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JULA-JULA AS A MODEL OF SHARIAH-COMPLIANT MICROFINANCE: COMMUNITY PRACTICES IN RURAL INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT - This study explores the indigenous Rotating Savings and Credit Association (ROSCA) known as Jula-Jula, as practiced in Tarai Bangun, a rural area in Riau Province, Indonesia. While exhibiting characteristics of global ROSCA models, Jula-Jula is deeply interwoven with the local cultural, social, and religious fabric. Employing a qualitative phenomenological approach involving observations, interviews with ten members and five collectors, and documentation, this research (i) identifies and describes the distinct operational models of Jula-Jula prevalent within the community and (ii) analyzes their economic, financial, and social ramifications through the lens of Islamic finance principles. The findings reveal three primary operational models based on contribution frequency—monthly, weekly, and daily—alongside two structural variations: Jula-Jula No Fee, which emphasizes mutual support without financial charges, and Jula-Jula With Fee, characterized by modest, transparent service fees mutually agreed upon to compensate collectors for logistical efforts. This study underscores the significant role of Jula-Jula in fostering financial inclusion, providing interest-free microfinance opportunities, and enhancing community resilience. These practices are found to be consistent with core Islamic economic tenets, including the prohibition of *riba* (interest), the promotion of *maslahah* (benefit), *adl* (justice), and *ta'awun* (cooperation). Ultimately, this research contributes to the ongoing discourse on ethical and community-driven financial systems, demonstrating the potential of localized Shariah-compliant models to complement or serve as alternatives to formal financial institutions in underbanked regions.
Keywords: *Jula-Jula*, ROSCA, Islamic finance, *riba*-free microfinance, community finance, Maqasid al-Shariah

ABSTRAK - Jula-Jula sebagai Model Keuangan Mikro Syariah berbasis Komunitas di Indonesia. *Penelitian ini mengkaji praktik Jula-Jula, sebuah model simpan pinjam bergilir (ROSCA) yang dipratikkan di Desa Tarai Bangun, Kampar, Riau, Indonesia. Sistem keuangan informal ini dikenal secara lokal sebagai Jula-Jula, memiliki kesamaan dengan praktik ROSCA global, namun terintegrasi secara mendalam dengan nilai-nilai budaya, sosial, dan keagamaan masyarakat setempat. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk (i) mengidentifikasi dan mendeskripsikan model Jula-Jula yang dipraktikkan dalam masyarakat, dan (ii) menganalisis implikasi ekonomi, finansial, dan sosialnya dalam kerangka keuangan Islam. Data untuk penelitian ini dikumpulkan melalui observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi terhadap sepuluh anggota dan lima pengelola Jula-Jula dan dianalisis dengan pendekatan fenomenologi kualitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan tiga model operasional—kontribusi bulanan, mingguan, dan harian—dengan dua tipe struktur utama: Jula-Jula Tanpa Biaya yang menekankan dukungan bersama tanpa imbalan keuangan, dan Jula-Jula dengan Biaya, yang menerapkan biaya layanan secara sukarela dan transparan untuk mendukung operasional kolektor. Studi ini menyoroti peran Jula-Jula dalam memperluas inklusi keuangan, menyediakan pembiayaan mikro tanpa riba, serta memperkuat ketahanan masyarakat. Praktik ini selaras dengan prinsip-prinsip ekonomi Islam, seperti larangan riba, penerapan maslahah, keadilan, dan ta'awun (kerja sama). Penelitian ini berkontribusi pada wacana keuangan etis berbasis komunitas, serta menunjukkan bahwa model keuangan lokal yang sesuai syariah dapat melengkapi atau menggantikan institusi formal di wilayah yang belum terjangkau layanan keuangan formal.*
Kata Kunci: *Jula-Jula, ROSCA, keuangan Islam, mikrofinansial bebas riba, keuangan komunitas, Maqasid al-Shariah*

INTRODUCTION

The practice of Rotating Savings and Credit Associations (ROSCAs), known locally as "*Jula-Jula*," is a widespread phenomenon observed across various socio-economic settings, including housing complexes, residential areas, traditional marketplaces, small towns, and large cities. This practice is prominent in both developed and developing nations (Ernest et al., 2019). Within the Indonesian context, *Jula-Jula* possesses deep historical roots and continues to thrive as a vital financial practice (Ajija & Siddiqui, 2020; Hakim et al., 2024). Specifically, in Tarai Bangun Village, Kampar, Riau Province, the practice of *Jula-Jula* serves as a critical financial solution for many residents, offering a short-term, interest-free financial mechanism in the form of loans or savings, thereby enabling participants to access funds for planned or unexpected needs (Otudor, 2020). The thriving practice of *Jula-Jula* in Tarai Bangun can be attributed to the village's growing population, residential development, proximity to the urban center of Pekanbaru, high population mobility, and its diverse religious, ethnic, and cultural composition (Yefni et al., 2020). This diversity may influence the nuanced ways in which *Jula-Jula* aligns with Islamic finance principles within the community.

From an Islamic finance perspective, the practice of *Jula-Jula* aligns with the core principles of shariah-compliant finance, notably the prohibition of *riba* (interest) and the emphasis on mutual cooperation (*takaful*). The inaccessibility of formal financial institutions, such as government and private banks, Islamic banks, and cooperatives, has often led communities to adopt informal financial arrangements like *Jula-Jula* (Hamzaoui & Bousalam, 2015; Otudor, 2020). These barriers to formal financial inclusion—whether geographical constraints, administrative complexities, or socio-economic factors—are well-documented in Islamic finance literature (Besley et al., 1994; Ernest et al., 2019; Khan & Ali, 2021). *Jula-Jula* offers a practical alternative that embodies the Islamic principles of mutual help, social solidarity, and financial justice by addressing the financial needs of marginalized or underserved communities (Sutriyono et al., 2022).

Participation in *Jula-Jula* is driven not only by financial necessity but also by various social and cultural motivations, including the desire to strengthen social ties, establish friendships, and foster a sense of community (Andriani & Suriani, 2020; Sutriyono et al., 2022). Social networks based on shared origins, ethnicity, alumni ties, professional affiliations, or hobbies frequently support the formation of *Jula-Jula* groups (Abdullah, 2016). Furthermore, participants may be motivated by the opportunity to save, access interest-free loans, or develop financial management skills (Widyastuti et al., 2018). These socio-financial motivations resonate with the Islamic emphasis on fostering *ukhuwah* (brotherhood) and promoting a sense of shared responsibility within communities.

Globally, ROSCAs like *Jula-Jula* have been studied extensively across various contexts. Dinç et al. (2021) identified the presence of ROSCAs in 105 countries under different names, highlighting their universal appeal as informal financial systems. Besley et al. (1994) distinguished two main operational models of ROSCAs: one where funds are allocated randomly among members and another where bidding mechanisms determine fund distribution. Jahangir et al. (2022) further classified ROSCAs into four types: random offers, premium offers, discount offers, and fixed offers. However, despite their widespread use, Ajija and Siddiqui (2020) noted a lack of sufficient academic research examining the economic implications of *Jula-Jula*, particularly within Islamic finance frameworks. Other studies, such as that by Khan and Ali (2021), have emphasized *Jula-Jula* as a crucial fundraising platform for participants. Baihaki and Malia (2018), Kamilah et al. (2022), and Haq et al. (2024) have explored the financial inclusion, accounting, and economic perspectives of *Jula-Jula* practices, demonstrating their contribution to asset ownership, financial planning, and overall well-being.

Despite these contributions, the specific implementation models and socio-economic roles of *Jula-Jula* within particular Islamic contexts, such as Tarai Bangun Village, Riau Province, remain underexplored. This study focuses on understanding the unique paradigm of *Jula-Jula* practiced in this village, emphasizing its compliance with Islamic finance principles. The practice in Tarai Bangun is primarily monetary-based, offering a flexible, interest-free financial mechanism with minimal administrative requirements (Andriani & Suriani, 2020). Participants typically use funds for various purposes, including education, vehicle installments, household expenses, debt repayment, and home renovations (Ajija & Siddiqui, 2020; Dinç et al., 2021). While other items such as food, vehicles, and sacrificial animals may be involved, the primary medium of exchange remains cash (Marcello et al., 2020). This study will examine the specific models of *Jula-Jula* in Tarai Bangun and their role in supporting family economies.

Given the centrality of social interaction and mutual trust in *Jula-Jula*, a qualitative approach employing in-depth interviews and observations is necessary to grasp the Islamic social dynamics underpinning the practice. Accordingly, this study adopts a qualitative phenomenological method to explore the lived experiences of *Jula-Jula* participants. In alignment with Islamic economic values and community finance perspectives, the specific objectives of this research are: (i) to describe the *Jula-Jula* models implemented in Tarai Bangun Village, Kampar, Riau Province; and (ii) to analyze the role of *Jula-Jula* in supporting family economies in accordance with Islamic financial ethics.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept, Terms, and Existence

Jula-Jula can be characterized as "a financial self-help group that collects contributions from its members over time and reallocates the funds on a rotating basis." It is an informal financial activity practiced in many nations, consisting of associations of core participants who commit to regularly contributing to a fund that is distributed, in whole or in part, to each member on a rotating basis (Dinç et al., 2021). This activity falls under the broader framework of Rotating Savings and Credit Associations (ROSCAs), informal financial systems that exist globally under various names. For example, in Azerbaijan, it is called "*lotto*"; in Bangladesh, "*samity*"; in Ghana, "*susu*"; in Japan, "*kou*"; and in Pakistan, "*bisi*." Regionally, ROSCAs are known as "tandas" in Latin America, "*gam'eya*" in the Middle East, and "*chama*" in Swahili-speaking East Africa. In Indonesia, similar practices include "*arisan*," "*paketan daging*," "*paketan kawinan*," "*mapalus*," "*bajulo julo*," "*mengandelek*," and "*Jula-Jula*" (Ajija & Siddiqui, 2020; Dinç et al., 2021).

Historically, the origins of *Jula-Jula* can be traced back to around 200 BCE in China, where it emerged as an alternative form of informal finance. By 1293 CE, a similar concept, known as "kou," was practiced in Japan, bearing close resemblance to the modern notion of rotating savings and loans. According to Dinç et al. (2021), *Jula-Jula* or similar practices exist in 105 nations worldwide. While in some countries it remains informal, others, such as Egypt, have formalized it. The fundamental principle of *Jula-Jula* remains consistent—members contribute fixed amounts of money, which are then distributed in rotation, creating a system that continues to thrive across diverse societies (Besley et al., 1994; Dinç et al., 2021).

Characteristics of *Jula-Jula*

The sustainability of *Jula-Jula* depends on several key characteristics and factors. Trust among members and collectors is considered essential for the success of the practice (Jahangir et al, 2022). Reputation, commitment to payment, and active participation are equally critical for maintaining the group's integrity and functionality (Kifli, 2020). Additionally, the motivation to participate in *Jula-Jula* often stems from difficulties in accessing formal financial institutions, the need for durable goods, and the desire to contribute to the social and economic wellbeing of the group (Hakim et al., 2024;).

One notable feature of *Jula-Jula* is its informality and lack of legal status, which distinguishes it from formal financial systems (Haq et al., 2024). This informality allows it to operate without operational costs, legal requirements, or written agreements, relying instead on social trust and commitment among members (Adi, 2018). As a result, *Jula-Jula* groups often adapt to evolving contexts, including the development of digital *Jula-Jula* platforms, which incorporate modern technologies into traditional practices.

Jula-Jula in an Islamic Perspective

From an Islamic perspective, *Jula-Jula* aligns with the principles of *shariah-compliant* finance, as it prohibits *riba* (interest) and emphasizes mutual solidarity (*takaful ta'awuni*). Sutriyono et al. (2022) describe *Jula-Jula* as a form of *jam'iyyah muwaddhofin*, which refers to an association or gathering of employees. The majority of Islamic scholars (ulama) consider *Jula-Jula* to be *mubah* (permissible) because it facilitates mutual assistance without involving elements of usury or harm to members. This perspective aligns with the Quranic principles of mutual cooperation and trust, as highlighted in *Surah Al-Ma'idah* (5:1–2): "O you who believe, fulfill your promises. And help one another in righteousness and piety, but do not help one another in sin and transgression."

The principles of *Jula-Jula* are further supported by Islamic financing concepts such as *qardulhasan* (benevolent loans) and *mudharabah* (profit-sharing). *Qardulhasan* involves interest-free financing provided without collateral, while *mudharabah* operates on a profit-sharing basis, with risks and benefits shared between parties (Iyud, 2022; Sari et al., 2024). Unlike formal Islamic financial institutions (IFI), which impose administrative fees and legal obligations, *Jula-Jula* relies on simple agreements based on trust, with no operational costs or penalties (Munir & Wardani, 2013). This simplicity underscores *Jula-Jula*'s alignment with Islamic values of mutual assistance and community welfare.

The practice of *Jula-Jula* also reflects the Islamic ethical principle of honoring promises. Members who receive funds first are considered borrowers and are obligated to continue contributing until the cycle is complete. This collective responsibility fosters trust and ensures the group's sustainability, aligning with the Quranic injunctions to fulfill promises and assist one another in virtue.

The Role of *Jula-Jula* in Household Economics

Jula-Jula plays a significant role in improving household economics, particularly for families without access to formal financial institutions. Many studies highlight its relevance in enabling individuals and households to manage finances, invest, and save. For example, Wati (2015) notes that participation in *Jula-Jula* reflects a person's financial capacity, while Abdullah (2016) emphasizes its role in fostering shared consumption patterns and lifestyles among members. Other studies demonstrate its utility in providing informal financial services, such as loans or savings mechanisms, which contribute to household asset accumulation, including home renovations, vehicle purchases, and investments in durable goods (Ajija & Siddiqui, 2020; Andriani & Suriani, 2020).

Jula-Jula also serves as a platform for financial management and social interaction. Telaumbanua and Nugraheni (2018) highlight its role in empowering housewives to contribute to family economies, while Widyastuti et al. (2018) describe it as a system that facilitates borrowing and saving. Additionally, Kharisma et al., (2020) argue that participation in *Jula-Jula* activities can reduce poverty by enhancing access to funding, information, and social networks. As a result, *Jula-Jula* groups not only address financial needs but also foster social solidarity and trust among members.In recent years, the concept of *Jula-Jula* has evolved in some regions into formal institutions. Jahangir et al. (2022) identify cases where ROSCAs have transitioned from informal to formal financial systems, offering structured services to their members. Despite this formalization in certain contexts, the core principles of *Jula-Jula*—trust, simplicity, and mutual assistance—remain intact.

Jula-Jula represents a vital informal financial mechanism that provides both economic and social benefits to its participants. Rooted in trust, mutual cooperation, and community solidarity, it embodies key principles of Islamic finance, including the prohibition of interest and the emphasis on collective welfare. By offering an accessible alternative to formal financial institutions, *Jula-Jula* plays a critical role in household economics, enabling individuals and families to manage resources, invest, and improve their living conditions. Furthermore, its flexibility and adaptability make it a resilient model, capable of evolving with societal and technological changes. As such, *Jula-Jula* continues to thrive as a significant financial and social institution in both rural and urban contexts (Sutriyono et al., 2022; Sari et al., 2023; Bathuta et al., 2023).

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study was conducted in Tarai Bangun Village, located in Tambang District, Kampar Regency, Riau Province. The research employed a qualitative field study design, carried out over a six-month period from February 2024 to August 2024. A phenomenological approach was adopted, specifically Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), to explore and understand the lived experiences of individuals involved in *Jula-Jula* activities (Zhang et al., 2025; Yazici et al., 2024). IPA was selected for its suitability in capturing both the *what* and *how* of participants' experiences (Hossain et al., 2024). The sampling strategy was purposive, with participants chosen based on their direct involvement and depth of knowledge relevant to the phenomenon under study. Informants in this research included: (1) Five individuals serving as *Jula-Jula* managers or collectors (initials: DES, LIN, EL, MIS, HSD), and (2) Ten individuals participating as *Jula-Jula* members (initials: FIR, RAT, YUS, LIS, SANTI, RAM, MAI, ERA, DES, FITRI).

Data Collection Techniques

Data were gathered through observation**,** semi-structured interviews**,** and document analysis**.** Prior to each interview, informants were briefed on the research objectives and provided consent. A profile form was completed by each participant, detailing information such as name/initials, age, education level, duration of involvement in *Jula-Jula,* and perspectives on its principles, models, and roles.

A total of 15 participants were interviewed, with sessions lasting between 5 to 15 minutes. The interviews allowed participants to share personal narratives and reflect on their involvement in *Jula-Jula* without any financial incentive. This approach aligns with qualitative research standards, particularly with sample sizes ranging from 2 to 25 informants.

Data Analysis Technique

The collected interview data were analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) based on the framework established by Smith and Osborn, as cited in Yazici et al. (2024). Each transcript was analyzed independently to identify emerging themes, followed by cross-analysis among researchers to ensure analytical rigor. This iterative process enhanced the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings by allowing for reflective interpretation and consensus-building.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Informant Profile

The research conducted through observation and interviews provided detailed information about the profiles of *Jula-Jula* collectors and members in Tarai Bangun Village. Two tables summarize the demographic and experiential characteristics of the informants.

Table 1. Profiles of *Jula-Jula* Collectors

No	Initial	Age (Year)	Education	Years as a Collector	Domicile
1	LIN	53	Senior High School	14	Tarai Bangun Village, Kampar
2	EL	48	Senior High School	16	Tarai Bangun Village, Kampar
3	MIS	48	Senior High School	12	Tarai Bangun Village, Kampar
4	DES	53	Senior High School	14	Tarai Bangun Village, Kampar
5	HSD	54	Vocational High School	14	Tarai Bangun Village, Kampar

Tables 1 and 2 highlight the diversity of *Jula-Jula* participants in terms of age, educational background, and years of experience. Both collectors and members are deeply embedded within the local community, which strengthens trust and participation in *Jula-Jula* activities. Data from 5 *Jula-Jula* collectors and 10 members in Tarai Bangun Village, Kampar, revealed key sociodemographic patterns (Tables 1–2). Collectors (aged 48–54) predominantly held senior high school diplomas (80%) and averaged 14.8 years of experience.

Table 2. Profiles of *Jula-Jula* Members

No	Initial	Age (Year)	Education	Years as a Member	Domicile
1	FIR	42	Senior High School	16	Tarai Bangun Village, Kampar
2	RAT	71	Senior High School	14	Tarai Bangun Village, Kampar
3	YUS	48	Junior High School	14	Tarai Bangun Village, Kampar
4	LIS	52	Senior High School	16	Tarai Bangun Village, Kampar
5	SANTI	48	Vocational High School	15	Tarai Bangun Village, Kampar
6	RAM	53	Senior High School	16	Tarai Bangun Village, Kampar
7	MAI	56	Senior High School	15	Tarai Bangun Village, Kampar
8	ERA	54	Senior High School	6	Tarai Bangun Village, Kampar
9	DES	55	Senior High School	16	Tarai Bangun Village, Kampar
10	FITRI	48	D-III Keb	16	Tarai Bangun Village, Kampar

Members (aged 42–71) exhibited similar educational backgrounds (70% senior high school graduates) with 14.2 years of mean participation. All resided within the village, emphasizing the localized nature of *Jula-Jula* networks.

Operating Principles of *Jula-Jula*

Understanding the operational principles of *Jula-Jula* is essential to grasping how this community-based financial system functions in practice. To explore this aspect, in-depth interviews were conducted with five experienced *Jula-Jula* collectors (informants: LIN, EL, MIS, DES, and HSD). Each collector was asked the same central question: *"Are there specific principles or values that must be upheld by both collectors and members in the practice of Jula-Jula?"* All five informants responded affirmatively and provided detailed insights based on their management experiences. Seventeen key principles were identified, which are summarized in Table 3.

The LIN collector emphasized five foundational aspects of *Jula-Jula*. First, the system is informal and not regulated by any legal or institutional framework. Second, it operates without a formal organizational structure, relying instead on interpersonal trust. Third, despite its informality, the *Jula-Jula* system maintains high-precision bookkeeping, ensuring transparent accounting. Fourth, the collector highlighted the economic and utility value of the funds, which are used for practical household needs. Finally, LIN underscored the importance of Shariah compliance: the practice involves no interest (*riba*), hidden charges, or unfair benefits, reflecting Islamic finance ethics.

The EL collector identified three core principles: mutual trust, consistency, and commitment. Trust operates bidirectionally—between participants and collectors—and serves as the ethical foundation of the entire system. Consistency in attendance and contribution reinforces the collective spirit, while commitment to regular payments ensures the sustainability of the rotating fund.

Table 3. Core Principles of *Jula-Jula*

Collector	**Theme**	**Principle**
LIN	Structural & Operational	Informal practice (not legally regulated)
	Structural & Operational	No formal organizational structure
	Financial Compliance	Accurate bookkeeping and financial recording
	Economic Value	Funds used for household and practical needs
	Shariah Compliance	No interest (*riba*), fees, or hidden charges
EL	Ethical & Behavioral	Two-way trust between members and collector
	Ethical & Behavioral	Consistency in participation and payments
	Ethical & Behavioral	Strong commitment to complete the cycle
MIS	Operational Models	Face-to-face interaction model (e.g., group meetings)
	Operational Models	No face-to-face model (collector-dominated "pot" model)
DES	Structural & Operational	Defined turnover period (e.g., 10 months)
	Structural & Operational	Cycle types: daily (10-day), weekly (50 weeks), monthly (10 months)
	Structural & Operational	Group size: 10–20 members; members can join multiple groups
	Structural & Operational	Geographic proximity among members
	Membership Dynamics	Intermittent group formation and continuity option
HSD	Operational Integrity	Transparent lottery drawing for fairness
	Managerial Capacity	One collector can manage multiple groups based on trust and skill

(Source: Informant/The Collectors)

The MIS collector discussed two operational models based on the degree of participant interaction. In one model, participants meet face-to-face for draws and social bonding. In the alternative model—often used in dispersed groups—interaction is minimal, and the collector takes on the dominant role, using a pot offering method where fund disbursements are pre-arranged. Both models are shaped by community preferences and logistical constraints, highlighting the flexibility of *Jula-Jula*.

The DES collector outlined five logistical and structural principles. These include (1) turnover periods—typically 10 months or up to one year; (2) categorization of cycles as daily (10-day intervals), weekly (50 weeks), or monthly (10 months); (3) optimal group size ranging from 10 to 20 members;

(4) geographic proximity among participants to ensure ease of communication and collection; and (5) the intermittent nature of membership, where groups may dissolve and reform depending on cycles, enabling both continuity and flexibility. Finally, the HSD collector emphasized two managerial aspects. First, lottery drawings must be conducted transparently to determine the payout sequence fairly. Second, a skilled collector can manage multiple *Jula-Jula* groups simultaneously, provided they have the trust and organizational capacity to do so.

Taken together, these findings yield a comprehensive framework of 17 principles underpinning the implementation of *Jula-Jula* in Tarai Bangun Village. These principles—ranging from informality and trust to financial precision and Shariah adherence—offer a robust ethical and operational foundation that enables *Jula-Jula* to function effectively in both tightly knit and broader community settings. Understanding and upholding these principles are essential for ensuring fairness, sustainability, and compliance with both communal norms and Islamic financial values.

***Jula-Jula* Models and Practices**

Collectors LIN and EL described the monthly contribution model, where members contribute a fixed amount (e.g., IDR 500,000) monthly, and a lottery draw determines the recipient. The process repeats for 10 months, with no fees paid to collectors. In contrast, EL collectors manage a similar system with a fee (1-5%) deducted from the pooled amount.

Monthly Contribution Models

1. Free-based *Jula-Jula*

   This model, managed by LIN, involves monthly contributions and a random draw. It is the most common *Jula-Jula* model practiced in Tarai Bangun Village. The system involves ten members, each contributing IDR 500,000 every month, resulting in a pooled fund of IDR 5,000,000 per cycle (Table 4). The cycle lasts for ten months, with each member receiving the pooled amount once during the period. The model operates through a random draw mechanism without any service fee or return charged to the recipient.

Table 4. Free-based *Jula-Jula* Model

Period (Month)	**Member Identity**	**Contribution (IDR)**	**Payment Frequency**	**Contribution (IDR)**	**Remarks**
January	C	500,000	Monthly	5,000,000	Recipient for January
February	A	500,000	Monthly	5,000,000	Recipient for February
March	B	500,000	Monthly	5,000,000	Recipient for March
April	D	500,000	Monthly	5,000,000	Recipient for April
May	E	500,000	Monthly	5,000,000	Recipient for May
June	F	500,000	Monthly	5,000,000	Recipient for June
July	G	500,000	Monthly	5,000,000	Recipient for July
August	H	500,000	Monthly	5,000,000	Recipient for August
September	I	500,000	Monthly	5,000,000	Recipient for September
October	J	500,000	Monthly	5,000,000	Recipient for October
Total				**50,000,000**	Full Cycle (No Fees)

(Source: Informant / LIN Collector)

At each monthly gathering, all members convene at an agreed location, often a participant's home. A lottery system is implemented using small rolled papers bearing participant names or numbers, placed in a container (e.g., a bottle). A name is drawn, and the selected individual receives the total pooled funds for that month. The process continues until all members have received their turn, with one name removed from the draw each month. This method is entirely based on mutual trust and collective agreement, reflecting the informal and interest-free nature of the model, consistent with Islamic financial principles (Figure 1).

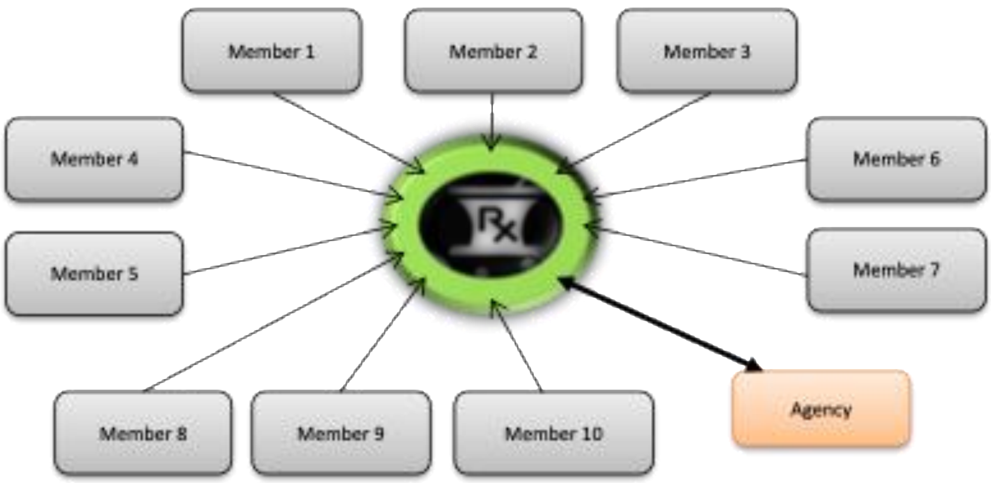

Figure 1. Random Draw Cycle
(Source: Informant / LIN Collector)

The collector, often one of the members, voluntarily manages the process and is not compensated. The sincerity of their role is rooted in communal values rather than financial gain. This model is commonly found in various community structures such as neighborhood units (RT, RW), women's religious study groups *(Majelis Taklim)*, ethnic-based associations *(Arisan Suku)*, alumni groups, and friendship circles throughout Tarai Bangun Village.

2. Fee-based *Jula-Jula*

A second model, managed by independent collectors such as EL, operates under similar structural principles but includes agreed-upon service fees *(ujrah)* ranging from 1% to 5%. Participants may or may not meet physically; instead, the collector manages multiple groups and may or may not participate as a member. These collectors often offer *Jula-Jula* schemes to interested participants, with terms agreed upon at the beginning of the cycle.

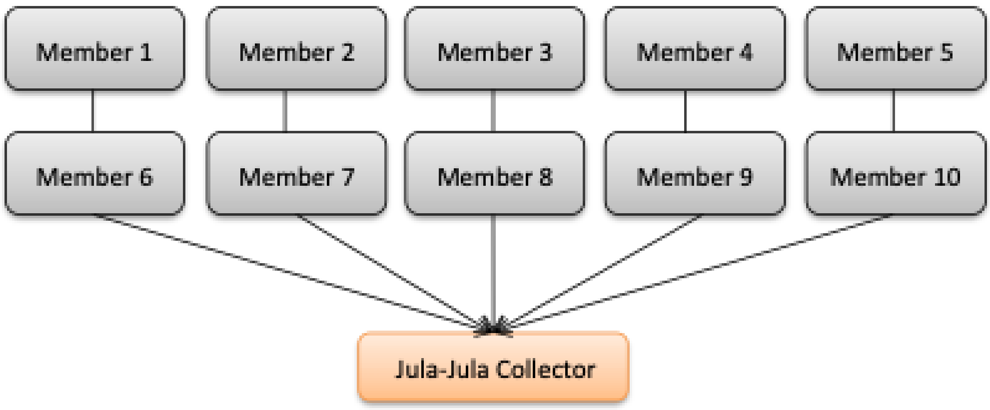

Figure 2. Passive Collector, Active Participants
(Source: Informant / EL Collector)

In this model, the contribution amount is pre-determined by the collector, allowing members to select according to their capacity (e.g., IDR 250,000, IDR 500,000, or IDR 1,000,000). The cycle typically lasts for 10 months with a maximum of 10 members per group, and the number of groups depends on the collector's managerial capacity. A mutually agreed fee of 1–5% is deducted from the recipient's total. For example, with a 3% fee, the recipient would receive IDR 4,850,000 (IDR 5,000,000 - (IDR 5,000,000 x 0.03)). The details of this model are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Fee-based *Jula-Jula* Model

Period (Month)	Member Identity	Contribution (IDR)	Payment Frequency	Contribution (IDR)	Remarks
January	C	500,000	Monthly	5,000,000	Net received = IDR 4,850,000 (after 3% fee)
February	A	500,000	Monthly	5,000,000	
March	B	500,000	Monthly	5,000,000	
April	D	500,000	Monthly	5,000,000	
May	E	500,000	Monthly	5,000,000	
June	F	500,000	Monthly	5,000,000	
July	G	500,000	Monthly	5,000,000	
August	H	500,000	Monthly	5,000,000	
September	I	500,000	Monthly	5,000,000	Fee between 1–5% per recipient
October	J	500,000	Monthly	5,000,000	
Total				**50,000,000**	

(Source: Informant / EL Collector)

The draw mechanism involves a random lottery conducted prior to the start of the cycle. In some cases, the collector takes the first turn or covers defaults. Collectors may assign early draw numbers (1, 2, 3) to committed, reliable members and later numbers to higher-risk participants. There are two collection approaches: passive, where members voluntarily deposit funds to the collector (Figure 2), and active, where collectors visit members to collect contributions and deliver disbursements (Figure 3).

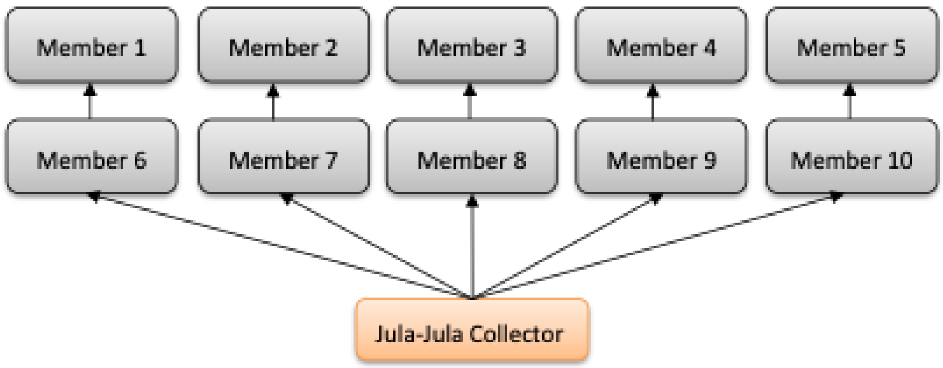

Figure 3. Active Collector, Passive Participants
(Source: Informant / EL Collector)

This model introduces managerial complexity but provides flexibility for members who prefer structured oversight and are willing to pay for convenience. Importantly, fee agreements are reached consensually, and no coercion is reported. This model is common in markets, among vendors, and in dispersed communities.

Weekly Contribution Models

In addition to monthly cycles, *Jula-Jula* practices in Tarai Bangun Village also operate on a weekly basis. This model is particularly prevalent among women's religious study groups *(Majelis Taklim)* affiliated with local mosque communities. Field data reveals two common forms of weekly *Jula-Jula*, each reflecting distinct financial mechanisms and community objectives.

1. Weekly Cash Contributions and Disbursements (with Random Draw)

   This model involves direct monetary contributions from participants, where recipients are selected through a weekly lottery. The group typically comprises between 20 to 50 members, with weekly contributions ranging from IDR 20,000 to IDR 50,000, based on each member's financial capability. Drawings occur each week, and a member receives the pooled amount. The cycle spans 50 weeks, allowing for either two full rounds within a year or adjusted cycles depending on group size and preferences. The *Jula-Jula* collector is chosen by mutual agreement and may receive voluntary fees from members, though this is not mandatory. The system is driven by mutual trust and collective decision-making, and it is free from any form of coercion.

Table 6. Weekly *Jula-Jula* Model with Cash Contributions and Voluntary Fees

Period (Week)	**Member Identity**	**Contribution (IDR)**	**Members / Round**	**Contribution (IDR)**	**Remarks**
Week 1–50	A	20,000	25	500,000	Recipient in Week 1
	B	20,000	25	500,000	Recipient in Week 2
	C	20,000	25	500,000	Recipient in Week 3
	…	…	…	…	…
	T	20,000	25	500,000	Last recipient in Round 2
Total				**IDR 25,000,000**	2 rounds over 50 weeks

(Source: Informant / HSD Collector)

In this example, 25 members contribute IDR 20,000 per week. The total contribution per week is IDR 500,000. Over a 50-week period, two full rounds are completed, with each member paying and receiving once per round. Voluntary contributions to the collector may be offered but are not fixed or required.

2. Weekly Cash Contributions, Goods Received at End of Cycle (No Lottery)

   In this variation, members contribute money weekly, but instead of receiving cash via a random draw, the pooled funds are used to purchase basic necessities (*sembako*)—such as rice, sugar, cooking oil, and eggs—distributed at the end of the 50-week cycle. This model operates more like a savings scheme rather than a rotating credit mechanism, as no lottery is conducted during the cycle. It is commonly timed to conclude just before the holy month of Ramadan, helping members prepare for increased household needs.

Table 7. Weekly *Jula-Jula* Model with Cash Contributions and Goods Distribution

Period (Week)	**Member Identity**	**Contribution (IDR)**	**Members/ Round**	**Contribution (IDR)**	**Remarks**
Week 1–50	A	7,500	50	375,000	Receives goods in Week 50
	B	7,500	50	375,000	
	C	7,500	50	375,000	
	…	…	…	…	
	AX	7,500	50	375,000	Final member
Total				**IDR 18,750,000**	Sembako at cycle end

(Source: Informant / HSD Collector)

In this case, 50 members contribute IDR 7,500 weekly, pooling IDR 375,000 each week. The total accumulated over 50 weeks is IDR 18,750,000. At the end of the period, each participant receives a package of goods equivalent to the amount they contributed (e.g., IDR 375,000 worth of sembako), serving both economic and religious-preparatory functions.

The HSD Collector manages both models. While participation remains voluntary, small fees may be offered by members as tokens of appreciation. These fees are not fixed, and no member is pressured to contribute. In both models, the trust-based relationship between collectors and participants is central to the sustainability of the system, and the models adhere to Islamic financial ethics by avoiding interest, ensuring fairness, and encouraging social solidarity.

Daily Contribution Model

The *Jula-Jula* model with daily contributions represents a more intensive and widespread financial cycle within Tarai Bangun Village. Unlike the monthly or weekly models, daily *Jula-Jula* schemes often span across multiple neighborhood units (*RT* or *RW*) and even across hamlets, depending on the logistical capacity of the collector. Participation is open to a broad range of community members, including those affiliated with *Majelis Ta'lim*, alumni networks, friendship circles, or entirely informal associations. Membership eligibility is typically determined by the collector, based on personal assessment of the participant's reliability and payment consistency.

In practice, payments are made daily, but disbursement occurs once every ten days. This results in a 10-day rotation cycle, with one complete round lasting 100 days for a 10-member group. Within a calendar year, approximately three full *Jula-Jula* rounds can be completed. Each group generally comprises 10 participants, and when larger pools are formed (e.g., 100 members), they are divided into multiple subgroups. Daily contributions range from IDR 10,000 to IDR 100,000, depending on the agreement set at the beginning of the cycle.

Service fees range between 1% and 5%, and are openly discussed and mutually agreed upon between the collector and group members. This model is typically managed by collectors such as DES and MIS, who are responsible for overseeing contribution collection and fund disbursement.

Table 8. Daily *Jula-Jula* Model with Cash Contributions and Agreed Service Fee

Period (Days)	Member Identity	Contribution (IDR)	Payment Frequency	Total Pooled Amount (IDR)	Remarks
Days 1–10	A	50,000	Daily (100 days)	5,000,000	A receives payment in first 10-day cycle
	B	50,000		5,000,000	Receives in second 10-day cycle
	C	50,000		5,000,000	
	…	…		…	
	J	50,000		5,000,000	Last recipient in the cycle
Total (1 round)				**5,000,000 per 10-day cycle**	Fee: 1–5% agreed by group

(Source: Informant / DES and MIS Collectors)

Depending on the fee agreement, the final amount received by each participant may vary as follows:

- 1% Fee
    - Collector receives: IDR 50,000
    - Recipient receives: IDR 4,950,000
- 3% Fee
    - Collector receives: IDR 150,000
    - Recipient receives: IDR 4,850,000
- 5% Fee
    - Collector receives: IDR 250,000
    - Recipient receives: IDR 4,750,000

These fees compensate the collector for operational responsibilities, especially in cases where participants are geographically dispersed. The transparency and prior agreement of the fee ensure fairness and adherence to Islamic finance principles, specifically regarding mutual consent and avoidance of coercion.

Member Perspectives

To better understand the experiences and perceptions of participants, in-depth interviews were conducted with ten members of various *Jula-Jula* groups in Tarai Bangun Village. The informants—identified by the initials FIR, RAT, YUS, LIS, SANTI, RAM, MAI, ERA, DES, and FITRI—were selected through purposive sampling, based on their availability, willingness to share, and active involvement in the *Jula-Jula* system. All participants were asked a consistent set of open-ended questions to ensure comparability and thematic consistency.

Jula-Jula Role

In response to the first question—*"What do you understand about the role of Jula-Jula in your financial life?"*—participants generally described *Jula-Jula* as a simple yet effective financial management tool. Many stated that contributing a fixed amount of money to a trusted collector over a specific time frame functioned as a personal savings mechanism. They felt that saving small amounts of money at home was challenging due to household needs, while saving such amounts in a bank (e.g., IDR 20,000) felt inefficient or even burdensome. Therefore, *Jula-Jula* offered a structured way to commit to savings with a clear social incentive.

Several informants who received the pooled funds early in the rotation acknowledged that the arrangement was, in effect, a form of borrowing. However, they emphasized the distinction from conventional loans, as the system imposed no interest (*riba*) and any fees were minimal and agreed upon collectively. Importantly, they noted that this feature aligned with Islamic financial ethics, making participation feel both morally and economically secure.

Moreover, participants expressed appreciation for the simplicity of the system. There were no complicated administrative requirements, guarantees, or collateral. The only prerequisites were the ability to pay consistently and a strong commitment to complete the cycle. Finally, trust in the collector was considered essential. All participants reported that they only joined *Jula-Jula* groups led by collectors with a clear domicile, ideally located within the same neighborhood. There was unanimous avoidance of online or remote *Jula-Jula* groups, as these lacked the element of interpersonal trust that was central to the practice. Upon receiving the disbursed funds, members typically used them immediately to meet various personal or household needs.

Utilization of Jula-Jula Funds

Regarding the second question—*"How do you benefit from participating in Jula-Jula, and what do you use the funds for once received?"*—responses were diverse but highly practical. All participants stated that the money received through *Jula-Jula* was directed toward pressing financial needs or planned expenditures. The most common uses included household consumption (such as basic food and daily necessities) and the purchase of kitchen or household equipment. Several participants reported using the funds to buy electronics, cover children's school or university fees, or purchase clothing for family members.

In addition to these immediate needs, some informants used the funds for wealth preservation and asset accumulation—for instance, purchasing gold jewelry or making payments toward existing debts and vehicle installments. Others allocated the money toward home renovation projects, often in preparation for family events or seasonal maintenance. These varied responses demonstrate the flexibility of *Jula-Jula* funds and the significance of the system in supporting household financial planning and stability. Overall, the interviews highlight *Jula-Jula* as a trusted, interest-free, and socially embedded financial mechanism that enables savings, supports responsible borrowing, and fosters mutual trust among community members.

Risk Management Strategies

As with any informal financial practice, *Jula-Jula* is not immune to risk. Although based on mutual trust and communal values, cases of default and fraud occasionally occur. In Tarai Bangun Village, several informants (DES, LIN, EL, MIS, and HSD) reported incidents such as collectors absconding with group funds or members failing to fulfill their payment obligations—colloquially referred to as "collectors running away" or "members disappearing at night." In such cases, no formal legal action is typically taken. When a member defaults, the loss is absorbed by the collector. Conversely, if a collector flees, all members bear the financial loss. The only recourse available is often to wait and hope that the offending party will eventually fulfill their obligations voluntarily. To address these vulnerabilities, experienced collectors and participants employ a range of informal risk mitigation strategies. These strategies, derived from practical experience and community norms, serve as preventive measures to ensure the continuity and reliability of the *Jula-Jula* system.

Risk Mitigation Strategies for Collectors

Collectors play a central role in managing *Jula-Jula* operations and, consequently, face the highest level of risk. To mitigate these risks, informants suggested several criteria. Firstly, collectors should have established residency in the area for at least three years, preferably in a house they own, to provide stability and community trust. A stable family environment is also important, as it indicates emotional and financial responsibility. Trustworthiness and strong communication skills are essential, as collectors must be seen as reliable and able to maintain open, consistent communication with all members. Effective collectors should understand financial flows and be capable of managing large groups; for example, DES collectors reportedly manage up to 500 participants in daily *Jula-Jula* and up to 100 members in monthly schemes. Collectors are often expected to cover missed contributions in cases of member default, especially in high-trust groups. They should also maintain detailed knowledge of each member's background, including employment, education, and residence. Lastly, members who own their homes are often preferred, as their routines are easier to track and their commitment levels are perceived to be higher.

Risk Mitigation Strategies for Members

While the collector carries the bulk of the operational risk, members are also assessed and selected based on informal criteria designed to minimize defaults. Members must demonstrate payment discipline by being punctual and consistent in fulfilling their obligations, with no history of arrears. They are expected to adhere to established operational rules, including a tolerance for minor delays of up to three days. Participants who have a proven track record of timely payments may be granted privileges, such as choosing earlier draw numbers. Preference is given to members with stable employment and permanent housing, as these factors correlate with lower financial risk.

Discussion

Jula-Jula as a Model of Financial Inclusion and Community-Based Microfinance

The findings demonstrate that *Jula-Jula* in Tarai Bangun Village operates through three core models: monthly, weekly, and daily contribution schemes. Each model exhibits adaptability to participants' financial capacities and social contexts. Two structural types are prominent: *Jula-Jula No Fee* (JNF), which emphasizes mutual assistance without transactional costs, and *Jula-Jula With Fee* (JWF), where service fees are agreed upon in advance to support operational logistics such as transportation and administration.

These models embody the principles of financial inclusion, especially for individuals excluded from formal banking systems due to limited income, lack of collateral, or geographic isolation. The *Jula-Jula* system offers a community-based alternative to interest-bearing financial instruments, positioning itself as a *riba*-free microfinance mechanism that aligns with the foundational ethics of Islamic finance. The absence of interest (*riba*), the transparency of fee agreements, and the voluntary nature of participation collectively fulfill the requirements of *Shariah compliance*, particularly when supported by mutual consent (*taradhi*) and absence of coercion.

The model also demonstrates inherent risk-sharing. When one member receives funds early, they effectively commit to repaying future installments, mimicking the ethics of Islamic *qard al-hasan* (benevolent loan). In the absence of collateral, *Jula-Jula* relies on social capital, where trust, community ties, and shared responsibility enforce discipline—key components of Islamic economic justice (*adl*) and social welfare (maslahah). This aligns with the *Maqasid al-Shariah* goal of promoting public interest, reducing hardship, and upholding communal integrity.

Flexibility, Mutual Assistance, and Ethical Governance

A notable finding is the flexibility and informal ethical governance embedded in *Jula-Jula*. Participants are not only allowed but encouraged to negotiate fund disbursements in cases of urgency. For instance, if a member (e.g., B) faces financial hardship and another member (e.g., A) is drawn as the recipient, the group may support B's request to temporarily receive the fund, with A's future right preserved. No interest or compensation is involved in such exchanges, exemplifying the principles of *ta'awun* (mutual cooperation) and *adl* (fairness)**.**

This model of community negotiation and support goes beyond transactional utility—it fosters resilience by enabling members to manage life-cycle needs (e.g., school fees, emergencies) without exploitation. The practice reflects the ethics of Islamic social finance, where financial arrangements must contribute to dignity, stability, and mutual growth.

Shariah Compliance of the Fee-Based Jula-Jula Model

The *Jula-Jula With Fee (JWF)* model introduces modest service fees (*ujrah*), usually ranging from 1% to 5%, agreed upon at the start of the cycle. These fees are used to compensate collectors who bear operational costs, particularly when serving geographically dispersed members through daily or door-to-door collection. As long as these fees are transparently disclosed, voluntarily agreed upon, and not linked to the timing or risk of disbursement, they are permissible under Islamic finance principles.

Unlike *riba*, which is prohibited due to its exploitative and risk-free return for the lender, the fee here functions as a service charge for effort, labor, and risk borne by the collector. This distinction aligns with jurisprudential positions that allow administrative charges in microfinance—so long as the charge reflects actual service rather than capital rental (interest). As such, the model remains consistent with *Shariah* values when implemented ethically.

Jula-Jula as an Instrument of Economic, Financial, and Social Impact

The impact of *Jula-Jula* spans across economic, financial, and social domains. Economically, the system supports poverty alleviation and asset accumulation. It helps members access lump sums for education, health, business, or consumption without falling into exploitative debt cycles. The findings support studies that show informal finance can stabilize household consumption and increase the probability of asset ownership (Kharisma et al., 2020; Khan & Ali, 2021), contradicting claims that *Jula-Jula* lacks economic value (Ajija & Siddiqui, 2020).

From a financial inclusion perspective, *Jula-Jula* offers an accessible platform for saving and borrowing, especially in environments where formal institutions are out of reach. Members reported reluctance to deposit small amounts in banks, and instead preferred *Jula-Jula* for its informality, flexibility, and educational function—serving as a space for basic financial literacy and community-based trust building (Haq et al., 2024).

Socially, *Jula-Jula* acts as a mechanism of solidarity and communal expression. Beyond financial exchange, it becomes a space for social gathering, mutual support, and local knowledge-sharing—reflecting the Islamic principle of *shura* (consultation) and the democratic spirit of *min al-nas, bi al-nas, li al-nas* ("from the people, by the people, for the people") (Adi, 2018). The model facilitates group cohesion, emotional well-being, and informal social insurance, contributing to community resilience (Ibrahim, 2024).

Challenges and the Limits of Institutionalization

Despite these benefits, *Jula-Jula* faces risks, particularly in the case of member default or collector misconduct. Field data revealed instances where collectors fled with funds or members disappeared mid-cycle. In these cases, the collector bears the financial burden. Unlike formal financial institutions that have legal recourse or insurance mechanisms, *Jula-Jula* operates entirely on social enforcement and trust. While this trust-based approach often ensures accountability, it lacks formal safeguards.

The idea of formalizing *Jula-Jula*—as in Egypt or other countries—faces practical challenges in Indonesia. Formal institutions may be unwilling to assume the default risk without legal protections or viable enforcement mechanisms. Thus, *Jula-Jula* continues to thrive as a semi-formal, Shariah-aligned community finance model, balancing flexibility with social responsibility.

The *Jula-Jula* model in Tarai Bangun Village exemplifies a functioning model of Islamic microfinance rooted in local wisdom. Whether fee-free or fee-based, the system demonstrates clear Shariah compliance through its avoidance of interest, mutual agreement, and prioritization of social welfare. It fosters financial inclusion, supports risk-sharing, and strengthens community resilience, thus serving not only as a practical tool but also as a manifestation of *Maqasid al-Shariah*—promoting justice (*adl*), benefit (*maslahah*), and cooperation (*ta'awun*). This study affirms the significance of indigenous financial practices in advancing inclusive, ethical, and sustainable finance within the Islamic economic framework.

CONCLUSION

This study explored the practice of *Jula-Jula*, a community-based rotating savings and credit association (ROSCA) in Tarai Bangun Village, Riau, Indonesia. Using a qualitative phenomenological approach, the research identified three main operational models—monthly, weekly, and daily contribution schemes—and two structural types: *Jula-Jula No Fee* (JNF) and *Jula-Jula With Fee* (JWF). The findings show that *Jula-Jula* functions not only as an informal savings and lending mechanism but also as a trust-based microfinance system aligned with Islamic principles such as the prohibition of *riba*, promotion of justice (*adl*), and cooperative values (*ta'awun*). It plays a vital role in supporting household consumption, smoothing financial shocks, and enabling participants to meet planned or urgent expenses without relying on interest-bearing loans.

These findings have significant implications for the fields of Islamic finance, financial inclusion, and community development. The *Jula-Jula* model illustrates how localized financial systems can achieve the broader objectives of the *Maqasid al-Shariah*, including promoting public benefit (*maslahah*) and social justice. The transparency of fee structures, the voluntary nature of participation, and the trust-based management framework make *Jula-Jula* a viable alternative to formal financial institutions for underbanked populations. Practically, the model demonstrates how interest-free microfinance rooted in social capital can provide ethical and sustainable financial services while reinforcing community cohesion and resilience. These insights can inform policymakers, Islamic microfinance institutions, and social entrepreneurs seeking to develop Shariah-compliant, community-embedded financial models.

However, the study is not without limitations. As a single-case, village-based study, the findings may not be generalizable to all *Jula-Jula* systems in Indonesia or other ROSCA models globally. The research focused on descriptive and experiential data, and did not include quantitative analysis of financial outcomes or long-term impacts. Future studies could examine *Jula-Jula* in urban contexts or compare its outcomes with formal Islamic microfinance products. Further investigation into the digitalization of *Jula-Jula* practices, the integration of legal protections for collectors and members, and its potential for replication in other socio-cultural settings would also be valuable. Expanding the empirical scope and incorporating gender, generational, or economic stratification could deepen understanding of how informal Islamic finance adapts to changing socio-economic realities.

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