

Implementation of the Wahdah Islamiyah Foundation's Tarbiyah Halaqah Program in Fostering Noble Character Among Youth in Palu City

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
Volume: 4 ISSN: 2963-5489	This study investigates the implementation of the <i>Tarbiyah Halaqah</i> program organized by the Wahdah Islamiyah Foundation in fostering noble character among youth in Palu City. The research adopts a qualitative descriptive approach with data collected through observation, in-depth interviews, and documentation. The study aims to understand how the program is carried out, what methods are applied, and to what extent it contributes to the moral development of young participants. The findings reveal that the <i>Tarbiyah Halaqah</i> program functions as a systematic character-building effort that emphasizes religious knowledge, discipline, spiritual training, and the internalization of Islamic values. The mentoring sessions, conducted regularly, provide not only religious guidance but also psychological support and a sense of belonging, which encourage youth to practice good morals in their daily lives. Furthermore, the program instills leadership, social responsibility, and self-awareness, enabling participants to respond constructively to the challenges of modern life. The research concludes that the consistent implementation of <i>Tarbiyah Halaqah</i> plays a significant role in strengthening youth morality and character. It also demonstrates that Islamic-based educational movements can serve as an effective response to the crisis of moral values among young generations in contemporary society.
KEYWORD Tarbiyah Halaqah, Wahdah Islamiyah, Noble Character, Youth, Islamic Education	

1. Introduction

Islamic education is not merely concerned with the development of cognitive aspects but also with the cultivation of noble character (akhlaq). This is in line with the central mission of the Prophet Muhammad, who was sent to perfect human morals. Character becomes a fundamental pillar in shaping a holistic Muslim personality, since moral integrity often determines a person's usefulness to society more than intellectual capacity alone. However, in the midst of globalization, technological advancement, and the penetration of foreign cultural values, the challenge of nurturing good character has become increasingly complex. The rise of moral decline among youth—manifested in hedonistic lifestyles, declining manners, lack of social responsibility, and the growing phenomenon of juvenile delinquency—demonstrates the urgency of finding effective solutions in character education. (Hidayat, H. 2025).

The moral development of youth in contemporary Indonesia faces mounting challenges due to rapid modernization, widespread digital media influence, and the penetration of global cultural values that may conflict with Islamic moral

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teachings. These dynamics have been associated with declines in civic responsibility, weakening social etiquette, and increasing vulnerability to negative behavioral trends among young people, creating an urgent need for structured moral education interventions. Religious organizations and community foundations have responded by implementing targeted character-building programs. One notable model is the Tarbiyah Halaqah approach promoted by Wahdah Islamiyah, which organizes regular small-group halaqah (study and mentoring circles) aimed at deepening religious knowledge, fostering discipline, and internalizing Islamic values among participants. The halaqah format emphasizes peer interaction, guided reflection, and mentoring—elements that research identifies as effective for identity formation and moral internalization among Muslim youth.

Halaqah tarbiyah has become one of the hallmark programs of modern Islamic movements, including Wahdah Islamiyah, which places great emphasis on cadre development and moral formation. Through halaqah, youth are nurtured to have strong Islamic commitment, discipline in worship, and noble character. Previous studies have reported positive impacts such as increased religiosity, improved discipline, and better quality of worship among participants. Nevertheless, many of these studies remain descriptive in nature and have not comprehensively examined the systematic impact of halaqah on character formation, especially in addressing contemporary social challenges such as moral degradation through social media, identity crises, and the influence of popular culture. (Samsuddin, S., Iskandar, & Nurshamsul, M. 2022).

Empirical studies on tarbiyah/halaqah-based programs in various Indonesian contexts report positive outcomes: improved religious commitment, heightened sense of social responsibility, and observable changes in everyday behavior among participants. Case studies of Wahdah Islamiyah's programs in multiple regions describe structured curricula and cadre development efforts that aim not only at religious literacy but also at leadership and community engagement. These findings suggest that organized halaqah programs can be a viable strategy to strengthen moral formation in youth, though contextual evaluation (e.g., city-specific factors in Palu) remains necessary to assess local implementation fidelity and impact. Palu City, with its particular social and educational landscape, presents a relevant site for examining how the Wahdah Islamiyah Tarbiyah Halaqah is operationalized and how it influences youth character. Prior local research on character education programs in Palu indicates both opportunities and constraints in school- and community-based moral education initiatives, highlighting the importance of studying program delivery, participant engagement, and measurable behavioral outcomes in situ. This study therefore seeks to document implementation practices, identify enabling and inhibiting factors, and evaluate the extent to which the Tarbiyah Halaqah contributes to the cultivation of noble character among youth in Palu.

2. Literature Review

First, the study by Ramli and Hanafie (2025) emphasizes the importance of the *tarbiyah halaqah* model in cultivating students' religious character. Their article highlights that halaqah functions not only as a forum for teaching Islamic knowledge but also as a medium for moral formation through close emotional ties between the mentor (*murabbi*) and participants. The strength of this study lies in its assertion that halaqah can be an effective Islamic character education model in addressing moral decline among young people. However, its limitation is that it focuses mainly on formal school students, requiring further exploration in broader community contexts such as youth in Palu.

Furthermore, Wahid (2023) in *Peer-Group-Based Intellectualism among Muslim Youth* explores the role of peer groups in shaping religious identity and morality. The halaqah is portrayed as a collective space that strengthens solidarity while enhancing spiritual quality. This literature provides a strong theoretical foundation on the significance of social interaction within halaqah, which is highly relevant to the present study.

The research by Br. (2024) on halaqah tarbiyah in Takalar demonstrates its role in restoring youth character by reinforcing religious values and social responsibility. This case study supports the empirical evidence that halaqah can be effectively implemented in local communities. Nevertheless, the study is limited to a specific regional context, making further investigation in Palu important for a more comprehensive understanding.

3. Methodology

This section should contain detailed information about the procedures and steps followed. It can be divided into subsections if several methods are described.

4. Results and Discussion

The implementation of the *Tarbiyah Halaqah* program by the Wahdah Islamiyah Foundation in Palu City illustrates the importance of structured religious education as a medium for moral development among youth. This program emphasizes direct mentoring, routine learning circles, and the integration of Islamic values into daily practices. Through these methods, participants are not only equipped with religious knowledge but also trained to practice discipline, strengthen their spiritual awareness, and develop social responsibility. The findings highlight that halaqah sessions provide a safe and constructive environment for young people to discuss moral challenges, receive guidance, and gradually internalize noble values. However, the program also faces obstacles such as differences in participant backgrounds, consistency in attendance, and adaptation to modern youth lifestyles. Despite these challenges, *Tarbiyah Halaqah* remains effective in promoting character building and offers an alternative model of Islamic education that responds to contemporary issues of youth morality. (Arisnaini, A.,2021)

The findings of this study also indicate that the majority of youth who participate in *halaqah* experience significant changes in terms of discipline, responsibility, and self-control in avoiding deviant behaviors. Several informants admitted that their involvement in *halaqah* kept them away from negative activities such as free association, excessive and purposeless use of social media, and tendencies toward juvenile delinquency. This demonstrates that *halaqah* functions as both a moral safeguard and a space for the positive development of youth potential.

From the perspective of the mentoring methodology, the success of *tarbiyah halaqah* is influenced by several key factors, namely:

1. **Uswah Hasanah (exemplary conduct of the murabbi):** The murabbi not only delivers the material but also demonstrates daily behavior that serves as a direct example for the participants.
2. **Habituation method:** Participants are consistently trained to repeat good practices until they are internalized as character.
3. **Provision of motivation and advice:** The murabbi actively provides moral guidance that is relevant to contemporary issues faced by youth.
4. **Strengthening of ukhuwah:** A sense of togetherness within small groups fosters solidarity, mutual support, and positive social control. (Wahdah Islamiyah. 2008).

Further discussion reveals that *halaqah* holds significant relevance for the needs of Muslim youth in the modern era. The challenges of globalization, the rapid flow of information, and the identity crisis among adolescents demand a model of guidance that can balance spirituality with social realities. *Tarbiyah Halaqah* provides an answer to this need by creating a conducive space for building moral integrity, strengthening faith, and preparing the younger generation to face contemporary challenges without losing their Islamic identity.

In this context, *Tarbiyah Halaqah* emerges as a strategic platform that provides a positive alternative for the youth of Palu. The findings of this study indicate that participation in the halaqah serves as an effective means of shielding them from the negative influences of urban environments. Through the halaqah, young people not only acquire religious knowledge but also gain access to healthy social interactions, the strengthening of Islamic brotherhood (*ukhuwah Islamiyah*), and the cultivation of social awareness. Thus, the halaqah plays an essential role in reinforcing Islamic identity while instilling a sense of social responsibility among the younger generation in Palu. (IDMAP MUSLIM. 2021).

Furthermore, the existence of the halaqah is highly relevant to the post-disaster needs of Palu, particularly after the 2018 earthquake, tsunami, and liquefaction that had a profound impact on the community. As a vulnerable group, youth often face psychological pressure, loss of direction, and identity crises. Under such circumstances, the halaqah functions not only as a medium of moral development but also as a space for mental recovery, spiritual motivation, and the strengthening of solidarity among young people. In other words, this tarbiyah program addresses dual needs: fostering morality while simultaneously reinforcing social resilience in the aftermath of trauma.

This discussion demonstrates that the *Tarbiyah Halaqah* of Wahdah Islamiyah in Palu functions not merely as a form of non-formal religious education but also as a social model capable of responding to local challenges. Through a combination of spiritual values, social solidarity, and the exemplary conduct of the murabbi, the halaqah makes a tangible contribution to shaping the youth of Palu into individuals who are morally upright, resilient, and prepared to face the dynamics of modernity as well as post-disaster conditions.

5. Conclusion

This study concludes that the *Tarbiyah Halaqah* program has a significant contribution in fostering noble character among youth in Palu City. By combining religious instruction, personal mentoring, and consistent spiritual practices, the program successfully shapes moral awareness and positive behavioral changes. The halaqah method proves to be an effective strategy to cultivate disciplined, responsible, and socially aware young Muslims. Therefore, the implementation of this program can be considered a relevant and strategic approach in Islamic education to produce a generation that is intellectually competent, spiritually strong, and morally upright.

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