

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 3RD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ISLAMIC EDUCATION AND SCIENCE DEVELOPMENT (ICONSIDE)

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NAVIGATING TRADITION AND MODERNITY: THE SURVIVAL STRATEGIES OF DAYAH EDUCATION IN ACEH

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Abstract

This paper discusses the survival strategy of Dayah education in Aceh, Indonesia, in negotiating the realm of tradition and modernity. Where it is known that in the past, Dayah was only an institution that studied the knowledge of turats (yellow books) but now along with the times the institution has changed its shape to follow the times. This report investigates the incorporation of modern education into Dayah MUDI Samalanga in Biren, Aceh. This research uses qualitative research methods. This research uses a case study approach by using purposive sampling and conducting in-depth interviews with educators and students from selected Dayah institutions in Aceh, where the sources come from 2 students and 2 teachers at the institution. the obstacles faced during this process, and the balance between tradition and modernisation. They agreed that it is necessary to adapt to modernity in order to thrive and the way they overcome obstacles is to embrace negative responses through advocacy.

Keywords: Dayah education, Aceh, Indonesia, traditional education, modernity, modern education

INTRODUCTION

Education is a spiritual reappraisal of human life, which enables individuals to take a richer and more significant view of their experience and is a liberalising process that frees the mind from crowding and self-interest (Snedden, 1928). Education is therefore an important asset for human beings. Educational choices can be of various types. As parents, there are many choices in choosing schools, both formal and non-formal education, to get good learning outcomes that proper to their children. Referring to (Elice et al., 2023) Formal, informal and non-formal education systems together shape students for the better, integrating social contexts and encouraging behavioural development in line with the times. Meanwhile, Indonesia is predominantly Muslim. About 87% of Indonesia's population is Muslim, making it the largest Muslim country in the world (Hidayat & Darmadi, 2019). This shows how large the Muslim population is in Indonesia. Therefore, in Indonesia we recognise several educational units such as Pondok Pesantren, Madrasah, Pesantren, State Islamic Universities, private institutions, and online platforms. (Nakamura and Nishino, 1993).

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However, in this paper we discussed one type of institution that is quite interesting, namely Dayah. Dayah is an Islamic institution in Aceh. In Dayah students learn the turats or yellow books. Dayah in the book by Abddul Qodir Jailani on Islamic Political Struggle in Indonesia reveals that it has been established since the Islamic era of Samudera Pasai Kingdom and continued to develop in Aceh, even it becoming the forerunner of pesantren in Indonesia. He also mentioned that Dayah has its roots in the current madrasa, a long time ago Sunan Gersik sought knowledge in Samudra Pasai and passed on the knowledge to his son Sunan Ampel and developed until the term madrasa was found, but this is a debate among scholars. The root of the word dayah comes from the words Zawiyah- Corner -, where long ago they talk about the knowledge in the corner of room to do khalaqah (discussing with group)- this term keep changing till Dayah and comes to Madrasah- additionally acehness called it as Meunasah. As modernity passes dayah as a traditional institution may go hand in hand with modern institutions. Acehnese people are still interested in traditional Dayah, while modern Dayah and Dayah tahfizul Quran and Hadith are growing in Aceh, along with the increasing number of parents who choose modern learning patterns and Dayah tahfizul Quran and Hadith for their children (Wildan, 2022). This research aims to find out how Dayah MUDI in Aceh survives in the midst of modernity and maintains their existence as an institution that has been established for a long time.

Research Questions

1. How does the role of modern education affect Dayah institutions in Aceh?
2. What challenges did Dayah institutions face during their transformation, and how did they overcome them?

Literature Review

The Traditional Role of Dayah

Dayah in Aceh during the Dutch colonial period (1900-1998) played an important role in integrating education and politics, nurturing charismatic Islamic scholars and contributing to political change in Aceh. The history of dayah and meunasah in Aceh shows that they have undergone changes and adaptations, where public schools are now superior in curriculum, educational programmes, and human resources (Raya, 2021). Dayah education in Aceh remains unique due to its consistent education system, focus on the yellow book text in Arabic, and its role as a centre of religious learning, a bulwark against colonial penetration, an agent of development, and a school for the community (Nurainiah, 2021). The intellectual dynamics of Acehnese Dayah Ulama, a place for teaching Islamic teachings, remain unchanged, focusing on understanding classical books with actual contexts (Kahar, 2021). However, as

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the modernity and the demand of having legal certification some dayah tend to change by inserting certain secular subjects.

Modernisation of Dayah Education

The identity of *teungku* in Aceh is formed and reshaped through various modes in the practices of the dayah community, including learning, teaching, serving the community, and fighting against ideologies (Usman et al., 2021). For a long time, parents tend to send their children to Dayah to be future preacher, however since the demand of the era change some institution need to adapt. The modernisation of the Dayah education system in Aceh based on traditional principles allows it to continue to shape morals and provide moral education in the face of globalisation (Kahar et al., 2021). The impact of Aceh governor regulation in number 451.2/474/2003 on improving the quality of dayah education. Government assistance in Aceh has not only had a positive impact on the physical development and infrastructure of dayahs, but has also changed their leadership paradigm, potentially impacting the quality of education. According to the Government Regulation Republic of Indonesia Number 55 of 2007, Article 1 paragraph (4), states that Pesantren or Pondok Pesantren is an Islamic religious education institution that organises diniyah education or is integrated with other types of education. Meanwhile, Aceh Qanun Number 5 of 2008, Article 1 paragraph (29) states that Dayah, also known as pesantren, is an educational institution where *tullab* or *santri* live. Dayah focuses on Islamic education and is led by a *teungku*. Qanun Aceh distinguishes Dayah into two types, namely "Dayah Salafiah and Integrated/Modern Dayah". Article 1 paragraph (30) states that Dayah. Salafiah is an educational institution that focuses on providing Islamic religious education in Arabic and various sciences that support it. Furthermore, paragraph (31) states that an integrated/modern Dayah is a modern educational institution which is a Dayah educational institution combined with a school or madrasah. This regulation gave a certain framework to distinguish between two kinds of dayah.

Balancing Tradition and Modernity

Instructional planning is essential for optimal learning management in Dayah education in Aceh, which includes managing the learning process, classroom management, use of media, mastery of educational foundations, and managing learning interactions (Faisal, 2022). The Dayah education system has evolved to adapt to the modern world while maintaining its traditional roots, thereby contributing to increased capacity and social control in Aceh (Mashuri, 2013). Traditional and modern dayah educational institutions in Aceh both foster respect for teachers and leaders through the methods of reading, lectures, advice, and guidance (Alimuddin, 2021). Balancing these things will provide the best output for the *santri*.

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METHOD

The method used here is a case study because it allows us as researchers to investigate a particular topic in depth. This method allows a detailed examination of contextual factors, causal mechanisms, and theoretical propositions within a finite system (Creswell, 2017). Here we use purposive sampling to obtain data, Purposive sampling involves deliberately selecting individuals from a population based on the knowledge and judgement of the authority or researcher (Curtis, 2011). We will conduct in-depth interviews with 2 teachers and 2 students from the Ma'hadal Ulum Diniyyah Islamiyyah Masjid Raya dayah or often referred to as MUDI Mesra Samalanga, Bireun, Aceh. To facilitate the interpretation of data we use codes where T1 (Teacher 1), T2 (Teacher 2), S1 (Student 1), S2 (Student 2) Data will be obtained through online interviews via Whatsapp calls. After conducting the interview, we will code the data based on the criteria.

Finding and Discussion

Teacher's Perspective

T1:

According to the teacher at dayah mudi "there are those who claim that dayah mudi samalanga was founded in 1607 by sultan Iskandar muda lungsu, but at that time it was only called a mosque of taklim, the naming of dayah mudi was first in 1965, which was given by ahmad nuruddin hanafiah", regarding leadership "there were several transfers of leadership from teunku ahmad syibudin, then abi hanifiah, then to the last abu syih. As time goes by, more and more students study in the dayah. "We are very adaptive to the era and modernity" As (Ilardo & Nielsen, 2018). Modern humans must be adaptive to live in a harsh environment and display a variety of lifestyles, "this is what motivates us to invite santri not only to master the salafi field but also the secular subject, of course to keep up with the times requires legality from the government, therefore we facilitate the existence of universities, in addition, our institution has now becoming a modern institution and is not traditional. Some dayahs institution that are still very traditional they do not study falq science and also arudh science and siyasat / legal drafting, this is also one of our differences from traditional dayah ".

In addition, "with the development of our institution from full traditional to modern, here we see the involvement of our students in producing writings or manuscripts, previously they are only learning from other people's books while now they are able to produce their own writings, according to me that is one of the great things because they are able to turn it out into they critical thinking and their knowledge". Service learning in traditional pesantren in Aceh, Indonesia, is effective in producing highly

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qualified Muslim scholars and helps develop the competence of santri, thus providing benefits for santri and society. (Anshari et al., 2023) Moreover, "even if people want to speak on Friday prayer as preacher, some of them are required to have a diploma to be able to go to the podium, this shows that adaptation to the era is important". There were some responses that were not positive "but you assured us that with modernity we must be able to adapt".

T2:

"Dayah mudi was formed around the 17th century, the beginning was taken care of by syekh Fakih Abdul Ghani, initially this was a place of learning yellow books such as nahwu and syorof, but along with the times, our institution adapted by established universities and makhad ali. This significant change is certainly the contribution of teachers", teacher support has a positive effect on students' intrinsic value and effort (Dietrich et al., 2015). "In addition to falq knowledge, students are also given access to multimedia learning. ". "For the challenges we face after to transform into a modern dayah, it is common for people to say that the students will become secular and liberal". Perhaps it might be natural to have such concerns because according to Robertson (1971) the secularisation controversy has diverted sociological efforts and had an impact on religious studies, especially among sociologists and theologians. "To maintain our existence, we provide information to prospective santri that the diploma certificate that we will offer here is a legitimate, legal diploma and is able to compete, not infrequently we see many alumni who are able to continue their postgraduate studies with the diploma certificate that we provide." "Of course, working with the government is also a matter as we mad agreement of cooperation with the government. It is fundamental to supporting our accreditation.". At the end the changing of the intuition needs several stakeholders and government participation.

Students' Perspective

S1:

"We still study, the yellow book, still study in the halls, and still, study with the teacher" but there is a significant difference where now "the existence of extracurricular activities indicates a significant change from dayah", of course because as is known participation in extracurricular activities is positively correlated with student academic success, character development, social development, and interest in community involvement (Pharaswal & Latif, 2023) besides they also study languages such as Arabic and English, "Our institution has also changed a lot as modern institution, we have certificate which is equivalent to a postgraduate level". The way Dayah mudi adapts to the times is by providing good facilities "For example, when we study falaq science we try to have binoculars to facilitate learning process". The challenge

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faced by the students is that the time is not maximized "the existence of learning such as falaq, language and subject turats is enough to overwhelm us" The solution that can be offered is "dayah teachers must be able to allocate their time efficiently". As for the wishes of the next pesantren, "of course we want to produce cadres of scholars who are capable of various lines of knowledge not only focusing on the yellow book, one of our efforts is to be expertise in several areas".

S2:

Regarding the development of dayah "the way dayah adapted was by establishing a higher institution or sekolah tinggi which then transformed into an institution and has now turned into a university". In connection with modernization "Dayah is not only required to be a religious minister by the community but is guided to be able to compete in jobs market or even in the government office", Many changes in policy of the institutions occurs every year in the dayah because "the head of the pesantren wants all of his students to be proficient in all part of knowledge expertise".

Conclusion and Limitation

In conclusion, the strategy for the continuity of Dayah education in Aceh, must be able to navigate between the realms of tradition and modernity, it is very important for adaptation and growth in the contemporary world, because this can make us compete. The incorporation of modern education into Dayah institutions, while maintaining its traditional roots, may encounter obstacles, especially since not all dayahs are willing to adapt to become modern institutions, especially since dayah play a significant role and social control in Aceh. It is not uncommon for some people to be worried, but this integration is able to make dayah students compete. The way to handle negate comments is by providing understanding through advocacy and not attacking personal institutions. One of the limitations of this study is its focus on only one Dayah institution in Aceh, which may limit the generalisability of these findings to other Dayah institutions in the region. In addition, the use of purposive sampling and the small sample size of 2 teachers and 2 students may limit the breadth of perspectives gathered. Further research with a larger and more diverse sample size from various Dayah institutions in Aceh may provide a more comprehensive understanding of Dayah education survival strategies in negotiating tradition and modernity.

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