

PEOPLE CHANGE WITHIN THREE DAYS: KHURŪJ AND CHARACTER EDUCATION AMONG TABLIGHI FOLLOWERS IN LOMBOK ISLAND

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Abstract: The Tablighi Jamaat is a *da'wah* movement that seeks to invite Muslims to return to the pure practice of Islam, with the primary goal being to awaken the spiritual spirit in every Muslim, personally and collectively. Since its presence on the Indian mainland a few decades ago, the Tablighi Jama'at has become the world's most influential global *da'wah* movement. Indonesia, the largest Muslim-majority country in the world, is one of the bases of this movement. This article examines how the Tablighi Jama'at wins huge and loyal followers among the Muslim community in Indonesia. This study focus on revealing a character-building model carried out by the movement in Lombok Island, Indonesia, through one of its essential activities called *khurūj fi sabil Allāh*. The author has conducted field research and collected data through participant observation, interviews, and documentation. This study finds that the character-building model performed in *khurūj* consists of four components: literature or teaching materials, practices, a conducive environment, and evaluations through deliberation. This study argues that the *khurūj* can change people's character in a relatively short time.

Keywords: Tablighi Jamaat; *khurūj*; character-building; Lombok.

Introduction

This paper describes the models for the character formation of Tablighi Jamaat, a transnational Islamic movement founded in 1345/1926 by Shaykh Muḥammad Ilyās b. Muḥammad Ismā'īl al-Kandahlawī. The word “al-Kandalawī” is taken from his hometown called Kandala in Saharanpur, India. He was born in

1303/1885 and spent his childhood in Kandala. Then he, with his parents, lived in Nizamuddin district which later became the headquarters of Tablighi Jamaat.¹

In Indonesia, the *da'wah* activities of the Tablighi Jamaat have been quite successful. It won huge followers across the country. One of the places in the country where the Tablighi *da'wah* is growing fast is in Lombok Island, West Nusa Tenggara Province. In a short time, Tablighi Jamaat can be said to have coloured the pattern of religious diversity in the Muslim community in the island. Its thousands of members are scattered throughout the island, in urban-rural-coastal areas, mountain slopes, or even remote areas. Besides, they are found in almost all the mosques the researcher has visited.² In some degree, they are success in prospering mosques, reviving *da'wah*, upholding the Prophet's Sunna, encouraging the community to pray five times a day, and so on. As if tireless, they do *da'wah* anytime, anywhere, and to anyone they meet.³

This “growing-fast” phenomenon could not seemingly be separated from the fact that how the Tablighi Jamaat shaped the character of their followers in relatively short time. More precisely, they need only three days in changing or building character of their followers coming from any background. Character is a universal value of human behaviour that includes all human activities relating to God, himself, fellow humans, and the environment, manifested in thoughts, attitudes, feelings, words, and actions based on norms.⁴

¹ Uswatun Hasanah, “Jamaah Tabligh I (Sejarah dan Perkembangan),” *El-Afkar: Jurnal Pemikiran Keislaman dan Tafsir Hadis*, Vol. 6 No. 1 (2017), 1-10.

² Observations, Lombok Timur, February 15, 2019.

³ Observations, Lombok Timur, March 1, 2019.

⁴ Samrin, “Pendidikan Karakter (Sebuah Pendekatan Nilai),” *Al-Ta'dib: Jurnal Kajian Ilmu Kependidikan*, Vol. 9 No. 1 (2016), 120-143. By this definition, a character is identical to ethics and morals, a trait embedded in the soul that causes various kinds of actions quickly and easily without needing reflection and care. Ibrāhīm Anīs, *al-Mu'jam al-Wasīf* (Cairo: Dār al-Ma'ārif, 1972), 202. Abū Hāmid al-Ghazālī, *Ihyā' 'Ulūm al-Dīn*, Vol. 3 (Beirut: Dār al-Fikr, n.d.), 56; Abuddin Nata, *Akhlak Tasawuf dan Karakter Mulia* (Depok: PT. Rajagrafindo Persada, 2015), 2-3; Anas Salahudin and Irwanto Alkrienciehie, *Pendidikan Karakter: Pendidikan Berbasis Agama dan Budaya Bangsa* (Bandung: CV. Pustaka Setia, 2013), 42.

Pay attention to what happened to followers namely Rd, MS, and Rj.⁵ They were previously robbers, thieves, drunks, pickpockets and did various other crimes. They also did not perform prayers, fasting and other rituals of worship. One time they met one of the Tablighi members, then communicated and finally became Tablighi members.⁶ In a short time, the new followers have shown changes, especially concerning obedience in worshipping Allah. They have been diligent in praying five times a day at the beginning of time, polite, kind, gentle, friendly, and patient. Including the way of dressing, there has been a change from previously not wearing a cap to wearing a cap, from wearing ordinary clothes and pants to wearing typical Tablighi Jamaat clothes such as a robe, a turban, and a round white cap.⁷ Likewise, the ‘drastic character formation’ applied to civil servants, soldiers, police, businessmen, traders, farmers, fishermen, *ustadh*, or even master teachers like Jm, Us, Si, Mk, Ip, Ag, only in a few days after their espousal to Tablighi Jamaat.⁸

Based on the above phenomenon, character formation is essential in the development of Tablighi Jamaat in the community. Unfortunately, many scholarly works on Tablighi Jamaat often ignore character formation. Tablighi movement has been studied in the matter of its communication models, application of teaching values, *da'wah* strategy, formation of the early childhood character, influence in community development, and character of its *da'wah* as reflected in such work titles as “Model Komunikasi Dakwah Jamaah Tabligh” by Ujang Saepuloh,⁹ “Jamaah Tabligh dalam Perspektif Psikologis” by Siti Zulaiha,¹⁰ “Interaksi Sosial Jamaah Tabligh di Kota Malang (Studi tentang Interaksi Sosial Jamaah Tabligh di Masjid Pelma dan Ponpes Jami’urrahman Malang)” by

⁵ Residents of Lombok.

⁶ Observations; interview with Ilham, Lombok Timur, January 13, 2019.

⁷ Observations, Mataram, October 10, 2020.

⁸ Observations in early 2019; Ujang Saepuloh, “Model Komunikasi Dakwah Jamaah Tabligh,” *Jurnal Ilmu Dakwah*, Vol. 4, No. 14 (2009), 657-688.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Siti Zulaiha, “Jamaah Tabligh dalam Perspektif Psikologis,” *Fokus: Jurnal Kajian Keislaman dan Kemasyarakatan*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (2016), 101-118.

Haris Mahdi,¹¹ “Keberadaan Kelompok Jamaah Tabligh dan Reaksi Masyarakat: Perspektif Teori Penyebaran Informasi dan Pengaruh” by Umdatul Hasanah,¹² “Strategi Dakwah Jamaah Tabligh dalam Realitas Konflik Sosial di Kecamatan Masamba Kabupaten Luwu Utara” by Abdin Subu et al.,¹³ “Strategi Dakwah Gerakan Jamaah Tabligh di Kota Pancor” by M. Zainul Asror,¹⁴ and “Pengaruh Dakwah Jamaah Tabligh terhadap Pembangunan Masyarakat Muslim di Lombok sejak Tahun 2011-2016” by M. Zaki Abdillah.¹⁵

Looking at the titles above, it is clear that no one discussed the character formation process among Tablighi Jamaat. Therefore, different from them, this study aims to elaborate the character building conducted among the Tablighi Jamaat through three-days *khuruj*. This study argues that the character-building process in the Tablighi Jamaat can be completed within three-days *khuruj*, contrary to the experts’ opinions so far which states that forming a character take time and long process. In carrying out this study, the author has conducted in-depth research using a qualitative approach with data collection techniques of participatory observation, qualitative interviews, and documentation among the Tablighi Jamaat in Lombok Island, West Nusa Tenggara Province.

This study will begin the discussion by elaborating on the character-building process within the three-days *khuruj* of the Tablighi Jamaat, contrasting with, even breaking, the well-known theories on character-building. Then, this study compares the character-building conducted in the Tablighi Jamaat with that

¹¹ Haris Mahdi, “Interaksi Sosial Jamaah Tabligh di Kota Malang (Studi tentang Interaksi Sosial Jamaah Tabligh di Masjid Pelma dan Ponpes Jami’urrahman Malang),” *Al-Qudwah: Jurnal Integrasi Sains dan Islam* (2007).

¹² Umdatul Hasanah, “Keberadaan Kelompok Jamaah Tabligh dan Reaksi Masyarakat: Perspektif Teori Penyebaran Informasi dan Pengaruh,” *Jurnal Indo-Islamika*, Vol. 4, No. 1 (2014), 21-40.

¹³ Abdin Subu, Arifuddin and Usman Jasad, “Strategi Dakwah Jamaah Tabligh dalam Realitas Konflik Sosial di Kecamatan Masamba Kabupaten Luwu Utara,” *Jurnal Diskursus Islam*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (April 2017), 30-42.

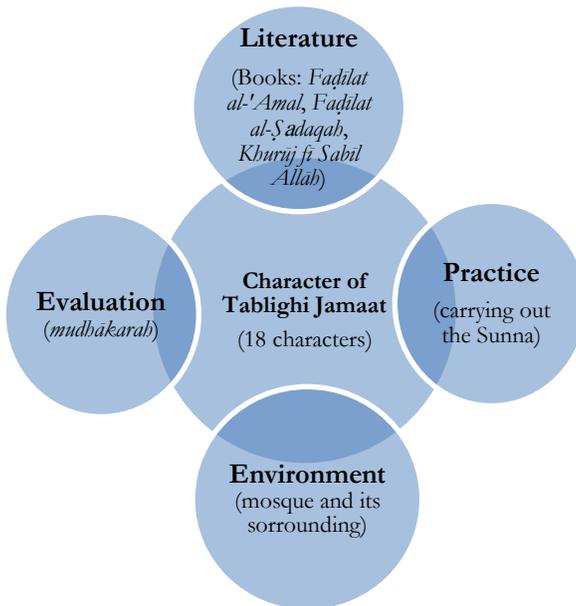
¹⁴ M. Zainul Asror, “Strategi Dakwah Gerakan Jamaah Tabligh di Kota Pancor,” *Sosio Edukasi: Jurnal Studi Masyarakat dan Pendidikan*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (December, 2018), 39-45.

¹⁵ M. Zaki Abdillah, “Pengaruh Dakwah Jamaah Tabligh terhadap Pembangunan Masyarakat Muslim di Lombok sejak Tahun 2011-2016,” *Jurnal Al-I’lam: Jurnal Komunikasi dan Penyiaran Islam*, Vol. 1, No. 2 (March, 2018), 1-16.

developed by experts. Finally, this paper concludes that Tablighi Jamaat's character-building was successfully carried out in only a short time or within three-days *khurūj*.

***Khurūj* and Character Building**

The reason why Tablighi Jamaat can form the character of its members in a relatively short period of time has been found in their series of activities called *khurūj fi sabīl Allāh* (hereafter called *khurūj*). *Khurūj* means spending time in Allah's matters using wealth, moving from one place to another, from one mosque to another around the world, to establish *ṣilat al-raḥm* (informal gathering) in the framework of *da'wah* and *tabligh*.¹⁶ *Khurūj* has four important method components that cannot be separated each other: literature or teaching materials, practice, environment and evaluation. These four method components are none other than essential part of the character formation model developed by Tablighi Jamaat, as pointed out by below figure:



¹⁶ An Nadhr M. Ishaq Shahab, *Khurūj Fi Sabīlillāh; Sarana Tarbiyah Ummat untuk Membentuk Sifat Imaniyah* (Bandung: Pustaka Ramadhan, 2010), 318-319.

Literary Components

The literature the author refers to here is teaching or study materials during *keburūj* activities. There are three main kinds of literature used as references by Tablighi Jamaat in the *keburūj*. The first is the book *Faḍīlat al-‘Amal* of Muḥammad Zakariyyā al-Kandahlawī. This book consists of seven chapters and 26 subchapters displaying the stories of the Companions of the Prophet in terms of their fear of Allah, impeachment, righteousness, passion and love for *kebusū‘* and *kebudū‘* prayer, as well as compassion and spending wealth in the way of Allah (*fi sabīl Allāh*).¹⁷

The second literature is *Faḍīlat al-Ṣadaqah* by Maulānā Muḥammad Zakariyyā al-Kandahlawī. This book consists of seven chapters and 12 subchapters, consisting of discussion about the verses of the Qur’ān on the priority of unfaithful property and Ḥadīths about the priority of donating property in religious matters. It is concluded by a sub-theme on the issue of *ḡubd*, *qanā‘ah* and urges not to ask others.

The third reference is *Khurūj fi Sabīlillāh* by An Nadhr M. Ishaq Shahab. This book consists of six chapters. Chapter One, titled “The Umma of the Prophet Muḥammad,” elaborates on the importance of *da‘wah*. Chapter Two, “*Asas wa Uṣūl al-Da‘wah*,” talks about the principles of *dā‘ī* (preachers), the properties of *dā‘ī*, *uṣūl* (the rules) and the target of *da‘wah*. Chapter Three, “Six Characteristics of Friends,” comprises the explanation of the word *Lā Ilāha Illā Allāh Muḥammad Rasūl Allāh*, *kebusū‘ wa al-kebudū‘* prayer, the science of *ma‘a dhikr*, *ikrām al-Muslimīn*, *taṣṣīb al-niyyah*, and *da‘wah wa al-tablīgh*. Chapter Five, “*Adab wa Sunnah*,” has such several points as *adab* of an Amir, *ṣilat al-raḥm* (to *ulamā‘* [scholars], *umara‘* [government], *aghniyā‘* [rich people], *dbu‘afā‘* [poor people], and fellow *da‘wah* proponents), *jawlah* (a kind of *ṣilat al-raḥm* around society, door-to-door, to deliver religious messages), and daily activities (of travel, going to mosque, deliberation, *ta‘līm wa al-ta‘allum*, eat and drink, sleep, *istinjā‘*, cutting nails, siwak, dressing and makeup, shaved moustache and lengthen beard, and praying). Chapter Six is “*Mudhākarat Da‘wah*,” consisting of seven

¹⁷ See Muhammad Zakariyya Al-Kandahlawi, *Kitab Fadhilah Amal* (Yogyakarta: Ash-Syaff, tt).

points, namely: Allah as Creator and Custodian of all creatures, the world as a place of trial, the love of Allah to His servants, the atmosphere and circumstances changed by human practice, religion that will exist in man if cultivated, faith and *'amal ṣāliḥ*, faith that will be in us if sought, the word *Lā Ilāha Illā Allāh* as the foundation of all worship, and the belief that will be formed by *da'wah*.

During the implementation of *khurūj*, every word and deed of the the Tablighi members must refer to the three books mentioned above. However, if one member did not read the books, he could learn from their fellow *khurūj* entourage in every program they conducted. The program includes *bayān hidāyah* (conducted before leaving for *khurūj*), *bayān majlis* (after Maghrib and Ṣubḥ prayer at the location of *khurūj*), *mudhākarah* (after Ṣubḥ, Zuhr, and 'Aṣr prayer or if there is free time), *mushāwarah* (namely deliberation after Ṣubḥ), *ta'lim* (after Zuhr, 'Aṣr and 'Ishā'), *jawlah* (in the morning and evening), and *bayān wabsy* (right before returning home).¹⁸

Bayān Hidāyah

One of the essential preparations that, therefore, must be carried out before leaving for *khurūj* is *bayān hidāyah*. *Bayān* means 'religious talk or speech,' while *hidāyah* means 'guidance.' All Tablighi members going for *khurūj* must be guided through this *bayān*.¹⁹ The contents of the *bayān* are about travel, the principles of *da'wah*, and the orderly *da'wah*.²⁰ The *bayān* conveys the general picture or the circumstances of the location to be addressed. The essence of the *bayān* is the advice before starting or leaving for *khurūj*.²¹ The members usually depart together with each *ḥalaqah*. Each *ḥalaqah* has one person in charge called Amir, who has to guide others in the *ḥalaqah* and is usually the senior

¹⁸ Observation of the *khurūj* during November 2020-March 29, 2021.

¹⁹ The city that explains ushul-ushul and orderly *da'wah* and tabligh when going to move or before going out in the way of Allah SWT. Perform a work program according to the instructions, not according to experience. Shahab, *Khurūj Fi Sabīlillah*, 316.

²⁰ Observations, Mataram, October 16, 2020

²¹ Observations, Lombok Barat, Juni 7, 2020

member of the *halaqah*.²² *Bayān Hidāyah* is taught by one of the Shuro or assigned by the Shuro, and is carried out on Friday night (*laylat al-ijtima'*) so that the members may leave for their respective *khuruj* destination on Friday morning.²³

Bayān Majlis

When the members were accepted at the intended mosque, the programs were one by one implemented, one of which was a religious lecture to explain the purpose of the *da'wah* or called *bayān majlis*. It will be conducted right after Maghrib and Ṣubḥ prayer. The conveyed *bayān majlis* materials include, firstly, the belief in the power of Allah and the Sunna as the only source of glory. In this respect, the topic discussion usually goes on the *kalimah tayyibah*. Secondly, improving the prayer so it reaches its essence as the Prophet prayed. Thirdly, *'ilm ma'a dhikr* (the science along with remembrance). The two should not be separated because knowledge without remembrance would be in vain, while remembrance without knowledge would be lost. Fourthly, *ikrām al-muslimin* (glorifying Muslims) or fulfilling fellow Muslims' rights without expecting our rights to be fulfilled. Fifthly, *tashih al-niyah* (correcting intentions), namely doing charity solely because of Allah by clearing any purpose that will be able to damage the charity. Sixthly, *da'wah wa al-tabligh*, an attempt to improve oneself to create a perfect religion (*imāniyah*, *'ubūdiyyah*, *mu'āmalah*, *mu'āsharah*, and morals) in oneself, family and people throughout the world, using possessions, self and time under the commandments of Allah and His Messenger.

Every lecture always ends with *tashkīl*²⁴ to invite people to increase sacrifice as much as possible to go to the whole world to preach.²⁵ Some of the manners in giving the lecture are:

- 1) All speech leads to kindness.
- 2) Avoiding wasted talk.

²² Observations, Lombok Tengah, November 20, 2020.

²³ Observations, Mataram, October 05, 2020

²⁴ *Tashkīl* is to persuade or invite people by giving encouragement and information to spend time in Allah's matters. Shahab, *Khuruj Fi Sabilillah*, 320; Partisipatory observations during November-December 2020.

²⁵ Shahab, *Khuruj Fi Sabilillah*, 316; participatory observations during November-December 2020.

- 3) Talk does not lead to subtlety.
- 4) It does not lead to abomination, reproach, or a curse.
- 5) The conversation does not contain insults or harassment.
- 6) It does not defame a Muslim.
- 7) The conversation does not contain hostility or *ghibab*.
- 8) The conversation does not contain lies.
- 9) His words were clear, wordless, and easy to understand.
- 10) Not joking or intentionally making others laugh.
- 11) It shows no pride for others to think of being eloquent.
- 12) It does not invite heated debate.
- 13) Repeating conversations that are important to know.
- 14) Deliver the good news.
- 15) Knowing the condition (*aḥwāl*) of a person or society, so as not to make them bored or cause slander.
- 16) Do not praise the wicked.
- 17) *Mubayyin* and *mustami'* came face to face, and sat tightly.
- 18) Proclaim the afterlife, the grave, the day of hereafter, heaven, and hell.²⁶

The responsibility for the *bayān* goes to some of the Tablighi members that have been assigned through *mushāwarah*. They take turns in charge of delivering the lectures.

Mudhākarah

In addition to lectures, another program is *mudhākarah*.²⁷ It is one of the routine activities carried out by the Tablighi Jamaat in *khuruj*. It is carried out right after Ishā', Ṣubḥ, Zuhr, and 'Aṣr prayer. An Amir leads *mudhākarah* by forming a semicircle. Then he opens the *mudhākarah* by praying together, then displays *faḍīlah* (benefits of) *mudhākarah* when it begins.

The Amir always calls for the proposal of all *mudhākarah* participants as to what theme or topic it would go to. When all participants had proposed the theme, the Amir then recited *ṣalawāt* to the Prophet and determined one of the themes that would be used as a *mudhākarah* theme. Participants whose proposals were accepted said *astaghfir Allāh al-'Aẓīm*, feared because the proposal

²⁶ Shahab, *Khuruj Fi Sabilillah*, 162-171.

²⁷ *Mudhākarah* in the opinion of Tablighi Jamaat is reminding each other to practice together.

may bring *mudārāt* (disadvantages) for others and whose proposal was not accepted pronounced *al-ḥamd li Allāh Rabb al-‘Ālamīn*.²⁸

The themes revealed are all those in the book *Khurūj fī Sabilillāh: Sarana Tarbiyah Ummat untuk Membentuk Sifat Imaniyah* by An Nadhr M. Ishaq Shahab, *Faḍīlat al-‘Amal* by Maulānā Zakariyyā al-Kandahlawī, “*Faḍīlat al-Ṣadaqah*” and other books on the Tablighi Jamaat. After the *mudhakarah* is completed, the Amir closes it with a pray called *kaḥārat al-majlis: subḥāna Allāh wa bi ḥamdih subḥānak Allāhumma wa bi ḥamdik, ashhad an lā ilāha illā Anta, astaghfiruk wa atūbu ilayk*.²⁹

Ta‘līm

Ta‘līm, according to Tablighi Jamaat, is learning or teaching aiming at understanding of the Qur’ān and Ḥadīth to increase charitable passion.³⁰ Among the virtues of *ta‘līm* include getting peace of mind, being showered with mercy by Allah, surrounded by angels, being proud by Allah in front of the angels, and destroying 100 negligent assemblies when it was done in the mosque and 40 negligent councils when done at home.³¹ On the contrary, if *ta‘līm* is not held, then among the losses that the people must bear are: doing charity by following passions, not knowing the divine values, and causing the demons to run rampant.³²

The implementation of *ta‘līm* is carried out with a predetermined *adāb*. *Adāb ta‘līm* is divided into two, namely *adāb ṣābiriyah* and *adāb baṭnīyah*. In *adāb ṣābiriyah*, one could, *ḥsrt*, take ablution then sit tight with the *iftirāshī* position³³ facing the Qibla with *tawajjuh*³⁴ and using fragrances. *Second*, reading what has been written in *Faḍīlat ‘Amal*. If one has not been able to read the verses of the Qur’ān or words in Ḥadīth correctly, just read the meaning.

²⁸ Observations, Mataram, October 16, 2020.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Shahab, *Khuruj Fi Sabilillah*, 187-188.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ *Iftirāshī* is a sitting position where both legs are folded backward for the pedestal of the body, both heels of the foot become the buttocks, and the back of the sole of the left foot facing to the floor. While the position of the right foot is almost the same, it’s just coupled with slightly bending the right toes in the front as if following the Qibla direction.

³⁴ *Tawajjuh* is focusing Allah. Shahab, *Khuruj Fi Sabilillah*, 320.

Reading it should be like a teacher who wants his student understand a lesson. *Third*, saying *Salawat* when hearing the name of the Prophet mentioned, *raḍīya Allāh ‘anhum* for the name of the Companions of the Prophet, and *la‘nat Allāh ‘alayh* for the names of those who are cursed. All the sayings are spoken in a low voice so as not to interfere with everyone. *Forth*, when hearing the good news about heaven and reward, one should say *tasbiḥ*, *tahmīd* and *takbīr*, “my Allah give it,” ask for the protection of Allah, and say *na‘ūdhu bi Allāh* for hearing the punishment and torment. *Fifth*, not to leave the council before it is finished. For force majeure reasons, a member may leave the ceremony by raising his hand or fingers: lifting the forefinger to urinate or stir, two fingers for defecation, and five fingers for purposes impossible for returning to the council.

The *adāb baḥīnīyah* includes *ta‘zīm wa al-iḥtirām* (glorifying), *taṣḍīq wa al-yaqīn* (justify and believe), *ta‘āthur bi al-qalb* (tearful in the heart), and *niyyat al-‘amal wa al-tablīgh* (intention to practice and convey).³⁵ *Ta‘līm* activities are carried out four times a day, namely: morning *ta‘līm* in around 09.00-11.00 interspersed with reading the Qur’ān, noon *ta‘līm* for about 10 minutes after the *Zuḥr* prayer, afternoon *ta‘līm* in about 10 minutes after ‘Aṣr prayer, and night *ta‘līm* for about 10 minutes after the end of *Ishā’* prayer.

Ta‘līm activities are usually led by a person in charge who has been appointed through *mushāwarah*. Then, *ta‘līm* begins to finish the implementation of congregational prayers and other practices and *sunnah* prayers. The person in charge of *ta‘līm* took place in the mid of the worshippers that sat docked to form a semicircular. In *ta‘līm* activities, the members read *Faḍīlat al-‘Amal*. The book contains seven chapters, including stories of the Companions of the Prophet, *faḍīlat al-ṣalāh*, *faḍīlat al-tablīgh*, *faḍīlat al-dhikr*, *faḍīlat al-Qur’ān*, *faḍīlat Ramaḍān*, and the only way to improve the decline of the umma. Another book read in the *ta‘līm* is *Faḍīlat al-Ṣadaqah* which consists of seven chapters, namely: the virtue of heeding wealth in the way of Allah, a reproach to ignorance, special attention on *ṣilat al-raḥm*, *ṣakāb* command and its virtues, warning for people who do not fulfil *ṣakāb*, *ṣubḥ*, *qanā‘ah*, and

³⁵ Ibid., 188-199.

encouragement not to beg others, and the stories of *zuhd* experts and benefactors in the way of Allah.

All two books are read continuously every day. An average of five to ten pages of both books are read daily on the *ta'lim*. This means that no page is missed. After all the pages are read, the person in charge who reads will repeat the reading from the beginning page. That is how it goes on. As one of them read, the other congregation members who sat in a tight circle listened to the reading.³⁶

Bayān Wabsy

Bayān wabsy is the last series of the *kehrūj* activities. For those who do a three-days *kehrūj*, *bayān wabsy* is given at the *kehrūj* location a few moments before returning home. For those who do a forty-day or four-month *kehrūj*, the *bayān* is given at the provincial Headquarters. This *bayān* is a kind of advice about the importance of maintaining *da'wah* after arriving at each *maḥallā* (dwelling). Once this *bayān* was given, they would return to their respective homes.

The appointed person giving *bayān wabsy* for three-days pilgrims is the Amir of the group or one of the entourage members assigned by the Amir. Meanwhile, the *bayān*, for the Tablighi members doing a forty-days or four-month *kehrūj* is delivered by a Shuro member or person appointed by the Shuro.

Bayān wabsy contains a description or explanation on how to do *da'wah* and *tabligh* in their respective *maḥallā*, how to be '*alim*,³⁷ '*ābid*,³⁸ and a good preacher. It is also explained how to manage the time (1/3 for the mosque, 1/3 for home, and 1/3 for the purposes) and use the property (1/3 for purposes, 1/3 for business capital, and 1/3 for religion).³⁹

Practice Component

This practice is the second component of character building for the Tablighi members. The knowledge they got at the *kehrūj* location was immediately put into practice, like the

³⁶ Observations, Mataram, November 19, 2020.

³⁷ *Alim* is a person who has good religious knowledge.

³⁸ '*Ābid* is a humble or humble person.

³⁹ Shahab, *Khuruj Fi Sabilillah*, 316-317.

knowledge on how to eat, drink, take a bath, leave and enter the toilet, leave and enter the mosque, wear and take off sandals, put on and off clothes, and so on. Also, they practised how to speak, what is allowed to or not to discuss, how to express opinions, how to dress, all of which must be based on the knowledge acquired directly at the *keburuj* location within the three days.⁴⁰

When talking about how to dress, eat, sleep, and others, they faced several questions they answered with one short sentence: “this is Sunna.” So, everything they do is based on the Sunna they believe. They learned it from *keburuj* activities, and their stance was very firmly on it.⁴¹ The group revealed that during *keburuj* exercises, they learned to carry out the Sunna that the Prophet had inherited. They get their knowledge and practice it right away. It is difficult for them to get an understanding while practising it together in other activities.⁴²

Some leading figures of the Tablighi Jamaat said, “that three-days activity is an effort to achieve guidance, that is our effort.”⁴³ “After leaving for *keburuj*, then only the blessings are felt. In everything we do, we think about whether there is a benefit for the hereafter or not. It is difficult to describe this sense of *angente ni* [our heart].”⁴⁴ “Going out for *telu jelo* (three days) is to better faith. Our faith is sick.” “Yes, with this method, a character would be formed by itself, because we directly practised knowledge we got from our *keburuj*.” “This is a habituation method. After getting habitual, it feels like a need, then an obligation, giving birth to a character. Many ‘hard’ people became weak once they had entered the Tablighi Jamaat.”⁴⁵

The practice shown by the Tablighi Jamaat during the *keburuj* is none other than an attempt at habituation. As they said, “science has no if we do not practice it directly. That is why here we learn while practising directly the knowledge we get. So we, for three

⁴⁰ Participatory observation of the *keburuj* during November 2020-March 2021.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Interview with *ustadh* Rajab, one of leading figures of Tablighi Jamaat, November 13, 2020.

⁴⁴ Interview with *ustadh* Haji Selamat Alwi, another leading figure of the Tablighi Jamaat of Mataram City, December, 2020.

⁴⁵ Informal discussion with the group while following the sermons of the Tablighi Jamaat during November-December 2020.

days here, practice the Sunna.”⁴⁶ “What I have got here, I practice here straight away. There are no manipulations here. What we are doing is real.”⁴⁷ Another informant said:

When I followed the Tablighi Jamaat for the first time, I knew nothing about it, even about what Tablighi Jamaat is I did not know. Then after I came out for three days, I just knew and felt the benefits. What I did was listen to study, talk about none other than religion, and immediately practice all at that time. It was only after joining *keburij* of the Tablighi Jamaat I knew that the *da'wah* of the Tablighi Jamaat is not only addressed to others but also ourselves. *Alhamdulillah*, I have a lot of knowledge about Sunnah I have never found.⁴⁸

Similarly, Lukman Hakim said: “for 72 hours here we practice the Sunnahs of all. Even sleeping, we practice the Sunnahs taught here.” So, within three days, everything conducted by the Tablighi followers is always based on the Sunna.⁴⁹

Environmental Components

The environment the author refers to here is where the *da'wah* activities occur, namely the mosque as the centre of the *da'wah* and the community around the mosque. In the location, for three days or 72 hours, the Tablighi members had been with their fellows and the mosque congregations. They were reminding and advising each other; even when some of them were late to wake up, one of them would wake them up immediately. In addition, in the environment, there were no other activities other than doing goods, *mudhakarab*, *ta'lim*, talking about religious matters, and others. The atmosphere was designed to carry out *da'wah*. Even, handphone was strictly forbidden to use.⁵⁰

The mosque is certainly different when compared to home. As a center of worship and *da'wah* activities, the mosque automatically becomes a conducive place to carry out the Sunna practices of the Prophet. The conducive environment of the mosque makes the Tablighi members free for 24 hours to carry out their worship. One of them said,

⁴⁶ Interview with Andi during *keburij*, November 2020-March 2021.

⁴⁷ Interview with Haji Mas'ud during *keburij*, November 2020-March 2021.

⁴⁸ Interview with Ari, November 2021.

⁴⁹ Interview with Lukman Hakim during *keburij*, November 2020-March 2021.

⁵⁰ Observation of *keburij*, 2020.

During the three days in such an environment, practicing the worship gave birth to *nūr* [light]. There was worship, atmosphere, friends, and then got the light. There were like seeds that were ready to grow. Their advice would be able to enter the heart. Why is the heart closed? It is because there are so many sins. Like iron, it will melt with a certain degree of heat. The environment must be prepared first.⁵¹

How the environment is very decisive in building or changing the character of the Tablighi members is more strengthened by Andi, saying “*selame ni tiang ndekke uah tao i'tikaf lek masjid selame telu jelo, bahkan setenge jelo doang ndekke tao gawekn, laguk alhamdulillah berkatte sak milu Jamaah Tabligh marak nike akbirne baunte gawekn. Mustabiltek tao gawekn untuk iktikaf selame telu jelo seandainya tiang ndek milu kance rombongan Jamaah Tabligh n?*” (so far, I can never do *i'tikaf* in the mosque for three days. Even half a day, I can not do it, but thank God I can finally do it because I joined the Tablighi Jamaat).⁵² Same with Andi, Mulyadi also said,

For me, this environment is indeed very decisive to form a character because the character is not *bim salabim*, the character cannot be separated from the environment, the character is yes formed in the environment, if the environment is good surely the people will be good if the environment is not good surely the people are also not good.⁵³

The same thing was said by other worshippers: “I joined the Tablighi Jamaat one month ago. Friends invited me. After I did *khurij*, I felt good. I stayed in the mosque, studied, and read the Qur'an and others. What makes me comfortable is the environment and friends here.”⁵⁴ “*Pokonya ikut Jamaah Tabligh, tinggal lek sekitaran masjid, lingkungan solah-solah, batur-baturte solah-solah, pembicaraan solah-solah, perkataan solah-solah, perbuatan solah, maka pastilah ite jari dengan solah*”⁵⁵ (however, joining the Tablighi Jamaat, we stay in the neighbourhood of the mosque, in a pleasing environment, with good friends, good words, talks, and deeds, then indeed we become good people).

⁵¹ Interview with *ustadh* Abu Bakar, December 25, 2021.

⁵² Interview with Andi, November 2020.

⁵³ Interview with Mulyadi, November 2020.

⁵⁴ Interview with Samsudin, following *khurij* in 2020.

⁵⁵ Interview with Firman, following *khurij* in 2020.

Evaluation Component

The Tablighi Jamaat conduct evaluations through *mushāwarah*. The forum constitutes a place for them to conduct evaluations related to the program and the Tablighi members. Each member would explain the problems faced. For instance, some members were less active in carrying out congregational prayers. They would consult to identify the cause and solve the solution together. Likewise, they always solve problems together through *mushāwarah* on other issues.

They consider that *mushāwarah* is a principle of *da'wah* that becomes the spirit of every sacrifice. Sacrifice without *mushāwarah* would be in vain. Without *mushāwarah*, collective work (*'amal al-ijtimā'i* or *ijtimā'iyāt*) will be lost, and Allah's help (*nuṣrat Allāh*) will stay away since it will come through the togetherness of people. *Mushāwarah* is likened to a substitute for the descent of revelations that will no longer be. Instead of expecting material help, this struggle only wishes for help from Allah. *Mushāwarah* will unite many hearts and increase thinking capacity. It is the collective work as much as congregational prayer. It is not just to decide something but to present the problem by asking for proposals from everyone.

Ijtimā'iyāt is not merely the gathering of a group of people, but the unity of heart, thought and movement. Like praying in congregation, worshipers would reach the unity of heart (*tawajjuh*), get focused (*ḵbushū'*), and do same move if they had *ūbār* (putting others over yourself) and *tawādu'* (feeling others as better than yourself). They believe that this is the way the Prophet did. The Prophet did not work alone but cooperates with friends so that they all get direct *tarbiyyah* (upbringing) from Allah. Therefore, the *mushāwarah* is only to seek the pleasure of Allah so that Allah gives the same *tarbiyyah*.⁵⁶

For the Tablighi Jamaat, the *mushāwarah* is to unify thoughts, goals, and procedures. Therefore, everyone will accept and practice religion perfectly so that religion will exist in the life of individuals, families, society, and all of nature. Not only is *mushāwarah* solving problems, but it also prevents people from doom. Allah created problems, then only He will solve the problem. Whatever Allah

⁵⁶ Shahab, *Khuruj Fi Sabilillah*, 181-183.

promises, He will fulfil through the blessings of *mushāwarah*. Even if a punishment comes down to a location where the religious deliberation takes place, the punishment would be suspended, slowed down, or Allah will move it to another place. Unlike the case of doom or penalty, if God's mercy is revealed, it would be accelerated.⁵⁷

The *mushāwarah* in the Tablighi Jamaat is led preferably by Amir *ṣaf* (entourage). Before *mushāwarah* begins, the Amir should empty his heart and mind of personal plans; begin the *mushāwarah* by reciting *basmalah*, *ḥamdalah*, and *ṣalawāt*, but it is recommended to pray *allāhumma alḥimnā marāshid umūrinī, wa a'idhnā min shurūr anfusinā wa min sayyi'at a'mālinā*; delivering a short *dhikr* (introduction) for *mushāwirin* (participants) to think about the meaning and purpose of *mushāwarah* and inflicting *jaḥab*⁵⁸ on every participants so that no one feels ruled; a forum for *mushāwirin* to convey *karghazari* (a report of program activities that have been carried out); and it is time for Amir to ask for proposals from *mushāwirin* ranging from the right to the left sides.⁵⁹

The Amir asked each participant to submit a program report that had been carried out for 24 hours. For example, he would ask about whom the members have met, what his name is, where his house is, what they were talking with him about, what the obstacles they face are, how their feeling is, and so on. Each member then expressed one-by-one findings to be discussed and solved together.

Character Building Revisited

Related to the character building, among the experts is Agus Wibowo arguing that to form the character must be through planning character education management, organizing the resources owned, conducting a briefing to achieve goals effectively and efficiently, and controlling. The steps are quite similar to what Tablighi Jamaat implemented within *khurij* activities. Even before the day of *khurij*, careful plannings such as how many people in the *khurij* entourage are, who the Amir of the *khurij* is, how many

⁵⁷ Ibid., 184.

⁵⁸ *Jaḥab* is a passion and feeling of love towards proselytizing efforts.

⁵⁹ Shahab, *Khurij Fi Sabilillah*, 186.

days the *khuruj* will be carried out, where to come, what to bring, have been planned before the departure of the *khuruj* group.

All the resources the *khuruj* entourage has are always optimized. A member who is good at giving speech is given the opportunity for lectures, and who is good at the recitation of the Qur'an is requested to be the prayer imam, and who has good communication skill is asked to be a spokesman when *jawlah* and others.

The briefing is carried out on one of the *khuruj* series called *bayān hidāyah*. In this respect, the group was advised and trained on what related to *khuruj* typical challenges before departing to the *khuruj* location/destination. At the time of *khuruj*, the briefing is again conducted by the Amir of the group at the time of *khuruj* related to what the group face in the location. The next and last briefing is *bayān wabsy*, namely advice to the *khuruj* group a few moments before returning home. The controlling is also carried out by *khuruj* group every morning through a daily deliberation program, where the activities that have been carried out during the previous 24 hours, such as *jawlah*, deliberation, *mudbākarah*, *ta'lim*, and others are evaluated.

The management of character building put forward by Wibowo above has been carried out by the Tablighi Jamaat. However, Wibowo did not mention the literature (teaching materials) used and how it was carried out. In fact, for the Tablighi Jamaat, teaching materials are important part of character education.

Wibowo also mentioned that the successful character building should be based on some conditions, namely: examples from the head of the institution, teachers, employees, and stakeholders; it is carried out continuously and consistently and prioritized character values.⁶⁰ The character values have been carried out continuously and consistently (*istiqamah*) by the Tablighi Jamaat. They have tried to make themselves role models in their *khuruj* environment. For instance, their perform of *istiqamah* in showing the way they dress has been quite tested and proven. They will never be embarrassed or hesitate to show it in any situation or anywhere. They try to

⁶⁰ Agus Wibowo, *Pendidikan Karakter: Strategi Membangun Karakter Bangsa Berperadaban* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2017), 45.

imitate what the Prophet exemplified and preach it and try to be an example for other Muslims.

The three mottos⁶¹ put forward by Ki Hajar Dewantara has also been implemented by the Tablighi Jamaat. Like all Tablighi members always set a good example in everything, such as how to dress, how to speak, how to eat, how to drink, and others. The tablighi Jamaat try to practice the Sunnah of the Prophet. They also in their deliberations continue to always think to get an idea so that their dakwah efforts are accepted, run well and continuous. The members also always give each other encouragement and motivation to carry out proselytizing efforts towards anyone they meet. However, different from what the character-building process of the Tablighi Jamaat, the motto put forward by Ki Hajar Dewantara does not explain the environment and its implementation practices.

Heart also said that the approaches to form the character consist of rational development, moral value consideration, value clarification, cognitive moral development, social behavior, and value cultivation.⁶² This has been done by Tablighi Jamaat in their *keburuj* activities such as discussion, deliberation, and *mudhakarab*. In such activities, it is taught how to act out the mind and to become a good person in society or in the system of human life. They think to continue to improve the moral damage of Muslim communities. Even it is instilled in the Tablighi members a worry about the moral damage that occurs. They also continue to cooperate and assist each other in cognitive and social development among themselves and other Muslims.

The above view is reinforced by Salahudin and Alkrienciehie saying that the approaches in character formation involve experiential, habitational, emotional, rational, exemplary, and functional approach.⁶³ In fact, all these types of approaches have

⁶¹ They are: *Ing Ngarso Sung Tulodo* (when in front, an educator must set a good example or example of action), *Ing Madya Mangun Karsa* (when in the middle or among students, the teacher must create an initiative or idea), and *Tut Wuri Handayani* (when behind, the teacher should be able to give encouragement or direction). Kokom Komalasari and Didin Saripudin, *Pendidikan Karakter: Konsep dan Aplikasi Living Values Education* (Bandung: PT. Refika Aditama, 2017), 21.

⁶² Quoted in Maksudin, *Pendidikan Karakter Non-dikotomik* (Yogyakarta: Student Library, 2013), 63.

⁶³ Salahudin and Alkrienciehie, *Pendidikan Karakter*, 218.

been carried out by the Tablighi Jamaat in their character education. The Jamaat can directly practice every knowledge they get by always putting forward their emotions and rational. They advise and remind each other, and are role models for others.

Elias further said that there are three approaches used to shape character, namely cognitive, affective, and behavioral approaches.⁶⁴ The cognitive approach of the Tablighi Jamaat comes from the books *Faḍīlat al-‘Amal*, *Faḍīlat al-Ṣadaqah* and *Khurūj fī Sabīl Allāh*. The content of the books becomes a theme in every deliberation and *mudhakarab* during the *khurūj*. The deliberation and *mudhakarab* activities are carried out to equalize understanding and improvement towards the practices of the Tablighi followers. Another view is expressed by Wiyani, offering character education of learners based on Total Quality Management (TQM), namely continuous improvement of the character of learners, quality assurance of the character of learners, changing the school culture, changing the organization of the school, and the cooperation of the school with the student guardian.⁶⁵ This view is also similar to that done by the Tablighi Jamaat. *Khurūj*, for the Tablighi Jamaat, is a method of conducting character education continuously, even it has totally changed the personalities and habits of the members.

When juxtaposed with the process of forming the Tablighi Jamaat’s character, the experts’ opinions about character building above are less effective than that of the Tablighi Jamaat. The experts have yet to be shown that their methods can form characters relatively quickly, like what the Tablighi Jamaat have done. What they offer is only in the form of methods, approaches or designs that can be implemented anytime and anywhere. They did not mention the literature or teaching materials used, the form of practice carried out, a conducive environment to form a desired character, and evaluation in the form of deliberation, all of which can boost the character-building process in a relatively short time.

Conclusion

This study concludes that what caused the Tablighi Jamaat character formed in a relatively short time was the *khurūj fī sabīl*

⁶⁴ Maksudin, *Pendidikan Karakter*, 63.

⁶⁵ Novan Ardy Wiyani, *Pendidikan Karakter Berbasis Total Quality Management* (Yogyakarta: Ar-Ruzz Media, 2018), 117-178.

Allāh method comprising of four components, namely literature or teaching material, practice, environment, and evaluation. In the form of teaching or study materials, the Tablighi Jamaat studied *Faḍīlat al-‘Amal*, *Faḍīlat al-Ṣadaqah*, and *Khurūj Fī Sabil Allāh* during the *khurūj* activities. The Jamaat practice directly at the location of the *khurūj* the knowledge they have been obtained. They also create a conducive environment at the location of *khurūj*, namely the mosque and the environment around it where they study religious knowledge and practice it. They carry out the evaluation through deliberation forum every morning, in which they discuss program evaluation and self-evaluation by reminding and advising each individual openly.

The author considers this method as something new because no other group or organization has ever carried out education or character building similar to what has been carried out by the Tablighi Jamaat, and no other method that have successfully changed people character within three days than the *khurūj* by the Tablighi Jamaat.[]

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