THE NATURE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL DEVELOPED IN TRADITIONAL ISLAMIC BOARDING SCHOOLS (DAYAH) AND ITS EFFECT ON THE EMPLOYMENT OF GRADUATES FROM RURAL COMMUNITIES IN ACEH, INDONESIA.

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the nature of social capital developed in traditional Islamic boarding schools (dayah) in rural Aceh, Indonesia, and examines the effect this has on helping graduates find employment. Despite a long history of providing traditional religious education in rural Aceh, dayah are not recognised by the government as formal education providers. The dayah curriculum focuses on teaching classical Islamic texts. The boarding school nature of dayah requires students to study and live in a lifestyle that adheres to the principles and practices of Islam. The exclusive focus on religion and lack of formal education in subjects, for example, Science and Mathematics, has led to criticisms. These include a concern about dayah student employment following their studies in traditional dayah. Such criticisms were the impetus for this study.

This research study brings together literature about the use of social capital and its relation to employment and previous studies of traditional dayah that infer a form of social capital develops through dayah education. The study is the first of its type to explore the nature of social capital based on faith developed in dayah. In addition, it investigates how this social capital is developed and used by students, as graduates, to access information and gain employment.

A qualitative approach to data collection and analysis is used. The primary method of data collection was semi-structured, in-depth interviews. This method provided opportunities for the 22 dayah graduates (referred to as participants in the study), to share and discuss their experiences of dayah education, its contributions and limitations to their life, and work, after graduation. Interviews were conducted in Acehnese and Indonesian by the Researcher, transcribed and returned to participants for member-checking (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Once checked for accuracy and content, the transcripts were translated into English for analysis. The English translation was verified by independent Acehnese – English speaking academics. Nvivo 10 software was used to help code data.

Major findings show ‘social capital based on faith’ developed in dayah through social relationships and the practice of a shared faith. The social relationships developed were with fellow students, the dayah leader (teungku), with teachers, and with people in the local community. Social capital based on faith developed in dayah was found to be instrumental in helping participants find and gain employment. Individuals within the social networks were
motivated to help others not for personal gain, rather because it is what God expects of them. This is a practice deeply set in their Islamic belief. Their motivation differs from researchers’ general understanding and use of the term social capital.

These findings challenge and refute criticisms that dayah education leads to unemployment. All participants were found to be actively employed in different occupations; however, they were low paying in nature. The study argues that it is not the use of social capital based on faith that leads participants to lower paid employment, rather low-income jobs dominate the job market in rural areas of Aceh. The findings also suggest that better and higher paid jobs can be found but not accessed because, according to participants, their education in dayah is not formally recognised by the government and a certification of educational achievement is not provided.

All participants were found to be actively involved in roles of a religious nature in their local communities. Following Islamic belief, none expected and most received no pay for such work. The continuing voluntary commitment to their communities in these roles and others was seen as an extension of the religious devotion developed in and through dayah, to their community.

This study contributes new understanding about the nature of social capital developed in dayah, and how it is used to gain employment. The study contributes to the academic discourse on social capital, and its development and impact in rural communities. Specifically, it deepens our understanding of the education and the role of faith as a determinant in seeking employment and community development.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I owe profound thanks to the many people that have supported me to complete this research.

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To the Australian Government for their generous sponsorship of my studies through an Australia Awards Scholarship, and to the University of Canberra’s International Support Service team, thank you. Without your support, this research and study experience would not have been possible.

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<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>BPPD</td>
<td>Badan Pembinaan Pendidikan Dayah (translate: Dayah Development and Education Board)</td>
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<tr>
<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IAIN</td>
<td>Institusi Agama Islam Negeri</td>
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<tr>
<td>ILO</td>
<td>International Labour Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNDP</td>
<td>United Nations Development Programme</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNICEF</td>
<td>United Nations Children’s Fund</td>
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<tr>
<td>UNIDA</td>
<td>Universitas Iskandar Muda</td>
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## GLOSSARY

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<tr>
<td>Abu</td>
<td>A synonym term for <em>teungku</em> (see <em>teungku</em>).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Akhlaq al-karimah</td>
<td>Good morals and manners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aulia</td>
<td>The sains</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ashar</td>
<td>Late afternoon prayer time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahasa</td>
<td>Language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahasa Aceh</td>
<td>Acehnese language.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bale</td>
<td>A wooden porch where classes are conducted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Da’wah</td>
<td>Preaching religious teachings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dayah</td>
<td>An Acehnese term for traditional Islamic boarding school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The term is used for both singular and plural.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhuhr</td>
<td>Mid-day prayer time.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eid</td>
<td>A celebration of the end of the fasting month of <em>ramadhan</em>.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>The state of being employed, which may be voluntary (unpaid work) or for which a person may work and earn a living</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fatwa</td>
<td>Originated from Arabic word, a ruling of Islamic law by recognised Islamic scholars.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formal education</td>
<td>An education where a student receives a state-recognised certificate upon graduation.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hajj</td>
<td>The Islamic pilgrimage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hadith</td>
<td>Sayings and tradition of the prophet Muhammad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ija kroeng</td>
<td>Traditional clothing wrapped around the waist.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insyia Allah</td>
<td>If God will.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>Religion of Islam.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jilbab</td>
<td>Headscarf.</td>
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Khalafiyyah : An adopted Arabic term for modern.

Khutbah : Preach.

Kitab/kitab kuning : Classical Islamic texts

Kupiah : Traditional Acehnese hat.

Kyai : A Javanese term for an Islamic religious leader.

Madrasah : Formal Islamic school.

Maghrib : Sunset prayer time.

Majlis ta’lim : Religious group gathering.

Marhaban : An Arabic term (original meaning “welcome”) adopted to represent a group of women singing religious chanting accompanied by beatings of tambourines. Marhaban is generally performed in local celebrations.

Meunasah : An Acehnese term for a small praying place. A synonym to mushalla (see mushalla).

Modern pesantren : An Islamic boarding school that has been modernised where its curriculum offers both religious and non-religious subjects.

Mu’adalah : A borrowed Arabic term for accreditation.

Mushalla : An Arabic term which means a prayer side. In the Acehnese context, it is referred as a small praying place.

Muslim : A person who adheres to the Islamic faith.

Non-formal education : An education where a student is not entitled to receive a state-recognised certificate upon graduation.

On rumpun : A type of vegetable common in Aceh.

Paket C : An equivalency test to gain a recognised leaving certificate that is equal to secondary higher education level.

Pesantren : An Indonesian term for traditional Islamic boarding school

Pondok : Literal translation ‘hut’ or ‘cottage’. Often used as short for pesantren.
Qanun: An Arabic term for ‘law’. In Aceh, the term is adopted and named after Provincial regulations.


Rujak: A typical dish that is made of chopped local fruits with peanut sauce.

Salafiyah/salafi: Traditional, conservative.

Santri: Students of dayah.

Santri kalong: A dayah student who participates in dayah-held classes, but does not live in the dayah housing.

Santri mukim: A full-time dayah student who lives and takes part in all dayah-held activities.

Shari’ah law: An Arabic term for “path”. It is traditionally understood as the Islamic way of life, and not a law. The creation of shari’ah law is based on people’s interpretation of the Qur’an and hadiths.

Subuh: Dawn prayer time.

Surah: Chapter in the Qur’an.

Ta’zim: Obedience, respect.

Tawadhu’: Humble.

Terpadu: Integrated, modern learning.

Teungku: An Acehnese term for Islamic religious scholar whose embodied religious knowledge was gained from studying in dayah. The term is also often used to address a dayah leader. Throughout this study, teungku are referred to as dayah leaders and religious scholars.

Ulama: Islamic scholar.

Uroe peukan: Market day.

Ustadz: Islamic teacher.
**Wajar Dikdas** : Short for *Wajib Belajar Pendidikan Dasar*, or compulsory basic education.

**Wetongan** : A traditional teaching method that centres around a teacher reading, translating, and explaining classical Islamic texts to students while they listen.

**Work** : To be employed, to fulfil duties regularly for wages or on a voluntary basis

**Zawiyah** : Arabic word for ‘corner’ or commonly translated as a corner of a space.
Chapter One: Introduction

1.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces a study that researches the nature of social capital developed in traditional Islamic boarding schools (dayah) in Aceh, Indonesia, and the effect this has on helping graduates find employment. Dayah are rural-based, nonformal and traditional educational institutions. The curriculum in dayah has an exclusive focus on teaching classical Islamic texts and excludes general subjects, for example, science and mathematics. Therefore, graduates from dayah in Aceh are often criticised for their lack of formal education and qualifications (Husin, 2014; Riza & Ilyas, 2013). Studies of Islamic education also claim that dayah education does not provide students with practical skills (Sirozi, 2004), and that its focus on religious studies hinders their ability to find employment (Guerin, 2006). The criticisms have led the Aceh government to reassess dayah education. This involved setting up a government body, Badan Pembinaan Pendidikan Dayah (BPPD) in 2007, to oversee dayah education. With more than 78,000 students currently enrolled in traditional dayah (Kementerian Agama RI, 2016), there is a need for a more comprehensive examination of the employability of dayah graduates. The findings will provide new empirical insight and information about the impact of dayah education on graduates’ ability to find employment.

This chapter outlines the context and focus of the research. This includes information about where the research takes place, the role and practice of dayah education in Aceh, and graduate employment issues. The sections that follow present the rationale for the study, the research aims, objectives and approach, the significance of the study, research question and method, researcher position and structure of the thesis. The chapter closes with a summary of the key points introduced. Table 1.1 provides an outline of the chapter.
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1.1 The context of research

This study takes place in rural Aceh – Indonesia, where traditional Islamic boarding schools, known as dayah, are commonplace. The focus of learning in traditional dayah is on classical Islamic studies. Therefore, questions arise about how graduates use the education received to gain employment and what types of employment they find. For example, the lack of ‘formal’ education in modern subjects, such as mathematics and science, does not provide students with the knowledge and skills essential for employment in present-day Acehnese society (Chiswick, 2005; Guerin, 2006; Mahdi, Ilyas & Nurdin, 2013; Riza & Ilyas, 2013; Zulkhairi, 2012). Further, given dayah are not formally recognised by Government as education providers, employers may not recognise the traditional informal nature of a dayah education (Departemen Agama RI, 2009). In present-day Aceh, an educational qualification is seen to be essential for gaining employment. Therefore, the lack of a government-recognised educational qualification, will in all likelihood, further hinder a dayah graduate’s ability to find employment. Empirical research is needed to explore dayah education and the experiences of the graduates, to ascertain the means that are, or may be used, to find employment. Definitions of the terms ‘work’ and ‘employment’ that are based on the perspective taken in this research are included in the glossary.

Research on traditional Islamic boarding schools has focused extensively on the island of Java, Indonesia (Dhofier, 1999; Hamdi, 2014; Lukens-Bull, 2001; Permani, 2009; Pohl, 2006; Srimulyani, 2007). Few studies have examined Acehnese dayah or the issue of employment (Amiruddin, 1994; Husin, 2014; Ilyas, 2012; Saby, 2013; Srimulyani, 2014; Yeoh, 1994; Zulkhairi, 2012).

The available research literature largely concentrates on topics of leadership, and the authority of dayah leaders on Shari’ah law (Amiruddin, 1994; Ichwan, 2011; Yeoh, 1994).
Other research documents the history of dayah in the colonial era and the Aceh conflict (Aspinall, 2007; Hadi, 1992; Reid, 2004; Roche, 2012) and dayah curriculum reform (Zulkhairi, 2012). More recent research has explored the role of women as dayah leaders (Husin, 2014; Srimulyani, 2014).

The subject of dayah graduate employment was mentioned briefly in Amiruddin’s (1994) thesis but has not been followed up. Riza and Ilyas (2013) examined the quality of dayah education and delivered several recommendations, however, the employment aspect of graduates was not discussed. To date, no research has examined issues about the employment of dayah graduates. This study will examine this under-researched area to find out whether criticisms of dayah graduates’ ability to find employment are warranted, and to identify how those who are employed managed to do so.

The sections that follow introduce dayah education and the notion of social capital developed in dayah. These areas provide background to the context of the study and are central to the research design.

1.1.1 Introducing dayah

Understanding of the focus of Islamic schools worldwide is determined by people’s knowledge of their history, general understanding of education and learning, and specific teaching methods (Abd-El-Khalick, Boyle, & Pier, 2006; Roche, 2012). Traditional Islamic schools in Aceh have been part of the region’s history of religious education for hundreds of years (Amiruddin, 1994; Hadi, 1992; Roche, 2012; Yeoh, 1994). Like many other traditional Islamic schools, dayah is highly regarded in the community for its specialised religious education. The education excludes subjects found in formal public schools. A student’s life and study in dayah follows
traditional Islamic beliefs, teaching and practices. It is this focus on traditional Islam that is thought to strengthen a reluctance by teungku, or traditional dayah school leaders, towards change in their school’s curriculum (Mahdi, Ilyas, & Nurdin, 2013; Srimulyani, 2007; Zulkhairi, 2011).

Traditional dayah are mostly found in rural Aceh. The existence of a dayah is significant to the local community, not only because of the Islamic education they provide, but also for the socio-economic development they offer. In general, dayah students come from lower socio-economic rural communities in Aceh. Children are sent to these schools by their parents, in the hope that their knowledge of Islam will be broadened. By learning Islamic teachings, students are expected to understand and spread their knowledge to the wider community. Attending a well-known dayah bestows some social recognition on the family and signifies their decency and piety as Muslims.

As independent educational institutions, dayah rely heavily on the financial support of their leader, students, parents and the people in the community. A dayah is managed by the leader, who is normally the owner, referred to as the teungku (Mahdi et al., 2013; Suyanta et al., 2012). It is argued that the success of a dayah is dependent on the leader’s management including searching for financial resources to fund the school (Mahdi et al., 2013). Much of the additional financial support is needed to cover teachers’ incentives, learning materials, and school maintenance. Mahdi et al. (2013) found that teungku (dayah leader) generally do not possess a secure income despite their permanent employment as a dayah leader. Many teungku need to take on additional work, such as being a farmer or tradesperson, to support their daily needs and those of the school. Dayah teachers too, seek extra income by working elsewhere because of the low salary they receive from the dayah. Mahdi et al. (2013) assert that low pay has a prominent effect on the quality of dayah education, and this can result in low numbers of qualified teachers found in dayah.
Though dayah is favoured by the local communities for the religious purity and strong Islamic roots developed in students, these schools are often associated with a poor quality education, characterised by an unstructured and unstandardized curriculum (Amiruddin, 1994; Mahdi et al., 2013; Zulkhairi, 2012).

Dayah education has been criticised for not providing knowledge and skills to students other than Islamic learning (Amiruddin, 1994, 2013a; Husin, 2014; Malik, Zarkasyi, Hamdani, & Thahiry, 2007; Zulkhairi, 2012). Amiruddin (1994) implied that the quality of dayah education had not changed much despite ongoing economic development in the communities in which the dayah are located. Criticisms directed at the traditional curriculum partly result from concerns about a dayah graduate’s future employment, and their lack of preparation to cope with rapid economic changes and advanced development driven by new technologies.

In short, dayah are expected to produce graduates with skills needed in a modern workplace. Given that the dayah curriculum is devoted to classical Islamic studies, students’ knowledge, skills, and experience prepares them for employment in religious activities, but not necessarily for other types of activities or professions (Iannaccone, 1990).

### 1.1.2 Dayah and employment

The increasingly competitive economic environment in Aceh requires job seekers to meet at least the minimum academic requirements of secondary education, and more often to acquire a university degree as well (see, for example, the requirement for civil servant http://cpns.kemenkumham.go.id/). This poses a potential problem for dayah graduates who lack a state-recognised certificate of graduation or study in formal subjects. Critics maintain that the current focus on traditional religious education restricts the graduates’ chances of continuing
Amiruddin (1994) explains that it is a tradition of dayah education for students to be actively engaged within the community, and this is embedded in the students’ learning process. The focus of such engagement is for religious purposes rather than for paid employment (Muhammad, 2010). Permani (2009) also found that traditional Islamic boarding schools in Indonesia (widely known as pesantren) provide direct religious benefit to the local community. Permani asserts that the pesantren leaders’ involvement in the local community indirectly benefits, in the form of employment, those local people living close to pesantren. Her study concludes that traditional Islamic boarding schools contribute to the building of social capital, which positively affects the socio-economic welfare of Muslims surrounding these schools. These studies indicate that a form of social capital is developed in a religious environment of Islamic schools, and that this affects the employment of students and local people living close to the schools. However, no research has identified or examined the nature of this social capital or its use by students of traditional dayah or pesantren in finding employment. This study will fill this research information gap.

1.1.3 Social capital, faith, and employment

The concept of social capital has been interpreted in many ways by economists, anthropologists, political scientists, and development practitioners, adapting it to the field in which it is applied. Field (2003) describes the concept of social capital in two words, ‘relationships matter’. That is, through relationships and connections that are maintained over time, social capital allows individuals to achieve goals that they otherwise cannot attain without the support of others. Social capital helps a person to access and secure benefit through their involvement in social
networks or other social structures (Portes, 1998). These include, for example, developing social relations through and with parents, families, friends and acquaintances. These relationships are considered to be important assets. They are individuals a person can rely on in a crisis, or consult for help, or be helped by, as opposed to being used for material gain (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000).

Faith can be seen as an attribute of social capital. It helps connect people who hold similar or different beliefs, obligations, habits, and customs to other people with whom they choose to connect (Candland, 2001; Furbey, Dinham, Farnell, Finneron, & Wilkinson, 2006; Hays, 2002). For example, members of a religious community can build networks of faith-based trust and use this for personal advantage. These social bonds created through faith serve as the source of social capital (Candland, 2001; Hays, 2002).

In dayah, the responsibility to develop benevolence and social connectedness is at the heart of traditional Islamic education (Dhofier, 1999). Fundamental to traditional Islamic teaching is the development of relationships built on faith. This practice is motivated by altruism, experiences and religious understandings (Furbey et al., 2006), not necessarily for employment or financial gain. Dayah provides a space for like-minded people to engage in religious study and social interactions driven by shared Islamic belief and practices (Kurdi, 2010). Therefore, developing social networks is a natural part of dayah life and a fundamental component of dayah teaching, learning and religious practice.

The dayah’s curriculum has been criticised by the Aceh public, in part for its failure to prepare students for future employment (Amiruddin, 2013a). It is well known that individuals have acquired jobs through social capital – by drawing on social networks and connections. Many studies have established the link between social capital and job attainment (Granovetter, 1974; Lin, 1999, 2002; Narayan, 1999). Good networking can provide channels to valuable
sources of information regarding employment prospects (George & Chaze, 2009; Smith, 2010). Therefore, this research seeks to explore the nature of social capital developed in the religious environment of a dayah, and the effect this has on the employment of graduates.

1.2 Rationale and significance of the study

Despite the importance of traditional dayah as providers of education, and the public criticisms of their inability to prepare students for employment in modern-day Aceh, little is known about the employment of its graduates. This research will provide new information about the nature of social capital developed in traditional dayah, in rural Aceh, and much-needed information about the employability of dayah graduates.

Previous research into dayah graduates’ community involvement (Amiruddin, 1994; Muhammad, 2010), and the economics of Islamic education in Indonesia (Permani, 2009) infers the presence of social capital within traditional Islamic schools. However, it does not examine how such social capital is built or used by students. Therefore, this study will provide new understanding and information about the nature of social capital developed in dayah education.

This research brings together literature about the development of social capital and its use in finding employment. Specifically, the study will explore whether the social capital developed in dayah plays a role in helping dayah graduates gain access to employment. Central to this study is an exploration of social capital embedded in dayah education. In so doing, the study will contribute to the academic discourse on social capital and education, and its development and impact in rural societies.

This research will contribute information needed to understand the influence of dayah education and what it means to the local community. It will also contribute information to the
academic discourse on traditional Islamic boarding schools in Aceh. Finally, this study will address criticisms about the value and effect of dayah education. The findings are expected to either confirm criticisms about the place of traditional Islamic schools in society, or provide empirical information to refute criticisms. Recommendations will be made to help in reforming, if needed, thinking and practice about dayah education.

1.3 Research aim, objectives and approach

This research aims to provide an empirical understanding of the social capital developed through faith in rural dayah, and the effect this has on helping graduates find employment.

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Examine the role of social capital, based on faith, in finding employment for dayah graduates in rural Aceh, Indonesia.
2. Contribute to a more in-depth understanding of dayah education in rural Aceh.
3. Explore and respond, with empirical evidence, to criticisms of dayah education in rural Aceh.
4. Identify and examine issues that arise.

To better understand the nature of social capital developed in dayah, the study will examine student perspectives of their education and life in dayah. The study will also investigate whether the social capital developed in dayah has affected the graduates’ job-seeking and employment.
1.4 Research questions and methods

The question guiding this research has its foundations in the findings of literature reviewed, criticisms of dayah education, and my experience as a student in dayah. The question is:

“What is the nature of social capital developed in dayah and how does it affect the employment of dayah graduates in rural Aceh?”

To answer this question, and address criticisms of traditional dayah education, the research will focus on four areas:

1. The nature of social capital developed in dayah education,
2. The role of social capital in helping graduates find employment,
3. The nature of the employment found,
4. The effect of employment on graduates’ participation in their local communities and beyond.

1.4.1 Methods

A qualitative approach to data collection and analysis was used. The methods allowed the researcher space to interact with the people of the dayah community, to hear their stories and understand their experiences (Liamputtong, 2010; Munhall, 2006). The primary method of data collection used were semi-structured, in-depth interviews. These interviews provided opportunities for students known as participants in the study, to share and discuss, their experiences of dayah education, its contributions and limitations to their life and work after graduation. The data gained from the participants was used by the Researcher to develop and explore themes arising out of their educational and employment journey (King & Horrocks, 2010). The interview data captured the participants’ schooling experience in dayah, their
experiences in gaining jobs, the types of jobs undertaken and their involvement in the local community.

Both the rural context of dayah, and a pilot study, confirmed the choice of research methods. The study’s participants were identified through rhizomatic sampling (Stehlik, 2003) which is a modified snowball sampling technique. Nvivo 10 software (QSR International, 2012) was used to code and organise the data. The Nvivo 10 software was chosen for its ability to manage and analyse interview data effectively (Richards, 1999). Interviews were conducted in Acehnese and Indonesian by the Researcher. These were then transcribed and returned to participants for checking. Once checked for accuracy and content, the transcripts were translated into English for analysis. The final transcripts were verified by two independent Acehnese-English speaking academics. For transparency purposes, an example of an original interview transcript and English translation is included in the appendix (see appendix D).

1.5 Locating the researcher

In this study, I positioned myself as an insider researcher. As a native Acehnese person and former dayah student, I understand the context of dayah, the participant group and how to approach them (Smyth & Holian, 2008). I was born and raised as an Acehnese person, hence I understand both the local culture and symbolic meanings expressed by the participants during their interviews. This has helped me to work closely with the participants.

I believe my status as an insider provided better access to participants and decreased barriers, such as cultural and linguistic differences (Liamputtong, 2010). My educational experience as a graduate of an Islamic boarding school also contributed to my understanding of the dayah educational context, and helped the participants to feel more relaxed in telling me their stories. Participants working with an insider researcher are more likely to be comfortable discussing sensitive issues because of their shared ethnic identities (Madriz, 1998).
Researchers suggest that participants have a tendency to accept that they share similar views and experiences with researchers who have the same ethnic identity as them (Liamputtong, 2010; Suwankhong & Liamputtong, 2015; Unluer, 2012). As an insider, my cultural and religious understanding will help put the participants at ease during interviews, and understand and interpret nuances conveyed in the participants’ comments (Bonner & Tolhurst, 2002). Member-checking of interviews (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and the data analysis procedures will be used to ensure the trustworthiness and credibility of data.

1.6 Structure of the thesis

This thesis consists of seven chapters. Chapter One introduces the study and gives background to the research context, describes the significance and the potential contributions of the study. It also provides an outline of the study aims, objectives and research questions.

Chapter Two presents a review and discussion of the context and role of traditional dayah in rural Aceh. This chapter provides insights into the dayah education system. This includes the schools’ characteristics, teaching and learning environment, and issues regarding graduates’ employment.

In Chapter Three, a review of literature relevant to the study is presented. This chapter will examine the function and core elements of social capital, including the faith dimension, as reported in research, and the relationship between social capital and employment.

Chapter Four examines the methodology used in the study. This includes a rationale for the qualitative research design, an outline of the methods used, and the process of recruiting participants for interviews. The Chapter also presents details of the interview content, and data analysis procedures; limitations to the research design are identified.
Chapter Five presents the findings. The findings including themes are juxtaposed with the research questions and sub-questions. The data of the participants’ experiences as dayah students and in gaining employment following their dayah studies, are presented. Two types of dayah participant emerge, and the findings are presented separately. From the participant reports, the nature of social capital developed in dayah, and how it is used to access employment, become clear.

Chapter Six presents an in-depth discussion of the key themes and findings. The chapter discusses the nature of social relationships between the participants and their friends in dayah, the *teungku*, and people in the village. These are interpreted to form the foundation of what is termed social capital built on faith. The chapter further discusses how these social relationships and extended dayah networks are used by the participants to access information and gain employment. The impact of using these faith-based social networks on the types of employment gained by dayah graduates is also discussed.

Chapter Seven concludes the thesis and makes recommendations for future research and practice.

1.7 Chapter summary

In this chapter, I have introduced the research, which aims to provide an empirical understanding of the relationship between dayah education and social capital developed through faith, and its impact on graduate students gaining employment. I have also provided a rationale for the study, an overview of the research aims and objectives, and outlined the methods used. I have described the context of dayah education in rural Aceh and the criticisms levelled at
dayah education, as background information. Concepts of social capital, faith and employment of dayah graduates in rural Aceh, central to the research study, were also previewed.

Information about social capital, its development in dayah education, and its use by students to gain employment was provided, and it is hoped that the Aceh Government, educators and dayah leaders will make positive use of this information to inform their policies and practices. The potential benefits of the study, for the participants, students of rural dayah, local communities and government, were outlined. These include helping them better understand the importance and practice of developing social capital networks based on faith, and the value dayah graduates bring to their community. The final sections of the chapter included a brief discussion of the researcher positioning herself as an insider - a positioning that allowed both the researcher and participants greater access to each other, that lowered barriers and led to rich and reliable data. The chapter concluded with an overview of the thesis structure.
Chapter Two: Dayah in Aceh

2.0 Introduction

This chapter provides the background and explores the research context: dayah in Aceh. Dayah is an Acehnese term for Islamic boarding schools where traditionally the teachings exclude curriculum other than traditional Islamic teachings. This chapter begins by introducing the setting for the research. It includes the geographic and demographic characteristics of Aceh province, Indonesia. The chapter then describes the country’s Islamic education with a focus on dayah education in Aceh. This section includes the history, dayah-related government policies, the characteristics of dayah education, including the teaching and learning method, and its role in Aceh society. These descriptions provide important background about how dayah education affects graduates’ employment, which is the main focus of this research. Finally, a summary is presented to finish the chapter. An overview of the chapter content is shown in Table 2.1

Table 2.1

Outline of Chapter Two

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2.1 Geographic and demographic characteristics

Aceh is a province situated on the northern tip of Sumatera Island which historically was a strategic location for the international trading of various goods, such as, spices from the archipelago. Its prime position has created strong connections to the Indian Ocean and the Malayan Peninsula mostly in the economic, political and cultural context. Aceh had a population of 5.96 million people in 2016, with 68.3% of the population living in the rural areas, and 29.87% dwelling in the city (Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Aceh, 2016).

Aceh is known for its long-term experience of conflict; the Acehnese fought in the war against Dutch occupation, before Indonesia’s independence in the 19th century, and in the post-independence 30-year civil conflict against the central government of Indonesia. The civil conflict eventually ended with the signing of a peace agreement between the government of Indonesia and Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka - GAM) in 2005. These unfortunate events have led the province to suffer from poverty despite being rich in natural resources, particularly oil and gas. In fact, the region’s natural resources were the main trigger for the civil conflict that resulted in a poor economy, weak government structure and function, and poor public services.

Rural poverty in Aceh is also linked to the predominant employment of its people in agriculture. In 2008, it was reported that Aceh’s employment rate in the informal sector (e.g., non-government employees, agricultural work) was 61.8% which was slightly higher than the national average of 61.3% (United Nations Development Programme, 2010). Looking at the trend in 2014, people working in the informal sector increased slightly to 63.59%, and fell just a little further to 60.53% in 2015 (Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Aceh, 2015). Looking at these trends, one sees a steady percentage of people working in the informal sector, around 40% of whom work in the agricultural sector. Unfortunately, over 30% of Aceh rural households live
below the poverty line; a reflection of the dominant work in the agricultural sector as people’s main source of income (World Bank, 2008).

As outlined by the World Bank (2008), there are three main links to poverty and agriculture work. First, farmers still use traditional ways of farming. This means harvesting takes place only once a year. With limited irrigation, technologies, and the high cost of fertiliser, it is difficult for farmers to meet their basic needs. Second, the dependency on middlemen for marketing and product purchase disadvantages the poor farmers because crops are purchased at low prices. In addition, any product surplus results in the crops being sold at lower prices, or otherwise being allowed to rot, due to the lack of links to other markets. Third, farmers lack the skills to increase their agricultural productivity. They lack modern agricultural technologies in processing, pest control, seed production, cultivation, and management skills. Other factors related to poverty include the low education standard of the head of the household, large family size, and families headed by a female. Despite these problems, the people’s reliance on work in the agriculture sector absorbs much of the workforce and reduces the unemployment rate – a characteristic of countries in intermediary levels of development (United Nations Development Programme, 2010).

Given the nature of the country’s geographical location, Aceh and other parts of Indonesia are prone to natural disasters. On Sunday morning, 26 December 2004, Aceh was hit by a 9.0 Richter scale earthquake. The ten-minute earthquake was followed by a tsunami that reached land within 45 minutes of the earthquake. The tsunami directly affected 11 countries, and the full force of the big wave was experienced by Aceh. The double jeopardy of earthquake

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1 A national report on Women Headed Household Empowerment Programme (PEKKA) by Zulminarni (2005) reveals that poverty has greater impact on female-headed families in rural areas of Indonesia. Poor female-headed households include widows and single women. Among the triggers in which female-headed families fall into poverty are the ongoing conflicts in certain regions and also the migration of the male spouse to seek better income. Consequently, women are left behind minding their dependents. With a very low education level, women mostly do labour work as farmers which generates average income that is less than a dollar a day.
and tsunami brought immediate chaos and destruction to the region. People were unaware of what was happening. Many responded to the earthquake by leaving their houses and standing in an open space to protect themselves from collapsing houses. The people did not know the tsunami had already flattened over 800 km of the coastal area, and within minutes it had reached the housing areas. The earthquake and tsunami wiped out over 130,000 inhabitants of the region, with 37,000 people missing and 500,000 people displaced by the catastrophe (Badan Rehabilitasi dan Rekonstruksi, 2006; World Bank, 2008). The tsunami is attributed to increasing the region’s poverty level from 28.4% in 2004 to 32.6% in 2005 (World Bank, 2008).

As well as the human loss, the geography of the region was greatly affected. Many villages near the coastline merged with the ocean, including the much-loved village where the Researcher often visited extended family and relatives. Physical infrastructure including houses, mosques, schools, roads, access to clean water and public services were destroyed. The cost to recover Aceh was estimated to be about US$5 billion, which is nearly the amount of the region’s annual Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Kenny, Clarke, Fanany, & Kingsbury, 2010).

Nevertheless, Aceh benefitted from the massive national and international aid flow for emergency relief and post-disaster reconstruction. Within days, over 60 international organisations were in operation, followed by 200 more within weeks, working alongside local Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) (Kenny et al., 2010). Many of the short-term emergency support changed into longer-term development activities conducted by key organisations, such as, the World Bank, UNDP, UNICEF, and the EU. Ironically the emergency aid is believed to have facilitated a slight decline in poverty through the reconstruction activities that employed many Acehnese workers (World Bank, 2008). In other words, the presence of aid organisations, both national and international, created more employment opportunities than Aceh had ever experienced before - albeit temporarily – that managed to absorb a large number of workers. Therefore, it contributed to a decrease in the unemployment rate. Nevertheless,
Aceh’s poverty level remained higher at 23.6%, compared with the national average of 15.2% in 2008 (United Nations Development Programme, 2010), and experienced a 5% decline in 2014 at 18.05% (Badan Pusat Statistik Provinsi Aceh, 2015).

Another characteristic of Aceh is its *shari’ah* law (Islamic law) status. As Aceh is predominantly Muslim, it was declared as a province that followed *shari’ah* law in 1999. This regulation or *qanun* was authorised by the Aceh parliament. Just after the fall of President Soeharto in 1998, the central government of Indonesia granted Aceh special region status (under the Law on Special Region No. 44/1999). This was further strengthened by the passing of the Law on Aceh Governance (No. 11/2006). Implementing *shari’ah* law then became the responsibility of the Aceh local government.

The enforcing of *shari’ah* law may be portrayed as the central government responding to the people’s ideal and wishes; there are a Muslim majority and strong Islamic tradition in the region. However, Ichwan (2011) argues the approved *shari’ah* law was triggered more by the long civil conflict between Aceh and the central government. He views the central government approval of *shari’ah* law in Aceh as a politicised Islamic law or “*shari’atization*”; a law designed and used as “a manoeuvre to win the hearts of the Acehnese, and to delegitimise the Free Aceh Movement (*Gerakan Aceh Merdeka*; GAM)” in their struggle for Aceh independence (p. 184). Ichwan (2011) also notes that *shari’ah* law in Aceh was negotiated by various parties, such as, state apparatuses, independent *ulama* (Islamic scholars) and Islamic movements. He views the policies granted to Aceh (for example, granting special regional autonomy) as being politically motivated. The policies, he argues, were used as a way for the central government to apologise for the deep trauma caused by the civil conflict. They were implemented to avoid losing another region (e.g., East Timor). While the special regional status allows relative autonomy and responsibility in education, custom, religion, and the *ulama*
involvement in decision making, the shari‘ah law agenda was implemented to maintain central government control, and keep Aceh as part of the country (Ichwan, 2011).

Under the special autonomy law (Number 18/2001) and the Law of Aceh Governance (Number 11/1999), Aceh can govern its own education system that does not contradict the shari‘ah. This includes the management of dayah education in Aceh, which led to the establishment of a government body in 2007, known as the Dayah Development and Education Board (Badan Pembinaan Pendidikan Dayah; BPPD), to administer dayah in Aceh. Under qanun (Aceh government regulation) number 5/2007, the overall function and responsibility of BPPD is to improve the quality of dayah. This includes improving the curriculum, funding textbooks, supporting teachers’ wellbeing (e.g., teaching incentives), conducting teachers’ training, and providing other administrative assistance. The status of dayah was further recognised through the Aceh Government regulation on Dayah Education in Aceh (Number 47/2010). This regulation states the financial support dayah are entitled to receive, including school infrastructure, teachers’ salary, learning facilities, teachers’ training, and scholarships for students; all governed under the BPPD and provincial Department of Religious Affairs. Even though dayah have existed in Aceh long before any other forms of schools, the actions of the Government were taken fairly recently. This raises the question ‘why now?’

As independent informal learning centres, dayah have always relied on the leaders’ financing and the support of the community. Thus, is it the dayah leaders’ role to seek financial support from the government? Are they now finding it difficult to self-finance dayah? Are the Aceh rural communities becoming less involved in assisting dayah? Is it the dayah leaders who now want a formal recognition of dayah? Or are dayah merely subject to political games? Although these questions are not directly related to this study, it is an area of concern as to how these regulations are used by various parties. For instance, a study by Mahdi, Ilyas, and Nurdin, (2013), found that many dayah are registered under BPPD but are physically invisible. In other
words, these dayah do not exist. These are the works of those who want to take advantage of the finance provided by the Aceh government. In another finding, these authors argue that people in the village have become less committed to financially supporting the dayah in their village because these schools have been receiving government funding. This, to them, suggests that dayah, which originally belonged to the community, are now ‘owned’ by the government. Consequently, in the people’s eyes, this diminishes the once well-established social relations between dayah and the community. For this research it is important to have a general understanding of dayah in Aceh (before government regulations were made), and its place in Acehnese society. This is discussed in section 2.3

2.2 Islamic education in Indonesia

Before discussing dayah education, a review of Islamic education is needed to understand the context of dayah. Education and knowledge are central to the Islamic faith, and the Qur’an is the principle source for the educational platform; it is key to building the foundation of an individual’s faith. In Islam, education plays a critical role in shaping a person’s view towards life (Zia, 2007). It is understood that in Islam, education includes all knowledge as a means to revealing humans to understand God, to have a personal relationship with God, among humans and non-humans (Barazangi, 1995). Essentially, God creates knowledge and therefore “all knowledge comes from God” (Jackson & Parker, 2008, p. 21). While the aim of education is to guide individuals in how to conduct their life in this world, its ultimate goal is to lead individuals to a prosperous life in the hereafter. At the very least, education in Islam is “inseparable from the spiritual life” (Cook, 1999, p. 345). Therefore, ideally, education in Islam should not be separated into religious and general education (a western concept of education). As described by Jackson & Parker (2008), “… education cannot be secular or atheistic, it cannot be a-moral,
nor can it occur without Islamic faith” (p. 21). Education is therefore seen to have a dual purpose
- acquiring knowledge through reason and logic, and spiritual knowledge derived from spiritual experience - the acquisition of both type of knowledge must be equal (Cook, 1999). There is no limit to which knowledge needs to be pursued. This means the purpose of seeking knowledge is to gain an understanding of God’s will and to live life accordingly as a good Muslim (Halstead, 2004). As explained by Cook (1999), “acquiring knowledge in Islam is not meant to be an end unto itself, but only a means to stimulate a more elevated moral and spiritual consciousness leading to faith and righteous action” (p. 346).

The often cited verses in the Qur’an in chapter Al-Alaq (the Clot), highlight the importance of knowledge acquisition, and that it is a duty of worship for Muslims. Instruction to seek knowledge is present in many hadith (sayings and traditions of the Prophet Muhammad) such as, “the seeking of knowledge is obligatory upon every Muslim”, and “He who goes forth in search of knowledge is in the way of Allah till he returns” (Ali, 2013, pp. 38–39). For Muslims, achieving high levels of knowledge is greatly respected. It says in the Qur’an that people who are knowledgeable and who display a never-ending thirst for knowledge will be highly rewarded in the next life (Al-Qur’an surah Al-Mujadalah: 11). The Qur’anic teachings and examples of the Prophet Muhammad were the primary references of the early Islamic education.

Traditional Islamic schooling originated in the Arab world during the leadership of Prophet Muhammad (in the years 610 - 688 Common Era) and continued to expand throughout the world (Bin Omar, 1993). In Indonesia, an Islamic education based on the Qur’an took place in traditional Islamic boarding schools, known as pesantren, in the general Indonesian context (Dhofier, 1999) or dayah in Acehnese (Hurgronje, 1906; Siegel, 1969). Since the research for this study was conducted in Aceh, the terminology dayah is used from this point forward to refer to traditional Islamic boarding schools, unless indicated otherwise.
The birth of dayah marks the beginning of Islamic education in Aceh. Many scholars confirm that dayah were established during the period of pre-Islamic, Hindu monarchies (Van Bruinessen, 1994). During the 19th and 20th centuries, Islamic education was faced with challenges brought about by western colonialism in many Muslim countries, including Indonesia. The western influence dominated the political and economic spheres as well as the education sector. Initially, Islamic education changed with colonial occupation by the Dutch (1873-1904) (Amiruddin, 1994). Secular schools set up under the Dutch excluded religious education, and this conflicted with the Islamic education philosophy (Cook, 1999), segmenting the country’s educational system. As a consequence, students who wanted to learn Islam had to seek out the traditional Islamic schools, such as, dayah. Marshallsay (2012) explains how secular schools using a ‘modern-style’ of education gained popularity, training students to become local elite, while dayah became marginalised and less prestigious.

The western secular system has been influential in causing an unfortunate divide between the secular and Islamic education systems. This separation has altered the understanding of the original concept of Islamic education. Secular education is perceived as an institution that focuses on worldly affairs which have very little attachment to religion; while Islamic education is viewed as an institution that is less concerned with worldly matters and attends to Godly affairs. For Muslims that attend secular education, it produces individuals embedded with western ideas that practice western cultures, but who also carry out the general Islamic duties (e.g., prayers, fasting, reciting Qur’an) (Cook, 1999).

In Indonesia, regular schools (public and private secular schools) which use the national curriculum are administered under the Ministry of National Education (MONE), while Islamic schools (public and private), employing the Islamic curriculum, are organised by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA).
Islamic schools under the MORA administration fall into several categories. In general, there are *madrasah* (Arabic for school) - state-recognised schools that are either publicly or privately run. *Madrasah* are organised in the same manner as schools administered under the MONE, with graded classes, examinations, and leaving certificates upon completion. The only difference between *madrasah* and regular schools lies in the curriculum, where 70 percent of the curriculum employs general subjects, set by MONE, and 30 percent of it comprises religious subjects, set by MORA (Van Bruinessen, 2004; Jackson & Parker, 2008). The stages of school include primary level (*madrasah ibtidayah*), secondary level (*madrasah tsanawiyah*) and higher secondary level (*madrasah aliyah*). Recently, early childhood education (*Raudhatul Athfal*) which caters for children under the age of six has been included. Under the 1989 regulation of the National Education System (No. 2/1989), the *madrasah* has been required to employ the national curriculum, resulting in *madrasah* being regarded as equivalent to secular schools managed under MONE (Zuhdi, 2006). As a result, *madrasah* are more similar to secular schools than they are to dayah because they adopt the national curriculum (Jackson & Parker, 2008).

Ideally, there should be no separation between secular and religious education. However, when education for intellectual knowledge is regarded as essential for worldly success (e.g., potential careers, competition, individual success), it can indeed diminish the aim of Islamic education in enriching one’s piety (Jackson & Parker, 2008). Nevertheless, *madrasah* play an important role in providing both secular and religious education to the Indonesian population. In the schooling year 2013/2014, the total *madrasah* in Aceh was 1,188 units (19.62% of total schools), which accommodated 236,240 students between the ages of 7 and 18 (Kanwil Kemenag Prov. Aceh, 2014).

Dayah in Aceh are also administered under the MORA. Similar to the *madrasah* system, there are dayah that incorporate non-religious subjects as an addition to studies on *kitab kuning*
(classical Islamic texts), into the curriculum. These dayah are known as *khalafiyah* or modern. Therefore, there exist ‘traditional’ dayah that adhere to the classical Islamic texts, and ‘modern’ dayah that have struck a compromise by reducing the volume of classical Islamic text subjects, and allowing subjects from the standardised curriculum to be included.

Due to social pressure and modern economic demands, more and more dayah have adopted the national curriculum as part of their education (Lukens-Bull, 2001; Yeoh, 1994). This has been managed through the establishment of *madrasah* within the dayah environment (Jackson & Parker, 2008). This can be seen as a significant transformation to the Acehnese dayah education system. The societal pressure and of the state for dayah to change has affected the *teungku’s* (dayah leader) authority. Similar to *madrasah*, the government has some control over modern dayah, which may include intervening in the curriculum. This creates a form of dependence on the state and diminishes the *teungku’s* authority as an independent leader (Yeoh, 1994).

The restructure of dayah has been attributed to their reduced popularity, their lack of funds, and poor facilities that are not sufficient to meet modern needs (Yeoh, 1994). There has also been the social pressure for dayah to provide both religious and general education to be recognised by the government. Lukens-Bull (2001) argues that this adjustment allows the coexistence of modernity and spirituality, and is necessary to prepare students with contemporary working skills for future employment, given the rapid social change. Part of the adjustment has resulted in the issuing of state-recognised certificates, which allows graduates access to employment and also to pursue tertiary education. Given the economic pressure and competition, these educational attributes are critical to secure employment after graduation. In the schooling year 2013-2014, there were already 483 units of modern dayah in Aceh (Kanwil Kemenag Prov. Aceh, 2014).
The dayah that teach classical Islamic texts exclusively are referred to as salafiyyah or salafi which means traditional. This dayah category is the focus of this research. Throughout this thesis, the term ‘dayah’ refers to the traditional dayah exclusively. The term ‘modern’ will be used when the discussion requires differentiation from the traditional.

In other parts of Indonesia, dayah are similar to the pesantren or pondok pesantren in Java, and the surau in Minangkabau. In other parts of the world, they are similar to the pondok in the Malay community, similarly in southern Thailand and the southern Philippines; while in Middle Eastern and South Asian countries they are largely known as madrasah (Saby, 2013; Smith & Woodward, 2014; Woodward & Yahya, 2009). Dayah have a special characteristic in which the school leader, teachers and students stay within the school housing (Amiruddin, 1994; Dhofier, 1999; Nilan, 2009; Srimulyani, 2007). They are privately owned by religious leaders who are Islamic scholars, with a given title of a teungku chik, teungku dayah or teungku (Acehnese terms). Despite private ownership, dayah leadership and management are conducted solely by the teungku (Raihani, 2001).

The students’ learning activities involve Qur’an recitation, Arabic grammar, and learning classical Islamic texts (Raihani, 2001; Srimulyani, 2007). The main teaching and learning method involves memorising content delivered orally by the teungku (Amiruddin, 1994; Dhofier, 1999; Srimulyani, 2007; Yeoh, 1994). Hefner (2007) explains the memorisation and recitation of the Qur’an are critical to training individuals to become Islamic scholars. Further, it is believed that memorising the Qur’an ‘has the lasting effect of embodying the revealed knowledge of the Qur’an in the beings of the students (Boyle, 2006, p. 490). These schools concentrate on learning life after death matters (Dhofier, 1999). Other Muslim countries have long established traditional Islamic boarding schools that share similar roles and views as dayah. For example, in Morocco, a study conducted by Boyle (2004) on the country’s traditional Qur’anic education confirms that the schools’ role was to pass on cultural and
religious knowledge. Such knowledge is sought for cultural purposes rather than for future employment or economic reasons. Since it is understood that learning bestows prestige, it is a prominent achievement for children sent to these schools to memorise the Qur’an (Boyle, 2004).

In contrast to the *madrasah* and modern dayah which employ the national curriculum, traditional dayah are less subject to government control over their conduct and practices. These schools are not obliged to follow the national curriculum because they are institutions set up by the community (Ilyas, 2012). Instead, the *teungku* (dayah leader) determines what subjects are taught (Jackson & Parker, 2008). This flexibility is a result of dayah being independent institutions and being owned by private foundations and individuals (Jackson & Parker, 2008).

Today, there is a special government board that administers dayah affairs outside the MORA, such as, BPPD in Aceh. However, according to some dayah leaders, these schools continue to receive less financial support and professional development compared to other Islamic schools. Many dayah are still not registered and therefore have no access to financial support from the government. Nevertheless, as these schools have existed long before the instigation of government funding (such as those organised by BPPD), to not receive funds from the government does not appear to be as much of an issue to those who run dayah, for they have become accustomed to receiving support from the owner and the community.

### 2.3 An introduction to dayah education

The establishment of Islam in Aceh occurred around 601 H/1204 C.E through the arrival of Muslim missionaries, ie. merchants, who came into the region to trade (Hasjmy, 1989; Said, 1981). The spread of Islamic theology and philosophy in the archipelago was believed to be the dominant role of the Aceh Kingdom (Yeoh, 1994). Later, as Islam was recognised throughout,
the *teungku* were responsible for spreading Islamic knowledge through the establishment of dayah in the region (Amiruddin, 2003; Yeoh, 1994). It is believed that the establishment of dayah was in the 1600s, during the reign of Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607-1636), known as the greatest Aceh ruler who brought Aceh to glory (Feener, 2011).

Originating from the Arabic word *zawiyah*, the meaning of dayah refers to a cornered space in the mosque where *Sufis* (dervishes/roving scholars of more mystical expression of Islam who adhere to certain rituals, values and doctrines) would gather to learn, discuss and share their experiences (Saby, 2013). The term was later used to describe a religious learning centre (Hurgronje, 1906; Yeoh, 1994). Before the Dutch occupation, dayah were the only educational institutions in Aceh that covered both religious and general subjects, with an emphasis on Islamic studies (Baihaqi, 1976; Hasjmy, 1975). Before the establishment of dayah throughout the village areas, these Islamic learning centres were built inside palaces under the Sultan’s orders. Islamic scholars were sponsored to teach and produce writings on Arabic literature, history, Islamic law, and philosophy which was distributed to areas under the Sultanate rule, hence the spread of Islam. During this period, Aceh became known as the centre of Islamic learning, and a departure point for people going to *hajj* (pilgrimage) in Mekkah.

History shows that the *teungku* have the tendency to establish dayah in villages. Abdullah (1987) explains that this can be traced back to the era of Sultan Iskandar Muda. Despite the *teungku’s* important role as advisors to the Sultan, their existence became less significant to the kingdom compared to other royal elites, such as, the district chiefs. This was due to the stronger relationships formed between the district chiefs and the Sultan and their interrelated political interest. This was thought to be the trigger for the *teungku* to expand their independent authority and leadership roles by setting up dayah in the villages. Their expansion to the villages created strong ties between the *teungku* and villagers. Amiruddin (1994) discusses the history and role of dayah in his thesis, *The Response of the 'Ulama Dayah to the*
Modernization of Islamic Law in Aceh. He explains that dayah are not only places to study Islam, but also function as valued community centres. At the time, the teungku were teachers of all subjects. For instance, literacy was first taught in dayah (Yeoh, 1994). Those who were taught under the guidance of the teungku achieved well and became prominent figures in Aceh (Amiruddin, 1994).

Unfortunately, many dayah were destroyed during the Dutch-Aceh war (declared in April 1873) (Amiruddin, 1994). The Dutch provided mass schooling to teach the Acehnese reading and writing; however, Acehnese youth were also subtly educated and trained to be loyal to the Dutch government (Reid, 1979). This became a major concern of the teungku which led them to declare a fatwa (binding religious ruling): to study at a Dutch-administered school is haram (forbidden/sinful) (Yakub, 1980). After the war, the remaining teungku rebuilt dayah to keep youth away from the negative secular influence of the Dutch, and they decided to concentrate on teaching religion. By relying on the limited teaching resources, they adversely affected the quality of education (Amiruddin, 1994). These limited teaching resources included a lack of qualified teachers, as many of them were involved in the war and died fighting against the Dutch. The limited funding affected the reconstruction of dayah. The loss of kitab (classical Islamic texts) that were destroyed during the war hindered the teaching-learning activities. Moreover, dayah activities were strictly monitored by the Dutch (Hasjmy, 1975), who intervened in the curriculum, to the point where teaching subjects related to politics were forbidden (Amiruddin, 2003).

This historical background seems to have caused long-term trauma in today’s dayah community. One aspect of this trauma is that the appreciation of learning worldly knowledge, as instructed in the Qur’an, was neglected by dayah leaders. Modernity is often associated with western influence, and anything linked to it is perceived negatively (personal communication with dayah expert, March 5, 2015). Therefore, they continued to build dayah as unreformed
traditional Islamic learning centres. The emphasised teachings in dayah mainly concerned *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence) and *sufism* (mysticism) following the *Shafi’i* school of thought or *madzhab*. Yeoh (1994) argues that the *teungku* refer to the writings and teachings of the early Islamic scholars to find answers on any issue. That is, students are taught from and trained to refer to a particular *madzhab*, which is found in the *kitab kuning* - classical Islamic texts (the main teaching resources in dayah) - to find answers to questions they may have. This is an example of the conservative nature of learning in dayah. On the one hand, this continuity implies that these schools are very traditional in preserving the Islamic culture and Aceh identity. On the other hand, dayah are becoming more marginalised, in modern society, as they fail to meet contemporary needs of students and keep up with social change. Consequently, they are criticised for the limited curriculum on general subjects, and for not being able to meet modern needs (Boyle, 2004; Riza & Ilyas, 2013). Husin (2014) argues that these criticisms have resulted in the decline of dayah popularity and the rise in popularity of state-run schools. The concern seems to be that although *santri* (dayah students) have an adequate religious background, they are less well equipped in terms of broader contemporary knowledge and skills (computer skills, administration, management, critical thinking). This is especially problematic when there is a need to secure employment after graduation; graduates lack the skills and experience to meet the selection criteria. Yeoh (1994) mentions that many Acehnese are pressured to enrol their children in formal schools, rather than dayah, in order to earn a state-recognised leaving certificate, as it guarantees an opportunity to pursue tertiary education (eg. university), that can later secure employment. Yeoh (1994) explains that *Insafuddin*, a dayah-based organisation in Aceh, has long recognised these problems. Part of the organisation’s platform is to address the issue of employment attainment by graduates. The organisation,

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2 After the death of Prophet Muhammad, four renowned *madzhab* were established by four Islamic scholars –Hanafi, Maliki, Syafi’i, and Hanbali. These schools of thought concentrate on the understanding of *fiqh* (Islamic jurisprudence). Indonesian Muslims are known to be followers of the *Shafi’i* *madzhab*. 
established in 1968, is aimed at modernising traditional dayah. They understood dayah’s struggle to compete with state-run schools, and to be acknowledged as a formal institution by the government. There are dayah leaders who acknowledge these challenges and agree that dayah should be reformed in order to address the social and economic demands, such as, those who joined the Inshafuddin organisation. Husin (2014) argues the process of change is slow.

The literature discussed above supports the conclusion that dayah’s persistence to remain traditional relates to matters of historical trauma, control, and retaining the religious tradition and Aceh identity. Nevertheless, the objective of a dayah is to continue to spread and preserve the teachings of the prophet Muhammad, and create a cohesive society through teaching (Saby, 2013). A goal of dayah education is to prepare students to become informal leaders in the community and leading ulama (Islamic scholars). In this role, they convey the Islamic teachings to the people of Aceh as an adherent of the Islamic faith (Saby, 2013). Further, dayah have continued to become Aceh’s ‘guardian’ in preserving the region’s Islamic tradition, despite the external influences from political, economic and religious movements that have shaped the region’s historical development (Amiruddin, 2003; Roche, 2012). These schools are a reminder to the people of their important role in fighting for Indonesia’s independence (Hefner, 2009b).

2.3.1 Dayah’s characteristics

It is important to acknowledge that the existence of a dayah is significant to the people of Aceh, not only because of its specialization in Islamic education but also because of the socio-economic groups in society, which it serves. Dayah generally serve those from a lower socio-economic background most of whom reside in rural Aceh. The teungku do not consider teaching in dayah as their source of income. Rather, it is seen as part of their dedication to God in the
form of da’wah (preaching religious teachings). Teaching Islam is perceived as a religious obligation with hopes of receiving nothing more than God’s blessing and a heavenly place in the hereafter. In keeping with their religious intention not to ‘contaminate’ the religion/or the students with material means, dayah provides education free of charge.

In general, everyone is eligible to enrol in a dayah as there are no prerequisite levels of education. This flexibility has allowed pupils as young as seven years old to enrol, and is suitable for poor people who can only afford basic education, such as primary school and up to junior secondary school, or who cannot afford either at all. Therefore, it is normal practice for people to start their dayah education after completing either primary or junior secondary school. After receiving a basic education including literacy and numeracy, others choose to pursue dayah education and attend formal schooling (e.g., junior secondary and secondary education) simultaneously. There is no restriction on what age santri can study in a dayah. Therefore, it is not unusual to find a class environment consisting of students of different ages. The knowledge developed through study in dayah is not bounded by age; rather the pursuit of knowledge is based on one’s ability. This learning practice distinguishes dayah from the mainstream education, where teaching is geared toward students’ age rather than students’ ability. The studying period in dayah is also unique. Zulkhairi (2012) reports that the studying period in dayah is different to the schooling year practised in formal schools. The length of study depends on students’ learning capacity to complete the kitab kuning; as a result, some students may stay in dayah far longer than others.

Dayah welcome santri to stay in the dayah housing (and manage their own living costs) while studying Islam under the tutelage of the teungku. Once again, this makes education in dayah a convenient choice. For the poor, these schools are the best alternatives to fee-paying schools. Not only is the education provided for free, but the education content is focused on Islamic subjects and character building within the Islamic context. As such, it is understandable
that these schools are more dominant in rural communities, considering the social group they serve, and that dayah closely relate to and practice rural living.

Dayah are generally described as independent community-based learning centres that teach Islam through kitab kuning. These traditional schools are generally set up on waqf lands (donated lands) from pious local philanthropists (Hefner, 2009a) or on family inherited lands. In general, a dayah consist of a teungku (dayah leader and teacher), teachers, santri (students), housing, bale (Acehnese term for a wooden porch where classes are conducted), and meunasah (Acehnese term for a small praying place). The teungku, teachers, and santri live in the housing located inside the dayah environment.

The central figure of a dayah is the teungku. As the often single owner, manager, and teacher of a dayah, the role of the teungku is critical to the school’s existence. Therefore, the quality and prestige of a dayah are strongly determined by the teungku’s managerial skills, as well as, his or her reputation in the community. A teungku is an honorable title given to an individual that is highly knowledgeable in Islam, and who is also a teacher and scholar with a charismatic personality. Generally, the title of a teungku is bestowed by society if a person has ‘wandered’ to study the kitab in various Islamic schools located outside of the home village. Thalal et al. (2010) explain that it is expected for a potential teungku to move from one dayah to another to seek knowledge and build inter-dayah networks. Once this is achieved, he or she receives a verbal statement from the precedent teungku regarding the student’s mastery of the kitab (Hefner, 2009b), proficiency in Arabic language and social skills, such as, delivering sermons (Thalal et al., 2010).

A teungku, having gained social acknowledgement, generally sets up a dayah of their own (Suyanta et al., 2012). A teungku is believed to have the special ability to communicate with God, and that blessings are showered in the society through their presence (Smith &
Woodward, 2014). A teungku who is respected for his or her religious knowledge, great wisdom and personality, often attract individuals to study in the particular dayah. Some teungku are known for their expertise in certain subjects of kitab kuning, which also attract santri who want to learn specific knowledge (Jackson & Parker, 2008).

In addition to teaching responsibilities, a teungku is expected to facilitate people’s engagement in the community. Some are even involved in helping with economic and political problems (Dhofier, 1999). In other words, a teungku is seen as a public figure who embodies not only religious knowledge and charismatic personality, but who also provides leadership. The higher the degree of scholarship and humbleness of a teungku, the higher the appreciation and respect earned from the santri and community (Suyanta et al., 2012).

Suyanta et al. (2012) describe a teungku’s integrity as being critical to a dayah’s foundation. Integrity is interpreted in the form of the teungku having the capacity to be a parental figure, trustworthy, demonstrating akhlaq al-karimah (good morals), knowledgeable and highly respected by the people. Further, it is expected of a teungku that he/she will practice strong religious commitment and have both religious and spiritual experiences. These qualities have attracted many Muslims to place trust and their utmost loyalty in a teungku. A teungku’s judgement on any matter is considered true, and it is accepted without question. This is instilled in the majority of santri who learn under their guidance, which constitutes a unique and interesting pattern of teungku-santri relationship. As learning in dayah is informal and teacher-centred, the learning activity is “not in the sense of being casual, but in its being anchored on student’s love and devotion to his teacher, rather than enrolment in a corporate institution” (Hefner, 2009a, pp. 8–9).

As mentioned, the existence of a teungku is closely associated with God’s blessings. For instance, people loyal to a teungku believe that to kiss his or her hand showers them with God’s
blessings (Smith & Woodward, 2014). It is not unusual at the closing of community events for santri and guests to queue, waiting to get the chance to kiss the teungku’s hand. Suyanta et al. (2012) describe this as a display of the admiration and respect engrained in the dayah tradition.

Respect for the teungku is also closely associated with total obedience or ta’zim. This is believed to bring blessing into the lives of santri. The ta’zim tradition is also evident in a popular Acehnese proverb ‘Ta’zim keu guree geubrie ilmee, ta’zim keuambah geubrie hareuta.’ This means ‘to obey and respect the teungku will give you knowledge, to obey and respect the king will give you wealth’ (Malik et al., 2007). The saying implies that teungku earn such respect, loyalty and followers’ ta’zim because of their embodiment of Islamic knowledge, truth and wisdom (Abdullah, 2013). As such, it is not uncommon for graduates to follow in the footsteps of their preceding teungku by setting up their own dayah (Amiruddin, 2013a). To both the santri and the people of the community, a teungku deserves to hold a high position in the society (Suyanta et al., 2012).

Nevertheless, santri’s loyalty and ta’zim should not be perceived as a compulsion to serve the teungku as a person with authority; if anything it is driven by religious sentiments (Abdullah, 2013; Suyanta et al., 2012). However, further observation is necessary to shed light on the basis of the loyalty and ta’zim, especially by younger or newly enrolled santri. As the concept may be new to them, it is important to distinguish whether they have a full understanding or are merely following what other santri are practising. It is important to determine whether there is a cultural influence - other than the religious sentiment - as the driving factor to practice loyalty and ta’zim towards a teungku.

The santri are important constituents of dayah. There are two types of santri: the first type being part-time santri, known as santri kalong; and the second type being full-time santri, known as santri mukim. Santri kalong are individuals who study in dayah, but do not settle in
the provided housing. This is because some santri live close by, hence there is no need to reside in the dayah. Some other santri have formal school commitments (e.g., attending regular school), which take place during the day, thus can only attend dayah evening classes. The santri mukim are individuals who study as well as live in the housing. Full-time santri are expected to take control of their individual needs. For instance, they need to cook for themselves and sometimes need to work to cover their living expenses. They are accommodated with modest individual or shared rooms, depending on room availability.

The living arrangement in a dayah familiarises santri with the day to day traditional practices of communal praying, group studying, and cooking in groups (Suyanta et al., 2012). This organised living also means that social interactions occur daily, forging close ties among santri, and between santri and the teungku. In Muhammad’s study (2010) on the acculturation of Islamic kinship in traditional dayah, he describes that five components involved in the building of Islamic kinship in dayah. These are the teachers, students, parents, curriculum, and the community. He explains that this type of kinship is centred on religious values, and the belief that to obtain Allah’s blessing strengthens the relationships of the people involved. Muhammad (2010) explains that the kinship based on Islamic values in a dayah is developed through interactions of the people involved. Such interactions occur during the teaching process where the teungku gives lectures and advice to students, or when people refer to the teungku for religious advice. Muhammad (2010) also reveals that the kinship between dayah teachers and students is strong because the aim of their kinship is to seek God’s blessing and adhere to his commandments. Studies by Muhammad (2010), Suyanta et al, (2012) and others highlight the development of social capital in a faith-based environment, such as, dayah.

As this study will explore the nature of social capital developed in dayah and its effect on seeking employment, the living, study and work environments of dayah, are expected to play important roles. Therefore, the research will focus on graduates who were studying as full-time
santri. Graduates who were part-time santris are not included in the data to be collected for this study because they were not involved in the whole living experience in dayah.

2.3.2 The teaching – learning environment

In the Islamic way of living, religion influences all decisions. This is based on the belief that Allah will examine one’s religious conduct and social obligations on judgement day (Dhofier, 1999). This is why Muslims place a high value on being educated about Islam. Learning Islam is considered “as an act of worship in its own right” (Hefner, 2009a). In traditional Islamic schools, students are taught that learning is a form of devoting oneself to God, and not the seeking of power and wealth (Dhofier, 1999). Therefore, one of the principles of learning in dayah is building one’s character in accordance with the Islamic teaching. The main canons of dayah education are to teach students modesty, honesty, purity, good morals, spread benevolence, apply the acquired knowledge in society, and be dedicated to serving the community (Idris, 2008). Thus, it is not surprising for dayah to be referred to as schools for character building. In Aceh, it is common for parents to send their troubled children to dayah to ‘set them straight’ and become individuals who embody good morals and uphold the Islamic tradition.

In terms of teaching methods, the memorisation of scriptures and the oral tradition of knowledge transmission are the two major pedagogies. The ‘one-way’ knowledge transmission is based on students listening to their teacher and memorising learning materials (Marshallsay, 2012). The teacher transmits knowledge using the oral tradition in groups and to individuals (Van Bruinessen, 1994; Dhofier, 1999; Smith & Woodward, 2014). Texts are read aloud, analysed and commented on by the teacher, while santri listen and look closely at the texts.
being read (Berkey, 2007; Smith & Woodward, 2014; Zulkhairi, 2012). This teaching method is known as *wetonan*.

The *kitab kuning*, written in classical Arabic script, are the main textbooks used in the dayah curricula. As mentioned, *kitab kuning* are writings of previous Islamic scholars that follow a certain Islamic school of thought. Most of these classical texts are notes of commentaries on classical texts in Arabic (Hefner, 2009a). These texts are highly regarded in the dayah community, as guidance to live life according to the Islamic tradition even in a modernised setting (Lukens-Bull, 2001), despite (*kitab kuning*) being written in different centuries. In Amiruddin’s (2013) study on the dayah curriculum, he reports the learning of the *kitab kuning* is focused on one’s ability to read the texts. The study shows the *teungku* spends a great amount of time teaching the literal translation of each word and grammatical structure of the Arabic wordings before discussing the content of the texts. Amiruddin (2013) explains the aim of this teaching method is for students first to acquire Arabic grammar so they can better understand the content of the texts in the *kitab kuning*. Although Arabic is the language used in Islam’s main texts such as, the Qur’an and the *kitab kuning*, it is not generally spoken by the Acehnese; hence the emphasis placed on learning the grammar of the language, in dayah education. However, Amiruddin (2013) argues the extensive time spent on learning the language structure has a negative influence on students’ ability to fully understand the *kitab’s* content. This clearly shows that the ability to read, translate, and interpret the *kitab* is critical to the dayah education.

Amiruddin’s study also examines the limited space for critical analysis in the dayah pedagogy. During the teaching process, there is little time spent critically analysing the content and the correctness of the references, and the significance of the content (Amiruddin, 2013a; Van Bruinessen, 2004). He further asserts the *kitab kuning* used as teaching resources are out
of date. This suggests the resources and learning process are inclined towards maintaining traditions as opposed to educating for a changing society.

Dayah do not have a fixed or standard curriculum (Yacob, 2010). There is no systematic guideline for a curriculum that can be adopted by all dayah in Aceh (Zulkhairi, 2012). The teaching in dayah is based on the curriculum that is very much informal, with little effort from the teungku to innovate the curriculum (Zulkhairi, 2012). Given the flexibility, however, most dayah employ relatively similar curricula with an emphasis on the subject of fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) (Smith & Woodward, 2014). Other subject areas covered in the curriculum include, but are not limited to, tawheed (monotheism), mantiq (the science of logic), hadith (sayings of Prophet Muhammad), usul al-fiqh (the sources of the law), tafsir (exegesis of the Qur’an), usul ad-din (principles of religion), tasawwuf (mysticism) and nahwu (Arabic grammar) (Hefner, 2009b; Kraince, 2009). Subjects in natural and social sciences are absent from most dayah, as these are not considered priority learning areas (Hefner, 2009b).

Unlike mainstream schools, there are no graded classes and formal examinations in dayah. Upon graduation, students are issued with a leaving certificate signed by the teungku that shows subjects mastered (Smith & Woodward, 2014). The certificate serves as identification of the origins of the teungku under whom graduates were taught, rather than as evidence of subjects studied (Marshallsay, 2012). It does not provide access to employment, or entry into a tertiary institution (eg. university), implying that recognition of their dayah qualification is based on their teungku’s status and acknowledgment in the society. For instance, if a student graduates from a dayah led by a well-known teungku, there is a higher chance that the graduate will be recognised by society and become an informal community leader. It also suggests that the social status of the teungku is a determining factor of the school’s popularity (Marshallsay, 2012). In fact, it is not uncommon for graduates who set up their own dayah to name themselves after the dayah they attended. This is one way to show and convince people
in the community that they have been taught under the guidance of a renowned *teungku*. Naming themselves after the dayah demonstrates graduates’ pride in their former institution, and transmits their positive learning experience.

According to the norms of a traditional dayah, students are not allowed to pursue knowledge in regular day schools. This is to avoid outside influence – in this case, secular education – that can taint their Islamic knowledge and purity (Husin, 2014). For the same reason, dayah are reluctant to integrate the modern curriculum, as integration potentially poses the threat of prioritising subjects aimed at pursuing material success ahead of religious teachings. This can be seen today in modern dayah, where the proportion of religious subjects is outweighed by general subjects. Religious subjects in modern dayah are seen as an addition to the standardised curriculum, to maintain the status quo, rather than as an educational priority. There are exceptions, however, some *teungku* are much more flexible with regard to their students’ intention to pursue modern education. A prominent example, cited by Husin (2014), is Dayah Darussalam in Labuhan Haji, Southern Aceh, a well-known dayah that encourages its students to pursue modern higher education.

As independent institutions, dayah support the costs of academic activities, school infrastructure, and cover water and electricity bills. *Santri* are not expected to pay any fees. In order to survive, many of these schools cultivate land (e.g., rice field, palm plantation) to generate income. The *teungku* and *santri* farm together and are responsible for the farm production. This practice in itself is a way to encourage responsibility in *santri*. The life skills taught are in line with dayah’s aim to encourage and train students to be independent and self-sufficient individuals (Jackson & Parker, 2008). The teaching of life skills is appropriate for the rural setting. Lukens-Bull (2001) describes how dayah teach self-sufficiency by keeping a fish pond as a food source for *santri*. These life skills are intended to give graduates the skills to generate additional income.
Because dayah are community-based learning centres, and are open to the public for referring to religious matters or day-to-day affairs, it is common for people in the village to support them. For instance, villagers often provide the teungku with crops during the harvest season while others contribute money. Some also receive support from government institutions such as BPPD. A strong relationship between dayah and the community is forged, partly as a result of the social activities that the dayah engage in with the community, for instance, (i) students and graduates teach free Qur’anic recitation and Islamic education courses in villages, (ii) dayah host religious celebrations that involve villagers’ participation, (iii) the teungku lead communal prayers at the local mosques, (iv) they organise funerals and the accompanying rituals for people in villages. People in dayah, especially the teungku, not only teach Islamic education but play an important role in dealing with social, cultural and political matters. For example, a teungku has a certain degree of authority among the community, due to charisma and religious prestige, which is critical during the election period, as they have the power to influence the people’s vote (Van Bruinessen, 2004). Therefore, dayah are regarded as both educational and social agents (Dhofier, 1999).

In the academic year of 2014/2015, MORA reported that Aceh had approximately 1,222 dayah (both traditional and modern) and it was home to more than 100,000 students. Traditional dayah account for 52% of dayah in total, while the remaining 48% are modernised (Kementerian Agama RI, 2016). This number implies that many are still relying on traditional dayah education despite its lack of integrated curricula. They do present an attractive educational option for several reasons. First, most Acehnese people are Muslim and therefore obliged to learn Islam. Dayah are favoured because they provide education exclusively on Islamic subjects. The second reason is that santris are not obliged to pay tuition fees, which helps families with financial difficulties. Third, these schools are mainly located in rural areas of Aceh where most households have low socio-economic backgrounds, making education in
dayah a convenient choice. Within the orthodox Islamic doctrine, dayah have continued to provide religious training and knowledge to the Acehnese society. They have helped Aceh retain a Muslim identity, despite rapid social and economic change development (Roche, 2012).

2.4 Dayah graduates and employment

The literature above discusses dayah’s establishment, characteristics, and their role in the community. However, few consider the employment prospects of its graduates. To the researcher’s knowledge, there have been no studies on dayah that concentrate on issues concerning graduates’ employment. Nevertheless, the literature contains some indications as to how graduating from a dayah might affect graduates’ employment opportunities. What is known is that many graduates are faced with challenges in gaining employment, while others with a more comprehensive education face fewer barriers in achieving social and economic success (Van Bruinessen, 2004; Riza & Ilyas, 2013; Yeoh, 1994). In a technology-driven modern world, it is believed that santri need more than just religious knowledge and rural life skills (e.g., farming) if they are to keep pace with the rapid development of the labour market. Santri need to be equipped with contemporary knowledge and skills, to be able to compete with non-dayah graduates in attaining jobs. Since dayah are informal institutions, a dayah leaving certificate is not recognised by the state. This affects graduates’ ability to pursue tertiary education and to apply for jobs (Departemen Agama RI, 2009; Yeoh, 1994). A recognised leaving certificate is critical for graduates to have any chance of gaining access to the formal labour market.

MORA and MONE have introduced a number of alternatives in an effort to elevate the formal acknowledgement of dayah, so that dayah graduates receive the same opportunities as graduates from formal schools in order to gain employment. First, MORA, in partnership with
MONE, has introduced the Nine Years Compulsory Education in dayah (*Wajar Dikdas Pondok Pesantren Salafiyah*)\(^3\). The nine years of compulsory education is conducted in traditional dayah, which equates to six years at primary level and three years at junior secondary level of formal schooling. The core subjects being taught are mathematics, natural science, and Indonesian language, in addition to the Islamic subjects in the dayah curriculum. On completion, *santri* are issued with formal leaving certificates that are equal to the junior secondary level of formal schooling. This certificate is recognised by any higher secondary schools; therefore, *santri* may continue their education.

In Aceh, few traditional dayah incorporate this national initiative. In the 2014-2015 schooling year, eight dayah took part in providing the compulsory education at the primary level, twenty-nine dayah at the junior secondary level, and only nine dayah offered the complete program (Kementerian Agama RI, 2016). The differences in program delivery may relate to the available teaching personnel and administrative capacity of the dayah. As demonstrated in Murtadho’s (2007) study on the implementation of *Wajar Dikdas* in traditional Islamic schools, some of the challenges in maintaining the continuity of the program include the lack of teachers’ salary which affects teaching performance, and the limited provision of textbooks for students that impedes the learning process.

Another alternative introduced by MONE, namely *Paket C*, is a sit-in examination which consists of general subjects, and is considered equal to the final examination conducted at the higher secondary level. *Paket C* is available for *santri* (or other students from non-mainstream schooling, such as, home schooling) who wish to receive a formal leaving certificate, equal to higher secondary schooling, without having to attend formal education.

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\(^3\) Under the presidency of the late KH. Abdurrahman Wahid in 2000, a collective agreement was made between MORA and MONE to introduce the *Wajar DikDas* program in dayah. This agreement was established under regulation number 1/U/KB/2000 and number: MA/86/2000.
The mu’adalah initiative is another alternative introduced by MORA. The borrowed Arabic term mu’adalah is understood as a process to provide accreditation and formal recognition for educational institutions, such as dayah (Departemen Agama RI, 2009). To achieve mu’adalah status, dayah have to go through a verification process and need to comply with five major components determined by MORA. These are the curriculum, teaching staff, students, school management, and school facilities. For students who have graduated from a dayah with mu’adalah status, their dayah qualification holds more value. Such graduates can pursue higher education at universities that recognise dayah qualification with a mu’adalah status.

Even though these alternatives are available, many of these schools prefer to promote the traditional learning. As explained, this has a direct influence on graduates’ ability to find employment. Yet, how graduates find employment is unclear and is an under-researched area. Of the few studies of dayah, Yeoh (1994) stated the concern of the Acehnese public, who shift their children from dayah to formal schools, in the hope that they will be more likely to find jobs and will be better able to access tertiary education. Amiruddin (1994) briefly observed graduates’ success in gaining employment as a result of being active in the community. He describes this as a dayah tradition, whereby students are educated and expected to be actively engaged in assisting the community as part of their religious duties, and not for material gain. Therefore, this study will provide new insight and information on how dayah education has an impact in helping graduates find employment and issues related to it.

2.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter has provided the background information needed to understand the context of dayah education as traditional learning centres in rural Aceh. To help the reader grasp a general
overview of the dayah context, the chapter presented the geographical and demographic characteristics of Aceh and its people. As a Muslim-dominant province, the acquisition of Islamic education is central to the Acehnese public. The chapter discussed the types of Islamic schools in Indonesia in which the people can choose to enrol. These are madrasah (state-recognised Islamic day schools), modern dayah (Islamic boarding school with a mix of general and religious subjects in the curriculum), and traditional dayah – central to this research - informal boarding schools where the teachings are traditionally centred on learning kitab kuning exclusively.

Criticisms have been addressed to traditional dayah for the limited curriculum on general subjects (Husin, 2014; Riza & Ilyas, 2013) and for not being able to meet modern needs, such as, accessing employment (Guerin, 2006). Although students have an adequate religious background, their broader contemporary knowledge and skills for a career in the modern world are limited. The need to secure employment after leaving dayah is a concern, considering graduates have limited skills and experience to meet the selection criteria.

Based on the studies discussed in this chapter, it is plausible to claim a dayah’s educational goal was never aimed at producing skilled graduates for working purposes. Rather, it was to produce graduates with an identity attached to Islamic character, as enshrined in the Qur’an. It is also important to acknowledge that the long existence of dayah is evidence of how the Acehnese society, and especially rural communities, support, value, and respect Islamic education in general, but also the particular manner in which this education is enacted in dayah.

However, due to social and economic pressures, improving the education is deemed necessary, especially to provide its graduates with the knowledge and skills suitable to secure future employment. To some extent, the government has shown itself to be proactive in supporting the development of these schools, through initiatives that can better recognise the
qualities of these institutions and their graduates. Nevertheless, the national initiatives have not been implemented evenly throughout dayah in Aceh. In turn, this affects graduates’ chances to pursue further higher education and gain access to employment.

The employment aspect of dayah graduates is an under-researched area; specifically, how graduates find employment is unclear. This study sets out to provide an empirical understanding of how dayah education impacts on graduates and their employment. Such an understanding will provide new insights to inform the local government, dayah leaders and teachers in relation to dayah-related policies and practices.
Chapter Three: Literature Review

3.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews and links the literature on social capital, faith, and employment as it applies to the study context of dayah in rural Aceh. First it examines the various interpretations of social capital, followed by the characteristics of social capital and factors that promote social capital. This is followed by an introduction to faith, focussing on ‘faith’ as an attribute in shaping social capital, and how the concept links to this study. The literature which examines the effect of social capital on finding employment is then discussed. In sections of this chapter, anecdotal evidence or examples from Aceh are included to help capture and understand more fully the research context. The chapter concludes with a summary. An outline of the chapter is presented in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1

Outline of Chapter Three

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3.1 Definitions of social capital

Social capital has been examined and interpreted in many ways by economists, anthropologists, political scientists, and development practitioners. For example, social capital is included in literature on policy development (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000), economic development and poverty reduction (Narayan, 1999), public health (Fujiwara & Kawachi, 2008), community development (Dale & Onyx, 2005), education (Coleman, 1988) and job searching (George & Chaze, 2009; Granovetter, 1974; Lin, 2002; Matthews, Pendakur, & Young, 2009; O’Connor, 2013; Stone, Gray, & Hughes, 2003).

One way to understand the idea of social capital is to imagine that a person can benefit from his or her social relations with others. A common example of everyday life that mobilises social capital is when a person is in need of money; they seek help from friends or family members. In another example, a person may save money when shopping if they are told by a close friend who works at the store that the item will soon be discounted. Another example common in poor rural communities is when a customer can buy daily needs, such as rice from the local grocery store without having to pay immediately. The owner of the local grocery store allows the customer to pay in instalments or whenever the customer has the ability to pay. This is because the owner knows the customer well, recognises the needs, and places trust in the customer to pay what is owed. Similarly, the customer would not want to lose the store owner’s trust; it needs to be maintained by keeping the promises made, thus social capital is retained. The notion of social capital, as will be reviewed, goes beyond these everyday life occurrences.

Field (2003) expresses the core of social capital in two words, ‘relationships matter’. Through relationships and connections that are maintained over time, social capital enables people to achieve goals that they otherwise cannot achieve without the support of others. Portes (1998) illustrates the concept by comparing it with other forms of capital:
Whereas economic capital is in people’s bank accounts and human capital is inside their heads, social capital inheres in the structure of their relationships. To possess social capital, a person must be related to others, and it is these others, not himself, who are the actual source of his or her advantage. (p. 7)

Similarly, Dinham (2009) argues that people are enriched by their human capital (e.g., education, work experience, knowledge and skills) and by their relationships with other people. He suggests that social capital strengthens educational attainment, increases participation in civic engagement, reduces crime rates, and empowers labour market and economic growth. It is then arguable that a cohesive community is one where social capital is high.

Coleman (1990) believes that social capital is not an individual’s private property, stating, “social capital inheres in the structure of relations between persons and among persons. It is lodged neither in individuals nor in physical implements of production” (p. 302). As such, it becomes available to individuals only when it is shared. Drawing on Coleman’s concept of social capital, Narayan (1999) defines it as “the norms and social relations embedded in the social structures of society that enable people to coordinate action and to achieve desired goals” (p. 6). Similarly, on an individual level, Lin (2001) argues social capital focuses on embedded resources (valued goods in society) in an individual’s social network and how these resources can benefit the individual’s action. Lin (2001) also asserts that, unlike human capital where resources are owned by individuals (e.g., education, work experience), social capital is not the individual’s possessed goods, but is accessible through social ties - both direct and indirect ties.

In research on social capital in rural communities, social capital is defined by Falk and Kilpatrick (2000) as “the product of social interactions with the potential to contribute to the social, civic or economic well-being of a community-of-common-purpose” (p. 103). They assert that without interaction, social capital cannot be established. They argue that social
interaction is the key to creating social capital, and is crucial to begin analysing any sort of relationship.

A related concept drawn from the social capital literature is ‘network capital’. This is explained by Wellman and Frank (2001) as people seeking help through their personal community networks including, friends, families, neighbours and work colleagues. They assert that such ties with social groups provide network capital that allows access to resources that people may find useful. These resources include information, friendship, emotional and material support, and a sense of belonging, all of which people access to address daily life issues.

While the studies mentioned above provide a wider understanding of the concept, Stone & Hughes (2002) make it more specific by developing four classifications of an individual’s social capital. The classifications are:

- Social capital is rich. This cluster refers to people who are highly connected to informal networks and institutions (such as family, friends, and community groups) and have generated trust and reciprocity.
- Strong norms and civic connections. This refers to groups of people with high trust and reciprocity level in various types of social networks but low levels of association with informal ties (friends, family members, colleagues at work, neighbours).
- Informal. This category suggests people are connected to a few informal networks but with high trust and reciprocity level. The connections are at a local community or neighbourhood level.
- Social capital is poor. People in this category have limited informal networks with families, community and institutions.
From the literature on social capital, it becomes clear how relations between humans develop for the mutual benefit of one another. That is, parents, families, friends and acquaintances are important assets, whom one can rely on during a crisis, or benefit from for material gain (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). Therefore, in different forms, social capital is in existence when an individual can benefit from the networks of social connections as a means of ‘capital’. Social capital is built on trust, reciprocity, shared values and norms within the social network. When people are living together and working together in an intense study environment, such as, dayah, some form of social capital must develop.

In the reviewed studies on social capital, the definitions most often referred to, and interpretations of social capital are by contemporary sociologists including Pierre Bourdieu (1980, 1985), James Coleman (1988) and Robert Putnam (2000). There are marginal differences in the definitions they propose. Bourdieu (1985) identifies social capital as “the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition” (p. 248). He argues that to achieve social capital, one must strategically invest in social networks to access the benefits available, implying that social networks are not naturally given (Portes, 1998). This social capital approach positions potential resources located in social networks to be used to the advantage of the person (Dale & Onyx, 2005). Bourdieu’s definition highlights how social capital can be broken down into two elements: the social relationship which allows individuals access to resources available to other members; and the quality and quantity of the resources (Portes, 1998).

Coleman (1988, 1990) emphasises the involvement of social structures that assist individuals in achieving their goals. Coleman’s (1990) view of social capital contributes to the uniqueness of the concept. That is, social capital is a productive asset, in which certain objectives can only be achieved in its presence. Coleman compares social capital with physical
and human capital. While physical capital is observed in material form, and human capital is built through an individual’s skills and knowledge (e.g., education, working experience) enabling action, social capital is created through relationships between people to facilitate action and achieve goals. He continues to argue that because it is embodied in relationships among people, social capital becomes less tangible than the other two capitals. Coleman (1990) examines “obligations and expectations” (p. 306) and views these as resources for individuals that can be accessed through social relations. For example, if a person does a favour for a friend and believes that one day the friend will return the favour, then the friend is bound by obligation to keep the person’s trust and expectation. It is clear that mutual obligation promotes “sturdy norms of reciprocity” (Putnam, 2000, p. 20). This scenario demonstrates that trustworthiness is involved in this form of social capital.

In an example where trustworthiness is critical, Coleman (1990) refers to the practice of rotating credit; an unconventional way of saving money, but a common practice in Indonesian communities. The groups of people who are involved in this practice are generally friends and neighbours. They meet once a month to collect the same amount of money from each member, then hand it to the one lucky recipient (in Indonesia, some groups prefer to collect and withdraw money on a weekly basis; a fact the Researcher knows because of personal involvement in such social activity). The cycle will repeat until each member receives one payout. Coleman (1990) asserts that this practice has been successful due to the high level of trustworthiness among members of the group. In this rotating credit activity, he recognises that things can easily go wrong if a member leaves the group after receiving the money at an earlier stage, leaving the rest of the members with a financial loss. Therefore, there exists a set of expectations among members to be trustworthy, and also an obligation to keep such trust.

Coleman (1990) also emphasises the “information potential” (p. 310) embodied in social relations as an important form of social capital. He states that information, a tool to facilitate
action, is important, but gaining access to information is sometimes costly. A person can gain information from social relations, established for other objectives, with minimum cost. This form of social capital is shown in one of the examples mentioned earlier in the discussion about a person who depends on her friend to give information on discounted items at her friend’s workplace. Such social relations can also be seen in rural dayah environment. For instance, a dayah graduate who is searching for a job depends on his dayah community to provide him with, if not an actual job, at the very least, information on job opportunities that suit him. As this study concentrates on social capital and dayah graduates’ experience in finding employment in rural communities, this form of social capital – the provision of information through social relations is highly relevant.

Coleman (1990) does not distinguish clearly between the motivations of recipients (people who benefit from social capital) and donors (people who benefit others), facilitated by social capital (Portes, 1998). In Portes’ (1998) view, motivations are critical to developing social capital. He argues there must be a clear distinction among those who possess social capital (those who can claim), the sources (those who comply with the claims) and resources of social capital. Nevertheless, Coleman’s (1990) analysis of the concept is relatable through his specific examples of social conduct, which help provide a visualisation of the many forms of social relationships that constitute social capital.

A later study on social capital by Robert Putnam (1995) received great attention and stirred public and academic debate. Putnam’s (1995) interpretation of the concept of social capital in his early works was “features of social organisation such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit” (p. 2). In his later studies, Putnam (2000) describes social capital as “connections among individuals – social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them” (p. 19). An element added to the latter definition of social capital is reciprocity. Putnam (2000, 2001)
asserts that the central idea of social capital is that there is value in social networks; that social capital can influence the productivity of individuals and groups. To explain how social networks hold value for individuals, Putnam (2000) provides an example: For individuals seeking jobs, the best strategy would be “networking”, because most people gain jobs from the people whom they know (social capital), not necessarily from what they know (human capital) (Putnam, 2000, p. 20). As for the value of social networks for groups or community, Putnam illustrates an example where the rate of crime is lowered because neighbours in a well-connected community look out for each other’s homes.

Further, Putnam (2001) points out that social capital comes in various forms. For instance, an organisation that has a hierarchical structure (e.g., a chairman), and membership fees and/or other procedures, is a form of social capital that is highly formal. Other forms of social capital that are less formal can be found at parties where groups of people get together. In both situations, networks can easily be established, and reciprocity developed, resulting in potential gains. There is also an obscure form of social capital, such as when people nod to others they sometimes see at the supermarket. And there is also social capital that is ‘densely interlaced’ (closely intertwined), such as steelworkers who meet daily at the factory, meet at church every Sunday and go bowling together regularly (Putnam, 2001). This densely connected form of social capital correctly fits the context of study in rural dayah, in Aceh. As described in the previous chapter, students in dayah study, eat, cook, clean, and live together. In this condition, strong ties – including trust and reciprocity - can easily be formed.

The idea of ‘bonding’ and ‘bridging’ social capital has captured the interest of scholars and practitioners, for it is used as an instrument to build solid communities. Following Granovetter’s (1974) work on the ‘strong and weak ties’ of social capital theory, the two forms of social capital ‘bonding’ and ‘bridging’ have been clearly differentiated. Putnam (2000) defines bonding social capital as ‘inward looking and tend to reinforce exclusive identities and
homogeneous groups’ (p. 22). More precisely, it is described as long-term relationships between similar people with strong ties, such as relationships with family and friends (Gilchrist, 2004). This form of social capital is the basis for social support, reciprocity and solidarity.

On the other hand, bridging social capital comprises people or groups from different social circles. It is understood as the building of links or loose ties between heterogeneous groups who may have a common interest, such as among neighbours, colleagues, and different groups within a community (Gilchrist, 2004). Putnam (2000) argues that bridging networks are more important for acquiring access to external resources and information diffusion, both within and between groups. This idea is pointed out in Granovetter’s (1974) theory of the ‘strength of weak ties’, where job seekers tend to have valuable access to employment through their weak social ties, such as, distant acquaintances, hence ‘bridging’ social capital. Granovetter’s argument also points to weak ties having more value in providing access to employment than strong ties. This is because strong ties are homogeneous and tend to form amongst the same social circle as the job seeker, thereby providing access to only a limited amount of new job-related information.

The main difference between the two ideas is located in the characteristics of the group, where bonding occurs among more homogeneous groups of people, and bridging among heterogeneous groups. Despite the different outcomes of bonding (strong homogeneous networks) and bridging (weak heterogeneous networks), the negative outcome of social capital is caused by excessive bonding and less bridging. Bridging social capital allows more access to resources that are useful for individuals, and this can also decrease a person’s level of dependency (Putnam, 2000; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). Therefore, a balance between bonding and bridging, arguably, can optimise the positive effects of social capital (Stone et al., 2003).
Nevertheless, practitioners commonly associate this idea with development in poor communities. Putnam asserts the existence of strong social bonds can facilitate poor people within communities to face and alleviate poverty issues. An ethnographic study by Edin and Levin (1997) confirmed that people in poor communities rely on social capital to address basic needs. Thus, bonding social capital is a critical requirement to engage people in building better communities (Putnam, 2000). Putnam’s bonding argument can be seen in situations, such as, in rural Aceh, where the problem of poverty is visible in the communities. People in rural communities have the tendency to rely on each other for almost every aspect of life. In rural Aceh, close community bonds provide support, ranging from minding the neighbour’s children, sharing food, extending loans, minding others’ rice field, to providing access to job opportunities. Such behaviours can also involve local dayah; for a dayah is central to people in rural Aceh communities (Idris, 2008). The dense social ties found in rural Aceh communities is a fascinating area of potential research. However, the focus of this study is more related to how graduates access employment through social capital built in a faith-based education, such as dayah.

Putnam (2000) also highlights the importance of bridging capital as it can convey more resources that may be useful to the people in poor communities. Therefore, the bonding phase is critical for poor communities to get basic assistance, while the bridging phase is necessary to help the people go forward. This view of social capital is relevant to community development practitioners, government policy conversations, research agencies and public health organisations. As well as Putnam’s ‘bonding’ and ‘bridging’, there is the ‘linking’ of social capital. Woolcock (2001) argues that linking social capital provides connections with formal institutions beyond community reach, such as a government or governing body that provides useful resources. Gilchrist (2004) elaborates further that this form of social capital is developed through links between people, or groups, with nothing in common, but which enables its
members with resources that are not available in their own network. Others, such as De Souza Briggs, (1998, p. 178) make further distinctions of social capital:

(i) ‘Social support’ is social capital that aids people with a problem resulting from their circumstances (e.g., poor people). Known as ‘getting by’.

(ii) ‘Social leverage’ is the next phase in the social capital ladder which helps people change their lives by taking advantage of opportunities (e.g., getting a job). Known as ‘getting ahead’.

From the literature reviewed, it can be concluded that social capital is essential to help create, achieve and improve individuals’ lives and rural community cohesiveness. It also highlights the importance of dayah within the community, and the possibility of social capital development in dayah.

3.1.1 The functions of social capital

Portes (1998) distinguishes three functions of social capital: a source of social control; a source of family support; and a source of benefits beyond the immediate family. The first function of social capital (social control) is created through dense networks that mostly benefit certain social groups, such as, parents, teachers, and police, whose purpose is to enforce discipline and order to those under their responsibility. Influenced by Coleman’s views, Portes’ second function of social capital for family support is demonstrated by the parent who is primarily responsible for raising the children. For instance, Asian immigrant mothers often buy second-hand textbooks to help their children with their schoolwork (Coleman, 1988). The role of family support is also highlighted in Hao's (1994) work, where a greater social capital was found in two-parent families with fewer children and with high hopes for their loved ones. In this family situation, the parents tend to give the children more attention and spend more time with them,
possibly resulting in children with an achievement-oriented personality (Hao, 1994). Portes’ (1998) third function of social capital (a source of benefit beyond immediate family) is demonstrated during the process of accessing employment, while striving for career enhancement and entrepreneurial success. The idea is that social connection is an important tool used to take individuals further (Granovetter, 1974; Loury, 1977). This particular function of social capital is well-captured in Granovetter's (1974) well-known argument about the “strength of weak ties”. It shows that social connections other than immediate family and close friends – referred to as weak ties – have the influence and power to direct individuals to employment opportunities. However, he does not specify whether individuals are aware of this advantage (Lin, 2001). In this study, I will examine whether the dayah graduates’ strong and/or weak ties are helpful in their search for employment. Further literature on the use of social capital in gaining employment is discussed in section 3.4.

Social capital has the ability to assist in the development of human capital (Bourdieu, 1985; Coleman, 1990). Parents who are well-connected can increase individual opportunities to gain better education, training and access to employment (Lin, 2001). This is common in Aceh (based on the Researcher’s local knowledge as an Acehnese), where parents who are well connected, as a result of their higher hierarchical positions, are able to enrol their children in good schools. This action could mean some rules are slightly ‘bent’ (e.g., minimum age requirement). It shows that not only do the parents have connections and authority, but the children also benefit from a good education, and contribute to their own human capital. Similarly, it is also argued that human capital influences social capital (Lin, 2001). It is believed that people with better education and skills (human capital) tend to have social networks that are rich in resources (social capital).

With various studies suggesting the importance of social capital in gaining employment, this research will seek to discover whether graduates’ social capital (social networks) help them
to find employment. Specifically, this study seeks to examine the nature of social capital developed in dayah, and the role of social networks in helping dayah graduates, with no formal educational qualification, to find employment.

3.1.2 The other side (exploitation) of social capital

I have discussed the role of social capital in helping individuals or groups to obtain their objectives. This makes social capital sound like it always brings positive outcomes. However, Coleman (1990) argues that some forms of social capital, which are useful in assisting certain actions, may not be sufficient and can sometimes be harmful to others. Portes (1998) asserts that social capital can be destructive to the members of the networks as well as to non-members. Similarly, Putnam (2001) stresses that all forms of social capital can result in negative outcomes. It can restrict the freedom of individuals, and has the potential to claim too many resources from successful members. This is because of the asymmetrical forces embedded in social capital (Narayan, 1999; Portes, 1998). Putnam (2001) gives an example of how social capital can be used for destructive purposes. He refers to a bombing incident in the United States by an individual who was supported by a number of loyal people. Putnam asserts that the person who initiated the bombing would not have succeeded if not for the support of the team members. Therefore, this network of people who were aimed at doing harmful things was indeed an example of social capital being used for destructive purposes (Putnam, 2001, p. 3). Fukuyama (2001) refers to this act of destruction as ‘negative externalities’ resulting from social capital. He mentions groups such as the Ku Klux Klan who came together to achieve their aims on the basis of shared norms that created social capital, but at the same time harmed the society who were against them.
Another side effect of social capital is that it sometimes creates disruptions in a society, leading to social exclusion (Print & Coleman, 2003). As Portes (1998) observed, the same strong ties that bring benefits to group members, occasionally disable access for others. In an example illustrated by Kraince (2008), if Muslims from various groups who study in Islamic institutions create a strong bond, then distrust non-Muslims, this creates social exclusion and tensions rather than cohesion. In the Aceh context, the practice of social exclusion is also common. Anecdotally, it is a commonly-held belief that it is easier for government employees to be promoted to a higher job position if they come from the same district, or belong to the same ethnic background, as their superiors. In this situation, the shared ethnicity elicits trust, which then produces social capital with the benefit of career enhancement for only certain employees.

Another side effect of social capital is that social group members can be controlled to the point that individuals are deprived of their personal freedoms. This situation is common in a knit-tight community, such as in villages. Portes (1998) explains that members of a village can benefit from social relations with their neighbours, but at the same time experience restricted personal freedom. For some people, this creates an inconvenient place to live in, and results in the younger people leaving the village in search of their own space. Similarly, in Aceh rural settings, social control is almost unavoidable, because of close social ties. While it may bring benefit, it also has the power to enforce local norms that sometimes individuals cannot afford or do not agree with. For instance, a wedding reception is expected to be held by a family who just wedded their daughter, even if they are financially poor. If this tradition is not perpetrated, the family is quickly perceived as stingy, and not sociable. To avoid such a negative social label, the family consequently holds a wedding reception that increases their financial indebtedness. It can be concluded that social capital cannot be described as ‘good’ or ‘bad’. As
critical as it may be, it becomes good or bad depending on those who shape it (Dale & Onyx, 2005).

3.2 Core elements of social capital

In this study, I have not taken a stance on which definition of social capital is right or wrong, better or worse. My priority here is to point out the elements that construct social capital, and how these elements fit into this study of rural dayah. The following elements contribute to the building of social capital: engagement, collective norms, trust, reciprocity, trustworthiness, shared values, cooperation, knowledge diffusion, shared futures and community identity (Coleman, 1990; Bohm & Nichol 1996; Etzioni, 2000; Dale 2001; Robinson 2004). These elements are considered to be the essential tools for creating and maintaining social capital. They show just how rich and complex the concept is. In the following sections, literature will be reviewed on core elements: trust, reciprocity, shared values and norms. These are viewed as having a strong link to the faith dimension of the research context.

3.2.1 Trust and reciprocity

The centrality of trust is critical in the social capital debate (Fukuyama, 1996; Putnam, Leonardi, & Nanetti, 1994). It is believed that trust is imperative to building social, economic, intellectual, virtual or actual relationships (Dale, 2005). Fukuyama (1996) suggests the well-being and dynamism in society come from interpersonal trust inherent in them. Faith communities, such as the dayah community, are believed to be rich in inherent trust (Dinham, 2009). Lin (2001) defines trust in the context of economic behaviour: people’s confidence in others is reciprocated over repeated exchanges. Misztal (1996) argues that trust represents faith
in morality and that it has three functions; trust supports social stability, social cohesion, and collaborations – thus, solidifying community. In terms of accomplishment, Coleman (1990) argues that members of a group who demonstrate trustworthiness and have a high level of trust in one another have the ability to accomplish more compared to a group that lacks in trustworthiness. Similarly, Arrow (2000) suggests that trust enables members of a group to be more effective and encourages better performance.

In most cases, time is essential for the development of trust especially at the bonding level (Dale, 2005). Coleman (1990) gives an illustration where time reinforces trust. He notes that trust is often placed in a ‘long-term personal friend’ (p. 307). In an example, Coleman (1990) explains that state leaders would have someone they can completely trust when asked for help. These are people with whom they have had a long relationship. Therefore, the relationship provides social capital which is used by the leaders to achieve their goal. In dayah, a student’s duration of study plays an important role in building social relationships among dayah members. It is in the dayah tradition for many students to study and live together in the dayah compound for a long period of time i.e. seven to fifteen years. The longevity of their stay in dayah may be a contributing factor to building trust, and thus developing strong social ties among dayah members. This study delves further into this aspect.

Notable is Putnam’s (2000) differentiation between the kinds of trust. “Thick trust” is strong and frequent, and embedded in personal relationships with people close to us, for instance, when a younger sister shares a secret with an older sister, or when a mother trusts a neighbour with her baby while she attends a work meeting. There is also “thin trust” which occurs when a person has fewer social interactions. As Putnam illustrates, thin trust can be constructed when a person meets new people at the coffee shop. These forms of human interaction constitute somewhat indirect social networks that involve expectations of reciprocity. Putnam stresses that “thin trust” widens the circle of trust even more than the list.
of people an individual personally knows. He argues that this form of “thin trust” is strongly associated with various sorts of civic engagement. According to his analysis, when people have trust in the community, they do more volunteer work, give more to charity, donate blood often, and are more tolerant towards minorities. This idea resonates with Granovetter’s (1974) ’strength of weak ties’ which describes social networks in which there is no close personal relationship with the members, for example, colleagues at work, or acquaintances. Weak ties can be more useful than strong ties in terms of giving access to job opportunities due to the wider social circle (Granovetter, 1974). Falk and Kilpatrick (2000) argue that it is trust that individuals depend on to produce meaningful social interaction. These social and interpersonal interactions produce mutual expectations of social accountability, which cannot succeed without trust – a social relationship that bonds many rural communities (Falk & Kilpatrick, 2000).

On trustworthiness, Putnam (2000) explains that studies have shown that people who place trust in others and think they are honest are less likely to exhibit negative behaviour, such as lying, cheating and stealing. They are also more inclined towards positive behaviour, such as respecting other people’s rights. Putnam concludes that people who trust others are generally good citizens, and those more involved in community activities are more trusting and trustworthy. He also notes that people in small towns or rural areas are more trusting and trustworthy than big city dwellers. Almost all kinds of altruism such as volunteerism and lower crime rates, occur more frequently in small towns than in big cities because of the high level of social trust (Putnam, 2000). Indeed, this is the situation in Aceh where strong social ties exist between dayah people and community members in villages. For instance, volunteering in religious-related activities for the community is one of the main features of dayah education. Dayah leaders, teachers, students and graduates are actively involved in the village community, where social interactions mostly take place through religious-related activities (Amiruddin, 2000).
Further, the dayah people are known for their trustworthiness, which contributes to developing mutual trust between the dayah people themselves, and with members of the community. It is also common for the people to lay trust in the dayah leader, to guide them in religious matters and in day to day issues (Yeoh, 1994). The question is, do trust and honesty, elements of social capital, lead dayah graduates to job opportunities? A part of this research is to address such a question.

Furthermore, the importance of trust in building social relationships, as reported in the literature, sheds light on what mistrust can bring into relationships. Mistrust undeniably breaks, or at least diminishes, ties in social relationships, increasing the feeling of separation between individuals and communities (Dale, 2005). This is evident in those who are less engaged with the community, who think they are circled by offenders, and are less honest people themselves (Putnam, 2000).

Reciprocity is another important element in the investment of social capital. It encourages people to balance their interest with the interest of the community (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2002). Coleman (1990) conceptualises reciprocity through reciprocal ‘obligation and expectation’ as explained earlier. Krishna & Shrader (1999) categorise the value of reciprocity, with trust, solidarity, beliefs and social norms as the less tangible side of social capital, or cognitive, social capital. Reciprocity is a shared value of community members that creates space for them to work together in the spirit of a common good (Krishna & Shrader, 1999). Reciprocity can sometimes be specific (Coleman, 1990; Putnam, 2000), for example, when someone performs a favour in exchange for a favour by another. However, the more valuable and much-appreciated kind of reciprocity is ‘generalised reciprocity’ (Putnam, 2000). This is when someone performs a favour without expecting anything in return, but feels confident that help will come, when needed, from any other sources. Similarly, Onyx & Bullen (2000) define reciprocity as the generalised kind, in which “the individual provides a service to
others or acts for the benefits of others at a personal cost” (p.24). There is, however, an expectation that this kindness will be returned at some undefined time in the future.

However, there are situations where generalised reciprocity has declined. Based on his research of American society, Putnam (2000) explains that the society is now reliant on formal institutions and the law to solve problems that were previously dealt with by generalised reciprocity - through social capital. His study indicates that generalised reciprocity and trust have declined, or are absent, from societies where people care less about each other’s interest; social capital has diminished. On the other hand, a community with strong respect for reciprocity displays caring attitudes toward one another (Onyx & Bullen, 2000), which enables cooperation for collective action (Nyhan Jones & Woolcock, 2007).

In the context of Islam, the act of generalised reciprocity is a common concept promoted in the Islamic faith. For example, giving charity or alms is one of the five pillars of Islam. In the dayah setting there is a generalised reciprocity which represents a form of social capital. This is also demonstrated by their voluntary activities in the community; organizing and conducting a funeral ceremony for a member of the village who has died; conducting regular Qur’anic learning sessions for the villagers; and other religious-related works (Idris, 2008). The significance of religion or faith that is integrated into dayah’s activities can be seen as the drive for this reciprocal behaviour, which leads to the formation of social capital. The roles of faith in social capital are reviewed and further discussed in section 3.3.

3.2.2 Shared values and norms

Shared values are believed to be another critical element in creating and preserving social capital. People make connections through their common values, and these connections or
networks constitute resources that can be useful for individuals, and thus form a kind of capital (Field, 2003). It is well established that these shared values are linked to ethnicity, kinship, neighbourhood, occupation, and class (Silverman, 2001). Through shared values, a bond of trust is established, which is key for developing social capital (Silverman, 2001). Coleman (1990) refers to shared social norms as common understandings among persons in a society that are not usually put into writing. Shared social norms provide a form of social control to determine expected behaviour patterns that are approved in a given social context. For instance, in a neighbourhood that values these norms, criminal offences are few, and there is less need to rely on formal regulations because members of the community tend to look out for each other. This then enables people in the community to communicate easily, collaborate, and achieve understanding through common experience.

Shared values are also appropriate in the context of shared belief or faith. People with shared faith have the tendency to establish mutual trust (Candland, 2001). A study by Grootaert (1999) on social capital in Indonesia shows that religion is one of the key dimensions to drive collective action. The study indicates that people who share religious beliefs, develop mutual trust and understanding with each other more easily and, thus have the ability to mobilise collective action. These activities maintain social capital developed through faith (Candland, 2001). The role of a homogeneous or shared faith, ethnicity, or caste, in establishing social capital has been documented in other studies (Candland, 2001; Furbey et al., 2006; George & Chaze, 2009; Narayan, 1999). The good deeds exercised by the people are more than just social responsibilities, they are acts of submission to their faith. There is then a clear distinction between the concept of social capital and faith-based social capital. Social capital is referred to as social relationships that are established through mutual trust, reciprocity and shared norms, with a view to achieving certain objectives. In contrast, social capital based on faith involves the same social elements to establish social relationships and networks, but not for the purpose
of achieving a personal objective. In the dayah context, people with the same faith come together to learn and practice their faith. In dayah, shared values are linked to shared belief or faith.

Based on the above review on the core elements of social capital, it is concluded that trust, reciprocity, shared values and norms in networks, create a community that is strong, and willing to share resources, and is one which prevents opportunistic behaviour. But how is social capital developed through these elements? The answer to this question will be examined in the next section.

**3.2.3 How does social capital occur?**

Social capital begins with social interaction. Falk and Kilpatrick’s (2000) study on social capital in rural communities indicates how the quantity of meaningful or significant interactions is a requirement to build social capital. In other words, the frequency of quality interaction matters. By quality, they refer to various dimensions of the interactions, including reciprocity, history, shared values, norms, trust, and the quality of internal-external interactions (Falk & Kilpatrick, 2000). Although their study did not go so far as to measure how many quality interactions should occur to create social capital, it is implied that the less frequent the interactions, the more social capital may diminish. This resonates with Coleman’s (1990) assertion that social capital through social relationships can be maintained through regular communication. In other words, the frequency of social interactions matters in establishing, strengthening, and maintaining social capital.

Falk and Kilpatrick (2000) argue that individuals draw on two resources for social interactions in developing their social networks. These resources are categorised as knowledge
resources and identity resources. Knowledge resources include knowledge of community networks, procedures, rules and values important to the community. Identity resources relate more to the individual’s cognitive attributes, such as trust, self-confidence, personally acquired values and norms, and commitment to the community. Falk and Kilpatrick’s findings suggest that social capital arises from interactions based on knowledge and identity resources. Unlike many social scientists whose dominant analysis focuses on the theoretical complexities and the many dimensions of social capital, Falk and Kilpatrick’s study elaborates the actual process of building social capital. They argue that “social capital is simultaneously used and built” through actual interactions between people (p. 15).

Building social capital is also shown in a study by Dale (2005) on social capital for community development. Dale (2005) incorporates the elements that build social capital and how it can contribute to sustainable community development. These elements are empowerment, relationship, connection, reciprocity, communication, and deliberative dialogues as presented in Figure 3.1 below.
Dale (2005) argues that these are the six steps to building social capital which are important to sustainable community development. She notes that the linear figure is for the purpose of highlighting the elements, not necessarily linear in the process toward achieving social capital for community development. While Falk and Kilpatrick (2000) argue that social capital starts with social interactions, interestingly, Dale (2005) places emphasis on empowerment as the first step of the process in building social capital. That is, people must be empowered to help themselves and others before moving on to any other steps of the social capital ladder. In the horizontal axis of Figure 3.1, it shows that time affects the process of building social capital. It suggests that the more time being invested in the building process through the six steps, the more social capital is achieved. The investment in time simultaneously increases ecological, social and economic reconciliation (vertical axis), thus achieving sustainable community development. Looking back on Falk and Kilpatrick’s quantity of social interactions, it is on a parallel line with that of Dale’s function of time investment to create social capital. These studies indicate that to achieve a certain number of social interactions, it involves the investment of time, during which each interaction occurs.

Given all the elements needed to produce social capital, it is important to recognise the importance of preserving social ties to social capital and to understand the risk of losing it if it is not maintained. As Coleman (1990) concluded:

Social capital is one of those forms of capital which depreciates over time. Like human capital and physical capital, social capital depreciates if it is not renewed. Social relationships die out if not maintained; expectations and obligations wither over time, and norms depend on regular communication. (p. 321)
These studies outline the social elements that are critical in developing social capital. They provide important insights into the achievement of building and maintaining social capital. They suggest communities embedded in resources of social capital have the strength to mobilise the resources to achieve goals that can bring benefits to community members and create social cohesion. These studies provide a background into how social capital can be developed in a faith-based educational setting such as dayah. The next section discusses how ‘faith’ or religion is another contributing factor to the formation of social capital.

### 3.3 The ‘faith’ dimension in social capital

There has been little attention given to faith or religion as a dimension for social capital formation. The origins and maintenance of religious norms are vaguely presented in the literature. The major focus of this research is to examine how social capital develops in a religious education context and then how it is used by graduates to gain employment. A review of literature that links social capital and faith is needed to understand the dynamics of dayah education.

There has been some discussion in the literature about the relevance of religion or faith as a dimension of social capital (Bunn & Wood, 2012; Candland, 2001; Dinham, 2009; Furbey et al., 2006; Grootaert, 1999; Putnam, 2000). Religious institutions are well-known for their services in fields such as education, care for the poor and homeless, and care for the elderly. The motivation to do so is believed to have arisen from a religious viewpoint of valuing and caring for everyone (Finneron & Dinham, 2002). Religious groups are also recognised for their political participation, and their power to influence policy making (Dinham, 2009; Hepworth & Stitt, 2007).
Social capital developed through faith is referred to as spiritual capital and religious capital. These are terms used interchangeably, although some studies have differentiated between the two (Berger & Hefner, 2003; Baker & Smith, 2010). For instance, the William Temple Foundation uses the term religious capital to refer to:

The practical contribution that faith groups make to society by creating networks of trust, guidance and support (e.g., through the use of a building, volunteers, paid community workers, training organisations and activities for particular age or interest groups, etc.) (Baker & Smith, 2010, p. 9)

Meanwhile, the understanding of spiritual capital is that which is ‘embedded locally within faith groups, but also expressed in the lives of individuals’ (Baker & Smith, 2010, p. 9). Therefore, religious capital places emphasis on the ‘how’ of faith-based participation, and spiritual capital on the ‘why’ (Baker & Smith, 2010).

Other research addresses faith as a basis of social capital formation, for example, Candland (2001):

Faith-based social capital is grounded in beliefs, customs, habits, and obligations that are not seriously threatened by individual defection. Social institutions –formally or informally established patterns of behaviour – that are based on belief in the duty to submit to the will of Allah or belief in the wisdom of taking refuge in the Dharma, for example, are not diminished by defection. (p. 130)

This definition by Candland distinguishes itself from other forms of social capital by being involved in God’s instructions and the person’s obligation to God. Candland argues that people in a faith community do not necessarily require frequent social interactions to build mutual trust. Their shared faith alone allows the trust to be placed in one another. Any personal benefits gained through this form of social capital are considered an additional feature and are not the main purpose of conducting social relationships, for example, dayah’s active engagement in the community – driven by their belief – develops a strong connection with the
people in the community, leading to social capital formation. The social relationships that occur in a dayah environment as a result of religious allegiance are a key issue in this study’s research.

Hays (2002) argues that faith supports the development of social capital by enforcing a person’s sense of obligation to others. He asserts that some people have instinctively used reciprocal behaviour to connect with other people and achieved a sound community, while others act according to a belief system, which aligns with the interconnectedness of human beings in the universe. For instance, in the Christian tradition, the love of God and the love between humans are fundamental to the religion. Similarly, in Islam, one’s relationship with God (hablum minallah) and one’s relationship with human beings (hablum minannas) are the foundations of being a good Muslim (Al-Qur’an surah Ali Imran: 112). In Islam, faith becomes meaningless unless it is affirmed by action, such as, in ‘good doings’ which is stressed numerous times in the Qur’an (Abdelhak, 2016).

According to Hays (2002) the purpose of religious institutions is to bring together a community of like-minded people, and to offer them comfort and relief from the feeling of hopelessness and isolation. This description fits accurately within the dayah context. Dayah refers to an informal religious educational institution that provides not only Islamic education for the poor, but acts as a social agency that people trust and feel secure in turning to for support (Yeoh, 1994). Similarly, churches provide somewhere for low-income people who are socially excluded to gather and form social networks (Hays, 2002). Dayah are the only schools that provide free education for students, regardless of its many educational deficiencies. People from low-income backgrounds are mostly those who send their children to dayah because they cannot afford to access to other schools, and would otherwise be excluded from formal schooling.
Further, a religious community is more effective at achieving community betterment, which is why religious institutions – such as dayah - have an important role in mobilising social capital based on faith, to accomplish such a goal (Hays, 2002). Similarly, Dinham (2009) observes that faith embodies elements which can bring communities together. This is of great interest to religious communities because of the power they have to promote community cohesion. This assertion is confirmed by Candland's (2001) study. He explains that in Indonesia and Sri Lanka, religious institutions are agencies for promoting community development and that faith is the driving factor for their activities. One of the religious institutions studied by Candland is the Nadhatul Ulama (NU), a prominent Islamic social organisation in Indonesia. The organisation’s motivation for activities in social development is based on the belief of rahmatan-lil-alam. It is an Arabic saying which means the blessing that Allah grants to the whole universe. That is, activities for community development should be targeted towards anyone since Allah’s blessings belong to everyone, regardless of one’s religion or race. This idea of ‘good doings’ is also based on the belief that Islam is not just for the private life of an individual; rather, it covers every aspect of human life (Abdelhak, 2016). Indeed, this form of social capital is very much contextualised. Countries like Indonesia are strongly bound by norms of religion. This commitment is legally addressed in Pancasila (the state’s philosophical ideology). The notion of religion is addressed in the first of the five Pancasila principles; belief in the one and only God, whereas countries that separate religion and state affairs are more likely to establish and mobilise other forms of social capital for community betterment.

In Putnam’s, Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community (2000), the author dedicates a chapter to America’s “religious participation” (p. 65). Putnam points out that religion is a potential aspect of promoting social capital, and draws on an extensive range of data to assess the role of religious participation in social capital formation. Based on his study of the American society, he argues that “faith communities in which people worship together
are arguably the single most important repository of social capital in America” (p. 66). This argument is based on the number of memberships in social organisations, in which almost half of the members are religiously related, have a religious character, and are involved with voluntary religious-related activities. This means that religious involvement plays a role in shaping social capital in society. Putnam’s argument echoes studies on community development, in Aceh, post-tsunami (Kenny, 2005; The Kecamatan Development Program, 2007; Thorburn, 2010). For instance, in Thorburn’s (2010) study on village government in rural Aceh after the tsunami, strong social capital was equated to the people’s level of mutual trust in the community and in their Keucik (village leader). He explains that rebuilding social capital in Aceh was achieved by creating spaces where the re-establishment of social interactions could take place. Apparently, the most important space to rebuild was the meunasah (small mosque) so that religious and social activities could be resumed. Thorburn's study also indicates women’s religious activities, such as wirid yasin (Qur'an recitation) and rabana (Qur'anic chanting accompanied by traditional tambourine) are critical for re-establishing a cohesive community. Almost every social activity mentioned in Thorburn's study is associated with religious content. The study shows that shared faith is central in creating social capital in the Acehnese community.

Putnam (2000) notes that social activities conducted by religious institutions are not limited to those related to religion, but cover a wide range of activities from improving community health and stopping crime to workshops on career building. Putnam’s chapter also states that religious institutions are places where one can attain social skills and norms. They also provide space for community interests, for instance, members of a church learn to deliver speeches, acquire administrative skills, and learn about conflict resolution. This type of community engagement encourages members of faith communities to form stronger social bonds. Putnam’s other supporting data shows that people who worship regularly and highly
value their faith have the tendency to connect with others more actively, for example, they visit friends, attend meetings, engage with neighbours, involve themselves in community projects, and give to charity. He also concludes that people who are more religious tend to know more people because of their social interactions at the church, mosque, or temple.

It is important to recognise that religious sentiments may not always be favourable in promoting social bonds. Based on Putnam’s (2001) analysis of society in southern Italy, Catholicism has little effect in forming social capital. He argues that people attending church have little to do with their participation in civic engagement. He further asserts that civic engagement, once seen as critical to the continuity of community, have weakened. Although frequent religious attendance does not necessarily influence altruism (e.g. volunteering for the community) as shown by Catholics in southern Italy, many voluntary social activities are associated with religious involvement that is considered important for the wider community.

Collectively, these studies signal that religious principles drive social commitment and community betterment. Although the reviewed literature about faith is heavily concentrated on the churches of western societies, the studies discussed provide a broader picture of how faith is integral in producing a form of social capital, and its influence on community.

This study will explore dayah - a faith-based community where like-minded people engage in social interactions to build social relationships. The driving force for education is not economic prosperity but rather a duty to God, Allah. It is proposed that a form of social capital based on faith is established through the teachings in a curriculum grounded in the Islamic faith. It is then a Muslim’s duty to uphold social solidarity for the common good of the society in the hope of receiving Allah’s blessings.
3.4 Social capital and employment

While social capital can be discussed in various contexts and from many perspectives, this study focuses on how social capital, through social networks, relates to finding employment. Many studies have readily established the connection between social capital and job attainment. Much of the existing literature agrees that most jobs are acquired through connections in social networks (Granovetter, 1974; O’Connor, 2013). In an early study, Rees (1966) found that professional and formal employment opportunities are mostly accessed through networks of family and friends. For Holzer (1988), using the connections of family and friends is seen as an effective method for finding job opportunities. This is in line with Carson’s (1995) findings, which indicate that networks of friends and associates are important factors in accessing job opportunities for immigrants in Australia. Burt (1992) argues that to be involved in the workplace’s social network has a positive impact on one’s career. Similarly, Narayan (1999) states that economic outcomes and employment opportunities increase through social networks of close-knit ethnic groups.

The diversity of an individual’s social network is also a contributing factor to job attainment, for example, in a social capital study by Stone, Gray, and Hughes (2003), the researchers found that the more varied a person’s social network, including professional contacts, the higher the chance of the person gaining employment. In a more recent study on social capital, and the employment of immigrants in Canada, George and Chaze (2009) found that social capital plays an important role in giving access to job-related information, opportunities and an actual job. The immigrants in their study benefited from a variety of social networks: families, friends, organisations and job search agencies. The immigrants’ shared ethnic background was also a strong factor in gaining access to employment opportunities. Trimble O’Connor (2013) found that members or contacts in social networks have valuable resources, such as job-related information, the ability to use their reputation at work to influence
hiring decisions, and the opportunity to recommend someone to other employers. These examples show the important role that social capital can play in helping to find employment and establish an individuals’ career.

Mark Granovetter (1974) is a prominent contributor to the concept of social network in the employment field, and many social scientists have built upon his pioneering work, in which he looked at the use and effectiveness of strong and weak ties in job attainment (Burt, 1992; Lin, 1999, 2001, 2002; Stone et al., 2003). His major research investigated the value of personal contacts in finding jobs. His analysis demonstrated that male workers in the professional, managerial, and technical positions use personal contacts often and successfully gain benefit from doing so. He concluded that social networks have an important role in job-finding, and asserts that approximately half of all jobs are found through social connections, which has been confirmed in later studies (Lin, 1999, 2001; Wahba & Zenou, 2005; Wegener, 1991). Granovetter is well respected for his argument on the greater effectiveness of ‘weak ties’, as opposed to ‘strong ties’, in providing access to job opportunities. Weak ties are those formed with people for whom one does not have strong emotional feelings, such as acquaintances; whereas strong ties represent the social relationships formed with close-knit people, including family members and close friends. Granovetter asserted that weak ties are valuable for their broader access to social circles and information diffusion, which is especially important when looking for jobs. While strong ties are important resources of social capital, Granovetter argued that strong ties are typically small homogeneous networks that can be less useful when job hunting. While many studies confirm Granovetter’s conclusion, other research emphasised the importance of strong ties when job hunting, in difficult labour markets, and the involvement of obligation and reciprocity (Bian, 1997; Brown & Konrad, 2001). Later studies have compared the types of jobs accessed through personal contacts to those accessed by other means, and found great variation in how much people use personal contacts to find employment, and how
the types of jobs they do acquire, differ in terms of their salary, (Bian, 1997; Burt, 1992; Lin, 2001; Matthew et al., 2009). Thus, the use of strong and weak ties is clearly a prominent factor in gaining access to employment.

Granovetter (1985) has identified the importance of interpersonal relations and networks to generate trust, expectations, and to apply norms. Building on Granovetter’s work, Nan Lin (1999, 2001) demonstrated how individuals use resources embedded in social networks to achieve their goals, particularly in gaining employment. Lin (2001) showed how individuals can enhance their careers with the help of their social ties. He also divided the accumulated resources in social capital into two categories, ‘ascribed’ and ‘acquired’ resources. Ascribed resources are inherited by nature, such as, ethnicity and gender. Other resources, such as caste, religion, and parental resources are based on inheritance. On the other hand, acquired resources comprise education and jobs. Lin (2001) argued that social capital accumulates when these resources are being invested in the market and are expected to bring benefits in return. In the same vein, Putnam (2000) suggested that people deliberately build connections with others to gain personal benefit.

This is a strong reason why individuals are willing to engage in social interactions and networking – to gain benefit (Lin, 1999). More specifically, Lin (1999) presented four primary benefits of taking part in social networks. The first is “the flow of information” (p. 31). Social networks perform functions, such as, helping someone to seek out job opportunities. For instance, people in certain work positions can provide valuable information about job opportunities that the individual may not otherwise be able to access. Social ties can also function by informing an organisation or community about a person’s interest in a job, linking them to a potential employee whom they may not otherwise have come into contact with. Second, existing social ties can influence an organisation’s decision making about a particular
individual (e.g., the employer decides to hire the person). Third, an individual’s connectedness to certain social ties may be seen by the organisation as desirable (e.g., a person with high connections) and as someone who can contribute to the organisation. Lastly, it is expected that engaging in social networks can support a person’s identity, recognition, and public acknowledgement.

In terms of how social networks are often used to find employment, Stone et al. (2003) identified three types of social networks. The first is informal ties. These involve relations with family members, friends, neighbours and colleagues at work. Here, informal ties are similar to Granovetter’s interpretation of ‘strong ties’. The second is generalised relations. The social relations included in this category are people in the local community, such as people in community groups, or those people that a person does not frequently meet with or have strong ties with. Again, this echoes Granovetter’s term of ‘weak ties’. The third is institutional relations, which include a person’s relations with institutions that are outside of their own community, such as the government, universities, and business organisations. This category of social networks further helps the Researcher to classify the existing networks of dayah graduates. Lin (2001) highlights the need for individuals first to activate social capital for purposive action so the network can lead to employment opportunities. This enables resources embedded in the networks to be of maximum benefit. However, the embedded resources in social capital may not always lead to a positive job search. Lin (2001) argues that this is because job seekers depend on people who may not have the appropriate resources for the type of job they are looking for. Furthermore, some people may have the right resources, but refuse to share them. This means that a person may have a dense social network or be rich in social capital, but may not necessarily have the right resources to access job opportunities. Several lines of evidence suggest that it is the members of a given social network who decide with whom they are willing to share their resources and on what terms (Lin, 1999, 2001; Marin, 2012). People
looking for jobs need to approach others in the social network who have the right resources and are willing to share those resources (O’Connor, 2013).

As mentioned, success in a job search sometimes depends on the status (social or occupational status) of the people who are willing to help. It is suggested that people with high status have wider social networks, compared to those with lower status (Lin, 1999, 2001; Mcpherson, Smith-lovin, & Brashears, 2006). This means that people with high status have more and varied resources, compared to those with lower status, which may be valuable and useful for people who are looking for jobs (Lin, 1999, 2001). Other factors, such as a person’s age, employment status, and education are most likely to affect their ability to help someone searching for jobs. For instance, people who are employed most likely have the information about job opportunities because of their involvement with the people at work (O’Connor, 2013). Further, people with a high level of education often have wider and more diverse networks (Mcpherson et al., 2006). They also have a higher level of social capital than people with low education (Lin, 2001). People with these criteria possess the resources that may be useful for persons looking for jobs.

Another important factor to be successful in a job search is the relationship between individuals looking for jobs and the people they refer to for help. Marin (2012) suggests that the people with whom individuals have strong ties are in a better position to help, compared to those people with less emotional attachment (weak ties). This is because the people with whom individuals have strong ties are familiar with the individuals’ work qualifications, and thus have a better understanding of their skills, and the jobs that would suit the individuals. People categorised as weak ties are less likely to find a person a job because they will want to avoid mismatching the job and the person. Although Marin’s claim contradicts Granovetter’s ‘strength of weak ties’, it clearly indicates the importance of, and maintains the position of strong ties in relation to job search. Therefore, one part of this research will address the
effectiveness of dayah graduates’ use of strong and weak ties in relation to the attainment of employment.

The process of job-finding involves an investment of time and effort. A close relationship between job-seekers and others is a contributing factor when seeking employment (O’Connor, 2013). Lin (2001) argues that people do not tend to invest a lot of time and effort to help people in their weak ties to find jobs, especially when they are not obligated to do so. In contrast, those people with strong ties feel more driven to help individuals looking for jobs, and ensure they get the job (Bian, 1997). In addition, members in social networks are more inclined to help individuals looking for jobs, if those individuals had performed favours in the past, or if they trust the individuals to return the favour in the future (Granovetter, 1985; Smith, 2005). This assertion is well-established in Coleman’s (1990) ‘obligation and expectation’ as one of the forms of social capital, where trust and reciprocity play an important role in maintaining social capital that can lead to job attainment. The message these studies convey is that having a dense social network does not necessarily contain the resources useful for job-finding. What is of importance is for job seekers to know the right people to approach for better access to the resources in order to gain employment.

In relation to the labour market, Jackson (2008) asserts how social networks are critical for bringing job seekers and employers together. He explains that there are three main reasons why a social network is important in the labour market. First, if a firm needs to hire a new employee, the employer will most likely seek information from current employees about other potential employees. This is because the firm wants to hire people with similar characteristics to the current employees. By referring to the current workers, the firm benefits from gaining new employees without having to invest the time and money for job advertising. This is common in companies that rely on labour intensive workers, such as fast-food restaurants and cleaning companies. Second, an employer can use social networks to reach those people who
do not respond to a job advertisement but may be suitable for the job. The third reason why social networks are important to the labour market is that current employees’ information regarding a potential worker is considered to be a more reliable source than information coming from an external party. Further, current employees would not want to recommend someone that is ill-matched for the vacant position because it would affect their reputation in the firm. In the same vein as Marlin (2012), Jackson’s (2008) assertion clearly suggests a pertinent role for social networks in job attainment. He argues that employees must have some knowledge of the potential employee’s educational qualifications as suitable for an advertised position. Similarly, current employees must have developed some sort of emotional tie, or feeling of obligation to make them want to reach out to a potential employee with job-related information. In other words, social networking between current employees and potential employees is one way to bring significant benefit to their employer.

Another important point is that job attainment is also affected by the geographical aspect of individuals’ social capital. While there is substantial literature discussing the differentiation between urban and rural social capital (Hofferth & Iceland, 1998; Onyx & Bullen, 2000; Portes, 1998; Wellman & Frank, 2001), there are only a few studies focusing on the role of social capital in rural communities, in relation to job-finding (Lindsay, Greig, & McQuaid, 2005; Matthew et al., 2009; Wahba & Zenou, 2005). In city areas, social capital consists of rich resources, including a variety of networks of people, unlike in rural areas where social capital is constructed from a less diverse resource, such as a close-knit group (Wellman & Frank, 2001). On the other hand, networks in rural communities are likely to be smaller, denser, and more attached to family and friends (Hofferth & Iceland, 1998; Onyx & Bullen, 2000), which suggests that social capital in rural societies is more homogenous (e.g., smaller and solid networks). This emphasises the importance for people living in rural areas to form external ties with networks outside the community (Enns, Malinick, & Matthews, 2008). Matthews et al.’s
(2009) analysis suggests that people in rural communities frequently use both their strong and weak ties to find jobs, while people in the city tend to use formal means instead. Nevertheless, there are differentiations in the use of strong and weak ties within urban communities. In poor urban communities, people’s everyday survival very much depends on friends and families in the same economic situation. These social ties tend to be disconnected with the social circles in the inner city, thus restricting their access to information about job vacancies (Portes, 1998) - a situation similar to that in poor rural communities.

These studies indicate that those living in the city have more access to job opportunities and are therefore less dependent on social ties for gaining employment. On the other hand, if individuals live in urban areas but are of a low socioeconomic status, social ties are depended upon for job searching. People living in rural areas may be rich in social capital, but do not necessarily bring success in employment searches. While social capital does play a role in finding employment, it is worth noting that using networks of family and friends from a low socio-economic background to search for jobs may result in job opportunities with low payment (Stone et al., 2003). Meanwhile, those seeking employment through professional contacts are more likely to have access to professional job opportunities (Stone et al., 2003). This further suggests that there is inequality of social capital with regard to job searching. In Lin’s *Social capital: a theory of social structure and action* (2001), there is a call for attention regarding the inequality of social capital: that is, how different social groups (e.g., gender, race, age) have different access to social capital based on their status in society. For instance, inequality of social capital results in fewer opportunities for women, who are seen as being disadvantaged, to access employment-related resources (Lin, 2001). These studies conclude the types of job opportunities that arise are dependent on the resources available, which in turn are determined to some extent by the type of social capital or social network the individual has developed.
As reviewed, social interactions and relationships do assist individuals in gaining access to employment opportunities in the labour market (Stone et al., 2003). However, this is not the main purpose for many people to engage in these networks (Arrow, 2000). People’s ‘optimising behaviour’ may be motivated by altruism, experiences and religious understandings (Furbey et al., 2006). Dayah education can be considered an example of a faith-based community learning centre, a place for people to engage in social interactions and to build social relationships, not necessarily for economic reasons. A core practice of the Acehnese cultural tradition (drawn from Islamic teachings) is to maintain the ties of kinship to one another. This tradition is strongly upheld by the people who attend the dayah (Kurdi, 2010).

Together, these studies provide important insights into the role that social capital plays when people search for a job. This study will therefore explore the role of faith in developing social capital for dayah graduates, and how it is used in gaining access to employment. The study will also investigate the impact that graduates’ qualifications in traditional Islamic education, may have on their ability to access resources in the labour market (Amiruddin, 2013b; Riza & Ilyas, 2013).

3.5 Chapter summary

This chapter reviewed literature in key areas of social capital, faith, and employment and where appropriate linked the research review to the study context of dayah, in rural Aceh. The literature review examined various interpretations of social capital, followed by the characteristics and factors that promote social capital. From the review, it became clear that in a close living and intense study environment, such as dayah, some form of social capital must develop. It was concluded that social capital provides people with essential tools to create, achieve and improve their lives and community cohesiveness. It also highlights the possibility
of social capital affecting graduates’ search for employment. Understanding the nature of social capital developed in a faith-based educational context could confirm or extend the views of the social capital theorists reviewed.

This review placed emphasis on ‘faith’ as an attribute in shaping social capital, and explained how the concept linked to my study. I have reviewed the different forms of social capital developed through faith, including spiritual capital and religious capital. Candland’s (2001) work on faith-based social capital, and Hays (2002) view that faith supports the development of social capital by enforcing the person’s sense of obligation to others as a human being, were also reviewed. In summary, this research provided a clear foundation for my study of dayah education and the social relationships that occur in a dayah environment. Religious allegiance is potentially a key issue that underpins the research and the employment of graduates.

The literature discussing the effect of social capital on searching for a job highlighted the importance of social ties, both strong and weak, in gaining access to employment. The concept of “information potential” (Coleman, 1990, p. 310) embodied in social relations was identified as an important form of social capital. As a large part of this study concentrates on social capital and dayah graduates’ experience in finding employment in rural communities, this form of social capital, the provision of information through social relations, is highly relevant.

The purpose of this review was to provide an understanding of social capital, the faith dimension of social capital, and its relationship to finding employment, particularly in rural communities. This review of relevant literature has highlighted the paucity of information available on the nature of social capital developed in faith-based institutions. Similarly, there exists little research into how graduates use this social capital based on faith to acquire
employment. Answers to the questions raised by the review are critical to rural communities such as Aceh, where pressures exist, and questions are asked about the value of traditional religious schools, such as dayah and the contributions they make to the students and their employment in the broader community.
Chapter Four: Methods

4.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research design based on a qualitative approach. The chapter is organised into two parts: Part A which presents the research design, and Part B which presents a critical reflection of methods in practice. Part A begins by presenting the research question and an explanation of how it is best addressed. This is followed by a description of the interview method used in the study, i.e., the primary data collection tool. In this section, details of participants, sampling process, recruitment procedure, and interview content are explained. The Researcher’s position as an insider, and the Researcher’s method of building rapport, are presented. The final part of this section elaborates the procedures used for data analysis.

Part B includes details of the researcher’s experience during field work, and what was learned throughout the data collection process. Both parts A and B provide an outline of how the research was initially constructed, and how adjustments were made and why they were necessary during the implementation phase. The content of this chapter is outlined in the table below.
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Part A

4.1 Research aims, objectives and questions

This research aimed to provide an empirical understanding of the relationship between dayah education and social capital developed through faith, and its impact on graduate students gaining employment.

The objectives of the study were to:

1. Investigate the role of social capital based on faith in finding employment for dayah graduates in rural Aceh, Indonesia.
2. Achieve a more in-depth understanding of dayah education in rural Aceh.
3. Explore and respond, with empirical evidence, to criticisms of dayah education in rural Aceh.
4. Identify and examine issues that arise.

An ‘interpretivist’ qualitative research paradigm was chosen to understand the individual nature of dayah students’ study and job-seeking experience. Underlying an ‘interpretive’ approach was the ontological belief that there exist multiple social realities rather than one (Liamputtong, 2010). Interpretive research describes “aspects of the social world by offering a detailed account of specific social settings, processes or relationships” (King & Horrocks, 2010, p. 11). Therefore, questions asked of dayah graduates when conducting this research were based on their experiences, feelings, beliefs and practices. The researcher took an interest in, and at times, probed the meanings, ideas, feelings, beliefs and practices being conveyed in the interview context (Bailey, 2007). By taking such an approach, coupled with
member checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of Researcher’s understanding, the data collected should provide an accurate reflection of each participant’s views. Qualitative methods were chosen to collect and analyse data. These are outlined in Section 4.2.

4.1.1 Research question

The question guiding this research has its foundations in criticisms of dayah education, the research context and literature reviewed. The question was:

“What is the nature of social capital developed in dayah and how does it affect the employment of dayah graduates in rural Aceh?”

To find answers to this question the research concentrated on several areas and issues:

1. How is social capital based on faith developed in a dayah education?
2. What role does social capital based on faith play in graduates’ employment?
3. What is the nature of the employment found?
4. Does employment affect graduates’ participation in their local communities and beyond?

4.2 Selection of methods to collect data

Qualitative methods provide the means to represent people’s voices, and for these voices to be heard using the language of the participants (Munhall, 2006). Liamputtong (2010) argues that qualitative research is needed in studies that explore the subjective experiences of participants. That is, if researchers are interested in understanding society and culture, then it is impossible to measure them or to generalise about them. A qualitative approach to inquiry is justified in
studies designed to seek reflection on real life experiences and to drive social change (Warren & Karner, 2010).

Qualitative methods are justified for use in this study because I am seeking to understand the subjective educational and job seeking experiences of individual dayah graduates. The analysis of these experiences provides insight into relationships between dayah education and social capital developed through faith, and the impact of this social capital on graduate students gaining employment.

The primary method to collect data for this research was semi-structured, in-depth interviews. Qualitative research interviews, as Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) defined, are “attempts to understand the world from the subjects’ point of view, to unfold the meaning of people’s experiences, to uncover their lived world prior to scientific explanations” (p. 1). The selection of this method was considered appropriate for exploring themes from participants’ stories of their educational and employment journey, at the same time providing opportunities for participants to elaborate about their own experiences (King & Horrocks, 2010).

The value of qualitative interviewing lies in its flexibility and openness (Sewell, 1998). As outlined by Rubin and Rubin (2012), qualitative interviewing has been extremely beneficial in research that aims to:

- explore people’s motives, opinions and experiences;
- observe ongoing social processes;
- explore personal and sensitive subjects; and
- examine the complexity of the world.

In the face-to-face interviews, data was generated through close communication between the Researcher and the participants – dayah graduates. These semi-structured
interviews focused on participants’ educational and job-seeking experiences, and on any perceived links between their employability and their traditional Islamic schooling. The collected data included translated transcripts of participant stories regarding their schooling experience in dayah, their understanding of dayah (the school’s characteristics, curriculum, and educational goals), their experiences in gaining jobs, the types of jobs undertaken, and their involvement in the local community.

The semi-structured interviews used open-ended questions to help identify opinions and reasoning of an event. To ensure understanding, the Researcher probed answers and at times asked for clarification. Section 4.4.1 provides detail of the interview content. The questions and follow-up analytical procedures represent a modified version of those used by Cheong, Armour, and Bosnic-Anticevich (2013) in their study on social network analysis.

In the first part of the interview, questions focused on the participant’s demographic information which included their age, gender, years of schooling in dayah, other education attainment (if any) and their employment status. After the demographic information had been obtained, the questions became semi-structured and open-ended, and were designed to draw out and clarify information on the key research areas. The questions comprising the final part of the interview were aimed at gathering information to help identify each participant’s social network, for instance, questions such as “Who are the people that helped you in gaining access to employment?” helped identify the participant’s job-related social network.

4.3 Selection of research site

Aceh was selected for this research because of its strong Islamic tradition within the community and because of criticisms received about the scope of dayah education. As noted in Chapter
Two, dayah were the only educational institutions in Aceh until the Dutch colonised the region. Today, however, Acehnese dayah are often associated with poor quality education. These criticisms provided the stimulus to explore the dayah graduates’ experience of seeking employment as well as the connections formed between graduates and the community. Another reason for selecting Aceh as the research site was because, as found in the review of literature, few studies have been conducted into dayah education and the social capital developed through such faith-based educational institutions. Therefore, it was anticipated the research findings would contribute new knowledge and insight about the value and effect of dayah studies, and social capital developed within dayah institutions.

To reach potential participants, the Researcher worked with people identified during preliminary field study. These included individuals from the BPPD and leaders of different dayah. Two senior leaders within the education and dayah community were found and met with, during the preliminary field visit in June 2014. These persons who agreed to help by recommending key contacts and setting up introductions with graduates from different dayah communities will be referred to as ‘key persons’ for the purpose of this study. The first key person was the Deputy Head of Aceh ‘Ulama Consultative Assembly and former General Secretary of Acehnese Dayah Scholar Association (HUDA). The second key person was a senior lecturer at an Islamic public university in Aceh. He is recognised among dayah scholars and their network for his academic research that focuses on dayah in Aceh.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted in two different regions: (i) Banda Aceh, the provincial capital city; and (ii) the rural areas of West Aceh district. The two regions were selected because access to dayah was restricted. Therefore, with the assistance of the two key persons (see 4.4.2) with considerable access to dayah in each of the two areas, the Researcher was able to access a wider network of participants. This did not mean that all participants were graduates from dayah located only in these two areas. In reality, given the
rhizomatic sampling (see Section 4.4.2) used, participants were identified who had been educated in a dayah in different regions of Aceh. However, to begin, the study focused on participants from Banda Aceh and West Aceh.

4.4 Details of the method: Interview

4.4.1 Content of the interview

As stated, the main data collection method used was a semi-structured interview. A copy of the interview guideline is included in Appendix A. As suggested by King and Horrocks (2010), the researcher asked questions, being careful to phrase them so that they would be understood. The goal was to provide a comfortable environment to facilitate interaction. A flexible, semi-structured approach helped maintain a balance in providing enough time for participants to express their views while at the same time allowing the researcher to stay focused on the important research issues needing to be addressed (King & Horrocks, 2010).

The interview guideline was designed around three main topics drawn from the research questions: (i) the participants’ experience in dayah, (ii) the participants’ social networks developed in dayah and (iii) the participants’ journey in searching for employment. Interview questions formulated for each topic were designed to elicit specific information from participants. The types of questions asked were guided by Patton's (1990) approach:

- **Demographic questions.** Demographic questions included participant’s age, gender, educational attainment, and employment history. These questions were asked at the very beginning of the interview.

- **Experience questions.** These types of questions related to participants’ unique experiences. Many of the key questions in the interview schedule can be described as
experience questions. For instance: ‘What was the learning experience like when you were studying in dayah?’ ‘How did you have access to your current employment?’

- **Opinion questions.** The questions in this category were about getting participants to provide opinions on a range of topics. Many of the interview questions formulated fell into this question category, for example: ‘What are the values of dayah education?’ ‘What is the benefit of being a dayah student?’ ‘How important is it for you to build and maintain social relationships?’ ‘Is it difficult to find a job as a dayah graduate? If yes, why is that so?’ ‘What type of job do you think is best for dayah graduates?’

- **Knowledge questions.** In this category, questions were asked to ascertain participants’ knowledge about factual information, regardless of it being true or false. Therefore, it was important to keep in mind what participants hold as facts (their knowledge about the facts). The questions included those such as: ‘What do you know about the employment opportunities for dayah graduates?’ ‘What does dayah promote?’ ‘What are the reasons for people to study in dayah?’

Prior to conducting the actual interviews, a pilot of the semi-structured interview questions was conducted with four dayah graduates who were non-participants in the study. The pilot helped ascertain the content validity and helped to improve the format of the interview questions (Creswell, 2014). Following Kervin, Vialle, Herrington and Okely (2006), the pilot provided critical information about the time required to complete the interview, and ways to adjust questions that did not make sense or were confusing for participants. Participants in the pilot also evaluated the interview. This helped the Researcher to further fine-tune the setting and questions to use during the formal data collection.

The interviews were conducted in a language preferred by the participants, Acehnese or Indonesian, and recorded using a digital voice recorder to store the full, accurate record of each interview. Field notes were also kept by the Researcher to provide a written reminder of
important issues raised during the interviews. These were essential and proved useful in summing up, for probing answers and when listening back to the voice recording. All transcripts were translated from Acehnese or Indonesian to English, and were checked for accuracy by independent language experts who were native Acehnese or Indonesian speakers and fluent in English.

**Post-pilot note:** The first phase of the pilot interview related to participants’ personal background, their dayah education, their social networks, and employment. In the second part of the interview, participants had to identify the people in their social network, and how they had helped them access employment. They ranked these on a piece of paper, number one being the most helpful. This information was considered important for identifying and categorising participants’ social groups and allowed the Researcher to gain a greater understanding of each participant’s context. However, this proved challenging to pilot since some participants had benefited (in terms of employment) from a variety of people within their network and in a different time frame, which made it difficult to weigh up and rank the benefits acquired, from the different social groups.

The pilot test showed that participants understood most of the questions although some had to be given more time to answer. During the pilot, some had the impression that the research was focused on studying dayah as an institution. The Researcher had to clarify that the subject of research was the dayah graduates and their pathways in finding employment. The question about employment experience had to be adjusted and made clear. Following the pilot, adjustments were made to the original interview guideline. This included changes in the ways questions were to be asked, and the removal of questions that were confusing or seen as irrelevant to the purpose of the study.
4.4.2 Sampling and recruiting participants

The participants for this research were dayah graduates from rural communities in Aceh. In selecting participants, a number of variables were considered:

- The number of participants. Given the time for data collection and location, 22 participants were eventually involved in the study. This number allowed a more in-depth analysis of the data collected (Creswell, 2014).

- Participants’ time after graduation. Participants were also selected who had graduated from dayah and who had gained some form of employment in the previous five years. This helped establish a pattern of work experience.

- Gender distribution. Efforts were made to recruit an equal number of male and female participants, although in the end, this was not possible.

Due to the rural context and lack of formal documentation within dayah about their graduates, an adapted snowball sampling method of recruiting participants was used. Snowball sampling is a common method used to locate and recruit participants based on referrals of initial participants to other potential participants (Johnson, 2014). According to Cohen and Arieli (2011), the snowball sampling method is beneficial in three stages of data collection; locating, accessing and reaching research participants. Locating participants was made easier through social networks, which also saves the time and money. Accessing and reaching participants in rural and remote areas was found to be more feasible with snowball sampling because it allowed participants to use their existing social ties to help the researcher identify new potential participants.

A common limitation in studies employing this method however is the problem of ‘representativity’ (Cohen & Arieli, 2011). Snowball sampling, whereby social networks help
to identify potential participants, is however open to challenges of bias (Baxter & Eyles, 1997; Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981; Cohen & Arieli, 2011). There is the possibility of excluding potential participants, who are not in the network circle being accessed by the researcher (Van Meter, 1990). In addition, relying completely on referrals may result in a homogeneous group of participants who may not embody the whole research population, and thereby decrease the validity of research (Cohen & Arieli, 2011). Bias may also occur as a result of the method’s dependency on the first participant’s referrals to potential participants and their willingness, or unwillingness, to take part in the research (Griffiths, Gossop, Powis, & Strang, 1993; Kaplan, Korf, & Sterk, 1987). These arguments of the limitations, however, were outweighed by the context of the study and the potential ‘multiplicities’ the snowball method can offer (Stehlik, 2003).

To overcome concerns about the linear nature of snowball sampling, and to capitalise on a broader range of dayah graduates, rhizomatic sampling (Stehlik, 2003) was used. Rhizomatic sampling is an expanded form of snowball sampling (Stehlik, Gray, & Lawrence, 1999). The rhizome expression explains “the ‘underground’ nature within naturally occurring networks” (Stehlik, 2003, p. 39). It suggests a “sense of growth and renewal… within the notion of a living rhizome” (Stehlik 2003, p.39). Based on its non-linearity physical form and multiple growth points, a rhizome method of sampling can help reveal potential multiplicities of external networks (Carrington, 2011). Using Deleuze and Guattari’s (1987) principles of rhizome - connection, heterogeneity, multiplicity, rupture, and cartography – the method provided greater access to a broader range of individuals and networks of dayah graduates, thereby reducing the likelihood of bias.

To further address limitations of the sampling method (i.e. potential bias, lack of representativeness, over-representation of participants) two key persons, senior leaders within the Aceh dayah community, were consulted during a preliminary field visit. These persons
agreed to help by recommending contacts from different dayah communities. Starting points began with the researcher’s own network based on field inquiries, and those of the two key persons. From these points, each individual participant became a starting point for helping to identify other participants, from within, and outside their dayah social network. The wide range of starting points used to identify potential participants is an example of the rhizomatic process in action. Despite the potential for bias and lack of representativeness, given the context of the study, this approach was seen as the most appropriate sampling method for this research.

Participants who resided in Banda Aceh were contacted through the key persons. They provided the researcher with their contact phone numbers and how best to be reached. The researcher, using phone or text message, explained the purpose and format of the interview, and arranged times for face-to-face meetings. During following up calls or meetings the researcher provided more information about the research, determined their interest in being part of the study, and more importantly, obtained verbal consent for their involvement. During the exchanges, participants asked more about the research and the credentials of the researcher.

For participants who lived in the rural areas of West Aceh district, some were contacted directly by the key persons whom participants knew well, while others were visited and invited to take part in the research. This technique appeared to ensure a positive response rate. This method was also necessary, given the unreliable postal service in the area and poor mobile phone network coverage.

During all visits, the aim of the research was explained. These verbal explanations were important for ensuring that participants fully understood the aim of the research, and the interview process of which they would be a part (King & Horrocks, 2010). Prior to the interview, all participants were asked to sign a consent sheet which included written information about the research purpose (see appendix B and C).
4.5 Insider researcher

The role of the researcher in this study was one of an ‘insider’. An insider researcher is defined as a person who studies a group of people to which they are related (Breen, 2007). An insider is considered to have sufficient knowledge about the group being studied and an understanding of how to approach them (Smyth & Holian, 2008). Being an insider helped the Researcher convey the meaning of questions to the participants in a culturally relevant way (Bonner & Tolhurst, 2002; Song & Parker, 1995).

The researcher’s ethnic identity, a born and raised Acehnese, and graduate of a modern Islamic boarding school (a modern dayah) helped in identifying and gaining access to participants (e.g., finding and contacting participants, conducting interviews). The researcher’s characteristics also lowered barriers, such as cultural and linguistic differences (Liamputtong, 2010). The use of a shared local language enabled a clearer understanding during interviews and helped when interpreting and checking the meaning of analysed data.

Another advantage of being an insider who shared their ethnic identity and had studied in an Islamic boarding school was that participants were more comfortable discussing sensitive issues (Madriz, 1998). As an Acehnese, the Researcher found that her acquired knowledge and understanding of both the local culture and symbolic meanings, expressed by participants during the research, helped her when working closely with participants. This is in agreement with Guevarra’s (2006) finding that research participants are more receptive, when they share some sort of commonality with the researcher, such as, the same ethnic identity. Similarly, Adamson & Donovan (2002) found participants attempt their best when providing information to researchers who share the same social and cultural characteristics.

There are, however, some limitations to being an insider. It is argued that insiders might create bias as a result of their closeness and shared culture (Bishop, 1998); or they might be less
critical when asking questions (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2005). To lessen the potential limitations, the researcher kept a professional, communicative distance while building rapport throughout the interview. This helped maximise neutrality and allow the researcher to examine problems closely. Recording of interviews also allowed member checks of transcripts and identification of any points where the researcher, as insider, contravened this professional communicative distance. These steps negated possible insider bias and were necessary to ensure credible, trustworthy data.

4.6 Building rapport

Before carrying out the interview, it was important to develop a certain closeness and trust with research participants because it is thought that this will encourage the participants to provide the researcher with more accurate responses (Esterberg, 2002). Before the interview, the participants were provided with more detailed information on the research topic and asked for their formal signed consent. Participants generally responded positively to questions although the length of some interviews was exacerbated by long participant stories or explanations and examples. At times the researcher had to intervene and bring the focus back to the question. All questions raised by the participant were responded to, and this kept positive relations with the participant. Apart from being an insider, the presence of the key person as a silent observer on some occasions added to the building of trust between the researcher and the participants.

4.7 Ethical considerations

Ethics approval from the university’s Human Ethics Research Committee (HERC) was acquired before conducting the study. Based on the University of Canberra’s human ethics
research guideline, this research applied the principles of ethical considerations when conducting the study:

1. Informed consent. The researcher has ensured that all participants understood the research and the research procedure clearly. The researcher distributed the information sheet and consent form to be signed by participants only before data collection began (Appendix B and C). These documents have followed the format as outlined in the university’s guideline.

2. Participants’ rights. The researcher has informed participants of their rights, which included the right to withdraw from the research without feeling threatened of being fined, the right to be protected, and the right to have access to publication of the study that they took part in.

3. Confidentiality. The researcher has informed participants that any information about them is treated confidentially.

4.8 Data analysis

Thematic analysis of the data has been performed in this thesis; a type of analysis frequently employed in the social science field. This method was conducted through several phases; starting with the process of transcribing and translating the data, reading the text closely to identify initial themes and ideas, and generating codes and key themes. The research used Nvivo 10 software to code and retrieve data (QSR International, 2012). The Nvivo 10 software was chosen because it manages and analyses data effectively, especially interview data (Richards, 1999). Nvivo 10 facilitated the data analysis through a range of inherent tools designed for handling rich data. These included coding, annotating, recording, exploring data patterns and synthesising ideas (QSR International, 2012; Richards, 1999). The use of this tool supported the Researcher in organising and understanding the interview data; analysing and identifying
themes; and visualising how social networks are developed. The next section explains the process of data transcription and translation as part of the thematic analysis employed in this research.

4.8.1 Transcription and translation

In the early phase of thematic analysis, it was important to familiarise oneself with the data. This included reading the data closely to identify broad themes and transcribing them, if necessary (Braun & Clarke, 2006). All of the interviews were conducted in Acehnese and Indonesian, before being translated into English by the researcher. This allowed a closer examination of participants’ views and experience. The transcribed transcripts were member checked (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) by participants in this study. Since the interviews were transcribed by the Researcher, this process was considered to be part of the first stage of data analysis, and this helped the Researcher familiarise herself with the data (Langdridge, 2004).

The quality (e.g., accuracy, as per recording) of interview transcripts has a direct impact on data analysis. To ensure quality and accuracy, the researcher followed the steps as suggested by Poland (2002) to perform an accurate transcription:

- ensured the recording tool was of good quality to enable accurate transcripts;
- was aware of missing contextual features, such as non-verbal communication and paralinguistic features (voice intonation, pitch, sighs, and pauses). Notes of such features were written on transcripts when it was felt they added to the meaning of what was said.
The original interview transcript was checked by the participants for accuracy. For participants who had an email address and internet access, the transcripts were sent and returned by email. For other participants, the transcripts were delivered in person.

As stated, the transcripts were then translated into English. This was important because data imported and analysed using features in Nvivo 10 have more function when documents are in English (QSR International, 2012). Furthermore, the English translation was needed because parts of the interviews would be presented in the findings chapter of the thesis. The translated interviews were then shown to two language experts in Aceh who understands Acehnese, Indonesian and English for further validation of translation. The language experts together with the researcher went through the translated transcripts, and made corrections where necessary based on the advice of the language experts. This step was essential for helping to improve the accuracy, credibility and validity of the transcribed data. Figure 4.1 shows the interview data processing procedure.

![Figure 4.1. Processing of interview data](image-url)

The translated data were then imported into the Nvivo 10 for data management and analysis using the thematic analysis approach, which is explained in the next section.
4.8.2 Thematic analysis

In general, this approach looks for patterns and themes in the data set, and identifies those participants with similar views and those with different views. The researcher needed to identify and organise themes according to key categories (King & Horrocks, 2010). This required the researcher to identify topics in the data set that could be developed, and through revision, refined into key themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006), which were used to understand and answer different research questions.

The term thematic analysis is often used interchangeably with the term ‘content analysis’ due to its similarity in the coding technique. However, it has been argued that the two approaches are different. For example, Spencer, Ritchie, Ormston, O’Connor and Barnard (2013) argue that content analysis belongs to a particular philosophical tradition, while thematic analysis is not bound to any specific philosophical construct. Ryan and Bernard (2000) contend that thematic analysis is more of a basic method of analysis rather than an approach. Nevertheless, while thematic analysis does not necessarily belong to a specific theoretical tradition, the flexibility of thematic analysis was found to be appropriate and useful for this project’s data analysis. The approach used is based on King and Horrock's (2010) practical guide, a variation of the guideline presented by Langdridge (2004). The three processes followed were:

- **Descriptive coding.** Data was reduced by selecting and highlighting parts in the data transcript that were relevant to the research question. Comments were added to the highlighted text and descriptive codes were generated.

- **Interpretive coding.** Descriptive codes were grouped based on shared meanings, and interpretive codes representing each group were created. The construction of
codes was ‘concept-driven’ in which codes influenced by the research question, field notes, transcribed data, literature and other related documents, were initially constructed (Gibbs, 2007). The analysis also employed ‘open coding’ which required the Researcher to go through the data set with an open mind and try to understand the situation in the text, putting aside any presumptions based on an existing theory (Gibbs, 2007).

- **Overarching themes.** Overarching themes capturing the key concepts in the analysis were then generated. Existing codes and passages were rearranged into the key themes.

This method combined elements of cross-sectional analysis, in which the Researcher labelled or coded the data set to enable retrieval of thematic passages in the data (Mason, 2002). This method was necessary because it provided a methodical guide of the data which helped identify conceptual themes and categories, and allowed the Researcher to make comparisons and discover connections across cases (Spencer et al., 2013).
Part B

4.9 Implementation of Methods

This section discusses the implementation of methods. While the methods planned as outlined in this Chapter were followed, some refinements were needed in the field and as analysis took place. This section includes details of the interviewed participants and the adjustments made to methods during the fieldwork.

4.9.1 Details of participants

At first, during the design phase of the research, the targeted participants were dayah graduates with some variables that influenced participant selection (e.g., time after graduation). However, during the early stage of the field work, it became necessary to classify the participants into two groups. These were subsequently labelled as ‘basic traditional’ and ‘comprehensive traditional’. The purpose of this differentiation was to allow the exploration and comparison of stories and experiences of dayah graduates with different educational attainment. A detailed description and definition of the groups follows:

1. **Basic traditional**

These were participants who have a basic or foundation level of education. This included some form of primary or junior secondary education before starting dayah. These participants then spent lengthy and continuous time studying and living in dayah, with no further formal or higher education. This category describes the core participants in this study. First, graduates in the ‘basic traditional’ category have significant experience of living in a dayah environment; most of their schooling years were in dayah. Their transcribed experiences capture the developing
social ties and relations between people in the dayah. The data arising from these ties and experiences were interpreted to represent a form of social capital based on faith. Second, participants in this group were recognised in the dayah and by the community as having high levels of specialised knowledge in Islamic education. Third, the participants’ basic formal education and long period of continuous study in their dayah provided a unique insight into how they gained employment after leaving their dayah. The ‘basic traditional’ group produced more stories and examples about the role of social capital based on faith, in gaining access to employment, than the second group.

2. Comprehensive traditional

The educational experiences and attainment of participants in this category were distinct from the ‘basic traditional.’ These were participants who entered dayah after receiving a basic education, followed by a more comprehensive education elsewhere (for example formal high school or higher education). Although some were simultaneously studying at levels beyond junior secondary education while attending dayah, for example, during the day, participants may study at a public school and continue to study in dayah for the rest of the day. The length of time studying in dayah was, on average, much less than those in the ‘basic traditional’ group. The purpose for including ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants in this research was to serve as a comparison group. Including the two categories of participants resulted in a more diverse data set which included a wider range of participant experiences of dayah education, more and varied social networks, and more stories of how they gained access to employment. From these, it was possible to identify similarities and differences in patterns of social networks, the types of employment pursued, their achievements, perspectives and personal values relating to education and employment.
During field work, seven participants of the ‘comprehensive traditional’ group were interviewed first because of their availability. The Researcher then moved on to conduct 15 interviews with participants in the ‘basic traditional’ category, many of whom lived in the more remote rural areas of West Aceh. The number of participants interviewed was influenced by their accessibility during the data collection period. The geographical distance between participants, and the willingness of individuals to be interviewed, were found to affect the number and gender composition of those interviewed. While the number of participants within the groups was not identical, it was considered important to include more participants in the ‘basic traditional’ group because an implicit objective of the research was to explore the experience of those graduates with greatest exposure to dayah education.

4.9.2 Participants’ demographic profile

The final gender distribution between groups turned out to be uneven which was unexpected. This was because many of the referred female participants in each group could not, or were not willing to be interviewed. However, because of the small sample size of twenty-two participants, a balanced sex distribution was not considered a relevant variable to be pursued in this study. The ages of participants in both groups ranged between 27 and 66 years old. Table 4.2 shows the demographic profile of participants by age and gender.

Table 4.2

Demographic profile of participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex/ Age</th>
<th>Basic traditional</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Comprehensive traditional</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.9.3 The interview process

Positioning the Researcher as an insider made the recruitment process easier, particularly since the Researcher was from the same cultural and religious background (i.e. an Acehnese and a Muslim) as potential participants. As explained in Part A, participants living in Banda Aceh were contacted by phone, prior the interviews, and participants living in more remote rural areas were initially contacted by the key person, whom participants knew well. The key person was also present when the interview took place in remote rural areas. This was felt to be more culturally appropriate as it made the participants feel relaxed about the process. One of the male participants reported at the end of the interview that he would have been a bit hesitant to answer questions had the key person not been present. While being an insider helped the interview process generally, for some participants, having a key person present as a non-participant was reassuring to them and resulted in higher quality data. Throughout the whole experience in the rural areas of West Aceh, every visit was welcomed with great hospitality.

During the field work, it turned out that one of the key persons, whom the researcher assumed would be most helpful, was mostly unavailable. Nevertheless, the other key person was very good at helping the researcher identify the participants and in ensuring their cooperation in sourcing other potential participants. Having more than one point of referral was a significant advantage of employing the rhizomatic sampling technique.

It is important to recognise that at the beginning of the study there were no existing statistical records detailing the number of dayah graduates, or data on where graduates were living or on their employment status. Such records are not kept by dayah. The absence of such data explains much about the status of dayah as an educational institution in Aceh. Nonetheless, the use of the rhizomatic sampling technique overcame such problems and successfully
facilitated the recruiting process. Given the context of the study, this was the most suitable sampling method for the research.

During the field work, there were unexpected incidences. A few dayah graduates who were contacted by text messages refused to be interviewed after exchanging many texts. Some of the participants had to reschedule the interview, and a few others had to withdraw because of other commitments. Fortunately, these minor drawbacks did not affect the process of data collection. All the participants who were finally interviewed met the research criteria.

In the first few interviews, questions were asked in the exact order of the interview guideline. This unintentionally resulted in a formal interview atmosphere and affected the way participants responded to questions. These participants were more guarded when responding to the questions; they were trying to give the right answer. This was shown by the formal manner in which responses were made. Learning from this experience, the researcher decided to adopt a more conversational approach, which made the environment more relaxed and immediately put participants at ease. First, the interview was started with small talk, such as asking about their dayah experience in general. This was followed by a set of questions appropriate to what participants seemed most interested in talking about. Consequently, the sequence of questions was different for each interview. The presentation did not follow the order of the interview script because every participant had a different starting point (depending on the small talk). For example, when explaining the research, the participant often commented on it and started to give a response that belonged to a particular question. Nevertheless, the same key questions were asked of each participant and the more interviews conducted, the more proficient the researcher became.

The researcher found that participants in the two groups tended to respond to the questions differently. The open-ended questions asked of participants in the ‘comprehensive
traditional category were answered without any trouble and provided rich information. In contrast, members of the ‘basic traditional’ category found it challenging to respond to an open-ended question, for example, when asked “Tell me about the lessons learned in dayah?” They often responded with, “everything learned was good.” Even though the objective of an open-ended question was to give space and allow participants to tell their stories, participants in this group tended to respond with very short and direct answers. It was then decided to revise and re-ask some questions in a closed-ended format; a form of follow-up question specific to the subject. The question above was readjusted to, “Did you learn a lot in dayah?” And followed with a specific question, “What are the things you learned in dayah?”, “Was it a good experience?”, “Did learning in dayah have an impact on your personality/character building? If yes, how so?” At most times, the researcher tried to avoid giving examples to prevent leading participants’ answers. It was found that this form of questioning prompted their memory and stories tended to be told in a more chronological order. In addition, it created a more informal atmosphere for the interview session, whilst generating data.

The researcher also found that participants in the ‘basic traditional’ group responded unexpectedly when asked about their employment status. When the question asked was, “What is your current job?” or “Where do you work?” The answer would be “Oh I don’t work” or “I don’t have a job”. At first, the given response confused the Researcher. Then the question was rephrased to, “What do you do for a living?” or “What do you do to earn money?” The given answer was straightforward, such as, “I am a farmer” or “I do miscellaneous jobs”. This raised the question as to why such responses were only given by participants in the ‘basic traditional’ group and not by those in the ‘comprehensive traditional’ group. To find the answer, the Researcher asked the participants for feedback at the end of the interview, and asked them why they gave a different answer to a similar question. The participants revealed this was because they understood the questions to mean something different. This highlighted, for the
researcher, how differences in education and local language use could affect their understanding of the terminology. By asking the same question in different ways, the researcher ensured that the question was being understood. The initial question (“What is your current job?”) gave the impression that one would be considered to have work or a job in the formal sector, such as, in the public or private sector (e.g., civil servants, bank employees, lecturers), and that one would have an office. The revised question (“What do you do for a living?”) was more open and therefore suited a broader range of employment types.

This was a finding in itself, i.e., where the terms ‘job’ and ‘employment’ have distinct meanings, depending on the participant’s current employment. An individual working in the public or private sector is considered to be someone with formal employment and formal attributes, such as, a work uniform and education. In Aceh, the word ‘employment’ is associated with an occupation such as a civil servant, a highly competitive occupation favoured by the people because it provides financial security, monthly income, health insurance, and pension allowance. On the other hand, jobs in the agricultural sector are considered informal and do not provide individuals with such benefits.

At the end of each interview, the researcher verbally summarised the interview and answers to cross-check understanding of the interview content. A review of all transcripts showed overall consistency with what was asked to participants.

4.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented the design of the research and its implementation. In the section outlining the research design, I have described the methods used, that is, those deemed most suited to addressing the research questions. In-depth interviews were the primary method used
to collect the data. A total of 22 participants from two districts (Banda Aceh and West Aceh) were selected by employing the rhizomatic sampling technique (a modified snowball sampling method). The small sample size might contest the generalisation of the findings to dayah in other districts in Aceh. However, since this study has used a qualitative approach, the number of participants was not as critical as the in-depth analysis that resulted from the information provided by the participants. Nevertheless, the chosen districts were among those districts where large numbers of dayah have been established. In addition, this study has confirmed, through cross-referencing, that dayah in Aceh have common characteristics and are mostly located in rural areas. Thus, a certain degree of generalisation can be applied to other districts, despite the small number of participants.

By employing thematic analysis, I was able to analyse key themes arising from the interview data and the field notes, using NVivo 10. Transcribing and translating the interview data were key to the process of identifying the key themes to be analysed. The transcribed data was checked by the participants for validation to ensure data was interpreted correctly.

During the implementation phase, some adjustments were made to the recruiting and interviewing processes. It was deemed necessary to categorise participants into two groups, identified as ‘basic traditional’ and ‘comprehensive traditional’. This was to allow the participants the opportunity to explore and compare stories and experiences concerning their dayah education, social networks, and access to employment. Throughout the data collection process, the key persons played an important role in linking the researcher with potential participants. Most importantly, their presence during the interview process reassured participants that it was safe for them to be part of the research, and that the information given was going to be treated confidentially by the researcher. In addition, given the insider position of the Researcher and the assistance of accompanying key persons, a range of participants from
different dayah were identified. The data collected from interviews with the participants met the research objectives. The research findings are presented in the next chapter.
Chapter Five: Findings

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the key findings and analysis of data from interviews which are aligned with the research questions. The chapter begins by presenting the findings on the development of social capital based on faith which was found in the transcripts of dayah participants. This includes the social relationship built between participants and their dayah friends, teungku and teachers, and the people in the community. The following section explores the findings related to the participants’ reported journey in finding employment.

The different sections of this Chapter, as outlined in Table 5.1, reflect the most significant areas of interest identified in participants’ interviews. The presentation of findings includes a general summary of the most significant factors using description and explanations from participants. When needed, the number or rounded up percentage of participants who raised or mentioned the issue, and the group they come from, is included. Interview extracts are used to provide illustrative examples of participant responses. A summary concludes the Chapter.
Table 5.1

*Outline of Chapter Five*

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<th>Description</th>
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<td>5.1.2</td>
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<td>Social relationships with the <em>teungku</em> and teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.2.3</td>
<td>Social relationships with people in the village community</td>
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<td>Finding employment</td>
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<tr>
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<td>5.7</td>
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</table>
5.1 Inside dayah education

As the first educational institution in Aceh, dayah has proven that it can maintain its existence and identity in the midst of the globalised economic setting. In dayah, the sole purpose of learning is to acquire religious knowledge. Its goal is to teach Islam and maintain its tradition. When asked about the objective of dayah education, one participant said:

In general, based on dayah education philosophy; students are to learn. The education is to give guidance on how to worship properly. Graduates are active in their community and share the knowledge they know. (Male 1, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

A dayah is believed to carry out an important educational purpose; that is, to offer religious and social assistance to the wider community. As outlined in Chapter Two, and in the transcript extract above, people who study in dayah have a role to play in guiding the community’s understanding of the Islamic faith and practice. During interviews, participants were asked about their perceived role as a dayah student and contribution to community. One response highlights the role of dayah students and graduates in the community, during and following graduation:

Yes we do that. Because the saying ‘ulama warasatul ambiya’ stays within them. It means that ulama (Islamic scholar) are the successors of the prophets. This means that they are the people who forward the prophet’s messages. This concept was invested in dayah teaching. We would not even think about charging money for our services at that time because the prophet never collected money when preaching the message of Islam… So we did that as well. (Male 2, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

The participant continued to explain that since dayah curriculum restricts itself from teaching subjects other than Islamic subjects, the knowledge and skills provided to students are specific and focused on religious knowledge and practice. Traditional dayah, such as, those involving ‘basic traditional’ participants in this study, do not provide students with
contemporary knowledge and skills in the ways other schools do; this is not their educational goal.

For jobs such as in the public service, they (dayah graduates) are not being prepared for that kind of job. They will be informal leaders where ever they go. The saying ‘ulama warasatul ambiya’ is deeply embedded. They believe that they have to provide guidance to others. People know that to study in dayah involves a lengthy learning process. But why do people still go there? Because they expect and receive something from dayah that other schools cannot offer. (Male 2, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

Eighty percent (12) of ‘basic traditional’ participants report they were financially incapable of pursuing education, other than that provided by dayah. The remaining 20% report choosing dayah to improve their religious understanding and knowledge of Islam, and not to pursue further education. The ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants in this study had the financial support and wanted to enrol in formal schooling. Interview transcripts reveal that participants see benefits in both types of education. Yet one participant raised a concern about going to secular schools and the negative effects this may have:

I will not give away my children to a secular school. It’s because of what’s happening and changing in our society today. If children do not have dayah education then they will know nothing (about Islam), and can lead them astray (Male 7, ‘basic traditional’)

5.1.1 Being a dayah student

As presented in Chapter Two and reflected in participants’ interviews, a dayah’s focus is not to prepare students with the working knowledge and skills required by most organizations; rather, it focuses on preparing students to become informal leaders in the community. However, while studying in dayah, participants report examples of activities, engagement and practice that provide opportunities for them to develop social and leadership skills. One of the leadership characteristics inculcated in students was to become an individual with strong self-discipline,
and to support others to achieve the same. All participants (22) shared stories of similar experiences when asked about education and learning inside dayah:

We become very disciplined in dayah. Usually, when it was time for *subuh* prayer (dawn prayer), it’s hard to get up from bed at 5.30 in the morning. But in dayah, at 5.30 we must already be awake, pray together and do everything else, very disciplined. (Male 5, ‘basic traditional’)

Before studying in dayah, I always wake up after 6 in the morning. When I was living in dayah, we have to be awake at 5 in the morning, take a shower, and get ready to pray together. After the *subuh* prayer (dawn prayer), we head to class straight away. When others were slow we helped each other. We learn to lead by our disciplined example. (Female 8, ‘basic traditional’)

As part of the disciplined training, the rules in dayah are strict. Students would be sanctioned for breaking the rules:

There are rules in dayah. There are rules about performing communal prayers. Students were punished if they could not attend communal prayers. At that time, the punishment was for students to carry sacks of dirt that had to be fetched 500 meters away from the dayah. The dirt was to be carried back to use it for covering muddy grounds. (Male 6, ‘basic traditional’)

Another characteristic instilled in students was self-reliance, which was depicted in participants’ daily activities in dayah, for example, a male participant alluded to the notion of self-reliance, in terms of managing their expenses:

I became self-reliant because of the environment in dayah… we were taught how to manage our savings because if we didn’t know how to manage our savings, we would not have enough money to buy food. (Male 5, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

The participant (Male 5) provided an example of self-reliance and responsibility which were needed when conducting domestic work:
Generally, everyone cooks by themselves, washes and irons their clothes. Everything has to be done by themselves, and at the same time, there is studying to do. So, I felt this helped build my self-reliant character and this benefited me and others. (Male 5, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

The findings also indicate that students who received little financial support from their parents needed to earn income to cover their daily needs in dayah. This means that some participants had to work to generate income during their studies. Dayah leaders viewed working as a time to build the students’ self-reliance and character. Participants who worked were mostly involved in casual jobs:

I just worked to earn some income to cover my living cost in dayah, to earn some pocket money… I sold clothes… sold in small quantities... I also sold motorcycles; I was a motorcycle sales agent. (Male 5, ‘basic traditional’)

One participant recalled that during the day, he sold rujak (local food of mixed chopped fruits) to the students in dayah to earn some extra money. He also occasionally became a fishmonger, selling fish to the students in dayah.

At that time, I sold rujak (local food of mixed chopped fruits). When students were taking their naps at 11 am, I started to peel the pineapples. I placed my rujak cart just near the dormitory. By the time students woke up and have performed their dhuhur prayer (midday prayer), everyone would come to eat rujak, in which I served on a small plate. So I sold rujak for a thousand rupiah per portion. I also sold fish when in dayah. It was for the students in there. I sold fish using a bicycle. I bought this bicycle from my pocket money given by my parents and from the money I earned from selling rujak. (Male 6, ‘basic traditional’)

Participants reported on another characteristic developed through education in dayah, that is, ‘sincerity’. One way participants develop this is by taking part in unpaid work, for example, some students were asked to teach religion, or carry out religious services for people in the village, without being paid. At other times, they received only a small amount of money,
as in charity money. Participants who took part in voluntary teaching agreed that it had
developed their personality and helped them to become sincere individuals.

When I was in dayah Darussalam, I taught year 4 and year 5 students. The teaching was
voluntary… lillaahi ta’ala (to seek Allah’s blessing) there was never any money.
(Female 7, ‘basic traditional’)

The notion of sincerity was expressed by some participants as paying respect to their
dayah teachers:

When I went to dayah, I didn’t have to pay for anything. Therefore now, when people
want to study in my dayah, I also do not expect them to give me anything in return,
nothing… I’m sincere about it. (Female 7, basic traditional)

This participant (Female 7), who is a dayah leader, stated that she did not have to pay tuition
fees because dayah provided free education. Now, she willingly applies the same practice of
not requiring her students to pay for her teaching services – an act of sincerity. The description
implies that the dayah people are less attracted to materialism – however much of it is needed.
What is more important is the strong belief that God has plans for each individual’s sustenance,
as long as one is committed to spreading the message of Islam.

Another characteristic developed by students in dayah was honesty. Ninety percent of
transcripts mention the need for, and value of, honesty - for example, “dayah people are known
for their honesty” (male 3, ‘basic traditional’). One participant stated that as a dayah student,
he was considered an honest and reliable person and this led to part-time jobs in the village. In
the interview, he explained:

I was appointed as head of the election committee at the village level because they
considered me as an honest person, and to have the capability to work and to lead. I
believe this honest characteristic was trained in dayah; we were taught to be honest
individuals. (Male 5, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

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The participant’s extract confirms the trust that rural communities in Aceh place in dayah as a religious and socially responsible, educational institution.

5.1.2 Dayah’s role in the community

The findings show examples of dayah participant involvement in various community activities. These duties vary from teaching Qur’an recitation to children to being a religious leader. True to one objective of dayah education, all participants (22) in this study report working with local communities. In return, as shown in many of the extracts included in this chapter, these communities and their members’ actions reflect a trust and respect in the dayah and its students.

This trust helps dayah members perform their duties as the ‘warasatul ambiya’ (successor of the prophet) – and to spread Islamic teachings. The extract below verifies the importance of dayah for the community:

In the village, many look up to dayah graduates because they can lead religious events such as funeral service and ceremony, prayers… most graduates are actively involved in the society, depends on their skill level. Those who studied for a long time in dayah usually start their own dayah. For those who cannot start their own dayah, their contribution is through their active participation in the community. (Male 1, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

This extract provides an example of how people in the community use dayah members to lead all types of religious practices. It further emphasises the dayah’s role in supporting students and community by helping identify graduates, who have sufficient knowledge and skills, to lead and teach in their own dayah. ‘Active participation’ in religious work at the community level is an expectation of all dayah, for example, “perform prayers and rituals in a funeral” (Male 2, comprehensive traditional) and “lead communal prayers in the village’s mosque” (Male 5, ‘comprehensive traditional’). All 22 participants reported their dayah saw such work as an obligation and an integral part of their education. Community involvement
allows dayah members to spread the message of Islam in any way possible, and the members should not expect anything in return, “There is no fame, no money, no status just some satisfaction in their duties as warasatul ambiya” (Male 1, ‘comprehensive traditional’).

The commitment by dayah graduates to the community extends beyond their dayah education. One ‘basic traditional’ female participant (Female 5) reported teaching a Qur’an recitation class in her home. She did not generate income from the teaching activity; the class was free to anyone from her village who was interested. Her actual income was generated through other work such as farming and from selling everyday household items in a small wooden kiosk which she had built next to her house. These experiences illustrate the high level of commitment to serving the community through voluntary work. In return, they are highly appreciated and respected by the community, as shown in the following transcript extract:

The dayah communities in Aceh, when graduates return to their village, they become a role model in that village because of their genuine intention to guide the people. (Male 6, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

From the responses of participants, it seems the motivation to conduct community work lays not in the work itself, but rather the spiritual reward they receive from the act of giving or providing a service.

As dayah students, we are told that we are the successors of the prophets. To earn income is not our priority, giving is, spreading the message of Islam is. We believe that Allah will provide for us if we sincerely spread the message of Islam. That is what was taught and believe. (Male 2, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

The findings in this section provide examples of the value dayah bring to the communities they serve, and the rewards which dayah receive from Allah, in return. The findings confirm the importance of the traditional religious institution of dayah to the people in rural Aceh, and the role of dayah in providing religious education and preserving the Islamic tradition.
5.2 Social capital built on faith in dayah

The findings reported in this section show how the participants’ social capital, constructed during their schooling in dayah, was based on a shared faith. This development was embodied in a dayah education that focused solely on Islamic teaching. One hundred percent of all 22 participant interviews suggest an association between participants’ dayah education and the development of social capital based on faith. The findings show that social capital based on faith in a dayah environment is developed through three types of social groups, with which participants actively engage daily during their studies: [1] social relationships with friends in dayah, [2] social relationships with the teungku and teachers in dayah, and [3] the people in the village in which the dayah is situated.

5.2.1 Social relationships with friends in dayah

The participants’ social relationships with their friends in dayah were developed during their daily social interactions. As dayah is a boarding school, the activities could be categorised as either study or general domestic life examples. However, this distinction was not made by participants who saw their life and learning in dayah as embracing a religious commitment to the values and ways of the scriptures. The transcripts give many examples of the communal or collective work performed. As one female participant explained, her daily life in dayah was a schedule full of activities carried out with other female friends:

We wake up at 4 am every morning; we perform congregational morning prayers in the mushalla (prayers hall). After that, we perform wirid (religious chanting) 33 times. Then we hastily get ready to carry dirt from the river (to provide construction material in order to complete and maintain dayah buildings). We also work in the rice field. We are always together, praying, talking, sharing, and laughing. Every Friday during the harvest season, we go to the rice field… (Female 2, ‘basic traditional’)

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This statement is typical of many, and illustrates the collective social focus of daily life in dayah; a study and work environment where social interaction occurs frequently between people who become close friends. The extract conveys the sense of togetherness experienced and reported by all participants when describing life in dayah. This togetherness, developed through communal and social activities, is viewed as important in building social capital.

This togetherness was also reported in another participant’s account who said: “In dayah, we worked together and helped each other” (Female 1, basic traditional). Another female participant described how she enjoyed the togetherness in dayah when she and her friends were doing activities typical of a dayah setting. She said:

I enjoyed my time there. We ate on rumpun (a local vegetable). We had to bathe in murky waters. Our hands were stained in green colour because of cleaning the on rumpun that made us have to get some lime (to cleanse it off). (Female 3, ‘basic traditional’)

The mention of ‘murky waters’ or ‘dirty water’ was found in 80% or 18 of the 22 participant transcripts. The terms were used to illustrate how access to clean water was difficult at the time in the dayah. Dayah education was a modest life experience. The typical local vegetable, on rumpun, that she and her friends consumed is the most common and inexpensive vegetable in Aceh. Nevertheless, the togetherness that she experienced out of the modesty of living in dayah seemed to her a joyful experience.

Togetherness was also visible when participants were studying and doing domestic chores, such as cooking and washing clothes:

…after class we cook. The class was dismissed around 10 o’clock in the morning. 10 o’clock was our time to cook and wash our clothes. At 11 to 12 o’clock we repeat lessons. 12 to 1 o’clock was recess time. At 1 o’clock we do dhuhr prayer (midday prayer) and then continue to study. (Female 8, ‘basic traditional’)

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Another contributing factor to the development of participants’ friendship was the time spent living in dayah. Seventy percent (15) of all participants and 90% (13) of ‘basic traditional’ participants referred to their time in dayah as important in helping them to develop friendships. This means the longer the time participants spent living in dayah, the higher the frequency of social interactions between the participants and their friends. This adds to the intensity of the relationships developed and strengthens the bond of friendship. As one participant said:

The longer we stay in dayah, the stronger the bond built with our friends. But if we stay for only three years, for example, the bond isn’t as strong, sometimes they even fade. But if we stay like seven years or eight, that will definitely create a strong bond, just like family. For those who stayed for fifteen years, the closeness of their friendship is unbreakable. (Male 3, ‘basic traditional’)

This extract shows how the strong bond developed through the dayah education experience was a result of meaningful interactions between the male participant (Male 3, ‘basic traditional’) and his friends. Further, his use of the word ‘family’ to describe his fellow dayah students was not unusual. Over 85% (13) of ‘basic traditional’ and 60% (4) of ‘comprehensive traditional’ used the word ‘family’ in this way. In so doing, this emphasises the emotional bonds formed which solidify social relationships with friends in dayah. Factors such as frequency of social interaction, togetherness, the longevity of the education experience, and their contribution to the development of participants’ social capital in a faith-based environment, are discussed in more detail.

Dayah graduates stay connected with the friends developed in dayah: they do so by participating in dayah affiliated organisations such as Rabithah Thalibah Aceh and dayah–held events, such as, maulid (the birth celebration of Prophet Muhammad); by participating in the celebration of the teungku’s birthday; and by participating in symposiums. Twenty three percent (5) of all participants were regular attendees, and three of them were on the organising
committees of these events, at their respective dayah. Seventy seven (17) of all participants interviewed were less directly involved in such events. One ‘comprehensive traditional’ male participant explained the reason he did this was because of his strong feelings towards the circle of people in his dayah. Therefore, he took the time to drive for long hours to routinely visit and attend events in his dayah:

I just arrived in Banda Aceh yesterday from North Aceh. I travelled to North Aceh because of dayah. There was a maulid celebration there. I still stay connected with the dayah I went to. (Male 5, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

It was also reported that as a dayah graduate, developing social relationships with other students or graduates from different dayah was easily established. As one participant says:

This is how the dayah system works, for instance, a dayah student or graduate travels to Southern Aceh, and someone (who is also a student or graduate) there asks ‘where are you from?’ (and answers) ‘awak beut’ (dayah people), immediately then we feel a connection. Even though we haven’t known each other, we become very close, just like close relatives (Male 3, ‘basic traditional’).

Seventy seven percent (17) of all participants, like this participant, refer to a bond created from a shared dayah experience and identity with other dayah graduates. An identity built on a common understanding, experience and practice from their dayah education. This also shows that dayah in Aceh share a similar education system and promote the same religious values. Most importantly, it highlights how graduates gain access to other dayah communities, which, as discussed further in Chapter Six, improves their faith-based social network, and enriches their use of social capital based on faith.
5.2.2 Social relationships with the *teungku* and teachers

The analysed transcripts show how participants from both categories established a strong bond with their dayah leader, known as *teungku*, and their teachers. A *teungku* was viewed by participants as a person who was charismatic, caring, modest, pious, and highly dedicated to teaching and spreading the message of Islam. While speaking about the *teungku’s* personality, one participant reported:

…he (the *teungku*) seemed so charismatic. The language used was very polite, the way he walked and cared for us (dayah students) … our emotions then were unconsciously built to respect the teacher through this kind of engagement. (Male 2, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

The extract above conveys the positive emotional engagement of the participant with his *teungku*. It also portrays how the *teungku* was perceived as a nurturing authority, somewhat akin to a parental figure. Another participant (Male 7, ‘basic traditional’) alluded to the impression of the *teungku* as a parental figure:

At the time, I couldn’t afford to finish school (primary school) because both of my parents had passed away. So I was sort of adopted by *Abu* (another term for *teungku*). I had no money to support myself, but *Abu* would always show me ways to be on my feet… (Male 7, ‘basic traditional’)

This account clearly shows the participant’s invested emotion and the strong connection developed with his *teungku* and included a feeling of parental-like trust being placed in the *teungku*. This suggests that the *teungku* is a key figure in the development of social capital.

A *teungku* and teacher’s dedication to teaching Islam in dayah was found to be a recurring theme in developing and strengthening participants’ *teungku*/teachers’ social bond. This ‘bond’ was expressed in most of the participants’ interviews. It was exemplified in the voluntary nature of dayah educators’ work. They devoted their lives to teaching without
expecting anything in return. In one participant’s transcript, it was explained how educators are perceived as caring individuals who would dedicate themselves to teaching Islam to the people in the community:

The quality that you find in dayah is the sincerity in teaching. The teungku and teachers in dayah, they would teach without being paid. This might be different with other teachers (from public schools). They (the other teachers) would be reluctant to teach if not being paid, but not for the teungku and teachers in dayah. This is most likely formed by their religious mentality. This is one of the qualities that I see in dayah and is not found in any other places. (Male 6, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

This participant also compares characteristics between the teungku/teachers and educators of mainstream schools, suggesting that teungku and teachers in dayah are less motivated by material gains. Rather, their attention and focus is on ensuring their students understand Islam and its practices through their teachings. Conversely, the participants offer an opinion that educators in mainstream schools perceive teaching as a job, which is understood as a source of income.

This high commitment and dedication are what participants say led them to respect and obey, and become loyal to their teungku and teachers. Statements of loyalty and obedience towards their teungku and teachers were expressed in over ninety percent (20) of participants’ interviews:

It was our purpose to help out our teachers (to work in the rice field) in return for what they have provided us. It’s like ta’zim (reverence/respectful) to our teacher, so that we could be blessed with more knowledge. (Female 2, ‘basic traditional’)

This extract indicates there is more than just an obligation of the participant to return favours by helping her teachers. There is the impression that by being ta’zim (reverent/respectful), the participant hoped to receive blessings from God (in the form of more
knowledge) because of her good doings towards her teachers. The extract also implies that there is a belief system in which blessings from God can be channelled through their actions and through the teungku and teachers in dayah. This was also echoed in one participant’s interview, in which she said that her success in life was due to the blessing she received through the prayers of her teungku:

It is a blessing (received) from studying in dayah… well, I can have my own business now, even though it’s small, but it is running well because of the blessing I received from studying in dayah, through the prayers (of the teungku). (Female 6, ‘basic traditional’)

This extract describes how studying in a dayah under the guidance of a teungku is believed to bring blessing from God. The extract indicates that the teungku and teachers, as knowledgeable religious figures, are understood to have the ability to perform efficacious prayers and earn God’s blessings. Therefore, studying in a dayah can be likened to being on a quest for God’s blessings.

The practice of ta’zim was also embedded in the participants through the teaching and learning process, particularly through the advice and wisdom of the teungku that was passed on to the students. This further contributed to the closeness between participants and the teungku. As reported by one participant:

My teacher told me ‘since you will be returning back to your village, do not forget to teach even the simplest thing’. I said yes. And now I have been practising what I was told. I have been teaching Qur’an recitation since 1998 up to today. (Female 5, ‘basic traditional’)

This participant also describes how she followed the teungku’s advice by providing religious education she learned in dayah to the people in the village for free, therefore following in the footsteps of her teungku. Her strong commitment signals how deep the concept of ta’zim
is ingrained in the dayah tradition. This view was expressed in another participant’s account, in which he also obeyed and followed the advice of his teungku. He explained:

My teungku said to me “now you are about to return back to your village. In other words, you will become the people of the village. Teach whatever you can teach to the people. And do not expect anything in return. I taught you well, and I never asked money for teaching you, never… now you should do the same”. Because of that, it bothers me if I was invited (to deliver sermons) and being asked how much should I be paid for my service. That makes me upset. Why? Because then I would be disobeying my teungku. (Male 7, ‘basic traditional’)

The extract shows the participant’s level of respect and loyalty toward his teungku. The teungku’s advice, not to ‘expect anything in return’ was acknowledged by the participant. His mention of feeling ‘upset’ if ‘disobeying’ the teungku further indicates his strong attachment and the emotional connection developed during his time in dayah and maintained even though he was no longer studying in dayah.

Following in the footsteps of the precedent teungku is another form of ta’zim, reported by a female participant who became a dayah leader. She also embraced the concept of giving, just as her teungku had done before her, as she explained:

When I went to dayah, I didn’t have to pay for anything. Therefore now, when people want to study in my dayah I also do not expect them to give anything in return, not a thing. I am sincere… I don’t expect anything from the people, I only expect from Allah. (Female 7, ‘basic traditional’)

Together, these participants’ accounts display a pattern in the way social relationships or ties are built and maintained with their teungku and teachers. Earlier, I mentioned how the characteristics of the teungku and teachers supported the development of their relationship with the participants (see page 133). The teungku and teachers’ act of kindness and their dedication to spreading the message of Islam had such an impact on the participants’ feelings and beliefs,
that they were happy to reciprocate when helping out the teungku and teachers around the dayah.

Social relationships were built through a belief system that perceived ta’zim towards the teungku and teachers could bring blessing in life. This practice of ta’zim was not only influential in building ties, but also in maintaining them. Ta’zim, as a feature in developing social capital in a faith based institution, is discussed in more detail in Chapter Six.

5.2.3 Social relationships with people in the village

Another representation of social capital based on faith was the participants’ social relationships, developed while they were students in the dayah, with the people in the surrounding village. Over 90% (20) of all participants referred to dayah as a place where they built social relationships with the people in the village. The learning embedded in dayah strongly encouraged students to socialise and actively participate in the community. Dayah students were encouraged to engage with the people in the village, mostly through religious activities - as part of building their social responsibility. For male students, it mainly consisted of preaching or teaching to the community at religious gatherings, for example, a male participant in the ‘basic traditional’ category commented:

I actively participated in the community. Sometimes I performed the khutbah (preach) during Friday prayers… I started to preach in the community and the people wanted a preacher who was from dayah. (Male 6, ‘basic traditional’)

This view was supported by another participant who said:

We (dayah students) were encouraged to teach or preach in the community by the teungku (Male 4, ‘comprehensive traditional’)
A similar statement by another participant on his involvement in the community reads as follows:

I taught the people in the village, I delivered sermons in neighbouring villages, in majlis ta’lim (religious gathering), and delivered sermons during Eid celebration and Friday prayers. (Male 1, ‘basic traditional’)

As for female students, their engagement with the community was generally through activities, such as, teaching, performing marhaban (religious chanting) in cultural events, sewing workshops, cooking classes, visiting the ill, and attending funeral ceremonies as part of their social visits. As one participant said:

We (female students) were invited by the people to perform Marhaban (religious chanting). (Female 6, ‘basic traditional’)

When talking about this issue during the interview, another participant said:

Female students were allowed to visit the ill and attend funeral ceremonies. Then (perform) Marhaban. Marhaban is held in circumcision ceremony. Then attend wedding ceremony invited by the people in the community. (Female 1, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

Another participant verified their participation in the community:

There was an event being held at Umi’s dayah, a sewing workshop. I knew how to sew, so I taught the people in the community like around 50 people. (Female 4, ‘basic traditional’)

These findings also indicate that engagement with the community was not a one-way communication. The people in the village were also active in interacting with the people in dayah. This was noticeable when people in the village came to dayah to teach life skills to the students. One participant said:
Women from the neighbourhood would come to dayah to teach us. They also came to dayah to teach us how to farm. They teach how to graft plants. Just like training. It was held once a week (Female 3, ‘basic traditional’)

The community’s engagement with dayah graduates was also found in another participant’s interview. She recalled being constantly visited in her home by the people in the village who sought her help to study the Quran. Her dayah certification was the reason why she believes the people referred to her. As reported in her interview:

The third day of my arrival in this village, people started coming to my house to study the Qur’an. The people here knew that I graduated from dayah. At first, there were just a few that came to learn, then many others followed. (Female 5, ‘basic traditional’)

In terms of religious matters, participants reported that people in their villages would generally defer to the dayah people. For instance, one participant (Male 5, ‘comprehensive traditional’) was asked to be involved in the village’s religious affairs, such as being an imam (a person who leads prayers in a mosque).

They asked if I could be involved in the village religious affairs, at least to be an imam during maghrib prayers. But they also wanted me to be involved in the formal village affairs, to hold a formal structural position in the village’s administration. At that time, there was a vacant position for a head village, so I was appointed as the head village. So I had two responsibilities, to be accounted for the village’s religious matters and act as the head village. (Male 5, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

This extract suggests that people in the village perceive the participant as a qualified individual based on his religious knowledge. The trust placed in the participant was not just limited to dealing with religious matters, but also for matters related to the village’s governance. This shows that people acknowledged the dayah graduate’s religious knowledge, social skills, and also had expectations about his ability to govern.
The frequent social interactions between dayah graduates and the people in the village were made clear in a statement by a participant who explained graduates’ active involvement in the community’s religious affairs:

People in dayah are more of informal leaders. This is how the community perceives them. Through this informal leadership, social networks are established through interactions. They become a preacher, an imam. If someone died, they are capable of performing the Islamic funeral procession. (Male 2, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

It is important to note the mention of ‘informal leaders’ in the extract. It highlights one of the unique qualities of dayah graduates, and differentiates them from non-dayah graduates. If the community perceives graduates as informal leaders, this means that they acknowledge the quality of dayah education, their religious knowledge, social skills, and leadership skills. The mention of ‘informal leaders’ also implies the important role dayah graduates play in rural Aceh communities. Findings indicate dayah graduates were seen as ‘informal leaders’. They were the ones people in the community often consulted on religious matters. It can be concluded that the religious element attached to the activity of dayah students and graduates creates and maintains social capital in the dayah context.

From the previous extracts, communities in rural Aceh turn to dayah when they need help with religious-related matters. In return, the community supports the dayah in their village in ways they can afford. Some people provide financial help and moral support, and others offer their labour. This is made clear in the following participant’s statement:

In our dayah, the people are proactive. The people would come to dayah. They are proactive in many ways. It could be their contribution in labour, materials, and opinions. For instance, the maulid celebration held a few days ago in dayah were assisted by the people, such as cooking food. The people were heavily involved in succeeding this event. (Male 5, ‘comprehensive traditional’)
Similar views were voiced by a dayah leader who has received a great amount of support from the people in her village to build a dayah:

So the people knew that I had nothing (financially), so they helped. When it was harvesting time, they came and gave sacks of rice to me. I didn’t have a rice field. Alhamdulillah Subhanallah (praises to God), the rice weighed of tonnes. I sold it and used the money earned from it to buy sacks of cement and all necessary materials for the dayah construction. I received extraordinary moral and financial support from the people up until today. The neighbours, the people, we have a good relationship. (Female 1, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

This extract provides evidence of the level of respect and trust the village people must have for the participant, as a dayah graduate. It further shows the people’s reliance on this traditional institution, both for the education that it offers and its expertise in dealing with religious-related matters. A further indication of the people’s respect towards the dayah people was commented on in a participant’s account:

Our community tends to have high respect for the dayah people... when we were in dayah, we felt that (being respected). The higher the level of kitab kuning we studied, the more respect we get. The appreciation and respect of the people (for the dayah people) are high. (Male 2, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

From the data, it appears that a dayah students’ level of learning the kitab kuning influences the level of respect given to them, by their community. This further shows that people in rural Aceh highly value the religious education taught in dayah. The participant (Male 2, ‘comprehensive traditional’) also provided an example on this topic, in which the level of people’s respect was portrayed by treating dayah students differently. Students who were at the advanced level of studying kitab kuning received rather special treatment.

We were invited to khanduri (a local event). If the people knew we studied the classical fiqh text (intermediated level of classical text), we would be treated as normal guests in the event. For dayah students who have studied Mahalli (an advanced level of classical text), they would be treated as VIP guests or VVIP. (Male 2, ‘comprehensive traditional’
On a related topic, a participant explained how the people in the village perceived dayah graduates as role models because of their active participation and contribution in the community, especially in religious-related matters. It did not matter if the graduates had minimal formal education, as long as they were dayah graduates and showed a high level of commitment to the community. The participant set himself as an example:

When I completed my master’s degree, it didn’t really mean anything for the people when I returned to the village. But if it were dayah graduates, even though they only spent 4 years in dayah but they are active in the village, guiding the young people patiently and genuinely, the people see them as role models. They have a higher social status in the village. (Male 6, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

This extract illustrating a graduate who had only “spent 4 years in dayah…” shows the value people in the village hold for a dayah graduate, irrespective of their level of formal education. What is valuable for the people is the individual’s dedication to helping to improve and protect the village. The extract also implies that a tertiary education, such as that possessed by the participant was seen as the participant’s individual investment. This means that no matter how prestigious the tertiary degree is, it has little to do with the community’s development, unless the participant actively participates in the village’s affairs.

The extracts presented here have provided examples of the roles played by teungku and dayah educators, in implicitly developing a form of social capital based on shared faith, and in serving the local community. The extracts have also provided examples of how participants in this study formed a close-knit community through daily study and communal activity, both inside and outside the dayah. They have highlighted the high esteem in which local rural communities hold graduates of dayah. The next section presents evidence of how this social capital developed in dayah is used by participants in this study to access and gain employment.
From the findings of participants, it has become clear that daily activities and interactions with the *teungku*/teachers and the local community led to the development of social capital based on faith. The nature of this social capital and its implications will be discussed in Chapter Six.

5.3 Finding employment

The key finding to come out of the data obtained from ‘basic traditional’ participants in this study is that faith-based social networks play a significant role in helping them access employment, following their studies. Despite dayah’s focus on traditional Islamic teaching, and its lack of a recognised leaving certificate – highly associated with a low prospect in attaining future jobs – 100% (22) of all participants in this study were found to be employed. Their employment differed, with some earning only a small income, but they were employed nonetheless. As one participant stated:

My dayah friends that do not own a dayah have their own business; they are involved in the retailing business. There are fifteen of my friends who are still in dayah. Some have migrated to Java to become be salesman; those are the successful ones. One of my friend works for an electricity company. Another friend has his own clothing store. All of them are running their own businesses. (Male 3, ‘basic traditional’)

However, there were some differences in the types of jobs obtained by the two groups of participants, ‘basic traditional’ and ‘comprehensive traditional’. The participants generally have more than one type of employment. Table 5.2 below presents the types of employment obtained by participants in both categories.
Table 5.2

*Some participants had more than one type of employment

Types of Employment Obtained by ‘Basic Traditional’ and ‘Comprehensive Traditional’ Participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Employment</th>
<th>Basic traditional</th>
<th>Comprehensive traditional</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qur’an teacher for children and women</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dayah teacher</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dayah leader</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner of a small kiosk</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shop owner</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer (e.g., rice field, rubber and palm plantation)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tailor (small scale business/ home industry)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner of a mechanics workshop (fixes bicycles, motorcycles)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event organiser (e.g., catering for weddings)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University student</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local parliament member</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University lecturer</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government official</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public school teacher</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 5.2, participants in the ‘basic traditional’ category have accessed a range of employment types within the community. Most are self-employed or working with
fellow dayah graduates in basic service roles, for example, sales, kiosk attendee, catering. Those participants from the ‘comprehensive traditional’ group have accessed employment in the more formal or public sector, for example, government official, university lecturer, shop owner. These differences appear to be linked to the level of formal education received and the attainment of a recognised leaving certificate. One of the main requirements for applying for jobs in the formal sector is for the candidate to have completed formal education and to have recognised certification showing the level attained. This is a requirement that participants in the ‘comprehensive traditional’ category can fulfil, but one which those in the ‘basic traditional’ category, cannot fulfil. For this reason, dayah graduates in the ‘basic traditional’ category have used their faith-based social networks to find jobs. The section that follows provides examples of how these participants acquired employment through their faith-based social networks.

5.3.1 Basic traditional

The majority of participants in the ‘basic traditional’ category cited individuals from their faith-based social networks as the main source of job information. This means their access to jobs was gained first through their friends in dayah, the teungku and teachers, and then through people in their broader community network. These networks have given graduates in this category access to different types of employment. The following section presents evidence on how the participants have gained access to employment, based on each of the three faith-based social networks established in dayah.
5.3.1.1 Employment accessed through friends in dayah

In general, interview data shows instances of graduates helping each other in different ways. This includes giving information about jobs or hiring their dayah friends to work with them. The data shows two participants (14%) who reported having accessed jobs through their dayah friends. What was found is that dayah graduates do not necessarily have to come from the same dayah to attain job-related information. As long as they are dayah graduates, this information is accessible. The extract below illustrates how a participating graduate acquired a job through their dayah friends.

My friends from dayah helped in giving me access to employment. Let me give you an example how things work for us dayah people. There’s a dayah graduate who has a settled business and income, then if he came to know that his dayah friends are unemployed, he would ask them to work with him. This is trust. (Male 3, ‘basic traditional’)

The participant continued by giving an example of how the situation works for dayah graduates who needed jobs:

For instance, there’s a person who is the head of a construction project and also a dayah graduate. This person will ask his dayah friends whether they’d like to work with him to earn some money. (Male 3, ‘basic traditional’)

These extracts are examples of the loyalty and trust that exists between the dayah graduates. According to Muhammad (2010), the dayah teaching strongly embraces Islamic brotherhood which is embedded in their daily learning activities. They have shared experiences and understanding of what it is like to be a dayah student. The shared religious values and vision of dayah education are one of the aspects that contributed to the development of the strong emotional ties with friends in dayah. As a result, the participant can depend on his dayah friends
for finding a job. The participant (Male 3, ‘basic traditional’) in these extracts was a teacher in various dayah, jobs which had been offered to him by his dayah friends.

Similarly, another participant (Male 5, ‘basic traditional’) shared his experience of job attainment through his friends in dayah. The participant had held a number of part-time jobs since living in dayah. He sold clothes independently and sold second-hand motorcycles in the village. He explained that his friends in dayah helped him not only to find the jobs, but also to promote his small business to others.

These experiences reported by the two participants (Male 3 and Male 5, ‘basic traditional’) suggest that dayah graduates can rely on their faith-based social network to help identify job openings and obtain employment. However, the jobs being accessed were informal and generated low income. A dayah teacher, for instance, is basically a voluntary position. The dayah leader would occasionally provide a small incentive to the teachers for their service. The casual job as a construction worker on one construction site was only a three-day labouring job, which would have paid him very little. The casual or part-time jobs carried out by the participant (Male 5) were also informal jobs within the community, and generating low income. The income received was so low as to require the participants to take on multiple jobs to cover their basic expenses.

5.3.1.2 Employment accessed through the teungku and teachers

In the ‘basic traditional’ category, 40% or six participants accessed employment through their teungku and teachers. Of these, five participants were involved in religious work such as becoming a dayah teacher, a teungku, and an ustaz (Islamic teacher) for the people in the
village. One participant accessed jobs within the community, such as clothing retailer, and another worked as a local tailor with the help of their teungku and teachers.

Twelve participants or 80% in the ‘basic traditional’ category reported some level of teaching experience while studying in dayah. The teungku generally know their students well, and select outstanding individuals to teach at the dayah. For dayah graduates, teaching is one of their early job experiences and this also forms part of their learning. A total of seven participants (47%) in the ‘basic traditional’ category continued to work as a dayah teacher after completing their dayah education. The extracts that follow illustrate the teaching experiences of several participants during their dayah education.

“I was promoted as a teacher during my fifth year studying in dayah.” (Male 7, ‘basic traditional’)

And another commented:

“I became a teacher in dayah when I was in year eight.” (Male 6, ‘basic traditional’)

It is the teungku who decides when students are ready to be assigned to teaching activities, and this will be determined, in part, by the student’s level of understanding of the assigned teaching areas, their experience in teaching dayah subjects and their study performance. One participant explained that she continued her studies at a different dayah, to be specifically taught by the dayah leader who was a prominent teungku. During her two-year stay, she was offered a teaching position at the dayah because of her teaching experience in the previous dayah. This is described in the participant account below:
During the day, I was asked to teach at dayah *At-Taqwa Darussalam* (the name of the dayah) because I had teaching experience when I was previously studying in the dayah I went to… (Female 7, ‘basic traditional’)

Another participant was invited by his *teungku* to be a member of the teaching staff at the same dayah he had attended. The participant explained that after completing primary school, he enrolled in a dayah and had continued to serve the dayah by teaching there. He went on to become one of the managing staff of a dayah-owned mechanic workshop. An extract of his transcript and work experience follows:

I still live in dayah. In the evening I teach, and in the morning too. And at 8 o’clock in the morning, I come here (to the mechanic workshop) to work in order to generate some…well, some income to support my living cost in dayah. And *Alhamdulillah* (praise to God) our dayah has a co-op. One of the objectives of having a co-op is to help provide teachers with financial support. Every year teachers will receive a small amount of incentive from the co-op revenue. So the co-op is aimed to support the learning and teaching activities in dayah, especially for the teachers. (Male 4, ‘basic traditional’)

On a related subject, another participant explained that he was also offered a teaching position by *teungku* from another dayah. After marriage, the participant who was originally from northern Aceh moved to his wife’s hometown in West Aceh. He explained that there were already three dayah in the village at the time. He decided to serve one dayah through teaching, rather than by establishing a dayah of his own. This is described in the participant’s account below:

Since I moved to this village in early 2000, there were already three dayah. So I thought there was no need for me to establish another one. There is more than enough dayah for young people in the village to learn. So I decided to help the ones already established. Currently, I am serving one dayah in this village. (Male 7, ‘basic traditional’)

This extract refers to there being no need for him “to establish another” dayah. In Aceh, the participants explained, it is common for dayah graduates to set up their own dayah. This is
reasonable since their expertise is specific to the knowledge and skills gained in dayah. A dayah graduate’s level of dedication to the local community is also seen in this extract. This participant (Male 7, ‘basic traditional’) was a newcomer to the village, nevertheless, his main intention and concern was to help around the dayah in the village. The importance of participating in the community through related religious activities further demonstrates the deeply ingrained religious values which the participant gained through his dayah education.

Other ‘basic traditional’ participants found non-religious employment through the help of their teungku and teachers. One participant, on their advice, started a small business. She reported her work as “a self-employed tailor”. Her teungku helped market her products to the dayah students and to the teungku’s social networks. The participant acknowledged that her sewing skills were gained in sewing classes for female students in her dayah:

I make jilbab (headscarf), I sew them myself. I sell them to the people in the village and dayah female students… Umi (a term for a female teungku) would spread the words to her friends. She would help me sell the jilbab. (Female 4, ‘basic traditional’)

This participant explained that the teungku noticed her talent and encouraged her to take up this form of employment. He then promoted the products amongst female students and other people in her dayah social circle. The participant’s experience shows how the close social relationship established with the dayah and the teungku can lead to the employment of students.

Another participant shared how he became a clothing retailer through the help of his teacher in dayah. He was introduced to sales activities by his teacher during his senior years. After that, the participant “tagged along” for at least a year as the teacher’s sales assistant. The teacher was selling clothes in the local community and area around the village. The participant gained valuable working experience as well as the opportunity to broaden his social network of dayah graduates and potential customers.
He (the teacher) was selling around clothes during *uroe peukan* (market day). So I followed him around, assisting, my intention was to gain experience. How can he live on by selling around clothes? I helped him without expecting money in return. Nevertheless, he would give some money by the end of the day… I helped him for a year, and then this person encouraged me to do a retailing business. He saw I had retail skills, so I was loaned money (to start own business). (Male 6, ‘basic traditional’)

This extract describes how the participant’s social network with the people of the village was broadened through his sales activity. The participant “was loaned money” by a person in the village to start his own retail business, demonstrating the trust placed in dayah graduates. The participant explained that part of the person’s willingness to loan him money was because he knew of the participant’s active contributions to village life, in areas such as “preaching, teaching Qur’an to the people in the village, and teaching in *majlis ta’lim* (religious gathering)” (Male 6, ‘basic traditional’). In the following extract, the participant continues to explain that he enjoyed the work as a salesman, and has become very successful, all thanks to his dayah education, his active contributions to the local community and this person who placed trust in him. Today, he is one of the successful dayah graduates in his village.

After the tsunami, I bought a shop. After that, I bought a motorbike, and *Alhamdulillah* (praise to God) I could afford to build a house. In 2008, the construction of my house was completed. (Male 6, ‘basic traditional’)

From these extracts and others, ‘basic traditional’ participants talk of forming social networks, within and outside the community, during their time in dayah. The participants’ stories reveal how dayah education prepares them with religious knowledge, social skills and life skills. Their dayah leader, teachers and people in their local community give the students the opportunity to put into practice what they have learned. Participants in this group maintained a social network based on faith with the *teungku* and teachers, who directly and indirectly helped them access employment.
5.3.1.3 Employment accessed through the people in the village community

The findings reveal that 47% (7) of participants in the ‘basic traditional’ category have accessed and gained employment directly through the people in the broader dayah community. The role played by the people of the community in giving them access to employment was significant, and as these participants noted, helped their “economic well-being”. The types of employment gained through this network were: (a) dayah leader, (b) farmer, (c) salesman, (d) Qur’an teacher for children and women, (e) teacher at public schools, (f) religious counsellor, (g) tailor, and (h) religious mentor at majlis ta’lim (community gathering).

Two ‘basic traditional’ participants became teachers at public schools and reported being recommended by the people in the community to teach subjects related to Islam at public schools in the village. It is clear from these participants’ interviews that people in the local community recognise dayah graduates as having “a deep knowledge about Islam” which “allows” or “qualifies” them to teach religious subjects. This is regardless of whether the person has a formal education or not. As one participant said:

I was asked to be a teacher for the subject of Qur’an recitation at a public school in the village. The teachers of that school recommended me because as a dayah graduate I was seen has having a deep knowledge of Islam. (Female 5, ‘basic traditional’)

This participant (Female 5, ‘basic traditional’) had already run a Qur’anic class at her house for women and children in the village. She was then recommended by her students and teachers, who were also members of the village, to become a Qur’an teacher at a public school in the village. Another participant with a similar experience, who also runs a Qur’anic class at his house for young people in his village, commented on this issue:

I socialised and made friends, and they asked me to work with them… The majlis ta’lim (religious gathering) program was introduced to public high schools in West Aceh. I was asked to teach there every Friday, from eight to nine o’clock. (Male 3, ‘basic traditional’)
Similarly, participants who became teachers of Qur'an recitation for women and children in the village were also asked by people to run such activities. In such cases, people knew that the participants were dayah graduates, qualified to teach Islamic subjects, and therefore sought their assistance to learn the Qur’an. These recommendations provide an indication of how a shared faith contributes to the development of social capital, which can help graduates find employment. This will be discussed further in Chapter Six.

One participant reported that on moving to her husband’s village, people started to come to her house asking for her to teach the Qur’an. She explained this happened because the people knew she was a dayah graduate. As she said in her transcript:

Within three days after I moved here, people started to come over to study the Qur’an, and many more came up and still come to today. Initially, there were only two students, and then many followed. (Female 5, ‘basic traditional’)

Another female participant also reported that she started a Qur’an class at her house for the children in her neighbourhood. With the support of the people in the community, word spread about her service, and more people came to study under her guidance.

I teach the Qur’an. At the time, there weren’t many students, just two people. Then more people came to study, and at one point the number of students reached fifty people. I teach Qur’an here (at home). I teach in the evening. I also teach women. After ashar (afternoon prayer), sometimes there are thirty students who come to study, sometimes twenty or sometimes just about fifteen students. Now I have more or less sixty students. (Female 2, ‘basic traditional’)

Similarly, another female participant said that she started a Qur’an class for women and children at her home to provide the people in her neighbourhood with a basic understanding of the Qur’an and how to read it. The number of the students in her class grew by word of mouth.
She stated that “the class was for women that didn’t have any understanding of the Qur’an and also for children” (Female 1, ‘basic traditional’).

Further examples of how people have supported dayah graduates’ economic well-being are shown in the extracts below. Honesty is highlighted as one of the dayah graduates’ personal values. As evidenced in the following extract, this attracted people in the village to support the farming activity of the participant financially:

The fundamental asset is honesty. Because of my honesty, people have trust to loan me money. I asked for a financial loan of three million rupiah, and I told the person I would return it back in six months’ time during the harvest season of my coffee and rubber plantation. When I earned the money, I paid the loan back straight away. This loan was the kick start of my farming activity. When I graduated from dayah I had nothing, all I had was an ija kroeng (traditional Acehnese clothing) and a kupiah (traditional Acehnese hat). Among the people that gave me loans were my friends here in the village, and people that I didn’t really know. But when we get to know each other, and that I was a dayah graduate and that person knows my situation, the person will lend me some money anytime I needed it. (Male 7, ‘basic traditional’)

From this extract, the participant gives the impression that the people in the community perceive dayah graduates as honest and trustworthy individuals. This individual’s honesty and the status of the participant as a dayah graduate is, according to him, what ensured the people were willing to trust him with their money. Further, the trust people placed in the participant also implies their concern toward the participant’s personal and economic well-being.

Another example of employment being found through the people in the broader dayah community is evident in one female participant’s case. The people had known her as a dayah graduate and for her active involvement in religious-related work in the village. Because of this, she was offered a position as a religious counsellor at the subdistrict’s Department of Religious Affairs. When asked about how she was offered a position as a religious counsellor, the participant responded:
Well, I am actively involved in community activities in the village. These activities are being reported. My participation in various activities is reported to the sub-district office. Firstly, the announcement for a position of a religious counsellor from the District Religious Affairs office was distributed to the head village. Then, they search for a religious teacher who are active in the community and who teach the people in the village, to become a religious counsellor. (Female 3, ‘basic traditional’)

The participant continued to say that while being appointed as a religious counsellor, a job with the government, she was hired as ‘contract staff’ which meant her salary was low. This issue recurred throughout the data set, for example, another Female 5 (‘basic traditional’) was recommended to be a Qur’an recitation teacher in a public school, and she also was employed as contract teaching staff, generating only a small income.

Nevertheless, the people’s support towards dayah graduates’ economic well-being was again illustrated by a participant who was an experienced dayah teacher. She taught in various dayah outside of her village in West Aceh. On returning to her village, she planned to establish her own dayah on a small block of land next to her house. The building of her dayah was only made possible through the support, both physically and financially, and the enthusiasm of the people in the community. As she recalls:

I returned back here to the village in 1990. I was welcomed by the people, and together we built a dayah. It was a mutual decision. (Female 7, ‘basic traditional’)

The interviews indicate that male participants were more active in teaching at the dayah and at community religious gatherings, unlike female participants who were keener to organise Qur’an recitation classes at their homes. A possible explanation for this might be related to the cultural norms in Aceh, where women lead groups of women and children, while men generally lead groups of men, women, and children. However, the female participants were not limited to only teaching at their homes. The findings show that three female participants in the ‘basic
traditional’ category actively run a regular majlis ta’lim (religious gathering session) for the people in the community, at various places including the mosque, dayah, and at houses of members of the majlis ta’lim.

Findings also indicate that many of these teaching activities took place in the evening because the participants worked on other jobs during the day. This was stated by one participant whose day job was a salesman, which resonated with another participant’s account, “In the evening I teach. I do not have my own dayah. I teach here in dayah Darul Huda’ (Male 6, ‘basic traditional’).

Overall, the findings show participants in the ‘basic traditional’ category acquired jobs, after graduating from dayah, based on social networks developed in dayah. The types of employment varied with 70% (10) having more than one job. The participants reported that this was because most types of employment generated only a low income, for example, a Qur’an teacher is basically a voluntary-based job. There is no obligation for students to pay for the teacher’s services; nevertheless, to reciprocate their generosity, it is common for students to make a small financial contribution.

5.3.1.4 Employment accessed through other social networks

The findings presented so far have indicated that social networks developed in dayah were the main source of employment opportunities, however, other sources, such as, social networks with parents, spouse, and relatives, were also used. Eighty percent (12) of participants in the ‘basic traditional’ category reported accessing second or third jobs through networks that were not dayah-related. The types of employment accessed through these social networks included becoming a farmer e.g., rice, rubber, palm, and coffee plantation, tailor or salesmen.
Four participants or 27% reported using their family-based social network, in addition to their social network developed in dayah, to help find paid employment. One participant commented that on graduation, his early job experience was working on his parent’s coffee plantation. He said, “I first worked for my parents in Takengon (Central Aceh), at their coffee bean plantation. From there, I started earning and started saving” (Male 3, ‘basic traditional’). Although this occupation was no longer pursued by the participant, it did provide the financial support to get by, but most importantly he said it provided him with the working experience needed. The participant further explained that he continued to earn by doing other casual work, and now owns a successful palm plantation.

Three basic traditional participants also reported using their spouse-related social network in addition to their dayah network to help find employment. For example, one participant reported that “after that [after ten years studying in a dayah], I got married. I moved here (to West Aceh) and teach in this dayah” (Female 3, ‘basic traditional’). The dayah she teaches in is owned by her husband.

For two participants who became farmers, their data reveal they farm land inherited from their parents or their spouse’s parents for their source of income. As one such participant explained, “We have a farmland inherited from my wife’s parents” (Male 7, ‘basic traditional’). He continued to explain that he had sought financial assistance from members of his family:

Among the people who helped me most were my relatives and my dayah friends, because I didn’t have anything when I came here (to West Aceh). So, sometimes I’d ask for some money from my brother in Bireun (Northern Aceh), and sometimes from my brother here, then I’d ask from people who are not related (by blood) to me at all. (Male 7, ‘basic traditional’)

Similarly, a female participant (Female 8, ‘basic traditional’) reported that she became a farmer after she got married. Together with her husband, they farmed a rice field which they
rented. During the interview, she also stated that she had another job as a tailor. She had learned how to sew from a very young age from people in her village. During her time in dayah, she continued sewing in her free time, and pursued this job after leaving dayah, but had to stop working as a tailor when the tsunami hit the region. As she described in her transcript:

I learned to sew in the village… I was a casual employee of this person in the village. So this person hired me to sew. When my product is ready, I will deliver it to my employer in the village. (Female 8, ‘basic traditional’)

Another male participant who inherited a small piece of land from his parents used it to start a mechanical workshop for fixing motorcycles, bicycles and household machinery. During the interview, he mentioned that he received financial support from his relatives:

My relatives were very kind to me. At that time, one of my relatives lent me some gold (to be sold in exchange for money to start up the mechanic workshop). *Insya Allah* (with God’s will), I started this small business. *Alhamdullilah* I have succeeded. (Male 2, ‘basic traditional’)

The use of a family-based social network in helping to gain employment was also evident in another participant’s account. The participant, apart from being a farmer, was also a tailor, and currently owns a dayah. Her story was slightly different to the other participants who inherited lands or received financial support. “I learned how to sew from my mother… After I finished dayah I got married, I started to sew again and sell them” (Female 7, ‘basic traditional’).

The findings also show two participants who did not access their faith-based social networks to gain any employment but instead relied solely upon their other social networks such as family ties. These were reported by Female 8 and Male 2 in the ‘basic traditional’ category.
Overall, these results indicate dayah graduates make extensive use of the social networks developed in, or through, dayah to find employment. However, they also access other jobs through social networks that are not dayah-related. Based on the data in this study, it appears that individual participants, when the opportunity arises, make use of a range of family support, be it financial or tangible, for example land, to develop ways to generate income. These alternate social networks will be discussed in Chapter Six (page 216).

5.3.2 Comprehensive traditional

The results in this section report how participants in the ‘comprehensive traditional’ category have accessed and gained employment. Participants in this group had dayah education as well as secondary schooling and tertiary education. The tertiary education qualifications of ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants are shown in Table 5.3. Therefore, they possess formal recognised qualifications and were at liberty to take advantage of a wider range of employment opportunities. The experiences of the participants in this category showed that 90% (6) accessed their employment through formal job applications. That is, all dayah graduates in this category gained employment by going through the work application process, in which, a formal school leaving certificate was a requirement. The findings reveal 90% (6) of these participants were employed in the ‘formal’ or professional employment sector. Their jobs included working in the public service, as government officials, lecturers, or local senators (see Table 5.2 for details of the types of employment obtained). This type of employment is favoured by the majority of Acehnese as it provides long-term employment and a secure monthly income, among other benefits. All participants in the ‘comprehensive traditional’ category were both dayah graduates and university graduates with degrees, ranging from undergraduate to postgraduate and doctoral levels.
Table 5.3

*Tertiary Education of Comprehensive Traditional Participants*

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Comprehensive traditional</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
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</table>

The findings indicate 90% (6) of the participants in this category have gone through similar patterns when applying for jobs. An example is shown in the following extract:

After completing my master’s degree, I worked as a lecturer at Universitas Iskandar Muda (UNIDA). I applied for a position as a lecturer. I am still teaching at UNIDA (Male 6, ‘comprehensive traditional’).

With an advanced degree, the participant has even wider access to social networks and employment opportunities. This was also found to be the case for another participant:

I applied for a job as a development consultant when I graduated from my first degree. I took a test and *Alhamdulillah* (praise to God) I passed the test. I also applied for a government official position, in which I needed to take a test. I passed the test the second time I applied for the position. (Male 4, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

During the interview, the participant (Male 4, ‘comprehensive traditional’) stated that information about these jobs was accessed through announcements in newspapers and websites on the internet. One participant reported that information related to job vacancies was acquired within the university environment. The participant, who was at the time of the interview the head of Syari’ah Islam department director and also a judge at the Syari’ah Court in Banda
Aceh, received job-related information and gained employment from the university’s faculty members during his period of study.

In the faculty, our lecturers were also judges. They informed us (about job opportunities). Then, we visited the syari’ah court to search more information about it… we had no websites back then, just information posted on the board at the syari’ah court office. So, we couldn’t access information about this job if we didn’t receive information from them. (Male 2, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

Another participant, who was at the time of the interview the Deputy Chief of the Aceh Religious Court, shared his experience in relation to job-related information within the university environment. He explained that after completing his degree at an Islamic public university in Banda Aceh, he was hired as casual teaching staff at the university. According to the participant, his university degree was the main reason he was offered casual teaching. This is explained in the participant’s account:

When I graduated from IAIN (Islamic public university), I worked as a casual teaching staff at the university. With me having a university degree, the chances were high for me to work there. (Male 1, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

The participant continued his story about how he came to be working in the public service for the Aceh Religious Court:

Initially, I was not very keen to work in the public service, but I was offered a position in the public service by a friend of mine who was in the higher ranks. That was how I ended up working for the court. (Male 1, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

The participant’s account explained that his social networking with a friend, who was also a person in power, had enabled easier access in gaining the job that otherwise might not be accessible.
The experiences of the participants in this category show how their formal education extended their social networks. In other words, the established social networks for dayah graduates in the ‘comprehensive traditional’ category were not limited to those set up in dayah. Instead, further formal education has allowed them to form a much broader social network of individuals, social groups and organisations. However, all participants in this group (7) report an ongoing participation and religious contribution to the community, for example, one participant stated “I have established a number of modern dayah in the villages to accommodate dayah students with formal education and recognised leaving certificate” (Male 1, ‘comprehensive traditional’).

Another participant (Male 3, ‘comprehensive traditional’) who has served in the public service and who is a prominent Islamic scholar, demonstrated his contribution by leading a well-established, hereditary dayah. A similar experience was reported by a female participant (Female 1, ‘comprehensive traditional’), who at the time of the interview, held a position in the public service and was also a dayah leader. She explained that she had inherited a piece of land from her parents who passed away and used the land to build a dayah. She explained that her dayah was dedicated to her parents:

I told the people to pray for me so that I can establish a dayah on this inherited land. My purpose (to build the dayah) was for my parents to feel the spirit of my good intention through building a dayah on the land they have bequeathed to me. (Female 1, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

The participants’ contribution to the community was also evident through their active participation in the home village, such as teaching in dayah, being an imam in the local mosque, and participating in dayah-held events. These contributions are varied and dependent on personal skills:
Dayah graduates are more involved in the society according to their skills. For graduates who studied and lived in dayah longer, they generally establish their own dayah. For those who cannot build their own dayah, they tend to be more actively involved in running or organising community activities (Male 1, ‘comprehensive traditional’).

These findings suggest that although the participants have acquired tertiary education and expanded their social circle, the spirit of their Islamic education taught in dayah is instilled within them. The examples indicate dayah graduates in this category are still strongly attached to their dayah values. The use of social capital developed in dayah for purposes other than employment will be discussed further in Chapter Six (page 224).

5.4 Employment related to religion

A variety of reasons were provided about the types of employment pursued by dayah graduates in both categories. Some saw the reason for pursuing employment was for religious reasons, for example, a female participant (Female 5, ‘basic traditional’) explained that she always wanted to teach religion, which was why she studied in dayah. Another participant (Male 7, ‘basic traditional’) said that he became a dayah teacher to follow in the footsteps of his teungku. This view was expressed by 50% (11) of participants.

The data shows that 100% (15) of ‘basic traditional’ and 90% (6) of ‘comprehensive traditional’ are involved in religious-related work. The nature of dayah education has resulted in a larger number of ‘basic traditional’ participants in this study being involved in full-time or part-time religious-related work. No ‘basic traditional’ participants pursued further formal studies. One ‘comprehensive traditional’ participant offered a view on this.

Traditional dayah (students), they don’t continue their studies. Their schooling ends at the dayah level. They are advised while studying to be an Islamic scholar or to establish a dayah. That’s the typical pattern for dayah graduates. If authorised by their teungku to
build a new dayah, graduates will spread to villages to build dayah. They will no longer think to pursue further education. (Male 2, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

The opinion expressed in this extract is not backed up by the evidence found in the ‘basic traditional’ group of participants. While some reported starting up dayah, none mentioned they needed the permission of their teungku to do so. They did however comment, as presented, on the salary levels of some work. One hundred percent of participants in the ‘basic traditional’ group were engaged directly in religious employment and activity, albeit for some as a second or third job, which resulted in little or no financial return.

Another ‘comprehensive traditional’ participant offered a perspective on the types of employment pursued by dayah graduates:

Sometimes, for those with fewer skills, limited financial capital and business skills, they tend to work in the agricultural sector. Many of them may just work in the rice field; go to the mountains to become farmers, and other things. Some graduates that have the capacity to teach, they would start their own religious gathering in the village. (Male 6, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

This participant’s opinion is supported to a point by the data from the ‘basic traditional’ participants. The data shows that 60% (9) of ‘basic traditional’ participants are involved in agricultural work. However, as will be discussed in Chapter Six, given the lack of recognised formal qualifications, the ‘basic traditional’ participants in this study are involved in a range of different employment types to maintain and improve the financial status of their family. Please refer to Table 5.2 for examples of the types of employment performed by ‘basic traditional’ participants.

The participant continued to explain that graduates’ social network plays a major role in helping dayah graduates find and gain access to employment.
Not all graduates can teach. Maybe because of their limitation in knowledge or interest, so they tend find other jobs such as in sales activities. And maybe because they have good strong relationships with good friends from dayah, the dayah community and relatives, these people can help them find work or start their own business. (Male 6, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

The findings indicate that participants in the ‘basic traditional’ category tend to pursue and continue religious-related work because of their education, which promotes devotion and allegiance to Islam. It is the view of some ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants that religious employment is influenced by the participant’s expertise in religious education. The next section therefore, reports on the findings related to the importance of a formal education with a recognised leaving certificate for dayah graduates in gaining employment.

5.5 The importance of a formal education with a recognised leaving certificate in gaining employment.

As discussed in Chapter Two, dayah is a traditional and non-formal Islamic school. It does not issue a recognised leaving certificate to their students on graduation. What is given to students is a dayah certificate that contains information of the subjects completed along with their marks. A dayah certificate has little value in fulfilling the selection criteria for employment in most institutions. This was mentioned in one ‘basic traditional’ participant’s transcript, “The issued certificate by dayah only informs us about the level of student’s education in dayah, but it is not recognised by many institutions.” (Female 3, ‘basic traditional’).

Similarly, a ‘comprehensive traditional’ participant commented on the lack of formal recognition upon completion of dayah education, saying it is unfair and hampers a dayah graduate’s ability to seek further education or employment. He considered dayah graduates’ religious knowledge and understanding to be equal to individuals with advanced degrees in
Islamic studies, or even higher. Individuals with advanced degrees in Islamic studies can easily access professional and formal jobs, including jobs that are religious-related or not, which is not the case for dayah graduates:

There are people with university degrees in Islamic jurisprudence, Syari’ah law, or any other related degree. Some of their capabilities are lower than dayah graduates, and some are higher. So, in terms of capability, they (dayah graduates) can be higher. But just because they don’t have a recognized leaving certificate they do not have access (to employment), and that is not fair. I mean, it is just about the paper works. (Male 5, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

This extract indicates concern with the restricted employment access for dayah graduates. His opinion infers dayah graduates are being marginalised and their capabilities undermined because of their lack of a recognised leaving certificate, a point to be discussed in Chapter Six. He continues to explain that graduates have no difficulties in accessing jobs that are religious-related. However, for them to work in other areas is highly unlikely:

For graduates who only have a dayah certificate, it is impossible to be able to work in sectors other than religiously-related. For instance, in the sectors of ‘socio-economy’, or politics, that is impossible. But for positions that are related to religion or dayah related, I think there should be no problem. (Male 5, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

For participants in the ‘basic traditional’ category with a ‘dayah only’ qualification, their opportunity to be employed in the formal sector is very limited. The extract above represents the challenges experienced by the participants in the ‘basic traditional’ category. For instance, one participant had been hired as contract teaching staff at a public school. She has been teaching religion at the school for 10 years, and yet despite being recognised as the leading Islamic teacher, the participant has never been promoted to a permanent teaching position, due to the lack of a recognised leaving certificate. With a permanent position, she would be entitled
to a stable and higher income. The extract from the participant’s transcript highlights her position:

Other people (teachers) have been promoted to become civil servants, except for me because I don’t have a recognised leaving certificate, even though I have been teaching here for 10 years… now I need to take Paket C (an equivalency test to gain a recognised leaving certificate) because the school requires it… The purpose of the certificate is just to fulfil the paperwork (to fulfil the selection criteria for becoming a civil servant). (Female 5, ‘basic traditional’)

The term ‘civil servant’ was referred to in the extract, and in Indonesia, individuals with a permanent teaching position in public schools are classified as civil servants. A position as a ‘civil servant’ provides permanent employment status, better earnings and other benefits. The fact the participant is still teaching in the public school implies that her expertise is much needed. The participant reported that she did not have to apply for the job; rather she was offered the job by the teachers because of her specialist skills and knowledge in the area.

The findings of this section indicate that individuals from both ‘basic traditional’ and ‘comprehensive traditional’ groups believe that without a formal government-recognised, leaving certificate, dayah graduates (‘basic traditional’) are restricted in their ability to apply for and gain promotions in their areas of expertise, Islamic studies and practice. The need for dayah to be a recognised educational institution, and for graduates to receive a formal certificate of educational attainment will be discussed in Chapter Six (page 225).

5.6 Reasons to study in a dayah

The findings show that participants in this study chose to pursue dayah education for a variety of reasons. Their reasons are listed below, in Table 5.4.
Table 5.4

Reasons to Pursue Dayah Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons to study in dayah</th>
<th>Basic traditional*</th>
<th>Comprehensive traditional*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To learn about Islam</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low socioeconomic background</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ and family influence</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others (e.g., Aceh civil conflict)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*participants may have more than one reason.

Eighty percent (18) of participants in both categories stated that their main reason for studying in dayah was to learn about Islam. This finding is not surprising since Acehnese are born and raised as Muslims, and their day-to-day living is surrounded by Islamic practices and attributes. Therefore, it is seen as an important requirement for individuals to have a basic understanding of the religion and its practices. As explained in Chapter Two, the influence of Islam in Aceh has penetrated deeply into its cultural tradition. This is evident in the local spoken language, bahasa Aceh, which consist of vocabularies adopted from Arabic words in the Qur’an. Another example of Islamic influence is found in several transcripts which include song lyrics to accompany traditional Acehnese dances. The lyrics incorporate sayings of prayers and praises to God. This shows that being a Muslim in Aceh is part of an individual’s religious-cultural identity.

One participant expressed her interest in studying in dayah because she believed that it would guide her to become a good Muslim:

I wanted to study in dayah because our morals and behaviours would be guided there… and also to learn about the obligations as a Muslim. We can also share the gained
knowledge with others, and perform good deeds once graduated from dayah. (Female 1, ‘basic traditional’)

A similar response was given by another participant, “My intention to study in dayah was to gain (Islamic) knowledge and to be able to teach others.” (Female 5, ‘basic traditional’).

Participants had a lot of confidence in the dayah education, and this was evident in another graduate’s transcript, “I had a strong will to deepen my knowledge in Islam, so I went to dayah after graduating high school. I had other choices.” (Female 1, ‘comprehensive traditional’). The participant in the latter extract mentioned that she had completed high school before studying in dayah, which showed she had formal education with a recognised leaving certificate. This means that she had the opportunity to either apply for jobs or continue to pursue higher education in any area of interest. Instead, she chose to study at a traditional dayah. This example illustrates the status of dayah education in their community. As one ‘comprehensive traditional’ graduate expressed, “Dayah offer teachings of Islamic education that are not found in any other religious institutions.” (Male 5, ‘comprehensive traditional’). The following extract from a male graduate shows the specific teaching materials that are only available in dayah:

My first reason is because dayah education is purely salafiyah (traditional). They do not use the curriculum used in formal schools, not even one subject. So it’s really specifically about studying the kitab kuning (classical texts). (Male 6, ‘basic traditional’)

Table 5.4 shows that there is another reason for participants to study in dayah: their socio-economic background. This was reinforced by 50% (7) of participants in the ‘basic traditional’ category. Participants who came from families with little money found it difficult to send their children to formal schools because of the required tuition fees and other costs, such as uniforms and textbooks. The only reliable option for some students was to enrol in a dayah education because it required only a small fee. When asked about this, one participant responded, “At that time in the village, it was hard to go to formal school; it needed money.
Dayah also required money but not much so that’s where I went.” (Female 3, ‘basic traditional’). Her statement resonated with others:

I did not complete elementary school because of the financial problem; my parents did not have money. There were school fees to cover such as uniforms and many others. My parents could not afford it. So I asked them if I can study at dayah instead so that I can at least study. (Female 8, ‘basic traditional’)

In terms of costs, dayah education is inexpensive. Not just the dayah I went to but all other dayah if compared to formal schools. (Male 6, ‘basic traditional’)

These statements indicate that while dayah operate within a small educational budget, these schools are able to deliver a reliable and valued education to students. One participant commented that her parents’ socioeconomic background was one of the reasons for her to enrol in dayah, but the participant also indicated that she wanted to go there to study Islam, “Financial problem was one of the reasons. My parents were poor… but I also wanted to know more about religion” (Female 4, ‘basic traditional’).

One male participant suggested that dayah did not only accept people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, but they also appeal to middle and upper-class people for its comprehensive education in Islamic studies.

But there are also middle and upper-class people who send their children to dayah, but then again the numbers are small. Many that sent their children to dayah are from a lower socioeconomic background, considering it is the most inexpensive education they can get. This preference by people from different backgrounds is also influenced by the fact that dayah education is exclusive to teaching Islamic subjects. (Male 6, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

Similar comments were addressed by other participants showing that despite the inexpensive education, parents gave preference to dayah education because of the religious
teachings and because they believed it to be character building. This was expressed in one participant’s account, “Apart from the low cost studying in dayah, students are taught religious studies, which is a big relief for some parents” (Male 1, ‘comprehensive traditional’). A similar statement by another graduate confirms the latter, “Parents in the village prefer dayah; it is a path closer to religion compared to formal schools” (Female 4, ‘basic traditional’).

The low-cost of dayah education also appealed to other sections of the community:

Some people wanted to go to formal schools but don’t have the money. So the best option was to go to dayah. And my time, people’s focus was not so much into the studying part, but more to which school they can afford to go to. So that is why now there is a growing number of dayah for orphans. (Male 1, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

A small number of those interviewed indicated their reasons for studying in dayah were as a result of being influenced by parents and relatives (see Table 5.4). For example, a male participant commented that he dropped out of school to study in a dayah because of the influence of his relative who was studying there, as he explained:

I was in my second year in junior high school. A relative of mine was in dayah Ruhul Fata in Seulimum. At that time, my relative told me about the dayah, which interested me. So I left school to study there. (Male 6, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

Another participant reported that he was advised by his parents to study in dayah, “My parents were the one who suggested me to study at a traditional dayah” (Male 2, ‘comprehensive traditional’). While another participant reported his intention to study in dayah was to seek protection from the Aceh civil conflict, “I went to study in dayah, thinking that I would be safe in there” (Male 5, ‘basic traditional’).

This participant’s experience is in response to the civil conflict between the Acehnese rebellion movement and the central government, which has negatively affected the people,
especially those in rural areas. His comment suggests that dayah provided a form of immunity or sanctuary from the armed conflict; that the conflicting parties would negotiate to leave dayah unharmed. A possible explanation for this is that dayah is seen as an educational institution with a religious purpose and has no political agenda. For the majority of study participants, the purpose of attending dayah education was to widen and deepen their knowledge of Islam, while others were prompted to attend for socio-economic or other reasons. The next section presents findings regarding dayah’s philosophy, teachings, and students’ experiences.

5.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented the findings of the analysed interview data of 22 participants. The different sections include the most significant findings arising from the participants’ interviews. In the first sections (Section 5.1.1, 5.1.2, 5.1.3), participant responses indicate the development of social capital within dayah; a faith-based educational institution. Social relationships between participants and dayah friends, teungku and teachers, and the people in the community all contribute to a developing social network. The results in this chapter indicate that building and maintaining social relationships is part of dayah’s embedded learning, and this helps participants disseminate Islamic knowledge, understanding and practices.

The findings also reveal how two different participant groups, identified as ‘basic traditional’ and ‘comprehensive traditional,’ use their social capital, either developed in traditional dayah education or during more formal education, to find and access employment. Participants in the ‘basic traditional’ category were found to rely on their faith-based social networks, which they had developed in dayah, to access and gain employment. They also drew upon other networks such as parents, spouse and relatives to gain employment. The types of jobs accessed were usually found within the local community and included a range of religious,
agricultural or service roles, as well as in trading or retail. Some participants in this category also reflected a view that without formal government and societal recognition of their dayah education, the scope for employment is very limited.

The findings were different for participants in the ‘comprehensive traditional’ category. Their formal education and recognised certification of academic achievement allowed a broader social network, and access to employment in more public and professional sectors. Nevertheless, participants in the ‘comprehensive traditional’ category continued using their faith-based social networks to participate in, and maintain community-based religious activities.

The findings also provide a unique insight into how participants view life inside dayah and the role of dayah in the community. They will form the basis for a discussion in the following chapter, of the main research questions.
Chapter Six: Discussion

6.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the main themes derived from the key findings of this study. In so doing, it addresses the basic research question and sub-questions (Chapter Four, page 92). This chapter draws on the analysis of empirical interview data from participants in the ‘basic traditional’ and ‘comprehensive traditional’ categories. The three major themes and their related key findings to be discussed are:

Theme 1: Social capital is based on faith

Key finding: Social capital based on faith, developed in dayah, evolves through social relationships and the practice of a shared faith.

Theme 2: Dayah networks help with employment

Key finding: Shared faith contributes to the development of social capital that can help graduates find employment.

Finding: The teungku is pivotal in building and maintaining social capital based on faith and in helping graduates access employment.

Theme 3: Dayah education needs formal recognition

Key finding: There is a need for dayah to be a recognised educational institution and for graduates to receive a formal certificate of educational attainment.

Each section of the chapter includes a discussion of the theme and related key findings. Where appropriate, the related question(s), implications, and recommendations for further research are included.
In the following section is a discussion of the social relationships developed in dayah and a definition of social capital based on faith. This is followed by a discussion of the two categories of participants that emerged from the data and how they gained access to employment. The final section discusses the position of dayah as an education provider. A summary concludes the chapter. An overview of the chapter content is presented in Table 6.1.

**Table 6.1**

*Outline of Chapter Six*

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6.1 Social capital based on faith – the nature of social relationships developed in dayah

This section discusses findings which relate to research sub-question number one, ‘How is social capital based on faith developed in dayah education?’ The findings indicate that social capital is developed through social relationships formed within dayah and in the extended dayah community. The social relations are established by a shared faith. To understand the effect of social capital on accessing employment, it is important to recognise the nature of social capital as it was found to develop through dayah education. The findings show that social capital is evident in three types of social groups, with which participants actively engage. These are: [1] their friends in dayah, [2] the teungku and teachers in dayah, and [3] the people in the community (see Chapter Five, page 128). The importance of these groups to the participants and the nature of their membership, confirm the findings of other studies on social capital (Stone, Gray & Hughes, 2003; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). That is, participants in this study developed close personal and social relationships with others as a consequence of their education and daily life in dayah.

The process by which social capital occurs within the three social groups was different; yet, all originated from the same foundation, shared Islamic faith and related teaching. Their faith requires them to maintain social relationships, to help each other, and to be sincere in doing so; such practice it is believed ‘will bring blessings from God’ (Muhammad, 2010). Therefore, all of the activities in which the participants took part in dayah, and through dayah education, were found to be driven by religious allegiance. In a dayah context – this shared faith was found to be the driving factor which binds and maintains social relationships. This builds on Muhammad’s (2010) view of kinship, developed in a dayah environment, which as found in this study, is based on a strong adherence to Islamic values.
The nature of social capital identified in dayah was not based on an individual participant’s search or desire for career development, social status, or business prosperity. Rather, it was bound to the fulfilment and maintenance of social and religious solidarity, for the common good of dayah society, for God’s blessings and pleasure. This confirms the findings of Candland’s (2001) study on faith-based social capital, in which, he understands faith to be the foundation of social solidarity. While Candland’s (2001) study focused on the principled motives that promote faith-based social capital, this research focused on the nature of social capital formation developed in dayah, a shared faith environment. The point of difference between the general concept of social capital and social capital based on faith is discussed in Section 6.2.

In the subsections that follow, the discussion will focus on the social bonds developed within each of the social groups that emerged from the study findings. As appropriate, references to current literature on social capital are included. The purpose of this discussion is to position the findings of this study in relation to the body of knowledge about social capital.

6.1.1 Social relationships with friends in dayah

In dayah, the participants’ social relationships with other students began when they entered the dayah. The building of social relationships, which evolved into lifelong friendships, was achieved through face-to-face interactions, during study and daily life, as a boarding school student. The activities were usually done collectively and included attending classes, group study, doing homework, domestic cleaning, cooking, and laundry. The frequency of collective social activity is essential to creating social capital (Falk & Kilpatrick, 2000).
The study’s findings indicate the intensity (in addition to the frequency) of social interactions with friends was dependent on the length of time they spent living together in dayah (e.g., 7 to 15 years). The intensity of social interactions was found to increase the levels of trust, reciprocity, loyalty, obligation and expectations, and shared values (Coleman, 1988; Falk & Kilpatrick, 2000; O’Connor, 2013; Portes, 1998; Putnam, 2000), which in turn, increased the bonds between them and strengthened friendships. This is consistent with the study by Falk and Kilpatrick (2000) who researched social capital in a rural community. They determined that social capital cannot be created without a quantity of actual meaningful (quality) interactions. While their study did not provide evidence about how frequent the interactions should be to create and maintain social capital, they demonstrated that the less frequent the interactions, the less likely it was that social capital would be built.

This study confirms that social ties continued to grow stronger between people the longer they spent living and studying in dayah. The dayah in this way functions as a site where social capital is developed and maintained in a faith-based environment. From this point of view, the concept of social capital is seen as the depth and breadth of everyday relationships, which rely on shared religious, cultural values and practices (Silverman, 2001).

The following extract illustrates how ‘intensity’ is viewed as a key component in the building of social capital in dayah.

The longer we stay in dayah, the stronger the bond built with our friends. But if we stay for only three years, the bond isn’t as strong, sometimes they even fade. But if we stay like seven years or eight, that will definitely create a strong bond, just like family. For those who stayed for fifteen years, the closeness of their friendship is unbreakable (Male 3, ‘basic traditional’).

The family-like relationships developed as a result of the long years spent living in dayah. These findings illustrate how a participant’s friends in dayah were not just the people they were
in daily contact with, but people they came to depend on in difficult times. The difficult times refers to participants’ descriptions of assistance and support needed from their friends during illness, financial trouble, shortage in food supplies, and job seeking (a critical part of this study discussed in the later section, page 200). In this family-like atmosphere, members are expected to help one another; there is a mutual obligation to provide assistance. This mutual obligation is an example of how social capital developed in a faith-based institution supports individuals. This is consistent with Friedman’s (1977) concept of behavioural interdependence among actors (dayah graduates), in which he argued that expectations and obligations among actors develop over time based on each other’s assumption or knowledge of their interests. In other words, the longer the relationship is maintained, the more knowledgeable are the actors about each other’s personalities, needs, and interests. These social interactions therefore generate expectations and obligations among actors – potentially promoting the development of social capital (Friedman, 1977).

Coleman (1990) provided an additional illustration of ‘time’ reinforcing trust. He noted that a person’s trust is often placed in a ‘long-term personal friend’. The context he provided was based on the experiences of state leaders. Many state leaders have a person they trust completely ‘to act as one would in a given situation’ (p. 307). These persons are friends with whom they have had a long relationship, and embedded in it is trust. Therefore, as illustrated by Coleman (1990), the relationships developed by participants in dayah provide social capital which is used to achieve their goal and help, in times of need. While the term ‘trust’ was not explicitly mentioned by all participants in the interviews (the term was mentioned by Males 3 and 7 of the ‘basic traditional’ group), the notion of reliance and dependence featured in all transcripts, and these were subsumed under the attribute label ‘trust.’

Another factor that strengthened participants’ social relations with friends in dayah was their experience of ‘togetherness’ or being together physically, educationally and spiritually.
The concept of togetherness resulted from the intensity of the lived dayah experience, as a boarding school student. The concept of togetherness as embedded in the dayah education was found to create social solidarity among dayah students. Such togetherness is needed to achieve cohesion in society - a concept practised by the prophet Muhammad and his companions.

Togetherness was developed in all aspects of dayah life. From doing domestic chores, studying in groups, attending ‘communal prayers’, helping ‘rice farming work’, to ‘cleaning up the village mosque’ and doing other religious volunteer work for the village community. This meant all dayah graduates experienced a living environment where togetherness was highly valued and practised. As articulated by a female participant, almost every activity (whether it was study related or non-study related) was done together such as “go to class together, cook and wash clothes together” (Female 8, ‘basic traditional’).

These social activities help develop and maintain social relations between participants. The length of time spent living together in dayah further solidified the bond of their social relationship. The following passage illustrates the concept of togetherness:

We woke up at 4 am every morning, performed congregational morning prayers in the mushalla (praying hall). After that, we perform wirid (religious chanting) 33 times. Then we hastily get ready to carry dirt from the river (to provide construction material in order to complete their dayah building). We also did some rice farming work. Every Friday, during the harvest season, we went to the rice field. (Female 2, ‘basic traditional’)

The ‘we’ mentioned above is used to describe the daily activities highlighting the togetherness among students. This togetherness is what participants report help build a tight, strongly bonded community.

The only living arrangements for students in dayah are communal, and these close conditions ensure students participate in regular activities, and contribute to building an understanding of one another and a sense of togetherness. This verifies that social capital is
shaped through the shared activities which involve features, such as, trust and reciprocity (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). For students, the time spent in dayah means more than just committing to study-related activities. As indicated in this study, the time spent together and the breadth of collective activity, length of study, intensity and togetherness are constantly reinforcing the qualitative aspect of their social interaction. The collective activities in dayah require the students to reciprocate with each other; they must help and support each other (Muhammad, 2010). The activities also promote the creation of social capital.

It is therefore argued that relationships developed in dayah move to long-term friendships, with faith as a shared core attribute of that relationship. The process by which social capital, based on a shared faith, is developed through the social relations with friends in a dayah environment is illustrated in Figure 6.1. This diagram represents the connections between the elements discussed so far in this section.

**Figure 6.1** The development of social capital, based on faith, through participants’ social relations with friends in a dayah environment.
Another factor identified as contributing to the development of strong social bonds was the participants’ economic background; all of the ‘basic traditional’ participants came to their traditional dayah from rural villages, and from low economic backgrounds. The fact that they shared similar backgrounds and associated experiences made it easier for them to build social relationships with each other. One female participant in the ‘basic traditional’ category (Female 3) commented on how she bonded with her friends in dayah through having experienced similar daily activities common in Aceh rural living, such as, having to ‘bathe in murky water’, ‘ate on rumpun’, and working together to ‘help building the village’s mosque’. This was particularly so for participants in the ‘basic traditional’ category who came from a low socio-economic background. The results support and enhance those of a collective study on the self-sufficiency of four dayah, by Suyanta et al. (2012). There is a tendency in dayah to support one another, whether it be through shared cooking or the purchase of food or when times get tough. Dayah students from similar economic situations develop ways to work together to survive. A related example of social capital at work is what happened after the 2004 tsunami disaster when people who were affected helped others who had lost everything, with whatever resources they had left (Yamamura, 2014). In the initial stages, directly after the tsunami disaster in Aceh, survivors immediately took action to provide shelter for each other, cleaning houses, collecting and burying dead bodies (Kenny, Clarke, Fanany, & Kingsbury, 2010; Samuels, 2010). Whether it be in the context of natural disasters or dayah graduates’ economic background, the same principle applies; the shared experience of a deprived living situation brings people together. In such a situation, people come together to help, support, and trust one another – this is a demonstration of how social capital is built and maintained (Cassar, Healy, & Von Kessler, 2011).

It was also found that, not only did participants have an established network of friends within their dayah, but that they also had their own extended network of friends from other
dayah. The shared identity amongst members of different dayah is characterised by their shared religion and similarity of dayah experience. This dayah identity stood graduates apart from other members of their community and helped them identify, maintain and extend their social network based on faith. This demonstrates how social capital, based on faith, can be expanded.

As articulated by a male participant, if a dayah student or graduate meets another person from a different dayah, “immediately we feel a connection, even though we haven’t known each other, we can become very close, just like close relatives” (Male 3, ‘basic traditional’). This indicates how dayah students identify with one another and can develop a kinship and solidarity -a shared identity- due to their shared experience of study and life, in dayah.

The ingrained dayah tradition is one of the aspects that contribute to the development of social capital based on faith, within and among the people in the dayah community. As indicated by Coleman (1990), ‘social organisation constitutes social capital, facilitating the achievement of goals that could not be achieved in its absence or could be achieved at a higher cost’ (p. 304). Therefore, the dayah community can be described as a social organisation, with a body of social capital that brings benefit to its members.

The ultimate objective of dayah education is to produce graduates who are adherents to the Islamic faith and its traditions, who can give strength, protection, and religious guidance to the Acehnese people. The formation of social relations and solidarity during the students’ time in dayah is how social capital based on faith starts to take shape for dayah graduates.

**6.1.2 Social relationships with the teungku**

This section discusses how participants’ social relationship with their teungku and teachers developed. Three factors were found to contribute to developing this relationship:
1. Teacher-student relationship. The bond that was formed between participants and their teungku were influenced by the teungku’s conduct in treating students.

2. The personal qualities of the teungku. The charisma and religious piety of a teungku influenced participants’ obedience and loyalty.

3. Interdependence. The need to depend on one another created a strong bond between participants and the teungku.

Each of these factors are discussed in the following sub-sections:

6.1.2.1 Teacher-student relationships

In dayah, the participants’ relationship with the teungku and their teachers is another important component of social capital. Notably, students’ relationships with their teungku, as with their classmates, is a long-term bond. It is a relationship that is on a personal level rather than formal level (Amiruddin, 2003). The teungku is the person who has the qualification to establish, own and administer a dayah independently (Chapter Two, page 33). He or she is also the ‘principal’ or ‘leader’ who teaches most of the kitab kuning (classical Islamic texts). The teungku is a well-respected person in the dayah for his or her religious quality and personal characteristics. Therefore, the teungku is a ‘leader and teacher’. This is why the quality of a dayah, as an educational provider, relies solely on the teungku’s capacity as a leader (Amiruddin, 2013a). The teungku assigns other teachers to teach classical texts in which they are proficient. They may also be asked to assist the teungku in activities related to the administration of the dayah.

In this study, the terms teungku and teacher are used interchangeably as they are both educators in dayah, unless otherwise indicated.
It should be noted that the relationship between graduates and the teungku and teachers is integral to the establishment of social capital in the faith based environment of the dayah (Chapter Five, page 132). In this study, one male participant (Male 2, ‘comprehensive traditional’) shared his impression of his teungku. In addition to the teungku’s piousness, he described the ‘charismatic personality’ of the teungku through the ‘spoken language of carefully chosen words’ and the ‘politeness in the delivery’, the way the teungku walked, resonated humility, and the ‘caring gestures’ towards the students. The participant explained how these kinds of engagements created a sense of respect towards the teungku. A type of ‘bonding’ social capital is formed between the students and their dayah leader on the basis of religious and interpersonal sentiments.

The teungku’s religious piety, personality and the way students are treated all contribute to the building of a strong bond, akin to a parent, between dayah students and their teungku. This supports Lukens-Bull’s (2001) study of traditional Islamic schools in Indonesia. Lukens-Bull (2001) refers to this sort of bonding as a ‘father-son relationship’; traditionally these schools are patriarchal in nature (Smith & Woodward, 2014). Lukens-Bull (2001) explains that the existence of a ‘father-son relationship’ makes it easier to teach students and build character. He adds that the normally absent or low admission fee in dayah contributes to the creation of a ‘father-son relationship’.

The social capital available in a parent-child relationship, as illustrated in Coleman’s (1990) work, tends to be in favour of the patriarch, where the father generally holds more entitlements or is in a position of power and therefore able to benefit from the relationship at any time he wishes. In this study, the teungku to student relationship replicates the parent-child relationship by providing Islamic education to students at no (or low) cost and instructing students to follow the rules, traditions and teachings in the dayah. Hence, a subservient bond between the students and the teungku is maintained. Lukens-Bull (2001) continues to argue that
this parent-like relationship is not found in the formal educational setting (e.g., public schools, university), where students are charged tuition fees and expect teaching services in return. Once students have accomplished their goal, e.g., students graduate from school with good grades, and teachers have provided their paid-teaching services, there is no further obligation between the student and the teacher. Lukens-Bull’s argument demonstrates that any special bond between the student and the teacher is unlikely to occur in a formal educational setting because the economic transaction is more highly valued. Consequently, the closeness of student-teacher relationships is limited and a formal relationship is maintained instead. Although the students and the teachers may interact numerous times, these interactions remain formal (on the quality of interaction see Falk & Kilpatrick, 2000). This is in significant contrast to the teacher-student relationship in a dayah setting, where the development and maintenance of strong relationships are valued.

Abdullah (2013) offers an alternative view on the development of parental relationships. Prior to sending a child to a dayah, a ‘handover’ ceremony – a small but personal ceremony - is held by the parent, as a means of farewell and entrusting their child to a teungku. He notes that the teungku is present at the ceremony, and the child is directly ‘handed over’ to the care of the teungku. This further demonstrates how a teungku is more than just a person with knowledge, but also a person that is trusted as a parent. This adds to the teungku’s responsibility, he/she is both an educator and a parent, which resonates with one participant’s account:

At the time, I couldn’t afford to finish school (primary school) because both of my parents had passed away. So I was sort of adopted by Abu (another term for teungku). I had no money to support myself, but Abu would always show me ways to be on my feet… (Male 7, ‘basic traditional)

Similarly, for other students who adopted the teungku as their parent (Abdullah, 2013) and teacher, the teungku was viewed as someone to be obeyed, respected, loved and cared for.
The findings clearly demonstrate that the level of trust placed in the relationship leads to bonding between the student and the teungku – a subtle demonstration of investing in social capital based on faith.

The dedication of the teungku and teachers to the students and dayah heightens the closeness of their relationships with students. One male participant (Male 6, ‘comprehensive traditional’) addressed this issue when he noted that teachers’ sincerity and dedication is the key behind the closeness of student–teacher relationship (Chapter Five, page 132). In agreement with this, Muhammad (2010) reveals several factors which contribute to establishing and maintaining kinship between the teachers and students in dayah: first, is to seek Allah’s blessing through teaching Islam sincerely and without being paid; second, is to adhere to Allah’s commandments, including caring for and loving other Muslims; and third, is to respect each other and to make regular visits.

Another factor that contributes to the closeness between participants and their teungku is the practice of ta’zim to seek a blessing. It is part of the dayah tradition to pay respect to, and obey, their teungku and teachers, as this is believed to bring blessing into their lives. The research data demonstrates that all participants used the practice of ta’zim towards the teungku (see Chapter Five, page 133). As Smith and Woodward (2014) assert, to be trained under a teungku’s guidance is to receive knowledge, understanding and blessing. The dayah tradition of ta’zim is captured in a popular Acehnese proverb ‘Ta’zim keu guree geubrie ilmee, ta’zim keu nambah geubrie hareuta’, which means, to obey and respect the teungku will give you knowledge, to obey and respect the king will give you wealth (Malik et al., 2007).

Abdullah (2013) argues that in the dayah community, the teungku is an ideal figure, that is, he/she is the embodiment of religious knowledge, truth and wisdom. People such as this deserve respect, loyalty and ta’zim from the dayah community. He stresses that the students’ loyalty and ta’zim are not at all related to worldly matters or a compulsion on the teachers’
behalf, rather, they are driven by religious sentiments, which explains why the practice of *ta’zim* is still embraced after graduation. All participants reported regularly visiting their dayah, attending and actively participating in dayah related events. Such activities are referred to as *dakwah bil hal* (preach for goodness), in which the kinship built in dayah is to last for a lifetime (Muhammad, 2010).

In another example, a female participant (Female 7, ‘basic traditional’), who is the leader and owner of a dayah explains how she runs her dayah exactly as her *teungku* did. She provides free education to her students and expects nothing in return but blessings from Allah. This suggests that, in keeping with the *teungku*, she must provide free education to students studying in her dayah. The act of reciprocity is not directed to her former *teungku* who provided the free education, but to her students. This is interpreted as an extension of the participant’s reciprocity towards her *teungku*, however indirect. The practice of *ta’zim* serves the purpose of assisting others in need of free education, and in so doing, preserves Islamic teaching and doctrine in the hope of receiving *berkah* from Allah. In this specific context, dayah graduates’ *ta’zim* towards their *teungku* widens and strengthens the word of Islam through extended social networks in the dayah community.

Other participants displayed their *ta’zim* by actively assisting the people in the community through voluntary religious-related work. These examples show how social capital based on faith results in a strong relationship between graduate and the *teungku*. This relationship can benefit the people in the rural community and as will be discussed, provides some benefit for graduates in their future employment. It shows how social capital, in this case, driven by faith, demonstrates there is value in social relationships which can benefit the individual and the society as a whole (Dekker & Uslaner, 2001; Middleton, Murie & Groves, 2005). However, the sole purpose of relationships developed with the *teungku* and practice of *ta’zim* is to deepen understanding and practice of Islam, not for personal profit or gain.
6.1.2.2 The personal quality of the teungku

The personal quality of the teungku plays an important role in forming the dayah student-teungku relationship. Notably, teungku are highly respected for their rich knowledge of Islam, their piouiness, and charismatic personality, and their teachings are treated as an inheritance; the teachings transmitted to students are exactly the same as were taught by previous teungku. This is believed to be an act of respect, obedience, and to a certain degree resonates a blessing (Smith & Woodward, 2014).

A teungku’s charisma can influence students and people in local rural communities in Aceh to perform good deeds (Shabri, Wahyuni, Indriani, Seno & Wibowo, 2000). Smith & Woodward (2014) found the influence of a charismatic kyai (a Javanese term for teungku used in their study in Java) to be more than that of religious leader in the society. As religious authorities, they are believed to have the ability to communicate with God in ways others cannot: God’s blessing and forgiveness are provided to society through their spiritual ability (Smith & Woodward, 2014).

People are very loyal to the teungku, and simply accept these attributes unquestioned, in particular, the students, graduates and their families (Shabri et al., 2000; Smith & Woodward, 2014). This loyalty and trust are supported by the people in rural Aceh (Baihaqi, 1976). According to participants in this study, they obey and follow the teachings of a teungku as demonstrated by the practice of ta’zim (obedience). The people do not dare to argue against his or her teachings since this will mean to go against aulia (the sains) (Baihaqi, 1976; Shabri et al., 2000). The loyalty and trust placed in a teungku help manifest the development of social capital based on faith. An example from this study shows how participants believe their success today is a result of the prayers of their teungku (Chapter Five, page 134). This resonates with
Abdullah’s (2013) argument that to be in a dayah is to be in a blessed environment. The findings reveal that a teungku’s personal qualities are highly valued by dayah students, graduates and the community. It shows how the participants’ social capital based on faith arises from a strong relationship between graduates and the teungku and is influenced by the teungku’s personal characteristics and position.

6.1.2.3 Interdependence

The nature of relationships established in dayah by the teungku is one of interdependence. The students and their families trust the teungku to provide Islamic education, and the teungku places trust in the students to adhere to the Islamic teachings and tradition. Such a relationship further demonstrates how trust, a feature of relationship building and social capital development (Bunn & Wood, 2012) is an important value in this faith-based community.

The free education offered by the teungku constitutes, for the students, an obligation to obey the teungku as the person in authority. Similarly, the teungku expects the students to obey the dayah teachings and traditions. One participant explained the need to comply with the established rules in dayah, “in dayah, we were not allowed to read kitab other than the ones set in the curriculum” (Male 2, ‘comprehensive traditional’). Other participants also mentioned that students are asked to teach in dayah as part of the learning tradition. These findings support those of Husin (2014) who found that students need the free education that is provided by the teungku, and the teungku equally needs the students’ willingness to obey the rules of dayah. These include providing free labour, such as teaching in dayah, or performing construction work in dayah to help with the institution’s management and its continuity. These findings (Chapter 5, page 122) support and extend those of Husin’s (2014) in which participants actively engaged in and performed assigned duties while living in dayah.
Such duties are integral components of the dayah pedagogy, and their practice is perceived as religious service (Amiruddin, 2003). The community acknowledges dayah students’ service. One participant labelled their status as ‘informal leaders’ (Male 2, ‘comprehensive traditional’) specialised in traditional Islam who are equipped with the knowledge and skills to serve their community by teaching and preserving the Islamic tradition. This point will be discussed further in Section 6.1.3.

Participants were also found to help the continuity of dayah as educational institutions. With the help of the students, the teungku did not necessarily have to teach every class in the community. Rather, participants described how, as they progressed in their dayah studies, they were increasingly expected to take this responsibility. Therefore, the interdependence between the student and the teungku provides mutual benefit. The teungku would decide if a student had mastered a particular subject, and only then would allow the students to teach it to others (Smith & Woodward, 2014). This pattern of interdependence which draws on obligation and expectation is what helps form social capital (Coleman, 1990). Specific to this study, the interdependence that exists between the students and the teungku constitutes a form of social capital, based on faith, that both the teungku and students share. This obligation and expectation results in ‘affective trust’ (Dirks & Skarlicki, 2004) in which the trusted person reciprocally shows compassion and concern for the other’s well-being.

6.1.3 Social relationships with the people in the community

This section discusses how social relationships developed between the participants and the people in the community contributed towards building social capital. Two factors were identified that contributed to the developing social connectedness or cohesion with the
community: first, the participants’ voluntary involvement in the community; and second, the participants’ personal characteristics.

6.1.3.1 Participants’ voluntary involvement in the community

The social relationship formed between dayah students and the people in the local community is another way for social capital, based on faith, to develop. This links to a key finding that social capital based on faith developed in dayah evolves through social relationships, within or outside of the dayah community. As discussed in Chapter Five (page 136), it was found that embedded in the collective dayah experience of participants was active participation in community events and voluntary-based activities, which included taking part in maulid celebrations or funeral ceremonies, offering prayers to the ill, or becoming informal leaders (teaching Qur’an recitation for the people in the village, delivering sermons, leading prayers in local mosques). This is illustrated in the example below:

People in dayah are more of informal leaders. This is how the community perceives them. Through this informal leadership, social networks are established through interactions. They become a preacher, an imam. If someone died, they are capable of performing the Islamic funeral procession. (Male 2, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

These activities show how dayah education encourages civic engagement through a shared faith. Importantly, they show how a religious allegiance stimulates a bond or tie between the participants and the people in the community. These bonds help develop extended social networks based on a shared faith. The findings are in agreement with Muhammad’s (2010)

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4 Informal leadership refers to activities with positions that are not formally registered under the state as a form of employment but highly recognised among the communities. An imam for example, is categorised as an informal leader and has social status in the community. Most of the informal leaders in the Acehnese community are from the dayah people – the teungku, teachers, students and graduates. In this study, all participants have practised some sort of informal leadership within their community.
study in which he argues that social activities reinforce the social bond between dayah students and their local community; a bond built on Islamic values. The motivation to do such activities arise from a religious allegiance which values and cares for all people (Finneron & Dinham, 2002). In Muhammad’s study (2010) on the acculturation of Islamic kinship in traditional dayah, he describes five components involved in the building of Islamic kinship in dayah: the teacher, students, parents, curriculum, and the community. He emphasises that this type of kinship is heavily based on religious values, and the belief that Allah’s blessing strengthens the relationships of the people involved.

Through these social relationships built on a shared faith, trust also evolves. These social and interpersonal interactions produce mutual expectations of social accountability, which cannot succeed without trust – a social relationship that bonds many rural communities (Falk & Kilpatrick, 2000). Fukuyama (1996) suggested that well-being and dynamism in society come from interpersonal trust inherent in them. In faith communities, such as a dayah community, trust is a core and rich component (Dinham, 2009).

In this study, participants engaged in their local communities and in so doing, gained the trust of the people. The participants’ association with dayah brings about a social status. As a female ‘basic traditional’ participant (Female 5) explained, on the third day of her arrival in the village ‘two people came over’ to her house to learn Qur’an recitation once they learned that she has a ‘dayah background’. As these lessons were provided for free, more and more people from the village joined her class to learn the ‘Iqra’ (Qur’anic textbook for beginners), Qur’an, and *kitab jawo* (classical Malay language text written in Arabic script).

From such examples, it is observed that the nature of the relationships built between participants and the people in the village is one of ‘bonding’ which is promoted through a shared faith. This implies the shared faith element helps develop trust towards dayah graduates,
therefore, building and maintaining the social capital available to both participants and the community. It is also important to note that the degree of religious engagement contained in a dayah education is paramount to developing a community’s trust and appreciation towards dayah people. Graduates who “studied classical texts in fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) and those who reached the highest level of classical texts (for instance mahalli) are favoured by the people in the village” (Male 2, ‘comprehensive traditional’) which suggests that if the level of religious engagement is less in a dayah education, then it may impact on the social trust placed in dayah.

The decline in religious engagement in modern dayah education (Chapter Two, page 25) may explain, in part, why students from traditional dayah are reported as being the preferred religious advisors or leaders by participants in this study. The study of classical Islamic texts and community engagement are no longer central in the modern dayah curriculum. This is because students’ learning activities are predominantly classroom-based with less involvement in community events and activities, as are present in traditional dayah. In modern dayah, general subjects are given more priority in the curriculum, reducing the emphasis on classical Islamic subjects (Jackson & Parker, 2008). This shift in educational focus also influences the social environment that students experience, and may lead to a decline in social capital. As suggested by Putnam (2000), ‘busyness’ that occurs as a result of increased classroom-based learning activities reduces the time for students to engage in social activities, such as those present in traditional dayah. Consequently, it diminishes religious engagement and community connectedness of modern dayah students.

Conversely, the rural communities in Aceh were reported to be highly appreciative of traditional dayah graduates for their commitment to society, as stated by a male participant:

The dayah people in Aceh, when returning to their village, become a role model in that village because of their genuine intention to guide the people. When I completed my master’s degree, it didn’t really mean anything for the people when I returned to the village. But if it were a traditional dayah graduate, even though they only spent four years
in dayah but they are active in the village, guiding the young people patiently and genuinely, the people see them as role models. They have a higher social status in the village. (Male 6, ‘comprehensive traditional’)

This extract and related findings suggest that traditional dayah graduates’ religious knowledge and experience, in addition to their commitment to community service, helps develop social relations between graduates and the people in the community. The greater depth of religious engagement and community service develops trust and promotes social cohesion. Conversely, the less religious engagement and the less community service, as found in modern dayah, the less trust is placed in the graduates and the less social connectedness there is. This finding helps to explain Muhammad’s (2010) argument regarding the deterioration of people’s admiration towards teungku of modern dayah, who are seen to defer attention away from traditional teaching and practice towards government politics. In this study, it was observed that people’s acceptance of dayah participants with a shared faith (religious allegiance) and traditional practices (commitment to community service) acts to reinforce the social cohesion found in their rural community.

6.1.3.2 Personal characteristics of dayah students (participants)

The findings of this study show the community acknowledges and respects the personal values of dayah students. These include characteristics such as sincerity, honesty, piety, modesty, and trustworthiness (Chapter Five, page 122). Similarly, Hasan, Othman and Nwawi (1993) argue that Islamic education such as that found in dayah is more than just teaching Islamic subjects. Its purpose is to guide and build individuals with quality personal characteristics, such as being honest and trustworthy.
Participants in rural communities reported dayah graduates to be positive contributors who possess both high-levels of religious knowledge and good personal values. One ‘comprehensive traditional’ participant (Male 6) explained that dayah graduates are seen as role models when returning to their village because of their continuing “sincerity in guiding the people”. In another example, a male ‘basic traditional’ participant (Male 3) built two bale (a wooden porch that functions as a learning space), at the back of his house to provide free informal Islamic classes on Qur’an recitation and kitab kuning for the youth in his village. In another example, a female ‘comprehensive traditional’ participant (Female 1) who runs and owns a dayah, returned to her village after completing her dayah education and started free Qur’anic class in her home. She was able to expand her class into a dayah with the full support (financial, physical and moral support) of the people in the community. These examples show the reciprocal nature of the relationship between traditional dayah students (graduate) and the local dayah community. Each is dependent on the other (Muhammad, 2010) and this is made possible because of the personal characteristics of the dayah student.

When performing their social duties, a dayah student or graduate ‘never asks for money’ for their time and effort. This follows in the footsteps of the prophet Muhammad who “never collected money when preaching the message of Islam” (Male 2, ‘comprehensive traditional’). This practice is upheld in dayah and all dayah students are expected to behave in the same manner. Money or benefit is not the motivation, the students are performing a social duty (Amiruddin, 2003). The level of sincerity and dedication shown by the participants indicates they had earned the community’s respect, appreciation and trust.

The participants’ personal characteristics are associated with the concept of ‘ulama warasatul ambiya’ (translation: ‘ulama are the inheritance of the prophets) which is embedded in the dayah teaching and practice. The people identify dayah students as ‘ulama warasatul ambiya’. Therefore, the participants, as dayah students and as graduates, are held in high
esteem; they are religiously significant individuals. This explains, in part, why returning and contributing to the community is deemed important to each dayah participant in this study. Another explanation lies in the participants’ continuing social relationship with their community (Lochner, Kawachi, & Kennedy, 1999).

The personal characteristics of participants as dayah graduates and their active civic engagement contribute to social capital based on faith. The involvement and acceptance of dayah students and graduates as active members of their local communities benefit both the students and the community. For students and graduates, as will be discussed in Section 6.3, the extended social capital based on a shared faith developed through engagement with community helped several participants in this study find employment. In turn, the roles taken by students and graduates of dayah help facilitate a more connected and unified faith environment. These findings confirm the assertion by Putnam (2000) that faith communities are important resources of social capital and help to create a cohesive society. The findings expand the assertion of Kraince (2008) in his study on social cohesion and Islamic higher education in Indonesia, notably, how a common faith-based study experience can build social cohesion in rural communities.

However, social capital can lead to problems such as social exclusion (Coleman, 1990; Print & Coleman, 2003). As illustrated by Kraince (2008), Muslims from different Islamic institutions can build a close relationship within communities through social bonding, but this can also create a distance with non-Muslims; this creates social exclusion and tensions rather than cohesion. He argues that it is because of this that the institutions’ character plays an important role in avoiding social tensions. However, this assertion is not necessarily true of dayah in rural Aceh communities. This study has demonstrated clearly that the shared faith element is integral to the development and maintenance of social capital, and has helped to maintain social cohesion within the local rural communities. The communities themselves share
a common faith as Muslims. Therefore the likelihood of the disruptive effects of social exclusion and distrust occurring is highly unlikely and not reported. Nevertheless, these pose important questions for future research, for example, what are the social effects on non-Muslims living in a rural Muslim community? What are the community perceptions of dayah students, their social involvement and contribution to social cohesion?

The concept of social relationship holds an important implication for dayah graduates’ community life. This discussion suggests that faith (religious allegiance and engagement) in rural dayah communities is all-encompassing. It is evident in all aspect of rural community life, and dayah students and graduates have a central role in helping create and maintain social cohesion. This is made possible in the local communities of a shared faith. The section also highlights the potential benefits to dayah graduates of an extended, faith-based, social network.

6.2 Defining social capital based on faith

The nature of social relationships, developed through dayah education and practises, provides a significant contribution to theory building about social capital. It also provides background to understanding the first key theme to emerge from the findings, that is social capital based on faith. In discussing this theme, the focus is on a major finding about the nature of social capital developed in dayah.

As discussed in the previous sections, a strong bond is clearly established between students, between the teungku and the students, and with their teachers, in the dayah. As dayah boarding school students, they must adopt and obey the religious teachings and practices espoused by their teungku. The longer the time students spend in dayah, the deeper the social relationships developed.
The dayah curriculum places great importance on developing and maintaining Islamic solidarity, and this is embedded in the daily learning activities of dayah (Muhammad, 2010). The dayah education places an emphasis on living a religious life and on character building. This thinking is drawn from the Qur’an and *hadith* (sayings and traditions of the prophet Muhammad). The dayah education is intended for students to become good Muslims and to promote a way of life in accordance with the Islamic faith. Students are not just being taught to obey the instructions of a *teungku* and teachers, they are in effect, obeying the instructions of Allah.

Therefore, all activities exercised in dayah, including the establishment of social relations and friendships, serving as a resource of social capital, are driven by adherence to and understanding of a shared faith. The activities serve a clear purpose - to submit to the word of God. This is consistent with Candland's (2001) definition of faith-based social capital, which “is grounded in beliefs, customs, habits, and obligations that are not seriously threatened by individual defection” (p. 130).

The social relations or social capital developed in dayah mark a significant contrast between the general understandings of social capital, and that identified in this study as social capital based on a shared faith. Social capital, as found in the review of literature, provides individuals the opportunity to benefit from his or her networks of social connections and to achieve personal objectives. To achieve benefit from one’s social capital, one must maintain a good relationship with the social network. However, the social capital developed in dayah is different. The focus is to connect for a religious, not a personal purpose. In Islam, the concept of social capital based on faith is interpreted as “*hablum minannas*” which is interpreted to mean developing relationships among human beings. The term is explicitly mentioned in the Qur’an, in *surah* (chapter) Ali Imran (translation: Family of Imran) verse 112, in which God explains that mankind can avoid misfortune by standing by God’s rules (Islam) and ‘doing good
to one another’. In an oft-cited Qur’anic verse, embracing the concept of “hablum-minannas”, God has commanded his followers to do good to one’s “parents, friends, orphans, the poor, neighbours, people who are stranded in journey, and people in slavery” (Al-Qur’an, surah An-Nisa (translation: The Women) verse 36). The surah Al-Ma’un (translation: The Small Kindesses) in the Qur’an stresses the importance of helping the orphans and the poor, and how mankind will suffer misfortune if help is refused them. In this surah, verse 1 to 7, Allah said:

*Have you seen the one who denies the Recompense? (1) For that is the one who drives away the orphan (2) And does not encourage the feeding of the poor (3) So woe to thee who pray (4) [But] who are heedless of their prayer (5) Those who make show [of their deeds] (6) And withhold [simple] assistance (7).*

These verses emphasise the need for individuals to take responsibility in caring for others, especially those in need. These Qur’anic verses show that solidarity, compassion and mercy are at the heart of the religion, and are at the heart of social relations developed and used in accordance with the traditional Islamic faith. A large part of the interpretation and application of these verses involves strengthening social connectedness to better preserve the life of each individual, for the community, and to alleviate social exclusion. The development and implementation of “hablum minannas” indicates the implicit nature and establishment of social capital in, and through, the Islamic faith.

The findings indicate that “social capital based on faith” developed in dayah builds a “bond” (Gilchrist, 2004) or enduring relationships between the teungku and the students, and with the teachers in the dayah. This social capital based on faith also promotes developing ‘links’ (Gilchrist, 2004) between people in the local community, who in rural Aceh, share a similar faith. The bonding between individuals and linking to other dayah communities are integral features of social capital based on faith, as taught and expected of students in dayah.
Within dayah, shared faith both builds and promotes the development and maintenance of social capital with others who share that faith. This study defines social capital based on faith as: “social relationships based on shared religious values, tradition and practices developed to maintain social and religious connectedness and solidarity”. This definition, based on empirical data, adds to the established understanding and theory of social capital.

In this study, the intent to create and maintain social capital based on faith was found not to be for personal gain, but for religious solidarity and cohesion, for example, the findings of ‘basic traditional’ participants show how social networks based on faith, provided initial information about potential jobs and contact with employers.

**6.3 Accessing and gaining employment through social capital based on faith**

This section discusses the second major theme that ‘dayah networks help with employment’, and finding that shared faith contributes to the development of social capital and this is used by dayah graduates to find employment. This discussion provides answers to the research sub-questions:

- What role does social capital play in graduate employment? (see page 202)
- What is the nature of the employment found? (see page 218)
- Does employment affect graduates’ participation in their local communities and beyond? (see page 208, 224)

Smith (2010) concluded that a solid structure of social capital would most likely enhance employment opportunities. It is widely recognised that social capital developed through social relationships and networks helps facilitate the employment of individuals. This
is because people within the social network often have access to information about job opportunities or potential employers (Lin, 2002). Some social networks provide members with valuable sources of job-related information and may even mention an individual specifically to prospective employers (George & Chaze, 2009; Smith, 2010). As will be discussed, this type of behaviour in the dayah was found in social networks based on faith.

The focus on the employability of dayah graduates resides in criticisms of dayah’s specialised religious education and its perceived failure to prepare students with contemporary working skills and knowledge needed to gain paid employment (Amiruddin, 2003, 2013a). Similarly, a traditional dayah qualification is considered informal and is not recognised by the government, and therefore potential employers. Without a recognised qualification, dayah graduates will have difficulty finding employment (Amiruddin, 2013a; Departemen Agama RI, 2009).

The ‘basic traditional’ and ‘comprehensive traditional’ groups that arose in the data are examined separately. Section 6.3.1 discusses the access to and gaining of employment by participants in this study, classified as ‘basic traditional’. These are dayah graduates who have minimum formal education experience (basic) and extended education in dayah. The final part of Section 6.3.1 discusses the types of employment accessed by the ‘basic traditional’ participants.

Section 6.3.2 focuses on the employment and use of social capital based on faith of participants classified as ‘comprehensive traditional’, that is, those participants who have completed more comprehensive formal education, for example, secondary and tertiary education, in addition to their dayah education. By comparing the employment situation of the ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants with that of the ‘basic traditional’ participants, one can
respond to the third research sub-question: “What is the nature of the employment found?” The implications of the different educational backgrounds of participants are also discussed.

Section 6.4 discusses the findings and implications of a major finding of the study; the call by participants for dayah to be a recognised educational institution and for graduates to receive a formal certificate of educational attainment.

6.3.1 Basic traditional

The study findings suggest that social capital based on faith supports the employment of ‘basic traditional’ graduates. Eighty-five percent (13) of the 15 graduates in this category attribute their initial employment following the completion of their dayah studies to the social relations developed within dayah. This employment was gained following direct referrals or information received from the friends in dayah, the teungku or dayah teachers. Others reported it was people in the extended dayah community or communities who assisted them in finding employment.

The following sections discuss the role of social capital based on faith in helping ‘basic traditional’ graduates find employment. This discussion draws on Granovetter’s (1974) pioneering work on the use of strong and weak ties to find employment. The implications of strong and weak ties within faith-based social networks for ‘basic traditional’ graduates of dayah, finding employment are discussed. Strong ties are found in relationships with family and long-term/close friends and neighbours, while weak ties are those social relationships formed with colleagues at work, acquaintances, and organisations (Granovetter, 1974; Lin, 2001; Matthews et al., 2009; Putnam, 2000). Strong ties are evident in the social relationships with friends in dayah and the teungku and teachers, and to a lesser extent, family. The shared faith, related lifestyle and religious practices are reported by participants to result in parental-
like relationships formed between students and their teachers, and a strong family-like brotherhood or sisterhood between students, leading to long-term friendships.

Weak ties are formed between participants and people in the community through the extended faith-based social networks. These different types of social ties (strong and weak) are called upon by participants seeking employment, and have implications for participants’ livelihood after graduating from dayah. The following sections will focus on and discuss how graduates of dayah benefit from individuals within their faith-based social networks, to access employment, following graduation. The ensuing discussion brings together findings in recent literature on the role of social capital in job seeking, and the findings of this study. In so doing, our understanding of the role of social capital based on faith in job-seeking by dayah graduates in Aceh will be enhanced.

6.3.1.1 Jobs accessed through friends in dayah

In the ‘basic traditional’ category, two graduates accessed jobs through strong social ties with dayah friends. One male participant (Male 3, ‘basic traditional’) became a dayah teacher but first found work as a manual labourer. In his experience, it was “easy to rely on dayah friends for jobs”. He simply asked around if anyone knew of paid jobs coming up. His example does not mean that it was easy to get a job through his social networks of dayah friends, rather he found information about paid work opportunities by first asking his ‘dayah friends’ and then approached the employer. The same participant gave an example of how a fellow dayah graduate who was previously the head of a construction project shared information with other graduate friends about possible jobs. When in need of construction workers, this graduate would first circulate the job availability among his dayah friends. This is consistent with Lin's (1999) description of how social networks can assist in ‘the flow of information’. Lin (1999) found
that members of the social networks who are ‘located in certain strategic locations and/or a hierarchical position’ (p. 31) are most likely to provide an individual with job information that is not easily obtained otherwise. Although Lin’s (1999) research is into social networks and employment in the formal sector (for example managers, business executives), interestingly, the same practice was found to apply in the rural dayah context. While the example of the participant showed how he gained access to employment by following up on the information received, all 15 participants reported information about possible jobs being shared among fellow dayah students. The strong ties developed between students resulted in them sharing job opportunities with each other. The information about jobs came from individual dayah graduates’ extended social networks. These were found to be extended social networks based on faith.

If there was a ‘jobless dayah graduate’, friends would rally to inform other graduates about their friend’s employment situation, and would seek paid employment opportunities for them through their social networks. This demonstrates the close ties that exist between these participants. Their actions reflect how social networks can spread information within dayah, and through extended dayah networks in the community, about the employment needs of a friend. This sharing is consistent with the findings of Lin (1999). However, the social relationship based on a shared faith that binds dayah communities is shown through the experiences of the study participants. The motive of potential employers was not addressed in this study, whether it was obedience to their faith, the dayah, or as Lin (1999) found, to reduce the recruitment cost of finding new workers with the necessary skills is a topic worthy of future investigation. Interestingly, employers did not require application forms, interviews or other documents when hiring a dayah graduate. The employers were themselves graduates from dayah and trusted other dayah graduates.
Another participant (Male 5, ‘basic traditional’), explained that he did various casual jobs following graduation from dayah. He then decided to start his own business selling second-hand motorbikes. This self-employed work depended on dayah friends to spread the word about his small business. The success of his small business is attributed to the support received from his friends in dayah. Although his path to self-employed work had no direct connection with his dayah friends, his dayah network of friends ensured its success.

The experiences of both participants are common to all of the ‘basic traditional’ participants in this study. That is, the faith-based social networks result in strong ties that assist and continue to assist members to find employment in their rural communities. This finding contrasts with those of Granovetter (1974) who asserted that strong ties in social networks are less useful for those seeking employment due to their homogenous characteristic and smaller networks. The strong ties developed in the shared faith context of dayah were found to be a significant and reliable source for the participating dayah graduates to access a variety of jobs.

Other researchers also argue that strong ties play a significant role in finding jobs, especially where obligation and reciprocity dominate the labour markets (Bian, 1997; Brown & Konrad, 2001). Obligation, obedience and reciprocity of support are intrinsic characteristics of Islamic faith, dayah education and of dayah graduates. The use of strong ties in finding employment is viewed to be contextual. As identified in Chapter Three, studies have considered the significance of context in the use of social capital to find employment (Granovetter, 1983; Wegener, 1991). For instance, Ericksen and Yancey (1980) found that the use of strong and weak ties varies according to individuals’ education attainment; with less educated workers relying heavily on their strong ties to find jobs. This study supports such findings. In the rural context which is characterised by strong relationships, based on a shared faith, strong ties facilitate the employment of dayah graduates. In this study, participants and their dayah friends come from similar rural communities which in Aceh, share a common faith. Therefore, the
respect showed to dayah graduates by the extended faith-based networks of dayah friends, results in employment opportunities. Such networks will be discussed further in Section 6.3.1.3.

It is notable that the strong ties developed in dayah resulted in employment for dayah graduates but it was always of a low-income nature. This raises the question of whether it is the strong ties developed in dayah, or the rural context, that result in low-income jobs. If the strong ties lead participants to lower paying jobs, then it could be because their networks of strong ties are less diverse and may limit graduates access to information and more highly paid employment. However, if the majority of jobs in Aceh rural areas are categorised as low income, then it is inevitable that strong ties will lead to employment of a low-income nature. This reflects the findings of the United Nations Development Programme’s (2010) survey of work available in rural areas of Aceh. No evidence was found that participants initially sought information about potential employment outside the dayah community or rural contexts. Further research is needed to develop the understandings about the role of friends within dayah and the scope of the information sharing about potential employment.

6.3.1.2 Jobs accessed through the teungku and dayah teachers

In the basic traditional category, 40% (6) of participants accessed employment through their strong social ties with the teungku and dayah teachers. The types of jobs accessed included (i) work of a religious nature, e.g., dayah leader, dayah teacher or ustadz (Islamic teacher) for the community, and (ii) non-religious work, e.g., local clothing retailer or local tailor.

Several examples of participant reports will be used to illustrate how the teungku and dayah teachers helped students gain access to employment. One female participant (Female 4) gained experience in sewing while a student in dayah. She explained that in the dayah, she was
required by the teungku to attend sewing classes taught by women from the local community. The classes enabled students to create and mend their clothes, or those of others, while a student in dayah. After graduating from the dayah, building on her interest and skills developed in dayah, she started a small tailoring business. She produced jilbab (headscarves for women) to be sold to dayah students and in her local community. While she was categorised as self-employed, her female teungku was instrumental in encouraging her to take up this line of work. Her finished products, the jilbab, are marketed to ‘the female students’ of her dayah. Her teungku ‘helps to sell the jilbab’ by ‘spreading information about her’ to her dayah friends and in the broader community’. This suggests that the participant’s strong ties with her teungku led to her choice of employment. The strong ties maintained between teungku and student continue to assist her ongoing jilbab business.

Another example of the informal jobs accessed through the teungku are jobs of a religious nature, for example, one male participant (Male 4, ‘basic traditional’) was offered a position on the teaching staff of the dayah by his teungku. Five other participants report similar invitations. Others, on the advice of their teungku, started their own dayah in their villages. The teungku, through their social networks, was indirectly involved in helping these students obtain permission, gain access to dayah sites and network funds to start building the dayah. Although this permission is granted verbally, it is treated seriously by the community because to have permission from the teungku means that they’ve been ‘accredited’ or approved to carry out the work. This role of teungku confirms the findings of other studies of dayah (Amiruddin, 1994; Muhammad, 2010; Riza & Ilyas, 2013). An example given by Riza and Ilyas (2013) portrays the situation clearly - in which dayah graduates often return to their village, and with the permission of their teungku, become informal religious leaders in their rural communities. This further suggests that it is a common practice for graduates to access religious-related work (as a dayah teacher, dayah leader, an ustadz, or all of the three) through their teungku.
Although work as a dayah teacher or dayah leader may be accessed using social capital based on faith, and is considered to be a prestigious position, as discussed, the work is considered voluntary. It is a calling from God through the teungku. Therefore, participants who take up such positions receive no direct ‘financial rewards’, and their choice is not governed by material gains, but rather by spiritual gains. They choose to serve because of their ‘pure dedication’ to the religious needs of their communities. This is consistent with Idris's (2008) assertion that it is in the dayah tradition for the teachers to deliver services for non-profit means, without hoping to be financially or socially rewarded. They serve only to receive the blessings of Allah (Muhammad, 2010).

As found in this study, other participants also dedicated their time to help their community, for example, one became a local preacher or an imam of the local mosque, jobs that also have no direct financial reward (Idris, 2008). Such religious dedication was identified in a male participant (Male 7, ‘basic traditional’), who is a dayah teacher in three different dayah, an ustaz, and also an imam and a preacher in his local community. The participant reported that he would have dedicated more of his time to dayah-related activities if only he had a better and more reliable source of income to support his family.

Work as a teungku and dayah teacher does not result in a direct material reward. However, occasionally the participants report they receive shadaqah, recompense in the forms of small amounts of money or goods, such as, rice, crops or fruits. Such “charity” is given by the students’ parents and also by other “dayah graduates working as farmers, who have just had their harvest” (Female 7, ‘basic traditional’). Occasionally shadaqah is given by the community to the ustadz in gratitude for the teaching service performed, for example, a male participant (Male 6, ‘basic traditional’) admitted that he managed to “cover costs” for a modest living from the shadaqah he received. These anecdotes are consistent with the findings of Muhammad (2010) who also noted that shadaqah is given to the teungku and teachers for their dedication.
to providing religious service. Nevertheless, religious work does not provide a reliable source of income. This is why participants report needing multiple jobs. This finding extends the work of Idris (2008) who also found that dayah graduates in rural communities performing religious-related works often have secondary jobs in trading, farming, carpentry and other jobs that produce lawful sustenance. Of the six participants who accessed jobs through the teungku and dayah teachers, five are also farmers, and one participant works in a dayah-owned mechanics workshop.

It is also worthwhile noting that participants who ended up working for the teungku, tended to be those who had spent the longest time in dayah. Their time in dayah ranged from ten to fifteen years (see Table 6.2), suggesting the longevity of the dayah experience influences the strength of ties between the teungku and students, as well as increasing their knowledge and devotion to Islam and therefore, in their teungku’s eyes, their capacity to carry out the job. This finding supports those of Idris (2008) who found a dayah teacher is a person who has studied for eight to nine years in the same dayah. Although not all participants in this study have remained teaching in the same dayah they studied in, all began their teaching experience at the dayah they attended.
Table 6.2

*Length of Residency for Participants Involved in Works Related to Religion (Basic Traditional)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants involved in religiously-related works through the <em>teungku</em></th>
<th>Length of residency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male 6</td>
<td>15 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male 7</td>
<td>11 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female 7</td>
<td>14 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male 4</td>
<td>12 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male 1</td>
<td>12 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female 3</td>
<td>11 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The strong ties with the *teungku* provide convenient access to employment in jobs of a religious nature. While some of these jobs are full-time, most are of a part-time nature. The results indicate that two factors contribute to whether or not an individual can access religiously-related employment on the advice or recommendation of their *teungku*. Firstly, the person has to have both studied and lived in a traditional dayah, which specialises in orthodox Islamic education and understanding, and most importantly the person must have achieved a high-level of Islamic knowledge, devotion and skilled practice in dayah traditions. Secondly, the length of residency in dayah was found to be important. The more time a person stays in a dayah, the higher the level of study they experience. Such persons, as Idris (2008) also found, are more qualified to carry out religious works, for example, a dayah teacher. The findings of this study suggest the social relationships between students and their teungku, and dayah education and curriculum are significant determining factors in the employment of graduates as dayah leaders and teachers.
Zulkhairi’s (2012) study of dayah found the curriculum scope varied - some have more or fewer subjects, depending on the teungku’s expertise. Most had nine grades (classes), first grade being the lowest or beginner’s level. In each level, the range of subjects students were required to study was from six to thirteen subjects. Participants in the ‘basic traditional’ group reported that these subjects are difficult to pass, possibly because they are taught in classical Arabic and because of the complexity of the knowledge (Male 3, ‘basic traditional’). This person reported it was hard to reach “the fifth grade” and that it was common for students to repeat subjects until they passed. This was confirmed by another male participant of the ‘comprehensive traditional’ group (Male 2) who stated that students “can spend many years just to pass certain subjects”. Therefore, it is difficult to know the length of study needed to pass a level in dayah because it depends on the students’ learning capacity and also the time students invest in studying. As indicated, many students need to work to cover their living cost in dayah which affects their study time.

The length of time participants in this study and others spend in dayah and the level of their achievement upon leaving (graduation) is largely due to the complexity of the curriculum. Riza and Ilyas (2013) found there is no fixed timeframe for study in dayah, progress being determined by the students’ ability and the time taken to pass or master the different subjects. Therefore, for those who receive recommendations from their teungku to pursue religious work, it is a clear indication and acknowledgement of the high-level of religious education they have achieved.

This discussion identifies important points about social relationships developed between students and their teungku. The teungku and dayah teachers provide opportunities for students through their dayah studies to develop skills in areas beyond those of a religious nature. Secondly, the teungku and dayah teachers advise and encourage students to pursue employment in fields where they have shown promise, and use their own social networks and influence to
help and support graduates in whatever employment they undertake. Third, the length of time taken in dayah studies and complexity of the knowledge gained in that time is a reflection of the students’ knowledge and skill. For the selected few who are recommended by their teungku to pursue employment in jobs of a religious nature, this is a testament to their high-level of dedication, devotion and religious knowledge and practise.

Participants’ involvement in religious work, whether it be full time or part time, was found to be one of their own choosing, rather than the last employment option. This is in contrast to some other studies and critics who argue that graduates undertaking religious-related work in rural Aceh do so because their qualification only fits within the rural framework, and not in other sectors (Amiruddin, 2003, 2013a; Riza & Ilyas, 2013). In this study, the participants reported it was their choice to lead their lives as ‘warasatul ambiya’ (the messenger of the prophets), and this is reflected in their religious work in the local communities.

6.3.1.3 Jobs accessed through the people in the community

The findings revealed that 47% (7) of ‘basic traditional’ participants found jobs through their extended faith-based social network of the people in the community. The ties with such people are seen as weak compared to those developed within dayah and family. The jobs being accessed by participants through these weak ties fall into two types: (i) jobs in the informal sector that include farming, running a household enterprise, retailing, tailoring, shopkeeping and religious-related works (teaching Qur’an, delivering sermons, establishing a dayah); (ii) jobs in the formal sector include teaching in public school and religious counselling.

The participants’ experience in acquiring jobs through the community was slightly different from those acquired through friends, teungku and dayah teachers. People in the rural
community practice and uphold the same Islamic tradition and values as dayah students. Therefore, participants reported a positive community acknowledgement of their personal characteristics developed in dayah. These characteristics included being hardworking, honest, sincere, and trustworthy (Male 5, ‘comprehensive traditional’; Males 6 and 7, ‘basic traditional’). These personal characteristics were believed to help participants find jobs through the people in the community. One male participant (Male 7, ‘basic traditional’) shared that on graduation from dayah, he had nothing else other than ‘a peci and ija kroeng’, a saying that resembles the meaning of ‘nothing more than the clothes on their back’. Coming from a farming family, he needed financial support to start his own farm. He informed a person in the local community about his dilemma. The person, (a non-dayah graduate) was a member of a communal religious gathering where the participant had delivered sermons. He explained that the person did not hesitate to lend him the money even though “they were not related by blood”. Blood ties (family) are strong, whereas community ties are somewhat weaker. The participant believed that the person’s generosity had to do with him being a dayah graduate; someone with “whom people can place their trust”.

A female participant (Female 5, ‘basic traditional’) reported how she gained the position as an Islamic teacher in a public school as a result of her social ties with the people in the village. Being known as a dayah graduate and a Qur’anic teacher who ran a class at her own home, the participant was offered a teaching job at a public school in the local community. She was recommended by a person who had attended her classes and was also a teaching staff member of the school. The participant’s extended faith-based social network led to employment that, at the time of the interview, had lasted for 11 years.

A female participant (Female 3, ‘basic traditional’) reported that being known as a dayah graduate and through her active involvement in religious-related activities in the community,
she was offered a position as a religious counsellor at the subdistrict’s Department of Religious Affairs. This participant’s extended faith-based social network led to employment.

The commonality of these recounts and others demonstrate how social capital based on faith developed with people in the community helped dayah graduates gain access to jobs. These local communities show respect and acceptance of dayah graduates because of their shared faith and of graduates’ personal characteristics built in dayah.

From the findings, participants report how the people trust and prefer dayah graduates to undertake religious-related work in their rural communities rather than others with more formal education qualifications - “the villagers prefer people from dayah to deliver sermons compared to those with higher education (university degree)” (Male 6, ‘basic traditional’). This was also confirmed in two other ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants’ interviews (Males 2 and 6, ‘comprehensive traditional’), in which the community “have high respect” for the dayah people and consider them as “a role model more than us”.

It can be seen from the findings that ‘basic traditional’ participants use both strong and weak ties to find employment. A similar conclusion was reached by Matthews et al. (2009) in a study of social capital and job-finding in rural regions of Canada. Specifically, rural workers tend to use both their strong and weak ties whereas urban workers tend to only use their weak ties as a means to find employment. The study results show that by drawing upon their weak ties with people in their extended social capital network, ‘basic traditional’ graduates were able to access a variety of different employment options which were not available through their strong tie connections. The findings do not indicate though, that using weak ties in this specific context led to any high-income jobs for graduates. This supports the work of Matthews et al., (2009) who found that rural workers’ use of weak ties provided them access to ‘getting a job’, but not necessarily ‘getting a good job’. Weak ties provided leverage for several participants to
access different networks and labour markets. These results are in agreement with Hofferth and Iceland (1998) who found these diverse networks proved to be an important means for accessing employment opportunities.

As studies have suggested, the use of strong and weak ties means something different for individuals from varied backgrounds trying to enter a new labour market. Further study of extended faith-based social networks of ‘basic traditional’ participants is needed to more fully understand the impact of such networks on dayah graduate employment opportunities.

In rural Aceh, the restricted labour market is dominated by employment in the informal sector, that is mostly low-income jobs (United Nations Development Programme, 2010). Employment in the rural area lacks diversity (Magnusson & Alasia, 2004), whereas in urban areas there is a great pool of potential jobs (Magnusson & Alasia, 2004; Wojan, 2000). This implies that whatever strategy ‘basic traditional’ participants use to find employment (either using strong ties or weak ties), it will mostly lead them to informal jobs. Matthews et al. (2009) confirmed that job searching in rural regions through weak ties is “a generalised search for any opportunity, rather than the best opportunity” (p. 325). The findings of this research support this; most ‘basic traditional’ participants report a willingness to accept a job, albeit temporary or of a low earning nature. This can, in part, be explained by the demographics of the participants studied; all ‘basic traditional’ participants came from rural communities. Therefore, the notion that they could achieve high paying formal jobs following traditional dayah education was not a consideration.

Another interpretation of the tendency to access low-income jobs by ‘basic traditional’ participants relates to the members of their faith-based social networks. Strong ties exist within the dayah network of friends and the teungku, and they form weak ties with people in their local community. However, if the social networks of their friends and their extended dayah
community are restricted to rural areas and do not have contacts with access to job-related information, then the likelihood of participants being exposed to higher income jobs is small. Further research is needed to examine ways in which dayah education can build or enhance students’ social capital based on faith beyond the immediate rural context.

6.3.1.4 Jobs accessed through other social networks

This section discusses the use of alternate social networks used by ‘basic traditional’ participants to find employment. Some participants report accessing jobs through sources other than those related to their dayah environment; these often include social networks comprising family, neighbours and friends who have not studied in dayah. Eighty percent (12) of ‘basic traditional’ participants indicated they had used these networks of strong ties to access jobs following their graduation from dayah. The types of jobs include those run by families, such as small businesses or farming.

Two participants did not access their faith-based social networks developed through dayah to gain employment. One female participant (Female 8, ‘basic traditional’) was employed as a tailor in her village community before commencing her studies in dayah. While studying in dayah, she continued working part-time as a local tailor. Upon graduation, she returned to the tailoring business, however, following the devastation of the tsunami in Aceh, her job was lost. She married and started farming with her husband on rented land. Her relatively short period of study in dayah (three years) did not provide her with the desired educational background or confidence to undertake religious-related work. Therefore, while maintaining close friendships with her dayah community, she did not approach her teungku, or any of dayah friends for help. Instead, she found work through social networks outside of dayah; it was through her husband’s friends that they were given land and began farming.
The other participant, a male (Male 2, ‘basic traditional’) found employment through a relative. Upon graduation from dayah, a relative lent him the money to open a mechanics workshop on a small section of land inherited from his family. His strong family tie with the relative was the only connection he needed to start his business. The two examples illustrate how social networks with family can be used to find employment. However, as is typical of rural areas of Aceh, the types of employment found were low paying.

Two implications can be drawn from the experiences of these participants. Firstly, participants’ social networks with family provide access to employment; however, it is employment that generates only a low income. Secondly, in both cases, the social networks identified were tight, with fewer members and connections to other networks outside of their family and immediate local area. Therefore, their access to a variety of employment options was extremely limited. While the female participant did have a dayah network to access, she chose not to access it; whereas, the male participant’s social network was restricted to his relatives, on whom his livelihood depended.

Members of both participant social networks share similar living characteristics, socioeconomic backgrounds, ethnicity, language and a shared faith. Their social networks reflect a ‘homogenous network’ of like-minded individuals or ‘local social capital’ (Erickson, 1998). Given the nature of participants’ social relationships, their networks tend to be closely attached to their local area and therefore, the types of employment gained through such networks are closed and highly dependent. These ‘localised’ social ties affected their opportunities to access information or jobs beyond their local community. Nevertheless, both participants were settled with their employment choices, despite the irregularity or seasonal nature of their income. According to Lochner et al. (1999), social relationships that are ‘localised’ or closely attached to the local area can impact on the feelings the person has about the local area. In this study, the ‘localised’ social ties naturally led participants to find jobs in
their local area. However, while social interactions among people in the community might be high, the scope of these interactions is geographically limited, resulting in less diverse social networks (Hofferth & Iceland, 1998). Nevertheless, the family social network is significant and proved effective in helping the two dayah graduates access employment. This confirms our understanding of the nature of strong and weak ties (Granovetter, 1974; Lin, 2001; Matthew et al., 2009; Putnam, 2000) in this context, strong ties are found in relationships with family and close friends. It also suggests the need for closer study of social networks and employment in rural communities that share a common faith.

6.3.1.5 Types of employment

All ‘basic traditional’ participants experienced multiple types of employment as a result of social relations developed within dayah and the extended faith-based dayah networks of family, friends and people from the local community. These findings directly refute claims that dayah education results in the unemployment of dayah graduates (Amiruddin, 2003, 2013a; Guerin, 2006; Riza & Ilyas, 2013; Sirozi, 2004). They also confirm the important role that social capital based on faith plays in obtaining employment.

Amiruddin's (2013) criticism of traditional dayah education centres focusses on their insufficiency in preparing students with sufficient modern skills to gain employment in the formal sector. The implication is that the specialised religious knowledge gained does not transfer to professional employment opportunities. However, three ‘basic traditional’ participants found employment in the formal sector and also continued unpaid religious work in their communities.
The definition of the term ‘employment’ used in this study follows the standard definition of employment according to the International Labour Organisation (ILO). There are two categories: (i) ‘paid-employment’, in which a person performs work for salary in a given timeframe; and (ii) ‘self-employment’, in which a person performs work (or a person in an enterprise but not at work, for example, a business enterprise or farming) for profit or family gain in a given timeframe. The ILO also considers a person is self-employed if they produce economic goods and services that comprise a significant contribution to his/her own and household consumption. This study then interprets employment as the means by which a person obtains money or goods to sustain their livelihood, whether the person is being employed by others or self-employed.

The nature of employment found by ‘basic traditional’ participants is characteristic of the rural environment in which participants reside (see Table 6.3), and includes paid employment as a teacher or casual work for others, and self-employed jobs, in sales, farming, and businesses, such as a tailor, caterer or mechanic. The majority of the participants were also involved in informal household enterprises, as opposed to higher paying jobs in the more formal public sector, such as services/agencies or registered private businesses (United Nations Development Programme, 2010). Of the 15 participants in this group, three of them were employed in the formal sector, (see Table 6.4).

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Table 6.3

Informal Sector Employment (Basic Traditional’ Participants) *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment type</th>
<th>Informal sector employment</th>
<th>Total*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-employed</strong></td>
<td>Local sales agent</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clothing retailer</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Qur’an teacher</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Small local business</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dayah owner</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local tailor</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Local catering business</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mechanic workshop owner</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employed by others</strong></td>
<td>Dayah teacher</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Casual jobs (e.g., builder, selling clothes)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*participants’ main jobs although all have more than one job.

Table 6.4

Formal Sector Employment (Basic Traditional’ Participant)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment type</th>
<th>Formal sector employment</th>
<th>Total*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-employed</strong></td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Employed by others</strong></td>
<td>Public school teacher</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Religious counsellor</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*participants’ main jobs although all have more than one job.
The main type of employment undertaken by participants in the ‘basic traditional’ category generally generates lower incomes. Therefore, all participants undertake more than one job in order to sustain their livelihood. These findings concur with du Plessis' (2004) argument based on a study in rural Canada that it is common for people in rural communities to have multiple jobs. These may include hobbies and casual self-employment, for example, one ‘basic traditional’ participant (Female 5), who runs a Qur’anic class in her home also teaches Qur’an at a public school in the village. Although she considers teaching in her own home as her full-time job, it is technically volunteer work for which she does not often receive a financial return. At the public school, however, she is a contract teaching staff member, for which she receives a regular but low-level of income. This participant is also a farmer and owns a small kiosk located in her front yard, from which she sells produce and everyday goods.

Another female participant (Female 7, ‘basic traditional’) who is a dayah leader reported that in rural Aceh, professions that are religious-related, such as dayah leader and teachers do not provide a regular salary. However, occasionally she receives shadaqah in money or goods, for example, rice crops from graduates and other people in the local community, and these are enough to sustain her livelihood.

The nature of the participants’ employment suggests three factors that contribute to this employment pattern. First, jobs in rural areas are less diverse and highly concentrated in the informal sector. Higher paying jobs, such as those in education, health, trade, government, and commerce are generally more concentrated in urban areas of Aceh. Nevertheless, participants in the ‘basic traditional’ category have successfully managed to find employment in the informal sector or local rural communities. In a large scope survey by the United Nations Development Programme (2010) in Aceh, rural employment and jobs in the informal sector accounted for 62% of the economy. Therefore, the dominance of dayah graduates working in the informal sector represents a somewhat typical Acehnese rural livelihood. Second, in the
rural communities, one job for dayah graduates is not enough to sustain their livelihood. This is especially critical when they are employed in religious work which by its very nature does not require payment. Third, ‘basic traditional’ graduates are unable to access higher paying jobs in the formal sector when they do exist in rural areas. As reported, dayah is not a recognised education provider and therefore the education qualification received by graduates does not result in a government recognised certificate of educational attainment. This finding will be discussed in Section 6.4.

6.3.2 Comprehensive traditional

This section discusses how ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants access employment. The nature of the employment found (research sub-question 3), and the effect this has on their participation in local communities and beyond (research sub-question 4) will be discussed. The previous section discussed how ‘basic traditional’ participants access their faith-based social networks to find employment. This section, in comparison, examines the ways in which participants in the ‘comprehensive traditional’ category gain employment. ‘Comprehensive traditional’ participants are dayah graduates who have pursued further formal education in addition to their traditional dayah education. The findings reveal 90% (6) of these participants were employed in the formal sector or in different professional occupations. Their jobs included work in the public and private services, as government officials, university lecturers, a senior judge in the Islamic high court and local politicians. Whereas 85% (13) of the 15 ‘basic traditional’ participants accessed jobs through faith-based social networks developed in dayah, all seven ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants were employed following regular job application processes. All participants reported that a formal school leaving certificate was the main requirement for their job.
Recognising the limitation of a traditional dayah, and having the financial means to do so, graduates who undertook formal education in addition to traditional dayah education were afforded the opportunity to build more extensive social networks, and with these were able to access more prospective employers. As one male participant (Male 2, ‘comprehensive traditional’) explained, the only way for him to pursue a prospective career as a judge in the high court was by acquiring a formal tertiary education. This participant and others in the ‘comprehensive traditional’ category came from families who could afford such educational expenses. Socioeconomic backgrounds and financial capability are identified as the main differences between the ‘basic traditional’ and ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants. The collective reason for ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants to study in a dayah was to extend their learning of traditional Islam, while those in the ‘basic traditional’ group chose dayah to learn Islam, and because it was the only educational provider they could afford. This is in agreement with Amiruddin's (2003) finding that traditional dayah is not only favoured for its comprehensive Islamic education, but for providing free education as an alternative for the poor. ‘Comprehensive traditional’ participants had the choice to pursue the type of education they desire, while most participants of the ‘basic traditional’ group had limited educational options.

The different educational attainment reached by the two groups of participants impacted the way in which they were able to access employment. The interview data suggest that ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants do not benefit from, or use their faith-based social networks to the same degree as ‘basic traditional’ participants to access employment. ‘Comprehensive traditional’ participants accessed job-related information through members of their social networks in formal organisations, such as universities. For instance, one male participant (Male 2, ‘comprehensive traditional’) explained that he received information on an open recruitment for the position of a judge in the Aceh religious court. This came via his
university lecturers who were also judges at the court, rather than via the internet which wasn’t in popular use at that time. The only way to access job-related information was through social ties – the lecturers, and they would regularly circulate such information. Had this not been done, knowledge of the jobs would not be as easily available. Their strategic position as lecturers and judges enabled ‘the flow of information’ on job recruitment. This confirms Lin’s (1999) argument that people who hold certain hierarchical positions of power and are part of a social network are well placed to provide useful job-related information to individuals that cannot be accessed in any other way.

The findings also show that several ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants accessed job-related information through ‘newspapers and websites’ (Male 4, ‘comprehensive traditional’). The extended nature of their social networks, developed through formal education, allowed ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants access to information and employment in the formal sector. Such jobs generated stable incomes and were typically better paid than jobs in the informal sector.

The social capital based on faith developed in dayah, while not directly used to access employment, was maintained and accessed for religious purposes. As a male participant explained, “I have established a number of ‘modern’ dayah in the villages which provides dayah students with both an education in Islam and formal education in subjects such as Maths, Science, History and languages” (Male 1, ‘comprehensive traditional’). This education also provides graduates with a government recognised leaving certificate. Another male participant (Male 3, ‘comprehensive traditional’) who has served in the public service and who is a prominent Islamic scholar, demonstrated his ongoing commitment and contribution by leading a well-established, hereditary dayah. Another participant (Female 1, ‘comprehensive traditional’) accessed her faith-based social network to help establish and lead a dayah in her village. She was determined to establish a dayah on a family-inherited land, with full support
(financial, physical and moral support) of the people in the village community. This suggests that even with her formal educational qualifications she chose to be directly involved in the religious-related work. This commitment to serving her dayah and rural community for religious purposes is ingrained in the dayah teachings. These examples highlight the devotion of ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants to traditional dayah education and the faith based social capital established within them, despite their having a formal education as well. These participants also have a very strong commitment and attachment to dayah and the values inherent in the dayah education.

The type of employment gained by ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants in this study was religious in nature, for example, there are participants who lecture in Islamic studies, participants who are government officials working for the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA), and a judge who is an advocate in a religious court. The ‘religion’ element in each of these jobs suggests the values and practices developed in dayah that led these participants to take up tertiary study and ultimately professional employment in different fields, all with a religious orientation.

These findings expand our understanding of the role of faith as a determinant in employment. They also shed light on the effect of traditional religious schooling coupled with modern education on the nature of employment gained by ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants.

6.4 Formal recognition and enhancement of dayah education

This section discusses the third major theme to emerge from the findings, the formal recognition of dayah education. The chapter focuses on a major finding of the need for dayah to be a
recognised educational institution and for graduates to receive a formal certificate of educational attainment. Formal recognition will also address criticisms (Amiruddin, 2013a; Husin, 2014; Riza & Ilyas, 2013) that dayah do not provide students with an education that can be used to gain employment beyond those typified in rural areas of Aceh.

‘Basic traditional’ participants in this study report that dayah’s specialised education limited their employment options, and the types of employment accessed were low paid. One of the major challenges identified by the participants was their lack of access to jobs in the formal sector. This is because employers in this sector expect a government recognised certificate of educational attainment. This cannot be provided because traditional dayah are not recognised by the government as education providers. A formal recognised educational qualification is a standard requirement, as found in the ‘comprehensive traditional’ group, for employment as a professional in the formal sector. Therefore, ‘basic traditional’ participants who wish to be promoted beyond contract work, or who have the desire to pursue religious studies at higher levels of education, or who want to apply for professional employment of a religious nature, are prevented from doing so by the government. The challenges are expressed in a female participant’s (Female 3, ‘basic traditional’) interview. Her intention to be on the permanent teaching staff in a public school is restricted because of her lack of a formal educational qualification. Unless the participant undertakes an equivalency examination, commonly known as Paket C, her hope of becoming a permanent teacher and of receiving a higher salary is very unlikely. The participant made a comment regarding her friends in dayah who, like her, did not pursue further formal education after graduating from dayah. She commented that although none of her dayah friends are unemployed, none of them work in professional occupations. Another female participant (Female 5, ‘basic traditional’) works as

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6 Paket C is an examination for individuals who wish to acquire a state-recognised qualification that is equivalent to a secondary education qualification. Paket C is normally taken by individuals who did not graduate high school or dayah graduates for job purposes).
contract teaching staff at a public school in her village and is categorised at a low-income level. Although she has been teaching for 11 years at the school, she cannot get promoted or become a permanent teacher due to her lack of a formal qualification.

The findings of this research indicate that traditional dayah education is rigorous and intense. Islamic scholars, employers and community members recognise the qualities of the graduates and the high-level of Islamic knowledge and understanding developed through traditional dayah education. The findings show dayah graduates develop workplace skills through specialised classes and part-time employment in the local communities. Such skills are recognised by employers and are used by graduates to access employment. Nevertheless, the nature of employment is that it is low paid and restricted by:

- the rural context in which they study, live and work;
- the social capital based on faith developed in dayah which does not extend beyond faith-based communities; and
- an education provider that is not formally recognised by the government and which, therefore, cannot issue a formally recognised certificate of educational attainment.

As Amiruddin (2013) states, dayah graduates are currently overshadowed by skilled graduates from modern education who can offer contemporary working skills and knowledge to the workforce. The findings of this study show that traditional dayah education can and does offer graduates contemporary working skills and knowledge which they can use in the workforce. However, graduates are restricted to rural areas of Aceh where the types of employment are similarly restricted.

Dayah’s specialised education in classical Islamic studies has triggered debate as to whether traditional dayah should go through a transformation to keep up with social change and
economic demands, or should remain ‘traditional’ to maintain the religious tradition that has been inherited by many ulama for generations (Amiruddin, 2013; Husin, 2014; Roche, 2012; Zulkhairi, 2012). Dayah is seen as the protector of the Islamic faith and its practices from negative secular influences. One male participant (Male 7, ‘basic traditional’) explains that his son can now read and write as a result of primary education, and he intends to enrol his son in a traditional dayah rather than a modern dayah or a public school. His reasons, other than for his son to follow in his father’s footsteps, are his concern about the social change and ‘secular influence’ that has taken place in modern Aceh. He believes that only a traditional dayah education can prevent his son from such influences. While this view was echoed in other participant interviews, it can be seen as somewhat biased because the only education the participant (Male 7, ‘basic traditional’) had received was in dayah. Nevertheless, while recognising dayah’s contribution towards the development of graduates’ social capital based on faith, and preserving the Islamic tradition, which as shown in this study contributes greatly to gaining employment, dayah can do more. Recommendations of ways dayah can enhance the opportunities offered to students without undermining the highly valued Islamic tradition underlying dayah education are provided in Chapter Seven (p. 242).

Acehnese scholars believe that it is time for a transformation in the curriculum and management of traditional dayah to be in line with other public education institutions in order to address social change (Amiruddin, 2013a; Yahya, 2013; Zulkhairi, 2012). Four ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants show where they stand regarding this issue. One male participant (Male 1, ‘comprehensive traditional’) explained how he thought the education offered in the dayah curriculum was too exclusive and there was little room for analytical and critical thinking in the learning process. This was why he decided to pursue formal education by attending public school while also studying and living in dayah. This participant later pursued tertiary education which has led to a successful career as a judge in the Aceh religious
high court. Nevertheless, it was also his experience in the traditional dayah that led him to establish a modern dayah that provides students with a combined curriculum of religious and general subjects. He believed that Muslims should be intellectuals who have the integrated knowledge and skills, religious and scientific, to undertake a productive role in the modern society.

Another male participant (Male 2, ‘comprehensive traditional’) reported that dayah education prepares students to become ‘informal leaders’ in the community, not bank employees or public servants. The participant’s explanation suggests that dayah education has never been designed to produce students with the working knowledge and skills for professional careers; instead, it is an institution that provides students with the educational experience of Islam’s metaphysical inquiry in an orthodox setting (Roche, 2012). This, however, does not mean that traditional dayah graduates should be prevented from entering modern professions.

Even though graduates have acquired public recognition regarding their expertise in religious knowledge and social skills, unless a state-recognised qualification is presented, they are not qualified to access jobs in the formal and professional sector (Departemen Agama RI, 2009). This need to formally recognise traditional dayah education resonates with the views of a participant (Male 5, ‘comprehensive traditional’). He believes “the restricted access to the professional labour market due to graduates’ ‘dayah only’ education is rather biased”. He argued that “many people with formal degrees in Islamic studies, for instance, are not necessarily more knowledgeable or skilled than those with a traditional dayah only qualification”. The participant continued to argue that “a state-recognised qualification is required merely for the paperwork in a job application process. Therefore, traditional dayah graduates should have the opportunity to apply, and must not be restricted simply because of their unaccredited dayah education”. One male participant (Male 4, ‘comprehensive traditional’) explained that although an informal qualification is common for traditional dayah
there are dayah that have acquired muʿadalah status - a standardised education system accredited by the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA). For students who graduated from these dayah, their dayah qualification carries more value, and they can continue their tertiary education at certain universities that recognise dayah leaving certificate with muʿadalah status. The muʿadalah for dayah is an initiative by MORA which aims to provide recognition of dayah education that is equal to a higher secondary qualification (Departemen Agama RI, 2009). To achieve muʿadalah accreditation, a dayah has to go through a verification process in which it has to satisfy five major requirements determined by MORA: (i) the curriculum, (ii) teaching staff, (iii) students, (iv) school management, and (v) facilities. The muʿadalah initiative seems a reasonable and feasible way for dayah to achieve recognised education provider status rather than forcing it to convert, as has been suggested, into a modern dayah. To begin with, other than the addition of subjects in Islamic studies, the required curriculum to achieve a muʿadalah accreditation does not include general subjects such as science and mathematics. This alleviates the task of dayah leaders having to include general subjects as well as additional teaching staff. Moreover, since the subjects required in the curriculum are topics related to Islamic studies, it is within the dayah leaders’ expertise, although additional teaching staff will be necessary due to the additional subjects. There appear to be a few limitations: the additional subjects mean that students have to purchase textbooks which is an encumbrance (Murtadho, 2007) for the majority of students who come from low socio-economic backgrounds, ie., the ‘basic traditional’ participants; and, dayah leaders require additional teaching staff for the extra subjects. This will cost them time and money to search for teachers that specialise in the subjects required by MORA when all their time is spent teaching and managing the dayah. These limitations might be one of the reasons why very few dayah in Aceh have acquired muʿadalah status. Further research is needed to understand and evaluate existing national initiatives, such as, muʿadalah accreditation, which is designed to support traditional dayah in Aceh. The
findings of such research would further our understanding of traditional dayah education and ways to enrich it without compromising the traditional and valued education they currently provide.

Overall, the findings of this study indicate that recognition of traditional dayah as formal education providers, through *mu'adalah* accreditation or other means, is needed. Formal recognition or accreditation will allow graduates to receive a recognised educational qualification. This will lift restrictions on their ability to access employment beyond those available in rural contexts. The findings also indicate that some form of change or enhancement needs to occur within the traditional dayah that can expand the social capital, based on faith, of graduates beyond that of their extended faith-based rural networks. Strategies are recommended for consideration in Chapter Seven which do not undermine the traditions of dayah education and practices, and are based on the findings of this study.

### 6.5 Chapter summary

In summary, this chapter discussed the major themes and findings of the study with reference to the related literature. The first section of the chapter examined three levels of social relationships developed during a traditional dayah education. This section discussed findings which relate to research sub-question number one, ‘How is social capital based on faith developed in dayah education?’ It was argued that social capital is developed through social relationships formed within the dayah religious environment and in the extended dayah community. The social relations are established based on a shared faith.

What emerged from this discussion of findings is a new understanding of the nature of social capital developed in dayah. The term used to describe this was “social capital based on faith”. The point of difference between this and a previous term ‘faith-based social capital’ used
by Candland (2001) was discussed with examples of participant data and reference to related study findings.

Section 6.3 discussed the second major theme that ‘dayah networks help with employment’ and it was found that ‘shared faith contributes to the development of social capital and this is used by dayah graduates to find employment.’ The reported findings of ‘basic traditional’ and ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants are discussed separately and then compared. This discussion provides answers to the research sub-questions, “What role does this social capital play in graduate employment?” and “What is the nature of the employment found?”

Positions of employment accessed through participants’ faith-based social networks are mostly found in the informal sector which is characteristic of jobs reported to be found in rural areas of Aceh. These include farming, tailoring, trading, and religious work. Participants in this study also accessed similar types of jobs through other social networks (families and non-dayah friends). Discussion about the ties that bind graduates and their different social networks provides new thinking about the benefit of strong and weak ties in a faith-based context. The discussion also addresses criticisms of dayah education. The section finished with a discussion of the findings and implications in response to research question number 3 - What is the nature of the employment found?

In section 6.4 the focus was on the third major theme, ‘The formal recognition of dayah education’ and related finding ‘for graduates to receive a formal certificate of educational attainment.’ It is argued that formal recognition of dayah will address criticisms (Amiruddin, 2013a; Husin, 2014; Riza & Ilyas, 2013) that dayah do not provide students with an education that can be used to gain employment beyond those typified in rural areas of Aceh. The study findings show participants have been prevented from entering the professional labour market...
and this has created inequality of employment opportunities which affect their economic well-being. Therefore, it was concluded that while a dayah only education may not be sufficient to access professional employment, it is clear that dayah education is designed to provide students with an Islamic educational experience and promote social participation as part of the Muslim identity (Roche, 2012).

Therefore, some form of change or enhancement needs to occur within the traditional dayah that can expand the graduates’ social capital based on faith beyond those in their extended faith-based rural networks. Chapter Seven provides recommended strategies to be considered as a consequence of the study findings.
Chapter Seven: Conclusion

7.0 Introduction

The purpose of this final chapter is to summarise the research focus, key research findings and related implications. These are followed by recommendations for further research and concluding remarks. Table 7.1 below outlines the content of this chapter.

Table 7.1

Outline of Chapter Seven

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7.1 Summary of key findings</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>7.1.1 Social capital based on faith developed in dayah evolves through social relationships and the practice of a shared faith.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>7.1.2 Shared faith contributes to the development of social capital that can help graduates find employment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1.2.1 ‘Basic traditional’ participants</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7.1.2.2 ‘Comprehensive traditional’ participants</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.1.2.3 The nature of the employment found</td>
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<td>7.1.2.4 Employment and its effect on graduates’ participation in their local communities and beyond</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.1.3 A need for dayah to be a recognised educational institution, and for graduates to receive a formal certificate of educational attainment.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7.2 Recommendations</th>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td>7.3 Further research</td>
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| 7.4 Concluding remarks |  |

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This study investigated the nature of social capital developed in rural dayah and the effect of dayah education on graduate employment. Traditional dayah education in Aceh dates back to the 1600s, during the reign of the Aceh ruler, Sultan Iskandar Muda. Despite this, they are not recognised by the government as a formal education provider. Dayah provide students with a highly specialised Islamic education. In today’s modern education world, the place of traditional dayah has been questioned. Critics claim that the specialised religious education received in dayah does not provide students with contemporary skills and knowledge needed to secure employment (Amiruddin, 2013a; Riza & Ilyas, 2013). Others question the relevance of dayah education because it does not lead to a formal, government or employer recognised qualification. They claim dayah graduates are strictly ‘off the grid’ when applying for jobs (Mahdi et al., 2013; Riza & Ilyas, 2013).

Previous research found that dayah graduates in rural areas access jobs through active participation in their local communities (Amiruddin, 1994). To engage with the community is part of the dayah tradition and reported to be embedded in the students’ dayah learning process (Muhammad, 2010). Amiruddin (1994) and Muhammad (2010) inferred that a form of social capital was developed in the religious environment of dayah. However, this was not investigated. It was these criticisms and the lack of empirical data to help us understand the nature and effects of dayah education that were the motivation for the research reported in this thesis.

To understand the context, a review was made of the history and focus of dayah education, in rural Aceh, Indonesia. This review was presented in Chapter Two. To better understand the concept, development and application of social capital, research was reviewed and presented in Chapter Three. The review of research highlighted core elements of social capital, its development, and the strong relationship existing between social capital and employment. Albeit limited, research was identified and reviewed that focused on the faith
dimension of social capital. The literature reviewed also provided information that informed both the research design and the research questions. These were reported and discussed in Chapter Four.

To reiterate, the question guiding this research has its foundations in criticisms of dayah education, the research context and literature reviewed. The question was, “What is the nature of social capital developed through faith-based education and what role does it play in helping dayah graduates find employment in rural Aceh?” To find answers to this question, the research concentrated on four related sub-questions:

1. What is the nature of social capital developed in dayah education?
2. What role does this social capital play in graduate employment?
3. What is the nature of the employment found?
4. Does employment affect graduates’ participation in their local communities and beyond?

The findings of this qualitative study of 22 volunteer traditional dayah graduates were analysed and reported in Chapter Five and discussed in Chapter Six. In summary, this study was designed to examine the context of dayah education; to uncover the nature of any social capital being developed through dayah education, and to investigate the effect this may have on helping students find employment.

The findings show how dayah education results in the development of what was termed social capital based on faith, and they add to our theoretical understanding of social capital. They provide empirical data about how social capital is developed and used by graduates in dayah to establish, improve and maintain social and personal relations within dayah, with the local community and extended dayah networks in rural Aceh. The findings also reveal how the participants use this social capital, developed through faith, to find employment. The research
deepens our understanding of the value and operation of traditional dayah in rural Aceh, and provides information that can be used to address criticisms levelled at dayah education. The next section summarises the key findings and their implications.

7.1 Summary of key findings

7.1.1 Social capital based on faith developed in dayah evolves through social relationships and the practice of a shared faith.

The findings summarised in this section respond to research sub-question 1: “What is the nature of social capital developed in dayah education?” The social capital developed in dayah education was found to be based on a shared faith. Social capital based on faith was identified as developing through dayah education. This study defined it as “social relationships based on shared religious values, tradition and practices developed to maintain social and religious connectedness and solidarity”. The intent to create and maintain social capital based on faith was found not to be for personal gain, but for religious solidarity and cohesion, for example, in regard to employment, the findings of ‘basic traditional’ participants show how social networks based on faith provided initial information about potential jobs and contact with employers. The intent of the individuals providing such information was not for personal gain, but more, as reported, for a desire to help fellow dayah students who were in need of employment. There was no evidence found to suggest dayah graduates formed social networks based on faith for the purpose of using them to find employment.

Social capital based on faith develops through daily dayah education and activities. A shared faith was found to underlie dayah lifestyle and study. The participants in this study engaged daily with fellow students, the teungku and teachers, and regularly with people in the
local community. Islamic teaching and practice were the core of the participants’ education, and developing social relationships with each other and with others are integral to this. However, participants were also required to lead various classes and perform part-time jobs, within the dayah and in the community, for example, sewing classes, working as a labourer in building construction, in sales or farming. Participants reported that these classes and unpaid jobs helped develop skills which were put to use while maintaining the dayah environment and living conditions. They were designed to develop in practice their understanding of Islam and obedience and dedication that they repeatedly reported, will ‘bring blessings from God’. Their studies and these activities also helped develop and maintain positive social relationships with dayah classmates, the teungku, dayah teachers and the broader local community. All activities in dayah were driven by a religious allegiance. These findings support those identified by Muhammad (2010), that the integration of Islamic kinship occurs in traditional dayah.

This study has also revealed the personal quality of a teungku to be important in forming social relationships. A charismatic teungku was viewed to embody religious knowledge, truth and wisdom, and contributed to building a strong bond between students and the teungku. This bond was like that of a parent and involved the participants placing their loyalty and trust in the teungku, an observation also commented upon by Abdullah (2013) and Lukens-Bull (2001). As supported in the literature review (Baihaqi, 1976; Smith & Woodward, 2014), the participants also reported accepting the personal attributes of the teungku without question due largely to his or her status as a religious leader.

Social capital based on faith within dayah developed through the practice of ta’zim (obedience) by the students to the teungku and through the values and beliefs of their shared faith. The loyalty and trust shown to the students by the teungku is reciprocated by the students, and for this, they believe they will be guided, protected and blessed by God. Ta’zim towards the teungku and the receipt of his or her blessing is part of the dayah tradition in Aceh.
Therefore, the participants practise *ta’zim* daily and learn to rely on the advice, wisdom and guidance of their *teungku*. *Ta’zim* developed with the teungku was found to extend beyond dayah education, as evidenced by their frequent returns to the dayah following graduation.

The findings indicate how this strong social and personal bond, based on a shared faith, developed between the *teungku* and the students, and extended to the people in their local rural communities. The participants’ personal characteristics as dayah graduates were reported to help build and reinforce social relationships with the people in the community. Dayah are known and trusted by people in the local community to build individuals who uphold high levels of religious values and personal characteristics. Therefore, dayah students, as reported in this study, were readily accepted into the workplaces and homes of people in the community who entrusted them in the conduct of religious services and practice. People in the community perceived the participants as possessing intrinsic personal values of honesty, trustworthiness, sincerity, and modesty. The findings of this study infer a social status and trust given to the participants. This is a reflection of the prestige that the community bestows on the dayah; an identity built on adherence to and the embodiment of a shared faith.

The findings suggest that social capital, based on faith, binds the students to the fulfilment of Islamic belief and values, and this includes maintaining social solidarity for the common good of society.

In Islam, the concept of social capital based on faith can be interpreted as “*hablum minannas*” which means relationships among human beings. This is enshrined in many verses of the Qur’an that emphasise strengthening social connectedness as being critical to preserve community life and alleviate social exclusion. Therefore, social capital based on faith developed through dayah education is seen as a natural means to help dayah students contribute to the social well-being of society. This interpretation, coupled with the findings of the participants,
extends our understanding of the nature of social capital as developed in the faith-based environment of traditional dayah. This also confirms Candland’s (2001) reported understanding about the principles behind faith-based social capital. In the context of this study, findings show the development of social capital based on faith, and how it is used by the participants to connect with others and gain employment. Social capital is generally about how one can benefit from his or her networks of social connections (Lin 2001). However, social capital based on faith, as developed in dayah, has no personal objective; rather, its purpose is to develop and maintain social connectedness for religious purposes. This further develops Muhammad’s (2010) views about “Islamic kinship” in dayah.

7.1.2 Shared faith contributes to the development of social capital that can help graduates find employment.

Social capital based on faith developed in dayah was found to be instrumental in helping ‘basic traditional’ (Chapter Four, page 109) participants find information and ultimately access employment. All ‘basic traditional’ participants indicated their job search began with friends in dayah and the teungku. For ‘comprehensive traditional’ (Chapter Four, page 110) participants, their access to employment followed more formal employment pathways. These findings, summarised below, provide answers to the research sub-question 2: “What role does this social capital play in graduate employment?”

7.1.2.1 Basic traditional participants

‘Basic traditional’ participants gained access to employment through social networks based on a shared faith developed in their dayah. These networks involved individuals that participants
knew well – their strong ties - for example, friends in dayah, and the teungku and teachers. These individuals provided a reliable source of employment information and ultimately jobs. This finding is in contrast with Granovetter's (1974) assertion that strong ties are less useful in providing access to employment due to their homogeneous characteristic and smaller networks.

While strong ties within the dayah network provide access to employment, the nature of the employment differed. The types of employment gained following graduation were in areas such as agriculture (farming), teaching in dayah or as a tutor and leader of religious study groups, in retail as sales people, tailors, mechanics, or in service positions, such as, shops or food outlets. The nature of the employment was linked to the participant's skills, often, as found in this study, developed in part-time community work or before entering dayah.

The findings suggest it is not the strong ties that lead participants to gain low-income jobs; rather that low-income jobs are the dominant work available in rural areas of Aceh. This implies the use of strong ties is a means for accessing job opportunities, regardless of the income they generate. The findings also show all the participants in this category continue to do religious work, in either a full-time or part-time capacity, in their community. This is despite such work providing low or no income. These findings reinforce the ingrained teaching of dayah and the ongoing dedication of the participants to working in their community in a religious capacity. This supports the views of Amiruddin (1994, 2003) that doing work related to religion is to seek God’s blessings without any expectation of social or financial advantage. The findings refute claims that dayah education leads to unemployment (Amiruddin, 2003, 2013a; Guerin, 2006; Riza & Ilyas, 2013; Sirozi, 2004).

All ‘basic traditional’ participants were found to work at more than one job. In order to find second or third jobs, the participants relied upon an expanded social network based on faith. These included people in the local dayah community or other communities beyond. Many
of these contacts were friends of friends. Therefore the ties between participants and these people were considered as weak. The findings also suggest it was the perceived personal characteristics of the participants as dayah graduates, i.e., honest, sincere, trustworthy, modest, hardworking, that influenced people in the local community to provide them with employment. While the use of weak ties in extended dayah networks provided the participants with access to a greater variety of jobs; they did not initially lead to higher paying jobs.

The findings show that the participants’ faith-based social networks in rural areas are limited to those who can only offer low paying jobs. The restricted labour market in rural Aceh eventually leads the participants to access low-income jobs, no matter what approach they initially used to find employment. The findings of several self-employed participants showed that they were capable of earning greater income by accessing their faith-based social networks as a way of marketing their goods and services.

7.1.2.2 Comprehensive traditional

The employment journey for the participants categorised as ‘comprehensive traditional’ was found to be different to those of the ‘basic traditional group’. Findings suggest the participants in this group had the financial means to complete longer periods of formal education. This widened their social networks and opportunities for employment. The findings indicate that with formal qualifications, ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants were able to access the professional labour market and acquire employment. The participants in this category reported using a more contemporary means to find employment, including formal job-postings in newspapers, websites and other people outside of the dayah community.

The role of their social capital based on faith – social ties with dayah friends, teachers, and people in the community - was less relevant to the process of seeking employment.
However, these social ties were nevertheless maintained and used to continue their religious work in the community. These participants return regularly to provide material support and to participate in religious gatherings and ceremonies. Several participants provided financial support to the community, and all provided support to their traditional dayah.

7.1.2.3 The nature of the employment found

This section summarises the findings in response to research sub-question 3: “What is the nature of the employment found?” The research found all ‘basic traditional’ and ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants to be actively employed in a range of different occupations. The participants in the ‘basic traditional’ category made strong use of their social networks based on faith to access information and gain employment. The nature of employment initially secured included jobs such as tailor, salesmen, farmer, dayah teacher (see Chapter Six page 220 for detailed information on the jobs found).

‘Comprehensive traditional’ participants used extended networks developed as a consequence of more formal schooling to access information about employment. They also reported using conventional job searching and application processes to secure employment. The nature of employment for these participants included jobs as lecturer, judge, and in the public service (see Chapter Six page 222 for detailed information on the jobs found).

7.1.2.4 Employment and its effect on graduates’ participation in their local communities and beyond

Participants in this study dedicated their time, during and following graduation, to contributing to their community. The summary below reports the findings that directly answer the research
sub-question 4: “Does employment affect graduates’ participation in their local communities and beyond?”

The research found that all ‘basic traditional’ and ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants were involved in jobs of a religious nature which assisted their local communities. Participants in the ‘basic traditional’ category showed that they return to their village and do religious-related work in the rural community. The participants volunteered to do religious works without any expectation of reward, except to bring blessings from God. They choose to help their communities because of their religious dedication. Participants in the ‘comprehensive traditional’ category who have taken professional jobs in urban Aceh showed their strong commitment and attachment to the dayah values and traditions by helping their rural communities, for example, establishing a modern dayah in the village, or leading a dayah. The findings deepen our understanding of the education and the role of faith as a determinant of employment and community development.

7.1.3 A need for dayah to be a recognised educational institution and for graduates to receive a formal certificate of educational attainment.

The findings show that ‘basic traditional’ participants do not receive formal recognition from the Government for their dayah studies. Recognition of studies completed, in the form of a certificate, is the norm for individuals in Aceh seeking more formal employment in schools, businesses and in the public and private sector (Amiruddin, 2013a). The findings confirm that the lack of formal certification had an adverse effect on participants. It prevented them from applying for promotion or progressing in their current employment. It also prevented participants from applying for professional employment. Despite participants being publically recognised for their expertise in religious knowledge and social skills, without a state-
recognised qualification, they are not qualified to access formal and professional employment (Departemen Agama RI, 2009). Therefore, recognition of traditional dayah as formal education providers is needed, using strategies such as mu’adalah accreditation or other means.

The findings suggest that either dayah need to improve their education system to include more formal academic subjects while preserving the Islamic tradition, or, the Government needs to recognise dayah as a legitimate education provider and grant ‘basic traditional’ participants certificates of educational achievement (Chapter Six, page 225).

7.2 Recommendations

There are a number of recommendations arising from this research. The purpose of these recommendations is to highlight issues needing to be addressed.

1. It is recommended that Government agencies and dayah leaders be made aware of the nature and role of social capital, built upon faith, in helping graduates find employment. The nature of dayah education and the implicit development of social capital based on faith do not preclude or overshadow the need to find ways to enhance graduates’ contemporary knowledge and skills. This may involve traditional dayah in rural areas developing formal links to modern dayah in urban areas. This would have the dual benefit of providing both sets of students through regular exchanges with opportunities to interact experience study in different settings and perform community service in different contexts. Students from traditional dayah who are interested could use the exchanges to complete more formal academic study. The exchanges would extend the social networks of graduates and thus provide greater access to possible employment opportunities. A report of these research findings should be provided to the Aceh Government. The Dayah Development and
Education Board (BPPD) and the Ministry of Religious Affairs (MORA) could be effective units for such dissemination.

2. The findings of this study confirm that the Islamic tradition, generated largely through the education and work of dayah, has significant influence on the lives of people in rural communities. The dayah community keeps an informal check of a community’s religious practice (Amiruddin, 2003; Baihaqi, 1976) which includes: ensuring children begin learning Qur’an recitation at an early age, filtering out social influences that might disrupt the Islamic faith, and ensuring the people are equipped with basic knowledge of Islam through community teaching. It is recommended that dayah leaders and the government consider ways of improving dayah without interfering with its values and tradition. This is to preserve its existing role in the community and to avoid changes in the nature of these community-based schools. It is also recommended that dayah leaders be consulted on ways to enhance the quality of dayah education through the inclusion of formal education, involving contemporary academic subjects either within dayah or as a requirement or option to be studied elsewhere in the community. The power of the teungku to promote further educational options is relevant and positive. Given the loyalty, trust, and respect students place in their teungku, encouragement from them to pursue formal education in addition to their dayah education would provide a valuable incentive.

3. It is recommended that the related Government agencies, particularly BPPD and MORA, provide financial support, such as government scholarships for students and graduates to enrol in and complete formal education, in addition to their dayah education. Many dayah students are from low socio-economic backgrounds and find it financially challenging to complete formal education. The findings of this study showed that for some students, this
was one of the main reasons why they did not pursue formal study in addition to their dayah education.

4. It is recommended that Government recognises dayah as a legitimate education provider, and grants graduates from traditional dayah certificates of educational achievement. A recognised dayah leaving certificate will help graduates access a wider range of employment and study opportunities. It will also help existing graduates to further their careers through gaining promotions and better-paid employment.

5. It is recommended that dayah leaders and government agencies, BPPD and MORA, work with the wider Acehnese community to create an awareness of the value and critical role of dayah in the Aceh rural communities. One of the feasible ways to acknowledge this is through the dissemination of reports or newsletters for communities and through formal reports, journal articles, and conference presentations.

6. The findings indicated the ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants have a continuing commitment to their dayah and rural community. It is recommended that graduates such as those from the ‘comprehensive traditional’ group, as alumni, be encouraged to broaden their involvement with their dayah and the students. This could take the form of activities such as:

   - the funding of joint-study scholarships for dayah students;
   - the joint funding of exchange programmes with modern dayah;
   - the provision of academic support teachers in the community;
   - talks or presentations to current dayah students; and
\begin{itemize}
\item active engagement and involvement of current dayah students in their extended social networks based on faith.
\end{itemize}

### 7.3 Further research

In consideration of the recommendations and limitations of the study, further research is needed to support the findings and enhance our understanding of traditional and modern dayah education, social capital based on faith, and the employment of graduates.

1. The focus of this research was the perception of dayah graduates’ educational experience, the social capital that evolved, and its effect on their employment. To support and to extend understanding of this study’s findings, research is needed that focuses on the insight of the *teungku* and dayah teachers, and the Aceh Government on dayah graduates’ employment issues. The findings of such research may expand the findings of the effect of traditional religious schooling on graduates’ employment.

2. Further research is needed to understand the role of friends within dayah, and the scope of the information sharing about potential employment. Such research might confirm the findings about the role of friends in this study and extend understanding of the networks they draw on to access information about employment.

3. Further research is needed to examine the way in which dayah education can build or enhance the students’ social capital, based on faith, beyond the immediate rural context. This research would provide ways for dayah to become more proactive in enhancing dayah graduates’ social networks; therefore, building wider employment opportunities.
4. Further research of a larger sample of ‘basic traditional’ and ‘comprehensive traditional’ participants is needed to confirm and expand on the findings of this study. Such future research could also include interviews with people who provided job access to dayah graduates. The findings of this research would extend those of this study and provide an even greater understanding of the impact of traditional dayah education, the social relations developed and the nature of social capital developed through faith.

5. Further research is needed to assess and compare the educational experience of female and male students in traditional dayah, and any effect this has on social capital, based on faith, in finding employment, based on their gender status. There is much to explore regarding an individual’s social behaviour according to their gender, especially in a dayah specific context, and could possibly show how some employments are gender-specific if being accessed through social capital.

6. Further research is needed to understand and evaluate existing national initiatives, such as mu’adalah accreditation, which are designed to support traditional dayah in Aceh. The findings of such research would further our understanding of traditional dayah education, and ways to enrich it without compromising the traditional and valued education they currently provide.

7.4 Concluding remarks

This study has shed light on the nature and use of social capital based on faith developed in a traditional dayah education context. The findings indicated that living, learning and practising a shared faith, resulted in the development of close ties ‘like family’ between students, the teungku and teachers. The social network or what we termed as ‘social capital based on faith’
was strong and was developed implicitly through dayah education. The findings show a faith-based social network, extended through organised work in the dayah community, to be the main source of information used in finding employment. The study refutes claims in the literature that dayah education does not prepare students for employment; indeed, it does so, implicitly through living, through teaching and through educational experiences.

However, more research is needed to understand the nature of education and the educational experience that the students receive, which leads to developing social capital based on faith. Nevertheless, the findings provide new insight into an area largely unexplored. Participants in this study found employment in a range of different jobs. They attribute this to their education in traditional dayah, which proved the catalyst for developing skills and a social network leading to employment in rural areas of Aceh. The nature of the employment varied and was low paying. However, such jobs need doing in rural communities of Aceh. As the findings suggested, participants believed higher paid and better jobs could be found if their education in dayah was formally recognised by the Government and a certification of educational achievement awarded.

Recommendations to enhance the status of dayah education have been made. However, these are done so in the spirit of maintaining the fundamental values of dayah education and the way dayah practices contribute to communal cohesion (character building, social relationships, community development and empowerment). These values and practices need to be the primary consideration if the government and educational decision makers attempt to make changes to the institution.

In conclusion, this research has developed new insights and understanding of the nature and effects of dayah education in rural Aceh. The findings have stimulated an even greater interest and need for ongoing investigation. A major contribution to theory building about social
capital, is the concept of social capital based on faith. This concept emerged from the accrued social relationships within dayah and in accordance with shared religious values, tradition and practices. This study is a starting point in understanding how social capital based on faith affects the personal, social and economic-wellbeing of the individuals involved. Deepening, through empirical study, the understanding and awareness of educators and the community about the value of dayah and the contributions they make and the affects of social capital developed is critical to the future of dayah education, and the communities they serve in rural Aceh.
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Appendices
Appendix A: Interview guideline

Interview Guide: primary questions

Education
- Can we talk about your education in dayah? Which dayah did you go to?
  - How long did you study in dayah for?
  - What were your main reasons for studying in dayah?
  - Can you tell me more about the teachings in dayah?
  - Were you encouraged to work together and help each other?
  - What are the skills you learned in dayah?
  - Did you enjoy studying in dayah?
- Let’s talk about the things you like about dayah. What were the best things about going to dayah? Did you find it helpful? In what ways?
  - What about the thing you do not like about dayah. Can you tell me more about this?
  - What were the worst things about going to dayah?
  - What were the least helpful things about going to dayah?
- During your education in dayah, did you engage in any activities with the community or work with the community?
  - YES  
    - What kinds of activities or work did you do? Did you enjoy these activities?
  - NO  
    - Why?
- Did your education in dayah encourage you to engage or work with the community?
  - YES  
    - What kinds of activity/work with the community encouraged in dayah?
  - NO  
    - What could they have done to encourage you to engage?
Did your dayah encourage you to engage with people outside your faith?

Let’s talk about your friends in dayah. Did you have many friends? *(Name generator question, come back to this question)*

Do you still keep contact?

Do you make friends easily?

Were you encouraged to make friends in dayah? If so, how?

What about your teachers, staff and dayah leader, do you still keep contact?

How important is it for you to build and maintain social relationships?

How did your dayah education influence how you think about building and maintaining social relations?

Friends in dayah

YES  [In what way?]

NO  [Then what has influenced you?]

Social Network

Tell me more about your friends in dayah, how is your relationship with them?

How often do you meet? In what context? Is it a friendly get together?

Would you ask them for help?

YES  [What sort of assistance will you ask them?]

NO  [Why? What stops you?]
Tell me about other people in your dayah, who do you keep in contact with? (Ask about dayah leader)
How often do you meet?
Would you ask them for help?

YES [What sort of assistance will you ask them?]
NO [Why? What stops you?]

Can we talk about people in your community, who are the people in your community that you know?
How did you know these people? (Ask for each person identified by participants)
Are they from your dayah or others?
How often do you meet?
Will you ask them for help if you need it?

YES [What sort of assistance will you ask them?]
NO [Why? What stops you?]

How involved are you in the local community?
How important is it to be involved in the community? What influences your thinking in doing this?
Employment
Do you have a job?

What sort of job?
How did you find the job?
Who helped you get the job? Can you describe your relationship with this person?
Is this your first job since graduating from dayah?
Can you tell me about your first job since you graduated from dayah?
Are you happy with your job?

- YES
  Why?
- NO
  Why not?

Is this your ideal job?

- YES
  Great! Why is it the ideal job for you?
  Do you think it is the ideal job for dayah graduates?
  What do you think are the ideal jobs for dayah graduates?
  What do you think are the jobs favoured by dayah graduates?

- NO
  What is your ideal job?
  How would you pursue it?
  What do you think are the ideal jobs for dayah graduates?
  What do you think are the jobs favoured by dayah graduates?
Before you were employed and looking for jobs, did you ask people information about job opportunities?

If so, who were these people?

Can you describe your relationship with each person you mentioned? How are you connected to these persons?

How long have you known these persons?

Where did you first meet them?

How did they help you in finding a job? (Must describe for each person)

Why did you choose them? (Must describe for each person)

Who helped you the most in terms of getting a job?

If not, how did you find employment? Can you tell me the process you went through to find a job?

Did your dayah education affect you in finding employment? If so, how did your dayah education affect you in finding employment?
Did you go looking for a job?

How did you go looking for a job?

Did you ask anyone for help?

Who are they? Are they your friends from dayah?

In what way did they help?

Why did you choose them? (Must describe for each person)

Who was most helpful?

Did you try other ways to find a job?

What do you think prevented you from getting a job?

Did your dayah education affect your ability to find a job? If so, how? Can you tell me more about this?

Did your friends or people from the Dayah help you in anyway?

Was this your choice? Can you tell me more about this?

What is it like for you not having a job?

What is your ideal job?

Would you go outside your faith for employment? Why? Or, would ask people outside your faith for employment?

Open network question: let’s go through the list of names you have mentioned. Is there anybody else who helped you or will help you to find employment and whose name is not yet on the list? If yes, I would like to add this person to the list.
Appendix B: Participant information sheet and informed consent in English

Participant Information Form

Project Title
Social capital, education, employment: experience of graduates from traditional Islamic schools in Aceh.

Researcher
Name: Nanda Riska  
Course: Doctor of Philosophy in Education  
Faculty: Education, Science, Technology and Mathematics, University of Canberra

Project Aim
This research will be conducted in Aceh. It aims to explore the use of dayah graduates’ education and social network in gaining employment. This research also aims to gain a better understanding about dayah education in Aceh.

Benefits of the Project
This research will contribute to the discourse on traditional Islamic schools in Aceh since there is little literature on the nature of dayah. The critical part of this study aims to develop understandings of the ways to better support dayah graduates in gaining employment.

Participant Involvement
As a participant, you will take part in an interview. You are allowed to ask questions for clarification before, during, or after the interview. The interview will last around one hour. The interview will take place in a space you feel most comfortable. The interview will be audio recorded with your permission. Following the interview, recordings will be transcribed and returned to you for confirmation and checking. Your approved transcript will then be translated into English and checked by a bilingual Acehnese-English speaker. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time with no consequences. If agreed, you will be required to sign the consent form below stating that your participation in this project is voluntary.

The research is a part of the study at University of Canberra. The result of the study will be presented through the researcher’s thesis and possible publications and conference papers.

Confidentiality
The researcher guarantees the confidentiality of the interviews. The information provided will be handled with respect and discretion. The interview data will not be available for general consumption. Only the researcher has access to and be able to identify your individual data. Data is collected only for the stated research purpose, and will not be used for any other purposes without your permission. This is to ensure and safe guard your data, identifying
information will be removed and known only to the researcher. Participants’ individual identification will be anonymised in the thesis or any publication arising from this research.

**Anonymity**
The information collected from participants will be non-identifiable. Pseudonyms and codes will be used to identify participants. Only the researcher will know the code and be able to identify individual data.

**Data Storage**
All records of data will be kept secure by the researcher. Following University of Canberra protocols, data will be stored for a five year period, after which it will be destroyed.

**Ethics Committee Clearance**
This research has been approved by the University of Canberra Ethics Committee in Human Research of the University of Canberra.

**Queries and Concerns**
For further information or questions concerning this project, please contact the researcher on 040 3682 811 or nanda.riska@canberra.edu.au

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**Informed Consent**

I, ____________________________, agree to the following:

- I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary.
- I am free to withdraw at any time without any consequences for me.
- I understand that all information I provide will be treated as confidential and will be anonymized.
- I agree to take part in the above study.

Signature of Participant: ____________________________ Date: ________________

Signature of Researcher: ____________________________ Date: ________________
Appendix C: Participant information sheet and informed consent in Bahasa Indonesia

Lembar Informasi

Judul Penelitian
Modal Sosial, Pendidikan, dan Pekerjaan: Mengamati pengalaman para alumni Dayah Salafi di Aceh
Social Capital, Education, Employment: Experience of Graduates From Traditional Islamic Schools in Aceh.

Peneliti
Nama: Nanda Riska
Kursus: Doctor of Philosophy
Fakultas: Education, Science, Technology and Mathematics, University of Canberra

Tujuan
Penelitian ini akan dilaksanakan di Aceh dengan tujuan untuk menelusuri manfaat pendidikan dayah tradisional bagi alumni dayah dan jaringan sosial yang mereka miliki dalam mendukung alumni dayah untuk mendapatkan/memperoleh pekerjaan.

Manfaat Penelitian
Adapun manfaat dari penelitian ini diharapkan dapat memperkaya pengetahuan tentang dayah salafi mengingat masih jarang ditemui studi yang membahas tentang dayah itu sendiri sebagai institusi pendidikan tradisional. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengembangkan upaya-upaya strategis bagi alumni dayah untuk mendapatkan pekerjaan.

Peran Peserta

Kerahasiaan
Peneliti menjamin kerahasiaan informasi pribadi para peserta. Data yang didapatkan dari hasil wawancara tidak akan menjadi konsumsi publik dan hanya dapat diakses oleh peneliti. Data
yang dikumpulkan akan dimanfaatkan sepenuhnya untuk keperluan penelitian dan tidak akan
digunakan untuk keperluan lain tanpa izin anda.

Untuk informasi lebih lanjut, hubungi 0822 7716 3645 atau email nanda.riska@canberra.edu.au

Formulir Persetujuan

Saya,______________________________, menyetujui butir-butir berikut ini:

- Saya telah membaca dan memahami lembaran informasi diatas.
- Saya paham bahwa partisipasi saya bersifat sukarela.
- Saya diperbolehkan untuk mengundurkan diri kapanpun tanpa konsekuensi apapun.
- Saya paham bahwa semua informasi yang saya berikan akan dirahasiakan.
- Saya setuju untuk berpartisipasi dalam penelitian ini.

Tandatangan Peserta:  
Tanggal:  

Tandatangan Peneliti:  
Tanggal:  

### Appendix D: Example of a section of an interview transcript and English translation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transcript (direct as recorded)</th>
<th>English Translation</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[i]: nanda ingin melihat pengalaman umi selama di dayah, padum thon, dan pembelajaran apa2 saja yg didapat di dayah. Boleh umi ceritakan pengalaman selama di dayah?</td>
<td>[i]: I would like to know about your experience in dayah. How many years you’ve spent there and what are the lessons learned. Can you tell me about your experience in dayah?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[i]: berarti tamat SD, tamong dayah Darussalam dari ton 1985 sampai 1994 nyoe?</td>
<td>[i]: So after primary school, you went to dayah Darussalam from 1985 to 1994?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[p]: nyoe.</td>
<td>[p]: yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[i]: jeut umi cerita bacut kiban pengalaman di dayah.</td>
<td>[i]: can you tell me about your experience there?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[p]: mangat I kamoe ideh. Pajoh on rumpun, makan sambal sunti. Mandi sama air kuning dulu. Tangan ijo abis pesing on rumpun, payah mita boh kuyun.</td>
<td>[p]: I enjoyed my time there. We ate morning cress vegetable (local vegetable), sweet sour sauce. We bathe with yellow-colored water. Our hands were dirty from cooking, we had to find some lime to cleanse it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[i]: apa motivasi umi utk masuk dayah nyoe mengingat usia yg sgt muda. Apakah urueng cik yg peutamong?</td>
<td>[i]: what was your motivation to enroll in dayah, considering you were so young. Did your parents take you to dayah?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[p]: han, cit galak droe, aleh pakon. Aleuh nyan dudoe ka 3 thon nyan, alah mejak sikula. Dudoe alah bah keuh inoe aju. Aleuh cok ijazah ibtidayah, ijazah tsanawiyah di dayah Darussalam.</td>
<td>[p]: no. I wanted to go there, not sure why. After 3 years in dayah, I thought about going to school. But then I thought just to stay in dayah. I completed the ibtidayyah and tsanawiyah level in dayah Darussalam and granted with a certificate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[i]: tapi nyan ijazah yg dikeluarkan oleh dayah ya?</td>
<td>[i]: are those certificates issued by dayah?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[p]: nyoe.</td>
<td>[p]: yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[i]: di dayah nyoe jeut ta sikula ditempat laen?</td>
<td>[i]: in this dayah, are you permitted to go to school as well?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[p]: jeut cit.</td>
<td>[p]: yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[i]: apa apa saja yg umi dapatkan selama di dayah?</td>
<td>[i]: what dare the lessons learned when you were in dayah?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[p]: lagee fiqh, bahasa Indonesia, pelajaran umum waktu itu ada waktu zaman abu nasir memimpin. IPA, bhs Inggris, bhs Indonesia, matematika.</td>
<td>[p]: such as fiqh, Indonesian language, the general subjects at that time were taught by Abu Nasir. Science, English, Indonesian, and mathematics subject.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I:</td>
<td>oh.. berarti disediakan ya bagi yg mau.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p:</td>
<td>iya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I:</td>
<td>kegiatan social di masyarakat na terlibat umi?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>na, gotong royong kamoe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I:</td>
<td>ini program dari dayah?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>na, gotong royong kamoe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I:</td>
<td>kegiatan social di masyarakat na terlibat umi?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>iya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I:</td>
<td>were you involve in activities in the community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I:</td>
<td>these subjects were available for those who are interested?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I:</td>
<td>were you involve in activities in the community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I:</td>
<td>were you involve in activities in the community?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I:</td>
<td>what about activities related to hand craft skills?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>there was sewing activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I:</td>
<td>what about hand crafts related to social skills?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>yes. It was taught by dayah teacher who could sow. I learned lots of hand crafts skills in dayah. I learned to make crochet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>yes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I:</td>
<td>what about being independent, was it taught in dayah?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P:</td>
<td>mmm... (seems confused)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix E: Example of labelled theme exported from the NVivo 10 software.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faith-Based Community</th>
<th>CONTRIBUTING BACK TO THE COMMUNITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<Internals\Participant Interview\AH> - § 2 references coded [2.05% Coverage]

**Reference 1 - 0.57% Coverage**

In the evening, I teach. I do not have my own dayah. I teach here in dayah Darul Huda

**Reference 2 - 1.48% Coverage**

My 13th year in dayah, 2003, I returned here to teach in Meulaboh at Haji Hasbi’s dayah. I didn’t know how he came to know that I have returned home. He would pick me up every Thursday night to teach in Meulaboh.

<Internals\Participant Interview\AM> - § 5 references coded [7.96% Coverage]

**Reference 1 - 3.62% Coverage**

I was assisting other dayah in the village, because when I arrived here in Karak early 2000 there were already three dayah... So I decided not to start my own dayah, instead, I’d assist dayah that already exist. Currently, I am working to improve one dayah, Alamu Huda.

**Reference 2 - 0.90% Coverage**

I also teach at a Majlis Ta’lim in the subdistrict, and at evening classes.

**Reference 3 - 0.19% Coverage**

This (teaching) is my main activity.

**Reference 4 - 0.74% Coverage**

Nanda: Is that your contribution to the community? and you don’t see the money you receive from this work as a source of income?

R : Oh no no, I don’t see it as a source of income, I do it only for the people in the community.

**Reference 5 - 2.51% Coverage**

I have accomplished what I wanted to be... thank God. To be khairun nas yar fa’unah, which means the best of a person is who can bring benefits to others. I prayed to god so I can be the light for the people, even just a small light, Insya Allah today I have accomplished that.
Since I’m a dayah student, my teacher told me that I have to teach (Islam), and you will not be complete before you learn and teach Islam.

I was able to help the people in the neighbourhood by employing them. Around three families. I employed 3 female workers for my catering business. We provide cakes, rice; we can provide all sorts of request.

yes, they have to. Because there is a saying “ulama warasatul ambiya” stays within them. The saying means ulama are the inheritance of the prophets. This means people who forward the prophet’s messages. This concept is invested in dayah learning process. And when it is in our head, we would not even think about money at that time, because the prophet never collected money when preaching the message of Islam. So we did that as well.

Traditional dayah (students) they don’t continue their studies, it stops at their dayah. They are asked to be an Islamic scholar or even to develop the dayah. That’s the pattern. If permitted by the dayah leader to build a new dayah, graduates will spread to villages to build dayah. They will no longer think to pursue further education.

I run a Qur’an class at home.

I have two spaces, one for al qur’an class and the other one for classical text class

I was offered a job to teach at a public high school. I saw students who didn’t know how to say the syahadat. Then I thought there must be young people in my village who didn’t know it as well. It moved my heart. Then with my own money, I build a bale (a porch functions as a class) for the young people.
Now, many teenagers come to my bale to learn. Even though they still miss their prayers, but then I said that’s fine for now, at least they are coming to my bale.

Reference 4 - 1.18% Coverage

The purpose of my palm business is to support my teaching activity.

Reference 1 - 0.89% Coverage

I returned back here to the village in 1990. I was welcomed by the people and together we built a dayah.

Reference 1 - 1.29% Coverage

So half the day I studied, and half the day I was teaching Qur’an recitation for children and female adults. When I returned home from dayah, I was trusted by a number of villages in Pagar Air (Subdistrict) to lead the Majlis Ta’lim.

Reference 2 - 1.26% Coverage

Yes. I was also asked to give speech in Maulid ceremony. The people knew me from speeches. I gave speech in the radio, speech in Maulid ceremony. They heard the content of my speech, so I was asked to be their permanent teacher.

Reference 3 - 1.74% Coverage

at that time this house was functioned as qur’an recitation place. Then, with Allah’s blessing, each year goes by, more and more children come to learn here day and night. Just like a lantern that lights, that’s how Allah’s blessed this place up to today. We afforded to buy this land next to us, and built a dayah.

Reference 1 - 3.84% Coverage

The dayah people in aceh, when returning to their village they become role model in that village. Why? Because of their sincerity in guiding the people. The treatment they (dayah graduates) receive is different to people with higher education (refering to non-dayah people). For instance: when I completed my master’s degree, it didn’t really mean anything for the people in the village when I returned. But if it were dayah graduate, eventhough they only spent 4 years in dayah but they are active in the village, guiding youth patiently and sincerely, the people see them as role models. They have a higher position in the village.
Reference 1 - 0.95% Coverage

I have helped the community by hiring them to work with me here at the mechanic workshop. Out there, there are five of them. Many are working in the well drilling area.