic school has a feedom in choosing textbooks, teaching materials, time schedule and learning contents corresponded various environmental changes such as social, cultural and economic. So if they face societal or sometime political fluctuations, those flexibilties are well functioning in responding to diversified fluctuations.

Second, the another new finding of this article is that diversification of Islamic education has influenced not only among many Islamic education categories, but also within a category of Qur'anic school. Growth of Qur'anic schools thanks to its flexibilities have encouraged the public's interest in reconsidering teaching methods and the skill of reading and reciting the Qur'an. Furthermore, it has provided a chance to reconsider non-formal education for Muslims from the grass-roots level. And the government's intentions to follow the global trend of promoting non-formal education must also have greatly affected the recent vibrant development of Qur'anic schools. The spread of access to Qur'anic schools has played an important role in promoting the grass-roots need for better quality non-formal education. In addition, the process of teaching and learning in the Qur'anic schools is opened to various perspectives to improve educational services for Muslims as well as promoting the building of educational partnerships between the schools and the community.

The challenge of the article is that there are many spaces to other categories Islamic education (Qur'anic kindergarten, Qur'anic recitation, etc.); if they have the same flexibilities, there are some spaces to research.

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