

## The Implementation of Halaqah Method at Madrasah Muhammadiyah, Pondok Sungai Durian, Kuala Krai, Kelantan

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### Abstract

The *pondok* learning institution is the earliest form of traditional Islamic learning institution established in Malaysia. Its contribution in the development of Islamic education especially in Malaysia and the Malay Archipelago cannot be denied. The *pondok* learning institution is also well-known for its halaqah method that has been in use through the years. One of the more active pondok institutions that has maintained the use of the halaqah method is Madrasah Muhammadiyah, Pondok Sungai Durian, Kuala Krai, Kelantan. The objectives of this research is to study the implementation of the *halaqah* method in Islamic education and to review the implementation of the *halaqah* method at Madrasah Muhammadiyah, Pondok Sungai Durian, Kuala Krai, and Kelantan. This study uses the qualitative method that includes library and field research to compile the data needed. Library research refers to books, journal articles and proceeding papers. On the other hand, field research refers to observations and interviews with informants from Madrasah Muhammadiyah, Pondok Sungai Durian. The results of the study show that the *halaqah* method is still being used at Madrasah Muhammadiyah, Pondok Sungai Durian. Even in these changing times with the modernisation of the education system particularly Islamic education, the *halaqah* method seems to have a special place in Islamic education since the time of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). As a centre of Islamic education, the pondok learning institution and its many learning methods that has been preserved through the years has resulted in many renowned Islamic scholars. Besides that, the pondok learning institution also has contributed in terms of intellectual pursuits, missionary activities and the development of Islamic knowledge to the Muslim community through the years.

**Keywords:** Implementation, Halaqah, Islamic Education, Madrasah Muhammadiyah, Pondok Sungai Durian, Kuala Krai, Kelantan

## Introduction

The method of teaching and spreading knowledge has become a method of connecting the educators and students who are always interacting among themselves. Students get more knowledge and skill, develop attitude, gain interest and other values when teachers choose the right method. Method is a mean to reach the aim of teaching, yet there is no one size fits all teaching method (Ishak, 1995). The methodology or technique used in the teaching and learning process is important in ensuring students are interested in the subject matter and also are able to master and apply the knowledge that has been acquired particularly Islamic related knowledge. This is vital because the interest in Islamic studies is waning. The application of the appropriate teaching and learning method is crucial because it will help students to not only improve themselves but also pave the way in the development of a character that is dynamic, holistic, filled with integrity, and highly skilled in various aspects (Kasim, & Husain, 2008).

The institution of *pondok* was the earliest centre of studies founded in Malaysia and has become Malay-Islamic civilizational heritage in the field of education for generations. The contribution of this institution towards the expansion of knowledge and the spread of da'wah among the Muslim community in Malaysia has been significant since it was established. The institution has been receiving great support until now, which at the end leads to the acknowledgement of the institution of *pondok* as centre of Islamic education. This institution maintains the doctrine of Islamic teaching which relies on the *'aqidah* (faith) of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jamā'ah and the *fiqh* of madzhab as-Syāfi'ie which are practiced specifically by the Malaysians and the people of Archipelago in general.

This study is vital as it is regarded as an effort to investigate either the method of *halaqah* used by this institution is still valid in contributing towards the development of education at present, or not. Therefore, this study had analysed the implementation of this method in Madrasah Muhammadiyah, Pondok Sungai Durian, Kuala Krai, Kelantan. It was to confirm the survival and the continuity of the *pondok* institution in education especially in Kelantan, as well in Malaysia at large.

## The *Halaqah* Method in Islamic Education

The *umumi* method is the earliest method used in the Islamic education system and it was established by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). The characteristics of the *umumi* method include being opened to the general public, does not have a specific curriculum, the learning time is determined by the teacher and the learning venue or classroom is shared by all. The approach used is the *halaqah* method whereby the students will be seated around the teacher in a circle or semi-circle (Ismail, & Othman, 2015).

According to the *Mu'jam al-Wasit* dictionary, *halaqa* or *halqah* means a religious gathering or study circle whereby the students learn from the *halaqah* of a teacher. *Halaqah* can also be defined as a religious gathering conducted in *talaqqi* in a *halaqah* of a teacher (Anis, al-Sawalihi, Muntasar, Ahmad, 1972 ). However according to the *Munjid* dictionary, *halqah* or its plural form *halaqa* and *halaqat* means that an individual is learning in a group while seating in a circle (*al-Munjid fi al-Lughah wa al-Adab wa al-Ulum*, 1927).

Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) had used numerous methodologies or pedagogies in imparting Islamic knowledge to the Muslim community such as tutorials, lectures, narration,

question and answer and also activities (Jaafar, & Tamuri, 2012). The *halaqah* method was the first Islamic learning method established in 610 M by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) that focused on the development of good character in line with Islamic values and also upholding true Islamic teachings (Ahmad, 1984). This method was also used in the city of Makkah by Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) during the earlier stage of the spread of Islam. Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) had propagated the divine revelations to his close companions by using the *halaqah* method either at his own home or in the home of his companions. Among these companions was al-Arqam bin Abi al-Arqam. The home of al-Arqam bin Abi al-Arqam was a well-known *halaqah* among the companions in the earliest stage of the spread of Islam (Baharudin, Jailani, & Sumari, 2013). There is a hadith by the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) about the benefits of *halaqah* especially in religious gatherings. Some of the benefits include:

عَنْ أَنَسِ بْنِ مَالِكٍ رَضِيَ اللَّهُ عَنْهُ أَنَّ رَسُولَ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ قَالَ إِذَا مَرَزْتُمْ بِرِيَاضِ الْجَنَّةِ فَارْتَعُوا قَالُوا وَمَا رِيَاضُ الْجَنَّةِ قَالَ جِلْقُ الذِّكْرِ

Anas bin Malik [may Allah be pleased with him] narrated that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "When you pass by the gardens of Paradise, do it gladly." They said: "And what are the gardens of Paradise?" He said: "The circles of remembrance or *halaqah*." (Riwayat al-Tirmidzi, hadith no. 3510)

During the reign of Saidina Abu Bakar al-Siddiq (632-634 M), there was a rise in the development of Islamic knowledge in terms of the study of hadith particularly in Quranic interpretations of Islamic law. Moreover, during the reign of Saidina Umar al-Khattab (634-644 M), teachers were appointed to teach in the *halaqah* of mosques in Madinah, Basrah, Kufah dan Damsyik (Dalip, 2007). From the Umayyah until the Abbasiyyah period, Islamic scholars taught Islamic studies at mosques using the *halaqah* method. Islamic education developed and the propagation of Islam gradually increased with the rising number of students that led to the increase of *halaqah* at numerous mosques during those times. During the Umayyah period, Islamic education that centred on the *halaqah* method had been implemented at education centres such as kuttah and mosques (Anwar, 2015).

During the Abbasiyyah period, Imam Syafie (767-820 M) taught Islamic studies using the *halaqah* method at a mosque in west of Baghdad. The *halaqah* method used by Imam Syafie mainly focused on lectures, discussions and an exchange of views which in the end led to the birth of numerous religious scholars and intellectuals that continued with the legacy of imparting knowledge. Besides Imam Syafie, the *halaqah* method was also applied by Imam al-Ghazali, that used the *halaqah* method in his teaching sessions in a school that was built near his home. This is to enable his students to learn more deeply about Islam and also serve as a point of transit for *sufi* scholars (Yusof, 2013)

Generally, the teachers would conduct *halaqah* in the direction of the kiblat where the teacher usually sits down and leans against a pillar or a wall of the mosque. The teachers would also be in a state of focus and complete concentration, begin the lesson with *Basmalah*, praising Allah SWT and invoking blessings upon Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). After this is done, the *halaqah* session commences (Ishak, 1989), (Tamuri, & Yusoff, 2010). *Halaqah* is a learning method that requires students to be seated in a circle or semi-circle and this method was used in religious study centres particularly in Makkah in the past. There were also some *halaqah* where the teacher is seated in the centre and is the focus of the

students. In the beginning, the *halaqah* method was mainly used at Masjidil Haram and Masjid Nabawi and was integrated into the education system of the *pondok* institution in the Malay Archipelago (Hayimasae, 2013) (Hamid, 2010).

Students were given the freedom to choose which *halaqah* they liked and this method reflects that students were not being forced to join a particular *halaqah* taught by certain teachers. The students would be divided into certain groups and would normally be seated in a circle during the learning session which were conducted in mosques. They would also fully concentrate and take notes on the topics discussed during these sessions (Abdullah, L., 2011). The *halaqah* method is one of the best teaching and learning method that is most suited for studying collectively (Shirin, Islam, & Islam, 2014). Although there are more modern Islamic religious institutions such as the madrasah and university, the *halaqah* method is still being applied today in the Islamic education system in mosques of Muslim countries (Baharudin, Jailani, & Sumari, 2013).

The *halaqah* method is practised in the *pondok* learning institution in the Malay Archipelago as the main teaching and learning method in its education system. The *pondok* system in Malaysia is a learning method where students would be sitting in a circle with their books or texts while the teacher is sitting in the middle. This system has been in place since Islam was revealed and the term *halaqah* is used to refer to students in a study circle with the teacher being the focus (Osman, & Deraman, 2000). Through the use of the *halaqah* method, the teacher will teach while referring to religious texts and the students would be diligently taking notes and focusing on what was being taught (Zin, 2005). The students would make notes on the left and right column of the text that is referred to as *dhabit*. Upon completing the lesson with a particular text, the teacher will start using a different text for the next lesson without conducting any tests or revision of the previous text. The medium of instruction used at the time was the Malay language and the local language although the religious texts were in the Arabic language (Bakar, 1992). The *pondok* institution has become the centre of knowledge which disseminates knowledge and upholds Islamic traditions which inevitably became the focus of the local community. Therefore the lives of the community generally experienced a tremendous change and gradually developed (Mohammad, 2008).

### Research Methodology

This study is based on the qualitative method that focuses on the analysis of documents, observations and interviews. The document analysis includes a careful examination of books, journals, theses and proceedings. Besides that, the researcher also conducted an observation of the research area to gain more accurate data about the respondents. Through these observations, it allowed the researcher to get close to the respondents freely and openly while gathering the much needed data for the study (Masri, 2005). The observation technique being used was participant observation that allows the identification of the subject of the study as proposed by Denzin and Lincoln. The researcher is able to insinuate into the group of informants with their consent and observe the real situation (Darussalam, & Hussin, 2016). On the other hand, interviews were conducted to gain information based on facts, trust, feelings and needs of the research in question (Konting, 2000). A semi-structured interview was conducted where the questions were prepared in advance. This would allow the researcher the freedom to adapt the questions according to the situation and gain the desired response from the respondents. The questions in semi-structure interviews can be added, reduced, modified and arranged in a

way that will enable the respondents to fully understand the question being asked (Piau, 2011).

Madrasah Muhammadiyah, Pondok Sungai Durian, Kuala Krai, Kelantan (Mmpsd)

Pondok is increasingly gaining support from the society, local and abroad, even around Indonesia, witnessing its strong role as a centre of education and da'wah (Noor, 2015). Part of the society are still believe that pondok is the right institution to develop Islamic values and to strengthen soft skills among its students (Ismail, 2016). The development of pondok in Kelantan was supported by the expansion of Islam and the Islamic environment occurred in Kelantan as the centre of knowledge from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. It had become the most influential institution during the moment (Jamsari, Yaakob, Mujani, Sulaiman, & Jusoff, 2011).

Madrasah Muhammadiyah, Pondok Sungai Durian (MMPSD) is the oldest pondok in Hulu Kelantan well-known as centre of knowledge and the widespread of Islamic knowledge particularly in Kelantan and Malaysia in general. MMPSD is known as Pondok Tuan Guru Haji Abdul Rahman, or its full name is Madrasah Muhammadiyah Pondok Sungai Durian. It is located in the district of Kuala Krai, Kelantan. PSD is registered under *Majlis Agama Islam dan Adat Istiadat Melayu Kelantan* (MAIK) (The Council of the Religion of Islam and Malay Custom), 365/68 (MAIK Paper). The distance from this *pondok* to Kuala Krai is about 4 kilometres, whereas its distance with the capital city of Kelantan, which is Kota Bharu, is 66 kilometre.

This *pondok* was established on the 4<sup>th</sup> of June 1958 in Kampung Sungai Durian by Sulaiman (1923-1988). At the beginning, it was operated in Guchil, Kuala Krai in the year of 1957. As the number of children kept on increasing and the location was not suitable for pondok education, therefore, MMPSD was moved to Sungai Durian which was built on the 4-acre land of Tuan Guru Haji Abdul Rahman. At present, the area has been expanded to 12 acres with the effort from the neighbours of this pondok who have spent on the land. MMPSD keeps on developing and now the number of the buildings built for this pondok has reached 700 (<http://www.pondoksgdurian.com>).

The expenditure to manage and to build the infrastructure of the MMPSD is funded by the fee, donations from individuals, the society, and particular people. It has received the award of the best *pondok* (first place) from *Jabatan Hal Ehwal Agama Islam Negeri Kelantan* (Kelantan Department of Islamic Affairs) in conjunction with the celebration of *Ma'al Hijrah* at the national level of Kelantan in the year of 2001, 2002, 2003 and 2008 (<http://www.pondoksgdurian.com>). The total number of the PSD students recorded in 2018 is illustrated in the following Table 1.

Table 1.  
Number of MMPSD Students in 2018

Types of Students	No of students
Pondok	300
Tahfiz	40
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>340</b>

Source: PSD Administration Office



**The *Halaqah* Method at Madrasah Muhammadiyah, Pondok Sungai Durian (Mmpsd)**

The teaching and learning system at pondok institution are divided into two modes which are general (*umumi*) and specific (*nizami*). The learning method being applied is the *halaqah* method whereby the teacher will be reading the religious text and the students will conduct *dhabit* related to the lesson being discussed at the moment (Nor, 2004) (Abdullah, 2011). Based on the *halaqah* method, the students will be sitting in a cross-legged position in front of the teacher while the latter will be reading from a religious text and lecturing the former based on the contents of the said text.

The learning approach as applied in MMPSD Durian is divided into modern (*nizami*) and traditional system (*'umumi*). The spark of this idea came from al-Marhum Tuan Guru Haji Abdul Rahman himself to improvise and develop pondok education. MMPSD has transformed the education system through the practice of modern education system, yet the traditional identity of pondok has not been neglected. As Tuan Guru Dato' Rahman (2009), the *Musyrif* of PSD mentioned:

"Even though modern education has entered pondok, it cannot violate its tradition, which is the pondok style. On the other hand, the presence of formal educational institutions is intended to reinforce existing tradition, known as pondok modern education. Change is an *islah* without losing the special features of the pondok. "

In MMPSD, the method of *halaqah* (circle) is applied only during *'umumi* learning. As mentioned in the following transcription:

"For your information, MMPSD has practiced two types of teaching approaches which are the method of *halaqah* and the classroom. The *halaqah* method is opened to all students and the public, meanwhile, the classroom method is prepared only for students who have registered as pondok students."

(inf1/G1/Tbl/Kh.PSD/19/7/2017)

The traditional learning system in pondok is known as the *'umumi* learning through the method of *halaqah* is guided by a teacher based on the syllabus and particular text (*kitab*) is referred. The *umumi* learning system is where the students are given the freedom to learn as much as they can from the religious text and also based on their own individual interests. However, the students are required to learn the religious texts that are fundamental according to the pondok learning institution. The general learning system is being applied at the Muhammadiyah Mosque. Through this method, students form a *halaqah* led by a teacher or the students follow the learning in general with the guidance of a teacher who teaches based on particular text (*kitab*). This kind of traditional method has been prioritized by the administrator of MMPSD because this system is found to have successfully produced brilliant new generations. The students learn from the work from the past written by scholars of the Archipelago and the Middle East. The learning session starts after the daily prayers in the mosque of MMPSD based on the scheduled timetable (Hassan, H., 2008). It is open to the public and made compulsion to all *nizami* and *tahfiz* students of MMPSD. The class begins after the *rawatib* prayer every day except after Zuhur because it is allocated as recess time. The learning style of *'umumi* is through reading of the *kitab* from the beginning to the ending of the class. All students need to memorize the *mataan* and they must let the teacher listen

to the memorization. The *kulliyah* after the *Isya'* prayer was attended by 30 students, only those higher level students (Yaacob, Y., Interview, 19<sup>th</sup> of July, 2017). The syllabus is determined by the *pondok* administrator. Priority is given to the study of classical text (*kitab*) produced by great scholars either in the language of Malay-Jawi or the Arabic Language. Among them are *Safwah al-Tafsir*, *Tafsir al-Nasafi*, *Tafsir al-Baidhawi* (*Tafseer*), *Iqna'*, *Mahalli*, *Sullam al-Mubtadi*, *Bughyah al-Tullab*, *Matla' al-Badrain wa Majma'a al-Bahrain*, *Munniyat al-Musalli* (*Fiqh*), *Sirah al-Nabawiyyah Ibnu Hisyam* (*Seerah*), *Ihya' 'Ulumiddin*, *Kitab Hikam*, *Sair al-Salikin* (*Tasawwuf*) and *al-Duur al-Thamin* (*'Aqidah*).

From the observation, the *halaqah* study has gone through several transformations. One of it is that the study of *fiqh* does not only focus on the use of the *turaath kitaab* like other *pondok*, yet PSD also uses current and contemporary *kitaab* as the main reference in the *halaqah* of 'umumi study, for example the *kitab* of *Fiqh al-Mu'tamad* by Prof. Dr. Muhammad al-Zuhaili. This transformation, shows the openness of *pondok* curriculum towards the spark of ideas based on current knowledge. The following interview has clarified this:

"Regarding to the use of modern *kitab* other than the *turaath*, I would say I agree because the study in *pondok* also needs modern *kitab*... just like *Pondok Sungai Durian* which has combined the use of the *turaath* and the modern *kitab*."

(inf2/G2/Tbl/Kh.PSD/7/8/2018)

The *pondok* teachers also have translated and *tahqiq* (verify) the classical *kitaab* and have improvised the content through the aspects of grammar, explanation of the content, the effort of *takhrij hadith* (the extraction and authentication of Hadith), and the commentary of the scholars based on different sources. Among them are the *kitaab* of *Munyatul Musalli* (*Fiqh*) and *Penawar Bagi Hati* (translation: The Remedy for The Heart) (*Tasawwuf*) which were *tahqiq* by Tuan Guru Dato' Dr. Ab. Basit Ab. Rahman, the *Musyrif* of *Pondok Sungai Durian*, Kuala Krai, Kelantan. All these efforts have demonstrated that this *pondok* is putting effort to compete with current development and needs. Furthermore, with the emergence of problems pertaining to the matters of '*aqidah* (Islamic creed) and *hukm* (Islamic law), solutions are needed through thinking and critical idea brainstormed through the sources of Islam made by the Islamic scholars and students of religious studies particularly the *pondok* students. The institution of *pondok* through the method of *halaqah* plays vital role in providing explanation and information based on current issues so that peaceful Islam can be guaranteed, for example, in the matter of *bid'ah* (heresy), '*aqidah* such as the matter of *Syi'ah*, and other ambiguities in the *fiqh* law pertaining to the concept of *mu'amalah*, such as the banking system.

#### **The Observation Chart of the Halaqah Method at MMPSD**

Wednesday, 14 <sup>th</sup> May 2017, 3.45-4.35 p.m. at MMPSD Mosque	
Observation	Comments of the Observer

<p>-There are about 120 students that comprise of male and female students and just one teacher.</p> <p>-The halaqah was conducted in the mosque</p> <p>-The mosque is located in front of the administrative building, class building, student hostel and faces the entrance to the MMPSD, Kuala Krai, Kelantan. The mosque is a landmark when entering the MMPSD. This mosque is a newly renovated building. The mosque is also located near to the home of Allahyarham Tuan Guru Haji Abdul Rahman B. Sulaiman. It is a double-storey mosque and can accommodate around 3000 people's and used for Friday prayers. Inside the mosque there is a fully-carpeted prayer area with several racks of al-Quran. The prayer room also has air conditioning and there is Moroccan pattern carving in the <i>mihrab</i>. Outside the mosque is also a space for prayers with mosaics. This mosque is equipped with an efficient sound system.</p>	<p>- The learning method being applied is the <i>umumi</i> method.</p> <p>-The teacher is right in front and close to the pulpit. He refers to the Fiqh text and uses a loudspeaker to make the teaching more effective. The teacher puts the text on a small table</p> <p>- Students form a <i>halaqah</i> where they are closely seated in a cross-legged position facing the teacher in a semi-circle while referring to their respective texts.</p> <p>- Some students position their text on their lap, the floor and the <i>rehal</i> while doing the <i>dhabit</i> in full concentration.</p> <p>- The teacher explained the contents of the text explicitly line by line.</p> <p>- The students paid full attention to their teacher.</p> <p>- The teacher give an example in order to make students understanding to the topic.</p> <p>-Before <i>halaqah</i> ended, the teacher open a session to the students for asking a question related about the topic</p> <p>-The <i>halaqah</i> ran smoothly without any problems</p>
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1<sup>st</sup> Observation Chart: ( Lebar, O., 2017 )

Wednesday, 9 <sup>th</sup> August 2017, 8.00-8.40 p.m.,9.00-9.35 p.m. at MMPSD Mosque	
Observation	Comments by the Observer



- There are about 200 students that comprise of male and female students and public with just one teacher.

-The halaqah was conducted in the mosque

-The mosque is located in front of the administrative building, class building, student hostel and faces the entrance to the MMPSD, Kuala Krai, Kelantan. The mosque is a landmark when entering the MMPSD. This mosque is a newly renovated building. The mosque is also located near to the home of Allahyarham Tuan Guru Haji Abdul Rahman B. Sulaiman. It is a double-storey mosque and can accommodate around 3000 people's and used for Friday prayers. Inside the mosque there is a fully-carpeted prayer area with several racks of al-Quran. The prayer room also has air conditioning and there is Moroccan pattern carving in the *mihrab*. Outside the mosque is also a space for prayers with mosaics. This mosque is equipped with an efficient sound system.

- The learning method being applied is the *umumi* method

-The teacher is right in front and close to the pulpit. He refers to the Fiqh Syafie text and uses a loudspeaker to make the teaching more effective. The teacher puts the text on a small table.

-This session is also recorded and held live on Facebook

- Students form a halaqah where they are closely seated in a cross-legged position facing the teacher in a semi-circle while referring to their respective texts.

-Some students position their text on their lap, the floor and the *rehal* while doing the *dhabit* in full concentration.

- The teacher explained the contents of the text explicitly line by line

- The students paid full attention to their teacher.

- The teacher give a dominant example in order to make students understanding to the topic.

-The teacher instructs students to write an important and relevant terms in that session

-When *halaqah* ended, the teacher give a *selawat* to Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and announce that the lessons will be continue to the next session

-*Halaqah* ended without question and answer session

	- The halaqah ran smoothly without any problems
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2<sup>nd</sup> Observation Chart: ( Lebar, O., 2017 )

#### 4.2 Matters related to the Implementation of the Halaqah Method at MMPSD

NO.	EVENTS THAT TOOK PLACE DURING THE OBSERVATION	FREQUENCY		
		REALLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE
1.	Students and teachers were punctual for the <i>halaqah</i>		√	
2.	The teacher recited a prayer, surah al-Fatihah and invoked blessings upon Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) before the start of the halaqah to get the blessings from Allah.	√		
3.	The students are seated on the floor in a semi-circle or circle while being guided by their teacher.	√		
4.	Students and teachers have their own religious text to refer to during the learning session.	√		
5.	The teacher will revise the previous lesson before proceeding with the lesson at hand.		√	
6.	The teacher explains the contents of the text explicitly while elaborating its meaning.	√		
7.	The students paid full attention to their text while their teacher was reading the text.		√	
8.	The students had done dhabit in their note book or text based on the elaboration done by their teacher.		√	
9.	The students paid full attention during the <i>halaqah</i> learning session.		√	

10.	Students are well-mannered and show great respect to their teacher during the <i>halaqah</i> session.	✓		
11.	There were students who were seen to be chit-chatting or sleeping during the <i>halaqah</i> session.		✓	
12.	There was interaction between the teacher and students where students asked a lot of questions during the <i>halaqah</i> .			✓
13.	There was a question and answer session after the <i>halaqah</i> ended.		✓	
14.	Teaching aids were used during the <i>halaqah</i> session.	.	✓	
15.	In general, students paid full attention to their lessons during the <i>halaqah</i> session.	✓		

## Conclusion

The *pondok* institution still has an important role in Malaysia especially in Kelantan because it is the one of important centre for Islamic education nowadays. A traditional method such as the *halaqah* still practiced in the teaching and learning process in the *pondok* even in these modern times. Although times have changed and numerous innovations in the teaching and learning method have been made, the *halaqah* method is still deemed appropriate in the modern education system. MMPSD is one of the *pondok* learning institutions that is still using the *halaqah* method in education system. MMPSD have taken a few steps to modernize in teaching and learning system but the modernization process does not ignore the traditional system such as the *halaqah* and *talaqqi*. The learning of the *turath* text in Jawi or Arabic is still conducted using this teaching and learning method. These methods of study has remained in the system for generations and become the identity of the *pondok* institution.

The importance of conducting this study can be seen through the contributions of the *pondok* institution in generating development for education and knowledge. This matter is considered crucial when the institution has successfully produced students who are knowledge-wised, yet are not mastering knowledge for the sake of getting worldly reward. Moreover, this institution is seen capable to internalise good personal values through methods of education applied by the teachers, and one of them is the method of *halaqah*. The acceptance of entities within *pondok* towards education system being practiced by this institution, including the use of the method of *halaqah* in learning system, should be understood and investigated, even though the system has undergone changes and improvements to suit current needs. This study concluded that the method of *halaqah* is still

relevant to be applied in present education system, although modern trends have greatly altered the educational system in practice to suit the reality of the present world.

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**Interviews**

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