

Hadith Learning and Salafi Educational Epistemology in Wahdah Islamiyah Makassar

Pembelajaran Hadis dan Epistemologi Pendidikan Salafi di Wahdah Islamiyah Makassar

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Abstract: *This study examines the understanding of Hadith within Wahdah Islamiyah and its implications for education and da'wah. Using a qualitative field research approach, data were collected through interviews, observations, and documentation involving organizational leaders, preachers, and educational figures. The study analyzes Wahdah Islamiyah's methodological orientation, epistemological foundations, and influence on religious learning and preaching activities. The findings show that Wahdah Islamiyah adopts a predominantly textual approach rooted in the manhaj al-salaf, emphasizing adherence to the Qur'an, Sunnah, and interpretations of classical scholars. Hadith is understood through a framework prioritizing textual authenticity, scholarly authority, and methodological discipline. This orientation significantly shapes the organization's educational and da'wah systems by encouraging structured learning, moral development, and doctrinal consistency. The study also reveals that Wahdah Islamiyah seeks to preserve the continuity of Islamic intellectual tradition, strengthen religious literacy, maintain theological stability, and reinforce orthodox Sunni identity within contemporary Muslim society. Furthermore, this approach functions as an instrument for safeguarding religious understanding from subjective interpretation while reinforcing organizational identity and sustaining the transmission of Islamic teachings across educational institutions contemporarily. "This study contributes to the discourse on Hadith pedagogy by demonstrating how Salafi-oriented organizations institutionalize textual Hadith learning within integrated formal and nonformal educational systems."*

Keywords: Hadith Understanding; Wahdah Islamiyah; Textual Approach; Manhaj al-Salaf; Islamic Education



Abstrak: Penelitian ini mengkaji pemahaman hadis di Wahdah Islamiyah serta implikasinya terhadap pendidikan dan dakwah. Penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode penelitian lapangan. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi yang melibatkan pimpinan, dai, dan tokoh pendidikan Wahdah Islamiyah. Kajian ini menganalisis orientasi metodologis, landasan epistemologis, serta pengaruh pemahaman hadis terhadap aktivitas pendidikan dan dakwah organisasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Wahdah Islamiyah menggunakan pendekatan tekstual yang berlandaskan manhaj al-salaf dengan menekankan komitmen terhadap Al-Qur'an, Sunnah, dan penafsiran ulama klasik. Hadis dipahami melalui kerangka yang mengutamakan autentisitas teks, otoritas ulama, dan disiplin metodologis. Orientasi tersebut memengaruhi sistem pendidikan dan dakwah melalui pembelajaran terstruktur, pembinaan moral, dan konsistensi ajaran. Penelitian ini juga menunjukkan bahwa Wahdah Islamiyah berupaya menjaga kesinambungan tradisi intelektual Islam, memperkuat literasi keagamaan, menjaga stabilitas teologis, serta memperkokoh identitas Sunni ortodoks dalam masyarakat Muslim kontemporer. Selain itu, pendekatan tersebut berfungsi sebagai instrumen untuk menjaga pemahaman agama dari kecenderungan interpretasi yang subjektif sekaligus memperkuat identitas organisasi dan kesinambungan transmisi ajaran Islam melalui lembaga pendidikan, kajian, serta aktivitas dakwah yang berlangsung sistematis dan berkelanjutan di tengah masyarakat modern. Penelitian ini memberikan kontribusi terhadap kajian pedagogi hadis dengan memperlihatkan bagaimana organisasi salafi mengembangkan institusionalisasi pembelajaran hadis tekstual melalui integrasi sistem pendidikan formal dan nonformal.

Kata Kunci: Pemahaman Hadis; Wahdah Islamiyah; Pendekatan Tekstual; Manhaj al-Salaf; Pendidikan Islam

Introduction

Recent developments in Islamic education indicate a significant expansion of Hadith-based instruction across formal and nonformal educational institutions,¹ particularly in Indonesia where Islamic schools, universities, and community organizations have increasingly integrated Hadith studies into their curricula and religious activities.² However, this expansion has not been accompanied by a consistent pedagogical framework governing how Hadith is systematically taught, interpreted, and contextualized.³ Empirical studies further suggest considerable variation in teaching practices, ranging from memorization-oriented transmission to more interpretive and practice-based approaches, raising concerns regarding the coherence and effectiveness of Hadith pedagogy in contemporary Islamic education.⁴

In response to these developments, Islamic education is understood as a comprehensive process of human development aimed at nurturing individuals who are faithful, knowledgeable, and morally upright, where Hadith occupies a strategic position

in shaping educational philosophy, teacher–student relations, and value-based pedagogy.⁵ Within this context, Islamic organizations have increasingly become key actors in structuring, systematizing, and transmitting Hadith learning across both formal and nonformal settings.⁶ These organizations function not only as educational providers but also as epistemic agents that shape how religious knowledge is organized, interpreted, and practiced in contemporary Muslim society.

Among these institutions, Wahdah Islamiyah stands out as an Islamic community organization that significantly contributes to Hadith-based education in Indonesia.⁷ Headquartered in Makassar, the organization maintains an extensive national network.⁸ Originating from the Fathul Muin Foundation (1988), Wahdah Islamiyah was formally established in 2002 and has since placed education as the central pillar of its da'wah mission. Through formal institutions such as the College of Islamic Studies and Arabic Language (STIBA) Makassar and nonformal institutions like *halaqah* (study circles), majlis *taklim* (learning assemblies), and *daurah ilmiyyah* (scholarly training programs), Wahdah Islamiyah has established a holistic educational system that positions Hadith as the foundation of character formation and community development.⁹

Hadith learning activities in Wahdah Islamiyah operate through two principal channels. The formal channel—implemented in STIBA and affiliated Islamic schools—employs structured curricula focusing on memorization, *sanad* and *matan* analysis, and textual interpretation. The nonformal channel—conducted through *halaqah* and majlis *taklim*—emphasizes participatory learning and exemplary practice.¹⁰ The synergy between these two approaches illustrates a balance between intellectual rigor and character development, embodying the integration of knowledge (*ilm*) and practice (*'amal*).

Over its development, Wahdah Islamiyah has formulated distinctive models and patterns of Hadith pedagogy. Its instructional model follows the *ta'lim wa ta'dib* paradigm—integrating the transmission of knowledge with the cultivation of moral discipline. The pattern of Hadith learning combines textual and contextual orientations: the textual emphasizes accuracy in memorization and authentication of *sanad*. This synthesis renders Hadith education both theoretical and practical, equipping learners to apply Islamic values in everyday life.

Beyond its pedagogical structure, the Hadith learning system within Wahdah Islamiyah also reflects a broader epistemological orientation rooted in Salafi thought. The organization emphasizes textual authority, methodological discipline, and the transmission of religious knowledge through the framework of *manhaj al-salaf*.¹¹ In this regard, Hadith pedagogy functions not only as a process of religious instruction but also as a mechanism for preserving orthodoxy, shaping religious identity, and

maintaining continuity with classical Islamic scholarship.¹² These dimensions position Wahdah Islamiyah as an important case for examining the relationship between textualism, religious authority, and Islamic education in contemporary Indonesia.

Despite its prominent role, scholarly research that specifically examines the relationship between Hadith learning practices and Salafi educational epistemology within the context of Wahdah Islamiyah remains limited. Most previous studies have primarily focused on the historical development of the organization or its role in Islamic preaching (da'wah). For instance, Luthfi Hardi (2024) analyzed the social transformation of Muslim communities in Makassar through the social activities of the Wahdah Islamiyah da'wah movement,¹³ while Muhammad Fahriadi Azhari (2021) examined the character education model (*halaqah* method) within the Wahdah Islamiyah mass organization in Makassar.¹⁴ These studies indicate that existing research has largely concentrated on socio-religious and organizational dimensions, without sufficiently addressing the pedagogical and epistemological aspects of Hadith learning. However, Wahdah Islamiyah represents an important example of an Islamic educational system that integrates hadith learning with a distinctive epistemological structure in shaping character formation and religious authority. This scholarly gap provides the rationale for the present study.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the models and patterns of Hadith learning within Wahdah Islamiyah's educational framework in Makassar by focusing on its pedagogical methods, epistemological orientation, and interpretive tendencies. The study examines how Hadith learning is implemented within formal and non-formal educational settings and how textual authority is transmitted through Salafi-oriented educational practices. The findings are expected to contribute to the broader discourse on Hadith pedagogy, Islamic educational epistemology, and the transmission of religious authority in contemporary Muslim society.

Research Methodology

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach with a field research design to obtain an in-depth understanding of the models and patterns of Hadith learning within the Islamic educational system of Wahdah Islamiyah in Makassar. The research was conducted over a three-month period through field observations in formal educational institutions, *halaqah* sessions, majlis *taklim*, and other religious learning activities organized by Wahdah Islamiyah Makassar. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis of curricula, instructional materials, organizational guidelines, and institutional archives. The study involved seven informants consisting of organizational leaders, Hadith instructors, preachers, educational administrators, and *halaqah* mentors within Wahdah Islamiyah. Informants were selected using purposive sampling based

on their active involvement, institutional roles, and experience in Hadith teaching and educational activities.

Primary data were obtained from interviews and field observations, while secondary data were derived from institutional documents, academic references, and supporting literature related to Islamic education and Hadith studies. Data were analyzed using thematic and interpretive analysis to identify recurring patterns concerning Hadith pedagogy, textual authority, Salafi-oriented educational practices, and the integration of formal and nonformal learning systems within Wahdah Islamiyah. The analytical process included data coding, categorization, interpretation, and triangulation of findings.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, this study applied source and method triangulation, supported by member checking with key informants. These procedures were conducted to verify the consistency and accuracy of the findings so that the results objectively reflect the actual practices and epistemological orientation of Hadith learning within Wahdah Islamiyah Makassar.

The Model of Hadith Learning in Wahdah Islamiyah

Hadith learning in Wahdah Islamiyah constitutes an essential component of the Islamic educational system developed by the organization. This pedagogical model reflects Wahdah Islamiyah's view that Hadith is not merely an object of religious study, but also serves as an epistemological foundation for Islamic education. By positioning Hadith as the basis of its curriculum, the organization seeks to integrate the spiritual, intellectual, and social dimensions of education, making Hadith instruction both a means of spiritual development and a process of Islamic character formation. This orientation aligns with Wahdah Islamiyah's vision that unites da'wah, education, and cadre development into a cohesive system.

Based on interviews and field observations, the Hadith learning system in Wahdah Islamiyah is organized in a structured and tiered manner, encompassing two primary pathways: formal education and nonformal education. These two pathways do not function independently but complement one another to achieve a comprehensive process of personal and spiritual formation. As stated by Muhammad Yusran Anshar, Chairman of the Sharia Council of Wahdah Islamiyah:

*"The model of Hadith learning in Wahdah Islamiyah is divided into three forms: halaqah (study circles), general ta'lim sessions (nonformal), and curricular instruction within STIBA and other formal schools."*⁵

This statement illustrates that Wahdah Islamiyah regards Hadith learning as a central pillar of both da'wah and education, forming an integrated system that connects academic study, moral discipline, and community development. From the interview findings, it can be identified that the methods of Hadith instruction within

the organization are classified into two main approaches: formal and nonformal learning models.

1. Formal Model of Hadith Learning

The formal model of Hadith learning in Wahdah Islamiyah is implemented through educational institutions under the organization's management, ranging from early childhood education to higher education. Its primary objective is to cultivate an understanding of Hadith appropriate to the developmental stages of the learners. The tiered approach applied by Wahdah Islamiyah reflects the principle of *tathawwur al-tarbiyah* (educational development in accordance with age and ability), demonstrating pedagogical awareness that each level of education requires a distinct form of Hadith instruction.

At the elementary level, Hadith functions primarily as a medium for moral habituation and value introduction, whereas at the secondary and tertiary levels, it is positioned as a source of knowledge and a means for developing critical Islamic reasoning. In the early childhood education (PAUD) and SDIT Wahdah Islamiyah programs, Hadith is taught in simplified forms emphasizing memorization and basic comprehension. Syamratujanna (teacher at PAUD Wahdah Central) explained:

*“The Hadiths we teach are short and easy for children to memorize—such as Hadiths about kindness to animals, cleanliness, and good manners. The teacher recites the Hadith, explains its meaning, and then the children repeat it.”*¹⁶

This method applies the learning by repetition approach, proven effective for instilling Hadith values intuitively in early childhood learners. While repetition is beneficial for memory and habit formation, it must be balanced with moral contextualization to ensure that memorization does not become mechanical and detached from ethical understanding.¹⁷

Similarly, Dian Pertami from SDIT Wahdah Islamiyah added that the book *Kitab al-Hadith al-Sharif*—compiled according to grade levels—is used as the main instructional text. Hadith lessons employ varied methods, including collective reading in which the teacher first recites the Hadith several times, followed by the students, who then proceed to memorize it. Afterward, the teacher explains the moral meaning contained in the Hadith. This strategy reinforces a habituation-based educational orientation, where Hadith serves as a tool for internalizing moral and Islamic behavioral values.

At the junior and senior high school levels (SMP and SMA IT Wahdah Islamiyah), Hadith learning is directed toward deepening understanding and application. Nur Afdaliah Ali noted:

“Each Hadith is discussed over two sessions—one focused on memorization and the other on understanding and application. If students are unable to complete memorization during class, they may submit it online via video.”¹⁸

This illustrates the integration of blended learning, combining face-to-face instruction with digital media, while fostering self-directed learning responsibility. The learning structure at the secondary level marks a methodological transition from rote memorization to value internalization and practical application. The two-session system—combining memorization and interpretation—reflects an effort to balance rote learning and reflective learning, enabling students not only to memorize the Hadith but also to grasp its practical relevance in daily life.¹⁹

At SMA IT Wahdah Islamiyah, Hadith is taught as part of the Qur’an and Hadith subject. According to Irmawati Syukur, the methods employed include lectures, memorization, and question–answer sessions, using *Kitab al-Jami’* as the primary reference. This indicates that Hadith learning at Wahdah Islamiyah emphasizes both conceptual understanding and practical implementation.

At the higher education level, particularly at the College of Islamic Studies and Arabic Language (STIBA) Makassar, Hadith learning is conducted academically and methodologically. In an interview, student Nur Mutmainnah explained:

“The Hadith studies we learn at STIBA include understanding the meanings of Hadith and examining the credibility of narrators. The method involves not only memorization but also research on the authenticity of the sanad (chain of transmission) and matan (content). Through this approach, we gain a deeper understanding of Hadith authenticity and its intended message.”²⁰

This statement demonstrates that Hadith study at STIBA goes beyond memorization, emphasizing analytical and critical thinking skills in examining both the textual and contextual dimensions of Hadith. The approach renders Hadith learning more scientific, applicable, and relevant to the needs of contemporary Islamic education.

Across all levels of formal education, Wahdah Islamiyah consistently applies a model of curriculum integration, in which Hadith is not treated merely as an independent discipline but as the moral foundation underpinning all areas of study. This integrative approach strengthens the unity between intellectual development and ethical formation—an embodiment of Islamic education that harmonizes knowledge, faith, and practice.

2. Nonformal Model of Hadith Learning

In addition to formal education, Wahdah Islamiyah develops nonformal Hadith learning through *halaqah* (study circles), *ta’lim* (public lectures), and *daurah* (intensive training programs). This nonformal system reflects the distinctive character of

Wahdah Islamiyah as a da'wah-based organization that integrates education, spiritual development, and community empowerment. By positioning Hadith as the central axis of all religious activities, the organization does not merely transmit knowledge but cultivates a social environment that fosters the internalization of Sunnah values. These three models function as key frameworks for spiritual and socio-religious development among members and the wider community.

The halaqah model represents the most fundamental system of cadre formation within Wahdah Islamiyah. These sessions are held weekly and are mandatory for all members. As Hidayat Hafidz explained:

*“The weekly halaqah is attended by all cadres, including senior asatidzah. The materials include ‘aqidah, ibadah, Hadith, ethics (akhlaq), and tahsin. It also involves Hadith memorization, recitation, and explanation of their sharh (interpretation).”*²¹

The *halaqah* embodies the concept of learning in community, where interactions among participants foster mutual advice, moral reinforcement, and the strengthening of brotherhood (*ukhuwah*). The methods of *talaqqi* (direct transmission from teacher to student), memorization, and group discussion form its distinctive pedagogical characteristics. This model also exemplifies community-based learning, emphasizing social interaction and the equal role of teachers and learners within the learning process.²² However, its effectiveness depends greatly on consistent participation and mentorship by the *murabbi* (spiritual mentor); without continuous supervision, the *halaqah* risks losing its spiritual guidance function, which is its primary purpose.

The *ta'lim 'amm* (public lecture) model is designed to reach the broader community. These sessions are typically conducted in mosques and campuses in an open, inclusive format. Muhammad Yusran Anshar explained:

*“In public ta'lim, the Hadith is taught along with its sharh, vocabulary (mufradat), and legal implications. Our aim is for the community to understand Hadith practically, not merely theoretically.”*²³

This approach highlights the orientation of public Islamic literacy, positioning Hadith as a medium for social awareness and moral empowerment. The *ta'lim* model represents the educative dimension of Wahdah Islamiyah's da'wah, using Hadith as a tool for community enlightenment. It builds religious public literacy focused on social morality rather than mere transmission of knowledge. Thus, *ta'lim* serves a dual purpose—enhancing religious understanding while cultivating social piety.²⁴

The learning process in *ta'lim* employs an in-depth approach to canonical Hadith texts such as Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim. Each session typically begins with the instructor reciting the Hadith, followed by a comprehensive explanation of its

meaning, significance, and commentary (*sharh*), revealing the deeper moral and linguistic dimensions. This process fosters a holistic understanding of the context and intent of the Hadith while training participants to relate the teachings of Hadith to practical aspects of daily life.

The *daurah* model serves as an intensive training program for selected cadres, aiming to deepen Hadith scholarship and enhance da'wah competencies. According to Muhammad Yusran Anshar, such programs have been held in various regions—including Makassar and Kolaka—featuring prominent scholars and Hadith experts. Ismar, Deputy Head of Dakwah at DPC Bungaya, added that the methods employed include lectures, practical exercises, and case discussions, enabling participants to contextualize Hadith texts with real-life situations. The *daurah* model thus represents a form of intensive education oriented toward the development of practical competence. However, to achieve optimal outcomes, post-training mentoring is necessary; without continuity, *daurah* activities risk becoming short-term initiatives with limited impact on behavioral transformation.

Collectively, these three nonformal learning models portray a dynamic system of Islamic education that integrates intellectual, social, and spiritual dimensions. The *halaqah* nurtures spiritual intimacy, ta'lim expands public religious understanding, and *daurah* strengthens practical da'wah competencies among cadres. Together, they embody a unified educational framework linking teaching, da'wah, and moral development.

The pedagogical approach employed in Wahdah Islamiyah harmonizes classical methods—such as *talaqqi*, memorization, and *sharh*—with modern strategies that include discussion, digital evaluation, and contextualization. Hence, the Hadith learning model developed by Wahdah Islamiyah can be characterized as integrative and applicative Islamic education—one that not only focuses on scientific mastery but also nurtures the formation of *da'i*, educators, and Muslim communities grounded in Islamic character and ethics.

Patterns of Hadith Understanding in Wahdah Islamiyah

The understanding of Hadith within Islamic community organizations is strongly influenced by the methodological approaches employed in formulating religious teachings and practices. Each organization possesses its own epistemological tendency in interpreting Hadith.²⁵ In this context, Wahdah Islamiyah demonstrates a predominantly textual orientation, namely understanding Hadith based on the apparent meaning of the text as understood by the early generations of Islam (*al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ*).²⁶ This approach constitutes a distinctive characteristic of the organization and serves as the foundation for its various activities in da'wah, religious development, and education.

Since its establishment, Wahdah Islamiyah has positioned Hadith as a primary reference in constructing the intellectual, moral, and educational framework of the Muslim community. In an interview, Muhammad Yusran Anshar, Chairman of the Sharia Council of Wahdah Islamiyah, explained that the organization's understanding of Hadith is deeply rooted in the scholarly tradition of classical Hadith scholars:

“In the early period, our understanding of Hadith was highly textual and did not extensively refer to the works of Hadith scholars. However, over time and through academic experience, especially during our studies in Madinah, our understanding became more structured while remaining grounded in the methods of authoritative scholars through the classical Hadith commentaries.”²⁷

This statement indicates that Wahdah Islamiyah's textual approach should not be understood as rigid literalism, but rather as a commitment to the scholarly methodology developed within the classical Islamic tradition. The organization emphasizes that the understanding of Hadith must consistently be based on textual sources while also referring to interpretive frameworks developed by scholars possessing recognized religious authority. In this regard, textuality is not merely understood as a literal reading of the text, but as a disciplined scholarly approach aimed at preserving methodological consistency and the authenticity of Islamic teachings. This orientation also reflects the organization's effort to maintain religious understanding within the framework of Sunni orthodoxy.²⁸

Furthermore, by grounding its interpretation of Hadith in the classical commentaries and the scholarly tradition of the ulama, Wahdah Islamiyah seeks to preserve the continuity of Islamic scholarly transmission (*sanad*).²⁹ Such an approach enables the organization to remain connected to the broader intellectual heritage of Islam while avoiding interpretive tendencies considered inconsistent with the foundational principles of Islam. At the same time, this model of understanding provides a relatively stable epistemological foundation for the organization's educational and da'wah activities, ensuring that religious teachings are conveyed systematically, responsibly, and in accordance with established scholarly authority.

This consistency was further emphasized by Hidayat Hafid, a member of the Shura Council of Wahdah Islamiyah, who stated that the organization's intellectual orientation shares certain similarities with Muhammadiyah, particularly in its commitment to authentic Islamic sources:

“In terms of thought, we are quite similar to Muhammadiyah. Our understanding of the Qur'an and Sunnah tends to be textual—holding firmly to the meaning of the text itself, although we have not yet adopted a contextual approach.”³⁰

This statement demonstrates that Wahdah Islamiyah regards the Qur'an and Hadith as authoritative sources of truth in Islam. Therefore, the organization's tex-

tual orientation should not be viewed as a rejection of social realities or contemporary developments, but rather as a form of scholarly caution in preserving the authenticity and integrity of religious understanding. By placing textual evidence as the primary reference while simultaneously referring to the interpretive legacy of classical scholars, Wahdah Islamiyah seeks to ensure that the interpretation of Hadith remains within the accepted boundaries of Sunni Islamic scholarship.

In this regard, the organization's approach reflects the principle of *al-luzūm bi al-naṣṣ*, namely adherence to textual evidence as the primary basis for understanding religious teachings.³¹ This principle functions as an epistemological safeguard against excessive and subjective interpretations, particularly those detached from the guidance of recognized scholarly authority.³² At the same time, the principle demonstrates that preserving textual authenticity is considered essential for maintaining the continuity of the Islamic intellectual tradition and sustaining the credibility of Islamic education and da'wah in contemporary Muslim society.

Moreover, Wahdah Islamiyah's approach to understanding Hadith is also grounded in the principle of *ittibā' al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ*, namely following the interpretive methods of the Prophet's Companions, the *tābi'īn*, and the *tābi' al-tābi'īn*.³³ This was emphasized by Muhammad Istiqamah, Director of Wahdah Islamic Travel:

*"In understanding Hadith, we strive to follow the approach of the early generations of this ummah—the Companions, the tābi'īn, and the tābi' al-tābi'īn. The way they understood Hadith is the approach that we seek to follow, rather than relying on our own interpretations."*³⁴

This statement illustrates that Wahdah Islamiyah regards the understanding of the *salaf* as the benchmark of orthodoxy. Hadith is not interpreted based on personal opinion, but through a scholarly tradition characterized by historical continuity and intellectual legitimacy.³⁵ This principle reflects epistemological caution as well as respect for the authority of recognized scholars. By positioning the understanding of the early generations and classical scholars as primary references, Wahdah Islamiyah seeks to preserve consistency in religious understanding and avoid interpretive approaches considered speculative or excessively subjective.

Furthermore, this orientation shapes the organization's educational and da'wah framework, in which religious teachings are conveyed through systematic learning processes, academic supervision, and sustained engagement with classical Islamic literature.³⁶ Reliance upon established scholarly authority demonstrates that the organization emphasizes not only fidelity to the text, but also methodological discipline in the process of understanding Hadith. In this context, the *salaf*-based approach functions not merely as a theological identity, but also as an educational mechanism for preserving intellectual continuity and strengthening the legitimacy of Islamic teachings within contemporary Muslim society.

The organization's textual orientation is also reflected in the themes of Hadith studies developed within its educational and da'wah institutions. Iwan Kurniawan explained that Wahdah Islamiyah's Hadith studies focus on the two primary sources of Islamic teachings, namely the Qur'an and Hadith:

*"The themes of Wahdah's studies revolve around the Qur'an and Hadith, encompassing creed (aqidah), worship (ibadah), ethics (akhlāq), the Prophet's biography (sirah), and social transactions (mu'amalah). All of these studies are based on the understanding of al-salaf al-ṣāliḥ."*³⁷

These themes encompass various dimensions of Islamic life, including faith, worship, ethics, history, and social relations. Altogether, they are intended to guide Muslims toward a comprehensive understanding of Islam based on authentic textual sources and the guidance of trustworthy scholars. Through this framework, Wahdah Islamiyah seeks to cultivate a religious culture grounded in knowledge, intellectual discipline, and adherence to divine revelation (*naṣṣ shar'i*). The integration of these themes within educational and da'wah activities demonstrates that Hadith learning is not confined to theoretical study, but also serves as a foundation for shaping moral consciousness and social behavior in everyday Muslim life.

In addition, the emphasis on textual authenticity and scholarly authority reflects the organization's commitment to preserving the continuity of the Islamic intellectual tradition amid contemporary social change.³⁸ By encouraging Muslims to study religion through structured learning processes and the guidance of competent scholars, Wahdah Islamiyah seeks to strengthen religious literacy and minimize partial or superficial understandings of Islam. In this regard, the organization's educational orientation demonstrates that Hadith-based learning contributes not only to individual piety, but also to the formation of a disciplined and ethically grounded Muslim community.

The textual orientation in understanding Hadith, grounded in the *manhaj al-salaf*, significantly influences the educational and da'wah systems of Wahdah Islamiyah. In the field of education, this approach produces learning models that emphasize mastery of Islamic sciences alongside moral cultivation, enabling students not only to understand Hadith academically but also to implement its teachings in accordance with their authentic meanings.³⁹ In the sphere of da'wah, this orientation shapes a mode of religious communication that is principled, scholarly, and methodologically grounded, ensuring that Islamic teachings are conveyed accurately and consistently.

Thus, Wahdah Islamiyah's orientation toward Hadith reflects a strong commitment to preserving the authenticity of Islamic teachings and maintaining the continuity of the classical scholarly tradition. This approach emphasizes adherence to textual sources, respect for scholarly authority, and caution in interpretation. Within

the context of contemporary Islamic education, such an orientation plays a significant role in maintaining theological stability amid diverse interpretive tendencies, while simultaneously fostering a generation of Muslims who possess strong intellectual foundations, moral discipline, and commitment to the Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH).⁴⁰

Implications for Islamic Education

The integration of Hadith learning systems within *Wahdah Islamiyah*—through the synergy between formal and nonformal education—offers significant implications for the development of Islamic education in Indonesia. The educational model adopted by the organization not only strengthens the cognitive dimension of learners through mastery of Hadith texts but also enhances their affective and psychomotor domains through habitual practice, moral exemplification, and social da'wah. This model reinforces the idea that ideal Islamic education does not end with intellectual achievement alone but aims to produce individuals who are both knowledgeable and virtuous, in accordance with the integrated concepts of *ta'lim* (instruction), *tarbiyah* (nurturing), and *ta'dib* (moral cultivation).⁴¹

First, from the perspective of Islamic educational epistemology, *Wahdah Islamiyah* has expanded the paradigm of learning from a classical model toward an integrative one. This approach emphasizes not only the transmission of religious knowledge but also the internalization of Hadith values as the foundation of moral and social development. By introducing Hadith education from early childhood to higher education levels, the organization demonstrates that vertical integration (across educational stages) and horizontal integration (between knowledge and values) can holistically strengthen the learners' character.⁴² This pattern reflects the principle of *al-takāmul al-tarbawī*—the unity of knowledge, faith, and action—which forms the philosophical foundation of modern Islamic education.

Second, in terms of pedagogical methodology, the system applied by *Wahdah Islamiyah* provides an alternative to the dualism that often characterizes Islamic education in Indonesia. Formal education in institutions such as STIBA serves as a center of Hadith scholarship and research, while nonformal programs such as *halaqah*, *majlis taklim*, and *daurah* function as practical spaces for internalization and application of values. This combination creates a balance between theoretical knowledge and practical embodiment, bridging the gap between academic learning and social reality.⁴³ As evidenced in the findings, the Hadith learning culture cultivated within *Wahdah Islamiyah* remains vibrant and relevant to the dynamics of contemporary society.

Third, in terms of Hadith literacy and educational da'wah, *Wahdah Islamiyah* contributes to the dissemination of Hadith knowledge through digital transformation and its extensive organizational network across Indonesia. The use of online media such as e-learning platforms, webinars, and the *Wahdah Islamiyah* YouTube channel has expanded public access to Hadith studies across regions. These innovations make Hadith education more inclusive, accessible, and responsive to the demands of the digital age.⁴⁴ Consequently, Islamic education is no longer confined to classrooms but evolves into a community- and technology-based learning system.

Fourth, in the aspect of Islamic education curriculum development, *Wahdah Islamiyah* has made a substantial contribution to the establishment of a Hadith-centered learning model. Although there is no national policy requiring Hadith instruction in all Islamic educational institutions, the experience of *Wahdah Islamiyah* provides a valuable reference for other institutions in designing integrative Hadith-based curricula.⁴⁵ Such a curriculum can reinforce Islamic values across various academic disciplines while nurturing a generation of Muslims who possess both spiritual and intellectual balance.

Fifth, regarding institutional development, the establishment of the *Hadith Studies Department* at STIBA Makassar in 2024 marks a strategic advancement in strengthening *Wahdah Islamiyah's* role in academic Hadith scholarship. This initiative demonstrates that Islamic organizations can become pioneers in establishing higher education institutions rooted in Hadith studies, combining scientific rigor with da'wah orientation. The program is expected to produce scholars of Hadith who not only master research methodologies but also apply Hadith values within educational and social contexts.⁴⁶

In summary, this study shows that *Wahdah Islamiyah's* integrative approach to formal and nonformal education presents an applicable, sustainable, and contributive model for Islamic education. By positioning Hadith as both an epistemic and moral foundation, *Wahdah Islamiyah* successfully bridges the gap between classical Islamic scholarship and modern educational needs. This model offers a new direction for Islamic education in Indonesia—one that is textually grounded, socially contextual, and oriented toward nurturing a learned and civilized Muslim generation.

Epistemological and Ideological Dimensions of Hadith Learning in Wahdah Islamiyah

1. Textualism and the Problematics of Hadith Contextualization

The Hadith learning model within *Wahdah Islamiyah* demonstrates a strong epistemological tendency toward textualism.⁴⁷ The understanding of Hadith is constructed upon strict adherence to the literal meaning of religious texts by positioning

the Qur'an, Sunnah, and interpretations of classical Salafi scholars as the primary authorities in determining religious truth. In pedagogical practice, this orientation is reflected in the emphasis on memorization, *sanad* authenticity, methodological discipline, and the limitation of interpretation beyond the framework of *manhaj al-salaf*. Such an approach illustrates a form of text-based Islamic pedagogy in which religious legitimacy is closely associated with fidelity to transmitted texts rather than contextual reinterpretation.⁴⁸

From an epistemological perspective, this textual orientation functions as an effort to preserve doctrinal purity and maintain theological consistency amid the diversity of contemporary Islamic interpretations. Wahdah Islamiyah views adherence to textual sources as a safeguard against speculative reasoning and subjective interpretation that may distort religious teachings. In this framework, Hadith learning is not merely intended to transmit knowledge but also to regulate the boundaries of acceptable interpretation.⁴⁹ Consequently, the educational process reinforces a structured religious worldview grounded in obedience to scriptural authority and the continuity of classical Islamic scholarship.

Nevertheless, the dominance of literal textualism also raises important critical questions concerning reinterpretation and social transformation. The prioritization of textual meanings may reduce interpretive flexibility in responding to modern social realities, particularly in issues that require contextual *ijtihad* and adaptive legal reasoning.⁵⁰ Critics of textualist approaches argue that excessive dependence on literal interpretation risks narrowing the dynamic and transformative dimensions of Islamic thought.⁵¹ In this regard, the Hadith pedagogy practiced within Wahdah Islamiyah reflects an ongoing tension between preserving orthodoxy and accommodating the changing conditions of contemporary Muslim society.⁵² This tension demonstrates that Islamic education is not only a site of knowledge transmission but also a contested arena in which authority, interpretation, and social change are continuously negotiated.

2. Religious Authority and the Transmission of Knowledge

The educational system of Wahdah Islamiyah also illustrates how religious authority is institutionally constructed and transmitted through structured pedagogical mechanisms. Religious authority is not solely based on intellectual competence, but also on scholarly lineage, mastery of classical Islamic sciences, and loyalty to Salafi methodological principles.⁵³ Within this framework, teachers occupy a central position as custodians of authentic religious understanding, while students are expected to demonstrate obedience, discipline, and commitment to established scholarly traditions. The relationship between teacher and student therefore extends beyond instructional interaction and becomes a process of moral and ideological formation.

Through *halaqah*, *daurah ilmiyyah*, cadre training programs, and formal educational institutions, Wahdah Islamiyah institutionalizes a hierarchical model of knowledge transmission that reinforces continuity with classical Islamic scholarship. This structure reflects the traditional Islamic concept of *sanad*, where the legitimacy of knowledge depends not only on textual references but also on the credibility and continuity of scholarly transmission.⁵⁴ In contemporary Islamic education, *sanad* functions not merely as a chain of narration but as a mechanism for validating religious authority and preserving theological authenticity. As a result, the transmission of Hadith knowledge simultaneously becomes a process of maintaining organizational discipline and regulating interpretive legitimacy within the religious community.

Critically examined, this pattern of authority formation also reveals how educational institutions can function as mechanisms for consolidating epistemological control. By centralizing interpretive authority within recognized scholars and institutional structures, the educational process limits alternative readings that fall outside the accepted framework of *manhaj al-salaf*. Such a model contributes to theological stability and organizational cohesion, yet it may also reduce opportunities for dialogical and critical engagement within religious learning. Therefore, the Hadith learning system in Wahdah Islamiyah should not only be understood as a pedagogical structure but also as an epistemological system that shapes the production, validation, and circulation of religious authority in contemporary Islam.

3. Ideological Education and the Reproduction of Salafi Orthodoxy

Beyond its formal educational objectives, Hadith learning within Wahdah Islamiyah also functions as a medium for ideological formation and the reproduction of Salafi religious identity.⁵⁵ The integration of textual learning, moral discipline, organizational mentoring, and cadre development demonstrates that education is directed not only toward the transfer of religious knowledge but also toward the internalization of specific theological orientations.⁵⁶ Through continuous participation in *halaqah tarbiyah*, mentoring sessions, and organizational activities, students and members gradually develop a collective religious consciousness shaped by Salafi doctrines and interpretive frameworks.

This process indicates that the educational system of Wahdah Islamiyah plays a significant role in institutionalizing Sunni orthodoxy rooted in Salafi thought.⁵⁷ Orthodoxy is reproduced through the reinforcement of textual authority, the legitimization of particular scholarly references, and the marginalization of interpretive approaches considered inconsistent with the Salafi *manhaj*.⁵⁸ In this context, Hadith pedagogy becomes closely connected to the preservation of ideological continuity

and the construction of collective identity within the organization. Educational activities therefore operate simultaneously as spaces of religious learning and mechanisms for sustaining organizational coherence and doctrinal uniformity.

From the perspective of critical pedagogy, this phenomenon demonstrates that Islamic education is never entirely neutral, since it inevitably involves the production of values, authority, and ideological orientation.⁵⁹ The pedagogical system of Wahdah Islamiyah reveals how education can become an instrument for shaping religious subjectivity and reinforcing a particular vision of Islamic authenticity in contemporary Muslim society. At the same time, the reproduction of Salafi orthodoxy through educational institutions reflects broader dynamics within modern Islamic movements, where the contestation over religious authority and identity increasingly takes place through organized systems of teaching, cadre formation, and textual dissemination.⁶⁰ Consequently, Hadith pedagogy within Wahdah Islamiyah represents not only an educational practice but also a socio-religious strategy for preserving orthodoxy and sustaining ideological continuity in the modern era.

Conclusion

Hadith learning within Wahdah Islamiyah represents a comprehensive system of Islamic education through the integration of formal and nonformal educational pathways. Hadith is not merely positioned as a body of knowledge to be taught, but also as a source of values shaping character, morality, and da'wah orientation. The findings of this study demonstrate that the integration of Hadith learning within Wahdah Islamiyah's educational system successfully establishes a balance between intellectual mastery and spiritual development through structured educational mechanisms implemented in formal schools, *halaqah*, *ta'lim*, and *daurah* programs. This integrative model reflects an educational orientation that combines religious instruction, moral cultivation, and cadre formation within a sustainable Islamic educational framework.

The pattern of Hadith understanding developed within Wahdah Islamiyah is predominantly textual and grounded in the *manhaj al-salaf*, emphasizing adherence to the Qur'an, Sunnah, and interpretations of recognized classical scholars. This orientation should not merely be understood as intellectual rigidity, but rather as an epistemological effort to preserve textual authenticity and maintain continuity with the classical Islamic scholarly tradition. At the same time, this study demonstrates that Hadith pedagogy in Wahdah Islamiyah functions not only as religious instruction but also as a mechanism for preserving textual authority, reproducing Salafi-oriented epistemology, and constructing contemporary Sunni religious identity. In this regard, Hadith learning operates simultaneously as a pedagogical, epistemological, and ideological system within modern Muslim society.

Theoretically, this study contributes to the discourse on Hadith pedagogy and Islamic educational epistemology by showing how Salafi-oriented educational institutions institutionalize religious authority through integrated systems of learning, mentoring, and organizational discipline. The findings also highlight the relationship between textualism, religious authority, and ideological reproduction in contemporary Islamic education. Academically, this research enriches broader discussions concerning the transmission of Islamic knowledge, the preservation of orthodoxy, and the formation of religious identity within modern Islamic movements in Indonesia. Furthermore, the study provides an empirical contribution to understanding how Hadith learning becomes a medium for maintaining theological stability while responding to the challenges of modern educational and social transformation.

Nevertheless, this study remains limited to the educational environment of Wahdah Islamiyah in Makassar and primarily focuses on pedagogical and epistemological dimensions. Future studies may further examine comparative models of Hadith pedagogy between Salafi-oriented and contextualist Islamic movements, investigate the transformation of Hadith learning in digital religious spaces, or analyze the socio-political implications of textual religious education in contemporary Muslim societies. Such studies are important for developing a broader understanding of the dynamic relationship between Islamic education, religious authority, ideology, and social change in the contemporary era.

Endnotes

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