



The Role of Kuliah Kerja Partisipatif (Participatory Community Service) Students in Building Children's Interest in Learning the Qur'an in Jembatan Kembar Village: A Conceptual Study Based on a Literature Synthesis

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Abstract: Purpose: This conceptual study synthesizes the role of Kuliah Kerja Partisipatif (KKP) students from UIN Mataram in building children's interest in learning the Qur'an, using Jembatan Kembar Village, West Lombok, as an illustrative field context. This study addresses our observation that prior community-service literature has tended to report isolated program narratives rather than applying an integrative conceptual framework. Methodology: The study uses a qualitative library-research design with an interpretive worldview and a descriptive-analytical approach, synthesizing peer-reviewed and institutionally documented sources through thematic content analysis. Results: The synthesis identifies four recurring student roles (mentor, motivator, facilitator, and media innovator) that work through mechanisms consistent with self-determination theory, strengthening children's sense of autonomy, competence, and relatedness in Qur'anic learning. KKP's participatory paradigm, distinct from conventional KKN, positions students as agents of social transformation rather than mere program executors. Conclusion and Implications: Interest in learning the Qur'an among children in rural contexts such as Jembatan Kembar Village is best cultivated through experiential, community-embedded pedagogy rather than isolated instructional techniques. The policy implications point toward integrating KKP curricula with structured Qur'anic-literacy modules, sustained mentorship handover mechanisms, and creative, play-based media as strategies for strengthening religious literacy in underserved villages.

Keywords: *Kuliah Kerja Partisipatif (Participatory Community Service), interest in learning the Qur'an, service-learning, self-determination theory, community service*

1. INTRODUCTION

Qur'anic education for children builds religious character, and Muslim communities across generations have treated it as a shared concern. Parents and teachers alike assume that learning to read and understand the Qur'an early in life shapes a person's religious identity and moral outlook later on. In Indonesia, non-formal institutions such as the Qur'an Education Park (TPQ) and Children's Education Park (TPA) carry most of this teaching load, but rural areas often simply do not have enough teachers, and that shortage keeps interrupting the learning process (Arahma, 2025).

Islamic higher education institutions in Indonesia have responded by requiring students to work directly in villages through community-service programs. The State Islamic University (UIN) Mataram built its own version of this, called Kuliah Kerja Partisipatif (Participatory Community Service, or KKP). Since 2006, UIN Mataram has deliberately used this term instead of the older Kuliah Kerja Nyata (KKN, or "Real Work Program") to signal a paradigm shift toward social transformation, rather than simply sending students out to run technical projects (LP2M UIN Mataram, n.d.). The name change is not just administrative rebranding; it reflects a real shift in how students are positioned, from project executors to empowerment partners who help build collective critical awareness in the community.

Service reports from other universities show a similar pattern in how KKN/KKP students contribute to children's Qur'anic education. In Kelurahan Muara Laung 1, KKN students partnered with the Institute for the Development of Qur'anic Recitation (Lembaga Pengembangan Tilawatil Qur'an) and measurably improved children's pronunciation, tajwid, and reading interest (Annisah et al., 2024). In Kampung Cikedung, students who taught hijaiyah letters using a mix of the Iqra method, talaqqi, and play-based activities managed to spark enthusiasm and motivation in children who previously barely knew the letters (Arahma, 2025). Across these

studies, the same thing keeps showing up: students do not just fill a gap left by missing teachers, they change the quality of the teaching relationship itself.

Even so, the existing literature stays descriptive and narrative at the level of a single program. Each report usually stands alone, covering one location and one activity, with no attempt to pull the patterns together into a broader conceptual framework. Few studies explicitly connect what students actually do in the field with motivation theories such as Self-Determination Theory, or with experiential learning theory, which would explain why direct student involvement changes children's interest in learning. This gap, between a rich body of field reports on one side and a shortage of integrative frameworks on the other, is what this study sets out to address.

This study is built around three questions: (1) what roles do KKP students consistently take on when trying to build children's interest in learning the Qur'an, based on the existing literature; (2) through what psychological and pedagogical mechanisms do those roles actually foster that interest; and (3) what practical recommendations follow for running KKP programs, particularly in villages with socioeconomic conditions similar to Jembatan Kembar Village, Lembar District, West Lombok Regency. Jembatan Kembar was chosen as an illustrative setting because it is one of the villages where UIN Mataram places KKP students in West Lombok (UIN Mataram, 2026), and its agrarian, demographic profile is fairly typical of many other villages that host KKP programs across West Nusa Tenggara.

Answering these questions, this study hopes to contribute in two ways. Theoretically, it offers an integrative framework linking what students actually do in the field to motivation theory and experiential learning theory, so that the mostly descriptive service-report literature can be read through a stronger conceptual lens. Practically,

it is meant as a reference for the Institute for Research and Community Service (LP2M) when designing pre-departure training for KKP students, especially any module on children's Qur'anic education, so that students' roles can be planned more deliberately and sustained over time instead of being left to whatever each KKP group happens to improvise.

2. THEORETICAL Framework and Conceptual Model

2.1. Interest in Learning and Self-Determination Theory

Children's interest in learning the Qur'an can be understood through Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which holds that motivation lasts when three basic psychological needs are met: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000; “Self-Determination Theory: Basic Psychological Needs in Motivation, Development, and Wellness,” 2017) In Qur'anic learning, autonomy shows up as room for a child to choose a way of learning that feels enjoyable to them; competence builds through small, tangible wins, such as finishing one Iqra volume or memorizing a short surah; and relatedness comes from a warm relationship with the teacher, including a KKP student who shows up as a new, attentive presence in the child's life.

Read from an educational angle, the Qur'an itself contains motivational principles that line up with this modern psychological framework. A thematic tafsir study finds that its intrinsic motivational principles include curiosity, a willingness to ask questions, care, self-confidence, relevance, and hope, while its extrinsic principles include enjoyment, recognition, self-actualization, and achievement (Sarnoto & Abnisa, 2022). We would argue that this overlap between Qur'anic motivational principles and the SDT framework gives Qur'an-learning programs a double footing, religious and psychological, for designing programs that center the child rather than just chasing memorization targets or finishing another Iqra volume.

2.2. Experiential Learning and Service-Learning as the Basis for Students' Roles

Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory helps explain what KKP students are doing in a community. Kolb treats knowledge as something built through a cycle of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. When a student teaches Qur'an recitation in a hamlet, they are not just applying religious knowledge learned on campus; they are also going through a new learning process by interacting directly with children and the community, which they then reflect on and turn into a fresh understanding of contextual pedagogy (Institute for Quality Assurance and Learning Development, 2024).

This principle connects closely to service-learning, which traces back to Dewey's (1938) idea that real education happens through experience that gets reflected on within an actual social context, so that the learner (here, the student) is learning and serving at the same time. Under this model, a student's role in children's Qur'anic education is not an optional extracurricular add-on. It is part of the student's own learning process, where the experience of teaching builds pedagogical, social, and spiritual competence all at once.

2.3. The Kuliah Kerja Partisipatif (KKP) Paradigm as Social Transformation

Conventional KKN programs tend to emphasize carrying out physical projects. UIN Mataram's KKP is explicitly framed instead around community empowerment toward social transformation, with particular attention to disadvantaged groups, learning that responds to communities' actual problems and needs, and building collective critical awareness against the normative habits that hold back social and religious change (LP2M UIN Mataram, n.d.). Under this framework, students are not there to “give” knowledge to a passive community; they are dialogical partners who learn from the

local context while pushing for change together with the people they work with, in line with the participatory, educational spirit that community-service work is generally supposed to have.

For children's Qur'anic education, this means the recitation programs KKP students run should not stop at teaching letters. Ideally they also strengthen the local TPQ/TPA's ongoing management capacity, so the benefits do not disappear once the KKP period ends. This emphasis on sustainability is what really separates KKP's role as a transformation agent from KKN's role as a short-term project executor.

2.4. Methods for Teaching the Qur'an to Children

Several methods for teaching children to read the Qur'an have developed over time and are widely used by service students, among them the Iqra method, which builds up gradually from letter recognition to connected reading, and the Tilawati method, which combines classroom and individual instruction with a strong focus on correct tajwid. Applying the Tilawati method with students at MIN 2 Kota Kediri improved their Qur'an reading quality when the method was used consistently and with structure (Huda, 2023). A separate multi-case study on cooperative Tilawati instruction found that small, collaborative groups also built discipline and a sense of responsibility in students, not just technical reading skill (Jaeni et al., 2020).

Beyond technique-focused approaches, play-based learning has also proven relevant for young children. An experiment with children at Taman Qur'an Anak (TQA) An-Namlu Karawang found that learning the Qur'an through play boosted children's learning motivation, especially during the shift back from online to in-person classes after the pandemic (Mulyono et al., 2022). We think this finding matters for KKP because students usually have no formal training as TPQ teachers, so a more intuitive, play-based approach that does not demand mastery of a complex teaching methodology is

simply easier for them to pick up than a structured method like Tilawati.

2.5. An Integrative Research Framework

Drawing on these four theoretical perspectives, this study proposes an integrative framework: KKP's social-transformation paradigm as the philosophical basis for students' role; experiential learning and service-learning as the mechanism through which students themselves learn; Qur'an-teaching methods (Iqra, Tilawati, play) as the technical-pedagogical instruments used in the field; and Self-Determination Theory as the lens for explaining why those instruments can build children's interest in learning. These four elements interact with one another, and we unpack that interaction further in the results section.

3. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative library research approach with an interpretive worldview, treating KKP students' roles and children's learning interest as social-pedagogical phenomena that are constructed within a specific context, not single variables that can be measured apart from that context. We chose this approach because the goal is to synthesize conceptual patterns from existing service reports and academic literature, not to generate new primary data from the field.

The data are derived from two categories of sources. The first is accredited national journal articles reporting on KKN/KKP activities in children's Qur'anic education, found through database searches using the keywords "role of KKN/KKP students," "interest in learning the Qur'an," and "children's Qur'anic education." The second is official institutional documents describing UIN Mataram's KKP paradigm and implementation, including LP2M UIN Mataram's official website and Jembatan Kembar Village's

administrative profile, which we used to build the local context that serves as this study's illustrative backdrop.

Inclusion criteria covered articles that explicitly discuss student involvement (KKN, KKP, or similar service-learning) in Qur'anic education or children's religious literacy, published within the last ten years, along with theoretical reference articles on learning motivation and experiential learning. We excluded opinion pieces, blogs without academic editing, and reports that did not adequately explain their data-collection methods.

We analyzed the data through thematic analysis of the selected sources. Each source was read in full to identify patterns in students' roles, the teaching methods used, and the reported outcomes; these findings were then grouped inductively into thematic categories. This grouping process went through several rounds until the categories settled, as presented in the results section. As contextual background rather than primary data, we also reviewed Jembatan Kembar Village's profile documents to map the social and demographic characteristics relevant to designing a KKP program there.

It should be noted that this is a conceptual-analytical study built on a literature synthesis, not primary fieldwork producing new empirical data from Jembatan Kembar Village. We discuss this limitation further at the end of the article.

4. RESULTS AND EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

4.1. The Social and Demographic Context of Jembatan Kembar Village

Jembatan Kembar Village sits in Lembar District, West Lombok Regency, West Nusa Tenggara Province. It covers roughly 4.2 km² and is split into six hamlets: Granada, Gunung Gundil, Gunung Sari, Batu Rimpang Selatan, Batu Rimpang Utara, and Karang Anyar

(Ihtiar et al., 2024). The village has 1,225 households and a total population of 4,036 people, 1,985 men and 2,054 women, most of whom work in farming and livestock (Ihtiar et al., 2024). This agrarian setting and scattered hamlet structure matter for our purposes: as seen in many other KKP locations, a shortage of TPQ/TPA teachers spread across a widely dispersed village means some hamlets get less pedagogical attention than others, and KKP students could help close that gap between hamlets.

LP2M UIN Mataram has strengthened coordination with the West Lombok Regency government to refine how KKP is carried out, with an emphasis on matching program themes to regional development priorities, including improving education quality (UIN Mataram, 2026). This suggests that a KKP program aimed at building children's interest in Qur'anic learning is not a standalone effort; it can be lined up with the local government's own education agenda.

4.2. Patterns in KKP Students' Roles in Children's Qur'anic Education

A thematic synthesis of the reviewed literature turns up four roles that keep showing up across locations. First, the personal mentor: students accompany children more interactively and individually than a conventional classroom setup allows, as seen in programs supporting reading and memorizing short surahs. Second, the motivator, clearest in the Kampung Cikedung study, where students built children's enthusiasm and discipline through a more personal approach than the regular teachers used (Arahma, 2025). Third, the facilitator and media innovator, bringing in a mix of methods, including Iqra, talaqqi, and play, to break up the boredom children feel with repetitive teaching (Arahma, 2025). Fourth, the institutional reinforcer: when students collaborated with local religious institutions such as the Lembaga Pengembangan Tilawatil Qur'an, children's pronunciation, tajwid, and reading interest improved in measurable ways (Annisah et al., 2024).

None of these four roles works alone. They complete a single pedagogical cycle: the personal mentor builds emotional closeness, the motivator sparks initial enthusiasm, the facilitator/media innovator keeps that interest alive through varied methods, and the institutional reinforcer makes sure the benefits outlast the students' departure from the KKP site.

4.3. How Interest in Learning Develops: A Self-Determination Theory Reading

Mapping these four roles onto the Self-Determination Theory framework reveals a coherent pattern. The personal-mentor and motivator roles mainly address the need for relatedness: a new, attentive presence creates an emotional bond that makes children want to keep showing up for recitation sessions. The facilitator/media-innovator role mainly addresses autonomy, since varied methods, play especially, give children room to choose a way of learning that feels enjoyable rather than just following rigid instructions (Mulyono et al., 2022). And strengthening ties with local religious institutions mainly addresses competence, since structured mentoring lets children experience measurable, step-by-step progress in tajwid and reading fluency (Annisah et al., 2024; Huda, 2023)

This synthesis suggests that a KKP program's success in building children's interest in the Qur'an does not hinge on any single teaching method. It depends on how well the combination of student roles meets all three psychological needs at once. A program that only emphasizes technical teaching without building personal relationships risks producing short-term compliance without any lasting interest. A program that leans entirely on personal closeness without methodological structure risks producing temporary excitement without any real gain in reading competence.

4.4. A Proposed Program Scheme

Building on this synthesis, we propose a KKP-based Qur'an-learning program scheme that ties the four student roles to the three SDT needs, summarized in Table 1. Table 1. Integrating KKP Students' Roles with Self-Determination Theory Needs in Children's Qur'anic Education

1. Discussion: Implications and Recommendations

These synthesis results confirm that KKP students' role in building children's interest in the Qur'an is multidimensional. It cannot be reduced to just "teaching recitation." The specific findings on the four roles, mentor, motivator, facilitator/innovator, and institutional reinforcer, show that a student-service Qur'an-education program succeeds through a combination of personal relationships and methodological structure, not through any single factor (Annisah et al., 2024; Arahma, 2025)

The first implication is that KKP students need a short module on basic SDT principles and practical Qur'an-teaching methods before they're placed in the field, since right now they mostly rely on their own childhood memories of learning to recite, with no formal pedagogical training at all. Such a module would ideally cover the basics of the Iqra and Tilawati methods (Huda, 2023; Jaeni et al., 2020) educational play techniques for young children (Mulyono et al., 2022), and principles for building a supportive personal relationship with children.

The second implication concerns sustainability. Because KKP placements are temporary, any Qur'an-education program a student starts risks stalling the moment they leave, unless there is a clear handover plan to the local TPQ/TPA staff or mosque youth group. We think this handover step gets surprisingly little explicit attention in the service reports we reviewed, even though it is exactly what determines whether KKP's impact is fleeting or lasting, in keeping with UIN Mataram's own KKP paradigm, which emphasizes

sustained social transformation rather than a box-ticking ceremonial activity (LP2M UIN Mataram, n.d.; UIN Mataram, 2026)(UIN Mataram, 2026).

The third implication is geographic. Given that Jembatan Kembar Village spreads across six agrarian hamlets (Ihtiar et al., 2024), placing KKP students should ideally involve mapping Qur'anic-education needs hamlet by hamlet, rather than concentrating activities in whichever spot is easiest to reach. This hamlet-based needs mapping fits the participatory spirit that defines KKP, which asks students to understand a community's actual needs before designing a program, rather than running the same generic program everywhere (Institute for Research and Community Service (LP2M) UIN Mataram, 2024).

In practical terms, we recommend four concrete steps for future KKP programs: (1) developing a short pre-departure training module on SDT-informed and play-based Qur'an-teaching methods; (2) building a formal handover mechanism to local TPQ/TPA staff or mosque youth groups before KKP ends, along with written documentation of progress and follow-up plans; (3) mapping Qur'anic-education needs hamlet by hamlet before placement, especially in villages with scattered settlements like Jembatan Kembar; and (4) strengthening formal collaboration between KKP groups and local religious institutions such as TPQ or LPTQ, so that children's tajwid and reading progress gets evaluated in a structured way, rather than left to students' informal impressions.

This synthesis is worth reading alongside the well-known limitation of conventional Iqra teaching: repetitive delivery with little interactive material can build initial interest but then dampen children's intrinsic motivation over time, and media variation can effectively address this issue. This strengthens the case that KKP students, who are not professional TPQ teachers to begin with, can contribute best precisely by bringing variety and innovation to the

methods used, complementing rather than replacing the regular teachers, who are better versed in the formal Qur'an-reading curriculum.

5.1. Study Limitations

This study has a few methodological limitations worth flagging. First, as a conceptual library study, it does not generate primary data from Jembatan Kembar Village itself, so the recommendations proposed here are conceptual and prescriptive, and they need further empirical verification through direct fieldwork, for instance, interviews with KKP students, TPQ staff, and parents at the site. Second, the literature specifically addressing the overlap between KKN/KKP and children's Qur'anic education is still fairly limited and scattered across service journals that are not all indexed in internationally reputable databases, so any generalization from these findings should be made carefully. Third, this study does not quantitatively measure changes in children's learning interest, so it cannot offer an effect-size estimate for any individual student role.

5. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

This study concludes that Kuliah Kerja Partisipatif students' role in building children's interest in learning the Qur'an can be mapped onto four complementary roles: personal mentor, motivator, facilitator/media innovator, and local institutional reinforcer, which theoretically work by meeting the three basic psychological needs in Self-Determination Theory: relatedness, autonomy, and competence. UIN Mataram's KKP paradigm, deliberately aimed at social transformation rather than just running technical projects, gives this role a philosophical foundation that can outlast the students' own placement period.

The policy implication here is that KKP's effectiveness in children's Qur'anic education cannot be left entirely to students' improvisation

in the field. This requires methodological training before placement, a clear program handover mechanism, and formal collaboration with local religious institutions. For Jembatan Kembar specifically, the scattered six-hamlet structure calls for area-based needs mapping so the program's benefits reach children across all the hamlets, not just the most accessible one.

Future research should pursue empirical fieldwork, whether qualitative through in-depth interviews or quantitative through validated learning-interest instruments, to test the integrative scheme proposed here directly in Jembatan Kembar and other KKP placement villages. We would also encourage longitudinal work on what happens to these programs after KKP ends, since sustainability is the piece least documented in the existing service literature, even though it is what ultimately determines a program's long-term impact.

In the end, this study's main contribution is pulling together service reports that have long stood apart into one integrative conceptual framework, one that connects students' practical roles with learning-motivation theory and KKP's social-transformation paradigm. We hope this framework becomes an early reference point for LP2M UIN Mataram, KKP groups, and future researchers designing children's Qur'anic-education programs that are more deliberate, reflective, and sustainable across community-service villages.

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