Traditional *Dayah* Education in Aceh in the Perspective of Perennialist Philosophy

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**Abstract:** This study aims to analyze the existence of education in dayah in terms of perennialist philosophy. The problem that will be studied is the existence of the dayah education system and its relationship with the concept of perennialist philosophy. The research methodology is library research with a descriptive analysis approach. The findings of this study are: First: the curriculum in Aceh’s dayahs has led to the refinement of a more modernist curriculum; many Islamic boarding schools in Aceh have integrated the general curriculum into the Islamic boarding school (dayah) curriculum so that there is a balance between public and religious education, even though religious education dominates the implementation curriculum. Second: learning methods, dayahs, have modernized learning methods, such as attending skills and art classes, entrepreneurial learning, financial management, etc. Third, dayahs have prepared students to face the world of industrialization and the needs of the world of work. Fourth, traditional dayahs still preserve the old culture and continue to present new things that are modernist to answer the challenges of the globalization era.

**Keywords:** dayah, education, philosophy.

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan menganalisa eksistensi pendidikan di dayah tradisional dalam tinjauan filsafat perenialisme. Adapun masalah yang akan ditinjau adalah bagaimana eksistensi sistem pendidikan dayah tradisional dan hubungannya dengan konsep filsafat perenialisme. Metodologi penelitian ini library research dengan pendekatan deskriptif analisis. Adapun temuan penelitian ini Pertama: kurikulum yang ada di dayah tradisional Aceh telah menuju kepada penyempurnaan kurikulum yang lebih modernis, banyak dayah di Aceh telah mengintegrasikan kurikulum umum kedalam kurikulum dayah, agar ada keseimbangan antara pendidikan umum dan agama, walaupun pendidikan agama lebih mendominasi pada penerapan kurikulumnya. Kedua: metode pembelajaran, dayah tradisional telah melakukan modernisasi terhadap metode belajar, seperti kehadiran kelas keterampilan dan kesenian, pembelajaran wirausaha, manajemen keuangan, dan lain-lain, ketiga, dayah tradisional telah mempersiapkan pelajar untuk menghadapi dunia industrialisasi dan kebutuhan dunia kerja. Keempat, dayah tradisional masih melestarikan budaya lama dan terus menghadirkan hal-hal baru yang sesifatnya modernis demi menjawab tantangan era globalisasi.

**Kata Kunci:** dayah, filsafat, pendidikan
INTRODUCTION

The education system is functionally a reflection of a particular perspective in the universe of human life (Muttaqin & Ulumudin, 2022). Education is an essential perspective on acquiring knowledge (Bustamam-Ahmad, 2015). Paradigm has a significant influence on the formation of the education system. The Conservative paradigm gave birth to traditional education—the liberal paradigm gave birth to liberal education, and so on. Therefore, continuous steps in formulating and reaffirming the educational paradigm must not stop efforts to develop education, especially Islamic education (Ni’mah, 2020).

Dayah, the oldest Islamic educational institutions in Indonesia that still maintain traditional methods in the educational process, face enormous challenges. Many lawsuits were filed against the educational process, starting from narrowing the scope of curriculum orientation, saying it did not answer the challenges of the times, learning methods were humanist, going in one direction, the education system was relatively theocentric and less oriented towards worldly education, the learning process was tedious, not creative-innovative (Ernita Dewi, 2019). All of these claims must be answered not only by using naql arguments but also by applying universal arguments that are by general logic so that all parties can accept these answers (Ismail, 2017).

Islamic boarding schools in the context of terms in the Aceh region are called dayah; Dayah, the oldest educational institution in the archipelago, has a distinctive and varied form. Along the way, the dayah has fluctuated (Muhammad Latif & Shah, 2021). But now, the dayah are starting to rise again and seriously improving themselves. In the past, dayah have taken on important positions and hugely influenced socio-political changes in Aceh. The glory of dayah in the past has been able to educate the people of Aceh in various ways. As a result, some can become kings, ministers, army commanders, clerics, experts in shipping technology, agriculture, medicine, and others (Novita et al., 2020).

One of the proofs of dayah glory at that time can be seen from the role played by dayah, namely as a place for community development, a place for delivering Islamic da’wah as well as a place to educate students to fight against the colonial nation (Zulkhairi, 2021). In its journey, dayah education experienced a decline in its role as one of the pillars of social change in Aceh. This setback can be caused by many factors and can be seen from many sides. However, after the tsunami and conflict in Aceh, the dayah underwent good changes; it began to rise and continue to grow (Inayatillah, 2021).

In its development, dayah in Aceh have experienced significant results, especially in the matter of renewing a more modern curriculum and producing promising innovations; all of this is due to the existence of dayah education so that it can answer the challenges of an era of complexity and globalization in all fields. Departing from this dilemmatic situation, a study of the presence of traditional dayah (Islamic boarding schools) education is believed to be able to balance the development of needs in the current era of globalization and how educational activities in Aceh’s traditional dayah take place, whether the presence of traditional
dayah (Islamic boarding schools) education in Aceh can run according to the paradigm of Islamic education and give birth to generation expected by Islamic education.

**METHOD**

This research is a type of library research because the analysis can only be answered through library research, and it is also impossible to expect data from field research (Abubakar, 2021). In this study, the approach used by the researcher is a qualitative approach in which an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of entities related to the object of research is used to answer problems while obtaining various data, which are then analyzed. Qualitative research is intended to describe and analyze beliefs, phenomena, social activities, events, perceptions, and thoughts of individuals or groups (Moleong, 2009).

**FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

**Traditional Dayah and Development in Aceh**

The introduction of Islam to Aceh was essential to the expansion and development of the dayah (Islamic boarding schools) (Kahar, 2021a). People who converted to Islam in Indonesia sought to learn more about the doctrines of the faith they accepted, including how to perform worship, read the Koran, and understand Islam more generally and thoroughly. This was when the first Islamic education in Indonesia began. Learning initially took place in homes, balee, mushalla, or mosques. Here kids receive one-on-one instruction on how to read the Quran and other sacred texts. In addition to being a worship site during the Apostles’ time, the mosques served as a centre of study and educational activities. Many Muslim sons and daughters received an excellent education at the mosques. These groups took place in the corners of the mosque. These teams operated inside the boundaries of mosques. For Islamic educational institutions, Acehnese people use the term zawiya with greetings that are exclusive to their ethnic group’s pronunciation (Muslim, 2021). Dayah was created from the term zawiya. The oldest and most stable Islamic institution in Aceh is Dayah. Aceh began to take shape at the same time as Islamic teachings did (Latif & Shah, 2021).

Dayah has also contributed a lot to the development and progress of Aceh. Through Dayah, Acehnese and Islamic values are passed down from generation to generation. Before the Dutch came to Indonesia, the dayah was a center for community development and development, carried out through activities to spread religion and had a specific role. After the Dutch succeeded in controlling the kingdoms in the archipelago, Dayah became the center of resistance against Dutch rule. Dayah functioned as a center for the spread of Islam among the people and as a center for fighting colonialists. The education in Aceh before the Dutch opposed it was education based on the Islamic religion because Aceh at that time was an Islamic empire. This Islamic-style education applies to the whole country at that time. Children are educated in homes, mushalla or mosques (Usman & Hadi, 2021). The place of learning for the community, in general, is the dayah. Dayah education at this time starts from the low, middle, and high levels. Every day and medium-level
learning is carried out at home or in the meunasah, taught by students with increased knowledge. Meanwhile, Tengku Balee studied with Tengku Dayah (Ilyas et al., 2019).

While the high level is done by inviting a teacher or scholar to teach at home, even at a special level in a particular branch of knowledge. Further stated that the education of dayah during the sultanate experienced rapid progress. This is evidenced by the number of Islamic boarding schools (dayah) that continue to grow, the number of ulema continues to grow, the sultan invites foreign clerics, both for the benefit of teaching and the interests of the kingdom as consultants in the field of Islamic law. Some Acehnese scholars deepened their knowledge by choosing places to go to Mecca and Medina (Iswandi, 2019). Other evidence is that there are a number of books by Acehnese scholars with international reputations such as the thoughts of Hamzah Fansuri, Syamsuddin al Sumatrani, Nuruddin ar-Raniry and Abdurrauf al-Singkili which have colored Islamic thought in Southeast Asia since the 16th-17th centuries and even up to now (Muhzinat, 2020). The quality of Islamic education began to decline, namely when the Dutch war raged in Aceh, because many religious scholars and students were involved in the war and they were martyred on the battlefield. Islamic boarding schools (dayah) as educational institutions, especially in Indonesia, have shown their ability to produce quality cadres of scholars, so it is not surprising that during the Dutch and Japanese colonial times there were often rebellions led by dayah leaders and their students, as well as with (Yunus et al., 2021).

The history of the struggle for independence, the dayah have always actively taken part in fighting the invaders. Apart from that, the Dutch action destroyed a number of Islamic boarding schools and their libraries. This has caused the people of Aceh to lose a number of major scholars, and lose valuable sources of knowledge in the form of the works of major scholars in various scientific disciplines, both works by Acehnese and Middle Eastern scholars. Education in Aceh was under Dutch supervision at that time. When the Dutch began to oversee Aceh's education, the subject matter that was allowed to be taught at the dayah was only sciences related to pure worship, namely Fiqh, Tawhid and Sufism. Arabic and the science of Mantiq are studied only to sharpen the understanding of Fiqh (Silahuddin, 2016).

Dayah education in Aceh starts from East Aceh Perlak throughout Aceh and throughout Indonesia, even to Kedah and Pahang, Malaysia now. At that time Aceh became the center of attention of the Islamic community in Southeast Asia. On the other hand, Aceh already has the power of monotheism in defending the Islamic State from Dutch colonialism. So that Aceh is called Veranda of Mecca (Mannan, 2022). Cot Kala Dayah (East Aceh) is a center of educational activities that has produced many scholars, preachers, educators and leaders who have played many roles in building the kingdoms of Perlak, Samudra Pasai. Dayah as an Islamic educational institution has created many Ulama, preachers, educators, leaders, so that they are able to solve various problems of the people and are able to deal with trials and obstacles in spreading Islamic teachings throughout the country. Scholars and preachers had completed their studies at a dayah, re-established a new dayah in their area of origin. Isfahan, the Moroccan Islamic Empire in Morocco, the Ottoman Empire in Turkey, and the Islamic kingdom of Aceh Darussalam in Aceh (Ali Buto & Hafifuddin, 2020).
This power is supported by economic, political and military forces. All of this is obtained through educational institutions. According to Hanafiah estimate, the existence of dayah in Aceh as having existed since the sultanate and contributed to the overall life of the community and played a social function, especially in religious disciplines (Hanafiah, 2018). Acehnese people, especially young people, mostly traders, migrate to gain knowledge (Choiriyati et al., 2018). Dayah in Aceh have been able to show their active participation with elements of society including the government in the success of development programs, especially in terms of religious life and the education of the nation’s children. The struggle of historical literature and social dynamics dialectically makes the dayah have the awareness and concern to participate in overseeing the process of the nation’s journey in accordance with the ideals of religion and society universally (Nirzalin, 2018).

At the beginning of its development, the dayah had two functions, namely as a broadcasting institution and at the same time as an educational institution (Hadi, 2017). Explain that Islamic educational dayah determine Islamic character from the origins of a number of manuscripts on Islamic teachings in Southeast Asia. Then collected by a number of Dutch and English trading travelers since the 16th century. He further stated, since Western civilization entered Indonesia through the Dutch colonialism, it has greatly influenced the views of the Indonesian people, including in the world of Islamic boarding school (dayah) education. At the beginning of the growth of the Islamic boarding school, they were not familiar with general sciences, but since Dutch civilization entered, the classical system began to be implemented and general subjects were taught, however, there were still very few Islamic boarding schools implementing educational reform ideas (Marzuki & Khusairi, 2021).

Islamic boarding schools (dayah) in Aceh differ from those elsewhere, such as in Java in the early 20th century, before the independence of the Republic of Indonesia. In general, Islamic boarding schools are still traditional, but this is only the case for some Islamic boarding schools. Others have embraced the idea of revamping, such as the Islamic boarding school (dayah) of Tebuireng, leader of Kiyai Hasyim Asha’ry (Indra, 2017). The Islamic boarding school (dayah) that principles of these Islamic boarding schools still have the characteristics of ancient Islamic boarding schools that used a group system, unaware of the class system and study period. Increase. They were reading aloud by the Haraka system. As educational institutions, the existence of Islamic boarding schools as schools that maintain the traditional education system and as changed educational institutions has significantly impacted the lives of the Indonesian people. From time to time, Islamic boarding schools grow and develop in quality and quantity. Many people still pay attention to Islamic boarding schools as an alternative education. As Islamic boarding school (dayah) education has evolved, its model has always been consistent with the predominantly Muslim Indonesian people’s soul, spirit, and personality (Buto & Zainuddin, 2016).

Traditional Dayah and Education in Aceh

Talking the function of Islamic boarding school (dayah) is closely related to the aim of Islamic boarding school (dayah) education, which is to prepare students to deepen and master Islamic religious knowledge in the field of morality, which is
expected to produce cadres of scholars, preach and spread Islam, become a stronghold of the people in the area of character, enhance community development in various fields. The sector becomes the centre of empowering the community’s economic potential. Education, according to Islam, is an effort to improve oneself to form the qualities of perfection as a human being of faith, knowledge, noble character and sincere charity (Roche, 2012). Based on the above objectives, the function of an Islamic boarding school (dayah) is as follows: as a place to study Islamic teachings, to spread and preach Islamic education to the community, as a moulder of noble human beings and as a place for community development cadres in various sectors. In general, the goals of Islamic boarding schools are part of the national education goals because Islamic boarding schools are also responsible for educating the nation as a whole. So the aim of Islamic boarding school (dayah) education is: to produce Muslim individuals who become supporters of the teachings of God as a whole. Referring to the Al-Quran and hadis, the primary basis of the aim of Islamic boarding school (dayah) education is to be directed to religious experts and scholars who master spiritual knowledge and practice it diligently to serve and serve themselves fully to God (Maskuri et al., 2020).

The creation of humans to worship Him, revive the apostles’ sunnah and spread Islamic teachings in a sincere, noble manner, istiqamah in carrying out good relations with fellow human beings can worship God. The aim of Islamic boarding school (dayah) education is basically the same as the goal of Islamic da’wah: to make Muslim humans able to practice Islamic teachings in social life and devote themselves before God so that they remain relevant to the purpose of human creation itself. Because of that, the birth of Islamic boarding school (dayah) education is a place to educate and teach the Islamic generation (Muslem & Hayatina, 2021). Islamic boarding school (dayah) education generally aims to develop citizens with Muslim personalities through Islamic teachings. It instills this religious sense in all aspects of life and can make themselves valuable people for religion, society and the state. The specific objectives of Islamic boarding school (dayah) education are to educate students to become Muslims who are devoted to God, have a noble character, and have intelligence, skills and both physical and mental as citizens of a nation with Pancasila principles—educating students to make Muslim human beings as cadres of scholars and preachers who are sincere, steadfast, challenging, entrepreneurial in practising Islamic teachings as a whole and dynamically (Qamariah, 2020).

Educate students to acquire a good personality and strengthen the spirit of nationalism to develop people who can create themselves and are responsible for the development of the nation and state. Educate students/students as extension workers for micro and regional development. They are educating students to become skilled workers in various development sectors, especially mental-spiritual development. Educating students to help improve the social welfare of the environmental community in the framework of community and nation development efforts. Taking into account the goals to be achieved by Islamic boarding school (dayah) education, the existing Islamic boarding school (dayah) needs to be renewed in its function; its existence is not only to prepare its students to become ukhrawi scholars who are capable of giving only religious teachings. However, it can improve and advance the socio-economic community (Burhanudin, 2004). Thus, the ulema is
not only nurses and mental-spiritual coaches but also a driving force in the cultural development of the Indonesian nation. To carry out this function, Islamic boarding schools must be adequately fostered to become Islamic religious education and teaching institutions that teach and educate practical knowledge and experts in religion. Islamic boarding school (*dayah*) as educational institutions have several advantages, as the main emphasis of education and learning is spiritual, intellectual, and emotional intelligence. With this, students are expected to have intelligence and strong character and easily socialize in society. Islamic boarding school (*dayah*) are the oldest educational institutions in the archipelago, grown by scholars who transfer knowledge sincerely. They are clean in heart and always draw closer to Allah. This causes the knowledge obtained at Islamic boarding schools more beneficial (Kahar, 2021b).

Students can be fully guarded and protected from these negative influences. With an education based on Nusantara Islamic values, Islamic boarding school (*dayah*) become institutions that resist various threats of adverse effects. Islamic boarding school (*dayah*) will produce alumni students with a blend of solid Islamic principles and personalities who sympathize with others. Students can integrate the knowledge acquired through formal madrasas with religious knowledge gained through Islamic boarding schools. This knowledge will make it easier for the students to understand the true meaning of life. Considering the several advantages of the Islamic boarding schools above, education should become the leading educational institution for the people of Aceh (Prasetyo et al., 2020).

The curriculum has a vital role in an educational institution. He concludes in three parts viz. The conservative position is the curriculum developed to transfer what has happened in the past to the next generation to be preserved, forwarded or developed. Thus, educational institutions can influence and foster student behaviour through the shared values that apply in society (Suud et al., 2020). The critical or evaluative role is that the curriculum acts as an answer to solving various social problems related to education and actively participates in exercising social control and emphasizing basic thinking patterns. This role is reflected by the notion of the curriculum, which is based on the philosophical view of progressivism. The creative part is a curriculum for building a life, now and in the future, with various innovative and constructive activities and various national development and development plans used as the basis for developing future life. Considering the role played by the curriculum, every educational institution should have an explicit curriculum. But what applies to Islamic boarding school (*dayah*) education differs from formal education. The Islamic boarding school (*dayah*) curriculum is determined more by the authority of a teacher as its leader. This has led to the discovery of similarities in curriculum or books that are used as standards in teaching; even in some Islamic boarding schools, no curriculum is found. This difference shows that Islamic boarding schools still lack attention of the Islamic boarding schools towards the importance of the curriculum. Islamic boarding school (*dayah*) curriculum is a sequence of books studied by students in Islamic boarding school (*dayah*) and is not standardized collectively (Abdullah, 2020).
Perennialism in learning at *Dayah* Aceh

Perennialism views education as a way back or a process of returning to the present situation (Khudaeri, 2017). Perennialism makes an influential contribution, both in theory and practice, to contemporary culture and education. So, it can be said that perennial views Islamic boarding school (*dayah*) education as a way back, namely as a process of returning Islamic boarding school (*dayah*) education to the authentic culture, especially Islamic boarding school (*dayah*) education in the present era, which must be connected to the culture that existed in the past (Malik, 2021).

In Perennialism philosophy, the values of truth are universal and eternal (Nikolic, 2020). This is the goal of proper *dayah* education. Therefore, Islamic boarding school (*dayah*) education aims to help students prepare and internalize the eternal values of truth to achieve the wisdom and goodness of life. *Dayah* is a learning setting, namely a place where immature students get acquainted with the most significant human achievements. *Dayah*, like progressive views, is not miniature of the wider society. In its most total sense, human life can be lived only after the rational aspect of man has been developed. *Dayah* is a unique institution that seeks to achieve a very noble mission. *Dayah* is not too concerned with issues such as work, entertainment and human recreation. These three things have a place in human life but are outside the scope of *dayah* educational activities. *Dayah* is an institution where the intellectual elite trains those who know the truth and one day will pass it on to the next generation (Rahmah et al., 2021).

*Dayah* is an institution whose role is to prepare students or young people to plunge into life. *Dayah*, for perennials, is an artificial place where students get acquainted with the best results from socio-cultural heritage. The *dayah* education curriculum is subject Connected, centred on the subject matter. Subject matter must be universal, uniform and timeless. In addition, the subject matter must primarily be directed to the formation of human rationality because that is human nature. The subjects with the highest status are the *dayah* subjects related to one another. Therefore, the emphasis of the *dayah* curriculum is placed on religious, spiritual, ethical and human issues (Nur, 2019b).

*Dayah* has been recognized as a multi-functional institution that contributes quite a lot in efforts to educate the religious and national life of the Indonesian people. From a historical point of view, the *dayah* has gone through tortuous experiences. By making accommodations and concessions, the *dayah* has maintained its existence. Some Islamic *Dayah* educational institutions have succeeded in establishing institutions that are rich in religious culture in Indonesia (Ilyas, 2014).

Traditional Islamic *Dayahs* are the archipelago’s cultural heritage, accommodated in Islamic educational institutions that are classical, civilized and consistent in imparting religious knowledge. As a cultural heritage, *dayah* emerges and develops from the sociological experiences of the people in their environment. In other words, *dayah* have strong ties to Indonesian history and culture (Nur, 2019a). It can even be said that *dayah* is the deepest part of the life system of the majority of Indonesian Muslims who form the majority group in this nation. As an Islamic
educational institution, the academic orientation of the dayah is structured in terms of curriculum and objectives. Education objectives for dayahs are clear, and standards are generally accepted for all dayah. The orientation of dayah education is the same as that of Islamic education in general (Idris & Suroto, 2022).

The traditional dayah education system is based on life values based on ethics, and morals, all of which are implemented in the purpose of human life, which is always to worship God. For this reason, all processes and activities carried out at dayah are always oriented towards the interests of the afterlife, directly proportional to the interests of life in the world, which are highly prioritized because religious teachings accumulate in a cultural and civilizational and social reality in the lives of the students at Islamic boarding school (dayah) (Asari et al., 2020).

Thus, the primary purpose of dayah education is to provide life provisions for humanity so that life goals can be achieved both in this world and in the hereafter. Knowledge is essential in human life. Traditional Dayah have formulated a scientific discipline or knowledge that must be mastered that preserves past culture and develops things that are good and needed in the present. This is the essence of the philosophy of Perennialism so that humans can fulfil these needs. Scientific disciplines or knowledge learned in Islamic boarding school (dayah) include Kalam, Tasawwuf, Fiqh, Tafsir, Hadis, Tarikh, Ushul-, Tasawwuf, Nahwu, Sharf, Balaghah, Bayan, Mantiq and Akhlaq (Raya, 2021). By dayah, these scientific disciplines are essential material for understanding religion, and this is adapted to today’s life. From the exposure to the scientific disciplines taught in dayahs, it can be generalized that the scientific stress of this educational institution is not only religious sciences but the knowledge needed in life. This comprehensive knowledge is required because the challenges are increasingly complex and urgent due to increasing development needs and advances in science and technology. Dayah must always exist in a more rational, dynamic, competitive industrial society. Science and technology development activities will increasingly dominate educational work, and dayah in Aceh have headed to this stage (Lismawani, 2020).

Based on the Perennialist philosophy, education should be based on cultural values, such as dayah education, which will bring balance to social life. Regulatory clarity has been tested. These values exist in old values and cultures that have been proven to contribute to human life positively. Traditional dayah learning materials are an integration of religious and general knowledge. The centre of scientific development for dayah is indeed spiritual knowledge balanced with other existing sciences at present; this is to reinforce the understanding of dayah.

CONCLUSION

The curriculum in Aceh’s traditional dayah has led to the refinement of a more modernist curriculum; many dayah in Aceh have integrated the general curriculum into the dayah curriculum so that there is a balance between public and religious education, even though religious education dominates the application of the curriculum. As for learning methods, traditional dayah have modernized learning methods, such as attending skills and art classes, entrepreneurial learning, financial
management, etc. Traditional dayah have prepared students to face the world of industrialization and the needs of the world of work. Fourth, traditional dayah still preserve the old culture and continue to present new things that are modernist to answer the challenges of the globalization era.

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