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Rhythmic Talking Stick and Memorization Motivation for Surah Ad-Duha: A Junior High School Case Study

Kanti Dwi Rahmawati [1a*], Ahmad Saiful Rizal [2b]
[1]Institut Agama Islam Khozinatul Ulum Blora, Indonesia
[2]Institut Agama Islam Khozinatul Ulum Blora, Indonesia

1 kantidwirahmawati@iaiku.ac.id; 2 asrizal@iaiku.ac.id

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***Correspondence Address:**
xxxxxxxxxx@xxxxx.xxx

Abstract:
Qur'anic memorization (tahfiz) in school settings is often monotonous and tension-laden, which can weaken students' motivation. This study examines how the Rhythmic Talking Stick model, which integrates nasyid rhythm into a stick-passing game, was implemented to foster motivation to memorize Surah Ad-Duha, and interprets the findings through Self-Determination Theory and active learning. A qualitative single-case study was conducted at a junior high school, using semi-structured interviews with seven students, the Islamic Education teacher, and the vice-principal for curriculum affairs, supported by observation and documentation; credibility was established through source triangulation. The main findings show that rhythm shifted most students from anxiety and monotony toward enthusiasm, confidence, and active participation, including independent practice at home. Rhythmic pauses marked verse segments, and group rehearsal strengthened competence and relatedness, whereas autonomy was weakly supported: shy students remained tense because they could not control when their turn came. The novelty lies in applying a rhythm-based Talking Stick to tahfiz and in triangulating student, teacher, and curriculum-management perspectives. Practically, the study offers Islamic Education teachers a structured, non-punitive design with verse chunking, group rehearsal, and pacing matched to fluency, and recommends options such as volunteering or passing once for quieter students.

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Introduction (مقدمة)

Islamic Religious Education (PAI) plays a strategic role in shaping students' religious character, extending beyond knowledge transfer to include the ability to memorize the Qur'an (tahfiz) (Hasanah et al., 2022). Memorizing short chapters such as Surah Ad-Duha may appear simple given the limited number of verses, yet it still demands perseverance, concentration, and self-confidence that are not easily cultivated in early adolescents (Yundianto et al., 2023). Moreover, evaluations of school-based tahfiz programs show that memorization targets alone do not guarantee effective outcomes (Muawanah et al., 2022), which suggests that how

memorization is taught matters as much as what is to be memorized.

Recent studies indicate that Qur'anic memorization instruction in schools still relies heavily on oral repetition and teacher-led delivery, with limited student engagement (Basir et al., 2024; Layyinah et al., 2025; Zakariyah et al., 2025). Preliminary observation at the research site showed the same pattern: PAI memorization sessions were dominated by lecture followed by individual recitation. This fostered a passive, one-way classroom atmosphere in which many students remained silent or avoided eye contact when asked about their readiness, turning what should be a joyful act of worship into a source of cognitive and emotional strain (Yundianto et al., 2023). The problem, therefore, is not a lack of memorization tasks but the absence of learning designs that make memorization engaging, secure, and socially supported.

The Talking Stick model, in which a stick is passed among students to encourage courage and active participation, is one response to this problem (Yuniari et al., 2023; Huda, 2013). However, preliminary observation suggested that a version without musical accompaniment still left residual tension. This led to a modification that incorporates Islamic nasyid rhythms. The Talking Stick originated as a Native American turn-taking practice later paired with music in classroom adaptations (Carol Locust, cited in Huda, 2013; Yuniari et al., 2023). The present modification extends it to Qur'anic memorization for three reasons. First, rhythmic pauses can mark verse segments, so that students memorize in small units rather than attempting a whole surah at once, which resonates with the incremental, verse-by-verse patterns documented in school tahfiz programs (Suryana et al., 2024). Second, singing together while the stick moves provides repetition, a core strategy for sustaining tahfiz motivation (Anoum et al., 2022). Third, group rehearsal and a playful atmosphere can shift the activity from a pop-quiz scenario into a collective, Islamic-oriented form of edutainment. Surah Ad-Duha was chosen as the pilot material for its manageable length combined with a level of diligence appropriate to junior high students.

Prior studies report that Talking Stick, including versions integrated with music or traditional songs, can raise learning motivation and student-centered engagement (Kamarudin et al., 2021; Triandini R. et al., 2026; Yuniari et al., 2023). Three gaps remain. First, the literature is dominated by classroom action research and experimental designs that measure outcomes quantitatively (Aini et al., 2024; Astikajaya, 2022; Kamarudin et al., 2021; Triandini R. et al., 2026; Yuniari et al., 2023). These report class-level gains and say little about students for whom the approaching stick heightens rather than relieves tension. Second, the few qualitative accounts address general content learning rather than Qur'anic memorization (Riftiani & Permadi, 2025), while qualitative studies of memorization motivation mostly examine teachers' or institutional strategies in boarding-school settings (Anoum et al., 2022; Prayitno et al., 2025) rather than a game-based classroom model. Third, little is known about how students psychologically experience rhythm while memorizing a surah, and PAI teachers need procedural guidance on integrating artistic elements in ways that foster self-endorsed rather than merely rule-following motivation (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

This study therefore employs a single qualitative case study at SMP N 3 Bogorejo (Yin, 2018), treating the rhythmic modification not as a manipulated variable but as a phenomenon explored through the perspectives of students, the PAI teacher, and the vice-principal for curriculum affairs, triangulated as three complementary data sources (Miles et al., 2014). Two

frameworks serve as sensitizing concepts: Self-Determination Theory, which holds that motivation becomes more self-endorsed when the social context supports autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2020), and active learning, understood as instructional activities that involve students in doing and reflecting on what they are doing (Bonwell & Eison, 1991). This orientation is consistent with Law No. 20/2003 on the National Education System, which frames education as a process in which students actively develop their potential, including religious and spiritual strength (Republik Indonesia, 2003).

Based on the foregoing, this study aims to describe and understand the implementation of the Rhythmic Talking Stick model in teaching Surah Ad-Duha memorization, the characteristics and dynamics of students' memorization motivation after the rhythmic element is integrated, and the factors supporting or hindering its role, in order to provide pedagogical references for PAI teachers. These aims are operationalized through three research questions: (1) how is the model implemented; (2) what characterizes students' motivation after implementation; and (3) what factors support or hinder the rhythmic element's role in fostering motivation? The findings are interpreted through Self-Determination Theory and active learning in the Discussion.

Method (منهج)

This study employs a qualitative single case study design (Yin, 2018), with SMP N 3 Bogorejo as the sole research site, following a similar design used to examine PAI classroom learning strategies (Masturin, 2024). The aim is a holistic, contextual understanding of how the Rhythmic Talking Stick model is implemented and interpreted within a specific classroom, rather than establishing generalizable cause-and-effect relationships; no comparison groups, intervention cycles, or statistical tests were used.

The study was conducted during PAI lessons held every Monday in the first period (08:00-09:15 WIB), from June to September 2026. Data collection followed the principle of saturation rather than a fixed number of sessions, ending when new data repeated earlier information; in total, ten PAI sessions were observed and nine informants interviewed: seven students, the PAI teacher, and the vice-principal for curriculum affairs. The Rhythmic Talking Stick model had already been developed and implemented by the PAI teacher before the study began; the first author entered only to observe and interview, using open-ended questions that invited both positive and negative experiences of the model.

Informants were selected purposively (Kistoro et al., 2023; Masturin, 2024). The seven grade IX student informants (S1-S7) were chosen in consultation with the PAI teacher to represent varied levels of self-confidence and memorization fluency, so that both enthusiastic and hesitant experiences could be captured (Miles et al., 2014); because selection involved the teacher, more vocal students may be over-represented, a limitation addressed in the Conclusion. The PAI teacher was included as the model's implementer, and the vice-principal for curriculum affairs as the informant responsible for curriculum policy and oversight of learning innovations.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, non-participant observation, and documentation, covering the model's implementation, students' motivational experiences, and supporting/inhibiting factors. Each interview lasted approximately 7-10 minutes, was audio-

recorded with permission, and transcribed verbatim; observation notes recorded lesson stages, participation, and technical conditions, while documents consisted of the lesson plan (RPP). Interview data constitute the primary evidence, with observation and documents used as contextual cross-checks; excerpts were originally in Indonesian and are presented here in English translation.

Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Miles et al. (2014) — data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification — consistent with stages applied in recent qualitative studies of school tahfidz programs (Suryana et al., 2024). Transcripts and field notes were coded inductively into the five themes presented in the Results. Credibility was pursued through source triangulation across students, the PAI teacher, and the vice-principal, and by reporting divergent cases alongside the dominant pattern (Masturin, 2024).

The study obtained permission from the school principal. Because all student informants were minors, written informed consent was obtained from parents or guardians and each student gave verbal assent; participation was voluntary, withdrawal carried no consequence for grades, and identities were kept confidential. Students are identified by codes (S1-S7); adult informants are referred to by institutional role.

Result (نتائج)

This section presents the findings from triangulating three data sources — semi-structured interviews with seven grade IX students, the PAI teacher, and the vice-principal for curriculum affairs — with observation and documents used as contextual cross-checks. To maintain the confidentiality of the student informants, who are minors, students are coded S1-S7, while the PAI teacher and vice-principal are referred to by their institutional roles. Findings are presented thematically: (1) memorization conditions before the model; (2) implementation of the Rhythmic Talking Stick model; (3) characteristics and dynamics of students' motivation after implementation; (4) supporting and inhibiting factors; and (5) institutional support and curriculum alignment.

1. Learning Conditions for Memorizing Surah Ad-Duha Before the Model Was Applied

Student informants consistently described memorization learning before the model as dominated by lectures and individual recitation in front of the class. S1 recalled the teacher "only lectured in front, then told us to memorize individually and move forward one by one," describing the atmosphere as "very quiet, even a bit tense," while S3 called it "quite tense because sometimes the teacher is a bit fierce if they haven't memorized." This tension carried an affective cost: S1 admitted feeling "a bit lazy" about PAI time out of fear of "being laughed at by my friends," a pattern the PAI teacher confirmed, noting that participation was previously "dominated by certain students who are naturally self-confident," while most students "passively bow down, avoid eye contact, or [are] busy alone," with those awaiting their turn left "without meaningful activities." Triangulating student and teacher accounts shows a convergent pattern: memorization learning before the model was teacher-centered, individualistic, and evaluation-oriented, contributing to boredom and performance anxiety among most students.

2. Implementation Process of the Rhythmic Talking Stick Model

a. Stages of Implementation

The PAI teacher implements the model through five sequential stages: (a) preparation — delivering objectives, explaining rules, and forming heterogeneous small groups; (b) material delivery — explaining the content and recitation of Surah Ad-Duha; (c) group practice — students listen to each other's memorization before the game; (d) the rhythmic stick game — the stick passes to the music, and whoever holds it when the rhythm stops recites a designated verse segment; and (e) evaluation and reflection. The group-practice phase is confirmed by student data: S4 explained the group "divides the task of who memorizes how many verses first," while S7 described "a kind of practice turn before the actual game starts."

b. Rhythm Arrangement Techniques and Memorizing Materials

Nasyid rhythm is chosen at a "medium" tempo — fast enough to avoid monotony, slow enough to avoid panic — with stop points deliberately unpatterned so "students stay focused." Memorization material is chunked into short segments matched to students' average ability, supported by visual aid cards for those who struggle. Who recites is determined solely by where the stick stops, not by teacher appointment, to preserve fairness; consequences for unprepared students are designed to stay in the "nuance of 'play', not punishment" — for example, repeating a verse with a classmate. This is consistent with student experience: none of the seven informants reported shame-based punishment, though some still felt pressure from the uncertainty of their turn (sub-theme 3c).

3. Characteristics and Dynamics of Students' Memorization Motivation after Implementation

a. Increased Enthusiasm and Courage

Most students reported greater enthusiasm and courage once rhythm was integrated. S2 found the first experience "very exciting" because it felt "like playing a game," while S6 "laughed a little" at not expecting a religious lesson to be "so fun." S4 felt "more courageous... because the atmosphere is like a competition," and S5 described it as "an exciting challenge, not a scary exam." This courage extended beyond the classroom: S2 practiced "every night," and S5 practiced with a younger sibling at home.

b. Role of Group Cooperation

Group cooperation during preparation repeatedly appeared as a motivational element: S4 described the group as "very compact," dividing verses among members; S7 called it "quite organized," with practice turns before the game; and S6 emphasized mutual help — "those who have memorized first teach those who haven't." The PAI teacher observed that previously passive students now "join in singing along... help their friends in a group practice, and seem more enthusiastic about waiting for their turn," indicating that motivation became embedded in group social relations rather than remaining purely individual.

c. Response Variations: Between Enthusiasm and Residual Tension

Responses were not uniform. S3 still described a tense atmosphere — "the time seemed to be very fast, not like usual" — and reported that rhythm sometimes increased confusion when memorization was weak. S5 reported an ambivalent experience of anxiety about waiting, which

made S5 "rush to wait first." The PAI teacher confirmed this variation: "not all students feel comfortable... a small number...feel more tense when the stick gets closer, because they are afraid of being the center of attention," even with a more relaxed atmosphere — indicating that rhythm's effect on motivation is heterogeneous and depends on individual self-confidence.

4. Factors Supporting and Inhibiting the Role of Rhythm in Memorization Learning

a. Supporting Factors

Three supporting factors emerged: meaningful repetition during group practice and games (S1: singing together while waiting for the stick keeps the verse "carried in the head"; the PAI teacher noted that stick movement following the music's tempo accustoms students to memorize "in small pieces...instead of...one whole surah at once"); the collective, supportive game structure (sub-theme 3b); and educative, non-punitive consequences that prevent competition from becoming a new source of fear.

b. Inhibitory Factors

On the hindering side, the PAI teacher noted technical obstacles — inadequate speaker volume in a crowded class and occasional device problems — and early classroom-management challenges as students learned to pass the stick. Students most often complained about tempo: S1 suggested slowing the music "so I don't have to rush," and S3 wanted more preparation time "so that those who are not fluent like me don't panic too much." A more personal obstacle, noted in sub-theme 3c, is the discomfort of shy or less confident students appearing in public.

5. Institutional Support and Alignment with Curriculum Policy

The vice-principal explained that the model was proposed informally through an oral presentation in a teachers' meeting, on condition that it still "refers to the RPP...and does not interfere with the allocation of designated lesson hours." The model was assessed as "fairly aligned" with the Kurikulum Merdeka because its games, movement, music, and group work accommodate auditory, kinesthetic, and socially motivated learning styles, while quiet students need special attention so they do not feel pressured by the turn-based approach. The model does not alter the PAI learning outcomes (CP) but functions as an alternative delivery strategy. Evaluation remains "informal, there is no standard...instrument yet"; the vice-principal's perception that memorization achievement had improved could not be corroborated with documented assessment records and is therefore reported as an informant's appraisal rather than a measured outcome.

A summary of the thematic findings of the research is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Summary of Themes and Sub-Themes of Research Results.

Theme	Sub-Theme	Source Triangulation	Key Indicators
Initial conditions of learning	Teacher-centered and individualized learning	S1, S3, S5; PAI teacher	Tense atmosphere, boredom, low participation

Theme	Sub-Theme	Source Triangulation	Key Indicators
Model implementation process	Five learning stages; technical arrangement of rhythm and verse chunking	PAI teacher; S4, S7	Heterogeneous groups, random turns, visual aid cards
Dynamics of memorization motivation	Enthusiasm and courage; group cooperation; variation in emotional response	S1, S2, S4, S5, S6; PAI teacher	Increased participation and independent training; anxiety remains in some students
Supporting and inhibiting factors	Meaningful repetition and collective structure vs. technical constraints and rhythm tempo	PAI teacher; S1, S3	Inadequate speaker volume; tempo perceived as too fast
Institutional support	Informal coordination; alignment with the Independent Curriculum	Vice-principal for curriculum affairs	Informal monitoring; no standardized evaluation instrument

Source: researcher's processed results from interview data, 2026.

Boosting Memorization Motivation through the Rhythmic Talking Stick Model: Reinforcing

Discussion (مناقشة)

Prior Findings

Field findings reveal a consistent shift among most students: from tension and reluctance before the model to enthusiasm and confidence once rhythmic elements were introduced. This aligns with classroom action research and experimental studies on Talking Stick across subjects: Kamarudin et al. (2021) reported motivated students in Civics rising from 20 percent in the pre-cycle to 90 percent in the second cycle; Aini et al. (2024) found Arabic-learning motivation rising from moderate to high between pretest and posttest; in PAI, Triandini R. et al. (2026) reported increased participation and motivation among eighth-graders, and Astikajaya (2022) reported a related gain in learning outcomes — mastery rising from 69 percent to 100 percent — in Hindu Religious Education.

While consistent with these findings, the present study does more than reiterate them. Qualitative interview data from SMP N 3 Bogorejo illuminate the dynamics behind rising motivation figures — how nervousness shifted into curiosity, and the tension of awaiting one's turn into anticipation. The quantitative and action-research studies cited generally stop at pre-test/post-test scores or mastery percentages without exploring the underlying psychological mechanisms; this study instead provides contextual depth to a pattern previously captured only in aggregate terms.

Rhythm as a Segmentation Marker: Characteristics of Student Motivation in the Rhythmic Talking Stick

A notable finding is the PAI teacher's account of rhythm helping students segment verses

into small units aligned with musical pauses, making memorization feel gradual rather than an attempt to memorize an entire surah at once. This connects two previously separate lines of research: Anoum et al. (2022) documented repetition-based strategies used by tahfidz teachers to sustain motivation, while Yuniari et al. (2023) found regional-song-accompanied Talking Stick significantly boosted Natural Sciences motivation among fifth-graders (mean gain 0.769 vs. 0.225) without qualitatively exploring how music functioned cognitively.

The present findings connect and extend both lines: rhythm here serves not merely to create enjoyment, as in Yuniari et al. (2023), but specifically marks memorization segment boundaries, complementing Anoum et al.'s (2022) repetition techniques and resonating with the incremental, verse-by-verse patterns documented in school tahfidz programs (Suryana et al., 2024) — a convergence between classical tahfiz strategies and music-based collective game strategies not explicitly examined in either prior study.

The PAI teacher explained that rhythmic pauses were triggered randomly and that consequences for unprepared students were designed to stay playful rather than punitive, intended to make students feel secure — aligning with Triandini R. et al.'s (2026) argument that equal opportunities to participate foster greater engagement than one-way lectures (their study recorded participation rising from 64.28 percent to 91.07 percent across two cycles). However, Triandini R. et al. (2026) relied on observation, questionnaires, and descriptive documentation, leaving the reasons behind students' sense of security uncaptured verbatim; the present interview data capture these reasons directly — S5 described the game as "an exciting challenge, not a scary exam," and S4 as "fun, not scary," whereas before the model S1 feared being "laughed at by my friends." This expands understanding of why such participatory design works, not merely that it works.

One finding diverging from the prevailing tone of earlier studies deserves explicit mention: a small number of students continued to experience tension even after rhythm was introduced — not from rejecting the model, but because uncertainty about when their turn would come heightened anxiety, particularly among naturally shy or less confident students. The PAI teacher confirmed the impact was not entirely uniform. A qualitative study of Talking Stick in elementary PAI likewise identified nervousness as an inhibiting factor (Riftiani & Permadi, 2025); this study extends that observation by locating the tension specifically in the unpredictability of turns within a rhythm-based game.

This nuance matters because it does not appear in the quantitative studies referenced here. Kamarudin et al. (2021), Aini et al. (2024), Astikajaya (2022), and Triandini R. et al. (2026) all reported class-wide averages or aggregate percentages without disaggregating students whose responses diverged from the majority; classroom action research and quasi-experimental designs tend to focus on whole-class change, so individual variation is often obscured by rising averages. The qualitative findings here do not contradict those earlier conclusions but place important limits on their generalizability: the Rhythmic Talking Stick's effectiveness does not appear equal across all student personality profiles — a point meriting attention in future instructional design, for instance by offering additional readiness options for students who need them.

The vice-principal noted that the model aligns with the spirit of the Kurikulum Merdeka, particularly in accommodating auditory and kinesthetic learning styles and students motivated

by social interaction. While conceptually compelling, this alignment rests on the appraisal of a single management informant and has not been examined against the literature on differentiated instruction, warranting further investigation.

Reading the Findings through Self-Determination Theory and Active Learning

Self-Determination Theory helps explain why the rhythmic modification energized most students yet left some tense: motivation becomes more self-endorsed when the social context supports competence, relatedness, and autonomy (Ryan & Deci, 2000, 2020) — a lens also used in recent qualitative work on Qur'anic memorization motivation among primary students (Prayitno et al., 2025). Read through this lens, the findings suggest the model supported competence and relatedness more consistently than autonomy.

Support for competence was evident in how the lesson broke the surah into manageable units: verse chunking aligned with musical pauses, visual aid cards, and rehearsal before the game reduced task size and gave students repeated chances to succeed. S1's remark that singing together while waiting kept the verse "carried in the head" illustrates how rhythm turned repetition into shared, low-stakes practice — though S1's and S3's complaints about tempo show this support is fragile: when pace outstrips fluency, the same rhythm that scaffolds memorization becomes a source of pressure.

Support for relatedness was visible in group rehearsal and collective singing — dividing verses among members (S4), practice turns (S7), peer teaching (S6) — while the PAI teacher observed previously passive students now singing along and helping peers, consistent with evidence that cooperative, group-based formats create a more interactive learning atmosphere in Qur'anic studies than conventional lecturing (Karman et al., 2024). Memorization thus became embedded in peer relationships rather than a solitary obligation, which may explain why some students extended practice beyond the classroom (S2 practicing nightly, S5 practicing with a sibling), consistent with more internalized motivation, though this study did not measure motivational regulation directly.

Support for autonomy was more ambiguous. Random stopping and non-punitive consequences removed the sense of being singled out, reducing controlling pressure — yet students still had no say over when they would be called, and this lack of choice is precisely where shy students' residual tension was located. From an active-learning perspective, the model succeeded in involving students in doing — rehearsal, singing, recitation — and to a lesser extent in thinking about what they were doing, which occurred mainly during closing reflection (Bonwell & Eison, 1991). A practical implication is to add elements of choice — allowing students to volunteer, choose their verse segment, or pass once — so the design also supports autonomy for quieter students.

The Boundary Between Meaningful Learning and Extra Burden

These findings should also be read alongside Surawardi et al. (2023), who critically examined a remedial practice of dhikr recitation and short-surah memorization at MA Sabilal Muhtadin, finding that memorization tasks assigned as remediation without guidance on unmet learning indicators functioned as an additional burden rather than a means of improving understanding. This contrast is a basis for reflection rather than a contradiction: the Rhythmic

Talking Stick at SMP N 3 Bogorejo was designed with clear stages — preparation, material delivery, group practice, the game, and evaluation-reflection — and judged by the vice-principal to remain consistent with the curriculum's learning outcomes (CP), unlike the remedial tasks Surawardi et al. examined. This reinforces that the core issue is not the memorization activity itself, but whether it is designed with coherent learning objectives or serves merely as an ungrounded practical fix.

This study's contribution lies in three aspects. First, musical accompaniment in Talking Stick is not new (Huda, 2013; Yuniari et al., 2023), but its application to Qur'anic memorization — where rhythmic pauses double as verse-segment markers — has not been reported in the PAI Talking Stick studies reviewed here (Triandini R. et al., 2026). Second, triangulating three perspectives (students, PAI teacher, and vice-principal) provides an institutional viewpoint rarely found in the reviewed Talking Stick studies, which typically involve only students or students and teachers. Third, capturing variation in individual responses and interpreting them through Self-Determination Theory offers a modest methodological and theoretical contribution addressing the limits of the aggregate quantitative designs that have dominated the Talking Stick literature.

Conclusion (خاتمة)

This study describes the implementation of the Rhythmic Talking Stick model for Surah Ad-Duha memorization at SMP N 3 Bogorejo, maps students' motivation characteristics following the rhythmic element's integration, identifies supporting and inhibiting factors, and offers pedagogical references for PAI teachers. Based primarily on semi-structured interviews, with observation and documentation as contextual cross-checks, the three research questions can be answered as follows.

First, implementation proceeds through a structured sequence: preparation, material delivery, group practice, the rhythmic stick game with random stops, and evaluation-reflection — a structure the vice-principal judged consistent with the curriculum's learning outcomes, distinguishing it from rote memorization practices applied without pedagogical basis, such as those criticized in a study of dhikr remediation elsewhere.

Second, most students shifted from a monotonous, tense atmosphere to collective enthusiasm once rhythm was introduced, driven by rhythm as a verse-segmentation marker and by group practice fostering collective readiness. This effect was not uniform: shy students continued to experience tension from the uncertainty of their turn, indicating that the design supported competence and relatedness more readily than autonomy — a nuance rarely revealed in the aggregate quantitative designs of previous Talking Stick research.

Third, non-punitive consequences and randomized stopping points helped maintain students' sense of security, and the vice-principal's assessment that the model aligns with the student-centered principles of the Kurikulum Merdeka supported institutional acceptance; conversely, limited technical facilities, initial classroom-management challenges, and shy students' varied psychological responses require ongoing attention.

For PAI teachers, these findings suggest that integrating artistic elements such as rhythm

into cooperative learning can transform the tension of rote memorization into meaningful learning, provided the process is clearly structured, paced to students' fluency, and offers choice to quieter students. Academically, the study contributes a tahfiz-specific application of rhythm-based Talking Stick examined from student, teacher, and curriculum-management perspectives and interpreted through Self-Determination Theory.

This study has limitations. As a single-school case study relying primarily on interview data, its findings are not intended for statistical generalization; the reported improvement in memorization achievement remains an informant's appraisal rather than a measured outcome. Informants were selected in consultation with the PAI teacher, and interviews were brief (7-10 minutes), which may have limited the depth of accounts. Future research should test the model's replication in other school settings with different student demographics, incorporate documented memorization records, and map students' learning styles and confidence levels from the outset to design more intentional support strategies for shy students.

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