

# THE EXISTENCE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DAYAH AS A TRADITIONAL ISLAMIC EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION IN INDONESIA BASED ON LOCAL WISDOM

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## ABSTRACT

The historical formation of Islamic traditional institutions in Aceh, particularly dayah, remains underexplored, especially regarding the relationship between their socio-historical origins and foundational educational practices. This study aims to analyze the historical establishment and basic education model of Dayah Raudhatul Huda. Using a qualitative descriptive design with socio-historical and Islamic education approaches, data were collected through in-depth interviews with dayah leaders and supported by document analysis. The findings indicate that the institution emerged through strong community participation, driven by religious consciousness, waqf contributions, and the need for accessible Islamic education. Its educational model reflects the salafiyah tradition at the ula and wustha levels, focusing on classical Islamic texts while integrating faith, ritual practice, and moral discipline as core elements of student formation. These findings highlight that the sustainability of dayah lies in its community-based foundation and value-oriented pedagogy. The study implies that such a model offers a relevant framework for strengthening character education and religious literacy in contemporary Islamic education systems.

## KEYWORDS

Dayah History, Islamic Education, Character Building

## ABSTRAK

Pembentukan historis lembaga-lembaga tradisional Islam di Aceh, khususnya dayah, masih kurang dieksplorasi, terutama terkait hubungan antara asal-usul sosio-historisnya dan praktik-praktik pendidikan dasarnya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pembentukan historis dan model pendidikan dasar Dayah Raudhatul Huda. Dengan menggunakan desain deskriptif kualitatif yang mengintegrasikan pendekatan sosio-historis dan pendidikan Islam, data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan para pemimpin dayah dan didukung oleh analisis dokumen. Temuan menunjukkan bahwa lembaga ini muncul melalui partisipasi masyarakat yang kuat, didorong oleh kesadaran keagamaan, sumbangan wakaf, dan kebutuhan akan pendidikan Islam yang terjangkau. Model pendidikannya mencerminkan tradisi salafiyah pada tingkat ula dan wustha, yang berfokus pada teks-teks Islam klasik sambil mengintegrasikan iman, praktik ritual, dan disiplin moral sebagai elemen inti pembentukan karakter siswa. Temuan ini menyoroti bahwa keberlanjutan dayah terletak pada fondasi berbasis masyarakat dan pedagogi yang berorientasi pada nilai. Studi ini menyiratkan bahwa model semacam itu menawarkan kerangka kerja yang relevan untuk memperkuat pendidikan karakter dan literasi keagamaan dalam sistem pendidikan Islam kontemporer.

## KATA KUNCI:

Sejarah Dayah, Pendidikan Islam, Pembentukan Karakter

## INTRODUCTION

Although dayahs are the most popular Islamic educational institutions in Acehese culture, not all of their histories have been clearly documented and revealed. It is acknowledged that a small number of dayahs, particularly the more advanced and larger ones such as Dayah Blang Bladeh and Dayah Mudi Mesra Samalanga, have been written about and researched by scholars. However, the fact remains that there are still many dayahs in Aceh whose histories have yet to be explored and revealed. This is primarily related to dayahs that are geographically located in the interior of Aceh or situated in border regions and remote areas. In addition to being less known to researchers, their remote and inland locations are also one of the reasons for the scarcity of studies on these dayahs (Hamdan, 2017; Muhammad, 2020; Rahman, 2022).

The lack of historical research on dayahs in remote and rural areas of Aceh has resulted in limited information and literature regarding their historical dynamics and the educational models that have developed within them. Consequently, not only is the existence of dayahs poorly documented academically, but knowledge of the historical uniqueness and educational characteristics of each dayah is also at risk of being lost. This situation highlights a fundamental scholarly issue: the lack of a robust body of knowledge regarding the history of dayah establishment and the models of basic education that have developed within these under-explored dayahs.

In fact, the history of the establishment and existence of dayahs varies significantly from one dayah to another. The unique history of each dayah, if studied, would serve as an important source of knowledge regarding the history and culture of

Acehnese society, particularly in the development of knowledge related to the dayah institutions themselves. This situation is all the more ironic because dayahs are a tangible manifestation of the culture and local wisdom of the Acehese people (Nasir et al., 2022; Nuraini, 2014).

In light of this, this study aims to conduct a historical analysis of the process of establishing dayahs and to identify the patterns of basic education implemented in dayahs as traditional educational institutions of the Acehese community. To examine these two themes, this article discusses the history and basic education at Dayah Raudhatul Huda as the subject of this study. Dayah Raudhatul Huda, located in Simpang Balik, Bener Meriah Regency, is worth studying for at least three main reasons. First, this dayah has been in operation and contributing to the community for over three decades. Second, Dayah Raudhatul Huda is among the earliest generation of dayahs in Bener Meriah, particularly in the Simpang Balik area. Third, to date, there is no scientific literature that specifically discusses the history and basic education at Dayah Raudhatul Huda. There is indeed one scholarly article that mentions this dayah, namely the work by Gyo Firnanda Putra; however, that study is not a specialized study on the history of the dayah but merely touches upon it in two paragraphs regarding a program on the socialization of religious moderation in Bener Meriah. Therefore, a study of Dayah Raudhatul Huda is important, particularly regarding the two main focuses of this article: (Putra, 2023).

On the other hand, the two themes that form the focus of this article also have their limitations. The issue of how dayahs were established in the Aceh region has received very little scholarly attention, and relevant theories and

literature are scarce. Although Acehese society generally understands that the establishment of dayahs depends heavily on the character of a *teungku*, this view has not been extensively substantiated in scientific studies; at the very least, it is difficult to find field-based research that specifically addresses this topic. Nevertheless, it is generally acknowledged that the history of the dayah as an Islamic educational institution in Aceh has received significant attention from scholars. For example, the studies by M. Hasbi Amiruddin and Azhar that touch upon the history of the dayah dating back to the era of the Sultanate of .

Another study, for example by Karnila, examines Islamic education during the reign of Iskandar Muda. She states that the golden age of education occurred during the reign of Sultan Iskandar Muda, a period marked by Aceh's status as the center of Islamic education in the Indonesian archipelago and even beyond. Islamic boarding schools (*dayah*) covered all levels of education, from elementary and secondary to higher education. Karnila cited *Jami'ah Baiturrahman* as a leading institution of higher education during that era. Iswandi also examined Islamic education during the Aceh Sultanate, beginning with the establishment of the Peureulak Kingdom, focusing on the pillars of education. According to him, the pillars of education during the sultanate era included *meunasah* and *ranggang*-level educational institutions. Prominent religious scholars of that era included Hamzah Fansuri, Syamsuddin Sumatrani, *ar-Raniry*, and Abdurrauf.

Islamic boarding schools have indeed existed since the era of Islamic kingdoms, but the background behind the establishment of these schools—which now number more than 1,000 in

Aceh—still requires further exploration, particularly from anthropological and socio-historical perspectives. In this context, the study of *Dayah Raudhatul Huda* can be categorized as part of the historical study of 20th-century dayahs based on their year of establishment. Linking *Dayah Raudhatul Huda* to the 20th century is both logical and significant, given that this century marked a pivotal moment in the history of Aceh and Indonesia, characterized by major transformations in social, political, and educational structures.

Just as with the historical context of the establishment of dayahs, studies on basic education within the context of dayahs in Aceh still reveal significant gaps in the academic literature. Most previous research has tended to focus on the normative and functional aspects of Islamic education—such as educational values, curriculum, and the social role of dayahs—without specifically elaborating on the structure, patterns, and practices of basic education taking place within them. For example, Suyanta (2012) emphasizes the aspect of self-reliance through life skills and entrepreneurship-based learning, while Kurniawan (2019) highlights the policy dimension of dayah diploma legalization. Other studies by Abi Hasan and Sarkawi(2021) examine dayah strategies in border regions; Ismail discusses the role of dayahs in the context of countering radicalism; and Fahmi and Amiruddin(2010) focus on the development of the *Ma'had Aly* curriculum. On the other hand, Zulfikar (2024) positions the study of classical Islamic texts as the center of dayah's epistemological framework.

Although these studies have made significant contributions to understanding the dynamics of dayah education, there remains a research gap: specifically, the absence of an

integrative analysis linking the historical context of dayah establishment with the development of basic education within them—, particularly in dayahs located in non-urban areas that are poorly documented. In other words, the existing literature remains fragmented between historical studies and educational studies, and has not specifically addressed how basic educational practices are shaped by the socio-historical context of the dayah's establishment itself.

Given this gap, this study offers a unique perspective by integrating a socio-historical approach to analyze the process of establishing Dayah Raudhatul Huda while reconstructing the patterns of basic education implemented there. This study not only fills an empirical gap regarding dayahs, which have not been extensively studied, but also seeks to make a conceptual contribution by demonstrating the connection between the historical context of the dayah's establishment and the characteristics of the basic education that developed there. Thus, this article positions itself as an effort to build a more comprehensive understanding of the dayah, not only as an Islamic educational institution but also as a historical entity that shapes traditional educational practices within Acehnese society.

## **THEORY DESCRIPTION**

In studies of traditional Islamic education, the dayah is understood as an institution that serves not only as a place for the transmission of religious knowledge but also as a space for the reproduction of Islamic intellectual traditions deeply rooted in the social and cultural context of Acehnese society (Erawadi & Setiadi, 2023; Rifqi & Dehham, 2024). Conceptually, the term dayah derives

from the Arabic word *zawiyah*, meaning a corner or space within a mosque used for religious learning activities. In the historical development of Islam, *the zawiyah* served not only as a place of learning but also as a center for spiritual and intellectual cultivation, which later underwent a contextual transformation into the dayah within Acehnese society. From a socio-historical perspective, the existence of dayah cannot be separated from social dynamics, scholarly authority, and the role of central figures such as the *teungku*, who possess religious and cultural legitimacy in shaping educational orientation and institutional structure (Azra, 2012b; Dhofier, 1982).

Theoretically, education in dayah is rooted in the classical Islamic educational system, which emphasizes the integration of cognitive, affective, and spiritual dimensions. As an educational institution based on *turats* (classical Islamic texts), the dayah positions these classical texts as the primary source of scholarly authority, as well as an epistemological medium in shaping the religious worldview of the students. Learning traditions such as *talaqqi*, *bandongan*, and *sorogan* serve not only as methods of knowledge transfer but also as mechanisms for the internalization of values, etiquette, and a continuous scholarly lineage (Bruinessen, 1994). In this context, dayah education is divided into several levels, ranging from elementary (*ula*), middle (*wustha* and *ulya*), to higher (*Ma'had Aly*), indicating the existence of a structured

educational system despite its non-formal nature.

Furthermore, from an educational anthropology perspective, dayahs represent a form of local wisdom that has developed organically within the community. The dayah education system does not fully follow modern formal patterns but possesses an internal structure that is adaptive and contextually responsive to the social needs of the community (Azhari & Jailani, 2022; Mariyati et al., 2024). This aligns with social constructivism theory, which emphasizes that knowledge is constructed through social interaction and cultural experiences (Vygotsky, 1978). Therefore, basic education in dayah—which includes the *ula* and *wustha* levels—is not only aimed at mastering basic religious knowledge, such as the ability to read the Qur'an and understand the fundamentals of Islamic studies, but also serves as a process of shaping the students' socio-religious identity.

Historically, dayahs have existed since the early days of Islam in Aceh; in fact, they are believed to have been present as far back as the era of Islamic kingdoms such as the Kingdom of Peureulak and the Sultanate of Aceh. The Dayah Cot Kala is often cited as one of the earliest centers of Islamic education in Southeast Asia, playing a key role in the spread of Islam and the formation of a network of *ulama*. The continued development of dayahs across various regions in Aceh demonstrates that these institutions not only serve an

educational function but also play a strategic role in *da'wah* and the formation of the community's religious social structure (Amiruddin, 2003; Nur, 2020).

Based on this framework, it can be understood that there is a close relationship between the historical context of the dayah's establishment and the educational patterns that developed within it. The social and historical conditions at the time of establishment shape the educational orientation, while the ongoing educational practices reproduce the values, traditions, and scholarly identity that form the very foundation of the dayah's existence. Thus, the dayah is not merely understood as an educational institution but also as a historical and cultural entity that shapes the traditional Islamic education system in Aceh.

## METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a descriptive-analytical design to examine the history of the establishment and patterns of basic education at Dayah Raudhatul Huda. This approach was chosen because it allows for an in-depth exploration of the social, historical, and pedagogical phenomena that have developed within the context of the dayah as a traditional educational institution (Creswell, 2018). The research location is at Dayah Raudhatul Huda, Simpang Balik, Bener Meriah Regency. The selection of this location was based on several considerations: the dayah has been established for a long time and has made a tangible contribution to the education of the

local community, particularly in a relatively remote area. Furthermore, the Raudhatul Huda Islamic Boarding School (Dayah) is among the earliest institutions in the development of Islamic boarding schools in the Bener Meriah region, thus holding significant historical value worthy of study. To date, no scientific study has specifically addressed the history of its establishment or the patterns of basic education within this institution; consequently, this research aims to fill this gap in the literature and provide an academic contribution to the development of studies on Islamic boarding schools, particularly in non-urban areas.

The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained through in-depth interviews and participant observation. Research informants were selected through purposive sampling, namely the head of the dayah (Tgk. Mahmud Alimal) as the key informant, as well as several students from various educational levels as supporting informants. Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured approach to obtain comprehensive data regarding the history of the dayah's establishment and basic educational practices. Observations were conducted directly on learning activities, teacher-student interactions, and the dayah's social environment. Meanwhile, secondary data was obtained from scientific journals, books, and relevant documents sourced from the FKIP Library at Samudra University in Langsa and the UIN Ar-Raniry Library in Banda Aceh.

Data analysis was conducted through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions in an interactive manner (Miles, M. B., Huberman & Saldaña, 2014). The collected data was classified based on research themes and then analyzed using three approaches: the socio-historical approach, the Islamic education approach, and the educational policy approach. The socio-historical approach was employed through heuristic stages, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography to reconstruct the history of the dayah. The Islamic education approach was used to analyze learning patterns and the values transmitted, while the educational policy approach was used to understand the relationship between dayah educational policies and ongoing basic educational practices.

To ensure data validity, this study employs source and method triangulation, as well as member checking with informants. Consequently, the research findings are expected to possess a level of validity and credibility that is scientifically accountable.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **The Historical Context of Dayah Institutions and Educational Formats**

The history of the founding of Dayah Raudhatul Huda is inextricably linked to Teungku Mahmud Alimal, who served as both the central figure and the driving force behind the establishment of this educational institution. Teungku Mahmud Alimal was born in 1940 in Gampong Lembang Pasi, Kluet Selatan, South Aceh. His educational

background began at the Elementary School, followed by the Islamic Boarding School at Dayah Raudhatul Ulum in Blang Pidie, under the guidance of Abu Haji Hamid Kamal. This extensive educational journey, spanning from 1958 to 1971, shaped his scholarly capabilities and religious authority, which later became the primary foundation for his service to the community.

The historical journey leading to the establishment of the Islamic boarding school began with Teungku Mahmud Alimal's personal move in 1971, when he left his hometown for Banda Aceh. During that journey, he stopped in Bireuen and Matang to meet with fellow alumni of the Islamic boarding school. However, a pivotal moment occurred on his return trip when he decided to head to Takengon—a decision that was initially spontaneous yet deeply considered. During the trip, he experienced some hesitation because he had no social network in the area, until he finally remembered an acquaintance, Tgk. Laot, who lived in Simpang Balik. The decision to stop in Simpang Balik became the starting point of his involvement in the educational dynamics of the region.

Teungku Mahmud Alimal's arrival in Simpang Balik was welcomed by the local community, which at that time already had the Madrasah Tarbiyah Islamiyah (MTI) but still needed teachers with sufficient academic expertise. The community then asked him to settle there and teach at the madrasah. Initially, he declined this request, but after careful deliberation and consultation, and upon receiving permission from his teacher in Blang Pidie, he finally agreed to serve in Simpang Balik. From that point on, he began teaching at MTI at the age of 33, which marked the initial phase of a long journey leading to the establishment of the Islamic

boarding school. Throughout his life, he married in 1979 and continued to expand his role in community education until he finally founded Dayah Raudhatul Huda in 1992.

The establishment of Dayah Raudhatul Huda itself is inseparable from the full support of the community. The institution stands on approximately seven hectares of waqf land donated by local community leaders. In addition to the land, the physical construction of the dayah was also the result of community cooperation, ranging from the wood for the pillars and walls to material assistance such as cement donated by the local government. This fact demonstrates that the dayah was born as a community-based educational institution, built collectively through material and non-material contributions. In this context, the community's role is not merely that of a supporter but also that of an active participant in the process of establishing and developing the dayah.

The organizational structure of Dayah Raudhatul Huda reflects a communal model of dayah establishment, in contrast to the individualistic model that relies entirely on the personal resources of a teungku. Nevertheless, the presence of the teungku remains a central factor in both models. In the case of Dayah Raudhatul Huda, Teungku Mahmud Alimal serves as the central figure driving the educational process, while the community plays a role in providing social, economic, and cultural support. This model demonstrates that a dayah is an institution born from the synergy between the scholarly authority of the ulama and the collective needs of the community.

Operationally, the process of establishing a dayah proceeds through several stages, beginning with the presence of human resources in the form of

a teungku, the emergence of the community's need for religious education, deliberations to reach consensus, and culminating in physical construction and the implementation of educational programs. In this context, Dayah Raudhatul Huda also exemplifies the general pattern of dayah establishment in Aceh during the 20th century, which tended to be community-based and developed independently. This aligns with the character of the dayah as an autonomous Islamic educational institution that does not fully depend on state intervention, although there has been limited government contribution throughout its development.

In addition to social and institutional factors, the historical context of the dayah's establishment was also shaped by deeper dimensions of religious values and consciousness. The community's collective awareness of the importance of religious education served as the primary foundation for the establishment of the dayah. Islamic teachings emphasizing the obligation to seek knowledge provided a strong spiritual motivation, both for the community and for Teungku Mahmud Alimal himself. This awareness was reflected not only in the community's request for him to settle and teach there, but also in their active participation in supporting the dayah's establishment through endowments and collective efforts.

Additionally, there was a social need underlying the establishment of the dayah, namely limited access to religious education and a shortage of religious scholars in the region at that time. The gap between the community's educational needs and the availability of teachers became the primary driving factor behind the establishment of Dayah Raudhatul Huda. Thus, the establishment of the dayah is not only understood as a response to

normative religious teachings but also as an answer to the community's real need to build a generation possessing strong Islamic knowledge and identity.

Along with the establishment of the dayah, the educational model that was developed also reflected the distinctive character of dayah education. In the early days, learning activities involved not only students but also the general public of all ages. Children learned the basics of religion and read religious texts daily, while adults attended regular religious study sessions, particularly in the field of fiqh. This pattern indicates that the dayah functioned not only as a formal educational institution but also as an inclusive and sustainable community learning center. Thus, the historical context of the establishment of Dayah Raudhatul Huda reflects not only the birth of an educational institution but also illustrates the close interconnection between individual factors, the community, religious values, and social needs in shaping the format of traditional Islamic education in Aceh.

In subsequent developments, the existence of Dayah Raudhatul Huda has increasingly taken on an institutional form that aligns with the formal regulatory framework for dayah education in Aceh. The existence of the dayah as a community-based educational institution is not only grounded in social and cultural legitimacy but is also reinforced by a legal foundation as stipulated in Aceh Qanun No. 9 of 2018 on the Implementation of Dayah Education. This Qanun stipulates that a dayah is an Islamic educational institution organized by the community and led by ulama, with the aim of shaping students who possess an understanding of Islam based on classical Islamic texts within the framework of Ahlussunnah waljama'ah. This provision directly reflects the character of Dayah Raudhatul Huda,

which was established from the outset through community initiative, led by Teungku Mahmud Alimal, and focused on the teaching of classical texts (. . .

Furthermore, the Qanun also recognizes the hierarchical structure of dayah education, which includes the *ula*, *wustha*, and *ulya* levels, up to the *Ma'had Aly*, thereby conceptually reinforcing the educational format that has traditionally evolved within dayah practices. In this context, the educational model at Dayah Raudhatul Huda, particularly at the elementary level, can be understood as part of the dayah education system that has received formal recognition from the local government. Thus, the historical context of the establishment and development of Dayah Raudhatul Huda not only represents the social and religious dynamics of the community but also demonstrates the connection between traditional educational practices and the framework of Islamic education policy in Aceh (Aceh Regulation No. 9 of 2018 on the Implementation of Dayah Education, 2018).

### Basic Education Patterns in Dayah

The basic educational model at Dayah Raudhatul Huda is inseparable from its institutional typology as a Salafi dayah that upholds the traditions of classical Islamic education. According to the dayah's leader, Teungku Mahmud Alimal, the institution adheres to the *Ahlussunnah wal-Jama'ah* creed and follows the Shafi'i school of fiqh. This orientation places Dayah Raudhatul Huda within the broader framework of Salafiyah dayahs in Aceh and Indonesia, in terms of creed, fiqh, and a learning system centered on the study of classical Islamic texts. Physically, this Salafi character is evident in the dayah's simple architecture, such as an open-air hall

shaped like a stage used for teaching and learning, as well as the students' living quarters that blend seamlessly with the dayah's surroundings. This design reflects a traditional educational style that does not rely on formal classrooms but instead emphasizes direct interaction between the *teungku* and students within a collective and religious learning atmosphere.

As a Salafiyah Islamic boarding school, Dayah Raudhatul Huda maintains a teaching system based on classical Islamic texts, including both Jawi and Arabic texts. The texts taught cover various disciplines of Islamic studies, such as *fiqh*, *tawhid*, *hadith*, *akhlak*, Arabic language, and *adab*. Among the texts studied are *Matan Taqrib*, *Fathul Qarib*, *Minhajul Talibin*, *Panah Talibin*, *al-Mahalli*, *Matan al-Jurumiyah*, and *Mutammimah*. Mastery of these texts serves as the primary indicator of educational success and forms the epistemological foundation for shaping the students' religious understanding. In this context, basic education at the dayah functions not only as an initial stage of learning but also as the foundation for the development of higher Islamic scholarship.

The educational structure at Dayah Raudhatul Huda essentially follows the general pattern of traditional dayah education, although it is not as fully formalized as in modern educational systems. The students studying at this dayah come from various age groups, ranging from elementary school to high school age. However, in the dayah tradition, the determination of a student's academic level is not based on age, but rather on the individual student's ability. The ability to read the Qur'an and understand religious texts serves as the primary criterion for determining the level of study. Consequently, a student may be placed in the same

level as other students who are younger or older, depending on their mastery of the material. This approach demonstrates that basic education in the dayah is flexible, yet it still demands diligence and earnestness in learning.

Basic education at Dayah Raudhatul Huda encompasses the mastery of fundamental Islamic sciences, which serve as the foundation for the development of the students' character and personality. In the field of creed, students are taught the theology of Ahlussunnah wal-Jama'ah, including concepts such as the Twenty Attributes and the Fifty Attributes. In the field of fiqh, learning is focused on the correct practice of worship according to the Shafi'i school of thought, which is a hallmark of Islamic education in Aceh. Meanwhile, in the field of akhlak, the instillation of moral values is an integral part of the learning process. Thus, basic education in dayah is not only oriented toward the mastery of knowledge but also toward the formation of attitudes and behaviors consistent with the values of Islam (.

An emphasis on character development is a defining feature of the elementary education program at Dayah Raudhatul Huda. Students are not only expected to understand religious knowledge but also to apply it in their daily lives. This principle is reflected in Teungku Mahmud Alimal's statement that knowledge without good manners is meaningless, and that good deeds are the fruit of knowledge. Therefore, moral education is conducted intensively through daily life practices within the dayah environment. Students are trained in discipline, patience, trust in God, humility, and maintaining proper speech and behavior. This process is not only carried out through theoretical

learning but also through the application of rules and customs that gradually shape the students' character.

In practice, the cultivation of good manners at Dayah Raudhatul Huda is carried out through a strict and consistent disciplinary system. The students' daily activities are structured to reflect Islamic values, from waking up and performing religious rituals to studying and social interactions. In this way, students not only understand moral concepts intellectually but also internalize them through concrete behavior. This pattern demonstrates that basic education at the dayah has a strong practical dimension, where learning is inseparable from daily life.

In addition to serving as an educational institution for students, Dayah Raudhatul Huda also functions as a community learning center. In its early years, educational activities were attended not only by children but also by adults from various backgrounds. Parents attended regular religious study sessions, particularly in the field of fiqh, while women and men had separate study times. This pattern indicates that basic education at the dayah is inclusive and open to all segments of society, thereby functioning as a social school that strengthens the religious life of the community.

From a broader perspective, the model of basic education at Dayah Raudhatul Huda also holds significant social importance. This dayah serves not only as a place of learning but also as an agent of community development and a center for religious education. The relatively affordable cost of education makes the dayah an educational alternative for economically disadvantaged communities. This aligns with the general character of traditional dayahs, which are not profit-oriented but focused on service and dedication to the community.

Furthermore, basic education at Dayah Raudhatul Huda also contributes to shaping a generation with scholarly capabilities and a social role in the community. The dayah's alumni are not only religiously devout individuals but also serve as community leaders, imams, or educators who carry forward the tradition of Islamic scholarship. In this context, the dayah functions as a center for the reproduction of ulama and the strengthening of a sustainable scholarly network. Thus, the basic education model at Dayah Raudhatul Huda not only shapes individuals but also contributes to building the broader religious social structure of Acehese society.

In the context of educational regulations in Aceh, the primary education model at Dayah Raudhatul Huda can also be understood as part of the dayah education system that has gained formal legitimacy through local policies. Aceh Qanun No. 9 of 2018 on the Implementation of Dayah Education affirms that dayah salafiyah are educational institutions focused on the study of classical Islamic texts using traditional learning methods, and aim to produce future religious scholars who are knowledgeable, possess strong faith, and exhibit noble character. Conceptually, this provision reinforces the educational practices that have been taking place at Dayah Raudhatul Huda, particularly in its emphasis on the integration of academic study, worship, and character building.

Furthermore, the recognition of the dayah's educational levels—which encompass the elementary (ula and wustha), secondary, and higher levels—demonstrates that elementary dayah education holds a strategic position as the foundational stage for developing students' religious competencies. In this regard, the educational model

at Dayah Raudhatul Huda, which emphasizes the ability to read the Qur'an and religious texts as a prerequisite for advancement, aligns with the principle of strengthening religious literacy—a hallmark of dayah primary education. Thus, the existence of this basic education model in the dayah not only reflects traditional practices passed down through generations but also demonstrates alignment with the normative framework and Islamic education policies in Aceh, which recognize and reinforce the dayah's role as a community-based educational institution.

### **Analysis of the Coherence of Research Findings with Islamic Education Theory**

An analysis of the coherence between research findings regarding the historical context of the establishment and patterns of basic education at Dayah Raudhatul Huda and Islamic education theory reveals a strong connection between empirical practices and the theoretical constructs developed in contemporary Islamic education studies. Conceptually, Islamic education is not only understood as a process of knowledge transfer, but also as a process of character formation (formation of character) that is integral to the cognitive, affective, and spiritual aspects of the self. The findings of this study indicate that the educational model at Dayah Raudhatul Huda substantially reflects these principles, particularly in its emphasis on the integration of knowledge, practice, and etiquette.

Historically, the establishment of community-based dayahs led by religious scholars aligns with Islamic educational theory, which positions scholars as the center of epistemological and moral authority in the educational process. This

is consistent with Azyumardi Azra’s view, which emphasizes that networks of traditional scholars play a crucial role in the transmission of knowledge and the formation of Islamic scholarly traditions in the Nusantara. In this context, the role of Teungku Mahmud Alimal as a central figure is not merely administrative but also epistemological and cultural, thereby reinforcing the legitimacy of the *dayah* as a traditional Islamic educational institution.

Furthermore, the educational model based on classical texts, which forms the foundation of learning at *Dayah Raudhatul Huda*, aligns with the

epistemological concepts of Islamic education that emphasize the importance of classical texts as the primary source of knowledge. This aligns with Masooda Bano’s findings, which state that traditional Islamic educational institutions maintain scholarly authority through the transmission of classical texts as a form of preserving religious orthodoxy. Thus, the use of texts such as *Matan Taqrib* and *Fathul Qarib* in elementary education is not merely a tradition but a well-established epistemological system.

**Table 1.** Analysis of the Coherence of Research Findings with Theory

No	Aspect of Findings	Description of Findings	Theoretical Consistency
1	Community-based establishment	Community endowments and mutual aid	Islamic education as a social practice (Halstead, 2004)
2	The Role of the Teungku	Scholarly and moral authority	Ulama as the center of knowledge transmission (Azra, 2012a)
3	The Turats Curriculum	Use of classical texts	Traditional Islamic epistemology (Bano, 2014)
4	Emphasis on etiquette	Discipline and moral cultivation	Integration of knowledge and ethics (Sahin, 2013)
5	Flexibility in Levels	Based on ability	Constructivism in Islamic education (Erawadi & Setiadi, 2023)

From a pedagogical perspective, research findings indicate that learning in Islamic boarding schools is contextual and experience-based, which can be theoretically explained through the constructivist approach in Islamic education. Abdullah Sahin emphasizes that effective Islamic education must be able to connect the text with the context of the students’ lives (Sahin, 2013), thereby fostering reflective and practical understanding (Karim, 2020; Saifuddin, 2021). Learning practices that integrate the daily lives of students with Islamic values at *Dayah Raudhatul Huda* demonstrate alignment with this approach.

Furthermore, the strong emphasis on character development in the *dayah*’s foundational educational framework aligns with the concept of *tarbiyah* in Islamic education, which emphasizes the holistic nurturing of the human person (Inayatillah, 2022b; Qari et al., 2024). The emphasis on etiquette, discipline, and the internalization of moral values indicates that education in *dayah* is not only oriented toward cognitive aspects but also toward the formation of religious habitus. This aligns with Halstead’s perspective(2004), who states that the primary goal of Islamic education is to shape individuals of noble character who are socially responsible.

Further coherence is evident in the social function of the *dayah* as a community learning center. Research findings indicate that the *dayah* serves not only its students but also the general public, which, from the perspective of Islamic education theory, reflects the concept of education as an inclusive social process. Bano (2014) asserts that traditional Islamic educational institutions play a vital role in maintaining social cohesion and the continuity of religious values within society. Thus, the function of the *dayah* as a “community school” demonstrates strong relevance to the theory (Inayatillah, 2022a; Karim, 2020).

Overall, this analysis indicates that the research findings exhibit a high degree of coherence with Islamic education theory, encompassing epistemological, pedagogical, and educational objectives. Educational practices at *Dayah Raudhatul Huda* not only represent local traditions but also reflect universal principles in Islamic education that have been examined in the international literature. Thus, the *dayah* can be understood as a concrete form of the implementation of Islamic educational theory within the social and cultural context of Acehese society.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study confirms that the most significant finding lies in the close connection between the historical context of the establishment of *Dayah Raudhatul Huda* and the format and model of basic education it has developed. This *dayah* did not arise solely from the individual initiative of a *teungku*, but is the result of a synergy between the scholarly authority of *Teungku Mahmud Alimal* and the collective

awareness of a community with a strong need for Islamic education. The community-based establishment model, utilizing *waqf*, mutual cooperation, and social participation, demonstrates that the *dayah* functions as an organic and contextually rooted educational institution. At the same time, the basic educational model applied demonstrates consistency with the *Salafiyah dayah* tradition, namely an orientation toward mastery of classical Islamic texts, the formation of *Ablussunnah wal-Jama'ah* creed, and the instillation of *adab* as the core of education. A learning system not based on age but on the ability to read the *Qur'an* and classical texts is a distinctive feature that reinforces the character of education grounded in religious competence. Furthermore, this study also found that the basic education model at *Dayah Raudhatul Huda* has a strong practical dimension, in which the integration of knowledge, worship, and moral values is not merely taught theoretically but internalized in the daily lives of the students. This indicates that the *dayah* is not merely an institution for the transmission of knowledge but also a space for the formation of character and Islamic identity. Furthermore, the *dayah's* role as a community learning center demonstrates its inclusive and sustainable social function, while simultaneously reinforcing the role of the *Dayah* as an agent for the reproduction of *ulama* and the strengthening of the community's religious social structure. The implications of this research indicate that a community-based *dayah* education model emphasizing the integration of knowledge

and adab holds high relevance for development within the contemporary Islamic education system. The formal legitimization through Aceh Qanun No. 9 of 2018 also underscores the importance of synergy between local traditions and educational policies in ensuring the sustainability of the dayah as an authentic and contextual Islamic educational institution.

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